PERCEPTIONS OF PRE UNIVERSITY (FORM SIX) STUDENTS TOWARD CAREER IN ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Loleh Bin Ibrahim

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A thesis submitted
In fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of
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2014
I certify that I have supervised and read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a research paper for the degree of Corporate Master in Business Administration.

Dr. Harry Entabang
Supervisor

This research paper was submitted to the Faculty of Economics and Business, UNIMAS and is accepted as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Corporate Master in Business Administration.

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DECLARATION AND COPYRIGHT

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I hereby declare that this research is the result of my own investigation, except where otherwise stated. Other sources are acknowledged by footnotes giving explicit references and a bibliography is appended.

Signature : 

Date : 
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Bismillahirrahmanirrahim

Thank you Allah s.w.t for giving me strength and spirit to complete this CBP. Thank you to my mom, wife and daughter for always understanding and supporting my studies in UNIMAS. A deepest appreciation to Dr Harry Entabang (my supervisor) for the guidance and time. To all my lecturers, thank you for the wonderful learning experience with all of you.
This is a research study that examines form sixth students perception about a career in the field of entrepreneurship in Sri Aman, Sarawak. It aims to identify the perceptions of students, student interest and resources affecting students about entrepreneurship among students in the sixth form. This study is a descriptive and inferential study. A total of 112 students were selected randomly. All information was obtained using a questionnaire and interviews. The analysis was done using SPSS 21.0 for Windows software. The study found that no demographic factors influencing students' perceptions of entrepreneurship as a career. In addition, there is a positive and significant relationship between student perception and student interest in entrepreneurship. Furtermore, a positive and significant relationship also found in student perception and source of encouragement about entrepreneurship. Result also show the positive and significant relationship between student perception and influences of entrepreneurship program. It is hoped that this study would provide benefits to certain parties, especially the management of the school to serve as a guideline for improving mmat students to entrepreneurship as a career. Other than that hopefully this study can serve as a guide to researchers conducting similar studies in the future.
ABSTRAK


Hasil kajian mendapati tidak terdapat faktor demografi mempengaruhi persepsi pelajar tentang keusahawanan sebagai kerjaya. Selain daripada itu, terdapat hubungan yang positif dan signifikan antara persepsi pelajar dengan minat pelajar terhadap keusahawanan, persepsi pelajar dengan sumber penggalak terhadap keusahawanan serta persepsi pelajar dengan program yang mempengaruhi pelajar terhadap keusahawanan. Diharap kajian ini dapat memberi faedah kepada pihak tertentu terutamanya pihak pengurusan sekolah untuk dijadikan garis panduan bagi meningkatkan minat pelajar terhadap keusahawanan sebagai satu kerjaya. Selain daripada itu di harap kajian ini dapat dijadikan panduan kepada penyelidik yang menjalankan kajian yang sama di masa akan datang.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Title Page</td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approval Page</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Declaration and Copyright Page</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgements</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>vi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abstrak</td>
<td>vii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table of Content</td>
<td>viii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of Table</td>
<td>xii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of Figure</td>
<td>xiii</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction                          1
1.1 Research Background                  2
1.2 Problem Statement                    4
1.3 Research Objectives                  5
1.4 Research Questions                   6
1.5 Hypothesis of the Study              6
1.6 Significance of the Research         7
1.7 Scope of the Study                   7
1.8 Definition of the Key Terms          7
   1.8.1 Student                           8
   1.8.2 Perception                        8
   1.8.3 Career                            9
   1.8.4 Entrepreneur                      10
   1.8.5 Entrepreneurship                 10
1.9 Limitation of Study                  11
CHAPTER 2 – LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction
2.1 Definition of Entrepreneurship
2.2 Student Interest
2.3 Theory of Planned Behaviour and Self-employed Intention
2.4 Entrepreneurial Attitude and Entrepreneurial Self Efficacy
2.5 Entrepreneurship Education in Malaysia

CHAPTER 3 – RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction
3.1 Research Design
3.3 Population of Study
3.3 Sampling Method
3.4 Research Instrument
3.5 Data Collection Method
  3.5.1 Primary Data
  3.5.2 Secondary Data
3.6 Data Analysis
  3.6.1 Frequency Distribution
  3.6.2 Descriptive Statistics
  3.6.3 Hypothesis Testing
  3.6.4 T-Test (Independent Sample T-Test)
  3.6.5 One Way ANOVA
  3.6.6 Pearson Correlation
CHAPTER 4 – DATA ANALYSIS, FINDING AND INTERPRETATION

4.0 Introduction
4.2 Reliability Test
4.3 Frequency Analysis
  4.3.1 Frequency Analysis for Gender of Respondents
  4.3.2 Frequency Analysis for Race of Respondents
  4.3.3 Frequency Analysis for Father Occupation of Respondent
  4.3.4 Frequency Analysis for Family Income of Respondent
4.4 Descriptive Statistics for Variables
4.5 Testing Hypothesis
  4.5.1 Hypotheses 1
  4.5.2 Hypotheses 2
  4.5.3 Hypotheses 3
  4.5.4 Hypotheses 4
4.6 Result of Interview
4.7 Conclusion

CHAPTER 5 – CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction
5.1 Discussion
5.2 Recommendation
BIBLIOGRAPHY

APPENDIX I: SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>Strength of Relationship</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>Reliability Coefficients for Variables</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>Frequency Distribution for Gender of Respondents</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>Frequency Distribution for Race of Respondents</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>Frequency Analysis for Father Occupation of Respondents</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>Frequency Distribution for Family Income of Respondents</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>Descriptive Statistics</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>T-Test Between Gender of Respondents and Their View of Perception Towards Entrepreneurship</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>ONE WAY ANOVA Test Between Race of Respondents and Their View of Perception Towards Entrepreneurship</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>ONE WAY ANOVA Test Between Father Occupation of Respondents and Their View of Perception Towards Entrepreneurship</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.10</td>
<td>ONE WAY ANOVA Test Between Family Income of Respondents and Their View of Perception Towards Entrepreneurship</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.11</td>
<td>Relationship Between Students Interest and Their View of Perception Towards Entrepreneurship</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.12</td>
<td>Relationship Between Source of Encouragement and Their View of Perception Towards Entrepreneurship</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.13</td>
<td>Relationship Between Influence of Entrepreneurship and Their View of Perception Towards Entrepreneurship</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LIST OF FIGURE

Figure 1  Theory of Planned Behaviour Model (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980)  16
1.0 Introduction

As a developing country, Malaysia is facing pressures and challenges in a competitive 21st century. But determination Malaysia to become a developed country, competitive and remain firmly intact. National mission has been prepared to outline the approach to be adopted to tackle challenges and achieve national goals as established in Wawasan 2020. As awareness of a society that is productive and competitive, many efforts have been made to increase interest more students to participate in entrepreneurship. But these efforts will not succeed fully if not implemented in the right way, (Norasmah Hj Othman et.al, 2003). Malaysia is changing the social conditions of the people who depend on the government to people who are self employed. The government wants people to be alone with no hope for the help of others to support themselves and their families, (Nor Fadillah Nasharudin & Halimah Harun, 2010).

But to be a successful entrepreneur one should have to have the characteristics of entrepreneurs and entrepreneurial spirit. An entrepreneur emerged not as a personality characteristic or natural born, but because of other factors and can be trained, (Zaidatol Akmaliah 1998). This opinion is also supported by Hisrich (2000), entrepreneurial career influenced by parental occupational background of an entrepreneur and the family plays a role in promoting entrepreneurship as a career credibility. Successful entrepreneurs are individuals who believe in themselves and do not believe in success and failure is due to luck or external factors. Entrepreneurs with high internal locus of
control, motivated by high achievement, and ability to assume the responsibilities of self-confidence, (Norita Deraman et al., 2005).

Based on the average annual growth rate of last year, gross domestic product (GDP) for Malaysia is expected to increase from 115 billion Ringgit in 1990 to 920 billion Ringgit by 2020, an increase of nearly 8 times. In the same period, the population of Malaysia is expected to increase by about 32 million people (Ali, 2003). These figures show market opportunities and great prospects for entrepreneurs or potential entrepreneurs.

1.1 Research Background

Malaysia is known as developing country with a clear vision. The Vision 2020, is a strategic plan that drive Malaysia to become a developed country by the year 2020. The vision aims to have progressive society with strong economies and maintaining races united. Therefore, in order to achieve the vision, Malaysia has taken various actions, including increased the number of educated and skilled workforce. A quality human resources is a major asset to the country. McKee (2003) wrote:

"Investment in people is the single most important factor in business success, whether in the commercial sector or in the public sector". An organization needs caliber human resources to run their operations. Quality human resources will ensure the organization’s growth and sustainability.

Having realized all these, the Malaysian government has developed policies and plans which give due recognition to human resource development. The policies and plans include the Vision 2020 (Malaysia: the Way Forward), the Second Outline Perspectives Plans (OPP2) which includes the National Development Policy, the Sixth Malaysian
Plan, the Science and Technology Policy and many others that have similar objectives that is to build a progressive, prosperous and united nation (Shahar, 1994).

At high school or pre university stage, students somehow should have their career aspirations. Career aspirations are individual ambitions related to occupations (Rojewski, 2005). Students’ aspirations can influence their future career (Staff, Harris, Sabates, & Briddell, 2010). By understanding students aspirations can help teachers to relate their teaching activities according to student’s interest. High aspirations can motivate students to study hard and try to achieve their goals. Most of the time career aspiration is something that is too ideal to reach. Instead, career expectation is more realistic. It is an occupation that students think they can achieve it. Compare to early childhood, adolescence have chosen their career aspirations and expectation based on some knowledge and experiences (Ashby & Schoon, 2010). Thus, it is important to explore accounting students’ career aspirations and expectation at secondary school level.

According Aluwong, et al (2010) entrepreneurial education is a necessary ingredient for stimulating economic growth and employment opportunities in all societies. They further added that entrepreneurial education is a tool for fighting poverty and dependency; it has the perversity to continually provide business interest and skills to youth and also to;

i. provide more semi-skilled, skilled and professional manpower needed to revitalize,

ii. help to reduce employment by providing and sustaining a generation of job creators rather jobs seekers

iii. promote creativity and innovation of the grass root
Entrepreneurship education is aimed at providing learning directed towards developing and inculcating into the students skills, competences, understanding and attributes that will equip them to be innovative, and to identify, create, initiate, and successfully manage personal, community, business and work opportunities (Momoh, 2008). The ability to actualize the objectives of entrepreneurial education to a large extent depends on the student’s perception and attitudes towards the policy. This is because, the students’ dedication and commitment depends on weather their perceptions and attitude towards the policy is positive or otherwise.

1.2 Problem Statement

Entrepreneurship is not seen as a career as an engineer, architect or surveyor who has status in the public eye (Rohaizat, 2002). But it has begun to be applied to students as early as high school again. This is because every year many students out of higher education institutions regardless of university or public or private colleges, vocational institutes, nor the training centers all of which will be helpless in finding their own career opportunities. But mentality of our society rarely promote children become the employer because of the level of risk we are consuming is low (Muhammad Salleh, 2003). In Malaysia, entrepreneurship is being developed through education, in line with efforts to make the field of career fields of interest (Shahrin Bin Hashim & Norsila Binti Abdul Rahman, 2007). The student should have the initiative to create a paradigm shift in which they need to see entrepreneurship as an important career prospects in line with the demands of globalization. In addition, entrepreneurship is seen as a potential career path in order to overcome the problem of unemployment among graduates.
Entrepreneurship is a career field that is very important in this country. Government aims to make the field of entrepreneurship, especially small and medium enterprises sector as a major contributor of new jobs, and help the development of the economy in the 21st century (Perceptions et.al). Three or four decades ago, career as an entrepreneur is not an option for most people. This is because the business opportunities are not so prominent, and many other jobs are more readily available. Many argue that entrepreneurship is something that is hard and it is a career that is not secure than if salaried jobs, especially working with the government. In fact, not one to say that the indigenous people involved in entrepreneurship because they had to due to the failure to get another job. However, changes and progress in economic development, particularly in the last two decades has created many business opportunities. Tertiary centers also began to offer courses related to business management. Such developments lead to more people, especially the indigenous people are beginning to understand and take advantage of business and entrepreneurship. Thus we find that the more people knowingly and voluntarily choose entrepreneurship as their career. They began to see entrepreneurship as a source of income that is more convincing. As more people are becoming entrepreneurs on their own choice, we expect that they would have been prepared to succeed as entrepreneurs. Yet we find many who failed in business venture. Looking at the failures of a number of entrepreneurs, we wondered whether entrepreneurship is a safe career? To conclude we need to see in detail what are the characteristics of entrepreneurship, external environmental factors and the process of creativity. Are our student ready to take entrepreneurship as job or lifestyle?

1.3 Research Objectives

The objectives of this study are:
i. identify the interests of form Sixth Secondary School Student in Sri Aman on entrepreneurship.

ii. identify sources of encouragement form Sixth Secondary Schools Student in Sri Aman area towards entrepreneurship.

iii. identify the influence of entrepreneurship programs have been implemented to form Sixth Secondary Schools Student in Sri Aman on their career aspirations.

1.4 Research Questions

The main research questions for this study are:

i. is there any relationship between the respondents demographic factors with their perception towards entrepreneurship.

ii. is there any relationship between the respondents interest with their perception towards entrepreneurship.

iii. is there any relationship between the respondents source of encouragement with their perception towards entrepreneurship

iv. is there any relationship between the respondents influence of entrepreneurship program with their perception towards entrepreneurship.

1.5 Hypothesis of the Study

The hypothesis of this study are:

i. There is a significant relationship between the respondents demographic factors and their perception towards entrepreneurship.

ii. There is a significant relationship between the respondents interest factors and their perception towards entrepreneurship.

iii. There is a significant relationship between the respondents source of
encouragement and their perception towards entrepreneurship.

iv. There is a significant relationship between the respondents influence of entrepreneurship program and their perception towards entrepreneurship.

1.6 **Significance of Study**

This study tries to reveal some important information on what is form six students’ perception toward entrepreneurship as a career in Malaysia. The study may be able to find out the elements or factor that could attract or detract them in entrepreneurship world. Hopefully, this study able to help the government (Education Ministry) and other agencies, including the students themselves to realize what are the students’ preferences career in the future. This study also helps the concerned parties to better understand the trends and knowing the form six students’ perception to the current entrepreneurship profession.

1.7 **Scope of the Study**

This research only focused on Pre University or Form Six Students in national secondary school. In Malaysia, Form Six is the last stage in the national school system before the students entering University after managed to get a good result in the Higher Education Certificate examination. While in human development stages, form six is very crucial stages where students start to consider a realistic career option.

1.8 **Definitions of the Key Terms**

The following definitions are intended to clarify the terms used in the study:
1.8.1 Student

Form Six students in Malaysia are a group of student which already successfully completed their studies in form one to form five. Their age is between 17 to 19 years old. To enter the form six levels, students must pass their Malaysia Education Certificate Examination with a minimum three credit and other conditions.

1.8.2 Perception

Perception is a process of being aware of one’s environment through the senses. How one perceives the world consequently determines how one reacts to it. Perception involves analysing and interpreting items picked out by the senses in order to assign meaning to them. How one analyse and interprets a sensory reception is determined by many factors which include cultural setting, memories, values, imaginations and past experiences. As such, different people will perceive the same object differently because the content and degree of these influences is different. Consequently perception is not external reality. Perception is the way a particular person thinks about the reality; it is a subjective reality (Lindsay & Norman, 1977).

Perception plays a critical role in entrepreneurship. If a person has a positive perception towards entrepreneurship it is likely that the person will engage in an entrepreneurial act (GEM, 2010). A person’s perception of entrepreneurship will be shaped by factors endogenous and exogenous. Endogenous factors are those that are within one’s control and relate to issues such as character. The
exogenous factors are beyond a person’s control and relate to environmental issues such as taxation rates, inflation and recession.

While these factors may affect all, those with a positive perception of entrepreneurship will perceive themselves as having what it takes to overcome hurdles (Moy & Wright, 2003). An individual’s perception of self and environment determine the goals the individual sets for him/herself and the expected outcome of actions taken. The perception of opportunity, alongside motivation and access to means to pursue the opportunity, is seen as a prerequisite condition to entrepreneurial behaviour.

Those who take up entrepreneurship perceive lucrative opportunities where others do not. Entrepreneurs are also seen to perceive less risk in situations. Rather than look at disadvantages and threats they focus on advantages and opportunities. (Palich & Bagby, 1995).

1.8.3 Career

Career describes an individuals' journey through learning, work and other aspects of life. There are a number of ways to define a career and the term is used in a variety of ways. Career is defined by the Oxford English Dictionary as a person's "course or progress through life (or a distinct portion of life)". In this definition career is understood to relate to a range of aspects of an individual's life, learning and work. Career is also frequently understood to relate to the working aspects of an individuals life e.g. as in career woman. A third way in which the term career is used to describe an occupation or a profession that
usually involves special training or formal education, and is considered to be a person’s lifework.

1.8.4 Entrepreneur

One of the earliest definitions was by Adam Smith in 1776 that saw an entrepreneur as an economic agent who transforms demand to supply. Richard Cantillion in the eighteenth century, described an entrepreneur as someone who takes risk by making decisions in uncertain economic environment in order to seek the best opportunities, (Holt, 2003).

1.8.5 Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship refers to an individual’s ability to turn ideas into action. It includes creativity, innovation and risk taking, as well as the ability to plan and manage projects in order to achieve objectives. This supports everyone in day to day life at home and in society, makes employees more aware of the context of their work and better able to seize opportunities, and it provides a foundation for entrepreneurs to establish a social or commercial activity.

Joseph Schumpeter in 1934 described entrepreneurship as a process of creative destruction through which an entrepreneur dismantles existing patterns or structures in order to come up with new combinations thus new commodities and systems. (Holt, 2003).
1.9 Limitation of The Study

The data in this study will be gathered using a survey questionnaire and interview. The accuracy of the data will depend on respondents’ sincerity in revealing their feeling and thought. The results from the study also gathered from form six students in Sri Aman, Sarawak. Therefore, the results are specific only to these students or to those with similar demographics. The study was intended to be 'attitudinal'. It was designed to measure and explore respondents’ current attitude and perception toward entrepreneurship as a future career choice rather than to make any specific attempt to measure the reasons for these perceptions.

1.10 Organization of the Study

The process of this study will be divided into five (5) chapter as follow:

Chapter 1 Introduction. In this chapter, background information of the study is introduced. The information related to development of the entrepreneur education, future outlook and job prospects are reviewed. The research questions of this study are identified. The purposes of the study are stated. The scope and limitations of this study as well as the definitions of the key terms are defined.

Chapter 2 Review of the Literature. This chapter presents information related to the previous studies done by other researchers regarding the entrepreneurship as a career.

Chapter 3 Research Methodology. In this chapter, the research methods are identified and determined. The plan of the study as well as the presentation of methods utilized in gathering data is explained.