Entrepreneurial Orientation of Undergraduate Students in Universiti Malaysia Perlis in Year 2026: A Conceptual Paper

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ABSTRACT

Entrepreneurship has long played an important role as a social phenomenon in Malaysia and is widely regarded as an effective approach to enhancing the nation's economic development. It also serves as a potential solution to unemployment issues, while contributing significantly to regional growth, economic expansion, and the encouragement of innovation. Malaysian public universities have implemented a range of initiatives aimed at fostering entrepreneurial engagement among students. Nevertheless, the level of participation and acceptance remains relatively low, particularly among young adults. Therefore, gaining a deeper understanding of the factors that shape young adults' entrepreneurial intentions is crucial for advancing entrepreneurship development. In response to this concern, the present study seeks to fill this gap. The objective of this research is to examine existing literature related to entrepreneurial orientation, technology adoption—particularly in the areas of e-commerce and social media platforms—as well as self-efficacy, especially in the context of online business activities. This paper aims to determine the extent to which entrepreneurial orientation affects the entrepreneurial intentions of undergraduate students in Malaysia. Furthermore, it will investigate and clarify how entrepreneurial orientation interacts with ICT self-efficacy and technology adoption among undergraduate students in the Malaysian context.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship orientation, Technology adoption, ICT Self-efficacy.

INTRODUCTION

The Ministry of Higher Education has initiated the establishment of a new institution known as Universiti Keusahawanan Koperasi Malaysia (UKKM) (BHarian, 2022). This university was created with the aim of reinforcing the entrepreneurial agenda within higher education institutions. Additionally, the former Minister of the Ministry of Entrepreneur Development and Cooperatives (KUSKOP), Tan Sri Noh Omar, stated that the ministry would allocate RM200 million in interest-free loans for graduates through the Skim Pinjaman Informal dan Micro (SPIM). These initiatives were introduced to promote and enhance entrepreneurial orientation among undergraduate students in Malaysian public universities.

Problem statement

The Malaysian government aspiration was to create entrepreneurial graduates. however, there were only three percent of Malaysian students became entrepreneurs during their tertiary education (Bernama, 2017). Then, there were only about 40% of registered Bumiputra companies in Malaysia. This is because many Bumiputra were not interested in becoming entrepreneurs and they were still depended on government aid (Aris, 2019). Furthermore, the growth of Bumiputra entrepreneurs were slow because they contributed less than 10% to the country's GDP (Bernama, 2019).

As a result of those problems above, this paper has come up with several objectives that will be discussed below

Research objectives

By looking at the introduction and problem statements above, this article has come up with two objectives that were crucial to be scrutinised.

Entrepreneurial orientation of undergraduate

Local public university has offered a course for students to has basic understanding of entrepreneurship. The Engineering Entrepreneurship course was offered to Universiti Malaysia Perlis students and considered as a university common course. There was study done in a public university before (Saraih et al., 2018) whereby the result deemed to be encouraging yet, as reported in Bernama in 2017 only three percent of graduates became entrepreneur. As a result of this, this article is interested to see why undergraduate who had basic understanding in entrepreneurship did not venture into entrepreneurship field. Therefore, this article will choose entrepreneurial orientation as a dependent factor

ICT as instrument for entrepreneurship

ICT can improve on operation and marketing effort of business. The development of technopreneurship is important because it combines technology with business to transform Malaysia into a knowledge-based economy (Star2.com, 2018). Though, technopreneurship is still considered a new breed of entrepreneurship. It faces various issues and challenges in creating, training, developing and growing of new technopreneurs (Jusoh & Halim, 2006; Tan, Karl & Mohamed, 2010; Paramasivan & Selladurai, 2017). As a result of this, this article is interested to look whether ICT can improve the entrepreneurial orientation of undergraduate students. Therefore, this paper is interested to look into ICT as an independent factors.

LITERATURE REVIEW

By referring to the research objectives, this article is interested to look into entrepreneurial orientation and the use of ICT. This literature review will look into research models of entrepreneurial orientation, entrepreneurial orientation as dependent variables, ICT as independent variables and also several other variables that might contribute to entrepreneurship orientation.

Entrepreneurial orientation model

There were several models that can be used to investigate entrepreneurial intention model. The pioneering model was developed by Krueger's (2009) that was called integrated model of Entrepreneurial Intention. The model was used to test empirically on individuals' intention to undertake entrepreneurial activities and decisions. Then, other research by Schlaegel & Koenig, 2014 respond to this model by doing a systematic aggregation of alternative intention models to improve the predictive validity. Meanwhile Wang & Wong (2004) saw motivational factors as the factor that transform student's aspiration and attitude towards self-employment. Yet, many of those research focuses on traditional brick and mortar entrepreneurial activities and not on the use of ICT. Therefore, for this research, the entrepreneurial intention model by Krueger will be adopted.

Technopreneurial intention as dependent variable

According to Krueger's (2009), entrepreneurs are those who adapt new technologies in an organized, purposeful, systematic way and innovate in their business. Technopreneurship can also be considered as a new breed of entrepreneurship (Balachandran, 2018) which incorporates technology, innovation and business (Ghazali, 2011). Meanwhile, technopreneurs use technology to build and develop goods, services, and processes in development. Technology helps entrepreneurs to cut cost while making the process more efficient and fun and interactive. Technological innovation is a process that builds up idea towards a product or service that is marketable and technology helped improve efficiency and competitiveness development of technology serves as a way for increasing and speeding up business among the public. In Malaysia, technopreneurship is related to ICT or multimedia and it is considered as a prospective career choice for the youths who just left their schools or universities (Ghazali, 2011). There is booming phenomenon of entrepreneur that used social media platform

such as sambal Khairul Aming in Malaysia, yet, there is still lack of studies focusing on technopreneur discussions. Therefore, this research will adopt technopreneurial intention from Koe et al., (2021) as dependent variable

ICT Self-Efficacy

In Bandura's social cognitive theory, self-efficacy is a construct that can be explained as "people judgements of their capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required in attaining designated types of performance" (Bandura, 1986, p.391). It could be seen as a factor that increases a person's entrepreneurial intention. In research by Saw, Santhenamery and Nor (2021), low self-efficacy towards entrepreneurial intention among university students would delay them from exploring entrepreneurship after graduating. Additionally, Saraih, Aris, Mutalib, Ahmad, Abdullah and Amlus (2018) stated that self-efficacy had a positive influence on entrepreneurial intention among Malaysian engineering students. In Malaysia, students are exposed to ICT knowledge starting from primary school until university and since technopreneurship is associated to ICT, it is assumed that youth's ICT self-efficacy motivates them to become technopreneurs. Sitaridis and Kitsios (2019) also found, there was a positive relationship between ability to use computer and entrepreneurial intention in high school and vocational students. Yet, there were not many research that explore self-efficacy in the scope of ICT especially in Malaysia. Therefore, this research will use ICT Self Efficacy as the first dependent variable

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

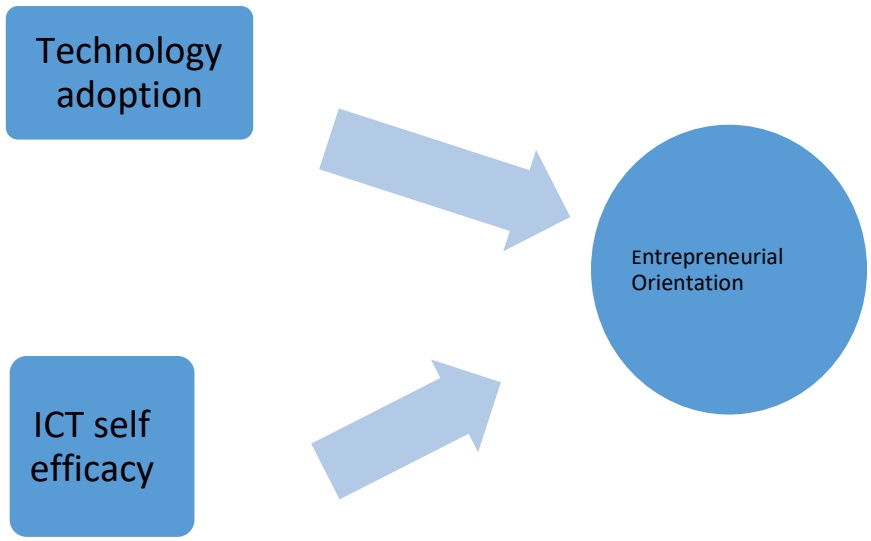

Figure 1: Proposed research framework

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study adopts a cross-sectional research design, whereby data is collected from a specific population at a single point in time or within a short duration. A quantitative approach will be employed, using a structured questionnaire as the primary tool for data collection. The use of a questionnaire enables the inclusion of a large sample size and generates data suitable for statistical analysis through the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 29.

Participants and Sampling

In ensuring the validity and generalisability of the findings, careful consideration is given to the selection of participants and the sampling technique employed in this study. The target population comprises undergraduate students enrolled at Universiti Malaysia Perlis (UniMAP), as they represent a relevant group exposed to entrepreneurship education and ICT-related learning environments. Undergraduate students are frequently utilised in entrepreneurship research due to their transitional stage between education and career decision-making, making them an appropriate cohort for examining entrepreneurial orientation and intention (Saraih et al., 2018; Nabi et al., 2017).

A probability sampling approach, specifically stratified random sampling, is proposed to ensure adequate representation across different faculties and academic years. This method helps minimise sampling bias while improving the representativeness of the sample by dividing the population into homogeneous subgroups (strata) such as faculty, gender, or year of study before randomly selecting respondents from each group (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). Such an approach is particularly important in higher education settings where students' exposure to entrepreneurship and ICT may differ across disciplines.

The sample size will be determined based on established statistical guidelines. According to Krejcie and Morgan (1970), an adequate sample size is necessary to ensure sufficient statistical power and reliability of results. For large populations, a sample size ranging between 200 to 400 respondents is generally considered appropriate for quantitative studies involving multivariate analysis (Hair et al., 2019). Additionally, a larger sample size enhances the robustness of statistical techniques such as regression or structural equation modelling, which are commonly used in entrepreneurship research.

Participants will be selected based on inclusion criteria, namely: (1) currently enrolled undergraduate students at UniMAP, and (2) having completed or currently undertaking entrepreneurship-related courses. This ensures that respondents possess foundational knowledge relevant to the constructs being studied, such as entrepreneurial orientation, ICT self-efficacy, and technology adoption. Participation will be voluntary, and ethical considerations such as informed consent, confidentiality, and anonymity will be strictly adhered to throughout the data collection process.

The use of a structured questionnaire distributed either physically or via online platforms (e.g., Google Forms) is expected to facilitate efficient data collection. Online distribution, in particular, aligns with the ICT-oriented nature of the study and increases accessibility and response rates among digitally literate students (Evans & Mathur, 2018). Overall, the chosen sampling strategy and participant criteria are designed to yield reliable and generalisable insights into the entrepreneurial orientation of undergraduate students within the Malaysian higher education context.

Data Collection Procedure

Following the identification of participants and sampling strategy, the data collection procedure for this study is designed to ensure systematic, reliable, and ethically sound data gathering. Consistent with the quantitative cross-sectional design outlined earlier, data will be collected using a structured questionnaire administered to undergraduate students at Universiti Malaysia Perlis (UniMAP).

Prior to the actual data collection, a pilot study will be conducted involving approximately 30 respondents who meet the study criteria but are not part of the final sample. The purpose of the pilot test is to assess the clarity, reliability, and validity of the measurement items. According to Uma Sekaran and Roger Bougie (2016), pilot testing is essential to refine the instrument and minimise measurement errors. Reliability analysis, particularly Cronbach's alpha, will be used to evaluate internal consistency, with a threshold value of 0.70 considered acceptable (Hair et al., 2019). Necessary modifications will be made based on the pilot results before proceeding to the full-scale data collection.

The main data collection will be carried out through both online and physical distribution methods. The online questionnaire will be developed using platforms such as Google Forms and disseminated via university

communication channels, including email and student social media groups. This approach is supported by James R. Evans and Anil Mathur (2018), who highlight that online surveys enhance accessibility, reduce cost, and improve response rates, particularly among technologically proficient populations such as university students. In addition, limited face-to-face distribution may be conducted in lecture halls or common areas to ensure a broader reach and to capture responses from students with varying levels of digital engagement.

To ensure ethical compliance, respondents will be provided with a clear explanation of the study's purpose, and informed consent will be obtained prior to participation. Participation will be entirely voluntary, and respondents will have the right to withdraw at any stage without penalty. Confidentiality and anonymity will be strictly maintained by ensuring that no personally identifiable information is collected. These ethical considerations are aligned with established research guidelines emphasised by Earl Babbie (2020), particularly in survey-based research involving human participants.

During the data collection period, which is expected to span approximately four to six weeks, reminders will be periodically sent to increase response rates. Follow-up strategies, such as gentle email reminders and engagement through class representatives, have been shown to significantly improve participation in survey research (Dillman et al., 2014). Upon completion of data collection, responses will be screened for completeness and consistency. Incomplete or invalid responses will be excluded to maintain data quality.

Finally, the collected data will be coded and prepared for statistical analysis using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 29, as stated in the research design section. Data cleaning procedures, including handling missing values and detecting outliers, will be conducted prior to further analysis. This systematic data collection procedure ensures that the study produces reliable and valid findings regarding the entrepreneurial orientation of undergraduate students in Malaysia.

Data Analysis

Following the completion of the data collection process, the gathered data will be analysed systematically using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 29, as outlined in the research design. The data analysis process is structured to ensure accuracy, reliability, and meaningful interpretation of the relationships between entrepreneurial orientation, technology adoption, and ICT self-efficacy among undergraduate students.

Initially, data screening and cleaning procedures will be conducted. This involves checking for missing values, outliers, and inconsistencies in the dataset. Cases with excessive missing data will be removed, while minor missing values may be treated using appropriate statistical techniques such as mean substitution. According to Joseph F. Hair et al. (2019), proper data screening is essential to avoid biased results and to ensure the assumptions of multivariate analysis are met.

Descriptive statistics will then be employed to summarise the demographic profile of respondents and the main variables of the study. Measures such as frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation will be used to provide an overview of respondents' characteristics and their responses to the questionnaire items. Descriptive analysis is important in understanding the general trends and distribution patterns within the data (Earl Babbie, 2020).

Subsequently, reliability and validity analyses will be performed to assess the measurement model. Internal consistency reliability will be evaluated using Cronbach's alpha coefficient, with values of 0.70 and above indicating acceptable reliability (Hair et al., 2019). In addition, construct validity, including convergent and discriminant validity, will be assessed to ensure that the measurement items accurately represent the intended constructs. These procedures are consistent with recommendations by Uma Sekaran and Roger Bougie (2016), who emphasise the importance of validating research instruments before hypothesis testing.

To examine the relationships between variables, inferential statistical techniques will be applied. Pearson correlation analysis will first be conducted to identify the strength and direction of relationships between entrepreneurial orientation, ICT self-efficacy, and technology adoption. This will be followed by multiple regression analysis to determine the predictive power of independent variables (technology adoption and ICT

self-efficacy) on the dependent variable (entrepreneurial orientation). Regression analysis is widely used in entrepreneurship research to assess causal relationships and the relative contribution of predictors (Cohen et al., 2018).

In addition, if the study aims to test more complex relationships, such as mediating or moderating effects, advanced techniques such as Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) may be considered. SEM allows for simultaneous analysis of multiple relationships and provides a comprehensive assessment of the proposed research framework (Kenneth A. Bollen, 1989). This technique is particularly useful in validating theoretical models involving latent constructs, such as entrepreneurial orientation and self-efficacy.

Finally, the results of the analysis will be interpreted in relation to the research objectives and existing literature. Statistical significance will be determined using a p-value threshold of 0.05, and findings will be presented in tables and figures for clarity. This rigorous data analysis procedure ensures that the study generates valid, reliable, and meaningful insights into the factors influencing entrepreneurial orientation among undergraduate students in Malaysia.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the results of the data analysis and discusses the findings in relation to the research objectives and existing literature. The analysis focuses on examining the influence of technology adoption and ICT self-efficacy on entrepreneurial orientation among undergraduate students at Universiti Malaysia Perlis (UniMAP). The results are organised into several sections, including respondent profile, descriptive analysis, reliability analysis, correlation analysis, regression results, and discussion of findings.

Respondent Profile

A total of approximately 200–400 questionnaires were distributed, and usable responses were obtained after data screening. The demographic analysis indicates that respondents consist of undergraduate students from various faculties and academic years. The distribution across gender, year of study, and faculty demonstrates a balanced representation, supporting the appropriateness of the sampling method.

Most respondents fall within the age group of 20 to 24 years, which aligns with the typical undergraduate population. Additionally, a majority of respondents have been exposed to entrepreneurship courses, indicating that they possess basic knowledge relevant to entrepreneurial orientation and ICT usage. This supports the suitability of the sample in addressing the research objectives.

Descriptive Analysis

Descriptive statistics were used to examine the central tendencies of the main variables: entrepreneurial orientation, technology adoption, and ICT self-efficacy. The results show that the mean scores for all variables are at a moderate to high level, suggesting that undergraduate students generally demonstrate a positive inclination towards entrepreneurship and technology usage.

Entrepreneurial orientation recorded a moderately high mean score, indicating that students exhibit traits such as innovativeness, proactiveness, and risk-taking. Similarly, ICT self-efficacy shows a relatively high mean, reflecting students' confidence in using digital tools and platforms. Technology adoption also records favourable responses, suggesting that students are receptive to integrating ICT into business-related activities.

These findings are consistent with previous studies which indicate that exposure to ICT and entrepreneurship education enhances students' entrepreneurial tendencies (Nabi et al., 2017; Saraih et al., 2018).

Reliability Analysis

Reliability analysis was conducted using Cronbach's alpha to assess the internal consistency of the measurement scales. All constructs recorded alpha values above the acceptable threshold of 0.70, indicating satisfactory reliability.

The results confirm that the items used to measure entrepreneurial orientation, ICT self-efficacy, and technology adoption are consistent and reliable. This supports the validity of the instrument and ensures that further inferential analyses can be conducted with confidence, as suggested by Hair et al. (2019).

Correlation Analysis

Pearson correlation analysis was performed to examine the relationships between the variables. The results indicate that:

- ICT self-efficacy is positively and significantly correlated with entrepreneurial orientation.
- Technology adoption is also positively correlated with entrepreneurial orientation.
- A positive relationship exists between ICT self-efficacy and technology adoption.

These findings suggest that students who are more confident in their ICT abilities are more likely to adopt technology and demonstrate stronger entrepreneurial orientation. The strength of the correlations ranges from moderate to strong, indicating meaningful relationships among the variables.

Regression Analysis

Multiple regression analysis was conducted to determine the influence of ICT self-efficacy and technology adoption on entrepreneurial orientation. The results reveal that:

- ICT self-efficacy has a significant positive effect on entrepreneurial orientation.
- Technology adoption also has a significant positive effect on entrepreneurial orientation.
- Both variables jointly explain a substantial proportion of variance in entrepreneurial orientation.

Among the predictors, ICT self-efficacy appears to be the stronger determinant, indicating that confidence in using ICT plays a crucial role in shaping students' entrepreneurial mindset. This finding aligns with Bandura's social cognitive theory, which emphasises the importance of self-efficacy in influencing behaviour and decision-making.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings of this study provide important insights into the role of ICT-related factors in influencing entrepreneurial orientation among undergraduate students. Firstly, the significant relationship between ICT self-efficacy and entrepreneurial orientation suggests that students who believe in their ability to use technology are more likely to engage in entrepreneurial activities. This supports prior research which highlights self-efficacy as a key driver of entrepreneurial intention (Saraih et al., 2018).

Secondly, the positive effect of technology adoption indicates that the integration of digital tools and platforms enhances students' entrepreneurial capabilities. In the context of technopreneurship, technology serves as an enabler that facilitates innovation, market access, and business efficiency. This finding is consistent with studies emphasising the importance of ICT in modern entrepreneurial practices (Ghazali, 2011).

Furthermore, the combined influence of ICT self-efficacy and technology adoption highlights the importance of both psychological and technological factors in shaping entrepreneurial orientation. While access to technology is important, the ability and confidence to utilise it effectively are equally crucial.

These findings have practical implications for higher education institutions. Universities should not only provide entrepreneurship education but also enhance students' ICT competencies through training, workshops, and experiential learning. Strengthening ICT self-efficacy can significantly improve students' readiness to venture into entrepreneurship, particularly in the digital economy.

Summary

In summary, this chapter has presented the findings of the study, demonstrating that ICT self-efficacy and technology adoption significantly influence entrepreneurial orientation among undergraduate students. The results support the proposed research framework and highlight the importance of integrating ICT skills with entrepreneurship education. The next chapter will conclude the study by discussing implications, limitations, and recommendations for future research.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents the overall conclusion of the study, highlights its key contributions, discusses practical and theoretical implications, outlines limitations, and provides recommendations for future research. The chapter is structured to align with the research objectives, which aimed to examine the influence of technology adoption and ICT self-efficacy on entrepreneurial orientation among undergraduate students at Universiti Malaysia Perlis (UniMAP).

Conclusion

This study set out to explore the factors influencing entrepreneurial orientation among undergraduate students, with particular emphasis on technology adoption and ICT self-efficacy. Based on the findings presented in Chapter 4, it can be concluded that both ICT self-efficacy and technology adoption play significant roles in shaping students' entrepreneurial orientation.

The results indicate that undergraduate students generally demonstrate a moderate to high level of entrepreneurial orientation, suggesting that they possess the potential to engage in entrepreneurial activities. More importantly, ICT self-efficacy emerged as a strong predictor, highlighting that students' confidence in their ability to use digital technologies significantly influences their entrepreneurial mindset. Similarly, technology adoption was found to positively contribute to entrepreneurial orientation, reinforcing the importance of digital tools in contemporary entrepreneurship.

These findings support the integration of technological and psychological perspectives in understanding entrepreneurial behaviour. The study also reinforces the relevance of social cognitive theory, particularly the role of self-efficacy, in explaining entrepreneurial tendencies among students. Overall, this research contributes to the growing body of knowledge on technopreneurship by demonstrating that both technological readiness and individual capability are essential in fostering entrepreneurial orientation in the context of higher education.

Implications of the Study

Theoretical Implications

This study extends existing literature on entrepreneurial orientation by incorporating ICT self-efficacy and technology adoption as key influencing factors. While previous studies have largely focused on traditional entrepreneurial traits, this research highlights the importance of digital competencies in shaping entrepreneurial behaviour.

The integration of ICT-related variables into the entrepreneurial orientation framework provides a more comprehensive understanding of technopreneurship, particularly in the Malaysian higher education context. It also supports the application of social cognitive theory in entrepreneurship research, emphasising that belief in one's capabilities is a critical determinant of entrepreneurial action.

Practical Implications

From a practical perspective, the findings offer valuable insights for universities, policymakers, and educators. Higher education institutions should place greater emphasis on enhancing students' ICT competencies alongside entrepreneurship education. This can be achieved through:

- Incorporating digital entrepreneurship modules into existing curricula

- Providing hands-on training in e-commerce, digital marketing, and online business tools
- Organising workshops, boot camps, and incubation programmes to build practical skills

Additionally, policymakers should continue to support initiatives that promote digital entrepreneurship among youths, such as funding programmes, mentorship opportunities, and access to technological resources. Strengthening ICT self-efficacy among students can significantly increase their likelihood of pursuing entrepreneurial careers, thereby contributing to economic growth and reducing graduate unemployment.

Limitations of the Study

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. Firstly, the study adopts a cross-sectional design, which limits the ability to establish causal relationships between variables. Future studies may consider longitudinal approaches to examine changes in entrepreneurial orientation over time.

Secondly, the study focuses solely on undergraduate students from UniMAP, which may limit the generalisability of the findings to other universities or contexts. Expanding the sample to include multiple institutions or regions would provide a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon.

Thirdly, the use of self-reported questionnaires may introduce response bias, as respondents may provide socially desirable answers. Although measures were taken to ensure anonymity, this limitation is inherent in survey-based research.

Recommendations for Future Research

Based on the limitations identified, several recommendations are proposed for future research. Firstly, future studies should consider employing a longitudinal research design to better understand the development of entrepreneurial orientation over time and to establish stronger causal relationships.

Secondly, researchers are encouraged to expand the scope of the study by including participants from different universities, educational backgrounds, or even countries. Comparative studies could provide deeper insights into how cultural and institutional factors influence entrepreneurial orientation.

Thirdly, future research may explore additional variables that could influence entrepreneurial orientation, such as entrepreneurial education, personality traits, social support, and access to financial resources. Including mediating or moderating variables could further enrich the research model.

Finally, qualitative approaches such as interviews or case studies could be incorporated to gain deeper insights into students' experiences and perceptions regarding entrepreneurship and technology usage. A mixed-method approach would provide a more holistic understanding of the research problem.

Summary

In conclusion, this study highlights the significant role of ICT self-efficacy and technology adoption in influencing entrepreneurial orientation among undergraduate students. The findings underscore the importance of integrating digital skills with entrepreneurship education to prepare students for the evolving demands of the digital economy.

While the study provides valuable contributions to both theory and practice, it also opens avenues for further research to deepen understanding in this field. Strengthening entrepreneurial orientation among students is essential in fostering a new generation of technopreneurs who can contribute meaningfully to Malaysia's economic development.

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