Inclusive Entrepreneurial Intention Among the Youth in Malaysia, Does Gender Matter?

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Abstract. Inclusive entrepreneurship refers to the participation of underrepresented groups in entrepreneurialism in order to assist them in overcoming social and economic challenges as well, that plays a very significant role in poverty reduction. This study propounds that the main solution to this issue is to promote inclusive entrepreneurship (the definition of inclusive entrepreneur is who produce inclusive as well as innovative services and goods). Among students who are graduating from tertiary education in Malaysia. The theory of planned behaviour is employed to predict the inclusive entrepreneurial intention that can be the key to bridge the existing gaps in understanding the intention of youth to be inclusive entrepreneurs, also testing the moderation effect of gender to compare the males' and females' behavioural traits towards the intention of being an inclusive entrepreneur. The regression analysis results show attitude and perceived behavioural control are significant towards Inclusive Entrepreneurial Intention, and the moderation effect of gender is significant for the relationship of attitude towards inclusive entrepreneurial intention. Concluding the males express higher intention than females to provide high-quality products at very low costs sustainably and considering the mass outreach as well as including the excluded population which is translated to inclusive products or services.

Keywords: Inclusive · Entrepreneur · TPB · Gender · Youth

1 Introduction

GEM (Global Entrepreneurship Monitor) experts rated Malaysia highly for its good internal market dynamics, easy access to finance, and good infrastructure. Over the last decade, the small and medium enterprises sector has grown faster than the overall economy. Despite this, fewer Malaysians are launching new ventures. When compared to similar countries, the country has a low and declining TEA (Total Early-Stage Entrepreneurship Activity) rate, falling from 7.0 percent in 2012 to 2.9 percent in 2016.

This has been followed by a decrease in the number of Malaysian adults who consider entrepreneurship to be a viable career option. 45% of the entrepreneur population in Malaysia [1]. is female. In 2017, the TEA percentage of females divided by the equivalent

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percentage for their male counterparts is 87% while the global average is 70%, giving the advantage to Malaysia in testing the entrepreneurial intention generally and inclusive entrepreneurial intention more specifically.

On the other hand, the proportion of TEA participants who say their product or service is new to at least some clients AND that few/no other businesses provide the same offering, Malaysia leads the rate at 29.33 while the global average is 26.5, and the regional average 25.44. The higher innovation rate in Malaysia indicates a suitable environment for establishing inclusive innovation bases to support the inclusive entrepreneurial intention among the youth. Therefore, this research has employed the theory of planned behaviour (TPB) in the process of examining the difference in intention towards being inclusive entrepreneurs between Malaysian youths according to gender.

2 Literature Review

2.1 Gender

Entrepreneurs prefer to self-select into industries that are compatible with their gender group's stereotyped notions. According to studies, women gravitate toward feminine sectors, whilst men lean toward masculine ones [2][3]. This is an important aspect of creating business and selecting inclusive products as the preference of males towards profitable businesses that have bigger financial demands, while females prefer and target the beneficial and advantageous businesses [4].

Gender socialization has also resulted in a division of labour, with women occupying household responsibilities and males occupying professional ones [5]. Because of this division of labour, women and men entrepreneurs have distinct professional ambitions. For instance, research indicates that women prioritise professional flexibility and work-life balance [6][7][8], whereas men tend to prioritise financial success [9]. This begs the question; which gender would consider inclusive products and services that increase the well-being of the entire community as well as wealth? Most research in innovation field concentrate on systems and organisations, with only a few focusing on individuals. Also, there is an underlying comprehension that males surpass female in innovation. However, females and males do differ in innovation behaviour regardless to individual's level to have broader implications [10].

2.2 Entrepreneurship and Inclusiveness

Entrepreneurship is a tool to create new business [11], to identify market needs and opportunities [12], to describe economic activities that undertaken by individuals [13], and absolutely engaged with innovation [14]. According to the latest study, inclusivity in innovation ought to be recognised and practiced by businesspersons to achieve sustainability in economy [15]. By pursuing sustainability in innovation, it creates significance socially, economically, and environmentally [16].

On a different note, poverty pockets can be reduced significantly by technological inclusive innovation [17], because inclusive innovation focuses on low-income communities by supporting them in facing the socio-economic challenges [18]. Thus,

Inclusive entrepreneurship refers to the participation of under-represented groups in entrepreneurialism in order to assist them in overcoming social and economic challenges [19].

The earlier research claimed that inclusive entrepreneurship upholds the incorporation of BoP group is able to alleviate the poverty [20][21]. "Inclusive business involves the creation of development impacts using economically viable business models that lead to positive ecological impacts for the short and long term [22]. From a development overview, inclusive business model, low-income populations can provide markets, workforce and small-scale producers can strengthen the supply chain for businesses" [23]. Therefore, engaging the poor as producers, distributors, suppliers, or consumers. This triggers the realization of socio-economic value as well as livelihood opportunities for the BoP (base of the pyramid) communities in commercially viable ways.

Most inclusive business models from participating communities focus on the inclusion of the BoP as employees, producers, business owners and/or consumers of affordable goods and services [23][24][25][26]. However, the determinants of inclusive entrepreneurial behaviour and intention are yet to be explored. Therefore, this research applies the theory of planned behaviour TPB [27] to shape the behavioural intention towards being an inclusive entrepreneur and test the variables that predict that intention.

2.3 Youth Entrepreneurs

Youth are inclined to take various entrepreneurial-based activities and set goals [28]. Youth are more productive in start-ups creation with lower costs compared to subsidies [29]. Young people can build up their entrepreneurial capacity and ability to identify opportunities [30]. Although, family social capital positively affects the start-up business scope [31], youths who have possessed the capacity to accomplish a money related freedom, bear the cost of the rental, offer help to relatives, and build up and support their families and societies [32].

From these previous studies, the youth with entrepreneurial intention can develop their skills and abilities to be successful entrepreneurs in different ways. Through all the challenges and barriers, the young entrepreneurs face by providing cheaper and more innovative solutions, they can attain an achievement and successful goals in producing inclusive products and services which benefit them and the community at large.

3 Methodology

3.1 Research Questions

This study demonstrates not only predictability of the theory of planned behaviour in bridging the existing gaps to understand the intention of youth to be inclusive entrepreneurs but also makes a comparison between the males' and females' behavioural traits towards the intention of being an inclusive entrepreneur.

1. What is the relationship between attitude and inclusive entrepreneurial intention?
2. What is the relationship between subjective norms and inclusive entrepreneurial intention?

3. What is the relationship between perceived behavioural control and inclusive entrepreneurial intention?
4. Does gender moderate the relationship between three antecedents of TPB and inclusive entrepreneurial intention?

3.2 Purpose of the Study

This study propounds that the main solution to this issue is to promote inclusive entrepreneurship (the definition of inclusive entrepreneur is who produce inclusive as well as innovative services and goods). Among students who are graduating from tertiary education in Malaysia.

Understanding the differences between male and female factors is necessary for those adolescents to consider inclusive entrepreneurship as a solution to face the challenges of income inequities, poverty as well as unemployment,

This insight will help initiatives that are being designed to change the intention, attitude, and perspective of persons who have not viewed inclusive entrepreneurship as a viable career option.

3.3 Theoretical Framework

This research aims to examine the inclusive entrepreneurial intention among the Malaysian youth, by employing the theory of planned behaviour to explore the determinants that influence the mentioned dependent variable.

The framework in Fig. 1 suggests four independent variables influence the dependent variable the inclusive entrepreneurial intention. The four independent variables are the three antecedents of TPB namely; attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control which are commonly used to predict behavioural intention, while gender is a proposed moderator variable both dependents and the independent.

The inclusive entrepreneurial intention is a dependent variable in this research and refers to the entrepreneurial intention of youth to produce inclusive innovation products or services that unleash their innovation and creativity towards a self-efficient economy and are beneficial for society.

[33], the entrepreneurial intention is a mind conscious state before actions that direct attention, towards specific objects. Also, [34] asserted that entrepreneurial intention is when a person has a self-acknowledged conviction to consciously plan to start a new business.

3.4 Data Collection

This quantitative study uses a mechanistic view to test relationships of social phenomena, develops objectives and studies the youth population. According to National Youth Development Policy (NYDP) in Malaysia 1997 has defined the youth age range is between 15–40 years old. The target population of this study is the youth (Malaysians and internationals) who study at the tertiary level of higher education in Malaysian institutions which is 1,325,699 students [35].

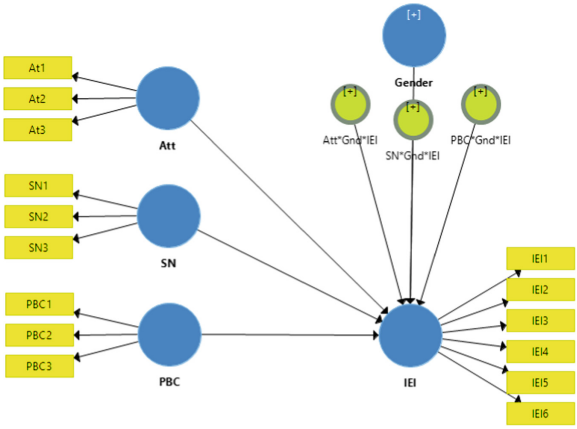

Fig. 1. Framework

The research applies a questionnaire technique to collect the primary data in the form of a convenience sampling technique and collected 361 participants as a sample. The data is collected in a natural setting [36], applying Non-Contrived Settings. Cross-sectional is adopted to gather data and examine the information of a group of respondents at a single point in time due to the time constraints to complete the survey for collecting primary data.

4 Findings and Discussions

This study uses the partial least squares structural equation modelling PLS-SEM that tests and assesses the structural development, of the purpose of testing the relationships between independent variables and dependent variable which is inclusive entrepreneurial intention. Minimum sample size is calculated using G*Power application with setting of the "Linear multiple regression: Fixed model, R2 deviation from zero" and the procedure provides power analyses for omnibus F-tests of the null hypothesis that the squared multiple correlations between a dependent variable and a set of predictor variables [37]. The framework of this study includes 3 predictors giving the sample size as $n = 119$ that achieves a power of 0.95 in a test based on $\alpha = 0.05$.

The descriptive analysis of demographic shows the percentage of female respondents is 62.9%, while the males are 37.1%, the majority of respondents are Degree level of education 92.5%, and aged between (20–25 years) as 90.6%, from 11 different universities around Malaysia, namely (IIUM, MMU, UiTM, UMK, UMT, USIM, UTEM, UTHM, UTM, UTP, and UUM).

In the discussion of the reliability tests in Table 1, Cronbach's Alpha statistics of the independent and dependent constructs show them above 0.7 which is an excellent internal consistency level [38], where all items of the mentioned constructs are reliable for this research. The Composite Reliability of all constructs is above 0.6 [39], indicating all scale items are internally consistent. On the other hand, AVE results show all constructs factor loading is above 0.5 [40], thus items have convergent validity.

Table 1. Construct Reliability and Validity

Scale	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Item	CR	AVE
Inclusive Entrepreneurial Intention	0.959	6	0.967	0.830
Attitude	0.897	3	0.936	0.829
Subjective Norms	0.904	3	0.940	0.839
Perceived Behavioral Control	0.922	3	0.951	0.865

Table 2. The model fit analysis

Test	Saturated Model	Estimated Model
SRMR	0.035	0.041
NFI	0.919	0.918

Table 3. Path Coefficients

Hypothesis	Beta	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P-Values
Att → IEI	0.404	0.085	4.785	0.000
SN → IEI	-0.009	0.083	0.111	0.456
PBC → IEI	0.436	0.082	5.304	0.000
Att * Gnd * IEI → IEI	0.268	0.156	1.716	0.043
SN * Gnd * IEI → IEI	-0.062	0.171	0.364	0.358
PBC * Gnd * IEI → IEI	-0.101	0.142	0.713	0.238

The model fit analysis of the structural model in Table 2 for this research confirms according to SRMR (Standardized Root Mean Square Residual) the difference between the model correlation matrix and observed correlation is 0.031, which is even lower than 0.08 [41] indicating the goodness of the model. Moreover, the NFI (Normed Fit Index) confirms the goodness of fit of the model at 0.919, that's very close to 1.00 [42].

The bootstrapping calculation reveals the path coefficients between the constructs as shown in Table 3. At a 5% significant level, Attitude and Perceived Behavioural Control, toward Inclusive Entrepreneurial Intention have a p-value lower than 0.05 significantly, while the p-value of the subjective norm is 0.456 which is higher than 0.05.

The moderation effect of gender is significant for the relationship of attitude towards inclusive entrepreneurial intention, while it has no significant effect on the subjective norm and perceived behavioural control. Accordingly, the following Table 4 presents the hypotheses acceptance results and the Fig. 2 shows the strength of the relationship of all constructs toward Inclusive Entrepreneurial Intention:

Table 4. Hypotheses' Results

Hypothesis	P-Values	Results
H1: there is a relationship between Attitude and Inclusive Entrepreneurial Intention.	0.000	Supported
H2: there is a relationship between Subjective Norm and Inclusive Entrepreneurial Intention.	0.456	Not Supported
H3: there is a relationship between Perceived Behavioural Control and Inclusive Entrepreneurial Intention.	0.000	Supported
H4: Gender moderates the relationship between Attitude and Inclusive Entrepreneurial Intention.	0.043	Supported
H5: Gender moderates the relationship between Subjective Norm and Inclusive Entrepreneurial Intention.	0.358	Not Supported
H6: Gender moderates the relationship between Perceived Behavioural Control and Inclusive Entrepreneurial Intention.	0.238	Not Supported

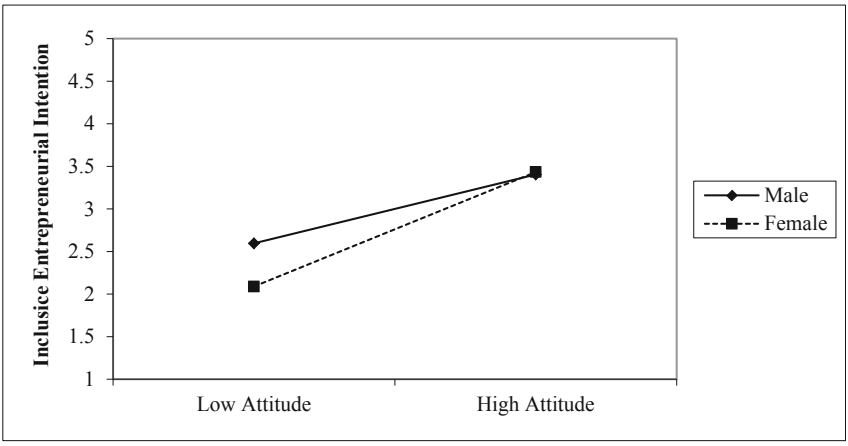

Fig. 2. Moderation affect

To devise the interaction of the gender moderation effect on the relationship between Attitude and inclusive entrepreneurial intention, this research followed the procedure as well as the template to produce the graph that has been used and recommended by [43][44][45]. The gender is a binary variable where male = 0 and female = 1, therefore the regression analysis for the moderator was unstandardized as recommended. According to graph (1), the interception between the two lines confirms that gender moderation affects the relationship between the mentioned variables. Also, the female shows higher inclusive entrepreneurial intention when they have a higher Attitude while the male shows very slightly higher inclusive entrepreneurial intention when they have a higher Attitude.

Table 5. Considering to be an inclusive entrepreneur Crosstabulation

			Considering to be an inclusive entrepreneur		Total
			No	Yes	
Gender	Male	Count	50	84	134
		%	37.3%	62.7%	100.0%
	Female	Count	107	120	227
		%	47.1%	52.9%	100.0%
Prior Entrepreneurship Experience	Yes	Count	76	141	217
		%	35.0%	65.0%	100.0%
	No	Count	81	63	144
		%	56.2%	43.8%	100.0%
Total	Count	157	204	361	
	%	43.5%	56.5%	100.0%	

The demographic analysis is extended to include a question about whether the respondents consider being inclusive entrepreneurs, the majority of 204 respondents (56.5%) answered Yes while 157 respondents (43.5%) answered No. Given the importance of this question, crosstabulation analysis is done with gender and having prior entrepreneurship experience as follows:

According to the crosstabulation analysis in Table 5, the first section represents the crosstabulation between gender (male, female) who are considered to be inclusive entrepreneur who produces inclusive products or services (yes, no).

The results show that almost half of the respondent female population would consider being an inclusive entrepreneur, while 62.7% of males responded with yes to considering being an inclusive entrepreneur. In the second section, having prior entrepreneurship experience is not limited to a received entrepreneurship educational course or program, accelerated program, or incubating camp, but also those who run start-ups or own businesses. The results show the youth who had prior entrepreneurship experience are 167 participants while 110 did not have. Those who have prior entrepreneurship experience have higher consideration of being an inclusive entrepreneur at 64.7%, which explains the necessity of having the prior experience to have the intention of developing or providing inclusive goods or services.

The youth, regardless of their gender consider producing inclusive goods or services, which explains the need for youth to implement the inclusive innovation to increase the well-being of the entire nation and include them in the plan toward an innovation-driven economy.

5 Conclusions

The findings have answered the research questions respectively. The significant relationships between attitude and perceived behavioural control, as well as the not significant relationship of subjective norm towards inclusive entrepreneurial intention, are consistent with the previous research that has employed the theory of planned behaviour to predict the entrepreneurial intention generally such as [46] who studied the entrepreneurial intention of Malaysian youth, [47][48, 49] in South Africa, and [50] in the Netherlands.

The insignificant relationship of subjective norms towards inclusive entrepreneurial intention can be explained as the higher locus of control could be the reason for lower social norms impact parallels. It indicates the new generation of youth are considering less importance on the approval and support of relatives, friends or important people in their life circle. In other words, behaving more independently to be inclusive entrepreneurs or produce inclusive products and services.

Tapping on gender as a moderator, where attitudes are habitual ways of reacting to situations as well as opinions that represent a person's overall inclination toward an object or idea, the gender has a moderating effect on the relationship between attitude and the intention to be an inclusive entrepreneur.

The moderation analysis shows that females' intentions would change along with their attitude, while males have fewer changes in their intentions. However, the hypotheses of moderation effects of gender on subjective norms and perceived behavioural control towards inclusive entrepreneurial intention are rejected due to the insignificant effects. Nevertheless, the crosstabulation analysis shows that males have more consideration for being inclusive entrepreneurs than females. Although, empowering females, promoting women-owned business, and closing the gender gap are seen important to reduce poverty as well as increase the economic performance, the males express higher intention to provide high-quality products at very low costs sustainably and considering the mass outreach as well as including the excluded population which is translated to inclusive products or services.

5.1 Limitations and Recommendations

The number of respondents that have participated in the questionnaire is 361, which is considerably small, to generalise the intention of the entire population. This research has focused on youth and has targeted university students at the Malaysian higher education institutions due to accessibility, where not all youth are at the university level of education. This research has employed the theory of planned behaviour to predict the intention, however, there are more theories to be considered to study and explore inclusive entrepreneurship such as the diffusion of innovation. The demographic analysis may extend to cover the financial background of the youth and its impact on the intention of being an inclusive entrepreneur.

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