Challenges to Educate Information Technology Students on Entrepreneurship Education

Norhaidah Abu Haris, Munaisyah Abdullah, Abu Talib Othman and Fauziah Abdul Rahman

Abstract— **Entrepreneurship Education is important to create future generations of entrepreneurs. This paper presented a pilot study on the challenges in implementing entrepreneurship education at the Malaysian Institute of Information Technology, Universiti Kuala Lumpur. The study was conducted using a questionnaire to understand the entrepreneurial intention of the students who studies in Information Technology program. The result shows that entrepreneurship education has given significant impact on the students' entrepreneurial intention to two different bachelor program. Therefore, to promote more students to graduate as entrepreneurs, necessary actions should be taken to improve certain aspects of the existing entrepreneurship education.**

Keywords— **Entrepreneurs, Entrepreneurship Education, Entrepreneurial Intention, Information Technology.**

I. INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurship is defined as a process where the entrepreneur interacts with the environment to identify an opportunity and eventually start a new venture[21]. The process also involve on identifying an opportunity, understanding resource requirements, acquiring resources, planning and implementing [25]. Entrepreneurship can contribute to societies by increasing employment, economic reward and work satisfaction[6]. Entrepreneurship Education (EE) which is embedded in the Higher Education Institution (HEI) curriculum development as a mechanism for economic and social adjustments to create new industries, employment and wealth. [18]. The growing need for entrepreneurs would also accelerate economic development through generation of new ideas that will be converted into profitable ventures [35].

The socioeconomic growth and development will provide job opportunities, a variety of consumer goods and services, escalate national prosperity and competitiveness[40]. Students who graduated will enter job markets and need to compete for fewer and challenging vacancies or decided for self-employment. Entrepreneurship is good for economic growth because entrepreneurs create new business that will in turn create jobs, intensify competition and may increase

productivity through the change of technologies. This activity should be from the state, corporate and Higher Education Institution(HEI). The HEI needs to play an important role in developing economies, especially in research and development, technology commercialization and education [1].

Currently, graduate unemployment is one of the Malaysian economy, social development problems. The Department of Statistics released in June 2014 revealed that 31% of the unemployed had a tertiary education. HEI realized the significance of entrepreneurship in the development of economy in Malaysia therefore increasing effort have been put to promote EE to students [4], while there are still studying to instill the entrepreneurial cultures and aspirations[33]. However, there are challenges faces by the HEI in promoting the entrepreneurial education to students. This study discussed on the challenges to educate students with Entrepreneurship Education (EE) in HEI and recommendation to educate EE to students in Malaysian HEI.

II. THE CHALLENGES TO EDUCATE STUDENTS WITH ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION

Education is significant to create an understanding of entrepreneurship, develop entrepreneurial capabilities and contribute to entrepreneurial identities and cultures at individual, collective and social levels [29]. Hence, EE can be successfully implemented if the objectives of the program are clear, achievable and the program delivery method is effective [10]. However, only some of the educational aspects of the entrepreneurship can be taught to produce entrepreneurs [14-15]. The exposure on the EE will stimulate the growing intentions to start a business [20] and may lead to increase the number and quality future entrepreneurs [27-28].

There are many ways to offer EE, depending on the objectives of the education. The objectives can be divided into three: [16].

a. Increase understanding of what entrepreneurship is about - provide information through public channels such as media, seminars or lectures.

b. Equip individuals with entrepreneurial skills which are applicable directly to work - provide education and training that enable individuals to involve directly in the entrepreneurial process such as industrial training.

c. Prepare individuals act as entrepreneurs - facilitate experiments by trying entrepreneurship out in a controlled environment, for instance through business simulation or role playing.

Therefore, the theoretical concept of entrepreneurship is very crucial for the students to understand the consequences of their decisions in the future [8]. The initiatives taken to embedded EE in the curriculum of the HEI lead to various challenges. The challenges that have been identified to hinder students' entrepreneurial intention to become an entrepreneur has been identified as below:

A. The challenges to adopt EE concepts

Government should play the role in enforcing HEI to organize the entrepreneurship courses. An entrepreneurship model should be proposed that associated with innovation, technology, scale and growth. The concerns on the capacities that should be developed, changes to be made and how to facilitate the initiatives is important to adopt the appropriate entrepreneurship concept [11]. The challenges in executing EE curriculum which some of the HEI in Malaysia have encountered as illustrated in table I.

TABLE I: THE CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED DURING ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION IMPLEMENTATION. [37]

HEI	Challenges
Univ Malaysia Kelantan	NIL
Univ Teknologi Malaysia	Lack of interest among students, capital funding, experience, skill, financial, management, coordination, space
Univ Teknologi Hussin Onn	Financing, networking, lack of knowledge, mentality
Univ Sains Malaysia	Credit bureaucracy
Univ Malaya	Staff and student lack commitment
Univ Kebangsaan Malaysia	Leadership, communication
Univ Putra Malaysia	Mentality
Univ Teknologi MARA	Funding
Univ Malaysia Perlis	NIL
Univ Utara Malaysia	Funding, Lack of information, networking, mentality, coordination among agencies
Univ Malaysia Pahang	Coordination, no special unit, continuity
Univ Sultan Zainal Abidin	No expertise, Bureaucracy, No support from higher authority
Univ Malaysia Terengganu	No special unit
Univ Perguruan Sultan Idris	Pedagogy
Univ Pertahanan Malaysia	NIL
Univ Sains Islam Malaysia	Culture Nurturing
Univ Teknikal Melaka	NIL
Univ Malaysia Sabah	Lack of confidence, funding, experience, marketing strategy
Univ Malaysia Sarawak	Funding, lack of experience
Univ Islam Antarabangsa	NIL
Univ Kuala Lumpur [30]	Lack of interest

B. The Challenges to Inspire the Entrepreneurial Intention to HEI Students:

Prior research has identified the intentional level of the students to become an entrepreneur is low could be the students are lacking in the exposure and information on entrepreneurial opportunities and programs[38]. The challenges to equip the students with entrepreneurship skills such as creativity in team working, divergent thinking, interpersonal communication [13][1]. Other skills that necessarily important are the abilities to solve problems, self confidence, information seeking and initiatives. The lack of such skills could deter their confidence to become entrepreneurs [3].

The students who seek tertiary education are usually concerned about becoming paid employees rather than become self employed or entrepreneurs[2]. The entrepreneurship concept could be misunderstood that starting a business after graduation is the sign of unemployment[36]. However, students with working experience have shown interest to become entrepreneurs after graduation [31].

C. The Challenges to Provide Entrepreneurial Support for HEI Students:

Various support has been identified to encourage students with entrepreneurial intention. The support could be in term of knowledge on how to identify market opportunities, assess market potential, write a business plan, secure funding, protect intellectual property and make the best use of limited resources such as money, equipment, personnel and etc. [12]. Providers which give support such as financial availability, market opportunity, growth potentials, venture rejuvenation and creation [5]. Other support in terms of initial capital for startup, legal assistance or counseling, ideas of what business to start and the knowledge of the business world [7], funding accessibility[3] and a business course system [36] are considerably important for these students to embark on entrepreneurship world.

D. The Challenges involve family and Cultural Constraints:

The students cultural context in which they are rooted will give positive contributions towards their entrepreneurial behavior [23]. However, family members that have no exposure in business [3,26] and also lack of motivation from the family members, academicians and EE that they have studied [39] will deter the students' intention to become an entrepreneur after graduation.

III. RECOMMENDATION FOR SOLVING THE CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED

Several HEI in Malaysia have introduce EE in their curriculum program with the intention to motivate students to plan their employment through entrepreneurship. The entrepreneurial culture develops in HEI is believed will lead the Malaysian government aspirations to become a high income country. Hence, HEI has to present a positive image of entrepreneurship as a career option to draw students' attention within the university environment by providing resources and facilities[19].

Further actions and appropriate measures need to be taken to tackle the possibilities should these challenges arise in any HEI in Malaysia. The majority of these HEI aware the challenges that their institution were facing. Therefore, to address these

challenges, Malaysian HEIs has adopted various approaches to promote the culture of entrepreneurship as a new way for creating jobs and wealth. The recommendations to resolve these challenges have also been proposed as listed in table II.

TABLE II: RECOMMENDATION FOR SOLVING THE CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED[37]

HEI	Recommendation
Univ Malaysia Kelantan	NIL
Univ Teknologi Malaysia	Space, grant, subsidy mentor-mentee, skill development
Univ Teknologi Hussin Onn	Standardized term of financing, financial knowledge, cooperation with SMIDEC and SME Bank
Univ Sains Malaysia	Bridging arrangement
Univ Malaya	Awareness program
Univ Kebangsaan Malaysia	More time, expert
Univ Putra Malaysia	Motivation
Univ Teknologi MARA	Dedicated fund, continuous business opportunity
Univ Malaysia Perlis	NIL
Univ Utara Malaysia	Integrated program, agency proactive, networking creation, support
Univ Malaysia Pahang	Continuous support
Univ Sultan Zainal Abidin	TOT, establishment of special unit
Univ Malaysia Terengganu	Coordination
Univ Perguruan Sultan Idris	More time, entrepreneurship related subject
Univ Pertahanan Malaysia	NIL
Univ Sains Islam Malaysia	NIL
Univ Teknikal Melaka	NIL
Univ Malaysia Sabah	Curriculum revamp, continuous guidance from entrepreneurs
Univ Malaysia Sarawak	Friendly procedure, enhancement of training and practice
Univ Islam Antarabangsa	NIL
Univ Kuala Lumpur[30]	Teaching methods need to be revised

The growing numbers of HEI that have added courses on entrepreneurship in their curriculum shows the importance to promote the students on the desire for entrepreneurial careers. HEI is a place where course offering on scientific or technical knowledge that fits the labor market of a country. HEI has the ability to promote entrepreneurial spirit to the future graduates by showing technical, professional, social, organizational and cognitive skills towards a competitive and inclusive society[32].

A few Malaysian HEI currently also provides support offers for the students who have the intention to become an entrepreneur. The resources and facilities could support HEI to promote entrepreneurial activities in the form of management(A), infrastructure(B), promotion(C), funding(D) and advisory (D) as listed in table III.

TABLE III: LIST OF SUPPORTED OFFERS PROVIDED BY MALAYSIA HEI [37]

	A	B	C	D	E
Univ Malaysia Kelantan	√	√	X	X	√
Univ Teknologi Malaysia	√	√	X	X	√
Univ Teknologi Hussin Onn	√	√	√	X	X
Univ Sains Malaysia	√	√	√	√	√
Univ Malaya	√	√	√	√	√
Univ Kebangsaan Malaysia	√	√	√	√	√
Univ Putra Malaysia	√	√	√	√	√
Univ Teknologi MARA	√	√	√	√	√
Univ Malaysia Perlis	√	√	√	√	√
Univ Utara Malaysia	√	√	√	√	X
Univ Malaysia Pahang	X	X	√	√	X
Univ Sultan Zainal Abidin	√	X	X	√	X
Univ Malaysia Terengganu	√	X	√	√	X
Univ Perguruan Sultan Idris	√	√	√	X	√
Univ Pertahanan Malaysia	X	X	X	X	X
Univ Sains Islam Malaysia	√	√	√	√	√
Univ Teknikal Melaka	X	X	X	X	X
Univ Malaysia Sabah	√	√	√	√	√
Univ Malaysia Sarawak	√	√	√	√	√
Univ Islam Antarabangsa	√	√	√	√	√
Univ Kuala Lumpur [30]	√	√	√	√	√

IV. ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION CHALLENGES IN UNIVERSITY KUALA LUMPUR

A study using questionnaires was conducted at Malaysian Institute of Technology, Universiti Kuala Lumpur (MIIT UniKL). The sample comprises of 81 bachelors studying in two different programs of undergraduate studies - Bachelor of Multimedia Technology (BIMD) and Bachelor of Business Technology in Computer Entrepreneurial Management (BCEM). The BCEM program is designed to produce IT professionals to manage IT related companies in the future and the BIMD program is designed for graduates to work in a variety of fields associated with design, media, creative arts and communication technologies. The study conducted to research on the entrepreneurial intention of the Information Technology students with different majoring.

A comparative analysis is conducted to understand the significance differences between the students seeking for entrepreneurship education and the challenges to encourage the students on entrepreneurial intention. The results of this research will enable to establish whether EE conducted in UniKL have an impact on the students to venture into entrepreneurial career and also whether BCEM students have higher motivation with respect to start an entrepreneurial career in comparison to BIMD students.

A. The Methods of the Research

The questionnaire is made up of three sections – demographics of the graduates, professional attraction, entrepreneurship education and the challenges faces by the students. The questionnaire was measured using 5 points Likert scale, where the numerical evaluations have the following meanings: 1. – completely disagree, 2- disagree, 3-partly agree,4- agree, 5- completely agree.

The data are analyzed using R statistical analysis. The means and percentage are used to compare the results between BCEM and BIMD students.

B. The Results of the empirical research:

The sample comprises a total of 81 Bachelor students from BCEM (45) and BIMD(35).

TABLE IV: STUDENTS CONSIDERED TO BECOME AN ENTREPRENEUR AFTER GRADUATION

Program	N	Entrepreneurial Intention
BCEM	45	29.7%
BIMD	35	18.5%

81 students have responded on their entrepreneurial intention. Table IV, shows the results of the survey with only 48.2% from the total of students in the survey who have the entrepreneurial intention. This included the 29.7% of BCEM students. Even though, BCEM program is more focused on building entrepreneurial career, but only a few of them have the intention to build entrepreneurial career.

TABLE V: STUDENTS WITH ENTREPRENEURIAL INTENTION AND FAMILY BACKGROUND

Program	Father Entrepreneur	Father Private/ Public Sector	Mother Entrepreneur	Mother Private/ Public Sector
BCEM	6.2%	18.5%	4.9%	4.9%
BIMD	4.9%	9.9%	2.5%	8.6%

The students who studied in MIIT UniKL come from various family backgrounds. The results in table V shown students who are not from families with entrepreneurship history also have build interest to become an entrepreneur in the future.This could be the EE that they they have acquired during their studies have inspired their intention to become entrepreneurs

TABLE VI:COMPARISON BCEM AND BIMD WITH WORKING EXPERIENCE AND BEING AN ENTREPRENEUR

Statement	BCEM	BIMD
Students with working experience and entrepreneur	3.7%	7.4%
Students with no working experience and entrepreneur	0%	3.7%
Students with working experience and not entrepreneur	26%	24.6%
Students with no working experience and not entrepreneur	26%	8.6%

In table VI, the result shows that 61.7% students have working experience. The students are 3.7% BCEM students and 7.4% BIMD students have the experience working and exposure being an entrepreneur. The results show that the program offered in MIIT UniKL has attracted the students to pursue their tertiary education in Information Technology programs with different majoring.

TABLE VII: PROFESSIONAL ATTRACTION AFTER GRADUATION

Statement	BCEM (mean)	BIMD (mean)
Working as employee	3.60	3.28
Starting up a firm	3.51	3.75
Follow training and preparation for entrepreneurship program	3.91	3.94
Further Studies	3.58	3.61

Table VII, shows that students from both courses have interest to work as employee after graduation. However, these students also look forward to follow training and preparation for entrepreneurship program to enhance their skills and knowledge on the entrepreneurship after their graduation.

BIMD students show higher interest in entrepreneurship compared to BCEM students in starting up a firm (3.75) and follow training on entrepreneurship (3.94). These demonstrate that the university has successfully instills student with the entrepreneurial intention. BIMD students also show positive impression to seek further knowledge on the entrepreneurship courses even though their program were focused on multimedia technology.

TABLE VIII: COMPARATIVE STUDENTS' ANSWERS ON THE ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION IN UNIKL

Statement	BCEM (mean)	BIMD (mean)
University encouragement on entrepreneurship education:		
• Knowledge about the entrepreneurial environment	3.51	3.33
• Necessary abilities to be an entrepreneur	3.93	3.69
Studies in UNIKL contribute in the development of necessary personal traits to become an entrepreneur:		
- Opportunity Recognition	3.80	3.50
- Creativity	4.02	3.75
- Problem solving	4.04	3.69
- Leadership and communication skill	4.06	3.91
- Development of new product or services	3.89	3.97
- Networking and making professional contacts	3.95	3.83
The university provides useful knowledge about business:		
- Firm creation	3.20	3.25
- Practical details to start a firm	3.33	3.19
- Confidently to succeed in the business creation	3.64	3.22

The results in table VIII, show that education has a positive effect on the need to develop personal traits to become an entrepreneur. The university also encourages the students to become entrepreneurs through EE. These demonstrate that the education provided by UniKL has encouraged the students to involve with entrepreneurship. BCEM students have shown higher interest compared to BIMD students in pursuing further knowledge on EE. BCEM and BIMD students agree that UniKL encourage them to become entrepreneurs in terms of providing the knowledge of the firm creation and related information on entrepreneurship education. Both programs also have higher interest to follow training and preparation for entrepreneurship program. This can be concluded that that the students have the intentions to start up a business.

Studies in UniKL have contributed in the development of personal traits of the students to become entrepreneurs, the mean variation is in the interval from 3.50 to 4.04. EE in MIIT UniKL has positive effects on developing personal traits for both programs such as:

a. Development of new product or services (7.97)
b. Leadership and communication skill (7.86)
c. Networking and making professional contacts (7.78)
d. Creativity (7.77)
e. Problem Solving (7.73)
f. Opportunity Recognition (7.3)

However, in the development of new product or services the BIMD students (3.97) show highly confident compared to

BCEM students (3.89). Summarizing the results shows that BCEM and BIMD have the intention to become entrepreneurs in the future. However, the entrepreneurial intention was greater for BCEM program. This could be the syllabus content of BCEM programs have more exposure on entrepreneurship.

V. DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSION

The challenges faces by MIIT UniKL is to inspire the technical students, especially the Information technology students in choosing entrepreneurship as their career option. In the studies conducted show that there no significant differences with both programs. The BCEM program aim is to produce students that can manage IT related companies. However, only a few students in the study who have the entrepreneurial intention after graduation. Based on these findings, UniKL should revise the teaching methods to further encourage more students from the Information Technology program to build interest as an entrepreneur. This is supported by research done by [30] in the British Malaysian Institute of Universiti Kuala Lumpur, believe that teaching methods should be improved to promote behaviors, develop competencies and entrepreneurship attributes of the students.

Education support factor is verified through the statements with reference to [35] that education acquired at university will encourage students to venture into the entrepreneurial world. Hence, there are five factors that contribute to the lacking in the development on the entrepreneurial intentions among university students:- educational resources, motivation in training, teaching methods and regulations, foresight and hardware resources. The educational resources such as the weakness of the curriculum, inappropriate lesson plans and contents and less books of references may cause ineffective EE conducted by HEI [34].

Another factor need to be considered is the doubt on most people about to start a career in entrepreneurship. Majority parents do not inspire their children to build careers as entrepreneurs, but to build career in line with their qualification and employed in corporate sectors or government agencies[17].

The results also show that EE in MIIT UniKL has successfully stimulated the students' entrepreneurial intention even though the students are not from the family business background. This is consistent with [22] entrepreneurial intention of the MIIT UniKL students are not from the influence of the family with business background.

Lastly, the study focused on the challenges to inculcate the entrepreneurial intention to Information Technology students. However, the results are limited to MIIT, UniKL campus only and generalization cannot be made to other campuses in UniKL. Future studies should involve larger samples to generalize the whole campus of UniKL.

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Norhaidah Abu Haris is working as an educator in Software Engineering Section, Malaysian Institute of Information Technology (MIIT), Universiti Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Dr. Munaisyah Abdullah is working as an educator in Software Engineering,Malaysian Institute of information Technology (MIIT), Universiti Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Currently is the Head of Software Engineering Section and she has obtained her PhD in Computer Science.

Prof Dr Abu Talib is working as a Dean at the Malaysian, Spanish Institute (MSI),Universiti Kuala Lumpur. He has obtained his PhD at University of Bradford.

Fauziah Abdul Rahman is working as an educator in the Malaysian Institute of Industrial Technology (MITEC), Universiti Kuala Lumpur.