Personality, prior knowledge, social capital and entrepreneurial intentions: Entrepreneurial alertness as mediator

Wei Lee Lim¹, Yvonne Lean-Ee Lee², Ravindran Ramasamy³

¹UCSI University, 56000, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
²Multimedia University, 63100, Cyberjaya, Malaysia
³Unirazak University, 50100, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

ABSTRACT

Objective – This empirical study aims to examine the role of entrepreneurial alertness as a mediator to personality traits, prior knowledge and social capital in influencing the potential of entrepreneurial intention.

Methodology/Technique – A total of 212 questionnaires were personally distributed in the Kuala Lumpur area. The data were analyzed using structural equation modelling (SEM) employing the Baron and Kenny method with the bootstrapping method in testing for mediation effect.

Findings – The findings concluded that there are significant relationships between the three variables; prior knowledge, social capital and personality traits with the entrepreneurial intention which is mediated by entrepreneurial alertness. Social capital and prior knowledge in the form of entrepreneurship courses and entrepreneurial experience have a positive relationship with entrepreneurial intention and hence attention should be directed towards them.

Novelty – Demonstrate the originality or value of the paper which makes it different from prior studies.

Type of Paper: Empirical

Keywords: Entrepreneurial intention; Alertness; Prior knowledge; Social capital; Personality; Mediator.

1. Introduction

The role that entrepreneurship plays in the building of a nation is increasingly a vital one. Activities of entrepreneurship have been associated with growing economic development, wealth generation, job creation for the nation and increased level of innovation (Westhead, Wright and McElwee, 2011). The field of entrepreneurship is about the creation of new ventures. The new ventures are deemed as one of the most important forces in driving for economic development.
Venture creation can be viewed as a process of conceptualisation and execution or even as a result of solving the customer problems and then serving the larger market (Ajzen, 1987, Edelman and Yli-Renko, 2010) and individuals carrying out the functions are called “entrepreneurs”. The entrepreneur is viewed by the German-Austrian school of thought as a radical market innovator and the instigator of what Schumpeter calls “creative destruction” through innovation (Ozgen, 2006). Hence, entrepreneurship has gained much attention from the researchers and policy makers and the call to better understand the process has never been more urgent.

Entrepreneurial intention can be defined as one’s willingness to undertake entrepreneurial activities, or in other words become self-employed. The intention to embark on entrepreneur journey is important for researchers to better explain and predict the behaviour of entrepreneurs. Before entrepreneur can happen, opportunity recognition must first happen (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000) and opportunity recognition is cognitive process and intentional in its nature. Before a new venture can be started, the alert individual would first respond to the environment and condition around him transforming and bringing a perceived idea to a viable opportunity. Within the psychological studies, intentions have been proven to be the best predictor of planned behaviour. Particularly when then behaviour is rare, hard to observe and it involves unpredictable time lags (Krueger, Reilly and Carsrud, 2000). Though there are numerous studies being carried out on the entrepreneurial process, there is a noticeable concentration on existing entrepreneurs with an established venture while neglecting a substantial group of potential entrepreneurs with high entrepreneurial intentions. With a greater emphasis being made by the Malaysian government on promoting entrepreneur activities, there is a need for a greater understanding of the factors affecting such intention in potential entrepreneurs in the new venture creation process. Therefore, this research focuses on personality dimensions that may relate to entrepreneurial behaviour.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Entrepreneurial intention

In psychological study, the presence of intentions had been proven to be the best predictor of a planned behaviour. This is particularly true when the behaviour to be observed is rare, hard to observe or that it involves an unpredictable long period of time lapse. The creation of new venture is a process that involves considerable planning and is a result of such plan and intentions over time (Krueger, Reilly and Carsrud, 2000). Due to the difficulty of observing the behaviour of business creation, the intention to new venture creation offer critical insights to our understanding of the underlying process of opportunity recognition leading to founding of business. Empirically, the behaviour has been studied from the perspective of attitudes, situational factors (i.e. employment status or informational cues) and individuals (i.e. demographic characteristics, personality traits). The forces acting on behaviours are transmitted thought their influences on intentions via key attitudes. Just as intention predicts behaviour, certain attitudes predict intention. It is proposed that intentions are determined by attitudes which are shaped and moulded by exogenous factors such as situational circumstances (Krueger et al., 2000). A particular note on intentions are that the underlying attitudes are perception based. This infers that they can be learned and taught. In a study performed by Linan and Chen (2009), demographic characteristics and personality traits were examined and found to have shown significant relationships.

2.2 Entrepreneurial Alertness

Alertness has been defined by Kirzner (1997) as an individual’s ability to identify opportunities which are overlooked by others. To further elaborate, alertness is also about the capability of a special individual who are able to make a judgement base on the new changes or shifts in information and deciding if there is a reflection on business opportunity with potential to profits (Tang, Kacmar and Busenitz, 2012). The ability of alertness and the development of schemata enables a person to interpret and organise information in various domains of knowledge which are related to the area of new
opportunities development (Gaglio and Katz, 2001). Therefore, the concept of alertness has been used extensively in the area of opportunity recognition in understanding how new ideas are generated and pursued.

Despite the potential of alertness as an area of study, the concept remains understudied due to the lack of tools for rigorous empirical testing as well as the differences of definition surrounding the concept. Past research on alertness have attempted to decode the concept from various perspectives such as economics (Kirzner, 1997), behavioural (Kaish and Gilad, 1991, Besenitz, 1996) and cognitive (Gaglio & Katz, 2001). For this study, a re-conceptualisation of entrepreneur alertness proposed by Tang (2007) is adopted. Tang (2007) proposes alertness to be conceptualised as an information processing approach which had incorporated all three existing approach mentioned earlier. The alertness adopted in this study comprises of three dimensions developed by Tang (2007). First, seeking new information and how it is accumulated by individuals for later use. This is the information accumulation. Second, the ability to perceive and interpret the environment explains how an individual cognitively respond to the newly received information whether by discounting it or transforming it to accommodate the existing knowledge stock. This is information transformation. The third dimension is information selection; which is a unique ability to sense profitable opportunities that were overlooked by others. This dimension explains why some individuals but not others are able to filter out unnecessary information while utilising information and identify business opportunities from its manipulation. Hence for this study, alertness is defined as an individual’s ability to accumulate, transform and select information.

An entrepreneur needs to be persistent and unconventional in pursuing new ideas (Busenitz, 1996). The task of information accumulation asserts that entrepreneurs scan the environment habitually to collect information. The stock of information accumulated by ways of actively or passively may equip the entrepreneur to excel especially in the early preparation stage of the entrepreneurial process. In more recent studies, scholars have continued to advance the argument for alertness involving a proactive stance based on a number of cognitive abilities and processes such as prior knowledge and experiences, pattern recognition, information processing skills and social interactions (Ardichvili et al., 2003; Baron, 2006; Shane, 2000).

Hypothesis 1. Alertness is positively associated with Entrepreneurial Intention.

2.3 Personality traits

Personality is the sum total of ways in which an individual reacts and interacts with others (Robbins and Judge, 2013). The cognitive and behavioural pattern which stabilises over time and changing environment is the core of a person’s personality which would in turn influences his attitudes and values (Olver and Mooradian, 2003). Personality to some extend is able to predict how an individual sense, interpret and act on the information and stimuli which they receive from their environment and through social learning process. Therefore, personality traits can be a good predictor for many aspects of entrepreneurship including intention to start a business.

The Big Five personality traits states that personality consists of five separate dimensions that altogether provide a comprehensive taxonomy for the study of human behaviour. Big Five consist of five distinct traits; extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism and openness to experience. The extraversion dimension captures the individuals comfort level with relationships. Past research have shown extraversion to have an influence with interest in enterprising occupations (Costa, Terracciano and McCrae, 2001). Extraverts are also aggressive and are attracted to affiliative environments (Cable and Judge, 1997) which is an important trait for an entrepreneur in building his social network (Chandler and Jansen, 1992). Hypothesis 2. Extraversion is positively associated with Entrepreneurial Intention.

Conscientiousness

Conscientiousness is a measure of reliability of an individual. Individuals who are conscientious values self control and are more likely to display stronger entrepreneurial intentions to preserve their independence. In a study by Barrick and Mount (1991), the study
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has found that conscientious people are highly achievement orientated, ambitious and persistent. These traits have been suggested as a core characteristic that an entrepreneur should have (McChelland, 1961). The sense of alertness in an entrepreneur is a cognitive process. The cognitive framework represents the cumulative experience and learning giving meaning to a specific domain which is built by the individual. They are essential for processing and utilising of stored information and knowledge which are subject to idiosyncratic of the individual. Individual who are conscientiousness are driven and focus in their search for information and knowledge and hence are more alert to changes of the environment.

Hypothesis 3. Conscientiousness is positively associated with Entrepreneurial Intention.

Hypothesis 4. The relationship between Conscientiousness and Entrepreneurial Intention will be mediated by alertness.

2.4 Prior experience

Prior knowledge refers to a distinct set of information possessed by an individual that is related to a particular subject matter. Such information provides the entrepreneur with the capacity to identify opportunities (Shane and Venkataraman, 2000). Prior knowledge and experience has been well established as a factor that facilitates entrepreneurship (Ardichvili et al., 2003).

Past studies have proposed that general business experience, industry experience, functional experience and previous start up experience all provide some of the knowledge and skills that can increase the chances of spotting opportunities. The entrepreneur’s knowledge is based on a mix of different life experiences and also on the non uniform distribution of information available in society (Kirzner, 1997). Each individual’s unique prior knowledge creates a cognitive pathway that enables that particular individual and not other in recognising opportunities. This study focuses on the idiosyncrasies of the entrepreneur’s knowledge as a result of a unique implication of work experience, education and personal events. Prior entrepreneurial experience no matter from a failed or success business results in learning and hence knowledge for the individual. Various studies have shown the entrepreneurs with previous experience of setting up new ventures are more successful in creating and managing new businesses (Davidsson and Honig, 2003). As a result of the experiences, the entrepreneurs should see specific opportunity as more desirable than other individuals making it more likely to pursue and exploit the opportunity (Eckhardt and Shane, 2003). The experiences will also be more likely to contribute to deliberate intention to start-up (Quan, 2012).

With increased sense alertness and opportunity recognition, the likelihood of starting a new venture with increased intention strengthens. Education background is another type of prior knowledge which can influence entrepreneurial intention (Davidsson and Honig, 2003). The increase in education level enhances the individual’s general skills and the perception of self-efficacy. It increases the entrepreneurs stock of information and skills useful in pursuing the entrepreneurial process (Shane, 2000).

Hypothesis 5. The relationship between entrepreneurial experience and entrepreneurial intention will be mediated by alertness.

Hypothesis 6. The relationship between entrepreneur’s prior knowledge in entrepreneurship course and entrepreneurial intention will be mediated by alertness.

2.5 Social capital

Traditionally, research of entrepreneurs had concentrated mostly on the individual entrepreneurs and their personal characteristics, personality, experiences and skills.

However, many have began to include influences social capital as a contributing success factor as the narrow individual perspective may be incomplete view on our understanding of the entrepreneurial process. Social capital can be defined as the actual or potential values and benefits resulting from the entrepreneurs own social interactions and networks (Santarelli and Tran, 2013). Social networks provided by extended family or community based ties are likely to amplify the effects from education, experience and financial capital. In a study by Granovetter, (1973) network partners are classified in terms of either a “strong ties” or “weak ties”. The strong and weak ties in a network refers to the relations with high or low levels of emotional attachment. Such relations may arise from the entrepreneur’s family, relatives and
friends. In a study conducted by Bruderl and Preisondorfer (1998), the study argues that support from strong ties is more important than support from weak ties. It is especially so during the early stages of the entrepreneurial process where the presence of strong ties plays a supporting role in influencing the persistence of nascent entrepreneurs to start up new ventures (Davidsson and Honig, 2003). The presence of an entrepreneur within a family compensates for financial, managerial restriction and provide emotional support to sustain the emotional stability.

Hypothesis 7. The relationship between entrepreneurial family background and entrepreneurial intention will be mediated by alertness.

2.6 Conceptual Framework

This study aims to better understand the impact of personality, prior knowledge and social capital on entrepreneurial intention through the mediation of entrepreneurial alertness. Entrepreneurial intention is the best predictor for future behaviour. Through better understanding of the variables at play, the study hopes to shed light on how entrepreneurial start-up rate can be improved. Personality shapes and influences how an individual’s attitudes and values are developed through time. To some extent, it predict how an individual sense, interpret and act on the information and stimuli which they receive from their environment and through social learning process. The social cognitive theory posits that emotional, cognitive and behavioural reactions are interconnected and is influenced by the past and current learning environments of the individual. Hence prior knowledge in the form of past experience and knowledge of information are being observed and processed to make sense of the environment. Individuals are connected through their social networks which provides assistance, support and information to each of its members.

Through the social network ties of a strong tie in the form of an entrepreneurial parent, the individual stands a stronger chance of receiving more support and knowledge leading to higher intention to business start-up. The trait of being ‘alert’ is likened to an ‘antenna’ that permits recognition of gaps within the market. Individuals who are well positioned and are equipped, will be able to receive the signals easily and exploit the information to fill in the market gap. Within the research area in opportunity recognition, it is suggested that high alertness will lead to higher opportunity identification. In the same line of thought, we posit that higher alertness will lead to higher intention to business start-up as it builds on the individual’s self-efficacy. This study proposes that alertness mediates between the relationship of personality, prior knowledge and social capital with entrepreneurial intention.

![Conceptual Framework of Entrepreneurial Intention](image)

Figure 1. Conceptual framework of entrepreneurial intention

3. Methodology

3.1 Sample and data collection method

To test the hypothesis in this study, 300 questionnaires were distributed to respondents in the area of Kuala Lumpur. After eliminating incomplete answers, there were in total 212 valid responses left. The questionnaires were distributed directly to the respondents by hand at several commercial and leisure centres in around Kuala Lumpur. The data collection process
was undertaken within a period of 2 weeks. Participation of the survey is on voluntary basis and all respondents are assured of the confidentiality of their responses.

3.2 Measurement

The measurement variables of personality, knowledge from entrepreneur courses, entrepreneurial experience, entrepreneurial parent, alertness and entrepreneurial intention are adopted and developed on the basis of established existing variables from past studies. All constructs were measured with multiple items and established scaled were used where applicable. Most measures were anchored on 5 point Likert scales ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

The variable of entrepreneurial intention was measured with 5 items adopted from Kristiansen (2004) and Davidsson (1995). The personality traits which consists of the traits such as Conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, Neuroticism and Openness to experience was measured according to the Big Five personality traits of Costa and McCrae (Ciavarella et al., 2004). In total these variables contain 25 items. The construct “Alertness” captured in the form of search and scanning, association and connection, and lastly evaluation and judgement. These 13 items was taken from the study by Tang et al., (2012). Previous experience in the capacity of an entrepreneur was required of respondents to report as number of years. Social capital in the form of strong ties from the condition of having either one or both parent as an entrepreneur was captured as a dummy variable (0=No, 1=Yes). Prior studies by Davidsson and Honig (2003) have considered such experiences and social ties.

A total of 4 control variables were included to reduce confounding effects due to entrepreneur’s differences in demographic characteristics. Age was measured with a dummy variable (0=youth; 1=adult). The respondents represented 3 main ethnic groups in Malaysia (Malay, Chinese and Indian). As the majority of the respondents were of Chinese decent, ethnicity of Chinese decent was constructed with a dummy variable (0=Chinese; 1=non-Chinese). Gender was measured with a dummy variable (0=male, 1=female). Education in business related programs and background was also measured using dummy variable (0=business student, 1=non-business student).

4. Finding & Discussion

4.1 Reliability analysis

The Cronbach’s alpha coefficient was conducted on the three main construct: entrepreneurial intention, personality and entrepreneurial alertness. The Cronbach alpha scores for intention and alertness are 0.79 and 0.87 respectively, showing good reliability (Hair et al., 2010). For the Big five personality items, the Cronbach alpha scores are between 0.62 (Neuroticism) to 0.81 (Conscientiousness). Though three of the personality scored at the lower scale of reliability (Agreeableness, 0.65; Openness, 0.69, Neuroticism, 0.62), the score is considered as generally acceptable as it is above the recommended minimum level 0.6 (Li, Huang and Tsai, 2008). This may be due to the small sample size.

The dependent variable of subsequent career intentions scale had a high reliability coefficient of .82 as compared to the independent variables. The independent variables of workplace bullying and emotional dissonance had coefficient values of .78 and .79 respectively.

Table 1: Reliability Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha</th>
<th>N of Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intention</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extraversion</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conscientiousness</td>
<td>0.81</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neuroticism</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Agreeableness 0.65 4
Openness 0.69 3
Alertness 0.87 13

4.1 Descriptive statistics & analysis

From the responses gathered, the findings showed that the distribution of gender was higher for females with a total of 123 female respondents (58%). On the other hand, there were 89 male respondents (42%) out of the total respondents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Min.</th>
<th>Max.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intention</td>
<td>3.97</td>
<td>0.52</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extraversion</td>
<td>3.62</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conscientiousness</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neuroticism</td>
<td>3.05</td>
<td>0.54</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agreeableness</td>
<td>2.92</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Openness</td>
<td>3.52</td>
<td>0.46</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E.Alertness</td>
<td>3.51</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>1.67</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entrep Experience</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Valid N 212

The age of the respondents showed that most of the respondents are of the adult age group (age 22 and above) representing 68.4% (145 adults) while the youth group between 17 to 21 years old, makes up 67 individuals or 31.6% of the respondents. In terms of ethnicity, the respondents are made up from the three main ethnicities in Malaysia; Malay, Chinese and Indians. Of the three groups, most are of Chinese ethnicity (80.7%) followed by Malay (12.7%) and Indian (6.6%). The majority of the respondents obtained an education level of at least an undergraduate degree. This group of 102 individual represented about 48.1% of the respondents. Interestingly, the second largest group representing 28.3% obtained the equivalency of high school or SPM level.

Table 2 displays the means, SDs, min and max among the variables. From the results of the mean score, the respondents show a high inclination of entrepreneurial intention and are alert towards information and actions that support the intention. Reading the results of Big Five personality, conscientiousness ranked the highest followed by extraversion.

The findings also found that most of the respondents have at least one parent who is an entrepreneur. Though there are half of the respondents from a business course background, not all have attended any entrepreneurial related course before.
The correlations between various constructs are given in Table 3. From the table, it can be seen that there is a significant relationship between entrepreneurial intention with personality traits of extraversion, conscientiousness and openness. The table shows that there were significant positive relationships between extraversion and entrepreneurial intention (r=.396; p<.01) as well as significant positive relationship between conscientiousness and intention (r=.410; p<.01). The results gave support to H2 and H3. In support for H1, the results shows a positive and moderate correlation relationship between entrepreneurial awareness and intention (r=.451; p<.01). Other significant relationships but weak found are those between entrepreneurial intentions with prior experience in entrepreneurship course (r=.250; p<.01) and entrepreneurial intention with gender (r=.287; p<.01).

To test for the mediator effect of entrepreneurial awareness in H4 to H7, the hypothesis are tested using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). SEM are able to estimate a series of separate but interdependent multiple regression equations together simultaneously (Hair et al., 2010). To test for mediator effects, this study have utilized a combination of techniques by Baron and Kenny (1986) and bootstrapping. The results of the SEM analyses are shown in Table 4. In H4, it is proposed that conscientiousness and entrepreneurial intention is mediated by entrepreneurial awareness. Using the Baron & Kenny approach, the results show a full mediation effect as direct effect without mediator was significant (p-value = 0.005) changed to not significant when measured direct effect with mediator (p-value= 0.101). Using the bootstrap method further support the finding with a significant p-value = 0.004. Hence, H4 is supported. H5 proposes the entrepreneurial experiences effect the intention to start business through the mediation of entrepreneurial awareness. The hypothesis is not supported by the findings as the results were not significant in all the three tests. The direct relationship with mediator (p-value= 0.297) and without mediator (p-value=0.118) was not significant. This is also reflected in the indirect effect (p-value=0.003).

In the relationship between prior knowledge having taken an entrepreneurship course and entrepreneurial intention, awareness plays the role of a partial mediator. Referring to the table, the Baron & Kenny approach shows a significant relationship in both direct with mediator (p-value = 0.035) and direct without a mediator (p-value = 0.009). The p-value from the indirect effect also returned a significant result (p-value = 0.004) and as such H6 is partially supported with entrepreneurial awareness as a partial mediator. Based on the Baron & Kenny approach, it can be confirmed that there is a partial mediation effect of entrepreneurial awareness between entrepreneurial intention and having a parent who is an entrepreneur. The direct effect without accounting for mediator was just slightly into the not significant value (p-value=0.051).

However, when mediator was introduced, the relationship improved to significant value (p-value=0.033). Cross checking the indirect effect of the mediator using the bootstrapping approach, the results confirmed the relationship to be not significant (p-value=0.428). Hence,
H7 is rejected where the relationship between entrepreneurial family background and entrepreneurial intention will be mediated by alertness is not supported.

In summary this paper’s results show that the higher the entrepreneurial alertness of the entrepreneur, the higher the entrepreneurial intention. Alertness acts as a mediator between entrepreneurial intention and the personality trait of conscientiousness as well as a mediator between entrepreneurial intention and entrepreneur’s prior knowledge in the form of entrepreneurship courses.

Table 4: Summary of SEM mediator analyses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relationship</th>
<th>Direct with mediator</th>
<th>Direct without mediator</th>
<th>Indirect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Estimate</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>Estimate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EI ---- C</td>
<td>0.138</td>
<td>0.101</td>
<td>0.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EI ---- EntEx</td>
<td>0.063</td>
<td>0.297</td>
<td>0.093</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EI ---- EntCourse</td>
<td>0.127</td>
<td>0.035</td>
<td>0.157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EI ---- MEnt</td>
<td>0.125</td>
<td>0.033</td>
<td>0.115</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. Limitations

This study was conducted within the area of Kuala Lumpur only. The limitations encountered were of time and situational constraints where the respondents were from an area in Kuala Lumpur. Therefore, the generalisation of the results may not be applicable to other areas or countries and is limited. Furthermore, Malaysia is a developing country located in Southeast Asia. Further studies should be made to explore the issues in another cultural and social setting. Another limitation to the study is the use of small sample size. Bigger samples across a larger area may yield different results.

6. Conclusion

In this study, the entrepreneurial alertness was proposed as a mediator between conscientiousness, entrepreneurial experience, prior knowledge of entrepreneurship courses and child of an entrepreneur with entrepreneurial intention. Previous studies have not specifically address this mediation role but we believe that the role of entrepreneurial alertness as a mediator is an important perspective that warrants further studies to be made. An important question which was raised within the entrepreneurship literature is whether the skills of opportunity recognition can be taught. As one of the important antecedent to opportunity recognition, the role of alertness has not been studied extensively enough. Baron (2006) has proposed that from the perspective of pattern recognition, such skills can be taught and that with appropriate training, entrepreneurs will be able to recognise opportunities. In the same vein, this study believes that through appropriate training such as entrepreneurship courses, entrepreneurial intention can be further solidify. This study has shown that social capital and prior knowledge in the form of entrepreneurship courses and entrepreneurial experience have positive relationship with entrepreneurial intention. The study further establishes the role of entrepreneurial alertness as a mediator in between the relationship of entrepreneurial courses with intention. Therefore, entrepreneurship courses should also focus on program outcomes of increased alertness to the environment and information changes. The personality trait of conscientiousness enhances the alertness of an individual when assessing information and acting upon it. In turn, this raises the entrepreneurial intention of the individual. This knowledge may be used to help relevant agencies that are responsible in developing entrepreneurs in a developing country.
Huge investment has been made to increase the quality of human capital in hopes of boosting the country’s entrepreneurial take up rate. The agencies involved needs to ensure that such training and help are given to the appropriate individuals with the right traits and conditions to increase the success rate for entrepreneurship.

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References


