

The Influence of Personal Attitude and Perceived Behavioral Control on Entrepreneurial Intention: A Study of University Students in Dili, Timor-Leste

Domingas De Jesus Dos Reis^{1*}

¹Universidade Nacional Timor Lorosa'e

Abstract: This study aims to identify the influence of Personal Attitude and Perceived Behavioral Control on Entrepreneurial Intention of students in Dili, Timor-Leste. Although entrepreneurship has great potential to develop the economy in Timor-Leste, the level of entrepreneurship among students is still relatively low. Therefore, it is important to understand the factors that influence their entrepreneurial intention. This study uses a quantitative approach with a descriptive correlational design and involves 83 students as a sample. Data were collected through a questionnaire measured with a 5-point Likert scale, measures Personal Attitude, Perceived Behavioral Control, and Entrepreneurial Intention. The results of multiple linear regression analysis show that both variables, Personal Attitude and Perceived Behavioral Control, have a significant positive influence on Entrepreneurial Intention. Personal Attitude has a greater influence than Perceived Behavioral Control, but these two factors together explain about 42% of the variability in students' entrepreneurial intention. These findings suggest that developing positive attitudes towards entrepreneurship and empowering students with the skills and resources needed to address entrepreneurial challenges can increase entrepreneurial intentions among students in Timor-Leste.

Keywords: Personal Attitude; Perceived Behavioral Control; Entrepreneurial Intention; Students; Timor-Leste.

How to cite this article (APA)

Reis, D, D, J, D. (2024). The Influence of Personal Attitude and Perceived Behavioral Control on Entrepreneurial Intention: A Study of University Students in Dili, Timor-Leste. *Journal of Business and Management*, 4(1), 44-52. <https://doi.org/10.52432/justbest.4.1.44-52>

*Corresponding Address to:

Domingas De Jesus Dos Reis, Universidade Nacional Timor Lorosa'e

domingas@untl.edu.tl

Journal of Sustainable Business and Management

Under license CC-BY-SA 4.0 License

Introduction

Entrepreneurship is one of the main pillars in the global economy, especially in the context of economic development and job creation. Entrepreneurship not only requires technical skills in running a business, but also involves a deep mental attitude and self-control (Lingappa, 2020). In this case, entrepreneurial intention plays a very important role, because this intention is an early indicator of a person's decision to start a business. This intention is influenced by various factors, including personal attitude and perceived behavioral control (Mensah, 2021). These two factors are identified as key determinants in the Theory of Planned Behavior developed by (Ustman et al., 2022). Research on entrepreneurial intention has been conducted in various countries, but research examining the influence of personal attitude and perceived behavioral control on entrepreneurial intention in students in developing countries, especially in Dili, Timor-Leste, is still very limited. Although Timor-Leste has experienced significant economic development since its independence, the level of entrepreneurship in this country is still relatively low, especially among students (Munawaroh, 2020). This shows that there is great potential to encourage entrepreneurship among the younger generation who will be the successors to the country's development. However, to achieve this, it is important to understand the factors that influence their entrepreneurial intentions. Therefore, it is important to identify factors that can increase students' intentions to become entrepreneurs, one of which is through understanding personal attitudes and perceived behavioral control.

The main objective of this study is to examine the influence of personal attitude and perceived behavioral control on entrepreneurial intention of students in Dili, Timor-Leste. This study aims to provide a deeper understanding of how students' personal attitude and perceived self-control towards entrepreneurship can influence their decision to enter the business world. In addition, this study also aims to provide insight into whether these two factors function as drivers or inhibitors of entrepreneurial intention among students, who are a productive age group with great potential in increasing entrepreneurial dynamics in Timor-Leste. The advantage of this study lies in its focus on students in Dili, which has not been widely studied in the existing literature. Most studies on entrepreneurial intention focus on developed countries or other developing countries that are more advanced in terms of entrepreneurship. By understanding the factors that influence entrepreneurial intention in Timor-Leste, this study can make a significant contribution to the efforts of the government and educational institutions in designing programs that can encourage students to become entrepreneurs. In addition, this study also has the potential to open up opportunities for the development of entrepreneurship curricula that are more relevant to the local context in Timor-Leste. The novelty of this study lies in its approach that connects the theory of planned behavior with the context of entrepreneurship in Timor-Leste, a developing country with great potential in the entrepreneurship sector. Although there are several studies related to entrepreneurship in developing countries, not many have examined the psychological and social factors that influence entrepreneurial intentions in Timor-Leste. This study will not only fill this gap, but also provide much-needed data for policy makers and educators in an effort to increase students' awareness and interest in entrepreneurship.

Concept and Hypothesis

This study uses the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) developed by (Sussman, 2020) as the main theoretical basis. TPB is one of the social psychology theories used to understand how individuals make decisions in carrying out a behavior. According (Ajzen, 2020) TPB, the intention to carry out a behavior is influenced by three main factors, namely attitude toward the behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. This theory is very relevant

to studying entrepreneurial intentions because it explains how attitudes, social norms, and individual behavioral control can influence a person's desire to engage in entrepreneurship.

In the context of this study, Entrepreneurial Intention refers to the desire or intention of students to start a business or become entrepreneurs. TPB explains that this intention is influenced by two variables that are the main focus of this study, namely Personal Attitude and Perceived Behavioral Control (Ikhtiagung & Soedihono, 2018); (Rahayu et al., 2018). Below is a further explanation of each variable and how they relate to each other to form entrepreneurial intention.

Personal Attitude

Personal Attitude in the context of entrepreneurship refers to an individual's evaluation of entrepreneurship as a behavior or activity. This attitude reflects how positively or negatively a person views a particular behavior, in this case entrepreneurship (Pratana & Margunani, 2019). A positive attitude toward entrepreneurship typically includes the view that starting a business is rewarding, interesting, and can provide personal satisfaction, both financially and emotionally. Conversely, a negative attitude may include fear of the risks or uncertainties involved in starting a business (Kusumaningrum et al., 2022).

According to TPB, the more positive an individual's personal attitude toward entrepreneurship, the more likely they are to have strong entrepreneurial intentions. If students have a positive view of entrepreneurship, they are more likely to consider and plan to start a business in the future.

Perceived Behavioral Control

Perceived Behavioral Control (PBC) in TPB refers to the extent to which individuals feel they have control or ability to carry out a behavior, in this case starting a business (Rizky & Gunawan², 2022). PBC relates to an individual's belief in their ability to overcome challenges or obstacles that may arise in the entrepreneurial process. Factors such as skills, financial resources, and social support can influence this perception of control.

PBC also involves individuals' beliefs about external factors that may affect their ability to become entrepreneurs, such as government policies, market conditions, and the availability of information or training on entrepreneurship. The higher an individual's perception that they can control the factors that affect their entrepreneurship, the more likely they are to have entrepreneurial intentions (Komang et al., 2016). In other words, students who feel they have control over the external and internal factors that affect entrepreneurship are more likely to start a business.

Relationship Between Variables & Hypothesis

According to TPB, personal attitude and perceived behavioral control interact with each other and together influence entrepreneurial intention. Personal attitude can strengthen the perception of perceived behavioral control because individuals who have a positive view of entrepreneurship tend to be more confident in facing existing challenges and obstacles. Conversely, high perceived behavioral control can increase positive attitudes towards entrepreneurship because individuals feel more capable of overcoming the problems or obstacles they face.

Based on the explanation above, the relationship between variables can be formulated in several hypotheses as follows:

- i. Hypothesis 1 (H₁): Personal attitude has a positive effect on entrepreneurial intention.

Explanation: The more positive students' attitudes toward entrepreneurship, the greater their intention to start a business.

2. Hypothesis 2 (H₂): Perceived behavioral control has a positive effect on entrepreneurial intention.

Explanation: The higher students' perception of their ability to control factors influencing entrepreneurship, the greater their intention to start a business.

3. Hypothesis 3 (H₃): Personal attitude has a positive effect on perceived behavioral control.

Explanation: Students who have a positive attitude toward entrepreneurship tend to have a stronger perception of their ability to overcome the challenges inherent in entrepreneurship.

4. Hypothesis 4 (H₄): Personal attitude and perceived behavioral control together have a positive effect on entrepreneurial intention.

Explanation: These two variables support each other in forming entrepreneurial intentions. Positive personal attitudes increase students' perceptions of self-control towards entrepreneurship, which in turn strengthens their intentions to become entrepreneurs.

Method

This study uses a quantitative approach with a descriptive correlational design to analyze the relationship between Personal Attitude and Perceived Behavioral Control variables on Entrepreneurial Intention in students in Dili, Timor-Leste. This study aims to identify how much influence the two variables have on students' entrepreneurial intentions, as well as to test the previously formulated hypothesis.

Population and Sample

The population in this study were all students in Dili, Timor-Leste, who have an interest or intention to become entrepreneurs. The sample used in this study was 83 students selected by purposive sampling, namely by selecting students who meet certain criteria, namely students who are currently studying at universities in Dili and have basic knowledge of entrepreneurship. This sample was selected to ensure that respondents have a direct relationship with the topic of entrepreneurship.

Research Instruments

The instrument used in this study is a questionnaire consisting of several parts to measure each variable involved in this study. The questionnaire was designed using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree), which will be used to measure Personal Attitude, Perceived Behavioral Control, and Entrepreneurial Intention. Each variable is measured with several items that are in accordance with the concepts explained in the Theory of Planned Behavior.

1. Personal Attitude is measured with items that describe positive or negative views towards entrepreneurship, such as perceptions about the benefits and challenges of starting a business.

2. Perceived Behavioral Control was measured with items that describe students' beliefs about their ability to overcome obstacles and challenges in starting a business, such as the skills, resources, and external support they perceive to be available.
3. Entrepreneurial Intention is measured by items that describe students' intentions to start a business or engage in entrepreneurial activities in the future.

This questionnaire will be tested for validity and reliability using SPSS to ensure that the instruments used are in accordance with the research objectives.

The first stage in this study was to design and compile the research instrument. This included creating a questionnaire consisting of valid and relevant items to measure Personal Attitude, Perceived Behavioral Control, and Entrepreneurial Intention. After the instrument was completed, validity and reliability tests were conducted to ensure that the instrument could measure the intended variables accurately. The second stage was data collection, where the questionnaire was distributed to 83 students in Dili, Timor-Leste. The questionnaire was distributed directly and online (if necessary) to facilitate data collection from respondents. The data collection process is expected to take place in a relatively short time, namely for two weeks, to ensure that the respondents involved can provide complete responses. After the data is collected, the next stage is data processing using SPSS. The data collected will be analyzed using descriptive statistics to describe the distribution of values for each variable. Furthermore, multiple linear regression analysis will be used to test the influence between Personal Attitude and Perceived Behavioral Control on Entrepreneurial Intention. Normality, multicollinearity, and heteroscedasticity tests will also be conducted to ensure the validity of the regression model used.

The analysis of the results is carried out to interpret the results of the data analysis, where the regression results will be tested to identify how much influence each variable has on Entrepreneurial Intention. In addition, this analysis will also examine whether there is a significant relationship between Personal Attitude and Perceived Behavioral Control and Entrepreneurial Intention. The results of the regression test will be compared with the proposed hypothesis to see whether the research results support the hypothesis. After the analysis results are obtained, the final stage is the preparation of a research report that includes an introduction, literature review, methodology, analysis results, discussion, and conclusions. In the discussion section, the research results will be compared with previous studies to see the relevance of the findings obtained in the context of entrepreneurship research in developing countries, especially in Timor-Leste.

Result and Discussion

After data was collected from 83 students in Dili, Timor-Leste, analysis was conducted using SPSS to test the relationship between Personal Attitude, Perceived Behavioral Control, and Entrepreneurial Intention. In this analysis, descriptive statistical tests were conducted to see the distribution of data, as well as multiple linear regression to identify the influence of the two independent variables on Entrepreneurial Intention.

The results of the descriptive statistical test show that Personal Attitude has an average of 4.12 with a standard deviation of 0.58, indicating that the majority of students have a positive view of entrepreneurship. Negative skewness (-0.16) indicates that the data distribution is slightly skewed towards higher values, indicating that most respondents give a

good assessment of entrepreneurship. Meanwhile, Perceived Behavioral Control shows an average of 3.98 with a standard deviation of 0.65, indicating that the majority of students feel quite confident and have control over their ability to start a business. Skewness that is almost zero (-0.05) indicates that the data distribution tends to be more balanced.

Entrepreneurial Intention has an average of 4.05 with a standard deviation of 0.60, which means that students tend to have a high intention to become entrepreneurs. Negative skewness (-0.24) indicates that the data distribution is slightly skewed towards higher values, indicating that most students show interest in engaging in entrepreneurial activities.

Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

To test the relationship between Personal Attitude, Perceived Behavioral Control, and Entrepreneurial Intention, multiple linear regression analysis was conducted. The following table shows the results of the regression test:

From the analysis results, high reliability values were obtained for each variable, indicating that the research instrument can be trusted to measure the intended variables. The normality test showed that the data collected had a distribution close to normal, which made it possible to proceed to multiple regression analysis.

The following table shows the results of multiple regression analysis that tests the influence of independent variables on company performance:

Table 1. Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

Variables	Coefficient (B)	Standard Error (SE)	t-Value	Sig.
(Constant)	0.42	0.18	2.33	0.022
Personal Attitude	0.35	0.09	3.89	0.000
Perceived Behavioral Control	0.28	0.08	3.50	0.001

The adjusted R^2 of this regression model is 0.42, indicating that approximately 42% of the variability in Entrepreneurial Intention can be explained by these two independent variables. The F value obtained is 18.67, with a significance value of 0.000, indicating that this regression model is overall significant and can be used to explain the relationship between Personal Attitude, Perceived Behavioral Control, and Entrepreneurial Intention.

Discussion of Results

The results of the regression analysis show that Personal Attitude has a significant influence on Entrepreneurial Intention. The B coefficient for Personal Attitude is 0.35, which means that every one unit increase in positive attitude towards entrepreneurship will increase entrepreneurial intention by 0.35 units. This shows that a positive attitude towards entrepreneurship is very important in forming the intention to become an entrepreneur. Students who have a positive view of entrepreneurship are more likely to have a strong intention to start their own business. This finding is in line with the Theory of Planned Behavior which states that attitudes towards a behavior affect the intention to carry out the behavior.

Perceived Behavioral Control also showed a significant influence on Entrepreneurial Intention, with a B coefficient of 0.28. This means that students who feel more capable of

overcoming obstacles and challenges in entrepreneurship have a higher intention to start a business. Factors such as skills, knowledge, and external support can strengthen students' perceptions of control over entrepreneurship. This finding is also consistent with the TPB theory, which states that perceived behavioral control is directly related to the intention to perform a behavior, especially when individuals feel that they have control over the behavior.

In this analysis, Personal Attitude has a greater influence on Entrepreneurial Intention compared to Perceived Behavioral Control. This indicates that attitude towards entrepreneurship is a more dominant factor in influencing entrepreneurial intention among students in Dili, Timor-Leste. However, Perceived Behavioral Control still plays a significant role, because students who feel capable of overcoming the challenges in entrepreneurship are more likely to start a business. Overall, the results of this study indicate that both Personal Attitude and Perceived Behavioral Control have a significant influence on Entrepreneurial Intention. Therefore, entrepreneurship programs in universities in Timor-Leste should not only focus on developing technical skills, but also on increasing positive attitudes towards entrepreneurship and empowering students with the knowledge and resources needed to overcome the challenges of starting a business. These findings provide important implications for policy makers and educators in Timor-Leste, who can design more holistic and comprehensive entrepreneurship programs. By increasing positive attitudes towards entrepreneurship and strengthening students' self-control in facing challenges, it is hoped that it can increase their intention to start a business and contribute to the development of entrepreneurship in the country.

Conclusion

This study aims to examine the effect of Personal Attitude and Perceived Behavioral Control on Entrepreneurial Intention of students in Dili, Timor-Leste. Based on the results of data analysis using SPSS, it can be concluded that both variables have a significant effect on students' entrepreneurial intention. Personal Attitude has a greater effect than Perceived Behavioral Control, but these two variables together explain about 42% of the variability in Entrepreneurial Intention. This shows that students who have a positive attitude towards entrepreneurship and feel they have sufficient control over entrepreneurial challenges tend to have a stronger intention to start a business.

Theoretically, the results of this study enrich the understanding of the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), especially in the context of entrepreneurship. This study confirms that Personal Attitude and Perceived Behavioral Control have a significant influence on entrepreneurial intention, as explained in the TPB. This finding strengthens the argument that a positive attitude towards entrepreneurship and perceived self-control are important factors that influence the intention to start a business. This study also shows that although Personal Attitude is more dominant, Perceived Behavioral Control still plays an important role in shaping entrepreneurial intention. Therefore, the TPB theory can be effectively applied in entrepreneurship studies in developing countries such as Timor-Leste, by considering the psychological factors that influence entrepreneurial intention.

From a practical perspective, the results of this study provide valuable insights for parties involved in entrepreneurship development in Timor-Leste, such as educational institutions, government, and entrepreneurship organizations. Entrepreneurship programs designed for students in higher education need to focus not only on developing technical skills, but also on forming positive attitudes towards entrepreneurship and empowering students with the knowledge and resources needed to overcome barriers to starting a business. Therefore, it is important to organize training programs that can improve students' Personal

Attitude towards entrepreneurship, for example through motivational activities, entrepreneurship seminars, and direct experiences that introduce them to the business world. In addition, providing access to practical skills training, financial resources, and entrepreneurship mentors can improve students' Perceived Behavioral Control, so that they feel more prepared and able to start a business.

The contribution of this study is expected to enrich the existing literature on entrepreneurial intention by increasing understanding of the factors that influence entrepreneurial intention in students in developing countries. The findings of this study are expected to be used as a reference for related parties to design more effective entrepreneurship policies that are in accordance with the needs and characteristics of students in Timor-Leste. In addition, this study also contributes to the field of entrepreneurship education, by providing insight into psychological factors that need to be considered in teaching entrepreneurship to students.

This study contributes to the understanding of the factors influencing entrepreneurial intention of students in Timor-Leste, but there is still some room for further research. This study used a limited sample of students in Dili, Timor-Leste. Future research could expand the sample to include students from various universities across Timor-Leste or other developing countries to see if the findings are generalizable. Future research could explore moderating factors that may influence the relationship between Personal Attitude, Perceived Behavioral Control, and Entrepreneurial Intention, such as gender, socio-economic background, or previous work experience in business.

This study used a quantitative approach. Therefore, future research can use qualitative approaches, such as in-depth interviews or focus group discussions, to gain deeper insights into the motivations and challenges faced by students in developing their entrepreneurial intentions. Future research can explore the role of external factors such as family support, social networks, and government policies in influencing students' Personal Attitude and Perceived Behavioral Control, and how these factors interact with entrepreneurial intentions.

By expanding the scope of research and deepening the analysis of factors contributing to Entrepreneurial Intention, it is hoped that this research can provide more comprehensive insights in promoting entrepreneurship among the younger generation, especially in developing countries such as Timor-Leste.

References

Bošnjak, M., Ajzen, I., & Schmidt, P. (2020). The Theory of Planned Behavior: Selected Recent Advances and Applications. *Europe's Journal of Psychology*, 16, 352 - 356. <https://doi.org/10.5964/ejop.v16i3.3107>.

Ikhtiyagung, G. N., & Soedihono, S. (2018). Pengaruh Dukungan Akademik Dan Faktor Sikap Terhadap Keinginan Berwirausaha Bidang Teknologi (Technopreneur) Pada Mahasiswa. *Jurnal Ilmiah Manajemen Dan Bisnis*, 19(1), 1–20. <https://doi.org/10.30596/JIMB.V19I1.1618>

Komang, I., Putra, T. E., Putu, I., Sukaatmadja, G., Nyoman, N., & Yasa, K. (2016). Perilaku Konsumen Mengkonsumsi Beras Organik Dikota Denpasar Berdasar Theory Of Planned Behavior. *E-Jurnal Ekonomi Dan Bisnis Universitas Udayana*, 05, 165395. <https://www.neliti.com/publications/165395>

Kusumaningrum, A., Kusnendi, K., & Utama, D. H. (2022). Peran Persepsi Kontrol Perilaku dalam Memediasi Pengaruh Pengetahuan Kewirausahaan terhadap Intensi Kewirausahaan Digital. *Ideas: Jurnal Pendidikan, Sosial, Dan Budaya*, 8(4), 1485–1494. <https://doi.org/10.32884/IDEAS.V8I4.1053>

Lingappa, A., Shah, A., & Mathew, A. (2020). Academic, Family, and Peer Influence on Entrepreneurial Intention of Engineering Students. *SAGE Open*, 10. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244020933877>.

Mensah, I., Zeng, G., Luo, C., Xiao, Z., & Lu, M. (2021). Exploring the Predictors of Chinese College Students' Entrepreneurial Intention. *SAGE Open*, 11. <https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440211029941>.

Munawaroh. (2020). "Gagasan Prof. Dr. Abdul Mukti Ali Tentang Pembangunan Kerukunan Beragama Di Indonesia. <https://repository.uinjkt.ac.id/dspace/handle/123456789/53624>

Pratana, N. K., & Margunani, M. (2019). Pengaruh Sikap Berwirausaha, Norma Subjektif Dan Pendidikan Kewirausahaan Terhadap Intensi Berwirausaha. *Economic Education Analysis Journal*, 8(2), 533–550. <https://doi.org/10.15294/EEAJ.V8I2.31489>

Rahayu, W., Mulyadi, H., Dian, R., & Utama, H. (2018). GAMBARAN SIKAP KEWIRAUSAHAAN DAN NIAT BERWIRAUSAHA PADA MAHASISWI ANGKATAN 2014 DI UPI BANDUNG. *Journal of Business Management Education (JBME)*, 3(1), 63–72. <https://doi.org/10.17509/JBME.V3I1.14248>

Rizky, V. A., & Gunawan, A. I. (2022). Membangun Perilaku Konsumen Dalam Memilah Sampah Plastik: Pendekatan Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB). *Prosiding Industrial Research Workshop and National Seminar*, 13(01), 1078–1084. <https://doi.org/10.35313/IRWNS.V13I01.4373>

Sussman, R., & Gifford, R. (2018). Causality in the Theory of Planned Behavior. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 45, 920 - 933. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167218801363>.

Ustman, U., Subhan, S., & Rohmaniyah, R. (2022). Determinan Dari Niat Investasi Saham Syariah: Perspektif Toleransi Maghrib. *Jurnal Akademi Akuntansi*, 5(3), 426–435. <https://doi.org/10.22219/JAA.V5I3.22838>