



***FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE THE INTENTION OF AGRICULTURE
PROGRAMMES STUDENTS AS ENTREPRENEURS***

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**FACULTY OF AGRICULTURE
UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA
SERDANG, SELANGOR**

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ENTREPRENEURS**

By

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**A research paper report submitted to Faculty of Agriculture, Universiti Putra Malaysia,
in fulfillment of the Final Year Project, PPT4999 for the award of degree in Bachelor
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ABSTRACT

In view of Malaysia government's vision to transform its economy from knowledge-based to innovation in its aspiration to be the high-income country by 2020, the students from higher education institutions should be exposed with the entrepreneurial skills. The entrepreneurship has the great potential to develop economic growth. The various policies and programs have been established to encourage more graduates engaged in entrepreneur as a career. The Malaysian government also has given special attention to entrepreneurship as an alternative to facilitate and improve the industrial structure in order to create industries for the future generations. The unemployment problems among graduates become a big issue and create problem to the government. The entrepreneurship is considered as one of the best alternatives to overcome the graduate unemployment problems in Malaysia. Thus, the purpose of this study was to investigate the factors that influenced the intention of students as entrepreneurs. The qualitative method used in this study involved 350 respondents who are agriculture programmes students from Faculty of Agriculture, Universiti Putra Malaysia. The data was analyzed by using three statistical methods such as descriptive analysis, chi-square analysis and factor analysis. The chi-square analysis showed the association between socio-demographic backgrounds and intention to be an entrepreneur. There were four factors that influenced the intention of agriculture programmes students as entrepreneur namely attitudes, personal attributes, family influence and education.

ABSTRAK

Dalam menyasarkan visi kerajaan Malaysia untuk mengubah ekonomi berasaskan pengetahuan kepada inovasi yang berinspirasi untuk menjadi negara berpendapatan tinggi menjelang tahun 2020, pelajar dari institusi tinggi harus didedahkan dengan kemahiran keusahawanan. Keusahawanan mempunyai potensi yang besar dalam membangunkan ekonomi. Pelbagai polisi serta program telah ditubuhkan untuk menggalakkan lebih ramai graduan untuk terlibat dalam usahawan sebagai kerjaya. Kerajaan Malaysia turut memberi perhatian khusus kepada keusahawanan dengan memperbaiki struktur perindustriaan sebagai langkah bagi mewujudkan industri untuk generasi akan datang. Masalah pengangguran di kalangan graduan menjadi isu besar dan membuat masalah kepada kerajaan. Kerjaya Keusahawanan dianggap sebagai salah satu alternatif terbaik untuk mengatasi masalah pengangguran siswazah di Malaysia. Oleh itu, matlamat kajian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji faktor-faktor yang mempengaruhi niat pelajar sebagai usahawan. Kajian ini yang melibatkan kira-kira 350 responden yang merupakan pelajar program pertanian dari Fakulti Pertanian, Universiti Putra Malaysia. Kaedah statistik yang digunakan dalam kajian ini ialah analisis deskriptif, khi-kuasa dua dan faktor analisis. Analisis khi-kuasa dua menunjukkan perkaitan antara latar belakang responden dan niat untuk menjadi usahawan. Terdapat empat faktor yang mempengaruhi niat program pertanian pelajar sebagai usahawan yang merupakan sikap, sifat peribadi, pengaruh keluarga dan pendidikan.

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DECLARATION

The research entitles Factors that influence the intention of agriculture programmes students as entrepreneurs, prepared by Nur Anis Athirah Binti Azman and submitted to the Faculty of Agriculture in fulfillment of the requirement of PPT4999A and PPT4999B courses for the awards of the degree of Bachelor Science of Agribusiness is based on my original works.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

MECD	Ministry of Entrepreneur and Cooperative
MOHE	Ministry of Higher Education
INSKEN	National Entrepreneurship Institute
BSEP	Basic Student Entrepreneurial Programs
MEF	Malaysia Employers Federation
AIM	Amanah Ikhtiar Malaysia
1MeT	1Malaysia Entrepreneurs
MOYS	The Ministry of Youth and Sports
MaGIC	Malaysian Global Innovation and Creativity Centre
GEM	Global Entrepreneurship Monitor
TEA	Total Early-Stage Entrepreneurial Activity
SME	Small Medium Enterprise

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 GRADUATE UNEMPLOYMENT IN MALAYSIA

Azina (2011) in her study revealed that the Malaysian graduates with a good academic achievement is no longer a guarantee for them to get a better job. It is a benefit for the graduates but it is not as a guarantee for them to be given jobs and it also does not show that the graduates are able to conduct the tasks given by the employers.

The Ministry of Higher Education, in its “Graduate Tracer Study Report 2015” shows that of the 273,373 graduates that responded to the ministry survey, about 24% of graduates were still unemployed after six months graduating. The issue of unemployment graduate has been discussed as hot topics and a statement as in the Berita Harian dated 3 February 2016 by our Malaysia Employers Federation (MEF) Executive Director mentioned in that year, there were about 200,000 degree holders who are unemployed in Malaysia.

Currently, our Ministry of Human Resource indicated that the unemployment rate in Malaysia as September 2017 stands at 3.4% or about 504,000 as reported by New Straits Times. Ismail (2017) analyzed that about 270,330 job seekers are registered with the Job

Malaysia portal as of September 2017. Among the registered job seekers, 187,551 (69.4%) are graduates while 82,799 (30.6%) are non-graduates.

Thus, entrepreneurship is one of the best strategies to overcome the graduate unemployment problem as well as to increase society standard of living. Self-employment through entrepreneurship offers university graduates the opportunity to create jobs for themselves and others. Beeka, Rimmington and Buang (2011) point out that entrepreneurship is one of the career options for graduates and youths.

1.2 EMPLOYMENT SECTOR CHOICE BY UNEMPLOYED GRADUATES

The Malaysian government strongly promotes entrepreneurship as a career at various levels especially among the students from tertiary education. This is due that entrepreneurship creates the opportunities for graduates to achieve benefit by contributing to job creation, innovation as well as economic growth (Hisrich, 2005). However, many students do no interest to be entrepreneur after graduation.

According to the Former Vice Chief Secretary of MECD, a survey conducted in 2004 showed that only 30 out of 2,275 graduates respondents choose to get involved in entrepreneurship. It can be seen that majority of the students preferred to be hired rather than self-employed after graduation.

From the survey conducted by the Ministry of Higher Education in 2015, revealed that about 73.4% of the respondents said that they are still looking for job. The unemployed graduates are seen too dependent on the government and other sectors as compared to be self-employed or entrepreneurs.

Employment sector	Total of respondents	Choice according to priority				
		First	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth
		%				
Government	53,593	62.3	2.4	15.5	11.5	8.3
Statutory bodies		11.2	28.5	17.5	32.7	10.1
Multinational company		9.2	19.0	26.8	26.9	18.1
Self-employment / Entrepreneurship		9.7	22.0	15.2	6.4	46.7
Private company		7.6	25.0	25.0	22.5	16.9

Figure 1: Employment Sector Choice according to priority by Unemployed Graduates

Source: Ministry of Higher Education (2015)

The Ministry of Higher Education, in its “Graduate Tracer Study Report 2015” indicates that of the 53,593 graduates that responded to the ministry survey, most unemployed graduates from tertiary education are highly preferred to work in government sector as their first choice which about 62.3% or 33,388 as compared to become entrepreneur which only 9.7% or 5,198.

The entrepreneurship or self-employment is only considered as their second or last choice if compared to other employment sectors such as government, statutory bodies and multinational company as well as private company. Figure 2 and Figure 3 illustrate the Employment sector choice by unemployed graduates as first choice and the last choice.

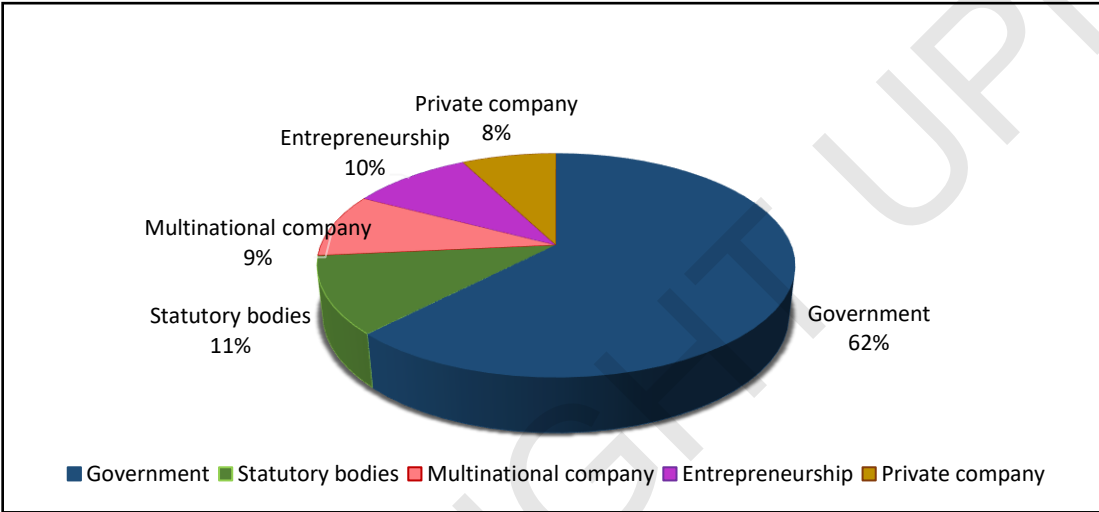


Figure 2: Employment sector choice by unemployed graduates as first choice

Source: Ministry of Higher Education (2015)

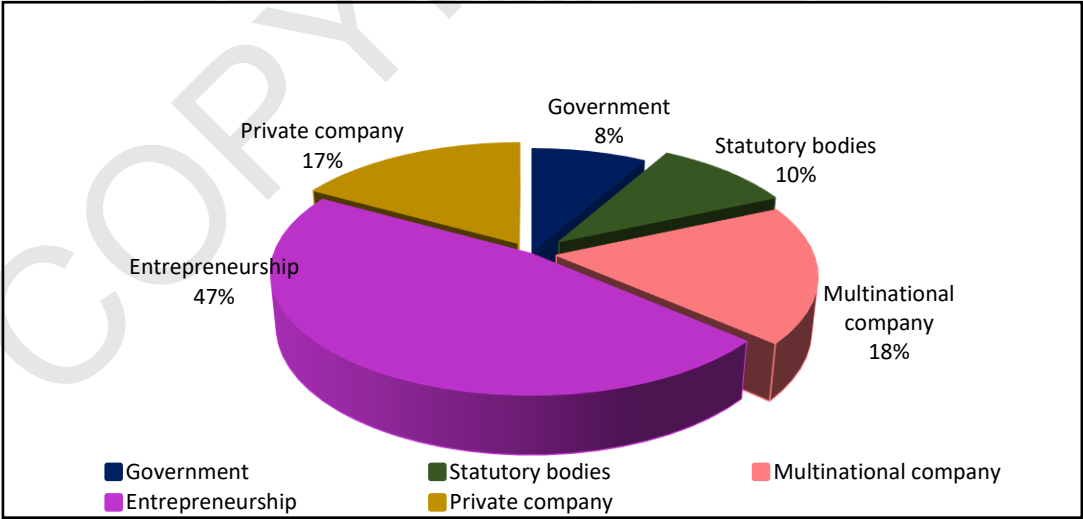


Figure 3: Employment sector choice by unemployed graduates as last choice

Source: Ministry of Higher Education (2015)

1.3 ENTREPRENEURSHIP DEVELOPMENT IN MALAYSIA

Entrepreneurship development is important as it is one of the main drivers for economic growth which contributes to wealth, innovation and technology and reduces poverty in Malaysia (Ariff, 2002). The Malaysia government has placed great intention to the people especially among Malays to involve in entrepreneurship activities. The best evidence to perceive with the government initiative for the development entrepreneurship is by the various programs and policies that exist for entrepreneur including the funding, motivation, business infrastructure, and incubation program to support potential entrepreneurs. The objective of these programs primarily to ensure an increase in productivity as well as generate higher income level among the entrepreneurs (Amna, 2015).

The special ministry for entrepreneurs, the Ministry of Entrepreneur and Cooperative Development (MECD) was established in 2004, effectively replacing the Ministry of Entrepreneur Development (1995) is clearly to show the government concerns towards the important of entrepreneurship and entrepreneur development. MECD (SME BANK, TEKUN, MARA, BANK RAKYAT) is the main agency responsible for coordinating the development of bumiputra entrepreneurs. The Ministry of Entrepreneur and Cooperative Development (MECD) had planned various activities and programs in institutions of higher learning in order to produce more entrepreneurs among graduates. The activities and programs are inclusive of business opportunities, educational programs, financial assistance, physical infrastructure and consultancy services to young entrepreneurs.

The National Entrepreneurship Institute (INSKEN) was established on 12 January 2005 aimed to culture entrepreneurship among Bumiputra's clearly show the commitment by the government. INSKEN plays a major role in managing entrepreneurial programs and courses for the Malaysian community especially the Bumiputra's. Basic Student Entrepreneurial Programs (BSEP) is among the courses offered for the students. It was introduced in 2003, with involved one private higher education and 19 local higher education institutions. BSEP has expanded to 27 polytechnics for the purpose to improve the technical skills of the potential or new entrepreneurs.

The Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE) have organized entrepreneurship program to expose youth and graduates to the concept of entrepreneurship, to nurture their awareness and interest as well as to help them identify opportunities in the business world. Entrepreneurship subjects and courses related to entrepreneurship also have been introduced in the primary and secondary school as well as at university level. The entrepreneurship subject is introduced in all public universities in Malaysia and it is compulsory for the students to enroll for the subject before they graduate.

Other programs that organized by the cooperation between MECD and the Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE) are including the development of entrepreneurship culture in public higher learning institutions (Program Pembudayaan Keusahawanan di Institut Pengajian Tinggi Awam), Graduate Development Program (Program Pembangunan Usaha Siswa), Graduate Entrepreneurship Training Scheme (Program Latihan

Keusahawanan Siswa) and a Basic Course in Entrepreneurship for Graduates (Kursus Asas Keusahawanan Siswazah). All these programmes have been implemented in 17 public universities in Malaysia (Ministry of Entrepreneur and Cooperative Development, 2007) with the aim to expose and encourage greater involvement among graduates in Entrepreneurship.

Besides, the government also have provided financial aid to graduates through the Graduate Entrepreneurship Fund to help graduates join into a new venture (SME BANK, 2006). The micro-credit facilities provide by the government through TEKUN Nasional and Amanah Ikhtiar Malaysia (AIM). These government's institutions are trusted to handle the micro-credit funds. The entrepreneurship training is provided together with this facility especially in the business plan preparation and finance as well as marketing and promotion. The government has instituted the 1Malaysia Entrepreneurs (1MeT), Malaysian Global Innovation and Creativity Centre (MaGIC), and Tabung Usahawan Siswazah (TUS), literally translated to Graduate Entrepreneurship Fund for youth entrepreneur development.

The Ministry of Youth and Sports (MOYS) through the National Youth and Sports Department has implemented Youth Entrepreneurship Program (Business and Agriculture Business). This program offers courses such as Basic entrepreneurship in labeling and packaging technology, Smart Partnership (Youth entrepreneur), Smart Financial Manager,

and Technical Agriculture programs (National SME Development Council, 2013). The primary purpose of these programs is to develop 1,000 entrepreneurs by 2020.

The special programs, Women Entrepreneurship Incubator (I-KeuNITA) was organized for women which expose them to the skills training in micro. This program provides intensive skills training and entrepreneurship assistance for low-income women in the various field that are inclusive of commercial cooking, crafts, sewing, beauty therapy, childcare, and tour services.

1.4 ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION AND UNIVERSITY'S ROLES

Nowadays, the growth of entrepreneurship can be interpreted as the level of interest in entrepreneurship is getting higher by students from business school. It clearly seems, most of universities have offer the courses which expose the students on how to start and finance new business (Shane, 2003). There are many activities provided by university and faculty for students to start a business that can revolutionize industry and create wealth which clearly show the interest in entrepreneurship. Pages and Poole (2003), however, point out that college, universities and small business development centers are basically offer training courses which available to small groups of entrepreneurs, teaching on how to start a business, how to develop and implement business plan as well as various elements in development process of a small business.

Entrepreneurship education provides valuable opportunities to university students to gain knowledge of entrepreneurship as well as providing great learning experiences (Norasmah and Hanisah, 2017). Entrepreneurship education provides an opportunity for students to learn and gain experience through creative and innovative activities related to entrepreneurship, business plan development, learning from successful entrepreneurs, getting some role models and developing social networks as well as running real small business (Segal et al., 2005).

According to Wilson et al. (2007) entrepreneurial education is helpful to develop necessary knowledge, skills and recognize an opportunity as well as able to face challenges and difficulties. It is an evident that entrepreneurial training and courses have influence student's mind-sets toward the entrepreneurial and intention to choose entrepreneurship as career (Dyer, 1994). As stated by Henderson and Robertson (2000) entrepreneurship education is effective in certain aspects, namely encouraging students toward an entrepreneurial career.

As indicated by Gorman and Hanlon (1997), the entrepreneurial attributes can be positively influenced by entrepreneurship education. Students who are exposed to entrepreneurship education have more interest and favorable views towards small businesses. As studied by Sanchez (2013) students who have entrepreneurship education and enrolled in entrepreneurship courses are capable to be motivated, proactive, confident, good skills to work in a team as well as willing to face entrepreneurship challenges.

Kolvereid and Moen (1997) analyzed that entrepreneurship graduates often have stronger entrepreneurial intentions than other business graduates. In their perspectives, entrepreneurship graduates most interested to involve in such entrepreneurial activity and choose entrepreneur as their career.

Entrepreneurship education in Malaysia plays important role for the development of agropreneurship by equipping students with innovative business skills and creating business opportunities (Mohamed et al., 2012). For instance, the local universities have introduced many agropreneurship programs such as bachelor degree in agribusiness. The agropreneurship courses offer to agricultural students with the aimed to train students about agropreneurial knowledge and skills which capable to capture their intention to be successful agropreneurs.

However, entrepreneurship education is still undervalued by most students. Entrepreneurship education is ineffective in helping students to meet with people to propose good business idea. Lekoko et al. (2012) stated that there a little influence from entrepreneurship education in developing entrepreneurial mindsets and creating corporate culture among students. The evidence was perceived as the programs were too focused on the theoretical knowledge rather than practical aspects of entrepreneurship.

1.5 ENTREPRENEURIAL INTERNSHIP PROGRAMS

According to Dilts and Fowler (1999), the interaction with today's dynamic business environment is essential due to critical entrepreneurial skills can be developed and refined if they are practiced rather than by only the learning process of entrepreneurship in the classroom. Entrepreneurial internship is seen as a great platform to provide students with learning experience by seeing, touching, feeling about the real business world (Bottomley et al., 2004).

Shariff et al. (2000) highlighted the objective of having internship programme is to expose students in the industry practical and its nature of work practices. It is training strategy that transforms theoretical knowledge to application as well as to develop their working skills in the real career world (Dodge and McKeough, 2003).

As stated by Leaby et al. (2000), the entrepreneurship programs give benefits for universities, organizations as well as students. For example, students with entrepreneurial internship experience tend to exhibit lower job dissatisfaction as compared those without internship experience. Students that successfully participated in the internship program are most likely have higher career preparations towards jobs and higher satisfactions (Redington and Schlager, 2000).

Thus, many researchers suggested that entrepreneurial internship programmes should become compulsory educational structure to the university students (Leaby et al., 2000).

This is due that internship programmes become a vital part of today's educational curriculum in preparing university students towards entrepreneurial career (Raymond and McNabb, 1993). The good entrepreneurial internship programmes give a great impact on university students as well as result in the inclination towards entrepreneurship.

1.6 ENTREPRENEURSHIP CAREER INTENTION

The National Higher Education Action Plan Phrase Two (2011-2015) indicated inclination graduate students from tertiary education involved in entrepreneurship but it is still low which about 2% from the overall those who graduate yearly. The National Higher Education Action Plan Phrase Two (2011-2015), has placing the entrepreneurial activity as catalyst of economic growth through improving creativity, competitiveness and innovation.

According to the Attitudes and Perception Study of Entrepreneurship in Southern Asia by Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM), the awareness of the importance of entrepreneurship both male and female of Malaysian citizen from 2013 until 2015 is considered low which less than 50% who agreed that entrepreneurship is a good career in future. This phenomenon become a barrier to the youth to choose entrepreneurship as their career especially when they do not have support and permission from parents. Figure 4 shows the entrepreneurship as good career for Malaysia from 2013-2015.

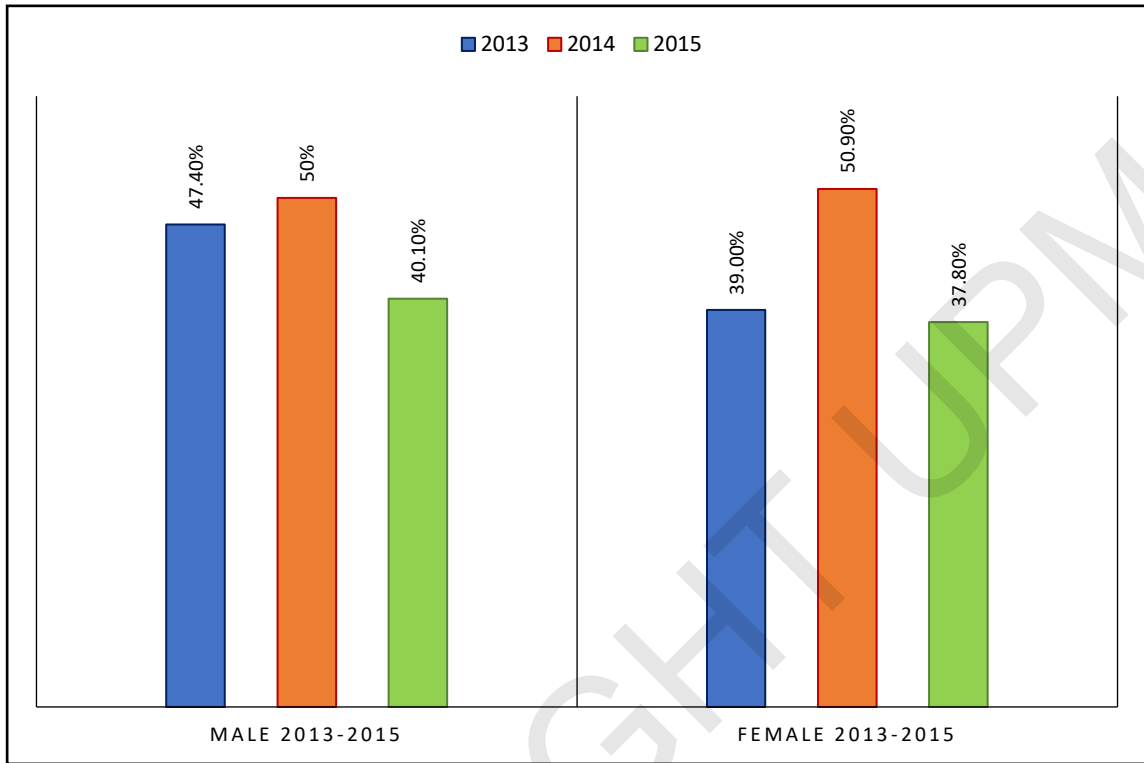


Figure 4: Entrepreneurship as a Good Career Choice for Malaysia, 2013-2015

Source: ASEAN Regional Entrepreneurship Report 2015-2016

Malaysian's achievement at ASEAN Country level in aspects entrepreneurial intention is quite low with only 11.60% of the individuals have intention to start a business in 3 years while the Total Early-Stage Entrepreneurial Activity (TEA) rate is only 5.90% of the individuals who start to involved in business as well as run the business less than 3 years.

Figure 5 illustrates the Entrepreneurial Intention and Total Early-Stage Entrepreneurial Activity (TEA) Rate (%) in ASEAN Country for 2014.

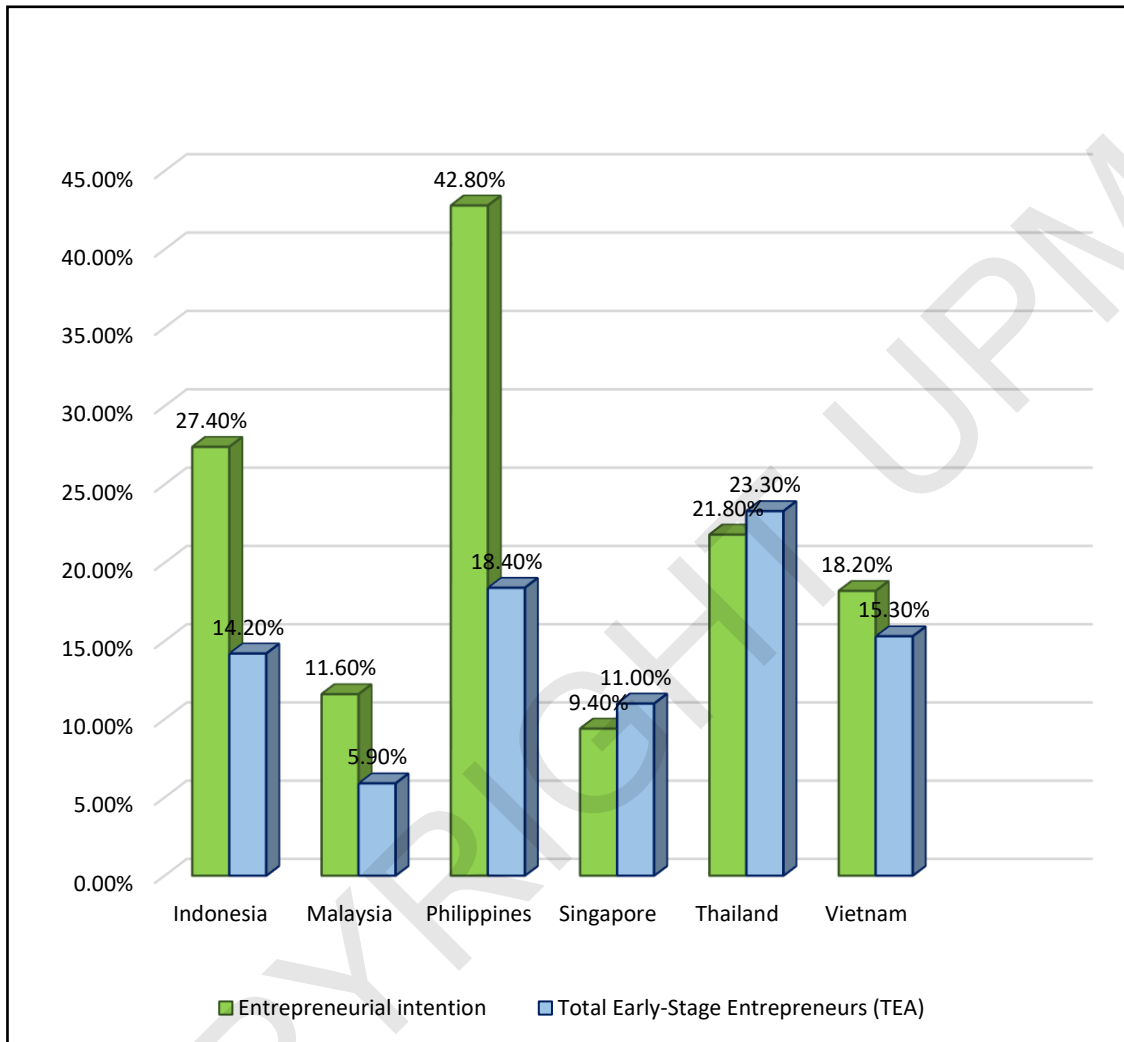


Figure 5: Entrepreneurial Intention and Total Early-Stage Entrepreneurial Activity (TEA) Rate (%) in ASEAN Country, 2014

Source: UNIRAZAK (2015)

1.7 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The unemployment problem among Malaysian graduates is become a big issue. The issue of graduate unemployment is often linked to the both graduates from private and public Malaysian Universities. According to the New Straits Times (2017) by our Ministry of Human Resource revealed that the unemployment rate in Malaysia as September 2017 stands at 3.4% or about 504,000. Among the registered job seekers, 187,551 (69.4%) are graduates while 82,799 (30.6%) are non-graduates.

In Malaysia, most employers searching for graduates who are balanced with good academic, achievement and soft skills such as problem-solving skills, communication skills, interpersonal skills and the ability to be flexible (Nurita et al., 2014). The low quality of graduate is one of the factors that contribute to unemployment issue in Malaysia (Rahmah et al., 2011).

Otherwise, majority of the students preferred to be hired rather than self-employed through entrepreneurship after graduation. According to the Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE) in 2015, unemployed graduates from tertiary education are highly preferred to work in government sector as compared to other sectors. Entrepreneurial careers have not been considered as a first choice for undergraduate's students in Malaysia as they only see this career as a second or last choice and most prefer to work as wage earners. The entrepreneurship education is still undervalued by most students. Therefore, universities are responsible for creating attractive and accessible entrepreneurial education courses for

students. According to Prodromou (2009), it may be challenging for graduates to establish a profitable business without a strong entrepreneurship education due to lack of basic business skills.

In line with the purpose of creating more entrepreneurs, the Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE) organized various entrepreneurship programs to expose youth and graduates to the concept of entrepreneurship as well as attract them to discover opportunities in the business world. The Ministry of Higher Education has also taken initiatives to encourage Malaysia students to get involved in entrepreneurship activities. At universities, undergraduates are exposed to an entrepreneurship courses that provide them with opportunity to plan and prepare budgets, organize business as well as manage problem during the implementation of activities related to entrepreneurship. This course is introduced in most of public universities in Malaysia and it compulsory for the students to enroll for the course before they graduate.

However, the number of graduates who attend entrepreneurship programs launched by various ministries is not very encouraging. It was recorded that, only 10,000 graduates out of 170,000 graduates produced yearly who attend entrepreneurship programs organized by Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE). This indicates that there is gap between the actual level of graduate's involvement in entrepreneurship and the government's expectation.

1.8 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- 1) What are the socio-demographic profile of agriculture programmes students?
- 2) What are the factors that influence the intention of agriculture programmes students as entrepreneurs?
- 3) What is the association between socio-demographic profile and the intention of agriculture programmes students as entrepreneurs?

1.9 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1.9.1 General Objective

To study the intention of agriculture programmes students as entrepreneurs.

1.9.2 Specific Objectives

- 1) To analyze the socio-demographic profile of agriculture programmes students.
- 2) To investigate the factors that influence the intention of agriculture programmes students as entrepreneurs.
- 3) To determine the association between socio-demographic profile and the intention of agriculture programmes students as entrepreneurs.

1.10 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to obtain data and information on factors influence the intention of agriculture programmes students to become entrepreneurs. The findings from this study will be useful especially for government as indicator in order to draw out the new guidelines and start new initiatives as well as encourage graduate students to become successful entrepreneurs. This research also will help to investigate potential of students toward the entrepreneurial and intention to choose entrepreneurship as their career.

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