



Research Article

Theory of Planned Behavior: Undergraduates' Entrepreneurial Motivation and Entrepreneurship Career Intention at a Public University

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Abstract

Entrepreneurship intention for graduate students like many other job and work career options depends on other considerations. Previous literature reviews revealed that more research works are needed in examining the determinants of entrepreneurship intentions of students. Due to its importance and significant thrust to the economic development of a nation, research works on entrepreneurial motivation and entrepreneurship intentions have continued to be the focus in recent years. This study uses Theory of Planned Behaviour Model to determine the level of students' entrepreneurial motivation and entrepreneurship intention at a public University and the relationship between these two factors. A total of 450 self-administered questionnaires were distributed to the students of the various faculties, races and student seniority at a Public University using the convenient and structured sampling method. A total of 413 duly completed questionnaires that were returned were used in the analyses. The components of entrepreneurial motivation affecting career entrepreneurship intention are found to be comprised of behavioral control, subjective norm, and attitude towards entrepreneurship. The level of behavioral control is very good; subjective norm and attitude towards entrepreneurship are both at good level. Subjective norm and attitude of self-employment are significantly related to both student immediate and future entrepreneurship intentions. However, behavioral control entrepreneurial motivation is found to be significantly related to student immediate career intention but not related to entrepreneurship career intention. Planned Behavior Model can be used as a tool to identify the would be entrepreneur and target them for entrepreneurial development. Youths who are really serious to start and own a business as would be entrepreneurs can be identified and targeted through this Model to be developed through entrepreneurship interventions initiatives.

Keywords: entrepreneurship, entrepreneurship intention, entrepreneurial motivation, theory of planned behavior

Introduction

Entrepreneurship is thriving throughout the world. It promotes a nation's economic growth and development. It is important for job creation, innovation and growth. Therefore, it is an engine that drives the economy of a nation. Scarborough (2012) described entrepreneur as someone who creates a new business in the face of risk and uncertainty with the goal of making profit and growth through the identifying of opportunities, assembling the necessary resources to take advantage and exploiting the identified opportunities. According to him, entrepreneurial profile includes attributes of desire for responsibility, preference for moderate risk, confidence in personal success, self-reliance, perseverance, desire for immediate feedback, have a higher level of energy and are more energetic than the average person, tend to dream big and motivated by achievement. Literature reviews revealed that more research works are needed in examining the determinants of entrepreneurship intentions of students (Karimi et al., 2010, Souitaris et al., 2007). Carsrud and Brännback (2011) revealed that entrepreneurial motivation is not the same as "uniquely entrepreneurial personality traits". They disclosed that entrepreneurial motivation is a crucial topic in entrepreneur study and that more study is needed. It is a much neglected area (Carsrud et al., 2009; Edelman et al., 2010) because in the past, most researchers assumed it was possible and sufficient in defining an entrepreneur by identifying the unique personality traits (Carsrud and Brännback, 2011). However, due to its importance and significant thrust to the economic development of a nation, the contextual differences of the research works on entrepreneurial motivation and entrepreneurship intentions, it has continued to be the focus area of interest to researchers in recent years. This study uses Theory of Planned Behaviour Model to determine the levels of student's entrepreneurial motivation and entrepreneurship intention

at a public University and the relationship between these two factors.

Literature Review

Grooming and nurturing entrepreneurship among students to prepare them for career employability is an important matter to public policy (Branchet et al., 2011). The behavioral linkage of entrepreneurship intentions, ideas and action is critical in understanding the entrepreneurial process (Ajzen, 1991; Krueger and Carsrud 1993). Ajzen's (1991) theory of planned behavior prescribed that a person's intent toward an activity with perceived behavioral control will be able to predict the behavior accurately. Krueger et al., (2000) have demonstrated that intention is a single best predictor of planned behavior.

Behavioural Theory

Vroom's (1964) expectancy model establishes a common thread connecting many process-oriented explanations of entrepreneurial motivation. According to his theory, an individual will make the best choice through the behavior that will lead to the most desirable outcome. Ajzen (1991) explained that the underlying factors that influence a behavior are motivation factors. It is assumed that these motivational factors influence and shape the behavioral intention. These factors are the individual's attitude toward the behavior, subjective norm and perceived control which are the factors in the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) model. Attitude is developed from behavioral beliefs. It is assumed that an individual with a higher attitude towards the behavior will be more likely to take the action that is being monitored (Ajzen, 2002). Subjective norms are the individuals' perceptions of values, beliefs and norms of influential individuals including family members, teachers, other entrepreneurs, friends etc, that are regarded as important to the individual's desire to comply with those norms. It is believed that it is able to shape the formation of the

entrepreneurship intentions of the individual. However, Krueger et al., (2000) argued that for an individual with high internal locus of control, social norms are less predictive of intentions. Behavioral control influences an individual's intention of action basing perception of degree of difficulty of performance of that specific behavior (Ajzen, 1991). This concept is conceptually similar to Social Cognitive Theory described by Bandura (1997) of an individual's belief in their abilities to perform a specified action.

Entrepreneurial Motivation

Motivation is important in our daily lives. It is the core of biological, cognitive, and social regulation (Ryan and Deci, 2000). This is because motivation involves energy, direction, perseverance and intention. Goals and motives play a role in predicting human behavior. This indicates a link exists between intentions, motivations, and behavior. Motivation drives us into actions. The reason behind such actions is the orientation of the motivation. In rediscovering motivation, Krueger and Carsrud (1993) reviewed that critique on entrepreneurship intentions studies argued that there is a lack of basis to support on intention-action linkage although intentions have been centered as predictors of future action. The link has been used loosely as implied or assumed. They then argued that motivation provides the link between intention-action. Edelman et al., (2010) avers that motivations could be the stimulus to transform a latent intention that drives entrepreneurship and reiterated that it could be the missing link between intentions and action. It implies that the underlying attitudes and goals of entrepreneurial motivation should give rise to entrepreneurship intention. Edelman et al., (2010) reiterated that there is a lacking of research in this area and more work is needed.

Entrepreneurship Career Intention

Is entrepreneurship an attractive career option for graduate students? Entrepreneurship offers graduate self-employment opportunity. It is a career option for youth and graduates (Fatoki, 2014; Beeka and Rimmington, 2011) by providing employability. It reduces social ills and public policy makers are emphasising and engaging students of higher learning institutions in entrepreneurship to improve employability rate (Branchet et al., 2011). This has made research works on entrepreneurship phenomena very attractive, more so in how to attract graduate students towards entrepreneurship. Krueger et al., (2000) envisaged that entrepreneurial inclination can be better determined through entrepreneurship intention rather than personality traits, demographic characteristics, or situational factors.

Kim-Soon et al., (2013) in their study on investigating the motivators and obstacles to youth entrepreneurship with entrepreneurial intention of young entrepreneurs implies that youths who are really serious to start and own a business as would be entrepreneurs can be identified and targeted to develop through government entrepreneurship interventions initiatives. In a 12-country evaluation of Ajzen's model of planned behavior, Engle et al., (2010) found out social norm as a strong and consistent predictor of intentions within all countries of the study. They found that attitude toward the behavior, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control significantly increased the likelihood of students reporting the formation of entrepreneurial intentions. Ummah (2009) suggested that policy makers and educators should consider the factors influencing the desirability of self-employment to energize one's intention towards self-employment. Fitzsimmons and Douglas (2011) reported that a person's perceived desirability and perceived feasibility had a negative interaction effect in the formation of entrepreneurial intentions. In line with a prevention-focused orientation,

they suggest that situational factors may induce individuals involved in the process of forming entrepreneurial intentions to adopt a prevention focus.

Entrepreneurial motivation and entrepreneurship career intentions

Malebana (2014) has successfully used TPB model to examine entrepreneurship intention of students study in a South African rural university and reported that most of the students intend to start a business in the future. Hence, the relevant embedded theory underlying the research work on entrepreneurship intention is the planned behavior (García-Rodríguez et al., 2013, Nishimura and Tristán, 2011, Krueger et al., 2000). TPB model is a useful framework for intervening and guiding behavioral changes through evaluating the effectiveness of such behavioral performance (Ajzen, 2011, 2012). In recent years, researchers have popularly used the theory of planned behavior to examine and conduct research works on motivation and predicting entrepreneurial intentions under various contexts (Malebana, 2014; Fatoki, 2014); Otuya et al., 2013; Ritzsimmons and Douglas, 2011; Engle et al., 2010; Fatoki, 2010).

Research methodology and findings

Research Framework

The constructs of this study are based on the Theory of Planned Behavior and have been used in prediction of behavioral intention. The independent variables for this research are the entrepreneurial motivational factors which are made up of attitude towards self-employment, subjective norm, and behavioral control. Entrepreneurial intention is the dependent variable.

Questionnaire design, measurement and sample size

The survey questionnaire designed for this study is made up of three parts. Part A consists of questions requiring respondents

to answer about their background. Part B comprises of questions related to entrepreneurial motivational factors which are made up of attitude towards self-employment, subjective norm, and behavioral control. Students were required to indicate the level of agreement of their motivation to choose entrepreneurship as their career by circling on a scale 1 to 5 where 1= Strongly disagree 2= Disagree 3= Not Sure 4= Agree 5=Strongly agree for each of the respective statements. Part C is questions requiring them to rate the degree of entrepreneurship intention by indicating the level of agreement on scale 1 to 5 (1= Strongly disagree 2= Disagree 3= Not Sure 4= Agree 5=Strongly agree) through circling the number for each of the respective statements. The statements in Section B and Section C were adapted and modified from the work by Fatoki (2010) on the determination of motivations and obstacles of graduate entrepreneurial intention in South Africa. The questionnaire developed was pilot tested with a sample of 30 respondents to run factor reduction and to give an indication of the reliability of the dimension of measures of Part B and Part C of the questionnaire which were further refined prior to data collection.

The total number of students pursuing the degree course at Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia is around 14,000 students. Based on the table setting by Krejcie and Morgan (1970), the sample size for this study is 377. In this study, the sample size is 450 students. In this case, the sample size is slightly larger. Structured random sampling method was used to collect the data from the students. Students are from the various faculties, from the different races and genders, years of studies and seniority where they are being selected conveniently, randomly and in structured manner for this survey. The total number of duly completed questionnaires returned is 413 questionnaires (92%). This is sufficient because it meets the requirements of more than 70 to 80% return of the questionnaire (Cohen et al., 2007).

Scope of study and profile of respondents

This study was conducted inside the campus of a Malaysian university. Data from a total of 413 students were collected through questionnaire survey by structured random sampling method. The profile of the students

from the various faculties, different races and genders, years of studies and seniority is tabled in Table 1. The selection of the number of samples taken was proportionately based on the estimated number of students of the respective different categories in the population.

Table 1: Profile of the respondents (N=413)

Demographic	Categories	Frequency	(%)
Gender	a. Male	206	49.9
	b. Female	207	50.1
Age (years)	a. 19 to 20	180	43.6
	b. 21 to 22	109	26.4
	c. 23 to 27	124	30.0
Faculty	a. FPTPK	85	20.6
	b. FSKTM	58	14.0
	c. FKMP	82	19.9
	d. FKEE	78	18.9
	e. FKAAS	89	21.5
	f. FTE	21	5.1
Seniority at UTHM	a. Degree Year 1	121	29.6
	b. Degree Year 2	100	24.2
	c. Degree Year 3	103	24.9
	d. Degree Year 4	83	21.5
Race	a. Malay	231	55.9
	b. Chinese	100	24.2
	c. Indian	45	10.9
	d. International Student	37	9.0

Factor Analysis

Factor analyses (Principle Component Analysis with Varimax Rotation, tested for significant of KMO (Measure of Sampling Adequacy) with outliers of loading of less than 0.5 were removed to achieve clearer separation of factors, and only Eigenvalues of more than one accepted (Hair et al., 1998) were run separately using SPSS for the sets of motivational factors making up of attitude towards self-employment, subjective norm, behavioural control, and entrepreneurial

intention. The results of these factors and the respective reliability of the measures on student entrepreneurial motivation to choose entrepreneur as a career and on entrepreneurship career intention are tabled in Table 2 and Table 3.

Table 2: Factor and reliability analyses on motivation to choose entrepreneur as a career

Dimension on Motivation to Choose Entrepreneur as a Career	Factor Loading		
	Factor1	Factor2	Factor3
Behavioral control (Self-efficacy beliefs)			
1.To be my own boss	.821	.226	.152
2.To realize my dream	.697	.266	.204
3.Increase my prestige and status	.696	.300	.151
4.For my personal freedom	.694	.099	.356
5.Enjoy myself	.638	.306	.147
6.Good economic environment	.618	.368	.240
7.To challenge myself	.616	.337	.316
8.For my own satisfaction and growth	.577	.346	.295
Subjective norm (Tolerance for risk)			
1.To use the skill learned in the university	.136	.755	.332
2.Entrepreneurial family culture	.349	.750	-.010
3.Follow the example of someone that I admired	.410	.690	.084
4.To invest personal savings	.171	.671	.377
5.To maintain my family	.484	.655	.102
6.I enjoy taking risk	.212	.637	.195
Attitude (desirability) towards self-employment			
1.To provide job security	-.029	.381	.762
2.To provide employment	.196	.228	.735
3.To take advantage of my creative talent	.396	.054	.703
4.Earn a reasonable living	.476	.104	.683
5.Opportunities in the market	.462	.177	.613
Reliability (alpha)	0.90	0.87	0.85
Eigenvalue	4.60	4.05	3.39
Percentage Variance Explained	46.96	7.90	7.12
Total variance explained	61.98		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.	0.92		
Note: Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity Sig. at $p < 0.001$			

Table 2 shows that there are three factors that comprise the dimension on student's motivation to choose entrepreneur as a career with the respective reliability, Eigenvalue and variance explained for the respective factors. These are: behavioral

control, subjective norm and attitude towards self-employment. Similarly, in Table 3, it shows that there are 2 factors for the dimension of student's entrepreneur career intention. They are immediate term and future entrepreneurship intentions.

Table 3: Factor and reliability analyses on entrepreneurship career intention

Dimension of Entrepreneurship Career Intention	Factor Loading	
	Factor1	Factor2
Immediate Term Intention		
1.I prefer to be an entrepreneur rather than to be an employee in a company	.850	.057
2.I am prepared to do anything to be an entrepreneur	.793	.263
3.I am very interested to be an entrepreneur	.777	.245
4.I shall work very hard at becoming an entrepreneur	.717	.243
5.I have already prepared myself to become an entrepreneur	.707	.364
6.My professional goal is to become an entrepreneur	.704	.209
7.I'll put every effort to start and run my own business	.659	.336
8.I have thought seriously to start my own business after completing my studies	.652	.479
9.I want to be my own boss	.538	.399
Future Intention		
1.I'm determined to create a firm in the future	.292	.833
2.I will start my business in the next ten years	.076	.787
3.I have strong intention to start a business someday	.340	.713
Reliability (alpha)	0.92	0.78
Eigenvalue	5.14	2.99
Percentage Variance Explained	53.11	9.41
Total variance explained	62.57	
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.	0.91	
Note: Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity Sig. at $p < 0.001$		

Levels of attitude towards self-employment, subjective norm and behavioural control motivations, and entrepreneurial intention

The levels of attitude towards self-employment, subjective norm and behavioural control motivations, and entrepreneurial intention are tabulated in

Table 4.0. It shows the level of behavioural control entrepreneurial motivation is at very good level and the subjective norm and attitude on self employment entrepreneurial motivations are at good level. Entrepreneurship intention for both immediate term and future intention to be an entrepreneur are all rated as good.

Table 4: Mean of variables and levels of motivational factors (attitude towards self-employment, subjective norm, behavioral control) and entrepreneurship intention with their standard deviation

Variable	Dimension	No. of Items	Mean	Std. Dev.	Level
1 Entrepreneurial Motivational Factors	a. Behavioral control	8	3.81	0.72	Very Good
	b. Subjective norm (Tolerance for risk)	6	3.62	0.77	Good
	c. Attitude on self-employment (Desirability)	5	3.66	0.68	Good
2 Entrepreneurship Career Intention	a. Entrepreneur Immediate Term Career Intention	9	3.34	0.77	Good
	b. Entrepreneur Career Intention in the future	3	3.34	0.81	Good

(N=210); Range is based on Likert Scale of 1 to 5 where 1.00-2.33 = Low; 2.34 - 3.66 Good and 3.67 - 5.00 = Very Good)

Relationships of entrepreneurial motivation and entrepreneurship intention

Correlations analysis

Table 5 tabulates the correlations results among the variables studied. The results generally show that correlation exist between the factors of entrepreneurial motivation with either immediate or future entrepreneurship among the students at $p < .01$ level. The Correlation Coefficient measures the strength of the linear relationship between two variables. If $r = +.70$ or higher, this means the two variables under test are very strong positive relationship, $+.40$ to $+.69$ indicates strong positive relationship, and $+.30$ to $+.39$ indicates moderate positive relationship. In this case all the relationships under test are very strongly positively related between the

variables tested and significant at $p < 0.01$ level.

Regression of entrepreneurial motivation and entrepreneurship career intension

Table 6.0 tabulates the model summary of predicting the statistical relationships and explains the underlying relationships between entrepreneurial motivation and immediate entrepreneurship career intension. The coefficient of determination is a measure of the amount of variance in the dependent variable explained by the independent variables. The value of $.42$ indicates that 42% of the variance in the immediate entrepreneurship career intension (dependent variable) is explained by the 3 motivational factors. Behavioral control with standardized coefficient of

Table 5: Pearson Correlations (N=413) among variables

Dimension		Entrepreneurial motivation			Entrepreneurship intention	
		1a.Behavioral control	1b.Subjective norm	1c.Attitude on self-employment	2b.Immediate intention	2b.Future intention
1a	Behavioral control	1	.714**	.665**	.549**	.490**
1b	Subjective norm	.714**	1	.564**	.552**	.652**
1c	Attitude on self-employment	.665**	.564**	1	.576**	.498**
2a	Immediate intention	.549**	.552**	.576**	1	.616**
2b	Future intention	.490**	.652**	.498**	.616**	1

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

.137 is significant at $p < .05$, subjective control with value of .226 and attitude with value of .335 are significantly contributing to the variance explained. The F change value of $p < 0.001$ indicates variance was significantly explained by the model. Durbin Watson value of 1.76 of the model suggests that the result of regression model is valid. Table 7.0 shows that 45% of the variance of future entrepreneurship career intention (dependent variable) is explained by only the 2 motivational factors. Behavioral control

motivational factor is not significant. Subjective norm motivational factor indicates a standardized coefficient of .577 and is significant at $p < .001$, and attitude with value of .216 is significantly contributing to the variance explained at $p < .001$. The F change value is $p < 0.001$ which indicates variance was significantly explained by the model. The Durbin Watson value of 1.77 of the model suggests that the result of regression model is valid.

Table 6: The Effect of Entrepreneurial Motivation on Immediate Entrepreneurship Career Intention

Independent Variables	Beta standardized Model
Model Variables	
Behavioral control (self-efficacy beliefs)	.137**
Subjective norm (Tolerance for risk)	.266***
Attitude (Desirability) of self-employment	.335***
R ²	.42
Adj. R ²	.41
R ² Change	.42
F Change	96.68***
Durbin-Watson	1.76

Note: ***Sig. at .001 **Sig. at .05

Table 7: The Effect of Entrepreneurial Motivation on Future Entrepreneurship Career Intention

Independent Variables	Beta standardized Model
Model Variables	
Behavioral control (self-efficacy beliefs)	-.066
Subjective norm (Tolerance for risk)	.577***
Attitude (Desirability) of self-employment	.216***
R ²	.45
Adj. R ²	.45
R ² Change	.45
F Change	112.14***
Durbin-Watson	1.77
Note: ***Sig. at .001	

Discussion

Samuel et al., (2013) in their assessment of entrepreneurship intention among Sunyani Polytechnic Marketing Students in Ghana reported that demographic variables such as gender, age, religion affect responses given by respondents. Thus, in the present study, data on the gender, age, seniority at the University, faculty and race are being collected in a structured manner in order to reduce their influences on the findings. Gyamfi (2014) reported that entrepreneurship courses are important and have a significant effect on reducing graduate unemployment. Samuel et al., (2013) suggested that entrepreneurial education must be introduced into the tertiary institutions which are not currently offering entrepreneurship courses. In response to equipping students with competencies for job creation and self-employment, universities are offering a wide range of entrepreneurship development activities, and Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia (UTHM), a Public University in Malaysia is of no exception. To nurture entrepreneur, UTHM like most other universities is active in seeking practices and re-orientating students to embrace a more clearly defined element of personal and career development for students besides supporting its capacity building and academia development of the university. These include the creating of opportunity for practice of key

entrepreneurial behaviors through Centre of Excellence, the engagement of corporate entrepreneurship development, entrepreneurship curriculum besides the requirement that all undergraduates need to take at least a subject on entrepreneurship in the first or second year of their respective degree programme.

The levels of motivational factors (attitude towards self-employment, subjective norm, and behavioral control) and entrepreneurial intention are rated good. This is contrary to the finding by Fatoki (2010) where he reported weak results. To overcome low entrepreneurial intention African students, Fatoki (2010) suggested that motivators must be reinforced and the organizing practical trainings for students involved in entrepreneurship education or who would like to be involved in entrepreneurial practices, non-governmental organizations should be well funded through local and international grants to help with the training need of graduate entrepreneurship, training seminars can also be organized regularly to students as well as a "learning from peers" or mentorship approach can be instituted by government agencies to help students to get involved in entrepreneurship trainings at tertiary institutions. Thus, this supports the fact that universities entrepreneurship and curricular development are crucial to assist students to acquire increased understanding of entrepreneurship. Other researchers also

reported that entrepreneurship education programs have been able to develop students' entrepreneurial capabilities and improve their success as an entrepreneur (Akmaliah et al., 2012; Cheng et al., 2009; Jaafar and Aziz, 2008). In this sense, this study has reemphasized the argument by Liñán et al., (2013) that individuals having the necessary entrepreneurial competencies will favor entrepreneurial behavior if those close to them are supportive and valued entrepreneurship positively. This supported the call by Kim-Soon et al., (2013) that those youths who are really serious to start and own a business as would be entrepreneurs be identified and targeted to develop through entrepreneurship interventions initiatives.

Concluding remarks

Entrepreneurship is crucial to new business start-ups, developing existing businesses, job creation and economic growth. Higher learning institutions are integrating entrepreneurship skills, knowledge and behaviors across its curriculum. The level of behavioral control of entrepreneurial motivation at UTHM is very good, subjective norm and attitude towards entrepreneurship are both at good level.

Correlation analysis and regression analysis showed that strength of motivation in choosing entrepreneurship as a career option among the students is related with entrepreneurship intention. Statistically, students' strength of entrepreneurial motivation and intention is significantly and positively related. The entrepreneurial motivation factors affecting career intention to be an entrepreneur are made up of social norms (individual perception of the significance of how others value and support the establishment of a new business), subjective norm (individual perceptions of their abilities and tolerance to perform entrepreneurial tasks), and attitude towards behavior (individual awareness of the importance and value of entrepreneurship) entrepreneurial motivations. Subjective norm (tolerance for risk) and attitude

(desirability) of self-employment are significantly related to the student's immediate and future intention to be an entrepreneur. However, behavioral control entrepreneurial motivation is found to be significantly related to the student's immediate career intention but not significantly related to the student's future entrepreneurship career intention in this study. This could be argued using Krueger et al., (2000) argument that individuals with high internal locus of control, social norms are less predictive of intentions. Behavioral control influences an individual's intention of action basing perception of degree of difficulty of performance of that specific behavior (Ajzen, 1991). As mentioned earlier, it is conceptually similar to Social Cognitive Theory explained by Bandura (1997) about an individual's belief in their abilities to perform a specified action.

Universities in Malaysia like UTHM have put much effort to raise the profile of graduate entrepreneurship and to attract graduate students to seriously engage in entrepreneurship. The antecedents of entrepreneurship intention should be embedded into entrepreneurship curriculum and pedagogical strategy. Entrepreneurship is the central to future career, economy and social development. Creating opportunity for practice of key entrepreneurial behaviors is seen as being crucial in cultivating entrepreneurial behaviors. This study also supported the call that those youths who are really serious to start and own a business as would be entrepreneurs should be identified and targeted to develop through entrepreneurship interventions' initiatives.

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