



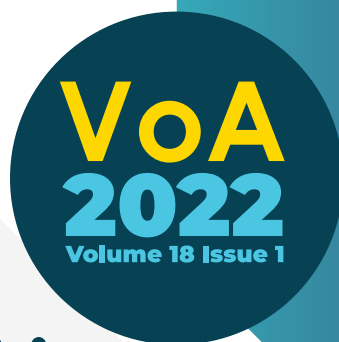
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TABLE of CONTENTS

TAX AVOIDANCE AND MANAGEMENT FRAUD IN MALAYSIAN PUBLIC LIMITED COMPANIES: CONCEPTUAL PAPER Roshidah Safeei	1 -13
RELIGIOSITY AND ATTITUDE INFLUENCE ON MUSLIMS' INTENTION TO VISIT HOMESTAYS IN SABAH, MALAYSIA Azrin Jalsai ¹ & Sylvia Nabila Azwa Ambad ²	14 -28
MEDICAL HEALTH INSURANCE: A CROSS-SECTIONAL STUDY OF FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE FINAL YEAR UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT'S INTENTION Muhammad Danial Kamarulzaman ¹ , Mohd Nazir Rabun ^{2*} & Mustaqim Mohd Halim ³	29 - 41
APPLICATION OF GOLDEN RATIO IN INCREASING THE APPEAL OF PROPORTIONS IN DESIGN Azmir Mamat Nawil ¹ , Wan Zaiyana Mohd Yusof ² , Hafeezur Rahmaan Mohd Yassin ³	42 - 48
THE DOMINANT OF VALUES AND LIFESTYLES (VALS) BETWEEN GENERATIONS IN MALAYSIA Ahmad Subhi Zolkafly	49 - 57
CASHLESS SOCIETY IN CAMPUS: STUDENT'S USAGE AND LEVEL OF AWARENESS Nurul Azwa Binti Abdul Rais ¹ , Noorezatty Mohd Yusop ² , Syamila Nabilah Binti Sabtu ³ , Nur Elya Ezzaty Binti Shamsul Bahrin ⁴	58- 66
A STUDY OF STUDENTS' PERCEPTION OF ONLINE LEARNING CLASSES BASED ON MARS MODEL IN UTM SEREMBAN 3 CAMPUS Muhammad Akif Zakwan Amir ¹ , Abdul Hakim Mat Luwi ² , Farah Adilla Ab Rahman ³	67 - 80
THE DOMINANT TRAITS FOR WOMEN TO BECOME ACADEMIC LEADERS IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS: A CONCEPT PAPER Nur Idayu Badrolhisam ¹ , Nur'Ain Achim ² & Norhayati Omar ³	81- 90
THE INFLUENCE OF CUSTOMER INCIVILITY TOWARDS DEVIANT BEHAVIOUR: A CASE STUDY OF CASUAL RESTAURANT FRONTLINE EMPLOYEES IN THE KLANG VALLEY, MALAYSIA Tasnimul Islam ¹ & Fahmi Sarin ²	91 -99
ASSESSING USAGE OF METACOGNITIVE ONLINE READING STRATEGY AND ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH STUDENTS' COMPREHENSION ACHIEVEMENT IN THE NEW NORM Saripah Anak Sinas ¹ , Suthagar A/L Narasuman ² and Sandra Phek-Lin Sim ³	100 - 115
INFLUENCING FACTORS OF CUSTOMER LOYALTY IN THE MALAYSIAN AIRLINE INDUSTRY USING STRUCTURAL EQUATION MODELLING (SEM) Haslinda Ab Malek ^{1*} , Nurhamiza Haris ² , Siti Sara Wendri ³ , Sharifah Najihah Syed Faisal ⁴ & Isnewati Ab Malek ⁵	116 - 128
THE ACCEPTANCE OF ISLAMIC DEPOSIT PRODUCTS AMONG NON-MUSLIM BANK CUSTOMERS IN MALAYSIA Nurul Afidah Mohamad Yusof ^{1*} , Khoo Siew Teng ² , Khor Siew Yi ³ , Teh Shu Yi ⁴ , Webster Ho Min Zhang ⁵ , and Wong Soon Seng ⁶	129 - 141

MEASURING THE VALUE ADDED INTELLECTUAL CAPITAL ON FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE: A CASE OF MALAYSIAN GREEN TECHNOLOGY COMPANIES Noor Sharida Badri Shah ¹ & Noor Azuddin Yakob ²	142 - 157
THE MEDIATING ROLES OF CRITICAL PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS TOWARDS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN JOB CHARACTERISTICS AND JOB OUTCOMES: A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK Emi Normalina Omar ¹ , Nur Atiqah Rochin Demong ² , Lailatul Faizah Abu Hassan ³ , Narehan Hassan ⁴ , Anisah Alwi ⁵	158 - 168
A STUDY ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CUSTOMER SATISFACTION TOWARDS SERVICE QUALITY IN A THREE-STAR HOTELS IN PERLIS Nurul Labanihuda Abdull Rahman ¹ , Syaza Syahirah Samsu ² , Muhammad Shyazzwan Ibrahim Brian ³ , Nurul Izzati Idrus ⁴	169 - 181
A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR ENTREPRENEURIAL PERSONALITY AND ENTREPRENEURIAL POTENTIAL TRAITS FOR TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (TVET) STUDENTS IN MALAYSIA Norffadhillah Rofa ¹ , Rohana Ngah ²	182 - 197
HOW GOOD IS SOCIAL EQUALITY IN THE PENINSULAR MALAYSIA; A CROSS-SECTIONAL STUDY AMONG BUMIPUTERA COMMUNITY Mohd Nazir Rabun ¹ , Abdul Jalil Mohamed Ali ² & Nuraisyah Chua Abdullah ³	198 - 210
THE IMPLEMENTATION OF MARKOV CHAIN TO PREDICT MARKET SHARE SMARTPHONE CUSTOMERS IN SURABAYA DURING PANDEMIC COVID-19 Hilyatun Nuha ¹ , Wiwin Widiasih ² & Mustofa Wahyu Romadon ³	211 - 225
PEMBANGUNAN KEUSAHAWANAN ASNAF BERDASARKAN KERANGKA NLP: SATU KAJIAN AWAL Abd Latif Abdul Rahman ¹ , Zuraidah Arif ² , Zati Atiqah Mohamad Tanuri ³ , Hasniza Hassim ⁴ , Che Halimah Hassan ⁵ & Norazliza Amil ⁶	226- 234
ANALYSIS OF PRODUCT DESIGN IN DEVELOPING LEARNING AIDS FOR DYSLEXIC CHILDREN Siti Nur Solehah ¹ , Wan Noor Faaizah ² , Hasnul Azwan Azizan ³	235- 249

A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR ENTREPRENEURIAL PERSONALITY AND ENTREPRENEURIAL POTENTIAL TRAITS FOR TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (TVET) STUDENTS IN MALAYSIA

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ABSTRACT

This concept paper aims to study the determinants of entrepreneurship potential among Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) program students. Recent policy has included TVET to focus on entrepreneurship to cultivate and breed more students' entrepreneurs and graduates' entrepreneurs. Nevertheless, this program is not well enough to equip and support students to fit in paid employment careers as competent-skilled workers and job creators. Prior studies found that entrepreneurial potential can be developed through the entrepreneurial personality traits of individuals involved in Entrepreneurship Education. The components of entrepreneurial personality traits proved as the traits that can lead students to develop entrepreneurial potential. This paper aims to contribute to understanding determinants that affect the entrepreneurial potential of TVET students' programs. Many researches focused on entrepreneurial intention rather than potential studies, and it is conducted in non-Malaysia settings. SPSS will be used to analyse the hypothesized relationships in the proposed conceptual framework. It is hoped that the findings of this study will shed light on the existing literature of entrepreneurial potential among TVET students, specifically the entrepreneurial potential studies from an entrepreneurship academia perspective. Therefore, the paper attempts to explore this context in Malaysia's settings.

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1. Introduction

National Entrepreneurship Policy or *Dasar Keusahawanan Negara (DKN)* (2019) was established to inspire an entrepreneurial ecosystem that tapped entrepreneurial potential in entrepreneurship (Khazi, 2019; Shariff, 2019). The government has strategized and allocated various initiatives in order to create student entrepreneurs and graduate entrepreneurs. These initiatives included providing funds and grants, training and development, infrastructures, technology, marketing accessibility, social entrepreneurship, and commercialization to promote and assist entrepreneurship, especially for student entrepreneurs (DKN, 2019; Khazi, 2019; Shariff, 2019). Previous studies have shown that entrepreneurship education positively impacts students' entrepreneurial potential (Boldureanu, Ionescu & Bercu, 2020; Simanjuntak, Awwaliyah, Hayati & Artanto, 2016).

Prior research has indicated that students' entrepreneurial potential is positively impacted by entrepreneurship education (Boldureanu, et.al, 2020; Simanjuntak, et.al, 2016). It is essential to explore entrepreneurial potential as it will provide a predictor of success in business and intention to be an entrepreneur (Souza, Santos, Lima, Cruz, Tavares Da, & Rojas, 2016). Entrepreneurial potential can further strengthen with appropriate assistance and support to carry out the business venture (Carsrud, Brännback, Elfving, & Brandt, 2017; Block, Sandner, & Spiegel, 2015; Rey-Marti, Porcar, Mas-Tur, 2015). As concluded in DKN (2019) in Shariff (2019) stated that all education sectors had been merged with entrepreneurial education, including Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET). It is a program that the Ministry of Education originated to provide employment options for technically skilled students. This is in line with the Government's aim towards high-income nations that capitalize the high technology that fulfills the recent demand-supply disparity in numerous industries with the employment of approximately 3.3 million competent workforces (Economic Planning Unit-EPU, 2018; Nawang, Mamat, & Sa'at, 2018). The education system of TVET is essential in crafting entrepreneurial potential via entrepreneurial traits. The entrepreneurial traits would complement the required competent human resources, modern tools and equipment would meet the student's entrepreneurial needs, materials, stimulating workshop environment, and adequate financing (Shodipe, & Ohanu, 2020; McCallum, 2019; Oviawe, 2018).

Indeed, the TVET program is developed to train students to be competent employees, and they are exposed to entrepreneurship through entrepreneurship education (Hassan, Foong, & Ismail, 2019). The education curriculum would support students who are trained with specific skills embedded with entrepreneurship education to help students embark on their future endeavours either to join industries or be entrepreneurs and as job makers. TVET skills such as welding and fabrication, electrical installation, piping and fitting, and metal works are embodiments of TVET and, as such, capable recovered and important to support the economy (Deebom, & Dokubo, 2017). These attainments of skills and standards of training will enhance the national economy to be sustained and recovered.

Although the TVET program aims to train students to be competent employees (Hassan et al., 2019), employers questioned students' skills and competency (Kenayathulla, Ahmad, & Idris, 2019). It was found mismatched as required by the industry (Kintu, Kitainge, & Ferej, 2019; Ratnata, 2016; Ernest et al., 2016). The TVET graduates can also be offered good income due to their minimal qualification and denied better salaries (Wei & Jamil, 2019; Ratnata, 2016). As TVET graduates struggle to secure a proper job with a good salary (Olukayode Olusola, 2020), it is important to encourage TVET graduates to explore entrepreneurial opportunities, especially with their practical skills. Based on the report by Ministry of Education, only 1.3 percent TVET graduates chose to be an entrepreneur in 2014 and further decreased to 0.6 percent in 2017 (Ismail, Adnan, Masek, Hassan, Hashim, & Ismail, 2019). Ismail et al. (2019) stated that several TVET graduates who

venture into entrepreneurship are only 2 percent of the total number of yearly graduates. Global Entrepreneurship Monitor-GEM 2014 (Arafat & Saleem, 2017) further reported that only 50.37 percent of Malaysian graduates perceived entrepreneurship as a profitable career option. This phenomenon is probably limiting the tendency of young people to venture into entrepreneurship.

A recent study displayed that entrepreneurial potential is important for students in order to determine their future action (Tu, Lin, Chen, Li, & Li, 2019; Esfandiar, Sharifi-Tehrani, Pratt, & Altinay, 2019) but it was carried out only public universities' graduates (Al-Jubari, Hassan, & Liñán, 2019; Arranz, Arroyabe, & Fdez. De Arroyabe, 2019; Thakur, 2019; Ambad & Damit, 2016; Nowiński, Haddoud, Lančarič, Egerová, & Czeglédi, 2019). It is authenticated by other studies which indicated that Higher Learning Institution (HLI) graduates whom high entrepreneurial personality traits will exhibit more entrepreneurial behavior, which could, in turn, lead them to entrepreneurial potential (Nowiński et al., 2019; Zahari, Tamyez & Azizan, 2018; Rofa, Ngah & Wahab, 2015). Furthermore, students from HLIs have been identified as the best potential individuals to become entrepreneurs because of the availability of resources towards entrepreneurship (Olugbola, 2017; Dissanayake, 2013). However, there is no specific way to identify the entrepreneurial potential among young students and graduates (Nabi, Liñán, Fayolle, Krueger, & Walmsley, 2017). Indeed, identifying the entrepreneurial potential is challenging, and even by explaining the entrepreneur's behaviours, it does not portray a real entrepreneurial potential (Anjum, Ramzani, & Nazar, 2019; Marlow, Hicks, & Treanor, 2019).

Previous studies regarding entrepreneurial personality traits have been highlighted as it performs an important role in the entrepreneurial potential of students being entrepreneurs in the future, and even it is in many terms (Zeffane, 2013). However, only a few studies have been conducted on TVET institutions regarding entrepreneurial personality traits (Hassan, Foong, & Ismail, 2019; Bagheri & Pihie, 2011). Entrepreneurial personality traits showed mixed results on entrepreneurial potential (Obschonka, & Stuetzer, 2017). Nevertheless, an individual's personality traits would encourage students to decide on their future actions and decision-making (Barba-Sánchez, & Atienza-Sahuquillo, 2018). Thus, the different entrepreneurial personality traits of students might lead to a different outcome of entrepreneurial potential.

Students who were exposed to entrepreneurial education and engaged in entrepreneurial activities implied entrepreneurial potential. The entrepreneurial potential aforesaid is a good indicator of understanding the readiness of an individual to engage in entrepreneurship activities (Neneh, 2019; Olugbola, 2017; Che Embi, Jaiyeoba, & Yussof, 2019). Hence, it has been broadly studied at HLIs as it provides useful information about students' inclination for being entrepreneurs (Shamsudin, Mamun, Nawi, Nasir, & Zakaria, 2017; Kamaruddin, Othman, Hassan, Zaki, & Sum, 2017; Varamäki, Joensuu, Tornikoski, & Viljamaa, 2015). Current students have a high potential to get involved in entrepreneurship. They are brave decision-makers, strict, risk-taker, adaptable, money-oriented, brave in making decisions, and high in discipline (Herawati, Yuliana, Hidayat, & Ardi, 2019). As TVET program is offered at tertiary level, few studies agreed that they are highly potential to be an entrepreneur (Kissi, Ahadzie, Debrah, & Adjei-Kumi, 2020; Venkataraman, 2019; Ismail et al. 2019).

In order to embrace entrepreneurship, students should possess entrepreneurial personality traits such as the need for achievement, innovativeness, propensity to take risks, tolerance to ambiguity, and locus of control (Colakoglu & Gozukara; 2016). Although minimal studies are conducted on entrepreneurial potential from the TVET program, the exposure obtained had made them have a strong potential to become entrepreneurs. Therefore, this study focuses on

exploring the entrepreneurial potential of TVET program students to include entrepreneurial personality traits. From this point of view, the present study aims to study how entrepreneurial potential towards entrepreneurial personality traits among TVET program students.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Entrepreneurial Potential

The entrepreneurial potential is similar to enterprise potential, which is about the tendency of an individual to be an entrepreneur (Terek, Nikolic, Cockalo, Bozic, and Nastasic, 2017). The youngster and graduates were identified as more likely to have entrepreneurial potential when they start a business than those who had lower entrepreneurial potential (Zeffane, 2012). A study supported by Israr and Saleem (2018) elaborates personality traits indirectly influence student's entrepreneurial potential to start a new venture. Education institutions can produce employees in the future (Kintu, Kitainge, & Ferej, 2019), and students must be exposed to entrepreneurship education (Nowiński et al., 2019; Kintu et al., 2019). Students exposed to entrepreneurship education are usually equipped with certain entrepreneurial qualities such as active, flexible, adaptive, innovative, problem-solving skills, adaptive and creativity (Wahid, Ibrahim, & Hashim, 2016; Vodă, & Florea, 2019) and has entrepreneurial potential. Application of entrepreneurial potential initiated by entrepreneurial action may appeal to students' intention to choose as entrepreneurs and establish their venture for their future career (Demirtas, Karaca & Ozdemir, 2017; Karabulut, 2016). The steps taken by governments and policymakers are responsible for stimulating the entrepreneurial drives among the youth population, as it is elaborated in the past studies as a booster to entrepreneurial potential (Zeffane, 2013; Zeffane, 2012). Therefore, this study will focus on the entrepreneurial potential of TVET students and their entrepreneurial personality traits.

2.2 Entrepreneurial Personality Traits

Many researchers practice different terminologies when assessing personality traits by defining it bears similarity with entrepreneurial quality (Abd Rani, Mustafa Kamil, & Abd Rani; 2017) and entrepreneurial motivation (Alam, Kousar & Rehman, 2019). In the past 70 years ago, research on personality traits has evolved (Boyle, 2010), and the diversity of terms had made to entrepreneurial personality traits (Junid, Ngah, Osman, Lajin, Mohd, Halil & Abdul, 2017; Sandirasegarane, Sutermaister, Gill, Volz, & Mehta, 2016). Therefore, entrepreneurial personality traits are much needed to be encouraged by university students to develop their entrepreneurial potential and entrepreneurial intention (Chaudhary, 2017). These characteristics are reliable in motivating an individual to be an entrepreneur (Zeffane, 2013; Litunnen, 2000). Therefore, entrepreneurial personality traits are worth examining potential entrepreneurs and non-potential entrepreneurs (Chaudary, 2017). The combination of elements such as locus of control, creativity, and motivation (Ngoc Khuong & Huu An, 2016) and entrepreneurial alertness (Karabulut, 2016) discovered a significant effect on entrepreneurial potential (Karabulut, 2016). Students with substantial personality traits indicate the tendency to become entrepreneurs rather than those minor indications (Gozukara et al., 2016). As suggested by Timmon, Smollen, & Dingge (2000), these elements are adopted and adapted for this study. Thus, this study uses entrepreneurial personality traits to refer to individual personalities to become entrepreneurs.

a) Locus of Control

Asante and Affum-Osei (2019) explained that hard-working, decision-maker, problem-solver, efforts, and persuasion belong to the individual with a high internal locus. They do accept what they can control their life events because of their attitudes. In the meantime, external locus of control is when an individual believes that their perspectives result from external factors like luck, fate, chance, and the people around them (Lowes & Lin, 2015). Few studies have narrated

that there is a connection between both elements that significantly impact students' lives (Annisa, Tama, & Bashore, 2021; Ullah, Ramzan, Usman, & Qamar, 2019). Their decisions or choices are interrelated to academic performance, classroom behaviors, future career, career development, interpersonal relationships, health, and they are affected by it (Tsuda, Tanaka, & Matsuda, 2020). In the education environment, researchers found that more internal locus of control was connected with more significant academic achievement, social maturity, and independence, struggle, self-motivated behaviors (Ernst, Blood, & Beery, 2017; Nowicki & Strickland, 1973). However, if students indicated an unstable locus of control, the element is not static and can change over time with support and encouragement of appropriate behaviors (Annisa et al. 2021; Effendi, 2017; Nowicki & Strickland, 1973).

b) Entrepreneurial Innovativeness

Students innovativeness' is found significantly and strongly correlated to the 'attitude' of engineering students, which leads to their entrepreneurial potential (Shodipe, & Ohanu, 2020; Law, & Breznik, 2017). Students may act as innovative people when thinking about a new thing and doing a new thing (Law et al., 2017). Since entrepreneurship education has embedded with technological training in TVET program, it is crucial to enhance students' innovation skills in an increasingly challenging environment (Kissi et al., 2020; Hidayat et al., 2019). Entrepreneurial innovativeness has proved the most key instrument to promote a country's economic growth (Abdulrasheed, Suleiman, & Olalekan, 2019).

c) Entrepreneurial Alertness

Students may read and discuss the current information. These activities are all sources of entrepreneurial alertness of individuals (Aviram, 2010). Entrepreneurial alertness refers to venture awareness of common knowledge and business environment information (Hu, & Ye, 2017). However, it differs on students' mental ability to recognize business opportunities (Karabulut, 2016). Many researchers supported that entrepreneurial alertness contributed to individual judgment too, and this could encourage the development of entrepreneurial potential and upcoming business attitude (Pérez-López, González-López, & Rodríguez-Ariza, 2016). It is found as the heart of being an entrepreneur, which is significantly indicated in the study conducted on Chinese students (Ho, Uy, Kang, & Chan, 2018; Hu et al., 2017). Therefore, entrepreneurial alertness is predicted to affect potential entrepreneurs (Westhead, & Solesvik, 2016; Ho et al., 2018).

d) Need for Achievement

The need for achievement performs as the most persuasive predictor, which leads an individual to be creative and innovative when starting a new business (Qazi, Qureshi, Raza, Khan, & Qureshi, 2020). It is also an element observed to measure students' entrepreneurial potential (Voda et al., 2018; Karabulut, 2016; Chaudry, 2017; Gozukara, 2016). The need for achievement defines as a driver of an individual to be successful and enthusiastic to succeed (Karabulut, 2016). The higher each student, the greater it signifies a strong desire for entrepreneurial potential (Karabulut, 2016) compared to low need for achievement displayed low expectations, lack of capability, lack of self-pity, and insufficient encouragement (Voda & Florea, 2019). A study examined the entrepreneurial motivations of engineering students towards their entrepreneurial intention and found it directly affected the students' entrepreneurial potential. (Voda et.al, 2019; Barba-Sánchez, et.al. 2018).

According to the model developed for this purpose, it is assumed that entrepreneurial personality traits positively affect entrepreneurial potential. Figure 1 indicated the proposed conceptual framework developed according to the above discussion.

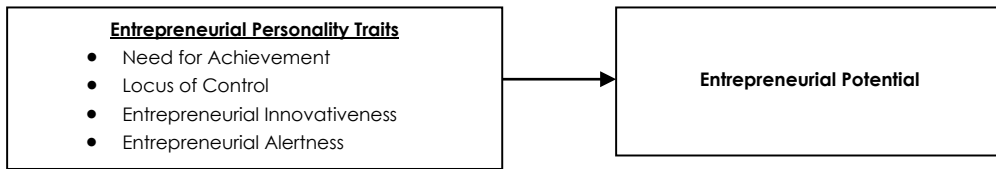


Figure 1 Proposed Conceptual Framework

3. Methodology

The purpose of this study is to explore the relationship between entrepreneurial potential and entrepreneurial personality traits. The primary data for independent and dependent variables were collected through an online survey done using a structured questionnaire. The questionnaires were addressed to 500 students who have taken entrepreneurship course. The study will be conducted on vocational colleges in Malaysia by using a convenience sampling method was used in the present study. The questionnaire will be sent to valid e-mail addresses of 81 vocational colleges in Malaysia. Therefore, 500 responses need to be gathered and analysed. Two hundred fifty-two completed valid responses are received for data analysis representing 49.6 percent of the response rate. The response rate was also considered acceptable compared to other similar studies. In Shah, Amjed, & Jaboob's (2020) study, received about 41.2 percent of responses in the survey managed to study entrepreneurial intention among graduates in Oman. Therefore, the response rate of 49.6 percent obtained from this study is still considered acceptable.

The entrepreneurial potential was measured using a five-item instrument based on the studies by Gozukara et al. (2016) and Van Gelderen, Brand, Van Praag, Bodewes, Poutsma, & Van Gils (2008). Innovativeness was measured through eight items adapted from Mueller and Thomas (2001). Need for achievement was measured based on Kristiansen and Indarti's (2004). Internal Locus of Control was measured using Mueller and Thomas's (2001). Finally, entrepreneurial alertness was measured based on the work of Kaish and Gilad (1991). All responses were measured using five-point scale items, ranging from "1=strongly disagree" to "5=strongly agree". Table 1 indicated the constructs measurement items for the variables.

Table 1:
The Constructs Measurement Items

No	Elements	Items
Entrepreneurial Potential		
1		I am ready to do anything to be an entrepreneur.
2		My ultimate goal is to be a professional entrepreneur.
3		I am determined to create a business venture in the future.
4		I do not have doubts about starting my own business in the future.
5		I have a strong intention to start a business in the future.
6		My academic qualification will contribute to my interest in starting a business.
Entrepreneurial Personality Traits		
7	Needs of	I am going to do lots of hard work for difficult tasks relating to my studies
8	Achievement	I will try hard to get good results in my studies.
9		I will be responsible for every added assignment assigned to me.
10		I will perform the assignments better than my friends.

11		I often put pressure on myself to achieve success.
12	Locus of Control	I will achieve success whether I am in the right place or at the right time.
13		To a great extent, my life is controlled by accidental happenings.
14		When I get what I want, it is usually because I am lucky.
15		My life is determined by my own actions.
16		When I get what I want, it is usually because I worked hard for it.
17		Either success or failure in my life, it depends on my ability.
18	Entrepreneurial Innovation	I often help my friends to create designs for assignments that involve creativity.
19		I feel more satisfied with mastering a skill than coming up with a new idea.
20		I prefer assignments that have never been done by others.
21		I will complete an assignment exactly the way it was taught to me.
22		I like to run an experiment using the same sources but in different ways.
23	Entrepreneurial Alertness	I read news, or magazines, regularly to start my own business.
24		I browse the Internet every day to get ideas to start my own future business.
25		I always keep an eye out for new business ideas while gathering information.
26		I like to think about a business activity during my semester break which is relevant with my studies.
27		I can think about ideas of business only in semester breaks before initiating the actual business venture.

4. Conclusion

This paper summarizes the relationship between entrepreneurial personality traits of TVET program students and has discussed unique entrepreneurial characteristics that have a clear impact on entrepreneurial potential. The study shows the relationship between entrepreneurial personality traits towards entrepreneurial potential. Students who have positive entrepreneurial personality traits should be encouraged more towards a business venture than those who do not. Thus, entrepreneurial personality traits are a focal point for educators and trainers to encourage and support entrepreneurial potential by experiencing a good impact and an enriched venturing involvement for their future careers. As the TVET program has merged with entrepreneurship education, these students have been exposed and significantly affect entrepreneurial potentials. Entrepreneurial potential plays a critical role in entrepreneurship practice. Almost study was to be known about the entrepreneurial possibility among students in venture creation, especially from vocational colleges. This paper aims to formulate a model of student entrepreneurial potential. Generally, the conceptual paper draws on potential models by reviewing the literature, particularly to identify gaps. Based on these findings, a new conceptual model is formulated. There is less research regarding entrepreneurial potential and entrepreneurial personality traits to be found conducted in Malaysia setting to explain students' potential to become an entrepreneur, although many research has been managed in HLLs for entrepreneurial purposes (Anjum, Heidler, Amoozegar, & Anees, 2021; Tomy, & Pardede, 2020; Wegner, Thomas, Teixeira, & Maehler, 2019; Çera, Çepel, Zakutna, & Rozsa, 2018; Liu, 2017; Mahendra, Djatmika, & Hermawan, 2017).

Indeed, TVET is an educational training program designed to equip youths, adults, employed, and unemployed with knowledge and commercial, practical skills, competencies, and attitudes to participate in the work environment. Effective TVET program would capacitate graduates to be self-dependent and job creators (Nasser & Rashed, 2018; Nugraha, Kencanasari, Komari, & Kasda, 2020). UNESCO (2017) in Forcher-Mayr, and Mahlke (2020) has acknowledged that

education is considered the key to effective development strategies. Thus, TVET is a necessary master key that can lessen poverty, promote peace, conserve the environment, improve the quality of life for all and help achieve sustainable development (Rieckmann, 2018). Hence, the hands-on TVET program with education and entrepreneurial education is imperative for national transformation. Therefore, any nation desirous of change must vigorously pursue the TVET program integrated with entrepreneurial competencies. TVET program has carried an imperious role in evolving Malaysia's economy where it was established business, and it has been creating employment openings for 826,100 individuals (Berita Harian, 2018).

For future research has been the quintessence of comparing students from different streams of studies, such as academic and non-academic. Many researchers recommended that future studies examine contexts such as entrepreneurial institution climate and the role of lecturers in promoting potential entrepreneurial activities in the TVET institution. However, in few prior empirical studies, the entrepreneurial potential is correlated with entrepreneurial personality traits, but it may have a different impact. As one of the earliest studies examining the antecedents to entrepreneurial potential among TVET program students in an emerging economy, this study provides preliminary findings on entrepreneurial personality traits on entrepreneurial potential. It is hoped that the study will conduct more research to add richer information and contribute to the literature on entrepreneurial potential, specifically in the context of emerging economies. These extensive explanations would provide informative input for academia, TVET program developers, and training providers who struggle to nurture and boost their TVET students' entrepreneurial potential. Thus, learning institutions may benefit from this study to amplify their entrepreneurship education content as the significance of entrepreneurial personality traits.

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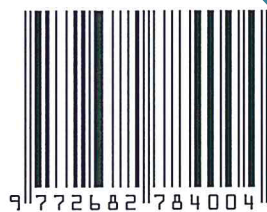
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