

The role of structural support in predicting entrepreneurial intention: Insights from Vietnam

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ABSTRACT

By adopting the theory of planned behaviour, our study develops research model to analyse the effect of structural support on the entrepreneurial cognitive process among university students in Vietnam. Authors employ a meta-analytic path analysis with a sample of 2218 students at 14 universities in Vietnam in order to show that although structural support has positive effect on attitude towards entrepreneurship and perceived behavioural control, it also has negative influence on subjective norms and entrepreneurial intention. Interestingly, different with some previous studies, authors investigate the significant and direct relationship between subjective norms and entrepreneurial intention in the economic transitional context of Vietnam. Moreover, analogously to many researches adapting the planned behavioural control, attitude toward entrepreneurship is still seen as the strongest influencing factor on entrepreneurial intention, followed by perceived behavioural control and subjective norms.

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1. Introduction

Entrepreneurship is becoming a worldwide phenomenon as its positive contribution to economic development across the globe. Guerrero *et al.* (2008) state that entrepreneurship is seen as an innovative and creative process, which play the potential role in creating added and new value to products/services, increasing productivity, creating new job opportunities, revitalizing and diversifying markets, improving social welfare, and developing the national economy. Historically, the establishment of new market, the relationship with profit orientation and capital investment (Schumpeter, 1975) led to the beliefs of economics regarding to the responsibility of entrepreneurship for economic growth (Cole, 1965). Thus, entrepreneurs play a crucial role in developing the national economy, well-being of a society (Iakovleva *et al.*, 2011), innovation and employment (Kelley *et al.*, 2011). The reasons of why students do or do not intend to run their own business have been interested by many researchers in entrepreneurship literature (Iakovleva *et al.*, 2011; Moriano *et al.*, 2012; Krueger *et al.*, 2000; Kolvereid, 1996a). Bird and Jellinek (1988) described entrepreneurial intention as the level of cognitive awareness related to set up a new business. While Krueger and Brazeal (1994) defined entrepreneurial intention as the intent to set up a

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new business, or the intent to be self-employed (Douglas & Shepherd, 2000) or the intent to own a business (Crant, 1996), there are many reasons that might become either big obstacles or motivated factors to transform this intent becoming a reality.

Recently, factors affecting on the intention to start a business have also been interested by many researches. For example, the influence of personal traits (Akanbi, 2013; Antoncic & Prodan, 2008), personal motivation (Camelo-Ordaz et al., 2016; Kautonen et al., 2013; Tkachev & Kolvereid, 1999), contextual environment (Bogatyreva et al., 2018; Baughn et al., 2006; Miranda et al., 2017), entrepreneurial education and educational background (Walter & Block, 2016; Bae et al., 2014; Patzelt et al., 2014) or personal background (Bird & Brush, 2002; Boden & Nucci, 2000; Camelo-Ordaz et al., 2016; Long & Quan, 2018) on entrepreneurial intention. However, Turker and Selcuk (2009) argue that most studies only focus on examining the role of some internal factors such as personal characteristics, individual motivations and personal background rather than considering the influence of external factors on shaping start-up intention. Indeed, Henderson and Robertson (2000) state that perception of youths on entrepreneurship is mostly driven from their innate characteristics. However, studies agree that entrepreneurial traits should be natured by external factors (Henderson & Robertson, 2000; Turker & Selcuk, 2009).

Thus, although the relationships between internal or external factors and entrepreneurial intention have been concerned by many researches, the effect of contextual and environmental factors on personal traits and entrepreneurial intention has not been proven clearly (Nguyen et al., 2009, 2018). In this study, we combine the contextualization view of entrepreneurship (Gartner et al., 1992; Busenitz et al., 2000; Turker & Selcuk, 2009) on entrepreneurial cognitions (Ajzen, 1991) to develop a conceptual framework that links structural supports (contextual factors) with students' cognitive processes in entrepreneurship (from three components in Ajzen (1991)'s the theory of planned behaviour to entrepreneurial intention). Particularly, this study aims to investigate the links between structural support and entrepreneurial cognitive processes (attitude towards entrepreneurship, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control).

Contributions of this study on entrepreneurial literature are represented in three manners: Firstly, the mediating process of structural support to entrepreneurial intention through attitude towards entrepreneurship and perceived behavioural control is investigated, while previous studies only focus on direct effect of some contextual factors on entrepreneurial intention (Baughn et al., 2006). Secondly, whereas relevant studies only investigate the direct influence of subjective norms on entrepreneurial intention (Liñán et al., 2013; Miranda et al., 2017), this study shows that besides direct effect, subjective norms also have indirect effects on entrepreneurial intention through attitude toward entrepreneurship and perceived behavioural control.

This study is organized as follows: First, literature review, conceptual framework and hypotheses involving the link of structural support, attitude towards entrepreneurship, subjective norms, perceived behavioural control and entrepreneurial intention will be presented. Second, research methods including data collection, analyses and measures are discussed. After that, the research results are represented. Finally, conclusion and recommendation for further researches are performed at the final part.

2. Literature review

In the light of previous studies, we would propose a research model to analyze the entrepreneurial intention of university students under the impact of structural support in Vietnam. The planned behavioral theory provides an overall framework to analyze the entrepreneurial intention of an individual (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1980; Ajzen, 1987, 1991; Turker & Selcuk, 2009). Entrepreneurial intention is perceived as an essential and fundamental condition to be a nascent entrepreneur. Whereas entrepreneurship is determined as the emergent process of an organization (Gartner et al., 1992), an individual's intention to pursue an entrepreneurial career is crucial to this process (Lee et al., 2011, p.126). Moreover, entrepreneurial intention is considered the first step in a series of action to found an organization (Bird, 1988),

yet Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) argued that intentions toward a behavior can be seen as important indicators of that behavior. In other words, intentions are still seen as the best predictor of individual behavior (Krueger et al., 2000). Shapero and Sokol (1982) describe that the start-up intention stems from perceived feasibility and desirability of a person and that are influenced by contextual factors such as culture, society and structure. Besides a direct effect, our study also examines the indirect impact of structural support on entrepreneurial intention throughout attitude towards entrepreneurship and perceived behavioral control. Fig. 1 describes the conceptual framework of the proposed study. By adopting the planned behavioral theory, authors would investigate the link between structural support and entrepreneurial intention.

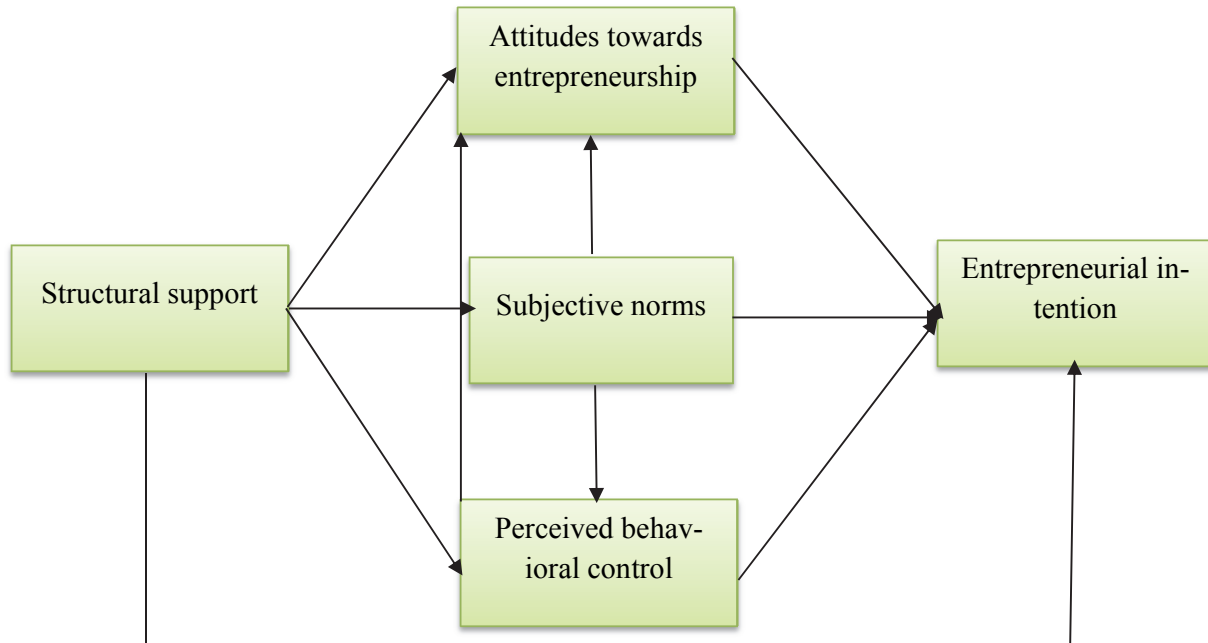


Fig.1. Conceptual framework

2.1. The roles of three antecedents in the theory of planned behavior

Ajzen (1991) states that behavioural intention is determined by attitude toward the behaviour, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control. *Attitude towards the behaviour* reflects the degree to which an individual has a favourable or unfavourable assessment of a particular behaviour, it also depends on an individual's evaluation of the expected results/outcomes of the behaviour. *Subjective norms* relate to the perception of social pressures by an individual to perform or not perform a specific behaviour, it reflects an individual's perception in terms of salient people encouraging or discouraging to carry out a particular behaviour. *Perceived behavioural control* refers to the beliefs about easiness or difficulty in carrying out a specific task. It also shows the perceptions of the availability of resources, supports or barriers to carry out behaviour. The theory of planned behavior probably can be implemented to any behavior which requires particular amount of planning. Thus, this theory has been reliably proved robust in explaining intentions and behavior in various fields of research. The decision to become an entrepreneur is a complex one, it is also seen as the result of intricate mental processes. Based on this sense, the theory of planned behavior of Ajzen (1991) has been frequently applied to explain this mental process leading to firm creation (Liñán, 2008).

A numerous researches on entrepreneurship have confirmed the relationship between three attitudinal components (attitude towards entrepreneurship, subjective norms and perceived behavioral control) and entrepreneurial intention (Kolvereid, 1996a; Krueger et al., 2000). However, the findings of existing

literature on the direct effects of subjective norms and entrepreneurial intention are relatively inconsistent. Some researchers argue to significantly explain entrepreneurial intention (Kolvereid, 1996a; Kolvereid & Isaksen, 2006; Tkachev & Kolvereid, 1999; Othman & Mansor, 2012; Solesvik, 2013; Maresch et al. 2015), while others found subjective norms to be insignificant (Autio et al., 2001; Krueger et al., 2000; Miranda et al., 2017). Although based on the theory of planned behavior, subjective norms have a direct influence on entrepreneurial intention (Ajzen, 1991; 2005), it is necessary to require more empirical evidences on the effect of subjective norms on entrepreneurial intention (Krueger et al., 2000). Some studies illustrated that entrepreneurial intention was not influenced by subjective norms (Liñán, 2008; Nabi & Liñán, 2013). However, family, friends and teachers can affect strongly on students' career choice in the cultural context of Vietnam (Tran, 2012), the following hypotheses are proposed.

H1a. Attitudes toward entrepreneurship has a positive effect on the entrepreneurial intention.

H1b. Subjective norms have a positive effect on the entrepreneurial intention.

H1c. Perceived behavioural control has a positive effect on the entrepreneurial intention.

2.2. The interrelationship among the three antecedents the theory of planned behavior

Many empirical studies illustrated that the three attitude components of intention, such as attitude towards entrepreneurship, subjective norms and perceived behavioral control, are not equally important to intention for all research contexts (Kolvereid, 1996a; Krueger et al., 2000; Autio et al., 2001; Liñán & Chen, 2009; Nabi & Liñán, 2013; Tsai et al., 2016; Zaremohzzabieh et al., 2019). For some contexts, attitude towards entrepreneurship is more important than other components. While for other context, normative beliefs or perceived behavioural controls are more important. Moreover, some researchers have stated that attitude toward entrepreneurship, subjective norm and perceived behavioural control are not independent (Autio et al., 2001; Liñán, 2008; Liñán & Chen, 2009; Liñán et al., 2013; Ali, 2016; Misoska et al., 2016; Naushad, 2018).

Firstly, subjective norms are supposed to have the effect on attitude toward behaviour. That is, an individual's attitude towards a behaviour is possible to be influenced by salient people, including their parents, teachers, friends, successful entrepreneurs (Liñán et al., 2013). In entrepreneurship researches, a person has negative attitude toward entrepreneurship if reference people approve and support, his or her attitude toward entrepreneurship may become more positive. In addition, the strong correlation between subjective norms and attitude towards entrepreneurship was discovered in some previous studies (Al-Rafee & Cronan, 2006). Thus, this relationship is more clearly proved in our study.

H2a. Subjective norms have a positive effect on attitude towards entrepreneurship.

Secondly, perceived behavioral control refers to the extent to which a personal control belief in terms of the activities being studied (Solesvik et al., 2012), while Liñán and Chen (2006, p.4) defined perceived behavioral control as "the perception of easiness or difficulty in the fulfillment of the behavior of interest". This construct consists of not only being able to have the essential skills to run a business and achieve success (Miranda et al., 2017), but also the perception about controllability of the behavior (Liñán & Chen, 2009). Bandura (1986) state that social beliefs play an important role in shaping an individual's personal beliefs of ability to perform a specific behaviour. A person can be convinced to believe that he or she has enough skills, knowledge and ability to reach an achievement successfully. For instance, the verbal encouragement of "I know you will succeed" from reference people can help an individual to remove self-doubt and focus on his or her effort on performing a behaviour (Bandura, 1977). Thus, the encouragement of salient others can have dramatic effects on one's capacity beliefs.

H2b. Subjective norms have a positive effect on perceived behavioural control

Finally, entrepreneurship is complex and challenging while the entrepreneurial process relates to uncertainties and risks. To be successful, individuals need skills, abilities, self-efficacy and required resources to cope with uncertainties and control the entrepreneurial actions. A person who believes that the entrepreneurial action will succeed will hold a favourable attitude towards carrying out the entrepreneurial action. In other words, when a positive outcome of entrepreneurship is perceived, a favourable attitude towards entrepreneurship will be realized (Eagly & Chaiken, 1993; Feather, 1982). Thus, the higher perceived behavioural control, the more positive attitude toward entrepreneurship because of the higher expectancy of the outcomes.

H2c. Perceived behavioural control has positive effect on attitude towards entrepreneurship.

2.3. The role of structural support

The effect of structural support on entrepreneurial intention is still seen as a controversial issue. Abdullah et al. (2009) state that structural support has a positive effect on starting small and medium enterprises. However, Turker and Selcuk (2008) argue that structural support can foster or restrain individuals' entrepreneurial intention, which involves their perceptions of opportunities or risks if they perform entrepreneurial activities in specific economic, social, political and cultural context. Thus, it is necessary to be interested in investigating the influence of external factors, such as culture, society, government policy on entrepreneurial intention to more clearly explain the reasons why a person runs a business while others do not (Ibrahim & Galt, 2011). Welter (2011, p.165) stress that "there is growing recognition in entrepreneurship research that economic behaviour can be better understood within its historical, temporal, institutional, spatial, and social contexts, as these contexts provide individuals with opportunities and set boundaries for their action". Liñán and Fayolle (2015) also agree that further researchers should examine the effects of contextualization perspectives on entrepreneurship. Thus, by adapting the planned behavioural theory of Ajzen (1991), our study focuses on estimating the role of structural support on predicting entrepreneurial intention among Vietnamese students throughout attitude towards entrepreneurship, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control.

Firstly, structural support can have positive or negative influence on attitude toward entrepreneurship (Misoska et al., 2016) since perceptions of support (or obstacles) from business environment can lead to favourable or unfavourable evaluations of performing entrepreneurship. For example, a person can have positive attitude towards entrepreneurship if it is easy to take loans from banks or national economy provides them many opportunities for entrepreneurs. In the transitional economy of Vietnam, the following hypothesis is proposed to estimate the influence of structural support on attitude towards entrepreneurship of university students.

H3a. Attitude towards entrepreneurship is related to structural support.

Secondly, entrepreneurial activities can be influenced by structural support, regulatory support for example (Fini et al., 2010; Goel et al., 2015; Foo et al., 2016). Thus, structural support can influence on subjective norms, which reflects a person's perception about salient people encouraging or discouraging to run a business. In the context of Vietnam, the following hypothesis is proposed to examine the relationship between structural support and subjective norms.

H3b. Subjective norms are related to structural support.

Thirdly, entrepreneurship research emphasizes the importance of perceived behavioral control as a mechanism for overcoming awareness of the greater technological, financial, legal uncertainties which are often related to new ventures (Obschonka et al., 2012). Thus, the correlation of structural support and perceived behavioural control can be rather significant (Miranda et al., 2017) since effective structural support can enhance perceptions of ability and capacity relating to entrepreneurship. In the context of Vietnam, the following hypothesis is proposed to test the link between structural support and perceived behavioural control.

H3c. Perceived behavioural control is related to structural support.

Finally, Turker and Selcuk (2009) believe that besides the effects of the educational support, the structural support also plays an important role on individuals' decision to start a business. Abelson et al. (1982) also show the relationship between structural support and entrepreneurial intention and behaviour. We are living in a broader context of social, economic, political and technological factors while the current context of entrepreneurship is mainly shaped by economic and political mechanisms, which are governed by the public, private, and non-governmental sectors. Thus, structural support can bring nascent entrepreneurs some opportunities or threats. For example, if there are some obstacles for entry into the market, people might have a lower tendency to run own business. However, if they perceive the given conditions adequate and favourable, it might be expected that they are more likely to run an own business (Turker & Selcuk, 2009). Thus, this link between structural support and entrepreneurial intention is hypothesized.

H3d. Entrepreneurial intention is related to structural support.

3. Methods

3.1. Surveys and sample

The surveys are divided into 2 sections, which is based on the purpose of the study, theoretical background and hypotheses. In the first section, the questions are designed to allow respondents providing their viewpoint regarding entrepreneurial self-efficacy, attitude toward entrepreneurship, subjective norms, perceived behavioural control and entrepreneurial intention, which was adapted from the previous studies. In the second section, demographic questions are designed to obtain respondents' information such as gender, fields of study and type of current professional (working) activities. Final-year undergraduate students at universities in Vietnam are chosen as the sample in our study. Liñán and Chen (2009) state that samples of students are relatively popular in entrepreneurship researches (Autio et al., 2001; Fayolle et al., 2006; Krueger et al., 2000). Reynolds et al. (2002) also argue that undergraduate students, who are from 25 to 34, have the highest intention to start a business. 2500 questionnaires were directly distributed to final undergraduate students at 14 universities in three regions of Vietnam (North, Central and South), including face-to-face explanations about the research's objectives and instructions on how to complete questionnaires, but only 2218 questionnaires are collected (approximately 88.72%). The rest of samples (282 questionnaires) are removed because of being not adequately fulfilled. Demographic information of respondents is presented in Table 1.

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics of Sample Demographics

Demographic variables		F	%
1. Gender	Male	1384	62.4
	Female	834	37.6
2. Fields of study	Economics	1221	54.6
	Non-economics	1006	45.4
3. Type of current professional (working) activities	Only studying	699	31.5
	Studying and working for a company	1080	45.9
	Studying and running own business	126	5.7
	Studying and looking for a job	375	16.9

Note: N=2218; F: Frequency; %: Percent

Source: Authors' elaborations based on research study

The results of descriptive statistics of demographic layouts indicate that a large proportion of respondents is male, accounting for 62.4% while only 37.6% of respondents are female. In terms of fields of study, approximately 55% students study economics whereas non-economics students only account for 45.4%.

In addition, 16.9% students consider that they are studying and looking for a job, 31.5% students are only studying, 45.9% students are studying and working for a company, and only 5.7% of them are studying and running a business.

3.2. Analyses

We performed a regression analysis to assess the contributions of structural support to entrepreneurial intention and examine the indirect roles of attitude towards entrepreneurship and perceived behavioural control on shaping entrepreneurial intention. Structural equation modelling (SEM) was implemented to test the hypothesized relationships and analysis process includes three main steps. Firstly, Cronbach's alpha and explorative factor analysis (EFA) are implemented to assess the reliability of variables. Secondly, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) is employed to test the empirical validity of the research model and each measure. Finally, the structural equation modelling was then applied to estimated path coefficients for each proposed relationship in the conceptual framework. In addition, the statistical analysis has been carried out using SPSS 22.0 and AMOS 22.0 software.

3.3. Measures

All scales used in our study were adapted from the past researches including structural support (Turker & Selcuk, 2009; Miranda et al., 2017), attitude towards entrepreneurship (Liñán & Chen, 2009), subjective norms (Liñán & Chen, 2009; Kolvereid, 1996b), perceived behavioural control and entrepreneurial intention (Liñán & Chen, 2009). The scales were scored on a 5-point Likert-type format from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree*. All scales were subjected to exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) for the purpose of scale testing and purification.

Structural support – SS (Cronbach's alpha = 0.892): the scale consisted of 4 items. Four first items were adapted from Turker and Selcuk (2009), including 'In Vietnam, entrepreneurs are encouraged by a structural system including private, public, and non-governmental organizations' (0.879), 'Vietnamese economy provides many opportunities for entrepreneurs' (0.872), 'It is quite easy to obtain a bank loan to start a business in Vietnam' (0.873), 'Government create favourable conditions (rules, regulations, mechanisms and policies to run a business' (0.866). The last two items were modified from Miranda et al. (2017), consisting of 'It is quite easy to find investors for a new business in Vietnam' (0.877) and 'The country's economic situation will improve notably in the coming years' (0.874).

Attitude towards entrepreneurship – ATE (Cronbach's alpha = 0.826): The scale developed by Liñán & Chen (2009), which is comprised of 5 items, including 'Being an entrepreneur implies more advantages than disadvantages to me', 'A career as an entrepreneur is attractive for me' (0.780), 'If I had opportunity and resources, I'd like to start a firm' (0.816), 'Being an entrepreneur would entail great satisfactions for me' (0.759) and 'Among various options, I would rather be an entrepreneur' (0.765). However, the corrected item-total correlation of the first item only reaches at $0.352 < 0.4$ (Nunnally & Brunstein, 1994). Thus, authors decided to remove this item from the scale of attitude towards entrepreneurship.

Subjective norms – SN (Cronbach's alpha = 0.826): The scale consisted of 3 items, two first items were developed by Liñán and Chen (2009), including 'If I decided to create a firm, my closet family would approve of that decision' (0.827), 'If I decided to create a firm, my closes friends would approve of that decision'. However, authors suppose that almost students who are not yet having a secure job, they can have no co-workers. Thus, the final item of 'If I decided to create a firm, people who are important to me would approve of that decision' (0.792) was adapted from Kolvereid (1996b). Perceived behavioural control – PBC (Cronbach's alpha = 0.822): The scale developed by Liñán and Chen (2009), which consisted of 6 items, including 'To start a firm and keep it working would be easy for me' (0.805), 'I am prepared to start a viable firm' (0.775), 'I can control the creation process of a new firm' (0.771), 'I know the necessary practical details to start a firm' (0.788), 'I know how to develop an entrepreneurial project' (0.796) and 'If I tried to start a firm, I would have a high probability of succeeding' (0.827).

Entrepreneurial intention – EI (Cronbach’s alpha = 0.918): The construct was measured with Liñán and Chen (2009) 6-item scale. Respondents indicate how interested they are in starting a new business, consisting of ‘I am ready to do anything to be an entrepreneur’, my professional goal is to become an entrepreneur’, ‘I will make every effort to start and run my own firm’ (0.911), ‘I am determined to create a firm in the future’ (0.895), ‘I have a very seriously through of starting a firm’ (0.874) and ‘I have the firm intention to start a firm someday’ (0.892). As the Cronbach’s alpha of the first and second item are higher than that of the scale of entrepreneurial intention. Thus, authors had removed the first and second items from this scale.

4. Results

4.1. Exploratory factor analysis (EFA)

After assessing the reliability of scales by Cronbach’s alpha, 22 items are used in the exploratory factor analysis (EFA). The first results of testing the validity of scales by the exploratory factor analysis show that $KMO = 0.926$, Sig. (Bartlett’s Test) = $0.000 < 0.005$, Initial Eigenvalues = $66.986 > 50\%$. However, factor loading of PBC6 (0.313), PBC5 (0.358) and ATE3 (0.407) < 0.5 and loaded at two factor groups. Thus, authors decided to remove these items from scales before starting confirmatory. The final results of the exploratory factor analysis are presented at Table 2.

Table 2
The results of exploratory factor analysis (EFA)

Items	Component				
	1	2	3	4	5
EI5	0.877				
EI4	0.846				
EI6	0.840				
EI3	0.821				
SS4		0.841			
SS2		0.812			
SS3		0.810			
SS6		0.803			
SS5		0.789			
SS1		0.777			
PBC3			0.830		
PBC2			0.824		
PBC4			0.755		
PBC1			0.730		
SN2				0.867	
SN3				0.836	
SN1				0.816	
ATE4					0.781
ATE5					0.761
ATE2					0.734
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy (KMO)				0.913	
Sig. of Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity				0.000	
Cumulative %				66.355	
Eigenvalues				1.644	

Note: N=2218

Source: Authors’ elaborations based on research study

4.2. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA)

In order to assess measurement validity, the authors performed the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) by using AMOS 22.0 (Hair et al., 1988). The results generally presented a good level of fit for the measurement models. After assessing each construct, the full measurement model was analysed at fig.2. The results of CFA exhibited a reasonably good level of fit: $\chi^2 (134) = 532.980$, $p = 0.000$. $CMIN/df = 3.331 < 0.5$ (Kettinger & Lee, 1995), $CFI = 0.976$, $GFI = 0.984$, $TLI = 0.981 > 0.9$ (Bentler & Bonnett, 1980),

RMSEA = 0.032. Also, standardized regression weights of all items are higher than 0.5 ($\lambda > 0.5$). Thus, the convergent validity is determined at all scales.

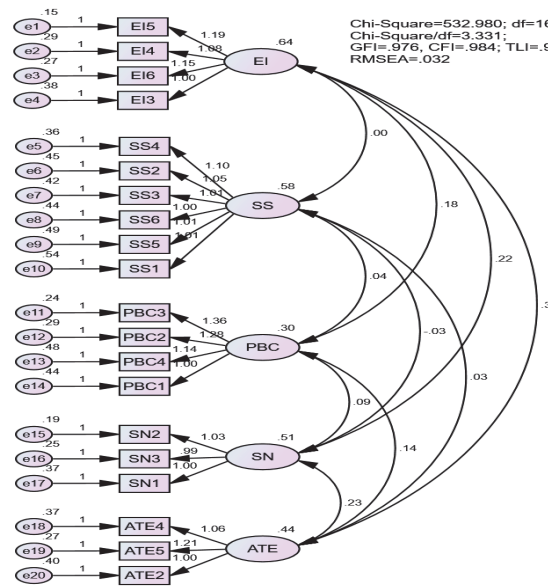


Fig. 2. The results of confirmatory factor analysis (unstandardized estimates)

Source: Authors’ elaborations based on research study

In addition, Table 3 shows the results of testing the discriminant validity between variables. The correlation of each couple of variables (r) and standard deviation (SE) are different to 1 ($P\text{-value} = 0.000 < 0.005$). Thus, the discriminant validity between variables are proved.

Table 3

The results of testing the discriminant validity between variables

Relationship	r	$1-r$	SE	CR	$P\text{-value}$
EI ↔ SS	-0.007	1.007	0.000	0.021	47.405
EI ↔ PBC	0.410	0.590	0.168	0.019	30.451
EI ↔ SN	0.393	0.607	0.154	0.020	31.074
EI ↔ ATE	0.686	0.314	0.471	0.015	20.315
SS ↔ PBC	0.101	0.899	0.010	0.021	42.537
SS ↔ SN	-0.051	1.051	0.003	0.021	49.540
SS ↔ ATE	0.054	0.946	0.003	0.021	44.597
PBC ↔ SN	0.219	0.781	0.048	0.021	37.680
PBC ↔ ATE	0.395	0.605	0.156	0.020	31.001
SN ↔ ATE	0.475	0.525	0.226	0.019	28.085

Note: $N=2218$; r : correlation; SE : Standard Deviation; CR : Critical Ratios.

Source: Authors’ elaborations based on research study

Table 4 shows the results of testing the measurement validity by confirmatory factor analysis. The results represent standardized regression weights (λ), composite reliability (ρ^c) and average variance extracted (ρ^{vc}) of all variables.

The overall fit statistics of the model without the control variables illustrated an acceptable level of fit: $\chi^2(160) = 532.980$, $p = 0.000$. $CMIN/df = 3.331 < 0.5$, $CFI = 0.976$, $GFI = 0.984$, $TLI = 0.981 > 0.9$, $RMSEA = 0.032$. So, the original model was used to test the hypothesized relationships.

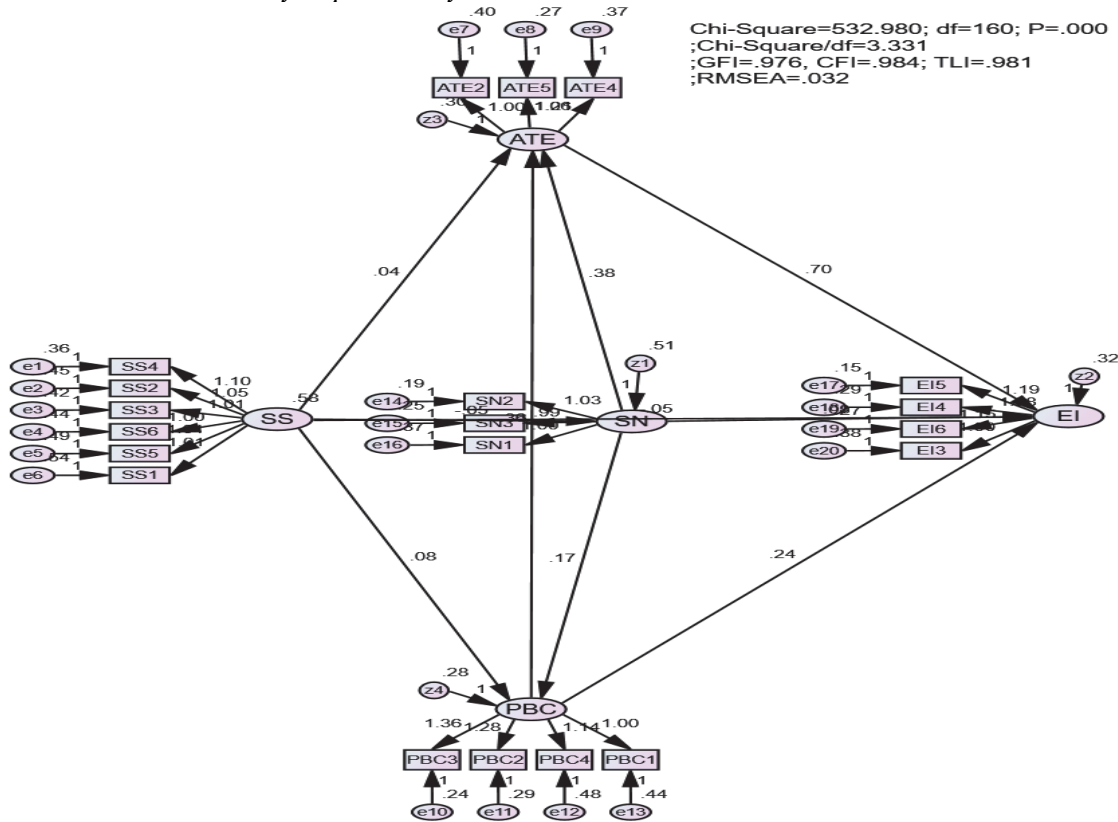
Table 4

The results of testing the *measurement validity by confirmatory factor analysis*

Scales	Items	λ	ρ^c	ρ^{vc}	Assessment
EI: Entrepreneurial intention		0.858	0.919	0.739	reasonably good level
EI3	4	0.790			
EI6		0.872			
EI4		0.846			
EI5		0.925			
ATE: Attitude towards entrepreneurship		0.774	0.818	0.601	reasonably good level
ATE2	3	0.726			
ATE5		0.838			
ATE4		0.758			
SN: Subjective norms		0.786	0.829	0.618	reasonably good level
SN1	3	0.760			
SN3		0.838			
SN2		0.758			
PBC: Perceived behavioural control		0.733	0.825	0.544	reasonably good level
PBC1	4	0.635			
PBC4		0.669			
PBC2		0.795			
PBC3		0.833			
SS: Structural support		0.762	0.893	0.581	reasonably good level
SS6	5	0.757			
SS3		0.767			
SS2		0.769			
SS4		0.814			
SS5		0.740			
SS1		0.724			

Note: N=2218; λ : Standardized Regression Weights; ρ^c : Composite reliability (CR); ρ^{vc} : Average Variance Extracted (AVE).

4.3. Structural and meta-analytic path analyses



Note: N= 2218

Fig. 3. The results of structural analyses (unstandardized estimates)

Table 5

The results of testing the research hypotheses

	Hypotheses		Estimate	S.E	C.R	P	Conclusion	
H1a	ATE	→	EI	0.703	0.035	20.728	***	Supported
H1b	SN	→	EI	0.083	0.025	3,344	***	Supported
H1c	PBC	→	EI	0.236	0.031	7.491	***	Supported
H2a	SN	→	ATE	0.384	0.024	16.100	***	Supported
H2b	SN	→	PBC	0.172	0.020	8.814	***	Supported
H2c	PBC	→	ATE	0.365	0.031	11.816	***	Supported
H3a	SS	→	ATE	0.039	0.019	2.041	0.041	Supported
H3b	SS	→	SN	-0.048	0.023	-2.116	0.034	Supported
H3c	SS	→	PBC	0.080	0.017	4.642	***	Supported
H3d	SS	→	EI	-0.055	0.019	-2.840	0.005	Supported

Note: $N=2218$; *** < 0.001; S.E: Standard Deviation ; C.R: Critical Ratios.

A total of nine proposed relationships were tested and all nine hypothesized paths were statistically significant. Specially, attitude towards entrepreneurship has the strongest effect on entrepreneurial intention ($\beta = 0.703$; $p\text{-value} < 0.001$), followed by perceived behavioural control ($\beta = 0.236$; $p\text{-value} < 0.001$) respectively. Interestingly, in this study we have investigated that the relationship between subjective norms and entrepreneurial intention is statistically significant but not strong ($\beta = 0.083$; $p\text{-value} < 0.001$). Our study also shows that subjective norms had dramatic effects on attitude towards entrepreneurship and perceived behavioural control ($\beta = 0.384$; $p\text{-value} < 0.001$ and $\beta = 0.172$; $p\text{-value} < 0.001$ respectively). Moreover, attitude towards entrepreneurship is also significantly influenced by perceived behavioural control ($\beta = 0.365$; $p\text{-value} < 0.001$). In terms of the link between structural support and entrepreneurial cognitive process, the research results have indicated that structural support had positive impacts on attitude towards entrepreneurship and perceived behavioural control ($\beta = 0.039$; $p\text{-value} = 0.041 < 0.05$ and $\beta = 0.080$; $p\text{-value} < 0.001$ respectively), however, it has negative effects on subjective norms and entrepreneurial intention ($\beta = -0.048$; $p\text{-value} = 0.034 < 0.05$ and $\beta = -0.055$; $p\text{-value} = 0.005 < 0.01$ respectively). In order to examine the effect of factors on entrepreneurial intention, besides considering the direct relationship, this study also has discovered the indirect effect of variables on entrepreneurial intention. In terms of statistical method, researching the mediating impacts is considered as testing the effect of independent variable on dependent variable through mediators. In case of being a large sample, we can use the Sobel test to investigate these indirect effects (Sobel, 1986). However, Preacher and Hayes (2004, 2008) state that bootstrapping method should be applied because of being more effective if using original data. In our study, authors have applied bootstrapping methods to discover the mediating effect of entrepreneurial self-efficacy and subjective norms on entrepreneurial intention.

Table 6 represents the total effects of variables. Firstly, if we only consider indirect effects, subjective norms had the strongest impact on entrepreneurial intention throughout perceived behavioural control and attitude towards entrepreneurship ($\beta_{\text{indirect SN-EI}} = 0.356$, $p\text{-value} = 0.025 < 0.05$), followed by the indirect influence of perceived behavioural control on entrepreneurial intention through attitude towards entrepreneurship ($\beta_{\text{indirect PBC-EI}} = 0.257$, $p\text{-value} = 0.026 < 0.05$). However, if we examine the overall effects, attitude towards entrepreneurship is seen as the strongest influencing factor ($\beta_{\text{indirect ATE-EI}} = 0.703$, $p\text{-value} < 0.001$). Thus, in order to promote youths to start a business, government should have the effective policy to enhance their positive attitude towards entrepreneurship. Secondly, although subjective norms have the insignificant effect on entrepreneurial intention, it shows that Vietnamese students is still influenced by salient people such as parents, friends and teachers. This result is totally appropriate to the cultural context of Vietnamese community when reference people (subjective norms) are expected to have direct effect on business start-up intention. Finally, although structural support has negative effects on subjective norms and entrepreneurial intention ($\beta_{\text{total SS-EI}} = -0.008$, $p\text{-value} = 0.026 < 0.05$; $\beta_{\text{total SS-SN}} = -0.048$, $p\text{-value} = 0.028 < 0.05$), these impacts are not dramatic.

Table 6

Total effects of variables

Dependent variable	Effects	Independent variables			
		SS	SN	PBC	ATE
SN	Direct	-0.048			
	Indirect	0.000			
	Total	-0.048			
PBC	Direct	0.080	0.172		
	Indirect	-0.008	0.000		
	Total	0.072	0.172		
ATE	Direct	0.039	0.384	0.365	
	Indirect	0.008	0.063	0.000	
	Total	0.047	0.447	0.365	
EI	Direct	-0.055	0.083	0.244	0.703
	Indirect	0.047	0.356	0.257	0.000
	Total	-0.008	0.439	0.501	0.703

Note: N= 2218

5. Conclusions

This study has expected to provide contributions for entrepreneurship research and practices. In terms of entrepreneurship literature, the contributions of our study have been indicated in two perspectives. First, the application of theory of planned behaviour is completely appropriate in the context of Vietnam. The research result has also indicated that the approval or non-approval from reference people (subjective norms) had direct effects on Vietnamese student's entrepreneurial intention. Moreover, both the direct influence and subjective norms have had the indirect impacts on entrepreneurial intention throughout attitude towards entrepreneurship and perceived behavioural control. Second, our study has shown that structural support had positive effects on attitude towards entrepreneurship and perceived behavioural control, but it had negative influence on subjective norms and entrepreneurial intention. This result shows that since subjective norms play significant role on entrepreneurial intention among Vietnamese, so when structural support negatively influences on subjective norms, it might influence on entrepreneurial intention stronger. Thus, government should have the favourable policies to foster entrepreneurship among youths by: (1) developing a structural system, consisting of private, public and non-governmental organizations in order to support nascent entrepreneurs; (2) supporting students to take a bank loan to run own business; (3) supporting students to find investors for a new business. Further researches can take several directions. First, the reasons why structural support had negative effect but it positively influenced on attitude towards entrepreneurship while the correlation between attitude towards entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial intention was very strong. This question should be considered by further researches. Second, randomly sampled approach should be used to increase the significant level. Third, in addition to discover the effect of structural support, it would be worthwhile to examine the influence of other contextual factors on entrepreneurial intention.

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