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How Entrepreneurship Programs of Chinese Universities Enable Entrepreneurial Intention? The Role of Personal Fit

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Abstract

The study at hand aims to examine the effect of entrepreneurships programs on entrepreneurial intention of Chinese university students under the boundary condition of perceived person-entrepreneurship fit. A sample of 223 students including international and Chinese students were collected at three different point of time. The hypothesized relationships were tested through structural equation modeling techniques. The results demonstrated that entrepreneurships programs offered at Chinese university has a positive influence on student's entrepreneurial intentions, and such influence is stronger when students perceive higher levels of person-entrepreneurship fit. This study was conduct at Chinese context, which has unique implications for theory and practice. At the end, crucial theoretical contributions and implications for practitioners are highlighted.

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1 Introduction

Students' entrepreneurship goals, and hence their tendency for entrepreneurial action, are impacted by their approaches for entrepreneurial activities (Kuratko & Morris, 2018; Maritz, Nguyen, & Ivanov, 2022; Vodă & Florea, 2019). Many other research have demonstrated that entrepreneurial intents can be promoted by education, in addition to the individual elements that affect students' entrepreneurial behavior (e.g., Alkhalaf, Durrah, Almohammad, & Ahmed, 2022; Khoshmaram, Shiri, Shinnar, & Savari, 2020; Pandit, Joshi, & Tiwari, 2018). Vanevenhoven and Ligouri (2013) found that entrepreneurship education drives students' entrepreneurial goals in a global, longitudinal study. According to Souitaris, Zerbinati, and Al-Laham (2007), entrepreneurial program boost students' entrepreneurial mindsets and intentions, as well as their likelihood of attempting an entrepreneurial profession at some time in their life. Furthermore, according to Peterman and Kennedy (2003), involvement in intuitional learning procedures improves students' perceptions of the attractiveness and viability of beginning a firm.

According to Katz (2003), the number of schools and institutions in the United States that offer entrepreneurship courses has increased from a handful in the 1970s to 1,600 now. According to the GEM Special Report on Education and Training (Monitor, 2010), entrepreneurial education and training in the countries surveyed has increased fast in recent decades. By the mid-2000s, Solomon (2007) had noticed a trend in entrepreneurship courses toward the use of technology and guest speakers, indicating more collaborative sharing methods as alternatives to traditional classroom approaches. The purpose of this study is to look into the relationship between entrepreneurial education program and students' entrepreneurship intentions when there is a perceived person-environment fit.

2 Review of literature

2.1 Entrepreneurship Education

Over the years, the scope of entrepreneurship programs at universities has expanded dramatically (Katz, 2003). This growth has been accompanied by a greater focus on the effectiveness of entrepreneurship education. The empirical evidence appears to support entrepreneurial initiatives on college campuses. Several studies have found that entrepreneurship classes increase student interest in starting a business (Kassean, Vanevenhoven, Liguori, & Winkel, 2015; Liguori et al., 2020; Matthews, Liguori, & Santos, 2021; Rushworth, Vanevenhoven, Winkel, & Liguori, 2016). Sanchez (2011) also found that, in addition to increasing entrepreneurial intent, entrepreneurship programs improve pupils' self-efficacy, pro-activity, and risk-getting tendency. According to Biberhofer, Lintner, Bernhardt, and Rieckmann (2019), students who have completed entrepreneurship programs have greater capabilities and more positive opinions of the transdisciplinary skills required to work in a modern corporate setting. After taking entrepreneurship classes, DeTienne and Chandler (2004) discovered that students learn how to identify opportunities and develop more inventive ideas. Nevertheless, Lee, Kreiser, Wrede, and Kogelen (2018) found that, while entrepreneurial lessons improve students' entrepreneurial abilities and self-confidence, they diminish the number of students who intend to start a business (Blesia, Iek, Ratang, & Hutajulu, 2021).

In current ages, research have suggested that campuses offer more experimental curricula that permit pupils to be uncovered to real-world entrepreneurial settings while learning on the job (Barnard & Vanevenhoven, 2018; Kassean, Vanevenhoven, Liguori, & Winkel, 2015; Rushworth, Vanevenhoven, Winkel, & Liguori, 2016) or are directed by knowledgeable industrialists who have faced the trials of starting a business and have failed (Vanevenhoven &

Liguori, 2013). Rasmussen and Sorheim (2006) found that at a Swedish university, entrepreneurship education that focuses less on classroom settings and more on learning-by-doing activities in a group or network context resulted in more than 200 student start-ups over a five-year period. Overall entrepreneurship education offers encourage students' entrepreneurship related goals and self-efficacy, according to Vanevenhoven and Ligouri (2013).

Surprisingly, they discovered that while the number of entrepreneurships offers had a substantial positive link with students' entrepreneurial behaviors overall, the number of extra-curricular activities had no such relationship. The authors, on the other hand, did not propose any feasible explanations for their findings on the inconsequentiality of extra-curricular entrepreneurial submissions. The researcher believe that the course-based offerings may have mitigated the benefits of extracurricular activities, an interaction influence that was not addressed in the research work and literature. The researchers also included a variety of extracurricular pursuits, including as corporate strategy contests, student associations, guest speaker conferences, and site outings, into a particular variable, potentially concealing the impacts of unique events. More research is needed to investigate and corroborate the linkages. In conclusion, the prior research work demonstrates that entrepreneurial education can have a positive impact on entrepreneurial inclinations. Nevertheless, there is not enough realistic study on pragmatic understanding particularly, and the limited evidence on the impact of such programs is mixed.

2.3 Research model and hypotheses

Education can help promote entrepreneurship in a big way (Eesley & Lee, 2021; Jena, 2020; Linton, & Klinton, 2019). Any pedagogical program or educational process that aims to instill entrepreneurial attitudes and abilities is referred to as "entrepreneurship education" (Fayolle, Gailly, & Lassas-Clerc, 2006). As a result, education can play a significant role in cultivating a desire to start a business (Anjum et al., 2021; Ozaralli, & Rivenburgh, 2016; Singh, Verma, & Rao, 2017; Wilson, Kickul, & Marlino, 2007). Entrepreneurship intention is described as an instant result of entrepreneurial learning by Linan and Fayolle (2015) and Nabi et al. (2017). Entrepreneurship education, according to Botha and Bignotti (2016), can change a person's approach toward entrepreneurial activities, with approach being a key determinant of intent. Entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial intention have also been proven to have a stronger association than general business education and entrepreneurship intention in studies (Armuña, Ramos, Juan, Feijóo, & Arenal, 2020; Wang, Yueh, & Wen, 2019; Westhead, & Solesvik, 2016). Many studies have found a strong link among entrepreneurship education and the desire to start a new business, owing to the advancement of a person's recognized competence and knowledge of entrepreneurship (Badri & Hachicha, 2019; Fayolle & Gailly, 2015; Wei, Liu, & Sha, 2019). Other research, on the other hand, have produced mixed outcomes (Karimi et al., 2016; Athayde, 2009; Almahry, Sarea, & Hamdan, 2018). After participating in an entrepreneurship program, students' ability and ambition to start a business rose, according to Peterman and Kennedy (2003). Students' intentions to establish a business increased significantly after attending a training program, according to Souitaris et al. (2007). However, several investigations came up with different results. For example, Karimi et al. (2016) observed no significant variations in the intention to establish a business before and after joining an enlightening curriculum. Oosterbeek et al. (2010) discovered results that opposed earlier research. The authors of some of these studies don't say if the research was done inside or outside of the university, or whether the programs were mandatory or elective (Asimakopoulos, Hernández, & Peña Miguel, 2019). As a result, the focus of this study is on the discrepancies in the findings about the association between entrepreneurship education and

entrepreneurship intention, while taking into account factors such as the kind of curriculum and the place where the education was provided. As a result, it is assumed that:
Hypothesis 1: *Entrepreneurship programs at university is positively related to entrepreneurial intention.*

Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy, according to Hsu, Wiklund, and Cotton (2017), is better at forecasting the intents of people who are happy with their existing monetary condition. Piperopoulos and Dimov (2015) also discovered that entrepreneurial instruction could boost learner self-efficacy while decreasing entrepreneurial intentions. Other research has found that the association among entrepreneurship self-efficacy and entrepreneurship intention is lower for men than women (Shinnar et al., 2014), and that the link among entrepreneurship self-efficacy and entrepreneurship intention is greater when perceived desirability (i.e., how much people want to start their own business) is low (Fitzsimmons & Douglas, 2011). We propose in this research that the link among entrepreneurial self-efficacy and entrepreneurial intent is conditional on the extent to which entrepreneurship meets personal needs (c.f., Brockner, Higgins, & Low, 2004). According to the person-entrepreneurship fit theory, people would examine whether they have the skills required for the job and whether doing the job meets their needs (Chuang, Shen, & Judge, 2016). While the demand-ability and need-supply elements of person-entrepreneurship fit are both favorable, the intention to complete the task is highest (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). When one of the dimensions is unfavorable, the impact of the other on the intention is reduced. As previously stated, the self-efficacy construct is similar to the demand-ability dimension of person-entrepreneurship fit, whereas our understanding of person-entrepreneurship fit focuses on the need-supply dimension. As a result, we propose that perceived person-entrepreneurship fit strengthens the motivation–entrepreneurship intention link. Our method is in line with Deci and Ryan's (2002) Self-Determination Theory, which considers need satisfaction as a predictor of individual attitudes and behaviors. We do not state such a hypothesis in the current paper because the motivation-entrepreneurship intention relationship has been widely investigated. Instead, we directly hypothesize the moderating impact. Therefore:
Hypothesis 2: *Perceived person-entrepreneurship fit moderates the positive relationship between entrepreneurship programs and entrepreneurial intention, such that the stronger the perception of fit with entrepreneurship, the stronger the effect.*

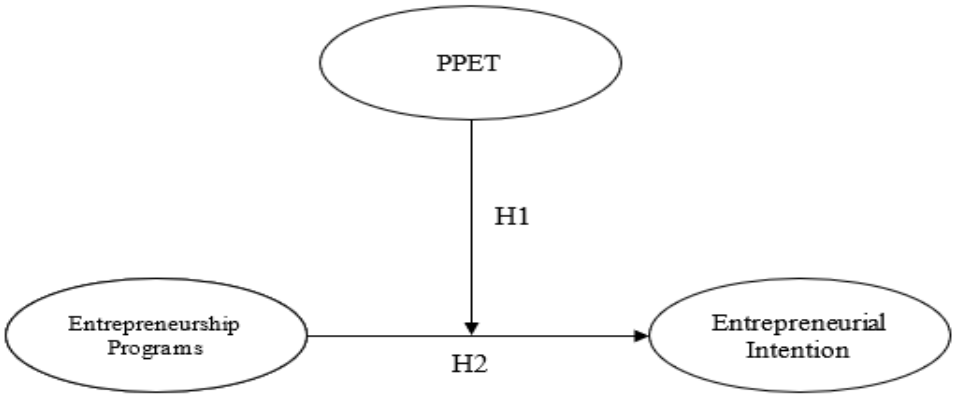

Figure 1: *Research model and hypotheses*. Note: Perceived Person-Entrepreneurship Fit =PPET

3 Methodology
3.1 Data and Sample
Data were gathered through self-administered questionnaire from four Chinese universities business students in Beijing and Sichuan provinces. Sample was selected through random

sampling method. Data was collected through both online and personal visits. The reason for using online and personal visits data collection process is because Chinese universities are scattered in various cities and are in huge numbers. Definitely, in a limited time period, it was not possible to reach all the university although every effort will be made to reach different universities to collect data from the representative sample. Hence, data collection process containing both versions, that is, online and personal visits is suitable in our case. The data were collected at three different point of time. At time 1 data on four educational programs, and demographic factors were collected, while at time 2 data on and entrepreneurship intention was collected. At time 3 data on perceived person-entrepreneurship fit was collected. A total of 350 respondents were approached to take part in this survey. Among 350 potential respondents, 290 agreed to take part. Out of 290 distributed questionnaires, the researcher was able to match 223 questionnaires in useful form, which we used for analysis purpose. The researcher asked respondents to provide their last four digits of their mobile number, which the researcher used for time 1, time 2, and time 3 data matching. We received 137 useful questionnaires from two universities at Beijing, which were distributed and collected back through personal visits. However, we received 86 questionnaires in useful form that were distributed through online mechanisms (mostly through WeChat ID's. The researcher used his personal resources and contacts to contact the potential respondents). Out of 223 respondents, 125 were female students, 98 students (43.95%) in the age group of 20 to 30 years, 162 students (72.65%) were holding their bachelors university degree. Table 1 indicates the statistics about the focal demographic factors. The response rate was 76.90% (290/223).

Table 1: Demographic factors (n=223)

Variables		N	Frequency
Gender			
	Male	98	43.95 %
	Female	125	56.05 %
Age			
	20-30 Years	98	43.95 %
	31-40 Years	82	36.77 %
	41-50 Years	42	18.84 %
	Above 50 years	1	0.44 %
Education			
	Bachelors Level University Degree	162	72.65 %
	Master Level University Degree	53	23.77 %
	PhD degree	6	2.69 %
	Others	2	0.89 %

3.2 Measures

Entrepreneurship programs. The main forecaster of importance is students' involvement in a wide variety of entrepreneurial program presented by the respondent universities. The different entrepreneurship programs are grouped into two classes: primarily, conventional classrooms-based program, and furthermore, experimental schooling. Respondents' involvement in classrooms-based entrepreneurial program, for instance seminars and lectures, is characterized in binary form, with score 1 if the respondent appeared in at least one program and 0 if the respondent did not appear in any system. Respondent partaking in pragmatic teaching program in the form of networking, coaching, mentoring, and workshops sessions is characterized in binary form, with score 1 if the respondent take part in at minimum one pragmatic teaching programs and 0 if the respondent did not partake in one the above mentioned programs.

Perceived Person-Entrepreneurship Fit (PPET). The researcher used Hsu, et al. (2019) three items scale of PPET. The respondents were required to value the items on a Likert scale entailing seven-point from 1=total disagree to 7=total agree.

Entrepreneurial intention. The researcher utilized 6-item scale of entrepreneurial intention developed by Liñán and Chen's (2009). The respondents were asked to value the items on a Likert scale entailing seven-point from 1=total disagree to 7=total agree.

Control variables. The researcher used demographic variables, such as gender, age, and educational level as control variable. However, the initial analysis indicated that the influence of these factors was not significant, thus, these were excluded from the final analyses.

4 Results

Table 2 shows descriptive statistics (i.e., mean, and standard deviation), and correlations.

Table 2: Descriptive statistics, and correlations

Variables		Mean	SD	1	2	3
1	Entrepreneurship programs	.78	.25	1		
2	Perceived person-entrepreneurship fit	5.03	1.08	.23**	1	
3	Entrepreneurial intention	4.95	.93	.20**	.49**	1

Figure 2 shows results of hypothesized linkages tested through SEM. H1 states that entrepreneurship programs at university is positively related to entrepreneurial intention. As anticipated, entrepreneurship program was positively related with entrepreneurial intention (β = 0.27, SE = 0.08, p = .01), providing support to H1. In H2, we suggest that the link between entrepreneurship programs and entrepreneurial intention is positive when perceived person-entrepreneurship fit is high but not significant when respondents are low in perceived person-entrepreneurship fit. Result in Figure 2 shows that the interaction term between entrepreneurship programs and perceived person-entrepreneurship fit on entrepreneurial intention was significant (β = 0.32, SE = 0.01, p = 0.000), offering preliminary support for H2. To enable the understanding of this moderation effect, the author plotted the interaction between entrepreneurship programs and perceived person-entrepreneurship fit on entrepreneurial intention in Figure 3 and studied the significance of the simple slopes at high level of perceived person entrepreneurship fit (1 SD above the mean) and low level of perceived person entrepreneurship fit (1 SD below the mean). Figure 3 reveals that entrepreneurship programs had a significant positive influence on entrepreneurial intention only when perceived person-entrepreneurship fit is high (β = 0.68, SE = 0.17, p = 0.000). When perceived person-entrepreneurship fit is low, however, the relationship is non-significant (β = 0.08, SE = 0.15, p = 0.609), providing support for H2.

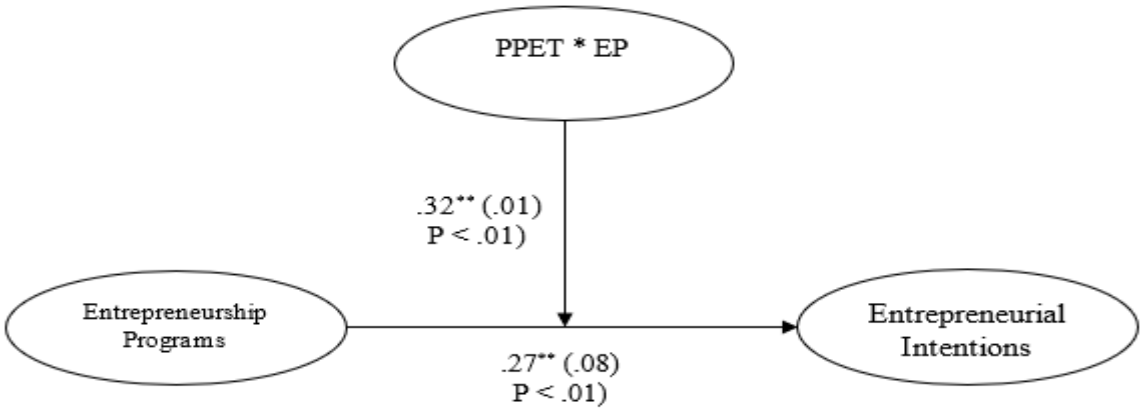

Figure 2: *Result of SEM (structural equation modeling). Parentheses shows standard errors.*

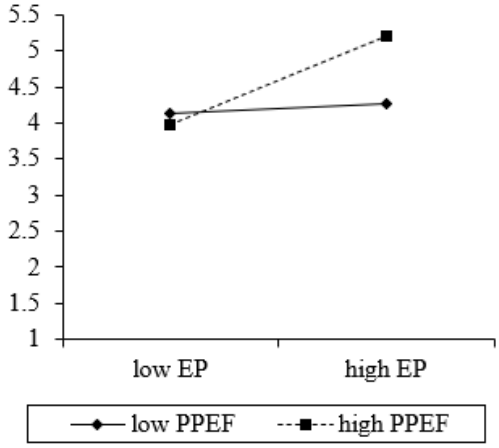

Figure 3: *Moderating role of perceived person-entrepreneurship fit (PPEF).* EP = entrepreneurship programs, Dependent variable = entrepreneurial intention.

5 Discussion

This study confirmed that entrepreneurship programs have significantly positive impact on the entrepreneurial intention. This finding is in line with the prior study's findings that entrepreneurial intention can be aroused as a result of learning, as Vanevenhoven and Ligouri (2013) across their international, longitudinal research demonstrated that entrepreneurial education stimulates students' entrepreneurship intention. In addition, Souitaris, Zerbinati, and Al-Laham (2007) demonstrated that entrepreneurial programs increase entrepreneurship related mindsets and intentions, and improve the prospects that students will essentially attempt an entrepreneurship profession at some point in their lives. Based on theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 2002), the study at hand explored the drivers of an individual's intentions, that is, entrepreneurship programs under perceived person-entrepreneurship fit condition. This study confirmed that under high level of perceived person-entrepreneurship fit entrepreneurship programs have a higher positive impact on student's entrepreneurship intention as compared to low level of perceived person-entrepreneurship fit condition.

The study at hand has several contributions to the literature. First, the study at hand contributed to advance knowledge of motivation by assimilating two flow of motivation research simultaneously. One flow paid attention on academic education as a critical determinant of student motivation (Duval-Couetil, Gotch, & Yi, 2014; Lang & Liu, 2019; Shinnar, Pruett, & Toney, 2009). A second flow focuses on university students' reaction to motivation to get an insight of how student motivations can boost their intention to engage in entrepreneurial activity (Kim-Soon, Ahmad, & Ibrahim, 2018; Samuel, Ernest, & Awuah, 2013; Solesvik, 2013). Notwithstanding, the understanding from the current motivation literature, less scholastic attention has been paid to study these two flows of research simultaneously (Liu et al., 2020). By assimilating these efforts, the study at hand advances the knowledge of how and under what conditions university student endorses motivation stimulated by their educational programs. Specifically, in line with the earlier study findings (Barba-Sánchez & Atienza-Sahuquillo, 2018), this study found that as positive attitude to entrepreneurial behavior (Fayolle, Gailly, & Lassas-Clerc, 2006), educational programs build a planned behavior that leads to students' motivations. Second, this study contributes to the emerging literature on entrepreneurship intention. Understanding entrepreneurship intention is crucial, because if university students do not react positively to universities entrepreneurial related programs then not only the intention to pursue entrepreneurial activities is minimized, but their motivation to pursue such activities also decreases. Hassan et al. (2021) pioneering

findings on how entrepreneurial motivation are perceived by university students as critical breakthrough in the motivation literature. Third, this study contributes to entrepreneurship literature by focusing on the rising knowledge of person-environment fit theory that demonstrations that attitudinal consequences, for instance intentions, are formed by individual assessments of inner aspects and the exterior setting (Saks and Ashforth, 1997; Kristof-Brown et al., 2005; Chatman, 1989). Fit theory to entrepreneurship was proposed by Markman and Baron (2003), and their theoretical research work make use of person entrepreneurship fit as a theoretic model to formulate the significance of individual factors in forecasting venture consequences. The study at hand extends their groundbreaking case of person entrepreneurship fit context by establishing a conceptual model that differentiates and operationalizes the content magnitudes of perceived fit. Accordingly, this study examined that how university student perceived person-entrepreneurship fit influence universities entrepreneurial programs reactions to student's entrepreneurship intentions. This study found that perceived person-entrepreneurship fit is critical condition that explains when entrepreneurial programs endorse of motivation. In line with the hypothesis, when students perceived person-entrepreneurship fit was higher, a positive linkage among entrepreneurial programs, motivation, and entrepreneurship intension was observed. Overall, the findings of the study at hand are in line with theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 2002) that entails that behavioral, normative, and control attitudes starts to the shape of a behavior intent. When granted adequate level of definite command over the conduct, individuals are likely to accomplish their intention when there are prospects. Therefore, intent is believed to be the instant precursor of conduct. The pattern of attitudes indicates to the growth of entrepreneurial intentions that is the essential component to describe entrepreneurial conduct and also implies the endeavor to execute the entrepreneurial conduct (Linan et al., 2011). Both institutional and individual circumstances may form the forms of attitudes that drive the development of entrepreneurship intentions in a person. Specific aspects consist of the person's psychological tendency and characteristics, identified jointly as attitudes (Souitaris et al., 2007), and the person's personal history and demographic outline (Wang & Wong, 2004; Crant, 1996). Institutional reasons may consist of background associated theories for example the comfort of acquiring funding (Scholtens, 1999) and administrative aspects that impact work gratification (Lee et al., 2011). The important recognized element of attention in this research, which is particularly appropriate in the perspective of student entrepreneurship, is entrepreneurship educational programs that enhances that intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, that in turn leads to entrepreneurship intention.

Although motivated individuals are asset for organizations, and policy maker are usually recommended to promote individuals' motivations either intrinsically or extrinsically. Those individuals who lacks motivation may harm their intention to be engaged in entrepreneurial activities. At the least, the efforts and time universities students put into may be a waste if the students do not ultimately get necessary knowledge and skills offered by universities, which can lead them into higher level of entrepreneurship intention. While doing so, perceived person-entrepreneurship fit has a crucial role in boosting entrepreneurship intention.

In particular, the findings of this study suggests that perceived person-entrepreneurship fit university students achieve better results (higher level of entrepreneurship intention), when they are intrinsically and extrinsically motivated simultaneously. That is, being perceived person-entrepreneurship fit goes a long way in enhancing future intention to be engaged in entrepreneurship intention. Those who has low level of person-entrepreneurship fit could strive to pursue alternatives way to boost the usefulness of their motivation, rather than directly goes for an entrepreneurial venture without any motivation, either intrinsic or

extrinsic. The most alarming situation may be for those who neither has form of motivation, that is, intrinsic or extrinsic.

This has limitations that should be considered when interpreting the findings and contemplating their effects. These shortcomings also indicate potential ways for future investigations. First, even though the study implemented a SEM analysis, the author did not have continual measures of study variables to determine the sharpest potential proof in favor of causal relationships. It would be useful to control for previous levels of the exogenic variables in our study to improve the certainty in the links analyzed. Although the author cannot allege causality, a two-wave data collection assisted the author to diminish the prospective influence of CMB that would then pollute the assessment of this study hypothesized model (Podsakoff et al., 2012). To obtained causality, future studies are required to adopt experimental design study endorsed by a field study. In addition, a different theoretical lens can further augment the findings of our study. This study was also conducted in a collectivistic culture (i.e., Chinese culture). Hence, the findings can be generalized to other similar collectivistic cultures, however, a call for study conducted in an individualistic culture or Western culture is required.

6 Conclusion

The study at hand was devised to provide a theoretical and empirical comprehensive perspective on university student motivation to pursue entrepreneurial activities. Entrepreneurship programs offered by universities, through its prioritization of university students' requirements via emotional empowerment and support, was exhibited to be extremely favorable to enhance university student motivation, as positive impact of entrepreneurship programs on to pursue entrepreneurial activities have been found. Results further uncovered that whether entrepreneurship intention plans were determined by the perceived person-entrepreneurship fit of university students.

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