

EXPLORE HOW KNOWLEDGE, FAMILY CULTURE, MARKETING INNOVATIONS CONTRIBUTE TO IMPROVED ENTREPRENEURIAL INTENTION OF VOCATIONAL STUDENTS IN CHINA VIA CREATING THEIR POSITIVE ATTITUDE ON ENTREPRENEURSHIP

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Abstract

The paper constructs the framework and proposes the research methodology to explore factors related to the Vocational students' Entrepreneurial Intention in China with attitude as the mediator. The problem to explore is what are the challenges faced by entrepreneurship vocational students in China, and how can educators and policymakers support them? The research gap identified based on previous studies is: previous studies had not identified and explored the mediating effect of "attitude" on understanding the many factors related to students' Entrepreneurial Intention among vocational students in China. The conceptual framework is identified based on the research gap, with the self-determination theory, planned behavior theory, and classical theories of entrepreneurship, as the theoretical foundation. Factors related to the Vocational students' Entrepreneurial Intention in China include family culture, knowledge and marketing innovation facing the vocational students. Attitude is the mediator exploring factors related to the students' Entrepreneurial Intentions in China. The proposed research methodology is identified and justified, referring to a combination of qualitative and quantitative strategies. In the quantitative data analysis, one online questionnaire is developed and listed on (www.wjx.com) to collect data from 260 samples of the 83,809 vocational students from Liuzhou City, Guangxi Province, China. Moreover, 30 Informants are selected under the purposive sampling to prepare for the qualitative analysis using online interviews. Six research hypotheses are developed based on the identified research problems after the literature review and the methodology section to direct future studies on empirical studies of the topic.

Keywords: Knowledge, Family Culture, Marketing Innovations, Attitudes, Entrepreneurial Intention of Vocational Students in China

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Introduction

Background

Entrepreneurship is important for vocational students in management-related majors to find their positions and to prepare for their career development after graduation. However, students face various internal and external challenges to gain their Entrepreneurship. Some of the common challenges they encounter include lack of experience, limited access to resources, risk-averse mindset, limited market understanding, etc., indicating the counterpart recommendation that the educators and policymakers in China could follow to support the students' gaining improved Entrepreneurial Intention (Alkhalaf et al., 2022). For example, practical training is important for vocational schools and universities to incorporate practical training modules that simulate real business scenarios (Li et al., 2021). These programs can provide students with hands-on experience in starting and running a business, enabling them to overcome the lack of practical expertise. Moreover, the policymakers and the educators should cooperate to develop partnerships and to achieve curriculum enhancement. Establishing partnerships with local businesses, industry associations, and entrepreneurship support organizations can provide students with valuable connections, mentorship, and access to resources (Chhabra et al., 2021). This collaboration can enhance students' entrepreneurial skills and create opportunities for internships, mentorship programs, and potential funding. Integrating entrepreneurship education into the vocational curriculum is essential to equip students with the necessary knowledge and skills (Chhabra et al., 2021). This should include courses on market research, business planning, financial management, and innovative thinking. However, it is a challenge for the educators and the policymakers to achieve the excellent cooperation toward the improved Vocational students' Entrepreneurial Intention in China concerning the diversified and dynamic conditions of the students (Valencia-Arias et al., 2021). The researcher is motivated to explore the various influential factors.

Statement of the Problem

The problem in research is: what are the challenges faced by entrepreneurship vocational students in China, and how can educators and policymakers support them? This problem in research is related to the roles of policymakers and educators after noticing the importance for Chinese Vocational Students to improve their Entrepreneurial Intention.

Research Questions

- (1) What is the level of knowledge, marketing innovations, family culture, attitudes and the vocational students' Entrepreneurial Intention in China?
- (2) What variables show impacts on the vocational students' Entrepreneurial Intention in China?
- (3) What is the model that the educators and policymakers could follow to improve vocational students' Entrepreneurial Intention in China?

Research Objective

- (1) To assess the level of knowledge, marketing innovations, family culture, attitudes and the vocational students' Entrepreneurial Intention in China.

(2) To analyse the variables that show impacts on the vocational students' Entrepreneurial Intention in China.

(3) To create a model that educators and policymakers could follow to improve vocational students' Entrepreneurial Intention in China.

Research Hypotheses

1) Vocational Students' knowledge is significantly related to China's Vocational Students' Entrepreneurial Intention.

2) Vocational Students' knowledge is significantly related to China's Vocational Students' positive attitudes on Entrepreneurship.

3) Vocational Students' family culture is significantly related to China's Vocational Students' positive attitudes on Entrepreneurship.

4) Marketing innovation facing the Vocational Students in China is significantly related to Students' positive attitudes on Entrepreneurship.

5) Marketing innovation facing the Vocational Students in China is significantly related to Students' Entrepreneurial Intention.

6) The positive attitude of the Vocational Students in China is significantly related to Students' Entrepreneurial Intention.

Significance of the Study

The research has significance concerning the policy, academic, and practical contributions.

Policy

The policy contribution is the policymakers and educators in China could develop policies focusing on improved well-being of vocational students to improve their innovative and performing entrepreneurship after graduation.

Academic

Academically, the research raises a conceptual framework directing future studies on the research topic. Attitude as the mediator means a contribution to the research gap of previous studies.

Practical

Educators could follow recommendations from the study to improve the Entrepreneurial Intentions of Chinese vocational students. For example, there could be updates in curriculum and marketing innovation for the educators to attract and serve the vocational students in China toward their improved Entrepreneurial Intentions.

Literature Review

The literature review chapter focuses on theories and variables to construct the conceptual framework and to propose hypotheses for the research.

Theory

Theories to support the research on "what are the challenges faced by entrepreneurship vocational students in China, and how can educators and policymakers support them?" include the self-determination theory, planned behaviour theory, and classical theories of entrepreneurship.

First, the virtues of free trade, specialisation, and competition are identified by the classical theories of entrepreneurship to define an entrepreneur's role in offering items to the global market (Schimperna et al., 2021). Findings by Arranz et al. (2018) summarised factors related to an entrepreneur's role in offering items to the global market (entrepreneurship). Those factors include internal and external factors, with attitudes as the important factors influencing students' viewing concepts, such as entrepreneurship, in conducting their behaviours and achieving their career development. Ma et al. (2020) proposed similar results by investigating 1053 undergraduate students of Andalusia universities to suggest barriers stopping students from starting new businesses as their career development after graduation.

Second, the self-determination theory focuses on the intrinsic values and preferences of individuals to explore reasons related to their entrepreneurial intentions (Al-Jubari et al., 2018). The theory indicated that skills, experience, and knowledge are three categories of key factors related to vocational students' entrepreneurial intention because those three categories of factors are related to attitudes of the students to determine their goal-setting and behaviours related to entrepreneurship (Al-Jubari et al., 2019). However, the researchers need to consider more factors motivating the entrepreneurial intention of students in their studies, considering the various related external stakeholders and factors, such as families, educators, and policymakers.

Third, entrepreneurship research exploring factors related to individuals' entrepreneurial intentions following the planned behaviour theory addresses external factors besides the internal conditions of individuals about their entrepreneurial intentions (Al-Jubari et al., 2018). However, the functions of the external factors always need their interactions with the intrinsic factors. For example, educators try to raise the students' interest in the courses they offer to motivate China's Vocational Students' Entrepreneurial Intention.

Vocational students' Entrepreneurial Intention in China

Vocational students' Entrepreneurial Intention is defined as the students' conscious state of mind performing entrepreneurial behaviours, such as becoming an entrepreneur or starting new businesses after their graduation (Younis et al., 2020). Vocational Students' Entrepreneurial Intention is related to their starting and running new businesses because the students are more likely starting new businesses when the students report an increased level of Entrepreneurial Intention. Vocational students' Entrepreneurial Intention are measured by three dimensions: knowledge beyond the classroom, student's commitment to Entrepreneurship related education, and entrepreneurial planning (Duong, 2021). The Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) offers the framework defining Vocational students' Entrepreneurial Intention by referring to how the identified external factors can shape the behaviours of the students (Praswati et al., 2022). Components of Vocational students' Entrepreneurial Intention in China are knowledge beyond the classroom, student's commitment to Entrepreneurship related education, and entrepreneurial planning (Duong, 2021).

Attitudes

Attitudes and their relations to Vocational students' Entrepreneurial Intention in China are defined by the self-determination theory, addressing factors of Vocational students related to their Entrepreneurial Intention (Setiawan et al., 2022). According to Boonsiritomachai and Sud-On (2021), the "attitude" of one Vocational student's Entrepreneurial Intention in China measures how the vocational student in China has a positive attitude to achieve entrepreneurship toward his or her career goals.

Attitude is the mediator exploring factors related to the students' Entrepreneurial Intentions in China. "Attitudes" shows the mediating effect when exploring relationships between vocational students' Entrepreneurial Intentions in China based on two mechanisms: the students' positive attitude on entrepreneurship and the students' goal-setting directing their career development (Boonsiritomachai & Sud-On, 2021). First, the emotional intelligence and spiritual aspects of the vocational students' attitudes toward Entrepreneurship in China measures to what extent the students have a positive attitude toward entrepreneurship (Setiawan et al., 2022). Emotional intelligence is measured by three dimensions: emotional abilities, emotional traits, and emotional competence (Miao et al., 2018). Spirituality is measured by relationships, life purpose and values (Raco et al., 2019). Second, the students' self-efficiency is one indicator to measure how the students have their goals toward their career success. Self-efficiency is measured by emotional states, vicarious experience, imaginal experience, and social persuasion (Tay, 2020).

Variable: Knowledge

The vocational students' knowledge is related to their entrepreneurial intention concerning the various indicators measuring their knowledge (Rodríguez-López & Souto, 2020). Pillars (important indicators) to measure the vocational students' knowledge on entrepreneurship include the students having clear knowledge, having experience starting and running their businesses, and having skills supporting the operations of businesses (Rodríguez-López & Souto, 2020).

Three factors to measure the vocational students' knowledge of entrepreneurship include the students have clear knowledge, have experience starting and running their businesses, and have skills supporting the operations of businesses (Rodríguez-López & Souto, 2020). Each of the three factors shows certain impacts on the vocational students' knowledge of entrepreneurship to influence their behaviours, as proposed by the planned behaviour theory. First, a clear knowledge of entrepreneurship by the vocational students suggests their likelihood of starting their own business because individuals have behaviours based on similar topics in their work, learning, and lives (Salisu et al., 2021). There are forms of knowledge that influence the vocational students' confidence in starting and running their own businesses. For example, the vocational students' knowledge of customers, suppliers, technologies, and dynamics in the marketplace is important to prepare for their starting new businesses (Valencia-Arias et al., 2021). Moreover, the skills of the vocational students prepare them for their career in starting and running new businesses because running a new business require the students' leadership, conflict-solving, cross-cultural effectiveness, and interactive communications when they need to audit and respond to the various challenges in the marketplace (Ruiz-Alba et al., 2019). Third, the vocational students' related experience contributes to their entrepreneurship because the students can learn from the experience drawing on the success and failures they had experienced when starting and running their businesses (Damian & Empoli, 2021). The students' observing behaviours and achievements of their friends and family members also lay the foundation for their evaluating entrepreneurship and performing entrepreneurship in the workplace (Damian & Empoli, 2021).

Family Culture

Family Culture refers to how the Vocational Students' family show their attitudes, such as the supportive status of the family in encouraging the vocational students to start and run their own businesses. The supportive status of the family culture on the Vocational Students' Entrepreneurial Intention in China is measured by three pillars, which are the entrepreneurship performed by the family members, career succession opportunities, and trade for a long time (Duong, 2021). The supportive status of families contributes to the vocational students' performing entrepreneurship from overall via the resources that the vocational students could apply to perform entrepreneurship (Bazan et al., 2020).

The supportive status of the family culture on the Vocational Students' Entrepreneurial Intention in China is measured by three pillars, which are the entrepreneurship performed by the family members, career succession opportunities, and trade for a long time (Duong, 2021). First, family members' supports encourage the vocational students to also perform entrepreneurship, following the entrepreneurship performed by the family members. For example, the research by Li et al. (2021) raised empirical evidence from 102 Chinese families to suggest that the entrepreneurship performed by the parents is positively related to their children's Entrepreneurial Intention. Nguyen (2018) raised similar findings to confirm the significant impacts of demographic conditions, such as the career of the parents, on the vocational students' career development goals on founding their own businesses. Second, longer period that a family have its own business is

positively related to the children's performing entrepreneurship because the long period of a family operating its own business helps the family accumulate resources supporting the students' starting their own businesses after graduation. Third, career succession opportunities available to vocational students determine their likelihood of starting their own businesses. However, there are various factors that influence career succession opportunities available for the vocational students because of the diversified resources of their families and the parents' attitudes on supporting the vocational students' running their family-own businesses (Weerasekara & Bhanugopan, 2022).

Marketing Innovation

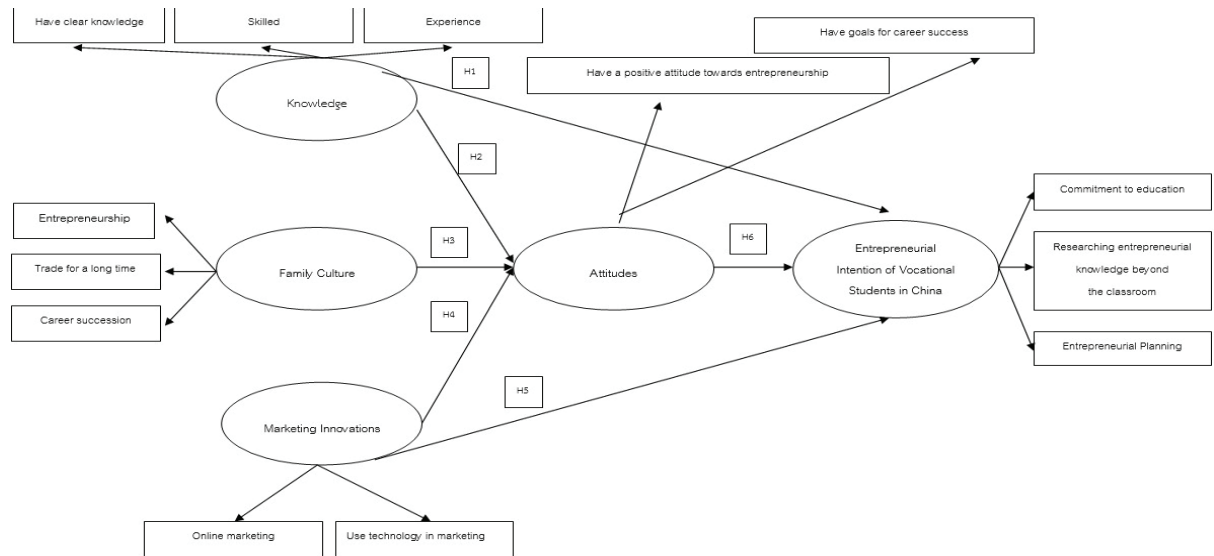
Marketing innovation influence interactions of the various stakeholders, such as policymakers and educators, and the vocational students in China, to influence the vocational students' Entrepreneurial Intention (Weerasekara & Bhanugopan, 2022). The forms of marketing innovation include the application of various marketing innovation technologies and the innovative ways that entrepreneurship is encouraged by policymakers and the education (Lihua, 2021).

There are two dimensions to measure marketing innovation: using technology and adopting online marketing (Weerasekara & Bhanugopan, 2022). First, online marketing with the various interventions adopted by the policymakers and the educators could interact with the vocational students in China to promote their Entrepreneurial Intention (Maheshwari & Kha, 2022). The planned behaviour theory confirmed the significance of policymakers and educators motivating the vocational students' Entrepreneurial Intention using online marketing because the students use online vehicles as the most important communication platform for interacting with the various stakeholders when evaluating business opportunities and starting their own businesses after graduation (Duong, 2021). The interactions of the various policymakers and the educators could determine their agreed measures, such as learning materials and incentives, to promote the vocational students' Entrepreneurial Intention using online marketing interventions in China (Widodo, 2021). Moreover, types of technologies are useful to promote online communications and to encourage the vocational students' Entrepreneurial Intention using online marketing interventions in China (Huang et al., 2022). The types of technologies in use include social media platforms, virtual reality, paid ads, blockchain, artificial intelligence, etc. (Huang et al., 2022). Those technologies could focus on a special perspective in the marketing practices to make a difference, such as by focusing on improved products (Wiji Prasetyo & Imanda Firmantyas Putri, 2021).

Research Gap and Conceptual Framework

The research gap identified based on previous studies is: previous studies had not identified and explored the mediating effect of "attitude" on understanding the many factors related to students' Entrepreneurial Intention among vocational students in China. The conceptual framework is identified based on the research gap, as illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Conceptual framework



Source: author

The conceptual framework is identified with the self-determination theory, planned behaviour theory, and classical theories of entrepreneurship as the theoretical foundation. Factors related to the Vocational students' Entrepreneurial Intention in China include family culture, knowledge and marketing innovation facing the vocational students. Attitude is the mediator exploring factors related to the students' Entrepreneurial Intentions in China. "Attitudes" shows the mediating effect when exploring relationships between vocational students' Entrepreneurial Intentions in China based on two mechanisms: the students' positive attitude toward entrepreneurship and the students' goal-setting directing their career development.

Proposed Research Methodology

The proposed research methodology is identified and justified, referring to a combination of qualitative and quantitative strategies. The section also includes a summary of the action plan and related ethical considerations achieving the study.

Mixed-Methods Sequential Explanatory Design

The mixed method is used in this research. The research with a mixed method includes both the qualitative and quantitative method to explore the strengths of the two research strategies (Aranda et al., 2021). Qualitative research helps achieve an in-depth analysis of the research questions (Shelton et al., 2020). The quantitative strategy with numeric data helps figure out accurate relationships among variables related to the research questions (Lyndon et al., 2022).

The Quantitative Research Strategy

The research first uses the quantitative research strategy with data collected from questionnaires and empirical studies conducted using SPSS.

The population of this study is 83,809 vocational students from Liuzhou City, Guangxi Province, China. Data on the population are found on the official websites of the universities concerning the students expected to graduate from 2020 to 2025. 260 samples are selected from the population with three steps. The sample size was estimated referring to the observation variables in the ratio of 1 to 20. The research has used 13 observation variables, indicating that there could be 260 samples selected under the 1 to 20 ratio as the rule. Stratified sampling is used to collect data from 260 samples from the vocational students in Liuzhou, China (Arnab et al., 2019). Step 1 is identifying all universities and students in the population. Step 2 is selecting the samples to prepare for the data collection. Step 3 is handing out the questionnaire to the samples for data collection.

The study uses the deductive approach to design and conduct the quantitative data analysis with six procedures: proposing the conceptual framework, creating a questionnaire, translating the questionnaire into Chinese, data collection and analysis, discussions, drawing conclusions and recommendations (Shin et al., 2018).

The research instrument in use is a questionnaire. The questionnaire includes six sections: demographic information, five-point Likert-supported questions related to Vocational Students' Entrepreneurial Intentions, attitudes, family culture, knowledge, and marketing innovation.

The online questionnaire is the way for the data collection. WJX (www.wjx.com) is the platform that the questionnaire were placed for data collection.

Validity and Reliability are important considerations of the questionnaire design, data collection and analysis for the research. First, this research asks experts to test the validity of the questionnaire and improve the questionnaire design until the answers of the experts fit with the validity standards (Lyndon et al., 2022). Seven experts are selected and involved in the process of evaluating the validity of the questionnaire by asking each of the experts to score the items related to the questionnaire. The researcher asks seven experts to check the validity of dimensions and indicators measuring variables in the research: entrepreneurial intention, knowledge, family culture, attitude, and marketing innovations. There are changes in dimensions, indicators, and definitions illustrating the dimensions and indicators if the expertise does not agree with the previously proposed frameworks. The final dimensions and indicators measuring variables in the research are determined after rounds of validity tests to gain approval on all the identified dimensions and indicators by the experts. Second, this study will test the reliability based on the

collected data, addressing the reliability index of the primary data collected (Shelton et al., 2020). The research includes the reliability test results after all data is collected and analysed. Cronbach's alpha is the criterion used to test the reliability of all data collected for this research, with 0.7 as the cutting-off level (Shelton et al., 2020).

Statistics to summarise the quantitative analysis include summary statistics, reliability, correlation, regression, and compare analyses.

The Qualitative Research Strategy

Data are collected from interviews and input into NVivo to apply the qualitative research strategy. The qualitative research strategy has the advantage of enabling in-depth analyses of how variables, such as knowledge, family culture, marketing innovations, attitudes and the vocational students' Entrepreneurial Intention, are related to direct the educator's and policymakers' interventions on promoting the vocational students' Entrepreneurial Intention in China. The researcher could compare findings from the qualitative, quantitative, and literature review section to draw conclusions to the research questions.

The population of this study is 83,809 vocational students from Liuzhou City, Guangxi Province, China. Data on the population are found on the official websites of the universities concerning the students expected to graduate from 2020 to 2025. 30 Informants are selected under the purposive sampling to prepare for the qualitative analysis. The research performs purposive sampling as one convenience sampling technique, which belongs to the non-probability sampling techniques and includes sampling biases to represent the conditions of the population with the identified samples (Arnab et al., 2019). However, it is still the best choice for the research to apply the convenience sampling technique because of the limited time and budget that the researcher could apply to recruit data from the selected samples for the empirical studies.

The study uses the deductive approach to design and conduct the qualitative data analysis with six procedures: proposing the conceptual framework, creating interview questions, translating the questions into Chinese, data collection and analysis, discussions, drawing conclusions and recommendations, similar to the efforts addressing the quantitative research strategy (Shin et al., 2018).

Interviews are used as the research instrument, with eight interview questions directing the interviews.

Data collection are achieved via online interview using social media platforms, such as WeChat. The researcher performs one-by-one online meetings to interact with each of the interviewees after getting their permission to participate in the online meetings. Each of the meetings lasts for around 30 minutes. The interviewer introduces the eight questions to direct the interview and to encourage answers of the participants. However, the interviewees are free to express their opinions related to the research topic beyond the eight proposed questions.

The research uses content analysis, which is one useful method for analysing qualitative data and conducting in-depth analyses of the data collected to answer the research questions. Themes are identified related to the research topic, research questions, and the rich data collected from the interviews to conduct the content analysis. NVivo is the software to organise the qualitative data analysis under the content analysis framework. When using NVivo to conduct the qualitative data analysis, there are thematic coding with three levels addressing the research questions, keywords related to the research questions (knowledge, Family Culture, Marketing Innovations, attitude, and Entrepreneurial Intention), and sub-factors measuring variables related to the Vocational Students' Entrepreneurial Intention in China.

Ethical Consideration in Research

The researcher, in designing and conducting the empirical research using the interview and the qualitative strategy, is required to consider private information security and other rights of the participants. The efforts include keeping individual respondents a secret, removing actual names and locations of the participants, etc., to enhance the reliability and validity of the qualitative data analysis of the research.

Conclusion

The paper is to construct the framework and propose the research methodology of the research titled: “Knowledge, Family Culture, Marketing Innovations, and Attitudes Affecting the Vocational students’ Entrepreneurial Intention in China”. The problem to explore is what are the challenges faced by entrepreneurship vocational students in China, and how can educators and policymakers support them? This problem in research is related to the roles of policymakers and educators after noticing the importance for Chinese Vocational Students to improve their Entrepreneurial Intention. The research gap identified based on previous studies is: previous studies had not identified and explored the mediating effect of “attitude” on understanding the many factors related to students’ Entrepreneurial Intention among vocational students in China. The conceptual framework is identified based on the research gap, with the self-determination theory, planned behaviour theory, and classical theories of entrepreneurship, as the theoretical foundation. Factors related to the Vocational students’ Entrepreneurial Intention in China include family culture, knowledge and marketing innovation facing the vocational students. Attitude is the mediator exploring factors related to the students’ Entrepreneurial Intentions in China. Six research hypotheses are developed. The proposed research methodology is identified and justified, referring to a combination of qualitative and quantitative strategies.

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