

From Technical Mastery to Venture Creation: Evaluating Barista Training and Entrepreneurial Intentions Through the Shapero's Model (SEE)

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ABSTRACT

While the burgeoning specialty coffee industry demands high technical proficiency, the link between vocational mastery and entrepreneurial emergence remains under-theorized. This study investigates the influence of barista training on students' entrepreneurial intentions through the lens of Shapero's Model of Entrepreneurial Event (SEE). Utilizing a cross-sectional quantitative design, data were synthesized from 227 barista trainees at Universiti Teknologi MARA and analysed via multiple regression. The results provide robust empirical validation for the SEE framework, identifying perceived desirability and perceived feasibility as significant precursors to intention. Notably, propensity to act emerged as the most potent predictor, underscoring the primacy of psychological readiness in behavioural formation. Conversely, technical barista training exhibited a negative, non-significant correlation with entrepreneurial intent. This pivotal finding suggests a competency-intention gap, where technical skill acquisition alone without integrated business-oriented modules, may inadvertently highlight the complexities of the craft, thereby dampening immediate entrepreneurial aspirations. The study advocates for a pedagogical paradigm shift in vocational hospitality education, transitioning from isolated skill-based training to an interdisciplinary model that synthesizes technical mastery with financial literacy and market strategy. These insights offer critical implications for curriculum designers seeking to bridge the divide between vocational competency and self-employment within the global coffee economy.

Keywords: Barista training, Entrepreneurial Intentions, Shapero's Model (SEE, Vocational Education, Hospitality Management, Propensity to Act

THE EVOLUTION OF THE BARISTA: FROM TECHNICAL OPERATOR TO ENTREPRENEURIAL AGENT

In contemporary hospitality education, the role of the barista has evolved from beverage preparation to specialized coffee expertise involving extraction mechanics and dairy chemistry (Arshad, 2024). As the specialty coffee market expands, industry requirements increasingly emphasize professionals who combine technical execution with operational competence (Lin and Kuo, 2022). Consequently, higher education institutions have formalised barista curricula to address core competencies including extraction techniques, product knowledge, and service delivery (Prehanto et al., 2021). However, while vocational frameworks aim to support immediate employment, technical proficiency alone may not fully account for long-term career trajectories or entrepreneurial emergence (Harahap et al., 2024; Maspul, 2022).

Specialized vocational training is frequently positioned as a potential pathway to entrepreneurship among hospitality students seeking professional autonomy (Mathews et al., 2020; Wati and Aini, 2021). Coffee shops often serve as accessible platforms for hospitality ventures; nevertheless, empirical literature remains focused on operational simulations, such as mock barista environments, rather than the psychological mechanisms underlying venture creation intentions (Azizan et al., 2018; Dailami et al., 2024). Practical simulations may

enhance technical confidence and operational alignment, yet their specific association with entrepreneurial intentions requires further empirical investigation (Batz Liñeiro et al., 2024). Existing research documents the technical professionalization of coffee preparation, emphasizing extraction tools, sensory science, and service quality (Harahap et al., 2024; Maspul, 2022). However, the cognitive mechanisms through which specialized technical instruction relates to the intent to establish a venture remain insufficiently delineated. This study addresses this theoretical gap by applying Shapero's Model of Entrepreneurial Event (SEE) within a vocational barista education context. By examining how Barista Skill Acquisition (BSA) aligns with perceived desirability, perceived feasibility, and the propensity to act, this inquiry evaluates how technical curricula interact with entrepreneurial intention formation (Ndofirepi, 2020)..

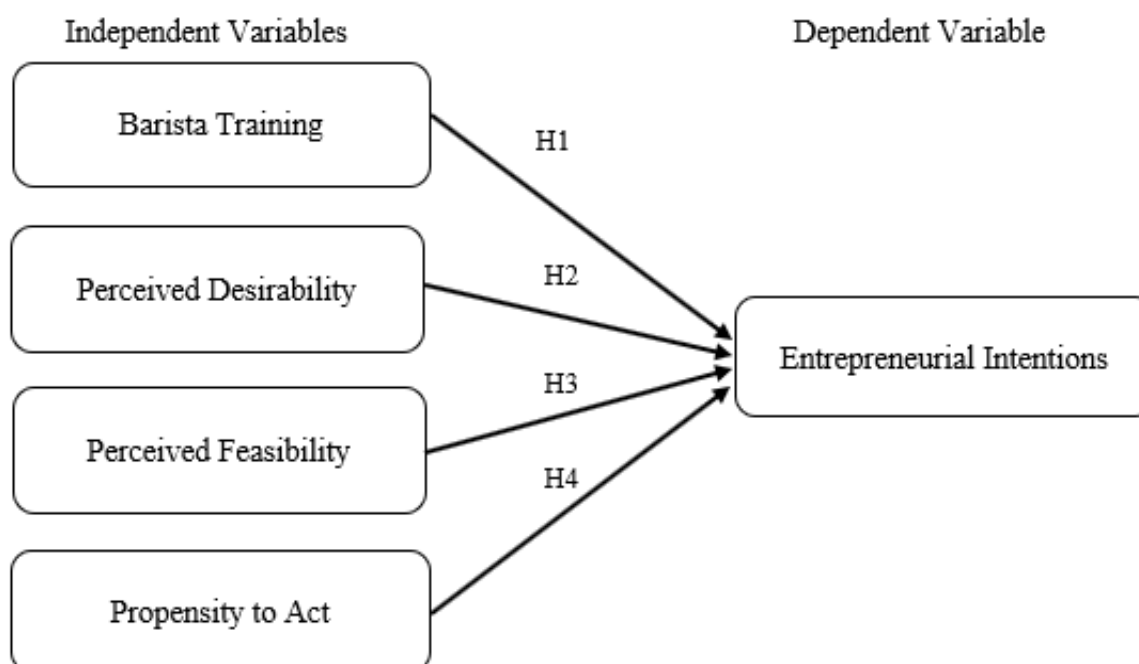
LITERATURE REVIEW

Entrepreneurial Intentions and The See Framework

Entrepreneurial intention represents the cognitive precursor to venture creation, reflecting a directed mental state toward establishing a new business (Krueger et al., 2000). Within vocational contexts, intentions are shaped by internal psychological predispositions and structured educational experiences (Astiana et al., 2022). According to Shapero's Model of Entrepreneurial Event (SEE), the formation of entrepreneurial intention is driven by three core constructs: perceived desirability, perceived feasibility, and the propensity to act (Shapero and Sokol, 1982).

Perceived desirability denotes the degree to which an individual finds starting a business personally attractive, whereas perceived feasibility reflects self-assessed capability regarding venture execution (Shapero and Sokol, 1982). These perceptions are influenced by psychological attributes, including self-efficacy and risk perception, which are further conditioned by educational environments (Astiana et al., 2022; Ndofirepi, 2020). In specialty coffee education, barista instruction provides a structured setting where technical execution interacts with operational awareness (Ferdian et al., 2023; Joesyiana et al., 2023; Wati and Aini, 2021). Certified technical training offers industry recognition, yet the degree to which technical mastery aligns with entrepreneurial intent remains a key empirical question (Arifqi and Irmawita, 2024; Burahman et al., 2022).

Fig. 1: Conceptual Model



Barista Skill Acquisition (BSA) and Entrepreneurial Intentions

Barista Skill Acquisition (BSA) is conceptualized as a multi-dimensional technical competency set comprising espresso machine operation, extraction dynamics, grind calibration, thermal management, and beverage

aesthetics. Vocational programs, such as mock barista laboratories, aim to build operational self-efficacy by simulating industry conditions (Prehanto et al., 2021). While technical mastery is often assumed to support self-employment readiness, specialized training without managerial instruction may focus student attention on operational execution rather than business ownership (Lin and Kuo, 2022). Thus, the direct relationship between technical skill acquisition and entrepreneurial intention requires formal evaluation.

H1: Barista Skill Acquisition (BSA) is positively associated with students' entrepreneurial intentions.

Perceived Desirability and Entrepreneurial Intentions

Perceived desirability reflects the perceived personal attractiveness and emotional resonance of venture creation (Munir et al., 2021; Wannamakok et al., 2020). In vocational barista training, exposure to specialty coffee culture, industry networks, and successful business models can enhance the perceived attractiveness of operating an independent coffee enterprise (Wati and Aini, 2021). When students perceive venture creation as a fulfilling career trajectory, their intention to pursue entrepreneurship is expected to be higher (Ramadhan et al., 2024).

H2: Perceived desirability is positively associated with entrepreneurial intentions.

Perceived Feasibility and Technical Self-Efficacy

Perceived feasibility represents an individual's confidence in their operational capability to establish and manage a venture (Aparicio et al., 2022). Within hospitality, feasibility is informed by technical self-efficacy and practical exposure gained through structured instruction (Rahardjo and Hasibuan, 2020). Mastering specialized barista techniques may reduce perceived technical entry barriers, thereby reinforcing individual perceptions of business feasibility (Gunawan et al., 2021).

H3: Perceived feasibility is positively associated with entrepreneurial intentions.

Propensity to Act as a Behavioral Antecedent

Propensity to act captures an individual's personal disposition and behavioral readiness to execute decisions and pursue opportunities (Zhuang and Sun, 2024). While desirability and feasibility establish cognitive predisposition, propensity to act represents the behavioral orientation required to transition from intention to action (Dailami et al., 2024). Practical vocational training can reinforce personal confidence and proactive dispositions, strengthening the structural link to entrepreneurial intentions (Silesky-Gonzalez et al., 2024; Wang et al., 2021).

H4: Propensity to act is positively associated with entrepreneurial intentions.

METHODOLOGIES

Research Design and Sampling Frame

This study employs a quantitative, cross-sectional survey design grounded in a post-positivist research framework. The target population comprised students from the Faculty of Hotel and Tourism Management at Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), across the Penang and Dungun campuses. Based on official records from the UiTM Academic Affairs Department, the sampling frame encompasses 4,782 students enrolled in the HTH201: Barista Skills course between 2013 and 2023. A convenience sample of 227 active students who completed the HTH201 module was secured. Convenience sampling was selected due to specific inclusion criteria requiring verified completion of the HTH201 technical curriculum, ensuring that respondents possessed the necessary technical baseline to evaluate Barista Skill Acquisition (BSA).

Instrumentation and Measurement

The survey instrument was adapted from validated scales (Astiana et al., 2022) and tailored to the vocational coffee context. All constructs were measured on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 ("Strongly Disagree") to 5 ("Strongly Agree").

1. **Barista Skill Acquisition (BSA):** Measured via 5 items capturing technical dimensions: grind skill optimization, coffee bean literacy, machine operation precision, brewing temperature mastery, and coffee art competency.
2. **SEE Antecedents:** Perceived Desirability (6 items), Perceived Feasibility (6 items), Propensity to Act (6 items), and Entrepreneurial Intentions (5 items).

Psychometric Assessment and Statistical Diagnostics

A pilot study ($n = 30$) established initial internal consistency. In the main study ($n = 227$), reliability was evaluated using Cronbach's Alpha. Statistical processing was conducted using IBM SPSS Statistics version 29. Diagnostic assessments for parametric analysis included tests for normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity via residual plotting. Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) collinearity diagnostics were conducted to evaluate structural overlap among the predictors.

Table 1: Pilot Test – Reliability Analysis

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items
Barista Skill Acquisition	0.834	5
Perceived Desirability	0.874	6
Perceived Feasibility	0.855	6
Propensity to Act	0.940	6
Entrepreneurial Intention	0.953	5

RESULTS

Sample Profile and Reliability Analysis

The sample ($n = 227$) was balanced across gender (52.0% male, 48.0% female), with 41.0% aged 20–22 years and 58.6% in their second year of study. Respondents were distributed across business (48.0%) and non-business (52.0%) family backgrounds. As shown in Table 1, all constructs demonstrated high internal reliability, with Cronbach's Alpha values exceeding the 0.70 threshold.

Table 1: Measurement Scale Reliability ($n = 227$)

Construct	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha (α)
Barista Skill Acquisition (BSA)	5	0.834
Perceived Desirability	6	0.874
Perceived Feasibility	6	0.855
Propensity to Act	6	0.940
Entrepreneurial Intentions	5	0.953

Regression Diagnostics and Hypothesis Testing

Multiple regression analysis was conducted to evaluate the predictive capacity of BSA and SEE constructs on entrepreneurial intentions. The overall model was statistically significant, $F(4,222) = 1475.450$, $p < 0.001$, yielding an R^2 of 0.964 (Adjusted $R^2 = 0.963$).

Table 2: Standardized beta coefficients and significance levels

Predictor Variables	Unstandardized B	Std. Error	Beta (β)	t-value	Sig.	VIF
(Constant)	0.025	0.047	-	0.527	0.599	-
Barista Training (BSA)	-0.087	0.048	-0.09	-1.807	0.072	15.101
Perceived Desirability	0.305	0.061	0.306	5.008	<.001	22.896

Perceived Feasibility	0.306	0.068	0.303	4.494	<.001	27.824
Propensity to Act	0.468	0.075	0.468	6.272	<.001	34.138

Note: Dependent Variable: Entrepreneurial Intentions. Significance level at $p < .05$.

The empirical findings support H2, H3, and H4. Propensity to act exhibited the strongest association with entrepreneurial intentions ($\beta = 0.468, p < 0.001$), followed by perceived desirability ($\beta = 0.306, p < 0.001$) and perceived feasibility ($\beta = 0.303, p < 0.001$). Conversely, Barista Skill Acquisition (H1) showed a non-significant, negative relationship with entrepreneurial intentions ($\beta = -0.090, p = 0.072$), resulting in the rejection of H1.

DISCUSSION

Model Performance and Collinearity Interpretation

The statistical model accounts for 96.4% of the variance in entrepreneurial intentions ($R^2 = 0.964$). While Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values range from 15.101 to 34.138, indicating substantial multicollinearity, this structural overlap reflects a cognitive bundling phenomenon within specialized vocational cohorts. In intensive technical environments, student perceptions of craft feasibility and career desirability do not function as isolated psychological domains. Instead, hands-on skill mastery, thus feasibility, is closely bound to professional identity and attraction to the industry, focusing on desirability. Consequently, SEE constructs share substantial structural variance when measured concurrently in homogeneous student samples.

Primacy of Behavioural Readiness

In alignment with prior studies (Silesky-Gonzalez et al., 2024; Wang et al., 2021), propensity to act emerged as the primary predictor of entrepreneurial intentions ($\beta = .468, p < .001$). This indicates that among hospitality students, behavioral readiness and proactive orientation exert a stronger influence on intention formation than attitudinal perceptions alone. In fast-paced operational settings like specialty coffee, individual action orientation serves as the key driver translating cognitive feasibility and desirability into venture intent.

Theoretical Justification of Technical Anchoring: The Rejection of H1

The non-significant, negative association between Barista Skill Acquisition (BSA) and entrepreneurial intentions ($\beta = -0.090, p = 0.072$) reveals a vocational paradox. Contrary to the assumption that technical training automatically promotes self-employment, these results indicate a phenomenon of Technical Anchoring. Drawing from Vocational Socialization Theory and Risk Perception Theory, intensive technical instruction socializes students into an operational expert practitioner identity. As students master high-precision skills, such as extraction parameters or micro-foam chemistry, their cognitive focus centers on technical perfection. This heightened mastery elevates their awareness of operational standards, equipment costs, and quality control risks, without providing corresponding managerial competencies. Consequently, technical skill acquisition without integrated business education anchors students toward specialized employment roles rather than venture creation (Dailami et al., 2024; Prehanto et al., 2021).

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Theoretical Implications

This study contributes to vocational entrepreneurship theory by conceptualizing the mechanism of technical anchoring. It demonstrates that technical competency acquisition and entrepreneurial intention formation represent distinct cognitive development paths. Furthermore, the observed multicollinearity highlights the presence of a "cognitive package," wherein perceived desirability and feasibility operate as an integrated construct within specialized technical cohorts.

Practical and Curriculum Implications

To mitigate technical anchoring, vocational hospitality curricula must transition from purely technical instruction to an entrepreneurship-embedded framework. Curricular integration syllabus such as HTH201-Barista Skills course should incorporate basic managerial competencies, including cost accounting, inventory logistics, and commercial strategy, alongside with emphasizing on extraction skills. Hence, laboratory redesign which focusing on exposing practical environments should function as business incubators where students manage simulated commercial operations, evaluating financial performance alongside beverage quality. Technical anchoring also should stress on entrepreneurial mentorship, which allow incorporating interactions with barista-entrepreneurs, so that it can provide visible career models illustrating the transition from technical execution to business ownership among the students.

Limitations and Future Research

This study has several limitations. First, the cross-sectional design precludes causal inferences regarding skill acquisition and venture creation. Second, the use of convenience sampling across two regional campuses limits broad generalizability. Third, the presence of multicollinearity and high R^2 values suggest structural overlap among SEE constructs, indicating that future studies should utilize Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) alongside composite construct evaluations (such as AVE, CR, and HTMT diagnostics) to better model structural relationships. Finally, longitudinal designs are recommended to track post-graduation venture creation rates over time.

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