วารสารธรรมเพื่อชีวิต
JOURNAL OF DHAMMA FOR LIFE
ISSN: 2822-048X
https://so08.tci-thaijo.org/index.php/dhammalife/index

Original Research Article

The Impact of Entrepreneurial Passion on Entrepreneurial Intention among Chinese International Students in Thailand: The Moderating Role of Entrepreneurship

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ARTICLE INFO

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Keywords:
Entrepreneurial Passion;
Entrepreneurial Intention;
Entrepreneurship

Article history:
Received: 07/01/2025
Revised: 02/02/2025
Accepted: 05/03/2025
Available online: 21/06/2025

How to Cite:
Zheng, Z. & Angasinha, C. (2025). The Impact of Entrepreneurial Passion on Entrepreneurial Intention among Chinese International Students in Thailand: The Moderating Role of Entrepreneurship. *Journal Dhamma for Life, 31*(2), 392-404.

ABSTRACT

This study explores the relationship between entrepreneurial passion, entrepreneurial intention, and the moderating role of entrepreneurship among Chinese international students in Thailand. Using a sample of 287 participants, the findings reveal that age and education level significantly influence entrepreneurial constructs, while gender, entrepreneurial experience, and birthplace do not have substantial effects. Correlation analysis indicates strong positive relationships among entrepreneurial passion, entrepreneurship, and entrepreneurial intention, suggesting these constructs are inherently interlinked. The regression analysis demonstrates that entrepreneurship significantly enhances the impact of entrepreneurial passion on intention, highlighting its moderating role. However, complexities in the interaction between entrepreneurial passion and entrepreneurship were observed, suggesting a need for practical feasibility assessments beyond passion alone. The study recommends that educators and institutions foster entrepreneurial passion and practical skills through experiential learning, mentorship, and targeted interventions. Policymakers are encouraged to create supportive ecosystems that nurture entrepreneurship and provide resources for international student entrepreneurs.

Introduction

The entrepreneurial landscape has witnessed a growing interest in understanding the factors influencing entrepreneurial intentions, particularly among young populations, including international students (Liñán & Fayolle, 2015). Chinese international students in Thailand represent a unique demographic, as they are exposed to a cross-cultural environment that may affect their entrepreneurial mindset and intentions (Chen et al., 2021). The increasing number of Chinese students studying abroad and the subsequent potential for entrepreneurship make them relevant for exploring entrepreneurial passion, intentions, and related behavioural dynamics (Zhang & Foo, 2018).

Entrepreneurial passion, characterised by intense positive emotions and dedication towards entrepreneurial activities, has been identified as a significant predictor of entrepreneurial intention (Cardon et al., 2013). Entrepreneurial intention is the commitment to starting a business, influenced by a combination of intrinsic motivation, perceived feasibility, and external influences (Krueger et al., 2000). Past studies have consistently suggested that entrepreneurial passion is central to forming entrepreneurial intentions (Obschonka et al., 2015; Murnieks et al., 2020). However, despite the growing body of literature, limited attention has been given to the specific context of Chinese international students in Thailand, where cultural differences and educational experiences may alter the relationships between entrepreneurial passion and intention (Chen & Elston, 2013).

Moreover, the moderating role of entrepreneurship, which encompasses risk-taking, innovativeness, and proactive behaviour, remains understudied in the context of international students (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000). Entrepreneurship can enhance or weaken the effect of entrepreneurial passion on intention, depending on individual predispositions and environmental factors (Newman et al., 2019). While previous studies have examined entrepreneurship in domestic contexts (Baluku et al., 2020), there is still a gap in understanding how entrepreneurship interacts with passion to affect entrepreneurial intentions among Chinese students in a cross-cultural setting, such as Thailand.

This study aims to fill this gap by investigating the relationship between entrepreneurial passion and entrepreneurial intention among Chinese international students in Thailand, with entrepreneurship as a moderating variable. By focusing on this unique context, the study seeks to contribute to understanding how cross-cultural exposure and individual traits affect entrepreneurial behaviour, providing valuable insights for educators and policymakers in fostering entrepreneurship among international students.

Research Objective

1. To examine the factor structure and reliability of the Youth Entrepreneurial Passion, Youth Entrepreneurship, and Youth Entrepreneurial Intention scales using exploratory factor analysis to validate their constructs and ensure they are suitable for further analysis.

2. To analyse the demographic influences on Entrepreneurship, Entrepreneurial Passion, and Entrepreneurial Intention, specifically focusing on factors such as gender, age, education level, entrepreneurial experience, and birthplace to determine which demographic characteristics significantly impact these entrepreneurial constructs.

3. To investigate the relationships among Entrepreneurial Passion, Entrepreneurship, and Entrepreneurial Intention through correlation and regression analysis to determine the strength and direction of their interrelationships.

Literature Review

The relationship between entrepreneurial passion and entrepreneurial intention had been the focus of numerous studies, as it played a crucial role in shaping individuals' decision-making processes and commitment to entrepreneurial ventures. Entrepreneurial passion, often characterised by intense positive feelings towards entrepreneurial activities, was suggested to significantly influence one's intention to start a business (Cardon et al., 2013). Studies had consistently found that individuals who experienced entrepreneurial passion were more likely to exhibit stronger entrepreneurial intentions (Obschonka et al., 2015). This relationship was supported by self-determination theory, which posited that intrinsic motivation, such as passion, fostered the willingness to engage in entrepreneurial behaviour (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

Entrepreneurial intention, defined as an individual's commitment to starting a business, had been extensively studied as a predictor of entrepreneurial behaviour (Krueger et al., 2000). Research indicated that entrepreneurial passion directly influenced entrepreneurial intention by enhancing self-efficacy and perceived feasibility of entrepreneurial activities (Liñán & Fayolle, 2015). According to the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991), attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control collectively determine an individual's entrepreneurial intention, with passion serving as a key attitudinal component that could strengthen intention. For instance, Murnieks et al. (2020) demonstrated that passion contributed to both the persistence and strength of entrepreneurial intention, thereby increasing the likelihood of entrepreneurial action.

Entrepreneurship, a moderating variable in this relationship, could enhance or weaken the impact of entrepreneurial passion on entrepreneurial intention. Entrepreneurship referred to the willingness to take risks, innovate, and pursue new opportunities despite uncertainty (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000). Research by Newman et al. (2019) showed that individuals with strong entrepreneurship were more likely to translate their entrepreneurial passion into entrepreneurial intentions due to their greater risk tolerance and proactive personality traits. Furthermore, Baluku et al. (2020) found that the moderating effect of entrepreneurship could significantly influence how passion was converted into concrete entrepreneurial goals and actions, highlighting its role in transforming emotional energy into intentional behaviour.

Moreover, several studies had highlighted the importance of contextual factors, such as culture and social support, in moderating the relationship between entrepreneurial passion and intention. For instance, the role of entrepreneurship was found to be more pronounced in cultures that supported individualism and innovation, as individuals in such environments were more likely to harness their passion and direct it towards entrepreneurial endeavours (Hayton & Cacciotti, 2013). Thus, understanding how entrepreneurship interacted with passion was vital in predicting entrepreneurial intentions, particularly in cross-cultural contexts.

Research Methodology

Population and Sample

The population of this study includes Chinese students in Thailand at the undergraduate, master, and Ph.D. levels. A sample of 287 students was selected through stratified random sampling to ensure representativeness across gender, age, education, entrepreneurial experience, and birthplace.

The sample size was determined to meet statistical requirements for reliable regression and moderation analyses while considering practical limitations. Stratified random sampling was employed to reflect the characteristics of the population and ensure representativeness. The sample details are presented in Table 1.

Table 1 Descriptive Result of the Sample

Variables		n	percent (%)
Gender	Male	129	44.47
	Female	158	55.21
Age	14-18	28	9.72
	19-25	159	54.86
	26-30	72	25.00
	31-35	28	9.72
Education	Lower-level undergraduate students	72	25.00
	Senior undergraduate students	100	34.72
	Master students	72	25.00
	Doctoral students	43	14.93
Experience	Yes	100	34.72
	No	187	65.28
Birthplace	Southern China	100	34.72
	Central China	115	39.93
	Western China	72	25.00

The sample comprises 129 males (44.8%) and 158 females (55.2%). The age distribution is as follows: 28 participants aged 14-18 (9.7%), 159 participants aged 19-25 (54.9%), 72 participants aged 26-30 (25.0%), and 28 participants aged 31-35 (9.7%). In terms of educational background, there are 72 lower-level undergraduates (25.0%), 100 senior undergraduates (34.7%), 72 master students (25.0%), and 43 doctoral students (15.0%). Regarding entrepreneurial experience, 100 participants have such experience (34.7%), while 187 participants do not (65.3%). For birthplace, 100 participants are from Southern China (34.7%), 115 from Central China (39.9%), and 72 from Western China (25.0%). This distribution highlights the diversity and representativeness of the sample, thereby enhancing the external validity and generalizability of the study results.

Research Instrument

The demographic variable scale has six parts: gender, age, education, major, entrepreneurial experience, and place of birth. Among them, gender includes male and female. The research object of this article is youth. According to the definition of youth in "The Middle- and Long-term Youth Development Plan (2016-2025)" of the State Council of the People's Republic of China (Xinhua, 2017), that is, youth between 14 and 35 years old. Therefore, the ages in this study include 17-18 years old, 19-25 years old, 26-30 years old, and 31-35 years old. Since this study's respondents are all students, Education includes lower-level undergraduate students (first and second years of undergraduate studies), senior undergraduate students (third and fourth years of undergraduate students), Master students are currently studying, and doctoral students are currently studying. Entrepreneurial experience consists of those with entrepreneurial experience and those without

entrepreneurial experience. Place of birth is divided according to China's economic zones, including southern China, central China and western China.

The Youth Entrepreneurial Passion Scale adopts the entrepreneurial passion scale designed by Cardon et al. (2013). The scale has a total of 13 items and a total of 3 subscales. Among them, the Inventing (Inv.) Scale has 5 items, the Founding (Fdg.) Scale has 4 items, and the Developing (Dev.) Scale has 4 items. The Youth Entrepreneurship Passion Scale adopts a five-point Likert-type scale, with 1 is strong disagreement, 2 is disagree, 3 is neither agree nor disagree, 4 is agree, and 5 is strongly agree. The higher the score, the stronger the entrepreneurial passion of young people.

The Youth Entrepreneurial Intention Scale refers to the individual entrepreneurial intention scales of Fayolle & Liñán (2014), Kusmintarti et al. (2016), and Li (2020). It was appropriately revised based on the background of Chinese students in Thailand to form the scale of entrepreneurial intention used in this study. There are 5 items in the Youth Entrepreneurship Intention Scale, using a five-point Likert-type scale, with 1 is strongly agree, 2 is agree, 3 is neither agree nor disagree, 4 is disagree, and 5 is strongly disagree. The lower the score, the higher the youth's entrepreneurial intention.

The Youth Entrepreneurship Scale adopts the Entrepreneurial Characteristics Scale used by Kusmintarti et al. (2016). This scale has a total of 6 sub-dimensions. Among them, there are 4 items in the dimensions of internallocus of control (ILC), there are 4 items in the dimensions of need for achievement (NFA) scale, there are 4 items in the dimensions of risk-taking propensity (RTP) scale, there are 5 items in the dimension of creativity (CRE) scale, the dimension of social networking (SNW) scale has 4 items in total, there are 4 items in the dimension of tolerance for ambiguity (TFA) scale. The scale has a total of 25 items, using a five-point Likert-type scale, with 1 is strongly agree, 2 is agree, 3 is neither agree nor disagree, 4 is disagree, and 5 is strongly disagree. The lower the score, the higher the youth entrepreneurship.

Data Collection

The subjects of this study were Chinese students from a well-known university in Thailand. All students were Chinese international students who had received entrepreneurial education. After identifying the research subjects, a data survey was conducted among the research subjects. This research collected 287 questionnaires. Invalid questionnaires were also eliminated through favourable inspection methods such as the length of question time and responses to reverse questions. Then data analysis was conducted on the responses to the questionnaires.

Research Statistics

SPSS software is used to carry out data analysis on the selected scales. The main contents include descriptive analysis, reliability analysis, validity analysis including exploratory factor analysis, independent sample t-test, One-way ANOVA, and correlation analysis, regression analysis, and moderator effect analysis to verify the hypotheses in the research model.

Results

The exploratory factor analysis was conducted to examine the data structure and validate the constructs identified through expert consensus. The results indicated that the Bartlett's sphericity test χ^2 value for the Youth Entrepreneurial Passion Scale was 2591.318 (P<0.001), with a KMO coefficient of 0.936; the Bartlett's sphericity test χ^2 value for the Youth Entrepreneurship Scale was 5424.087 (P<0.001), with a KMO coefficient of 0.957; and the Bartlett's sphericity test χ^2 value for the Youth Entrepreneurial Intention Scale was 741.496 (P<0.001), with a KMO coefficient of 0.846. The KMO coefficients for all scales exceeded 0.800, indicating that they are suitable for exploratory factor analysis. The results of the exploratory factor analysis are presented in Table 2.

Table 2 Results of exploratory factor analysis

λ		h^2	λ		h^2	λ		h^2	
Entrepreneurship									
ILC	.755	.670	CRE	.758	.675	RTP	.684	.567	KMO=0.957, x^2=5424.087, p<0.001; Variance=88.437%; Cronbach's α=0.853
	.713	.608		.811	.758		.787	.720	
	.789	.723		.736	.642		.789	.723	
	.696	.584		.699	.588		.699	.589	
NFA	.724	.624	SNW	.812	.760	TFA	.727	.629	
	.803	.744		.696	.585		.744	.653	
	.808	.754		.759	.676		.758	.674	
	.779	.706		.766	.686		.785	.716	
Entrepreneurial Passion									
Fdg.	.889	.795	Dev.	.869	.761	Inv.	.786	.620	KOM=0.936, x^2=2591.318, p<0.001; Variance=73.753%; Cronbach's α=0.870
	.870	.759		.854	.734		.831	.701	
	.882	.778		.858	.742		.854	.736	
	.857	.741		.874	.772		.841	.709	
							.856	.741	
Entrepreneurial Intention									
.795		.632	.824		.679	KOM=0.846, x^2=741.496, p<0.001; Variance=73.753%; Cronbach's α=0.860			
.811		.658	.830		.689				
.837		.701							

Table 2 results indicate that the Youth Entrepreneurial Intention Scale is a single factor with 3 items, accounting for a total variance explained of 73.753%. In contrast, the Youth Entrepreneurship Scale consists of 6 factors, each comprising 4 items, with a total variance explained of 88.437%. The Youth Entrepreneurial Passion Scale is composed of 3 factors with 4 items each, explaining 73.753% of the variance. All factor loading coefficients are greater than 0.58, indicating that the items are strongly correlated with their respective factors. The communalities of the factors are greater than 0.58, showing that each item significantly contributes to the factor structure. The explanation rate of each factor exceeds 5%, suggesting that there are no redundant factors. the Cronbach's alpha coefficients for the three scales are as follows—Youth Entrepreneurship Scale is 0.853, Youth Entrepreneurial Passion Scale is 0.870, and Youth Entrepreneurial Intention Scale is 0.860. All values exceed

0.8. These findings demonstrate that the scales have high reliability and validity, making them suitable for further research and data analysis.

Based on the scales analysed, Table 3 presents the results of the different analyses, which explore the variations in entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial passion, and entrepreneurial intention across different demographic groups.

Table 3 Results of Difference Analysis

Variable		Entrepreneurship		Entrepreneurial Passion		Entrepreneurial Intention	
		M±SD	*t*/F	M±SD	*t*/F	M±SD	*t*/F
GEN	Male	3.48±0.82	-1.58	3.49±0.80	0.58	3.33±0.89	0.36
	Female	3.63±0.78		3.43±0.85		3.29±0.92	
AGE	17-18	2.44±0.77	4.77**	3.17±0.97	0.58**	3.47±1.12	0.50*
	19-25	3.42±0.89		3.37±0.86		3.21±0.89	
	26-30	3.69±0.71		3.51±0.90		3.25±0.85	
	31-35	3.63±0.74		3.51±0.80		3.37±0.89	
EDU	Lower-level undergraduate	3.85±0.57	0.63	3.89±0.78	1.65**	3.83±0.97	1.57**
	Senior undergraduate	3.61±0.81		3.53±0.63		3.32±0.91	
	Master	3.53±0.83		3.38±0.75		3.27±0.88	
	Doctoral	3.57±0.79		3.46±0.91		3.29±0.91	
EXP	Yes	3.64±0.77	-1.59	3.44±0.84	0.45	3.30±0.91	0.17
	No	3.49±0.83		3.48±0.81		3.32±0.89	
BRP	Southern	3.63±0.73	0.93	3.56±0.72	2.25	3.38±0.84	0.60
	Central	3.51±0.83		3.36±0.85		3.25±0.90	
	Western	3.64±0.80		3.57±0.87		3.34±1.00	

Note: *p<0.05, **p<0.01

Based on the difference analysis (Table 3), the results indicate that gender does not significantly influence Entrepreneurship ($p > 0.05$), Entrepreneurial Passion ($p > 0.05$), or Entrepreneurial Intention ($p > 0.05$). For age, there are significant differences in Entrepreneurship ($F = 4.77$, $p < 0.01$) and Entrepreneurial Passion ($F = 0.58$, $p < 0.01$), with respondents aged 26-30 years reporting the highest scores for these constructs, while no significant differences were found for Entrepreneurial Intention ($p > 0.05$). In terms of education level, there are significant differences in Entrepreneurial Passion ($F = 1.65$, $p < 0.01$) and Entrepreneurial Intention ($F = 1.57$, $p < 0.01$), with lower-level undergraduate students scoring the highest in both constructs. However, entrepreneurship does not show significant differences in education level ($p > 0.05$). Regarding entrepreneurial experience, those with experience ($M = 3.64$, $SD = 0.77$) and those without experience ($M = 3.49$, $SD = 0.83$) show no significant differences in Entrepreneurship, Entrepreneurial Passion, or Entrepreneurial Intention ($p > 0.05$). For birthplace, no significant differences are found across Entrepreneurship, Entrepreneurial Passion, or Entrepreneurial Intention ($p > 0.05$). Overall, the findings suggest that age and education level significantly affect certain constructs—age influences Entrepreneurship and Entrepreneurial Passion, while education level affects

Entrepreneurial Passion and Entrepreneurial Intention—whereas gender, entrepreneurial experience, and birthplace do not have significant impacts.

The correlation analysis (Table 4) examined the relationships between entrepreneurial passion, entrepreneurship, and entrepreneurial intention.

Table 4 Result of Correlation analysis

	Entrepreneurial passion	Entrepreneurship	Entrepreneurial intention
Entrepreneurial passion	1		
Entrepreneurship	0.372**	1	
Entrepreneurial intention	0.579**	0.442**	1
M	3.457	2.62	3.307
SD	0.824	0.691	0.901

Note: **p<0.01

Based on the correlation analysis presented in Table 4, Entrepreneurial Passion and Entrepreneurship have a moderate positive correlation (r = 0.372, p < 0.01), suggesting that higher entrepreneurial passion is associated with higher entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurial passion also has a strong positive correlation with Entrepreneurial Intention (r = 0.579, p < 0.01), indicating that individuals with higher passion tend to have stronger entrepreneurial intentions. Additionally, entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial intention are moderately positively correlated (r = 0.442, p < 0.01), implying that greater resilience is linked to increased entrepreneurial intention. Overall, all the relationships among entrepreneurial passion, entrepreneurship, and entrepreneurial intention are positive and significant.

In the analysis of the moderating variable entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial passion remained the independent variable, and entrepreneurial intention was the dependent variable. According to the results of Model 1, entrepreneurial passion had a significant positive effect on entrepreneurial intention (B = 0.948, SE = 0.028, β = 0.867, t = 34.333, p < 0.001), indicating that as entrepreneurial passion increases, entrepreneurial intention significantly improves. Model 2 further confirmed this result, although the effect of entrepreneurial passion slightly weakened (B = 0.501, SE = 0.098, β = 0.458, t = 5.093, p < 0.001). Entrepreneurship also had a significant positive effect on entrepreneurial intention. In Model 1, the B = 0.981, SE = 0.032, β = 0.771, t = 30.544, p < 0.001. In Model 2, the effect of entrepreneurship was slightly weakened (B = 0.499, SE = 0.107, β = 0.392, t = 4.673, p < 0.001). The interaction term between entrepreneurial passion and entrepreneurship significantly positively affected entrepreneurial intention in Model 2 (B = 0.159, SE = 0.034, β = 0.457, t = 4.721, p < 0.001). This indicates that the interaction between entrepreneurial passion and entrepreneurship significantly enhances entrepreneurial intention. Overall, the R^2 values of Model 1 and Model 2 were 0.838 and 0.854, respectively, indicating that these two models explain most of the variance in entrepreneurial intention.

The changes in ΔR^2 (p = 0.000) and ΔF (p = 0.000) further validate the significance of the interaction term in Model 2.

Table 5 Entrepreneurial Education and Entrepreneurship as Moderating Variables on the Relationship between Entrepreneurial Passion and Entrepreneurial Intention

Variable	Entrepreneurial intention							
	Model 1				Model 2			
	B	*SE*	*β*	*t*	*B*	*SE*	*β*	*t*
Entrepreneurial passion	.948	.028	.867	34.333***	.501	.098	.458	5.093***
Entrepreneurship	.981	.032	.771	30.544***	.499	.107	.392	4.673***
Entrepreneurial passion* Entrepreneurship					.159	.034	.457	4.721***
R^2	0.838				0.854			
F	194.563***				188.073***			
ΔR^2					0.011			
ΔF					22.287***			

Note: ***p<0.001; **p<0.01

The interaction between entrepreneurial passion and entrepreneurship significantly enhances entrepreneurial intention(Table 5). Based on the regression analysis, the slope graph (Figure 1) was plotted using the mean and standard deviation (M ± SD) values. The graph demonstrates the moderating effect of entrepreneurship on the relationship between entrepreneurial passion and entrepreneurial intention. This visual representation allows for a clearer understanding of how varying levels of entrepreneurship influence the strength of entrepreneurial passion's impact on entrepreneurial intention.

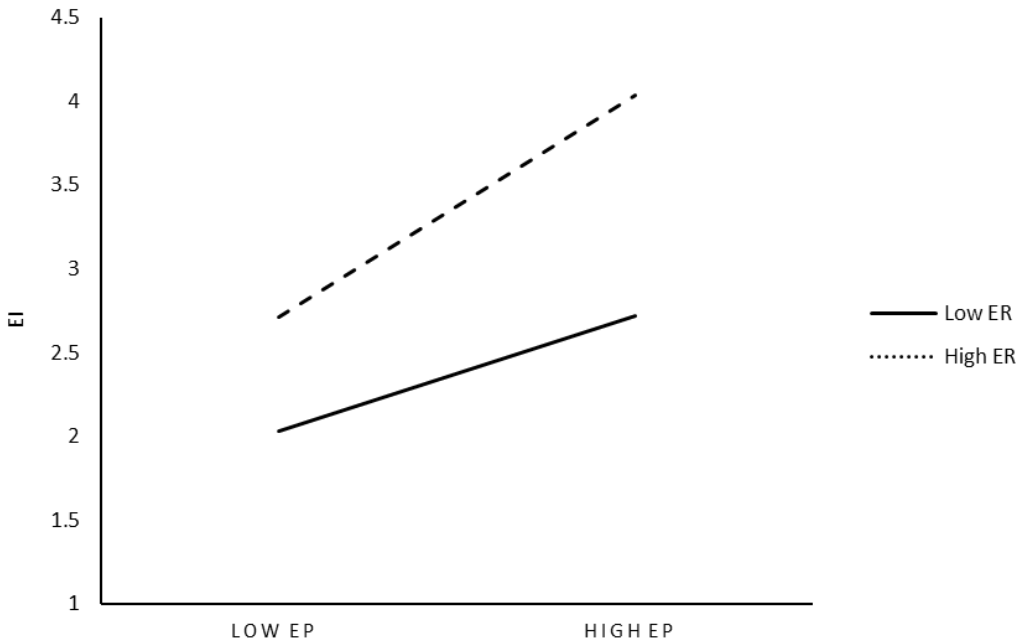

Figure 1 Moderation effect of entrepreneurship with entrepreneurial passion on entrepreneurial intention

The slope graph illustrates the impact of entrepreneurial passion and entrepreneurship on entrepreneurial intention in different scenarios. When entrepreneurial passion is low, entrepreneurial intention is relatively low under low entrepreneurship, but increases significantly under high entrepreneurship. This indicates that high levels of entrepreneurship can significantly enhance entrepreneurial intention even when entrepreneurial passion is low. Conversely, when entrepreneurial passion is high, entrepreneurial intention is already moderate under low entrepreneurship and rises under high entrepreneurship. This demonstrates that in the context of high entrepreneurial passion, high entrepreneurship has a more pronounced positive effect on entrepreneurial intention. Entrepreneurship significantly moderates the relationship between entrepreneurial passion and intention at different levels. Particularly, high entrepreneurship can substantially boost entrepreneurial intention in the presence of high entrepreneurial passion. This finding corroborates the regression analysis results, confirming entrepreneurship's significant positive moderating effect on entrepreneurial intention.

Discussion

The findings of this study provide significant insights into the relationship between entrepreneurial passion, entrepreneurial intention, and the moderating role of entrepreneurship among Chinese international students in Thailand. The results demonstrate that age and education level are significant determinants of entrepreneurial constructs, while gender, entrepreneurial experience, and birthplace do not substantially influence. This observation is consistent with existing literature indicating that entrepreneurial passion and intention are often shaped by demographic factors, particularly age and education (Liñán & Fayolle, 2015). However, the absence of gender effects contradicts other studies that have reported gender differences in entrepreneurial intention (Shinnar et al., 2012). This discrepancy could be due to the unique cross-cultural environment of Chinese students in Thailand, which may reduce traditional gender role expectations and create a more balanced entrepreneurial ecosystem (Chen et al., 2021).

The correlation analysis revealed strong and significant relationships between entrepreneurial passion, entrepreneurship, and entrepreneurial intention, suggesting that these constructs are inherently interlinked. Specifically, the strong positive correlation between entrepreneurial passion and intention aligns with the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991), which posits that attitudes such as passion significantly contribute to an individual's intentions. This finding is further supported by previous research showing that entrepreneurial passion can enhance motivation, thereby increasing entrepreneurial intentions (Cardon et al., 2013). However, the moderate correlation between entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial intention implies that while entrepreneurship is important, other factors may also significantly contribute to developing entrepreneurial intentions (Newman et al., 2019). This suggests a need for further exploration of additional moderating or mediating variables that may influence this relationship.

The moderating role of entrepreneurship in enhancing the effect of entrepreneurial passion on intention is a crucial finding of this study. The regression analysis results indicate that entrepreneurial passion significantly predicts entrepreneurial intention, and that the presence of strong entrepreneurship, such as risk-taking and innovativeness amplifies this effect. This is consistent with the findings of Baluku et al. (2020), who demonstrated that entrepreneurship plays a crucial role in converting passion into actionable entrepreneurial

intentions. The interaction effect identified in this study highlights that individuals with a high level of entrepreneurship can better leverage their passion to form concrete entrepreneurial intentions, supporting the arguments put forth by Shane and Venkataraman (2000). Nevertheless, it should be noted that the effect of entrepreneurial passion weakened slightly in the presence of entrepreneurship, suggesting potential complexities in the interaction between these constructs. One possible explanation is that individuals with strong entrepreneurship may rely more on practical assessments of opportunity feasibility rather than purely emotional drivers such as passion (Zhao et al., 2010).

The slope analysis further illustrated the moderating effect of entrepreneurship, demonstrating that high levels of entrepreneurship significantly boost entrepreneurial intention, even when passion is low. This finding underscores the importance of fostering entrepreneurship within education systems to support students in developing resilient entrepreneurial intentions. Such educational interventions could help mitigate the variability in entrepreneurial passion by equipping students with the tools and mindset needed to sustain entrepreneurial efforts. However, the pronounced effect of entrepreneurship in amplifying entrepreneurial passion's impact on intention also raises concerns about overemphasis on risk-taking and proactive behaviour, potentially leading to unrealistic optimism and increased susceptibility to failure (Hayward et al., 2010). Therefore essential for entrepreneurship education programs to balance the development of entrepreneurship with realistic assessments of entrepreneurial risks and challenges.

Conclusion

The implications of this study are significant for both educators and policymakers. Given that age and education level significantly impact entrepreneurial passion and intention, targeted interventions for younger students and those at lower education levels may be particularly effective in fostering entrepreneurial behaviours. Moreover, the critical role of entrepreneurship as a moderator suggests that educational programs should focus on nurturing entrepreneurship such as innovativeness, resilience, and risk-taking propensity (Gibb, 2002). Policymakers should also consider creating supportive environments that encourage entrepreneurial activities among international students, which could lead to increased entrepreneurial ventures and economic growth in host countries such as Thailand.

Despite the valuable insights provided by this study, several limitations must be acknowledged. The sample consisted exclusively of Chinese international students in Thailand, which limits the generalizability of the findings to other cultural contexts. Future research should explore whether the identified relationships hold across different populations and cultural settings. Additionally, the cross-sectional nature of the study precludes conclusions about causality. Longitudinal studies are needed to understand better how entrepreneurial passion, intention, and entrepreneurship evolve and how these relationships change in response to varying contextual factors (Liguori & Winkler, 2020).

Recommendation

Educators and institutions should focus on integrating entrepreneurship education that fosters both entrepreneurial passion and practical entrepreneurial skills. The findings indicate that entrepreneurship significantly moderates the relationship between entrepreneurial passion and intention, suggesting that providing students with opportunities to develop traits like risk-taking, resilience, and innovativeness can be crucial. Universities should design

programs that ignite students' passion for entrepreneurship and equip them with the skills and mindset required to navigate the challenges of starting a business. Programs such as experiential learning, internships with startups, and mentorship from successful entrepreneurs could effectively build both passion and practical entrepreneurial abilities (Gibb, 2002).

Entrepreneurship education should be tailored to accommodate the age differences and educational levels identified in the study. Younger and lower-level undergraduate students demonstrated a higher impact of entrepreneurial passion and intention. Hence, tailored interventions, such as workshops and hands-on entrepreneurial activities targeted at younger students, could help capitalise on their inherent enthusiasm and willingness to engage in entrepreneurial activities. More advanced entrepreneurial content could be provided to senior students and graduate-level participants to maintain and further nurture their entrepreneurial interests (Liñán & Fayolle, 2015).

The significant moderating effect of entrepreneurship highlights the importance of developing a supportive environment that encourages students to take risks and pursue entrepreneurial opportunities. Policymakers and educational institutions in Thailand should create a more supportive ecosystem by providing access to funding, networking opportunities, and supportive policies for student entrepreneurs. Such support would enhance students' confidence and ability to translate their entrepreneurial passion into actionable ventures, particularly in an international setting where students may face additional barriers due to cultural and regulatory differences (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000).

The findings indicate that entrepreneurial passion alone may not be sufficient for forming strong entrepreneurial intentions without adequate entrepreneurship. Thus, entrepreneurship programs should include components that foster self-efficacy and provide realistic assessments of the entrepreneurial journey, which can help students manage their expectations and reduce unrealistic optimism (Hayward et al., 2010). This approach could mitigate the potential negative effects of high entrepreneurial passion, such as vulnerability to failure due to overconfidence.

Given the study's limitations related to its sample and cross-sectional design, future research should adopt a longitudinal approach to monitor changes in entrepreneurial passion, intention, and entrepreneurship over time. Additionally, expanding the research to include students from diverse cultural backgrounds would provide a more comprehensive understanding of how different factors influence entrepreneurial behaviour in various contexts (Liguori & Winkler, 2020).

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