

Creative and Innovations Practices of Higher Education Institution Students in Malaysia towards Entrepreneurial Leadership

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Abstract

The issue of the essential job skills required by today's career economy is too high and unattainable for higher education institution students. The readiness for leadership among higher education institution students still needs to be enhanced to help them prepare for the future and better transition into the workforce. Therefore, students need to be equipped with entrepreneurial leadership qualities to face current career challenges. This study aims to identify the level of creative practices and innovations among higher education institution students towards entrepreneurial leadership. A total of 350 higher education institution students were randomly selected as respondents for this study. A questionnaire instrument was used to collect data from the respondents. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistical methods, involving mean scores and standard deviations. Descriptive analysis tests were conducted considering the mean scores involved. The Statistical Package for Social Science version 25 software was used to analyze the data in this study. The results of this study found that the level of creative practices and innovations among higher education institution students towards entrepreneurial leadership was moderately low and still acceptable. The implication of this study suggests that students should be more broadly exposed to such studies, focusing on a wider variety of respondents from different backgrounds of higher education institutions in Malaysia, including public and private institutions, to raise awareness about the importance of creative and innovative elements among higher education institution students towards entrepreneurial leadership more extensively.

Keywords: Creative and Innovation Practices, Higher Education Institution Students, Entrepreneurial Leadership

Introduction

The concepts of creativity and innovation are increasingly recognized as vital in today's competitive and rapidly evolving global landscape. "Creativity refers to the generation of new and imaginative ideas or solutions to problems (Vygotsky, 2004). Vygotsky believes that

creativity is nurtured through social interaction and learning from those around us. Creativity emerges when there are changes to a product, resulting in something new created through human activity. Creativity is an important ability that helps individuals create new things, new methods, and better or new ideas (DeGraff & Lawrence, 2002). With creativity, students can produce something new, high-quality, and functional (Ismail and Atan, 2011). In fact, everyone has different levels of creativity (Muradiani et al., 2006).

Innovation is the process of improving something with new capabilities or enhancements, resulting in better quality. This process of innovation involves actions aimed at enhancing the features, functions, or quality of a product to add value (Drucker, 1985 & Chua Yan Piaw, 2016). Generally, the practice of creativity and innovation occurs not only due to environmental factors like social media influence but also significantly influenced by social interactions, practice factors, and learning from others (Drucker, 1985; DeGraff & Lawrence, 2002; Vygotsky, 2004; Ismail & Atan, 2011; Chua Yan Piaw, 2016; and Muradiani et al., 2006). These elements are crucial not just for individual growth but also for the broader societal and economic progress.

The urgency to study creativity and innovation within higher education institutions (HEIs) in Malaysia is driven by their fundamental role in entrepreneurial leadership whereas directly impacting to the society mainly focusing on those students of HEI. The urgent demand for creativity and innovation can drive growth, solve problems, and improve quality in every industry, which is full of intense competition (Dias et al., 2023). Creativity and innovation are also crucial in the process of strategy formulation. Formulating a strategy is important because it helps organizations and individuals achieve their goals more effectively. By formulating a strategy, we can identify potential opportunities and challenges and design appropriate steps to address them. A good strategy also enables more efficient use of resources, enhances competitiveness, and ensures that actions taken are aligned with the organization's vision and mission. Ultimately, this leads to success and continuous growth. Currently, many business and entrepreneurship analysts predict that creativity and innovation are essential and necessary for all workforces. These two elements are crucial in creating and maintaining a competitive edge (Adnan, 2011). Moreover, the phenomenon of creativity and innovation occurs because entrepreneurship is often associated with the ability to identify and create opportunities, innovate, think creatively, have vision, be willing to take risks, accept uncertainty, and be proactive (Salamzadeh et al., 2014).

Creative and innovative elements are synonymous with the world of entrepreneurship. One of the developments from these elements is manufacturing intelligence, also known as Automated Intelligence (AI). China has captured 48 percent of total equity financing for global AI startups, an 11.3 percent increase in 2016 compared to the United States, which recorded about 38 percent, 13 percent more than other countries worldwide. China continues to strengthen the use of AI technology in various fields, including healthcare, self-driving vehicles, computer chips, facial recognition in finance, retail, and robotics (Nawi, 2019). This has raised concerns among U.S. leaders about the potential for technological competition and the loss of the unchallenged dominance the United States once enjoyed. However, the U.S. has taken various steps to maintain and improve its position in the AI competition. One of these actions is making significant investments in AI research and development (Hamet and Tremblay, 2017). Moreover, with global advancements in technology, particularly in areas like

Artificial Intelligence (AI), there is an increasing need for leaders who can leverage these innovations to maintain and enhance their competitive edge (Nawi, 2019). This makes it imperative to examine how HEI students in Malaysia develop and apply creative and innovative practices in their pursuit of entrepreneurial leadership.

To improve the quality of leadership, practices within the community are crucial. One such practice is valuing creativity and innovation. Generally, entrepreneurial leadership involves managing a team effectively to achieve specific goals (Yunus & Ahmad, 2016). This leadership is not only about entrepreneurship but also about being a role model who can self-manage and serve as an example to the community. The key aspect of entrepreneurial leadership education is teaching individuals how to communicate effectively with colleagues, customers, and stakeholders (Zulkifly & Ghani, 2023). Coursework is an excellent approach to developing knowledge and skills in leadership, motivation, innovation, communication, and teamwork (Okudan & Rzasa, 2006). Maintaining these entrepreneurial practices can produce entrepreneurial leaders (Sklaveniti, 2017). Therefore, transforming towards entrepreneurial leadership is essential for forming efficient and excellent organizational management and strengthening this leadership element among higher education institution (HEI) students.

Studying this topic is particularly important because entrepreneurial leadership, underpinned by creativity and innovation, is vital for developing a skilled and adaptable workforce that can meet the demands of a knowledge-based economy. To reinforce entrepreneurial leadership qualities among HEI students, Malaysia has launched the National Entrepreneurship Policy (NEP) 2030, which includes the New Development Model (NDM) to improve the development of the entrepreneurial ecosystem and a highly skilled workforce. The NDM aims to strengthen competitiveness, productivity, and market responsiveness, particularly in the education sector (Ministry of Entrepreneur Development, 2019). Human capital development is also considered important in shaping entrepreneurial attitudes and values such as initiative, creativity, resilience, and adaptability (Azira & Nadia, 2018).

The study's significance lies in its potential to inform educational strategies and policies aimed at strengthening the creative and innovative capabilities of future leaders. By exploring the level of creative and innovative practices among HEI students, this research seeks to understand how these practices contribute to the development of entrepreneurial leadership. Ultimately, the findings could help shape more effective educational programs and initiatives that align with Malaysia's broader economic and developmental goals. Thus, several questions arise that drive this study, such as: What is meant by the creative and innovative practices of HEI students? What is the level of entrepreneurial leadership? What is the level of creative practices among HEI students towards entrepreneurial leadership? What is the level of innovative practices among HEI students towards entrepreneurial leadership?

Problem Statement

Leadership in entrepreneurship is a topic that needs attention because this value is important to be enhanced among graduates in Malaysia over time. To improve the country's competitiveness in global rankings, Malaysia and several ASEAN countries have restructured student leadership through their educational institutions (Chang et al., 2012). Despite the restructuring, many former student leaders from higher education institutions still face challenges in finding suitable employment after graduation (Bernama, 2010). This issue has

been examined, and one of the problems identified is related to graduates' lack of readiness. Graduates are found to be less prepared mentally, physically, emotionally, and in terms of skills to transition from the academic environment to the workforce. Their skills and academic qualifications are reported to be insufficient or inadequate for entering the workforce (Ministry of Higher Education, 2021). According to findings by the Khazanah Research Institute (2018), higher education institutions focus more on academics rather than soft skills and work experience. Higher education institutions tend to emphasize academics, while employers expect more soft skills (50%), work experience (31%), and technical skills (27%) (Khazanah Research Institute, 2018).



Figure 1: Percentage of Skills Required by Employers Compared to Academic Qualifications
Source: School-to-Work Transition Survey (Khazanah Research Institute, 2018)



Figure 2: Top 10 Skills for 2025
Source: World Economic Forum (2020)

Various initiatives have been undertaken by the Ministry of Higher Education (KPT) and higher education institutions (IPT) concerning graduate employability, in line with the government's desire to produce innovative, creative, and competitive human capital and workforce, while also increasing the employability rate of graduates in Malaysia. However, several fundamental issues remain challenging, as identified through engagement sessions and discussions with stakeholders and strategic partners. In recent years, the labor market has

faced significant challenges. The unstable economic conditions resulting from technological changes, the effects of globalization, and economic crises affecting many countries worldwide have impacted the industrial sector in ASEAN countries, including Malaysia, leading to reduced operations and worker layoffs (Mohd Rafi & Mohd Nor, 2010). This situation presents challenges for the workforce, especially new graduates competing for jobs. Simultaneously, employers have become more cautious in selecting employees. Among these challenges is the gap in top skills required for 2025, which many graduates have not fully mastered (Ministry of Higher Education, 2021).

Five main reasons why graduates fail to find jobs are: unrealistic salary or benefit expectations (68%), poor English proficiency (64%), job selectiveness (60%), poor communication skills (60%), and unconvincing personality and character (59%) (Ministry of Higher Education, 2021). This issue is important because IPT graduates need the skills outlined in the Future Jobs Report (2020) from the World Economic Forum. Besides basic skills, graduates, as future employees, need problem-solving skills, self-management, teamwork, and the ability to use and develop technology. This issue arises if the learning experience does not support the income of talented graduates (Ministry of Higher Education, 2021). The readiness for leadership among IPT students still needs to be enhanced to help them prepare for the future and transition into the workforce more effectively.

Additionally, creativity and innovation are essential to meet the needs of generations Y and Z, as these generations have grown up surrounded by various technologies since birth (Maimun et al., 2022). Although much research has been conducted on creativity, comprehensive studies are still lacking. Most reports indicate that the creative and innovative practices of graduates are only moderate (satisfactory) (Lotherington, 2003). This problem arises due to the lack of creative and innovative practices in schools.

The creative and innovative practices that should be nurtured during teaching and learning sessions are either not implemented or inadequately executed. Students easily lose focus during teaching and learning sessions (Cremin, 2012; Mohammad, Hashim, & Mohammad Yasin, 2011), compounded by the use of teaching materials that do not interest students (Fullan & Hargreaves, 1992). Implementing creative and innovative approaches requires a long time. Due to the limited time for teaching and learning, most educators opt to use traditional teaching and learning methods (Omar, 1991). This action indicates that the awareness and understanding of the importance of creative and innovative practices in student development are still low or moderate (Normah, 2014). Utilizing technology can make the teaching and learning environment more modern and engaging compared to traditional methods (Maimun et al., 2022).

Based on the discussion and research questions above, the study was conducted to identify the following research objectives:

1. What is the level of entrepreneurial leadership among higher education institution students in Malaysia?
2. What is the level of creative practices among higher education institution students towards entrepreneurial leadership in Malaysia?
3. What is the level of innovative practices among higher education institution students towards entrepreneurial leadership in Malaysia?

Literature Review*Entrepreneurial Leadership*

Entrepreneurial leadership has various definitions from different perspectives. It not only focuses on business success but also on personal success (Akbari et al., 2020). The concept of entrepreneurial leadership refers to the framework, vision, and insight needed to create better management. An organization needs goals and a vision to enhance achievement, capacity, effort, and long-term services, particularly in the form of entrepreneurial leaders (Utoyo, Fontana, & Satrya, 2020). Entrepreneurial leadership is also closely related to the behavior of leaders within an organization, generally defined as the use of proactive and innovative entrepreneurial behavior by leaders to achieve common goals (Megheirkoun et al., 2020).

According to Kuratko and Neubert (2018), entrepreneurial leadership also involves elements such as minimizing risk, innovating to seize opportunities, accepting personal responsibility, and managing change in a dynamic environment for the benefit of the firm. Characteristics of a worthy leader include having foresight. This foresight, for a leader, is associated with guiding processes and having a clear vision and mission. Entrepreneurial leadership is characterized by dynamic processes of vision, transformation, and creation (Salwati, Norhisham, & Rafi, 2022). To develop and implement new innovative concepts and solutions, one must apply energy and enthusiasm. A leader must also be prepared to take measurable risks in terms of time, money, or career. The ability to build a strong team, innovate to acquire necessary resources, foundational knowledge for skill development, and a robust performance plan are essential components of entrepreneurial leadership (Kongjinda et al., 2020).

The goal of entrepreneurial leadership is to help leaders overcome obstacles in the development, growth, and success of new businesses and to navigate a hostile business environment (Latif et al., 2020). According to Norhisham & Mohd Nazri (2019), the four components of entrepreneurial leadership are creativity, proactivity, innovation, and risk-taking. These components help shape entrepreneurial character by providing high vision and inspiration. The four main methodologies used by researchers to study entrepreneurial leadership are: First, strategies that emphasize inventive qualities distinguishing entrepreneurial leaders from others by focusing on elements that influence creativity. Second, inspiring individuals in power within organizations to use entrepreneurial and leadership tactics in fulfilling their responsibilities. Third, investigating how business leaders influence groups to achieve their goals. Fourth, discussing the risks involved in using expertise to achieve the ministry's mission and vision. These four dimensions are crucial for a leader to be more proactive in developing organizational management strategies (Harrison, Paul, & Burnard, 2019).

Creative and Innovative

Creativity and innovation are two interconnected concepts that are often used interchangeably in research. Despite their close relationship, there are distinctions between them (Patterson, 2004; De Jong & Den Hartog, 2010). Amabile (1996), defines creativity as the generation of new and unique ideas that add economic value to an organization. Creativity is also defined as a cognitive or thought process that produces new ways to understand problems or situations (Amabile et al., 2005). Other researchers refer to creativity as the

generation of new and useful ideas related to work processes, products, or procedures within an organization (De Jong & Den Hartog, 2010).

The concept of innovation is broader, encompassing creativity as well as the application and implementation of new ideas that benefit a team, organization, or society (King & Anderson, 2002; Scott & Bruce, 1994; West & Farr, 1989). Scott and Bruce (1994) define innovation as a change process that begins with the generation of ideas and ends with the successful implementation of those ideas within an organization. Therefore, innovation involves innovative behavior by employees in performing tasks at work. Specifically, innovative behavior is defined as all individual actions aimed at introducing, developing, or using new ideas in products, services, or work processes to improve performance (Kleysen & Street, 2001; Dorenbosch et al., 2005). Innovative behavior is also associated with four employee activities: identifying problems, generating ideas, promoting ideas, and realizing ideas (Dorenbosch et al., 2005).

A Creative and Innovative Leader

A creative leader is an individual who works and is employed within an organization to manage and execute processes (Chen et al., 2020). The importance of creative leaders has increased as environments and cultures change, as they are capable of generating useful new ideas and achieving more than what is required in their work (Adila Hashim, 2013). They play a role in enhancing community and organizational performance, creating job opportunities, and developing unique value-added and competitive activities (Mahmood et al., 2019). The traits and achievements of creative leaders are significantly influenced by entrepreneurial behavior, making it relevant to explore these traits and accomplishments in the context of creativity (Han & Bai, 2020). Creative entrepreneurial behavior can be used as a conceptual lens in leadership and has been recognized as a valuable analytical tool (Clercq & Pereira, 2020). The sentence mentions that creative leaders' traits and achievements are significantly influenced by entrepreneurial behavior. The article's focus on higher education students' practices and innovations suggests a link between education, entrepreneurial leadership development, and the cultivation of creative leaders who can drive innovation and create value in organizations.

Scholars in the field of entrepreneurship believe that innovation is at the core of entrepreneurial behavior, enhancing resources and the ability to spot new opportunities. Innovation represents the third step in the three-stage process of achievement. It is a necessity in entrepreneurship and demonstrates an organization's ability to create new products or procedures that meet market demands (Raza et al., 2018). The essence of entrepreneurship lies in innovation and the desire to create value. Innovation is seen as a way to achieve competitive advantage and is considered a crucial strategy for companies to attain long-term success and significantly impact business performance (Zhang & Yang, 2020). The article likely discusses how students in Malaysia engage in innovative practices, which is central to entrepreneurial behavior as highlighted in the sentence. This connection emphasizes the role of innovation in fostering entrepreneurial leadership among students, preparing them to become creative leaders who contribute to business sustainability and competitive advantage.

Innovative behavior involves adjustments and changes that are essential for business sustainability. To launch a new business, entrepreneurs can update their business processes,

explore new markets, alter production resource usage, and introduce new products and services to the market. Generally, innovative behavior is directly related to the implementation of innovation and is defined as the application of new tools, systems, policies, programs, processes, products, or services to the recipient organization, whether generated internally or acquired externally (Vandavasi et al., 2019). This definition encompasses technical creativity aspects. The sentence describes innovative behavior as essential for business sustainability, involving adjustments and new implementations. The article probably examines how students' creative practices in Malaysia lead to the development and application of innovative solutions, further illustrating the concept of creative entrepreneurial behavior as a valuable tool for leadership.

Creative and Innovative Practices Towards Entrepreneurial Leadership Among Students

Practices refer to good actions or actions performed regularly. Practices are something done repeatedly as a habit (Dewan, 2007). The development of entrepreneurial leadership involves eight key components: proactivity, innovation, creativity, risk-taking, strategic thinking, motivation, personal competence, and communication skills (Fathi Mohammed, 2020). Indeed, practices such as creativity and innovation are fostered to become habitual in the development of students at higher education institutions in Malaysia.

One higher education institution in Malaysia that exemplifies the application of creative and innovative practices towards entrepreneurial leadership among students is Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM). UKM is one of Malaysia's leading research universities and has played a significant role in developing human capital to achieve knowledge-based and innovative economic transformation. One of the impacts of empowering human capital in higher education institutions is the generation of skilled employment (Ministry of Economy, 2023). As a research university now 46 years old, UKM has implemented several changes and introduced creative approaches to produce knowledgeable, skilled, creative, and innovative human capital. This includes introducing and implementing continuing education programs to promote lifelong learning, offering executive programs for working professionals, enhancing entrepreneurship programs, and fostering a culture that encourages creativity and innovation through the establishment of research excellence centers (Khaled, 2011).

UKM as a leading example of applying creative and innovative practices toward developing entrepreneurial leadership among students. The article likely discusses how UKM and other institutions in Malaysia foster these practices to produce skilled, creative, and innovative human capital. This aligns with the idea that higher education institutions play a crucial role in developing the habits and competencies necessary for entrepreneurial leadership. In summary, the article can be related to the sentence by illustrating how creative and innovative practices in Malaysian higher education institutions, particularly at UKM, are habitually developed to foster entrepreneurial leadership. This development contributes to producing skilled human capital and supporting Malaysia's economic transformation.

Methodology

This study employs a quantitative approach using a survey method as the research design. The survey method is a technique for simultaneously collecting and analyzing data and is frequently used in educational research (Creswell, 2005). The study focuses on students from public research universities. There are five public research universities in Malaysia, but only

three are included in the study: Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM), Universiti Malaya (UM), and Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM). The selection of these three universities is sufficient as they share similar criteria, such as student admission requirements. Furthermore, the enrollment numbers are also comparable. The number of admissions at these three universities has been increasing annually (see Table 3) (Ministry of Higher Education, 2023).

The study involves a sample of 380 students out of a total of 30,226 students. The sample size is determined based on Krejcie & Morgan's (1970) table. The sample was then selected using simple random sampling. However, for this study, only 350 students participated as respondents, with 30 respondents not providing feedback, representing 92.1%. The study proceeded because the response rate exceeded 80% of the expected number of respondents, which is considered sufficient for continuing the research (Kerlinger, 1986).

Table 1

Higher Education Statistics 2022

No.	Public University	Research Year	Admission		
			Male	Female	Gender
1	UKM	2022	3, 887	8, 069	11, 956
		2021	3, 232	5, 771	9, 003
2	UPM	2022	2, 624	4, 802	7, 426
		2021	2, 878	5, 271	8, 149
3	UM	2022	4, 187	6, 657	10, 844
		2021	4, 584	6, 934	11, 518
Sum Total		2022	10, 698	19, 528	30, 226
		2021	10, 694	17, 976	28, 670

The questionnaire was used as the research instrument to gather information related to elements of creative and innovative practices from the study respondents. The questionnaire is divided into three sections: A, B, and C. Section A contains the demographic profile of the respondents. Section B includes descriptive analysis results of student creativity culture dimensions related to entrepreneurial leadership, comprising five items (B1, B2, B3, B4, and B5). Section C presents descriptive analysis results of student innovative culture levels related to entrepreneurial leadership, consisting of four items (C1, C3, C5, and C8).

A pilot study was conducted with 30 students to validate the applicability of the questionnaire. This number is considered sufficient because, according to Cooper and Schindler (2013), an appropriate number for a pilot study is between 25 and 100 participants. Additionally, Johanson and Brooks (2010) suggest that a minimum of 30 participants is suitable for a pilot study, particularly for preliminary research or scale development. The results of the Cronbach's Alpha test and the validity values for each construct item are shown in Table 1. The Cronbach's Alpha coefficient for this questionnaire instrument is 0.737. Therefore, the Cronbach's Alpha value for the item statements is rated as good and acceptable. According to Pallant (2016), the minimum acceptable value for the reliability of a research tool is 0.3 to test the feasibility or suitability of the actual study to be conducted. Cronbach's Alpha coefficients exceeding 0.6 are considered acceptable (Nidzam, 2016).

Table 1

Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient Values

Construct	Item	Correlation Value	Cronbach's Alpha Values
Creative Culture	B1-B5	.381- .430	.737
Innovative Culture	C1-C4	.377- .480	.737

Table 2

Cronbach's Alpha Coefficients

0.9	Excellent
0.8 to <0.9	Very Good
0.7 to <0.8	Good
0.6 to <0.7	Moderate
<0.6	Weak

Source: (Muhammad Nidzam, 2016).

(Level: Excellent = 0.9- <1.0, Very good and effective = 0.8- <0.9, Good and acceptable = 0.7- <0.8, Moderate and item needs improvement = 0.6- <0.7, Weak and item needs to be dropped = <0.6)

The use of a four-point Likert scale allows the researcher to measure the level of agreement or disagreement of respondents with the statements provided in the questions. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences 25.0 (SPSS) was used to analyze the data. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistical methods. Table 3 shows the mean score values of the four levels to determine the respondents' levels based on the four-point Likert scale adapted from (Nunnally & Beinstein, 1994; Nasrudin, 2014).

Table 3

Interpretation of Mean Scores

Mean Scores	Interpretation of Mean Scores
1.00 to 2.00	Low
2.01 to 3.00	Medium Low
3.01 to 4.00	Medium High
4.01 to 5.00	High

Findings*Level of Creative Practices among University Students towards Entrepreneurial Leadership*

The descriptive analysis results, as shown in Table 4, indicate that the overall level of creative practices among university students towards entrepreneurial leadership is moderately low, with a mean score of 2.75 (SD = .518). It is clear that each item in the creative practices construct (such as problem-solving from various perspectives, courage to take risks, viewing problems as opportunities, interest in new and complex matters, and constructive dissatisfaction) as well as items in the innovative practices construct (such as innovative thinking in teaching, use of innovative teaching methods at the university, innovative ideas for

societal advancement, and consistently seeking new innovation opportunities) are at a moderately low level.

Table 4

Level of Creative and Innovative Practices

	Mean	Standard Deviation
Level of Creative Practices	2.73	.495
Level of Innovative Practices	2.76	.540
Sum	2.75	.518

Problem-solving from various perspectives and readiness to take risks and be different are items in the creative practices construct that recorded the highest mean compared to other items. According to Table 5, item B1 (*I believe that solving problems from various perspectives is among the practices at the university for fostering a creative culture*) recorded the highest percentage of agreement with a frequency of 43.4% (152 respondents). This was followed by item B2 (*I am ready to take risks and be different*) with a frequency of 42.3% (148 respondents). Although the level of creative practices among university students is moderate, many agree that creative practices are fostered in universities, with one such example being the readiness to take risks. According to a study, individuals who are creative and innovative are able to make decisions and solve problems more effectively (Nur Atiqah Abdullah et al., 2016).

Table 5

Items of Creative Practices Level

Item	Statement	SD		D		A		SA	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
B1	I believe that solving problems from various perspectives is among the practices at the university for fostering a creative culture	0	-	198	56.6	29	8.3	123	35.1
B2	I am ready to take risks and be different	0	-	202	57.7	19	5.4	129	36.9
B3	I view problems as opportunities with an open mind	1	0.3	224	64.0	16	4.6	109	31.1
B4	I have an interest in new and complex things	0	-	223	63.7	2	0.6	125	35.7
B5	I have a constructive dissatisfaction with what has been achieved and strive to explore new things that have not yet been discovered	0	-	221	63.1	5	1.4	124	35.4
Mean Average		2.73							
Standard Deviation		.495							

Level of Innovative Practices Among University Students Towards Entrepreneurial Leadership

Next, the element of decision-making skills in innovation ranks second with a mean score of 2.73 and a standard deviation of 0.458. According to Table 6, the highest percentage recorded in this construct is for item C2 (*The use of innovative teaching and learning methods (PdP) is a practice at the university*), which has the highest agreement percentage with a frequency of 43.4% (152 respondents). This is followed by item C1 (*I believe that innovative thinking needs to be widely adopted and introduced in the field of study*) with a frequency of 38.8% (136 respondents). Although the level of innovative practices among university students is moderate, they agree that innovative thinking should be adopted and widely introduced in their field of study, with the use of innovative PdP methods. In the field of education, the need for innovative behavior is driven by the motivation to implement it (Cropley & Cropley, 2009).

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Item-item Tahap Amalan Inovasi

Item	Statement	SD		D		A		SA	
		No.	%	No.	%	No	%	No.	%
C1	I believe that innovative thinking should be adopted and widely introduced in the field of study	0	-	214	61.1	18	5.1	118	33.7
C2	The use of innovative teaching and learning methods (PdP) is a practice at the university	0	-	198	56.6	32	9.1	120	34.3
C3	Innovative ideas can advance society forward	0	-	224	64.0	16	4.6	109	31.1
C4	I am always looking for new innovation opportunities, which means being open to new ideas, not afraid of new, different, or unknown things	0	-	223	63.7	2	0.6	125	35.7
Mean Average		2.76							
Standard Deviation		.540							

Discussion

Based on the study's findings, overall, the level of creative practice among higher education students towards entrepreneurial leadership is moderately low. This is because the respondents were limited to only three public research universities in Malaysia and did not encompass all public and private institutions in the Klang Valley. These findings align with the research of Affzalina and Aishah (2017), which found that entrepreneurial thinking or mindset was at a moderate level. Additionally, the willingness to take risks is an element associated with entrepreneurial leadership. This is because entrepreneurial leadership is a unique type of leadership necessary to address challenges and crises in today's organizational environment.

This leadership style allows leaders to effectively guide their organizations and solve problems through various growth and development strategies. It also significantly impacts a leader's ability to identify new opportunities for improving organizational performance (Imran & Aldaas, 2020). Furthermore, the level of innovation practice among higher education students towards entrepreneurial leadership is at a moderate level, with a mean score of 2.73. This is because students agree that innovative thinking should be adopted and widely introduced in their field of study, with the use of innovative teaching and learning methods (PdP). These findings are consistent with Maimun Aqsha et al (2022), who found that innovation, particularly in teaching and learning processes using digital technology, is crucial for developing highly educated human capital. Innovation is vital for a country as it promotes economic development and helps create a competitive nation. This demonstrates that elements such as creative practice and innovation are driving higher education students towards entrepreneurial leadership in the face of modernization.

Conclusion

To develop entrepreneurial leadership qualities among higher education students, it is crucial to enhance human capital attributes such as creativity and innovation. This study found that students involved in creative and innovative activities in higher education institutions are more likely to develop the leadership traits needed for success in entrepreneurship. Creative Practices and Innovations of Higher Education Institution Students in Malaysia Towards Entrepreneurial Leadership is of critical importance as it addresses the need to cultivate entrepreneurial skills and leadership among students within Malaysia's higher education institutions. In an era where innovation drives economic growth, this research highlights how fostering creativity and innovative thinking among students can lead to the self development of future graduates who are well-equipped to navigate the challenges of the post-graduate life in job hunting phase and ready the students with soft skills as well as entrepreneurial leadership skills. By examining the role of creative practices within educational settings, this study provides valuable insights into how academic institutions can better prepare students to become entrepreneurial leaders, thereby contributing to the country's economic advancement and societal well-being. Moreover, the findings of this study have the potential to influence educational policies and practices, ensuring that the next generation of leaders is both innovative and capable of driving sustainable development in Malaysia. Therefore, promoting and supporting creative and innovative practices among higher education students is essential for developing successful entrepreneurial leaders.

The implications of this study include the improvement of educational quality in higher education institutions (HEIs) in Malaysia. Creative and innovative practices among students can enhance educational quality, as approaches that encourage creativity and innovation help students develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills, which are vital for entrepreneurial leadership. Additionally, this study can strengthen the career ecosystem in Malaysia. By fostering creativity and innovation, especially within HEIs, a more robust entrepreneurial ecosystem can be built. Students exposed to these practices are more likely to start their own businesses or be competitive in their chosen careers. This study also increase good practical application in education. The topic is highly useful in the context of educational strategies within higher education institutions (HEIs). It explores how integrating creative practices and innovations into the curriculum can enhance students' entrepreneurial abilities. By emphasizing real-world applications, the study shows that these creative

approaches can be directly translated into entrepreneurial ventures, making education more relevant and engaging for students. Moreover, this research can be instrumental for policymakers and educational leaders looking to reform the educational system to better support entrepreneurial leadership. The utility of the study lies in its potential to guide the creation of policies that encourage innovation-driven education, thereby aligning academic programs with the demands of a rapidly changing global economy. Lastly, graduates who practice creativity and innovation are better prepared for the competitive job market. They possess not only academic knowledge but also practical skills that employers seek. In fact, enhance the student employability. The study highlights how creative and innovative practices can enhance the employability of graduates. In today's competitive job market, students who are able to think creatively and demonstrate entrepreneurial skills are more likely to succeed. This makes the study particularly useful for educational institutions aiming to improve their graduates' prospects in the job market.

Future research should expand the respondent sample size beyond the three research universities in the Klang Valley to make the study's findings more relevant and comprehensive. The initial study focused on a limited sample of respondents from three research universities located in the Klang Valley, which may not fully represent the diversity of students across Malaysia. Expanding the sample size to include more universities from different regions, including rural and urban areas, would provide a broader perspective. This would make the study's findings more generalizable and relevant to a wider audience. By including a more diverse sample, the research could capture variations in entrepreneurial practices and attitudes across different geographical, cultural, and institutional contexts. This would lead to more comprehensive insights and recommendations that are applicable across the entire higher education landscape in Malaysia. Further recommendations include encouraging student entrepreneurship projects, such as entrepreneurial webinars. Encouraging student participation in entrepreneurship-related projects, including webinars, would provide students with opportunities to learn from experienced entrepreneurs, industry experts, and academics. Webinars can cover various topics such as business development, innovation strategies, and leadership skills, offering students practical knowledge and inspiration. Entrepreneurship projects and webinars can serve as valuable educational tools that bridge the gap between theory and practice. They offer students the chance to engage with real-world business challenges and gain insights that can inspire them to pursue entrepreneurial endeavors. These initiatives also help students build networks with professionals and peers who share similar interests. HEIs can promote participation in entrepreneurship projects, such as business competitions, hackathons, and business incubators, providing students with platforms to apply their creativity and innovation in real-world contexts. Finally, integrating creativity and innovation into the curriculum is recommended. HEIs should incorporate elements of creativity and innovation into their curricular through special courses, problem-based projects, and activities that promote innovative thinking. HEIs should actively promote and facilitate student involvement in entrepreneurship-focused events such as business competitions, hackathons, and business incubators. These platforms allow students to apply their creativity and innovation in practical, competitive settings, where they can develop business ideas, create prototypes, and receive feedback from mentors and judges. Participation in such projects provides students with hands-on experience in entrepreneurship, fostering skills like problem-solving, teamwork, and leadership. These activities also create a supportive environment for innovation, where students can experiment

with their ideas and potentially launch startups. This kind of engagement is crucial for developing the entrepreneurial mindset that the study aims to promote.

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