



Examining Cognitive and Social Factors of TVET Enrolment Intention Among *Asnaf* Youth: Evidence from *Institut Kemahiran Baitulmal (IKB)*, MAIWP

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Abstract:

This study is developed based on an Applied Business Project (ABP) aimed at addressing a real-world organisational issue related to low enrolment in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) among Asnaf young adults at Institut Kemahiran Baitulmal (IKB), Malaysia. Despite substantial government investment and fully subsidised programmes, participation remains below institutional capacity, highlighting a critical gap between policy intention and actual uptake. Unlike purely theoretical research, this study focuses on solving a practical problem through the application of strategic tools and an extended Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) framework. The study examines the influence of TVET knowledge, self-efficacy, attitude, societal influence, and perceived family influence on students' intention to enrol in TVET programmes using a quantitative approach involving 204 respondents. The findings reveal that the model explains a substantial proportion of variance in enrolment intention ($R^2 = 0.517$), with attitude emerging as the strongest predictor, followed by self-efficacy and TVET knowledge, while societal influence and perceived family influence were found to be statistically insignificant. These results indicate that internal cognitive and psychological factors play a more dominant role than external social pressures in shaping vocational enrolment decisions among marginalised youth. The study contributes to both theory and practice by extending the applicability of the TPB framework within a socio-economically disadvantaged context, while demonstrating how conceptual models can be operationalised to address real organisational challenges. From a practical perspective, the study proposes targeted interventions focusing on enhancing awareness, strengthening self-efficacy, and reshaping attitudes towards TVET, offering valuable insights for policymakers, TVET institutions, and zakat agencies in designing more effective outreach strategies to improve participation and optimise resource utilisation.

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INTRODUCTION

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) play a critical role in human capital development and is widely recognised as a key driver in supporting countries such as Malaysia to achieve high-income nation status (MOHE, 2024). TVET provides practical and industry-relevant training across disciplines including engineering, construction, manufacturing, agriculture, and services (Pasha et al., 2023). In the context of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (IR4.0), the demand for a highly skilled workforce capable of operating in technologically advanced and automated environments has intensified. Consequently, TVET has been increasingly positioned as a strategic mechanism to enhance productivity, stimulate economic growth, and promote inclusive and sustainable development (Fadzil et al., 2022; UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2023; MOHE, 2024).

Despite these advancements, the perception of TVET in Malaysia remains relatively unfavourable. Many individuals continue to perceive vocational education as a secondary pathway, often associated with lower academic achievement. Such misconceptions and social stigma have contributed to fluctuating enrolment rates and the underutilisation of available TVET resources (Mustapha et al., 2022). This issue is particularly evident among the *Asnaf* community, a socio-economically disadvantaged group eligible for zakat assistance, who continue to demonstrate low participation in TVET programmes (Hanafi et al., 2025). Structural challenges, including limited access to education, lack of awareness, and socio-cultural barriers, further exacerbate this issue.

Although TVET presents a viable pathway for improving employability and socio-economic mobility among marginalised communities, participation among *Asnaf* youth remains disproportionately low. Prior studies have highlighted that limited awareness of TVET opportunities, negative societal perceptions, and the absence of targeted outreach initiatives contribute significantly to this participation gap (Mustapha et al., 2022; Penang Institute, 2021; Asia Foundation & INPUMA, 2021). Furthermore, there remains a lack of focused research examining the specific experiences and challenges faced by *Asnaf* individuals within the Malaysian TVET landscape, thereby limiting the development of effective and inclusive intervention strategies (Abd Karim & Mustapha, 2022; MOHR, 2022).

At the institutional level, *Institut Kemahiran Baitulmal* (IKB), under the administration of *Majlis Agama Islam Wilayah Persekutuan* (MAIWP), plays a significant role in providing fully subsidised vocational training programmes to young adult *Asnaf*. These programmes are designed not only to equip participants with technical competencies but also to foster entrepreneurship and self-reliance through the integration of Islamic values (MAIWP, 2023; MOHE, 2024; UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2023). Despite these initiatives, challenges related to enrolment and retention persist, indicating a gap between institutional capacity and actual participation.

Although previous studies have examined public perceptions of TVET and factors influencing vocational education participation in Malaysia, the existing literature has largely focused on the general youth population or secondary school students (Mustapha et al., 2022; Ayanwale et al., 2023; Shaari et al., 2024). Comparatively little attention has been given to marginalised groups, particularly *Asnaf* young adult, whose educational decisions are shaped by unique socioeconomic vulnerabilities, financial dependency, and limited access to educational opportunities. Consequently, it remains unclear whether the determinants identified in previous TVET studies are equally applicable to this population. Furthermore, limited empirical evidence exists regarding the combined influence of cognitive, psychological, familial, and societal factors on TVET enrolment intentions among young adult *Asnaf* within specialised institutions such as *Institut Kemahiran Baitulmal* (IKB). Addressing this gap is essential to develop targeted interventions and evidence-based policies that effectively promote inclusive TVET participation among economically disadvantaged communities.

Problem Statement

TVET has long been recognised as a strategic approach to reducing youth unemployment and supporting industrial growth. However, in Malaysia, participation rates remain relatively low. In 2022, only 6.1% of eligible Malaysian youth enrolled in TVET programmes, significantly lower than regional counterparts such as South Korea (14.2%), Indonesia (12.8%), and Singapore (23.8%) (MIDA, 2023). Although participation has improved to 11.14% by 2024 under the National TVET Policy 2030, a substantial gap remains between enrolment levels and the increasing demand for skilled labour (Bernama, 2026; SEA-VET, 2025). This gap is further emphasised by Malaysia's growing economic investments, which require a workforce of over 244,000 skilled workers to sustain high-growth, high-value (HGHV) industries (MIDA, 2026; DOSM, 2026; National TVET Council, 2025).

This issue is particularly pronounced among young adult *Asnaf*, who represent a key target group for fully subsidised TVET programmes offered by institutions such as *Institut Kemahiran Baitulmal* (IKB).

Despite the availability of financial support and training opportunities, enrolment trends at IKB remain inconsistent and below capacity. Based on internal data provided by the insider, for instance, student intake increased marginally from 84 in 2022 to 114 in 2026 but remains significantly lower than historical levels. In addition, attrition challenges persist, as reflected in 2025, where only 95 out of 105 enrolled students successfully completed their programmes. This situation is further compounded by the underutilisation of institutional resources, as IKB currently accommodates only 255 active students despite having the capacity for 300 to 350 residential students, alongside adequate facilities and teaching manpower (IKB, 2024; MAIWP, 2019; 2025). These conditions suggest the presence of systemic barriers affecting both recruitment and retention among young adult *Asnaf*.

One of the key contributing factors is the limited awareness and understanding of TVET among this group. Individuals from low-income backgrounds often perceive TVET as a secondary educational pathway, influenced by negative societal perceptions and limited exposure to vocational career opportunities (Mustapha et al., 2022). This perception is further reinforced by weak parental encouragement, social stigma, and insufficient access to structured career guidance (Penang Institute, 2021; Asia Foundation & INPUMA, 2021). Drawing from prior studies, five key determinants have been identified as influencing intention to enrol in TVET, namely TVET knowledge, self-efficacy, attitude, societal influence, and perceived family influence (Ayanwale et al., 2023; Shaari et al., 2024). However, the extent to which these factors influence decision-making among *Asnaf* young adult within the IKB context remains insufficiently explored.

Given the strategic importance of TVET in promoting inclusive human capital development and breaking the cycle of poverty among disadvantaged communities, understanding the enrolment behaviour of young adult *Asnaf* has become increasingly important. Unlike the general youth population, young adult *Asnaf* experience distinct socioeconomic constraints, including financial hardship, limited educational opportunities, and greater reliance on institutional assistance, which may influence their educational and career decisions differently. Despite being one of the primary beneficiaries of fully subsidised TVET programmes, empirical evidence explaining the factors that influence their intention to pursue TVET remains limited. This lack of evidence restricts policymakers and TVET institutions from designing interventions that effectively address the unique needs of this vulnerable group. Accordingly, this study seeks to identify the key determinants influencing the intention of young adult *Asnaf* to pursue TVET in the Federal Territories of Malaysia. The findings are expected to provide evidence-based insights that support the development of targeted policies and institutional strategies to enhance enrolment, improve programme effectiveness, and strengthen the role of TVET in fostering socioeconomic mobility among underprivileged communities.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This section reviews the literature to establish the theoretical and conceptual foundation of the study by examining the determinants of young adult *Asnaf*'s intention to pursue Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET). The review is guided by the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), which posits that behavioural intention is influenced by individual attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control (Ajzen, 1991). Building upon this theory, recent TVET studies have incorporated additional cognitive and contextual variables, including knowledge, self-efficacy, family support, and societal influence, to improve the explanatory power of TPB in educational decision-making (Shaari et al., 2024; Abd Hamid, 2024). However, existing studies have predominantly focused on the general student population, with limited empirical attention given to socioeconomically disadvantaged groups such as young adult *Asnaf*. Consequently, there remains insufficient understanding of how psychological, social, and contextual factors collectively influence TVET enrolment

intentions among this vulnerable population. This review therefore, synthesises previous findings while identifying the theoretical and empirical gaps that justify the proposed research framework.

Overview of the Intention to Enroll in TVET among *Asnaf* Young Adult

The intention to pursue TVET refers to the motivation or willingness of youth to enrol in vocational training programmes, influenced by their understanding of TVET and their confidence in its ability to provide stable career opportunities (Shaari et al., 2024). Although TVET plays an important role in workforce development in Malaysia, its perception is still affected by long-standing social biases and structural inequalities, particularly among marginalised groups such as the *Asnaf*. Economic hardship and limited access to reliable information further restrict their ability to make informed educational decisions (Mohd Nawawi et al., 2024).

One of the key barriers to TVET participation is the perception that it is a second-choice pathway for academically weaker students. This stigma is especially prevalent among B40 and *Asnaf* communities, where limited awareness of opportunities and unclear career pathways reinforce a preference for traditional academic education (Mohd Nawawi et al., 2024). However, students' perception of employability is crucial, as those who recognise that TVET provides practical and marketable skills such as communication, teamwork, and digital literacy are more likely to enrol (Halik Bassah & Mohd Noor, 2023). Additionally, the design of TVET programmes also influences students' intentions. Programmes that align with the socio-economic conditions and cultural context of marginalised groups tend to increase trust, engagement, and participation. From a behavioural perspective, the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) provides a useful framework to understand this intention. According to Ajzen (1991), intention is shaped by attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control. In the context of TVET, confidence in one's ability to succeed reflects perceived behavioural control, while awareness and self-efficacy shape attitudes, and family and peer expectations influence subjective norms (Shaari et al., 2024).

Previous empirical findings regarding the determinants of TVET intention remain inconclusive. While several Malaysian studies reported that subjective norms and perceived behavioural control are the strongest predictors of students' intention to enrol in TVET programmes (Abd Hamid, 2024), other studies found that attitude and self-efficacy exert greater influence, particularly when students perceive vocational education as offering favourable employment prospects and career advancement opportunities (Shaari et al., 2024). Similarly, research involving vocational and entrepreneurship education has demonstrated that self-efficacy consistently strengthens behavioural intention by increasing individuals' confidence in their ability to succeed, whereas the influence of social norms varies across educational and cultural contexts (Praswati et al., 2022; Ayanwale et al., 2023). These mixed findings suggest that the relative importance of TPB constructs is context-dependent and may differ across population groups. Consequently, examining these determinants among young adult *Asnaf* is necessary because their educational decisions are likely to be shaped by socioeconomic vulnerability, financial dependency, and institutional support, factors that have received limited empirical attention in existing TVET research.

Despite this, several barriers remain, including financial constraints, family responsibilities, social stigma, and limited access to career guidance, which continue to discourage participation, particularly among disadvantaged youth (Grundall & Mack, 2023). These challenges are more significant for those with limited social and institutional support. Previous studies on entrepreneurial intention also highlight the strong role of self-efficacy in shaping behaviour, while attitudes and social norms play a comparatively smaller role (Praswati et al., 2022).

Looking forward, initiatives such as the *Asnaf* 4.0 concept emphasise the integration of TVET with IR4.0 skills, digital literacy, and lifelong learning to better prepare *Asnaf* youth for a technology-driven

economy. This approach not only supports the National TVET Policy 2030 but also contributes to poverty reduction through more inclusive and forward-looking education (Hanafi et al., 2023).

Although previous studies have identified several determinants of TVET participation, the evidence remains fragmented. Most studies have focused on mainstream students, secondary school leavers, or entrepreneurship education rather than disadvantaged groups receiving targeted educational assistance. Furthermore, previous research has typically examined selected TPB variables independently, with limited integration of knowledge, self-efficacy, family influence, and societal influence within a single framework. Consequently, little is known about whether these factors operate similarly among young adult *Asnaf*, whose educational decisions are strongly influenced by socioeconomic constraints. Addressing this gap is essential to developing evidence-based strategies that improve TVET participation among vulnerable communities while supporting Malaysia's inclusive human capital development agenda.

Hypotheses Development

- **TVET Knowledge and Intention to Enroll in the TVET Programme**

TVET knowledge refers to students' understanding of the benefits, structure, and purpose of technical and vocational education, as well as its relevance to future career opportunities (Shaari et al., 2024). It involves not only awareness of available programmes but also an understanding of how TVET aligns with industry demands. Limited knowledge has been identified as a key barrier to participation, as students with low awareness tend to restrict their career choices to traditional academic pathways (Omar et al., 2020b; Yusran et al., 2021). In contrast, students who are well-informed about TVET are better able to evaluate its potential for improving employability and social mobility (Omar et al., 2020a). As such, TVET knowledge plays an important role in enabling informed decision-making, particularly among marginalised groups with limited access to career guidance.

From the perspective of the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), awareness of employment opportunities and training options shapes students' attitudes, which in turn influence their behavioural intentions (Shaari et al., 2024). When students have greater knowledge of TVET, they are more likely to perceive it as a credible and rewarding educational pathway. Increasing awareness is therefore essential to overcoming negative stereotypes and improving perceptions, especially in contexts where TVET is viewed as a second-choice option (Ebil et al., 2020). Research has shown that a clearer understanding of the link between vocational programmes and labour market needs significantly enhances students' intention to participate (Omar et al., 2020b; Yusran et al., 2021).

Improving TVET knowledge also contributes directly to higher enrolment rates. Providing practical exposure through workshops, experiential learning, and community-based initiatives has been shown to strengthen students' understanding of career pathways and increase their interest in vocational education (Omar et al., 2020a, 2020b; Ebil et al., 2020). For instance, the Ambidextrous TVET Junior programme has been found to enhance both vocational self-efficacy and awareness of employment opportunities, which are closely linked to behavioural intention (Shaari et al., 2024). In the context of young adult *Asnaf*, particularly at institutions such as IKB, limited awareness remains a major contributor to low enrolment despite the availability of fully subsidised programmes (Omar et al., 2020b; Yusran et al., 2021). Enhancing knowledge through targeted career counselling, outreach initiatives, and hands-on exposure can improve both attitudes and self-efficacy, thereby increasing the likelihood of enrolment. Strengthening TVET knowledge is therefore a critical strategy to improve participation and optimise the utilisation of institutional resources, as it has been identified as a strong predictor of intention to pursue vocational training (Shaari et al., 2024). Hence, based on the discussion, this study hypothesised that:

H1: TVET knowledge significantly influences *Asnaf*s' intention to enroll TVET programme.

- **Self-Efficacy and Intention to Enroll in the TVET programme**

Self-efficacy refers to a student's belief in their ability to successfully complete tasks and perform well in TVET-related learning activities (Shaari et al., 2024). In the context of TVET, it reflects students' confidence in mastering vocational skills, adapting to training requirements, and succeeding in the workforce (Bandura, 1997; Shaari et al., 2024). This confidence also influences their ability to learn new skills and make decisions about their academic and career pathways.

Students with higher self-efficacy are more likely to set challenging goals, persist through difficulties, and remain motivated to complete vocational training (Hanafi et al., 2023; Shaari et al., 2024). In contrast, low self-efficacy can discourage participation, as students may fear failure or doubt their ability to manage skill-based learning tasks (Omar et al., 2020b). From the perspective of the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), self-efficacy represents perceived behavioural control, which directly influences intention by strengthening confidence in one's ability to succeed (Shaari et al., 2024). Empirical studies in Malaysia have also shown that students with stronger confidence in their vocational abilities are more likely to enrol in TVET programmes (Hanafi et al., 2023). This is particularly relevant for marginalised groups such as *Asnaf* youth, who often face social stigma and lack role models, which can weaken their confidence in pursuing vocational pathways (Mustapha & Hussain, 2022; Yusran et al., 2021).

Strengthening self-efficacy not only increases students' intention to enrol but also improves their readiness for vocational learning. Practical exposure, mentoring, and continuous feedback have been found to enhance students' confidence (Omar et al., 2020a, 2020b). For example, the Ambidextrous TVET Junior programme has shown positive effects in improving self-efficacy and increasing participation intention (Shaari et al., 2024). Similarly, competence-based training and workplace exposure further support the development of self-efficacy among TVET students (Mustapha & Hussain, 2022; Azeem, 2021).

Despite fully subsidised programmes, participation among *Asnaf* youth remains low, largely due to a lack of confidence in their ability to succeed in vocational training (Omar et al., 2020b; Yusran et al., 2021). Targeted interventions such as mentorship programmes, pre-enrolment workshops, and engagement with successful TVET alumni can help build motivation and confidence. Therefore, enhancing self-efficacy is essential to improving enrolment and ensuring the effective utilisation of IKB's training capacity, as it has been identified as a strong predictor of intention to pursue TVET (Shaari et al., 2024). Hence, based on the discussion, this study hypothesised that:

H2: Self-efficacy significantly influence *Asnaf*s' intention to enroll TVET programme.

- **Attitude and Intention to Enroll in TVET programme**

Attitude refers to a student's positive or negative evaluation of TVET based on its perceived benefits and personal relevance, and it plays a key role in shaping vocational intentions (Ayanwale et al., 2023). Students with positive attitudes toward TVET are more likely to pursue vocational training, as they perceive it as a pathway to financial independence, improved employability, and career development (Praswati et al., 2022).

However, negative attitudes toward TVET are often influenced by sociocultural and structural factors. Studies have shown that community perceptions, limited job opportunities, societal bias, and discrimination against TVET graduates can discourage positive attitudes toward vocational education (Alam & Forhad, 2021). These findings indicate that attitudes are shaped not only by individual preferences but also by broader social and cultural influences.

From the perspective of the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), attitude directly affects how desirable a behaviour is perceived, which in turn influences the intention to engage in that behaviour (Tantawy et al., 2021; Shah et al., 2020). In the context of TVET, students who hold positive perceptions are more likely to develop strong enrolment intentions compared to those with neutral or negative attitudes (Ayanwale et al., 2023). A positive attitude also strengthens students' perception of the benefits of vocational training, making TVET a more credible and attractive career option. Attitude also acts as a mediator between subjective norms and behavioural intention, meaning that social influences from family, peers, and the wider community shape students' attitudes, which then affect their decisions (Ayanwale et al., 2023). Supportive social environments can encourage participation, while negative stereotypes may discourage it, even when opportunities are available. Therefore, efforts to improve attitudes must address societal perceptions and provide accurate information about TVET pathways.

In the context of young adult *Asnaf* at institutions such as IKB, developing positive attitudes toward TVET is essential to improving enrolment. Despite the availability of fully subsidised programmes, participation remains low when negative perceptions and limited awareness persist. Strategies such as public awareness campaigns, showcasing success stories, and involving role models can help shift perceptions and encourage participation. Improving students' attitudes is therefore a critical step in increasing enrolment and empowering *Asnaf* youth, as attitude has been consistently identified as a significant predictor of vocational intention (Praswati et al., 2022; Ayanwale et al., 2023). Hence, based on the discussion, this study hypothesised that:

H3: Attitude significantly influence *Asnaf*'s intention to enroll TVET programme.

• Societal Influence and Intention to Enroll in TVET Programme

Social influence refers to the impact of community expectations, cultural norms, and societal values in shaping students' attitudes toward TVET (Ayanwale et al., 2023). In collectivist societies, educational decisions are often influenced more by family and community approval than by individual preferences. When society views TVET positively as a pathway to stable employment and financial independence, students are more likely to consider it as a viable option. Aligning TVET with industry demands and its role in addressing the need for skilled labour further encourages enrolment (Wohlin-Elkovsky et al., 2023).

However, vocational programmes often face challenges in societies where higher education is associated with higher social status, despite the practical benefits of TVET (Wohlin-Elkovsky et al., 2023). Students' attitudes and intentions are strongly shaped by social support. Positive encouragement from family, peers, and the wider community can strengthen enrolment intention, while negative perceptions such as low prestige, stigma, and disapproval can discourage participation (Ayanwale et al., 2023; Mohd Nawi et al., 2024).

In Malaysia, the perception that vocational education is inferior to academic pathways continues to influence students' enrolment decisions (Mustapha & Hussain, 2022). Nevertheless, these perceptions are gradually changing, particularly in areas where institutional and government initiatives actively promote TVET (Mohd Nawi et al., 2024).

Research suggests that targeted interventions can improve societal perceptions of TVET. Community-based programmes, parental engagement, and awareness campaigns highlighting successful TVET graduates have been shown to reduce stigma and increase support for vocational education (Ebil et al., 2020; Omar et al., 2020a). Public perception improves when clear evidence is provided that TVET graduates can secure stable employment. In addition, aligning TVET with Industry 4.0 and national

economic priorities enhances its credibility and strengthens social acceptance (Mustapha & Hussain, 2022).

Addressing social influence is particularly important for increasing enrolment among young adult *Asnaf* at institutions such as IKB. As these students often rely on family and community guidance, they are more vulnerable to negative societal perceptions (Ayanwale et al., 2023). Therefore, involving parents, community leaders, and successful TVET alumni in awareness initiatives can help create a more supportive environment and encourage greater participation in vocational education. Hence, based on the discussion, this study hypothesised that:

H4: Societal Influence significantly influence *Asnafs'* intention to enroll TVET programme.

• Perceived Family Influence and Intention to Enroll in TVET Programme

Perceived family influence refers to the role of family support, approval, and expectations in shaping students' educational choices and attitudes toward TVET (Ayanwale et al., 2023). Parents are often key decision-makers in determining suitable educational pathways, especially in contexts where family plays a dominant role in academic and career decisions (Abdulla & Ugli, 2022). As a result, students frequently follow their parents' preferences regarding what and where to study, which may limit their willingness to explore alternative options (Mohamed et al., 2022). In collectivist societies such as Malaysia, family approval has a strong influence on students' decisions. Positive support, such as encouragement to acquire vocational skills for future employment, can strengthen students' confidence in choosing TVET as a career pathway (Ayanwale et al., 2023). In contrast, families who place greater value on academic qualifications as a symbol of social status may discourage TVET enrolment, perceiving it as a secondary option despite its potential for stable employment (Mustapha & Hussain, 2022; Mohd Nawi et al., 2024).

Students' perceptions of family influence significantly shape their attitudes and intentions toward vocational education. When families recognise the practical skills and employment opportunities offered by TVET, students are more likely to develop positive attitudes and consider enrolment (Ayanwale et al., 2023). Conversely, parental disapproval or low expectations may discourage participation, even among students with the interest or ability to pursue vocational training (Mohd Nawi et al., 2024). Therefore, perceived family influence acts as a form of social approval that guides students' educational decisions. This is particularly important for marginalised groups such as the *Asnaf*, who often depend on parental support when accessing educational opportunities (Praswati et al., 2022).

Efforts to increase parental awareness of TVET are crucial in shaping positive family influence. Studies show that parents are more supportive when they are exposed to success stories of TVET graduates or informed about employment opportunities linked to vocational training (Omar et al., 2020a; Ebil et al., 2020). Government and institutional initiatives aimed at improving the public image of TVET have gradually influenced parental perceptions, leading to a more supportive home environment (Mohd Nawi et al., 2024).

In the context of young adult *Asnaf*, particularly at institutions such as IKB, strengthening family support is essential to improving enrolment. As these students often rely on their families for financial and educational guidance, parental influence plays a critical role in their decision-making (Ayanwale et al., 2023; Mohd Nawi et al., 2024). Institutions can enhance family support through targeted initiatives such as awareness campaigns, community engagement, and programmes involving successful TVET alumni. Strengthening perceived family influence is therefore important for increasing acceptance of TVET and ensuring better utilisation of IKB's training capacity, as it remains

a key determinant of behavioural intention (Shaari et al., 2024). Hence, based on the discussion, this study hypothesised that:

H5: Perceived Family Influence significantly influence *Asnaf*'s intention to enroll TVET programme.

Research Framework

Based on the hypothesised relationships, this study develops a research framework to examine the factors influencing the intention to pursue TVET among young adult *Asnaf*. Grounded in the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) and its extended model, the framework (as shown in Figure 1) integrates both internal and external factors. TVET knowledge, self-efficacy, and attitude are positioned as internal variables that reflect students' awareness, confidence, and perception of vocational education. Meanwhile, societal influence and perceived family influence represent external factors related to social norms and support systems. These variables are hypothesised to have direct effects on students' intention to pursue TVET. By combining these relationships, the framework provides a structured model to test how different factors contribute to enrolment intention and to identify the most influential determinants within the context of this study.

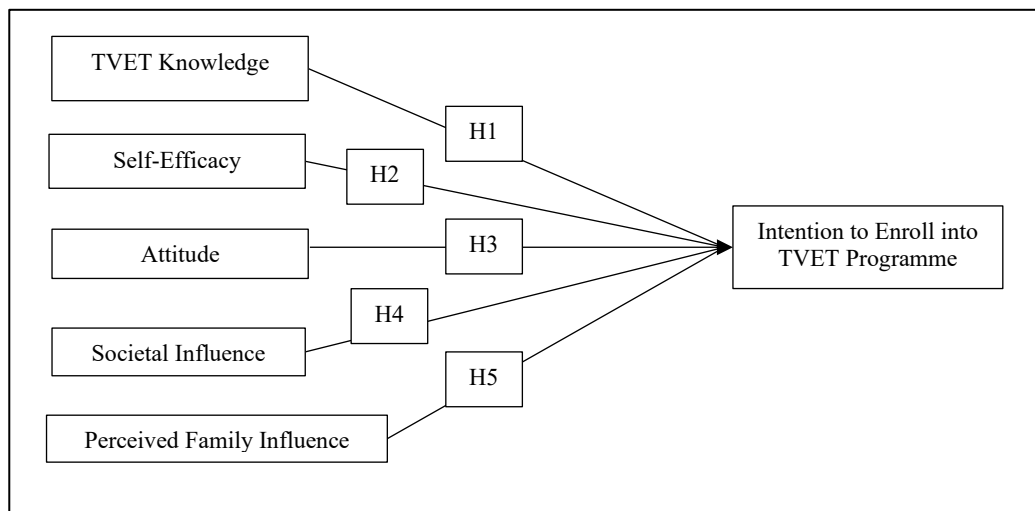


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employs a quantitative cross-sectional research design to examine the factors influencing the intention to pursue Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) among young adult *Asnaf* in Malaysia. The study focuses on key variables, namely TVET knowledge, self-efficacy, attitude, societal influence, and perceived family influence, in explaining students' enrolment intention. This approach allows for systematic data collection and statistical analysis to test the hypothesised relationships between variables, ensuring that the findings are reliable and aligned with the study's explanatory objectives.

Population and Sampling Method

Data were collected using a cross-sectional survey design, enabling the statistical examination of relationships among variables and providing empirical evidence regarding the factors influencing TVET enrolment intention (Shaari et al., 2024). The sampling design comprised the target population, sampling frame, sampling technique, and sample size. The target population consisted of young adult *Asnaf* aged

18–35 years in the Federal Territories who fulfilled MAIWP's zakat eligibility criteria and were eligible to enrol in TVET programmes offered by Institut Kemahiran Baitulmal (IKB), consistent with MAIWP initiatives and the Youth Societies and Youth Development Act 2007 (Act 668). To address the issue of limited enrolment and to obtain a more representative pool of potential respondents, the sampling frame was expanded to include eligible young adult Asnaf from other states in Malaysia who attended MAIWP outreach and promotional programmes.

A non-probability convenience sampling technique was employed because no comprehensive or centralised sampling frame of eligible young adult Asnaf intending to pursue TVET was available. In addition, the target respondents represented a relatively specific and difficult-to-access population that could only be reached through organised MAIWP roadshows and outreach programmes. Convenience sampling is considered appropriate in exploratory and applied research involving hard-to-reach populations where probability sampling is impractical or infeasible (Etikan et al., 2016; Saunders et al., 2023). Respondents were selected based on predefined inclusion criteria, namely their Asnaf status and eligibility for TVET programmes, while excluding individuals who had already enrolled in any TVET institution. Data collection was conducted personally by the researcher during MAIWP roadshow programmes, allowing direct access to respondents who satisfied the study criteria. A total of 207 questionnaires were collected. Following data screening, two responses were removed for not meeting the inclusion criteria, leaving 205 valid responses. Subsequently, one response was excluded during outlier analysis, resulting in a final sample of 204 respondents. This represents a usable response rate of 98.6%, indicating high-quality data suitable for statistical analysis. The final sample exceeded Cochran's (1977) recommended minimum sample size of 196 respondents and represented more than 60% of IKB's annual intake capacity of approximately 300 students (IKB, 2024; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2019). Although convenience sampling limits the statistical generalisability of the findings to the entire Asnaf population in Malaysia, the sample adequately represents prospective young adult Asnaf who are eligible for TVET programmes and constitute the primary target group of IKB. Consequently, the findings provide meaningful insights into the behavioural factors influencing TVET enrolment intention among this specific population and offer practical implications for MAIWP, IKB, and other institutions implementing similar TVET initiatives for socioeconomically disadvantaged communities. Future studies are encouraged to employ probability sampling techniques across multiple TVET institutions to enhance the external validity and broader generalisability of the findings.

Instrument Adoption and Adaptation

This study uses a 5-point Likert scale to measure all research constructs to ensure consistency and reliability. A total of 41 items were used to measure the independent and dependent variables. The measurement items were adapted from Ayanwale et al. (2023), who used a 6-point scale, and Shaari et al. (2024), who used a 5-point scale. For consistency, all items were standardised to a 5-point scale, with items from Ayanwale et al. (2023) rescaled accordingly to avoid respondent confusion and maintain data reliability (Wolf et al., 2016). The use of a 5-point Likert scale is appropriate as it includes a neutral midpoint. This is important when studying vulnerable groups such as young adult *Asnaf*, as it allows respondents to express uncertainty without being forced to choose a position. Without this option, responses may become less accurate due to forced choices or guessing (Lenz, 2024). In addition, a 5-point scale helps balance data variation while reducing respondent burden, which is important in field data collection settings (Chyung et al., 2017). The scale ranges from “strongly disagree” (1) to “strongly agree” (5), including “disagree,” “neutral,” and “agree.”

A pilot study was conducted to assess the reliability of the survey items, as some items were adapted from previous studies using different Likert scales and modified to a standard 5-point scale. This step was important to evaluate the clarity, consistency, and internal reliability of the questionnaire before the main

data collection. The pilot study also helped identify any issues with the adapted items and ensure that the instrument was suitable for measuring the intended constructs. A total of 30 participants, who met the characteristics of the target population, were involved in the pilot study. Reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha, with a minimum acceptable value of 0.70 (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). The results showed that all constructs achieved reliability values above 0.80, indicating good internal consistency. Based on these findings, minor refinements were made to improve the clarity and relevance of the questionnaire.

Data Analysis

The data were analysed using IBM SPSS Statistics Version 29 to process and examine the quantitative data collected in this study (Djaafar & Djaafar, 2023). Several stages of analysis were conducted to address the research objectives. First, data screening and cleaning were performed to ensure data accuracy and quality. A total of 207 responses were initially collected, of which 2 responses were removed during the screening process due to not meeting the study criteria, leaving 205 valid responses. Subsequently, 1 response was deleted during univariate outlier analysis, resulting in a final sample size of 204 respondents.

Normality testing was then conducted using skewness, kurtosis, and visual assessment techniques. The results showed that all values were within the acceptable ± 2.58 range, indicating that the data were normally distributed (Hair et al., 2019). Descriptive analysis was used to summarise respondents' demographic profiles and responses to the study variables using frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations. Reliability analysis using Cronbach's alpha was also conducted to assess the internal consistency of the constructs, and all variables recorded values above 0.70, indicating acceptable reliability. Finally, multiple regression analysis was employed to examine the relationships between the independent variables namely; TVET knowledge, self-efficacy, attitude, societal influence, and perceived family influence and the dependent variable, intention to pursue TVET. This analysis helped identify the significant predictors influencing students' intention to enrol in TVET programmes.

RESULTS

Respondent's Profile

Table 1 presents the demographic profile of the respondents involved in the study. The majority of respondents were aged between 18 and 20 years old, representing 71.1% (n = 145), followed by those aged 21 to 25 years old at 27.0% (n = 55). Only a small number of respondents were aged between 26 to 30 years and 31 to 35 years, each representing 1.0% (n = 2). In terms of residential location, most respondents were from the Central Region, accounting for 76.0% (n = 155), followed by the Eastern Region at 11.3% (n = 23). Smaller proportions came from the Northern Region (5.9%), Southern Region (3.9%), and East Malaysia (2.9%). Regarding gender, female respondents slightly outnumbered males, with females representing 53.4% (n = 109) and males 46.6% (n = 95). Most respondents were single, accounting for 97.1% (n = 198), while only 2.9% (n = 6) were married. In terms of educational background, the majority of respondents had secondary education at 63.7% (n = 130), followed by skill certification holders at 24.0% (n = 49). Respondents with primary education represented 7.8% (n = 16), while only 4.4% (n = 9) had undergraduate qualifications. For parents' education level, most respondents reported that their parents had secondary education, representing 51.0% (n = 104), followed by undergraduate qualifications at 36.3% (n = 74). Smaller percentages were recorded for parents with no formal education (4.4%), skill certification (2.0%), and primary education (1.0%). Overall, the findings indicate that the respondents were mainly young, single individuals with secondary educational backgrounds, largely originating from the Central Region.

Table 1: Respondents' Profile

Items	Frequency	Percentage
Age		
18 – 20 Years	145	71.1
21 – 25 Years	55	27.0
26 – 30 Years	2	1.0
31 – 35 Years	2	1.0
Residential State		
Central Region	155	76.0
Northern Region	12	5.9
Southern Region	8	3.9
Eastern Region	23	11.3
East Malaysia	6	2.9
Gender		
Male	95	46.6
Female	109	53.4
Marital Status		
Single	198	97.1
Married	6	2.9
Respondent's Education Level		
Primary Education	16	7.8
Secondary Education	130	63.7
Skill Certification	49	24.0
Undergraduate	9	4.4
Parents Education Level		
No Formal Education	9	4.4
Primary Education	2	1.0
Secondary Education	104	51.0
Skill Certification	4	2.0
Undergraduate	74	36.3

Correlation Analysis

Table 2 presents the correlation analysis among the study variables. The results indicate that all independent variables have positive and significant relationships with the intention to enrol in TVET programmes. Among the variables, attitude recorded the strongest relationship with intention to enrol ($r = 0.651$, $p < 0.01$), followed by TVET knowledge ($r = 0.624$, $p < 0.01$) and self-efficacy ($r = 0.616$, $p < 0.01$). Perceived family influence also showed a moderate positive relationship with intention to enrol ($r = 0.514$, $p < 0.01$), while societal influence demonstrated the weakest but still significant relationship ($r = 0.286$, $p < 0.01$).

The findings also show significant positive relationships among the independent variables themselves. Attitude had a strong correlation with TVET knowledge ($r = 0.715$, $p < 0.01$) and self-efficacy ($r = 0.647$, $p < 0.01$). In addition, perceived family influence was moderately correlated with attitude ($r = 0.619$, $p < 0.01$) and self-efficacy ($r = 0.575$, $p < 0.01$). Overall, the results suggest that higher levels of TVET knowledge, self-efficacy, positive attitude, societal influence, and perceived family influence are associated with stronger intention among young adult *Asnaf* to pursue TVET programmes.

Table 2: Correlation Results

Variables	Intention to enrol	TVET Knowledge	Self-Efficacy	Attitude	Societal Influence	Perceived Family Influence
Intention to Enrol	1					
TVET Knowledge	0.624**	1				
Self-Efficacy	0.616**	0.693**	1			
Attitude	0.651**	0.715**	0.647**	1		
Societal Influence	0.286**	0.403**	0.332**	0.532**	1	
Perceived Family Influence	0.514**	0.537**	0.575**	0.619**	0.400**	1

Note, n=204. Correlation tests are two-tailed.

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Multicollinearity Analysis

Table 3 presents the multicollinearity analysis results for the independent variables. The findings show that all tolerance values ranged from 0.353 to 0.706, which are above the minimum acceptable threshold of 0.10. Similarly, the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values ranged between 1.417 and 2.831, which are below the recommended threshold value of 10. Among the variables, attitude recorded the highest VIF value (2.831), while societal influence showed the lowest VIF value (1.417). Overall, the results indicate that there are no multicollinearity issues among the independent variables. Therefore, the variables are considered suitable for multiple regression analysis.

Table 3: Multicollinearity Results

Independent Variables	Intention to Enrol	
	Tolerance	VIF
TVET Knowledge	0.395	2.531
Self-Efficacy	0.442	2.260
Attitude	0.353	2.831
Societal Influence	0.706	1.417
Perceived Family Influence	0.555	1.801

Regression Analysis

Table 4 presents the multiple regression analysis results examining the effects of TVET knowledge, self-efficacy, attitude, societal influence, and perceived family influence on the intention to enrol in TVET programmes. The overall model explains 51.7% of the variance in intention to enrol ($R^2 = .517$), indicating that the selected variables moderately explain students' intention to pursue TVET. The results show that TVET knowledge has a positive and significant effect on intention to enrol ($\beta = 0.205$, $p = 0.010$), supporting H1, suggesting that increasing students' awareness and understanding of TVET may encourage enrolment. Similarly, self-efficacy has a significant positive effect ($\beta = 0.222$, $p = 0.003$), supporting H2, indicating that students with greater confidence in their ability to succeed are more likely to pursue TVET. Attitude emerged as the strongest predictor ($\beta = 0.352$, $p = 0.001$), supporting H3, highlighting the importance of fostering positive perceptions of vocational education to improve enrolment. In contrast, societal influence ($\beta = -0.096$, $p = 0.104$) and perceived family influence ($\beta = 0.097$, $p = 0.147$) do not significantly affect intention to enrol, leading to the rejection of H4 and H5. Overall, the findings suggest that recruitment strategies should focus on enhancing students' knowledge, confidence, and positive attitudes towards TVET, as these internal factors exert a greater influence on enrolment intention than external social or family influences.

Table 4: Regression Results

Hypotheses	Path	Std. Beta	Std. Error	t-value	p-value	R ²	Decision
H1	TK > INT	0.205	0.090	2.614	0.010**	.517	Supported
H2	SE > INT	0.222	0.081	2.992	0.003**		Supported
H3	ATT > INT	0.352	0.099	4.237	0.001**		Supported
H4	SI > INT	- 0.096	0.079	-1.635	0.104		Rejected
H5	PFI > INT	0.097	0.065	1.456	0.147		Rejected

***Significant at 5%, $p < 0.05$ (one-tailed)

(INT = Intention to Enrol, TK = TVET Knowledge, SE = Self-Efficacy, ATT = Attitude, SI = Societal Influence, PFI = Perceived Family Influence)

DISCUSSION

This study examined the factors influencing the intention to pursue Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) programme among young adult *Asnaf* in Malaysia using the extended Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB). The findings showed that the regression model explained 51.7% of the variance in intention to enrol, indicating that the selected variables provide strong explanatory power in understanding TVET enrolment intention among young adult *Asnaf*. Overall, the findings suggest that internal factors such as attitude, self-efficacy, and TVET knowledge play a more important role than external social influences in shaping students' decisions to pursue vocational education.

Among all variables, attitude emerged as the strongest predictor of intention to enrol in TVET programmes. This indicates that students with more positive perceptions toward vocational education are more likely to consider TVET as a suitable educational and career pathway. The finding supports the Theory of Planned Behavior, which explains that positive evaluation of a behaviour increases behavioural intention (Ajzen, 1991). The result is also consistent with previous studies by Ayanwale et al. (2023) and Praswati et al. (2022), which found that favourable attitudes toward vocational education significantly strengthen enrolment intention. In the context of young adult *Asnaf*, positive attitudes are likely influenced by perceptions that TVET can improve employability, financial stability, and future career opportunities. Self-efficacy was also found to have a significant positive effect on intention to enrol in TVET programmes. This finding suggests that students who are more confident in their ability to succeed in vocational training are more likely to pursue TVET education. The result supports Bandura's (1997) self-efficacy theory and the perceived behavioural control component of TPB, which emphasises that confidence in one's ability increases behavioural intention. This finding aligns with studies by Hanafi et al. (2023) and Shaari et al. (2024), which identified vocational self-efficacy as an important determinant of participation intention. For young adult *Asnaf*, limited exposure, financial hardship, and lack of role models may reduce confidence in pursuing vocational education. Therefore, mentorship programmes, practical exposure, and engagement with successful TVET graduates are important to strengthen students' confidence and readiness for vocational learning. TVET knowledge was also identified as a significant predictor of intention to enrol. Students with better understanding of TVET pathways, employment opportunities, and vocational career prospects were more likely to pursue vocational education. This finding supports previous studies by Omar et al. (2020a, 2020b), Yusran et al. (2021), and Shaari et al. (2024), which emphasised that awareness and understanding of TVET positively influence enrolment intention. Despite the availability of fully subsidised programmes at IKB, lack of awareness and misconceptions about vocational education continue to limit participation among young adult *Asnaf*. This highlights the importance of stronger outreach programmes, career counselling, and awareness campaigns to improve understanding of TVET opportunities.

Interestingly, societal influence and perceived family influence were not significant predictors of intention to enrol, despite both variables showing significant correlations with intention. This finding differs from Ayanwale et al. (2023), who reported that social influence significantly affected students' intention to pursue TVET, but is consistent with Praswati et al. (2022), who found that individual factors such as attitude and self-efficacy exerted stronger effects than social norms. One possible explanation is that young adult *Asnaf* prioritise practical

considerations, such as employability, financial security, and career opportunities, over external expectations when making educational decisions. As many respondents were between 18 and 25 years old and were directly exposed to MAIWP roadshows, they may have formed their own perceptions based on the information received rather than relying on family or societal opinions. This suggests that once adequate knowledge and confidence are established, external social influences become less influential in shaping TVET enrolment decisions among this group.

Overall, the findings highlight the importance of strengthening internal motivational factors to improve TVET participation among young adult *Asnaf*. Institutions such as IKB should focus on improving students' attitudes, awareness, and confidence through targeted interventions, mentorship programmes, and exposure to vocational career opportunities. The study also contributes theoretically by extending the application of the Theory of Planned Behavior in understanding vocational enrolment intention among marginalised youth in Malaysia.

CONCLUSION

As an Applied Business Project (ABP), this study was conducted to address a practical organisational issue related to the low enrolment of young adult *Asnaf* in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) programmes at *Institut Kemahiran Baitulmal* (IKB). Using the extended Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), the study examined the influence of TVET knowledge, self-efficacy, attitude, societal influence, and perceived family influence on students' intention to pursue TVET. The findings revealed that attitude, self-efficacy, and TVET knowledge significantly influenced enrolment intention, while societal influence and perceived family influence were not significant predictors. These findings provide important insights into the factors shaping vocational education decisions among young adult *Asnaf* and offer practical directions for improving TVET participation.

Practical and Policy Contribution

From a practical perspective, the study provides valuable insights for TVET institutions, policymakers, and zakat agencies such as MAIWP in improving TVET participation among *Asnaf* young adult. The findings indicate that increasing awareness, improving self-confidence, and fostering positive perceptions toward TVET are essential to strengthen enrolment intention. Institutions such as IKB should therefore focus on career counselling, mentorship programmes, school and community outreach, and digital awareness campaigns to improve understanding of vocational opportunities and reduce misconceptions regarding TVET. Stronger collaboration between TVET institutions, industries, schools, and community stakeholders is also essential to provide early exposure to vocational careers and employment opportunities. From a policy perspective, government agencies should integrate TVET promotion into national education and poverty alleviation initiatives by establishing sustained partnerships between MAIWP, TVET providers, and industry. Long-term policy efforts should also include periodic evaluation of outreach programmes, graduate employability tracking, and continuous curriculum alignment with Industry 4.0 and labour market demands to ensure that TVET remains relevant and attractive to disadvantaged youth.

Theoretical Contribution

This study contributes to the literature by extending the application of the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) to the context of TVET enrolment among *Asnaf* young adult, a socioeconomically disadvantaged group that has received limited empirical attention. While TPB proposes that behavioural intention is influenced by attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control (Ajzen, 1991), the findings demonstrate that internal cognitive factors namely attitude, self-efficacy, and TVET knowledge are more influential than external social factors such as societal and family influence in shaping enrolment intention. These findings suggest that, within vulnerable populations facing socioeconomic constraints,

educational decisions are driven primarily by individuals' confidence, awareness, and personal evaluation of vocational education rather than by social expectations. By providing empirical evidence from the Malaysian TVET context, this study enriches the understanding of TPB and offers a more context-specific explanation of vocational enrolment behaviour among marginalised youth.

Practical Recommendations

Based on the findings, several practical recommendations are proposed. First, IKB and related agencies should strengthen awareness and promotional activities through structured school engagement programmes, digital marketing campaigns, and community roadshows conducted throughout the year rather than as one-off initiatives. Second, mentorship and experiential learning activities involving successful TVET graduates and industry practitioners should be institutionalised to enhance students' self-efficacy and confidence. Third, career guidance initiatives should emphasise employability outcomes, industry demand, and long-term career progression to foster more positive attitudes toward TVET. Finally, sustained collaboration among MAIWP, TVET institutions, industries, and secondary schools should be established through formal strategic partnerships to ensure continuous programme evaluation, curriculum relevance, internship opportunities, and graduate employability monitoring, thereby supporting the long-term sustainability of TVET participation among young adult *Asnaf*.

Limitations and Future Research Avenue

Although this study provides important insights, several limitations should be acknowledged. The study focused mainly on young adult *Asnaf* associated with IKB and used a cross-sectional design, which limits the generalisability of the findings across different populations and over time. Future studies are encouraged to involve larger and more diverse samples from other TVET institutions in Malaysia. Longitudinal studies may also provide deeper understanding of how students' perceptions and intentions change over time. In addition, future research may examine other potential factors influencing TVET enrolment intention, such as perceived employability, financial readiness, digital literacy, career adaptability, and institutional support.

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