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Entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial intention: The mediating role of entrepreneurial self-efficacy

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Abstract---This study aims to analyze the mediating role of entrepreneurial self-efficacy in the relationship between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial intention. The population of this study consists of 844 students from the 2022 cohort of the Faculty of Economics and Business at Udayana University who have completed entrepreneurship courses. Using the Slovin formula, a sample size of 271 students was determined. The sampling technique employed was purposive convenience sampling. Data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling with Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) through SmartPLS 4 software. The results show that entrepreneurship education has a positive and significant effect on entrepreneurial intention. Entrepreneurial self-efficacy also has a positive and significant effect on entrepreneurial intention. Additionally, entrepreneurship education has a positive and significant effect on entrepreneurial self-efficacy. Entrepreneurial self-efficacy serves as a complementary partial mediator in the relationship between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial intention. The study concludes that the better the quality of entrepreneurship education provided, the greater the tendency of students to develop intentions to start and manage their own businesses. Higher levels of self-confidence in entrepreneurial abilities also increase the likelihood of students intending to become entrepreneurs. Furthermore, the higher the quality of entrepreneurship education received by students, the stronger their confidence in their entrepreneurial capabilities. Entrepreneurial self-efficacy not only mediates the relationship between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial intention but also amplifies the

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existing direct effect. Higher education institutions are encouraged to strengthen both theoretical and practical aspects of entrepreneurship curricula in a balanced manner. Moreover, they are expected to improve students' conceptual understanding of team management and financial management in business.

***Keywords*---**entrepreneurship education, entrepreneurial self-efficacy, entrepreneurial intention.

Introduction

Low entrepreneurial intention among university students can be explained through the framework of the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB). This theory provides a strong conceptual framework for explaining how behavioral intentions are formed, including in the context of entrepreneurship. According to TPB, an individual's intention is influenced by three main components: attitude toward the behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. Attitude refers to the degree to which a person has a positive view of entrepreneurial activities. Subjective norms reflect social pressures or expectations from the surrounding environment, such as family, peers, or society. Perceived behavioral control relates to an individual's belief in their ability to initiate and manage entrepreneurial activities. These three factors interact and collectively contribute to shaping an individual's intention to start a business. Thus, TPB is considered relevant and applicable in explaining the dynamics of entrepreneurial intentions among students.

A learning approach that integrates both theoretical and practical aspects is expected to help students gain an understanding of how to start and manage a business, as well as recognize the potential economic and social benefits of entrepreneurship. A study by Hafid et al. (2024) indicates that practice-based learning experiences play a crucial role in building students' confidence to engage in entrepreneurship. Interactions with experienced mentors during entrepreneurship education provide tangible examples of success, reinforcing students' belief in their potential to succeed in business ventures. Such educational approaches are anticipated to enhance students' entrepreneurial self-efficacy and motivation, which ultimately fosters stronger entrepreneurial intentions. Practical knowledge on running a business and recognizing its potential benefits, as shaped through entrepreneurship education, is expected to contribute to the development of entrepreneurial intention among students. This assumption will be examined using the TPB framework, which positions attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control as key determinants of entrepreneurial intentions.

Numerous studies have reported a positive impact of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial intention. Uzkurt et al. (2024) showed that entrepreneurship education plays a significant role in shaping students' entrepreneurial intentions. However, despite findings showing positive links, the results have not always been consistent. Some studies reveal that entrepreneurship education does not always have a direct and significant influence on entrepreneurial intentions. For

instance, Bae et al. (2014), through a meta-analysis of 73 studies, concluded that after controlling for individuals' initial intentions, the effect of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial intention becomes insignificant. Similar findings were reported by Montes et al. (2023), Mahendra et al. (2017), Kusumojanto et al. (2021), Yuliana & Soepatini (2024), Chai & Soelaiman (2024), Rocha et al. (2024), and Silesky-Gonzalez et al. (2025), who found that entrepreneurship education does not always directly determine students' entrepreneurial intention.

Entrepreneurship education is not only a means of delivering knowledge about business but is also expected to play a vital role in enhancing students' self-confidence regarding their ability to become entrepreneurs. Through applied learning experiences, students not only gain conceptual understanding of entrepreneurship but also improve their self-perception regarding their ability to face entrepreneurial challenges. This belief in their capabilities, known as entrepreneurial self-efficacy, refers to the extent to which individuals believe they can successfully perform entrepreneurial tasks.

Entrepreneurial self-efficacy emerges as a crucial psychological factor, directly affecting an individual's readiness and willingness to start a business. Within the TPB framework, self-efficacy aligns with perceived behavioral control, which refers to an individual's perception of their ability to execute a particular action. Therefore, students with high entrepreneurial self-efficacy are likely to feel more confident in their entrepreneurial abilities, which in turn contributes to the formation of entrepreneurial intentions. Entrepreneurial self-efficacy reflects an individual's belief in possessing the necessary skills and competencies to initiate and successfully manage a new business.

Entrepreneurship education plays a significant role in strengthening students' entrepreneurial self-efficacy. Practical learning experiences provide students with opportunities to develop entrepreneurial skills, gradually increasing their confidence to start and manage a business independently in the future. Research by Fan et al. (2024) found that entrepreneurship education has a positive and significant effect on students' entrepreneurial self-efficacy. This finding demonstrates that both theoretical and practical learning experiences in entrepreneurship education can enhance students' confidence in their entrepreneurial capabilities. Higher self-efficacy then has the potential to increase students' entrepreneurial intentions. Thus, entrepreneurial self-efficacy is hypothesized to mediate the relationship between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial intention, strengthening the indirect effect of education on intention.

Based on this explanation, it is understood that the effect of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial intention is not always direct. Entrepreneurship education is presumed to first enhance entrepreneurial self-efficacy, and through this increased self-efficacy, entrepreneurial intentions are fostered. Therefore, entrepreneurial self-efficacy is selected as a mediating variable as it is believed to bridge the cognitive and affective processes between entrepreneurship education and individuals' psychological decisions to start a business.

Most existing research on the relationship between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial intention has been conducted in foreign contexts, with differing cultural backgrounds, education systems, and student characteristics compared to Indonesia. This raises questions about the relevance of those findings within the national context. Thus, there is a need for research conducted within the local context, particularly in Indonesia, to examine whether similar patterns apply to Indonesian students. Although entrepreneurial self-efficacy has been widely discussed in the literature as a crucial factor in shaping entrepreneurial intentions, its mediating role in the relationship between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial intention remains underexplored in Indonesia.

Preliminary survey findings at the Faculty of Economics and Business, Udayana University, revealed that students' entrepreneurial intentions remain relatively low, despite having received education in economics and business. This suggests that entrepreneurial self-efficacy may not yet be adequately developed through the education they receive, resulting in a lack of confidence to start a business.

Based on the aforementioned background, this study aims to examine the extent to which entrepreneurship education can enhance students' entrepreneurial intentions through the reinforcement of entrepreneurial self-efficacy. This research also builds on previous findings to provide both scientific and practical contributions. A deeper understanding of the psychological factors that influence entrepreneurial intentions is expected to help produce graduates who are not only academically competent but also possess strong self-confidence and internal motivation to engage in entrepreneurship. Such contributions are believed to accelerate the growth of young entrepreneurs and expand job creation opportunities in Indonesia.

Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

Entrepreneurship education is recognized as a key determinant of entrepreneurial intention, particularly among university students. The Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991) suggests that intention is shaped by attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control—components that can be cultivated through learning experiences such as entrepreneurship education. Studies by Hafid et al. (2024), Rizky et al. (2022), Santoso & Tanoto (2020), Saoula et al. (2023), and Wu et al. (2022) consistently demonstrate that entrepreneurship education positively influences entrepreneurial intention, either directly or through psychological mechanisms such as character development and social awareness.

H1: Entrepreneurship education has a positive and significant effect on entrepreneurial intention.

Entrepreneurial self-efficacy—defined as one's belief in their ability to perform entrepreneurial tasks—is closely linked to perceived behavioral control in TPB (Ajzen, 1991). Several studies, including those by Wu et al. (2022), Lucas et al. (2025), Saoula et al. (2023), Uzkurt et al. (2024), and Riaz et al. (2023), confirm that higher entrepreneurial self-efficacy significantly boosts entrepreneurial intention.

H2: Entrepreneurial self-efficacy has a positive and significant effect on entrepreneurial intention.

Entrepreneurship education also plays a vital role in strengthening entrepreneurial self-efficacy by offering both theoretical and practical learning experiences. Empirical findings by Wu et al. (2022), Adeniyi (2023), Li & Wu (2019), and Haque et al. (2024) support the positive relationship between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial self-efficacy.

H3: Entrepreneurship education has a positive and significant effect on entrepreneurial self-efficacy.

Lastly, entrepreneurial self-efficacy is expected to mediate the relationship between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial intention. Studies by Wu et al. (2022), Jiatong et al. (2021), Haque et al. (2024), Li & Wu (2019), and Adeniyi (2023) consistently highlight that self-efficacy not only results from entrepreneurship education but also serves as a key psychological mechanism linking education to entrepreneurial intention.

H4: Entrepreneurial self-efficacy mediates the relationship between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial intention.

Methods

This study adopts a quantitative approach with an explanatory research design. The quantitative approach was selected as the study aims to test the relationships between variables formulated within a theoretical framework through the collection of numerical data that can be statistically analyzed (Sugiyono, 2019:82). Explanatory research is employed because the primary focus of this study is to explain the influence of exogenous variables on endogenous variables, either directly or through a mediating variable, based on established theories and hypotheses. Specifically, this research investigates the extent to which entrepreneurship education affects entrepreneurial intention, considering the mediating role of entrepreneurial self-efficacy among undergraduate students majoring in Accounting, Management, and Development Economics at the Faculty of Economics and Business, Udayana University. To analyze the relationships among the variables, this study employs Structural Equation Modeling based on Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS).

Result and Discussion

Inner Model Evaluation

The inner model testing in the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) approach aims to evaluate the relationships between latent constructs within the structural model. After the outer model is declared valid and reliable, the inner model is used to assess the strength, direction, and significance of causal relationships between latent variables, in accordance with the hypotheses formulated. The inner model evaluation in this study was conducted through the Coefficient of Determination (R^2), Model Fit – SRMR, and F-Square (Effect Size).

Coefficient of Determination (R^2)

The Coefficient of Determination (R^2) measures the proportion of variance in endogenous constructs that can be explained by exogenous constructs. The higher the R^2 value, the greater the model's predictive ability. An R^2 value of ≥ 0.75 is categorized as substantial, ≥ 0.50 – < 0.75 as moderate, and ≥ 0.25 – < 0.50 as weak. The results of the R^2 test are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Results of Coefficient of Determination (R^2) Test

Variable	R-square
Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy (Z)	0.415
Entrepreneurial Intention (Y)	0.580

Primary Data, 2025

Based on Table 1, the R-square values for each endogenous variable are as follows:

- Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy (Z) has an R^2 value of 0.415, meaning that 41.5% of the variance in Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy can be explained by Entrepreneurial Education (X) as the exogenous variable, while the remaining 58.5% is influenced by other factors outside this research model. According to the criteria, this value falls into the weak category.
- Entrepreneurial Intention (Y) has an R^2 value of 0.580, indicating that 58% of the variance in Entrepreneurial Intention can be explained by Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy (Z) and Entrepreneurial Education (X), while the remaining 42% is explained by other factors outside this model. According to Hair et al. (2021), this value falls into the moderate category, indicating that the structural model has a reasonably good predictive capability for explaining entrepreneurial intention among the respondents.

Model Fit Test – SRMR

The model fit test in the PLS-SEM approach evaluates the degree of fit between the theoretical model and empirical data. This test aims to assess whether the structural relationships among constructs and between constructs and indicators statistically conform to the actual data pattern. The SRMR (Standardized Root Mean Square Residual) criterion requires a value of less than 0.10. The results are shown in Table 5.10.

Table 2. Results of Model Fit (SRMR) Test

Estimated Model	SRMR	NFI
	0.040	0.933

Primary Data, 2025

Based on the results shown in Table 1, the SRMR value of 0.040 indicates the average discrepancy between actual covariances and those predicted by the model. Since the SRMR value is below the threshold of 0.10, it can be concluded

that the model has excellent structural fit, meaning the relationships among constructs in the model align well with the empirical data and are suitable for further hypothesis testing.

F-Square (Effect Size)

F-square (f^2) or effect size is a metric used to assess the relative contribution of exogenous constructs to endogenous constructs in the structural model. It indicates the extent of the impact of a predictor variable on the R-square (R^2) of the endogenous construct when it is included or excluded from the model. An f^2 value of 0.02 is considered small, 0.15 as medium, and 0.35 or more as large. The higher the f^2 value, the stronger the contribution of the construct to the dependent variable. The results of the F-square (effect size) test are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Results of F-Square (Effect Size) Test

Variable	X	Y	Z
X	-	0.098	0.711
Y	-	-	-
Z	-	0.442	-

Primary Data, 2025

The F-square matrix results in Table 3 show the following interpretations:

- Entrepreneurial Education (X) to Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy (Z): An f^2 value of 0.711 indicates a large effect, meaning that Entrepreneurial Education has a very strong contribution in shaping Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy.
- Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy (Z) to Entrepreneurial Intention (Y): An f^2 value of 0.442 also represents a large effect, suggesting that Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy substantially influences Entrepreneurial Intention.
- Entrepreneurial Education (X) to Entrepreneurial Intention (Y): An f^2 value of 0.098 indicates a small effect, but it still shows that Entrepreneurial Education contributes to the formation of Entrepreneurial Intention, although not as strongly as Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy does.

These results confirm that Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy (Z) plays a strong mediating role between Entrepreneurial Education (X) and Entrepreneurial Intention (Y), as indicated by the high effect size between X to Z and Z to Y, while the direct effect from X to Y is relatively weak. This finding supports the importance of enhancing self-efficacy within entrepreneurship education programs to effectively foster entrepreneurial intention.

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis testing in this study was conducted by analyzing the path coefficient values to identify the significance level of the relationships between constructs. This process was performed through bootstrapping techniques using the

SmartPLS version 4 software, allowing for the estimation of model accuracy through a non-parametric approach. The results of this testing were used to assess whether the hypothesized causal relationships in the structural model were statistically significant. The results obtained through the SEM-PLS approach are presented below.

Direct Effect Test

The direct effects between constructs in the structural model were analyzed through the estimation of path coefficients, supplemented with t-statistics and p-values. The statistical criteria for significance in the direct effect test are t-statistics ≥ 1.96 and p-values ≤ 0.05, with the path coefficients potentially being positive or negative according to the direction of the hypothesis. These three indicators were used to evaluate the direction, strength, and significance of the direct relationships between latent variables hypothesized in this study. The results of the direct effect testing are shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Direct Effect Test Results

Variable	Original Sample (O) / Path Coefficient	t-statistics	p-values	Remarks
X → Y	0.266	4.932	0.000	Significant
X → Z	0.645	16.359	0.000	Significant
Z → Y	0.563	10.814	0.000	Significant

Primary Data, 2025

Based on the hypothesis testing results presented in Table 4, it was found that all the paths between constructs in the structural model had positive path coefficient values with high levels of significance. The values of the path coefficients (original sample), t-statistics, and p-values indicated that the relationships between the variables in this model were statistically significant at a 95% confidence level (α = 0.05). These findings suggest that each of the studied constructs is directly interrelated and contributes to shaping students' entrepreneurial intentions. The hypothesis testing involved three direct relationships as follows:

a. The relationship between Entrepreneurial Education and Entrepreneurial Intention (X → Y) showed a path coefficient value of 0.266 with a t-statistic of 4.932 (≥ 1.96) and a p-value of 0.000 (≤ 0.05). This result indicates that the higher the students' perceptions of the entrepreneurial education they receive, the higher their tendency to have entrepreneurial intentions. This effect is classified as significant with a moderate effect size. Thus, the first hypothesis, stating that Entrepreneurial Education has a positive and significant effect on Entrepreneurial Intention, is accepted.
b. The relationship between Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy and Entrepreneurial Intention (Z → Y) yielded a path coefficient value of 0.563, a t-statistic of 10.814 (≥ 1.96), and a p-value of 0.000 (≤ 0.05). This finding indicates that the higher the students' confidence in their entrepreneurial abilities, the stronger their intention to become entrepreneurs. This effect is significant with a strong effect size. Therefore, the second hypothesis, which states that Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy has a positive and significant effect on Entrepreneurial Intention, is accepted.

c. The relationship between Entrepreneurial Education and Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy (X → Z) produced a path coefficient value of 0.645, a t-statistic of 16.359 (≥ 1.96), and a p-value of 0.000 (≤ 0.05). These results indicate that entrepreneurial education has a strong direct effect on enhancing students' Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy. Hence, the third hypothesis, which states that Entrepreneurial Education has a positive and significant effect on Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy, is accepted.

Indirect Effect Test

The indirect effects in the structural model of SEM-PLS were analyzed to identify the extent to which one latent construct influences another through a mediator. This test was conducted to determine whether the relationships between constructs occur not only directly but also through mediating pathways that generate mediation effects. The estimation of indirect effects was obtained by multiplying the path coefficients along the mediation paths, and subsequently analyzed using the t-statistics and p-values from the bootstrapping results. The statistical criteria for significance in the indirect effect test are t-statistics ≥ 1.96 and p-values ≤ 0.05, with path coefficients potentially being positive or negative in accordance with the hypothesis direction. The results of the indirect effect testing are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Indirect Effect Test Results

Variable	Original Sample (O) / Path Coefficient	t-statistics	p-values	Remarks
X → Z → Y	0.363	8.747	0.000	Significant

Primary Data, 2025

Based on the hypothesis testing results presented in Table 5 the indirect relationship between Entrepreneurial Education and Entrepreneurial Intention through Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy showed a path coefficient value of 0.363, with a t-statistic of 8.747 (≥ 1.96) and a p-value of 0.000 (≤ 0.05). These results indicate that Entrepreneurial Education not only has a direct effect but also a significant indirect effect on students' Entrepreneurial Intention through the enhancement of Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy. Thus, students who perceive their entrepreneurial education as satisfactory tend to have higher self-efficacy, which in turn strengthens their entrepreneurial intentions. Based on these results, the fourth hypothesis, stating that Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy mediates the effect of Entrepreneurial Education on Entrepreneurial Intention, is accepted.

Mediation Effect Test

The mediation effect test in this study was conducted by referring to the approach explained by Hair et al. (2021:140), which emphasizes the importance of evaluating the significance of indirect paths to determine the role of a construct as a mediator. The aim of this mediation test is to examine the extent to which Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy can mediate the relationship between

Entrepreneurial Education and Entrepreneurial Intention. The results of the mediation effect testing are presented in Table 6.

Table 6. Mediation Effect Test Results

Indirect Effect	p-value	Remarks
X → Z → Y	0.000 (sig.)	Complementary Partial Mediation

Primary Data, 2025
Notes:

- p1: Direct effect of exogenous variable (X) on mediator variable (Z)
- p2: Direct effect of mediator variable (Z) on endogenous variable (Y)
- p3: Direct effect of exogenous variable (X) on endogenous variable (Y)

Based on the results presented in Table 5.14, the relationship between Entrepreneurial Education (X) and Entrepreneurial Intention (Y) through Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy (Z) shows that all paths in the structural model have positive and significant path coefficients. Accordingly, following the mediation classification by Hair et al. (2021), this relationship falls into the category of complementary partial mediation, where Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy acts as a partial mediator that strengthens the relationship between Entrepreneurial Education and students' Entrepreneurial Intention.

Conclusion

The findings of this study conclude that entrepreneurial education has a positive and significant influence on entrepreneurial intention, both directly and indirectly through entrepreneurial self-efficacy. The better the quality of entrepreneurial education, the higher the students' intention to start a business, supported by the enhancement of their self-efficacy. Entrepreneurial self-efficacy is also proven to have a significant effect on entrepreneurial intention, indicating that confidence in one's abilities plays an important role in fostering such intentions. These results confirm the presence of complementary partial mediation, where entrepreneurial self-efficacy not only serves as a mediator but also strengthens the direct influence of entrepreneurial education on entrepreneurial intention.

Managerial Implication

This study has significant theoretical and practical implications. Theoretically, the findings strengthen the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) (Ajzen, 1991), particularly by emphasizing the role of entrepreneurial self-efficacy as a representation of perceived behavioral control that mediates the relationship between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial intention. The results demonstrate that entrepreneurship education not only improves students' positive attitudes but also enhances their self-confidence in facing business challenges, which ultimately drives their entrepreneurial intentions. Practically, this study recommends that higher education institutions strengthen entrepreneurship curricula by incorporating real case studies, field-based experiential content, and technology-based learning approaches. Universities are also encouraged to provide more experiential learning programs, such as business

simulations and entrepreneurship competitions, as well as specialized training in business financial management and team leadership. Moreover, establishing campus-based business incubators and mentoring programs involving real entrepreneurs is highly recommended to facilitate students in concretely developing and realizing their business ideas.

Research Limitations

This study has several limitations that should be considered in interpreting the findings and developing future research. First, the scope of the study is limited to students from the Faculty of Economics and Business at Universitas Udayana, making the results less generalizable to other faculties or universities with different entrepreneurship learning environments. Second, the study employs a cross-sectional design, which limits the ability to capture the dynamic changes in students' entrepreneurial intentions over time. Third, the research approach is entirely quantitative, using closed-ended questionnaires, which restricts the exploration of in-depth factors influencing entrepreneurial self-efficacy and entrepreneurial intention from a more holistic perspective. Fourth, the study focuses solely on entrepreneurship education, entrepreneurial self-efficacy, and entrepreneurial intention, without considering other potentially influential external factors. Therefore, future research is recommended to broaden the respondent scope, adopt longitudinal or mixed-method designs, and develop more comprehensive models by including additional relevant variables.

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