

The Impact of Entrepreneurial Education on Entrepreneurial Intention through Self-Efficacy

Self-Efficacy in
Entrepreneurial
Education and Intention

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ABSTRACT

Entrepreneurial education is recognized as a catalyst for entrepreneurial intention, but inconsistent empirical evidence underscores the importance of examining psychological mediators such as self-efficacy to clarify its impact. This research examined how entrepreneurial education affects entrepreneurial intentions among university students in East Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia. This study investigated both direct influences and indirect effects through self-efficacy using the Theory of Reasoned Action. Survey data from 211 students across five institutions revealed a significant dual pathway. The measurement model showed excellent reliability with all constructs exceeding recommended thresholds, though discriminant validity concerns between self-efficacy and other constructs suggest potential conceptual overlap in this cultural context. Entrepreneurial education showed a modest direct effect on intentions, yet demonstrated a much stronger indirect impact through self-efficacy. The findings indicated entrepreneurial education substantially enhances self-efficacy, which then strongly influences entrepreneurial intentions. With a considerable total effect of 0.756, our results highlight that nearly 79% of entrepreneurial education's impact occurs through self-efficacy enhancement rather than direct knowledge acquisition. These findings extend entrepreneurship theory by clarifying how educational interventions work through psychological mechanisms. For educators and policymakers in developing regions, this study emphasizes balancing knowledge transfer with self-efficacy development to maximize entrepreneurial outcomes.

Keywords: Entrepreneurial Education, Entrepreneurial Intentions, Self-Efficacy, Theory of Reasoned Action, University Students.

ABSTRAK

Pendidikan kewirausahaan diakui sebagai katalis untuk niat kewirausahaan, tetapi bukti empiris yang tidak konsisten menggarisbawahi pentingnya memeriksa mediator psikologis seperti efikasi diri untuk mengklarifikasi dampaknya. Penelitian ini mengkaji bagaimana pendidikan kewirausahaan memengaruhi niat berwirausaha di kalangan mahasiswa di Nusa Tenggara Timur, Indonesia. Studi ini menyelidiki pengaruh langsung dan efek tidak langsung melalui efikasi diri menggunakan Teori Tindakan Beralasan. Data survei dari 211 mahasiswa di lima institusi mengungkapkan jalur ganda yang signifikan. Model pengukuran menunjukkan reliabilitas yang sangat baik dengan semua konstruk melampaui ambang batas yang direkomendasikan, meskipun terdapat kekhawatiran mengenai validitas diskriminan antara efikasi diri dan konstruk lainnya yang menunjukkan potensi tumpang tindih konseptual dalam konteks budaya ini. Pendidikan kewirausahaan menunjukkan efek langsung yang sederhana pada niat, namun menunjukkan dampak tidak langsung yang jauh lebih kuat melalui efikasi diri. Temuan menunjukkan

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pendidikan kewirausahaan secara substansial meningkatkan efikasi diri, yang kemudian sangat memengaruhi niat berwirausaha. Dengan efek total yang cukup besar sebesar 0,756, hasil kami menyoroti bahwa hampir 79% dampak pendidikan kewirausahaan terjadi melalui peningkatan efikasi diri daripada perolehan pengetahuan langsung. Temuan ini memperluas teori kewirausahaan dengan mengklarifikasi bagaimana intervensi pendidikan bekerja melalui mekanisme psikologis. Bagi para pendidik dan pembuat kebijakan di negara berkembang, studi ini menekankan pentingnya menyeimbangkan transfer pengetahuan dengan pengembangan efikasi diri untuk memaksimalkan hasil kewirausahaan.

Kata kunci: Pendidikan Kewirausahaan, Niat Kewirausahaan, Efikasi Diri, Teori Tindakan Beralasan.

INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurship has gained significant attention from scholars and policymakers due to its vital role in economic development through innovation, commercialization, job creation, and new market formation (Bhatti et al., 2021; Muzaffar, 2023). Within this context, entrepreneurial intention represents a critical antecedent to entrepreneurial behavior, serving as a key predictor of an individual's likelihood to pursue entrepreneurship as a career path (Mensah et al., 2021; Mensah et al., 2023). Despite substantial investments in entrepreneurial education programs designed to equip students with business formation knowledge and access to support services (Klofsten et al., 2019; Aparicio et al., 2024). Research by Banha et al. (2022) and Flores et al. (2024) consistently indicates a concerning gap: relatively few graduates consider entrepreneurship a viable career option. This discrepancy highlights the need to better understand the complex psychological and contextual factors that influence entrepreneurial intentions, particularly as entrepreneurial activity gains recognition for its substantial economic and social contributions, competitive advantage development, and market innovation (Barba-Sánchez et al., 2022; del Brío-González et al., 2022). Countries aiming to foster entrepreneurial mindsets among youth must identify and develop the predictive dimensions of entrepreneurial intention to maximize entrepreneurial propensity (Bhatti et al., 2021; Muzaffar, 2023; Wediawati et al., 2025).

The theoretical foundation for understanding entrepreneurial intention has been significantly advanced through the integration of self-efficacy theory with entrepreneurial process frameworks. Mozahem (2021) and Costin et al. (2022) pioneered this approach by introducing the concept of entrepreneurial self-efficacy, demonstrating its positive influence on intention formation. This conceptualization suggests that effective entrepreneurial learning environments enhance both knowledge acquisition and self-efficacy, critical elements for strengthening entrepreneurial intentions (Ahmed & Islam, 2023; Juhari et al., 2023). In response, the cultivation of entrepreneurial spirit within academic institutions has become a strategic priority in higher education systems globally (Alshebami, 2022; Alshebami, 2023). This study examines entrepreneurial intention determinants through the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) lens, which identifies three crucial elements: attitude toward behavior (an individual's positive assessment of entrepreneurship), social norms (environmental pressure from family, peers, and institutions), and perceived behavioral control (self-assessed ability to execute entrepreneurial behaviors) (Ajzen, 1974; Ajzen, 1985; Ajzen, 1987). The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) further suggests that behaviors become more attractive when associated expectations and encouragement are greater, with behavioral control determined by procedural knowledge and understanding of potential constraints (Ajzen, 1991; Baciú et al., 2020; Vamvaka et al., 2020).

The empirical literature presents inconsistent findings regarding the relationship between entrepreneurial education and entrepreneurial intention (Chege & Wang, 2020; Apostu et al., 2022; Cekule et al., 2023). While numerous studies report positive direct relationships between educational support and intention, others document non-significant

effects. Recent investigations by Maheswari and Goyal (2021), Maheshwari (2022), and Maheshwari and Kha (2022) suggest an indirect effect mediated by psychological constructs such as self-efficacy. Despite extensive global research, studies in Indonesia remain limited, particularly concerning university students in East Nusa Tenggara, creating a notable research gap this study aims to address.

The purpose of this study is to analyze the influence of entrepreneurial education on entrepreneurial intention and test the role of self-efficacy as a mediating variable in the relationship between entrepreneurial education and entrepreneurial intention in students in East Nusa Tenggara. This research contributes to the literature in three significant ways. First, it offers empirical evidence on the mediating role of self-efficacy in the entrepreneurial education-intention relationship within an understudied geographical context. Second, it examines how emotional engagement interacts with self-efficacy to potentially catalyze sustainable entrepreneurial initiatives. Third, it provides actionable insights for various stakeholders: educators can design curricula that deliberately build entrepreneurial self-efficacy through mastery experiences; researchers can further investigate the mechanisms linking education to entrepreneurial outcomes; and policymakers can incorporate self-efficacy enhancement alongside traditional knowledge transfer in educational interventions. These contributions are particularly relevant given recent initiatives to increase entrepreneurial intentions in countries with below-average entrepreneurship rates through targeted educational programs with practical experiences.

LITERATURE REVIEW & HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

Entrepreneurial Education and Entrepreneurial Intention

This study is grounded in the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), which emphasizes attitudes toward behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control as key elements shaping individual intentions (Ajzen, 1974; Ajzen, 1985; Ajzen, 1987). In the context of entrepreneurship, these intentions are formed through cognitive evaluations, social expectations, and individuals' beliefs about their entrepreneurial abilities. The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) later extends TRA by incorporating perceived behavioral control, highlighting the extent to which individuals feel capable of performing entrepreneurial behavior (Ajzen, 1991; Baciú et al., 2020; Vamvaka et al., 2020).

Building upon this theoretical foundation, entrepreneurial education plays a crucial role in shaping these cognitive and psychological components. Entrepreneurial education is broadly understood as a structured learning process that equips individuals with entrepreneurial attitudes, behaviors, and competencies needed to recognize and pursue business opportunities (Fayolle & Gailly, 2008). Souitaris et al. (2007) similarly note that entrepreneurial education not only strengthens entrepreneurial desire but also provides the practical knowledge required to start and manage ventures. Through project-based learning, mentoring, and exposure to real business scenarios, students develop creativity, problem-solving abilities, and opportunity recognition skills. These competencies directly reinforce the components outlined in TRA and TPB, thereby strengthening students' entrepreneurial intentions.

The literature emphasizes that entrepreneurial education plays a strategic role in fostering entrepreneurial intention by influencing mindset, confidence, and skills relevant to entrepreneurial pursuits (Bhatti et al., 2021; Muzaffar, 2023). When learners acquire both the motivation and capability to engage in entrepreneurship, they are more likely to translate interest into intention. Although prior research has identified variations in the strength of this relationship, a consistent theme is that education serves as a foundational driver, encouraging individuals to consider entrepreneurship as a viable career path.

H1: Entrepreneurial education has a significant effect on entrepreneurial intention.

Entrepreneurial Education and Self-Efficacy

In the context of entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial education plays a crucial role in shaping attitudes and providing a conceptual and practical foundation that enhances an

individual's readiness to pursue entrepreneurial activities. However, exposure to this education does not automatically result in entrepreneurial intentions unless accompanied by confidence in one's own abilities. Therefore, self-efficacy serves as a crucial psychological bridge that transforms the knowledge and skills acquired from entrepreneurial education into confidence in one's capacity to run a business. Studies by Mozahem (2021) and Costin et al. (2022) consistently show that self-efficacy mediates the relationship between external inputs, such as entrepreneurial education, and the development of entrepreneurial intentions.

Based on this perspective, entrepreneurial education also plays a central role in strengthening entrepreneurial self-efficacy. Educational programs that integrate experiential learning, case discussions, simulations, and interactions with real entrepreneurs provide direct exposure that enhances students' confidence and perceived ability to handle entrepreneurial tasks (Souitaris et al., 2007). Through such learning experiences, individuals face realistic challenges and develop problem-solving skills and a sense of mastery, both fundamental components of self-efficacy. Barba-Sánchez and Atienza-Sahuquillo (2018) highlight that entrepreneurial education fosters competencies directly related to building self-confidence, including opportunity identification, business planning, and resource management. When students repeatedly apply these skills in a structured academic environment, their self-efficacy naturally increases. Furthermore, Cekule et al. (2023) argue that self-efficacy serves as a psychological mechanism that determines whether the knowledge gained from entrepreneurial education produces actionable results. Thus, entrepreneurial education not only provides knowledge but also builds the psychological readiness needed for entrepreneurial engagement.

H2: Entrepreneurial education has a significant impact on self-efficacy.

Self-Efficacy as a Mediator

The concept of self-efficacy, introduced by Bandura (1978) and Bandura (1982), refers to an individual's belief in their capability to execute the actions required to achieve specific outcomes. In the entrepreneurial context, self-efficacy is widely considered a proximal predictor of entrepreneurial intentions (Sadriwala & Khan, 2018; Vázquez-Parra et al., 2023). Previous studies indicate that students with higher levels of self-efficacy are more likely to view entrepreneurial challenges as opportunities, thereby strengthening their entrepreneurial intentions (Ahmed & Islam, 2023; Juhari et al., 2023). Consequently, entrepreneurial education plays a dual role: it functions not only as a vehicle for knowledge transfer but also as a medium to build students' confidence through mastery experiences, role models, and problem-based learning (Taneja et al., 2023; Otache et al., 2024).

The empirical literature presents mixed findings regarding the relationship between entrepreneurial education and entrepreneurial intention. Nowiński et al. (2019) and Elnadi and Gheith (2021) confirm a significant direct effect of education on intention, whereas Maheswari (2022) and Maheswari and Kha (2022) reveal that the relationship is only significant through psychological mediators such as self-efficacy. Jiatong et al. (2021) found that entrepreneurial education substantially strengthens students' intentions by enhancing their self-efficacy. This finding is consistent with evidence from developing countries, where experiential learning approaches, such as business incubation programs and venture simulations, are considered more effective in boosting entrepreneurial intention compared to purely theoretical instruction (Biswas & Verma, 2022; Travis & Craig, 2022).

H3: Self-efficacy mediates the relationship between entrepreneurial education and entrepreneurial intention.



Figure 1. Research Framework

Figure 1 proposes dual pathways through which entrepreneurial education influences entrepreneurial intention. The direct pathway operates through knowledge acquisition, skill development, and opportunity exposure, while the indirect pathway functions through enhanced self-efficacy, representing individuals' confidence in their entrepreneurial capabilities. As entrepreneurial education provides practical experiences, theoretical knowledge, and exposure to role models, it strengthens self-efficacy beliefs that transform educational inputs into entrepreneurial intentions. This framework acknowledges that knowledge and skills, while necessary, may be insufficient to catalyze entrepreneurial action without accompanying confidence in one's ability to deploy these resources effectively. Although international studies on the relationship between entrepreneurial education, self-efficacy, and entrepreneurial intention are abundant, research focusing on the Indonesian context, particularly in eastern regions such as East Nusa Tenggara, remains scarce. Cultural factors, economic conditions, and access to educational resources may influence the dynamics of this relationship (Banha et al., 2022; Flores et al., 2024). Therefore, this study provides a significant contribution by offering empirical evidence on the mediating role of self-efficacy in the relationship between entrepreneurial education and entrepreneurial intention within the Indonesian context. The findings are expected to extend theoretical understanding while offering practical recommendations for designing a more effective entrepreneurship curriculum.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study adopts a quantitative research design with a cross-sectional survey approach, aiming to examine the influence of entrepreneurial education on entrepreneurial intention with self-efficacy as a mediating variable. The cross-sectional design was chosen because it enables the collection of data from a large sample at a single point in time, allowing for the analysis of relationships among variables within the framework of the TRA and TPB. This research employed a cross-sectional approach using a digital survey via Google Forms, consisting of 27 questions rated on a 7-point Likert scale (1=strongly disagree to 7=strongly agree). The measurement of entrepreneurial education was adapted from Jiatong et al. (2021), while self-efficacy was measured using the scale developed by Wang and Wang (2022). Instruments were translated from English to Indonesian to ensure respondent comprehension. Data collection utilized a phased strategy with initial communication about research objectives, followed by questionnaire distribution through email and WhatsApp. From 235 initial responses, 211 valid responses remained after verification. Random sampling targeted university students across East Nusa Tenggara.

Data analysis was conducted using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with the Partial Least Squares (PLS) approach. The analysis consisted of two stages: measurement model evaluation and structural model evaluation. The measurement model was assessed through reliability testing, convergent validity, and discriminant validity. The structural model was then evaluated by examining path coefficients, R^2 values, and mediation effects to test the proposed hypotheses. Reliability analysis shows internal consistency if Cronbach's Alpha values >0.7 for all constructs. Measurement model assessment shows a good convergent validity if Average Variance Extracted (AVE) >0.5 , CR >0.7 , item loadings >0.5 , and satisfactory discriminant validity, meeting the established quality criteria recommended by Hair et al. (2020).

RESULTS

Participants in this study represented five higher education institutions in East Nusa Tenggara region namely Universitas Nusa Nipa, Politeknik Elbajo Commodus, Politeknik Negeri Kupang, Universitas Citra Bangsa, dan Universitas Terbuka. The respondent demographic shows in Table 1.

Table 1. Respondent Demographic

University	Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Universitas Nusa Nipa	Male	33	15.6
	Female	27	12.8
Politeknik Elbajo Commodus	Male	28	13.3
	Female	22	10.4
Politeknik Negeri Kupang	Male	39	18.5
	Female	31	14.7
Universitas Citra Bangsa	Male	22	10.4
	Female	18	8.5
Universitas Terbuka	Male	18	8.5
	Female	17	8.1
Total		211	100

Table 1 shows that Politeknik Negeri Kupang contributes the largest portion (33.2%), followed by Universitas Nusa Nipa (29.4%), Politeknik Elbajo Commodus (23.7%), Universitas Citra Bangsa (18.9%), and Universitas Terbuka (16.6%). Gender distribution showed slightly more male respondents across all institutions, with males comprising 66.3% and females 33.7% of the total sample, representing a relatively balanced gender distribution in the student population.

Table 2. Measurement Model

Variable	Code	Factor loading	Cronbach Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE
Entrepreneurial Education (Jiatong et al., 2021)	SEE 1	0.826	0.904	0.923	0.600
	SEE 2	0.843			
	SEE 3	0.839			
	SEE 4	0.858			
	SEE 5	0.862			
	SEE 6	0.787			
Self Efficacy (Wang & Wang, 2022)	ESE 1	0.742	0.942	0.952	0.715
	ESE 2	0.763			
	ESE 3	0.775			
	ESE 4	0.822			
	ESE 5	0.826			
	ESE 6	0.690			
	ESE 7	0.768			
	ESE 8	0.801			
Entrepreneur Intention	EII 1	0.850	0.914	0.933	0.700
	EII 2	0.635			
	EII 3	0.859			
	EII 4	0.885			
	EII 5	0.883			
	EII 6	0.880			
	EII 7	0.848			

Based on Table 2, the measurement model exhibits robust psychometric properties across all constructs. The entrepreneurial education scale demonstrates strong factor loadings ranging from 0.787 to 0.862, well above the recommended 0.5 threshold (Hair et al., 2020). The construct displays excellent internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.904$; CR = 0.923) and satisfactory convergent validity with AVE = 0.600, confirming that indicators appropriately capture the construct's domain. For the self-efficacy construct, all indicators show substantial factor loadings (0.690 to 0.826). The

reliability measures (Cronbach’s $\alpha = 0.942$; CR = 0.952) indicate exceptional internal consistency, while the AVE value of 0.715 demonstrates strong convergent validity, suggesting the indicators effectively represent the underlying construct. The Entrepreneurial Intention construct similarly displays strong measurement properties with factor loadings ranging from 0.635 to 0.885. Its high reliability coefficients (Cronbach’s $\alpha = 0.914$; CR = 0.933) and substantial AVE (0.700) confirm that the indicators cohesively measure the intended construct.

All constructs exceed the established thresholds for reliability ($\alpha > 0.7$, CR > 0.7) and convergent validity (AVE > 0.5 , factor loadings > 0.5) as recommended in methodological literature (Hair et al., 2020). These findings confirm the measurement model’s adequacy, providing a robust foundation for subsequent structural model assessment and hypothesis testing. The psychometric evidence suggests that relationships identified between these constructs will be built upon reliable and valid measurements, enhancing the credibility of the study’s findings.

Before examining the structural relationships between constructs, it is essential to establish discriminant validity, which determines whether conceptually distinct constructs are empirically differentiated from one another. The table below presents the Fornell-Larcker criterion results, where diagonal values (bolded) represent the square root of AVE for each construct, while off-diagonal elements represent inter-construct correlations. The discriminant validity can be seen in Table 3.

Table 3. Discriminant Validity

Variable	Entrepreneurial Education	Entrepreneurial Intentions	Self-Efficacy
Entrepreneurial Education	0.775		
Entrepreneurial Intentions	0.817	0.837	
Self Efficacy	0.896	0.894	0.845

Based on Table 3, there are significant concerns regarding discriminant validity. According to the Fornell-Larcker criterion, discriminant validity is established when the square root of AVE for each construct (diagonal values) exceeds its correlation with other constructs. However, the correlation between self-efficacy and entrepreneurial education (0.896) exceeds the square root of AVE for entrepreneurial education (0.775). Similarly, the correlation between self-efficacy and entrepreneurial intentions (0.894) exceeds the square root of AVE for entrepreneurial intentions (0.837).

These results suggest substantial overlap between the constructs, particularly between self-efficacy and the other two constructs. The high correlation values (>0.85) indicate potential issues of multicollinearity or conceptual redundancy. Respondents appear to have difficulty distinguishing between these constructs, particularly between their perceptions of entrepreneurial self-efficacy and entrepreneurial education or intentions.

The hypothesis testing results provide empirical evidence of the relationships among entrepreneurial education, self-efficacy, and entrepreneurial intentions. The path coefficients, standard errors, t-statistics, and significance levels are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Path Analysis Results

Path	Path Coefficient	T-Statistics	P-Values	Significance
Entrepreneurial Education → Entrepreneurial Intentions	0.161	2.042	0.021	Significant
Entrepreneurial Education → Self-Efficacy	0.822	27.922	0.000	Significant
Self-Efficacy → Entrepreneurial Intentions	0.725	9.960	0.000	Significant

The analysis confirms that all hypothesized relationships are statistically significant. Entrepreneurial education has a modest but significant direct effect on entrepreneurial intentions ($\beta = 0.161$, $p < 0.05$). More substantially, entrepreneurial education strongly

influences self-efficacy ($\beta = 0.822, p < 0.001$), while self-efficacy exerts a powerful effect on entrepreneurial intentions ($\beta = 0.725, p < 0.001$). These findings support the dual pathway model, where entrepreneurial education affects entrepreneurial intentions both directly and indirectly through self-efficacy.

Table 5. Direct, Indirect, and Total Effects

Path	Effect Type	Path Coefficient	T-Statistics	P-Values	Significance
Entrepreneurial Education → Entrepreneurial Intentions	Direct Effect	0.161	2.042	0.021	Significant
Entrepreneurial Education → Self-Efficacy → Entrepreneurial Intentions	Indirect Effect	0.595	9.943	0.000	Significant
Entrepreneurial Education → Entrepreneurial Intentions	Total Effect	0.756	16.127	0.000	Significant

Table 5 shows the analysis reveals that entrepreneurial education influences entrepreneurial intentions through both direct and indirect pathways. While the direct effect is modest but significant ($\beta = 0.161, p < 0.05$), the indirect effect through self-efficacy is substantially stronger ($\beta = 0.595, p < 0.001$). The total effect ($\beta = 0.756, p < 0.001$) demonstrates the overall strong relationship between entrepreneurial education and entrepreneurial intentions. These findings highlight self-efficacy's crucial mediating role, suggesting that educational interventions primarily enhance entrepreneurial intentions by building students' confidence in their entrepreneurial capabilities.

DISCUSSION

The findings reveal a dual mechanism through which entrepreneurial education influences entrepreneurial intentions among university students in East Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia. The direct pathway demonstrates a modest yet significant effect ($\beta = 0.161, p < 0.05$), while the indirect pathway mediated by self-efficacy exhibits a substantially stronger influence ($\beta = 0.595, p < 0.001$). These results align with recent theoretical developments in entrepreneurial education research, particularly the cognitive processing perspective advocated by Nabi et al. (2021), which emphasizes the importance of psychological mediators in translating educational inputs into entrepreneurial outcomes.

The modest direct effect of entrepreneurial education on intentions corroborates findings from Nowiński et al. (2019), Narmaditya and Wibowo (2021), and Elnadi and Gheith (2021), identified similar patterns in developing economy contexts. This relationship suggests that entrepreneurial education provides foundational knowledge and exposure that directly shape students' career intentions. However, the relatively small coefficient indicates that mere exposure to entrepreneurial knowledge is insufficient to generate strong entrepreneurial aspirations. As Wang et al. (2023) observed, curriculum content alone does not guarantee substantial shifts in entrepreneurial career preferences without accompanying psychological development.

The strong relationship between entrepreneurial education and self-efficacy ($\beta = 0.822, p < 0.001$) represents one of the study's most compelling findings. This robust association indicates that entrepreneurial education programs effectively enhance students' confidence in their entrepreneurial capabilities. This finding aligns with Taneja et al. (2023), Lili et al. (2024), and Otache et al. (2024), who identified pedagogical approaches that effectively cultivate entrepreneurial self-efficacy through mastery experiences, role modeling, and social persuasion.

The subsequent influence of self-efficacy on entrepreneurial intentions ($\beta = 0.725, p < 0.001$) confirms the critical role of perceived capabilities in entrepreneurial career

decisions. This strong association echoes research by Sadriwala and Ashraf (2018) and Vázquez-Parra et al. (2023), who demonstrated that entrepreneurial self-efficacy operates as a proximal antecedent to entrepreneurial intentions across diverse cultural contexts. The potent indirect effect ($\beta = 0.595$) suggests that entrepreneurial education's primary impact occurs through capability perception enhancement rather than direct intention formation.

The substantial total effect of entrepreneurial education on entrepreneurial intentions ($\beta = 0.756$, $p < 0.001$) underscores the significance of educational interventions in fostering entrepreneurial aspirations among university students. Notably, the predominance of the indirect effect (78.7% of the total) aligns with the social cognitive perspective, which identifies self-efficacy as a key intermediary between external influences and behavioral intentions (Bandura, 1978; Bandura, 1982). These results empirically validate Lavelle's (2021) framework, which positions psychological mediators, particularly self-efficacy, as central to the impact of entrepreneurial education. Furthermore, the findings extend Tang and Zhang (2022) and Thomas (2023) by quantifying the relative weight of direct and indirect pathways within a developing economy context, where entrepreneurial education may assume functions distinct from those in advanced economies.

Despite the significant results, the measurement model revealed discriminant validity concerns. High correlations between self-efficacy and both entrepreneurial education (0.896) and entrepreneurial intentions (0.894) exceeded the square roots of their AVEs, suggesting construct overlap. This aligns with Liu et al. (2019), who noted that entrepreneurship constructs often show conceptual entanglement. Such issues indicate that cognitive mechanisms of entrepreneurial education may be interwoven rather than discrete. As Mozahem (2021) and Costin et al. (2022) observed, self-efficacy may incorporate elements of education and intentions, particularly in cultural contexts where experiential learning and intention formation are closely connected. Thus, while the dual pathway model is statistically supported, construct boundaries may be more fluid than assumed in Western models.

The strong mediating role of self-efficacy suggests that entrepreneurial education should target students' confidence in performing entrepreneurial tasks, consistent with Navarro-García et al. (2024), who recommend mastery experiences and skill-building over mere knowledge transfer. The modest direct effect further indicates that knowledge-based approaches are insufficient, supporting Biswas and Verma (2022) and Travis and Craig (2022), who call for experiential, problem-based learning. The measurement results imply that integrative pedagogical approaches are needed, as Kisubi and Korir (2021) and Zhang et al. (2023) show that holistic designs yield stronger outcomes than targeting isolated constructs.

CONCLUSION

This study empirically validates a dual pathway model of entrepreneurial education's influence on entrepreneurial intentions among university students in East Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia. The findings confirm that self-efficacy functions as a crucial mediating mechanism, accounting for a substantial portion of entrepreneurial education's total effect on intentions. These results contribute to the theoretical understanding of entrepreneurship development processes in educational contexts and offer practical guidance for designing effective entrepreneurial education programs that enhance both knowledge and psychological capabilities. The study underscores the importance of integrating cognitive development approaches into entrepreneurship curricula to maximize their impact on students' entrepreneurial aspirations.

While this study provides valuable insights, several limitations should be acknowledged. The discriminant validity concerns highlight potential conceptual overlap among constructs, necessitating future research to refine measurement approaches. The cross-sectional design precludes causal inferences, suggesting the need for longitudinal studies to track how entrepreneurial education influences self-efficacy and intentions over

time. The East Nusa Tenggara context may limit generalizability to other regions with different socioeconomic conditions and entrepreneurial ecosystems. Future research should explore how regional developmental factors moderate the relationships identified in this study. Additionally, investigating alternative mediators beyond self-efficacy could provide a more comprehensive understanding of the mechanisms through which entrepreneurial education influences intentions.

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