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Entrepreneurial Mindset and Self-Efficacy as Mechanisms Linking Entrepreneurship Education to Intention

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ABSTRACT

The persistently elevated unemployment rate among Indonesian university graduates highlights the urgent need for sustainable alternative solutions. At universities, optimizing entrepreneurship education is one strategic approach that can be implemented. Although entrepreneurship education is widely assumed to stimulate students' entrepreneurial intention, prior empirical evidence remains inconclusive, with studies reporting inconsistent outcomes. This study explores how entrepreneurship education contributes to students' entrepreneurial intention by considering the roles of entrepreneurial mindset and self-efficacy within the Theory of Planned Behavior framework. The study collected primary data from 130 university students in West Jakarta who had completed an entrepreneurship course. Respondents were selected using purposive sampling, and the data were collected through an online questionnaire. The proposed research model was analyzed using PLS-SEM. The results suggest that exposure to entrepreneurship education is associated with stronger entrepreneurial intention among students, both directly and indirectly, with entrepreneurial mindset and self-efficacy serving as mediators. These findings lend empirical support to TPB and emphasize the importance of integrating cognitive and affective dimensions within entrepreneurship education to pursue entrepreneurial careers.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship Education; Entrepreneurial Mindset; Self-Efficacy; Entrepreneurial Intention

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INTRODUCTION

High unemployment remains a persistent issue in Indonesia. As of August 2024, the number of unemployed university graduates reached 842,378, while the number of unemployed graduates from academies/diploma programs stood at 170,527 (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2025). This situation reflects a structural imbalance between the increasing number of graduates entering the labor market and the limited absorption capacity of available jobs. Consequently, the issue of graduate unemployment has drawn growing attention from policymakers and educational institutions seeking alternative strategies to expand employment opportunities (Asmuruf & Soelaiman, 2022). In this context, entrepreneurship is increasingly viewed as a vital alternative for generating new employment opportunities and alleviating socio-economic challenges (Mukhtar et al., 2021). In response to this

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challenge, many universities have incorporated entrepreneurship education into their curricula. Through entrepreneurship courses, students are introduced to business concepts, opportunity recognition, and entrepreneurial problem-solving processes (Cui et al., 2019). The primary expectation is that such educational exposure will encourage students to consider entrepreneurship as a possible career choice after graduation. Some studies argue that conventional teaching approaches that emphasize theoretical knowledge without addressing internal psychological factors may be insufficient to prepare students for entrepreneurial careers (Yunita et al., 2024). As a result, entrepreneurship education programs should prioritize psychological aspects more strongly in their design. An entrepreneurial mindset is an essential attribute that involves creative thinking, risk-taking behavior, and the capability to recognize opportunities amid challenges. It is important to recognize that such a mindset does not develop instantly; instead, it evolves through experience, active learning, and a supportive environment (Correia et al., 2025). When entrepreneurship education is designed to encourage experiential learning and opportunity recognition, it may help students cultivate this mindset and strengthen their motivation to pursue entrepreneurial careers. Another psychological factor frequently associated with entrepreneurial intention is self-efficacy. In entrepreneurship research, self-efficacy represents the level of confidence individuals have regarding their ability to carry out activities associated with starting and managing a business. Such confidence may develop through learning experiences that provide opportunities to practice entrepreneurial skills and are therefore more willing to engage in entrepreneurial behavior (Puni et al., 2018). Previous studies also suggest that self-efficacy can serve as an important mechanism through which entrepreneurship education influences entrepreneurial intention (Branca et al., 2025).

Although numerous studies have examined the relationship between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial intention, the theoretical explanation of how entrepreneurship education translates into entrepreneurial intention remains inconclusive. Previous studies have produced mixed empirical findings. Some studies report a significant relationship between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial intention (Hermawan and Fitria, 2020). In contrast, Mukhtar et al. (2021) and Minah and Soelaiman (2024) reported that the effect is only indirect, occurring through the entrepreneurial mindset. Similarly, several studies indicate that self-efficacy plays a mediating role in linking entrepreneurship education to entrepreneurial intention (Jiatong et al, 2021; Wardani & Nugraha, 2021), while other findings show that this mediating effect is not always significant (Gunarso and Selamat, 2020). These inconsistent findings indicate that the psychological processes connecting entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial intention may be more complex than previously assumed. Much of the previous literature tends to examine mediating mechanisms separately, focusing either on cognitive orientations or motivational capabilities. However, entrepreneurial behavior is a complex process that involves both cognitive interpretation and perceived capability. From the perspective of the Theory of Planned Behavior, entrepreneurial intention is influenced by psychological determinants that shape individuals' perceptions, attitudes, and perceived behavioral control (Krueger, Reilly, & Carsrud, 2000). Nevertheless, many previous studies have tended to analyze these psychological factors separately, focusing either on cognitive aspects or on perceived capability. This study explores how entrepreneurship education contributes to students' entrepreneurial intention by considering the roles of entrepreneurial mindset and self-efficacy within the Theory of Planned Behavior framework.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theory of Planned Behavior

Entrepreneurial intention is frequently examined using the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB). The theory proposes that an individual's intention to perform a particular behavior is shaped by three psychological considerations: personal evaluation of the behavior, perceived social expectations, and the perceived capability to act (Ajzen, 1991). In the context of entrepreneurship, these components shape individuals' willingness to engage in entrepreneurial activities such as identifying business opportunities, developing innovative ideas, and initiating new ventures. Recent studies continue to confirm the relevance of TPB in explaining entrepreneurial intention among students

and young adults (Jiatong et al., 2021; Sun et al., 2023). Within this theoretical framework, cognitive and motivational factors play an important role in shaping entrepreneurial intention. Individuals who perceive entrepreneurship as an attractive and meaningful career option are more likely to develop stronger entrepreneurial intentions. At the same time, perceived capability influences whether individuals feel confident enough to pursue entrepreneurial activities. Previous research suggests that both attitudinal orientation and perceived capability significantly contribute to the formation of entrepreneurial intention among university students (Li et al., 2023; Hoang et al., 2021). Entrepreneurship education can therefore be viewed as an important mechanism that shapes the beliefs underlying entrepreneurial intention. Through structured learning processes, students are exposed to entrepreneurial concepts, opportunity identification, and practical business experiences that may influence how they evaluate entrepreneurship as a potential career path. Educational experiences may also contribute to strengthening students' confidence in their entrepreneurial capabilities, which ultimately influences the formation of entrepreneurial intention (Jiatong et al., 2021; Li et al., 2023).

Entrepreneurship Education and Entrepreneurial Intention

Entrepreneurship education has increasingly become part of higher education curricula to encourage students to consider entrepreneurship as a viable career alternative. Through structured learning activities, students are introduced to entrepreneurial concepts, opportunity identification, and business development processes. These learning experiences may influence how students perceive entrepreneurship and whether they consider it an attractive professional path. Previous studies have reported that entrepreneurship education contributes positively to entrepreneurial intention among students (Ganefri et al., 2024; Handayati et al., 2020). Exposure to entrepreneurial learning environments may encourage students to evaluate entrepreneurship more positively and develop stronger motivation to pursue entrepreneurial careers. However, the relationship between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial intention is not always straightforward. Some studies suggest that educational experiences influence entrepreneurial intention indirectly through psychological factors that shape individuals' cognitive orientation and motivational beliefs (Mukhtar et al., 2021; Minah & Soelaiman, 2024). This indicates that entrepreneurship education may not only act as a direct stimulus but also as a mechanism that influences internal psychological processes associated with entrepreneurial behavior.

Entrepreneurship Education and Entrepreneurial Mindset

Entrepreneurial mindset refers to a pattern of thinking that encourages individuals to remain alert to opportunities, explore innovative solutions, and respond constructively to uncertainty. Individuals with this orientation tend to interpret challenges as situations that may generate value rather than as obstacles that limit action. Educational environments can contribute to the development of this mindset by exposing students to experiential learning activities, opportunity exploration, and entrepreneurial problem-solving. Learning approaches such as project-based activities, case discussions, and business simulations may stimulate creative thinking and encourage students to develop a more opportunity-oriented perspective (Saptono et al., 2020). Empirical research also indicates that exposure to entrepreneurial learning environments may influence how individuals interpret business opportunities and entrepreneurial challenges (Li et al., 2023). Educational programs that emphasize innovation and opportunity recognition may therefore contribute to the formation of a mindset that supports entrepreneurial behavior (Ashraf et al., 2024).

Entrepreneurship Education and Self-Efficacy

Within the context of entrepreneurship research, self-efficacy reflects an individual's perceived capability to perform tasks associated with starting and managing a business. This perception of capability influences whether individuals consider entrepreneurial activities as achievable career options (Newman et al., 2021). Entrepreneurship education is often regarded as an important mechanism for strengthening entrepreneurial self-efficacy. Through these learning experiences, students can translate theoretical concepts into practical understanding while also receiving feedback that helps build confidence in their entrepreneurial abilities (Nengseh & Kurniawan, 2021). Recent

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studies also indicate that continuous exposure to entrepreneurial learning environments can gradually enhance students' belief in their capability to perform entrepreneurial tasks. Such confidence is particularly important because individuals who feel capable of identifying opportunities, mobilizing resources, and addressing business challenges are more likely to develop stronger intentions to pursue entrepreneurial careers (Li et al., 2023; Soelaiman et al., 2024).

Entrepreneurial Mindset, Self-Efficacy, and Entrepreneurial Intention

Both cognitive orientation and perceived capability play important roles in shaping entrepreneurial intention. Individuals who adopt an opportunity-oriented mindset tend to evaluate entrepreneurship more positively and demonstrate greater willingness to explore entrepreneurial opportunities. Research has shown that individuals with stronger entrepreneurial mindsets are more likely to develop entrepreneurial intentions because their cognitive orientation encourages opportunity recognition and tolerance for uncertainty (Mukhtar et al., 2021; Li et al., 2023). At the same time, perceived capability also influences whether individuals believe they can successfully perform entrepreneurial tasks. Self-efficacy has consistently been identified as an important determinant of entrepreneurial intention. Individuals who possess higher confidence in their entrepreneurial abilities are more willing to engage in uncertain entrepreneurial activities and consider entrepreneurship as a feasible career option (Wardani & Nugraha, 2021). These relationships suggest that both entrepreneurial mindset and self-efficacy may act as psychological mechanisms that explain how entrepreneurship education influences entrepreneurial intention. Based on the theoretical arguments discussed above, the conceptual framework of the study is presented in Figure 1.

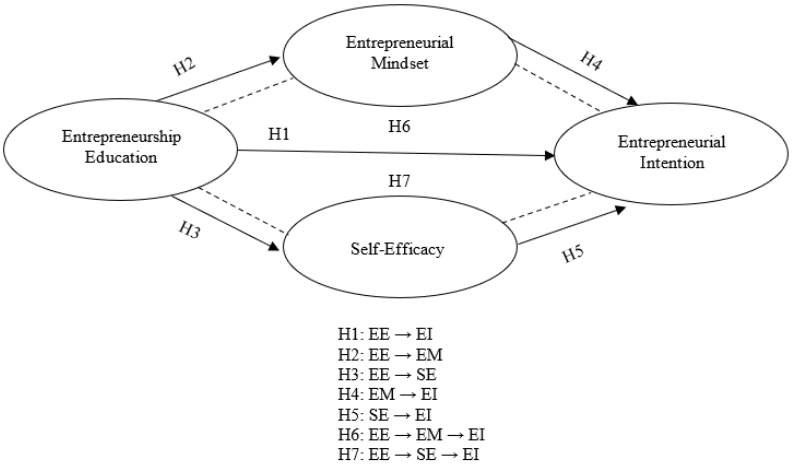

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework
Source: Adapted from Halim, Soelaiman, & Pamungkas (2023)

METHOD

This study adopted a quantitative approach to examine the relationships among the proposed variables. A descriptive research design was applied because the study aimed to obtain systematic information about the characteristics of the phenomenon being investigated. The research instrument was developed based on measurement indicators that have been widely applied in previous entrepreneurship studies. All items were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to agree strongly.

Table 1. Variables and Indicators

Indicators	Source
Entrepreneurship Education	Hermawan & Fitria (2020); Li et al. (2023); Minah & Soelaiman (2024)
1. Introduction to entrepreneurial careers	

2. Ability to identify business opportunities 3. Methods for generating business ideas 4. Encouraging entrepreneurial skills and abilities 5. Access to relevant entrepreneurial information	
Entrepreneurial Mindset 1. Awareness of entrepreneurial consequences 2. Willingness to engage in entrepreneurial activities 3. Building networks 4. Considering financial opportunities 5. Possessing business ideas 6. Determining risk-taking levels	Saptono et al. (2020); Ganefri et al. (2024)
Self-Efficacy 1. Preparedness to launch a business 2. Understanding practical aspects of business initiation 3. Confidence in managing risks 4. Confidence in solving problems 5. Confidence in creative thinking	Yasir et al. (2019); Hermawan & Fitria (2020); Minah & Soelaiman (2024)
Entrepreneurial Intention 1. Career objective of becoming an entrepreneur 2. Intention to start and manage my own venture 3. Desire to manage own business 4. Confidence in starting a business 5. Willingness to work hard in managing a business 6. Commitment to becoming an entrepreneur	Gunarso & Selamat (2020); Li et al. (2023)

Source: Hermawan & Fitria (2020); Yasir et al. (2019); Gunarso & Selamat (2020); Saptono et al. (2020); Li et al. (2023); Minah & Soelaiman (2024); Ganefri et al. (2024).

Population, Sampling Technique, and Sample Size

The population in this study focuses on active undergraduate (Bachelor's degree) students in West Jakarta who have completed a course in entrepreneurship. The sampling method in this research is non-probability, with participants selected through purposive sampling. The criteria for respondents include active undergraduate students who have completed an entrepreneurship course and are enrolled in universities that emphasize the development of entrepreneurial values in their institutional vision. The primary data for this study were collected using a questionnaire distributed electronically with Google Forms. Following Hair et al. (2019), the minimum number of respondents was set at five times the total number of indicators included in the proposed model. With a total of 22 indicators, at least 110 respondents are needed for the sample. In addition to meeting this minimum threshold, the final sample consisted of 130 student respondents. This number exceeds the minimum recommendation and is considered adequate for PLS-SEM analysis, particularly for models with moderate structural complexity (Hair et al., 2019). This study involved 130 student respondents, thus meeting the recommended criteria. The final number of respondents was determined based on the availability of eligible participants who met the purposive sampling criteria, namely, students who had completed entrepreneurship courses.

Data Analysis Steps

The relationships among the variables were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with the assistance of SmartPLS version 4.0. Evaluation of the outer model begins with testing the measurement model in terms of its validity and reliability. The assessment of validity involved examining convergent validity as well as discriminant validity, with indicator

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loadings and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value greater than 0.50. Next, reliability was assessed using Composite Reliability and Cronbach's Alpha when values are above the 0.70 threshold. Subsequently, the inner model was evaluated to examine the research hypotheses. Hypothesis testing in this study is regarded as statistically significant when the t-value is greater than 1.96 or the p-value is below 0.05 (Hair et al., 2019).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 2. Characteristics of The Sample

Characteristics	Characteristics	Total	Total	Percentage (%)
Gender				
Male	*Male*	107	107	82.3%
Female	*Female*	23	23	17.7%
Year of Enrollment	**Year of Enrollment**	**Year of Enrollment**		
2020	2020	3	3	2.3%
2021	2021	3	3	2.3%
2022	2022	13	13	10%
2023	2023	111	111	85.4%
Parental Occupational Background	**Parental Occupational Background**	**Parental Occupational Background**		
Entrepreneur	Entrepreneur	85	85	65.4%
Non-entrepreneur	Non-entrepreneur	45	45	34.6%

Source**:** Primary data processed by the author

Based on Table 2, most respondents in this study were male, totaling 107 individuals (82.3%), while 23 respondents (17.7%) were female. In terms of year of enrollment, most respondents were from the 2023 cohort, comprising 111 individuals (85.4%). Respondents from the 2022 cohort totaled 13 (10%), while the 2021 and 2020 cohorts had three respondents each (2.3%). Regarding parental occupational background, most respondents came from families where the parents were entrepreneurs, totaling 85 individuals (65.4%), while 45 respondents (34.6%) had parents with non-entrepreneurial occupations. Next, Figure 2 illustrates that the outer loading values for all 22 indicators exceed 0.50, confirming the validity of the measurement indicators, as presented below.

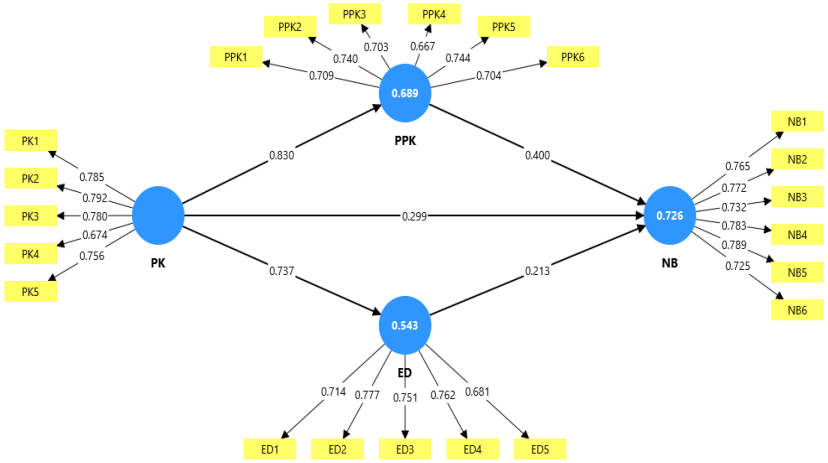

Figure 2. Outer Loading Values
Source: Processed by the authors using SmartPLS.

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Based on Table 3, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values for all constructs are above 0.50, indicating that each construct exhibits sufficient convergent validity. Furthermore, reliability testing was carried out to evaluate the degree to which the measurement instruments produce stable and consistent results over time for each construct, surpassing the 0.70 threshold.

Table 3. Validity and Reliability Analysis

Variable	*AVE*	*CA*	*CR*
"Self-Efficacy"	0.576	0.790	0.856
"Entrepreneurial Intention"	0.506	0.855	0.892
Entrepreneurship Education	0.544	0.814	0.871
Entrepreneurial Mindset	0.580	0.804	0.860

Source**:** Primary data processed by the author

Finally, hypothesis testing was carried out to assess both the direction and the significance of the relationships among the variables proposed in the earlier hypotheses.

Table 4. The Result of Hypothesis Testing

	β	T-Stat	P-Values	Conclusion
H1: EE → EI	0.299	3.105	0.002	Significant
H2: EE → EM	0.830	10.832	0.000	Significant
H3: EE → SE	0.737	7.274	0.000	Significant
H4: EM → EI	0.400	4.035	0.000	Significant
H5: SE→ EI	0.213	2.050	0.040	Significant
H6: EE → EM → EI	0.332	4.005	0.000	Significant
H7: EE → SE → EI	0.157	1.981	0.048	Significant

Source**:** Primary data processed by the author

Based on Table 4, all seven proposed hypotheses are statistically supported. Entrepreneurship education has a significant positive effect on entrepreneurial intention, entrepreneurial mindset, and self-efficacy. Entrepreneurial mindset and self-efficacy both significantly influence entrepreneurial intention, although the effect of entrepreneurial mindset appears stronger than that of self-efficacy. Furthermore, both mediating effects are significant, suggesting that entrepreneurship education influences entrepreneurial intention through psychological mechanisms.

The findings of this research highlight the important role of entrepreneurship education in shaping students' interest in entrepreneurial careers. This result indicates that exposure to entrepreneurial learning experiences can influence how students perceive entrepreneurship as a potential career path. Educational activities that introduce business opportunities, entrepreneurial challenges, and real-world practices may encourage students to evaluate entrepreneurship more favorably and consider it as a realistic career option (Ganefri et al., 2024; Handayati et al., 2020). Learning activities that introduce opportunity recognition, business development processes, and entrepreneurial experiences may influence how students evaluate entrepreneurship as a professional path. In this regard, entrepreneurship education appears to contribute not only to knowledge acquisition but also to the way students interpret entrepreneurial opportunities. The results also indicate that entrepreneurship education contributes to the development of an entrepreneurial mindset. This suggests that entrepreneurial thinking can emerge through learning processes rather than being solely determined by personal traits. Educational activities that involve opportunity exploration, creativity, and problem-solving may help students develop a mindset that is more open to innovation and uncertainty. Previous research has similarly noted that entrepreneurship education can stimulate opportunity recognition and proactive thinking among students (Saptono et al., 2020; Li et al., 2023). When students become accustomed to evaluating situations from an opportunity perspective, they are more likely to perceive entrepreneurship as an attractive career alternative.

Another important finding is the significant relationship between entrepreneurship education and self-efficacy. Educational experiences appear to strengthen students' confidence in their ability to perform entrepreneurial tasks. Learning activities such as business simulations, project-based assignments, and interaction with entrepreneurial practices may provide mastery experiences that reinforce this confidence. Previous studies have also reported that entrepreneurship education may enhance individuals' belief in their entrepreneurial capabilities by providing mastery experiences and practical exposure (Nengseh & Kurniawan, 2021; Soelaiman et al., 2024). The findings further show that both entrepreneurial mindset and self-efficacy were found to influence entrepreneurial intention. Students who adopt an opportunity-oriented mindset tend to interpret uncertainty as a challenge that can generate value rather than as a barrier to action. Such cognitive orientation may encourage individuals to evaluate entrepreneurship more positively and become more willing to engage in entrepreneurial activities. Earlier research has similarly suggested that individuals with innovative and opportunity-driven thinking are more likely to develop entrepreneurial intention (Mukhtar et al., 2021; Jiatong et al., 2021). At the same time, self-efficacy contributes to entrepreneurial intention by strengthening individuals' confidence in their capability to manage entrepreneurial tasks. When students believe that they are capable of identifying opportunities, organizing resources, and solving business problems, they are more likely to consider entrepreneurship as an achievable career path. This finding supports previous studies indicating that perceived capability plays an important role in motivating individuals to engage in entrepreneurial behavior (Wardani & Nugraha, 2021).

The mediation analysis provides additional insight into how entrepreneurship education translates into entrepreneurial intention. The results suggest that exposure to entrepreneurship education is associated with stronger entrepreneurial intention among students, through two psychological pathways. The first pathway operates through an entrepreneurial mindset, which reflects how students cognitively interpret and evaluate entrepreneurial opportunities. The second pathway operates through self-efficacy, which reflects students' belief in their capability to perform entrepreneurial activities. By considering these two mechanisms simultaneously, the study offers a broader explanation of how entrepreneurship education influences entrepreneurial intention. Previous research has often examined these variables separately (Mukhtar et al., 2021; Minah & Soelaiman, 2024), whereas the present findings highlight the complementary roles of cognitive orientation and perceived capability in shaping entrepreneurial intention. Interestingly, the mediating role of entrepreneurial mindset appears stronger than that of self-efficacy. This pattern may indicate that among university students, the way individuals cognitively interpret entrepreneurial opportunities plays a particularly important role in shaping intention. When students begin to view entrepreneurship as an opportunity-oriented activity rather than a risky alternative, their willingness to pursue entrepreneurial careers may increase. Therefore, educational approaches that emphasize opportunity recognition, creativity, and problem-solving may play a key role in strengthening entrepreneurial intention among students.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that entrepreneurship education plays an important role in shaping students' intention to pursue entrepreneurial careers. The findings suggest that learning experiences related to entrepreneurship not only provide conceptual knowledge about business but also influence how students think about opportunities and how confident they feel in dealing with entrepreneurial challenges. Students who are exposed to entrepreneurship education tend to develop a more opportunity-oriented perspective and stronger confidence in their ability to engage in entrepreneurial activities. The results further indicate that the entrepreneurial mindset acts as an important mechanism linking entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial intention. Students who develop creative thinking, opportunity awareness, and a willingness to face uncertainty are more likely to view entrepreneurship as a meaningful career option. Although self-efficacy also mediates this relationship, its influence appears to be relatively smaller compared with the role of entrepreneurial mindset. In practical terms, the findings highlight the importance of designing entrepreneurship

education that goes beyond theoretical instruction. Universities may strengthen entrepreneurial learning by incorporating experiential activities such as business simulations, project-based learning, mentoring with entrepreneurs, and participation in entrepreneurial competitions. These learning approaches may help students develop both adaptive thinking and confidence that are necessary for entrepreneurial engagement. Despite these contributions, several limitations should be acknowledged. The sample of this study was limited to university students in West Jakarta, which may restrict the generalization of the findings to other contexts. In addition, the research focused on a limited set of variables. Other factors, such as Family support, entrepreneurial environment, or personal motivation, may also influence entrepreneurial intention. Future studies may expand the scope of the research by involving broader samples and incorporating additional variables to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of the factors shaping entrepreneurial intention.

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