

# Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy

Subjects: **Management**

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Sustaining youths interest in entrepreneurial education is important to cultivating future entrepreneurs. In entrepreneurial education, both perceived educator competency and perceived social support are important drivers for the creation of self-efficacy in youth.

entrepreneurial self-efficacy

perceived lecturers' entrepreneurial competency

perceived social support

entrepreneurial attitude orientation

## 1. Introduction

As consumers of the education business, the perceptions of youths is crucial in measuring the quality of education products and services offered. The terms youth and students are used interchangeably since the study focuses on entrepreneurship education, which is one product that has gained enhanced popularity and investment in many countries <sup>[1]</sup>. This is especially true in Indonesia, where the number of Indonesian educational institutions focusing on entrepreneurial education has increased <sup>[2]</sup> due to its potential as an economic development tool <sup>[3]</sup>. Entrepreneurship education encourages colleges to build entrepreneurial abilities, skills, and intentions <sup>[4]</sup>. Past studies have emphasized that an effective entrepreneurship education program can help youth to increase entrepreneurial attitude, entrepreneurial mindset <sup>[5]</sup>, entrepreneurial intentions <sup>[6]</sup>, entrepreneurial activity <sup>[1]</sup>, entrepreneurial skill and motivation <sup>[7]</sup>, and even to improve business performance built by youth <sup>[2]</sup>. Therefore, universities are expected to be able to offer well-prepared entrepreneurship modules <sup>[8]</sup>.

Entrepreneurial attitude orientation (EAO), which is a way to predict entrepreneurship based on attitude or the tendency to respond in a way that is generally liked or disliked <sup>[9]</sup>, has been important in the development of entrepreneurship on campus. Curriculum requirements, convenience factors, practical considerations, experience, academic factors <sup>[10]</sup>, and achievement <sup>[11]</sup> are important factors in increasing entrepreneurial attitude. Entrepreneurial attitude orientation encourages creativity <sup>[12]</sup>, innovation <sup>[13]</sup>, entrepreneurial behavior <sup>[14]</sup>, individual entrepreneurial movement in the future, and entrepreneurial intention <sup>[15]</sup>. Previous studies have shown that entrepreneurs have a higher EAO scale than non-entrepreneurs <sup>[16]</sup>.

Bandura <sup>[17]</sup>, however, emphasized that entrepreneurial self-efficacy (ESE) also plays an important part in the field of entrepreneurship, especially in entrepreneurial activities <sup>[18]</sup>, because starting a business comes with a lot of ambiguities and uncertainties, including rejections, fluctuations in market conditions, and changes in business policies. Someone with high self-efficacy will be able to overcome all uncertainties and problems that can

negatively affect the performance of his/her business [19] because self-efficacy is strongly linked with creative behavior, creative ideas and novel activities [20] that are important to overcoming uncertain and diverse conditions of the market. In short, entrepreneurial self-efficacy gives strength and perseverance to someone to make the effort to overcome ambiguous conditions [21]. In past studies, entrepreneurial self-efficacy has been found to influence entrepreneurial attitudes [5], entrepreneurial intention [22][23], entrepreneurial emotion, career choices, and entrepreneurial performance [24]. Entrepreneurial self-efficacy is developed through learning, experience [24], instrumental readiness, risk propensity, and entrepreneurial knowledge [25]. High intrinsic motivation in entrepreneurial activity depends on entrepreneurial self-efficacy [26].

The existing lack of literature on the mediating role of entrepreneurial self-efficacy in understanding entrepreneurial attitude orientation. Although several previous studies explained the important role of entrepreneurial self-efficacy as a mediating variable [for example research conducted by van Caloen de Basseghem [27], Naushad and Malik [28], Ciuchta and Finch [29], Cho, Choi [30], most of them did so to understand entrepreneurial intention rather than entrepreneurial attitude orientation. van Caloen de Basseghem [27] for instance, examined the effect of entrepreneurial self-efficacy mediation on academic grade and entrepreneurial intention. Naushad and Malik [28], showed the important role of entrepreneurial self-efficacy as mediator for propensity to risk, self-confidence, internal locus of control and entrepreneurial intention, while Cho, Choi [30] looked at the mediating effect of entrepreneurial self-efficacy on entrepreneurial mentoring and entrepreneurial intention. There is scarce literature, if any, that focuses on using entrepreneurial self-efficacy as a mediating variable between perceived social support and perceived lecturers' entrepreneurial competency on entrepreneurial attitude orientation. This is the research gap that researchers found. Hence this may help reduce the gap by providing empirical findings on the important role of entrepreneurial self-efficacy on entrepreneurial attitude orientation.

## 2. Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy

The theory of self-efficacy was originally introduced by Bandura [31]. Self-efficacy can be seen as a person's ability to manage the actions needed [17] and the personal competencies that can control certain situations [32]. Self-efficacy affects what is thought, felt and done by a person [33]. Self-efficacy is closely related to work-related performance [34]. It can also serve as a driving force to face obstacles and limitations [23]. Self-efficacy will increase if someone manages to achieve what they want, and will decrease if there is a failure [35]. It will also increase with exposure to entrepreneurial education.

The construct of entrepreneurial self-efficacy was proposed by De Noble, Jung [36]. This construct refers to an individual's belief in his/her own abilities to perform various skills that are needed for starting up a new business [33]. According to De Noble, Jung [36], ESE is related to a "can do" attitude in starting up a business venture. ESE focuses on a person's belief that he/she is able to produce an entrepreneurial outcome [37], such as with building new businesses, first-time venture creators and completing entrepreneurial tasks.

## 3. Perceived Social Support

Perceived social support is defined as an exchange of resources between two individuals that is perceived by either the provider or the recipient as improving the well-being of the recipient [38]. Perceived social support brings positive emotions that can enhance physiological and affective states, and it is a source of self-efficacy. Social support can also help individuals gain mastery and experience. In the context of an institute of higher learning, students or consumers of entrepreneurial education require support from their social surroundings, because a supportive social environment can help self-efficacy to flourish [17]. Perceived social support, which refers to social support that an individual receives when s/he is carrying out entrepreneurial/business activities [39], may play an important role in developing entrepreneurial self-efficacy. Social support is a person's support and motivation for others to become an entrepreneur [40] because it gives them a sense of security and comfort to make good decisions [41] and it helps them to deal with stress [42] and failure during entrepreneurial activities [43]. Social support comes in the form of suggestions, advice [44], care and help given by someone to another party [45]. That "someone" can be partners, community organizations, friends or family [46]. However, in the context of a university, the "someone" that students need for social support includes their family, friends, and university entrepreneurship lecturers.

There were inconsistent results about the role of perceived social support in entrepreneurial self-efficacy. Lu, Song [47] found that university entrepreneurship support positively affects students' entrepreneurial self-efficacy. Another study found a relationship between family factors and youth's entrepreneurial self-efficacy [48]. The family provides support in the form of moral and financial assistance to help their children in conducting entrepreneurial activities. Family support motivates and gives confidence for youth to carry out entrepreneurial activities. Perceived social support from parents can also help youth to become proud as entrepreneurs. A study by Cho, Choi [30] also confirmed that social support has a significant effect on entrepreneurial self-efficacy. However, Kazumi and Kawai [49] found that formal institutional support has no correlation with entrepreneurial self-efficacy.

Langford, Bowsher [41] described several attributes of social support, including emotional support, instrument support, informational support, and appraisal support. In the context of social support in the development of entrepreneurship on campus, social support can be in the form of emotional support (love, caring, trust and empathy provided by lecturers and mentors), instrumental support (facilities provided by the campus to support entrepreneurship activities), informational support (from lecturers and mentors in the form of providing various solutions when students experience difficulties in developing their business), and appraisal support (when lecturers and mentors give appreciation to students). Perceived social support can have an impact on entrepreneurial success [50][51] because regardless of the form, perceived social support can improve one's attitude in entrepreneurship [52], improve one's performance in entrepreneurial tasks, pursuing business innovation and controlling business results [2]. Jadmiko [52] stated that perceived social support can influence the attitude of becoming social entrepreneurs. Perceived social support in the form of university entrepreneurship support can increase entrepreneurial attitude [47].

## 4. Perceived Lecturers' Entrepreneurial Competency

How youths perceive the competency of their lecturers is also important to understand because one of the determinants of the quality of university graduates is the quality of the lecturers [53]. Perceived lecturers' entrepreneurial competency refers to the youths' perception of lecturers' collective abilities (attitude, skills, and knowledge) to do entrepreneurial activities and complete entrepreneurial tasks. Since lecturers, who provide mentoring for students' businesses, are often viewed as role models for students, perceived lecturers' entrepreneurial competencies can enhance youths' confidence in their learning experience, which then lead to better self-efficacy among students [17]. Newman, Obschonka [24] found that the exposure to entrepreneurial role models and mentors is one of the key antecedents of entrepreneurial self-efficacy. In addition, a study conducted by BarNir, Watson [54] found that undergraduate students' exposure to entrepreneurial role models affects their belief in the ability to successfully carry out entrepreneurial tasks. In other words, youths will feel more confident and capable of completing entrepreneurial tasks when led by their role model. On the contrary, when students view their lecturers as having low entrepreneurial competency, their self-confidence may also decline, leading to lower self-efficacy and more failures.

Previous studies showed that successful role models, meaning role models that are also successful in completing entrepreneurial tasks, generate entrepreneurial self-efficacy in students [55]. However, a study by Malebana [56] found that entrepreneurial role models only have a very small impact on entrepreneurial self-efficacy. From four kinds of entrepreneurial role models that the author studied, only one of them was significantly related to entrepreneurial self-efficacy, but with  $p < 0.10$ . These inconsistent results led the researchers to further examine whether perceived lecturers' entrepreneurial competencies will predict students' entrepreneurial self-efficacy. It is proposed that students who perceive their lecturers as having entrepreneurial competencies are more likely to experience that the guidance from their lecturers are useful for their entrepreneurial projects, which will lead them to be more confident in conducting their entrepreneurial work.

The quality of learning and teaching is greatly influenced by the lecturer's entrepreneurial competency [57]. Lecturers will not be able to teach various competencies to students if the lecturers do not have entrepreneurial competencies. Entrepreneurial competencies needed include identifying opportunities, resource acquisition, championing competencies [58][59], relationship, organizing, commitment [60], human relation [61], innovating, sponsoring [62], etc. Lecturers with entrepreneurial competency will be role models for their students. Lecturers who become role models will influence entrepreneurial attitudes and interests [63][64][65]. However, there are also research results that explained that role models are not able to increase entrepreneurial attitude [66] because role models are only seen as one more factor in choosing an entrepreneur's career path. Therefore, researchers propose that perceived lecturers' entrepreneurial competency could influence students entrepreneurial attitudes, which could help them focus more on improving entrepreneurial attitude orientation.

Ardayan and Wijaya [2] proposed that entrepreneurial competency is the attitude, knowledge and skills possessed by a person related to entrepreneurial activity. The term entrepreneurial competency describes the trainee teacher's behavior [61], particularly those of lecturers who teach entrepreneurship. The competencies can be in terms of oral presentation skills, interpersonal skills, the ability to prepare and present a business plan [67], openness, accommodate new ideas, and critical thinking [68]. There were inconsistent results about the effect of perceived

lecturers' competency on perceived social support. A study from St-Jean and Audet [69] found that the expertise and experience of mentors did not increase mentees' satisfaction. This result suggests that perceived lecturers' competency does not always lead to the feeling of being supported by the lecturers. However, on the other hand, Dolan and Brady [70] suggest that the expertise of a mentor is very important for helping students, as this will make students feel supported by the mentors. These inconsistent results show that further studies are needed to ensure whether perceived lecturers' entrepreneurial competency will have an effect on perceived social support. It can be argued that lecturers who are not competent cannot optimally help students in coping with their entrepreneurial tasks. This makes students feel unsupported. Lecturers who have expertise in the subject areas are more likely to be able to guide and help students in their entrepreneurial tasks, and to provide better mentoring, so that students can feel supported [70].

## **5. Entrepreneurial Attitude Orientation**

Attitude theory and entrepreneurship theory are the basis of an entrepreneurial attitude orientation. Attitude is a response towards the object attitude, whether the object attitude is considered beneficial or not [71], and is a driving factor of interest in behavior [72]. In the context of entrepreneurship, the entrepreneurial attitude orientation (EAO) approach was first proposed by Robinson [73]. Using the Theory of Planned Behavior, [73] proposed a measurement scale related to entrepreneurial attitude orientation called the EAO Scale, which measures the characteristics of entrepreneurial attitude and to distinguish between entrepreneurs and non-entrepreneurs [74]. Previous research found that male students have more positive entrepreneurial attitudes compared to female students [75]. Harris and Gibson [76] argued that men have innovation, personal control, and experience; thus, their entrepreneurial attitude is also high.

The relationship between entrepreneurial self-efficacy and entrepreneurial attitude orientation cannot be concluded yet because there are still inconsistencies in research results. Several studies explained that entrepreneurial self-efficacy is able to significantly increase entrepreneurial attitude orientation [77][78][79][80], while other studies did not find a significant relationship [81]. In this research, researchers propose that entrepreneurial self-efficacy has a positive and significant effect on entrepreneurial attitude orientation. Bandura [82] posited that an individual's behavior is influenced by the belief that an individual holds about his or her abilities to complete the tasks. Bandura [17] even argued that self-efficacy influences the way people think, feel, and act. Furthermore, Bandura [17] also mentioned that self-efficacy will influence the choice of goal challenge, the effort to achieve the goal, and also the duration of perseverance in facing difficulties. Therefore, it can be argued that an individual with strong confidence in business can influence his/her attitude in business achievement, business innovation, and personal control. Students who have confidence in business, both in terms of knowledge and skills, can be reflected in their entrepreneurial attitude. They can pour their creative ideas into the products they produce, so that they can be useful. [77].

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