

Effects of Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy on Entrepreneurial Intention among Undergraduate Students. *The mediating role of entrepreneurial passion.*

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Abstract

Entrepreneurial self-efficacy is a key psychological factor influencing entrepreneurial intention among undergraduate students. This study explores entrepreneurial passion as a mediator on the effect of entrepreneurial self-efficacy on entrepreneurial intention among undergraduate students. The study employed a correlational survey design. To reach the 207 students who took part in the study, the convenience sampling method was employed. The researcher adopted quantitative research approach, and 187 questionnaires were received from respondents, representing 90.35 percent of the population. The results of R² reveal that entrepreneurial intention (EI) have an R² of 44.8%, indicating that entrepreneurial self-efficacy (ESE) and entrepreneurial passion (EP) account for 44.8% of the variation in students' entrepreneurial intention (EI). Furthermore, the result of the analysis revealed that entrepreneurial passion has a significant effect on Entrepreneurial Intention among undergraduate students. Entrepreneurial self-efficacy has significant effect on Entrepreneurial Intention among Undergraduate Students. Entrepreneurial self-efficacy has significant effect on Entrepreneurial Passion among Undergraduate Students. Lastly, entrepreneurial passion has mediating effect on Entrepreneurial Self-efficacy and Entrepreneurial Intention among undergraduate students. The study concludes that Entrepreneurial Passion, has a significant influence on entrepreneurial intentions among students, suggesting that efficacy views might ignite the drive required for entrepreneurial endeavours. Furthermore, the study recommends that to increase students' emotional involvement and enthusiasm for entrepreneurial endeavours, entrepreneurship

instructors can incorporate experiential learning activities such as pitch competitions and business simulations.

1. Introduction

The National Bureau of Statistics estimates that in 2020, there were more than 120 million young people without jobs. As a result, over 90% of recent graduates struggle with unemployment each year (Adeniyi et al. 2022). Sasu (2022) predicted that the youth unemployment rate would be 33.5% and the unemployment rate would be 33% in the third quarter of 2022, up from 32.5% in 2021. In 2023 and 2024, this is expected to rise to 40% and 44%, respectively. The National Bureau of Statistics (2024c) reported that the unemployment rate among young people dropped from 8.4% in Q1 2024 to 6.5% in Q2 2024. The high rate of youth unemployment may be explained by their lack of readiness to launch their own company. Entrepreneurship is known to increase economic growth and employment opportunities in any nation, including Nigeria (Ilevbare et al., 2022; Oyinlola et al., 2024; Amadi & Bob-Manuel, 2025). Furthermore, encouraging young people to start their own businesses directly contributes to the decline in poverty and unemployment (Koen et al., 2018; Nor, 2024; Umoh, 2025).

Students' entrepreneurial intention, which represents their deliberate wish to start and manage a business in the future, is a crucial component of the entrepreneurial ecosystem. This objective is closely related to the unique abilities and traits that students acquire throughout their academic pursuits (Ahmad et al., 2020). Because of their diverse skill set and innovative thinking, which have been encouraged by their education, students are often well-prepared to tackle the challenges of entrepreneurship. Furthermore, their propensity for risk-taking, which is often associated with entrepreneurial endeavors, influences their ability to embrace uncertainty and explore novel prospects (Kruse et al., 2019).

Students' entrepreneurial intention determines their capacity to start a business. Their efforts are sparked by their entrepreneurial intention, even though possessing the required tools and skills is essential. Students who are committed to entrepreneurship aggressively seek out opportunities, amass resources, and endure hardships (Hueso et al., 2021). As a result, students are encouraged to apply their talents to the practical application of business concepts by their entrepreneurial aspirations. Individual entrepreneurial orientation serves as a precursor to entrepreneurial objectives, influencing an individual's motivation and mentality to achieve them. Strong orientations toward risk-taking, creativity, proactivity, autonomy, and competition promote high levels of entrepreneurial intention; these characteristics eventually influence entrepreneurial behavior.

The conviction that one can affect their own motivation, conduct, and social environment is known as self-efficacy (Nguyen et al., 2022). A person's evaluation of their ability to get past challenges and achieve their goals is known as self-efficacy (Mouton et al., 2013; Uzunboylyu & Selcuk, 2016; Nwibe & Ogbuanya, 2024). It has to do with a person's confidence in his ability to do specific tasks or accomplish preset goals. According to Saraih et al. (2018), self-efficacy belief is the conviction that one can pursue and accomplish an entrepreneurial endeavor. Pihie and Bagheri (2013) discovered that self-efficacy promotes students' entrepreneurial intention by improving their attitude toward entrepreneurship, feeling of command over the whole entrepreneurial endeavor, and process management skills. Self-efficacy mindset, also known as perceived self-efficacy, is a self-evaluation of one's capacity to perform particular tasks and accomplish predetermined objectives (Rivers & Ross, 2018). Dullas (2018) identified perceived competence, perceived persistence, and perceived control as the three components of perceived self-efficacy. Bandura and Schunk (1981) model of self-efficacy was adopted in this study because it was simple, had a good measure, and had established psychometric properties (mastery experiences (performance outcomes), vicarious experiences, and social persuasion). Entrepreneurial passion (EP) provides the emotional drive that maintains entrepreneurial intention (EI), while entrepreneurial self-efficacy (ESE) increases EI by giving students the confidence they need to launch a business. ESE and EP work together to boost undergraduates' EI by providing confidence and motivation, respectively (Wu, Wareewanich & Chankoson, 2024; Ferreira-Neto et al., 2023; Liu et al., 2025).

Most students want to venture into entrepreneurial activities, but they are faced with a lot of challenges that distract them from these entrepreneurial activities. These challenges include family and social pressure; frequently parents advise against students adopting risky entrepreneurial endeavours in favour of education (Jaremus, Sincok, Patfield, Fray, Prieto, & Gore, 2025). Again, students usually don't have contacts, clients, or knowledge of current market trends, which makes their business ideas less viable (Al-Fattal, 2025). Furthermore, entrepreneurship centers and incubation programs are often underdeveloped in universities, giving students little real-world chance to test business ideas (Wu, Zhan, Zhang & Wang, 2025).

Although, there have been studies conducted on effect of entrepreneurial self-efficacy and entrepreneurial intention, such as (Roberts, Uye, Stephen & Olapegba, 2023; Taneja, Kiran & Bose, 2024; Haque, & Kour, 2024; Ho, Man & Chiu, 2025; Sutiadiningsih, Dewi, Ratnasari, Taufiq, & Miranti, 2025, Taneja, Kiran & Bose, 2025). To the best of the research knowledge, none has used Mastery Experiences (Performance Outcomes), Vicarious Experiences, and Social Persuasion as

dimensions of entrepreneurial self-efficacy of Bandura and Schunk (1981) to provide foresight abet in fostering entrepreneurial intentions among students; equally, the dimensions were used as a second-order construct in the study. By eliminating the need to examine each subdimension independently, using a second-order construct reduces model complexity and enables a more accurate and comprehensive representation of the theoretical idea (Becker, Klein, & Wetzels, 2012; Cantele, Landi, & Vernizzi, 2024). Instead of concentrating on isolated indicators, it also improves theoretical simplicity and interpretability, allowing researchers to evaluate how the overall construct affects other variables in the model (Paulus, Jordanow, Heidenreich, & Janz, 2025).

Consequently, studies have used other variables to mediate the relationship between entrepreneurial self-efficacy and entrepreneurial intention, such as (Taneja, Kiran & Bose, 2024, employed entrepreneurial attitudes; Sahid, Norhisham, & Narmaditya, 2024 used entrepreneurial intention and environmental factors; and Maziriri, Nyagadza, & Maramura, 2024, social entrepreneurial role models. Other studies have used entrepreneurial self-efficacy as mediation in their studies, which include: (Seo, Kim & Mesquita, 2024; Mishra, & Singh, 2024; Ouni & Jarboui, 2025; Zanaabazar, Luvsandash, Lombodorj, & Ganzorig, 2025). The study of Bui and Duong (2024); Zhang, Huang and Ye (2024) used entrepreneurial self-efficacy as a moderated mediation model. Furthermore, prior research logically supports the view that entrepreneurial passion mediates the relationship between entrepreneurial self-efficacy and entrepreneurial intention, as passion transforms confidence in one's entrepreneurial abilities into a strong motivational drive to act (Chang, Sathornsantikun & Chen, 2025; Zhang, Abdullah, Ghazali, D'Silva, Ismail, & Huang, 2025; Thabti, Omri, Yezza, & Omri, 2025). These studies have their contribution to the body of knowledge. This study explored entrepreneurial passion as a mediator on the effect of entrepreneurial self-efficacy and entrepreneurial intention among students. Entrepreneurial passion converts students' self-efficacy, the belief in one's own entrepreneurial abilities, into a powerful emotional drive that propels their desire to begin a business. By transforming perceived competence into real enthusiasm to pursue entrepreneurship, it closes the gap between confidence and action.

Therefore, this study investigates the effects of *entrepreneurial self-efficacy on entrepreneurial intention among undergraduate students*. A mediating role of entrepreneurial passion. And what effects does entrepreneurial self-efficacy have on entrepreneurial intention among undergraduate students, and how does entrepreneurial passion mediate this relationship? This study is very significant, because it explains how students' determination to venture in entrepreneurship is influenced by both their emotional drive (passion) and their self-efficacy

(confidence in their entrepreneurial talents). It offers guidance to educators and policymakers on how to create entrepreneurship curricula that not only develop students' abilities but also ignite their enthusiasm, strengthening their desire to pursue entrepreneurship.

The findings of this study will influence the entrepreneurial intention of undergraduate students in the institution of higher learning. The results would equip entrepreneurship instructors and counselors with the knowledge they need to mentor and counsel students who show an interest in starting their own business. Policymakers could also use the result of the findings to improve the intervention in entrepreneurial education programs for improved outcomes, particularly employment and wealth creation among youth. The rest of this article presents a literature review, methodology, discussion of results, conclusion, and recommendations.

2. Literature Review and Hypotheses Development

2.1 Entrepreneurial Intention

Entrepreneurial intention is the inclination of individuals to work for themselves, start a new business, or engage in entrepreneurial activities (Dohse, 2010; Dhose and Walter, 2012; Ghouse, Barber III, & Alipour, 2024; Vasilescu, Crivoi, & Munteanu, 2025). One of the main indicators for potential entrepreneurial action is entrepreneurial intention (Krueger et al., 2000). Competence and self-efficacy may suggest that an individual has the capacity to start their own business, but a lack of motivation may keep them from making the plunge. Intentional and spontaneous entrepreneurial intentions were distinguished (Quan, 2012). The former explains the intention without really managing business resources, but the latter demonstrates a person's willingness to enter the business world with a prepared mentality.

A condition or state of an individual that stimulates interest, attention, and a decision to execute a particular action could be characterized as entrepreneurial intention (EI) (Cai et al., 2022). Numerous things, such as being exposed to pertinent training, losing one's employment, and having possession of venture capital resources, can cause this. Business students exhibited a more favorable attitude towards entrepreneurship than students from other departments, compared to an empirical investigation on entrepreneurial intention across final-year students (Fatoki, 2014; Goswami, Alagh, Adnan & Pokhriyal, 2024; Abu Shriha, AL-Shboul & Abaddi, 2025). Similar findings were obtained by Muhammad et al. (2015), who employed a modified TPB as the main framework in their investigation of entrepreneurial intention among university students in Nigeria, utilizing information from the Student Entrepreneurial Spirit Survey conducted by Global

University. According to Gubik (2021), Hungarian students' business inclinations were significantly predicted by their family's entrepreneurial past. According to the findings of Ilevbare, Ilevbare, Adelowo, and Oshorenua (2022), the students were really motivated to launch their own business. Motivating variables that affect students' inclination to explore entrepreneurship include perceived family social backing, risk-taking tendencies, and prior entrepreneurial experience. Additionally, there was a substantial correlation between the father's age and career and the level of entrepreneurial intention. Additionally, Ediagbonya, Edokpolor, Odibo, and Sun (2024) found that students' entrepreneurial intention is significantly predicted by their entrepreneurial self-efficacy.

2.2 Entrepreneurial Self-efficacy

Self-efficacy beliefs (sometimes called expectancies) are the convictions that one can perform the acts that one believes are necessary to achieve desired results (Bandura, 1977). He argued that self-efficacy beliefs are among the most important factors influencing human behavior and promoted self-efficacy theory as a unifying explanation for all types of behavior change, including the outcomes of psychological and therapeutic treatments. He distinguished between self-efficacy expectancies, which center on one's ability to carry out behaviors, and outcome expectancies, which are centered on the expected results of one's activities. Bandura says that self-efficacy beliefs are the most important and powerful of the two factors influencing people's decisions to try or not undertake specific activities and to persevere in the face of setbacks (Bandura, 1986). According to Bandura, there are four main sources of self-efficacy beliefs: (1) performance attainments and failures, which deal with what one is trying to do and how successful or unsuccessful one is; (2) vicarious performances, which deal with what one sees other people doing; (3) verbal persuasion, which deals with what one hears about one's abilities or limitations; and (4) imaginal performances, which deal with what one imagines oneself doing and how well or poorly one imagines oneself doing it (Bandura, 1986).

Mastery experience (performance outcomes) is probably the most potent factor influencing a person's self-efficacy, or confidence in their own abilities. When someone successfully completes a difficult activity or takes on a new challenge, they gain a mastery experience that gives them concrete proof of their talents. The second significant driver of self-efficacy is the vicarious experiences that social structures provide. To put it simply, this is the process of learning by seeing others accomplish activities that the individual finds difficult or daunting (Bandura, 1986). According to Bandura (1986), social persuasion is the process of persuading or motivating individuals that they are capable of achieving particular goals. By offering verbal support, criticism, or encouragement from others like peers,

mentors, or teachers, it increases a person's sense of self-efficacy and fosters confidence and perseverance in achieving objectives.

2.3 Entrepreneurial Passion

For entrepreneurs, having entrepreneurial passion is a key emotional state. It is a potent indication of entrepreneurs' excitement for starting enterprises, along with high personal value thinking and behavioral expression (Chen et al., 2009; Chen, Zhang, Tian, & Bu, 2025). An essential component of entrepreneurial endeavors, entrepreneurial passion can also be described as a set of intricate patterns of mental, cognitive, and physical reactions that are triggered and sustained by enthusiasm (Cardon et al., 2009).

Additionally, entrepreneurial enthusiasm is seen as a key component of business motivation and success. encouraging business owners to see opportunities and start new projects (Shane et al., 2003; Cardon et al., 2009). However, this type of passion is an internal emotional state that a person experiences when considering or engaging in entrepreneurial-related activities rather than a personality feature (Cardon et al., 2009).

In addition to being necessary for achieving high performance levels and overcoming obstacles, passion can also help entrepreneurs achieve pertinent business outcomes. In this context, Carden et al. (2009) distinguished three role identities developer, founder, and inventor in various facets of the processes associated with various passion kinds. First, entrepreneurs who are enthusiastic about finding, creating, and investigating new prospects are said to be inventors. Second, the founder's identity is connected to their enthusiasm for ventures that try to launch companies in order to investigate untapped markets. Third, the developer status is associated with the entrepreneurs' enthusiasm for tasks pertaining to the development, growth, and expansion of their business. Some entrepreneurs may be passionate about all of these identities, while others may believe that one identity is more significant than the others, even if each of these roles may function independently of the others. Thus, the following hypotheses were formulated:

- Ho1 Entrepreneurial passion has no significant effect on entrepreneurial intention among undergraduate students.
- Ho2 Entrepreneurial self-efficacy has no significant effect on entrepreneurial intention among undergraduate students.
- Ho3 Entrepreneurial self-efficacy has no significant effect on entrepreneurial passion among undergraduate students.

2.4 Entrepreneurial self-efficacy and Entrepreneurial Intention

The research in the literature shows that there is a strong correlation between entrepreneurial self-efficacy and entrepreneurial intentions. Atmono et al. (2023) revealed that entrepreneurial self-efficacy has a positive impact on entrepreneurial intentions. Also, Odedokun (2023) result showed that self-efficacy, perceived relational support, and entrepreneurial education positively and significantly correlated with entrepreneurial intention. The influence of entrepreneurship self-efficacy towards entrepreneurship intention was found to be significant (Vivekananth, Indiran & Kohar, 2023; Saoula, Shamim, Ahmad & Abid, 2023; Sahid, Norhisham, & Narmaditya, 2024). Ediagbonya et al. (2024) revealed that the green entrepreneurial intention of business education students in Edo State was significantly predicted by their entrepreneurial self-efficacy. Nwibe and Ogbuanya (2024) also found that out of the three dimensions of self-efficacy, perceived competence and perceived persistence had significant partial mediating effects. Ho, Man and Chiu (2025) show in the study that entrepreneurship and greater entrepreneurship self-efficacy are linked to greater entrepreneurship intentions. On the other side, Taneja, Kiran and Bose (2025) found an indirect effect between entrepreneurial self-efficacy and entrepreneurial intentions. Nguyen and Phan (2024) and Gonzalez-Tamayo, Olarewaju, Bonomo-Odizzio and Krauss-Delorme (2024) found an insignificant effect of entrepreneurial self-efficacy and entrepreneurial intentions. Thus, the following hypotheses were formulated:

Ho4 Entrepreneurial passion has no mediating effect on entrepreneurial self-efficacy and entrepreneurial intention among undergraduate students.

3. Theoretical Underpinnings

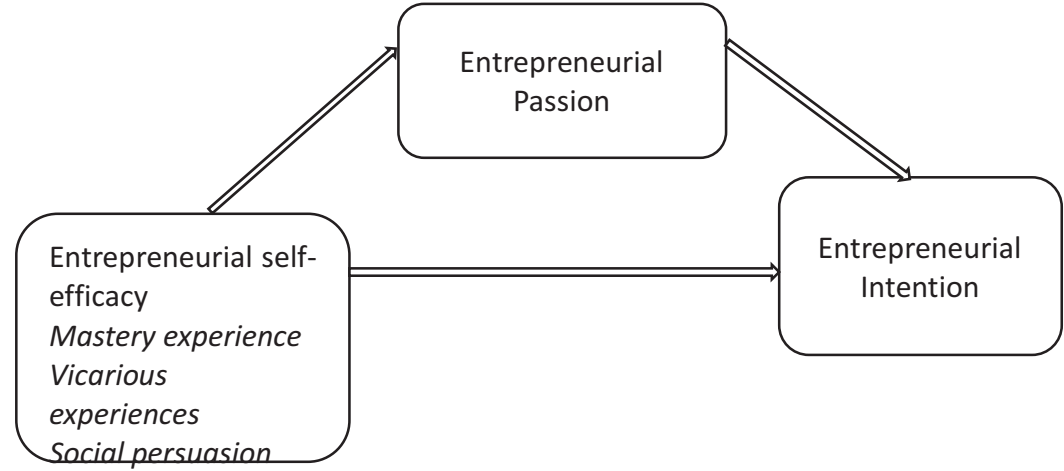
The study adopts the Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) to underpin the study. According to "social cognitive theory," the cognitive version of social learning theory, the result of a dynamic interplay of behaviors is human behavior, personal traits, and environmental influences. It incorporates ideas from behavioral psychology and cognitive and affective theories of behavior modification. The importance of self-efficacy, self-control, reinforcement, and observational learning in influencing behavior is also emphasized (Bandura, 1977). Although SCT provides a comprehensive foundation for analyzing how one's actions and results relate to behavioral, cognitive, individual, and environmental elements, the researcher felt it was the most suitable theory for this study. Biraglia and Kadile (2016) claim that SCT is capable of helping determine students' intention to launch a business; this might be influenced by a variety of personal characteristics, behavioral results, and surrounding variables. SCT holds that people behave in ways that advance their objectives (Bandura, 1986). Researchers look into the students' plans to establish their own enterprises after graduation in order to

examine behavioral effects. In accordance with SCT, an individual's actions, surroundings, and past experiences interplay reciprocally in three ways to determine their behavior (Bandura, 1986).

In this context, the cognitive conviction in one's ability to carry out entrepreneurial responsibilities is represented by entrepreneurial self-efficacy (ESE), the emotional and motivational drive is reflected by entrepreneurial passion (EP), and the behavioral outcome is represented by entrepreneurial intention (EI). SCT states persons with high ESE (confidence in oneself) are more inclined to experience positive emotions (EP), which boost motivation and consequently result in stronger intents to pursue entrepreneurship (EI) (Bandura, 1986; Wu, 2022; Ferreira-Neto et al., 2023).

4. Conceptual Framework

All of the hypothesized claims about the study variables are based on a research model that the researchers of this study created. Figure 1 illustrates how the model accounted for the *effect of entrepreneurial self-efficacy on entrepreneurial intention among undergraduate students*. A mediating role of entrepreneurial passion.



Source: Researcher
Figure 1. Conceptual framework of the study

5. Methodology

In order to ascertain the effect of entrepreneurial self-efficacy on entrepreneurial intention among Nigerian undergraduate students, with the mediating role of entrepreneurial passion, this study employed a correlational survey design. The sample being studied is composed of three hundred and four students of the faculty

of management science, Kaduna State University. The faculty consists of six departments, which include Business Administration and Entrepreneurship, Accounting, Marketing, Banking and Finance, Public Administration, and Procurement. The study sample included 450 students in total. The Krejcie and Morgan sample size table was used to calculate the sample size, and 207 samples drawn from the faculty of management science of Kaduna State University were utilized in the study (Krejcie & Morgan 1970). Between 400 and 217 [(196) and (217)], the median population size is 207 $(196+217/2)$. Convenience sampling was used to reach the 207 students that participated in the research. A standardized questionnaire served as the research's main tool. Information was obtained from the respondents using a questionnaire with the following title: Effect of Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy on Entrepreneurial Intention Among Nigerian Undergraduate Students: A Mediating Role of Entrepreneurial Passion. The questionnaire was structured with the following, which made up twenty-nine (29) opinion statements designed in a Likert Scale showing Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Neutral (N), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD) are weighted 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1, respectively. The three components that made up the entrepreneurial self-efficacy were mastery experience (ME), vicarious experiences (VE), and social persuasion (SP) as the IV, entrepreneurial passion (EP) as the mediator, and entrepreneurial intention (EI) as the DV. Entrepreneurial self-efficacy was proxied by mastery experience (ME), vicarious experiences (VE), and social persuasion (SP). Each dimension has six questions, which were assessed with a modified version of Bandura's Self-Efficacy Scale (Bandura, 1995). The *Linan and Chen (2009)* individual entrepreneurial intention scale was used to measure entrepreneurial intention (EI) with six items. *The measurement scale for Entrepreneurial Passion (EP) was adapted from the study of Huyghe et al. (2016) and Karimi (2020) with five items.* The face and content validity of the test were analyzed by the researchers. Entrepreneurship education experts were given access to it, and their input on the draft instrument was integrated into the final version of the questionnaire. After the sample questionnaire was given to 30 business administration students of Kaduna Polytechnic who were not in the study group, its reliability was evaluated using the Cronbach alpha. The findings revealed a 0.82 coefficient. A total of 187 questionnaires, or 90.35 percent of the population, were collected by the researchers. The study was conducted using SmartPLS version 4, and hypotheses 1 through 4 were investigated using the structural equation model (SEM).

6. Results and Discussion

6.1 Measurement Model Assessments

To assess the validity and reliability of the measurement model for this study, Cronbach's alpha (CA), composite reliability (CR), average variance extracted

(AVE), and factor loadings of each measurement are examined. According to Hair Jr. et al. (2021), a measurement model is considered valid if the AVE is greater than 0.5, the CR and CA values are greater than 0.7, and the factor loading value is equal to or greater than 0.7. According to Table 1, each construct's item loadings range from 0.856 to 0.902.

Further study was conducted to assess the discriminant validity of the measurement model. Discriminant validity was evaluated using the Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio of correlations, or HTMT. A measurement model is considered to have discriminant validity if the calculated HTMT values are less than 0.85 (Kline, 2016). In our analysis, all computed HTMT values were less than 0.85. The results of the measurement model are displayed in Tables 3, 4, and 5. This thorough validation process enhances the robustness of the measurement model by ensuring that the constructs are distinct and accurately assessed. As a result, the analysis's findings' acceptability and dependability are greatly increased, supporting the rigorous methodology of the study and offering a strong basis for future research.

6.2 Structural model

The relationships between the latent variables in question, P values, T statistic values, and all path coefficient values are shown in Fig. 2 and Table 6. The result indicates that Entrepreneurial Passion (EP) ($\beta = 0.393$, $t = 7.000$, $p = 0.000$) has a significant effect on entrepreneurial intention (EI) among Nigerian undergraduate students, indicating that students are more likely to acquire higher entrepreneurial intentions if they have a stronger entrepreneurial passion. Meanwhile, entrepreneurial self-efficacy (ESE) ($\beta = 0.337$, $t = 6.227$, $p = 0.000$) has a significant effect on entrepreneurial intention (EI) among Nigerian undergraduate students, implying that having belief in one's capacity for entrepreneurship increases the desire to start a business. Similarly, the result shows that entrepreneurial self-efficacy (ESE) ($\beta = 0.678$, $t = 25.550$, $p = 0.000$) has a significant effect on entrepreneurial passion (EP) among Nigerian undergraduate students. Suggesting that students who have confidence in their capacity for entrepreneurship are more likely to become passionate about it. Moreover, the indirect path (ESE → EP → EI) is also significant ($\beta = 0.267$, $t = 6.692$, $p = 0.000$), confirming that **entrepreneurial passion mediates** the relationship between self-efficacy and entrepreneurial intention among undergraduate students.

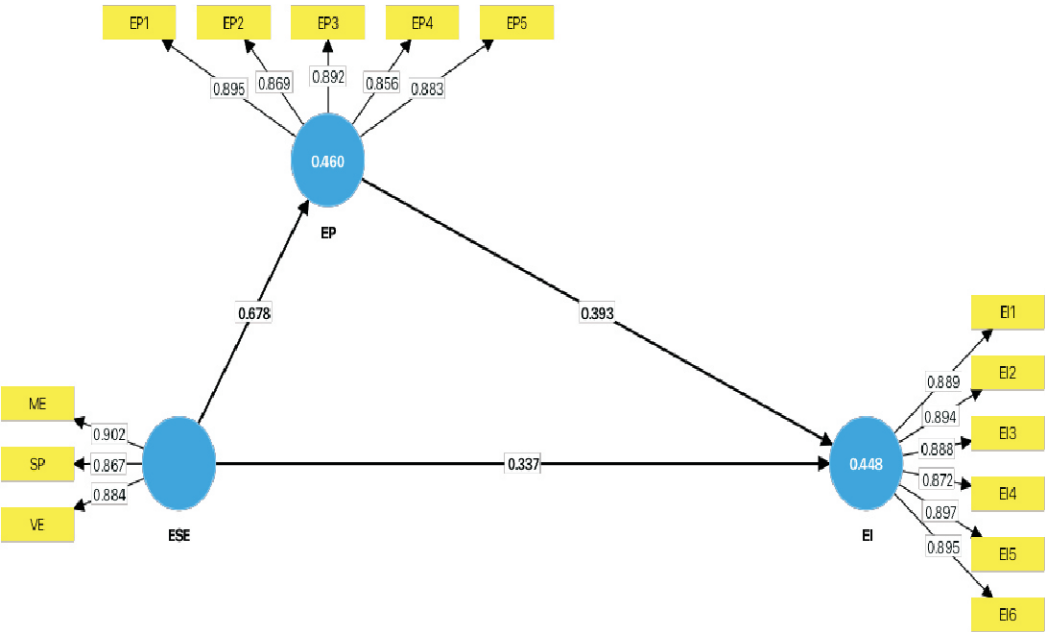
Furthermore, the results reveal that entrepreneurial intention (EI) has an R^2 of 44.8%, indicating that entrepreneurial self-efficacy (ESE) and entrepreneurial passion (EP) account for 44.8% of the variation in students' entrepreneurial intention (EI). Also, with an R^2 of 0.460, entrepreneurial passion (EP) shows that entrepreneurial self-efficacy (ESE) accounts for 46% of the variance in entrepreneurial intention (EI). These R^2 values indicate a moderate level of

explanatory power, indicating that the model has a significant degree of predictive relevance for the endogenous constructs, in accordance with Cohen's (1988) recommendations. According to the findings, entrepreneurial self-efficacy (ESE) has a moderate effect on entrepreneurial intention (EI) ($f^2 \geq 0.15$), a substantial effect on entrepreneurial passion (EP) ($f^2 \geq 0.35$ or above), and a moderate effect on entrepreneurial intention (EI) ($f^2 \geq 0.15$). According to Cohen (1988), these values show significant and meaningful correlations between the studied variables. Both EI (0.350) and EP (0.352) exhibit significant predictive accuracy, indicating the model's good out-of-sample predictive capabilities, since Q^2 values greater than 0 suggest predictive significance. The study assessed the inner and outer models' variance inflation factor (VIF) values. Due to the criterion's requirement that the variance inflation factor values be less than 5, multicollinearity exists. Table 1 below shows our model's values, which fall between 2.015 to 3.559 and meet the 5 criteria (Cohen, 2003). Therefore, there is no chance of multicollinearity issues.

Table 1: Item loadings, CA, CR and AVE Values

Variables	Items loading	VIF	CA	CR	AVE
EI1	0.889	3.344	0.947	0.958	0.791
EI2	0.894	3.585			
EI3	0.888	3.349			
EI4	0.872	2.997			
EI5	0.897	3.559			
EI6	0.895	3.543			
EP1	0.895	3.182	0.927	0.945	0.773
EP2	0.869	2.813			
EP3	0.892	3.160			
EP4	0.856	2.522			
EP5	0.883	2.949			
ME	0.902	2.384	0.861	0.915	0.783
SP	0.867	2.015			
VE	0.884	2.260			

Source: Smart-PLS 4



Source: Smart-PLS 4

Figure 1. Measurement model.

Table 2: Discriminant matrix of factors (HTMT).

Constructs	EI	EP	ESE
EI			
EP	0.662		
ESE	0.667	0.757	

Source: Smart-PLS 4

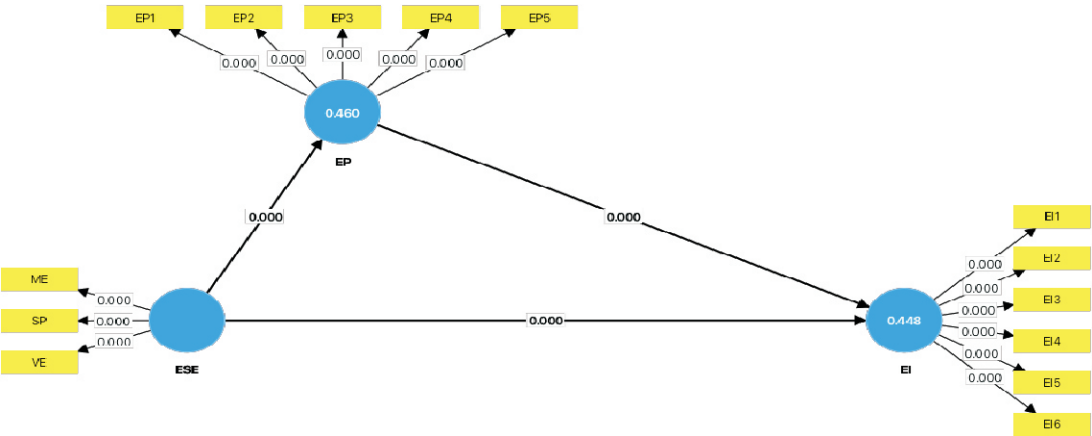


Figure 2. Structural model.

Table 6: Path coefficient and hypothesis results.

Paths	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	(STDEV)	T statistics	P values
EP -> EI	0.393	0.394	0.056	7.000	0.000
ESE -> EI	0.337	0.336	0.054	6.227	0.000
ESE -> EP	0.678	0.678	0.027	25.550	0.000
ESE -> EP -> EI	0.267	0.267	0.040	6.692	0.000

Source: Smart-PLS 4

7. Discussion

Ho1 revealed that entrepreneurial passion has a significant effect on entrepreneurial intention among undergraduate students. The study aligned with the studies of Al Halbusi, Soto-Acosta and Popa (2024); Kyriakopoulos, Herbert and Piperopoulos (2024); and Zheng and Angasinha (2025), who found significant effect, while it was not in line with the studies of Aqilah, Lastelinia and Rohman (2025), who found insignificant effect. The finding is in line with the Social Cognitive Theory (SCT). SCT places a strong emphasis on how affective and personal factors influence behavior. The emotional and motivating force that propels people to pursue entrepreneurial endeavors is known as entrepreneurial passion. According to SCT, this emotional energy strengthens entrepreneurial intention by improving self-regulation and goal commitment (Bandura, 1986).

The nonacceptance of Ho2 shows that entrepreneurial self-efficacy has a significant effect on entrepreneurial intention among undergraduate students. The study aligned with the studies of Edigbonya et al. (2024); Nwibe and Ogbuanya (2024); they found a significant effect, while it was not in line with the studies of Taneja, Kiran and Bose (2025); Nguyen and Phan (2024); and Gonzalez-Tamayo, Olarewaju, Bonomo-Odizzio and Krauss-Delorme (2024), who found an insignificant effect. The result is consistent with SCT; according to SCT, motivation and behavioral intention are directly impacted by self-efficacy beliefs. Students who have a high level of entrepreneurial self-efficacy have a stronger entrepreneurial intention because they believe they can recognize possibilities, take calculated risks, and manage projects (Bandura, 1986).

Ho3 revealed that entrepreneurial self-efficacy has a significant effect on entrepreneurial passion among undergraduate students. The result is in line with the social cognitive theory, which shows how positive self-beliefs affect emotional states in addition to behavior. Students who have confidence in their entrepreneurial ability are more intrinsically motivated and emotionally attached to entrepreneurial endeavors, which manifests as enthusiasm (Bandura, 1986).

Ho4 showed that entrepreneurial passion mediates the effect of entrepreneurial self-efficacy on entrepreneurial intention among undergraduate students. The result is in line with social cognitive theory; SCT holds that affective (emotional) and

cognitive (self-efficacy) variables interact dynamically to produce behavior. According to this research, self-efficacy indirectly increases entrepreneurial intention through entrepreneurial passion, demonstrating that self-confidence stimulates emotional motivation, which in turn influences behavioral intention.

8. Conclusion and Recommendations

The study concludes that a key psychological factor influencing entrepreneurial intention is emotional motivation, or passion. Students' chances of pursuing entrepreneurship can be significantly increased by fostering their interest. Moreover, the outcome validates SCT by showing that students' aspirations to start a business are greatly increased when they believe in their own entrepreneurial skill, or self-efficacy. Furthermore, the outcome shows that emotional engagement (EP) is stimulated by strong self-belief (ESE), suggesting that efficacy views might ignite the drive required for entrepreneurial endeavors. Lastly, SCT's claim that emotion and cognition cooperate to shape conduct is supported by the mediation function of entrepreneurial passion. Encouraging students to pursue entrepreneurship therefore requires boosting their confidence and passion.

The study recommends that to increase students' emotional involvement and enthusiasm for entrepreneurship, entrepreneurship instructors can incorporate experiential learning activities such as pitch competitions and business simulations. Again, in order for students to gain confidence through mastery experiences and role model observation, universities should create entrepreneurial programs that emphasize skill development, mentorship, and success modeling. Entrepreneurship instructors should encourage self-assurance-boosting activities like idea pitching, prototyping, and networking gatherings so that students can feel competent and develop a passion for entrepreneurship. Finally, to effectively foster students' entrepreneurial intention, entrepreneurship development programs should incorporate both affective development (inspiring passion and dedication) and cognitive training (developing skills and confidence).

9. Suggested Areas for Further Study

Future studies should look at how the connection between entrepreneurial self-efficacy and entrepreneurial intention is moderated by outside variables, including finance availability, family support, and mentorship. Future research might explore whether male and female students experience and act upon entrepreneurial self-efficacy differently, as well as any potential gender variations in the mediation of entrepreneurial passion.

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