



# The Impact of Work Experience on Entrepreneurial Intention among Vocational Education Students

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.30880/jtet.0000.00.00.000>

Received 00 Month 2000; Accepted 01 Month 2000; Available online 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023

**Abstract:** One entrepreneurship-related subject that has produced a lot of research is the investigation of entrepreneurial intention (EI). This study aims to investigate the impact of students' work experience across the four categories (SN, ES, ATE, and EE). The methodology employed in this study is quantitative, using a structural equation modelling (SEM) approach. The participants were assigned to multidisciplinary workgroups comprising six to eight individuals with backgrounds in management and engineering. There were five-course iterations between the 2021–2022 academic years. There were 250 students registered for this course. This research supports the belief that instruction in entrepreneurship can improve one's abilities in this area, even if it does not necessarily result in immediate action. This study highlights the importance of entrepreneurial education in increasing entrepreneurial intention among students. Additionally, students' belief in their abilities to become entrepreneurs, based on factors such as technical skills, social skills, and risk-taking abilities, is not affected by prior work experience. The study recognises that students' career experience is essential in understanding the significance of entrepreneurial education in fostering entrepreneurial intention.

**Keywords:** Work Experience, Vocational Education, Entrepreneurial Intention

## 1. Introduction

Entrepreneurship has gained significant attention from academics in recent years. It is believed that entrepreneurship is a crucial process for individuals engaged in economic activities and plays an essential role in promoting social harmony, making it a topic of academic interest. Research suggests that entrepreneurs contribute to eliminating trade and cultural barriers, reducing travel times, and facilitating job creation (Dong, Xu, & Cha, 2021; Obschonka et al., 2023). Therefore, creating an environment that fosters an entrepreneurial culture is essential since entrepreneurship is regarded as a driver of competitiveness, innovation, and growth (Haider Alvi & Ulrich, 2023; Williams, Tesfaye Hailemariam, & Allard, 2022). As a result, governments increasingly emphasise entrepreneurship as a strategy to aid economic development, generate income, and create employment opportunities, given the need for economies and societies to become more entrepreneurial.

Numerous studies have explored the idea of entrepreneurship in the literature and highlighted the significance of economic, psychological, and social elements for entrepreneurship promotion (Munemo, 2022; Rosado-Cubero, Hernández, Blanco Jiménez, & Freire-Rubio, 2023). These studies have found that various variables relating to a

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person's personality and surroundings can significantly impact their decision to start a business. The significance of public policies that encourage entrepreneurship and can affect the likelihood of initiating a company is recognised in the context (Gao, 2021; Watson et al., 2023). Tax incentives are added to the list of factors that can affect the benefits and hazards of business prospects by Drucker (Drucker, Funderburg, Merriman, & Weber, 2020). Finally, it is discovered that education policies can impact people's talents (Brown, Sadik, & Xu, 2021).

One of the entrepreneurship-related subjects that has produced a lot of research is the investigation of entrepreneurial intention (EI) (Abdelfattah, Al Halbusi, & Al-Brwani, 2022; Elnadi & Gheith, 2023; Truong, Le, Pham, Do, & Pham, 2022). These investigations aim to pinpoint and go deeper into the variables that influence an individual's entrepreneurial activities. Vocational education institutions are one of the academic settings that support the study of EI. Universities have a broader objective than just conventional teaching and research functions, and they possess a valuable and diverse body of knowledge to equip individuals with the necessary skills to establish their businesses (Jena, 2020; Shirokova, Osiyevskyy, Morris, & Bogatyreva, 2017). To achieve this, it is ideal for students to have acquired entrepreneurial-focused abilities, i.e., that they are people with entrepreneurial aims.

As they progress through vocational school, they can develop their prospective abilities (Cao, 2022; Handayati, Wulandari, Soetjipto, Wibowo, & Narmaditya, 2020). This realisation prompts preliminary thinking regarding the antecedent variables that might be important for comprehending EI. The objective of this research is to understand how the antecedents of the desire to start a business", as proposed by Boubker, who developed a multidimensional model that divides them into four categories: social norms (social norms exert a profound influence on entrepreneur intention as they shape individuals' perceptions of what is socially acceptable and desirable), entrepreneurial skill (entrepreneurial skills are pivotal determinants of entrepreneur intention as they equip individuals with the capabilities and confidence needed to pursue entrepreneurial endeavours), attitude toward entrepreneurship (attitude toward entrepreneurship plays a central role in shaping entrepreneur intention as it reflects an individual's beliefs, perceptions, and evaluations of entrepreneurial activities), and entrepreneurship education (entrepreneurial education has a significant influence on entrepreneur intention as it equips individuals with the knowledge, skills, and mindset necessary for entrepreneurship.). The investigations conducted by Singh—which examine each of these dimensions separately—support this concept. Students' work experience is considered in this study to determine the relative significance of these antecedents and define EI (Singh & Mehdi, 2022).

This research considers a group of 186 students enrolled in an entrepreneurship course at Universitas Negeri Padang (250 students registered for this course; 64 students did not respond to the questionnaire, so 186 students made up the sample). Most studies in this area have only considered a uniform group of students, and this research addresses a significant gap in the literature that limits deeper exploration of the topic. It is accepted, however, that not all studies properly examine the impact of students' prior work experience. Previous studies have focused solely on the significance of self-employment, ignoring students' work experience and only considering their entrepreneurial background. One study has indirectly explored the impact of work experience on understanding career choices related to entrepreneurship (Meoli, Fini, Sobrero, & Wiklund, 2020); Another study has limited its scope to a sample of secondary school students, which prevents the analysis of significant causal relationships, the results finding revealed that all the antecedents of the TPB (SN, ATE) have a statistically significant correlation with EI. The findings suggest that the TPB can be regarded as a valuable tool for evaluating students' EI (Malebana & Mothibi, 2023).

The remaining portions of this document are arranged as follows: First, a review of the research is provided on how to characterise EI and the entrepreneurial education process. The corresponding research hypotheses are offered after the construction of the conceptual model. The results are then presented and discussed considering their applicability and the advancement of knowledge regarding the categorisation of EI in vocational teaching. Finally, the findings are outlined, along with the study's key boundaries and potential future research directions.

## 1.1 Entrepreneurial Goals

Individual entrepreneur factors or environmental variables cannot be used to understand entrepreneurship in isolation. Given that Su and Zhang recognised that entrepreneurial activity is a planned behaviour, there is a need to comprehend and identify EI (Su et al., 2021; Zhang, Wei, Sun, & Tung, 2019). Entrepreneurial action is better understood when the antecedents of intentions are known. There are several different empirical assessments of EI in the literature. As major disparities between the construct measures utilised in each study are discovered, comparisons between these works become challenging.

Two categories of drivers contribute to the creation of academic spin-offs: economic factors (such as demographic and educational background, social and human capital) and psychological factors (such as personal attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control). Another systematic review explores these factors (Laspita, Sitaridis, Kitsios, & Sarri, 2023; Silva, Moutinho, & Moreira, 2022), in the context of social entrepreneurship and highlights some common factors present in all entrepreneurial activities, regardless of the business type, and some unique factors specific to social businesses. Rather than solely focusing on individual or environmental variables, models that analyse (EI) are helpful in understanding how an individual's EI affects their behaviour. Several models have been developed to explain this phenomenon, as discussed below.

The Shapero (1982) model is still one of the most used models for analysing entrepreneurship (Licht & Siegel, 2009). According to Shapero and Sokol's proposal, five aspects affect how a firm is formed, including incentives, disincentives, means, perceptions of willingness, and perceptions of feasibility. As acknowledged in previous studies, incentives are seen as components that can inspire a person to establish an organization (Alamri, 2023; Garbers & Konradt, 2014). The movement of the individual to take measures that result in the development of a new enterprise is also acknowledged to be caused by unfavourable forces.

The concept of rational choice theory posits that human actions can be understood as deliberate plans in which intentions are the driving force behind behaviour. But not all plans are carried out since some are abandoned and others are changed along the route. Behavioural intention is included in the model as its predictor since it acknowledges that an entrepreneur's beliefs are simply one of the factors influencing their actions. EI results from behavioural attitudes and subjective norms that are influenced by how people feel about themselves about others and how driven they are to live up to societal standards (Van Tonder, Fullerton, De Beer, & Saunders, 2023).

This model (The rational choice theory) has been used to forecast the actions of entrepreneurs as identified by (Cassar, 2014; Sharafanova, Fedosenko, & Skhvediani, 2017; Song, Dana, & Berger, 2021). However, the adoption of this paradigm has drawn several objections because it does not consider the reality that other factors impact people's behaviours. In this regard, Ajzen (1991) offers a theory of planned conduct that aims to incorporate and address activities over which an individual has limited control. Although the purpose comes first in both models, derived research also includes additional criteria that are related to the accessibility of opportunities and resources (DINC & BUDIC, 2016; Mohammed, Fethi, & Djaoued, 2017; Vamvaka, Stoforos, Palaskas, & Botsaris, 2020).

## 1.2 Entrepreneurial Education

Entrepreneurship education (EE) has experienced a notable rise in publications over the past few years. There is a growing recognition among universities, businesses, governments, and society regarding the significance of EE in achieving social growth, a maintainable economy, and addressing forthcoming challenges. According to Rocha and Fiore, promoting education in entrepreneurship is essential and imperative for creating an environment that supports and encourages entrepreneurship. (Fiore, Sansone, & Paolucci, 2019; Rocha, Paço, Alves, & Gaspar, 2023).

Opinions differ on the appropriate usage of "teaching" and "education" concerning entrepreneurship. While these terms are commonly used interchangeably, they have separate meanings. Teaching generally entails a structured method of conveying knowledge that can suggest a degree of initial inactivity on the student's part (Haneberg, Aaboen, & Williams Middleton, 2022; Malebana & Mothibi, 2023). In contrast, "education" is associated with developing learning processes and techniques to promote entrepreneurial instruction. Therefore, "educate" is more suitable and appropriate for creating awareness among students about the significance of fostering an entrepreneurial mindset. This perspective is also reflected in studies that aim to equip students with the necessary tools to act as entrepreneurs, suggesting that EE can contribute to their development (Hameed & Irfan, 2019; Westhead & Solesvik, 2016).

In EE, entrepreneurship is explored through theories related to entrepreneurship, business construction, the commercial impacts of entrepreneurship, and factors contributing to failure and success. However, entrepreneurship education aims to nurture entrepreneurial abilities among students and encourage the entrepreneurial journey. Therefore, the former perspective concerns knowledge transfer, while EE focuses on developing skills, attitudes, and values essential for entrepreneurship. Molina suggests that EE should be a multidisciplinary and action-oriented (Molina & Valbuena, 2019). Additionally, assessing entrepreneurial skills requires the creation of formative assessment methods and the active participation of all participants in the procedure (Bilén, Kisenwether, Rzsasa, & Wise, 2005; Chang & Rieple, 2013).

EE encourages a positive attitude towards entrepreneurship, which prompts students to reflect on their career paths and consider pursuing an entrepreneurial venture or using their newfound skills for self-employment (Aga, 2023; Rismawan, Sujaya, & Fauziyah, 2022). Even if students choose not to pursue entrepreneurship, developing entrepreneurial skills has been shown to increase their capacity for entrepreneurship (González-Serrano, Crespo Hervás, Pérez-Campos, & Calabuig-Moreno, 2017; Scuotto & Morellato, 2013; Thanasi-Boçe, 2020). Additionally, the skills needed to translate ideas into entrepreneurial ventures include basic management skills such as leadership, negotiation, communication, and teamwork, which can be taught through EE (Šlogar, 2012; Ulijn, Dúill, & Robertson, 2004).

EE in vocational education was originally targeted at students in economics and management (Hidayat, 2017; Stadler & Smith, 2017). However, it has expanded to other fields such as engineering, health, and tourism. This shift is due to the recognition that entrepreneurship is a cross-cutting topic that should be addressed in various vocational education courses (Ndou, Mele, & Del Vecchio, 2019; Wu et al., 2022; Zhao, Zhang, & Wang, 2018). As a result, interdisciplinary projects that expose students to new experiences and skills are being encouraged by some experts.

### 1.3 Research Hypotheses

Entrepreneurial education (EE) can be decisive in achieving professional success. Unlike the conventional education model that concentrates on imparting curricular knowledge, EE equips students with supplementary skills that can be utilised professionally. This is because, apart from traits like self-sufficiency, tactical foresight, tenacity, and initiative, EE also promotes the acquisition of skills that facilitate problem-solving and adaptability (Jardim, 2021). This approach necessitates students to confront various challenges and employ their creative thinking abilities to surmount them.

The approach of entrepreneurial education is centred around encouraging students to participate actively, focusing on analysing situations, generating solutions, applying them in real-life scenarios, and consolidating their knowledge from the classroom. These abilities go well beyond a desire to launch a business. EE is essential for fostering the development of rational thinking, creativity and awakening curiosity (Aamir, Atsan, & Erdem, 2019; Karimi, Biemans, Lans, Aazami, & Mulder, 2016; Yar, Wennberg, & Berglund, 2008). The outcomes of entrepreneurial education can vary widely, including activities such as starting a new business, contributing to a social advancement initiative, or adapting a product to a new format. However, under this paradigm, vocational education institutions are expected to assist their students in developing these skills (Maritz & Brown, 2013).

In this way, the first research hypothesis examines how EE helps students' emotional intelligence grow. The following definition applies to the first hypothesis:

H1: There is a significant relationship between SN and EI

H2: There is a significant relationship between ES and EI

H3: There is a significant relationship between ATE and EI

H4: There is a significant relationship between EE and EI

Another research approach with multiple dimensions has been established to analyse the impact of students' work experience on the four categories mentioned earlier. Like Abdo's research, many studies in this field have used a uniform sample of students, which limits the examination of this phenomenon (abdo, 2023). However, this technique is relevant to overcome those restrictions. Considering this, the succeeding study hypotheses were developed:

H5:

H5a: The relevance of the student's work experience is an essential factor to consider in assessing the suitability of SN for entrepreneurial intention.

H5b: The role of the student's work experience is to mediate the evaluation of the applicability of ES in EI.

H5c: The role of the student's work experience acts as a mediator in assessing the significance of ATE in EI.

H5d: The investigation of the application's applicability in EI considers work experience as a mediating factor.

The proposed model, which depicts the study hypotheses, is summarised in Figure 1.

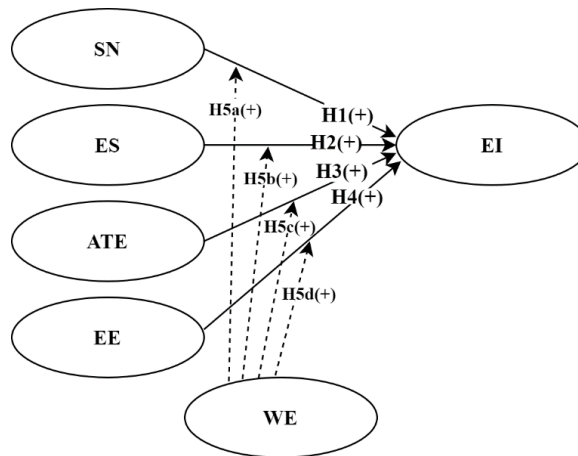


Fig. 1 - The proposed model

## 2. Method

To facilitate a quantitative examination of the theoretical models proposed by the researcher, this study employs a statistical technique called structural equation modeling (SEM), Boubker's research suggests that Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) is a versatile technique that has been extensively utilized in Entrepreneurship Education (EE) research as it enables the examination of connections between observed variables (Boubker, Arroud, & Ouajdouni, 2021). The most significant characteristic of SEM's expansion is its ability to incorporate multiple latent variables or several factors to calculate measurement errors. Variables that cannot be measured directly but can be observed by their consequences or observable causes can be included in these models.

The course covers both theoretical and practical aspects of entrepreneurship, such as finding business opportunities (using tools like pre-feasibility studies, idea generation processes, opportunity assessments, and decision-making processes), creating business plans (using tools like executive summaries, business definitions, marketing plans, operational plans, and financial plans), and establishing the legal framework for a new venture (e.g., software protection, intellectual property protection, licensing, and patents). The students were assigned to work in groups consisting of six to eight peers who came from diverse backgrounds in management and engineering. There were five iterations of the course between the 2021–2022 academic years course. There were 250 students registered for this course.

Students were required to complete a questionnaire at the start of the course to learn more about their profiles. 64 students did not respond to the questionnaire, so 186 students made up the sample. A detailed statistical breakdown of the sample's makeup is shown in Table 1. More than 72% of the students have a background in engineering, more than 68% of the students are male, and about 51% of the students are between the ages of 21 and 24. Around 88% of students have working experience, which is a proportional percentage. Over 46% of students have one to five years of working experience.

**Table 1 - Students Profile**

<b>Measurement</b>	<b>Rate</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	128	68,81
Female	58	31,18
<b>Age</b>		
21-24	96	51,61
25-28	57	30,65
29-32	33	17,74
<b>Background</b>		
Engineering	135	72,58
Management	51	27,42
<b>Possesses prior EE?</b>		
Yes	168	90,32
No	18	9,68
<b>Has working experience?</b>		
Yes	164	88,17
No	22	11,83
<b>Has created a business?</b>		
Yes	32	17,20
No	154	82,80
<b>Approximately how long have you been working?</b>		
Fewer than a year	29	15,59
Approximately one to five years	87	46,77
Above years	48	25,81

Finally, Table 2 shows the questionnaire's structure. A total of 30 components across five dimensions are taken into consideration. The outer loading of each item is higher than 0.7. All items are rated on a five-point Likert-style scale.

**Table 2 - Constructional structure**

Variable	Question	Outer Loading
SN	SN_1. Perceptions of the family on starting a business.	0.745
	SN_2. Teachers' perspectives on starting a business.	0.837
	SN_3. A friend's perspective on starting a business.	0.792
	SN_4. Individuals who are significant in your judgment of the establishment of a business.	0.790
ES	ES_1. Calculated effects of macro-environmental variations.	0.766
	ES_2. Calculate the project's risks.	0.745
	ES_3. Calculate the project's budgetary demands.	0.802
	ES_4. Create a plan for marketing and advertising.	0.745
	ES_5. Identify pertinent competitor data.	0.799
	ES_6. Getting external funding.	0.720
	ES_7. Establish an operating strategy.	0.821
ATE	ATE_1. I'll start a business if I have the chance and the resources.	0.793
	ATE_2. Of the choices available, I favour being an entrepreneur.	0.745
	ATE_3. I'm interested in a job as an entrepreneur.	0.805
	ATE_4. I stand to gain more benefits from being an entrepreneur.	0.756
	ATE_5. I would get enormous joy from starting my own business.	0.778
EE	EE_1. I'm excited to participate in this institution's entrepreneurship education programs.	0.860
	EE_2. One of the better courses in the area is this one.	0.789
	EE_3. This course on entrepreneurship development has taught me a lot.	0.711
	EE_4. My life will never be the same again because of this course.	0.745
	EE_5. All efforts are made by the instructors to ensure that students are properly informed.	0.709
	EE_6. Thanks to this course, I now have the knowledge and abilities to launch my own business.	0.812
	EE_7. It is quite great that this university has started offering courses on entrepreneurship development.	0.860
	EE_8. I'm happy with this university's entrepreneurship development courses overall.	0.777
EI	EI_1. I'll do whatever to succeed as an entrepreneur.	0.860
	EI_2. I'm determined to open a business someday.	0.765
	EI_3. My professional ambition is to launch my own business.	0.745
	EI_4. I've seriously considered starting my own business.	0.778
	EI_5. I'll try my hardest to launch and manage my own business.	0.709
	EI_6. In the future, I'm committed to starting a business.	0.837

### 3. Results

A basic statistical examination of the various constructions' items is shown in Table 3. The mean, median, and standard deviation are computed for this reason. Most of the items had a mean response of approximately 6, indicating high relevance for each item. However, certain items, such as the benefits of being an attractive entrepreneur (ATE5), the training opportunities offered by entrepreneurship developments (EE2), and the influence of the entrepreneurship course on their lives, had discrepancies. Some items had lower means and higher standard deviations, for instance, the influence of the entrepreneurship course on their personal and professional lives. (EE4). Notably, students mentioned that although they aimed to start their own business (EI6), they did not feel prepared to do so in the short term and make the necessary preparations (E1).

Table 4 presents a correlation analysis of different constructs along with their standard deviation and mean. Among all the structures, the mean of EI is the lowest among all the variables, while its standard deviation is the highest. The fitness data shows that all the measurements fall inside the anticipated range. The  $\chi^2$  value is 618.407 with 185 degrees of freedom, and the  $\chi^2/df$  ratio is 3.343. Additionally, the GFI value is 0.881, AGFI is 0.877, and CFI is 0.963. The sampled mean variances (AVE) range between 0.706 and 0.782, and the compositional confidences (CR) are above 0.75.

**Table 3 - Summary statistics**

Item	Mean	Median	Mode	Standard deviation
SN_1	6.589	6	6	0.657
SN_2	6.435	6	6	0.925
SN_3	6.559	6	7	0.821
SN_4	6.585	6	6	0.911
ES_1	6.205	6	6	0.782
ES_2	6.108	6	6	0.672
ES_3	6.556	6	7	0.872
ES_4	6.205	6	7	0.892
ES_5	6.324	6	7	0.766
ES_6	6.508	7	7	0.989
ES_7	6.243	7	6	1.113
ATE_1	6.269	6	6	0.899
ATE_2	6.367	6	7	0.921
ATE_3	6.554	7	7	1.082
ATE_4	6.278	6	6	0.978
ATE_5	5.832	6	6	1.765
EE_1	6.257	6	7	0.891
EE_2	6.522	7	6	1.688
EE_3	6.325	6	7	0.938
EE_4	6.442	6	6	1.876
EE_5	6.322	6	6	0.929
EE_6	6.312	7	6	0.784
EE_7	6.537	6	7	0.827
EE_8	6.344	6	7	0.829
EI_1	5.582	7	6	1.648
EI_2	5.765	6	5	1.235
EI_3	5.823	6	6	1.562
EI_4	5.383	6	5	1.022
EI_5	5.810	6	6	0.875
EI_6	6.056	7	6	1.003

**Table 4 - Assessment of a measurement model**

	Mean	SD	Cross-construct correlations				
			SN	ES	ATE	EE	EI
SN	6.112	0.932	1				
ES	6.226	0.941	0.671	1			
ATE	6.296	0.907	0.533	0.619	1		
EE	5.927	1.104	0.712	0.734	0.743	1	
EI	5.641	1.177	0.485	0.642	0.618	0.709	1
CR			0.834	0.789	0.765	0.865	0.837
AVE			0.706	0.782	0.715	0.741	0.728

Table 5 presents the results of the hypothesis testing conducted in the study. The data collected provided evidence to support all hypotheses that were created in the model. Specifically, the findings revealed that the impact of SN on EI was constructive ( $\lambda = 0.321, p < 0.01$ ), ES had a constructive impact on EI ( $\lambda = 0.382, p < 0.01$ ), ATE had a constructive impact on EI ( $\lambda = 0.329, p < 0.01$ ), and EE also had a constructive impact on EI ( $\lambda = 0.258, p = 0.032$ ).

**Table 5 - Evaluation of the hypothesis**

Hypothesis	Connection	Approximation	p-value	Result
Hyp.1	SN→EI	0,321	<1×10-3	Established
Hyp.2	ES→EI	0,382	<1×10-3	Established
Hyp.3	ATE→EI	0,329	<1×10-3	Established
Hyp.4	EE→EI	0,258	0,032	Established

Hypothesis 1 (Hyp.1) is accepted, namely SN has a significant impact on EI, as well as Hyp.2 (ES → EI) which means that ES influences EI, then Hyp.3 (ATE → EI) which means ATE also significant effect on EI and Hyp.4 which

represents the positive influence of EE on EI (EE → EI). Then, WE (Work Experience) really support EE in building EI. The rest supported by WE (SN, ES, ATE) have no influence, meaning the hypothesis is rejected.

Table 6 displays a test for assessing the impact of work experience, which examines the variance between students with work experience (WE) and those without work experience (NWE). The test uses a significance level of 0.05 to evaluate the difference. The results reveal a significant variation in student behaviours in the process of developing EI, indicating that students with work experience consider entrepreneurship education to be more important, and this is evident in their higher EI levels. Therefore, H5d is also accepted.

**Table 6 - The contrast between students has work experience and do not**

Hypothesis	Mean (WE)	Standard deviation (WE)	Mean (NWE)	Standard deviation (NWE)	p-value	Result
SN	6,427	0,839	6,283	0,958	0,181	Rejected
ES	6,017	1,078	5,933	1,135	0,165	Rejected
ATE	6,259	0,882	6,244	0,946	0,211	Rejected
EE	6,311	0,994	5,892	1,058	0,021	Accepted
EI	5,877	1,072	5,331	1,245	<1×10-3	Accepted

#### 4. Discussion

The relationship between various indicators such as social norms, entrepreneurial skill, attitude toward entrepreneurship, and entrepreneurship education with entrepreneurship intention is multifaceted. Entrepreneurship intention, or the willingness to engage in entrepreneurial activities, is influenced by these indicators in various ways. Positive social norms, where a society values and encourages entrepreneurship, can foster intentions to become an entrepreneur, while negative norms may deter individuals. Entrepreneurial skills, encompassing creativity and problem-solving abilities, empower individuals to pursue entrepreneurship. A positive attitude toward entrepreneurship, characterized by a favourable view of its challenges and rewards, can boost intentions, while a negative attitude may discourage them. Furthermore, access to entrepreneurship education equips individuals with knowledge and skills, enhancing their confidence and, in turn, their intentions to engage in entrepreneurship. These indicators' interplay is essential, but personal experiences and environmental factors also shape individual intentions to become entrepreneurs. Researchers employ surveys, interviews, and statistical analyses to explore these relationships in specific contexts comprehensively.

The current research validates earlier studies (Barba-Sánchez & Atienza-Sahuquillo, 2018; Bazkiaei, Heng, Khan, Saufi, & Kasim, 2020; Karimi, Biemans, Lans, Chizari, & Mulder, 2016), that emphasize the part of entrepreneurial instruction in boosting the desire for entrepreneurship amid students. The underlying principle of entrepreneurial education is that entrepreneurship is a continuous learning experience, with entrepreneurs constantly seeking out new opportunities for growth and development. By doing so, they continue to gain knowledge and skills.

The literature extensively discusses whether entrepreneurship can be taught or not. Some scholars assert that it relies on inherent traits, whereas others argue that it can be cultivated through education (Henry, Hill, & Leitch, 2005; Henry & Treanor, 2012; Matthews, Stowe, & Jenkins, 2011). This study supports the idea that entrepreneurial education can enhance entrepreneurial skills, even if it does not directly lead to action. Additionally, it also found the association of ATE, SN, and ES with increasing EI.

ATE is a common behaviour among those who are willing to take risks and is thus related to common entrepreneurial behaviour. Such behaviour can manifest in different ways. The study participants were students who had prior experience in managing their businesses or organizations. Internal entrepreneurship pertains to an individual's ability to introduce new ideas or methods within their company, even if they are not the ones who start the business or project. (Wang & Fu, 2023). This capability is becoming increasingly sought after in the job market and is crucial for career advancement. Although related, the study findings suggest that these student-led initiatives do not necessarily inspire them to abandon their current roles and pursue entrepreneurship. Most of these students hold technical or professional positions and are seeking to enhance their practical skills with academic qualifications that will prepare them for managerial roles within their organizations.

An entrepreneur is an individual who takes an active approach to search for new opportunities and endeavours to obtain the required abilities or competencies to succeed in the market, rather than waiting for them to come their way. Traits like taking initiative, being willing to take risks, having emotional intelligence, and putting in hard work are essential to an individual's entrepreneurial intention (EI) (Bauman & Lucy, 2021). Additionally, the external atmosphere in which the business works is also a crucial factor (Lee, Kang, & Kim, 2022). Social norms, laws, values, and culture can either facilitate or hinder the establishment of competitive, entrepreneurial, innovative, and risky businesses. This study highlights that students maintain their perception of the situation regardless of their past business experience.

Additionally, students' belief in their abilities to become entrepreneurs, based on factors such as technical skills, social skills, and risk-taking abilities, is not affected by prior work experience. The study recognizes that students'



career experience is essential in understanding the significance of entrepreneurial education in fostering entrepreneurial intention. Entrepreneurship entails developing new products/processes or penetrating new markets, whether by starting a new enterprise or operating within an established one. Entrepreneurs are driven by their convictions and beliefs, but the uncertainty associated with these endeavours is usually high. As a result, entrepreneurs must rely on their discernment to determine whether or not to pursue their (Hoang, Luu, Le, & Tran, 2022).

This study suggests that individuals familiar with the market and technology are more likely to recognise opportunities for entrepreneurship. They are also more motivated to pursue these opportunities if they have work experience and feel confident starting a business related to their field. Not all individuals may perceive these opportunities as contingent on their ability to detect fluctuations in the external situation. This study acclaims that students in the field of engineering are particularly interested in pursuing entrepreneurial opportunities due to the growing demand for this skill in the job market and the challenges of digitisation. Individuals with work experience in this field feel more confident in starting new businesses and gain a deeper comprehension of the significance of business education. However, students without work experience tend to have lower entrepreneurial intention levels and more difficulty understanding the benefits of business education in their career development. They tend to focus on short-term goals, such as gaining experience through internships, rather than starting their businesses.

## 5. Conclusions

The desire to become an entrepreneur, commonly called entrepreneurial intention (EI), is vital in comprehending launching a new enterprise. EI is linked to a personage's entrepreneurial behaviour and their determination to establish a start-up. Nonetheless, innate entrepreneurial abilities are not the only factors determining EI. Life experiences that result in the accumulation of knowledge, such as cultural and environmental factors, also play a significant role in motivating people to pursue entrepreneurship as a calling.

This study examines a diverse group of students who have taken an undergraduate course in entrepreneurship, with backgrounds in management and information technology and varying levels of work experience. The findings indicate that EI is a complex concept that must be considered from multiple perspectives, such as Entrepreneurial Action (EA), an individual's perceptions of their entrepreneurial abilities, and the societal context in which it occurs. Additionally, it was discovered that work experience significantly influences an individual's perception of EI and their attitude toward entrepreneurial education. People with more work experience tend to have a greater inclination towards launching their businesses and acknowledge the advantages of entrepreneurship education in accomplishing this objective.

This research focuses on the correlation between work experience and entrepreneurial meaning and its implications for entrepreneurship education, social norm perceptions, and an individual's capacity to pursue a business career. The study concludes that work experience in the engineering and management field is critical in comprehending the significance of education and entrepreneurial intention. As a result, the research provides practical recommendations for vocational education institutions to devise more efficient curricula and instructional techniques for students who lack professional experience. The results suggest that students with no work experience can overcome their lack of knowledge in the business sector by working in teams and exploring new business opportunities that balance technical and managerial skills.

## Acknowledgement

The authors would like to thank all who participated in this research.

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