

Entrepreneurship Education and Student Venture Creation: The Mediating Role of Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy among University Students in Ghana

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ABSTRACT

Ghanaian universities increasingly use entrepreneurship education to prepare students for self-employment and venture creation, yet most existing evidence evaluates entrepreneurial intention rather than actual entrepreneurial behaviour. This study examines whether entrepreneurship education is associated with student venture creation and whether entrepreneurial self-efficacy explains this relationship. Guided by Social Cognitive Theory, the study adopts a quantitative cross-sectional design and draws on survey responses from university students in Ghana who had prior exposure to entrepreneurship education. Entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial self-efficacy were assessed with multi-item measures, while venture creation was captured through behavioural indicators reflecting business start-up, revenue generation, and active time invested in a venture. The measurement model was assessed for reliability and construct validity, and the hypothesised relationships were examined using structural equation modelling with bootstrap mediation analysis. The findings show that entrepreneurship education is strongly associated with entrepreneurial self-efficacy, whereas its direct relationship with venture creation is weak. Entrepreneurial self-efficacy is positively associated with venture creation and carries the effect of entrepreneurship education to behaviour, indicating that education operates primarily through a psychological capability pathway. However, the modest translation of self-efficacy into venture activity highlights the continuing importance of structural conditions, including access to entrepreneurial networks, family business exposure, capital, and post-course support. The study contributes by shifting Ghanaian entrepreneurship education research from intention to behaviour, clarifying self-efficacy as a mediating mechanism, and identifying practical limits to education-only approaches to student entrepreneurship. The findings support stronger integration of experiential learning, incubation, mentorship, and resource access within university entrepreneurship programmes.

Keywords: entrepreneurship education, entrepreneurial self-efficacy, venture creation, Social Cognitive Theory, Ghana, intention-action gap.

1. INTRODUCTION

Graduate unemployment and the limited absorptive capacity of formal labour markets have intensified the policy expectation that universities should prepare students not only for paid employment but also for enterprise creation. In Ghana, recent labour-market evidence and public debate continue to identify youth and graduate unemployment as a major development challenge (Ghana Statistical Service, 2024; Ecofin Agency, 2025). In response, entrepreneurship has become increasingly embedded in tertiary curricula and national youth-enterprise initiatives. Universities have introduced entrepreneurship courses, centres, competitions and incubation activities, while public programmes such as the National Entrepreneurship and Innovation Programme have reinforced the policy emphasis on youth-led business creation. The timing of this study is therefore important: entrepreneurship education is receiving sustained institutional and public investment, yet its success should

ultimately be judged by whether students move beyond entrepreneurial aspirations to create operating ventures.

A large entrepreneurship education literature reports positive effects on entrepreneurial intention and entrepreneurial self-efficacy. Evidence from Vietnam, Indonesia, China and Malaysia generally indicates that course exposure, experiential learning and university support can strengthen students' confidence and entrepreneurial intentions (Hoang et al., 2020; Wardana et al., 2020; Wu et al., 2022; Vivekananth et al., 2023; Wang et al., 2023). Ghanaian studies similarly show that entrepreneurship education is associated with self-efficacy and intention among university and technical-university students (Puni et al., 2018; Adu et al., 2020; Nunfam et al., 2020; Padi et al., 2022; Amponsah et al., 2024). However, intention is an incomplete indicator of programme effectiveness. The intention-action literature shows that many individuals who express entrepreneurial intentions do not subsequently start businesses, and the translation from intention to behaviour varies with context, resources and institutional conditions (Bogatyeva et al., 2019; Harima et al., 2021; Tsou et al., 2023).

This distinction is especially consequential in Ghana. The policy rationale for entrepreneurship education is connected to self-employment, job creation and economic participation rather than to favourable attitudes alone. Yet the Ghanaian evidence base remains dominated by intention-based outcomes, often drawn from a single institution, programme or student segment. Consequently, it remains unclear whether entrepreneurship education translates into observable venture activity across university students and, if it does, through what mechanism. Entrepreneurial self-efficacy provides a theoretically plausible explanation. Social Cognitive Theory proposes that mastery experiences, vicarious learning, social persuasion and the management of emotional arousal shape beliefs about personal capability (Bandura, 1986). Entrepreneurship courses, simulations, mentoring and pitching activities can activate these sources and strengthen confidence in opportunity recognition, planning, financing, marketing and venture management (Chen et al., 1998; Liguori et al., 2019). Higher self-efficacy should, in turn, support persistence under uncertainty and increase the likelihood that students act on entrepreneurial opportunities (Gielnik et al., 2020).

The study addresses three connected gaps. First, it replaces entrepreneurial intention with a behavioural venture-creation outcome, thereby testing whether educational exposure is associated with action rather than aspiration. Second, it examines entrepreneurial self-efficacy as the mediating mechanism through which entrepreneurship education may translate into behaviour in a West African university context. Third, it considers a context in which structural conditions such as family business exposure, resource access and post-course support may constrain the movement from psychological readiness to venture creation. The study therefore asks whether entrepreneurship education strengthens self-efficacy, whether self-efficacy is associated with venture creation, whether education has a direct behavioural association, and whether self-efficacy carries the education-behaviour relationship.

Four hypotheses follow from this argument: H1, entrepreneurship education is positively associated with entrepreneurial self-efficacy; H2, entrepreneurial self-efficacy is positively associated with student venture creation; H3, entrepreneurship education is positively associated with student venture creation; and H4, entrepreneurial self-efficacy mediates the relationship between entrepreneurship education and student venture creation. By testing these relationships, the study contributes a behaviour-focused evaluation of entrepreneurship education at a time when Ghanaian universities and policymakers are under increasing pressure to demonstrate outcomes beyond classroom participation and entrepreneurial intention.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Social Cognitive Theory and Entrepreneurship

Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) explains behaviour through reciprocal interactions among personal factors, environmental conditions and behaviour itself (Bandura, 1986). Self-efficacy is central to this process because it influences whether individuals initiate a behaviour, how much effort they invest, and how persistently they respond to obstacles. Bandura identifies four principal sources of self-efficacy: mastery experience, vicarious learning, social persuasion and physiological or emotional arousal. In entrepreneurship education, these mechanisms can be activated through business-plan development and simulations, exposure to practising entrepreneurs, mentor and lecturer feedback, and pitch or competition experiences. Entrepreneurship education can therefore be viewed as an environmental and learning input that strengthens students' beliefs about their capacity to perform entrepreneurial tasks.

The social-cognitive logic is also consistent with Social Cognitive Career Theory, which positions self-efficacy as a proximal mechanism linking learning experiences and environmental inputs to career-related choices and actions (Lent et al., 1994; Adebuseyi et al., 2021). Within entrepreneurship, evidence from multiple institutional settings shows that self-efficacy is associated with opportunity-oriented behaviour, although the strength of this relationship varies with contextual conditions (Boudreaux et al., 2018). SCT is therefore appropriate for the present study because it explains why exposure to entrepreneurship education may increase psychological capability while recognising that confidence does not automatically remove external barriers to venture creation.

2.2 Entrepreneurship Education and Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy

Entrepreneurship education is conceptualised here as structured university exposure to entrepreneurship through courses, workshops and boot camps, simulations, mentorship, institutional encouragement, resource support and an entrepreneurship-oriented campus culture. This multidimensional view reflects recent approaches that combine curriculum with experiential and support components rather than treating entrepreneurship education as classroom instruction alone (Vivekananth et al., 2023; Mu et al., 2025). Such exposure can provide repeated opportunities for students to practise entrepreneurial tasks, observe role models, receive feedback and develop confidence in uncertain situations.

Empirical evidence on the education-self-efficacy pathway is comparatively consistent. Hoang et al. (2020) found that entrepreneurship education influenced entrepreneurial outcomes partly through self-efficacy and learning orientation among Vietnamese students. Wardana et al. (2020) reported positive links between entrepreneurship education, mindset, attitude and self-efficacy in Indonesia, while Wu et al. (2022) found a positive relationship among Chinese college students. Ghanaian evidence also supports this pathway. Puni et al. (2018) linked entrepreneurial education and knowledge acquisition to self-efficacy among university students, and Amponsah et al. (2024) showed that curriculum, teaching approaches and university support were important entrepreneurial antecedents among technical-university students. Although some studies report weaker or context-dependent effects (Adu et al., 2020; Ghouse et al., 2024), the dominant theoretical expectation is that meaningful, experiential entrepreneurship education strengthens students' perceived capability to perform entrepreneurial tasks. Accordingly, H1 predicts a positive association between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial self-efficacy.

2.3 Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy and Student Venture Creation

Entrepreneurial self-efficacy refers to confidence in one's ability to perform the tasks required to identify opportunities, mobilise resources, launch and manage a venture. Chen et al. (1998) operationalised the construct across domains such as innovation, marketing, management, risk

taking and financial control, while later applications extend it to opportunity recognition, resource mobilisation and adaptive management. SCT predicts that stronger self-efficacy should increase behavioural initiation and persistence, which are particularly important in entrepreneurship because venture creation involves uncertainty, setbacks and delayed rewards.

Evidence connecting self-efficacy to actual entrepreneurial behaviour is positive but less uniform than evidence connecting education to self-efficacy. Gielnik et al. (2020) showed that self-efficacy predicted business ownership among African entrepreneurs, while Boudreaux et al. (2018) demonstrated that institutional context conditions the relationship between entrepreneurial self-beliefs and opportunity entrepreneurship. The intention-action literature likewise shows that psychological readiness explains only part of entrepreneurial behaviour because access to resources, social networks and supportive environments remains important (Meoli et al., 2020; Nungsari et al., 2022; Tsou et al., 2023). In Ghana, family-business exposure may provide role models, informal knowledge and resource access that formal education cannot easily reproduce (Quaye & Acheampong, 2013). Thus, self-efficacy is expected to support venture creation, but its behavioural influence may be modest where structural constraints are strong. H2 therefore predicts a positive association between entrepreneurial self-efficacy and student venture creation.

2.4 Entrepreneurship Education and Student Venture Creation

A direct relationship between entrepreneurship education and venture creation is theoretically plausible but empirically contested. From a human-capital perspective, education should improve the knowledge and skills required to identify opportunities, plan a business, navigate registration, acquire resources and manage operations (Becker, 1964). University programmes that combine education with incubation, mentoring and seed-funding opportunities may also provide instrumental support that facilitates action. Conversely, SCT treats education as a more distal environmental input whose behavioural influence may operate through cognition and self-efficacy. Evidence suggests that formal entrepreneurship education often has stronger effects on intentions and psychological outcomes than on nascent entrepreneurial behaviour, while instrumental university support can be more important for moving students from intention to action (Lyu et al., 2023). The Ghanaian context further introduces capital constraints, market uncertainty and uneven access to post-course support. H3 nevertheless tests the conventional expectation that greater entrepreneurship education is positively associated with student venture creation.

2.5 The Mediating Role of Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy

The central proposition of the study is that entrepreneurial self-efficacy transmits the influence of entrepreneurship education to student venture creation. Education can create mastery, role-model exposure, persuasive feedback and managed performance experiences; these inputs strengthen confidence, and confidence can increase persistence and action. Prior studies report self-efficacy as a mediator between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial outcomes in several national settings (Hoang et al., 2020; Wardana et al., 2020; Wu et al., 2022; Amani et al., 2024; Wang et al., 2023; Mu et al., 2025). Ghanaian research also identifies self-efficacy as an important mechanism linking entrepreneurship education to intention (Puni et al., 2018), but behavioural venture creation remains underexamined. If education influences behaviour principally through self-efficacy, the indirect effect should be significant even when the direct education-behaviour path is weak or nonsignificant. Following Zhao et al. (2010), this pattern would be described as indirect-only mediation. H4 therefore predicts that entrepreneurial self-efficacy mediates the relationship between entrepreneurship education and student venture creation.

2.6 Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 summarises the study model. Entrepreneurship education is the exogenous construct, entrepreneurial self-efficacy is the mediating construct, and student venture creation is the behavioural outcome. The model estimates the education-to-self-efficacy pathway, the self-efficacy-to-venture pathway, the direct education-to-venture pathway, and the indirect effect through self-efficacy.

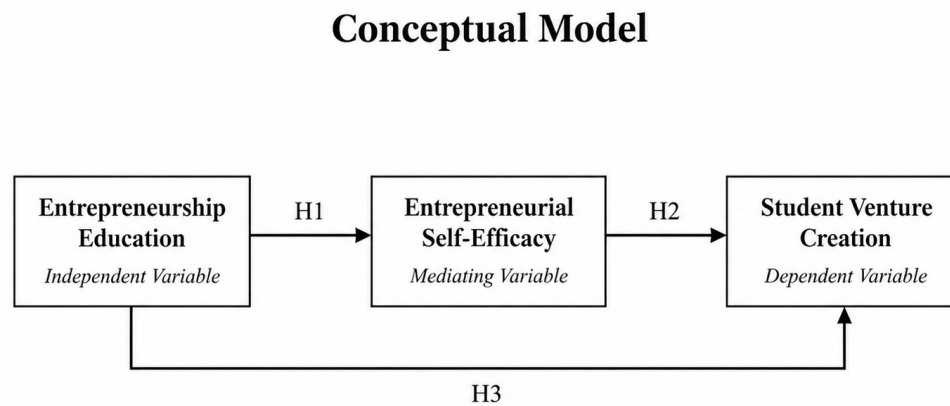


Figure 1. *Conceptual model of entrepreneurship education, entrepreneurial self-efficacy, and student venture creation. Source: Author's construct.*

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design and Study Context

The study employed a quantitative cross-sectional survey design. This design was appropriate because the research sought to estimate associations among entrepreneurship education, entrepreneurial self-efficacy and venture creation across a relatively large student sample at one point in time. Cross-sectional designs are common in entrepreneurship education research and permit simultaneous assessment of theoretically connected constructs, although they do not establish temporal causality (Hoang et al., 2020; Wardana et al., 2020; Vivekananth et al., 2023). The unit of analysis was the individual university student in Ghana.

3.2 Sample and Sampling Procedure

The final sample comprised 295 students drawn from public, private and technical/vocational higher-education settings in Ghana, with public-university students forming the large majority. Purposive sampling was used because eligible respondents were required to be currently enrolled students who had taken an entrepreneurship course or had received some form of entrepreneurship-related exposure. This eligibility criterion ensured that respondents could meaningfully evaluate the entrepreneurship education items. The sample was predominantly undergraduate and young adult, with slightly more women than men; a majority also reported a family business background. The sample size exceeded the commonly used minimum of 200 observations for covariance-based structural equation modelling and was adequate for the specified model (Kline, 2023).

3.3 Measures and Data Collection

Data were collected through a structured self-administered questionnaire distributed online and in person. Participation was voluntary and anonymous, no incentives were offered, and respondents were informed about the purpose of the study and asked to provide informed consent. Predictor, mediator and outcome items were placed in separate questionnaire blocks,

with demographic and contextual questions interspersed, as a procedural step to reduce common-method concerns (Podsakoff et al., 2003).

Entrepreneurship education was measured with seven retained items adapted from Vivekananth et al. (2023) and Mu et al. (2025), covering courses, workshops and boot camps, simulations, mentorship, institutional encouragement, access to entrepreneurship resources and university entrepreneurship culture. An eighth item on student business competitions was removed during measurement-model assessment because of a weak loading. Entrepreneurial self-efficacy was assessed with eight items adapted from Chen et al. (1998) and Liguori et al. (2019), capturing opportunity recognition, business planning, funding, venture management, marketing, financial management, adaptability and leadership. Both constructs used five-point agreement scales.

Student venture creation was operationalised as a behavioural composite based on three observable indicators: whether the respondent had started a business, whether the business had generated revenue, and the amount of weekly time invested in the venture. The indicators were rescaled to create a common composite. This behavioural operationalisation deliberately moves beyond intention-based outcomes used in much of the Ghanaian literature (Puni et al., 2018; Adu et al., 2020; Nunfam et al., 2020; Padi et al., 2022). Because the indicators represent different aspects of early venture activity, their measurement statistics were interpreted cautiously and alongside the substantive behavioural meaning of the index.

3.4 Data Analysis

Analysis proceeded in five stages. First, descriptive statistics, internal-consistency estimates and correlations were examined. Second, confirmatory factor analysis assessed the measurement model. Standardised factor loadings, Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability and average variance extracted were used to evaluate reliability and convergent validity, while the heterotrait-monotrait ratio assessed discriminant validity (Henseler et al., 2015). Third, variance inflation factors were inspected for multicollinearity. Fourth, the structural model estimated the hypothesised direct paths. Fifth, the mediating effect of entrepreneurial self-efficacy was tested with 5,000 bootstrap resamples and bias-corrected confidence intervals following established mediation procedures (Preacher & Hayes, 2008; Zhao et al., 2010). Robustness regressions included age, gender, family business background, university type and economic background as controls. The analyses were conducted in Python using *semopy* and *statsmodels* (Igolkina & Meshcheryakov, 2020).

4. RESULTS

4.1 Descriptive and Measurement Results

Entrepreneurship education recorded a moderate average score, while entrepreneurial self-efficacy was higher and student venture creation showed substantial dispersion across respondents. Entrepreneurship education was strongly correlated with self-efficacy, whereas the zero-order correlation between education and venture creation was negligible. The zero-order self-efficacy-venture correlation was small and did not reach conventional significance, indicating that the behavioural pathway was weaker than the education-self-efficacy relationship before model estimation.

The measurement results in Table 1 show acceptable reliability and convergent validity for entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial self-efficacy. The entrepreneurship education item concerning student business competitions was removed because its loading was below the acceptable range. The student venture creation composite displayed weaker internal consistency and average variance extracted than the two psychological constructs, reflecting the heterogeneity of its behavioural indicators; business start-up and revenue generation

contributed more strongly than weekly hours invested. Model fit was acceptable overall, and all reported HTMT values were below the recommended threshold, supporting discriminant validity among the constructs.

Table 1

Descriptive statistics and measurement-model summary

Construct	M	SD	Cronbach α	CR	AVE	Loading range
Entrepreneurship education	3.34	0.89	0.885	0.887	0.533	0.539–0.841
Entrepreneurial self-efficacy	3.71	0.83	0.935	0.937	0.652	0.588–0.883
Student venture creation	2.72	1.42	0.674	0.698	0.457	0.387–0.852

Note. N = 295. CR = composite reliability; AVE = average variance extracted. HTMT values were EE-ESE = 0.643, EE-SVC = 0.031, and ESE-SVC = 0.136. The original entrepreneurship-education competition item was removed because of a weak loading.

4.2 Structural Model and Mediation

The structural estimates are reported in Table 2. Entrepreneurship education was positively and strongly associated with entrepreneurial self-efficacy, supporting H1. Entrepreneurial self-efficacy was positively associated with student venture creation, although the magnitude of the relationship was comparatively small, supporting H2. In contrast, the direct path from entrepreneurship education to student venture creation was nonsignificant and slightly negative, so H3 was not supported. The total education-to-venture relationship was also negligible.

The bootstrap analysis supported H4. The indirect effect of entrepreneurship education on venture creation through entrepreneurial self-efficacy was positive and its confidence interval excluded zero, while the direct effect remained nonsignificant. This pattern is consistent with indirect-only mediation: entrepreneurship education was associated with venture creation primarily through its relationship with entrepreneurial self-efficacy rather than through an independent direct pathway. The robustness analysis produced the same substantive pattern and identified family business background as a particularly strong contextual predictor of venture creation.

Table 2

Structural-model and mediation results

Path	β	SE	t	p	95% CI	Decision
H1: EE $\rightarrow$ ESE	0.592	0.047	12.58	< .001	[0.466, 0.705]	Supported
H2: ESE $\rightarrow$ SVC	0.145	0.072	2.01	.045	[0.005, 0.287]	Supported
H3: EE $\rightarrow$ SVC (direct)	-0.063	0.072	-0.88	.380	[-0.200, 0.079]	Not supported
Indirect: EE $\rightarrow$ ESE $\rightarrow$ SVC	0.086	0.043	—	—	[0.003, 0.168]	Supported
Total: EE $\rightarrow$ SVC	0.022	0.058	0.39	.700	—	n/a

Note. N = 295. EE = entrepreneurship education; ESE = entrepreneurial self-efficacy; SVC = student venture creation. Indirect-effect confidence interval is based on 5,000 bootstrap resamples.

5. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

5.1 Entrepreneurship Education and Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy

The strongest relationship in the model was between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial self-efficacy. This finding supports SCT's proposition that learning environments can strengthen beliefs about personal capability through mastery experiences, modelling, persuasion and managed performance situations. University courses, workshops, simulations and mentorship provide students with opportunities to rehearse entrepreneurial tasks and receive feedback, making self-efficacy a plausible proximal outcome of entrepreneurship education. The result is consistent with findings from Vietnam, Indonesia,

China and Malaysia (Hoang et al., 2020; Wardana et al., 2020; Wu et al., 2022; Vivekananth et al., 2023), as well as Ghanaian evidence linking entrepreneurship education with self-efficacy and entrepreneurial readiness (Puni et al., 2018; Amponsah et al., 2024). The finding therefore indicates that Ghanaian university entrepreneurship education is effective at building psychological readiness, even where behavioural outcomes are less immediate.

5.2 Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy and Venture Creation

Entrepreneurial self-efficacy was positively related to student venture creation, but the relationship was modest. This distinction is important because confidence is not equivalent to behaviour. Venture creation requires persistence, but it also requires resources, networks, market access and opportunities that may not be supplied by psychological readiness alone. The finding aligns with Gielnik et al. (2020), who showed that self-efficacy can predict entrepreneurial action while also demonstrating that very high confidence does not automatically produce better behavioural outcomes. It also accords with evidence that contextual conditions shape the movement from entrepreneurial readiness to action (Boudreaux et al., 2018; Meoli et al., 2020; Nungsari et al., 2022). In the robustness analysis, family business background emerged as a strong predictor, suggesting that students embedded in entrepreneurial families may possess role models, informal knowledge, networks and resource access that help convert confidence into action.

5.3 The Intention-Action Problem and the Mediating Role of Self-Efficacy

The absence of a direct relationship between entrepreneurship education and venture creation is the most consequential finding for programme evaluation. Students reporting greater entrepreneurship education were not, on average, more likely to exhibit stronger venture-creation behaviour once self-efficacy was considered. This result is consistent with the broader intention-action literature, which cautions against equating entrepreneurial learning or intention with actual business formation (Bogatyreva et al., 2019; Harima et al., 2021; Tsou et al., 2023). It also supports evidence that instrumental university offerings, such as incubation and start-up support, may matter more for behavioural transition than classroom exposure alone (Lyu et al., 2023).

At the same time, the significant indirect pathway clarifies how education can still matter. Entrepreneurship education appears to operate as a distal input that strengthens self-efficacy, which then contributes modestly to venture activity. This indirect-only pattern is consistent with SCT because environmental learning experiences influence behaviour through cognitive mechanisms. The result also explains why earlier intention-based studies tend to report stronger educational effects: the psychological pathway may be relatively strong, while the subsequent movement from confidence to actual venture creation is constrained by conditions outside the classroom. In Ghana, these conditions plausibly include uneven access to capital, mentoring, networks and post-course incubation. Accordingly, the findings do not imply that entrepreneurship education is ineffective; rather, they indicate that education is insufficient when it is disconnected from the structural resources required for action.

6. RESEARCH CONTRIBUTIONS

This study makes three principal contributions. First, it makes a theoretical contribution by extending the application of Social Cognitive Theory from entrepreneurial intention to actual student venture behaviour. The findings show that entrepreneurship education functions primarily as a distal learning input that strengthens entrepreneurial self-efficacy, while the education-behaviour relationship is carried through this proximal cognitive mechanism. The indirect-only mediation pattern therefore refines the role assigned to entrepreneurship education within SCT-based entrepreneurship models.

Second, the study makes an empirical and contextual contribution by replacing intention with a behavioural venture-creation composite in a Ghanaian university sample. Much of the existing Ghanaian and Sub-Saharan African literature evaluates whether students intend to become entrepreneurs. By examining business start-up, revenue generation and active weekly engagement, this study tests a more demanding outcome and demonstrates that the positive psychological effects of entrepreneurship education do not automatically translate into entrepreneurial action.

Third, the study identifies a boundary condition with direct policy relevance. The robustness analysis indicates that family business background is strongly associated with venture creation, highlighting the importance of resources and entrepreneurial socialisation that exist outside formal education. This contribution shifts attention from an education-only explanation towards an education-plus-ecosystem perspective in which psychological capability, networks, capital and post-course support jointly shape student entrepreneurship.

7. PRACTICAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The findings have implications for university leaders, curriculum designers and entrepreneurship-support agencies. Programme evaluation should distinguish intermediate psychological outcomes from final behavioural outcomes. Improved self-efficacy is valuable, but it should not be treated as equivalent to venture creation. Universities should therefore track post-course behaviour, including business registration, revenue generation, continuity and active engagement, rather than relying only on intention or confidence surveys.

Curriculum design should also connect learning to post-course action. Experiential elements that build self-efficacy - business-plan development, simulations, exposure to entrepreneurs, mentoring and pitching - should remain central, but they should be integrated with incubation, structured mentorship, market access and seed-capital pathways. The strong role of family business background suggests that universities can partially compensate for unequal entrepreneurial exposure by creating institutional substitutes for the advantages available to students from business-owning families. Formal mentor matching, venture internships, alumni-founder networks, prototype grants and staged incubation can provide role models, information and resources to students who lack such support at home. The policy implication is not to reduce entrepreneurship education, but to redesign it as part of an entrepreneurial support system that continues beyond the classroom.

8. CONCLUSION

This study examined whether entrepreneurship education is associated with actual student venture creation in Ghana and whether entrepreneurial self-efficacy explains that relationship. The evidence shows a clear asymmetry: entrepreneurship education is strongly associated with students' confidence in performing entrepreneurial tasks, but it has no independent direct association with venture creation. Self-efficacy contributes positively to venture activity and carries the education-behaviour relationship, yet the behavioural effect is modest. These findings reinforce the value of entrepreneurship education while challenging the assumption that more classroom exposure will automatically produce more student businesses. The central implication is that psychological readiness must be connected to structural opportunity. For Ghanaian universities and entrepreneurship-support programmes, stronger outcomes are likely to depend on combining experiential education with sustained incubation, mentoring, networks and resource access.

9. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

The study has several limitations. Its cross-sectional design does not establish temporal causality, and self-selection into entrepreneurship exposure may influence the observed

associations. The sample is dominated by public-university undergraduates, which limits generalisation to private, technical/vocational and postgraduate populations. The venture-creation composite captures early entrepreneurial activity but not venture survival, growth or scale, and its heterogeneous indicators produced weaker psychometric properties than the education and self-efficacy measures. Common-method concerns also remain because the principal constructs were reported by the same respondents at one point in time. Future research should use longitudinal designs that measure education and self-efficacy during study and verify venture creation after graduation, incorporate registry or independently verified behavioural outcomes, and test moderators such as seed-capital access, post-course incubation, family business exposure and regional entrepreneurial ecosystems (Bogatyreva et al., 2019; Duong, 2023; Gielnik et al., 2020).

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