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**Mediating effect of self-efficacy on the relationship between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial mindset of Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University Bauchi undergraduate students**

Aminu I. Alkali<sup>1</sup>, Muhammad Adamu<sup>2</sup>, & Mohammed Rabiu<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1&2</sup>*Department of Business Administration, Bauchi State University Gadau Nigeria  
Alumni Relations Division, Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University Bauchi Nigeria*

Corresponding Email: [aminualka13@gmail.com](mailto:aminualka13@gmail.com)

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**Abstract**

*The paper investigates the influence of mediating role of self-efficacy in the relationship between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial mindset among undergraduate students of Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University Bauchi. Specifically, the paper is proposed to examine the influence of entrepreneurial skills, entrepreneurial orientation, entrepreneurial self-motivation and self-efficacy on the student's entrepreneurial mindset. The paper guided by Social Cognitive Theory to underpin the research model. Quantitative approach is adopted, where cross-sectional survey were employed to collect the data at a single point in time. The population of the study consists of 2205 undergraduate final year students. The study has a sample size of 331 undergraduate final year students from six faculties. Krejcie & Morgan (1970) sample size determination table to arrive at the sample. Stratified sampling techniques were used to select respondents from the six faculties. In conclusion, it is expected that the upcoming empirical studies using this framework can give an insight to university management, law makers and other stakeholders to understand the factors that might help to predicts the university undergraduate student's entrepreneurial mindset.*

**Keywords:** Entrepreneurial Mindset, Self-efficacy, Entrepreneurial Skills, Orientation, Self-Motivation

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**1. Introduction**

Entrepreneurship is the engine for economic growth and national prosperity. The importance and contribution of entrepreneurship in national development makes the topic of interest to both academics and policy makers. This understanding has led to the introduction of entrepreneurship curricula in many Universities around the world (Rabiu & Murtala, 2020). This is done with the aim of reducing or eliminating socio-economic problem of increasing unemployment and slowing economic growth in many countries. Youths are one of the most important and valuable assets of any country. This is because they are the foundation of every nation's economy. Their inventiveness, energy, character and

orientation determine the pattern of development and security of country. Governments of various countries are under pressure to reduce unemployment, especially since the 2020 global economic crises (Okolie & Inbini, 2021). According to ILO (2021), the global youth's unemployment rate is estimated at 12.6% which means approximately 1.5 billion young people are not employed. Almost 90% of this population lives in developing countries (ILO, 2021). The effects of youth's unemployment are felt all over the world. In Nigeria, many young people find it difficult to find work, and the rapidly rising unemployment rate is a major problem. Nigeria youths' unemployment rate among (18-35) years old is the highest

in the country, with 35% of Nigerian youths actively looking for work, according to the latest report on the workforce. Unfortunately, the number of vacancies is far less than the number of graduates produced by Nigerian universities, Polytechnics and College of education. Nigeria produced an average of 500 graduate's every year (Bamidele et al., 2020). The problem of youth's unemployment in Nigeria has increased over the past decade which is very problematic and has become a major issue in the lives of today's youths (Okolie & Inbini, 2021).

Thus, entrepreneurial knowledge, skills and mindset development might help the country to reduce the unemployment problem. No matter the degree of training or entrepreneurial opportunities presented to an individual, the mindset of such an individual could hamper the quality of the result recorded which is because mindset determines to a great extent how much one succeeds in any endeavor (Abubakar, 2016). This is because entrepreneurial mindset is a determinant of students' decision in an entrepreneurial career (Karim & Venkataiah, 2016). University education has been identified as an engine by which new ideas and novel approaches are introduced continually into the society, also creating positive entrepreneurial mindset among undergraduates around the world which is centered on the creation of unemployment free nations through the teaching of entrepreneurship. This is because positive mindset of university undergraduate students towards entrepreneurship has been identified as an important solution to solving problem of unemployment of university undergraduates and entrepreneurial mindset has been found to be a predictor of entrepreneurial activities among university undergraduates (Ayesha, 2017). Furthermore, the transition of university graduates into Labour market with little or

no positive entrepreneurial mindset has an adverse effect on the development of nations (Ayesha, 2017) Which is because one of the factors that could help to foster transition of economies is dependent on having a bunch of university graduates who are well equipped with knowledge of entrepreneurship from their university days.

### **1.1 Problem Statement**

The effects of youth's unemployment are felt all over the world. In Nigeria, the rapid rise in the country unemployment level has become a major source of concerned with many youths find it difficult to get jobs. According to Okolie & Igin (2020) the most recent report on the Labour force shows that, the unemployment rate among Nigerian youths between (18-35) is the highest in the country at 21.72 million (35.5%) Nigerian youths who are actually seeking employment, while the overall unemployment rate was 39.69% as at December, 2021 (National Bureau of Statistic, 2021) graduates are trained for wage employment in the formal sector at universities, polytechnic and college of education. Unfortunately, the number of job opening is much lower than the number of graduates.

However, Nigeria produced an average of 500,000 graduates at the end of every academic session (Bamidele et al., 2020). This led to increase over the last decade, which is extremely problematic and it has become a major issue in the lives of youths (Okolie & Inbini, 2021). This issue is causing disruption, frustration and reliance on friends and family who in turn have their own problem to deal with. Youth's unemployment is caused by several factors, including rapid population growth, infrastructural deficiency, external environmental factors, and deficiency and outdated school curriculum, this reflects on students/graduates low creative thinking and self-efficacy towards entrepreneurship, lack of focused on manufacturing,

imperfect and inconsistent government policies on youth's unemployment (Ogunbaya & Mhlanga, 2021).

The above-mentioned factors resulted to lack of critical entrepreneurial skills and orientation which left the graduates with little or no skills for sustainability. (Maiwada, 2020; Adebaya et al., 2020). Lack of motivation to actions, low entrepreneurship spirit and confidence (Rabiu & Murtala, 2020).

Against this background, it is necessary to determine the extent to which undergraduate students can acquire entrepreneurial spirit and self-efficacy. If appropriately acquired and used correctly, it might be possible to solve the problem of unemployment among young people and graduates. (Adebayo Aina et al., 2020).

## 1.2 Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study.

- i. What is the influence of entrepreneurial skills on student's entrepreneurial mindset in Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University?
- ii. What is the influence of entrepreneurial orientation on student's entrepreneurial mindset in Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University?
- iii. What is the influence of entrepreneurial self-motivation on student's entrepreneurial mindset in Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University?
- iv. Does self-efficacy mediate the relationship between entrepreneurial skills, entrepreneurial orientation, and entrepreneurial motivation on the entrepreneurial mindset of undergraduate students in Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University?

## 1.3 Objective of the study

The paper intends to achieve the following objectives:

- i. Examine the influences of entrepreneurial skills among undergraduate students in Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University.
- ii. Examine the influences of entrepreneurship orientation among undergraduate students in Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University.
- iii. Examine the influences of entrepreneurial self-motivation among undergraduate students in Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University.
- iv. Examine the mediating role of self-efficacy on the relationship between entrepreneurial skills, entrepreneurial orientation, and entrepreneurial self-motivation among undergraduate students in Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 Conceptual Reviews

This segment provides discussion on the conceptual issues on entrepreneurship skills, entrepreneurial orientation, entrepreneurial self-motivation, entrepreneurial self-efficacy and entrepreneurial mindset.

### 2.2 Concept of Entrepreneurship Skills

Entrepreneurship skills are reasonably imperative for entrepreneurs and student's studying entrepreneurship. In real-world situations, education in entrepreneurship necessitates new practical application than do other business disciplines (Jun Cui & Robin Bell, (2021). In addition to more traditional efforts, such as placements, educational institutions are developing in other ways to ensure that students will obtain the essential skills (Iklima & Dzulkifli, 2021).

Entrepreneurial skill is defined as the process of developing and creating new products and services that adds value to the society with economic benefit. (Jun Cui & Robin Bell, 2021). Consequently,

Olagunju (2021) Entrepreneurial skills are understood as an individual's ability to leverage ideas and start new business for the benefits of the individual and the society. For instance, in a study of Aina et al., (2020) found that business education students highly possessed communication skills, financial skills, management skills and innovative skills that could make them successful entrepreneurs. Likewise, in the study of Leow et al., (2018) the findings of the study revealed that students equipped with entrepreneurial skills to face the challenge upon graduation. It is also found that to be confident that they were having more entrepreneurial skills. The following proposition is formulated based on the above findings

*H1: There is significant relationship between entrepreneurial skills and undergraduate student's entrepreneurial mindset.*

### **2.3 Concept of Entrepreneurial Orientation**

Entrepreneurial orientation refers to the activities of implementing new ventures and the strategic decision making process of solving problems and responding to changes in the business environment. (Maiwada, 2020). For instance, the study of Maiwada (2020) on entrepreneurial spirit and new venture creation, the findings of the study revealed that, there is positive relationship between entrepreneurial orientation and new venture creation among undergraduate students

Eddy & Evan (2021) conducted a study on Entrepreneurial Mindset, Orientation, and Performance of University Students in Indonesia; the results revealed that entrepreneurial mindset has a significant effect on innovativeness, risk-taking, competitive aggressiveness, autonomy, and reactivity. All of these factors, in turn, affect or enhance a positive and significant impact on the students' entrepreneurial performance. It implies that the entrepreneurship education of public

universities in urabaya, Indonesia has succeeded in changing the students' mindset and orientation. The government needs to increase entrepreneurship education centers and business incubator centers at the universities for inventive development.

Consequently, considering the mix findings provided by previous studies on the relationship between the variables, the following hypothesis is developed as the expectation of this research.

*H2: There is significant relationship between entrepreneurial orientation and undergraduate student's entrepreneurial mindset*

### **2.4 Concept of Entrepreneurship Self-Motivation**

Entrepreneurial motivation is the combination of psychological characteristics of an individual entrepreneur and external or environmental factors that stimulate entrepreneurial activity in the form of exploring market opportunities, developing product innovations, starting a business, expanding a business, and diversifying. (Mawoli & Peter, 2021). Consequently, Mawoli & Peter (2020) Motivation is an inner drive and outdoor stimulus that push individuals into actions that is decisive goal-oriented. Subedi & Phil (2021) defined entrepreneurship motivation as a person's energy or willingness to recognize an opportunity and commit resource to exploit it.

However, the empirical review of Blaga (2021) found that complex motivation has a significant and positive association with entrepreneurial performance of the students. In another study by Astri et al., (2020) found that entrepreneurship motivation has a positive result on the student's entrepreneurial intention toward entrepreneurial activities. The following proposition is formulated based on the above findings.

*H3: There is significant relationship between entrepreneurial self-motivation*

*and entrepreneurial mindset of university undergraduate students.*

### **2.5 Concept of Entrepreneurial Self-efficacy**

Self-efficacy refers to an individual's confidence in completing goal-oriented task (Barbaranelli et al., 2019). Self-efficacy is also associated with the inclination of individuals to achieve their personal goals. According to Peterson (2019) Self-efficacy is an important factor that influence individual behaviour through cognitive processes, goal setting, and outcome expectation. Bunette et al., (2020) believe that self-efficacy explains cognitive processes, develop creative thinking, and assists individuals in decision making when starting a new business. For instance, in a study of Wanq et al., (2022) found that entrepreneurship education; entrepreneurial mindset, self-efficacy and creativity have a positive and significant influence on entrepreneurial mindset. In another study of Marshall et al., (2020) the result of the serial mediator regression analysis showed that self-efficacy significantly mediated the relationship entrepreneurship education and venture creation. Kannadhasan et al., (2018) found that entrepreneur's self-efficacy fully mediates the relationship between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial mindset of venture creation. In light of the above empirical findings, the following hypothesis is developed.

**H4:** *There is significant relationship between entrepreneurial self-efficacy and the entrepreneurial mindset.*

### **2.6 Mediating Effect of Self-efficacy**

Prior studies such as Kannadhasan et al., (2018) examine the mediating role of self-efficacy in relation to social capital and venture formation among 375 selected Indian entrepreneurs. Their result indicated that entrepreneurs' self-efficacy fully mediates the relationship between social capital and venture establishment. Similarly, Puni et al., (2018) verified the

mediating effect of entrepreneurial self-efficacy, the result of the multiple linear regression revealed that entrepreneurial self-efficacy mediates the relationship between the entrepreneurship education and intention of Ghanaian students towards venture creation. Consistently, Chen & He (2011), their findings from structural equation modeling revealed the manifestation of a positive and significant indirect effect on the relationship between strong ties and the entrepreneurial intention of Chinese students. However, the result indicated only tolerance self-efficacy mediated this relationship, with opportunity identification self-efficacy acquiring the largest mediating role. Marshall et al., (2020) tested the mediating effect of self-efficacy and the result of serial mediator regression analysis showed that self-efficacy significantly mediated the relationship between the persistence of these prospective entrepreneurs and venture creation activities. Zhao et al., (2015) tested the mediating effect of self-efficacy on the entrepreneurial intention of some postgraduate students from five universities using the structural equation modeling technique. Their result revealed that, there is significant mediated relationship between self-efficacy and entrepreneurship learning courses, entrepreneurial experience, risk-taking propensity and the development of the entrepreneurial intention to create new ventures among university students in Chicago.

However, there is evidence from the reviews showed that this area has not established in-depth research thoughtfulness, especially in the Nigerian framework, the researchers proposed H1: the greater the level of self-efficacy held by Nigerian undergraduate students, the more it positively mediates the relationship between individual-level entrepreneurial education and entrepreneurial mindset development. This suggests self-efficacy could be a mediating factor between EEO and EMS link. This showed the causal

effect of self-efficacy between entrepreneurship education outcome and entrepreneurial mindset among undergraduate students in ATBU Bauchi. Based on the above empirical reviews, the following propositions are developed.

*Hi<sub>5</sub>: Self-efficacy mediates the relationship between entrepreneurial skills and entrepreneurial mindset among undergraduate students in Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University Bauchi.*

*Hi<sub>6</sub>: Self-efficacy mediates the relationship between entrepreneurial orientation and entrepreneurial mindset among undergraduate students in Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University Bauchi.*

*Hi<sub>7</sub>: Self-efficacy mediates the relationship between entrepreneurial self-motivation and entrepreneurial mindset among undergraduate students in Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University Bauchi.*

## 2.7 Theoretical Framework

### Social Cognitive Theory (SCT)

Entrepreneurship education paradigms range from causal and linear understanding of planning, to process related approaches, making it difficult to understand what type of entrepreneurship education, there is still no consistent, rational model for how this will lead to successful outcome, entrepreneurship and methodological approaches of entrepreneurship is considered a key element in the entrepreneurship education (QAA, 2018) Entrepreneurship effectiveness of learning path. The existing EE research is mainly based on the theory of entrepreneurial intentions, regularly drawing on Janzen's (1991) Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) and Shapero and Sokol's (1982) Entrepreneurial Event Model (EEM) based on motivational theories. The former consists of three mechanisms that predict the establishment of intention which in turn predicts behaviour, namely the attitude toward the behaviour, subjective norms and the degree of perceived behavioural control

(self-efficacy). The latter signposts that EI stems from the perception of feasibility and desirability, and this path are affected by the cultural and social context. Although the two frameworks have been over-used, they provide an appropriate model for us to understand and predict entrepreneurial intentions.

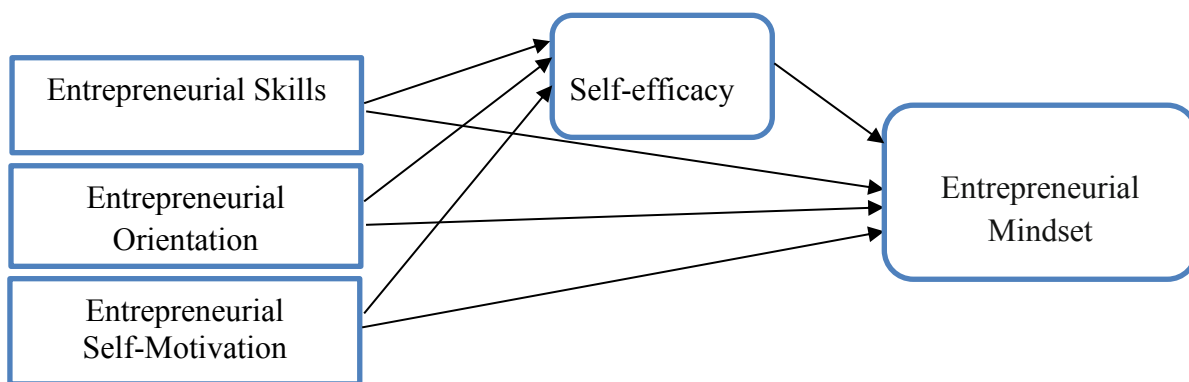
However, in order to explain the relationship between entrepreneurship education and students' entrepreneurial mindset instead of intention, we follow Bandura's (1992) Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) which reveals connections between personal (cognitive) variables, environmental factors, and behaviours in human functioning. Bécharde & Grégoire (2005) argue that SCT may provide a coherent framework to understand holistically entrepreneurship education from the view of cognitive psychology. Winkler (2014) applied this theory into the context of entrepreneurship education and developed a dynamic framework for EE impact research, which contributes to investigation of how environmental factors of EE learning affect student cognition and subsequent entrepreneurial behaviour. Winkler (2014) further identified environmental factors such as academic courses, curricula and non-academic learning experiences (practical for example), and cognitive factors such as self-efficacy and mindset. Given that entrepreneurial culture could result in mind-shift and emotive changing (Gibb 2002), and that entrepreneurial attitude is a metacognitive function (Haynie et al. 2010) EM is therefore a kind of reasoning personal variable inclined by environmental variables within EE here discussing to curriculum/ entrepreneurial orientation and extra-curricular activities that is practical skills of entrepreneurship. Undoubtedly, this study contributes to Winkler's (2014) framework by recognizing EM as a new type of cognitive variable. In this sense, SCT provides to some extent the theoretical foundation for the research primary to

investigate the relationship between EE and the changes of students' EM towards engaging to entrepreneurship activities. Consequently, the EE on EM could be elucidated by SCT in a broad view.

### 2.8 Conceptual Framework

To determine the relationship among the variables under review, conceptual framework was established. In the conceptual framework of entrepreneurial skills, entrepreneurial orientation, entrepreneurial self-motivation are the

independent variables and entrepreneurial self-efficacy is the mediating variable while entrepreneurial mindset is the dependent variable. The four mentioned variables have influenced on the students entrepreneurial mind-set as cited in the literature. Consequently, this study will employ these variables to propose research model in order to examine whether these variables could influence the mindset of undergraduate students to engage into entrepreneurial activities after graduation



**Figure 1:** Propose research model.

**Source:** Jun Ciu & Robin Bell (2021); Maiwada (2020); Astri Ayu et al., (2020); Wanq et al., (2021); Baron and Kenney (1965)

### 3. Proposed Methodology

This study is quantitative approach. Quantitative approach refers to the process of measuring the data by applying statistical techniques. A cross-sectional survey design is propose to collect data at a single point in time. The population of the study consists of 2205 final year undergraduate students of Aubakar Tafawa Balewa University Bauchi when disaggregate into faculties. 595, 456, 346, 303, 366 and 237 are from faculty of Agriculture, Environmental Technology, Engineering Technology, Management Technology, Sciences and Technology Education respectively.

The appropriate unit of analysis to investigate the concept of this study is individual unit of analysis. The sample size

is 331 undergraduate final year students. Rrejcie & Morgan (1970) sample size determination table. The sampling technique propose to apply is stratified sampling in order to ensure representative sample from six faculties of the university. The appropriate instrument for data collection for the target sample should be structural questionnaire and the propose techniques for data analysis is descriptive and Structural Equation Modelling (SEM)

### 4. Conclusion

The objective of this paper is to provide a proposed conceptual framework in order to examine the influence of the independent variables and mediating variable (entrepreneurial skills, entrepreneurial orientation, entrepreneurial self-motivation and self-efficacy which is a mediating variable) which serve as determinants of student's entrepreneurial mindset of venture creation. By Modifying the Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), this study adds

knowledge to the existing literature towards understanding the determinants that led to student's entrepreneurial mind-set. The study will focus on testing this framework in Abubakra Tafawa Balewa University Bauchi where there are fewer studies in relation to entrepreneurial mindset among undergraduate students. This conceptual model should serve as a guide to researchers who wish to conduct additional empirical studies on the relationship presented in the model. If the empirical research is successfully conducted, it will serve as a significant guide to university management, law makers and other stakeholders to understand the factors that might predict the undergraduate student's entrepreneurial mind-set.

Thus, this study highlighted a dynamic mechanism of entrepreneurship education on learning outcome of University undergraduate students. This study is one of the few studies that propose to introduce the mediating effect of self-efficacy on the student's entrepreneurial mindset in developing country like Nigeria. In addition, this study will be conducted on (i.e. Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University undergraduate students). The variables of this study will add value to the existing knowledge of academic research.

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