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# Entrepreneurship Education and Entrepreneurial Intention: Case Study of Business Students in Tianjin, China

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## Abstract

Entrepreneurial intentions refer to an individual's conscious and planned decision to participate in entrepreneurial activities, reflecting their desire to start a new venture or pursue opportunities. Entrepreneurial behaviors encompass the actions and activities undertaken by individuals to initiate, develop, and manage a business venture, involving aspects such as opportunity recognition, resource acquisition, innovation, risk-taking, and networking. Entrepreneurship education instills confidence and reduces the perceived barriers to entrepreneurship, motivating students to take the necessary steps to turn their entrepreneurial aspirations into tangible ventures. The research utilized the descriptive research design. The target population was 250 business students in Tianjin, China. The study did sampling of 230 respondents that were selected from the target population of 250 business students in Tianjin, China. The collection of data was conducted through stratified random sampling and questionnaires were used to gather data. The study concluded that entrepreneurship education positively affects students' intentions to become entrepreneurs and shapes their entrepreneurial behaviors. The incorporation of practical and experiential learning activities, such as business plan competitions and internships, proves to be particularly effective in enhancing entrepreneurial intentions and providing hands-on experiences for aspiring entrepreneurs. The curriculum that encompasses a wide range of entrepreneurial topics, including opportunity recognition, risk management, and innovation, plays an important role in shaping students' entrepreneurial mindset and knowledge. It was recommended that educational institutions should continue to prioritize entrepreneurship education and allocate resources to develop comprehensive and practical entrepreneurship programs. Institutions should employ rigorous assessment methods to measure the outcomes and effect of entrepreneurship education on students' intentions and behaviors. Policymakers should recognize the importance of entrepreneurship education and provide support to educational institutions in implementing and enhancing entrepreneurship programs.

**Keywords:** *Entrepreneurship Education, Entrepreneurial Intentions and Behaviors, Business Students, China*

## **1.0 Background of the Study**

The influence of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial intentions and behaviors has garnered significant attention in recent years. This area of study investigates the impact of educational interventions on individuals' inclination towards entrepreneurship and the actions they take to pursue entrepreneurial ventures. According to Gieure, del Mar Benavides-Espinosa and Roig-Dobón (2020), understanding this influence is crucial for educational institutions, policymakers, and aspiring entrepreneurs as it provides insights into the effectiveness of entrepreneurship education in fostering an entrepreneurial mindset and facilitating entrepreneurial actions. Entrepreneurial intentions are the aspirations, motivations, and desires of individuals to engage in entrepreneurial activities. Entrepreneurship education plays a critical role in shaping these intentions by providing learners with knowledge, skills, and exposure to entrepreneurial concepts. By introducing students to real-life case studies, guest lectures from successful entrepreneurs, and interactive activities like business plan competitions, entrepreneurship education cultivates an entrepreneurial mindset and sparks interest in entrepreneurial pursuits. Students are encouraged to think creatively, identify business opportunities, and develop innovative solutions to real-world problems (Tan, Le, & Xuan, 2020). Through entrepreneurship education, students gain a deeper understanding of the entrepreneurial process and are more likely to consider entrepreneurship as a viable career path.

However, entrepreneurial intentions alone are insufficient without corresponding behaviors. Entrepreneurial behaviors encompass the actual actions individuals take to establish and grow entrepreneurial ventures. Entrepreneurship education equips students with the necessary tools, resources, and skills to engage in entrepreneurial activities (Jena, 2020). Practical and experiential learning components, such as internships, incubators, and mentorship programs, enable students to apply theoretical knowledge in real-world contexts. By engaging in hands-on experiences, students develop competencies in business planning, market research, financial management, and networking, among others. Entrepreneurship education instills confidence and reduces the perceived barriers to entrepreneurship, motivating students to take the necessary steps to turn their entrepreneurial aspirations into tangible ventures. Education provides individuals with a strong foundation of entrepreneurial knowledge, including an understanding of market dynamics, risk assessment, and business strategies (Satalkina & Steiner, 2020). This knowledge equips aspiring entrepreneurs with the necessary insights to identify and evaluate entrepreneurial opportunities effectively. Entrepreneurship education exposes students to successful entrepreneurial role models, fostering inspiration and motivation. By showcasing real-life examples of entrepreneurs who have overcome challenges and achieved success, education helps students develop a positive entrepreneurial mindset and the belief that they too can succeed. Role models provide guidance and serve as a source of encouragement, nurturing the confidence and resilience required to pursue entrepreneurial ventures.

Moreover, entrepreneurship education enhances students' entrepreneurial skills. Wardana, Narmaditya, Wibowo, Mahendra, Wibowo, Harwida and Rohman (2020) mentioned that by incorporating practical exercises and simulations, such as developing business plans, conducting market research, and pitching ideas, students gain hands-on experience and develop essential competencies. These skills include critical thinking, problem-solving, leadership, communication, and teamwork, which are crucial for entrepreneurial success. Through experiential learning,

students also learn to adapt to uncertainties, manage risks, and make informed decisions, a skill set particularly valuable in the entrepreneurial context. Another critical aspect of entrepreneurship education is the creation of supportive learning environments. Collaboration and networking opportunities within educational settings facilitate the exchange of ideas, fostering innovation and creativity. Team projects and group discussions enable students to learn from their peers and develop a broader perspective on entrepreneurship. Moreover, entrepreneurship education often fosters partnerships with industry professionals, mentors, and entrepreneurs, providing students with valuable connections and guidance (Chen, Tang & Han, 2022). These support networks not only enhance students' entrepreneurial knowledge and skills but also offer guidance and mentorship throughout their entrepreneurial journey.

Entrepreneurial intentions and behaviors, when nurtured through education, contribute to the broader entrepreneurial ecosystem (Moraes, Fischer, Guerrero, Rocha & Schaeffer, 2023). As individuals with entrepreneurial intentions become entrepreneurs, they establish new ventures, generate employment opportunities, and contribute to local and national economies. Entrepreneurship education acts as a catalyst, fueling a cycle of innovation, wealth creation, and social development (Kabir, 2019). Educational institutions should design comprehensive and engaging entrepreneurship curricula that cover a broad range of topics, from opportunity recognition to financing strategies. The curriculum should strike a balance between theoretical knowledge and practical application, incorporating real-life case studies and experiential learning opportunities. By offering a holistic education, institutions can equip learners with the required skills and knowledge to navigate the entrepreneurial landscape successfully. Entrepreneurship education should be flexible and adaptable to changing market dynamics. As entrepreneurship evolves with advancements in technology and shifts in consumer behavior, educational programs should keep pace with these changes (Chaturvedi, 2021). This entails continuously updating curriculum content, integrating emerging trends, and providing students with exposure to the latest entrepreneurial practices and technologies. By staying relevant, entrepreneurship education can better prepare students to thrive in dynamic and competitive business environments.

Furthermore, collaboration between educational institutions, industry, and government is crucial for the success of entrepreneurship education (Bischoff, Volkmann & Audretsch, 2018). Partnerships with entrepreneurs, industry experts, and investors can provide valuable insights, mentorship, and networking opportunities for students. Government support in the form of funding, policy frameworks, and regulatory facilitation can create an enabling environment for entrepreneurship education. By working together, these stakeholders can leverage their respective resources and expertise to strengthen the impact of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial intentions and behaviors. Evaluation and monitoring of entrepreneurship education programs are essential to assess their effectiveness (Liu, Lin, Zhao & Zhao, 2019). Institutions should employ rigorous assessment methods to measure the outcomes and impact of entrepreneurship education on students' intentions and behaviors. Longitudinal studies that track graduates' entrepreneurial activities can offer valuable insights into the long-term effect of education on entrepreneurial success. This information can guide program improvements and help educational institutions identify best practices in entrepreneurship education. By providing knowledge, exposure to role models, practical experiences, and a supportive learning environment, education stimulates students' interest in entrepreneurship and equips them with the necessary skills and confidence to pursue entrepreneurial ventures. The influence of entrepreneurship education extends beyond

individuals, contributing to economic growth, innovation, and job creation (Lei, 2023). To optimize this influence, educational institutions, policymakers, and other stakeholders should collaborate and adapt their approaches to ensure that entrepreneurship education remains relevant, comprehensive, and impactful.

### **1.1 Statement of the Problem**

The influence of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial intentions and behaviors is a topic of great interest and significance in the field of entrepreneurship. However, there is a need for further research to understand this relationship, particularly in the context of business students in Tianjin, China. Tianjin is a major economic hub in China and has witnessed substantial economic growth and entrepreneurial activities. Therefore, it becomes imperative to examine how entrepreneurship education programs in Tianjin influence the entrepreneurial intentions and behaviors of business students. Understanding the impact of entrepreneurship education in this specific geographic and cultural context will provide valuable insights for educational institutions, policymakers, and stakeholders involved in fostering an entrepreneurial ecosystem.

This study aims to address the gap in the literature by investigating the influence of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial intentions and behaviors among business students in Tianjin, China. By focusing on business students, who represent a critical group with the potential to drive entrepreneurial activities in the future, this research will shed light on the effectiveness of entrepreneurship education programs in cultivating an entrepreneurial mindset and promoting entrepreneurial actions. The findings will not only contribute to the existing body of knowledge on entrepreneurship education but also have practical implications for educational institutions and policymakers in Tianjin, enabling them to tailor their entrepreneurship education initiatives to better meet the needs and aspirations of business students. Moreover, the study will provide insights into the specific factors within entrepreneurship education programs that play a significant role in shaping entrepreneurial intentions and behaviors, thereby helping students make informed decisions about their entrepreneurial career paths.

### **2.0 Literature Review**

Groves, Austin, O'Shea and Lamanna (2023) conducted research to investigate how EEd affects the aspirations of university students in Victoria State, Australia, to start their own businesses. The study's goals are to explore the nature of students' acquisition of entrepreneurial education, assess the degree to which students' acquisition of entrepreneurial education affects their entrepreneurial self-efficacy, and assess the degree to which students' acquisition of entrepreneurial education affects their entrepreneurial mindset. Information for the research came from both secondary and primary resources. Three hundred students from the state's three institutions were selected using stratified and random selection methods, and then given a structured questionnaire to fill out. Analysis of the survey takers' responses was performed using both descriptive statistics and simple regression. The results showed that students generally believed that EEd had a strong beneficial effect on their entrepreneurial self-efficacy and entrepreneurial attitude and that they have obtained knowledge in main areas of entrepreneurship like creativity, innovation, and venture development. Since students do not appear to have much faith in their capability to convert business opportunities into business projects/ventures, the study suggests that university administrations come up with



ways to adequately follow up with their learners to make sure that their entrepreneurial intentions are translated into action.

Magasi (2022) performed research to find out what motivates students in Turkey's Higher Business Education (HBE) programs to go into business for themselves. Many graduates still find themselves without gainful employment, even though EE is a required component of all degree programs. Primary data were used for this cross-sectional analysis. In-depth interviews were performed with 42 HBE alums from a range of academic programs. The primary data came from in-depth interviews guided by the researcher's own handwritten questions. Both a snowball and a purposive selection strategy were used to find participants for this research. The qualitative data was analyzed by the use of a content analysis approach in NVivo 12 software. Interpersonal characteristics, education and experience (EE), planning and concentration, proximity to successful groups, and government backing are identified as the five most significant antecedents of entrepreneurial goals. The findings of this study have important implications for the development of students' entrepreneurial careers of independence and self-employment, placing a responsibility on entrepreneurship educators, role models, close groups, professional supporters, and the government to simultaneously foster the combinations of EE and other factors that were found to have the highest predictive power on entrepreneurial intention. This study adds to our understanding of the factors that inspire people to go into business for themselves, and it sheds light on the role that residual and new antecedents of entrepreneurial ambitions play in encouraging new ventures among HBE graduates.

Aliedan, Elshaer, Alyahya and Sobaih (2022) conducted research to examine the connection between entrepreneurship education and the desire to start a business using a theoretical framework from the field of theory of planned behavior. The literature on the role of entrepreneurial education in international economic and social progress is used to inform the construction of a conceptual model. Several hypotheses are created to investigate the connection between demographic variables, risk tolerance, proactiveness, and self-efficacy, and entrepreneurial ambition. A research of Brazilian university students provides support for the hypothesized links between age, father's profession, and willingness to take risks in one's pursuit of entrepreneurial endeavors. The theoretical and practical consequences of these findings for entrepreneurship education are then examined. Suggestions for further study are also provided, emphasizing the need of encouraging students to develop an entrepreneurial mindset.

Anwar, Saleem, Islam, Thoudam and Khan (2020) conducted research to test Linen's model's hypothesis that students who take entrepreneurship courses have high chances of starting their own businesses. A close-ended questionnaire was administered to fourth-year undergraduates from three departments at a private Egyptian university as part of the research methodology. Despite the lack of a correlation between entrepreneurial education and either perceived feasibility or self-efficacy, the results imply a favorable association between entrepreneurship education and both intents and perceived attractiveness. Reforming the educational system to foster students' creativity and innovation is desired in light of entrepreneurship's critical role. Moreover, policymakers should recognize the importance of entrepreneurship education and provide support to educational institutions in implementing and enhancing entrepreneurship programs. This includes allocating funding for entrepreneurship initiatives, creating policies that encourage entrepreneurial activities, and facilitating connections between academia, industry, and government. Furthermore, policymakers should work towards developing an ecosystem that supports entrepreneurship,

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which includes access to funding, business incubators, and networking platforms. By creating an enabling environment, policymakers can empower aspiring entrepreneurs to turn their innovative ideas into successful ventures and contribute to economic growth and job creation.

Vodă and Florea (2019) conducted research determine how entrepreneurship classes affect university students' plans to start their own ventures, and how factors like personality and socioeconomic background influence that connection. To do this, we collected data from 256 questionnaires comprising validated measures and administered them to a sample of university students in Seoul, South Korea. There were positive impacts of entrepreneurship education, negative effects of proactive personality, and positive effects of family economic standing on the entrepreneurial intentions of university students. However, evidence for narcissism's moderating function is lacking. The present corpus of research is missing insights into the connection between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial intention; this study covers that gap by include the roles of personality and family economic situation. These findings provide empirical evidence for the moderating effects of proactive personality on the relationship between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial intention and the positive moderating effect of family economic status, illuminating the heterogeneity of the effect of entrepreneurship education.

Cui, Sun and Bell (2021) performed research to analyze how EE affects EI among Chinese students at vocational universities. The research analyzes the connections between EI, its precursors, and EE by the use of Theory of Planned Behavior and the EI Questionnaire. The samples consisted of 383 students from Wuxi Jiangsu Vocational College. Least-Squares Regression modeling was performed to determine that there were statistically significant positive associations between EE, EE, and EE. The investigation of mediation revealed that one's own attitude moderated some of the relationship between EE and EI. The findings indicate that EE is successful in promoting EI in China. Given the present status of China's economy, recent government initiatives, and the continuing discussion around the EE-EI connection, this research offers implications to policy-makers, vocational institutions, and academics.

### **3.0 Research Methodology**

The study used the descriptive research design. The target population was 250 business students in Tianjin, China. The study did sampling of 230 respondents that were chosen from the target population of 250 business students in Tianjin, China. The gathering of data was conducted through stratified random sampling and questionnaires were used to gather data.

### **4.0 Research Findings and Discussion**

#### **4.1 Correlation Analysis**

The findings presented in Table 1 shows the correlation analysis

**Table 1: Correlation Analysis**

	Entrepreneurial Intentions and Behaviors	Entrepreneurship Education
Entrepreneurial Intentions and Behaviors	Pearson Correlation 1.000 Sig. (2-tailed)	
Entrepreneurship Education	Pearson Correlation .291 ** Sig. (2-tailed) 0.000	0.000

The correlation results from Table 1 show that the entrepreneurship education was positively and significantly related with entrepreneurial intentions and behaviors ( $r=.291$ ,  $p=.000$ ). This is in accordance with Anwar, Saleem, Islam, Thoudam and Khan (2020) who mentioned that reforming the educational system to foster students' creativity and innovation is desired in light of entrepreneurship's critical role. Entrepreneurial intentions and behaviors, when nurtured through education, contribute to the broader entrepreneurial ecosystem. As individuals with entrepreneurial intentions become entrepreneurs, they establish new ventures, generate employment opportunities, and contribute to local and national economies. Entrepreneurship education acts as a catalyst, fueling a cycle of innovation, wealth creation, and social development

#### 4.2 Regression Analysis

The section includes model fitness, analysis of variance and regression of coefficient. The findings in Table 2 show the model fitness

**Table 2: Model Fitness**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.291a	0.236	0.211	0.00008357

The results from Table 2 reveal that entrepreneurship education was discovered to be sufficient in explaining the entrepreneurial intentions and behaviors among the business students in Tianjin, China. This was supported by the coefficient of determination, which is R square of 0.236. It indicates that entrepreneurship education explain 23.6% of the variations in the entrepreneurial intentions and behaviors among the business students in Tianjin, China.



**Table 3: Analysis of Variance**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	6.81	1	6.81	193.47	.000b
	Residual	8.80	250	0.035		
	Total	15.61	249			

The findings in Table 3 reveals that the overall model was statistically significant. The results indicate that entrepreneurial intentions and behaviors is a good predictor in explaining the entrepreneurship education among the business students in Tianjin, China. This was supported by an F statistic of 193.47 and the reported p-value of 0.000 which was less than the conventional probability significance level of 0.05. Through entrepreneurship education, students gain a deeper understanding of the entrepreneurial process and are more likely to consider entrepreneurship as a viable career path. Entrepreneurship education often fosters partnerships with industry professionals, mentors, and entrepreneurs, providing students with valuable connections and guidance. These support networks not only enhance students' entrepreneurial knowledge and skills but also offer guidance and mentorship throughout their entrepreneurial journey.

**Table 4: Regression of Coefficient**

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	0.430	0.106		4.057	0.039
Entrepreneurship Education	0.656	0.301	0.814	2.180	0.016

Based on the findings in Table 4, it was noted that entrepreneurship education was positively and significantly associated to entrepreneurial intentions and behaviors ( $\beta=0.656$ ,  $p=0.016$ ). This was supported by a calculated t-statistic of 2.180 that is larger than the critical t-statistic of 1.96. These findings shows that when entrepreneurship education increases by one unit, the entrepreneurial intentions and behaviors in business students in Tianjin, China will increase by 0.656 units while other factors that influence the entrepreneurial intentions and behaviors in business students remain unchanged. Magasi (2022) articulated that as part of preparing students for lives of independence and self-employment through entrepreneurship, educators, role models, close groups, professional supporters, and the government should all work together to foster the combinations of EE and other factors that have the highest predictive power on entrepreneurial intention.

## **5.0 Conclusion**

The incorporation of practical and experiential learning activities, such as business plan competitions and internships, proves to be particularly effective in enhancing entrepreneurial intentions and providing hands-on experiences for aspiring entrepreneurs. This study underscores the importance of entrepreneurship education as a catalyst for nurturing entrepreneurial talents and fostering a vibrant entrepreneurial ecosystem. Furthermore, the research sheds light on the specific components of entrepreneurship education that contribute to the development of entrepreneurial intentions and behaviors. The curriculum that encompasses a wide range of entrepreneurial topics, including opportunity recognition, risk management, and innovation, plays an important role in shaping students' entrepreneurial mindset and knowledge. The study also reveals the significance of supportive learning environments and entrepreneurial role models in inspiring and guiding students in their entrepreneurial pursuits. These findings emphasize the need for educational institutions and policymakers to design comprehensive and engaging entrepreneurship programs that foster an entrepreneurial culture and provide students with the required tools, resources, and mentorship to embark on their entrepreneurial journeys.

This study provides valuable insights into the influence of entrepreneurship education on business students' entrepreneurial intentions and behaviors in Tianjin, China. The findings highlight the positive impact of entrepreneurship education in promoting entrepreneurial aspirations and equipping learners with the skills and mindset required for entrepreneurial success. As the importance of entrepreneurship in driving economic growth and innovation continues to gain recognition, this research underscores the significance of integrating entrepreneurship education into the curriculum and creating a supportive ecosystem for aspiring entrepreneurs. By doing so, educational institutions and policymakers can foster a generation of entrepreneurial leaders who contribute to the sustainable development and prosperity of their communities.

## **6.0 Recommendations**

Educational institutions should continue to prioritize entrepreneurship education and allocate resources to develop comprehensive and practical entrepreneurship programs. These programs should incorporate a wide range of topics, including opportunity recognition, risk management, innovation, and practical business skills. The curriculum should be designed to provide students with hands-on experiences through activities such as internships, business plan competitions, and networking opportunities with successful entrepreneurs. Additionally, fostering a supportive learning environment that encourages collaboration, creativity, and critical thinking is crucial. Universities should establish strong partnerships with industry professionals and entrepreneurs to provide mentorship and real-world insights to students. Moreover, policymakers should recognize the importance of entrepreneurship education and provide support to educational institutions in implementing and enhancing entrepreneurship programs. This includes allocating funding for entrepreneurship initiatives, creating policies that encourage entrepreneurial activities, and facilitating connections between academia, industry, and government. Furthermore, policymakers should work towards developing an ecosystem that supports entrepreneurship, which includes access to funding, business incubators, and networking platforms. By creating an enabling environment, policymakers can empower aspiring entrepreneurs to turn their innovative ideas into successful ventures and contribute to economic growth and job creation.

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