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From Entrepreneurial Education to Entrepreneurial Action: How University Support Shapes Student Venture Creation

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Abstract

University support plays a crucial role in fostering student entrepreneurship and encouraging venture creation. However, the transition from entrepreneurial intention to actual entrepreneurial behavior remains insufficiently understood, particularly in the Indonesian context. This study examines how university support influences student entrepreneurial intentions and actions, considering the mechanisms and contextual conditions that shape entrepreneurial outcomes. A systematic literature review was conducted following PRISMA 2020 reporting principles. Searches conducted on 19 October 2026 identified 34 candidate records, of which 10 empirical studies and two reviews were retained for synthesis. The findings indicate that university support influences entrepreneurial outcomes through multiple pathways, including entrepreneurial self-efficacy, perceived behavioral control, attitudes, opportunity recognition, and entrepreneurial climate. The effectiveness of educational programs, mentoring, financial assistance, and commercialization support varies according to student characteristics and institutional contexts. Entrepreneurial intention only partially explains the relationship between university support and entrepreneurial behavior. Furthermore, most included studies measure intention rather than actual venture creation, and none focuses on Indonesia. University support should extend beyond entrepreneurship education to include experiential learning, mentoring, access to early-stage resources, and evaluation of actual entrepreneurial outcomes. Future research should employ longitudinal designs and investigate context-specific factors, particularly within Indonesian higher education, to clarify how university support translates entrepreneurial potential into venture creation.

Keywords: *Entrepreneurial intention; Entrepreneurship education; Intention–behavior gap; Student entrepreneurship; University support*

INTRODUCTION

Universities are increasingly expected to produce graduates who create ventures rather than only seek employment. To meet this expectation, many institutions now offer entrepreneurship courses, mentoring, seed funding, and incubation. The behavioral logic behind these investments usually draws on the theory of planned behavior (TPB) by Ajzen (1991), which treats intention as the proximal driver of action and positions attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control as its antecedents. Kautonen et al. (2015) tested the robustness of this theory for both entrepreneurial intentions and subsequent actions, and found that its three core constructs significantly predicted intention.

Intention, however, is not action. Nabi et al. (2017), in their systematic review of entrepreneurship education in higher education, reported that research was dominated by short-term and subjective outcomes rather than later behavior. Recent studies keep returning to this gap. Bozward et al. (2023) argue that the relationship between a nascent entrepreneur's intention horizon, the interventions a university provides, and entrepreneurial action remains under-articulated. Ngo et al. (2024), using data from 2,566 students at 16 Vietnamese universities, found that entrepreneurship education influenced entrepreneurial behavior directly even though it had no direct effect on intention. If education can shape action without first shifting

intention, models that treat intention as the only gateway to behavior may understate what universities actually do.

The evidence on university support is also inconsistent. Galloway and Mustafa (2023) found that no element of university support had a direct effect on students' entrepreneurial intention, whereas Ta (2024) reported that perceived university support exerted a strong direct influence on both intention and behavior among Vietnamese students. Recent reviews help map the field. Xanthopoulou and Sahinidis (2024) analyzed the most-cited studies of student entrepreneurial intention and grouped its determinants into personality traits, contextual factors, motivation, and personal background. Akram and Hye (2026), reviewing 93 studies, concluded that entrepreneurship education mainly conditions how attitudes, norms, and perceived control translate into intention, and that its effect depends on pedagogical quality, experiential depth, cultural fit, and institutional support. Neither review is organized around the different forms of university support or around venture creation as the outcome.

This article therefore asks how university support shapes the move from entrepreneurial education to entrepreneurial action. It reviews studies published between 2021 and 2026 and addresses four questions. RQ1: What does the evidence say about the relationship between university support and student entrepreneurial intention and behavior? RQ2: Through which mechanisms does support operate? RQ3: Under which conditions does it work better or worse? RQ4: What gaps remain? The review contributes a structured synthesis that separates forms of support, distinguishes intention from behavioral outcomes, and identifies where evidence is missing, including the absence of Indonesian settings among the retained studies.

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LITERATURE REVIEW

Conceptualizing university support

Studies do not define university support in the same way, which partly explains why their results differ. Sabri (2023) examined three forms: entrepreneurial education, mentoring support, and financial support. Liao et al. (2022) distinguished educational support, entrepreneurial activities support, and commercialization support. Makai and Dőry (2023) examined the support services and the wider environment of the entrepreneurial university ecosystem as perceptions held by students, and Galloway and Mustafa (2023) separated elements such as business and concept development support from the entrepreneurial climate in which students are embedded. In this review, university support means the educational, mentoring, financial, commercialization, and ecosystem resources that a university provides or that students perceive as available to them. The distinction between provided and perceived support matters, because several of the reviewed studies measure students' perceptions (Galloway & Mustafa, 2023; Makai & Dőry, 2023; Ta, 2024; Dipoatmodjo et al., 2026) rather than the objective supply of programs.

From intention to action

In TPB-based research, intention is the immediate antecedent of behavior, but the strength of that link varies across people and settings. Bozward et al. (2023) use an integrated model of entrepreneurial intentions and the concept of an intention horizon to show that students with different horizons ask for different portfolios of university interventions. Research on student ventures therefore needs outcome measures that go beyond intention. Ta (2024) found that intention only partially mediated the relationship between perceived university support and entrepreneurial behavior, which means support also reaches behavior through other routes. Ngo et al. (2024) reached a similar conclusion for education, which influenced behavior directly and indirectly through attitude and perceived behavioral control.

Mechanisms, conditions, and debates

Two families of mechanisms appear in the recent literature. Cognitive mechanisms concern beliefs about feasibility. Makai and Dőry (2023) found that perceived university support and environment affected students' perceived behavioral control, and Liao et al. (2022) showed that entrepreneurial self-efficacy and opportunity recognition partially mediate the link between support programs and nascent entrepreneurial intention. Contextual mechanisms concern the climate around the student. Drawing on institutional theory, Galloway and Mustafa (2023) found that entrepreneurial climate mediated the effect of business and concept development support on intention.

The main debates concern whether support has direct effects, whether formal programs are the effective part of the ecosystem, and for whom support works. Ejime-Okereafor et al. (2025) reported that formal programs at four Nigerian public universities offered little direct support to student entrepreneurs, whose actual ecosystem rested on informal, peer-based pillars. Ratkovic et al. (2025) showed that the importance of support differs by age and first-generation status. Gaps remain in four areas: behavioral outcomes are rarely measured, forms of support are seldom compared, student heterogeneity is under-researched, and evidence from several emerging settings is scarce. This review addresses these gaps through a structured synthesis of recent studies.

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METHOD

Design and protocol

This study is a systematic literature review reported according to the principles of the PRISMA 2020 statement (Page et al., 2021). The review protocol was not registered. The review question was framed around the population (higher education students), the exposure (university-provided education, mentoring, funding, or ecosystem support), and the outcomes (entrepreneurial intention or behavior, including venture creation).

Eligibility criteria and screening

Records were included if they (a) were published between 2021 and 2026; (b) were peer-reviewed journal articles; (c) concerned higher education students; (d) were empirical studies examining university-provided education, support, or ecosystem in relation to entrepreneurial intention or behavior; and (e) had verifiable bibliographic details (authors, journal, and DOI). Reviews and bibliometric studies were not treated as primary evidence, although two systematic reviews of direct relevance were retained as context. Records were excluded if they fell outside the date window or were not journal articles, if they were reviews, bibliometric studies, or book chapters not centered on university support, if their outcome or focus lay outside the scope (for example, business innovation capability or family support), or if their bibliographic details could not be verified.

The searches surfaced 34 distinct candidate records. Table 1 shows how they were screened. After applying the criteria, 10 primary studies and two reviews were retained. Screening was performed by a single reviewer, so inter-rater agreement could not be assessed.

Table 1. Screening outcomes of candidate records (n = 34)

Stage or reason	Records	%
Candidate records surfaced by the searches	34	100.0
Excluded: outside 2021–2026 or not a journal article	1	2.9
Excluded: review, bibliometric study, or chapter not centered on university support	9	26.5
Excluded: outcome or focus outside scope (e.g., innovation capability, family support)	4	11.8
Excluded: bibliographic details could not be verified	8	23.5
Retained as context: systematic reviews	2	5.9
Retained for synthesis: primary studies	10	29.4

Percentages are shares of the 34 candidate records.

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RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Characteristics of the included studies

Of the 10 retained studies, one was published in 2022, five in 2023, two in 2024, and two in 2025. Most used quantitative designs. One used fuzzy-set qualitative comparative analysis (Ratkovic et al., 2025) and one used qualitative data from student entrepreneurs (Ejime-Okereafor et al., 2025). Where the setting is reported, studies come from Vietnam, China, the United Kingdom, Malaysia, Hungary, and Nigeria, and none of the retained records identifies Indonesia as its setting. Only Ngo et al. (2024) and Ta (2024) modeled entrepreneurial behavior as a measured outcome alongside intention. Seven of the ten studies measured intention only, and Ejime-Okereafor et al. (2025) studied students who were already running micro-businesses. Table 2 summarizes the studies.

Table 2. Primary studies retained for synthesis (n = 10)

Study	Setting	Design and sample	Support examined	Main finding
Liao et al. (2022)	China	Quantitative model of mediation and moderation; university students	Educational, activities, and commercialization support	Support relates to nascent intention; self-efficacy and opportunity recognition partly mediate; meaning in life moderates
Bozward et al. (2023)	UK, China	Paper-based questionnaire; 679 undergraduates	University interventions	Students with different intention horizons request different portfolios of interventions
Galloway & Mustafa (2023)	n.r.	Mediation model based on institutional theory	University support, including business and concept development support	No direct effect on intention; entrepreneurial climate mediates the effect of business and concept development support
Makai & Dőry (2023)	Hungary	Structural equation model; students in a national startup incubation programme	Perceived university support and environment	Support and environment covary strongly; both affect perceived behavioral control
Pham et al. (2023)	n.r.	Quantitative; technological innovativeness as moderator	Entrepreneurship education and prior experience	Education and experience underpin perceived feasibility and usefulness, forming motivation
Sabri (2023)	Malaysia	Correlational; entrepreneurship students at one university	Education, mentoring, and financial support	All three are significantly associated with new venture creation (studied as intention)
Ngo et al. (2024)	Vietnam	TPB-based survey; 2,566 students at 16 universities	Entrepreneurship education	Direct effect on behavior but not on intention; indirect effects through attitude and perceived control

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Study	Setting	Design and sample	Support examined	Main finding
Ta (2024)	Vietnam	Mediation model; logistics-industry students	Perceived university support	Strong direct effect on intention and behavior; intention partly mediates the effect on behavior
Ratkovic et al. (2025)	n.r.	fsQCA with diversity factors	University entrepreneurial support	First-generation status is necessary for low intention; support matters most for younger and first-generation students
Ejime-Okereafor et al. (2025)	Nigeria	Qualitative; 35 student entrepreneurs at four public universities	University entrepreneurial ecosystem	Formal programs gave little direct support; informal peer pillars fostered resilience and identity

n.r. = not reported in the abstract consulted. TPB = theory of planned behavior; fsQCA = fuzzy-set qualitative comparative analysis.

Direct and indirect pathways (RQ1 and RQ2)

The retained studies do not agree on whether university support affects intention directly. Ta (2024) reports a strong direct influence of perceived support on both intention and behavior, while Galloway and Mustafa (2023) find no direct effect of any support element on intention and show instead that entrepreneurial climate carries the influence of business and concept development support. A third pattern appears in Ngo et al. (2024), where education affects behavior directly but affects intention only indirectly, through attitude and perceived behavioral control. Makai and Dőry (2023) and Liao et al. (2022) point to the same cognitive route: perceived support is associated with perceived behavioral control, and the effect of support programs on nascent intention runs partly through entrepreneurial self-efficacy and opportunity recognition.

These differences may reflect which outcome is modeled (intention or behavior), which mediators are included, and the national setting, since the studies come from different countries. Because the studies differ on all three at once, the present evidence cannot separate these explanations. What the studies do show is that a single-path model, in which support raises intention and intention produces ventures, is too simple.

Forms of support (RQ2 and RQ3)

Sabri (2023) found that entrepreneurial education, mentoring, and financial support were each significantly associated with new venture creation, studied as students' intention. Liao et al. (2022) reached a comparable conclusion for educational, activities, and commercialization support, although the sources consulted here do not allow a ranking of their relative strength. Pham et al. (2023) add that prior experience matters alongside education, since both underpin students' perceived feasibility and usefulness of online venturing. Bozward et al. (2023) draw a design implication: students with different intention horizons request different portfolios of interventions. Taken together, the evidence favors a differentiated portfolio of support over a single course (Arif & Windarsari, 2026; Riu et al., 2026). At the same time, none of the retained studies compares the forms of support head to head on the same behavioral outcome, so claims that mentoring or funding matters more than education remain untested.

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From intention to action (RQ1)

Evidence on action is the thinnest part of the field. Ta (2024) shows that intention only partly mediates the effect of perceived support on behavior, meaning that part of the effect bypasses intention. Ngo et al. (2024) report a similar result for education. Both findings resonate with Bozward et al. (2023), who call attention to how intention horizons and interventions combine to produce action. They suggest that intention is a partial rather than exclusive channel from support to behavior, a point that extends the TPB-based work of Ajzen (1991) and Kautonen et al. (2015) to the university setting. For universities, the practical implication is that support timed to the moment of action, such as business plan competitions, internships with local start-ups, and access to experienced mentors, may matter in addition to courses that build motivation. Ngo et al. (2024) make a similar recommendation.

Heterogeneity and informal ecosystems (RQ3)

Support does not work equally for all students. Ratkovic et al. (2025) found that first-generation status was a necessary condition for low entrepreneurial intention and that university support mattered especially for younger students and first-generation students. The Nigerian evidence adds that the effective ecosystem may not be the formal one: Ejime-Okereafor et al. (2025) found that formal programs offered little direct support to conditional student entrepreneurs, while informal pillars (accessible resources, community support, and entrepreneurial platforms) fostered adaptive resilience and entrepreneurial identity. At the review level, Akram and Hye (2026) conclude that the effect of education depends on pedagogical quality, experiential depth, cultural fit, and institutional support, and Xanthopoulou and Sahinidis (2024) show that personal background, including family and education, is among the most studied determinants. Together, these results indicate that support is conditional on who receives it and where.

Integrative synthesis

Table 3 summarizes the synthesis. Read together, the evidence supports a conditional, multi-path account. University support shapes action through cognitive routes (self-efficacy, perceived behavioral control, opportunity recognition), contextual routes (entrepreneurial climate and peer ecosystems), and, in some studies, a direct route to behavior. The strength of each route depends on the form of support, the student's background and intention horizon, and the national setting.

Table 3. Synthesis of evidence and design implications

Theme	Supporting evidence	Implication
Pathways	Direct effect on intention in Ta (2024) but none in Galloway & Mustafa (2023); direct effect of education on behavior in Ngo et al. (2024)	Model several routes at once; do not assume a single path from support to intention to venture
Cognitive mechanisms	Perceived behavioral control, self-efficacy, opportunity recognition, and attitude (Liao et al., 2022; Makai & Dőry, 2023; Ngo et al., 2024)	Design support to build mastery experience and feasibility beliefs

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Theme	Supporting evidence	Implication
Forms of support	Education, mentoring, and funding are associated with venture-creation intention (Sabri, 2023); prior experience also matters (Pham et al., 2023)	Offer a portfolio matched to students' intention horizons (Bozward et al., 2023)
Intention to action	Intention only partly mediates the effect of support or education on behavior (Ta, 2024; Ngo et al., 2024)	Time support to action points; track behavior, not only intention
Heterogeneity and ecosystem	Younger and first-generation students benefit most (Ratkovic et al., 2025); informal peer ecosystems matter (Ejime-Okereafor et al., 2025)	Target outreach; recognize and strengthen peer networks

Implications, limitations, and research agenda (RQ4)

For universities, the synthesis points to four practical moves: offer a portfolio of support rather than one course; build feasibility beliefs through experiential activities and mentoring; time support to action points such as competitions and early-stage funding; and monitor outcomes beyond intention, such as ventures started. Targeted outreach to first-generation and younger students, and recognition of informal peer networks, follow from the evidence on heterogeneity. Indonesian universities were not represented in the retained evidence, so these points should be treated as hypotheses to test locally rather than as settled guidance.

Several limitations qualify the review. The searches used an open web search engine instead of Scopus or Web of Science, so relevant studies may have been missed, and the PRISMA-style counts describe this search only. A single reviewer screened the records. Extraction relied mostly on abstracts. Eight otherwise relevant records were excluded because their bibliographic details could not be verified, which may bias the corpus. The corpus is small and heterogeneous, and only English-language sources were considered. A replication in Scopus and Web of Science with two independent reviewers and full-text appraisal is the obvious next step.

The findings point to a research agenda with five priorities. First, longitudinal designs should follow students from exposure to support through to ventures actually started. Second, studies should measure support multidimensionally and compare forms of support on the same behavioral outcome. Third, researchers should test heterogeneity by gender, age, first-generation status, and intention horizon. Fourth, evidence from Indonesia and other underrepresented settings is needed, including how informal peer ecosystems complement formal programs. Fifth, reviews should separate studies of intention from studies of behavior, so that conclusions about venture creation rest on behavioral evidence.

CONCLUSION

This systematic literature review asked how university support shapes the move from entrepreneurial education to entrepreneurial action. Across 10 primary studies published between 2021 and 2026, the answer is conditional. Support influences students through beliefs about feasibility, through the entrepreneurial climate around them, and in some cases directly through behavior, and its effect depends on the form of support, on who the student is, and on the national setting. The evidence on actual venture creation is limited, because most studies stop at intention. Universities should therefore offer differentiated support, time it to action points, and track behavioral outcomes. Future research should use longitudinal

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and multi-method designs, compare forms of support, and extend the evidence base to Indonesia and other underrepresented contexts.

DECLARATION OF GENERATIVE AI

During the preparation of this manuscript, the authors used Grammarly Application and QuillBot to improve the clarity, readability, and language accuracy of the text. The authors carefully reviewed and edited output generated by these tools and take full responsibility for the content of this article. The authors made all substantive intellectual contributions, including conceptualization, data analysis, interpretation, and final decisions on content, arguments, and conclusions. The authors take full responsibility for the integrity, originality, and academic quality of this article.

DECLARATION OF CONFLICTING INTERESTS

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