


# The Predictive Relationship Between Hospitality Students' Satisfaction with Their Major of Study and Their Entrepreneurial Intentions

## Abstract

The purpose of this study is to investigate the intentions of students studying hospitality towards engaging in entrepreneurial endeavours. This study examines the impact of students' satisfaction with their major of study, modelling, financial support, and entrepreneurial education on their entrepreneurial intentions by focusing on the mediation of perception of self-efficacy. Using an online survey, 246 valid responses were obtained from students studying hospitality at three public universities in Jordan. The data was analysed using Smart-PLS software. The findings revealed a positive association between students' perceptions of self-efficacy and their entrepreneurial intentions. Furthermore, students' satisfaction with their major of study and modelling were associated positively with perception of self-efficacy. In turn, perception of self-efficacy was found to mediate those relationships. Conversely, financial support and entrepreneurial education did not correlate significantly with self-efficacy. This study contributes to the discussion on the factors that encourage students' entrepreneurial intentions, particularly in the hospitality field, as there is currently a lack of published studies concerning this crucial topic. To the best of the authors' knowledge, this study is the first to shed light on the impact of students' satisfaction with their major of study on entrepreneurial intentions, especially through the mediation of the perception of self-efficacy.

**Keywords:** Students' satisfaction, entrepreneurial intentions, self-efficacy, hospitality

**Sultan ALZYUOD**   
Department of Business Administration,  
Business School, The Hashemite  
University, Zarqa, Jordan, Email,  
[s.alzyoud@hu.edu.jo](mailto:s.alzyoud@hu.edu.jo)  
**Corresponding author**

**Ayman HARB**   
Department of Hotel Management,  
School of Tourism and Hospitality,  
University of Jordan, Aqaba, Jordan,  
Email,  
[a.harb@ju.edu.jo](mailto:a.harb@ju.edu.jo)

**Wejdan ALAKALEEK**   
Department of Business Administration,  
Business School, The Hashemite  
University, Zarqa, Jordan, Email,  
[w.alakaleek@hu.edu.jo](mailto:w.alakaleek@hu.edu.jo)

**How to cite this article:** Alzyoud, S., Harb, A. & Alakaleek, W. (2024). The Predictive Relationship Between Hospitality Students' Satisfaction with Their Major of Study and Their Entrepreneurial Intentions. African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure, 13(1):31- 40. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.46222/ajhtl.19770720.479>

## Introduction

In today's period of rapid globalisation, entrepreneurship has emerged as a crucial driver for both innovation and economic growth. The importance of entrepreneurship in the service industry, namely in hospitality and tourism, is being acknowledged more and more, especially in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic (Alzyoud et al., 2023; Ramukumba, 2023; Utami et al., 2023). According to Khairy et al. (2023), entrepreneurship in the hospitality industry can promote economic growth by generating employment opportunities, fostering innovation and product development, and facilitating the growth of small and medium-sized enterprises. These outcomes have the potential to enhance the well-being of individuals and society as a whole. Nevertheless, there is still a significant lack of research on entrepreneurial intentions, particularly amongst hospitality students (Al-Jubari et al., 2023; Otache et al., 2021; Pinto Borges, 2021). One of the critical factors that has been extensively examined in the literature as a promoter of entrepreneurial intention though is perception of self-efficacy (e.g. Crespo et al., 2020; Musiiwa et al., 2019; Saoula et al., 2022). Findings indicate that the relationship between self-beliefs of personal efficacy and entrepreneurial intentions is complicated and demands further investigation, particularly in undiscovered domains. Thus, further investigation is required to fully understand the influence of the specific circumstances in which the entrepreneur operates (Elndi & Gheith, 2021). More specifically, existing entrepreneurial intention literature does not yet focus on the intent to start a business and self-efficacy in developing countries, such as those in the Middle East (Elndi & Gheith, 2021; Sharahiley, 2020). In previous research, various factors have been identified as potentially linked to both perception of self-efficacy and entrepreneurial intention. This study specifically focuses on modelling, entrepreneurial education, financial support, and students' satisfaction with their major of study as factors, all of which have been theorised to influence entrepreneurial intention, either independently or through the mediating role of self-efficacy. Notably, the relationship between students' satisfaction with their major and entrepreneurial intention has yet to be explored in existing literature, making it a novel aspect of investigation in this study. The absence of prior research addressing the connection between students' satisfaction with their major of study and entrepreneurial intention underscores the originality of our inquiry. By scrutinising these proposed factors and delving into the aspirations, motivations, and mindsets of students, we seek to unveil valuable insights that can inform the development of educational programmes, mentorship initiatives, and policies geared towards nurturing entrepreneurship within the hospitality field. This research, thus, seeks to examine the entrepreneurial intentions and perceptions of self-efficacy of hospitality students in Jordan to fill this gap.

## Research background and hypotheses development

### *Entrepreneurial intention and self-efficacy*

The concept of Entrepreneurial Intention (EI) refers to an individual's deliberate and intentional plan to establish a new business endeavour in the future, as described by Thompson (2009). In order to comprehend the development of *EI*, we employ the theory of planned behaviour (TPB model), which is recognised as an excellent framework for examining an individual's desire to engage in entrepreneurship (Fayolle & Gailly, 2009; Karimi et al., 2016). This model was initially proposed by Fishben & Ajzen (1975) and Ajzen & Fishben (1980) to describe the individual's intention as the best predictor of reasoned behaviour (Ajzen, 1991; Drnovsek & Erikson, 2005). Therefore, this study investigates the students' inclination towards engaging in



entrepreneurial activities by utilising the TPB framework. Studying entrepreneurial intention (EI) is crucial in research on new venture development, as highlighted by Thompson (2009), and has thus garnered significant interest. Researchers have examined the impact of several factors on the EI, such as personality traits (e.g., Biswas & Verma, 2022; Laouiti et al., 2022), entrepreneurial attitude (e.g. Fayolle & Gailly, 2015; Musiiwa et al., 2019; Vamvaka et al., 2020), entrepreneurial competencies (e.g., Alakaleek et al., 2023) and self-efficacy (e.g. Crespo et al., 2020; Musiiwa et al., 2019; Saoula et al., 2022). In the EI literature, one of the frequently investigated questions that has attracted the interest of several researchers is whether an individual's self-efficacy has any association with intentions to start a business. Do individuals with a strong conviction that they are capable of performing certain tasks independently also have the ambition to launch their own company?

Self-efficacy (SE) refers to individuals' perceptions regarding their ability to achieve specific levels of performance that can influence events that impact their lives (Bandura, 1994). The beliefs of these individuals have a significant impact on their actions, conduct, and endeavours when faced with obstacles; consequently, those with high self-efficacy are more proactive in their coping strategies and exhibit greater control over their behaviour (Bandura & Adam, 1977). An individual's self-beliefs of efficacy can be conducted through four processes, including the cognitive process (goal setting), the decisional process (activities that the individual decides to choose), the motivational process (self-regulation of motivation), and the affective process (sense of SE; individual's feeling of stress in difficult situations) (Bandura, 1994). These processes affect how people think of self-enhancing, motivation, and choices (Benight & Bandura, 2004). Most experts argue that SE is domain-specific, such as "occupation-specific SE (as opposed to generalized SE) that exerts effects on career development and performance. One type of occupation-specific self-efficacy is entrepreneurial self-efficacy" (Newman et al., 2019: 404). In the career choice-related process, previous studies have indicated that self-efficacy (SE) is a significant factor in influencing individuals' decisions to pursue entrepreneurial jobs and engage in entrepreneurial activity. (Newman et al., 2019). SE is recognised as a significant factor influencing university students' EI (Anwar et al., 2021; Crespo et al., 2020; Musiiwa et al., 2019; Saoula et al., 2022; Soomro & Shah, 2022; Wu et al., 2022; Yousaf et al., 2020). Newman et al.'s (2019) systematic review of entrepreneurial SE revealed that most past empirical studies have demonstrated a positive relationship between entrepreneurial SE and EI amongst university students. As such, it is obvious that entrepreneurial SE is a significant predictor of EI, and that led us to propose the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1: There is a significant direct effect of self-efficacy on students' entrepreneurial intention

Additionally, SE serves as an intermediary to elucidate the correlation between various factors and the individuals' EI. (e.g. Jiatong et al., 2021; Oyugi, 2015; Wu et al., 2022). In particular, how does an individual's self-belief in efficacy develop and does it impact the EI? This indicates the impact of several factors that could directly affect SE and indirectly affect EI through SE. Prior studies have determined that the self-efficacy of individuals is an output of several elements, such as the entrepreneurial ecosystem (Elndi & Gheith, 2021), entrepreneurship education (Kubberød & Pettersen, 2017; Wu et al., 2022), and role models (Austin & Nauta, 2016; Laviolette et al., 2012). The social, political, and institutional context in which a person is embedded influences formation of that person's entrepreneurial SE (Belas et al., 2017). This indicates that the influence of these environments may vary depending on the specific context. To illustrate the influence of various environments (social, political, and institutional) within a novel and unexplored context, the purpose of this research is to investigate the impact of some elements on the formation of the students' SE. Moreover, this research explicitly examines the direct impact of students' satisfaction with their major of study, modelling, financial support, and entrepreneurship education on self-efficacy and indirectly on entrepreneurial intention through SE. Figure 1 demonstrates the posited model.

### ***Factors influencing self-efficacy***

***Modelling:*** The development of robust self-beliefs of efficacy relies on several sources, including vicarious experiences via social models (Bandura, 1994). Studies have substantiated that people's social and emotional development is enhanced via exposure to role models, such as parents, coaches, and mentors (Laviolette et al., 2012). Several studies have documented the beneficial impact of modelling on enhancing entrepreneurial self-efficacy (Newman et al., 2019). For example, research indicates that female students who have role models demonstrate elevated levels of self-efficacy (Austin & Nauta, 2016; McAuley, 1985). Laviolette et al. (2012) contend that incorporating real-life models into education is crucial for improving students' skills for social entrepreneurial enterprises. The existence of a role model has a direct impact on individuals' self-efficacy (SE), as well as indirectly influencing entrepreneurial intention (EI) through SE. The research done amongst students at universities (e.g., Maheshwari & Kha, 2022; Oyugi, 2015; Wu et al., 2022) have corroborated the mediation impact of SE. This study, thus, puts forward the subsequent hypotheses:

Hypothesis 2a: There is a significant direct effect of modelling on self-efficacy

Hypothesis 2b: Self-efficacy will mediate the relationship between modelling and students' entrepreneurial intention

***Entrepreneurship Education (EE):*** University education is considered essential for enhancing students' skills and abilities that are relevant to pursuing entrepreneurship as a profession (Colombo & Piva, 2020; Modiba et al., 2023). The research on EI clearly demonstrates that entrepreneurial SE is greatly influenced by EE (Amwar et al., 2021; Kubberød & Pettersen, 2017; Rauch & Hulsink, 2015; Soomro & Shah, 2022). Entrepreneurship education (EE) employs several strategies, including mentorship, guest speakers, case studies, and exploration of entrepreneurs' lifestyles, to enrich students' understanding of



entrepreneurial self-efficacy (Newman et al., 2019). The teaching approaches utilised in the field of entrepreneurship education have an impact on students' entrepreneurial self-efficacy, as stated by Abaho et al. (2015). According to Mei et al. (2020), there is a positive correlation between the degree of entrepreneurial education (EE) that graduates get and the strength of their entrepreneurial self-efficacy (SE). Studies have also verified that SE plays a role in connecting entrepreneurship education to entrepreneurial intention. This has been demonstrated by researchers such as Amwar et al. (2021), Mei et al. (2020), Rauch & Hulsink (2015), and Yun (2010). Consequently, EE results in the improvement of individuals' self-efficacy and has an indirect impact on their entrepreneurial ambition. It may be inferred that EE has a direct and indirect impact on EI, through SE. Thus, this study suggests:

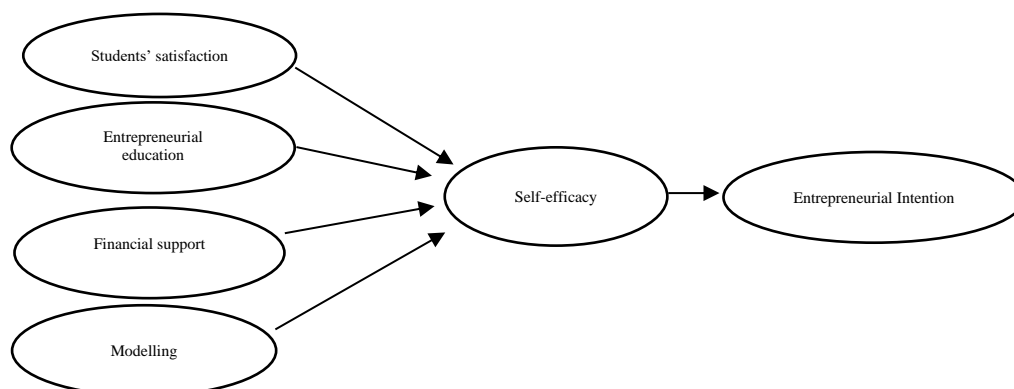
- Hypothesis 3a: There is a significant direct effect of entrepreneurship education on self-efficacy
- Hypothesis 3b: Self-efficacy will mediate the relationship between entrepreneurship education and students' entrepreneurial intention

**Financial Support:** People's belief in their own ability to succeed is influenced by how they perceive the environment around them. Having a supportive environment can increase people's confidence in starting a new business, where SE defines "whether entrepreneurs feel that they have the capacity to adequately respond to a particular entrepreneurial challenge" (Brändle et al., 2018: 18). The discussion of environmental factors focused on the influence that some variables, such as having financial support, might have in formulating individuals' intentions to start a business (Frank & Lüthje, 2004; Ounarat et al., 2019). The availability of financial resources, such as equity, family financial support, grants, and subsidies (Teixeira et al., 2018), represents an important predictor of SE (Elndi & Gheith 2021) and EI (Ahmed et al., 2020; Farashah, 2013). This type of support is important and has a significant effect on enhancing students' entrepreneurial SE (Elndi & Gheith, 2021). Examining the entrepreneurial ecosystem and environmental factors, self-efficacy also mediates financial support and the EI relationship (Al-Qadasi et al., 2023; Elndi & Gheith, 2021). Therefore, this research hypothesises that:

- Hypothesis 4a: There is a significant direct effect of financial support on self-efficacy
- Hypothesis 4b: Self-efficacy will mediate the relationship between financial support and students' entrepreneurial intention

**Students' Satisfaction with Their Major of Study:** Exploring the intricate interplay between students' satisfaction with their chosen major and entrepreneurial intentions is a crucial aspect of understanding the dynamics of educational and career aspirations. While extant literature has extensively examined factors influencing entrepreneurial intentions, there is a notable research gap regarding the direct correlation between students' contentment with their major and their inclination towards entrepreneurship, particularly within the context of hospitality education. Indeed, to the best of the authors' knowledge, we have not come across any article that directly studies the relationship between students' satisfaction with their major and entrepreneurial intention. In this research, we argue that satisfied students are more likely to identify opportunities, leverage their knowledge and skills, and envision themselves as future entrepreneurs within their chosen field. Conversely, students who are dissatisfied with their major may be less inclined to consider entrepreneurial paths, as their lack of enthusiasm and engagement can hinder their willingness to take risks and invest in their chosen domain. As such, we propose following hypotheses:

- Hypothesis 5a: There is a significant direct effect of students' satisfaction with their major of study on self-efficacy
- Hypothesis 5b: Self-efficacy will mediate the relationship between students' satisfaction with their major of study and students' entrepreneurial intention



**Figure 1. The study model**



## Methods

This study employed a quantitative methodology and collected data using an online survey. The target population consisted of students studying hospitality at universities in Jordan. Those students were targeted randomly through Facebook groups specifically for hospitality students. Moreover, the study employed the snowball approach by requesting that some academic staff members in the hospitality area provide the survey to their students and encourage them to pass it along to other colleagues. The participants were given a brief introduction to the study, including a link to the questionnaire. The introduction explained the purpose of the study and how the collected data will be used to encourage students' participation. The measurement items of the study's variables were adopted from past studies. All the measurement items were anchored on a 5-point Likert scale, with a rating of 1 indicating strong disagreement and a rating of 5 indicating strong agreement. Partial least squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM) was used to analyse the data using Smart PLS 3 software, which is a powerful tool for conducting complex statistical analyses and modelling in various research domains (Janib et al., 2022; Rasoolimanesh & Ali, 2018). PLS-SEM was chosen due to its suitability for handling both formative and reflective constructs, making it an ideal choice for examining the multifaceted relationships and latent variables within our research framework. This robust analytical approach allowed the researchers to comprehensively investigate the relationship among the variables under investigation and gain valuable insights into the research objectives. The study conducted data analysis in two steps, following the guidance provided by the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) literature, specifically referencing Siyal et al. (2019). This two-step approach is a common practice in PLS-SEM methodology, allowing for a comprehensive examination of complex relationships and latent variables within the research framework. It usually starts with a measurement model assessment that looks at how reliable and valid the constructs are. This is followed by a structural model assessment that looks at how these constructs are connected structurally (Schuberth et al., 2022).

## Results and discussion

### Respondents' characteristics

In this study, there were 246 completed questionnaires received. As illustrated in Table 1, around 71.7 percent of the respondents were males. Furthermore, 60 percent of the respondents were in their second year. Also, 50 percent of the respondents have travelled abroad.

**Table 1. Respondents' characteristics (N = 246)**

Characteristics	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
<b>Sex</b>		
Male	174	71.7%
Female	72	29.3%
<b>Academic Year Level</b>		
First	58	23.6
Second	71	28.9
Third	53	21.5
Fourth	60	24.4
Fifth	4	1.6
<b>Travelled Abroad</b>		
Yes	123	50%
No	123	50%

### Measurement model assessment

To evaluate the convergent validity of the measurement model, the researchers conducted several tests. These tests included looking at the following: (1) the composite reliability (CR), which according to Chin (1998) should be higher than 0.70; (2) the average variance extracted (AVE), which according to Fornell & Larcker (1981) should be higher than 0.50; and (3) the item loadings, which according to Fornell & Larcker (1981) should be higher than 0.70.

**Table 2. Mean scores and the reliability statistics of the measurement model**

Indicators and Factors	Mean (SD)	CR	AVE	Loadings
<b>F2: Entrepreneurial Intention</b>	<b>4.59 (0.75)</b>	<b>0.94</b>	<b>0.80</b>	
E11	4.67 (0.68)			<b>0.89</b>
E12	4.65 (0.69)			<b>0.89</b>
E13	4.55 (0.81)			<b>0.90</b>
E14	4.49 (0.81)			<b>0.90</b>
<b>F6: Self Efficiency</b>	<b>3.97 (0.89)</b>	<b>0.93</b>	<b>0.68</b>	
SE1	3.86 (0.91)			0.78
SE2	3.98 (0.89)			0.85
SE3	4.04 (0.88)			0.86
SE4	4.03 (0.90)			0.80
SE5	3.99 (0.88)			0.87
SE6	3.93 (0.89)			0.80
<b>F3: Modelling</b>	<b>2.6 (0.44)</b>	<b>0.86</b>	<b>0.76</b>	
Mo1	1.83 (0.38)			<b>0.95</b>
Mo2	1.54 (0.50)			<b>0.79</b>
<b>F4: Entrepreneurial Education</b>	<b>4.31 (0.49)</b>	<b>0.75</b>	<b>0.54</b>	
EE1	1.56 (0.50)			0.71
EE2	1.37 (0.48)			0.78
EE3	1.38 (0.48)			0.80
<b>F1: Financial Support</b>	<b>2.49 (1.04)</b>	<b>0.85</b>	<b>0.75</b>	
FinSup1	2.47 (1.09)			<b>0.82</b>
FinSup2	2.51 (0.99)			<b>0.91</b>
<b>F5: Students' Satisfaction</b>	<b>3.82 (1.13)</b>	<b>0.94</b>	<b>0.80</b>	
SAT2	3.75 (1.09)			0.86
SAT3	3.81 (1.19)			0.84
SAT4	3.86 (1.12)			0.94
SAT5	3.87 (1.11)			0.94





Table 2 presents the results, displaying the mean, standard deviation, composite reliability, average variance extracted, and item loadings for the constructs of the research model. Table 2 confirms the meeting of all convergent validity criteria, with composite reliability ranging from 0.75 to 0.94 and AVEs spanning from 0.54 to 0.80. All item loads exceeded the 0.7 threshold. In this study, we employed the criteria outlined by Gefen and Straub (2005) to assess discriminant validity. These criteria entail comparing the square root of the average variance extracted (AVE) for a specific construct to its correlations with other constructs in the model. Table 3 displays the results, comparing the square root of the AVE for each construct to the highest variance each construct shares with others in the model. These findings indicate minimal correlations between the construct of interest and the measurements of other dimensions.

**Table 3. Fornell-Larcker criterion**

	Financial Support	Entrepreneurial Intention	Modelling	Entrepreneurial Education	Students' Satisfaction
Financial Support	0.864				
Entrepreneurial Intention	0.088	0.894			
Modelling	0.054	0.243	0.871		
Entrepreneurial Education	-0.173	0.079	0.135	0.706	
Students' Satisfaction	0.216	0.181	0.036	-0.110	0.896
Self-Efficacy	0.096	0.234	0.187	0.103	0.287

Discriminant validity was further assessed using the Heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) criteria. HTMT is calculated as the average item correlations across different constructs divided by the average correlations among items measuring the same construct, as defined by Hair et al. (2019). Table 4 presents the HTMT analysis outcomes and summarizes the findings. Based on the work of Henseler et al. (2015), these results show that all of the values in Table 4 are below the significance level of 0.85. This means that there are no concerns about the discriminant validity using the HTMT criteria.

**Table 4. Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio (HTMT)**

	Financial Support	Entrepreneurial Intention	Modelling	Entrepreneurial Education	Students' Satisfaction
Financial Support					
Entrepreneurial Intention	0.119				
Modelling	0.081	0.297			
Entrepreneurial Education	0.318	0.123	0.217		
Students' Satisfaction	0.278	0.193	0.095	0.166	
Self-Efficacy	0.121	0.256	0.216	0.151	0.305

These findings indicate robust evidence of both convergent and discriminant validity for the measurements employed in the study. In summary, the results from the measurement model confirm their adequacy, ensuring that the evaluation of the structural model is acceptable.

**Results of the structural model and discussion**

The results of the proposed structural model are shown in Table 5. It includes the R2 values, estimated path coefficients, F square values, adjusted bias confidence intervals, t-values, and p-values. We can conclude that the proposed model fits the data well based on the model performance metrics. We used bootstrapping to evaluate the importance of each path. The model accounts for 22% of self-efficacy variability and 50% of intention variability.

**Table 5. Results of partial least square-structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM)**

	Original Sample (O)	Bias Corrected CI	F Square	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
SE -> EI	0.234	0.009	0.58	2.434	<b>0.015</b>
Modelling -> SE	0.155	0.006	0.28	2.782	<b>0.006</b>
EE -> SE	0.119	0.015	0.027	1.473	0.141
FIN-SUP -> SE	-0.011	0.010	0.001	0.123	0.902
SAT -> SE	0.276	0.001	0.16	3.921	<b>0.000</b>

The results revealed a positive and significant association between self-efficacy and entrepreneurial intention with a path coefficient of 0.234 ( $P < .05$ ), which supports hypothesis 1. This denotes that students' self-belief of efficacy can be considered a significant predictor of their intention to be entrepreneurs. This result is in line with various past studies, particularly among university students, such as the work of Crespo et al. (2020), Newman et al. (2019), Saoula et al. (2022), Soomro & Shah (2022), and Musiiwa et al. (2019). Moreover, the results here align with the findings of a recent study by Luong & Lee (2023) among hospitality students in New Zealand where they found that students' self-efficacy is an essential element in promoting their entrepreneurial intention. As such, the literature supports the conclusions regarding the relationship between self-efficacy and entrepreneurial intention. Furthermore, the outcomes support the proposed association between modelling and self-efficacy with a path coefficient of 0.155 ( $P < .01$ ), and that supports hypothesis 2a. Consequently, as modelling was found to be related to self-efficacy, and the latter to be associated with entrepreneurial intention, hypothesis 2b is supported, which proposes the mediation of self-efficacy between modelling and entrepreneurial intention. These results are also supported by various past studies (e.g., Laviolette et al., 2012, Maheshwari & Kha, 2022; Oyugi, 2015; Wu et al., 2022). For example, Luong & Lee (2023) suggested that having entrepreneurial role models is a strong predictor of entrepreneurial self-efficacy and the desire for entrepreneurship among tourism and hospitality students. Consequently, the results presented here are consistent with findings from earlier research.

Conversely, the findings did not support the hypothesised relationship between entrepreneurial education and self-efficacy (0.119,  $P = .141$ , ns), which led to the rejection of hypotheses 3a and 3b. This is in contrast with our expectations. In



addition, the results regarding the role of entrepreneurial education deviate from the findings of earlier studies (e.g. Amwar et al., 2021; Mei et al., 2020; Modiba et al., 2023; Newman et al., 2019; Rauch & Hulsink, 2015; Yun, 2010). The reason behind this unexpected result might be that entrepreneurship has not been fully covered in participants' modules or that there is a lack of attention regarding entrepreneurship in the universities where the participants study. Moreover, a non-significant association was discovered between financial support and self-efficacy, and that led to the rejection of hypotheses 4a and 4b. These findings also differ from the authors' expectations and do not correspond with previous studies such as Ahmed et al. (2020), Elndi & Gheith (2021), Farashah (2013), and Teixeira et al. (2018). For example, Nengomasha (2018) collected data from university students in South Africa and found a positive association between financial support, self-efficacy, and entrepreneurial intention. More recently, Al-Qadasi et al. (2023) found similar results in Yemen. Nevertheless, the results provide empirical support for hypothesis 5a, as a significant association was found between students' satisfaction with their major and self-efficacy (0.276,  $P = .000$ ). Thus, as students' satisfaction with their major was found to be related to self-efficacy, and the latter to be related to entrepreneurial intention, hypothesis 5b is also supported, which proposes the mediation of self-efficacy between students' satisfaction with their major and entrepreneurial intention. This denotes that students who find contentment in their chosen field of study are more likely to possess a stronger belief in their own abilities (self-efficacy) and a heightened interest in pursuing entrepreneurial ventures. This observation is in harmony with the notion that a sense of contentment and alignment with one's academic path can encourage one's self-assurance. When students derive satisfaction from their major, it can motivate and enhance their competence, thus contributing to heightened self-efficacy, which, in turn, can influence their likelihood of contemplating entrepreneurial endeavours.

### **Theoretical and practical implications**

This study contributes to the students' entrepreneurial intentions literature in several ways. Firstly, by establishing a positive and statistically significant association between self-efficacy and entrepreneurial intention, our findings reinforce the pivotal role of students' self-belief in efficacy as a fundamental predictor of their intention to pursue entrepreneurship. This affirmation not only aligns with existing research but also adds empirical support to the widely acknowledged notion that individuals possessing a strong sense of self-efficacy are more likely to express aspirations and intentions of venturing into entrepreneurship. This validation enhances the theoretical foundation of the field, providing empirical insights that reinforce the importance of nurturing self-belief among students to foster their entrepreneurial aspirations. Secondly, this study contributes by establishing a relationship between modelling and self-efficacy. The identified relationship underscores the importance of role models in shaping individuals' self-belief and confidence in their entrepreneurial capabilities. Theoretical implications suggest that exposure to successful entrepreneurial role models can play a crucial role in enhancing self-efficacy levels among aspiring entrepreneurs. This finding aligns with prior research and reinforces the theoretical understanding that modelling serves as a significant influencer in the development of entrepreneurial self-efficacy. As such, educators, policymakers, and institutions can leverage these insights to design interventions that incorporate positive entrepreneurial role models, fostering a supportive environment for the cultivation of self-efficacy among individuals with entrepreneurial aspirations. Finally, this study contributes by establishing a relationship between satisfaction with a major and self-efficacy. The identified relationship underscores the importance of aligning one's academic contentment with heightened self-efficacy levels. Theoretically, this relationship suggests that when students experience satisfaction in their chosen field of study, it positively influences their self-belief and confidence in their own abilities. This alignment between academic contentment and self-efficacy has implications for understanding the motivational factors that contribute to students' entrepreneurial intentions. Educators and institutions can consider these findings to design interventions aimed at enhancing students' satisfaction in their majors, recognising their potential impact on fostering self-efficacy and, consequently, entrepreneurial aspirations.

The present study also offers some practical insights into students' entrepreneurial intentions. First, we conducted the study in the context of university students, and the results emphasized the need to integrate self-efficacy development programs into entrepreneurship education initiatives, given the positive and significant association between self-efficacy and entrepreneurial intention. In response, institutions can proactively design targeted interventions that aim to cultivate students' self-belief, fostering a more entrepreneurial mindset. Second, supporting the notion that modelling is intricately linked to self-efficacy, and subsequently, self-efficacy is connected to entrepreneurial intention, this study highlights the importance of emphasising entrepreneurial role models. Institutions and educators can play a critical role by implementing mentorship programs and initiatives that showcase successful entrepreneurs. This strategic approach positively influences students' self-efficacy and, in turn, nurtures their entrepreneurial aspirations. Third, empirical support for the link between students' satisfaction with their major, self-efficacy, and entrepreneurial intention suggests that cultivating satisfaction in academic pursuits positively impacts students' entrepreneurial aspirations. Academic institutions can actively contribute to this by fostering environments that encourage satisfaction with chosen majors, ultimately leading to heightened entrepreneurial intentions among students. Finally, acknowledging the mediating role of self-efficacy, institutions can enhance the effectiveness of entrepreneurial support programmes by tailoring them to elevate students' self-efficacy levels. This may involve implementing targeted interventions, counselling services, or workshops specifically designed to boost self-confidence and instil a strong belief in one's entrepreneurial capabilities.

### **Conclusion, limitations, and recommendations for future studies**

This study aimed to investigate the influential elements that contribute to the development of entrepreneurial intention among hospitality students at public universities in Jordan. Specifically, the study focused on the role of self-efficacy as a mediator in



this process. The study investigated the impact of students' satisfaction with their major of study, entrepreneurial education, financial assistance, and modelling on their belief in their own capabilities (self-efficacy) and how this perception affects their intention to become entrepreneurs. The study obtained 246 usable responses and Smart-PLS Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) was utilised to analyse the collected data. The findings indicated a positive correlation between self-efficacy and students' entrepreneurial intentions. Furthermore, the results provide evidence for the suggested connection between modelling and self-efficacy, as well as the role of self-efficacy in mediating the relationship between modelling and students' entrepreneurial intentions. Nevertheless, there was no notable correlation discovered between entrepreneurial education and self-efficacy. As a result, the proposed role of self-efficacy in mediating the connection between entrepreneurial education and students' entrepreneurial intention was dismissed. In addition, the study did not find any connection between financial assistance and self-efficacy, which goes against what the authors anticipated. As a result, the proposed idea that self-efficacy mediates the relationship between financial support and students' entrepreneurial ambition was also disproven. However, the results confirmed the connection between students' contentment with their chosen field of study and their belief in their own abilities, and that the latter played a role in the impact of students' pleasure with their major on their desire to become entrepreneurs. This study is one of the first to investigate the connection between students' happiness with their major of study, self-efficacy, and entrepreneurial intention in the field of hospitality. Furthermore, this study adds to the discussion on the factors that stimulate students' inclination towards entrepreneurship, specifically within the hotel industry, which is currently lacking in research on this topic. This study aimed to offer a thorough comprehension of the viewpoints of hospitality students and contribute to the wider discussion on entrepreneurship in education.

Nevertheless, this study has some limitations. A constraint of this study is its exclusive reliance on data gathered from only three public universities in Jordan, so restricting the generalizability of the study's findings. Hence, it is advisable for future research to collect data from a diverse range of both public and private universities. In addition, this study gathered data using a self-administered survey in which students completed the questionnaire at a single moment in time, which may raise concerns about common method bias. However, many strategies were employed to address this problem. These included allowing participation in the research to be optional and ensuring that the identities of the respondents remained anonymous, in order to motivate people to make truthful responses. Additionally, the use of straightforward, uncomplicated questions without technical language was employed. Another weakness of this study is that it is quantitative and the characteristics being examined were based on previous studies. Therefore, it is recommended that future studies be conducted using a qualitative approach to investigate students' opinions on what motivates them to pursue entrepreneurial activities. Moreover, this study offers suggestions for academic institutions, governments, and industry participants to develop targeted strategies that foster a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship in hospitality education. One way to do this is by implementing additional modules, offering specialised training programmes, and enhancing students' understanding of the importance of entrepreneurship.

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