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The Effect of Entrepreneurship Education and Industrial Work Experience on Entrepreneurial Readiness, With Self-Efficacy as a Moderating Variable, Among Vocational High School Students

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Abstract
The purpose of this study is to analyze and discusses the effect of entrepreneurship education and industrial work practices on students' entrepreneurial readiness This research uses primary data collected from the distribution of Likert scale questionnaires to 155 respondents who are selected using probability sampling out of a total population of 252 students class XII for the period 2025–2026. Data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with a Partial Least Square (PLS) approach using SmartPLS 4.0 software. We have opted for this method because it allows us to fully analyze the links of causation between the variables, covering both the measurement model (outer model) and the structural model (inner model). The results demonstrate that entrepreneurship education has a positive and significant effect on entrepreneurial readiness while industrial work practices do not have a influence of legitimate significance to commercial sense of readiness. In addition, based on the moderation test results showed that self-efficacy is moderating in the relationship between entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial readiness, also industrial work practices against entrepreneurial readiness. The main practical implications of this study highlight that self-efficacy is a very important key to converting entrepreneurship knowledge and practical experience into real entrepreneurial readiness in students.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The cultivation of entrepreneurial readiness remains a critical concern within vocational education which is currently limited to 3.47%, remains a significant developmental hurdle that trails behind regional counterparts such as Malaysia at 4.7% and Singapore at 8.76% (Deny, 2024). Such disparities underscore an imperative for educational stakeholders to intensify their efforts in fostering a more productive and enterprising young demographic (Praja et al., 2023).This exigency is further magnified by the persistent reality that Vocational High School (SMK) graduates frequently constitute the largest segment of the open unemployment pool (BPS, 2024). Consequently, there appears to be a clear disconnect in student entrepreneurial preparedness, suggesting that the vocational sector has yet to fully realize its objective of equipping graduates for professional autonomy and business self-sufficiency (Herlina et al., 2024).

Entrepreneurial readiness is fundamentally defined as a multifaceted construct encompassing an individual's cognitive preparedness, professional expertise, and functional capacity to oversee business operations (Antonius & Handoyo, 2024). The development of this readiness is contingent upon a synthesis of internal and external factors, ranging from

psychological traits such as self-efficacy and confidence to environmental support systems, including familial backing and institutional infrastructure (Royyan & Pahlevi, 2022). In this study, entrepreneurial readiness was measured using indicators of self-confidence, willingness to take or bear risks, future orientation, and innovation, which reflect an individual's readiness to respond to business opportunities and challenges.

Entrepreneurship education is widely regarded as a primary driver of entrepreneurial readiness, functioning as a structured pedagogical framework designed to cultivate the essential mindset, character, and skill sets required for venture creation (Puteri et al., 2024). The efficacy of such programs is contingent upon several critical variables, including the rigor of the curriculum, pedagogical approaches, and the extent to which the educational environment aligns with real-world business demands (Herlina et al., 2024). In this study, entrepreneurship education was measured using the indicators of entrepreneurial knowledge, awareness of business opportunities, and creativity, which reflect an individual's ability to understand, identify, and develop business opportunities. Empirical literature generally supports a positive correlation between these educational interventions and student readiness, noting that such training significantly improves behavioral and cognitive competencies (Antonius & Handoyo, 2024; Hermawan et al., 2022). Conversely, recent scholarly discussions highlight a potential lack of significant influence in instances where curricula remain predominantly theoretical, suggesting that the absence of experiential learning limits the practical transition toward actual business operations (Hasan et al., 2024).

Complementing formal entrepreneurship education, industrial work placements serve as a cornerstone in developing entrepreneurial readiness by bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge and professional practice (Azifah & Marlena, 2020). The utility of these placements is largely dictated by the level of student engagement in substantive business processes, the caliber of industry-based mentorship, and the cultivation of an environment conducive to skill refinement (Yani & Balya, 2025). In this study, industrial work experience was measured using indicators such as the development of skills and abilities, the cultivation of work attitudes and a sense of responsibility, work experience, and knowledge of the workplace or industry. Existing scholarship largely corroborates that such experiential learning facilitates a more nuanced understanding of market dynamics and the complexities inherent in the labor force (Azifah & Marlena, 2020; Falah & Marlena, 2023). However, it is noteworthy that these placements may not inherently translate into increased entrepreneurial readiness; research indicates that if the training objective remains strictly aligned with workforce preparation rather than the fostering of an innovative entrepreneurial spirit, the developmental impact on business ownership intentions may be negligible (Andik et al., 2022).

Beyond external stimuli, entrepreneurial readiness is deeply rooted in internal cognitive processes, most notably self-efficacy a construct denoting an individual's conviction in their capability to navigate challenges and accomplish strategic objectives (Bandura, 1991). This psychological construct is largely shaped by an accumulation of academic and professional experiences, alongside the influence of familial support systems and existing entrepreneurial competencies (Hermawan et al., 2023). In this study, self-efficacy was measured using indicators of the ability to overcome business challenges, the ability to achieve business goals, and the ability to carry out business activities, which reflect an individual's level of confidence in their own capacity for entrepreneurship. Empirical literature highlights self-efficacy as a significant determinant of entrepreneurial preparedness; individuals characterized by high self-assurance are notably more adept at mitigating risks and navigating market volatility (Royyan & Pahlevi, 2022). Furthermore, research underscores the mediating role of self-efficacy in amplifying the efficacy of

educational and practical training, as it facilitates the internalization of acquired knowledge into actionable professional behaviors (Renaningtyas et al., 2021). Nevertheless, scholarly consensus suggests that the influence of self-efficacy is inherently contextual, contingent upon the depth and caliber of both the educational and experiential foundations provided to the individual (Aigerim Sekerbayeva; et al., 2023).

The interplay between entrepreneurship education, industrial work placements, self-efficacy, and entrepreneurial readiness is grounded in Bandura (1991) Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), This theoretical framework posits that human behavior emerges from a dynamic, triadic reciprocity known as reciprocal determinism involving the continuous interaction between personal, environmental, and behavioral components. In the present study, entrepreneurship education and industrial work placements are conceptualized as environmental determinants that furnish learners with essential academic and professional experiences. Conversely, self-efficacy functions as a personal factor that modulates the cognitive interpretation of these experiences, ultimately culminating in entrepreneurial readiness as the observable behavioral outcome (Bandura, 1978).

Despite the robustness of this theoretical foundation, empirical evidence regarding the specific impacts of these variables on entrepreneurial readiness remains fragmented, characterized by inconsistencies that warrant further academic scrutiny (Hasan et al., 2024). Notwithstanding established theoretical frameworks, scholarly discourse regarding entrepreneurial readiness remains characterized by a lack of conceptual consensus, particularly concerning the definition and operationalization of its underlying constructs (Adeniyi, 2023). Addressing this conceptual ambiguity, this study seeks to empirically examine how self-efficacy moderates the influence of entrepreneurship education and industrial placements on the entrepreneurial readiness of vocational high school students, thereby providing robust insights into the mechanisms that facilitate successful entrepreneurial development in the vocational sector (Renaningtyas et al., 2021).

2. RESEARCH METHODS

This study adopts a quantitative methodology utilizing an associative research design to rigorously examine the influence of entrepreneurship education and industrial work experience on entrepreneurial readiness, specifically testing the moderating role of self-efficacy (Hamad et al.,, 2018). Empirical data were obtained via structured, closed-ended questionnaires, with instrument development grounded in established academic frameworks; specifically, the measurement scales for entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial readiness were adapted from Hasanah et al. (2023) while those concerning industrial work experience and self-efficacy were derived from the model proposed by Renaningtyas et al. (2021). The research conceptualizes entrepreneurship education (X1) and industrial work experience (X2) as independent variables, with entrepreneurial readiness (Y) as the dependent variable, and self-efficacy (Z) integrated as a moderating factor to determine the conditional strength of these relationships.

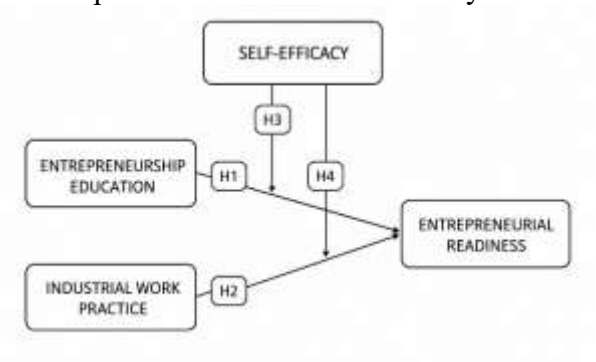
The study population comprises all 12th-grade students enrolled in the Institutional Accounting and Finance (AKL) program across public vocational high schools in South Jakarta who have successfully completed both entrepreneurship education and industrial work placements. To ensure a representative distribution, this research employs a probability sampling technique, specifically utilizing a proportional stratified random sampling method to account for the heterogeneous student population across the identified school strata (Syamsul et al., 2023). Based on the application of the Slovin formula with a 5% margin of error, the final sample size was established at 155 respondents drawn from a total population of 252 students (Sugiyono, 2019).

Table 1 Sampling Process

No.	School Name	Sample Calculation Method	Number of Students
1	Vocational High School 8 Jakarta	(108/252) x 155	67
2	Vocational High School 25 Jakarta	(72/252) x 155	44
3	Vocational High School 47 Jakarta	(72/252) x 155	44
TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS			**155**

Source: Data compiled by the author (2026)

The following is the conceptual framework for this study:



Gambar 1. Conceptual Framework
Source: Data compiled by the author (2026)

Entrepreneurship Education (X1) : Independent Variable
Industrial Work Experience (X2) : Independent Variable
Self-Efficacy (Z) : Moderating Variable
Entrepreneurial Readiness (Y) : Dependent Variable

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1.Research Results

Tabel 2. Results of Descriptive Statistical Tests

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
Entrepreneurial Readiness	155	21.00	52.00	5574.00	35.9613	7.55231	57.037
Entrepreneurship Education	155	15.00	44.00	5332.00	34.4000	6.18082	38.203
Industrial Work Experience	155	26.00	52.00	6181.00	39.8774	5.84578	34.173
Self-Efficacy	155	11.00	40.00	4299.00	27.7355	6.69762	44.858
Valid N (Listwise)	155						

Source: Results of data analysis using SPSS Version 26

Based on the results of a descriptive analysis of 155 respondents, the Industrial Work Practice variable showed the highest mean of 39.87, indicating that students'

perceptions of their field experience were predominantly positive. The Entrepreneurial Readiness variable had a mean of 35.96, followed by Entrepreneurship Education at 34.40. Meanwhile, Self-Efficacy had the lowest mean of 27.73 with a variance of 44.86, indicating a significant variation in perceptions among respondents regarding their self-confidence in entrepreneurship. Overall, the standard deviation values being smaller than the mean values for each variable indicate that the data distribution is stable and consistently represents the respondents' perceptions.

Table 3. Results of the Outer Loading Test

	X1	X2	Y	Z	Z x X1	Z x X2
X1.10	0.752					
X1.11	0.760					
X1.2	0.750					
X1.3	0.789					
X1.4	0.746					
X1.5	0.719					
X1.6	0.776					
X1.7	0.754					
X1.8	0.846					
X1.9	0.792					
X2.1		0.782				
X2.10		0.793				
X2.11		0.727				
X2.12		0.731				
X2.13		0.756				
X2.2		0.741				
X2.3		0.731				
X2.4		0.733				
X2.5		0.781				
X2.6		0.733				
X2.7		0.757				
X2.8		0.773				
X2.9		0.743				
Y.1			0.752			
Y.10			0.773			
Y.11			0.776			
Y.12			0.780			
Y.13			0.784			
Y.2			0.775			
Y.3			0.837			
Y.4			0.761			
Y.5			0.822			
Y.6			0.730			
Y.7			0.791			
Y.8			0.749			
Y.9			0.819			
Z.1				0.822		
Z.10				0.823		
Z.2				0.841		
Z.3				0.847		
Z.4				0.860		
Z.5				0.823		
Z.6				0.828		
Z.7				0.859		
Z.8				0.857		
Z.9				0.838		
X1.1	0.742					
Z x X1					1.000	
Z x X2						1.000

Source: Data processed using SmartPls4

Based on the results of the outer loading test, all items had values above 0.70, thus meeting the criteria for convergent validity (Hair et al., 2013). Consequently, the research instrument was deemed valid and suitable for structural equation modeling and hypothesis testing.

Tabel 4. Results of the Average Variance Extracted Test

	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability (rho_c)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
X1	0.93	0.932	0.94	0.588
X2	0.936	0.938	0.944	0.567
Y	0.947	0.948	0.953	0.61
Z	0.954	0.957	0.96	0.705

Source: Data processed using SmartPls4

The convergent validity assessment confirms that all research constructs surpass the 0.50 threshold for Average Variance Extracted (AVE) (Hair et al., 2013). Consequently, these metrics demonstrate that the chosen constructs effectively account for indicator variance, thereby validating their capacity to accurately represent the variables under investigation.

Tabel 5. Results of the Fornell-Larcker Criterion Test

	X1	X2	Y	Z
X1	0.767			

X2	0.730	0.753		
Y	0.591	0.481	0.781	
Z	0.074	0.121	0.435	0.840

Source: Data processed using SmartPls4

The Fornell-Larcker criterion confirms that discriminant validity is satisfied, as the square root of the AVE for every construct exceeds its respective correlation coefficients with all other variables within the model (Adeniyi, 2023). This outcome demonstrates that each research construct maintains a high level of uniqueness, thereby confirming the satisfactory discriminant power of the established model.

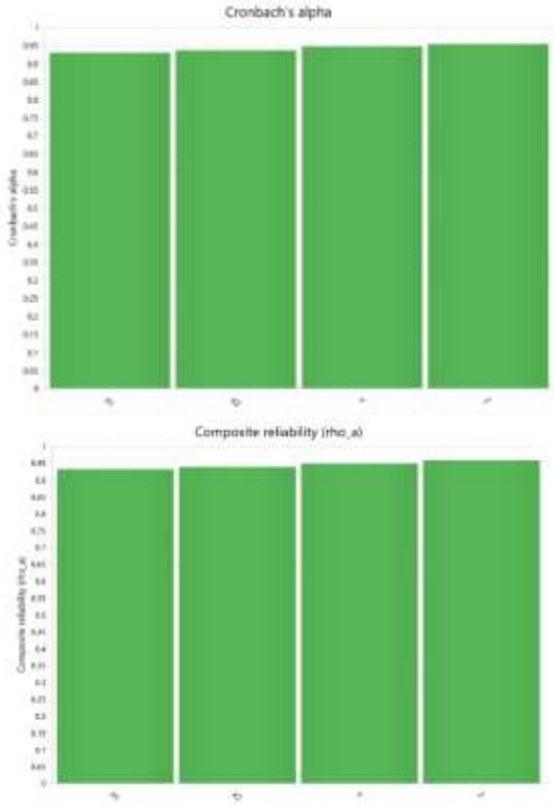
Tabel 6. Result of Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio value

	X1	X2	Y	Z	Z x X1	Z x X2
X1						
X2	0.780					
Y	0.625	0.504				
Z	0.096	0.135	0.450			
Z x X1	0.169	0.176	0.276	0.135		
Z x X2	0.167	0.168	0.312	0.066	0.737	

Source: Data processed using SmartPls4

Based on the results of the correlation matrix, all latent variables have correlation values below 0.90, indicating good discriminant validity. Entrepreneurial Readiness (Y) has a moderate positive correlation with Entrepreneurship Education (X1) of 0.625 and Industrial Work Experience (X2) of 0.504. Furthermore, the moderating variables (Z×X1 and Z×X2) exhibit characteristics distinct from their main variables, indicating that each construct in the model possesses an adequate level of discriminant validity.

Tabel 7. Results of the Cronbach's Alpha Test for Composite Reliability



Source: Data processed using SmartPls4

An evaluation of the measurement model's reliability revealed high internal consistency, with Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values for all variables exceeding 0.90 (Sarstedt et al., 2021). These results confirm that the research instrument has very strong reliability and is free from random fluctuation bias. Thus, the measurement model is deemed valid and ready for analysis in the structural equation modeling phase.

Tabel 8. R-Square Test Results

	R-square	R-square adjusted
Y	0.703	0.693

Source: Data processed using SmartPls4

The calculated R^2 value of 0.703 for Entrepreneurial Readiness (Y) reveals that 70.3% of the variation in student readiness is attributable to Entrepreneurship Education (X1), Industrial Work Experience (X2), Self-Efficacy (Z), and the associated moderating influences, while the remaining 29.7% is attributed to external variables beyond the current research scope. This result signifies that the structural model possesses substantial predictive capability.

Tabel 9. Effect Size Test Results (f^2)

	X1	X2	Y	Z	Z x X1	Z x X2
X1			0.508			

X2			0.014			
Y						
Z			0.579			
Z x X1			0.097			
Z x X2			0.082			

Source: Data processed using SmartPls4

The analytical findings indicate that both Entrepreneurship Education (X1) and Self-Efficacy (Z) exert a statistically significant direct influence on Entrepreneurial Readiness (Y). Conversely, while Industrial Work Experience (X2) fails to demonstrate a significant predictive impact, the interaction terms representing moderating effects (ZxX1 and ZxX2) contribute meaningfully by modulating the strength of these structural relationships. Ultimately, these results suggest that students' readiness for entrepreneurship is primarily driven by their educational background and internal self-efficacy levels.

Tabel 10. Results of the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) Test

	VIF
X1 -> Y	2.149
X2 -> Y	2.167
Z -> Y	1.038
Z x X1 -> Y	2.247
Z x X2 -> Y	2.216

Source: Data processed using SmartPls4

The Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) assessments for all predictor variables fall below the 3.00 threshold, which confirms the absence of multicollinearity within the research model. Consequently, the structural model is considered robust, ensuring that it possesses the requisite validity to estimate the individual effects of each variable without the confounding influence of collinearity.

Tabel 11. Goodness-of-Fit Index Test Results

	Saturated model	**Estimated model**
SRMR	0.051	0.051
d_ULS	2.913	2.914
d_G	1.7	1.7
Chi-square	1251.135	1251.295
NFI	0.792	0.792

Source: Data processed using SmartPls4

The Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) values for both the Saturated and Estimated models are 0.051, which falls below the established 0.08 threshold. Consequently, the research model demonstrates a favorable fit, confirming its adequacy in explaining the structural relationships among the investigated variables.

Tabel 12. Q-Square Test Results

	Q^2predict	RMSE	MAE
Y	0.675	0.577	0.449

Source: Data processed using SmartPls4

The obtained Q^2 value of 0.675 confirms that the model possesses substantial relevance and predictive utility regarding entrepreneurial readiness. Given that this metric exceeds the zero threshold, it provides empirical evidence that the research model achieves a satisfactory level of predictive accuracy.

Tabel 13. Hypothesis Test Results (bootstrapping)

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P values
X1 -> Y	0.57	0.569	0.06	9.437	000
X2 -> Y	0.094	0.099	0.067	1.401	0.081
Z -> Y	0.422	0.423	0.056	7.569	000
Z x X1 -> Y	0.259	0.257	0.063	4.111	000
Z x X2 -> Y	0.23	0.225	0.064	3.565	000

Source: Data processed using SmartPls4

The test results show that Entrepreneurship Education (X1) has a significant direct effect on Entrepreneurial Readiness (Y) (T-stat: 9.437; P-value: 0.000). In contrast, Industrial Work Experience (X2) did not show a significant direct effect on Entrepreneurial Readiness (Y) (T-stat: 1.401; P-value: 0.081). However, Self-Efficacy (Z) significantly moderated the effect of Entrepreneurship Education (X1) on Entrepreneurial Readiness (Y) (T-stat: 4.111; P-value: 0.000). Furthermore, Self-Efficacy (Z) was also found to significantly moderate the effect of Industrial Work Experience (X2) on Entrepreneurial Readiness (Y) (T-stat: 3.565; P-value: 0.000).

3.2.Discussion

Based on the results of the data analysis, the research findings are discussed in greater depth by relating them to relevant previous studies. The following section presents a summary of the research findings:

a.The Impact of Entrepreneurship Education on Entrepreneurial Readiness

Empirical analysis reveals that entrepreneurship education (X1) exerts a positive and statistically significant influence on entrepreneurial readiness (Y), as evidenced by a T-statistic of 9.437 and a P-value of 0.000 (Yamin, 2023). These findings suggest that enhanced educational interventions in entrepreneurship correlate with heightened levels of student readiness to pursue business ventures. While such pedagogical frameworks are instrumental in cultivating creativity, innovation, and opportunity recognition remains a critical necessity to reinforce practical business

management competencies and risk-mitigation strategies to further optimize student readiness. Consistent with the literature, this outcome aligns with research conducted by Puteri et al. (2024), Hasanah et al. (2023), and Cahyani et al. (2022) corroborating the assertion that structured entrepreneurship curricula positively impact student preparedness. Consequently, these findings underscore the fundamental role of entrepreneurship education in developing the necessary mindset, technical competencies, and baseline readiness required for successful business initiation and management.

b. The Impact of Industrial Work Experience on Entrepreneurial Readiness

Empirical findings indicate that Industrial Work Experience (X2) does not exert a statistically significant influence on Entrepreneurial Readiness (Y), evidenced by a T-statistic of 1.401 and a P-value of 0.081 (Yamin, 2023). While such placements are instrumental in broadening students' comprehension of workplace dynamics, environmental adaptation, and technical proficiency, this exposure alone appears insufficient to cultivate an entrepreneurial mindset. The observation that industrial placements often prioritize employee-oriented skill acquisition characterized by restricted involvement in strategic decision-making, business accountability, and operational entrepreneurship may account for this lack of significant impact. These results are congruent with studies conducted by Ulfa&Suharsono (2023) and Yani & Balya (2025), which similarly conclude that industrial work placements do not guarantee enhanced entrepreneurial readiness. Consequently, these findings highlight that industrial exposure is predominantly structured to foster professional work competencies rather than the specific character traits necessary for entrepreneurial independence.

c. The Effect of Entrepreneurship Education on Entrepreneurial Readiness, Moderated by Self-Efficacy

The analysis demonstrates that Self-Efficacy (Z) acts as a significant moderator, intensifying the positive relationship between Entrepreneurship Education (X1) and Entrepreneurial Readiness (Y), supported by a T-statistic of 4.111 and a P-value of 0.000 (Yamin, 2023). These results suggest that the foundational knowledge, creativity, and opportunity-recognition skills acquired through formal entrepreneurship education are more effectively translated into concrete entrepreneurial readiness when bolstered by robust self-efficacy. By fostering an optimistic outlook, enhancing resilience against adversity, and promoting a proactive approach to risk-taking, self-efficacy serves as a vital psychological catalyst for students navigating the entrepreneurial landscape. Consistent with previous scholarly works by Adeniyi (2023), Hermawan et al. (2022), and Renaningtyas et al. (2021), these findings corroborate the critical function of self-efficacy in amplifying the influence of entrepreneurship education. Ultimately, this evidence confirms that self-efficacy operates as a pivotal psychological construct that maximizes the efficacy of pedagogical interventions in developing students' readiness for business ventures.

d. The Effect of Industrial Work Experience on Entrepreneurial Readiness, Moderated by Self-Efficacy

Empirical evidence indicates that Self-Efficacy (Z) functions as a significant moderator, amplifying the influence of Industrial Work Experience (X2) on Entrepreneurial Readiness (Y), as demonstrated by a T-statistic of 3.565 and a P-value of 0.000 (Yamin, 2023). These findings suggest that the technical proficiency and environmental exposure acquired during industrial internships are more effectively leveraged toward entrepreneurial preparedness when mediated by a strong sense of personal agency. By fostering the confidence necessary to navigate professional risks,

surmount operational obstacles, and repurpose workplace experience as foundational capital, self-efficacy transforms passive professional training into an active driver of entrepreneurial intent. This outcome aligns with the research of Zhuang & Sun (2024), who posited that self-efficacy serves as a vital bridge between professional experience and business initiation, as well as the findings of Renaningtyas et al. (2021), which emphasized the synergistic effect of industrial placement and personal belief systems on readiness. Consequently, this study confirms that self-efficacy acts as an essential psychological mechanism that optimizes the developmental potential of pre-employment training in cultivating the character traits requisite for student entrepreneurial success

4. CONCLUSION

An analysis of the influence of Entrepreneurship Education and Industrial Work Experience on Entrepreneurial Readiness, with Self-Efficacy as a moderating variable, was conducted using the Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) method with the assistance of SmartPLS software. Based on the results of data analysis of 155 vocational high school students majoring in accounting in South Jakarta, the following conclusions were drawn.

1. Entrepreneurship Education has a positive and significant effect on Entrepreneurial Readiness by stimulating students' innovative mindset and courage.
2. Industrial Work Experience does not have a significant effect because the program's focus remains limited to developing employees' technical skills rather than entrepreneurial character.
3. Self-efficacy significantly strengthens the influence of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial readiness by acting as a catalyst for creative ideas.
4. Self-efficacy has also been shown to strengthen the influence of industrial work placements, as self-confidence enables students to convert the technical experience gained during their internships into readiness for independent entrepreneurship.

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