

Social Media Use and Entrepreneurial Intention: The Role of Students' Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy

Nur Ika Effendi^{1*}, Risni Nelvia², Yopi Eka Anroni³, Isman⁴, Wahyu Faisa Rika Sandi⁵

Muara Bungo University, Management Study Program, Indonesia¹ Muara Bungo University, Accounting Study Program, Indonesia^{2,4,5}, Metadata University, Digital Business Study Program, Indonesia³

Email: yumeika0711@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

Digitalization can change the mindset and the way students access information, as well as their desire to start a business or their interest in entrepreneurship. This study aims to determine the effect of social media on students' intention in entrepreneurship, with self-efficacy as an intervening variable, among students at Muara Bungo University. The study employed a quantitative approach, utilizing questionnaires to collect data from 101 students selected from all active students in the even semester of the 2024/2025 academic year, via proportionate stratified random sampling. Based on data processing Smart-PLS 4 statistical tool, the study found that social media and self-efficacy have a positive and significant effect on entrepreneurial interest, partial and simultaneous. Self-efficacy partially mediates the relationship between social media and entrepreneurial interest. It is hoped that universities, especially Muara Bungo University, can strengthen self-efficacy development programs and utilize social media as a learning tool to increase students' interest in entrepreneurship. This approach can help students create jobs in the future and increase economic growth in Bungo Regency

Keywords: Social Media; Entrepreneurial Intention; Self-Efficacy; Students; Bungo Regency,

INTRODUCTION

Possessing a formal educational qualification, such as a diploma or bachelor's degree, does not automatically guarantee easy employment. Although individuals with higher education credentials, such as Diploma I–III and Bachelor's degrees (D-IV, S1 to S3), experience lower unemployment rates (2.29% and 11.28%, respectively) compared to high school (30.72%) and vocational high school (24.65%) graduates, these figures reveal underlying structural concerns. Specifically, they may indicate a growing mismatch between the increasing number of university graduates and the availability of suitable employment opportunities. Alternatively, they may reflect a limited inclination among



graduates to pursue entrepreneurial endeavors or create their own sources of income (Rahayu & Hastuti, 2023).

Entrepreneurship plays a pivotal role as a driving force in economic growth and poverty alleviation (Effendi et al., 2025; Rifa'atul & Suratman, 2015). The presence of entrepreneurs can significantly contribute to national economic improvement, thereby reducing poverty levels (Amiruddin, 2021; Effendi, 2021; Suyati et al., 2021). However, Indonesia's entrepreneurship rate remains relatively low at 3.35%, far behind countries such as Malaysia (4.47%), Singapore (8.76%), and the United States (12%) (Statistik, 2024). This condition highlights the urgent need for structured entrepreneurship education across all levels of society. Such programs have long been implemented in developed nations and are now widely recognized as a crucial mechanism for fostering an entrepreneurial mindset, particularly among university students (Zimmerer, Thomas W; Scarborough, 2008). Students who are equipped with entrepreneurial knowledge and motivation are more likely to pursue entrepreneurial careers upon graduation, which reflects a stronger entrepreneurial intention (Arni, 2023; Bahri et al., 2023).

Entrepreneurial intention refers to an individual's willingness, interest, and readiness to engage in independent business activities despite associated risks (Oktaviani & Andriani, 2020). Several factors can drive this intention, such as the aspiration to become a leader, personal challenges, time flexibility, and the expectation of financial gain (Abdul & Amrullah, 2020). In addition, entrepreneurial intention is often influenced by self-efficacy, entrepreneurial knowledge, and family support (Atiningsih, S., & Kristanto, 2020; Rifa'atul & Suratman, 2015), as conceptualized in the Entrepreneurial Intention-Based Models and the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB). More recently, the role of social media has emerged as a significant determinant of entrepreneurial intention (Dhitara & Ardiansyah, 2022). Supporting this view, (Kumar & Ragini, 2024) found that the informative and inspirational nature of social media can positively influence students' entrepreneurial aspirations.

In the digital era, social media serves as a powerful tool that shapes perceptions, thought patterns, and personal preferences. These platforms are not only used for communication but also act as critical sources of business-related knowledge and entrepreneurial motivation (Dhitara & Ardiansyah, 2022). For university students, who are in a transitional phase between education and the labor market, frequent exposure to entrepreneurial content via social media can significantly affect their decision-making. Access to information regarding business opportunities, marketing strategies, and industry trends through social media can catalyze the formation of entrepreneurial intentions (Indriyani & Suri, 2020).

On the other hand, self-efficacy, or belief in one's ability, is also a major contributing factor to entrepreneurial intention (Oyeku et al., 2020). Students with high levels of self-efficacy tend to have greater confidence in applying their skills and knowledge within entrepreneurial contexts. According to (Effendi et al., 2025; Salsabilah & Kurniasih, 2022). Self-efficacy can be measured using three indicators: magnitude (the perceived level of task difficulty), strength (the degree of confidence), and generality (the extent to which the belief applies across different situations).

Interestingly, several studies have yielded inconsistent findings. (Dhitara & Ardiansyah, 2022) reported that social media use does not directly influence entrepreneurial intention through self-efficacy, but it does have a simultaneous overall effect. In contrast, a study by (Agustin & Trisnawati, 2021) found that self-efficacy partially mediates the relationship between family environment and entrepreneurial intention, showing an insignificant direct influence. However, when self-efficacy mediates the relationship between motivation and entrepreneurial intention, it exerts a significant impact, indicating full mediation. These differing outcomes highlight a research gap in understanding the interplay between self-efficacy, social media, and entrepreneurial intention. Moreover, to date, no study has specifically investigated the entrepreneurial intention of students enrolled at Universitas Muara Bungo (UMB) in the 2024/2025 academic year, despite the institution's active efforts in promoting entrepreneurship programs (Effendi, 2021; Octavia et al., 2017).

A preliminary survey involving ten students revealed that only 60% expressed interest in becoming entrepreneurs, while the remaining respondents preferred to work as civil servants or in the private sector. This finding suggests that entrepreneurial interest has yet to be fully cultivated among students. If left unaddressed, the lack of entrepreneurial intention could adversely impact economic development, particularly in the Bungo Regency area. Therefore, this study aims to examine the influence of social media and self-efficacy on students' entrepreneurial intention at Universitas Muara Bungo both partially and simultaneously as well as the intervening role of self-efficacy in the relationship between social media use and entrepreneurial intention.

METHODS

This study employs a quantitative explanatory approach to examine the causal relationships among the variables under investigation—namely, social media, motivation, self-efficacy, and entrepreneurial intention (Heryana et al., 2023). To ensure the validity and reliability of the research instrument, a pilot test was conducted involving five purposively selected active students from Universitas Muara Bungo (UMB). The instrument was developed based on previously validated indicators, and efforts were made to minimize the risk of common method variance (CMV), as recommended by (Acquaah & Agyapong, 2015).

The target population consists of all active undergraduate students at Universitas Muara Bungo during the 2024/2025 academic year who have completed at least four semesters and have taken the entrepreneurship course, totaling 940 students. Sample size determination refers to Ferdinand's (2014) guideline, which suggests a minimum of 5 to 10 times the number of estimated parameters. Given that this study involves 14 parameters, the minimum required sample is $14 \times 8 = 112$ respondents. The sampling technique applied is proportionate stratified random sampling to ensure that students from all faculties are proportionally represented. This technique is commonly used in entrepreneurship behavior research to maintain representation across academic disciplines (Zhang & Chen, 2024).

Operational definitions of the key variables such as social media, self-efficacy, and entrepreneurial intention were developed based on theoretical models validated in both international and local studies (Alhadihaq et al., 2024), and are presented in Table 1.

TABLE 1.
OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS OF VARIABLES

Variable	Operational Definition	Indicators	Scale
Entrepreneurial Intention (Y2)	Entrepreneurial intention refers to an individual's desire, interest, and commitment to start a business, including the willingness to work hard and take risks to achieve self-sufficiency.	1. Desire to become a leader 2. Personal challenges 3. Flexibility 4. Expected benefits	Likert
Social Media (X1)	Social media serves as a platform where users share information—such as text, images, audio, and video—either with peers or businesses.	1. Engaging and entertaining content 2. Ease of accessing information 3. Ease of communication	Likert
Self-Efficacy (Y1)	Self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief in their ability to execute tasks, make judgments, and meet performance expectations.	1. Magnitude (Task difficulty) 2. Strength (Level of confidence) 3. Generality (Breadth of capability)	Likert

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Out of the 112 questionnaires distributed to respondents, a total of 105 were deemed valid and suitable for further analysis. Since the percentage of unusable data was below 10%, this study meets the minimum threshold for data validity, as suggested by (Cuskley & Sulik, 2024), who argue that a data loss rate below this limit does not significantly compromise research reliability. The majority of respondents were male students, most of whom were between 18 and 25 years of age.

Descriptive analysis revealed that among the indicators of self-efficacy, generality—defined as the breadth of confidence in applying one's capabilities across different situations—received the highest mean score and was categorized as “very high.” In the motivation variable, the most prominent indicator was perseverance, which also received a “very high” rating from the respondents. For the social media variable, ease of accessing information stood out as the top-rated indicator. Finally, within the entrepreneurial intention variable, flexibility emerged as the most favored attribute, indicating that students highly value the autonomy and adaptability associated with entrepreneurial careers.

Measurement Model Analysis (Outer Model)

As the initial stage of hypothesis testing with smart pls 4, an evaluation of the measurement model (outer model) was conducted. This step aims to assess the validity and reliability of each indicator associated with the latent variables in the model. The outer model evaluation includes the assessment of convergent validity, discriminant validity, and composite reliability to ensure that the constructs accurately represent the theoretical concepts being measured. The results of the outer model evaluation are presented in Figure 1.

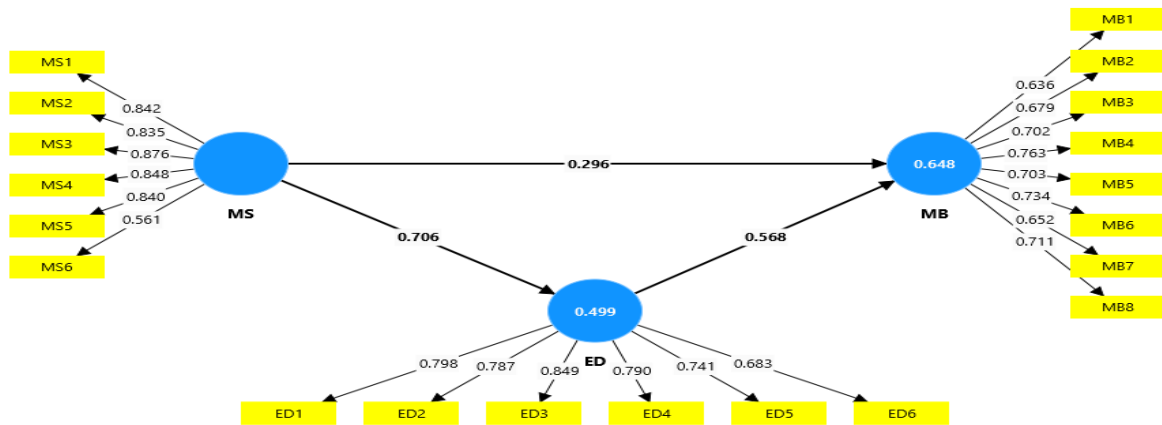
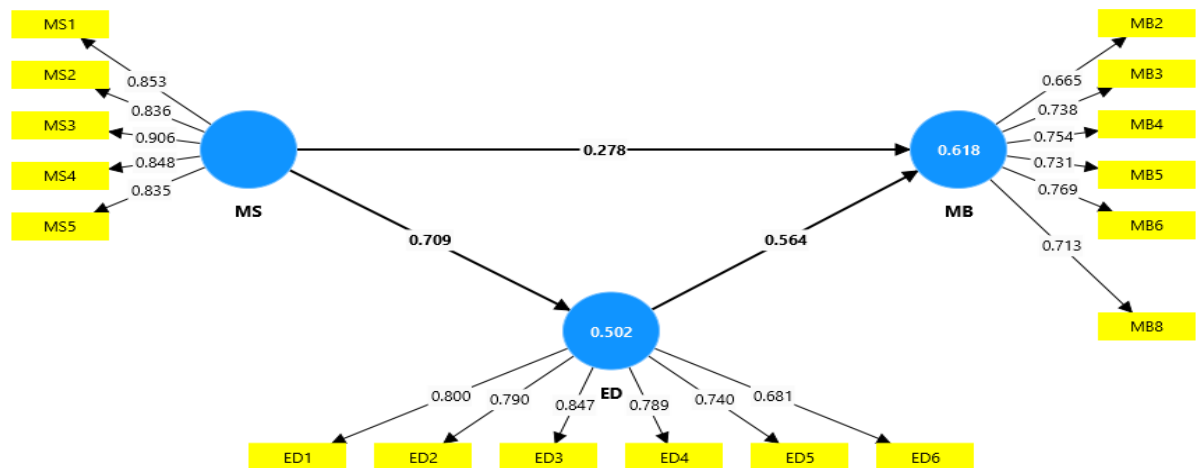


Figure 1. Graphical Output of Outer Model Evaluation

Source: Data analysis results, 2025

Based on Figure 1, the results of the outer model analysis indicate that the loading factors for indicators MS6, ED6, MB1, MB2, and MB7 fall below the recommended threshold of 0.70, and that the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for some constructs is also below 0.50. According to (Latan & Ghazali, 2015), such indicators should be excluded from the model to improve measurement validity. However, given that MB1 and MB2 represent a single construct dimension, the researcher decided to revise the model more selectively by removing only MS6, MB1, and MB7, as shown in Figure 2.

Although some retained indicators, such as MB2 (loading = 0.662) and ED6 (loading = 0.681) did not meet the ideal threshold of 0.70, these values are still considered acceptable and valid within the minimum tolerance level, particularly when the overall construct reliability remains intact (Hair et al., 2021). Furthermore, the reliability test using Composite Reliability (CR) and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) confirmed that all constructs achieved CR values above 0.70 and AVE values above 0.50, indicating that the instrument is reliable and demonstrates adequate



internal consistency (see Table 1).

Figure 2. Graphical Output of Outer Model Evaluation

Source: Data analysis results, 2025

TABLE 1. RESULTS OF AVERAGE VARIANCE EXTRACTED (AVE) ANALYSIS

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	rhoA	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)	Composite Reliability (CR)
Self-Efficacy (Y1)	0.867	0.868	0.603	0.901
Social Media (X1)	0.909	0.912	0.733	0.932
Entrepreneurial Intention (Y2)	0.823	0.823	0.531	0.872

Source: Data analysis results, 2025

Based on table 1, all constructs have a minimum threshold for Cronbach's Alpha, rho A, and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) (> 0.50), indicating that the indicators are valid and appropriately represent their respective constructs. In addition, all composite reliability (CR) values are greater than 0.70, confirming that the constructs are internally consistent and reliable. Therefore, the measurement model is deemed appropriate for structural testing.

Structural Model Analysis (Inner Model)

The first step in evaluating the structural model involved assessing the R-squared (R^2) values. The results show that the R^2 value for self-efficacy is 0.502, and for entrepreneurial intention is 0.618. These values fall within the moderate category, suggesting that social media explains 50.2% of the variance in self-efficacy. Likewise, both social media and self-efficacy explain 61.8% of the variance in entrepreneurial intention.

TABLE 2. PATH COEFFICIENT RESULTS

	Self-Efficacy (Y1)	Entrepreneurial Intention (Y2)
Self-Efficacy (Y1)	–	0.564
Social Media (X1)	0.709	0.278

Source: Data analysis results, 2025

TABLE 3. RESULT OF EFFECT SIZE (F^2)

	Self-Efficacy (Y1)	Entrepreneurial Intention (Y2)
Self-Efficacy (Y1)	–	0.415
Social Media (X1)	1.009	0.100

Source: Data analysis results, 2025

As shown in Table 2, all variables exhibit positive path coefficients, indicating meaningful contributions to the enhancement of both self-efficacy and entrepreneurial intention. Table 3 reveals that social media has a very strong effect on self-efficacy ($f^2 = 1.009$), while its effect on entrepreneurial intention is relatively weak ($f^2 = 0.100$). Meanwhile, self-efficacy has a moderate to strong effect on entrepreneurial intention ($f^2 = 0.415$). These findings suggest that the majority of relationships within the model are classified as strong and meaningful, underscoring the mediating importance of self-efficacy in the link between social media and entrepreneurial intention.

Model Fit Evaluation

In this study, model fit was assessed using the Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) value. The SRMR score of 0.082 falls within the acceptable range (i.e., < 0.10 indicates acceptable fit; < 0.08 indicates perfect fit), suggesting that the model demonstrates an adequate level of fit. Additional model fit indices, including $d_ULS =$

1.027 and $d_G = 0.555$, show that the discrepancy between the estimated model and the empirical model remains within acceptable limits. Moreover, the Chi-square value of 305.151 and the Normed Fit Index (NFI) of 0.748 indicate a moderate degree of model fit. Although the NFI does not meet the ideal threshold of > 0.90 , it still reflects a reasonably acceptable level of model adequacy given the complexity of the structural model (see Table 4).

TABLE 4. MODEL FIT TEST RESULTS

Fit Index	Saturated Model	Estimated Model	Standard Threshold
SRMR	0.082	0.082	< 0.10
d_{ULS}	1.027	1.027	—
d_G	0.555	0.555	—
Chi-square	305.151	305.151	—
NFI	0.748	0.748	> 0.90

Source: Data analysis results, 2025

Overall, Table 4 confirms that the structural model exhibits an acceptable fit based on multiple statistical indicators, although there is still room for improvement in terms of model refinement and construct alignment.

Hypothesis Testing

The next step in the analysis involved conducting a bootstrapping procedure to evaluate the significance of the proposed relationships within the structural model. The bootstrapping model estimation, along with the test of direct effects between exogenous and endogenous variables, is presented in Table 5. Meanwhile, the simultaneous (indirect/mediated) effects are summarized in Table 6.

TABLE 5. BOOTSTRAPPING RESULTS: DIRECT AND INDIRECT EFFECTS

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	Tstatistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
Social Media → Self-Efficacy	0.709	0.718	0.052	13.527	0.000
Social Media → Entrepreneurial Intention	0.678	0.684	0.049	13.769	0.000
Self-Efficacy → Entrepreneurial Intention	0.564	0.577	0.069	8.237	0.000
Social Media → Self-Efficacy → Entrepreneurial Intention (Indirect Effect)	0.400	0.415	0.061	6.604	0.000

Source: Data analysis results, 2025

Discussion

1. The Influence of Social Media on Self-Efficacy. The results in Table 5 indicate that social media has a significant positive effect on self-efficacy, with a t-statistic of 13.527 (> 1.985) and a p-value of 0.000 (< 0.05). This leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis (H_0) and acceptance of the alternative hypothesis (H_a). This means that increased engagement with social media tends to be followed by increased self-efficacy. These

findings are consistent with Hu et al. (2024), who found that both content-based and socially-oriented social media usage significantly enhance entrepreneurial self-efficacy among vocational students in China. Similarly, (Nurfathiyah et al., 2024) found that social media use significantly boosts farmers' confidence in utilizing digital platforms for e-commerce, particularly when used for social interaction rather than direct transactional purposes. However, these results differ from (Dhitara & Ardiansyah, 2022), who reported that the use of social media does not significantly influence self-efficacy ($p = 0.094$). This study provides empirical evidence that social media engagement contributes to an individual's self-efficacy, which is commonly referred to as their belief in their ability to accomplish specific tasks. The more frequently individuals access and interact on social media for social, educational, or professional purposes, the greater their opportunity to gain relevant information and constructively compare themselves with others.

2. **The Influence of Social Media on Entrepreneurial Intention.** As shown in Table 5, social media also has a significant positive effect on entrepreneurial intention, with a t-statistic of 13.769 (> 1.985) and a p-value of 0.000 (< 0.05), thus rejecting H_0 and supporting H_a . This finding suggests that exposure to entrepreneurial content through social media can enhance students' interest in starting a business. The result aligns with prior studies by (Dhitara & Ardiansyah, 2022) and (Ramdhani, 2023), who found that social media positively and significantly influences entrepreneurial interest among university students. The ease of access to entrepreneurial insights, motivational content, and success stories via social media helps cultivate entrepreneurial intention.
3. **The Influence of Self-Efficacy on Entrepreneurial Intention.** The findings indicate that self-efficacy significantly and positively influences entrepreneurial intention, as evidenced by a t-statistic of 8.237 (> 1.985) and a p-value of 0.000 (< 0.05). Hence, H_0 is rejected and H_a is accepted. This result means that students at Universitas Muara Bungo with higher self-efficacy are more likely to exhibit stronger entrepreneurial intentions. This conclusion supports previous findings by (Dhitara & Ardiansyah, 2022), which demonstrated that self-efficacy significantly and positively predicts students' entrepreneurial intentions.

The Mediating Role of Self-Efficacy in the Relationship Between Social Media and Entrepreneurial Intention. Based on Table 5, the **indirect effect of social media on entrepreneurial intention via self-efficacy** is also statistically significant ($t = 6.604 > 1.985$; $p = 0.000$). This confirms that the influence of social media on students' entrepreneurial intention operates in part through its ability to enhance their self-efficacy. Therefore, **self-efficacy serves as a mediating variable** in the relationship between social media and entrepreneurial intention among students at Universitas Muara Bungo. These results are in line with (Hu et al., 2024), who found that social media engagement improves entrepreneurial self-efficacy, which in turn boosts entrepreneurial intention. However, this finding contrasts with the results of (Dhitara & Ardiansyah, 2022; Sumerta et al., 2020), who found that social media does not significantly influence entrepreneurial intention through self-efficacy.

CONCLUSION

This study found that social media has a significant and positive partial effect on self-efficacy. Exposure to entrepreneurial content on social media platforms enhances students' belief in their ability to succeed in business activities. Furthermore, the self-efficacy of students at Universitas Muara Bungo significantly influences their entrepreneurial intention. Social media also has a direct and significant influence on entrepreneurial intention through self-efficacy. These findings confirm that self-efficacy

serves as a partial mediator in the relationship between social media usage and entrepreneurial intention among UMB students.

The results of this study provide a strong foundation for developing policies that encourage entrepreneurship, particularly among university students. It highlights the need to integrate entrepreneurship education into higher education curricula, especially at Universitas Muara Bungo, in a way that is relevant, practical, and responsive to digital trends. This research is expected to support the development of university-level policy simulations, aimed at fostering new entrepreneurs who can create job opportunities, drive innovation, and enhance the competitiveness of the local economy—particularly in the micro, small, and medium enterprise (MSME) sector—through structured entrepreneurial training programs and skill-based initiatives for students.

The optimal use of social media as a tool for learning, inspiration, and networking within the entrepreneurial ecosystem has the potential to enhance self-efficacy and stimulate entrepreneurial intention. In response, Universitas Muara Bungo is encouraged to strengthen its intervention programs by integrating initiatives that foster self-confidence, business simulations, and entrepreneurial mentoring. These should be embedded into entrepreneurship education through face-to-face coursework, targeted training, seminars, or digitally driven business incubator programs.

For practitioners and entrepreneurs, social media can serve as a powerful platform for both education and promotion. By creating inspirational and realistic content, they can better engage and motivate younger generations to explore entrepreneurial pathways.

Future researchers are advised to expand the scope of investigation by including other universities or a more diverse population—such as the broader community to increase the generalizability of the findings. Additionally, future studies may consider incorporating other variables, such as social environment or entrepreneurial knowledge, to enrich the understanding of what drives entrepreneurial intention in various contexts

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