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Relationship Between Entrepreneurial Collaboration, Mentorship and Entrepreneur-Driven Mindset of Business Education Students

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Abstract

In the contemporary landscape of global economics, fostering entrepreneurship has emerged as a pivotal strategy for sustainable economic growth. This study investigates the relationship between entrepreneurial collaboration, mentorship, and the development of an entrepreneur-driven mindset (EDM) among business education students. The design for the study was a non-experimental correlational design. The targeted population involves 1,412 business education students. A sample size of 303 was determined and used for the study through Survey Monkey sample calculator. Simple random sampling technique was used to select individual respondents for the study. Data were collected through a structured self-administered questionnaire containing a 5-pont Likert response scale and demographic items was designed for collection of data. A reliability test was also conducted and analyzed using Cronbach Alpha coefficient method on the instrument which yielded an overall reliability coefficient of 0.83. The method used for analysis was Person Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) and Regression Analysis (RA) through Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) for the generated data. Findings reveal that entrepreneurial collaboration and mentorship have significant and strong positive relationship with entrepreneur-driven mindset of students. Furthermore, the interaction of collaboration and mentorship was found to enhance EDM. The study concludes that fostering collaborative networks and structured mentorship programs within business education curricula is essential for equipping students with the entrepreneurial mindset required for sustainable entrepreneurship career success in the 21st century. Implications are drawn for educators, policymakers, and curriculum developers, with recommendations for integrating mentorship schemes and collaborative projects into entrepreneurial education.

Keywords: Entrepreneurial Collaboration, Mentorship and Entrepreneur-Driven Mindset

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INTRODUCTION

An entrepreneur is a person who seeks opportunities and attempts to realize entrepreneurial activities by taking necessary risks when they identify such opportunities. Entrepreneurship stands as a cornerstone of modern economies, driving innovation, creating jobs, and fueling economic growth. Entrepreneurship is widely recognized as a driving force behind economic development, innovation, and job creation (Audretsch & Keilbach, 2017). In recent years, scholarly attention has increasingly turned towards understanding the nuanced factors that influence entrepreneurial success and the broader economic impact of

entrepreneurial endeavors. Among these factors, entrepreneurial collaboration and mentorship have emerged as significant drivers shaping the trajectory of entrepreneurial ventures and, by extension, the overall entrepreneurial ecosystem. Entrepreneurial collaboration facilitates knowledge sharing, resource pooling, and collective problem-solving among entrepreneurs, leading to increased innovation, market penetration, and scalability of ventures. Through collaborative networks, entrepreneurs gain access to diverse expertise, complementary skills, and new market opportunities, enhancing their competitiveness and resilience in the face of uncertainties. Entrepreneurial collaboration refers to the cooperative effort between entrepreneurs or entrepreneurial entities to achieve shared goals, such as innovation, market expansion, or problem-solving. It involves the pooling of resources, expertise, and networks to create value and capitalize on opportunities (Lechner & Gudmundsson, 2014). Entrepreneurial collaboration encompasses various forms of cooperation among entrepreneurs, including strategic partnerships, joint ventures, and industry clusters (McAdam & McAdam, 2018). Collaborative networks enable entrepreneurs to access diverse expertise, complementary resources, and new market opportunities (Huggins & Thompson, 2015). Entrepreneurial collaboration emerges as a vital driver of economic growth and prosperity, fostering innovation, resource mobilization, and market expansion in the entrepreneur-driven economy. By fostering collaborative networks and partnerships, policymakers, industry stakeholders, and educational institutions can create an enabling environment conducive to entrepreneurial activity, thereby unlocking new pathways for job creation, wealth generation, and sustainable development.

Entrepreneurial mentorship emerges as a critical driver of economic development and prosperity, empowering entrepreneurs with the knowledge, support, and resources needed to succeed in the competitive marketplace. By promoting mentorship programs, fostering mentor-mentee relationships, and recognizing the value of mentorship in the entrepreneurial ecosystem, policymakers, industry stakeholders, and educational institutions can cultivate a supportive environment conducive to entrepreneurial growth, innovation, and wealth creation in the entrepreneur-driven economy. Entrepreneurship fosters social inclusion and community development by empowering marginalized groups, such as women, youth, and rural entrepreneurs, to participate actively in economic activities and access essential services (Afolabi et al., 2019). Through targeted support for entrepreneurship education, access to finance, and mentorship programs, Nigeria can unleash the entrepreneurial talents of its diverse population and bridge the gap between formal and informal sectors (Adelaja et al., 2020). Entrepreneurial collaboration and mentorship can Influence entrepreneur-driven economy through access to networks and resources. Mentors play a pivotal role in expanding entrepreneurs' social capital, broadening their professional networks, and enhancing their visibility within the entrepreneurial ecosystem (Chen & Nadkarni, 2017).

Entrepreneurial collaboration is pivotal in fostering an entrepreneur-driven economy by facilitating knowledge sharing, resource pooling, and collective problem-solving among entrepreneurs and other stakeholders. Wadhwa et al. (2019) in their study emphasize that collaborative networks enable entrepreneurs to access complementary skills and expertise, which enhances their ability to innovate and seize market opportunities. Moreover, collaborative initiatives such as co-working spaces, incubators, and accelerators create synergies among entrepreneurs, leading to the cross-fertilization of ideas and the formation of strategic partnerships (Feld & Hochberg, 2018). Furthermore, the symbiotic relationship between collaboration and mentorship creates a virtuous cycle of innovation and economic value creation. Collaborative ventures often emerge from mentor-mentee relationships, where seasoned entrepreneurs mentor aspiring ones, leading to the formation of joint ventures, strategic alliances, and innovation ecosystems. These collaborative endeavors not only drive

entrepreneurial success but also foster a vibrant ecosystem of startups, SMEs, and industry clusters, spurring job creation, wealth generation, and sustainable economic development.

Moreover, mentorship involves the guidance and support provided by experienced entrepreneurs or mentors to budding entrepreneurs. Mentorship serves as a crucial catalyst in nurturing entrepreneurial talent and fostering business growth. Ayodeji (2015) posited that mentorship offers a wide range of benefits such as welfare, satisfaction, development, progress, feeling rejuvenated in career development, learning how to use new technologies, becoming aware of business issues, methods, strategies or perspectives that are vital to business. Mentors provide invaluable guidance, support, and experiential insights to aspiring entrepreneurs, helping them navigate challenges, capitalize on opportunities, and make informed decisions. Mentorship accelerates the learning process, enabling entrepreneurs to avoid common pitfalls and make informed decisions (Lein, 2024). By transferring tacit knowledge, entrepreneurial wisdom, and industry-specific know-how, mentors empower entrepreneurs to develop critical competencies, expand their networks, and unlock their full potential.

Mentorship plays a crucial role in nurturing an entrepreneur-driven economy by providing aspiring entrepreneurs with guidance, support, and access to valuable networks and resources. Allen and Eby (2020) highlight that mentorship enhances the entrepreneurial skills and competencies of mentees, equipping them with the knowledge and confidence needed to navigate the challenges of starting and growing a business. Moreover, mentors serve as role models, inspiring mentees to pursue innovative ideas and take calculated risks in pursuit of entrepreneurial success. Through mentorship programs and initiatives, experienced entrepreneurs pass down their expertise and insights to the next generation of business leaders, fostering a culture of entrepreneurship and innovation within the economy (Klyver et al., 2018). Collaborative ventures enable entrepreneurs to share and exchange knowledge, ideas, and best practices with other stakeholders (Wadhwa et al., 2019). Through interactions within collaborative networks, entrepreneurs gain access to diverse perspectives and expertise, which can inform decision-making, problem-solving, and innovation. Collaborative ventures facilitate the pooling of resources, including financial capital, human capital, and physical assets, among participating entrepreneurs (Feld & Hochberg, 2018). By leveraging shared resources, entrepreneurs can overcome resource constraints, mitigate risks, and pursue larger-scale opportunities, thereby enhancing their prospects for success and growth.

Also, entrepreneurial collaboration and mentorship are fundamental drivers of the entrepreneur-driven economy, but they also come with significant challenges. These challenges can impede the effectiveness of collaborative efforts and hinder the development of budding entrepreneurs. One key challenge is the difficulty in finding suitable collaborators and mentors. According to a study by The Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM), entrepreneurs often struggle to identify individuals with the right skills, experience, and compatible personalities for collaboration and mentorship (GEM, 2020). This challenge is exacerbated by the fact that successful entrepreneurs and experienced mentors are often inundated with requests for collaboration, making it challenging for aspiring entrepreneurs to access their guidance and support. Another challenge lies in establishing and maintaining effective communication and trust among collaborators. As noted by Amabile and Pratt (2016), effective collaboration requires open and transparent communication, mutual respect, and a shared vision. However, differences in communication styles, conflicting priorities, and trust issues can undermine collaborative efforts, leading to frustration and inefficiency.

Furthermore, the lack of resources and support systems for entrepreneurial collaboration and mentorship presents a significant hurdle. Many aspiring entrepreneurs, particularly those from underprivileged backgrounds or marginalized communities, face

barriers such as limited access to networks, financial constraints, and inadequate institutional support (Wright & Marlow, 2020). Without proper resources and support structures in place, these individuals may struggle to find mentors, collaborators, and opportunities for growth. Moreover, the dynamic nature of entrepreneurial ventures poses challenges for sustained collaboration and mentorship. Entrepreneurs often operate in fast-paced environments characterized by uncertainty, volatility, and rapid change (Hossain & Belal, 2021). As a result, maintaining long-term collaborative relationships and mentorship engagements can be challenging, as individuals may need to adapt to shifting priorities, market conditions, and organizational dynamics. Resource constraints' limited access to financial resources, infrastructure, and expertise may pose significant barriers to entrepreneurial collaboration and mentorship. Entrepreneurs and mentors often face resource constraints, such as time constraints, funding limitations, and geographical barriers, which may impede their ability to engage in collaborative ventures or mentorship relationships effectively (Klyver et al., 2025).

However, despite the growing recognition of entrepreneurship as a pathway to economic independence and national development, many business education graduates still struggle with limited entrepreneurial orientation, overdependence on paid employment, and lack of confidence to initiate and sustain entrepreneurial ventures. A major factor contributing to this gap is the insufficient exposure of students to entrepreneurial collaboration and mentorship. While curricula may provide theoretical foundations of entrepreneurship, students often lack practical experiences, role models, and mentorship opportunities that can stimulate an entrepreneur-driven mindset. This lack of deliberate entrepreneurial collaboration and mentorship leaves students ill-prepared to translate entrepreneurial knowledge into action. Consequently, the potential of business education as a catalyst for nurturing job creators rather than job seekers remains underachieved. Addressing these concerns is essential to empower students with an entrepreneur-driven mindset capable of fostering innovation and economic growth.

Statement of the Problem

In today's fast-changing world, entrepreneurship plays a big role in driving innovation, creating jobs, and supporting sustainable growth. Business education is meant to prepare students with the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in the business world. Yet, many graduates still find it difficult to think and act like entrepreneurs. They often depend too much on paid jobs and lack the confidence to start and sustain their own businesses. One reason for this is that students are not getting enough exposure to entrepreneurial collaboration and mentorship. Because of this, many students are not able to turn what they learn into real entrepreneurial action. As a result, business education is not fully achieving its goal of producing job creators instead of job seekers. This situation raises important questions: How much does collaboration and mentorship affect the mindset of business education students? Can these approaches help close the gap between theory and practice? Finding answers to these questions is key to building students' confidence and ability to drive innovation and economic growth.

Purpose of the Study

The purposes of the study examine the influence of entrepreneurial collaboration and mentorship of business education students towards entrepreneur-driven mindset. The study is specifically conducted to determine:

1. The relationship between entrepreneurial collaboration and entrepreneur-driven mindset of business education students?

2. The relationship between entrepreneurial mentorship and entrepreneur-driven mindset of business education students?

Research Questions

1. What is the relationship between entrepreneurial collaboration and entrepreneur-driven mindset of business education students?

2. What is the relationship between entrepreneurial mentorship and entrepreneur-driven mindset of business education students?

Research Hypotheses

1. There is no significant relationship between entrepreneurial collaboration and entrepreneur-driven mindset of business education students.

2. There is no significant relationship between entrepreneurial mentorship and entrepreneur-driven mindset of business education students.

METHODOLOGY

This section describes the research design and procedures that was used to investigate the impact of entrepreneurial collaboration and mentorship of business education students towards an entrepreneur-driven mindset. The design of the study was a non-experimental correlational design. The targeted population involves 1,412 business education students in colleges of education in North-Central Nigeria. A sample size of 303 was determined and used for the study through Survey Monkey sample calculator. Simple random sampling technique was used to select individual respondents for the study. A structured self-administered questionnaire containing standardized scales and demographic items was designed for collection of data. The sections of the questionnaire include demographics, entrepreneurial collaboration scale, mentorship scale and entrepreneur-driven mindset scale adapted from literature. 5-pont Likert response scale was; strongly agree (5), agree (4), undecided (3), disagree (2) and strongly disagree (1). The questionnaire was validated by three experts and the overall reliability score was 0.83 from the pilot testing. Participants were briefed on the study's purpose and assured of confidentiality. The questionnaire was distributed to the respondents face to face and were retrieved immediately after responding to the questionnaire items. SPSS version 23 was used for Person Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) Analysis and Regression Analysis (RA).

RESULTS

Table 1: Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Gender	**Frequency**	**Percent**
Male	232	76.6
Female	71	23.4
Total	303	100.0
Age	**Frequency**	**Percent**
30-39years	186	61.4
40-49years	88	29.1
50-59years	19	9.5

Total	303	100.0
Education	**Frequency**	**Percent**
Bachelor or Higher	269	88.8
College or Polytechnic	34	11.2
Total	303	100.0

The demographic profile of respondents in table 1 show that the result for gender, majority were male (232; 76.6%), while female respondents made up 71 (23.4%) of the sample. In terms of age, most participants were within the 30–39 years category (186; 61.4%), followed by those aged 40–49 years (88; 29.1%), and a smaller group in the 50–59 years range (19; 9.5%). Regarding educational qualification, the majority of respondents possessed a Bachelor's degree or higher (269; 88.8%), while 34 (11.2%) reported College or Polytechnic education. These results suggest that the sample is largely male, relatively young to middle-aged, and highly educated relatively because the level of educational level.

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between entrepreneurial collaboration and entrepreneur-driven mindset of business education students?

Table 2: Pearson Correlation Summary of the Relationship Between Entrepreneurial Collaboration and Entrepreneur-Driven Mindset of Business Education Students

		Entrepreneurial Collaboration	Entrepreneur-Driven Mindset
Entrepreneurial Collaboration	Pearson Correlation	1	.790**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	303	303
Entrepreneur-Driven Mindset	Pearson Correlation	.790**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	303	303

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The correlation analysis in Table 1 shows a strong positive and statistically significant relationship between Entrepreneurial Collaboration and Entrepreneur-Driven Mindset among the respondents. The result indicates a Pearson correlation coefficient of .790, which is significant at 0.01 level (2-tailed) with a p-value of .000. This suggests that higher levels of entrepreneurial collaboration are strongly associated with a higher tendency toward an entrepreneur-driven mindset. The strength and significance of this relationship highlight the important role collaboration plays in fostering entrepreneurial orientation.

Table 3: Linear Regression Model Summary of the Relationship Between Entrepreneurial Collaboration and Entrepreneur-Driven Mindset of Business Education Students

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.790[a]	.625	.623	.52194	1.968

a. Predictors: (Constant), Entrepreneurial Collaboration

b. Dependent Variable: Entrepreneur-Driven Mindset

The linear regression model summary confirmed the result of the Pearson correlation which shows a positive and strong relationship (+0.79) between Entrepreneurial Collaboration and Entrepreneur-Driven Mindset of students (Table 3). The coefficient of determination (R Square) of .625 shows that 62.5% Entrepreneur-Driven Mindset of students is attributed to entrepreneurial collaboration. The Durbin-Watson value of 1.97 means the residuals are independent, and there is no problem of autocorrelation in the model and regression model satisfies the independence assumption of errors, making the results statistically reliable since it does not exceed the standard limit of 2.44.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between entrepreneurial collaboration and entrepreneur-driven mindset of business education students.

Table 4: Regression Analysis of the Relationship between Entrepreneurial Collaboration and Entrepreneur-Driven Mindset of Business Education Students.

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	136.391	1	136.391	500.670	.000[b]
	Residual	81.997	301	.272		
	Total	218.388	302			

a. Dependent Variable: Entrepreneur-Driven Mindset

b. Predictors: (Constant), Entrepreneurial Collaboration

The result showed that the overall regression model is significant ($p<0.05$). This was indicated by the f-Statistic of 500.670 and the associated p-value of 0.00 which is less than 0.05. This shows that there is a significant relationship between entrepreneurial collaboration and entrepreneur-driven mindset of business education students. The null hypothesis is therefore not accepted.

Table 5: t-test Summary of the Relationship Between Entrepreneurial Collaboration and Entrepreneur-Driven Mindset of Business Education Students

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	.608	.110		5.530	.000		
	Entrepreneurial Collaboration	.790	.035	.790	22.376	.000	1.000	1.000

a. Dependent Variable: Entrepreneur-Driven Mindset

The unstandardized regression coefficient (β) as indicated in the Table 5 revealed that a unit increase in the entrepreneurial collaboration will increase entrepreneur-driven mindset of students by .79. It further revealed that there is a direct relationship between entrepreneurial collaboration and entrepreneur-driven mindset of business education students. The t-value of 22.38 and the associated p-value of .00 ($p=.00<.05$, $t=22.38$) indicated that there is a positive and significant relationship between entrepreneurial collaboration and entrepreneur-driven mindset of students. The collinearity statistics in the coefficient table shows that there is no evidence of multicollinearity as indicated by the tolerance value of 1.00 which is greater than the cut-off point of .10 and supported by the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) value of 1.00 that is below the cut-off point of 10 (Table 5).

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between entrepreneurial mentorship and entrepreneur-driven mindset of business education students?

Table 6: Pearson Correlation Summary of the Relationship Between Entrepreneurial Mentorship and Entrepreneur-Driven Mindset of Business Education Students

		Entrepreneurial Collaboration	Entrepreneur-Driven Mindset
Entrepreneurial Mentorship	Pearson Correlation	1	.782**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	303	303
Entrepreneur-Driven Mindset	Pearson Correlation	.782**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	303	303

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The correlation analysis in Table 6 shows a strong positive and statistically significant relationship between Entrepreneurial Mentorship and Entrepreneur-Driven Mindset among the respondents. The result indicates a Pearson correlation coefficient of .782, which is significant at 0.01 level (2-tailed) with a p-value of .000. This suggests that higher levels of entrepreneurial mentorship are strongly associated with a higher tendency toward an entrepreneur-driven mindset. The strength and significance of this relationship highlight the important role mentorship plays in fostering entrepreneurial mindset amongst business education students.

Table 7: Linear Regression Model Summary of the Relationship Between Entrepreneurial Mentorship and Entrepreneur-Driven Mindset of Business Education Students

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.782[a]	.611	.610	.53131	1.911

a. Predictors: (Constant), Entrepreneurial Mentorship

b. Dependent Variable: Entrepreneur-Driven Mindset

The linear regression model summary confirmed the result of the Pearson correlation which shows a positive and strong relationship (+0.78) between entrepreneurial mentorship and entrepreneur-driven mindset of students (Table 7). The coefficient of determination (R Square) of .611 shows that 61.1% entrepreneur-driven mindset of students is attributed to entrepreneurial mentorship. The Durbin-Watson value of 1.91 shows that the regression model has no evidence of autocorrelation as it does not exceed the standard limit of 2.44.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between entrepreneurial mentorship and entrepreneur-driven mindset of business education students.

Table 8: Regression Analysis of the Relationship between Entrepreneurial Collaboration and Entrepreneur-Driven Mindset of Business Education Students.

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	133.419	1	133.419	472.628	.000[b]
	Residual	84.970	301	.282		
	Total	218.388	302			

a. Dependent Variable: Entrepreneur-Driven Mindset

b. Predictors: (Constant), Entrepreneurial Mentorship

The result showed that the overall regression model is significant ($p<0.05$). This was indicated by the f-Statistic of 472.628 and the associated p-value of 0.00 which is less than 0.05. This shows that there is a significant relationship between entrepreneurial mentorship and entrepreneur-driven mindset of business education students. The null hypothesis is therefore not accepted.

Table 9: t-test Summary of the Relationship Between Entrepreneurial Mentorship and Entrepreneur-Driven Mindset of Business Education Students

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	.578	.114		5.055	.000		
	Entrepreneurial Mentorship	.807	.037	.782	21.740	.000	1.000	1.000

a. Dependent Variable: Entrepreneur-Driven Mindset

The unstandardized regression coefficient (β) as indicated in the Table 8 revealed that a unit increase in the entrepreneurial mentorship will increase entrepreneur-driven mindset of students by .81. It further revealed that there is a direct relationship between entrepreneurial mentorship and entrepreneur-driven mindset of business education students. The t-value of 21.74 and the associated p-value of .00 ($p=.00<.05$, $t=21.74$) indicated that there is a positive and significant relationship between entrepreneurial mentorship and entrepreneur-driven mindset of students. The collinearity statistics in the coefficient table shows that there is no evidence of multicollinearity as indicated by the tolerance value of 1.00 which is greater than the cut-off point of .10 and supported by the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) value of 1.00 that is below the cut-off point of 10 (Table 5).

Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study show a strong positive and statistically significant relationship between Entrepreneurial Collaboration and Entrepreneur-Driven Mindset among the respondents. The result suggests that higher levels of entrepreneurial collaboration are strongly associated with a higher tendency toward an entrepreneur-driven mindset. Also, the result of the Pearson correlation shows a positive and strong relationship between entrepreneurial collaboration and entrepreneur-driven mindset of students. This is in agreement with Nugroho (2023), which found that collaboration and networking give entrepreneurs critical information, resources and partner-support that increase innovativeness, proactiveness and risk-taking which are core components of an entrepreneur-driven mindset and so collaboration acts as an antecedent to stronger entrepreneurial thinking and action. Also, the findings of Mwangi (2024) show that communication, coordination and relationship-building skills (i.e., collaboration capability) strengthen the effect of entrepreneurial orientation on firm growth. That implies entrepreneurs with collaborative competence are more likely to convert an entrepreneur-driven mindset into beneficial outcomes.

Furthermore, the results of the also show a significant relationship between entrepreneurial collaboration and entrepreneur-driven mindset of business education students. It revealed that a unit increase in the entrepreneurial collaboration increases entrepreneur-driven mindset of students. This means that collaboration increase access to resources and strengthen entrepreneurial orientation, which supports an entrepreneur-driven mindset. Entrepreneurial mindset and collaborative innovation have a reciprocal relationship: a stronger entrepreneurial mindset fosters collaborative innovation and collaboration reinforces entrepreneurial mindset features. behavior Santoso (2023) found that entrepreneurs' mindset

(creativity, proactivity) promotes collaborative innovation, while participation in collaborative projects further develops entrepreneurial skills and attitudes which becomes a virtuous cycle between mindset and collaborative. Collaboration (including digital collaboration) amplifies the effect of entrepreneurial orientation on innovative outcomes. Digital and cross-partner collaboration strengthens mindset-driven innovation. A study show that entrepreneurial orientation combined with collaborative digital practices (alliances, platform partnerships) increases disruptive innovation. This indicates collaboration channels (especially digital) extend the practical reach of an entrepreneur-driven mindset into market outcomes. (Kraus et al., 2023). Entrepreneurship education that uses collaborative, experiential learning (team projects, peer ventures, networks) is effective at cultivating an entrepreneurial mindset. Studies of entrepreneurship education find that programs emphasizing teamwork, joint projects and networking raise entrepreneurial self-efficacy, proactivity and intention i.e., collaborative educational experiences help form an entrepreneur-driven mindset among students (Sun et al., 2023; Jiatong et al., 2021). Collaboration (networks, partnerships, teamwork) is both an antecedent and an amplifier of the entrepreneur-driven mindset: it can help form mindset attributes (via exposure and learning) and also translate mindset into performance (via resources, information, and legitimacy).

The correlation analysis shows a strong positive and statistically significant relationship between Entrepreneurial Mentorship and Entrepreneur-Driven Mindset among the respondents. The findings of the study suggests that higher levels of entrepreneurial mentorship are strongly associated with a higher tendency toward an entrepreneur-driven mindset. Also, the results of the study show there is a significant relationship between entrepreneurial mentorship and entrepreneur-driven mindset of business education students. This is agreement with the study which show that mentorship increases entrepreneurial self-efficacy (ESE), which in turn supports an entrepreneur-driven mindset. The study found that mentor-led education and mentoring interventions significantly raise ESE, and ESE mediates the relationship between mentoring/education and entrepreneurial behaviours and mindset measures i.e., greater confidence, initiative, and opportunity orientation (Hu, 2021). The result also revealed that a unit increase in the entrepreneurial mentorship will increase entrepreneur-driven mindset of students. It further revealed that there is a direct relationship between entrepreneurial mentorship and entrepreneur-driven mindset of business education students. Similarly, a study found that mentoring raises entrepreneurial self-efficacy (ESE), which in turn supports an entrepreneur-driven mindset. Empirical evaluations show mentorship, modelling and feedback increase ESE, and higher ESE predicts greater opportunity pursuit, persistence and risk tolerance towards core elements of an entrepreneur-driven mindset (Yani, 2024).

Furthermore, the results of the study indicated that there is a positive and significant relationship between entrepreneurial mentorship and entrepreneur-driven mindset of students. This is in agreement with a study that mentoring operate via partly distinct mechanisms and combining both can better develop ESE and an entrepreneur-driven mindset. Comparative papers show mentorship tends to drive task performance and rapid skill uptake, while mentoring provides role modelling, networks and identity development; using both improves mindset outcomes (Cronjé, 2025). Also, another study revealed that inclusive and tailored mentorship increases mindset shifts among under-represented groups (women, minorities). This means that mentorship programs designed for inclusivity (peer matching, role models from similar backgrounds) raise entrepreneurial confidence and mindset among women and marginalized groups (Virga & Guerreiro, 2025). This means that sustained, structured mentorship (multi-session/longitudinal) produces larger mindset and skill gains than one-off mentoring events. Mentors act as role-models, identity catalysts by helping mentees adopt an

entrepreneurial role identity. This agrees with a study which found that mentors influence how entrepreneurs see themselves (entrepreneurial identity formation), which is strongly linked to mindset outcomes such as risk-taking, experimentation and strategic initiative (Elvekrok, 2023). Recent work on entrepreneurship found that para-social or "influencer" forms of mentoring can shape mindset but carry distinct risks (overconfidence, ill-fitting advice). The study emphasized that entrepreneurship influencers show para-social mentoring (online role modelling) can boost motivation and entrepreneurial thinking but sometimes leads to inappropriate transfer of tactics or overconfidence (D'Oria et al., 2025).

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, entrepreneurial collaboration and mentorship are vital drivers in building an entrepreneur-driven mindset among business education students. Simply put, when students work together, they exchange ideas, solve problems as a team, and develop innovative thinking, while mentorship provides them with guidance, encouragement, and real-world exposure. The synergistic influence of collaboration and mentorship not only enhances knowledge sharing and skill acquisition but also nurtures self-confidence and proactive attitudes toward entrepreneurship. Therefore, strengthening mentorship programmes and encouraging more collaborative learning in business education will not only enrich students' knowledge but also prepare them to embrace entrepreneurship with resilience and vision.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Policymakers should design and implement supportive regulatory frameworks that incentivize collaboration and mentorship initiatives, such as tax incentives for mentorship programs or streamlined regulations for collaborative ventures.
2. Educators should integrate entrepreneurship education into curricula across disciplines, emphasizing the importance of collaboration, teamwork, and mentorship in entrepreneurial success.
3. Industry leaders should promote open innovation initiatives that facilitate collaboration between startups, corporations, and other stakeholders, creating opportunities for knowledge exchange, co-creation, and partnership.

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