

Mentorship as Pedagogical Strategy in Teaching Entrepreneurship: A Qualitative Study Among HLIs Student

Rahmat Yuliawan¹, Suhailah Kassim^{2*}, Norzanah Mat Nor³, Ahmad Syahmi Ahmad Fadzil⁴, Amir Imran Zainoddin³, Noorain Mohd Nordin²

¹Universitas Airlangga, Surabaya, Indonesia

²Universiti Teknologi MARA, Campus Melaka, Malaysia

³Universiti Teknologi MARA, Campus Selangor, Malaysia

⁴Universiti Teknologi MARA, Campus Segamat, Johor, Malaysia

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 15 July 2024

Revised 8 January 2026

Accepted 9 February 2026

Online first 14 March 2026

Published 14 March 2026

Keywords:

entrepreneurship

mentorship

pedagogy

educator

intention

DOI:

10.24191/smrj.v22i2

September.10897

ABSTRACT

Despite increasing inclusion of entrepreneurship education in higher education, there has been little empirical research on how mentorship pedagogy works as an essential teaching method rather than a supplementary practice. This qualitative study addresses the gap by examining how mentorship pedagogy (MP) enhances entrepreneurial learning in a Malaysian public university setting. Grounded on Experiential Learning Theory and Social Learning Theory, the study explores how mentorship promotes practical engagement, reflection, and observational learning in entrepreneurship education. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with six students from business management faculty who had completed entrepreneurship courses. Thematic analysis identified five important themes: acquisition of practical entrepreneurial knowledge, educators' roles as mentors and motivators, the influence of entrepreneurial role models, students' self-motivation and preparedness, and perceived risks alongside the need for university support. The findings show that MP improves student engagement, entrepreneurial self-efficacy, and the integration of theory and practice. This study contributes to the entrepreneurship education literature by empirically demonstrating MP as an effective experiential and socially grounded instructional pedagogy that increases entrepreneurial intention. The findings provide valuable information for educators and policymakers attempting to move beyond traditional teaching methods and towards practical entrepreneurship curriculum.

INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurship is widely seen as a crucial driver of economic development, innovation, and job creation. Universities have been implemented entrepreneurship education and employ effective pedagogical strategies to equip students for practical business problems (Igwe et al., 2022). In Malaysia, this initiative

^{2*} Corresponding author. E-mail address: suhailahk@uitm.edu.my

is supported by strategic frameworks including the National Entrepreneurship Policy 2030 (NEP2030) and the Entrepreneurship Integrated Education (EIE) plan, which promote for entrepreneurship as an appealing career choice for graduates.

Nonetheless, despite these policies, a gap exists between classroom learning and the development of entrepreneurial competencies (Motta & Galina, 2023). Traditional pedagogical methods including lectures, tests, and business plan assignments, frequently fail to develop the practical knowledge, resilience, and opportunity identification needed in entrepreneurial contexts (Hu, 2024; Olokundun et al., 2018). As a result, educators are increasingly exploring mentorship pedagogy (MP), a learner-centric approach that provides students direct engagement with mentors, knowledge of entrepreneurial realities, and opportunity for reflection.

This study is fundamentally based on Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory (ELT), which claims that effective learning occurs through a cycle involving actual experiences, reflective observation, conceptual thought, and active experimentation. It is further supported by Bandura's Social Learning Theory (SLT), which emphasises learning through observation, modelling, and the development of self-efficacy. In the context of entrepreneurship education, these concepts explain how educator as mentor helps students' learning not only about entrepreneurship but also through experiential engagement with mentors, reflection on their experiences, and the implementation of insights to their individual goals.

Existing literature on entrepreneurship in Malaysia has explored multiple thematic areas. First, the research focusing on common curriculum method (Karim, 2016; Othman & Nasrudin, 2016). Next, research focus on related problems and challenges (Yusof et al., 2017). In addition, research also highlighted the recommended teaching methods for entrepreneurial learning that may improve best practices (Mahmood et al., 2024). Another study recently focuses at HLI mentoring approaches utilising the SLR method (Hashim & Ab Wahid, 2024). The research findings reveal that mentoring involves relationships that highlights on providing support and encouragement as well as guidance in cognitive development (knowledge), social (skills) and emotional (personality). From the findings, mentoring programmes in Malaysia often have a more informal approach, focusing on building relationships and connections with established entrepreneurs. Based on the research findings, it is demonstrated that research on mentorship among educators and pedagogy in Malaysia is limited and undeveloped.

MENTORSHIP PEDAGOGY (MP)

In the business world, mentorship has been recognised as an effective tool for talent development, leadership development, and entrepreneurial accomplishment (Badwan et al., 2022). Experienced professionals often mentoring new staff by giving practical insights, providing essential feedback, and guiding decision-making processes, thus accelerating the mentees' learning curve and minimising their chance of failure. These mentorship relationships are generally informal, dynamic, and based on trust, enabling a customised and experiential exchange of knowledge (Arnesson & Albinsson, 2017; Atenas et al., 2023). This study conceptualises MP as a transformative pedagogical approach in entrepreneurship education, drawing from existing corporate mentoring methods. Instead of only providing knowledge, educators adopt the role of mentors who enhance experiential learning by acting as guides, motivators, and reflective collaborators.

Students view educators as role models because educators who use mentorship strategies able to change students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship (Al Issa, 2023). Research have proven that experiential learning is the most used method in entrepreneurship education (Motta & Galina, 2023). The most effective experiential learning is for students to actively and directly participate in entrepreneurial firms, which will promote skills such as problem-solving abilities (Lackéus, 2020; Raja & Zulfiqar, 2018). Furthermore,

educators who adopt a mentorship behaviour during practical entrepreneurial classes replace entrepreneurs' roles as advisers for students (Johnson et al., 2023) and transform traditional teaching into a dynamic way of learning that resembles business incubators that introduce real-world case study situations (Harden & Lilley, 2025).

In this context, MP is implemented through assessment and strategies including practical case discussions, direct student involvement with the entrepreneurial community, and personalised feedback on students' business concepts (Pattison-Meek, 2024). According to the findings of this study, mentorship is a core pedagogical technique rather than a supplementary teaching tool. Mentorship operationalises essential components of Experiential Learning Theory and Social Learning Theory, including concrete experience, reflective observation, behavioural modelling, and the development of entrepreneurial self-efficacy (Bandura et al., 1977; Huang et al., 2023). The perspective highlights mentorship as a deliberate, integrated and focused on students' strategy that converts traditional classroom environments into entrepreneurial learning environments. Mentorship is important tools that could enhance HLIs student self-efficacy in becoming a real entrepreneur.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

In Malaysian context, the need of investigating innovative pedagogies is strengthened by the nation's goal to a high-income economy driven by innovation and entrepreneurship. Universities are expected to produce not only employable graduates but also entrepreneurial leaders (Teoh et al., 2024). Although graduate employability has shown some improvement for the past several years, the levels of self-employment and entrepreneurship among graduates remain constant (Ministry of Higher Education, 2023). According from the survey findings of Rapid Youth Success Entrepreneurship (RYSE) (2023) (Loheswar, 2023), Malaysian youths are afraid of failure, have low confidence, and prefer secure employment indicating that university students require stronger and more effective guidance to develop entrepreneurial readiness. Entrepreneurs with tertiary level education play a key role in creating jobs (Ziakakis et al., 2022) thus lowering unemployment rates (Hassan et al., 2020). Nonetheless, challenges remain within HLIs, as many academics are hesitant to embrace entrepreneurial mentoring responsibilities due to perceived gaps in training and experience (Ministry of Higher Education, 2021). Due to this factor, despite continuing reforms in Malaysian HLIs emphasising on curriculum enhancement and industry alignment, MP remains underutilised and inconsistently applied.

An increasing number of research suggests the issue lies not in the accessibility of entrepreneurship education, but in the methodologies employed in its teaching (Abreu et al., 2016; Matsko et al., 2024; Raja & Zulfiqar, 2018). Entrepreneurship education primarily relies on traditional teaching techniques, such as lectures, theoretical assignments, and business plan submissions, failing to adequately involve students in the realities, uncertainties, and complexities of entrepreneurial decision-making (Amir & Suryana, 2018; Mahmoud et al., 2020; Wijayati et al., 2021). Furthermore, while mentorship has been recognised in the business sector as a driver of entrepreneurial growth, its educational potential in higher education remains underutilised and inadequately studied (Mukesh et al., 2020). Empirical knowledge regarding how educators in mentorship roles might positively impact students' entrepreneurial learning and self-efficacy is limited (Blenker et al., 2012; Eunah et al., 2024; Peschl et al., 2021). Although entrepreneurship is fundamentally experiential and dynamic, current methods of teaching frequently do not involve students in real learning processes that reflect entrepreneurial practice. This study examines a significant gap by exploring how MP improves entrepreneurship education at the university level.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

To understand the impact of educators' mentorship pedagogy on students' entrepreneurship intentions in Higher Learning Institutions (HLIs).

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. How do students' entrepreneurial intentions and attitudes evolve through their involvement in mentorship pedagogy sessions?
2. What mentorship strategies and practices do students find the most impactful to increase entrepreneurship intentions?

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is grounded in two interrelated theories that offer a comprehensive framework for understanding how MP improves the teaching and learning of entrepreneurship in HLIs. Kolb's ELT defines learning as a cyclical process comprising four stages: tangible experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualisation, and active experimentation (Hung et al., 2023). This study suggests that mentorship in entrepreneurship education allows students to take part in genuine entrepreneurial experiences through mentor interactions, project-based assignments, or business simulations, allowing them to reflect on these experiences, connect them to theoretical frameworks, and apply their gained insights in future business situations. This cycle promotes deep learning and allows students to integrate entrepreneurial skills beyond traditional education technique (Kolb, 2007).

Additionally, Bandura's argues that individuals gain knowledge, behaviours, and attitudes through the observation of others, especially credible role models, and by assessing the outcomes of those behaviours (Bandura & Walters, 1977). In a mentorship-oriented classroom, educators and guest entrepreneurs serve as role models, offering students genuine entrepreneurial narratives, practical insights, and value-driven decision-making frameworks (Atenas et al., 2023). This technique promotes observational learning and improves entrepreneurial self-efficacy, a significant predictor of entrepreneurial intention (Amofah & Saladrighes, 2022). As students observe the authentic experiences, challenges, and achievements of their mentors, they start to perceive themselves as competent entrepreneurs, thereby enhancing their confidence and motivation. Together, these ideas define mentorship as a fundamental pedagogical strategy that promotes development through practice, observation, reflection, and application. The theoretical framework corresponds with the study's objective to investigate how mentorship pedagogy enhances entrepreneurial learning and affects students' preparedness for entrepreneurial practice.

METHODOLOGY

This study used a qualitative research approach, consistent with interpretivist principles, to capture the complex, subjective experiences of students engaged in MP within entrepreneurial classes. Purposive sampling was employed to identify six business students from Universiti Teknologi MARA who had completed entrepreneurship course for the semester. Prior qualitative methodological research suggests that data saturation can be accomplished with a small number of interviews when the study population is homogeneous and the research objective is clearly specified (Hennink & Kaiser, 2022). Constantinou et al. (2017) stated that saturation was achieved with as few as five interviews in research aimed to capture broad theme categories rather than substantial theory development. Given that the respondents in this study were chosen from a homogeneous group of students enrolled in the same entrepreneurship programme and

exposed to similar mentorship methods, the five interviews were adequate to achieve thematic saturation and yield relevant insights. Therefore, the sample size in this study is sufficient.

Participants were selected for their capacity to critically evaluate their learning experiences in entrepreneurship. Semi-structured interviews were conducted in person. Interview questions were designed to explore how students:

- i. Engaged with educator in class.
- ii. Reflected on their learning.
- iii. Applied mentor insights to their entrepreneurial thinking.

All interviews were recorded, transcribed, and analysed for thematic patterns.

DATA ANALYSIS

This section presents the thematic findings derived from in-depth interviews with six students enrolled in entrepreneurship courses. The data were examined thematically using Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase framework. To familiarise with the data, all interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed verbatim, and read frequently. Open coding was then done manually, with meaningful units of text tagged with descriptive codes that closely matched the participants' language. Multiple codes were used where appropriate to capture the complexity of the responses. The original codes were then examined and aggregated into broader groups based on conceptual similarity, which was determined by constant comparison across transcripts. Transcripts were coded based on themes aligned with experiential and social learning processes.

Themes were then established by studying the correlations between categories and connecting them with the study's theoretical framework. Themes were refined to ensure internal coherence, clear distinction, and relevance to the study objectives. Only themes that were consistently visible among participants were retained. Through a systematic thematic analysis, five major themes and corresponding sub-themes were identified, each reflecting how MP shaped their learning experience, attitudes, and confidence toward entrepreneurship. Throughout the process, reflexive memo writing and repeated data engagement were used to improve analytical rigor and ensure that the final themes appropriately reflected participants' experiences with mentoring pedagogy.

Data was collected over the course of one day. Semi-structured interviews were conducted in a quiet, non-disruptive classroom environment to ensure participants' comfort and confidentiality. Each interview lasted about 30 minutes. Participants were properly informed about the study's goal, voluntary nature, and the ability to withdraw at any moment without consequence. Before participating, researchers obtained written informed consent. To preserve confidentiality and anonymity, pseudonyms were employed, and all data was securely stored and accessed only by the researcher. The findings are presented in the Table 1 using a structure that integrates themes, sub-themes, and empirical statements.

Table 1. Themes, sub-themes and empirical statement for the study

Themes	Sub-Themes	Empirical Statements
Impact of Mentorship-Based Entrepreneurship Learning	Acquisition of Practical Knowledge and Skills	<i>"Subject ini mungkin memberi saya knowledge dengan skill, tapi secara praktikalnya, tidak."</i>

		<i>"Tanpa teori, basic tak ada... tapi lepas praktikal, kita lebih faham."</i>
	Real-World Engagement through Mentorship	<i>"Waktu diploma saya ada mentor yang ajar kita cara sebenar buat bisnes."</i> <i>"Kita buat sales sendiri, rasa cabaran dia, tu yang best."</i>
	Intrinsic Motivation Stimulated by Mentorship	<i>"Bila kita dah rasa sendiri, kita rasa kita nak jadi entrepreneur."</i>
Role of Educators as Mentors	Emotional and Motivational Support	<i>"Peranan lecturer penting sebab dia yang akan beri kita motivasi."</i>
	Personalized Mentorship and Risk Awareness	<i>"Lecturer cakap, kalau sanggup tahan dugaan dan ada capital, teruskan. Tapi kalau tak mampu, jangan."</i>
	Balance Between Theory and Practice	<i>"Kena ada teori, tapi praktikal tu penting... dua-dua kena ada."</i>
Influence of Role Models in Entrepreneurial Learning	Observational Learning through Real-Life Stories	<i>"Lecturer cakap kalau mentor awak Khairul Aming, awak akan belajar terus dari dia. Teruja betul!"</i> <i>"Bila dengar orang berjaya, kita pun nak rasa macam tu."</i>
	Inspiration and Goal Setting	<i>"Lesson dari seseorang yang dah berjaya motivate kita untuk buka bisnes juga."</i>
Personal Motivation and Self-Preparation	Strengthened Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy	<i>"Kita dah tahu mentor akan ajar semua flow bisnes, rasa yakin lebih sikit."</i>
	Proactive Learning Behaviours	<i>"Saya dah mula cari kelas luar dan join bengkel... sebab rasa excited."</i>
Challenges and Risk Perception in Entrepreneurship	Perception of Risk and Business Difficulty	<i>"Bisnes bukan sesuatu yang mudah. Banyak risiko, dan kita kena bersedia."</i>
	Need for Systemic Support and Collaboration	<i>"Kena ada kerjasama antara entrepreneur berjaya dan KPT."</i> <i>"Workshop hands-on tu penting... barulah kita rasa yakin."</i>

THEORETICAL REFLECTIONS

Kolb argues that learning commences with tangible experiences, as demonstrated in this study by students' interactions with mentors, participation in practical projects, and engagement in business simulations. The students engaged in reflective observation, analysing the advice received and reassessing the feasibility of their business concepts. Subsequently, students participated in abstract conceptualisation, correlating theoretical knowledge acquired in the classroom with insights gained from their mentors' practical experiences (Balinda, 2023; Gerberry, 2023). The cycle continued through active experimentation, evidenced by students initiating participation in external workshops and testing their entrepreneurial concepts.

Simultaneously, Bandura's SLT developed through students' observational learning, wherein they assimilated behaviours and attitudes by observing mentors and entrepreneurial role models. This observing process promoted self-efficacy, as students indicated increased confidence in their entrepreneurial capabilities due to mentorship exposure (Otache et al., 2024; Taneja et al., 2024). Together, these theories underscore how MP facilitates a dynamic and holistic learning environment for aspiring entrepreneurs.

Table 2 demonstrates that the themes and sub-themes generated by this study are theoretically grounded in Kolb's experiential Learning Theory and Social Learning Theory, demonstrating that MP in entrepreneurship education employs both experiential and social learning approaches. MP initiates concrete entrepreneurial experiences, which are then followed by reflective observation assisted by feedback, emotional support, and risk assessment. These experiences are subsequently translated into abstract conceptual understanding, allowing students to connect theory and practice. Through active experimentation, students apply entrepreneurial knowledge proactively. Concurrently, Social Learning Theory outlines how role modelling, observational learning, and social reinforcement improve students' self-efficacy.

Table 2. Table Mapping Themes to ELT and SLT

Theme	Sub-Themes	Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory (ELT)	Social Learning Theory (SLT)
Impact of Mentorship-Based Entrepreneurship Learning	Acquisition of Practical Knowledge and Skills Real-World Engagement through Mentorship Intrinsic Motivation Stimulated by Mentorship	Concrete Experience: Students engage directly in entrepreneurial tasks through mentorship. Active Experimentation: Learners apply knowledge in real or simulated business contexts, reinforcing experiential learning.	Social Reinforcement: Mentors encourage and validate entrepreneurial efforts, strengthening motivation and learning persistence.
Role of Educators as Mentors	Emotional and Motivational Support Personalised Mentorship and Risk Awareness Balance Between Theory and Practice	Reflective Observation: Educators facilitate reflection on entrepreneurial experiences. Abstract Conceptualisation: Students integrate practical experience with theoretical understanding.	Modelling & Guidance: Educators act as role models demonstrating entrepreneurial thinking and decision-making.
Influence of Role Models in Entrepreneurial Learning	Observational Learning through Real-Life Stories Inspiration and Goal Setting	Abstract Conceptualisation: translating observed experiences into entrepreneurial knowledge and aspirations.	Observational Learning: Students learn entrepreneurial behaviours by observing mentors and successful entrepreneurs.
Personal Motivation and Self-Preparation	Strengthened Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy Proactive Learning Behaviours	Active Experimentation: Confident students initiate entrepreneurial actions and apply learning independently.	Self-Efficacy Development: Observing mentor success increases belief in one's entrepreneurial capabilities.
Challenges and Risk Perception in Entrepreneurship	Perception of Risk and Business Difficulty Need for Systemic Support and Collaboration	Reflective Observation: Students evaluate challenges and risks encountered during entrepreneurial learning.	Social Support Mechanisms: Collaborative learning and institutional support reduce perceived risk and fear of failure.

FINDINGS

This study aimed to examine the influence of MP on students' entrepreneurial intentions in Malaysian HLIs. The study specifically investigated the growth of students' entrepreneurial attitudes through mentorship pedagogy learning (RQ1) and identified the mentorship practices that students considered most impactful in shaping their entrepreneurial intentions (RQ2). The findings offer detailed insights into how effective integration of mentorship pedagogy within entrepreneurship education can serve as a transformative educational instrument.

The findings show that MP learning experiences significantly impact students' entrepreneurial mindset. Participants consistently indicated that their views towards entrepreneurship were increasingly positive, focused, and self-directed as they participated in mentorship activities. These data strongly support RQ1 and illustrate consistency with the research objective. Students reported an increased sense of support and confidence due to participation in real-world discussions, project-based activities, and structured reflections. The activities conducted by mentors illustrate the phases of experiential learning whereby learning occurs through a dynamic cycle of tangible encounters, reflective observation, conceptual comprehension, and active exploration. The narratives of students show that the MP facilitated this cycle, enabling them to accept entrepreneurial values and develop practical readiness.

Moreover, the study showed several mentorship styles that students considered highly significant, thereby addressing RQ2. These included personalised mentorship from educators, psychological support, interaction with entrepreneurial models, and open discussions about risk and failure. These behaviours align with Bandura's SLT which emphasises the significance of observational learning and the influence of credible models in developing self-efficacy. Students indicated that witnessing mentors' real business experiences, including challenges and adaptations, makes the learning process more realistic and applicable. This method of indirect learning not only inspired students but also enabled them to envision themselves in similar entrepreneurial scenarios.

The research indicated that students had a favourable response to the relational aspect of MP. When educators assumed roles beyond traditional teaching, acting as coaches, discussion facilitators, and collaborative decision makers, students experienced increased engagement and support. This reinforces the idea that mentorship is not a secondary teaching method but a fundamental pedagogical practice, particularly effective in teaching entrepreneurship courses where affective and behavioural elements are as crucial as cognitive ones.

The findings support MP as an effective method for improving experiential and socially integrated learning, although expose limitation that require further investigation. Mentorship in entrepreneurial education relies significantly on the accessibility, competence, and dedication of educators, which raises difficulties regarding scalability and uniformity among universities. Not all educators have entrepreneurial experience or mentoring skills, which may restrict the quality of assistance offered and could reduce mentorship to informal support instead of a systematic pedagogical approach.

In the context of Malaysian higher education, structural difficulties continue to hinder the efficacy of MP. Large class enrolments, heavy academic workloads, and performance metrics that emphasise publication outputs over pedagogical innovation constrain educators' ability to establish sustainable mentorship relationships. Moreover, institutional focus on rigid curriculum implementation and assessment consistency could limit the required flexibility for experiential and mentorship methodologies. The structural limits show that MP, despite its educational benefits, cannot operate effectively without sufficient institutional and policy-level support.

The findings underscore ongoing difficulties between theoretical instruction and practical learning within the broader context of entrepreneurial education. While mentorship reduces this gap, students' concerns about perceived risks and inadequate subsequent support suggest that mentorship alone cannot

resolve systemic challenges such as restricted access to funds, industry networks, and entrepreneurial ecosystems. This highlights critiques in entrepreneurial education literature on the over dependence on pedagogical interventions without parallel ecosystem development.

These essential facts indicate that MP should be integrated into a comprehensive entrepreneurial education ecosystem rather than considered as a standalone solution. Successful execution necessitates educator training, acknowledgement of workload, institutional adaptability, and alignment with national entrepreneurship initiatives. Failure to overcome these systemic limitations could hinder the transformative potential of mentorship pedagogy in Malaysian higher education and entrepreneurial education.

CONCLUSIONS

This study emphasises mentorship pedagogy as a significant educational method that influences entrepreneurial learning through experiential engagement, reflective practice, and behavioural modelling. Students show increased motivation, confidence, and readiness to explore entrepreneurship as a realistic career option through practical experiences, reflective conversations and observational learning. The thematic analysis revealed five interconnected domains in which mentorship generated considerable influence: the development of practical skills, the educator's role as a motivator and guide, the encouraging effect of role models, the enhancement of self-efficacy and proactive learning behaviours, and a practical comprehension of entrepreneurial risks. The results enhance Experiential Learning Theory and Social Learning Theory by demonstrating how educator using mentorship pedagogy within these theoretical frameworks in entrepreneurship education, specifically by strengthening students' confidence in entrepreneurship and their capacity to relate theory to practical application.

The study highlights the necessity to redefine entrepreneurial education, shifting from traditional teaching methods to mentorship pedagogy learning environments. These findings emphasise that effective entrepreneurship education must extend beyond conventional information delivery to incorporate human-centred, experiential, and socially integrated pedagogies. Integrating mentorship into entrepreneurial education enables educators to share knowledge while also influencing attitudes, behaviours, and long-term ambitions. The study contributes to the expanding literature that supports pedagogical reform in entrepreneurship education and emphasises the immediate necessity for contextually relevant teaching approaches in Malaysian universities. However, the study is limited by its small, context-specific sample and reliance on self-reported data, which may restrict generalisability. Future study needs to investigate mentorship pedagogy across various educational settings and employ longitudinal or mixed method designs to further assess its impact on entrepreneurial intention and outcomes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This study proposes several recommendations to improve entrepreneurial education using mentorship pedagogy. Universities could incorporate structured mentorship into entrepreneurial curriculum by engaging successful businessmen as mentors or guest lecturers, thus offering students practical exposure and motivation. Secondly, educators need to undergo professional development in mentorship techniques, encompassing the facilitation of experience learning and reflective thinking. Third, institutions are urged to establish dynamic learning settings that foster practical entrepreneurial activities, including company simulations, pitching sessions, and field projects, all under the guidance of mentor support. Moreover, establishing strong university-industry collaborations can enhance the mentorship framework and provide students with exposure to contemporary market practices. Reflective instruments, such mentoring journals and peer-sharing dialogues, need to be integrated to foster enhanced learning and self-awareness. Policymakers as well as appropriate government agencies must support these programmes by specific funding, institutional incentives, and national policies that prioritise mentorship as an essential element of

entrepreneurial education. These initiatives will jointly foster more competent, self-assured, and proactive graduates ready to make significant contributions to Malaysia's entrepreneurial environment.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors would like to acknowledge the guidance from Rahmat Yuliawan and Profesor Norzanah Mat Nor for providing support in completing the paper. The author also would like to acknowledge the support from Dr Ahmad Syahmi for the analysis in the findings. The same gratitude also goes to the other co-author that contribute to the paper either in term of write-up, organising and summarising.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

The authors agree that this research was conducted in the absence of any self-benefits, commercial or financial conflicts and declare the absence of conflicting interests with the funders.

AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

Suhailah Kassim and Rahmat Yuliawan carried out the research, wrote and revised the article. Norzanah Mat Nor conceptualised the central research idea and provided the theoretical framework. Ahmad Syahmi Ahmad Fadzil and Amir Imran Zainoddin designed the research and supervised research progress. Noorain Mohd Nordin assisting in referencing and overall formatting.

REFERENCES

- Abreu, M., Demirel, P., Grinevich, V., & Karataş-Özkan, M. (2016). Entrepreneurial practices in research-intensive and teaching-led universities. *Small Business Economics*, 47, 695–717. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11187-016-9754-5>
- Al Issa, H. E. (2023). Entrepreneurial intentions among university students: the role of mentoring, self-efficacy and motivation. *Journal of Applied Research in Higher Education*, 16(5), 1848–1863. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JARHE-08-2023-0356>
- Amir, A., & Suryana, D. (2018). Active learning teaching and learning model of entrepreneurship subject at English education program of Indonesia University of Education. *Lembaran Ilmu Kependidikan*, 47(1), 1–8. <https://journal.unnes.ac.id/nju/LIK/article/view/12409>
- Amofah, K., & Saladrighes, R. (2022). Impact of attitude towards entrepreneurship education and role models on entrepreneurial intention. *Journal of Innovation and Entrepreneurship*, 11(1), 36. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13731-022-00197-5>
- Arnesson, K., & Albinsson, G. (2017). Mentorship—a pedagogical method for integration of theory and practice in higher education. *Nordic Journal of Studies in Educational Policy*, 3(3), 202–217. <https://doi.org/10.1080/20020317.2017.1379346>
- Atenas, J., Nerantzi, C., & Bussu, A. (2023). A conceptual approach to transform and enhance academic mentorship: Through open educational practices. *Open Praxis*, 15(4), 271–287. <https://doi.org/10.55982/openpraxis.15.4.595>
- Badwan, A. R., Tamvada, J. P., & Rentocchini, F. (2022). Evaluating mentorship-based learning in entrepreneurship education. *International Review of Entrepreneurship*, 20, 69–86. <http://eprints.soton.ac.uk/id/eprint/457156>

- Balinda, J. (2023). The Impact of Mentorship Programs on Career Advancement and Satisfaction. *International Journal of Human Resource*, 1(1), 36–47. <https://forthworthjournals.org/journals/index.php/IJHR/article/view/79?captcha>
- Bandura, A., Argyris, C., Bandura, & Stevens, S. S. (1977). Self-efficacy mechanism in human agency. *Psychological Review*, 55(2), 191–215. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.37.2.122>
- Bandura, A., & Walters, R. H. (1977). *Social learning theory* (Vol. 1). Prentice hall Englewood Cliffs, NJ.
- Blenker, P., Frederiksen, S. H., Korsgaard, S., Müller, S., Neergaard, H., & Thrane, C. (2012). Entrepreneurship as everyday practice: towards a personalized pedagogy of enterprise education. *Industry and Higher Education*, 26(6), 417–430. <https://doi.org/10.5367/ihe.2012.0126>
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77–101. <https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa>
- Constantinou, C. S., Georgiou, M., & Perdikogianni, M. (2017). A comparative method for themes saturation (CoMeTS) in qualitative interviews. *Qualitative Research*, 17(5), 571–588. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1468794116686650>
- Eunah, K., Eta, M. N., & Shepherd, M. (2024). Entrepreneurship pedagogy enhancing entrepreneurship intention in secondary school students in developing countries. *International Journal of Financial, Accounting, and Management*, 6(1), 117–133. <https://doi.org/10.35912/ijfam.v6i1.1996>
- Gerberry, C. V. (2023). Developing self-efficacy through the social constructivist mentorship. *Theory Into Practice*, 62(1), 62–69. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00405841.2022.2136480>
- Harden, R. M., & Lilley, P. (2025). A traditional or an innovative approach to assessment: The Assessment PROFILE. *Medical Teacher*, 47(1), 50–57. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0142159X.2024.2436443>
- Hashim, N., & Ab Wahid, H. (2024). Systematic Literature Review of entrepreneurship mentoring in higher education: A comparative study of Malaysia, China, the USA, and the UK. *Malaysian Journal of Society and Space*, 20(3). <https://doi.org/10.17576/geo-2024-2003-08>
- Hassan, H., Sade, A. B., & Rahman, M. S. (2020). Shaping entrepreneurial intention among youngsters in Malaysia. *Journal of Humanities and Applied Social Sciences*, 2(3), 235–251. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JHASS-02-2020-0029>
- Hennink, M., & Kaiser, B. N. (2022). Sample sizes for saturation in qualitative research: A systematic review of empirical tests. *Social Science & Medicine*, 292, 114523. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2021.114523>
- Hu, J. (2024). The challenge of traditional teaching approach: A study on the path to improve classroom teaching effectiveness based on secondary school students' psychology. *Lecture Notes in Education Psychology and Public Media*, 50, 213–219. <https://doi.org/10.54254/2753-7048/50/20240945>
- Huang, L., Bai, X., Huang, L., Huang, Y., & Han, G. (2023). How does college students' entrepreneurial learning influence entrepreneurial intention: Evidence from China. *Sustainability*, 15(12), 9301. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su15129301>
- Hung, L. Y., Wang, S. M., & Yeh, T. K. (2023). Kolb's experiential learning theory and marine debris education: Effects of different stages on learning. *Marine Pollution Bulletin*, 191, 114933. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.marpolbul.2023.114933>

- Igwe, P. A., Madichie, N. O., Chukwuemeka, O., Rahman, M., Ochinanwata, N., & Uzuegbunam, I. (2022). Pedagogical approaches to responsible entrepreneurship education. *Sustainability*, 14(15), 9440. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su14159440>
- Johnson, S. (2023). The policy impact of entrepreneurship research: challenging received wisdom. *Evidence & Policy*, 19(2), 299–314. <https://doi.org/10.1332/174426422X16596963542147>
- Karim, M. S. A. (2016). Entrepreneurship education in an engineering curriculum. *Procedia Economics and Finance*, 35, 379–387. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S2212-5671\(16\)00047-2](https://doi.org/10.1016/S2212-5671(16)00047-2)
- Kolb, D. A. (2007). *The Kolb learning style inventory*. Hay Resources Direct Boston, MA.
- Lackéus, M. (2020). Comparing the impact of three different experiential approaches to entrepreneurship in education. *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behavior & Research*, 26(5), 937–971. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJEBR-04-2018-0236>
- Loheswar, R., (2023, 25 Oct). Survey: Malaysian youth's limited attraction to entrepreneurship calls for greater outreach, mentorship programme. *Malay Mail*, <https://www.malaymail.com/news/malaysia/2023/10/25/survey-malaysian-youths-limited-attraction-to-entrepreneurship-calls-for-greater-outreach-mentorship-programme/98321>
- Mahmood, R., Ahmad, Z., Zahari, A. S. M., Mohd Fuza, Z. I., & Azmin, N. A. M. (2024). Entrepreneurship education position and entrepreneurial intention: the perception of Malaysian undergraduate students. *International Journal of Social Science Research*, 12(2), 119. <https://doi.org/10.5296/ijssr.v12i2.21534>
- Mahmoud, M. A., Garba, A. S., Abdullah, Y. A., & Ali, A. I. (2020). Assessment of entrepreneurship education on the relationship between attitude, subjective norms, perceived behavioural control and entrepreneurial intention. *International Journal of Business and Technopreneurship*, 10(2), 197–210. https://ijbt.unimap.edu.my/images/stories/IJBT%20JUN%202020/IJBT_Vol_10_June_2020_5_197-210.pdf
- Matsko, K. K., Wallace, J., Feiman-Nemser, S., Hammerness, K., & Kavanagh, S. S. (2024). Host or teacher of teaching? Examining mentors' tacit theories of student teacher learning. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 138, 104410. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2023.104410>
- Ministry of Higher Education. (2021). *Pelan Strategik Kebolehpasaran Graduan 2021–2025 Kementerian Pengajian Tinggi*. <https://repositori.mohe.gov.my/51/>
- Ministry of Higher Education. (2023). *Statistik Pendidikan Tinggi 2023: Kementerian Pendidikan Tinggi*. <https://www.mohe.gov.my/muat-turun/statistik/2023-3/1473-bab-1-makro-2023-pdf/file>
- Motta, V. F., & Galina, S. V. R. (2023). Experiential learning in entrepreneurship education: A systematic literature review. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 121, 103919. <https://doi.org/10.1016/J.TATE.2022.103919>
- Mukesh, H. V., Pillai, K. R., & Mamman, J. (2020). Action-embedded pedagogy in entrepreneurship education: an experimental enquiry. *Studies in Higher Education*, 45(8), 1679–1693. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2019.1599848>
- Olokundun, M., Moses, C. L., Iyiola, O., Ibidunni, S., Ogbari, M., Peter, F., & Borishade, T. (2018). The effect of non traditional teaching methods in entrepreneurship education on students entrepreneurial interest and business startups: A data article. *Data in Brief*, 19, 16–20. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.dib.2018.04.142>

- Otache, I., Edopkolor, J. E., Sani, I. A., & Umar, K. (2024). Entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial intentions: Do entrepreneurial self-efficacy, alertness and opportunity recognition matter? *The International Journal of Management Education*, 22(1), 100917. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijme.2023.100917>
- Othman, N., & Nasrudin, N. (2016). Entrepreneurship education programs in Malaysian polytechnics. *Education+ Training*, 58(7/8), 882–898. <https://doi.org/10.1108/ET-11-2014-0136>
- Pattison-Meek, J. (2024). The unsung heroes of practicum mentorship: Moving toward a triad model inclusive of student voice to support student teachers' professional learning. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 143, 104553. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2024.104553>
- Peschl, H., Deng, C., & Larson, N. (2021). Entrepreneurial thinking: A signature pedagogy for an uncertain 21st century. *The International Journal of Management Education*, 19(1), 100427. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijme.2020.100427>
- Raja, F. U. & Zulfikar A.B. (2018). Comparing traditional teaching method and experiential teaching method using experimental research. *Journal of Education and Educational Development*, 5(2), 276–288. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1200262.pdf>
- Taneja, M., Kiran, R., & Bose, S. C. (2024). Assessing entrepreneurial intentions through experiential learning, entrepreneurial self-efficacy, and entrepreneurial attitude. *Studies in Higher Education*, 49(1), 98–118. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2023.2223219>
- Teoh, W. M. Y., Chong, S. C., Yuen, Y. Y., Ravichander, S., & Chong, C. W. (2024). Entrepreneurial intentions among business undergraduates: The Malaysian case. *Journal of Education for Business*, 99(7–8), 411–421. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08832323.2024.2424181>
- Wijayati, D. T., Fazlurrahman, H., Hadi, H. K., & Arifah, I. D. C. (2021). The effect of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial intention through planned behavioural control, subjective norm, and entrepreneurial attitude. *Journal of Global Entrepreneurship Research*, 11, 505–518. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40497-021-00298-7>
- Yusof, S. W. M., Jabar, J., Murad, M. A., & Ortega, R. T. (2017). Exploring the cultural determinants of entrepreneurial success: The case of Malaysia. *International Journal of Advanced and Applied Sciences*, 4(12), 287–297. <https://doi.org/10.21833/ijaas.2017.012.048>
- Ziakis, C., Vlachopoulou, M., & Petridis, K. (2022). Start-up ecosystem (StUpEco): A conceptual framework and empirical research. *Journal of Open Innovation: Technology, Market, and Complexity*, 8(1), 35. <https://doi.org/10.3390/joitmc8010035>



© 2025 by the authors. Submitted for possible open access publication under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).