

The Relationship between Students' Perception of University Entrepreneurial Support and Entrepreneurial Intentions: The Mediating Role of Psychological Capital

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Abstract

Based upon social cognitive theory, this study examined the influence of students' perception of university entrepreneurial support (UES) on their entrepreneurial intention (EI); additionally, the mediating role of psychological capital (PC) in the relationship between students' perception of UES and EI was also investigated. A questionnaire survey was conducted to collect data from 1,168 Chinese university students. The findings of this study indicated a significant positive impact on students' perception of UES on EI. Additionally, it was observed that PC played a partial mediating role in the relationship between students' perception of UES and their EI. The findings offer theoretical and empirical evidence for university administrators and educators seeking to enhance university students' EI.

Keywords: university entrepreneurial support, psychological capital, entrepreneurial intention, university students

1. Introduction

With the rapid advancements in science and technology and the global economy, cultivating a substantial batch of entrepreneurial talents has become one of the core purposes of higher education in numerous countries worldwide (Li et al., 2022). The provision of entrepreneurial support in higher education is crucial for developing students' entrepreneurial skills, since it is significant to cultivate entrepreneurial ambitions among university students within the university setting (Yi, 2021). The enhancement of university students' intentions for entrepreneurship necessitates an initial focus within the stage of higher education; therefore, it is incumbent upon university administrators and educators to assume the responsibility of fostering an environment that promotes entrepreneurship and motivates students to enhance their entrepreneurial aspirations (Lu et al., 2021). Entrepreneurial intention (EI) refers to an individual's inclination to initiate a new venture and actively strategize its implementation in the foreseeable future (Thompson, 2009). Prior research in the field of education has examined the various factors influencing the entrepreneurial intentions of university students, specifically focusing on their attributes, the support they receive for entrepreneurship, and the management systems implemented by their respective universities (Mahfud et al., 2020; Yi, 2021). However, alternative perspectives put forth by scholars suggest that the EI of university students is predominantly influenced by the level of entrepreneurial support provided by their universities (Lu et al., 2021; Mustafa et al., 2016).

University entrepreneurial support (UES) encompasses a range of initiatives wherein higher education institutions offer assistance to students in their pursuit of entrepreneurial endeavors (Lu et al., 2021). Universities actively encourage entrepreneurship among their students by providing entrepreneurial platforms, financial resources, entrepreneurial knowledge and skills, and internships in startups to foster their entrepreneurial awareness and motivation (Saeed et al., 2015; Shi et al., 2020). Furthermore, previous research has indicated that providing entrepreneurial information, emotional or psychological support, role models, and material resources to university students through UES can positively influence the perceived feasibility of entrepreneurial endeavors among students, improving students' EI (Lu et al., 2021). Hence, this study suggested that students' perception level of UES might exert a significant positive influence on the students' EI.

Social cognitive theory posits that both individual and environmental factors can have a significant impact on behavior (Bandura, 1986). Based on this theoretical framework, university students' perception of UES can be considered an environmental component, and EI is the behavior. An individual factor may exist within the mechanism in which university students' perception of UES influences their EI. Hence, this study endeavored to incorporate psychological capital (PC) into the aforementioned influence process, positing that students' perception of UES exerted an initial impact on their PC and subsequently influenced their entrepreneurial intention. PC is a state of positive psychological development exhibited by an individual as he or she grows and develops (Luthans et al., 2007). According to Cui (2021), university entrepreneurship education can be regarded as a form of UES, which can enhance university students' PC. Furthermore, the PC of university students has been acknowledged as a significant determinant impacting their EI (Jin, 2017; Mahfud et al., 2020). Additionally, it has been shown that university students who possess a greater degree of PC are more inclined to exhibit motivation in initiating their own business and actively utilize diverse entrepreneurial opportunities; hence, they are more likely to have elevated levels of EI (Ephrem et al., 2019). Consequently, this study proposed that PC might mediate the effect of students' perception of UES on their EI.

Based on the aforementioned discussion, this study aimed to investigate the impact of students' perception of UES on their EI, drawing upon social cognitive theory as the theoretical framework. The research questions of this study were twofold: first, to investigate the significant influence of students' perception of UES on their EI; second, to examine the potential mediating effect of PC on the relationship between students' perception of UES on their EI.

2. Literature Review & Hypotheses Development

2.1 University Students' Perception of UES and EI

UES includes various support activities provided by university s and universities for their students' entrepreneurship (Lu et al., 2021). A multitude of approaches can be adopted to enhance UES and assist students in their entrepreneurial endeavors (Cui, 2021; Haddoud et al., 2020). Specifically, universities can provide students with entrepreneurial support, such as entrepreneurship education and mentoring, to teach them entrepreneurial knowledge, skills, and assistance, which can potentially cultivate favorable entrepreneurial attitudes, plans, and behaviors among university students (Cui et al., 2019; Paray & Kumar, 2020; Ramadani et al., 2022). Previous studies have also verified that UES has a significant positive effect on university students' entrepreneurial attitudes (Liu et al., 2022) and entrepreneurial behaviors (Cui, 2021). These findings enhance our understanding of the relationship between university students' perception of UES and EI.

According to the framework of social cognitive theory, Winkler (2013) examined the role of UES as an environmental factor, revealing that university students who actively utilized the diverse range of UES exhibited a heightened level of EI. Besides, the concept of EI pertains to a concentrated mental state that leads an entrepreneur's attention and experiences toward deliberate entrepreneurial actions (Do & Dadvari, 2017). Previous empirical research has demonstrated that the provision of UES to university students plays a noteworthy role in enhancing their entrepreneurship-related knowledge, skills, perspectives, and attitudes, as well as their innovation and entrepreneurship, which in turn positively affects their EI (Cui, 2021; Haddoud et al., 2020; Nabi et al., 2017). Liu et al. (2022) reported a positive correlation between university students' perception of UES and their EI. One of the possible reasons for this influential relationship is that when university students perceive more UES, they tend to develop more favorable attitudes towards entrepreneurship; hence, they are more likely to exhibit courage in confronting entrepreneurial challenges, embrace potential risks associated with entrepreneurship, and possess higher levels of entrepreneurial confidence (Liu et al., 2022). Consequently, the hypothesis is proposed as follows:

Hypothesis 1: There is a positive relationship between university students' perception of UES and their EI.

2.2 The Mediating Role of PC

PC is a construct that pertains to the positive psychological developmental state of an individual, which encompasses four dimensions, namely self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience (Luthans et al., 2007). Previous research has demonstrated that the provision of UES can have a positive impact on their PC, including teaching entrepreneurial-related knowledge and skills, cultivating students' capability to identify entrepreneurial opportunities, helping students with their business plans, as well as providing them with entrepreneurial resources, internships, entrepreneurial companies (Mahfud et al., 2020; Maslakçı et al., 2021; Saeed et al., 2015). In addition, it has been observed by certain scholars that PC has a significant positive effect on university students' EI, with a higher level of PC associated with an elevated level of EI (Ephrem et al., 2019; Jin, 2017). Hence, this study incorporated PC as a mediation variable to investigate the underlying process via which university students' perception of UES influences

their EI.

Bandura (1986) proposed social cognitive theory, indicating that a combination of individual and environmental factors influences an individual's behavior. As an environmental factor, UES can furnish university students with essential resources and assistance in their entrepreneurial endeavors (Winkler, 2013). Through UES, university students are supported to acquire comprehensive entrepreneurial knowledge and skills; hence, their ability to discover entrepreneurial resources is enhanced, which can bolster their confidence in engaging in entrepreneurial activities (Lu et al., 2021). Previous research has established that university students' perception of UES has a significant positive impact on their PC. Specifically, university students who perceive a greater degree of UES exhibit elevated levels of PC compared to their counterparts (Cui, 2021; Hasan et al., 2019).

Numerous prior investigations have substantiated the mediation of PC as an individual factor in the relationship between environmental conditions and EI among university students (Cui, 2021; Mahfud et al., 2020; Maslakçı et al., 2021). The significance of PC among university students has been acknowledged as a crucial determinant of entrepreneurship (Jin, 2017). Mahfud et al. (2020) highlighted that university students with greater levels of PC exhibited more levels of perseverance when confronted with entrepreneurial challenges; additionally, these individuals demonstrated a greater inclination to actively seek out solutions to problems, resulting in higher levels of EI. According to Syed et al. (2020), it has been observed that university students who possess positive PC are not only capable of effectively managing unforeseen obstacles in entrepreneurship, but also demonstrate adaptability in addressing entrepreneurial challenges, thereby ensuring the efficient execution of their entrepreneurial endeavors and attaining entrepreneurial success. Multiple empirical studies have demonstrated a significant positive correlation between PC and EI among university students (Ephrem et al., 2019; Mahfud et al., 2020). Therefore, this study suggested that university students' perception of UES initially enhanced their PC, which subsequently has a positive impact on their EI through the mediating role of PC. Consequently, the following hypothesis was proposed:

Hypothesis 2: PC will mediate the relationship between university students' perception of UES and their EI.

In summary, the hypothesized model of this study was derived as shown in Figure 1:

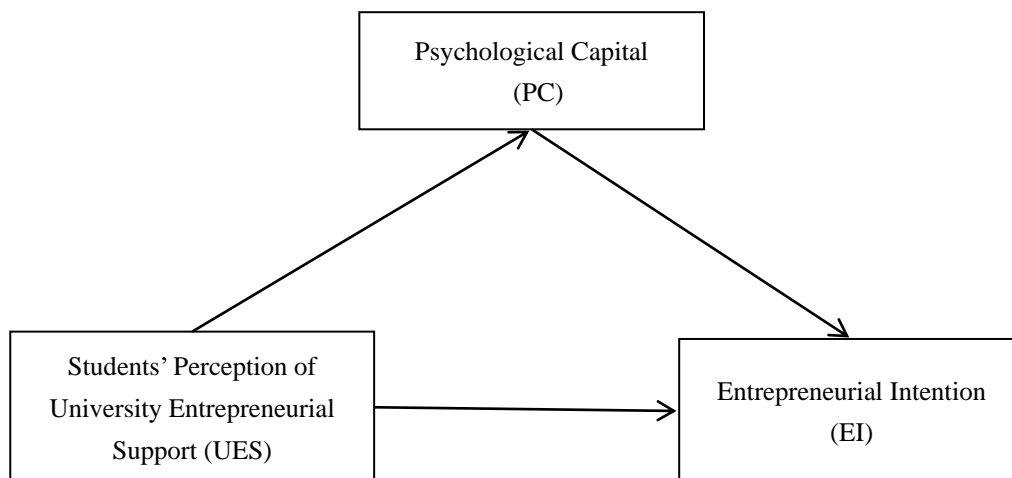


Figure 1. Hypothetical model

3. Methodology

3.1 Participants and Procedures

This study was approved by the Research Ethics Committee of Zhoukou Normal University, Henan Province, China (ZKNU-2023-05). Convenience sampling was employed to recruit students from three universities located in Henan Province of China. Prior to questionnaire administration, the teachers responsible for distributing the questionnaires were trained to explain the questionnaire items. Besides, the teachers were required to introduce the questionnaires to the participants, informing them of the purpose of this study and the confidentiality agreement. The questionnaires were submitted anonymously, and the collected data were exclusively utilized only for academic purposes. Participants had the option to decline participation or discontinue their involvement in the preset study at any point during the questionnaire completion procedure, if they had any reservations. After all participants completed the informed consent form, the online questionnaires were distributed through a web-based questionnaire-collecting

platform (www.wjx.cn). Participants were provided with the option to either scan a QR code or click on a hyperlink to access the electronic questionnaire, thereby facilitating their participation in the survey.

This study encompassed a pilot test and a formal survey. In the pilot test phase, a distribution of 220 questionnaires was conducted. After removing invalid questionnaires with consistent responses and insufficient time to fill out, 195 valid questionnaires were obtained, resulting in an effective recovery rate of 88.6%. In the formal survey phase, 1260 formal questionnaires were collected, from which 1168 valid questionnaires were acquired after removing invalid questionnaires, resulting in an effective recovery rate of 92.7%. The demographic distribution of the participants of the formal survey is shown in Table 1. In terms of gender, the sample consisted of 697 male university students (59.7%) and 471 female university students (40.3%). Regarding grade level, the participants included 455 freshmen (39.0%), 311 sophomores (26.6%), 160 in third grade (13.7%), and 242 in fourth grade (20.7%). In relation to parental entrepreneurial experience, 345 university students (29.5%) reported having parents with entrepreneurial experience, while 823 university students (70.5%) reported having parents without entrepreneurial experience.

Table 1. Demographic distribution of participants

Variables	Category	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	697	59.7%
	Female	471	40.3%
Grade	Freshman	455	39.0%
	Sophomore	311	26.6%
	Junior	160	13.7%
	Senior	242	20.7%
Students whose parents are entrepreneurs	Yes	345	29.5%
	No	823	70.5%

3.2 Data Analysis

This study employed SPSS for exploratory factor analysis (EFA), sample descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and scale reliability tests. AMOS was used for confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and common method variance (CMV) test of the measurement model. Besides, mediation effect tests were conducted using the Hayes Process of Model 4. Finally, Bootstrapped confidence intervals (CI) were used to confirm the significance of the mediation effect (Hayes et al., 2017).

3.3 Measures

3.3.1 Students' Perception of University Entrepreneurial Support

This study used the unidimensional University Entrepreneurial Support Scale adapted by Yi (2021) to assess university students' perception of UES. The scale consists of four items. Items were scored on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 ("Strongly Disagree") to 5 ("Strongly Agree"), with higher scores indicating higher levels of university students' perception of UES. For the pilot test sample, the results of item analysis showed that the critical ratio (C.R.) values of all items were greater than 3, the correlation coefficients between each item score and the total score were greater than 0.4, and Cronbach's α did not increase after deleting the items, which met the criteria for item retention and did not require deletion of any items. The results of EFA showed factor loadings between 0.760 and 0.880 for each question item, which met the criterion of greater than 0.4, indicating good validity (Guadagnoli & Velicer, 1988), and were retained with a cumulative total explained variance of 69.415%. The Cronbach's α for the scale in the formal survey sample was 0.880, greater than 0.7, indicating good scale reliability (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1978). The results of CFA showed: RMR = 0.026, SRMR = 0.034, CFI = 0.969, GFI = 0.963, NFI = 0.968, TLI = 0.906, IFI = 0.969, RFI = 0.904, which demonstrated a satisfactory fit of the model (McDonald & Ho, 2002).

3.3.2 Psychological Capital

University students' PC was measured using the Psychological Capital Scale adapted by Zhang et al. (2020), which has a total of 14 items in four dimensions, namely self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience. The items were scored on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 ("Strongly Disagree") to 5 ("Strongly Agree"), with higher scores representing higher levels of PC among university students. For the pilot test sample, the results of item analysis showed that the C.R. values of all items were greater than 3, the correlation coefficients between each item score and the total score were greater than 0.4, and none of the Cronbach's α increased after deleting the items, which met the

criteria for item retention and did not require any deletion of the items. The results of EFA showed that the factor loading of item 4 in the hope dimension of the scale was 0.304, less than 0.4, and it was then deleted. The factor loadings of the remaining items ranged from 0.524 to 0.829, which met the criterion of greater than 0.4, indicating good validity, and were retained with a cumulative total explained variance of 79.684%. The Cronbach's α values in the formal survey sample were 0.842, 0.911, 0.868, 0.868 for the dimensions of the scale, and 0.944 for the overall scale, all greater than 0.7, indicating good reliability. The results of CFA showed: RMR = 0.025, SRMR = 0.033, CFI = 0.965, GFI = 0.940, NFI = 0.960, TLI = 0.953, IFI = 0.965, and RFI = 0.947, which demonstrated a satisfactory fit of the model.

3.3.3 Entrepreneurial Intention

This study utilized the unidimensional Entrepreneurial Intention Scale developed by Liñán and Chen (2009) to evaluate university students' EI, which consists of 6 items. The items were scored on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 ("Strongly Disagree") to 5 ("Strongly Agree"), with higher scores representing higher levels of EI among university students. The results of item analysis showed that the C.R. values of all items were greater than 3, the correlation coefficients between each item score and the total score were greater than 0.4, and none of the Cronbach's α was elevated after deletion of the items, which met the criterion of item retention, and no items would not be deleted. The results of the EFA showed factor loadings between 0.814 and 0.912 for each item, which met the criterion of greater than 0.4, indicating good validity, with a cumulative total explained variance of 77.822%. In the formal survey sample, the Cronbach's α value for the total scale was 0.947, greater than 0.7, indicating good reliability for the scale. The results of CFA showed RMR = 0.021, SRMR = 0.021, CFI = 0.980, GFI = 0.957, NFI = 0.978, TLI = 0.966, IFI = 0.980, and RFI = 0.964, which demonstrated a satisfactory fit of the model.

4. Results

4.1 Common Method Variance Test

The CMV problem was assessed through CFA, and the fitness of the single-factor model was compared with that of the multi-factor model (Podsakoff & Organ, 1986). As shown in Table 2, the chi-square value of the multi-factor model ($\chi^2 = 1086.753$) was much lower than that of the single-factor model ($\chi^2 = 8588.148$), indicating the fitness of the multi-factor model was significantly better than that of the single-factor model ($\Delta\chi^2 = 7501.395$, $\Delta df = 15$, $p < 0.001$). Therefore, it could be inferred that the CMV in this study was not serious.

Table 2. Comparison of the single-factor model and the multi-factor model

Model	χ^2	df	$\Delta\chi^2$	Δdf	p
Single-factor model	8588.148	230	7501.395	15	0.000
Multi-factor model	1086.753	215			

4.2 Descriptive Statistics and Correlations

The descriptive statistics and correlation analysis of the variables in this study are presented in Table 3. The correlation analysis showed that university students' perception of UES was significantly and positively correlated with PC ($r = 0.537$, $p < 0.001$) and EI ($r = 0.363$, $p < 0.001$), and university students' PC was significantly and positively correlated with EI ($r = 0.562$, $p < 0.001$). The correlation coefficients between any two of the variables ranged from 0.363 to 0.562, less than 0.8, indicating no problem of collinearity in this study (Dormann et al., 2013).

Table 3. Descriptive statistics and correlations for all variables

Variables	M	SD	UES	PC	EI
UES	3.872	0.757	1		
PC	3.675	0.665	0.537***	1	
EI	3.326	0.884	0.363***	0.562***	1

Note: *** $p < 0.001$; UES = university entrepreneurial support, PC = psychological capital, EI = entrepreneurial intention.

4.3 Hypotheses Testing

The study tested the mediating effect of PC in the relationship between university students' perception of UES and EI using Model 4 of SPSS Process 3.5 developed by Hayes (2013). The results are shown in Table 4. In Model 1, university students' perception of UES significantly and positively predicted EI ($\beta = 0.363$, $p < 0.001$), and

Hypothesis 1 was supported. In Model 2, university students' perception of UES also significantly and positively predicted PC ($\beta = 0.537$, $p < 0.001$). After adding PC as a mediator variable in Model 3, university students' perception of UES still significantly and positively predicted EI ($\beta = 0.086$, $p < 0.01$), but the standardized coefficient decreased compared with that in Model 1 with PC also significantly positively predicting EI ($\beta = 0.516$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that PC served a significant mediating role in the relationship between university students' perception of UES and EI, and Hypothesis 2 was supported. Besides, the R^2 value in Model 3 increased ($R^2 = 0.321$) compared with that in Model 1 ($R^2 = 0.132$), demonstrating that the mediation model has a better explained variance.

This study further employed the bias-corrected nonparametric percentile bootstrap method to test the mediating effect of PC. The indirect effect value was 0.323, with the 95% CI ranging from 0.262 to 0.389, not including 0; the direct effect value was 0.100, with the 95% CI ranging from 0.035 to 0.166, not including 0. The mediation was found to account for 76.359% of the total effect, providing further evidence of the significant partial mediating effect of PC, as shown in Table 5.

Table 4. Testing the mediation model of psychological capital

Variables	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
	β	t	β	t	β	t
UES	0.363	13.287***	0.537	21.721***	0.086	2.996**
PC					0.516	18.033***
R^2	0.132		0.288		0.321	
F	176.554***		471.811***		275.416***	

Note: ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$; UES = university entrepreneurial support, PC = psychological capital, EI = entrepreneurial intention.

Table 5. Mediation Effect with Bootstrapping

Path	Estimate	Std. Error	95% LLCI	95% ULCI
Direct effects				
UES→EI	0.100	0.033	0.035	0.166
Indirect effects				
UES→PC→EI	0.323	0.032	0.262	0.389
Total effects				
UES→EI	0.423	0.032	0.361	0.486

Note: Estimate = unstandardized coefficients; bootstrapping random sampling 5,000 times; LLCI = lower limit of confidence interval; ULCI = upper limit of confidence interval; UES = university entrepreneurial support, PC = psychological capital, EI = entrepreneurial intention.

5. Discussion

5.1 Theoretical Implications

The theoretical implications of this study are mainly reflected in the following two aspects. First, prior studies have investigated the efficacy of UES and its influence on the attitudes and actions of university students (Lu et al., 2021; Liu et al., 2022). This study provides empirical evidence to confirm the research hypothesis that the UES has a statistically significant and positive impact on EI. These findings indicate that UES plays a significant role in cultivating university students' EI, aligning with the conclusions drawn by earlier scholars (Lu et al., 2021). One possible reason for this finding may be that UES offers comprehensive assistance to university students in their entrepreneurial endeavors. Through various means, including entrepreneurship courses, specialized training programs, and guidance in entrepreneurial practice, university students' entrepreneurial potential is fostered and unleashed while enhancing their awareness and motivation toward entrepreneurship. Favorably, UES has been found to positively influence university students' EI (Saeed et al., 2015; Shi et al., 2020). This study presents novel empirical findings about the positive impact of university students' UES on their EI, offering a new perspective for further explanation of the triggers of EI among university students.

Second, this study provides further evidence to verify the research hypothesis that PC partially mediates the association between university students' perception of UES and their EI. This finding indicates that the provision of UES can potentially augment the EI of university students by enhancing their PC. The results of this study provide further evidence in line with previous empirical research indicating that UES has a significant and positive impact on the PC of university students (Cui, 2021; Hasan et al., 2019) and that PC exerts a significant positive influence on EI (Ephrem et al., 2019; Mahfud et al., 2020). The potential reasons for this finding may lie in two aspects: On one hand, once the university students' entrepreneurial skills are enhanced via UES, their confidence and hopes in entrepreneurship are increased, which in turn improves their PC; on the other hand, higher levels of self-confidence among university students when confronted with entrepreneurial difficulties and challenges are associated with increased EI (Liu et al., 2022; Syed et al., 2020). The findings of this study further provide more empirical evidence for the notion of the interplay of personal, environmental, and behavioral factors, as posited by social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1986). Specifically, university students' perception of UES (environmental factors) positively influences their EI (behavioral factors) through PC (personal factors). Hence, the findings of This research contribute to further deepening our understanding of the underlying mechanisms by which university students' perception of UES influences their EI.

5.2 Practical Implications

This study possesses several practical implications. First, university students' perception of UES exerts a significant positive impact on their EI. Hence, it is imperative for universities to enhance university students' perception of UES, which entails creating an environment where students feel adequately supported in their entrepreneurial endeavors while also guiding them to utilize effective university entrepreneurial platforms. By doing so, students may effectively identify and capitalize on entrepreneurial opportunities, ultimately bringing their innovative ideas to fruition.

Second, the impact of university students' perception of UES on EI is mediated by their PC. Hence, instructors of entrepreneurship courses prioritize the implementation of enhanced positive incentives both in the instructional setting and in practical applications to foster students' optimistic outlook, and be more active in interactions with teachers and peers. Additionally, providing timely feedback on university students' entrepreneurial ideas and behaviors, along with positive reinforcement through praise and encouragement, can effectively inspire them to overcome obstacles encountered in their entrepreneurial endeavors. By doing so, their resilience can be enhanced, subsequently bolstering their PC.

Third, university administrators can extend invitations to accomplished alumni, who have succeeded in entrepreneurship, to deliver speeches, sharing their personal experiences and insights regarding their entrepreneurial accomplishments. This initiative can evoke positive entrepreneurial sentiments among university students, fostering a sense of optimism and enthusiasm toward entrepreneurship. Consequently, it is anticipated that this exposure to successful entrepreneurial role models will enhance students' confidence and belief in their ability to succeed in entrepreneurial endeavors, ultimately contributing to the development and augmentation of their PC.

6. Limitations and Future Directions

This study provides empirical evidence about the impact of university students' perception of UES on their EI, as well as sheds light on the underlying mechanisms of this impact. However, it is essential to acknowledge certain limitations. First, this study employed a cross-sectional design for examining the influence relationship between variables. However, it is important to note that this design cannot establish causality. In order to address this limitation, future researchers are encouraged to employ longitudinal studies or quasi-experimental designs to determine causal relationships. Second, this research exclusively focused on students from three universities in Henan Province of China as the target population. This limited scope may restrict the generalizability of the study findings. Consequently, future scholars are recommended to replicate the tested model of this study in diverse countries and organizational settings to gather additional empirical support. Finally, the results of this study indicate that PC serves as a partial mediator in the association between university students' perception of UES and their EI. The finding suggests the existence of additional potential mechanisms that may impact EI. Hence, future studies can explore additional mediating variables, such as entrepreneurial attitudes (Anjum et al., 2023) and entrepreneurial self-efficacy (Maheshwari & Kha, 2022), or investigate moderating variables, such as openness to experience personality (Singh & Mehdi, 2022) and cognitive flexibility (Wang et al., 2023), as these factors may yield significant theoretical and practical implications for augmenting the entrepreneurial intentions of university students.

7. Conclusion

The findings of this study revealed a significant positive impact of university students' perception of UES on their EI. Additionally, it was observed that PC partially mediated the association between university students' perception of UES and their EI. The findings of This research possess both theoretical and practical implications. From the theoretical perspective, this study highlighted the significance of environmental and individual elements in augmenting the EI of university students. An indirect impact of university students' perception of UES (an environmental variable) on EI via the mediator of PC (an individual variable) was reported. From the practical perspective, this study identified the environmental and personal factors that influence EI, as well as their underlying mechanisms of this influence. The discoveries in this study offer a new direction for university administrators and educators to enhance university students' EI efficiently.

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Appendix

Construct	Item
Students' perception of university entrepreneurial support	1. My university offers courses on entrepreneurship.
	2. My university motivates students to start a business.
	3. My university offers project work focused on entrepreneurship.
	4. My university provides students with the financial and policies means to start a new business
Psychological capital	1. I have a lot of learning methods.
	2. I see myself as being pretty successful in my study.
	3. I can think of many ways to reach my current study goals.
	4. At this time, I am meeting the study search goals that I have set for myself.
	5. I feel confident analyzing a long-term problem to find a solution.
	6. In my future study, I am confident that I can do better.
	7. In my future study, I feel confident about helping to set targets/goals in my area of studies.
	8. I feel confident presenting help to my classmates in the future.
	9. When things are uncertain for me in my job search, I usually expect the best.
	10. I always look on the bright side of things regarding my life.
	11. I approach my life with the attitude that something positive will always turn out no matter how difficult it might be.
	12. When I have a setback in my studies, I can recover quickly from it.
	13. In the process of learning, I usually manage difficulties one way or another.
Entrepreneurial intention	14. I can get through difficult times in my study search because I have experienced difficulty before.
	1. I am ready to do anything to be an entrepreneur.
	2. My professional goal is to become an entrepreneur.
	3. I will make every effort to start and run my own firm.
	4. I am determined to create a firm in the future.
	5. I have very seriously thought of starting a firm.
6. I have the firm intention to start a firm someday.	

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