

Exploring the Impact of University Support and Theory of Planned Behavior on Entrepreneurial Intentions: A Mediated Model Analysis

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ABSTRACT

Higher education institutions aim to cultivate entrepreneurial aspirations among students. However, challenges persist in effectively fostering new entrepreneurs. This study examines the role of higher education support in influencing students' entrepreneurial intentions, framed within the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB). A quantitative survey design was employed, gathering primary data from 256 undergraduate students engaged in the MBKM entrepreneurship program across 10 universities in Surakarta. Data analysis utilized Structural Equation Modeling-Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) with SmartPLS software to test the relationships between higher education support, TPB constructs, and entrepreneurial intentions. The findings reveal that higher education support does not directly affect students' entrepreneurial intentions. However, it significantly impacts these intentions indirectly through TPB variables: attitudes towards entrepreneurship, subjective norms, and self-efficacy. These mediating variables highlight the importance of fostering positive attitudes, supportive social norms, and confidence in entrepreneurial capabilities to enhance students' entrepreneurial intentions. The results suggest that higher education institutions should focus on strengthening TPB-related factors within entrepreneurship programs to indirectly motivate students toward entrepreneurship. Collaboration between universities, government, and the business sector is essential to enhance the entrepreneurial ecosystem. Entrepreneurship programs must be continuously refined to effectively support students' entrepreneurial journeys. Universities should leverage partnerships to create an integrated support system that aligns with TPB principles, fostering a conducive environment for entrepreneurship development.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Education is crucial for enhancing an individual's skills. Higher education plays a significant role in Indonesia's progress. A country can be considered prosperous if at least 2% of its population consists of entrepreneurs. Furthermore, one indicator of a developed country is having an entrepreneur ratio of

14% of the total population (Chrysnaputra & Pangestoeti, 2021). University graduates are key in creating job opportunities through entrepreneurship, and students are expected to be more than just job seekers. Entrepreneurship guidance for students needs to be intensified as it helps foster their entrepreneurial desire (Malaikosa, Ulfatin, Degeng, & Maisyaroh, 2020).

Entrepreneurship can be compared to a machine for creating jobs; it also drives innovation and positively impacts economic development in all countries (Albra, 2016). According to the Indonesian Ministry of Cooperatives and SMEs, Indonesia's entrepreneurship index is still much lower than that of other countries, standing at 3.47%. Indonesia ranks 5th in Asia and 75th globally on the entrepreneurship index. To address this issue, it is hoped that students will contribute positively by becoming entrepreneurs (Susilawaty, 2022). Governments around the world prioritize entrepreneurship to build a strong entrepreneurial ecosystem. They implement various policies, such as providing financial support and backing entrepreneurial education. Additionally, governments continuously encourage students to start their own businesses Lu & Song, (2021). However, the current issue is that the number of university graduates who start businesses has not grown significantly, especially in developing countries like Indonesia. In 2021, 11.85% of university graduates were recorded as unemployed. In 2022, this figure was 9.39% for university graduates, which is still quite high (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2023). This statistical data shows that Indonesian students' interest in becoming entrepreneurs remains low, even though the MBKM program has been implemented. This is due to many students still not recognizing the importance of entrepreneurship, resulting in only a few being interested in joining entrepreneurship programs.

Higher education has entrepreneurial programs such as *Merdeka Belajar – Kampus Merdeka* (MBKM) program. Students who complete the MBKM program are eligible for course recognition or credit conversion. The MBKM program is designed to help students prepare for their careers and to equip Indonesia's youth to become the nation's best generation. The MBKM policy gives every student the chance to develop their skills in line with their own interests and talents. This program also aims to enable students to gain direct experience in the workforce as part of their preparation before graduation. MBKM includes eight different activity programs that students can participate in. One of the activities within this program is engaging in entrepreneurship (Kemdikbud, 2022). The government hopes that the Merdeka Belajar program will encourage students to become entrepreneurs. The MBKM entrepreneurship program follows a concept similar to the "link and match" policy, emphasizing practical field experience. Through this program, students are expected to graduate with stronger soft and hard skills, enhancing their overall competence (Kodrat, 2021). This approach also opens up opportunities for students to create their own jobs by pursuing entrepreneurship (Soelaiman et al., 2023).

The implementation of the MBKM entrepreneurship program is reflected in several initiatives, including the Program Kreativitas Mahasiswa Kewirausahaan (PKMK), Program Pembinaan Mahasiswa Wirausaha (P2MW), the MBKM Entrepreneurship Grant Scheme, and Wirausaha Merdeka (WMK) program. The learning process in the Merdeka Belajar entrepreneurship concept involves students engaging with communities that have entrepreneurial potential. The method used in MBKM learning is "learning by doing," which is known to provide optimal learning outcomes (Sintiawati, Fajarwati, Mulyanto, Muttaqien, & Suherman, 2022). The MBKM entrepreneurship program has been implemented at several public and private universities in Surakarta. This support from higher education (HES) helps to cultivate students' entrepreneurial desire (EIN). Some of these universities include Sebelas Maret University (UNS), Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta (UMS), Duta Bangsa University (UDB), Slamet Riyadi University (UNISRI), Tunas Pembangunan University (UTP), Surakarta University (UNSA), Sahid Surakarta University (USAID), Nahdlatul Ulama University of Surakarta (UNU), Setia Budi University of Surakarta (USB), and Aisyiyah University of Surakarta (AISKKA). These universities support the development of new entrepreneurs among students and have achievements in the field of entrepreneurship, and they rank among the top institutions in Surakarta according to UniRank 2024. The government provides exceptional support for the MBKM program,

including financial assistance for students interested in participating. The financial support for the MBKM entrepreneurship program is substantial, with the expectation that students will not need to worry about funding when they want to start a business.

Support for fostering entrepreneurial desire among students is evident from the various achievements they have attained. The accomplishments and support from universities in the field of entrepreneurship indicate that these institutions are continually working to create new entrepreneurs from among their students. However, a challenge for each university is to maintain students' entrepreneurial motivation until they graduate and choose a career as entrepreneurs. Another challenge is that, compared to other MBKM programs, the number of students participating in the MBKM entrepreneurship program still needs to be increased.

EIN needs to be continuously encouraged, and universities are committed to supporting their students' entrepreneurship efforts through financial assistance, guidance, and strategies aimed at fostering entrepreneurial spirit. According to Chimucheka (2013), a key driver of entrepreneurship growth in a country is the role of universities in providing entrepreneurship education. Universities continuously strive to implement teaching methodologies, business models, and practices to help students develop business ideas and attract more of them to become entrepreneurs (Deveci & Çepni, 2017).

The important role of entrepreneurship in a country's economic growth remains a debated topic. There are still questions about how higher education institutions can best contribute to EIN (Davey, Hannon, & Penaluna, 2016). Previous studies by (Shen et al., 2017; Oosterbeek et al., 2010; Uyen et al., 2022) have shown that HES have not significantly impacted students' EIN. On the other hand, other research has found a positive relationship HES and EIN (Aliedan et al., 2022; Lu & Song, 2021; Su et al., 2021; Liu et al., 2022). These conflicting findings highlight the need for further research to understand the relationship between HES and EIN. The research gap in this study highlights the limited research on TPB framework in developing countries, particularly within the context of MBKM, a national policy program in Indonesia that explicitly supports young entrepreneurs. Previous studies on entrepreneurship have mostly focused on developed or Western countries. This study fills gap by exploring factors that can influence students' entrepreneurial desire in Indonesia as a developing country. Previous research had a limited sample of research because they were conducted at only one institution, making the results possibly not widely applicable. Previous research has also provided little practical guidance or clear recommendations for collaborate with the government and the business world to create a synergy that strengthens the entrepreneurial ecosystem, therefore, this study needs to be conducted.

This study combines the theory of planned behavior (TPB) by integrating perceptions of HES into the TPB framework. Recently, the TPB has been used as a theoretical basis to explain students' entrepreneurial desire (Entrialgo & Iglesias, 2016; Liñán & Chen, 2009). This research identifies a gap in previous studies, where the role of HES as a key factor has not been widely explored in the context of EIN (Elshaer & Saad, 2022). In addition, prior studies have not specifically examined the MBKM policy aimed at fostering the development of young entrepreneurs.

According to TPB, EIN is influenced by three main factors: attitude towards entrepreneurship (ATE), subjective norms (NSN) and perceived behavioral control (PBC) (Ajzen, 1991). In this study, PBC refers to an individual's perception of their ability to perform a specific task, a concept similar to self-efficacy (SEDS) (Bandura, 1982). Both concepts are related to a person's ability to carry out tasks, which is relevant when starting a new business. SEDS is more clearly defined and more directly related to intention compared to perceived behavioral control (Armitage & Conner, 2001). Previous studies on EIN often include entrepreneur self-efficacy as a component of PBC (Liu et al., 2022). ATE is a person's belief in the behaviors or actions they take in entrepreneurial activities. NSN are related to an individual's views on what those around them think, including influential people in their lives (Liu et al., 2022). Although some studies have applied TPB to student samples Joensuu et al. (2015), few

have focused on the role of higher education within the TPB framework for students (Lortie & Castogiovanni, 2015).

The novelty of this study lies in the combination of environmental factors, such as HES, with aspects of the TPB, which are believed to better explain and predict students' desire to become an entrepreneur. No previous research has examined the impact of HES integrating aspects of TPB through the MBKM program. Previous research did not examine national policies that explicitly support the creation of young entrepreneurs, this becomes another novelty of this research. MBKM provides an opportunity to explore how support from educational institutions, driven by government policies, can be more effective in fostering entrepreneurial desire. This study was conducted in Indonesia, a developing country, which adds to the understanding and insights into the dynamics of entrepreneurship in the country. It provides a different context from previous research that may have focused more on developed and Western countries with more established entrepreneurial ecosystems. This study focuses on a diverse sample of students from several universities in Surakarta who participated in the MBKM program. The question in this research is How does the interaction between university support and TPB factors mediate the relationship with entrepreneurial desire? This question investigates whether university support mediate the effects of TPB components on students' entrepreneurial desire. Exploring this interaction can reveal complex dynamics at play and offer a deeper understanding of how institutional support can enhance or hinder entrepreneurial desire. This study aims to provide new insights by examining students from Indonesian universities, which provides a local perspective that may differ from previous research conducted in other countries. This is important for understanding how cultural and social contexts influence more comprehensive understanding of higher education support with entrepreneurial desire by integrating aspects of TPB as a theoretical framework.

2. METHODS

This study employs a quantitative approach with a survey methodology. Data were gathered via an online questionnaire using Google Forms from August to September 2024. The analysis was conducted using SEM PLS with Smart PLS software. SEM-PLS is suitable for the exploratory model in this study because it allows for path analysis, providing insights into the strength and direction of relationships between variables. This helps in understanding how each factor contributes to entrepreneurial desire. Using SEM in this research offers a robust and comprehensive methodological approach to explore factors influencing entrepreneurial desire among students, leading to more in-depth results. The research investigates the impact of HES as an exogenous-variables, ATE, NSN and SEDS as a mediating variable on EIN as an endogenous variable. Primary data were obtained from a likert scale questionnaire, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The study included 479 students from Surakarta, with a sample of 256 students selected based on slovin's formula with a 5% margin of error Wahyudin (2015), and used convenience sampling. This study employed convenience sampling due to challenges in accessing the entire population and limited resource availability. The sample consisted of students enrolled in the MBKM entrepreneurship program in 10 university Surakarta. The limitation of using convenience sampling and collecting data through Google Forms is the potential for bias in sample selection. To address this, the researcher conducted an initial identification of each research data and expanded the respondent pool by targeting specific groups. The researcher also monitored respondent profiles to better understand their characteristics and to mitigate the risk of duplicate responses.

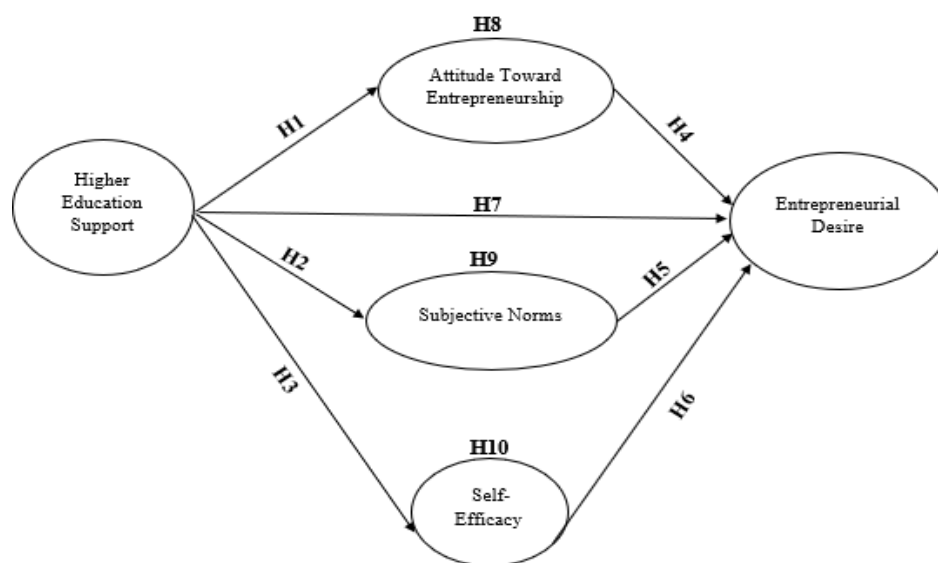


Figure 1. Theoretical Model

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Findings

The data processing in this research uses SmartPLS. The first step is to measure the initial indicators, test the dimensions of the constructs, and then perform the variance inflation factor (VIF) test. VIF is used to check if there is multicollinearity between the study variables. The study tests validity and reliability using an external model. The first step is to ensure that the measurement model is valid to check for convergent validity. The loading factor (LF) must be more than 0.7. If the value is greater than 0.7, the measurement is considered valid. If it is less than 0.7, the measurement is not considered valid.

Table 1. Convergent Validity Tests Results

HES	LF	ATE	LF	NSN	LF	SEDS	LF	EIN	LF
HES1	0.710	ATE1	0.761	NSN1	0.787	SEDS1	0.824	EIN1	0.789
HES2	0.703	ATE2	0.744	NSN2	0.851	SEDS2	0.822	EIN2	0.813
HES3	0.738	ATE3	0.722	NSN3	0.870	SEDS3	0.825	EIN3	0.766
HES4	0.729	ATE4	0.717	NSN4	0.725	SEDS4	0.815	EIN4	0.810
HES5	0.720	ATE5	0.783	NSN5	0.792	SEDS5	0.818	EIN5	0.856
HES6	0.718	ATE6	0.740	NSN6	0.756			EIN6	0.801
HES7	0.752								
HES8	0.721								
HES9	0.756								
HES10	0.741								
HES11	0.712								
HES12	0.708								

The results of the outer loading test represent that the value of all variables (HES, ATE, NSN, SEDS, EIN) is above 0.7. This means that each indicator has a loading factor greater than 0.7, as shown in Table 1. This means that the research model is valid and appropriate with the convergent validity criteria. Then, after verifying convergent validity, the next step is to conduct a discriminant validity test.

Table 2. Fornell-Larcker Criterion – Discriminant Validity

Code	ATE	EIN	HES	SEDS	NSN
ATE	0.745				
EIN	0.477	0.806			
HES	0.401	0.363	0.726		
SEDS	0.461	0.629	0.462	0.821	
NSN	0.280	0.428	0.338	0.513	0.799

To assess discriminant validity, the Fornell-Larcker criterion is applied. This criterion states that the square root of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for each variable should exceed the correlations between the variables (Henseler, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2015). When the AVE values are greater than the correlation values, it suggests that the model demonstrates good discriminant validity. Table 2. illustrates that the AVE values surpass the correlation values, this indicate that the research model fulfills the requirements for significant discriminant validity. The subsequent step in evaluating a reflective measurement model involves examining construct reliability. Reliability is confirmed when both Cronbach Alpha (CA) and Composite Reliability (CR) values exceed 0.7, and the AVE value is above 0.5 (Abdillah & Hartono, 2015)

Table 3. Reliability Tests Results

Code	CA	CR	AVE
ATE	0.841	0.882	0.555
EIN	0.892	0.918	0.650
HES	0.918	0.930	0.527
SEDS	0.879	0.912	0.674
NSN	0.888	0.913	0.638

The results in the Table 3. show that the values for Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability are above 0.7. The results also indicate that the AVE values are above 0.5, suggesting adequate discriminant validity. This means the model is highly effective.

Table 4. Results Goodness of Fit

Code	R Square	R Square Adjusted	Q Square
ATE	0.161	0.157	0.082
EIN	0.452	0.443	0.281
SEDS	0.213	0.210	0.141
NSN	0.114	0.111	0.066

R-square is a statistical metric used in regression analysis to evaluate the fit of the data to the model. R-square values are classified as follows: a value of 0.75 indicates a "strong" model, 0.50 signifies a "moderate" model, and 0.25 denotes a "weak" model (Ghozali & Latan, 2015). In Table 4. the variable ATE has an R-squared value of 0.161 and an adjusted R-squared of 0.157, which is considered weak, This indicates that 16.1% of the variation in ATE is accounted for by the HES, NSN, and SEDS, EIN variables, with the rest being affected by other factors that were not studied.

The variable SEDS shows an R-squared value of 0.213 and an adjusted R-squared of 0.210, which is also categorized as low. This means that 21.3% of the variability in SEDS can be explained by the HES, ATE, NSN and EIN variables, while the remaining portion is influenced by other factors that were not studied. The variable NSN has an R-squared value of 0.114 with an adjusted R-squared of 0.111,

also classified as low, This means that 11.4% of the variability in NSN can be explained by the HES, ATE, SEDS, EIN variables, while the remaining portion is influenced by other factors that were not studied. The variable EIN has an R-squared value of 0.452 and an adjusted R-squared of 0.443, placing it in the moderate category. This means that 45.2% of the variability in EIN can be explained by the HES, ATE, NSN, and SEDS variables, while the remaining portion is influenced by other factors that were not studied. The weak R-square category may be influenced by factors outside the scope of this research. According to Liu et al. (2022), a low R-square value can be affected by the diverse backgrounds, experiences, and motivations of individuals. This variability can make it challenging to explain entrepreneurial desire in general. Overall, the low R-square value indicates that many factors influencing entrepreneurial desire may not be included in this study's model, such as economic conditions or limited access to capital. This highlights the need for further research to understand the more complex dynamics behind entrepreneurial intentions. For Q-Square testing, a value above 0 indicates that the research model possesses good predictive relevance (Abdillah & Hartono, 2015). The Q-Square values are 0.082 for ATE, 0.281 for EIN, 0.141 for SEDS, and 0.066 for NSN, suggesting that the research model demonstrates adequate predictive capability.

Table 5. Variance Inflation Factor (VIF)

Code	ATE	EIN	HES	SEDS	NSN
ATE		1.348			
EIN					
HES	1.000	1.369		1.000	1.000
SEDS		1.710			
NSN		1.382			

Next, a VIF test was conducted with the requirement that VIF values must be below 5. If the VIF value exceeds this threshold, it indicates the presence of multicollinearity among the constructs (Sarstedt, Ringle, & Hair, 2017). According to Table 5. the VIF values for each variable are below 5, suggesting that there is no multicollinearity in this research model, and all indicators have been validated.

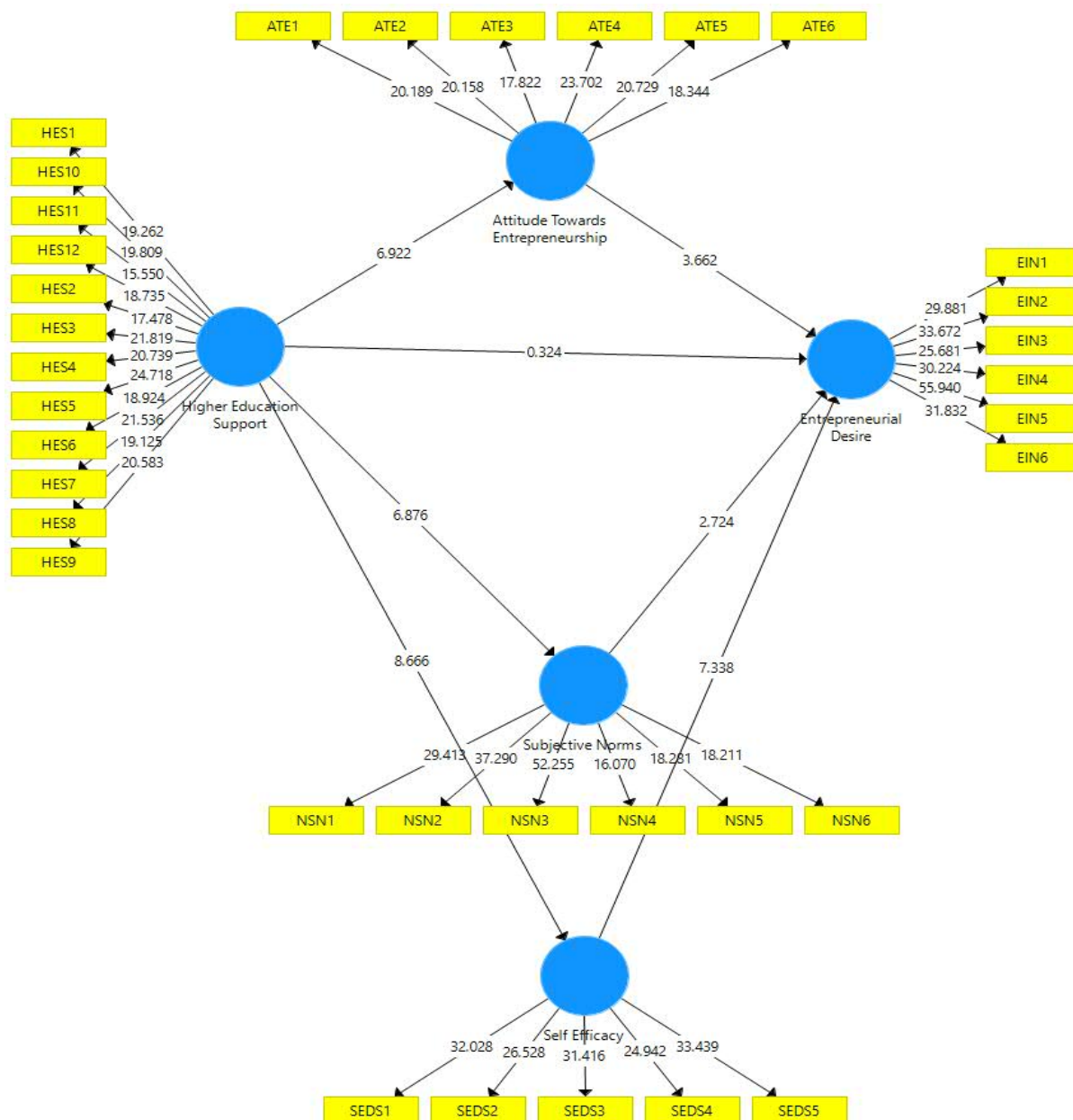


Figure 2. Evaluation of Reflective Measurement Models

This study uses path coefficients to test hypotheses for each path. The significance of the relationships between variables is assessed using the bootstrapping method. Statistical testing involves looking at the t-statistic and p-value to determine the significance of these relationships. A hypothesis is accepted if the t-statistic is greater than 1.96 and the p-value is less than 0.05, with a 5% significance level using a two-tailed bootstrapping method (Abdillah & Hartono, 2015).

Table 6. Results of the Hypothesis Tests

	Relationship	Original Sample	Sample Mean	Standard Deviation	T-Statistics	P-Values	Decision
H1	HES-> ATE	0.401	0.413	0.058	6.922	0.000	Accepted
H2	HES->NSN	0.338	0.349	0,049	6.876	0.000	Accepted
H3	HES->SEDS	0.462	0.473	0.053	8.666	0.000	Accepted
H4	ATE->EIN	0.225	0.234	0.062	3.662	0.000	Accepted
H5	NSN->EIN	0.127	0.124	0.047	2.724	0.007	Accepted
H6	SEDS->EIN	0.450	0.447	0.061	7.338	0.000	Accepted
H7	HES->EIN	0.022	0.022	0.067	0.324	0.746	Rejected
H8	HES->ATE ->EIN	0.090	0.097	0.029	3.104	0.002	Accepted
H9	HES->NSN->EIN	0.043	0.043	0.017	2.463	0.014	Accepted
H10	HES->SEDS ->EIN	0.208	0.212	0.039	5.338	0.000	Accepted

3.2 Discussion

The first hypothesis (H1) posits that higher education support (HES) directly influences students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship (ATE). The analysis reveals a p-value of 0.000, a t-statistic of 6.922, and an original sample value of 0.401, indicating a significant positive impact of HES on ATE. Previous research (Lu & Song, 2021; Aliedan et al., 2022; Liu et al., 2022; Su et al., 2021) underscores that entrepreneurship programs in higher education equip students with essential knowledge and skills to navigate the business world. These programs help cultivate a positive attitude toward entrepreneurship by instilling a sense of preparedness and resilience (Su et al., 2021).

According to Lu & Song (2021), higher education support plays a pivotal role in shaping students' entrepreneurial attitudes, a critical precursor to developing entrepreneurial intent. Support mechanisms such as mentorship and interactions with successful entrepreneurs inspire and motivate students by providing tangible examples of entrepreneurial success (Liu et al., 2022). This supportive environment fosters a positive outlook on entrepreneurial possibilities, creating an entrepreneurial culture among students (Aliedan et al., 2022).

Similarly, Yurtkoru et al. (2014) found that practical experiences offered through entrepreneurship programs—such as group projects, case studies, and business competitions—allow students to apply theoretical concepts in real-world contexts, thereby enhancing their interest in entrepreneurship. Further research by Talukder et al. (2024) demonstrates that higher education initiatives like seminars, workshops, and entrepreneurial activities raise students' awareness of entrepreneurship's significance. This heightened awareness motivates students to adopt a more positive and proactive attitude towards entrepreneurship.

The second hypothesis (H2) support from higher education (HES) has a direct effect on subjective norms (NSN). The test results show a p-value is 0.000, t-statistic is 6,876 and positive value of 0,338 in the original sample. This indicates that HES has a positive impact on NSN. This means that the higher the positive social pressure from peers, professors, and alumni, as well as the support provided by universities to students, the stronger the subjective norms among students will be. According to Talukder et al. (2024) universities that actively promote entrepreneurship through various programs and initiatives can provide behavioral models for students. When students see real examples of successful entrepreneurs from their university, it helps create subjective norms that support entrepreneurship, as they feel there is hope and possibility for success. Additionally, universities can raise students' awareness of the importance of entrepreneurship in society. This awareness can influence subjective norms, leading students to believe that entrepreneurship is a viable and respected career path, both in society and within their educational institutions. Overall, higher education support plays a crucial role in shaping students' subjective norms regarding entrepreneurship, which can affect their intentions to engage in entrepreneurial activities.

The third hypothesis (H3) posits that support from higher education (HES) directly influences students' self-efficacy (SEDS). The test results indicate a p-value of 0.000, a t-statistic of 8.666, and a positive original sample value of 0.462. Thus, it can be concluded that HES positively affects SEDS, aligning with the findings of Liu et al., (2022), who reported that higher education support enhances self-efficacy. This positive relationship is attributed to the various relevant entrepreneurship programs offered by universities, which help students develop the skills necessary for starting and managing businesses, thereby boosting their confidence in achieving success in entrepreneurship, it can be concluded that robust educational support contributes to higher self-efficacy among students, motivating them to take risks and explore entrepreneurial opportunities (Al Saiqal, Ryan, & Parcoero, 2018).

The fourth hypothesis (H4) suggests that attitude towards entrepreneurship (ATE) directly affects students' entrepreneurial desire (EIN). The results of the test reveal a p-value of 0.000, a t-statistic of 3.662, and a positive original sample value of 0.225. This finding indicates that ATE positively impacts EIN. This is consistent with the research by Lu & Song (2021), who contend that a positive entrepreneurial attitude, characterized by optimism and a willingness to take risks, can enhance students' confidence in starting and managing businesses, thereby increasing their intention to pursue entrepreneurship. Students who possess a strong attitude towards entrepreneurship are more inclined to perceive it as a rewarding opportunity rather than a daunting risk, motivating them to consider careers in this field. Therefore, a positive attitude towards entrepreneurship serves as a crucial factor influencing students' intentions to engage in entrepreneurial activities (Lu & Song, 2021). Additionally Anjum et al., (2021) found a positive correlation between ATE and EIN. This suggests that individuals with a favorable attitude toward entrepreneurship often have greater confidence in their potential for success in business.

The fifth hypothesis (H5) states that subjective norms (NSN) has a direct effect on students' entrepreneurial desire (EIN). The test results show a p-value is 0,007, t-statistic is 2,724 and a positive value of 0,127 in the original sample. The research findings indicate that NSN influence EIN. This is supported by a study conducted by Bayona-Oré, (2023), which found that students who feel supported by those around them, such as family, friends, and mentors, tend to be more motivated to pursue EIN. This support can provide the emotional and practical boost needed to start a business. NSN also include perceived expectations from others. If students believe that those close to them expect them to become entrepreneurs, they may feel driven to meet those expectations, which in turn increases their EIN. Overall, NSN act as a strong motivator for individuals to develop EIN by creating a supportive environment that encourages them to take steps toward entrepreneurship (Tahir & Kutpudeen, 2023).

The sixth hypothesis (H6) states that self-efficacy (SEDS) has a direct effect on students' entrepreneurial desire (EIN) 0.000, t-statistic is 7,338 and a positive value of 0,450 in the original sample. This shows that SEDS has a positive influence on EIN. These findings are consistent with research by Maheshwari & Kha (2022), which shows that students with high self-efficacy generally have greater confidence when facing risks and challenges in business. When students have high SEDS, they believe they can overcome obstacles and find solutions, which strengthens their intention to become entrepreneurs. High SEDS builds motivation and resilience in students, helping them persist through entrepreneurial challenges. If students are confident in their own abilities, they are more likely to work hard and not give up easily when facing difficulties in entrepreneurship. SEDS plays a crucial role in influencing students' intentions to engage in entrepreneurial activities, as it provides confidence and motivation, contributing to their resilience in handling entrepreneurial challenges (Wach & Wojciechowski, 2016; Liu et al., 2022).

The seventh hypothesis (H7) states that HES has a direct effect on EIN. The test results show p-value is 0,746, t-statistic is 0,324, and a value of 0,022 in the original sample. Therefore, it can be concluded that HES does not have a direct impact on EIN. The eighth hypothesis (H8) suggests that HES indirectly affects EIN through ATE. The test results show that the p-value is 0.002, the t-statistic is 3,104, and the value of original sample is 0,090. This shows that HES affects EIN through ATE as a

mediator. The ninth hypothesis (H9) states that HES has an indirect effect on students' EIN through NSN. The test results show a p-value of 0.014, t-statistic is 2.463 and a positive value of 0.043 in the original sample. This shows that HES affects EIN through NSN as a mediator. The tenth hypothesis (H10) states that HES has an indirect effect on EIN through SEDS. The test results show p-value is 0.000, t-statistic is 5.338 and a value of 0.208 in the original sample. This suggests that HES influences EIN, with SEDS as a mediator.

Hypothesis seventh (H7) contradicts previous research by Aliedan et al. (2022), because this research found that HES does not directly affect EIN, but HES has positively influences EIN through three mediators: ATE, NSN and SEDS. This suggests that HES is more effective when considered as a factor that impacts EIN through these mediators rather than having a direct effect. These findings support the Theory of Planned Behavior as an effective tool for explaining and predicting entrepreneurial desire or entrepreneurial intention, in line with Liu et al., (2022) who emphasize the importance of HES in boosting students' entrepreneurial intentions. Higher education support can include educational support, concept development, and business development assistance, which provides access to evaluate and explore business ideas. Students who receive higher education support tend to have a more positive attitude towards entrepreneurship, positive subjective norms and higher self-efficacy, which in turn increases their intention to become entrepreneurs. Consistent with Maheshwari & Kha, (2022) HES does not have a direct effect on EIN. Instead, it influences these intentions indirectly through four variables in the Theory of Planned Behavior: ATE, NSN, PBC and SEDS. According to Maheshwari & Kha, (2022), while educational support does not directly impact entrepreneurial intentions, it plays a crucial role in shaping students' ATE, NSN and SEDS, ultimately enhancing their intention to become an entrepreneurs, therefore (H8), (H9), (H10) is supported.

The mediating relationship identified in this study aligns with findings by Yurtkoru et al. (2014), who highlighted the pivotal role of higher education support (HES). Programs offering guidance, training, and resources empower students to build confidence in launching their businesses. This self-confidence enhances their self-efficacy—the belief in their ability to take entrepreneurial actions. A supportive and conducive environment further helps students develop a positive attitude towards entrepreneurship (ATE). When students perceive strong institutional support, they are more likely to cultivate a positive ATE, which subsequently influences their motivation and entrepreneurial intentions. Additionally, this environment fosters positive subjective norms (NSN), which strengthen students' confidence to pursue entrepreneurial goals (Contreras et al., 2022; Mohammed, Fethi, & Djaoued, 2017).

The indirect impact of HES on entrepreneurial intentions (EIN) is particularly evident in Indonesia, where limited access to capital remains a significant challenge for young entrepreneurs. Financial institutions often require collateral for loans, which many students lack. While university programs enhance technical skills and entrepreneurial knowledge, motivation to start a business frequently arises only when students feel financially secure, often after gaining work experience or saving over time. This underscores the indirect influence of HES on EIN.

To address these challenges, universities should design entrepreneurship programs that build skills and confidence through business simulations, pitching competitions, and mentorship opportunities. These resources can help students navigate financial obstacles, thereby indirectly increasing their entrepreneurial intentions. By equipping students with the tools to overcome funding challenges, universities can inspire greater confidence and foster a stronger entrepreneurial mindset.

In developing countries like Indonesia, where access to capital is limited, HES can indirectly affect EIN. Students interested in entrepreneurship often face significant challenges in securing funding to start their businesses. In this context, even though universities provide support through training, mentoring, and entrepreneurial education, students' motivation to actually launch a business remains limited if they feel financially unprepared. Therefore, university support may have a greater influence on the mediating factors discussed in the research. This indirect effect helps students gradually prepare for business challenges, but their intention to start a business may only fully develop when they see

more realistic funding opportunities or have their own savings. Thus, university support is more effective as a preparatory step rather than a direct encouragement to start a business, as financial constraints continue to be a primary obstacle. Another factor that influences the indirect relationship between HES and EIN is the highly competitive environment. This environment may make students feel that the risk of starting a business is too high, even if they receive support from the university. In this case, university support might not be enough to overcome their fear of failure or the uncertainty involved.

This study centers on MBKM students, distinguishing it from earlier research. The MBKM entrepreneurship program is a distinctive new initiative in Indonesia, unlike traditional entrepreneurship education programs found in universities. MBKM offers learning experiences beyond the classroom, such as practical fieldwork and partnerships with industry. While prior studies may have focused on theoretical or curricular aspects of university support, MBKM provides a practical platform for students to engage with real entrepreneurial challenges. This direct involvement may lead to a stronger or different impact on entrepreneurial desire compared to mere training or classroom education. MBKM prioritizes experiential learning, and this offers valuable insights into how such programs can affect EIN. The findings of this study reinforce the idea that the TPB can explain students' entrepreneurial desire. TPB is very effective in analyzing and predicting the factors that influence these intentions, making it a valuable tool in research. Merdeka Belajar – Kampus Merdeka (MBKM) policy can be an effective tool for fostering entrepreneurial desire by integrating HES and the three factors of TPB. This research indicates that MBKM programs create a supportive environment that motivates students to pursue entrepreneurial careers. Through practical experience, community support, and skill development, students will gain not only knowledge but also the confidence and motivation needed to develop their entrepreneurial desire. If applied consistently, this policy can have a positive impact on the growth of entrepreneurship among young people. It is essential for educational institutions to continuously evaluate and uphold this policy to meet the needs and expectations of the younger generation in the entrepreneurial world.

Entrepreneurship programs like MBKM and similar initiatives by universities can inspire students to become entrepreneurs. To achieve this, universities should collaborate with key stakeholders, including the government and industry. Such partnerships create a strong entrepreneurial ecosystem by combining academic knowledge with practical experience and business support.

One effective strategy is offering sustainable grants and funding programs, such as soft loans, to help students launch their businesses. These financial resources encourage innovation and support startups during their early stages. Universities can also establish entrepreneurship centers, like the one at the University of Indonesia, which provides training, incubation programs, and access to industry networks. This collaboration has successfully launched several startups and expanded access to global opportunities through international partnerships.

The government can further support these efforts by enhancing access to global markets and fostering international collaborations. Additionally, Indonesia can draw inspiration from successful models like Silicon Valley, which integrates education, technology, and venture capital to create a thriving entrepreneurial ecosystem. Silicon Valley demonstrates how collaboration between academia, industry, and investors drives innovation and economic growth.

By adopting such models and tailoring them to local needs, Indonesia can strengthen its entrepreneurial ecosystem, promote innovation, and achieve sustainable economic development.

4. CONCLUSION

The findings of this study indicate that support from higher education significantly influences students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship, subjective norms, and self-efficacy. Furthermore, three factors from TPB have a direct effect on students' entrepreneurial desire. The mediation model is validated, revealing that the connection between higher education support and entrepreneurial desire

is shaped by elements of the theory of planned behavior, particularly attitudes towards entrepreneurship, subjective norms, and self-efficacy.

Universities should continue collaborating with the government and the business sector to create a synergy that strengthens the entrepreneurial ecosystem. This can be achieved through sustained government grants for student entrepreneurship. Additionally, universities can establish entrepreneurship centers that offer training and incubation for students aiming to start businesses. These programs would also partner with various companies to provide students with industry network access. This research provides recommendations for the development of entrepreneurship programs from higher education institution so that these programs can be more effective and continuously motivate students to become entrepreneurs. Based on the findings of this study it is recommended that future research consider increasing the number of independent variables that impact entrepreneurial intention, so that the results can be more comprehensive and beneficial. It is also suggested that future research increase the sample size and expand the distribution of the questionnaire both at the provincial level and nationally in other regions to obtain new and better insights regarding the relationship between support from higher education and students' entrepreneurial desire. This research only focuses on quantitative methods to understand the factors influencing entrepreneurial intentions. However, future research could use a mixed-method approach by incorporating qualitative research, such as conducting interviews or focus group discussion with students to gain deeper insights into their experiences.

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