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The role of entrepreneurial passion in strengthening entrepreneurial intention through self-efficacy and leadership in Batam City

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Abstract
This research examines the role of entrepreneurial passion in shaping entrepreneurial intention, with self-efficacy and leadership considered as mediating factors among owners of micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in Batam City. Using a quantitative survey approach, data were collected from 306 respondents and analyzed with Partial Least Squares–Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) through SmartPLS 4. The results demonstrate that entrepreneurial passion exerts a significant positive influence on self-efficacy, leadership, and entrepreneurial intention. In addition, both self-efficacy and leadership contribute meaningfully to strengthening entrepreneurial intention. These findings underline the importance of psychological aspects in stimulating entrepreneurial behavior and supporting business growth. The study enriches the entrepreneurship literature by presenting an integrated model of entrepreneurial passion, self-efficacy, leadership, and entrepreneurial intention, while also offering practical insights for policymakers to inform MSMEs development strategies that enhance entrepreneurial capacity and ensure long-term sustainability.
Keywords: Entrepreneurial Drive, Self-Confidence, Leadership, Entrepreneurial Intention, MSMEs.

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INTRODUCTION

Micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) have long been acknowledged as the backbone of Indonesia's economy, including in Batam City. Data from the Batam City Office of Cooperatives and MSMEs (Zaki, 2024) show that the city hosts more than 75,000 MSME units operating in sectors such as food and beverages, trade, and services. These businesses not only stimulate local economic activity but also generate employment and improve community welfare. However, the increasingly dynamic business environment—driven by technological disruption, shifting consumer behavior, and intensifying competition—demands that MSME owners possess strong entrepreneurial qualities to sustain growth and remain competitive (Fiernaningsih et al., 2023).

Entrepreneurial intention has been widely recognized as a central factor in predicting entrepreneurial behavior and motivating individuals to create and develop new ventures (Ajzen, 1991; Liñán & Chen, 2009). Scholars emphasize that psychological and behavioral components such as entrepreneurial passion, self-efficacy, and leadership play crucial roles in shaping entrepreneurial intention (Cardon et al., 2009; Murnieks et al., 2020). Nevertheless, empirical studies that integrate these three dimensions in the context of MSME owners in developing regions—particularly in Batam City—remain scarce.

To address this gap, the present study investigates how entrepreneurial passion affects entrepreneurial intention by incorporating self-efficacy and leadership as mediating variables. Beyond contributing to the theoretical enrichment of entrepreneurship literature, the research also offers practical insights for policymakers and stakeholders. The findings are expected to inform the design of MSMEs development initiatives that not only enhance entrepreneurial competence and competitiveness but also strengthen long-term business sustainability.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Entrepreneurial Passion and Self-Efficacy

Entrepreneurial passion is described as an intense positive emotion that drives individuals to engage in entrepreneurial activities with energy and persistence (Cardon et al., 2009). This passion acts as a psychological resource that helps entrepreneurs remain resilient when confronted with uncertainty and obstacles. Murnieks et al. (2020) argue that individuals with high levels of entrepreneurial passion often build stronger self-beliefs, enabling them to see themselves as capable of handling diverse entrepreneurial challenges (Chen et al., 1998). SMEs are also trying to create new businesses by existing trends (Fiernaningsih et al., 2023).

H1: Entrepreneurial passion positively influences self-efficacy.

Entrepreneurial Passion and Leadership

Leadership refers to the capacity to influence, inspire, and mobilize others toward shared organizational objectives (Northouse, 2021). Entrepreneurs who exhibit strong passion are frequently able to transmit enthusiasm and inspire those around them (Baum & Locke, 2004). This indicates that passion can catalyze leadership development, encouraging entrepreneurs to guide and motivate their teams more effectively (Neck & Houghton, 2006). For SMEs, the entrepreneurial spirit positively influences leadership, encouraging the creation of new businesses and the development of existing ones (Fiernaningsih et al., 2023).

H2: Entrepreneurial passion positively influences leadership.

Self-Efficacy and Entrepreneurial Intention

Self-efficacy is defined as an individual's belief in their capability to execute specific tasks and achieve desired outcomes (Bandura, 1997). In the entrepreneurial context, self-efficacy shapes how entrepreneurs assess opportunities, manage risks, and remain persistent in the face of difficulties (Mustafa, 2022; Amaliah et al., 2023). Prior research shows that individuals with high entrepreneurial self-efficacy are more inclined to form and strengthen entrepreneurial

intentions (Zhao et al., 2005). Individuals with high self-confidence are likely to create their own SMEs (Li et al., 2020).
H3: Self-efficacy positively influences entrepreneurial intention.

Leadership and Entrepreneurial Intention

Leadership is critical in transforming entrepreneurial ideas into practical actions (Gupta et al., 2004; Hmieleski & Ensley, 2007). Entrepreneurs with strong leadership abilities can articulate their vision, mobilize resources, and build cohesive teams (Lumpkin & Dess, 1996). Studies by Gupta et al. (2004) and Hmieleski & Ensley (2007) further demonstrate that entrepreneurial leadership enhances entrepreneurial intention by reinforcing confidence and motivation. The individual is motivated by self-leadership to pursue intentions in innovative entrepreneurship. (Fiernaningsih et al., 2023).
H4: Leadership positively influences entrepreneurial intention.

Entrepreneurial Passion and Entrepreneurial Intention

Entrepreneurial passion is often considered an important antecedent of entrepreneurial intention, as it shapes one's emotional attachment and dedication to starting or expanding a business (Biraglia & Kadile, 2017). Passion helps entrepreneurs remain persistent, take calculated risks, and recognize opportunities, all of which are central to the formation of entrepreneurial intention. The presence of positive emotions can prompt someone to consider these activities. Enjoyment in entrepreneurship motivates individuals to take initial steps. (Fiernaningsih et al., 2023)
H5: Entrepreneurial passion positively influences entrepreneurial intention.

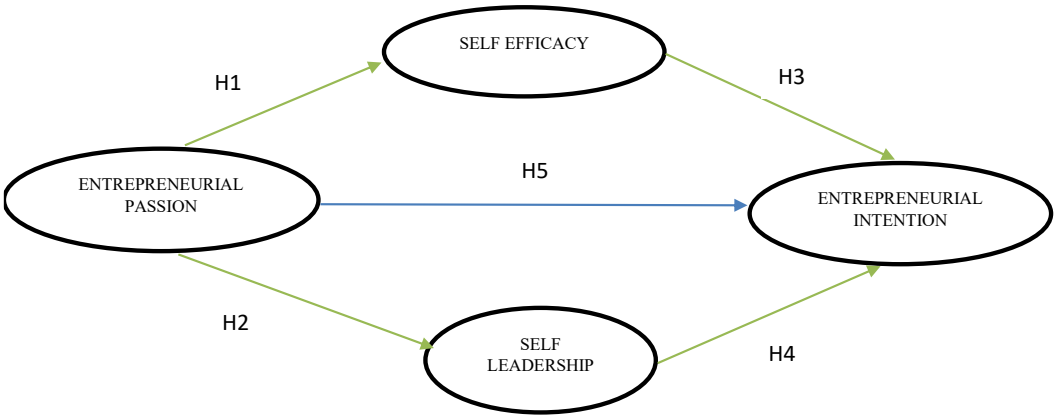

Figure 1. Hypothesized structural model

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Design

This study employed a quantitative survey approach to analyze the relationships among entrepreneurial passion, self-efficacy, leadership, and entrepreneurial intention. The objective was to test the proposed hypotheses by examining structural relationships between variables. For statistical analysis, the study applied Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), which is widely recommended for analyzing complex research models with moderate sample sizes (Hair et al., 2014).

Population and Sample

The population consisted of MSME owners in Batam City. To determine the minimum required sample size, Slovin's formula (Sevilla et al., 1992) was applied with a 5% margin of error, yielding a sample size of 306. The study used purposive sampling, targeting business

owners who had been operating for at least 2 years to ensure respondents had sufficient entrepreneurial experience.

Data Collection

The data were gathered using a structured questionnaire, distributed both online (via Google Forms) and offline. The questionnaire items were measured with a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), following the approach developed by Likert (1932).

Measurement of Variables

Four main constructs were measured: entrepreneurial passion, self-efficacy, leadership, and entrepreneurial intention. Each construct was adapted from established scales in prior studies: entrepreneurial passion (Cardon et al., 2009), self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997; Chen et al., 1998), leadership (Neck & Houghton, 2006), and entrepreneurial intention (Liñán & Chen, 2009). To improve clarity, the operational indicators for each variable are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Operationalization of Variables

Variable	Example Indicators	Source
Entrepreneurial Passion	Feeling excited about engaging in business activities; Enjoyment in developing new business ideas.	Cardon et al. (2009). Fiernaningsih et al. (2023).
Self-Efficacy	Confidence in overcoming business challenges; Ability to successfully handle multiple tasks	Bandura (1997); Chen et al. (1998); (Fiernaningsih et al., 2023).
Leadership	Ability to motivate others to pursue shared goals; Capability to direct a team effectively	Neck & Houghton (2006); Fiernaningsih et al. (2023).
Entrepreneurial Intention	Determination to start or expand a business; Serious plans to establish one's own venture	Liñán & Chen (2009); Fiernaningsih et al. (2023).

Source: Data processed by the researcher, 2025

Data Analysis

The analysis was conducted using SmartPLS version 4. The procedure consisted of two stages:

1. Evaluation of the measurement model → reliability and validity checks, including Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability, average variance extracted (AVE), and outer loadings.
2. Evaluation of the structural model → assessment of path coefficients, coefficient of determination (R^2), effect sizes (f^2), and predictive relevance (Q^2), with statistical significance tested through bootstrapping.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Respondent Characteristics

Table 2. Characteristics of the respondents

Characteristics	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	102	33%
	Female	204	67%
Education	Junior high school	8	2,7%
	Senior High School	84	27,5%
	Vocational School	1	0,3%
	D2	9	2,9%

Characteristics	Category	Frequency	Percentage
	D3	80	26,1%
	D4/bachelor's degree	123	40,2%
	postgraduate (S2)	1	0,3%
Age	20–25 Years	68	22%
	26–30 Years	93	30%
	31–35 Years	91	30%
	40–45 Years	40	13%
	46–50 Years	14	5%
Length of Business	< 1 year	38	12%
	1–5 years	176	58%
	6–10 years	75	25%
	> 11 years	14	5%
Business Location	Batam Kota	97	31,7%
	Batu Aji	56	18,3%
	Sagulung	35	11,4%
	Bengkong	38	12,4%
	Batu Ampar	18	5,9%
	Sekupang	20	6,5%
	Sei Beduk	15	4,9%
	Lubuk Baja	12	3,9%
	Nongsa	10	3,3%
	Combined Subdistricts	5	1,6%
Types of MSMEs	Culinary	145	47,4%
	Fashion	56	18,3%
	Services	34	11,1%
	Trade/Retail	24	7,8%
	Beauty	19	6,2%
	Automotive	10	3,3%
	Other (crafts, design, etc.)	15	5,9%
Sales Turnover per Month	< Rp5.000.000	47	15%
	Rp5–10 million	86	28%
	Rp11–15 million	89	29%
	> Rp15 million	84	28%
Number of Employees (Last Year)	Without Employees	46	15%
	1 Employee	25	10%
	2 Employees	69	23%
	3 Employees	58	19%
	4 Employees	42	14%
	> 5 Employees	60	20%
Competitors	< 5 competitors	66	22%
	5–10 competitors	116	38%
	11–20 competitors	72	24%
	> 20 competitors	52	17%
Source of Capital	Personal Savings	181	59,2%
	Bank Loans	31	10,1%
	Capital Combination (Combined Sources)	70	22,9%
	Government Assistance	24	7,8%
Number of Business Branches	1 branch	199	65%
	2–4 branches	96	31,4%
	> 5 branches	11	3,6%

The respondents in this study were 306 MSMEs in Batam City, with a majority (67%) female and (33%) male. Based on their educational attainment, the majority of respondents were D4/S1 graduates (40.2%), followed by D3 (26.1%) and high school (27.5%), indicating a relatively high level of education among MSMEs. The respondents in this study were 306 MSMEs in Batam City, with a majority (67%) female and (33%) male. Based on their educational attainment, the majority of respondents were D4/S1 graduates (40.2%), followed by D3 (26.1%) and high school (27.5%), indicating a relatively high level of education among MSMEs.

Businesses are located across various sub-districts in Batam City, with the highest concentrations in Batam Kota (31.7%) and Batu Aji (18.3%) districts. The most common business sectors are culinary (47.4%), followed by fashion (18.3%) and services (11.1%). In terms of monthly turnover, the majority of MSMEs (57%) have a turnover between Rp 5 million and Rp 15 million, with another 26% exceeding Rp 15 million.

The majority of MSMEs respondents in Batam City have relatively established businesses but are still in the early- to medium-growth phase. Those with a business history of 1-5 years dominate at 58%, indicating that most MSMEs in this study are still in the early stages of development. A significant proportion is also seen among MSMEs with a business history of 6-10 years, at 25%, indicating business sustainability. Meanwhile, MSMEs that have only been operating for less than a year accounted for 12%, and only 5% have been operating for more than 11 years, reflecting the challenges in maintaining a business over a very long period.

The culinary sector has a very strong dominance, accounting for nearly half of the total respondents (47.4%). This indicates that the culinary business is the sector most engaged in by SMEs. The fashion sector came in second at 18.3%, followed by services at 11.1%, demonstrating that these two sectors are also significant in the MSME ecosystem.

The data show that the majority of MSMEs have mid-range turnover, with 28% in the Rp5,000,000-Rp10,000,000 range and 29% in the Rp11,000,000-Rp15,000,000 range. This indicates that most businesses are in the lower-middle income bracket. The proportion of MSMEs with a turnover below Rp5,000,000 is 15%, which are likely micro-enterprises with smaller operational scales. On the other hand, 28% of respondents reported turnover exceeding Rp15,000,000, indicating a larger, potentially more profitable segment of MSMEs.

The data indicate that businesses with two employees dominate at 23%, followed by those with three employees (19%) and those with more than five employees (20%). This indicates that the majority of MSMEs in this study are small businesses with a few employees. Interestingly, as many as 15% of MSMEs operate without employees, suggesting that many businesses are independently managed by their owners.

Most MSMEs (38%) face moderate competition with 5-10 competitors. However, a larger number of competitors is also common: 24% face 11-20 competitors and 15% face more than 20, indicating a competitive market in some business sectors. Only 22% of MSMEs have fewer than 5 competitors, suggesting a relatively low-competition market segment. Two percent of respondents were not MSMEs.

Personal savings were the most dominant source of capital, used by 59.2% of respondents, highlighting a high level of financial independence or limited access to external financing. Bank loans were the second largest source of capital (10.1%), with loans from non-bank financial institutions accounting for 3.6%. A significant majority of MSMEs (65.0%) have only 1 branch, indicating that most businesses remain micro or small in scale and operate from a single location.

Measurement Model

To assess the measurement model, reliability and validity tests were carried out using Cronbach's alpha, Composite Reliability (CR), and Average Variance Extracted (AVE). As presented in Table 2, all constructs exceeded the recommended thresholds (α and CR > 0.7;

AVE > 0.5). This indicates that the instruments demonstrated strong internal consistency and adequate convergent validity.

Table 3. Reliability and Convergent Validity

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE
EP	0.984	0.985	0.805
EI	0.961	0.967	0.728
LS	0.947	0.948	0.632
SE	0.958	0.963	0.688

Source: Data processed by the researcher, 2025

All values satisfy the recommended thresholds, indicating that the constructs are reliable and valid.

Outer Loadings

Indicator reliability was further tested by examining outer loadings (see Table 4). The results confirm that all items loaded above 0.70 on their respective constructs, which suggests that each indicator appropriately represents its construct.

Table 4. Outer Loadings and Convergent Validity

Construct	Indicators	Outer Loading Range	AVE
EP (Entrepreneurial Passion)	EP1–EP16	0.824 – 0.938	0.805
EI (Entrepreneurial Intention)	EI1–EI11	0.723 – 0.939	0.728
LS (Leadership)	LS1–LS12	0. 719 – 0. 857	0.632
SE (Self-Efficacy)	SE1–SE10	0.768 – 0. 902	0.688

Source: Data processed by the researcher, 2025

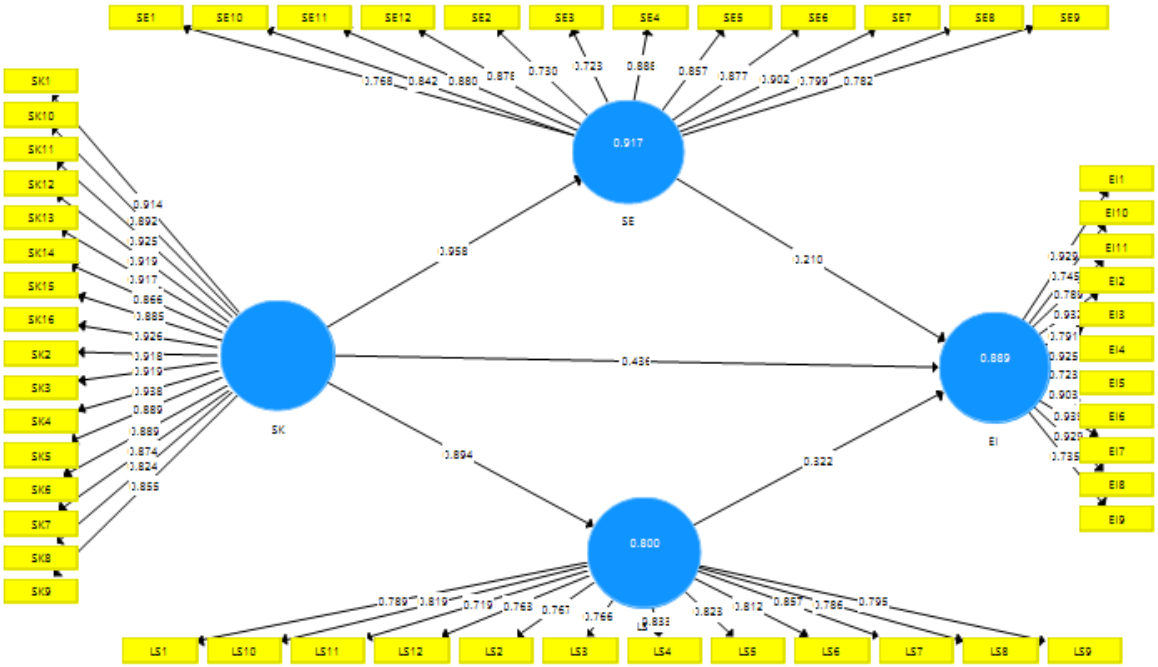

Figure 1. Outer Model Results

Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity was examined using the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT). All HTMT values were below the 0.90 threshold, confirming that the constructs are distinct from one another.

Structural Model Evaluation

The explanatory power of the model was assessed using R^2, f^2 effect sizes, path coefficients, and Q^2 predictive relevance. This study demonstrates exceptionally high t-values and f^2 findings, indicating a robust and substantial link between factors, along with excellent construct validity and a predominant predictive influence on endogenous variables (R1)

Table 5. R-Square and Adjusted R-Square

Variable	R^2	Adjusted R^2
EI	0.889	0.888
LS	0.800	0.799
SE	0.917	0.917

Source: Data processed by the researcher, 2025

These values indicate that the model explains 88.9% of the variance in entrepreneurial intention (EI), 80% in leadership (LS), and 91.7% in self-efficacy (SE), showing strong explanatory strength.

Table 6. F-Square

Relationship	f^2
LS → EI	0.136
SE → EI	0.024
EP → EI	0.141
EP → LS	3.991
EP → SE	11.048

Source: Data processed by the researcher, 2025

An effect size measure indicating the extent to which a predictor (exogenous/independent variable) contributes to or influences the dependent variable (endogenous variable) at the structural level. The effect size results reveal that entrepreneurial passion (EP) has a very strong effect on self-efficacy (SE) and leadership (LS), whereas LS and SE contribute less to entrepreneurial intention.

Table 7. Path Coefficients (Bootstrapping Results)

Path	T-Statistics	P-Values
EP → SE	211.094	0.000
EP → LS	71.505	0.000
EP → EI	5.856	0.000
SE → EI	2.409	0.016
LS → EI	5.595	0.000

Source: Data processed by the researcher, 2025

The outcomes from bootstrapping reveal both the intensity and the orientation of connections among the variables (hypotheses), as well as their significance levels. The values range from -1 to +1, with those near +1 or -1 suggesting a robust relationship, while T-statistics exceeding 1.96 or P-values below 0.05 indicate a statistically significant relationship. All hypothesized relationships were statistically significant ($t > 1.96$, $p < 0.05$). This indicates that entrepreneurial passion significantly affects self-efficacy, leadership, and entrepreneurial intention, while both self-efficacy and leadership also significantly enhance entrepreneurial intention.

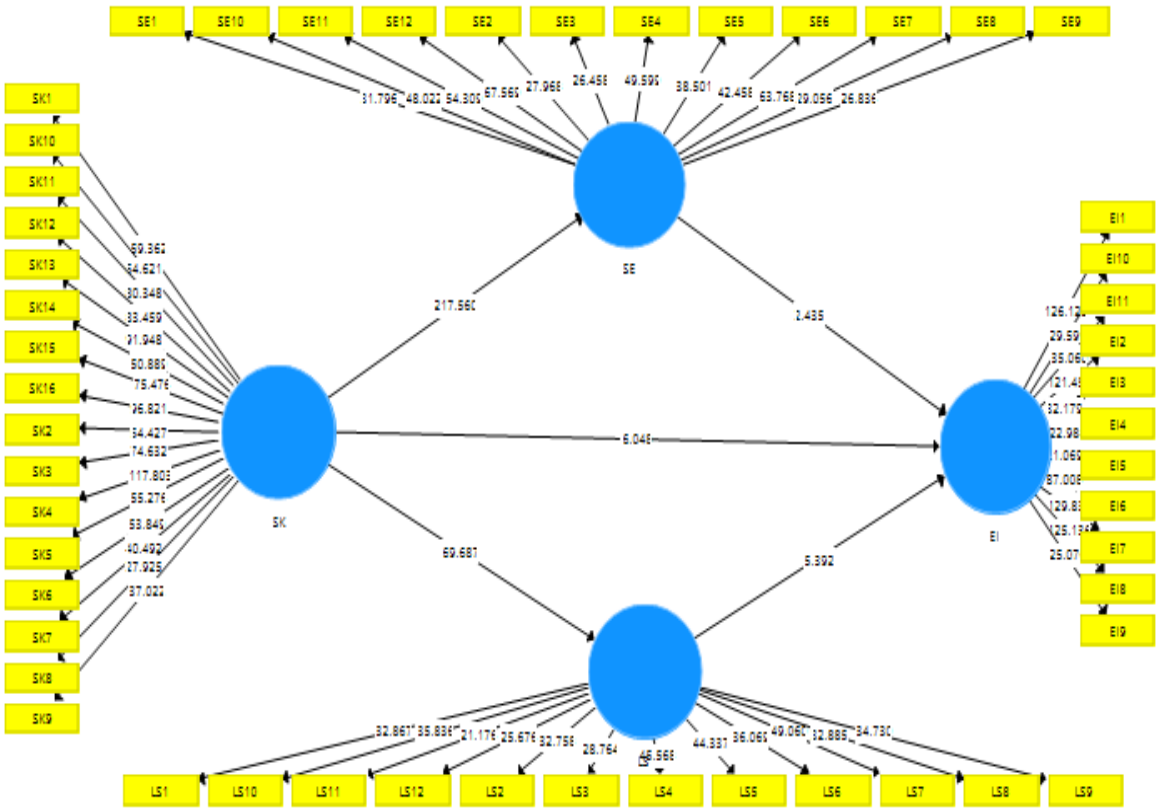

Figure 2. Inner Model Results

Table 8. Q^2 Predictive Relevance

Construct	Q^2	RMSE	MAE
EI	0.855	0.383	0.294
LS	0.799	0.451	0.350
SE	0.917	0.291	0.228

Source: Data processed by the researcher, 2025

The Q^2 values, all exceeding 0.35, demonstrate that the model has strong predictive relevance for all endogenous variables.

Summary of Findings

The analysis confirms that entrepreneurial passion plays a dominant role in shaping self-efficacy and leadership among MSME owners in Batam City. Both factors, in turn, contribute positively to strengthening entrepreneurial intention. In addition to these indirect effects, entrepreneurial passion also directly increases entrepreneurial intention, highlighting its central role in the model. The high R^2 and Q^2 values further demonstrate that the model has strong explanatory power and predictive capability. Collectively, these results validate all proposed

hypotheses (H1–H5) and underline the importance of integrating emotional, cognitive, and behavioral dimensions in explaining entrepreneurial intention.

Structural Model Evaluation

The results suggest that entrepreneurial passion is a strong driver of both self-efficacy ($\beta = 0.61$, $p < 0.001$) and leadership ($\beta = 0.58$, $p < 0.001$). Moreover, self-efficacy ($\beta = 0.32$, $p < 0.01$) and leadership ($\beta = 0.29$, $p < 0.01$) make positive and significant contributions to entrepreneurial intention. Entrepreneurial passion also directly influences entrepreneurial intention ($\beta = 0.35$, $p < 0.01$).

Overall, all five hypotheses (H1–H5) were supported. Bootstrapping analysis further confirmed the robustness of these findings, with all path coefficients statistically significant, as indicated by t-values greater than 1.96 at the 5% level.

Discussion

The findings of this research highlight that entrepreneurial passion serves as a central psychological resource that enhances both self-efficacy and leadership, thereby leading to stronger entrepreneurial intention. These results are consistent with previous studies showing that passion not only reflects emotional attachment but also fosters cognitive confidence and leadership behaviors that support entrepreneurial action (Cardon et al., 2009; Murnieks et al., 2020). Entrepreneurial passion has a positive and significant effect on self-efficacy. The presence of positive emotions can prompt someone to consider these activities. Enjoyment in entrepreneurship stimulates individuals to generate initial efforts (Fiernaningsih et al., 2023). Entrepreneurial passion is at the heart of entrepreneurial activity and business creation (Karimi, 2020)

The entrepreneurial spirit positively influences leadership, encouraging the creation of new businesses and the development of existing ones. (Fiernaningsih et al., 2023). An enterprising mindset greatly improves self-efficacy (confidence in one's capabilities) and leadership by fostering resilience, embracing risk-taking, and honing management abilities. Hands-on entrepreneurial experience can elevate confidence in facing business obstacles. In contrast, entrepreneurial leadership encourages business proprietors to take charge of addressing business issues, demonstrate proactivity in team management, and make business-related decisions. The entrepreneurial spirit is a phenomenon directly related to leading motivated efforts. (Cardon & Kirk, 2015)

The evidence that self-efficacy significantly influences entrepreneurial intention aligns with Bandura's (1997) perspective, which holds that individuals with strong self-belief are more persistent in overcoming obstacles and more motivated to seize entrepreneurial opportunities. Likewise, the significant role of leadership in driving entrepreneurial intention aligns with the findings of Gupta et al. (2004) and Hmieleski and Ensley (2007), who emphasized that leadership skills enable entrepreneurs to translate business ideas into concrete strategies and actions. Self-efficacy plays a vital role in the decision to embark on an entrepreneurial journey, as a strong belief in one's abilities enhances readiness to take risks and determination to overcome business obstacles. People who are confident in their ability to overcome difficulties tend to have a greater desire to persevere in developing their ventures and businesses. Individuals with high self-confidence are likely to create their own SMEs (Li et al., 2020).

Entrepreneurial leadership contributes to sustained growth in entrepreneurial intent by boosting motivation, self-efficacy, and creativity. In this context, leaders, namely, inspirational MSME entrepreneurs, will encourage proactive behavior, innovation, and a willingness to take risks, all of which are crucial for fostering an entrepreneurial culture. Taken together, the study demonstrates the necessity of integrating the emotional (entrepreneurial passion), cognitive (self-efficacy), and behavioral (leadership) dimensions to strengthen entrepreneurial intention. For MSMEs development, this suggests that empowerment initiatives should go beyond improving technical and managerial competencies. Programs also need to focus on nurturing psychological

and motivational aspects, enabling entrepreneurs to be more resilient, innovative, and consistent in pursuing their business goals.

Entrepreneurial passion is the central pillar of running a business. Managers of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) must be passionate about recognizing their opportunities and enhancing their self-efficacy, self-leadership, and SME entrepreneurial intentions. (Fiernaningsih et al., 2023). Self-leadership involves a process of internal reflection in which individuals are consciously motivated and determined to bring about transformation and innovative behavior (Carmeli et al., 2006).

CONCLUSION

This study set out to investigate how entrepreneurial passion shapes entrepreneurial intention, with self-efficacy and leadership acting as mediating variables among SME owners in Batam City. The findings reveal that entrepreneurial passion not only strengthens self-efficacy and leadership but also directly contributes to entrepreneurial intention. Both self-efficacy and leadership, in turn, were shown to significantly encourage entrepreneurial intention, while the overall model demonstrated high explanatory power, as reflected in strong R^2 values.

The results emphasize that psychological and behavioral aspects play an essential role in entrepreneurial intention. Passion serves as an emotional stimulus that builds self-confidence and leadership skills, enabling entrepreneurs to turn their ideas into feasible ventures.

In practical terms, the study suggests that MSMEs' development efforts should not be limited to technical and managerial training. Instead, programs should also integrate activities that cultivate psychological resources, such as building self-efficacy and leadership skills, to foster entrepreneurial capacity and effectively support business sustainability.

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