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Empowering Student Entrepreneurs: The Synergistic Effect of Education, Self-Efficacy, and Spiritual Motivation

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Abstract

The transition toward the Society 5.0 era demands graduates who can create rather than merely seek jobs, yet persistently high educated unemployment and a low national entrepreneurship ratio indicate that students' entrepreneurial interest still requires substantial encouragement. This study analyzes the effect of entrepreneurship learning and self-efficacy on students' entrepreneurial interest, with spiritual motivation as a mediating variable, within the context of Islamic higher education institutions (PTKI). A quantitative explanatory approach with a cross-sectional survey design was employed. The sample comprised 100 active students in semesters 6–8 at UIN Sultanah Nahrasiyah Lhokseumawe, selected through total sampling. Data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares–Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS 3.0 and a bootstrapping procedure. The results show that entrepreneurship learning has a positive and significant effect on entrepreneurial interest, whereas self-efficacy has no significant direct effect. Self-efficacy significantly influences spiritual motivation, and spiritual motivation emerges as the strongest predictor of entrepreneurial interest. The indirect-effect analysis reveals that spiritual motivation mediates the relationship between self-efficacy and entrepreneurial interest but does not mediate the relationship between entrepreneurship learning and entrepreneurial interest. The model explains 83.8% of the variance in entrepreneurial interest. These findings confirm that strengthening self-efficacy fosters entrepreneurial interest more effectively when internalized through spiritual motivation, implying that PTKI entrepreneurship curricula should integrate business competencies with spiritual values and Islamic business ethics.

Introduction

The transformation from the industrial era toward Society 5.0 requires new paradigms in the world of work, in which entrepreneurial competence is fundamental to producing competitive graduates (Fukuda, 2020). Higher education is increasingly expected not merely to produce job seekers but to cultivate job creators (Iwu et al., 2021; Majir, 2021), making digital-based entrepreneurial skills a strategic necessity. This urgency is heightened by the persistence of

"educated unemployment" among university graduates. Drawing on official Statistics Indonesia (BPS) releases rather than secondary news portals, the open unemployment rate among university graduates recorded in 2025 remained comparatively high (around 5.39%), while Indonesia's national entrepreneurship ratio (approximately 3.47%) continued to trail regional peers such as Malaysia and Singapore (BPS, 2025; Direktorat Jenderal Industri Kecil, Menengah, 2025). These figures indicate that, despite the opportunities of the digital economy, graduates' willingness to pursue entrepreneurship still requires substantial encouragement.

Sultanah Nahrasiyah State Islamic University (UIN) Lhokseumawe has articulated a strategic vision to become a leading ASEAN university by 2040, integrating digital technology with local wisdom (UIN SUNA, 2021). This vision extends to its graduate programs, notably the Master's in Islamic Education, which emphasizes entrepreneurship education that integrates digital skills with Islamic values.

However, preliminary data from 2022 cohorts reveal a discrepancy between educational inputs and outcomes. Despite widespread enrollment in mandatory entrepreneurship courses, 14.58% of students report low or neutral intentions to pursue business ventures after graduation. Moreover, practical engagement remains limited, with 19.79% reporting insufficient skills for developing business plans and a low participation rate in campus incubation initiatives. These findings suggest that possessing digital entrepreneurial skills alone is not sufficient to motivate entrepreneurial intentions without an underlying internal catalyst.

Although students complete entrepreneurship courses, many remain hesitant to launch real ventures (R. D. Putri et al., 2021; Sioukas, 2023), and entrepreneurial knowledge often stops at the discourse level (Al-Fattal, 2024). Entrepreneurial self-efficacy is a central psychological resource in this respect; without confidence in one's capabilities, technical skills alone rarely translate into entrepreneurial intention.

A dimension frequently underexamined in mainstream entrepreneurship learning is the spiritual one. PTKI students are distinctive not simply because they hold stronger religious sentiment, but because their entrepreneurial reasoning is embedded in a normative framework in which economic activity is evaluated against religious obligation and permissibility (Herlinda et al., 2025). Spiritual motivation is defined narrowly here as the internalized intention (*niyyah*) to undertake lawful and beneficial (*halal tayyib*) enterprise as an act of worship and trust (*amanah*) (N. A. Ali et al., 2024), pursued with excellence (*ihsan*) and oriented toward holistic well-being (*falah*) a construct kept conceptually distinct from entrepreneurial intention itself.

Previous empirical studies that entrepreneurship education can foster entrepreneurial intention (Listyaningsih et al., 2024) and that Islamic values may shape intention through inspiration and attitude (Sidek et al., 2015; Thayib & Hamid, 2022; Wibowo et al., 2022). Yet few studies simultaneously model entrepreneurial self-efficacy and an explicitly Islamic spiritual motivation construct as a mediator in entrepreneurship learning, particularly among PTKI students. This constitutes the empirical and conceptual gap that the present study addresses.

Conceptually, entrepreneurship education is understood as a value, attitude, and capability-forming process (Kakouris & Liargovas, 2021; Miço & Cungu, 2023; Neergaard et al., 2021). Because the program foregrounds e-commerce, the education construct is operationalized through concrete digital business competencies, such as using marketplaces, digital marketing, digital payments, customer analytics, and online store management, rather than generic business theory

(Hong et al., 2024; Mahendra et al., 2025). To avoid terminological drift, the study adopts a single label, entrepreneurship learning, consistently throughout. The internal driver is specified as Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy (ESE), a person's confidence in performing specific entrepreneurial tasks, such as risk management and innovation (Bandura, 1977; McGee et al., 2009; Pandang et al., 2022), rather than a generalized self-belief.

To effectively address this phenomenon, it is essential to understand the interplay among educational, psychological, and transcendental factors. Based on the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 2020), entrepreneurial intention, the focused desire and effort to transition from a job-seeker to a job-creator mentality (V. Damayanti & Hidayatulloh, 2020), is the strongest predictor of actual business creation. However, this intention does not develop in a vacuum. While entrepreneurship education provides foundational cognitive and psychomotor skills necessary to identify and create business opportunities (Awuor et al., 2022; Drucker, 2008), its effectiveness in the digital era requires integrating conventional strategies with practical e-commerce platforms (Hong et al., 2024; Syaifudin et al., 2025).

Rooted in Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory, entrepreneurial self-efficacy represents the crucial internal belief in one's capability to manage risks and innovate (Bandura, 1999; McGee et al., 2009; Pandang et al., 2022). For students, possessing technical, digital, and entrepreneurial knowledge will not translate into tangible action without this internal confidence (Awotunde & Westhuizen, 2021; Kannikar & Sangnak, 2026).

At UIN Sultanah Nahrasiyah Lhokseumawe, digital entrepreneurial knowledge and self-confidence alone are insufficient without a deeper value system. Spiritual motivation adds a vital transcendental dimension, driving work as worship (*amal shalih*) and seeking divine blessings (*fadhlan minallah*) through lawful means (Keskin, 2025; Solich, 2024). This motivation uniquely fosters business resilience, viewing failure as a spiritual test rather than a loss (Wibowo et al., 2022). Within this religious context, spiritual motivation transforms secular skills and confidence into enduring entrepreneurial intention.

This study tests a structural model linking entrepreneurship learning (X1) and self-efficacy (X2) to entrepreneurial intention (Y), with spiritual motivation (Z) as a mediator. It innovatively operationalizes an Islamic spiritual motivation construct in digital entrepreneurship education. Theoretically, it extends the Theory of Planned Behavior within a religious framework by showing how theological validation enhances self-efficacy. In practice, it proposes curriculum reform in Islamic Higher Education to shift from a technical-materialistic focus to a prophetic-entrepreneurial approach.

Based on the synthesized literature and contextual phenomena, this study proposes the following hypotheses:

H1: The Significant Effect of Entrepreneurship Learning on Spiritual Motivation

H2: The Significant Effect of Self-Efficacy on Spiritual Motivation

H3: The Significant Effect of Entrepreneurship Learning on Entrepreneurial Interest

H4: The Significant Effect of Self-Efficacy on Entrepreneurial Interest

H5: The Significant Effect of Spiritual Motivation on Entrepreneurial Interest

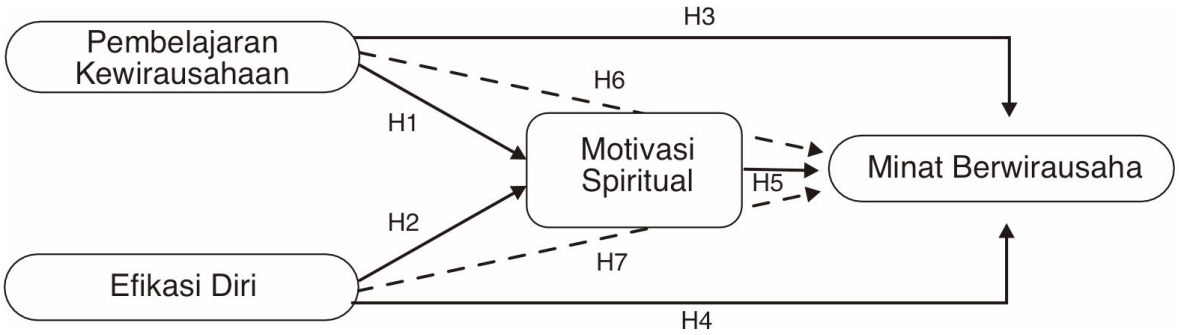
H6: The Significant Indirect Effect of Entrepreneurship Learning Through Spiritual Motivation on Entrepreneurial Interest

H7: The Significant Indirect Effect of Self-Efficacy Through Spiritual Motivation on Entrepreneurial Interest

Method

The study employs a quantitative, explanatory cross-sectional survey design. Because a single cross-sectional measurement cannot establish temporal precedence, the analysis is framed as a test of structural associations among constructs rather than of causal effects. The research site is UIN Sultanah Nahrasiyah Lhokseumawe, and the target population comprises 100 active students in semesters 6-8 (aged 20-23). A purposive sampling technique was employed, resulting in a final sample of 100 respondents (n = 100). Accordingly, the findings pertain to this specific population and are not automatically generalizable to all PTKI students. The model examines entrepreneurship learning (X1) and self-efficacy (X2) as predictors of entrepreneurial intention (Y), with spiritual motivation (Z) as the mediating variable.

Figure 1: Research Conceptual Framework



Source: Compiled by the researcher, 2026

The questionnaire uses a five-point Likert scale (1–5). Items, adapted from validated instruments and tailored to the Islamic higher-education context, measured entrepreneurship learning (X1) as digital business competence, self-efficacy (X2) as entrepreneurial task confidence, spiritual motivation (Z) as niyyah, amanah, ihsan, and halal tayyib orientation, and entrepreneurial intention (Y) as career preference and venture readiness. Informed consent was obtained prior to data collection.

All analyses were conducted in SmartPLS 3.0, assessing measurement validity and reliability through outer loadings, discriminant validity (Fornell-Larcker, cross-loadings, HTMT), and internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability, and the average variance extracted [AVE]). Structural model relationships and mediation effects were evaluated using bootstrapping (3,000 subsamples), reporting path coefficients, t-statistics, p-values, and 95% bias-corrected confidence intervals in line with current PLS-SEM standards (Hair et al., 2021).

This study was conducted in accordance with ethical principles for social science research involving human participants. Participation was entirely voluntary, and informed consent was obtained from all respondents prior to data collection. Participants were informed of the study's objectives, procedures, confidentiality measures, and their right to withdraw at any time without consequence. The research involved adult students and posed minimal risk, as data were collected through a self-administered questionnaire on entrepreneurship learning, self-efficacy, spiritual

motivation, and entrepreneurial intention. No personally identifiable information was collected, and all responses were anonymized and analyzed in aggregate form to protect participants' privacy and confidentiality. The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest related to this study, and the research complied with applicable institutional guidelines for ethical research involving human subjects.

Findings

According to the PLS-SEM methodological standards outlined by (Hair et al., 2021), the analysis consists of two main stages: first, the evaluation of the measurement (outer) model to assess the validity and reliability of the instruments and ensure that each indicator accurately reflects its latent construct; second, the evaluation of the structural (inner) model to test the model's predictive power and the significance of relationships among variables. In the measurement model evaluation, convergent validity is assessed using the outer loadings, with indicators ideally having loadings above 0.70 per Wijayanti's (2025) rule of thumb. Indicators with loadings below 0.70 suggest high error variance and weak contribution and should be considered for removal to improve data quality.

Table 1: Calculation of the PLS algorithm, Stage I

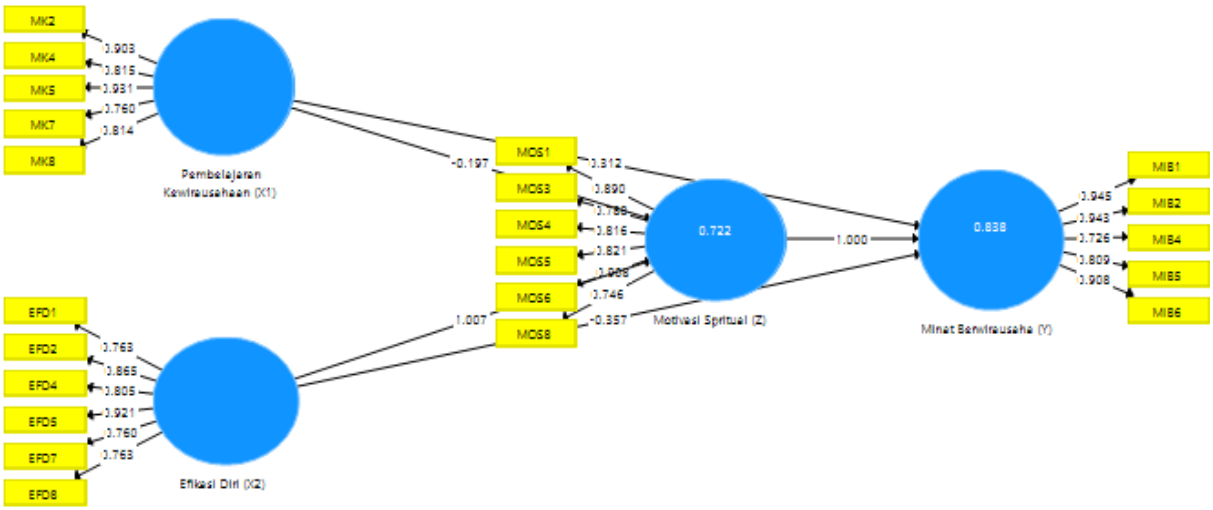
	Entrepreneurship Learning (X_1)	Self-Efficacy (X_2)	Entrepreneurial Interest (Y)	Spiritual Motivation (Z)	Explanation
MIN1			0.891		Valid
MIN2			0.892		Valid
MIN3			0.646		*Invalid*
MIN4			0.761		Valid
MIN5			0.775		Valid
MIN6			0.880		Valid
MIN7			0.606		*Invalid*
MIN8			0.695		*Invalid*
MOS1				0.863	Valid
MOS2				0.688	*Invalid*
MOS3				0.787	Valid
MOS4				0.805	Valid
MOS5				0.785	Valid
MOS6				0.879	Valid
MOS7				0.635	*Invalid*
MOS8				0.740	Valid
MK1	0.678				*Invalid*
MK2	0.871				Valid
MK3	0.641				*Invalid*
MK4	0.804				Valid
MK5	0.879				Valid
MK6	0.643				*Invalid*
MK7	0.736				Valid
MK8	0.776				Valid
EFD3		0.666			*Invalid*
EFD6		0.718			Valid
EFD8		0.744			Valid
EFD1		0.746			Valid

EFD7	0.747	Valid
EFD4	0.794	Valid
EFD2	0.845	Valid
EFD5	0.897	Valid

Source: SEM-PLS Test Results, 2026

Table 1 shows that indicators with outer loadings below 0.70 (specifically MK1, MK3, MK6, EFD3, MIN3, MIN7, MIN8, MOS2, and MOS7) were eliminated from the model. Following this, a recalculation (re-estimation) was conducted to obtain the final outer loading values, all of which met the validity criteria. Subsequently, convergent validity was evaluated using the data following the indicator-reduction (trimming) process. This analysis aimed to ensure that all remaining questionnaire items in the model have strong, consistent correlations with their respective latent constructs. According to Wijayanti's guideline (2025), an indicator is considered to have robust validity if its outer loading value exceeds the threshold of 0.70. This value indicates that the variance explained by the latent construct for that indicator exceeds its error variance (Wijayanti, 2025).

Figure 2. Results of the Measurement Model Test (Outer Model)



Source: SEM-PLS Test Results, 2026

Figure 2 shows that the remaining indicators in the final model meet the requirements for convergent validity, with outer loadings exceeding 0.70. The analysis then evaluates the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) and Discriminant Validity to demonstrate that the measurement model is not only internally valid but also distinct across variables. Internal consistency was evaluated using Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability (CR) with thresholds above 0.70, and AVE for convergent validity with a standard above 0.50 (Wijayanti, 2025). A summary of the construct reliability and validity test results is presented in the following table.

Table 3. Results of the Construct Reliability Test

	Cronbach's Alpha	Rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Self-Efficacy (X2)	0.898	0.905	0.922	0.665
Entrepreneurship Learning(X1)	0.900	0.905	0.926	0.717
Spiritual Motivation (Z)	0.908	0.914	0.93	0.689
Entrepreneurial Interest (Y)	0.917	0.927	0.939	0.758

Source: SEM-PLS Test Results, 2026

The results of the internal consistency test confirm that the research instruments possess superior reliability, as evidenced by Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability (CR) values for all latent variables consistently exceeding 0.89, well above the 0.70 threshold. Specifically, the Entrepreneurial Interest variable exhibited the highest measurement stability, with a CR of 0.939 and an Alpha of 0.917, indicating strong item homogeneity and minimal random error bias, thereby confirming the robustness of the model for further structural analysis.

Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity testing aims to ensure that each latent construct is unique and captures phenomena distinct from other constructs within the model. This evaluation uses the Fornell-Larcker criterion, which postulates that the square root of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for a construct must exceed its correlations with other latent variables (Sofyani, 2025).

Table 4. Results of the Discriminant Validity Test (Fornell-Larcker Criterion)

	Entrepreneurship Learning (X1)	Self-Efficacy (X2)	Entrepreneurial Interest (Y)	Spiritual Motivation (Z)
Entrepreneurship Learning (X1)	0.847	0.835	0.657	0.644
Self-Efficacy (X2)		0.815		
Spiritual Motivation (Z)		0.745	0.870	
Entrepreneurial Interest (Y)		0.842	0.899	0.830

Source: SEM-PLS Test Results, 2026

The violation of the Fornell-Larcker criterion between Entrepreneurial Interest (Y) and Spiritual Motivation (Z) indicates substantial overlap, suggesting that respondents perceive these constructs as very similar or that their measurement items are closely related. Although this strict criterion does not fully meet discriminant validity, the strong theoretical link in religious psychology explains the high correlation. Therefore, using the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) is recommended for a more balanced assessment of validity.

The discriminant validity test was conducted using the Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio (HTMT) approach to ensure that each construct in the research model demonstrates sufficient differentiation from the other constructs. According to Hair et al. (2021), a model satisfies discriminant validity when the HTMT value is below the threshold of 0.90. The HTMT test results for the present study are presented in Table 5 below.

Table 5. Results of the Discriminant Validity (HTMT)

	Entrepreneurship Learning (X1)	Self-Efficacy (X2)	Entrepreneurial Interest (Y)	Spiritual Motivation (Z)
Entrepreneurship Learning (X1)		0.840	0.717	0.712
Self-Efficacy (X2)				
Spiritual Motivation (Z)		0.811	0.870	
Entrepreneurial Interest (Y)		0.823	0.885	

Source: SEM-PLS Test Results, 2026

Based on the test results in Table 5, the HTMT values for all construct pairs range from 0.712 to 0.885. The relationship between entrepreneurship learning and self-efficacy is 0.840, with entrepreneurial intention at 0.717 and spiritual motivation at 0.712. Meanwhile, the relationship between self-efficacy and entrepreneurial intention yields a value of 0.811, and with spiritual motivation, 0.823. The highest HTMT value is observed between entrepreneurial intention and spiritual motivation, amounting to 0.885.

All these HTMT values remain below the maximum threshold of 0.90, indicating that all constructs meet the criteria for discriminant validity. These results suggest that each construct adequately measures distinct concepts and that there is no significant overlap between them. Therefore, the measurement model (outer model) meets discriminant validity requirements and may proceed to the structural model evaluation (inner model) and hypothesis testing stages.

The coefficient of determination, commonly denoted as R-Square (R^2), is a statistical measure that indicates how well the independent variables explain the variance in the dependent variable. In other words, R^2 represents the proportion of the variation in the outcome variable that the model's predictor variables can explain.

Table 6. R-Square Values (R^2)

	R Square	R Square Adjusted	Interpretation
Entrepreneurial Interest (Y)	0.838	0.833	83.8% of the variance in Entrepreneurial Interest can be simultaneously explained by Entrepreneurship Learning (X1), Self-Efficacy (X2), and Spiritual Motivation (Z).
Spiritual Motivation (Z)	0.722	0.716	72.2% of the variance in Spiritual Motivation can be jointly explained by Entrepreneurship Learning (X1) and Self-Efficacy (X2).

Source: SEM-PLS Test Results, 2026

Table 6 demonstrates strong predictive capability. An R^2 of 0.722 indicates that Entrepreneurship Learning and Self-Efficacy together explain 72.2% of the variance in students' Spiritual Motivation, highlighting the combined influence of external educational stimuli and internal confidence. The remaining 27.8% is attributed to unmodeled factors such as family background or prior religious education.

The primary variables yield an R^2 of 0.838 for Entrepreneurial Interest, indicating that 83.8% of its variance is explained by Entrepreneurship Learning (X1), Self-Efficacy (X2), and Spiritual Motivation (Z). In behavioral sciences, an R^2 above 0.75 denotes excellent explanatory power. These results confirm the model's robustness, suggesting that interventions targeting course quality, self-efficacy enhancement, and spiritual value internalization effectively foster entrepreneurial interest, leaving only 16.2% unexplained variance.

The minimal difference between R^2 and Adjusted R^2 values (e.g., 0.838 vs. 0.833) suggests the model is parsimonious, with each predictor contributing meaningful explanatory information rather than inflating fit metrics artificially.

Hypothesis Testing (Path Coefficient)

Once the measurement model (outer model) meets validity and reliability criteria, the next step is to evaluate the structural model (inner model) through direct effect testing. This test aims to assess the magnitude of direct influences among latent variables in line with the formulated hypotheses. The decision to accept or reject a hypothesis is based on the t-statistics and p-values obtained via the bootstrapping procedure in SmartPLS 3.0. A hypothesis is considered supported if it yields a t-statistic greater than 1.96 and a p-value less than 0.05 at the 5% significance level (Hair et al., 2022). The results of the direct effect tests are presented in Table 7 below.

Table 7. Path Coefficient Results

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P Values
Self-Efficacy (X2) → Interest in Entrepreneurship (Y)	-0.357	-0.378	0.199	1.793	0.074
Self-Efficacy (X2) → Spiritual Motivation (Z)	1.007	1.008	0.120	8.366	0,000
Spiritual Motivation (Z) → Interest in Entrepreneurship (Y)	1.000	1.006	0.100	9.959	0,000
Entrepreneurship Education (X1) → Interest in Entrepreneurship (Y)	0.312	0.327	0.115	2.716	0.007
Entrepreneurship Education (X1) → Spiritual Motivation (Z)	-0.197	-0.190	0.148	1.336	0.183

Source: SEM-PLS Test Results, 2026

Based on the results of the direct effect tests in Table 7, the interpretation of each relationship between the variables is as follows. The analysis of direct effects yielded the following results:

1. Entrepreneurship Education (X1) → Spiritual Motivation (Z) showed a non-significant negative effect (path coefficient = -0.197, t = 1.336, p = 0.183), so hypothesis H1 was rejected.
2. Self-Efficacy (X2) → Spiritual Motivation (Z) shows a significant positive effect (path coefficient = 1.007, t = 8.366, p < 0.001), which supports H2.
3. Entrepreneurship Education (X1) → Interest in Entrepreneurship (Y) shows a significant positive effect (path coefficient = 0.312, t = 2.716, p = 0.007), which supports H3.

4. Self-Efficacy (X2) → Entrepreneurial Interest (Y) showed a non-significant negative effect (path coefficient = -0.357, t = 1.793, p = 0.074), thus Hypothesis H4 is rejected.
5. Spiritual Motivation (Z) → Entrepreneurial Interest (Y) showed a significant positive effect (path coefficient = 1.000, t = 9.959, p < 0.001), supporting H5.

In summary, three hypotheses were confirmed: the effects of Self-Efficacy on Spiritual Motivation, Spiritual Motivation on Entrepreneurial Interest, and Entrepreneurship Education on Entrepreneurial Interest. Conversely, the direct effects of Self-Efficacy on Entrepreneurial Interest and Entrepreneurship Education on Spiritual Motivation were not supported.

Hypothesis Testing (Indirect Effects)

Following the testing of the direct effect, the next stage is to test the specific indirect effect. This test aims to determine whether Spiritual Motivation (Z) acts as a mediating variable in the relationship between Entrepreneurship Education (X1) and Self-Efficacy (X2) on Entrepreneurial Interest (Y). The test was conducted using the bootstrapping procedure in SmartPLS 3.0. Decisions regarding the mediation hypothesis were based on t-statistics and p-values, with an indirect effect deemed significant if it had a t-statistic > 1.96 and a p-value < 0.05 at the 5 percent significance level (Hair et al., 2022).

The results of the specific indirect effect test are presented in Table 8 below.

Table 8. Results Indirect Effect

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P Values
Self-Efficacy (X2) → Spiritual Motivation (Z) → Interest in Entrepreneurship (Y)	1.007	1.018	0.177	5.690	0,000
Entrepreneurship Education (X1) → Spiritual Motivation (Z) → Interest in Entrepreneurship (Y)	-0.197	-0.195	0.152	1.299	0.195

Source: SEM-PLS Test Results, 2026

Based on the results of the direct effect tests in Table 8, the interpretation of each relationship between variables is as follows.

The indirect effect of Self-Efficacy (X2) on Entrepreneurial Interest (Y) through Spiritual Motivation (Z) is significant, with a path coefficient of 1.007, t-value of 5.690, and p-value < 0.001. This supports the hypothesis that Spiritual Motivation mediates the relationship between Self-Efficacy and Entrepreneurial Interest, indicating that higher Self-Efficacy enhances Spiritual Motivation, which in turn increases Entrepreneurial Interest.

Conversely, the mediation effect of Spiritual Motivation on the relationship between Entrepreneurship Education (X1) and Entrepreneurial Interest (Y) is not significant, as evidenced

by a path coefficient of -0.197, t-value of 1.299, and p-value of 0.195. Thus, Spiritual Motivation does not mediate this path.

Overall, these results indicate that Spiritual Motivation functions as a mediator only in the link between Self-Efficacy and Entrepreneurial Interest. Enhancing entrepreneurial interest appears to depend more on individuals' self-efficacy and fostering spiritual motivation than on entrepreneurship education alone.

Discussion

The Influence of Entrepreneurial Learning on Spiritual Motivation

The results of the study indicate that entrepreneurship education has no significant effect on students' spiritual motivation. These findings suggest that the entrepreneurship education program currently in place has not yet directly enhanced students' spiritual motivation.

This situation can be explained by the fact that entrepreneurship education in higher education institutions still tends to focus on mastering business competencies, innovation, marketing, and business management, whilst the spiritual dimension has not yet been explicitly integrated into the learning process. Therefore, enhancing spiritual motivation cannot be achieved solely through entrepreneurship courses, but requires a more systematic internalization of religious values.

This finding differs from the research by (Dewi Khadijah & Putra Panji Respati, 2026; Zuhri et al., 2024), which showed that entrepreneurship education is capable of increasing entrepreneurial intent through religiosity as a mediating variable. This difference in results indicates that the effectiveness of entrepreneurship education in developing the spiritual dimension is greatly influenced by curriculum design and the implementation of teaching and learning at each institution.

The Influence of Self-Efficacy on Spiritual Motivation

The results of the study show that self-efficacy has a positive and significant effect on spiritual motivation. These findings indicate that the greater the students' belief in their own abilities, the higher their spiritual motivation. According to Bandura (1999), individuals with high self-efficacy tend to be more optimistic when facing challenges and more confident in the success of their actions. In the context of Islamic education, belief in one's own abilities is not only understood as personal capability but also as a trust from Allah SWT that must be utilized responsibly (El-Yunusi & Juliansyah, 2026). Therefore, self-efficacy can become a spiritual driving force that motivates students to work and benefit society. The results of this study demonstrate that the psychological and spiritual dimensions reinforce one another. Students who believe in their own abilities tend to be more motivated to realize that potential through activities that are both acts of worship and for the common good.

The Influence of Entrepreneurial Learning on Entrepreneurial Interest

The research findings show that entrepreneurship education has a positive and significant effect on students' interest in entrepreneurship. These findings indicate that the higher the quality of entrepreneurship education students receive, the greater their tendency to choose entrepreneurship as a career option. Entrepreneurship education not only serves as a means of transferring knowledge regarding business plan formulation, the identification of business opportunities, and

risk management, but also shapes an entrepreneurial mindset that fosters the intention to become an entrepreneur (Yousaf et al., 2021). These findings are consistent with the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), Ajzen (2020) which explains that a person's intention to engage in a particular behavior is influenced by attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. In the context of entrepreneurship education, learning experiences contribute to the formation of positive attitudes towards entrepreneurial activities, thereby increasing the intention to become an entrepreneur (Padilla-Angulo et al., 2022; Yousaf et al., 2021). The results of this study are also consistent with the research by (Erlinda & Respati, 2026; N. Q. Putri & Kurniawati, 2026), which found that entrepreneurship education has a significant effect on students' entrepreneurial intention and is able to strengthen students' psychological readiness to start a business. Furthermore, research by Prasetyo et al. shows that entrepreneurship education directly influences entrepreneurial intention, although the magnitude of this influence is strongly shaped by students' psychological factors (Prasetyo et al., 2022).

The Influence of Self-Efficacy on Entrepreneurial Interest

The results of the study show that self-efficacy does not have a significant effect on an interest in entrepreneurship. These findings suggest that students' belief in their own abilities is not yet sufficient to directly stimulate interest in becoming an entrepreneur. Theoretically, Social Cognitive Theory, developed by Bandura (1999), explains that self-efficacy is an individual's belief in their ability to complete a task, which, in turn, influences the behavioral choices they make. However, the theory also emphasizes that self-efficacy can be influenced by environmental factors, values, and the individual's experiences. The lack of a significant relationship suggests that, among PTKI students, self-efficacy alone is insufficient to foster interest in entrepreneurship (D. Damayanti et al., 2026; Prabandari et al., 2024). Students are likely to continue considering religious values, life orientation, social support, and their perceptions of the entrepreneurial profession before deciding to develop an interest in entrepreneurship. Consequently, self-efficacy requires additional mechanisms to translate into entrepreneurial intent, which, in this study, was demonstrated through Spiritual Motivation as a mediating variable (Liu et al., 2019).

The negative correlation indicates that students who perceive themselves as having high technical competence (self-efficacy) tend to prefer the comfort zone of applying for salaried positions at companies (as job seekers), rather than taking the risk of starting their own businesses, unless they have a strong spiritual drive.

The Influence of Spiritual Motivation on Entrepreneurial Interest

The research findings show that spiritual motivation is the variable with the strongest influence on students' interest in entrepreneurship. These findings indicate that students view entrepreneurial activities not only as a means of obtaining economic gain, but also as a form of worship, service to the community, and an effort to earn a halal livelihood. These results can be explained through the Theory of Planned Behavior, which states that, in addition to psychological and social factors, personal values such as spirituality can also strengthen the formation of behavioral intentions (Ajzen, 2020). Recent research shows that spirituality can be an important predictor of entrepreneurial intentions, particularly among communities with a religious background (J. Ali, 2023; Junaidi et al., 2023). These findings underscore that within Islamic religious higher education

institutions, fostering interest in entrepreneurship is more effective when entrepreneurship education is integrated with the reinforcement of spiritual values, Islamic business ethics, and a focus on benefiting society. Thus, entrepreneurship is not viewed merely as an economic activity, but rather as part of the implementation of religious values in daily life.

The Influence of Entrepreneurial Learning on Entrepreneurial Interest Through Spiritual Motivation

The results of the study indicate that Spiritual Motivation does not mediate the effect of Entrepreneurship Education on Entrepreneurial Interest. This finding is supported by a path coefficient of −0.197, a t-statistic of 1.299, and a p-value of 0.195, meaning that this indirect effect is not significant. Consequently, the mediation hypothesis is rejected.

These results indicate that the entrepreneurship education students receive has not yet increased their interest in entrepreneurship through the mechanism of enhancing spiritual motivation. This situation suggests that the entrepreneurship learning process currently in place remains primarily focused on developing technical competencies, such as business plan formulation, digital marketing, and business management, and has therefore not yet fully internalized the spiritual values that can foster entrepreneurial motivation. Consequently, although students acquire entrepreneurial knowledge, this improvement has not automatically translated into a spiritual drive that strengthens their interest in entrepreneurship. This finding can be explained by the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 2020), which posits that behavioral intentions are influenced by various psychological and environmental factors. In the context of this study, entrepreneurship education has not yet been able to foster the psychological factor of spiritual motivation as a mediator. Therefore, improving the quality of entrepreneurship education must be accompanied by integrating religious values, Islamic business ethics, and experiential learning, so that students not only develop business competencies but also gain spiritual motivation in carrying out entrepreneurial activities. The results of this study differ from several previous studies, which found that religiosity or spirituality mediates the influence of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial intent (Rashid & Ratten, 2022; Rodrigues et al., 2023; Wibowo et al., 2022). These differences are likely influenced by the characteristics of the respondents, the curriculum design, and the implementation of teaching at each university (Pariyanti et al., 2025).

The Influence of Self-Efficacy on Entrepreneurial Interest Through Spiritual Motivation

The findings demonstrate that Spiritual Motivation mediates the impact of Self-Efficacy on Entrepreneurial Interest, indicated by a significant indirect effect (path coefficient = 1.007, $t = 5.690$, $p < 0.001$). Although Self-Efficacy alone showed no significant direct effect, its influence became significant when mediated by Spiritual Motivation, suggesting that spiritual motivation channels self-belief into entrepreneurial drive. According to Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory, self-efficacy reflects individuals' confidence in their ability to complete tasks; however, this belief requires internal support to translate into intentions (Bandura, 1999). In this study's context, spiritual motivation serves as that internal factor, framing entrepreneurial ability as a trust to be exercised responsibly and as an act of worship benefiting society.

These results align with the Theory of Planned Behavior, highlighting that in Islamic higher education, spiritual values strengthen the link between psychological factors and entrepreneurial

intention. Thus, fostering entrepreneurship requires not only enhancing self-efficacy but also integrating spiritual guidance to sustain entrepreneurial interest (Ajzen, 2020).

The research findings indicate that Entrepreneurship Education has a positive and significant effect on Entrepreneurial Interest, whilst Self-Efficacy does not have a significant direct effect on Entrepreneurial Interest. On the other hand, Self-Efficacy had a positive and significant effect on Spiritual Motivation, and Spiritual Motivation had a positive and significant effect on Entrepreneurial Interest. However, Entrepreneurship Education does not have a significant effect on Spiritual Motivation; consequently, the learning process implemented has not yet been able to directly foster students' spiritual drive to engage in entrepreneurship. The results of the indirect effect test indicate that Spiritual Motivation mediates only the relationship between Self-Efficacy and Interest in Entrepreneurship, but not the relationship between Entrepreneurship Education and Interest in Entrepreneurship. These findings suggest that students' belief in their own abilities is more effective at fostering interest in entrepreneurship when it is internalized through spiritual motivation. Conversely, entrepreneurship education focused solely on acquiring knowledge and technical skills is insufficient to optimally foster students' spiritual motivation.

This study innovatively operationalizes Islamic spiritual motivation as a mediating construct within a digital entrepreneurship education model that uniquely integrates entrepreneurship education, self-efficacy, and religiosity in the PTKI context, where economic behavior aligns with religious norms. Spiritual motivation is defined as the internalized intention (niyyah) to pursue lawful, beneficial enterprise as worship (amal shalih), trust (amanah), and excellence (ihsan), distinct from entrepreneurial intention itself. The finding that self-efficacy impacts entrepreneurial interest exclusively through spiritual motivation challenges conventional models and enriches entrepreneurship education discourse with a faith-based perspective relevant to the Society 5.0 era. Theoretically, the study extends the Theory of Planned Behavior and Social Cognitive Theory by highlighting spiritual motivation as the key psychological mechanism translating self-efficacy into entrepreneurial interest. In practice, it advocates curriculum reform beyond technical training to incorporate principles of prophetic entrepreneurship, blending business competencies with Islamic ethics and spiritual values, and recommends that PTKI embed spiritual internalization, experiential learning, mentoring, and holistic assessments to cultivate ethical entrepreneurial readiness.

Conclusion

The entrepreneurship curriculum succeeds in stimulating entrepreneurial interest; it demonstrably fails to cultivate the spiritual motivation that most strongly drives that interest, thereby exposing a managerial and governance gap between the institution's stated vision of integrating digital competence with Islamic values and its actual instructional practice. The finding that spiritual motivation, rather than formal instruction, mediates the pathway from self-efficacy to entrepreneurial interest indicates that value internalization within PTKI remains incidental and pedagogically unmanaged, rather than being deliberately designed, monitored, and evaluated as a core learning outcome. This signals a deficiency not merely in curriculum content but in the strategic management of learning, encompassing leadership vision, lecturer competence, and assessment systems that continue to privilege cognitive and technical mastery over affective-spiritual formation. Consequently, Islamic education management is challenged to reposition

tauhidic values and Islamic business ethics from a rhetorical aspiration into an operational, measurable dimension of program governance. These conclusions warrant epistemic caution, given the single-institution sample, the cross-sectional design that precludes causal inference, and the suppression effect and inflated path coefficients that suggest construct overlap; accordingly, the managerial implications should be read as a provocative directive for curriculum reform and further multi-site inquiry rather than as a definitive prescription.

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