

# *Leadership And The Enhancement Of Entrepreneurial Character In Generation Z*

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**Abstract** - This study aims to analyze the influence of leadership on the development of entrepreneurial character among Generation Z students at SMA Negeri 2 Tegal. The background of this research highlights the importance of strengthening student leadership as a key factor in shaping students' entrepreneurial spirit. A quantitative approach with a survey method was employed. The research population consisted of all Generation Z students enrolled at SMA Negeri 2 Tegal during the 2024/2025 academic year. Using purposive sampling, 60 students actively involved in school organizational activities were selected as respondents. The research instrument was a questionnaire that had been tested for validity and reliability. Data analysis was conducted using simple linear regression and a t-test. The results showed that leadership had a positive and significant effect on students' entrepreneurial character ( $p\text{-value} < 0.05$ ), with a coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) of 45.2%. This indicates that leadership contributed 45.2% to entrepreneurial character.

**Keyword:** leadership, entrepreneurial character, generation Z, SMA Negeri 2 Tegal

## I. INTRODUCTION

Generation Z (Gen Z), born between 1997 and 2012, currently comprises the largest portion of the high school population. This generation has grown up in the digital era, with vast access to information and rapid technological advancement. Gen Z is characterized by a strong adaptability to technology, a preference for interactive learning experiences, an innovation-oriented mindset, and an early interest in financial independence.

In the context of secondary education, fostering entrepreneurial character is crucial for equipping this generation with the ability to compete in the job market and create independent business opportunities. One of the critical factors that contributes to the development of entrepreneurial character is leadership.

Leadership is closely associated with time management, which plays a significant role in academic, professional, and personal contexts, as it directly affects productivity, stress levels, and goal achievement. According to Claessens et al. (2007), time management encompasses three key dimensions: goal setting and prioritization, planning and scheduling techniques, and preferences for time organization [2]. These aspects have been shown to correlate positively with increased productivity and reduced stress. Individuals who possess strong time management skills tend to work more effectively and achieve a better work-life balance.

In the school environment, leadership, whether demonstrated by teachers, extracurricular advisors, or student organization leaders (e.g., OSIS) has a strategic role in nurturing an entrepreneurial mindset. Visionary and inspirational leaders can guide, motivate, and serve as role models by demonstrating initiative, creativity, and risk-taking behavior. These traits align closely with key elements of entrepreneurship, including innovation, risk tolerance, and resilience in the face of challenges.

Time management is also closely associated with academic stress. Häfner et al. (2014) found that time management training can reduce students' perceived stress levels and enhance their sense of control over time, ultimately contributing to overall mental well-being [5]. These findings are consistent with those of Bela et al. (2023), who identified procrastination and poor time management as major contributors to academic stress, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic [1].

In addition, time management is strongly linked to self-regulated learning. Mulyani (2013) demonstrated a significant correlation between time management skills and independent learning, indicating that students who are able to effectively manage their time tend to plan, monitor, and evaluate their learning processes more successfully.

At SMA Negeri 2 Tegal a leading high school in Tegal City various programs have been developed to promote students' entrepreneurial spirit. These include entrepreneurship-themed extracurricular activities, school bazaars, and creative projects based on project-based learning. However, a key challenge remains: how to integrate leadership development with the cultivation of entrepreneurial character in a way that aligns with the characteristics and needs of Generation Z.

Entrepreneurial coaching that focuses solely on technical business skills often produces students who are capable of running a business, but who lack long-term vision and the ability to manage teams effectively. Therefore, leadership development should be considered a fundamental component of entrepreneurial education. Visionary leadership equips students not only with the ability to innovate and take initiative, but also with the resilience and collaborative skills necessary for sustainable entrepreneurship.

Given this context, it is essential to examine the relationship between leadership and the development of entrepreneurial character among Generation Z students at SMA Negeri 2 Tegal. This study aims to provide a deeper understanding of that relationship and serve as a foundation for designing more effective coaching strategies. Ultimately, the goal is to shape a new generation that possesses not only entrepreneurial competence but also strong, innovative, and values-driven leadership.

Based on the background above, this study seeks to answer the following research question:  
*How does the leadership level of Generation Z students influence their entrepreneurial character at SMA Negeri 2 Tegal?*

The objective of this research is to identify the influence of leadership on the entrepreneurial character of Generation Z students at SMA Negeri 2 Tegal.

## II. RESEARCH METHODS

### 2.1 Types and Approaches to Research

This study employs a quantitative approach, which involves a series of stages based on specific assumptions, followed by the identification of variables and analysis using valid research methods. The research method applied is the survey method, which involves collecting information directly from respondents using a structured questionnaire as the primary data collection instrument. Surveys are conducted on population data or on samples that are representative of the larger population. According to Effendi and Tukiran (2015), survey research involves selecting and using samples from a population, with questionnaires serving as the core tool for data collection [4]. In this study, the quantitative approach combined with the survey method is used to examine the relationship between leadership (independent variable, X) and the development of entrepreneurial character (dependent variable, Y) among Generation Z students at SMA Negeri 2 Tegal.

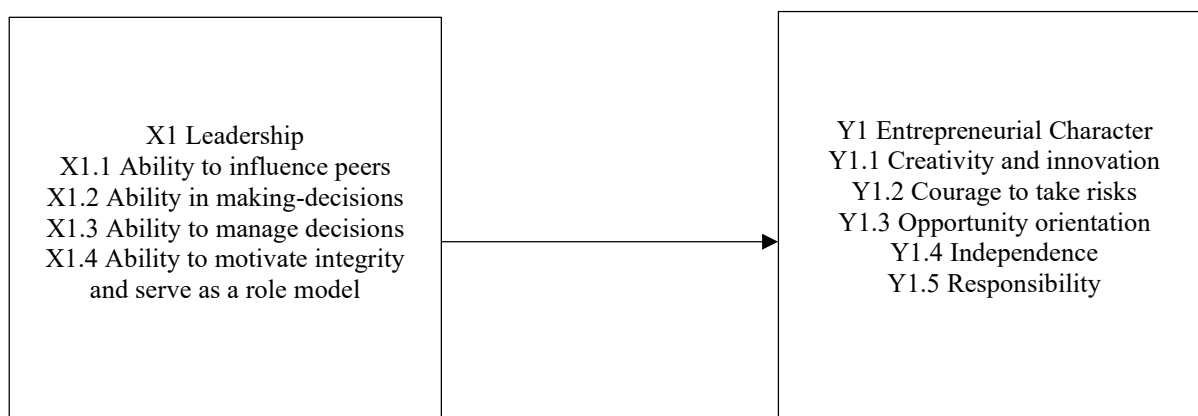
### 2.2 Population and Research Sample

The population in this study consists of all students at SMA Negeri 2 Tegal who are classified as Generation Z during the 2024/2025 academic year. This study uses purposive sampling, selecting students who are actively involved in school organizational

activities, such as the student council (OSIS), entrepreneurial extracurricular programs, and other leadership-related activities. A total of 60 students were selected as the research sample

### 2.3 Theoretical Framework

A research study requires a theoretical framework as a foundation to guide the approach and data collection process related to the research variables, namely the independent variable (X): Leadership and the dependent variable (Y): Entrepreneurial Character. According to Neuman (2019), a theoretical framework can begin with a situational analysis and should be aligned with previous research findings in order to develop a logical structure of thought for the study [8]. This framework serves to illustrate how leadership is assumed to influence the entrepreneurial character of Generation Z students, particularly in the context of high school education. It also helps in forming the research hypothesis, selecting appropriate indicators, and directing the overall research process. The theoretical framework of this study is presented as follows:



### 2.4 Data Collection and Analysis Techniques

Data were collected through surveys using structured questionnaires distributed to respondents. Additional data were gathered through documentation to support the field findings and through observations of student activities related to leadership and entrepreneurship. The analysis began with validity and reliability tests to ensure the accuracy and consistency of the research instruments and the data obtained. To examine the influence between variables, the study employed simple linear regression analysis to determine the effect of leadership on entrepreneurial character.

## III. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 3.1 Student Leadership

Leadership is defined as the ability to influence and guide others toward achieving shared goals (Yukl, 2013). In the school context, student leadership is reflected in the ability to lead activities, organize teams, and inspire peers. Leadership is an essential concept within organizations and has undergone various theoretical developments over time. In general, leadership is understood as the process of influencing others to achieve collective objectives [9]. Within this framework, a leader is not merely a controller, but a change agent who directs, motivates, and empowers followers.

Leadership continues to be a fundamental concept in organizational studies and has been shaped by diverse theoretical perspectives over time. As Syahril (2019) reiterates, leadership is broadly perceived as a process of influencing others to reach collective goals [9]. From this perspective, leaders function not only as authority figures but also as agents of change who provide direction, motivation, and empowerment to their followers.

Mattayang (2019) presents a comprehensive mapping of leadership styles and types, including democratic, authoritarian, laissez-faire, visionary, and situational leadership [7]. The effectiveness of each leadership type largely depends on the

organizational context and its specific needs. This perspective aligns with the contingency theory proposed by Vroom and Jago (2007), which states that leadership effectiveness is influenced by specific situations, such as task type, group structure, and organizational culture [10].

### 3.2 Entrepreneurial Character

According to Hisrich et al. (2017), entrepreneurial character includes creativity, courage to take risks, independence, and opportunity orientation. Students who possess entrepreneurial character are capable of discovering new ideas and transforming them into valuable activities or products. Entrepreneurship education plays a significant role in shaping an entrepreneurial mindset. Kusmintarti et al. (2017) found that entrepreneurial attitudes have a significant influence on entrepreneurial intentions, although the direct effect of entrepreneurship education alone is relatively limited [6]. However, when entrepreneurship education is combined with the development of positive attitudes, it can effectively enhance students' intention to start a business.

### 3.3 The Relationship Between Leadership and Entrepreneurial Character

A good leader is capable of fostering team spirit, providing direction, and motivating members to explore new ideas. Among students, strong leadership often correlates with creative and innovative thinking—key attributes of entrepreneurial character. In a broader context, particularly in community capacity building, entrepreneurship is also recognized as a tool for social empowerment. Darwis et al. (2022) explain that social entrepreneurship plays a significant role in empowering communities, especially in addressing issues related to poverty [3]. Such initiatives help build networks and provide access to media and resources that support the sustainability and growth of entrepreneurial activities.

## IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Validity Test

#### Leadership (X)

Item Code	Question	r-count	r-table	Sig. (2-tailed)	Result
X1.1	Ability to influence peers	0.804	0.2542	0.000	Valid
X1.2	Ability in decision-making	0.772	0.2542	0.000	Valid
X1.3	Ability to manage decisions	0.827	0.2542	0.000	Valid
X1.4	Ability to motivate integrity and serve as a role model	0.769	0.2542	0.000	Valid

The results of the analysis showed that all question items used to measure leadership variables had a calculated r-value greater than the r-table ( $r\text{-count} > 0.2542$ ) and had a significance value less than 0.050 ( $\text{Sig.} < 0.050$ ), so it can be concluded that all question items used to measure leadership variables were declared valid.

#### Entrepreneurial Character (Y)

Item Code	Question	r count	r table	Sig. (2-tailed)	Result
Y1.1	Creativity and innovation	0.747	0.2542	0.000	Valid
Y1.2	Courage to take risks	0.793	0.2542	0.000	Valid
Y1.3	Opportunity orientation	0.567	0.2542	0.000	Valid
Y1.4	Independence	0.624	0.2542	0.000	Valid
Y1.5	Responsibility	0.712	0.2542	0.000	Valid

The results of the analysis showed that all question items used to measure entrepreneurial character variables had a calculated r-value greater than the table r ( $r\text{-count} > 0.2542$ ) and had a significance value smaller than 0.050 ( $\text{Sig.} < 0.050$ ), so it can be concluded that all question items used to measure entrepreneurial character variables were declared valid.

#### Reliability Test

Variable	Number of Item	Cronbach's Alpha	Standar Cronbach's Alpha	Result
Leadership (X)	4	0.800	0.700	Reliable
Entrepreneurial Character (Y)	5	0.722	0.700	Reliable

The results of the analysis showed that the leadership variable had a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.800 and this value was greater than 0.700 ( $0.800 > 0.700$ ), thus concluding that the research instrument used to measure the leadership variable was declared reliable. The entrepreneurial character variable also has a Cronbach's alpha value greater than 0.700, which is 0.722 ( $0.722 > 0.700$ ), so it is concluded that the research instrument used to measure the entrepreneurial character variable is declared reliable.

#### Simple Linear Regression Analysis

##### Partial Test (t-test) and Simultaneous test (f-test)

Coefficients <sup>a</sup>						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	5.976	1.298		4.603	.000
	Leadership	0.727	0.105	0.673	6.920	.000

ANOVA <sup>a</sup>						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	135.833	1	135.833	47.892	0.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	164.501	58	2.836		
	Total	300.333	59			

The results of the analysis show that the value of t calculation of the leadership variable on entrepreneurial character is 6.920 and this value is greater than the t table ( $6.920 > 2.0017$ ), the significance value is also known to be smaller than 0.050 ( $0.000 < 0.050$ ), so it can be concluded that the leadership variable has a significant effect on entrepreneurial character.

#### Regression equations

$$Y = \text{Constant} + bX$$

$$Y = 5.976 + 0.673X$$

The results of the analysis show that the constant value is 5.976 which means that if the variable X is considered constant or zero, then the entrepreneurial character is 5.976. The regression coefficient of the leadership variable (X) is 0.675 and has a positive value, this means that if leadership experiences an increase of 1 unit, the entrepreneurial character will also increase by 0.675.

#### Coefficient of Determination ( $R^2$ )

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.673 <sup>a</sup>	0.452	0.443	1.684

The results of the analysis showed that the value of the determination coefficient ( $R^2$ ) was 0.452 which means that the entrepreneurial character was influenced by leadership by 45.2%, while the remaining 54.8% was influenced by other variables outside the research model.

## V. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of data analysis, it can be concluded that the leadership level of Generation Z students at SMA Negeri 2 Tegal falls into the high category, particularly in the indicators of influencing others, motivating peers, and decision-making abilities. Likewise, students' entrepreneurial character is categorized as strong, with the highest scores observed in the areas of creativity, innovation, and responsibility. The results of the simple linear regression analysis indicate that leadership has a positive and significant effect on students' entrepreneurial character, with a contribution rate of 45.2%. This suggests that leadership is a critical factor in shaping entrepreneurial traits among students. Therefore, efforts to enhance students' entrepreneurial character should be supported by strengthening leadership competencies, particularly in the areas of integrity, decision-making, and conflict management to better prepare them for future challenges in entrepreneurship and organizational contexts.

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