

## Unlocking Social Entrepreneurship Potential: An Analysis of Personal and Contextual Drivers among Students

Fairuz Rifqi Abdurahman\*<sup>1</sup>, Heny Hendrayati<sup>2</sup>, Suryana<sup>3</sup>, Hari Mulyadi<sup>4</sup>, Prasetyo Harisandi<sup>5</sup>  
<sup>1,2,3,4,5</sup> Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, Bandung, Indonesia

\* [fairuzrifqi@upi.edu](mailto:fairuzrifqi@upi.edu)

### Abstract

This study examines the effects of personal and contextual factors on students' interest in social entrepreneurship and evaluates the mediating role of personal factors within this relationship. A quantitative survey was conducted involving 219 active undergraduate students at a university in Bekasi who had completed at least one entrepreneurship course or participated in social entrepreneurship projects. Data were gathered using a Likert-scale questionnaire and analyzed through Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM Version 4). The findings indicate that contextual factors exert a positive and significant influence on students' social entrepreneurship interest. Conversely, personal factors demonstrate a significant but negative effect once contextual influences are considered. Additionally, personal factors serve as a significant mediator with a negative direction between contextual factors and social entrepreneurship interest, suggesting a compensatory mechanism in which strong environmental support may reduce students' dependence on individual strengths. These results highlight the crucial role of academic environments, social support systems, and institutional facilities in fostering social entrepreneurship interest, while also underscoring the need for strategies that reinforce students' internal capacities. The study offers important implications for policy development in social entrepreneurship education at the university level.

*Keywords:* Social Entrepreneurial Intention; Personal Factors; Contextual Factors; Student Digital Experience.

### Introduction

Social challenges such as poverty, unemployment, and inequality remain pressing concerns in the era of globalization and rapid digital transformation. In Indonesia, the open unemployment rate reached 5.1% in August 2023—equivalent to 8.4 million individuals—with unemployment among university graduates rising from 4.80% in 2022 to 7.89% in 2023 (BPS, 2024). These figures indicate that higher education institutions have not fully equipped graduates to compete effectively in the labor market, underscoring the urgency for alternative career pathways such as social entrepreneurship (Rifqi Abdurahman et al., 2025). Unlike conventional entrepreneurship, which emphasizes financial returns, social entrepreneurship focuses on generating sustainable social value (Harisandi et al., 2025) by integrating business innovation with a social mission to address societal problems (Harisandi, Yahya, et al., 2024).

Entrepreneurship plays a pivotal role in Indonesia's economic development, job creation, and poverty reduction. However, the national entrepreneurship rate remains relatively low. According to Statistics Indonesia (BPS, 2024), entrepreneurs constitute only 3.47% of the population—below the 4% minimum threshold recommended by the World Bank for economic competitiveness. This constraint is further compounded by persistent unemployment, including the rising rate among university graduates. These conditions suggest that higher education has not yet succeeded in producing job-ready graduates or supporting the creation of new ventures, particularly in the social entrepreneurship sector, which holds significant potential for addressing socioeconomic disparities (Hassan et al., 2022).

In response, the Indonesian government has launched several initiatives, including the Independent Learning–Independent Campus (MBKM) program and Presidential Regulation No. 2 of 2022 concerning National Entrepreneurship Development, aimed at increasing the number of entrepreneurs and strengthening the national entrepreneurial ecosystem. Entrepreneurship education has therefore emerged as a strategic instrument for developing students' entrepreneurial intentions and capabilities (Fayolle & Gailly, 2015; Mei et al., 2020). Nevertheless, existing empirical findings remain inconsistent. Some studies report that entrepreneurship education positively influences students' interest in social entrepreneurship (Harisandi, Muhammad Mardiputra, et al., 2024), while others highlight the stronger influence of personal attributes such as empathy, social motivation, and social support (Ballesteros-Sola & Magomedova, 2023; Wijaya & Sarwo, 2022). These inconsistencies signal a gap in existing research, particularly regarding how personal and contextual factors jointly shape students' social entrepreneurship interest (Harisandi et al., 2023).

Personal factors—including empathy, social value orientation, and resilience—play an important role in motivating individuals to pursue social entrepreneurship. Meanwhile, contextual factors such as academic climate, social support, time pressure, financial limitations, and family or peer influence may either enhance or inhibit such interest (Syafitri et al., 2024). Yet, most prior studies have disproportionately focused on entrepreneurship education without systematically examining the interplay between personal dispositions and contextual influences. Without this holistic perspective, the mechanisms through which students develop an interest in social entrepreneurship remain only partially understood.

Understanding the interaction between these factors is particularly critical within Indonesia's higher education landscape, where the MBKM program promotes flexibility and encourages students to engage in entrepreneurship-based social initiatives (Nizam & Junaidi, 2021). This study seeks to address the identified research gap by providing empirical evidence on how personal and contextual factors interact to shape students' interest in social entrepreneurship (Xanthopoulou & Sahinidis, 2025).

Based on the literature, previous studies predominantly examine the role of formal entrepreneurship education—both general and managerial—without integrating personal and contextual determinants into a unified conceptual model. Research such as Harisandi, Yahya, et al. (2024) and Mei et al. (2020) demonstrates that entrepreneurship education can positively influence social entrepreneurship interest; however, these studies do not fully account for the influence of empathy, social value orientation, resilience, environmental support, and external constraints such as limited time and capital. Meanwhile, evidence from Wijaya and Handoyo Edy S'Arwo (2022) shows that empathy and social support may exert a greater impact than entrepreneurial learning itself. Yet, such studies do not sufficiently examine non-academic barriers that may impede student engagement.

These gaps highlight the need for a more comprehensive model that integrates both personal and contextual factors to explain the formation of students' social entrepreneurship interest. Accordingly, the present study examines the combined effects of empathy, social value orientation, resilience, academic environment, social support, time pressure, and financial constraints on social entrepreneurship interest. Practically, the results are expected to inform curriculum developers, higher education policymakers, and entrepreneurship-support institutions by promoting more personalized and context-sensitive learning approaches. This study also contributes a conceptual basis for developing entrepreneurship education models that

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extend beyond managerial competencies to address students' backgrounds and environments as critical determinants of social entrepreneurship development.

## **Literature review**

### *Social Entrepreneurship*

Social entrepreneurship refers to the process of identifying, developing, and managing ventures that integrate social goals with entrepreneurial principles (Fayolle & Gailly, 2015). Unlike conventional entrepreneurship, which prioritizes financial gain, social entrepreneurship emphasizes the creation of sustainable social value (Ahmad Khairuddin, 2024; Harisandi, Nurhidayah, et al., 2024). Social enterprises play an increasingly important role in addressing complex societal challenges such as poverty, unemployment, and economic inequality. In Indonesia, this role is particularly relevant given the high unemployment rate among university graduates, which reached 7.89% in 2023 (BPS, 2023). Consequently, social entrepreneurship has emerged as a strategic avenue for empowering youth and enhancing socioeconomic resilience.

### *Social Entrepreneurial Intention*

Social entrepreneurial intention refers to an individual's willingness or tendency to start a venture that prioritizes a social mission. Grounded in the Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen, 1991), intention is regarded as the strongest predictor of actual behaviour, including the establishment of social enterprises. Key determinants of such intention include attitudes toward social entrepreneurship, subjective norms, and entrepreneurial self-efficacy. Empirical evidence demonstrates that students with direct exposure to social entrepreneurship practices—such as project-based learning or community engagement programs—show higher intention to initiate social enterprises (Mei et al., 2020). This suggests that experiential learning is critical in shaping students' motivation and readiness to pursue social value-driven ventures.

### *Personal Factors*

Personal factors refer to internal psychological characteristics that influence an individual's interest in or intention to engage in social entrepreneurship. These factors include:

- **Social Empathy:** the capacity to understand and emotionally connect with the experiences of others, which serves as a strong motivator for designing social solutions.
- **Social Value Orientation:** a personal value system that prioritizes collective well-being over individual gain (Syafitri et al., 2024).
- **Resilience:** the ability to cope with challenges and recover from setbacks within the social entrepreneurship context (Ballesteros-Sola & Magomedova, 2023).

Previous research has found empathy to be a significant predictor of social entrepreneurial intention—sometimes exerting a stronger influence than formal entrepreneurship education (Wijaya & Sarwo, 2022). These findings underscore the importance of personal motivations and values as foundational drivers of socially oriented entrepreneurial behaviour.

### *Contextual Factors*

Contextual factors encompass the external conditions and environmental supports that influence students' interest in social entrepreneurship. These include:

- **Academic Environment:** institutional policies, lecturer support, curricula, and learning facilities that enable students to engage in social entrepreneurship activities (Utomo, 2023).
  - **Time Pressure:** academic workload and off-campus responsibilities that may restrict students' capacity to initiate or sustain social entrepreneurship projects (Harisandi et al., 2023).
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- **Financial Limitations:** constraints related to initial capital, access to funding, or financial risk that may hinder the realization of social enterprise ideas (Fitria et al., 2023).
- **Social Support:** encouragement and assistance from family, peers, or the community that fosters entrepreneurial motivation (Syafitri et al., 2024; Wijaya & Sarwo, 2022).

These contextual elements can either strengthen or weaken students' interest in pursuing social entrepreneurship, depending on the extent of environmental support and barriers encountered.

### *Research Questions and Hypotheses Development*

Based on the reviewed literature, personal and contextual factors appear to play complementary roles in shaping students' social entrepreneurship interest. While personal factors drive intrinsic motivation, contextual factors determine the availability of external support and opportunities. However, empirical evidence regarding the interaction between these factors remains limited. To address this gap, the present study proposes a model that examines the direct and mediated effects of personal and contextual factors on students' social entrepreneurship interest.

Accordingly, the following hypotheses are formulated:

- H1: Contextual factors have a positive and significant effect on students' social entrepreneurship interest.
- H2: Personal factors have a positive and significant effect on students' social entrepreneurship interest.
- H3: Contextual factors have a positive and significant effect on personal factors.
- H4: Personal factors mediate the relationship between contextual factors and students' social entrepreneurship interest.

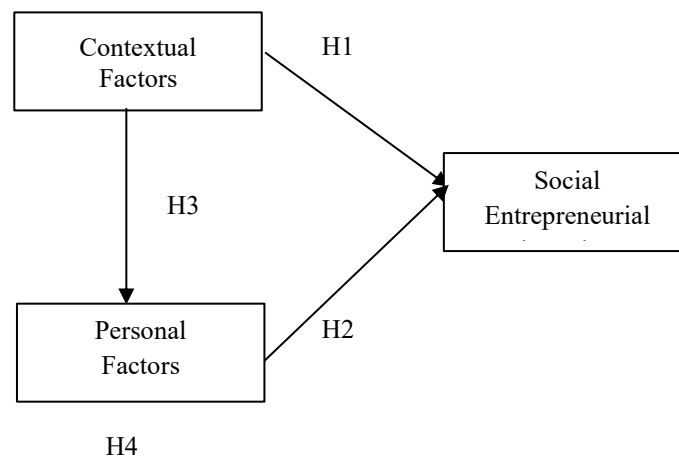


Figure 1. Research Framework

### **Research Methodology**

This study employed a quantitative research design using a survey method to empirically test the proposed hypotheses and examine the relationships between personal factors, contextual factors, and students' interest in social entrepreneurship. The population consisted of active undergraduate students from several universities in Bekasi who had completed at least one entrepreneurship course or were involved in campus-based entrepreneurial or social enterprise activities. A purposive sampling technique was applied to ensure that respondents met specific

criteria, including being enrolled in a minimum of three semesters and having experience in entrepreneurship-related or social project activities.

Following sample size recommendations for Structural Equation Modeling (SEM-PLS) (Hair et al., 2018) and general sampling guidelines by Roscoe (1975), a minimum of 135 respondents was targeted to meet the analytical requirements of SEM-PLS Version 4. This sample size is considered adequate for models involving multiple latent variables and mediating effects.

Data were collected through an online questionnaire distributed via Google Forms, email, social media platforms, and student organization networks. The instrument comprised sections on respondent demographics, personal factors (social empathy, social value orientation, and personal resilience), contextual factors (academic environment, time pressure, financial constraints, and social support), and social entrepreneurship interest (intention, motivation, and readiness). All items were measured using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (“strongly disagree”) to 5 (“strongly agree”). The measurement items were adapted from validated instruments used in previous studies and were further evaluated through expert judgment to ensure content validity.

Construct validity was assessed using outer loading analysis within SEM-PLS Version 4, while reliability was evaluated using Cronbach’s alpha and composite reliability criteria. Data analysis procedures included the assessment of the measurement model and the structural model, which involved examining the coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ), effect size ( $f^2$ ), and predictive relevance ( $Q^2$ ). Hypothesis testing was conducted using t-statistics and p-values generated through a bootstrapping procedure.

In addition, Multi-Group Analysis (MGA) was conducted to identify potential differences in the influence of personal and contextual factors across students from two types of higher education institutions. This analysis allowed for a deeper understanding of how institutional characteristics may moderate the relationships within the proposed model.

The study adhered to standard ethical research principles. Respondents were provided with informed consent, assured of the confidentiality of their identities, and informed that all collected data would be used exclusively for academic and research purposes.

### **Respondent Profile**

A total of 135 respondents from public universities participated in this study. The majority were female (60%), while male students accounted for 40% of the sample. In terms of academic standing, most respondents were enrolled in semesters 5–6 (43%), followed by those in semesters 3–4 (38%), and students in semester 7 or above (19%). Furthermore, 76% of respondents reported having prior experience in social enterprises or community-based social projects, whereas 24% had no such experience.

These characteristics suggest that most participating students were in intermediate to advanced stages of their undergraduate studies and were actively engaged in activities related to entrepreneurship or social initiatives. This composition aligns with the study’s objective, as the majority of respondents possessed relevant academic exposure and practical experience associated with social entrepreneurship.

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Table 1.  
Respondent Demographic Sample

Characteristics	Category	Total	%
Gender	Male	54	40%
	Female	81	60%
Semester	3–4	52	38 %
	5–6	59	43%
	≥ 7	24	19%
Social Enterprise/Project Experience	Yes	103	76%
	No	32	24%

## Research Results and Discussion

### *Outer Loading*

Based on the outer loading results presented in Table 2, all indicators in this study demonstrated sufficiently high loading values, with most exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.70 (Hair et al., 2019). These values indicate that each indicator reliably represents the latent construct it is intended to measure. For the personal factors construct, indicators associated with social empathy (PF1 = 0.933; PF2 = 0.738), social value orientation (PF3 = 0.910; PF4 = 0.904), and personal resilience (PF5 = 0.734; PF6 = 0.861) exhibit strong and consistent measurement properties. The highest loading value (PF1 = 0.933) suggests that the ability to understand and relate to others' feelings serves as the most dominant and accurate representation of the social empathy dimension. Conversely, indicators PF5 and PF2 show relatively lower loading values compared to the others; however, both remain above the acceptable threshold ( $> 0.70$ ), indicating that they remain valid and appropriate for retention within the measurement model.

Table 2.  
Research Questions

Variable	Dimension	Indicators	Outer Loading
Personal Factors	Social Empathy	PF1: Ability to understand others' feelings	0.933
		PF2: Concern for the well-being of others	0.738
	Social Value Orientation	PF3: Placing social values above personal interests	0.910
		PF4: Belief in the importance of social contribution	0.904
	Personal Resilience	PF5: Ability to survive failure	0.734
		PF6: Ability to overcome challenges	0.861
Contextual Factors	Academic Environment	CF1: Support from lecturers	0.813
	Time Pressure	CF2: Facilities supporting entrepreneurship	0.806
		CF3: Limited time to manage the business..	0.875
	Financial constraints	CF4: High academic load	0.884
		CF5: Limited initial capital	0.867
	Social support	CF6: Operational cost constraints	0.884
		CF7: Family support	0.865
	CF8: Peer support	0.884	
Interest in Social Entrepreneurship	Intention to Start a Social Enterprise	ISE1: Desire to start a business	0.945
		ISE2: Seriousness in preparing a business	0.936
	Social Motivation	ISE3: Desire to benefit the community	0.772
		ISE4: Drive to empower the community	0.945
	Readiness for Social Entrepreneurship	ISE5: Mental readiness	0.787
		ISE6: Resource readiness	0.931

For the contextual factors construct, all indicators met the criteria for convergent validity, with loading values exceeding 0.80. Indicators representing lecturer support (CF1 = 0.813) and entrepreneurship support facilities (CF2 = 0.806) demonstrated strong measurement reliability. Similarly, indicators for time pressure (CF3 = 0.875; CF4 = 0.884), financial constraints (CF5 = 0.867; CF6 = 0.884), and social support (CF7 = 0.865; CF8 = 0.884) exhibited high levels of indicator reliability. These results confirm that the contextual factors construct is measured consistently and accurately by all associated indicators.

For the social entrepreneurship interest variable, the indicators also showed very high outer loading values. Notably, the intention to start a social enterprise (ISE1 = 0.945) and motivation to empower communities (ISE4 = 0.945) recorded the strongest measurement performances. These values suggest that the indicators effectively capture students' interest, readiness, and motivation to engage in social entrepreneurship. Overall, the findings indicate strong convergent validity across all constructs, making them suitable for inclusion in subsequent structural model analyses.

*Descriptive Statistical Analysis*

Descriptive statistical analysis further reveals that all three research variables fall within the high category. The personal factors variable recorded a mean value of 4.1 with a standard deviation of 1.05, indicating that respondents generally possess high levels of empathy, social value orientation, and resilience, although there is notable variability in individual responses. Contextual factors produced a mean of 4.2 with a standard deviation of 0.78, suggesting that respondents perceive a high level of academic support, social support, and environmental conditions conducive to social entrepreneurship, with relatively lower variation across responses. Similarly, social entrepreneurship interest yielded a mean score of 4.2 with a standard deviation of 0.44, reflecting strong and relatively homogeneous interest, motivation, and readiness among respondents to initiate or engage in social enterprise activities.

Table 3.  
Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
Personal Factors	4.1	1.05
Contextual Factors	4.2	0.78
Interest in Social Entrepreneurship	4.2	0.44

*Validity and Reliability Analysis*

Table 4 presents the results of the validity and reliability assessment for each construct using Cronbach's Alpha, Composite Reliability (CR), and Average Variance Extracted (AVE). For the Personal Factors construct, the CR value of 0.867 and Cronbach's Alpha of 0.865 both exceed the recommended minimum threshold of 0.70, indicating strong internal consistency and measurement reliability. The AVE value of 0.651 is above the 0.50 benchmark,

demonstrating adequate convergent validity and confirming that the indicators effectively represent the underlying construct.

For the Contextual Factors construct, Cronbach's Alpha (0.862) and CR (0.865) similarly exceed the acceptable thresholds, reflecting high reliability and consistency across items. The AVE value of 0.785 is considerably higher than the 0.50 requirement, indicating that the majority of variance in the indicators is explained by the latent construct and that convergent validity is well established.

For the Social Entrepreneurship Interest construct, Cronbach's Alpha (0.861) and CR (0.861) also surpass the recommended standards, suggesting strong internal consistency. The AVE value of 0.706 confirms that the construct possesses satisfactory convergent validity, with indicators capturing the intended conceptual domain.

Collectively, these results demonstrate that all constructs in the measurement model exhibit acceptable to excellent levels of reliability and convergent validity. Accordingly, the measurement model is deemed robust and appropriate for proceeding to the structural model analysis.

Table 4.  
Validity and Reliability

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE
Personal Factors	0.865	0.867	0.651
Contextual Factors	0.862	0.865	0.785
Interest in Social Entrepreneurship	0.861	0.861	0.706

#### *Direct Effect Analysis*

The results of the Partial Least Squares (PLS) analysis for the direct structural paths are presented in Table 5 and yield several important findings.

#### 1. Contextual Factors → Interest in Social Entrepreneurship (CF → ISE)

$O = 1.420, t = 13.067, p = 0.000$

This path shows a strong and statistically significant positive effect of contextual factors on students' interest in social entrepreneurship. The result indicates that higher levels of academic support, availability of facilities, financial assistance, and social encouragement substantially enhance students' intentions, motivation, and readiness to initiate social enterprise activities. These findings are consistent with prior studies emphasizing that a supportive environment is a critical determinant of entrepreneurial intention (Fayolle & Gailly, 2015; Utomo, 2023).

#### 2. Personal Factors → Interest in Social Entrepreneurship (PF → ISE)

$O = -0.458, t = 3.884, p = 0.000$

Although statistically significant, the relationship between personal factors and social entrepreneurship interest is negative when contextual factors are included in the model. This suggests that higher self-perceived levels of empathy, social value orientation, and resilience

are associated with lower direct interest in social entrepreneurship under conditions of strong contextual support. This pattern implies that contextual factors may exert a more decisive influence than personal attributes in shaping entrepreneurial interest and that personal factors may operate more effectively through indirect or mediating mechanisms (Harisandi et al., 2025; Rifqi Abdurahman et al., 2025).

3. Contextual Factors → Personal Factors (CF → PF)

O = -0.971, t = 152.299, p = 0.000

This path exhibits a strong and statistically significant negative relationship, indicating that increasing levels of contextual support correspond with reduced reliance on personal factors. One possible explanation is a compensatory effect in which robust environmental support—such as mentorship, facilities, and institutional backing—reduces the need for individuals to depend heavily on intrinsic qualities like resilience or internal motivation (Davis, 2014).

Overall, the direct effects indicate that contextual factors act as the dominant driver of students’ interest in social entrepreneurship, exerting a stronger influence than personal factors. The strong negative link between contextual and personal factors suggests a compensatory dynamic: as environmental support strengthens, reliance on personal traits diminishes in determining social entrepreneurship interest. These findings highlight the need for higher education institutions to integrate both environmental enhancements and personal development strategies when designing interventions to promote social entrepreneurship.

Table 5.  
Direct Effect

Path	Original Sample	Sample Mean	Standard Deviation	T-Statistic	p-value	Result
CF => ISE	1.420	1.419	0.109	13.067	0.000	Significant
PF => ISE	-0.458	-0.458	0.118	3.884	0.000	Significant
CF => PF	-0.971	0.970	0.006	152.299	0.000	Significant

*Indirect Effect Analysis*

The results of the Partial Least Squares (PLS) analysis for the indirect effects, presented in Table 6, reveal one significant mediating relationship in the model.

Contextual Factors → Personal Factors → Interest in Social Entrepreneurship (CF → PF → ISE)

O = -0.445, t = 3.907, p = 0.000

This finding demonstrates that contextual factors exert a significant indirect effect on students’ interest in social entrepreneurship through personal factors; however, the mediation operates in a negative direction. This indicates that as contextual support—such as academic resources, institutional facilities, financial assistance, and social encouragement—strengthens, the extent to which personal characteristics (empathy, social value orientation, and resilience) contribute

to entrepreneurial interest diminishes. In effect, a highly supportive environment appears to reduce students' dependence on their internal traits to develop interest in social entrepreneurship, as external resources and structures already provide sufficient motivation and reinforcement (Alakaleek et al., 2023; Bae et al., 2023).

Overall, the results suggest that personal factors serve as a significant but negatively valenced mediator between contextual factors and students' interest in social entrepreneurship. This pattern may reflect a compensatory mechanism; whereby strong contextual support reduces the functional necessity of personal dispositions in fostering social entrepreneurship interest. These findings highlight the importance of adopting a balanced approach in higher education—one that not only enhances contextual support systems but also continues to strengthen students' personal competencies to ensure long-term, sustainable engagement in social entrepreneurial activities.

Table 6.  
Indirect Effect

Path	Original Sample	Sample Mean	Standard Deviation	T-Statistic	p-value	Result
CF => PF => ISE	-0.445	-0.445	0.114	3.907	0.000	Significant

## Conclusions

This study demonstrates that contextual factors exert a strong and significant direct influence on students' interest in social entrepreneurship. Although personal factors also show a significant effect, the direction becomes negative when contextual factors are considered simultaneously. This suggests that environmental support—such as academic facilities, lecturer guidance, financial assistance, and social reinforcement—plays a dominant role in fostering students' motivation, intention, and readiness to initiate social enterprise activities. Furthermore, the mediation analysis indicates that personal factors function as a significant but negatively valenced mediator, implying that high levels of contextual support may reduce students' reliance on internal traits such as empathy, social value orientation, and resilience.

These findings highlight the critical role of supportive higher education environments in cultivating students' interest in social entrepreneurship. At the same time, the negative influence observed in personal factors reflects a potential compensatory mechanism, whereby strong external support reduces the necessity for students to depend solely on their personal capabilities. This underscores the importance of adopting a balanced strategy in social entrepreneurship development—one that strengthens internal competencies while simultaneously enhancing external support structures.

## Recommendations

### *Implications for Higher Education Institutions*

Universities should continue to strengthen contextual conditions that encourage social entrepreneurship. This includes providing adequate entrepreneurship facilities, expanding social business incubation programs, developing partnership networks with industry and social organizations, and enhancing the role of advisors or lecturers in motivating and guiding students. Nevertheless, such environmental support must be complemented by initiatives aimed

at developing students' internal competencies. Programs such as empathy-building workshops, social leadership training, time management coaching, and resilience training can enhance students' readiness to engage in social entrepreneurship, especially when facing uncertainty or business failures.

#### *Implications for Future Research*

Future studies are encouraged to extend this research to more diverse contexts—across regions, institutional types, and academic disciplines—to determine whether the observed relationships remain consistent across different environments. Subsequent research may also incorporate additional psychological or behavioral variables, such as intrinsic motivation, social entrepreneurship self-efficacy, or participation in socially oriented extracurricular activities. Integrating these variables could provide a more comprehensive understanding of how social entrepreneurship interest develops among Indonesian students. Such expanded insights would support the design of more effective strategies for cultivating future social entrepreneurs.

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