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Factors Influencing Generation Z's Entrepreneurial Intention in the Poultry Agribusiness Sector: Empirical Evidence from Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

The poultry agribusiness sector faces a critical generational crisis due to aging farmers and persistent negative stigma. Accordingly, this study analyzes the internal and external factors influencing Generation Z's entrepreneurial intention in this sector to (1) identify key determinants using structural equation modeling via SmartPLS 4.0, (2) examine geospatial heterogeneity between Western and non-Western Indonesia through multi-group analysis (MGA), and (3) triangulate quantitative findings with qualitative insights from focus group discussions (FGDs). A structured survey of 323 respondents with verified poultry sector exposure was conducted in July–October 2025 across Indonesia, with FGDs held in September–October 2025 in Denpasar, Kupang, and Padang. Results revealed that business motivation, academic support, and social environment support significantly and positively influence entrepreneurial intention, with business motivation as the dominant predictor. Conversely, government support has a significant negative influence, empirically confirming the "government paradox" that perceives state programs as bureaucratically complex or structurally ineffective. PLS-MGA revealed that academic support is the primary institutional catalyst in non-Western Indonesia, whereas business management skills show greater marginal relevance in the Western region. FGD findings validated these structural patterns and identified digital modernization and peer role model exposure as the most effective enablers. The study underscores the necessity of a synchronized ecosystem involving academic institutions, family networks, and adaptive youth-centric government policies to ensure the long-term sustainability of Indonesia's poultry industry.

Keywords: entrepreneurial intention; Generation Z; Indonesia; multi-group analysis; poultry agribusiness

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia's poultry agribusiness sector is strategically positioned in national food security, supplying 56% of the country's animal protein needs and supporting millions of rural livelihoods (Syahlani *et al.*, 2022). In 2025, the national poultry population reached approximately 3.32 billion broilers, 420 million layer chickens, 170 million native chickens, and 45 million ducks. Notable among these populations was the broiler segment, constituting 83.8% of the total inventory (BPS-Statistics Indonesia, 2026b). The production landscape has a dual-tier structure comprising corporate-linked commercial farms (60%) and family-operated medium- and small-scale farms (40%) that reinforce regional food accessibility and rural economic vitality (Ali *et al.*, 2023; Sumiati *et al.*, 2025). Although these dynamics have established Indonesia as one of Southeast Asia's leading poultry producers (BPS-Statistics Indonesia, 2026a; Sumiati *et al.*, 2025), the sector's long-term sustainability is progressively threatened by human resource constraints.

This vulnerability is most pronounced in the expanding demographic disparity within the sector. Data from 2023 show that Indonesia's agricultural labor force is comprised of 36% farmers aged 55 and above and only 11% under 35 (Ambarwati *et al.*, 2025). This localized shift aligns with global labor declines, where agricultural employment dropped to 26.76% of the global workforce in 2019 (Girdziute *et al.*, 2022; Uddin & Antriyandarti, 2025), with 33.6% of China's farming population aged 55 or older (Zhang *et al.*, 2025), 70% of EU farmers over 45, and the average US farmer aged 48.6 years (Tikum & Ahmad, 2024). Low educational attainment among active farmers aggravates this situation, raising concerns about business continuity, technology adoption, and intergenerational knowledge transfer (Maró *et al.*, 2025; Wijayanti *et al.*, 2026). Moreover, persistent negative stigma portraying poultry production as physically arduous, low-prestige,

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and economically unviable deters young entrants (Ngadi *et al.*, 2023; Uddin & Antriyandarti, 2025). Thus, generational succession in agriculture is crucial to future sector viability (Borda *et al.*, 2023; Faturohman *et al.*, 2023; Girdziute *et al.*, 2022; Kabadzhova, 2022; Uddin & Antriyandarti, 2025).

Generation Z (Gen Z; born 1997–2014) is theoretically well-positioned to reverse this trend. Characterized by high digital literacy (Rani *et al.*, 2022; Syukur *et al.*, 2025; Theocharis & Tsekouropoulos, 2025), openness to innovation (Buayai *et al.*, 2025; Cerasi & Balcioglu, 2024), and a comparatively high entrepreneurial propensity (Lopes *et al.*, 2024; Papp-Váry *et al.*, 2023), this demographic cohort can substantially transform traditional livestock production into technology-driven enterprises (Mirkov *et al.*, 2025). Paradoxically, despite their business orientation, youth engagement in poultry and broader agricultural endeavors remains exceptionally low (Ngadi *et al.*, 2023). Instead, they gravitate toward urban-based (Ramadhan et al., 2023), service-sector (Adhiati et al., 2025), or digital careers (Putra & Dewi, 2025) perceived as prestigious and aligned with their lifestyle. Furthermore, public programs promoting agribusiness entrepreneurship through education, training, mentoring, and financial access (Akbar *et al.*, 2024; Hasan *et al.*, 2024; Lediana *et al.*, 2023) have yielded mixed results, suggesting a "government paradox" in which intensive institutional support cannot address Gen Z's specific psychographic needs.

Existing literature on youth agri-entrepreneurship exhibits three distinct structural gaps. First, despite broad studies, the poultry agribusiness sub-sector, with its distinct risk profile, capital structure, and market dynamics, remains underexplored. Second, although related research shows that government-driven intervention can paradoxically crowd out private entrepreneurial activity (Audretsch & Fiedler, 2023), a negative relationship between perceived government support and entrepreneurial intention has not been empirically tested in the Indonesian poultry context. Third, Indonesia's regional diversity has rarely been subjected to formal multi-group structural modeling, reflecting broader limitations in structural equation modeling (SEM)-PLS research where multi-group analysis (MGA) across geographic sub-groups remains underutilized (Cheah *et al.*, 2020). Thus, this study bridges these critical gaps by (1) focusing on the poultry agribusiness sector, (2) conceptualizing and validating the government paradox phenomenon, and (3) applying PLS-MGA to formally test for geospatial moderation between Western and non-Western Indonesian regions.

METHODS

Research Framework and Hypotheses

This study integrates individual internal factors and external support systems into an extended theory of planned behavior (TPB) framework to analyze Gen Z's entrepreneurial intention in the poultry agribusiness sector. The internal dimension comprises entrepreneurial spirit (*X1*), business management skills (*X2*), business motivation (*X3*), and risk perception (*X4*) (Boscardin *et al.*, 2024; Novianty *et al.*, 2025). The external ecosystem includes academic support (*X5*), family support (*X6*), government support (*X7*), and social environment support (*X8*) (Lediana *et al.*, 2023; Ngadi *et al.*, 2023; Timban *et al.*, 2024). Based on this framework (Figure 1), eight positive hypotheses (H1–H8) were formulated, each proposing that the respective constructs positively impact entrepreneurial intention (*Y*).

Measures of the Constructs

Primary data were gathered through a structured questionnaire, measuring nine latent variables (*X1–X8*, *Y*) using a five-point Likert scale (1 = "strongly disagree" to 5 = "strongly agree"). Indicators were adapted from established literature (Ingsih *et al.*, 2024) and contextualized for the Indonesian poultry agribusiness sector.

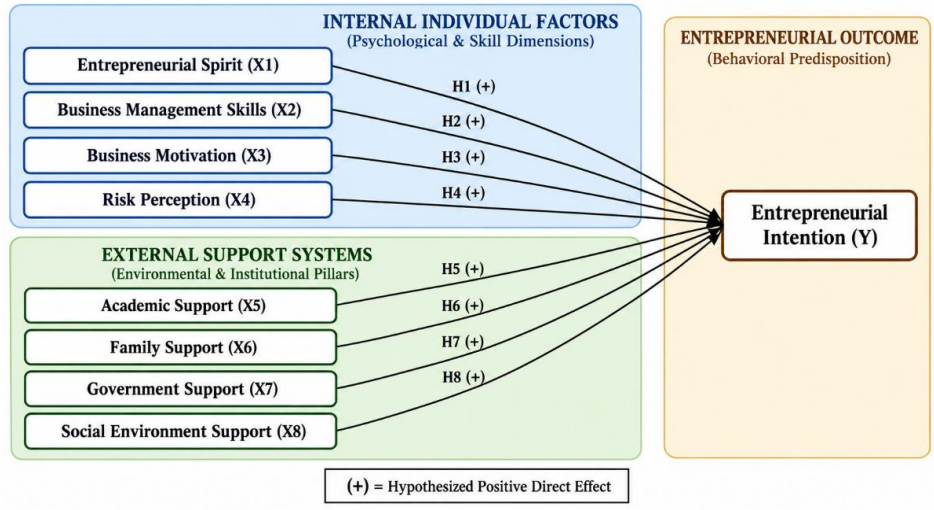


Figure 1. Integrated conceptual structural model of Gen Z's entrepreneurial intention in the poultry agribusiness sector

Data Collection and Population

This study employed a mixed-methods design, combining a structured survey of 323 respondents collected in July–October 2025 across Indonesia, with focus group discussions (FGDs) conducted in September-October 2025 in Denpasar, Kupang, and Padang. Using purposive sampling, Gen Z respondents who met at least one of the following poultry-sector exposure criteria were selected: (1) has a family member engaged in poultry farming, (2) is currently enrolled in or has graduated from the Faculty of Animal Husbandry, or (3) owns or operates a poultry farm business.

Sample locations were purposefully allocated using quota sampling across two spatial clusters (Figure 2) to capture geographical heterogeneity. Western Indonesia (n = 150, 46.4%) constitutes the first cluster, including West Sumatra, Riau, North Sumatra, East Java, West Java, DKI Jakarta, Central Java, Lampung, DI Yogyakarta, Riau Islands, Bangka Belitung Islands, South Sumatra, and Banten. The second cluster is non-Western Indonesia (n = 173, 53.6%), encompassing East Nusa Tenggara, Bali, West Nusa Tenggara, South Kalimantan, West Sulawesi, South Sulawesi, East Kalimantan, North Sulawesi, Papua, Southwest Papua, and West Papua. Thirty participants per cluster were selected through simple random sampling from the online respondent pool for the FGDs. Three thematic areas were discussed: (1) driving factors for entrepreneurial interest in poultry agribusiness, (2) primary entry barriers, and (3) strategic recommendations for youth engagement.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed using variance-based SEM via SmartPLS 4.0 (PLS-SEM), following a two-stage approach: measurement model (outer model) and structural model (inner model) evaluations (Hair *et al.*, 2022).

Measurement Model Evaluation and Multi-Group Analysis

Outer model validity was assessed using outer loadings (retained at 0.40–0.70, provided AVE > 0.5) and composite reliability (rho_c > 0.70), following foundational PLS-SEM standards (Hair *et al.*, 2022). The structural model was evaluated using the coefficient of determination (R^2) and path coefficients (β), with hypothesis testing using bootstrapping (5000 subsamples, t >1.96). Before conducting PLS-MGA, the measurement invariance of composite models procedure was performed using 5000 permutations. Step 1 (configural invariance) was automatically established through identical model specifications across groups. Step 2 (compositional invariance) was confirmed as permutation-based *p*-values for all constructs exceeded 0.05, validating that composite scores were formed equivalently in both clusters. Step 3 indicated partial invariance, which cannot sufficiently justify the MGA path coefficient comparison (Cheah *et al.*, 2020). Then, PLS-MGA was performed using two-tailed *p*-values to conservatively test for structural differences between Western and non-Western Indonesia.

RESULTS

Respondent Profile

The final dataset comprised 323 Gen Z respondents (Table 1), distributed across non-Western (53.6%) and Western (46.4%) Indonesia with near-equal gender representation. Most respondents (80.2%) belonged to the mid- and late-wave Gen Z cohorts (born 2001–2007) and either held or were pursuing tertiary education. The large majority (92.0%) had no owned business, representing the target group for the youth regeneration policy, whereas all active entrepreneurs (8.0%) operated exclusively within poultry agribusiness, reflecting the study's strict sector-specific data filtering.

Measurement Model Evaluation (Outer Model)

All latent constructs demonstrated high internal consistency (rho_c > 0.7) and adequate convergent validity (AVE > 0.50), with indicator loadings meeting the 0.40–0.70 retention criteria. Therefore, the measurement instruments are reliable and valid.

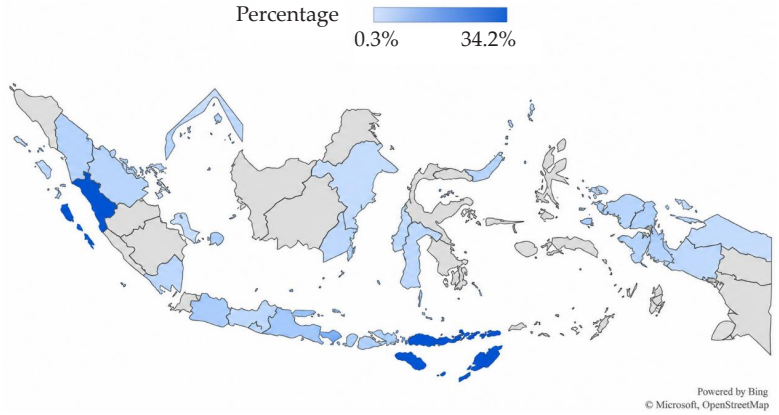


Figure 2. Geographic distribution of Gen Z respondents across the Indonesian archipelago. Source: Primary survey data collected by the authors (July-October 2025), mapped using Microsoft Excel (Map boundaries powered by Bing/OpenStreetMap).

Structural Model and Hypothesis Testing (Inner Model)

The estimated PLS-SEM model, illustrating the relationships between the eight independent variables and entrepreneurial intention (*Y*), is presented in Figure 3. The structural model indicates that the eight independent variables collectively explain a substantial portion of the variance in entrepreneurial intention (Y), as reflected in Table 2. The bootstrapping procedure (5000 subsamples) demonstrated that business motivation (*X3*) is the dominant positive predictor of entrepreneurial intention, followed by academic support (*X5*) and social environment support (*X8*). Family support (*X6*) exerted a marginally significant positive effect. Conversely, entrepreneurial spirit (*X1*), business management skills (*X2*), and risk perception (*X4*) showed non-significant positive effects. Most critically, government support (*X7*) yielded a significant negative path coefficient, empirically confirming the existence of a government paradox within this cohort.

Table 1. Demographic and socio-economic profile of Gen Z respondents (N = 323)

Characteristics	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Region		
Western Indonesia	150	46.4
Non-Western Indonesia	173	53.6
Gender		
Male	161	49.8
Female	162	50.2
Latest formal education		
Senior high school/ equivalent	144	44.6
Diploma 3 (D3)	2	0.6
Bachelor/diploma 4 (D4/S1)	164	50.8
Master's degree (S2)	13	4.0
Business ownership status		
Does not own a business	297	92.0
Already owns a business	26	8.0
Year of birth		
1997–2000	64	19.8
2001–2004	139	43.0
2005–2007	120	37.2

Note: Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding. Year of birth categorization is simplified for clarity.

Multi-Group Analysis: Regional Disparities

PLS-MGA was conducted to examine regional differences, as detailed in Table 3. Statistically significant regional differences emerged in two specific pathways. First, for the path from business management skills (*X2*) to intention (*Y*), Western Indonesia showed a marginally

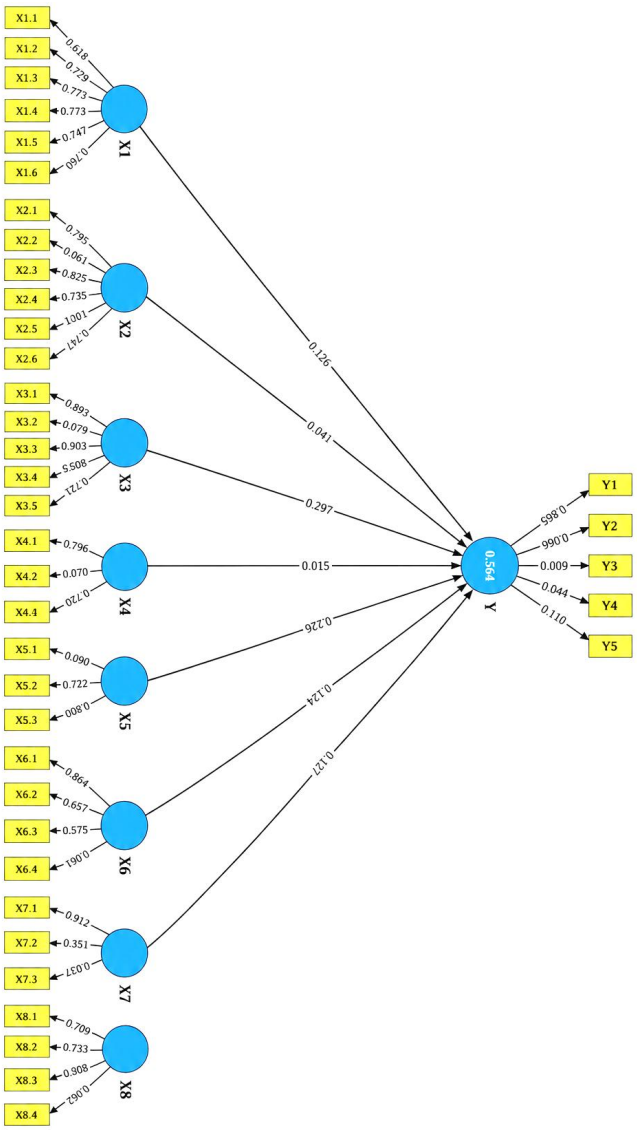


Figure 3. Path analysis and measurement model evaluation of factors influencing Gen Z's entrepreneurial intention

Table 2. Summary of hypothesis testing results and path coefficient evaluation

Hypothesis	Path	Coefficient (β)	p-value	Result
H1	X1 → Y	0.126	0.126	Not supported
H2	X2 → Y	0.041	0.573	Not supported
H3	X3 → Y	0.297***	0.000	Supported
H4	X4 → Y	0.018	0.717	Not supported
H5	X5 → Y	0.248***	0.000	Supported
H6	X6 → Y	0.124*	0.069	Supported (marginal)
H7	X7 → Y	−0.127**	0.042	Significant (negative)
H8	X8 → Y	0.222***	0.000	Supported

Note: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.10. R^2= 0.564.

Table 3. Multi-group analysis (MGA) and descriptive statistics results

Variable	Mean (West)	Mean (Non-West)	β (West)	t-stat (West)	p-value (West)	β (Non-West)	t-stat (Non-West)	p-value (Non-West)	$\Delta\beta$ (W-NW)	p-MGA (2-tailed)
X1	4.066	4.067	0.045	0.338	0.736	0.152*	1.877	0.061	−0.107	0.517
X2	3.692	3.886	0.175*	1.699	0.089	−0.108	1.504	0.133	0.283**	0.029
X3	3.803	3.754	0.353***	3.607	0.000	0.286***	3.965	0.000	0.066	0.584
X4	3.520	3.850	0.009	0.130	0.897	0.035	0.544	0.586	−0.026	0.784
X5	4.027	4.216	0.135	1.421	0.155	0.376***	5.036	0.000	−0.241*	0.050
X6	3.570	3.766	0.130	1.304	0.192	0.098	1.316	0.188	0.032	0.812
X7	3.698	3.919	−0.096	1.333	0.183	−0.109	1.316	0.188	0.012	0.925
X8	3.895	4.108	0.218***	2.842	0.004	0.267***	3.283	0.001	−0.049	0.662

Note: β = original sample; $\Delta\beta$ = absolute coefficient difference between Western and non-Western Indonesia. Asterisks indicate significance attached to path coefficients: *** p<0.01; ** p<0.05; * p<0.10.

positive effect, whereas non-Western Indonesia displayed a non-significant negative effect. Second, for the path from academic support (*X5*) to intention (*Y*), the non-Western cluster showed a strong positive effect, whereas the Western cluster showed a non-significant relationship. Conversely, business motivation (*X3*) and social environment support (*X8*) functioned as universally stable positive drivers across both regions. Finally, government support (*X7*) showed near-zero spatial variance. Therefore, its significant negative effect is a consistent, nationwide structural pattern.

DISCUSSION

The non-significant effects of entrepreneurial spirit (*X1*), business management skills (*X2*), and risk perception reflect a theoretically meaningful pattern rather than an incidental one. Their individual attributes can insufficiently convert latent interest into entrepreneurial intention without a supportive external environment to activate them. This finding aligns with Nurarifin and Kurniawan (2025), who argued that limited land access and weak youth support systems hinder the meaningful translation of individual skills and traits into actual entrepreneurial intentions. Mirkov *et al.* (2025) corroborated this concept across a broader sample of Gen Z attitudes toward agri-entrepreneurship. They found that contextual enablers consistently outweigh personal dispositions. FGD findings further contextualized this result, highlighting socio-cultural stigma (farming perceived as arduous, unhygienic, and inferior) as a primary psychological barrier that requires external ecosystem validation.

Business motivation (*X3*) emerged as the strongest positive predictor of Gen Z's entrepreneurial intention in the poultry agribusiness sector. Ingsih *et al.* (2024) highlighted intrinsic motivation, whereas this present study extends their work by specifying the underlying mechanism: the perceived long-term stability of animal protein demand. All FGD participants consistently framed poultry agribusiness as a "necessity business" anchored in essential animal protein demand that remains resilient during economic downturns. Thus, Gen Z evaluates agribusiness opportunities through observable market fundamentals and commercial predictability rather than abstract career aspirations.

Consistent with Lediana *et al.* (2023), who demonstrated that hands-on agricultural education generates stronger entrepreneurial commitment than lecture-based instruction, academic support (*X5*) represents another critical institutional catalyst. University-led incubators and practical business training emerged as primary drivers. The FGD participants reinforced this finding by emphasizing that active farm practicums, hands-on production mentorship, and incubator-driven business planning significantly enhanced their entrepreneurial self-efficacy and reduced perceived entry barriers.

Social environment support (*X8*) and family support (*X6*) confirm the critical role of social networks in shaping intentions. This finding aligns with the subjective norm dimension of theory plan behavior (Ajzen, 1991; Asrorulloh & Maryam, 2025; Lediana *et al.*, 2023). The marginally significant family support effect, combined with a highly significant social environment effect, indicates an important generational shift: family opinion remains influential, but peer networks and academic peer groups operate as co-equal sources of normative guidance. FGD data illuminated that relatable peer role models are a vital counterweight to socio-cultural stigma.

The significant negative relationship between government support (*X7*) and entrepreneurialism validates the government paradox within this cohort. Indonesia operates key public programs (KUR financing, input subsidies, mentoring) (Akbar *et al.*, 2024), but the paradox stems from a severe structural misalignment between program design and Gen Z's operational preferences. The FGD sessions qualitatively explain that although the participants were aware of government initiatives, they consistently described extreme administrative inaccessibility, including complex documentation requirements, exclusionary criteria, and bureaucratic friction. Thus, the negative path coefficient is driven by the prohibitive transaction costs of institutional navigation, which actively devalue entrepreneurial intention (Ngadi *et al.*, 2023).

The PLS-MGA revealed important regional nuances beyond the national aggregate. In non-Western Indonesia, academic support (*X5*) acts as a dominant catalyst, whereas in Western Indonesia, the path is non-significant. In Western Indonesia, a dense

non-agricultural corporate sector competes directly with agribusiness pathways, creating an opportunity cost that academic encouragement cannot solely overcome. In non-Western regions, where formal career alternatives are scarcer, universities become primary hubs for career scaffolding and risk reduction (Borda *et al.*, 2023; Lediana *et al.*, 2023). Conversely, business management skills (*X2*) are marginally significant only in Western Indonesia, where highly commercialized contract farming and intense market competition demand immediate operational readiness (Mirkov *et al.*, 2025; Novianty *et al.*, 2025).

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Conclusion

This study concludes that Gen Z's entrepreneurial intention in Indonesia's poultry agribusiness sector is primarily shaped by the external enabling ecosystem rather than individual traits and technical skills. Business motivation, academic support, and social environment support represent the dominant positive drivers of entrepreneurial intention nationwide. Conversely, perceived government support exerts a significant negative effect, confirming a nationwide government paradox where administrative complexity and bureaucratic friction actively deter youth participation. The PLS-MGA revealed critical regional disparities: academic support acts as the primary catalyst in non-Western Indonesia, where universities function as critical career scaffolding hubs, whereas business management skills show predictive significance in the commercially intensive Western region. The FGD triangulation validates these structural patterns, demonstrating that although youth recognize the long-term commercial stability of poultry agribusiness, their intentions are constrained by administrative friction and socio-cultural stigma.

Practical and Policy Implications for Animal Production

The empirical findings of this study provide several actionable practical and policy implications for the sustainability and modernization of Indonesia's poultry agribusiness sector:

1. Strengthening Ecosystem-Based Entrepreneurial Support: The PLS-SEM results demonstrate that Gen Z's entrepreneurial intention is influenced more substantially by external ecosystem support (business motivation, academic support, and social environment support) than by individual traits and technical skills only. Thus, strategies to foster youth engagement should focus on cultivating a collaborative entrepreneurial ecosystem that combines commercial viability awareness with peer-network validation.
2. Regionally Differentiated Educational and Institutional Support: The PLS-MGA findings highlight important regional variations in institutional roles. In non-Western Indonesia, where competing formal corporate career pathways are limited, academic support exerts a dominant positive effect. Therefore, agricultural universities could strengthen their role as career scaffolding platforms and safe havens for risk-reduced business experimentation. Conversely, in Western Indonesia, where business management skills show greater predictive relevance, educational programs could focus on practical managerial and operational competencies required for highly commercialized market environments.
3. Enhancing Accessibility and Procedural Efficiency of Government Programs: The significant negative path coefficient for perceived government support suggests simplifying access to public support programs. To address the administrative friction and transaction costs identified in the FGDs, policy frameworks should streamline application procedures, reduce documentation complexity, and channel financial and mentoring programs through trusted academic and peer networks.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

We certify that there is no conflict of interest with any financial, personal, or other relationships with other people or organizations related to the material discussed in the manuscript.

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DECLARATION OF GENERATIVE AI AND AI-ASSISTED TECHNOLOGIES IN THE WRITING PROCESS

During the preparation of this work, the authors used Gemini to assist in synthesizing quantitative results into a descriptive narrative and polishing the academic tone of the discussion. Subsequently, the authors reviewed and edited the content as needed and took full responsibility for the content of the publication.

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