

The influence of self-efficacy and soft skills on entrepreneurial resilience among university students

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Abstrak

Resiliensi berwirausaha menjadi kemampuan yang penting dimiliki mahasiswa agar mampu tetap bertahan dan menyesuaikan diri ketika menghadapi berbagai risiko, hambatan, serta ketidakpastian dalam menjalankan usaha. Fokus penelitian ini diarahkan pada (1) pengaruh self-efficacy terhadap resiliensi berwirausaha mahasiswa PAP FKIP UNS, (2) pengaruh soft skills terhadap resiliensi berwirausaha mahasiswa PAP FKIP UNS, serta (3) pengaruh self-efficacy dan soft skills terhadap resiliensi berwirausaha mahasiswa PAP FKIP UNS. Pendekatan kuantitatif diterapkan pada penelitian ini dengan melibatkan total populasi berjumlah 95 mahasiswa PAP FKIP angkatan 2022. Penelitian menggunakan sampel berjumlah 95 yaitu total dari seluruh populasi yang ditentukan dengan teknik sampling jenuh. Perolehan data yaitu dengan menyebarkan kuesioner, kemudian diolah dengan metode regresi linier berganda melalui bantuan software IBM SPSS Statistics versi 26. Hasil pengujian ini menunjukkan bahwa (1) self-efficacy memiliki pengaruh positif dan signifikan terhadap resiliensi berwirausaha dengan (sig. 0,001), (2) soft skills juga memberikan pengaruh positif dan signifikan dengan (sig. 0,004), (3) self-efficacy dan soft skills juga terbukti berpengaruh positif dan signifikan terhadap resiliensi berwirausaha dengan (sig. 0,000). Dengan temuan lain yaitu sumbangan efektif sebesar 21,1%. Hasil penelitian mengindikasikan bahwa peningkatan self-efficacy dan soft skills secara maksimal mampu menjadi sarana yang efektif dalam meningkatkan resiliensi berwirausaha mahasiswa.

Kata kunci: ketahanan usaha; efikasi diri; kompetensi nonteknis; mahasiswa wirausaha; program MBKM

Abstract

Entrepreneurial resilience is a critical capacity enabling students to sustain and adapt business ventures amid risk and uncertainty. This study examines (1) the influence of self-efficacy on entrepreneurial resilience among PAP FKIP UNS students, (2) the influence of soft skills on the same outcome, and (3) their combined influence. A quantitative survey design was employed; all 95 students from the 2022 PAP FKIP

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UNS cohort who participated in the Wirausaha Merdeka Programme were included via saturated sampling. Data were collected through a closed-ended Likert-scale questionnaire and analysed using multiple linear regression in IBM SPSS Statistics version 26. Results show that self-efficacy exerts a positive and significant effect on entrepreneurial resilience (sig. = 0.001), soft skills likewise (sig. = 0.004), and both variables jointly produce a positive and significant effect (sig. = 0.000), collectively explaining 21.1% of the variance in entrepreneurial resilience. These findings indicate that strengthening self-efficacy and soft skills constitutes an effective strategy for enhancing students' entrepreneurial resilience.

Keywords: venture tenacity; self-belief; interpersonal competence; student entrepreneurship; MBKM programme

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Introduction

Entrepreneurship plays a pivotal role in sustaining economic growth by generating employment opportunities, stimulating innovation, and enhancing the quality of human capital. Within this context, higher education institutions occupy a strategic position in shaping an entrepreneurial mindset among students one that extends beyond the pursuit of salaried employment toward the capacity to independently create and develop business ventures. A prominent institutional response to this imperative is the Wirausaha Merdeka (Independent Entrepreneurship) Programme, an initiative embedded within the broader Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka (MBKM) policy framework. This programme affords students direct experiential learning across the full business cycle from planning and management to development thereby advancing their preparedness for the business world.

Entrepreneurial activity is, however, inherently fraught with challenges, including intense market competition, shifting consumer demand, limited prior experience, and the ever-present risk of failure. Navigating such conditions requires students to sustain effort, adapt to change, and recover from setbacks a constellation of capacities collectively referred to as entrepreneurial resilience. Entrepreneurial resilience reflects an individual's ability to maintain and develop a business enterprise through adaptive responses to change and adversity (Yuan & Autio, 2021). Individuals with high resilience are generally able to regulate their motivational states, maintain a sense of agency over circumstances, and leverage failure experiences as opportunities for learning.

Preliminary observations of 2022 PAP FKIP UNS students who participated in the Wirausaha Merdeka Programme revealed that not all participants were able to sustain their business ventures after programme completion. Several students encountered persistent difficulties in confronting business obstacles, adapting to shifting market conditions, and maintaining entrepreneurial motivation following failure. These observations suggest that students' entrepreneurial resilience requires deliberate and sustained development.

One variable hypothesised to contribute to entrepreneurial resilience is self-efficacy an individual's belief in their capacity to plan and execute the actions necessary to achieve designated goals (Bandura, 1997). Heightened self-efficacy is associated with greater confidence in managing challenges and overcoming setbacks. Newman et al. (2019) demonstrated that entrepreneurial self-efficacy is meaningfully linked to entrepreneurial behaviour, perseverance, and business success. Consistent with this, Renko et al. (2021) argued that an individual's capacity to confront the uncertainty inherent in entrepreneurial activity is itself shaped by beliefs about personal capability.

Beyond self-efficacy, soft skills represent another dimension plausibly associated with entrepreneurial resilience. Soft skills encompass a range of non-technical competencies including

communication, collaboration, leadership, adaptability, and problem-solving that are indispensable for responding to the dynamic demands of the business environment. Ahmed et al. (2021) reported that entrepreneurial skills exert a positive and significant influence on students' entrepreneurial intentions, such that stronger skills are associated with a greater propensity to initiate business ventures. This aligns with Imania et al. (2024), who found that communication, collaboration, and problem-solving abilities play an important role in preparing students to develop independent business activities.

Although prior research has examined the relationship between self-efficacy and entrepreneurial behaviour, and the influence of soft skills on entrepreneurial readiness, studies that simultaneously investigate both variables in relation to entrepreneurial resilience particularly among participants in the Wirausaha Merdeka Programme remain scarce. The present study therefore aims to examine the influence of self-efficacy and soft skills on entrepreneurial resilience among 2022 PAP FKIP UNS students who participated in this programme.

Research Methods

This study employed a quantitative approach with a survey design to examine the relationships between self-efficacy, soft skills, and entrepreneurial resilience. The research population comprised 95 students from the 2022 PAP FKIP UNS cohort who had participated in the Wirausaha Merdeka Programme. Given the manageable size of the population, a saturated (total-population) sampling technique was adopted, whereby all 95 members of the population served as research participants (Sugiyono, 2023).

Data were collected using a closed-ended questionnaire employing a four-point Likert scale. The research instrument comprised 12 items measuring self-efficacy, 16 items measuring soft skills, and 18 items assessing entrepreneurial resilience. Instrument development was grounded in the theoretical indicators of each variable and informed by findings from prior empirical studies.

Instrument validity and reliability were established through a pilot study conducted in January 2026, involving 30 students from the Economics Education programme at FKIP UNS a separate sample from the main study participants. Validity was assessed at the item level using Pearson Product-Moment correlation, with an r -table threshold of 0.361 applicable to the 30-respondent pilot sample. Internal consistency reliability was evaluated using Cronbach's Alpha, with a minimum acceptable coefficient of 0.70.

Data analysis was performed using IBM SPSS Statistics version 26. Descriptive statistics were generated to characterise each variable, and inferential statistics were used to test the research hypotheses. Prior to regression analysis, four classical assumption tests were conducted: normality (One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test), linearity (F-test for deviation from linearity), multicollinearity (Tolerance and Variance Inflation Factor [VIF]), and heteroscedasticity (Glejser test). Multiple linear regression was then employed to identify the predictive relationships between the independent variables (self-efficacy and soft skills) and the dependent variable (entrepreneurial resilience). The t-test evaluated the individual contribution of each predictor, the F-test assessed their joint contribution, and the coefficient of determination (R^2) quantified the proportion of variance in entrepreneurial resilience explained by the model.

Results and Discussion

Research Results

Descriptive analysis of the 95 respondents revealed that the self-efficacy variable had a mean score of 38.22 ($SD = 3.38$), with observed values ranging from a minimum of 36 to a maximum of 47. The soft skills variable yielded a mean of 49.05 ($SD = 4.44$), with scores ranging from 47 to 61. The entrepreneurial resilience variable had a mean of 54.66 ($SD = 4.26$), with scores spanning from 53 to 65. The distribution of scores across all three variables was sufficiently adequate to support further inferential analysis. Detailed descriptive statistics are presented in Table 1.

Table 1*Descriptive Statistics of Research Variables*

Variable	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Self-Efficacy	95	36	47	38,2	3,38
Soft Skills	95	47	61	49,05	4,44
Entrepreneurial Resilience	95	53	65	54,66	4,26

All items across the three instruments were found to be valid. For the self-efficacy scale (12 items), Pearson correlation coefficients ranged from 0.602 to 0.810, all exceeding the r-table threshold of 0.361. For the soft skills scale (16 items), correlation coefficients ranged from 0.536 to 0.831, again all surpassing the threshold. For the entrepreneurial resilience scale (18 items), coefficients ranged from 0.488 to 0.818, likewise exceeding 0.361. Reliability testing yielded Cronbach's Alpha values of 0.910 for self-efficacy, 0.915 for soft skills, and 0.912 for entrepreneurial resilience all substantially above the 0.70 criterion, confirming strong internal consistency. The summary of validity and reliability results is presented in Table 2.

Table 2*Validity and Reliability Test Results for Research Instruments*

Variable	Items	r-value Range	Cronbach's Alpha	Result
Self-Efficacy	12	0,602–0,810	0,910	Valid & Reliable
Soft Skills	16	0,536–0,831	0,915	Valid & Reliable
Entrepreneurial Resilience	18	0,488–0,818	0,912	Valid & Reliable

Prior to regression analysis, four classical assumption tests were conducted to ensure the validity of the model. The results of all assumption tests are summarised in Table 3. Normality was assessed using the One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, which yielded an Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) value of 0.200 exceeding the 0.05 threshold and confirming that the residuals followed a normal distribution. Linearity was confirmed for both predictor–outcome pairs: the Deviation from Linearity was 0.106 for the self-efficacy–entrepreneurial resilience relationship and 0.348 for the soft skills–entrepreneurial resilience relationship, both of which exceeded 0.05, indicating linear associations. Multicollinearity diagnostics revealed a Tolerance value of 0.969 and a VIF of 1.032 for both independent variables, well within acceptable limits (Tolerance > 0.10; VIF < 10), confirming the absence of multicollinearity. Heteroscedasticity was assessed via the Glejser test, yielding significance values of 0.148 for self-efficacy and 0.286 for soft skills both exceeding 0.05 thereby indicating that the regression model was free from heteroscedasticity.

Table 3*Summary of Classical Assumption Test Results*

Test	Indicator	Value	Result
Normality	Asymp. Sig.	0,200	Normal distribution
Linearity (X ₁ –Y)	Deviation from Linearity	0,106	Linear
Linearity (X ₂ –Y)	Deviation from Linearity	0,348	Linear
Multicollinearity (X ₁)	Tolerance/VIF	0,969 / 1,032	No multicollinearity
Multicollinearity (X ₂)	Tolerance/VIF	0,969 / 1,032	No multicollinearity
Heteroscedasticity (X ₁)	Sig.	0,148	No heteroscedasticity
Heteroscedasticity (X ₂)	Sig.	0,286	No heteroscedasticity

Multiple linear regression analysis produced the following estimated regression equation: $\hat{Y} = 26.127 + 0.407X_1 + 0.265X_2$. As shown in Table 4, the t-test for self-efficacy yielded $t = 3.428$ (sig. = 0.001), and for soft skills $t = 2.936$ (sig. = 0.004). Both significance values fall below the 0.05 threshold, indicating that each predictor independently exerts a positive and significant effect on entrepreneurial resilience. The simultaneous F-test produced $F = 12.325$ (sig. = 0.000), confirming that self-efficacy and soft skills jointly exert a significant positive influence on

entrepreneurial resilience. The coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.211$) indicates that the two predictors together explain 21.1% of the variance in entrepreneurial resilience, while the remaining 78.9% is attributable to variables not included in the present model.

Table 4
Multiple Linear Regression Analysis Results

Variable	B	t	Sig.
Constant	26,127	-	-
Self-Efficacy (X_1)	0,407	3,428	0,001
Soft Skills (X_2)	0,265	2,936	0,004
F Statistic		12,325	
Sig. F		0,000	
R Square		0,211	

Discussion

The results of this study demonstrate a positive and significant relationship between self-efficacy and entrepreneurial resilience among PAP FKIP UNS students, supporting the first research hypothesis. This finding indicates that an individual's belief in their own capabilities functions as an internal psychological resource that facilitates adaptation to the varied challenges encountered in entrepreneurial activity. Students with higher self-efficacy exhibit greater confidence in making decisions, managing risk, and confronting obstacles that arise during business operations attributes that collectively enable them to sustain effort and adapt to the uncertainties inherent in entrepreneurship.

This finding aligns with Bandura's (1997) conceptualisation of self-efficacy as an individual's belief in their capacity to plan and execute actions required to attain designated goals. In the entrepreneurial context, such beliefs contribute to the formation of persistence, optimism, and the capacity to confront failure constructively. Newman et al. (2019) demonstrated that entrepreneurial self-efficacy predicts an individual's ability to navigate business challenges, while Renko et al. (2021) established that higher self-efficacy is associated with a greater capacity to withstand entrepreneurial pressure and uncertainty. Further empirical support is provided by Zhang et al. (2022), who found that enhanced self-efficacy was associated with increased resilience and entrepreneurial intention among young people, and by Abuzaid (2024), who affirmed that self-efficacy contributes to individuals' capacity to develop entrepreneurial skills and confront business challenges. Collectively, these findings suggest that self-efficacy development constitutes a meaningful pathway to strengthening students' entrepreneurial resilience.

The study also identified a positive and significant influence of soft skills on entrepreneurial resilience among PAP FKIP UNS students, supporting the second research hypothesis. This finding suggests that non-technical competencies including communication, collaboration, leadership, adaptability, and problem-solving make meaningful contributions to students' capacity to navigate the dynamic demands of the business environment. Students with well-developed soft skills are generally more adept at cultivating relationships with customers and business partners, functioning effectively within teams, and responding to environmental shifts. These capabilities support sound decision-making and facilitate the resolution of operational challenges, thereby enhancing students' preparedness to confront business obstacles.

This finding is consistent with Robles (2012), who emphasised that success in professional and entrepreneurial contexts depends not solely on technical competence but also on interpersonal and intrapersonal capabilities. Ahmed et al. (2021) similarly found that soft skills are a significant determinant of students' entrepreneurial readiness, while Imania et al. (2024) demonstrated that communication, collaboration, and problem-solving abilities contribute to individuals' capacity to develop independent business ventures. Additional support comes from Nursyirwan et al. (2022), who identified connections between creative thinking, problem-solving, and entrepreneurial self-efficacy in shaping students' entrepreneurial preparedness. It is noteworthy, however, that some studies indicate the magnitude of soft skills' influence on entrepreneurial outcomes may vary as a

function of respondent characteristics, business context, and the specific indicators employed. In the present study, participants' involvement in the Wirausaha Merdeka Programme renders soft skills particularly salient for the development of adaptive and resilient entrepreneurial behaviour.

The simultaneous analysis revealed that self-efficacy and soft skills jointly exert a positive and significant influence on entrepreneurial resilience among PAP FKIP UNS students, supporting the third research hypothesis. This finding indicates that students' capacity to recover from setbacks, sustain effort, and grow through entrepreneurial challenges is shaped not only by psychological factors but also by personal interpersonal competencies. Self-efficacy provides the cognitive foundation for believing that obstacles are surmountable, while soft skills equip students to build productive relationships, manage social dynamics, and adapt to the evolving demands of the business environment. The combination of these two factors cultivates the capacity to persist and develop in the face of entrepreneurial adversity.

These findings are consistent with Santoro et al. (2020), who demonstrated that resilience amplifies the effect of self-efficacy on entrepreneurial success particularly among entrepreneurs confronting resource constraints or adverse conditions. Montoro-Fernández et al. (2022) further identified that entrepreneurial resilience in university students is shaped by an interplay of psychological, social, and experiential learning factors. Marliyah (2023) reported positive associations between resilience and entrepreneurial attitudes among university students in Indonesia, while Guo et al. (2022) highlighted the role of psychological factors including self-belief and adaptive capacity in the formation of entrepreneurial resilience in a post-pandemic educational context.

The coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.211$) indicates that self-efficacy and soft skills together account for 21.1% of the variance in entrepreneurial resilience a meaningful contribution that nonetheless leaves 78.9% of the variance attributable to factors beyond the scope of the present model. Variables such as entrepreneurial motivation, adversity quotient, prior business experience, social support, family context, and other individual characteristics may also meaningfully determine students' capacity to confront entrepreneurial challenges. Entrepreneurial resilience is therefore best understood as the product of multiple interacting factors that collectively shape individuals' ability to sustain, adapt, and grow through business activity.

Conclusion

This study confirms that self-efficacy and soft skills are positive and significant contributors to entrepreneurial resilience among 2022 PAP FKIP UNS students. Individually, self-efficacy strengthens students' capacity to confront entrepreneurial challenges, adapt to changing conditions, and recover from setbacks. Soft skills, in turn, support the development of communication, collaboration, problem-solving, and adaptability in response to the dynamics of the business environment. When examined simultaneously, both variables exert a significant combined influence on entrepreneurial resilience, suggesting that students' entrepreneurial tenacity is shaped by the interplay between psychological disposition and interpersonal competence. This study has several limitations. The sample is restricted to 2022 PAP FKIP UNS students, which constrains the generalisability of the findings to populations sharing similar characteristics. Furthermore, the coefficient of determination of 21.1% indicates that entrepreneurial resilience is not fully explained by self-efficacy and soft skills alone, and that additional variables remain unaccounted for in the model. Future research should consider broadening the sample across cohorts or academic programmes, incorporating mediating variables such as entrepreneurial motivation or adversity quotient, or adopting a mixed-methods approach to capture the full complexity of factors that shape entrepreneurial resilience.

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