

Entrepreneurial culture, personal character, emotional intelligence toward improves entrepreneurs' independence

Nuzulul Qurnain✉, Zef Risal, Wahyu Maulana

Universitas Madura, Jawa Timur, Indonesia

✉qurnainnuzulul38@gmail.com

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Abstract

Purpose – This research aims to test and analyze whether personal character and emotional intelligence mediate entrepreneurial culture on the independence of cigarette entrepreneurs in Pamekasan, Madura. **Method** – This type of research is quantitative research with an associative approach. Data was collected using a questionnaire, and the research objectives were cigarette entrepreneurs in all sub-districts in Pamekasan Madura Regency. The population in this study was 1262 people, and the sample was 126 entrepreneurs. Purposive sampling techniques were used with predetermined criteria. Testing research hypotheses using AMOS SEM. **Findings** – The research results show that entrepreneurial culture positively affects entrepreneurial independence. Entrepreneurial culture positively affects personal character. Entrepreneurial culture positively affects emotional intelligence. Personal characters cannot mediate the influence of entrepreneurial culture on entrepreneurial independence. Emotional intelligence cannot mediate the influence of entrepreneurial culture on entrepreneurial independence. **Implications** – Theoretical implications have contributed to expanding scientific knowledge regarding the theory of entrepreneurial culture to increase business independence. Practical implications of the culture of the surrounding community need to be preserved because it influences increasing independence through personal character, namely thinking before acting, daring to take risks for future life and emotional intelligence, and the ability to recognize one's own emotions and the emotions of others.

Keywords: entrepreneurial culture, personal character, emotional intelligence, independence.

Introduction

Tobacco is a plantation crop that the Indonesian people and state need because it generates hundreds of trillions in income for the Indonesian state from tobacco excise every year (McMichael 2024). Tobacco contributes to the country through foreign exchange and excise taxes, provides employment opportunities, and is a source of income for farmers, laborers and regional income. Various regions in Indonesia have developed high-value crops since the Dutch colonial era. It was introduced and cultivated in regions such as Madura, especially Pamekasan and other areas. Tobacco has its charm to attract the attention of farmers because of its high selling value and provides benefits for the regions that develop tobacco plants, especially the Madurese people of Pamekasan; they have the idea that growing tobacco will significantly improve the family's economy, tobacco provides the hope of greater profits (Fauziyah et al. 2010). The Madurese people of Pamekasan have long cultivated tobacco after the tobacco harvest was sold to national and international cigarette companies such as PT. Gudang Garam, PT. Djarum, PT. Sampoerna, PT. Wismilak Inti Makmur and other cigarette



companies. In reality, the people of Pamekasan Madura experience huge losses in buying and selling transactions because prices are not determined by sellers or farmers but by buyers, namely national or international cigarette companies.

With this phenomenon, the people of Pamekasan began to develop and think about establishing their own cigarette company. Since 2001, The people of Pamekasan have begun to establish cigarette companies, and several have already been exported, and generally, they are still at the national level (Rofiuddin and Widayati 2018). The marketing of cigarette production in all provinces in Indonesia has developed rapidly to the point that both official or licensed cigarette companies and unlicensed cigarette companies currently exceed the number of licensed cigarette companies. All thanks to the tenacity and character of the entrepreneurs who own cigarette companies who are known for their attitude, personality, character, never giving up, liking challenges and believing in doing business independently, this provides many benefits for the economy of the surrounding community. Apart from the high tobacco price, this is profitable for farmers and can create jobs, ultimately reducing unemployment.

The Madurese Pamekasan people are known as a society with an entrepreneurial culture; from their ancestors, they are known for their work ethic. The work ethic of the Pamekasan Madura people is known as attitude, personality, character, tenacity, perseverance, never giving up, liking challenges and self-confidence in working in independent businesses. It is formed from various habits, cultural influences and value systems believed in by the Madurese people (Imron 1996). Morning to evening because they have a more noble and honorable principle of life than dying at home and not working. The Madurese Pamekasan community has a culture of looking down on unemployed people who are too lazy to work, and they become the subject of gossip, not only by the community but also by their families. The spirit of independence embedded in cigarette entrepreneurs in the Madurese Pamekasan community can be seen from the elements of Madurese Pamekasan culture, which consists of four elements: First, religion is the Madurese people's belief and belief in the religion they adhere to (Islam) and practice in everyday life.

As followers of the Islamic religion, the Madurese people are devout and loyal (fanatic) to their religious values. In this case, Jonge (1989) gives an example of the obedience of the Madurese people in carrying out worship: prayer, zakat, fasting and pilgrimage. Madurese people believe that belief in the truth of Islam must be carried out in everyday life, whether at home, in the community, in the office or companies. Second, the attitude and character of the Madurese people are known to be tough and friendly. In his literary work, Jonge (1989) describes the attitudes and character of the Madurese people: tough in upholding principles, maintaining family and kinship, upholding self-respect and honor, respecting elders and ancestors, friendly and polite. Third, the work ethic of the Madurese Pamekasan people is known to be tenacious, diligent, never giving up, like challenges and independent. Before they succeed in their work, the Madurese people of Pamekasan will not give up easily. This means that if pursued in a field of work, one must succeed and must not fail. Fourth, there are several levels of social status in the Pamekasan Madurese community, namely Kyai, Ustadz, Hajj, and others. This level of social status has developed so that its existence influences other social institutions (Masyhuri 2003).

The Madurese Pamekasan community is very fanatical in religion, so the existence of Kyai as community (religious) figures as role models in establishing an independent business, such as establishing a cigarette company, cannot be separated from advice, input and guidance from Kyai as role models and to obtain blessings in entrepreneurship. The problem in the lives of Pamekasan Madura today is that those who set up cigarette companies are generally those with a high school education or below. At the same time, the younger generation who are highly educated or have a bachelor's degree (S1) after graduating are more likely to be looking for work (job seeker) rather than creating jobs (Davey, Hannon, and Penaluna 2016). Based on the



results of the researcher's observations, the weakness of the young generation with a college education (S1) is that they are afraid to start a business. In contrast, those with a high school education or equivalent find it easy to start a business; their weakness lies in company management, so the number of graduates is not balanced with the number of jobs or the creation of entrepreneurial jobs; this will have an impact on the high unemployment rate in Pamekasan Madura.

Based on the entrepreneurship ranking of the best countries, Indonesia is in the second lowest position in ASEAN on a scale of 10 consisting of: Singapore 7.5; Malaysia 1.6; Thailand 1.4; Vietnam 0.8; Indonesia 0.7; Philippines 0.7; Myanmar 0.1 (Jayani 2019). So, with the data above the government needs to improve entrepreneurial culture through education, household life and the surrounding environment, including the Madurese community. Entrepreneurial culture on entrepreneurial independence has been studied by previous studies such as Danish et al. (2019); Calza, Cannavale, and Nadali (2020); Djamilah and Utama (2020) but the discussion of variables is different from this research. Previous research examining the influence of entrepreneurial culture on increasing entrepreneurial independence was carried out by Santoso and Oetomo (2017) revealed that entrepreneurial culture positively influences business independence, while the results of research conducted by Farouk, Ikram, and Sami (2014) found that entrepreneurial culture has no effect on entrepreneurial independence. Apart from that, research examines the influence the personal character of entrepreneurs towards business independence was carried out by Zainol and Ayadurai (2011); Koranti (2013); Kusmintarti et al. (2016) which produces entrepreneurial personal character has a positive effect on business independence. While research conducted by Bass, Avolio, and Binghamton (1994); Koh (1996); Endarwita (2021) shows the results that the personal character of entrepreneurs has no influence on business independence. Furthermore, entrepreneurial emotional intelligence on business independence was carried out by Danish et al. (2019); Djamilah and Utama (2020) which produces entrepreneurial emotional intelligence has a positive effect on business independence, while research conducted by Khatoon (2013); Najafi et al. (2014) shows that entrepreneurial emotional intelligence has no not affect independence. Previous research results show inconsistencies in the results, thus opening research gaps and requiring further and more comprehensive research.

The concept of entrepreneurial culture in this research will evaluate the mediating role of entrepreneurial personal character and entrepreneurial emotional intelligence on entrepreneurial independence. This is because the independent attitude felt by entrepreneurs is able to have a positive impact on independence among entrepreneurs (Yahaya 2015). Previous research conducted by Santoso and Oetomo (2017) discussed the role of internal and external entrepreneurial media factors on the influence of entrepreneurial culture on entrepreneur independence, Furthermore Rembulan and Fensi (2018) discusses the mediating role of the family environment on the perceived influence of entrepreneurial culture on entrepreneurial independence, but these three studies do not link personal character and emotional intelligence as mediation, so that in this case, entrepreneurial culture with the mediation of personal character and emotional intelligence influences the entrepreneur's independence into something new. These findings develop a new model, namely that personal character and emotional intelligence variables mediate the influence of entrepreneurial culture on increasing the independence of cigarette entrepreneurs. The relationship between these variables has not been found in previous studies that comprehensively connect several variables and the mediating role of these variables, thus making this study novel. This research aims to test and analyze how important entrepreneurial culture is in influencing the independence of cigarette entrepreneurs, as well as how personal character and emotional intelligence mediate the influence of entrepreneurial culture on the independence of cigarette entrepreneurs. This research is based on the perceptions of cigarette entrepreneurs in Madura

so that the research results can provide broader insight and knowledge regarding entrepreneurial independence through entrepreneurial culture, character, and emotional intelligence.

Literature review

Theory of planned behavior

The theory of planned behavior (TPB) is a psychological theory developed by Ajzen (1985). This theory predicts and understands human behavior, especially planned behavior and within the individual's control. The behavior of an entrepreneur will emerge because independence in behavior is one of the most influential frameworks and popular concepts in research in the field of humanity (Ajzen 1991). According to this theory, human behavior is guided by three considerations: Beliefs about possible consequences or other responses to behavior (behavioral belief). Beliefs about the normative expectations of others and the motivation to agree with those expectations are based on normative beliefs. Beliefs about factors may be more distant from behavior (control beliefs). Ajzen (1985) state the theory of planned behavior which consists of personal characteristics of behavior, subjective norms, and perception of behavioral control. One of the factors is that it originates from emotional intelligence, and then the perception of behavioral control can be developed and modified based on the entrepreneur's emotional intelligence (Khatoon 2013). Entrepreneurial behavior will emerge because of a behavioral plan towards independence in the cigarette business. The theory of planned behavior is devoted to the specific behavior that is developed and modified through three things, namely personal character and emotional intelligence towards entrepreneurial independence, with variables that influence entrepreneurial culture.

Entrepreneur independence

Entrepreneurial independence refers to the attitude and condition of a business that has an entrepreneurial spirit to meet needs and rely on one's abilities (Sukirman 2017). Entrepreneur independence there are three aspects: emotional autonomy, behavioral autonomy, and value autonomy (Shir, Nikolaev, and Wincent 2019; Bratianu et al. 2023; Tahar et al. 2023). Several factors, including genes or heredity of parents, parenting patterns, education systems in schools, and family and community education systems, influence the independence of entrepreneurs. Genetics or heredity is the first factor that influences the development of an entrepreneur's mindset (Ali and Asrori 2017). States that the characteristics of entrepreneurial independence will be seen when entrepreneurs carry out creative actions as values, like to try, are enthusiastic in facing challenges, are self-confident, have self-determination or locus of control, can manage risk, see change as an opportunity, are tolerant of many choices, have initiative and need achievement, are perfectionists, are forward-looking, consider time to be very valuable and have strong motivation, and the character of the entrepreneur has been internalized as values that are believed to be true (Bass, Avolio, and Binghamton 1994; Sukirman 2017).

Entrepreneurial Culture

Culture is a habit that includes ideological values, beliefs, hopes, attitudes, and norms that are shared and binding in a society (Nimran and Amirullah 2015). The theory of entrepreneurial cultural strategy includes role models, habits, taking lessons, giving advice, giving promises and threats, and disciplinary strategies (Gaio et al. 2024). The strategy that can be implemented to value entrepreneurial culture in family life is concretely giving examples or role models, meaning that parents can give examples through their daily activities. Most of the strategies that are usually used in family life and the surrounding environment are obtained by



cigarette entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurial culture is a habit and tradition that influences entrepreneurial independence with values, beliefs and behavior that are expected to be believed by entrepreneurs in a specific geographical area (Hayton and Cacciotti 2013). Danish et al. (2019) stated that entrepreneurial culture is the study of human behavior individually and in groups, and these activities can be observed with the eyes alone, some are in the minds of cigarette entrepreneurs. This behavior depends on the learning process by imitating the generation above, such as parents or older siblings, and also from the surrounding natural and social environment, which is called culture, which are the habits of an entrepreneur that must be inherited in social life (Kostis 2021).

Entrepreneurial culture must be introduced to society as early as possible, starting from the immediate family environment. The family has a powerful influence on the independence of cigarette entrepreneurs to run cigarette companies. Meanwhile, the first thing that needs to be done in household life is to change the mindset of those who think that entrepreneurship in the cigarette company sector is not a profession (Farny et al. 2016). In social life, the success or failure of the internalization process is influenced by in-depth mastery through parental coaching and guidance (Mustakim et al. 2024). The process of internalizing an entrepreneurial culture is carried out by modeling or providing examples by parents, through parents' daily activities for their children. This entrepreneurial culture was ultimately adopted when they were still children who needed an entrepreneurial education process in the household, which later, when they grew up, would create business independence with a high work ethic and never give up by creating an entrepreneurial personal character by being able to establish a cigarette company (Calza, Cannavale, and Nadali 2020).

Personal character

The character of an entrepreneur with entrepreneurial independence can be seen when interacting to convey information or when carrying out business activities and cooperating with business relations (Kusmintarti et al. 2016). Entrepreneurial character is the behavior of entrepreneurs in carrying out daily activities, which become standards or norms that apply continuously and consistently in dealing with the situations faced (Schaefer and Lamm 1998). Entrepreneurial character is an attitude and behavior in forming an entrepreneur, including the success of entrepreneurs because they are action-oriented, oriented towards actions and ideas that emerge in uncertain situations; the character of entrepreneurs can foster independence and self-confidence; character motivates running a business (McGrath and MacMillan 2000).

Ethnic entrepreneurial culture colors the entrepreneur's character in running his business (Yohanes 2010). Madurese ethnic culture, such as hard work, attitude and character, and never giving up, has an important role in supporting the performance of cigarette companies. The entrepreneurial character has provided significant support to transform the entrepreneurial culture, producing good performance. Meanwhile, the entrepreneur's character has a strategic role in mediating entrepreneurial culture towards the independence of cigarette entrepreneurs. Cigarette entrepreneurs have been able to take advantage of the opportunities provided by the government to develop their businesses in order to become a cigarette company that has high productivity and export value that is profitable for entrepreneurs, the surrounding community from the workforce factor and the regional government and central government from the excise sector (Andrade et al. 2020). To form an entrepreneur's character, a struggle must be endured to make it happen, one of which is through an entrepreneurial culture process so that entrepreneurs can have the ability to lead a better independent life by continuing to concentrate on positive things and will find ways to form positive quality character through entrepreneurial learning in everyday life (Kirkley 2016). The factors influenced by the personal character of the entrepreneur that can create



entrepreneurial independence are responsibility, discipline and independence with an orientation towards tasks and results; honesty, trustworthiness and wise in running an independent business (entrepreneurship); self-confidence, creativity, innovative ideas original and hard worker; have leadership and never give up; behave well and dare to take risks; tolerance, love peace and are future-oriented (Megawangi 2001).

Emotional intelligence

Emotional intelligence is a person's ability to recognize, understand, manage, and direct their own and other people's emotions effectively (Goleman 1995). Emotional intelligence is very relevant to the development of business independence, which is the ability of entrepreneurs to evaluate and control their emotions in the process of thinking and social relations (Zakarevičius and Župerka 2010). The three most important elements for assessing the emotional skills of entrepreneurs are: First, self-awareness is the ability to recognize one's own emotions, know the strengths and limits of the entrepreneur, and have confidence or self-confidence. Second, the ability to manage emotions, maintain norms of honesty and integrity, be responsible for personal performance, face change, and be open to new information. Third, Motivation for better achievement, creativity, initiative to take advantage of opportunities, and optimism in facing future challenges. Emotional intelligence is as important, and in some contexts more important, than intellectual intelligence in determining a person's success in life (Goleman 1995).

Hypothesis development

The existence of culture is the main key to the success of an entrepreneur. This depends on the entrepreneur's character, emotional intelligence and behavior, so culture becomes one of the factors that play a role in increasing the independence of an entrepreneur where specific cultural values support increasing the potential within an entrepreneur (Gray 2002). Cultural values are society's most abstract level of a custom or culture (Torelli, Keh, and Chiu 2023). The cultural value system consists of concepts that live in the minds of most society regarding things that entrepreneurs consider valuable and valuable in life so that they can function as guidelines that provide direction and orientation to an entrepreneurial society. Entrepreneurial culture influences all three components in the TPB, shaping the individual's intention and behavior to become an independent entrepreneur. Thus, the TPB bridges the relationship between entrepreneurial culture and entrepreneurial independence by explaining its psychological mechanisms. Entrepreneurial culture positively influences entrepreneurial independence because this culture creates values, motivation, and social support that encourages someone to be brave, independent, and responsible in running a business (Rawaf and Alfalih 2023). Research by Torres and Watson (2013) states that entrepreneurial culture is critical in influencing the increase in entrepreneurial independence, primarily if the culture of the environment around the entrepreneur supports it. Previous research found that entrepreneurial culture positively influences entrepreneurs' independence (Gray 2002; Hayton and Cacciotti 2013).

H1: Entrepreneurial culture has a positive effect on entrepreneurial independence.

The personal character and knowledge an entrepreneur possesses are influenced by the culture that prevails in the area where the entrepreneur is located and can adapt to local culture (Kozubíková et al. 2015). Ethnic entrepreneurial culture colors the behavior of entrepreneurial figures in running their business (Yohanes 2010). The socio-cultural theory of entrepreneurship was created by following planned cultural changes and developments by forming and managing the personal character of entrepreneurs through various aspects of social life (Scott and Marshall 2009). TPB explains that the entrepreneur's personal character forms an entrepreneur's behavior. TPB serves as a conceptual framework that explains how



entrepreneurial culture influences the development of one's character through attitudes, social norms, and perceptions of self-control. Entrepreneurial culture plays an important role in shaping personal character. It provides an environment, values, and experiences that encourage individuals to develop positive traits that support personal and professional success (Arias, Botero, and Torres 2022). Previous research conducted by Bass, Avolio, and Binghamton (1994); Sukirman (2017); Danish et al. (2019) stated that entrepreneurial culture has a positive influence on personal character.

H2: Entrepreneurial culture has a positive influence on personal character.

Emotional intelligence is the ability entrepreneurs possess to motivate themselves, be resilient in facing failure, control emotions, delay gratification, and manage mental conditions by adapting to the surrounding environment influenced by local entrepreneurial culture (Goleman 1999). Emotional intelligence, namely the entrepreneur's ability to adapt to the surrounding cultural environment, is considered more effective in controlling and understanding emotions (Mortan et al. 2014). In addition, emotional intelligence is the entrepreneur's ability to engage, expand or disengage to adapt to the existing entrepreneurial culture and reflect or re-understand situations associated with building an innovative environment related to emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence also plays a significant role in using emotions for entrepreneurs to become confident and competent in building a network of relationships for business by paying attention to the existing entrepreneurial culture. TPB can mediate between entrepreneurial culture and emotional intelligence, focusing on forming individual intentions and perceptions of the importance and ability to manage emotions. Previous research conducted by Paulina and Wardoyo (2012); Mortan et al. (2014) found that entrepreneurial culture has a positive influence on emotional intelligence in entrepreneurship.

H3: Entrepreneurial culture has a positive influence on emotional intelligence.

Internal and external factors influence the formation of an entrepreneur's spirit of independent behavior. TPB is closely related to internal factors that come from within the entrepreneur, which can be in the form of personal character, behavior, emotional intelligence and independent abilities, which can give the entrepreneur the strength to become an entrepreneur. Meanwhile, external factors come from outside the entrepreneur, which can be elements of entrepreneurial culture consisting of the family environment, business world environment, socio-economic environment and so on (Lee and Tsang 2001). An entrepreneur's independence also influences his soft skills because becoming an entrepreneur requires various skills, including personal character, entrepreneurial behavior and strong emotional intelligence (Farouk, Ikram, and Sami 2014). Previous research found that the personal character of entrepreneurs can mediate the influence of entrepreneurial culture on the independence of entrepreneurs (Kusmintarti et al. 2016; Calza, Cannavale, and Nadali 2020).

H4: Personal characters can mediate the influence of entrepreneurial culture on entrepreneurial independence.

Cultural factors, where most local people are entrepreneurs, make it very likely that they will also be influenced by entrepreneurial independence. TPB underlines the importance of beliefs and behavior in this culture that support business opportunities for creativity and innovation, which are the basis for practicing entrepreneurial independence by having more ability to motivate entrepreneurs in the form of emotional intelligence in self-motivation, resilience in facing failure, controlling emotions and delaying gratification, as well as mental management (Paulina and Wardoyo 2012). With emotional intelligence, a businessperson can put his emotions in the right portion, sort out satisfaction and regulate mood. Previous research found that entrepreneurs' emotional intelligence could mediate the influence of entrepreneurial culture on entrepreneurs' independence (Wilson, Kickul, and Marlino 2007; Zakarevičius and Župerka 2010; Paulina and Wardoyo 2012).

H5: Emotional intelligence can mediate the influence of entrepreneurial culture on entrepreneurial independence.

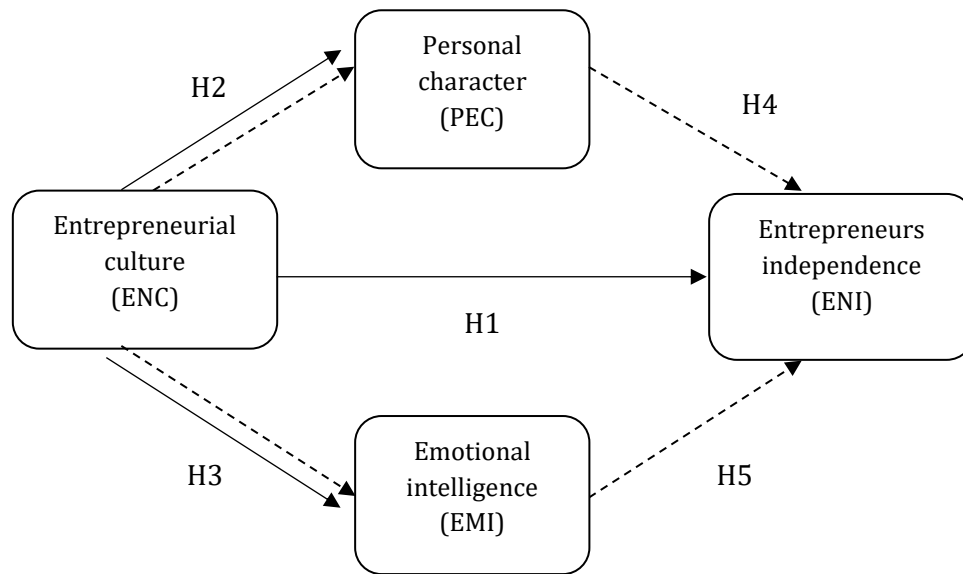


Figure 1 conceptual form of research

Method

Type of quantitative research (positivist) using an associative approach. This approach is also called the scientific (scientific) method because it meets scientific principles, namely concrete, empirical, objective, measurable, rational, and systematic (Sugiyono 2020). Data collection techniques through surveys are research conducted on a population. The population in this study was 1262 entrepreneurs. The data source was taken from the sample in this study. The sample in this study used a purposive sampling technique with inclusion criteria: cigarette entrepreneurs who live in Pamekasan regency, Madura, an official cigarette company with a business license. The sample in this study involved 126 participants who own a cigarette company in Pamekasan Madura spread across 13 sub-districts. The data analysis technique in this research uses AMOS SEM analysis with Sobel testing using SEM modeling with the help of an application in the form of AMOS. The sample referred to in this research can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1 cigarette entrepreneur samples

No	Subdistrict	Amount
1	Pamekasan city	4
2	Tlanakan	5
3	Pademawu	12
4	Galis	8
5	Larangan	45
6	Kadur	7
7	Pagentenan	9
8	Palengngaan	13
9	Proppo	9
10	Pakong	6
11	Waru	4
12	Pasean	3
13	Batumarmar	1
Total of samples		126

Source: primary data (processed, 2024)



In this study, indicators from research variables to statements in the distribution of questionnaires are presented and summarized in the operational definition table. Table 2 is an operational variable in this research.

Table 2 operational variables

Variables	Indicators	Statement	Scale
Entrepreneurial culture (ENC)	1. Masculinity vs femininity 2. Indulgence towards restraint 3. Achievement towards ascription (Jie and Jing 2015)	1. The entrepreneurial culture in my area is created by being able to be assertive, able to solve problems, able to communicate well, confident, honest and optimistic. 2. The entrepreneurial culture in my area has been created to motivate people to become entrepreneurs supported by social norms. 3. The entrepreneurial culture in my area was created capable of creating hard work to improve social status.	Likert
Personal character (PEC)	1. Hereditary factors 2. Family and surrounding factors 3. Educational factors 4. Thinking factor 5. Oriented to future opportunities (Santoso and Oetomo 2017)	1. I became an entrepreneur because of heredity from my parents. 2. I became an entrepreneur because I was supported by family factors and the surrounding environment. 3. I became an entrepreneur because I was supported by non-formal education. 4. I have the opportunity to think about creative ideas. 5. I have the ability to read opportunities for the future.	Likert
Emotional intelligence (EMI)	1. Can feel the feelings of oneself and others 2. Able to assess his own shortcomings 3. Always be grateful 4. Be a good listener (Najafi et al. 2014)	1. I know myself about the actions of feelings that arise in other people. 2. I can control behavior that can be self-destructive. 3. I am grateful to be able to compete with other entrepreneurs. 4. I can be a good listener.	Likert
Entrepreneur independence (ENI)	1. Self-confident 2. Independent 3. Value time 4. Be responsible (Sukmasetya et al. 2021)	1. I am confident as an entrepreneur. 2. I am independent as long as I am an entrepreneur. 3. I am time disciplined as an entrepreneur. 4. I am full of responsibility as long as I am an entrepreneur.	Likert

Results and discussion

Characteristics of respondents

Table 3 shows the results of the characteristics of respondents in this study, where the characteristics in question are based on the educational level of the respondents.



Table 3 characteristics of respondents

Character	Information	Amount	Percentage
Age	20 – 30	17	13.5
	31 – 40	33	26.19
	41- 50	54	42.85
	> 51	22	17.46
Level of education	Elementary school	13	10.32
	Junior high school	35	27.78
	Senior high school	72	57.14
	Bachelor	6	4.76
Long time entrepreneur	1-5	15	11.91
	6-10	42	33.33
	11-15	30	23.81
	> 16	39	30.95

Note: All respondents are male

Source: primary data (processed, 2024)

Instrument test

In the data instrument test, the tables below are the results of the validity and reliability of this research.

Table 4 standard loading factor (SLF) results

Variables	Indicators	SLF
Entrepreneurial culture (ENC)	ENC1	0.836
	ENC2	0.775
	ENC3	0.833
Personal character (PEC)	PEC1	0.502
	PEC2	0.676
	PEC3	0.790
	PEC4	0.787
	PEC5	0.689
Emotional intelligence (EMI)	EMI1	0.749
	EMI2	0.752
	EMI3	0.724
	EMI4	0.616
Entrepreneur independence (ENI)	ENI1	0.750
	ENI2	0.723
	ENI3	0.711
	ENI4	0.671

Source: primary data (processed, 2024)

Table 4 shows that the number of indicators for the entrepreneurial culture variable is 3 indicators; the number of indicators for the personal character variable is 5 indicators; the number of indicators for the emotional intelligence variable is 4 indicators; and the number of indicators for the entrepreneur independence variable is 4 indicators. All standard loading factor (SLF) values of the indicators for each variable are > 0.5 (Hair et al. 2013). This shows that good convergent validity properties regarding the size of SLF have been achieved.



Table 5 AVE and CR results

Variables	AVE	CR
Entrepreneurial culture (ENC)	0.705	0.877
Personal character (PEC)	0.546	0.855
Emotional intelligence (EMI)	0.555	0.832
Entrepreneur independence (ENI)	0.551	0.830

Source: primary data (processed, 2024)

Table 5 shows that the AVE value of all variables in this study is > 0.5 , which means that it meets the characteristics of good convergent validity based on the AVE measure. Meanwhile, based on the CR (construct reliability) value, it is known that the CR value of all variables in this study is > 0.7 , which means that it meets the characteristics of good convergent validity based on the CR measure.

Table 6 model fit test

Criteria	Value	Standard	Fit test
p-value	0,000	$< 0,05$	Good Fit
RMSEA	0,074	$< 0,08$	Good Fit
IFI	0,929	$> 0,9$	Good Fit
TLI	0,912	$> 0,9$	Good Fit
AGFI	0,815	$> 0,8$	Marginal Fit
NFI	0,841	$> 0,8$	Marginal Fit

Source: primary data (processed, 2024)

Table 6 shows that the SEM model in this study has good capabilities in terms of matching sample data (good fit and marginal fit).

Table 7 coefficient of determination

Variables	Estimate
Personal character	0.471
Emotional intelligence	0.676
Entrepreneur independence	0.565

Source: primary data (processed, 2024)

Table 7 shows that the coefficient of determination (R-square) value of the emotional intelligence variable is 0.471, which means entrepreneurial culture can influence emotional intelligence by 47.1%. It is known that the coefficient of determination (R-square) value of the personal character variable is 0.676, which means entrepreneurial culture can influence personal character by 67.6%. Meanwhile, it is known that the coefficient of determination (R-square) value of the entrepreneur independence variable is 0.565, which means entrepreneurial culture, personal character, and emotional intelligence can influence entrepreneurial independence by 56.5%.

Hypothesis results

Based on this research, analysis using SEM-AMOS can be seen in hypothesis results can be seen in Table 8.



Table 8 hypothesis results

Hypothesis	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P-value	Sobel Test
H1 : ENC→ ENI	0.416	0.192	2.167	0.030	
H2 : ENC→ PEC	0.561	0.109	5.164	***	
H3 : ENC→ EMI	0.599	0.109	5.470	***	
H4 : ENC→ PEC → ENI				0.477	0.711
H5 : ENC→ EMI → ENI				0.171	1.368

Note: *** the value is $p < 0,001$

Source: primary data (processed, 2024)

Table 8 shows that the entrepreneurial culture positively affects entrepreneurial independence with a path coefficient value of 0.416, CR value of $2.167 > 1.96$, and $p\text{-value} = 0.030$, which means < 0.05 , so H1 is accepted. The entrepreneurial culture variable positively affects a personal character with a path coefficient value of 0.561, CR value of $5.164 > 1.96$, and $p\text{-value} < 0.001$, which means < 0.05 , so H2 is accepted. The entrepreneurial culture variable positively affects emotional intelligence with a path coefficient value of 0.599, CR value of $5.470 > 1.96$, and $p\text{-value} < 0.001$, which means < 0.05 , so H3 is accepted. Based on the results of the Sobel test, the Sobel Z value was $0.711 < 1.96$ and $p\text{-value} = 0.477 > 0.05$. From these results, personal character cannot mediate the relationship between entrepreneurial culture and entrepreneurial independence, so H4 is rejected. Based on the results of the Sobel test, the Sobel Z value was $1.368 < 1.96$ and $p\text{-value} = 0.171 > 0.05$. From these results, emotional intelligence cannot mediate the relationship between entrepreneurial culture and entrepreneurial independence in this research, so H5 is rejected.

Entrepreneurial culture and entrepreneur independence

The results of this research state that entrepreneurial culture positively influences cigarette entrepreneurs' independence, so the better the entrepreneurial culture of Pamekasan Madura, the greater the independence of cigarette entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurial culture instils values essential for running a business independently, especially in the informal sector, such as the cigarette industry (Friesenecker and Lagendijk 2021). This illustrates that the independence of cigarette entrepreneurs can have various values obtained from the benefits of an entrepreneurial culture, namely increasing motivation in the form of self-confidence, not being afraid of risks, always being optimistic, patient, honest, not easily influenced by other people, having a firm stance, not being selfish, disciplined, trustworthy, sociable, friendly and able to be a good leader in the company (Stephan and Uhlaner 2010). Given the theory of planned behavior, a successful entrepreneur still has a gentle character and social and emotional intelligence, respects others, is a humble, soft heart and often helps local people who need help, both materially and non-materially, such as recruiting workers from family and local communities to work in his company, giving zakat, providing sacrificial meat, educational scholarships, helping build mosques and private educational institutions and so on around the company. Becoming a cigarette entrepreneur requires broad and flexible personal character and emotional intelligence, as well as where the entrepreneur is and interacts with the surrounding community. From the perceived behavioral control side, self-confidence to manage a cigarette business without relying on outside parties. This research strengthens the results of research conducted by Saffu (2003); Senadheera, Gamage, and Karunaratne (2014); Farny et al. (2016); Kostis (2021) which states that entrepreneurial culture has a positive effect on the independence of entrepreneurs. Therefore, entrepreneurship programs should integrate local social values and spirituality into their development approaches. Local governments can also design policies that support the growth of an entrepreneurial ecosystem based on local values and Madurese culture as part of an economic development strategy based



on local wisdom. The implication of entrepreneurial culture's influence on entrepreneurs' independence is the need for an economic development approach based not only on capital and regulation but also on values, character, and the social environment. This creates entrepreneurs who are mentally strong, operationally resilient, and economically independent.

Entrepreneurial culture and personal character

The results of this research show that entrepreneurial culture positively influences the personal character of a cigarette entrepreneur, the better the entrepreneurial culture, the better the personal character of the entrepreneur. Good personal character, mature enough to see, observe and apply the surrounding culture to make good decisions (Porfirio et al. 2023). Even though he is taking risks, the entrepreneur still dares to develop a company in uncertain conditions and still tries to be motivated to shape the entrepreneur's performance so that he is more independent in business. The good personal character of a cigarette entrepreneur will lead to truth, safety, and increasing the degree and dignity of the personal character of the cigarette entrepreneur and getting support from community leaders (kyai) as (public figure) and the surrounding community (Beugelsdijk and Noorderhaven 2005). The theory of planned behavior views the entrepreneur's character as being able to adapt to the existing entrepreneurial culture for the sake of a more advanced and developing company. Entrepreneurial culture shapes personal character by influencing attitudes, social norms, and individual perceptions of control. This process results in a firm intention to follow entrepreneurial values, which, if done continuously, develops into an ingrained character. This research strengthens the results of research conducted by Bass, Avolio, and Binghamton (1994); Kusmintarti et al. (2016); Hutagalung et al. (2017); Santoso and Oetomo (2017); Sukirman (2017) which stated that entrepreneurial culture has a positive effect on entrepreneurial personality traits. Therefore, entrepreneurship training and coaching should ideally involve religious and cultural figures as part of an economic empowerment strategy based on local wisdom to create entrepreneurs who are successful in business and socially dignified. Entrepreneurial culture can strengthen the personal character of cigarette entrepreneurs so that business success is not only measured by profit but also by the quality of the business actors as independent, ethical, and responsible individuals. Therefore, entrepreneurial development in this sector must integrate character development as a foundation for sustainability.

Entrepreneurial culture and emotional intelligence

The results of this research show that entrepreneurial culture positively influences cigarette entrepreneurs' emotional intelligence, so the better the entrepreneurial culture, the better the emotional intelligence of entrepreneurs. Success in emotional intelligence creates an independent attitude in cigarette entrepreneurs, namely the level of self-awareness regarding the ability to recognize one's emotions and the impacts that can be felt (Bautista and Bantulo 2024). Self-regulation regarding the ability to manage emotions, being able to assess one's shortcomings and being able to communicate well and effectively, always being grateful, maintaining norms of honesty and integrity with full responsibility, achievement motivation to progress and develop, commitment, initiative in taking advantage of opportunities and optimism in facing challenges supported by the surrounding culture (Farahbod 2013). The theory of planned behavior supports an entrepreneurial culture in developing entrepreneurs' emotional intelligence abilities, which enable the development of sustainable entrepreneurial skills in the long term. Entrepreneurial culture influences attitudes, norms, and perceptions of self-efficacy, all of which contribute to shaping healthy emotional intentions and habits and ultimately creating high emotional intelligence in entrepreneurs. The steps in starting and succeeding as an entrepreneur can be related to the emotional intelligence abilities possessed



and developed to determine the sharpness of the entrepreneur's independence. These capabilities enable entrepreneurs to make effective decisions, take calculated risks, and creatively move forward toward success. This research strengthens the results of research by Zakarevičius and Župerka (2010); Paulina and Wardoyo (2012); Mortan et al. (2014) stating that entrepreneurial culture has a positive influence on emotional intelligence. Entrepreneurs' development is directed at achieving economic success and creating business actors who are emotionally intelligent and ethical and contribute positively to the social and cultural environment around them. Entrepreneurial culture contributes to shaping the emotional intelligence of cigarette entrepreneurs, which ultimately strengthens resilience, work ethics, and the quality of social relationships in running a business. The significant implication is that business development must include the development of values, character, and emotional competence, not just business techniques.

Personal character mediates the influence of entrepreneurial culture on the entrepreneur's independence

This research shows that personal character cannot mediate the influence of entrepreneurial culture on entrepreneurial independence. This indicates that whether the personal character of the entrepreneur is good does not affect the entrepreneurial culture and influences the independence of entrepreneurs. This is because the direct effect of entrepreneurial culture is powerful on entrepreneurial independence. There may be other factors that are more dominant in forming entrepreneurial independence. In addition, the mediation process requires time and consistency, which has not been achieved. The theory of planned behavior views that personal character does not mediate the influence of entrepreneurial culture on business independence; this shows that entrepreneurs are more rational in considering the values of entrepreneurial culture in society than the entrepreneur's personal character. Personal character is not a dominant factor in determining an entrepreneur's independence. Personal character plays more of a role as a background factor in TPB, not as the primary mediator connecting culture to intention and behavior. Therefore, when the entrepreneurial culture is strong enough to form TPB elements (attitude, norm, control), the character does not play a significant role as a mediator. This research does not align with the results of previous research conducted by Kusmintarti et al. (2016); Calza, Cannavale, and Nadali (2020), which stated that the personal character of entrepreneurs can mediate the positive influence of entrepreneurial culture on entrepreneurial independence. When a personal character cannot mediate the influence of entrepreneurial culture on entrepreneurial independence, then program interventions and entrepreneurial development approaches need to focus directly on forming culture, environment, and perceptions of control, not just on personality formation. Therefore, it is necessary to explore other variables that can potentially be more significant mediators, such as motivation, work experience, or social support.

Emotional intelligence mediates the influence of entrepreneurial culture on the entrepreneurs independence

The results of this study show that emotional intelligence cannot mediate the effect of entrepreneurial culture on entrepreneurial independence. This shows that no matter how good an entrepreneur's emotional intelligence is, it cannot mediate the influence of entrepreneurial culture on entrepreneurial independence. This is because the direct effect of culture on independence is strong. Then, the function of emotional intelligence is more dominant in the interpersonal aspect, not in entrepreneurial decisions (Pathak and Goltz 2021). The theory of planned behavior does not rely on emotional intelligence as the primary link between socio-cultural factors and behavior. Thus, while emotional intelligence does not mediate the



relationship between entrepreneurial culture and entrepreneurial independence, it is consistent with the structure of the TPB, which emphasizes that intentions and behaviors are shaped by attitudes, norms, and controls—not emotional skills alone. This shows that entrepreneurs are more rational in considering the entrepreneurial cultural values that exist in society with entrepreneurial emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence is not a dominant factor in determining an entrepreneur's independence. This research does not align with the results of previous research conducted by Wilson, Kickul, and Marlino (2007); Zakarevičius and Župerka (2010); Paulina and Wardoyo (2012) which stated that emotional intelligence has a positive mediating effect on entrepreneurial culture on the independence of entrepreneurs. Therefore, the theory of planned behavior needs to be further adapted to understand entrepreneurial behavior influenced by specific cultural and social dynamics. The findings have implications that an empowerment program is needed in coaching cigarette entrepreneurs, which must instill an entrepreneurial mindset and encourage independence in thinking and acting and carrying out stress management.

Conclusions

The study results conclude that the higher the level of entrepreneurial culture entrepreneurs possess, the higher their level of independence in running a business. Cultural values such as the courage to take risks, innovation, hard work, and responsibility are important foundations for forming an independent entrepreneurial attitude. The stronger the entrepreneurial culture adopted, the more developed the character and emotional intelligence of entrepreneurs, which include the ability to manage emotions, be honest and confident and have high social ethics. The internal aspects of entrepreneurial personality contribute to strengthening their ability to run a business independently, face risks and make strategic decisions. Entrepreneurial culture influences entrepreneurial independence without going through personality formation as an intermediary path. This shows that the cultural values entrepreneurs internalize are more dominant in forming independence than the personality aspect.

This research has theoretical implications, namely adding insight and becoming a reference for further research related to entrepreneurial independence. Practically, this research can be a reference, recommendation, and illustration for entrepreneurs who want to increase entrepreneurial independence. Entrepreneurs can see the research results that to increase independence; entrepreneurs must have good personal character and behavior. The independence of entrepreneurs is also determined by emotional intelligence regarding changes that can increase their independence through the experience and knowledge gained so far, which is formed within the entrepreneur. This research uses the SEM AMOS research model on variables that influence personal character and emotional intelligence, which are still relatively weak, meaning many other factors can be researched. Therefore, in future research, it is hoped that other independent variables can be added to improve this research, such as independent attitude, self-motivation, hereditary factors (parents), leadership, etc.

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