Explaining Entrepreneurial Action Through Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy And Individual Entrepreneurial Orientation: Evidence From Msmes In Tasikmalaya City

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***Abstract**: Although entrepreneurship is widely regarded as a key driver of economic growth, the actual rate of entrepreneurial action in Indonesia, including in Tasikmalaya City, remains comparatively low. This study set out to map the levels of Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy (ESE), Individual Entrepreneurial Orientation (IEO), and Entrepreneurial Action (EA) among MSME actors in Tasikmalaya City, and to examine how ESE and IEO shape EA. A quantitative, descriptive-verificative design was applied. A five-point Likert questionnaire was administered to 395 purposively selected MSME actors; following data cleaning, 382 responses were retained for analysis using descriptive statistics, classical assumption testing, and multiple linear regression in IBM SPSS. All three variables (ESE, IEO, and EA) were found to sit in the high category. Both ESE and IEO exerted a positive, significant partial effect on EA, and together they significantly predicted EA, accounting for a substantial share of its variance. Taken together, the findings suggest that self-belief and personal entrepreneurial orientation function as complementary psychological drivers of real entrepreneurial behavior, and point to the value of entrepreneurship development programs that pair psychological capacity-building with external support such as capital access and business networking.*

INTRODUCTION

It is well established that entrepreneurial activity fuels economic growth, given its capacity to open employment opportunities, sharpen competitiveness, and stimulate innovation across nations (Suwandi et al., 2023). Indonesia, however, has yet to translate its considerable population and resource base into a correspondingly strong entrepreneurship sector. According to the Ministry of Cooperatives and SMEs (2022), the national entrepreneurship ratio stands at just 3.47% of the productive population, short of the 4% benchmark commonly associated with developed economies. This picture is echoed in the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM, 2023) report, which places Indonesia's Total Early-stage Entrepreneurial Activity (TEA) at only

8.1%, well below comparable developing nations such as Brazil (20%), Guatemala (29.4%), India (11.5%), Iran (16.4%), Togo (24.1%), and Tunisia (17.1%). Such figures make clear why strengthening entrepreneurial action is treated as a strategic priority for drawing more people into entrepreneurial activity and, in turn, into national economic growth (Ullah et al., 2025).

This national pattern is mirrored at the city level in Tasikmalaya. Open data published by the local government (Pemerintah Kota Tasikmalaya, 2023) indicate that, of its 752,546 residents, only around 56,665, or some 7.53% of the population, are engaged in entrepreneurship, a figure dwarfed by the number of residents in economically non-productive occupations. Such a gap points to the need for closer scrutiny of what actually pushes individuals to convert entrepreneurial potential into concrete entrepreneurial behavior.

Entrepreneurial action (EA) refers to an individual's capacity to convert innovative ideas into concrete entrepreneurial behavior (McMullen, 2015; Otache, 2025), spanning belief in an opportunity's feasibility (opportunity belief), willingness to tolerate uncertainty, the initiation of action, and persistence in acting despite uncertain conditions (McMullen & Shepherd, 2006). The literature attributes EA to a broad mix of internal and external influences: psychological and behavioral traits (Bolton & Lane, 2012; Mahmuda et al., 2025), cultural values (Fernández-serrano & Berbegal, 2017), resource-related factors such as education and financing access (Davidsson & Honig, 2003; Evans & Jovanovic, 1989), and situational forces such as economic shocks or technological disruption (Romme & Reymen, 2018).

This study zeroes in on the psychological dimension of EA, given its demonstrated explanatory power (Bolton & Lane, 2012; Mahmuda et al., 2025), specifically entrepreneurial self-efficacy (ESE) and individual entrepreneurial orientation (IEO). ESE captures how confident individuals are in their own capacity to succeed at entrepreneurial tasks, and those with stronger self-efficacy tend to decide and act more boldly under uncertain conditions (Adjimah et al., 2025; Al-Qadasi et al., 2023; Pilukiene et al., 2025). IEO, for its part, covers innovative, proactive, and risk-taking dispositions that likewise push individuals toward entrepreneurial behavior (Mahmuda et al., 2025). Both constructs align with Bandura's (1986) Social Cognitive Theory, which frames human behavior as the product of a reciprocal interplay between personal, environmental, and behavioral factors.

While ESE and IEO have both received considerable research attention (Rigtering et al., 2024; Shen et al., 2021), the bulk of this work has examined their bearing on entrepreneurial intention rather than on actual entrepreneurial action (Koe, 2016; Relente & Capistrano, 2025; Sisilia & Sabiq, 2019; Ticoalu et al., 2025; Ye & Kang, 2025). This is a notable gap, since it is action, not intention, that represents the decisive, final step of the entrepreneurial process (Gieure et al., 2020). Possessing entrepreneurial traits such as self-efficacy and a strong personal orientation counts for little in practice if it never translates into actual behavior (McGee & Terry, 2024).

Responding to this phenomenon and the gap it exposes, the present study seeks to map the levels of ESE, IEO, and EA among MSME actors in Tasikmalaya City and to test how ESE and IEO affect EA, both individually and jointly. MSME actors were chosen as respondents precisely because they have lived through the entrepreneurial process themselves, which allows the hypothesized relationships to be examined against genuine experience rather than hypothetical intention. The study is intended to add empirical weight to the entrepreneurship literature by directly testing the ESE–IEO–EA link, while also offering practical guidance for designing entrepreneurship programs in Tasikmalaya City.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The concept of entrepreneurial action was put forward by McMullen and Shepherd (2006) to account for how individuals move from merely intending to start a venture to actually exploiting an opportunity. On their account, EA emerges once an individual recognizes an opportunity and gathers the motivation, capability, and nerve to act despite uncertainty, meaning it demands genuine implementation through decisions and resource mobilization rather than opportunity perception alone. Sarasvathy's (2001) Effectuation Theory adds a complementary point: entrepreneurial action grows out of using whatever resources are already at hand rather than waiting for ideal circumstances. More recently, Asenkerschbaumer, Greven, and Brettel (2024) describe EA as intention made manifest through a fusion of cognition, emotion, and behavior aimed at realizing an opportunity, while Frese and Gielnik (2014) frame it as a dynamic, staged process running from opportunity recognition and evaluation through to the decision to act and eventual exploitation. In line with this body of work, the present study operationalizes EA through McMullen and Shepherd's (2006) four dimensions: opportunity belief, willingness to bear uncertainty, action initiation, and action under uncertainty.

Entrepreneurial self-efficacy (ESE) traces back to Bandura's (1977) self-efficacy theory, which holds that people's confidence in their own abilities shapes their motivation, persistence, and eventual performance. Building on this, Boyd and Vozikis (1994) position ESE as the bridge connecting entrepreneurial intention to entrepreneurial action, and Krueger, Reilly, and Carsrud (2000) identify it as a key determinant of intention operating through perceived behavioral control. Empirically, Newman, Obschonka, Schwarz, Cohen, and Nielsen's (2019) systematic review reports a direct link between ESE and both entrepreneurial action and business sustainability, while Caliendo, Kritikos, Rodríguez, and Stier (2023) find that ESE meaningfully predicts business survival, founder income, and job creation among German business founders. Following this literature, ESE in the present study is measured through four indicators: opportunity search, business planning, resource organization, and operational implementation.

Individual entrepreneurial orientation (IEO) grew out of the organization-level entrepreneurial orientation construct first proposed by Miller (1983) and later elaborated by Lumpkin and Dess (1996), before Bolton and Lane (2012) adapted it for use at the individual level. The construct sits close to Ajzen's (1991) Theory of Planned Behavior, in that an individual's entrepreneurial orientation is understood to shape entrepreneurial intention via attitude and behavioral control. Substantively, IEO refers to a person's habitual way of thinking and acting entrepreneurially: an innovative, proactive, calculated-risk-taking disposition geared toward generating new business opportunities (Kaouache, 2024). The present study draws on the three IEO dimensions most widely used in the entrepreneurship literature: innovativeness, risk-taking, and proactiveness (Bolton & Lane, 2012; Mahmuda et al., 2025).

On the strength of this theoretical review, three hypotheses guide the study: H1: Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy affects Entrepreneurial Action; H2: Individual Entrepreneurial Orientation affects Entrepreneurial Action; and H3: Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy and Individual Entrepreneurial Orientation jointly affect Entrepreneurial Action.

RESEARCH METHOD

Type and Object of the Research

A quantitative, descriptive-verificative design (Creswell, 2014) underpins this study: the descriptive component captures the standing of Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy, Individual Entrepreneurial Orientation, and Entrepreneurial Action, while the verificative component tests how the first two variables affect the third. Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy (X1) and Individual

Entrepreneurial Orientation (X2) serve as the independent variables and Entrepreneurial Action (Y) as the dependent variable. Respondents were drawn from active Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprise (MSME) operators in Tasikmalaya City, chosen because their day-to-day work gives them first-hand experience of spotting opportunities, making business decisions, allocating resources, and coping with uncertainty.

Population and Sample

The study population comprises the full set of MSME actors in Tasikmalaya City, comprising 28,248 business units in total. Applying the Slovin formula with a 5% margin of error produced a minimum required sample of 395.2, rounded up to 395 respondents. Respondents were selected through non-probability, purposive sampling, with eligibility restricted to MSME actors in Tasikmalaya City who were actively operating a business at the time of data collection.

Instrument, Validity, and Reliability

Data were gathered with a questionnaire built on a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree) covering the three study variables: ESE (X1), IEO (X2), and EA (Y). Ahead of full-scale data collection, the instrument was piloted on 30 respondents. Item validity was assessed via the Corrected Item-Total Correlation (CITC) technique against an r-table value of 0.361 (df = 28) (Ghozali, 2021); of the 36 original items, 35 were confirmed valid, while a single item under the IEO innovativeness indicator failed the test and was dropped, leaving a final instrument of 11 ESE items, 9 IEO items, and 15 EA items.

Reliability was checked using Cronbach's Alpha against the conventional 0.70 threshold (Ghozali, 2021); at the pilot stage, alpha values reached 0.895 for ESE, 0.825 for IEO, and 0.915 for EA, all comfortably above the cut-off.

Data Analysis Technique

Prior to the main analysis, the raw data were screened and cleaned to flag outliers using standardized Z-scores computed on the regression residuals, with $|Z| > 3.29$ taken as the cut-off for exclusion (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2019). Three analytical stages followed. The first, descriptive analysis, classified each variable into high, medium, or low bands using the ideal-mean/ideal-standard-deviation approach (Kusnendi, 2025). The second stage checked the classical regression assumptions: normality via the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, multicollinearity via Tolerance and VIF values, and heteroscedasticity via the Glejser test (Ghozali, 2021). The third stage tested the hypotheses through multiple linear regression, specified as:

$$Y = \beta 0 + \beta 1X1 + \beta 2X2 + \varepsilon$$

with Y denoting Entrepreneurial Action, X1 Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy, X2 Individual Entrepreneurial Orientation, β0 the constant term, β1 and β2 the respective regression coefficients, and ε the error term. Hypotheses were evaluated via the partial t-test, the simultaneous F-test, and the coefficient of determination (R^2), all at a 5% significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$), using IBM SPSS.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Data Characteristics and Instrument Testing

All 395 distributed questionnaires were returned in full, with no duplicate entries detected. Applying the standardized Z-score screen identified 13 data points (3.3%) as substantial deviations from the dominant response pattern, and these were removed prior to analysis, leaving

a final analytical sample of 382 respondents, well above the 66-respondent minimum required for a two-predictor multiple regression under Green's (1991) N ≥ 50 + 8m rule.

A follow-up validity check on the 382-respondent dataset, again using CITC against an r-table value of 0.098 (df = 393), confirmed all 35 items across the three constructs as valid. Cronbach's Alpha reliability values at this stage were 0.700 for Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy, 0.664 for Individual Entrepreneurial Orientation, and 0.761 for Entrepreneurial Action. The IEO figure falls just short of the conventional 0.70 benchmark, but is nonetheless treated as acceptable, given that survey-research reliability above 0.60 is generally regarded as sufficient (Hair et al., 2019).

Descriptive Statistics

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of the Research Variables

Variable	N	Mean	Max. Ideal Score	Category	% High Category
Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy (X1)	382	45.08	55	High	91.9%
Individual Entrepreneurial Orientation (X2)	382	36.13	45	High	89.5%
Entrepreneurial Action (Y)	382	60.65	75	High	89.5%

Source: Results of SPSS Data Processing, 2026.

As Table 1 shows, all three constructs (ESE, IEO, and EA) sit in the high category among MSME actors in Tasikmalaya City. For ESE, 91.9% of respondents fell into the high band (mean score 45.08 of a maximum ideal 55), suggesting that most MSME actors feel confident about identifying opportunities, drafting business plans, organizing resources, and running operations independently. For IEO, 89.5% of respondents were categorized as high (mean score 36.13 of a maximum ideal 45), pointing to a general tendency among MSME actors toward innovative, proactive, and calculated risk-taking conduct. EA likewise showed 89.5% of respondents in the high category (mean score 60.65 of a maximum ideal 75), indicating that these business actors have genuinely carried opportunities through into action: believing an opportunity is workable, accepting the uncertainty involved, initiating action, and persisting even when conditions remain unclear.

Classical Assumption Tests

The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test returned a significance value of 0.173 (above the 0.05 threshold), confirming that the residuals are normally distributed. Multicollinearity was ruled out, as both predictors recorded a Tolerance of 0.716 and a VIF of 1.397, well clear of the conventional cut-off of 10. The Glejser test for heteroscedasticity produced significance values of 0.790 for ESE and 0.168 for IEO, both exceeding 0.05, indicating the model is free of heteroscedasticity (Ghozali, 2021). With all classical assumptions satisfied, the regression model was deemed fit for hypothesis testing.

Hypothesis Test Results

Table 2. Multiple Linear Regression Analysis Results

Model	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	16.132	2.523	-	6.393	<0.001
Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy (X1)	0.575	0.060	0.430	9.576	<0.001

Individual Entrepreneurial Orientation (X2)	0.515	0.069	0.337	7.504	<0.001

Source: Results of SPSS Data Processing, 2026.

Table 2 yields the regression equation Y = 16.132 + 0.575X1 + 0.515X2. Holding IEO constant, each one-unit rise in the ESE score is associated with a 0.575-unit increase in the EA score; likewise, each one-unit rise in the IEO score corresponds to a 0.515-unit increase in EA. Both coefficients are positive, and the standardized Beta for ESE (0.430) exceeds that of IEO (0.337), pointing to self-belief as the relatively stronger driver of entrepreneurial action between the two.

Table 3. Results of the t-Test, F-Test, and Coefficient of Determination

Test	Calculated Value	Table Value	Sig.	Remarks
t-test: Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy (X1)	t = 9.576	1.966	<0.001	H1 accepted
t-test: Individual Entrepreneurial Orientation (X2)	t = 7.504	1.966	<0.001	H2 accepted
F-test: Simultaneous (X1, X2)	F = 156.842	3.02	<0.001	H3 accepted
R Square (R^2)	0.453	-	-	Contribution 45.3%

Source: Results of SPSS Data Processing, 2026.

The partial t-test produced a calculated t-value of 9.576 for ESE (exceeding the t-table value of 1.966) at a significance level below 0.001, supporting acceptance of H1: ESE positively and significantly affects EA. IEO similarly returned a calculated t-value of 7.504 (also above the t-table value of 1.966) at a significance level below 0.001, supporting acceptance of H2: IEO positively and significantly affects EA.

The simultaneous F-test yielded a calculated F-value of 156.842, well above the F-table value of 3.02, at a significance level below 0.001, supporting acceptance of H3: ESE and IEO jointly and significantly affect EA. An R Square of 0.453 indicates the two predictors together account for 45.3% of the variance in EA, leaving 54.7% attributable to factors outside the model, such as access to capital, support from social and business networks, and entrepreneurial family background, none of which were directly

tested here. For behavioral-science research, this level of explained variance is reasonably substantial, suggesting the model has meaningful explanatory power for EA.

Discussion

The positive, significant link found between Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy and Entrepreneurial Action suggests that the more confident MSME actors are in their own capabilities, the more likely they are to turn that confidence into concrete entrepreneurial behavior. This is consistent with Bandura's (1977, 1986) Social Cognitive Theory, under which self-efficacy shapes which activities people pursue, how much effort they invest, and how well they withstand setbacks. Chen and Greene (1998) similarly note that entrepreneurial self-efficacy empirically separates genuine business operators from those who merely occupy managerial roles. For MSME actors in Tasikmalaya City, many of whom work with limited capital and rely on skills handed down within local business clusters such as embroidery, garment production, and food processing, self-belief appears to function as a form of psychological capital that compensates for scarce external funding, echoing the bricolage view of entrepreneurship under

resource constraints (Baker & Nelson, 2005).

Individual Entrepreneurial Orientation likewise exerts a positive, significant influence on Entrepreneurial Action, though its effect trails slightly behind that of ESE. This suggests that MSME actors' inclination toward innovation, proactive behavior, and calculated risk-taking also helps convert opportunities into concrete action, in line with Kaouache's (2024) conceptualization of IEO. The gap between the two effect sizes can be read through McMullen and Shepherd's (2006) Entrepreneurial Action Theory, which separates the entrepreneurial process into an attention stage (recognizing an opportunity) and an evaluation-and-action stage (assessing and then acting on it). IEO, via its proactiveness and innovativeness dimensions, appears more central to the attention stage, while ESE seems more decisive at the evaluation-and-action stage, where the nerve and capability to execute an opportunity actually come into play. That ESE outweighs IEO in this study therefore implies that, for this sample, the evaluation-and-action stage is the more decisive juncture in whether entrepreneurial action is ultimately realized.

Taken together, ESE and IEO significantly predict EA, contributing 45.3% of its variance. This lends support to the study's guiding theoretical premise: that entrepreneurial action, understood in Schumpeter's (1934) sense as the creation of new combinations, can only materialize when backed by sufficient self-belief and psychological orientation, a pattern that fits the reciprocal-determinism principle in Bandura's (1986) Social Cognitive Theory. Because the two constructs jointly span the whole arc from opportunity awareness to concrete action, their combined predictive power substantially outstrips what either variable can explain on its own.

These findings corroborate and extend a growing body of prior research on the ESE–IEO–EA relationship. The positive effect of ESE on EA is consistent with Newman et al.'s (2019) systematic review linking self-efficacy to entrepreneurial action, and with Caliendo et al.'s (2023) finding that self-efficacy meaningfully predicts business survival and performance among founders, reinforcing self-efficacy as a robust antecedent of entrepreneurial behavior across contexts. Likewise, the significant contribution of IEO to EA aligns with Mahmuda et al. (2025), who reported that individual entrepreneurial orientation together with self-efficacy predicts entrepreneurial action among members of the Central Java Exporters Association, and with Rigtering et al.'s (2024) evidence that IEO shapes performance-relevant behavior among individuals. That the two constructs jointly explain a substantial share of EA's variance in the present study further reinforces the broader claim in the literature that psychological antecedents translate most reliably into entrepreneurial behavior when self-belief and entrepreneurial orientation operate together rather than in isolation (Bolton & Lane, 2012; Mahmuda et al., 2025).

Because the study relies on a cross-sectional, self-report design, these results are best read as statistically confirmed associations rather than as proof of causation in an experimental sense. A reverse pathway, in which the lived experience of taking entrepreneurial action feeds back to reinforce self-belief, cannot be excluded. On the practical side, the findings suggest that entrepreneurship-development programs in Tasikmalaya City are likely to work best as an integrated package: pairing experience-based mentoring that builds mastery and self-belief with training that sharpens proactive, innovative orientation, and backing both with external support such as easier capital access and broader market networks.

CONCLUSION

Overall, MSME actors in Tasikmalaya City display high levels of Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy, Individual Entrepreneurial Orientation, and Entrepreneurial Action. Both ESE and IEO exert a positive, significant partial influence on EA, and together they significantly predict EA.

Collectively, these results offer empirical support for the view that self-belief and personal entrepreneurial orientation act as complementary internal psychological forces behind real entrepreneurial behavior, in keeping with the theoretical lenses of Schumpeter (1934), Bandura's (1986) Social Cognitive Theory, and McMullen and Shepherd's (2006) Entrepreneurial Action Theory. On this basis, entrepreneurship-development initiatives in Tasikmalaya City would be well served by an integrated design that couples psychological capacity-building among business actors with external supports such as capital access and business networking. Subsequent research would benefit from incorporating further relevant variables, such as family support, capital access, social networks, and entrepreneurial passion, and from adopting a longitudinal design capable of probing causal relationships more rigorously than the cross-sectional approach used here.

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