The Influence of Role Model and Social Media on Alertness to Business Ideas Among Gen Z

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ABSTRACT

This study examines how role models and social media influence alertness to business ideas among Generation Z in Bandar Lampung. Alertness to Business Ideas (ABI) is an early-stage entrepreneurial capability that enables individuals to notice, interpret, and evaluate information that may develop into potential opportunities. This research aims to determine whether exposure to role models and engagement with social media significantly strengthen ABI among young individuals. A quantitative approach was used, involving 150 valid responses collected from Generation Z participants. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, validity and reliability testing, and multiple linear regression with a Bootstrap resampling procedure of 5000 iterations. The findings show that respondents reported high perceptions of role models, strong social media engagement, and high levels of alertness to business ideas. The regression results indicate that both role models and social media have a significant positive effect on ABI, with role models demonstrating the stronger influence. The model explains 45.6 percent of the variance in ABI. These findings suggest that role models and social media both play important roles in shaping alertness to business ideas among youth. The study implies that strengthening students' exposure to entrepreneurial role models and enhancing access to informative digital content may further develop their ability to notice, interpret, and evaluate potential business opportunities.
Keywords: Role Model, Social Media, Alertness to Business Ideas, Generation Z, Entrepreneurship

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini mengkaji pengaruh role model dan media sosial terhadap Kesadaran akan Ide Bisnis (Alertness to Business Ideas/ABI) pada Generasi Z di Bandar Lampung. ABI merupakan kemampuan awal dalam proses kewirausahaan yang memungkinkan individu untuk memperhatikan, menafsirkan, dan mengevaluasi informasi yang berpotensi menjadi peluang bisnis. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui apakah paparan terhadap role model dan keterlibatan dengan media sosial dapat meningkatkan ABI pada kalangan muda. Pendekatan kuantitatif digunakan dengan melibatkan 150 respons valid dari partisipan Generasi Z. Data dianalisis menggunakan statistik deskriptif, uji validitas dan reliabilitas, serta regresi linier berganda dengan prosedur Bootstrap sebanyak 5000 resampling. Hasil menunjukkan bahwa responden memiliki persepsi yang tinggi terhadap role model, tingkat penggunaan media sosial yang kuat, dan tingkat kesadaran akan ide bisnis yang tinggi. Hasil regresi menunjukkan bahwa role model dan media sosial berpengaruh positif dan signifikan terhadap ABI, dengan role model menjadi faktor yang lebih dominan. Model penelitian ini menjelaskan 45,6 persen varians ABI. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa role model dan media

sosial memainkan peran penting dalam membentuk kesadaran akan ide bisnis pada generasi muda. Penelitian ini mengimplikasikan bahwa peningkatan paparan terhadap figur wirausaha serta akses terhadap konten digital yang informatif dapat memperkuat kemampuan mereka dalam memperhatikan, menafsirkan, dan mengevaluasi peluang bisnis yang muncul.
Kata Kunci: *Role Model, Media Sosial, Kesadaran akan Ide Bisnis, Generasi Z, Kewirausahaan.*

INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurial role models play an important role in shaping students' entrepreneurial development and their ability to identify potential business opportunities. Role models, which may include parents, mentors, and successful entrepreneurs, serve as sources of inspiration that influence how individuals scan, connect, and evaluate information related to business ideas. Earlier research shows that exposure to role models increases entrepreneurial self-efficacy and reduces fear of failure, which supports students in recognizing and evaluating the feasibility of business opportunities (Abbasianchavari & Moritz, 2021). Other studies also indicate that role models can influence entrepreneurial thinking patterns that help young people become more alert to emerging opportunities, although the strength of this influence may vary across contexts (Kong et al., 2020).

The presence of digital role models has further expanded students' access to entrepreneurial inspiration. Through online platforms, young people can observe entrepreneurial journeys, gain practical insights, and learn from real success stories. This exposure can strengthen their confidence and motivation, which in turn enhances their sensitivity to potential business ideas. Research also shows that students who frequently engage with entrepreneurial content online tend to show stronger alertness toward opportunities and become more capable of transforming ideas into potential ventures (Al Halbusi et al., 2024)

Social media has also become a major factor influencing opportunity recognition among young people. As interactive digital platforms, social media allow students to access a wide range of entrepreneurial information, connect with various communities, and observe examples of business success in real time. These features increase their exposure to entrepreneurial ideas and encourage them to evaluate opportunities more actively. Studies have shown that social media use improves students' ability to recognize opportunities through greater access to information, higher interactivity, and increased confidence in evaluating business ideas (Barrera-Verdugo & Villarroel-Villarroel, 2022) In the Indonesian context, social media supports opportunity recognition by enhancing usability, accessibility, and exposure to entrepreneurial content that strengthens students' alertness to business ideas (Chaniago & Malik Sayuti, 2022)

Alertness to Business Ideas (ABI) is an early-stage entrepreneurial capability that describes how individuals notice, interpret, and evaluate information that may lead to new opportunities. ABI plays a central role in determining how young people respond to different sources of inspiration, including the influence of role models and social media. Previous studies suggest that ABI is shaped by prior knowledge

and cognitive processes that help individuals scan and connect information from their environment (Tang et al., 2012). In the Indonesian context, prior knowledge influenced by role models has been found to significantly strengthen ABI and support the discovery of entrepreneurial opportunities.

Although role models and social media have each been shown to influence opportunity recognition, there is still limited research examining how these two factors jointly influence ABI, especially among Generation Z. Gen Z is known for its strong digital engagement and high interest in entrepreneurship, making them an important demographic to study. Their daily interactions with both traditional and digital role models, combined with frequent exposure to social media, may create a unique environment that shapes how they recognize and evaluate business ideas. However, empirical evidence on how these influences interact in local settings such as Bandar Lampung remains limited. Based on these considerations, this study aims to analyze the influence of role models and social media on alertness to business ideas among Generation Z in Bandar Lampung. The findings are expected to contribute to a deeper understanding of how young people develop sensitivity to business opportunities and to provide insights that support entrepreneurship development among youth.

The development of the hypotheses in this study is based on several theoretical foundations. Bandura's Social Learning Theory (1977) explains that individuals can learn by observing the behavior, attitudes, and outcomes of others. In the context of entrepreneurship, role models provide real examples of how opportunities are identified and pursued. Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (1986) further emphasizes that learning can also take place through mediated environments such as social media, where individuals observe and internalize information from digital content. Kirzner's Theory of Entrepreneurial Alertness (1973) complements these perspectives by describing alertness as the cognitive ability to notice, process, and interpret information that may lead to the discovery of new business opportunities. These three theoretical perspectives show that both social interactions and digital exposure can help shape a person's readiness to recognize entrepreneurial opportunities.

Empirical findings support the theoretical links between role models and alertness to business ideas. Previous studies have shown that exposure to entrepreneurial role models increases students' confidence, reduces fear of failure, and strengthens the cognitive processes involved in recognizing opportunities. Bosma et al. (2012) and Nowiński & Haddoud (2019) found that role models improve opportunity awareness and opportunity scanning. Abbasianchavari and Moritz (2021) also reported that role models help individuals interpret information more effectively, which is closely related to the concept of alertness to business ideas. These findings indicate that role models provide both inspiration and learning that support the development of ABI.

Empirical evidence also shows that social media contributes to the development of alertness to business ideas. Thi Loan et al. (2024) found that social media improves students' cognitive alertness through exposure to information that supports opportunity recognition. Wibowo et al. (2023) also reported that social

media increases the ability of individuals to process information and identify potential opportunities. Their findings show that social media is not only a source of communication but also a learning environment that provides entrepreneurial cues, success stories, and market insights that may stimulate alertness to business ideas. Building on these theoretical foundations and empirical findings, the present study develops a conceptual framework that explains how role models and social media jointly influence alertness to business ideas among Generation Z. Role models are assumed to enhance entrepreneurial alertness through inspiration, behavioral guidance, and confidence-building, while social media contributes through information exposure, digital interaction, and continuous access to entrepreneurial knowledge. Together, these influences are expected to strengthen the cognitive readiness of young individuals in recognizing and interpreting potential business opportunities, and therefore, the objective of this study is to empirically examine the effect of role models and social media on alertness to business ideas among Generation Z in Bandar Lampung.

METHODS

This study employs a quantitative research design to analyze the influence of Role Models and Social Media on Alertness to Business Ideas among Generation Z in Bandar Lampung. The population consists of Gen Z individuals aged 18–27 who reside in Bandar Lampung, who currently have or previously had a business, and who actively use social media on a daily basis. Determining an adequate sample size is an important step in quantitative research to ensure reliable and generalizable findings. According to Sekaran & Bougie (2016), an appropriate sample size generally ranges from 30 to 500 respondents, and for multivariate analyses such as multiple regression, the minimum recommended sample is at least ten times the number of variables. This study uses three research constructs: Role Model, Social Media, and Alertness to Business Ideas (ABI). Each construct is measured using multiple items adapted from established instruments. Table 1 presents the number of items, the source of each construct, and the measurement scale. All items were assessed using a five-point Likert scale, where 1 indicates Strongly Disagree, 2 indicates Disagree, 3 indicates Neutral, 4 indicates Agree, and 5 indicates Strongly Agree.

Table 1. Research Variables, Number of Items, and Measurement Scale

Variable	Total of Items	Source of Items	Measurement Scale
Role Model	4 items	(Park et al., 2017	Likert Scale
Social Media	5 items	(Park et al., 2017	Likert Scale
Alertnessto Business Ide	6 items	Tang et al. (2012	Likert Scale

To obtain adequate data representation, this study adopted a target sample size within the commonly used range of 100–200 respondents. Data were collected using a structured online questionnaire, and a pilot test of 30 respondents confirmed that all constructs met the required reliability standards with Cronbach's Alpha values above 0.70. In the final data collection process, a total of 153 responses were

obtained, and after screening for completeness and consistency, 150 valid responses were used for further analysis. Data were analyzed using multiple linear regression with the Bootstrap method of 5000 resamples. The bootstrap approach was selected because it produces robust estimates and does not require the assumption of normality, making it appropriate for social science data. Significance testing was conducted using bias-corrected and accelerated (BCa) 95 percent confidence intervals, where a coefficient is considered significant if the interval does not include zero. This analytical method allows the study to evaluate how Role Models and Social Media contribute to the development of alertness to business ideas among Generation Z in Bandar Lampung.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research results show that a total of 153 responses were collected from Generation Z individuals living in Bandar Lampung. After screening for completeness and consistency, 150 responses were declared valid and used for analysis. Respondent characteristics in Table 2, indicate that most participants were between 20 and 22 years old (45.3 percent), followed by those under 20 years old (34.7 percent). The majority of respondents were university students, while the rest consisted of SMA/SMK students and young workers. In terms of occupational status, students dominated the sample with 82.7 percent, while the remaining respondents were entrepreneurs and employees. These characteristics align with the general profile of Generation Z, who are highly engaged with digital platforms and frequently exposed to entrepreneurial content.

Table 2. Characteristics of Respondents

Category	Description	Total	Percentage
Age	<20 years	52	34.7%
	20–22 years	68	45.3%
	23–25 years	24	16.0%
	25–30 years	6	4.0%
Education	University Stude:	79	—
	SMA/SMK Stud:	41	—
	Other Institution:	30	—
Occupation	Students	124	82.7%
	Entrepreneurs	14	9.3%
	Employees	12	8.0%

The research results include the validity and reliability testing conducted to ensure that the measurement instrument accurately reflects the constructs examined in this study. The validity test was performed using the Corrected Item Total Correlation (CITC) method, which evaluates how well each item corresponds with the overall scale. As shown in Table 3, all items in the Role Model, Social Media, and ABI variables produced CITC values above the minimum acceptable threshold of 0.30, with ranges between 0.501 and 0.710 for Role Model, 0.497 and 0.689 for Social

Media, and 0.421 and 0.736 for ABI. These results indicate that all items demonstrate adequate correlation with their respective constructs, showing that the questionnaire items successfully capture the dimensions they are intended to measure. The consistency of these values also reflects that respondents provided coherent and meaningful responses across the indicators of each variable.

Table 3. Validity and Reliability Summary

Variable	Number of Iter	CITC Range	Cronbach's Alpha	Conclusion
Role Model	4	0.501–0.710	0.822	Valid and Reliable
Social Media	5	0.497–0.689	0.843	Valid and Reliable
ABI	6	0.421–0.736	0.871	Valid and Reliable

In addition to validity, the reliability of the instrument was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha. The Role Model variable produced a reliability coefficient of 0.822, Social Media obtained 0.843, and ABI reached 0.871. All values exceed the minimum recommended threshold of 0.70, indicating that the items for each construct demonstrate strong internal consistency. High Cronbach's Alpha values imply that the items within each variable measure the same underlying concept and that respondents answered the items in a stable and dependable manner. This is important in quantitative research because reliable instruments ensure that variations in responses arise from true differences among respondents rather than measurement errors. With all variables meeting both validity and reliability criteria, the instrument can be considered appropriate for use in further inferential analysis, including hypothesis testing through the bootstrap regression procedure.

The hypothesis testing was carried out using multiple linear regression with a Bootstrap resampling procedure of 5000 iterations. The use of Bootstrap is appropriate for this study because it produces more stable coefficient estimates and reduces reliance on the assumption of normally distributed data, which is often difficult to fulfill in social science research. Through repeated resampling, the Bootstrap method provides bias-corrected confidence intervals and more reliable p-values. This ensures that the significance of the predictors is assessed using robust statistical evidence. The regression results show in Table 4, that both Role Model and Social Media have a significant positive effect on Alertness to Business Ideas (ABI), indicating that the variables included in the model are meaningful predictors of entrepreneurial alertness among Generation Z in Bandar Lampung.

For the Role Model variable, the regression coefficient obtained was 0.801 with a t-count of 6.480 and a significance value of $p < 0.001$. This strong coefficient indicates that increases in the perception of role model influence are closely associated with increases in ABI. In practical terms, this means that students who view their role models as supportive, inspiring, and behaviourally influential tend to exhibit higher levels of attentiveness toward potential business ideas. The effect size reflected in this coefficient is large, showing that role models make a substantial contribution to the development of ABI, which is consistent with the theoretical expectation that observational learning and confidence-building play important roles in shaping entrepreneurial cognition.

For the Social Media variable, the regression coefficient was 0.349 with a t-count of 3.326 and a significance value of p = 0.001. Although the effect is smaller compared to Role Model, the coefficient is still statistically significant and demonstrates that social media engagement contributes meaningfully to ABI. This suggests that respondents who frequently use social media to access knowledge, observe entrepreneurial content, and gather information are more likely to develop alertness toward business opportunities. The findings reflect that digital exposure plays a complementary role in strengthening entrepreneurial awareness, particularly among Generation Z who interact with digital platforms on a daily basis.

Table 4. Bootstrap Regression Results (5000 Resamples)

Predictor → Outcom	Coefficient (B	t-count	Sig. (p-value)	Conclusion
Role Model → ABI	0.801	6.480	p < 0.001	Significant
Social Media → ABI	0.349	3.326	p = 0.001	Significant

The model produced an R^2 value of 0.456, which means that Role Model and Social Media together explain 45.6 percent of the variation in ABI among Generation Z respondents. This level of explanatory power is quite strong for behavioral and perception-based studies, particularly those involving psychological constructs such as alertness. The adjusted R^2 value of 0.449 also shows that the model remains stable even after adjusting for the number of predictors. This suggests that the relationship between the variables is not artificially inflated and that the model fits the data well. The remaining 54.4 percent of variance may be influenced by other factors not included in the study, such as entrepreneurial education, previous knowledge, creativity, or personal motivation. Even so, the regression results provide strong evidence that role models and social media play important roles in shaping entrepreneurial alertness among young people in Bandar Lampung.

The discussion of these findings shows that role models play an important role in shaping students' alertness to business ideas. The regression coefficient of 0.801 with a significance level of p < 0.001 indicates that role models contribute strongly to the increase of ABI among Generation Z in Bandar Lampung. This effect suggests that when students are exposed to entrepreneurial figures who demonstrate success, persistence, and practical business strategies, they tend to become more aware of emerging opportunities around them. The descriptive analysis also supports this finding, as the Role Model variable produced consistently high mean scores. Respondents generally viewed their role models as influential sources of inspiration and learning, showing that observational experiences play an important role in their entrepreneurial thinking. These patterns are aligned with Bandura's Social Learning Theory (1977), which explains that individuals develop behaviors and cognitive frameworks through repeated exposure to the actions of others. Previous research also shows that role models encourage confidence, reduce uncertainty, and support opportunity recognition processes, which helps explain why students who see strong entrepreneurial examples tend to respond more actively when encountering potential business ideas.

Research results shows alignment with findings from previous studies that examined the influence of role models on entrepreneurial alertness. Abbasianchavari & Moritz (2021) found that role models strengthen entrepreneurial self-efficacy and enhance individuals' readiness to recognize opportunities. Similar evidence was reported by Bosma et al. (2012) and Nowiński & Haddoud (2019), who showed that exposure to entrepreneurial figures encourages greater opportunity scanning and cognitive engagement. These consistent findings reinforce the present study's result that role models play an important role in shaping students' alertness to business ideas.

Social media also demonstrates a meaningful influence on ABI, supported by a regression coefficient of 0.349 and a significance value of p = 0.001. Although the effect size is smaller compared to role models, social media still contributes substantially to the way students notice and interpret entrepreneurial signals in their environment. The descriptive findings show high mean scores across all items in the Social Media variable, indicating that respondents frequently rely on digital platforms to access entrepreneurial information, trends, and success stories. These patterns suggest that social media functions as an important informational resource by exposing students to diverse business ideas and enabling them to connect different sources of information. This cognitive influence is consistent with Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (1986), which highlights that learning can emerge from mediated interactions such as digital content consumption. Previous research supports this interpretation, showing that social media enhances opportunity recognition by providing real-time knowledge, facilitating interactions within online communities, and encouraging engagement with entrepreneurial material that stimulates idea formation. The results of this study reflect these situations, as respondents who use social media more intensively seem to develop stronger sensitivity toward potential business opportunities.

Research results further indicate consistency with prior studies that explored the role of social media in supporting opportunity recognition. Park et al. (2017) reported that social media improves access to entrepreneurial information and strengthens cognitive alertness. Emmanuel et al. (2022) and Barrera-Verdugo & Villarroel-Villarroel (2022) also found that digital platforms expose individuals to diverse insights that help them identify potential business opportunities. These studies support the current finding that greater engagement with social media contributes to higher levels of alertness to business ideas among Generation Z.

At the same time, the results indicate that social and digital influences interact with the cognitive processes underlying entrepreneurial alertness. Role models provide structured examples of entrepreneurial behavior that students can observe and internalize, while social media offers continuous exposure to information and insights that support opportunity scanning and interpretation. These influences appear to enhance ABI in different but complementary ways, helping students develop a richer understanding of how business opportunities emerge and how they might be evaluated. Observing entrepreneurial figures, whether directly or through digital environments, also creates a context in which students become more observant of changes, ideas, and possibilities in their surroundings. This pattern

reflects the broader conditions in which Generation Z engages with entrepreneurial content in everyday life and helps explain why both variables show significant effects in this study.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study show that both role models and social media play an important role in shaping the alertness to business ideas among Generation Z in Bandar Lampung. The results of the bootstrap regression analysis confirm that role models have the strongest influence on entrepreneurial alertness, indicating that observational learning, inspiration, and perceived support contribute significantly to students' ability to recognize and evaluate potential business opportunities. Social media also contributes positively to alertness, reflecting its role as a major source of information, exposure to entrepreneurial content, and interaction with online communities. These findings align with the theoretical foundations of Social Learning Theory and Social Cognitive Theory, showing that both direct and digital environments shape the cognitive processes involved in noticing and interpreting opportunities. The descriptive analysis further supports these relationships, as respondents reported high perceptions of role models, active use of social media, and strong attentiveness to business ideas.

Based on these results, this study concludes that strengthening social and digital influences may support the entrepreneurial development of young individuals. Learning environments that integrate exposure to entrepreneurial figures, success stories, and relevant digital content can help students become more alert to opportunities and more confident in evaluating potential ideas. Future research may examine additional factors that contribute to entrepreneurial alertness, such as creativity, entrepreneurial education, prior knowledge, or motivation, to gain a broader understanding of how different influences interact in shaping opportunity recognition. Studies involving different regions, qualitative approaches, or longitudinal designs may also provide deeper insights into how entrepreneurial alertness develops over time.

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