

## Entrepreneurial Intention of Millennial Farmers in the Vegetable Production Center of Bangka Regency: Theory of Planned Behavior

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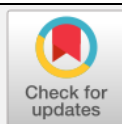
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### ABSTRACT

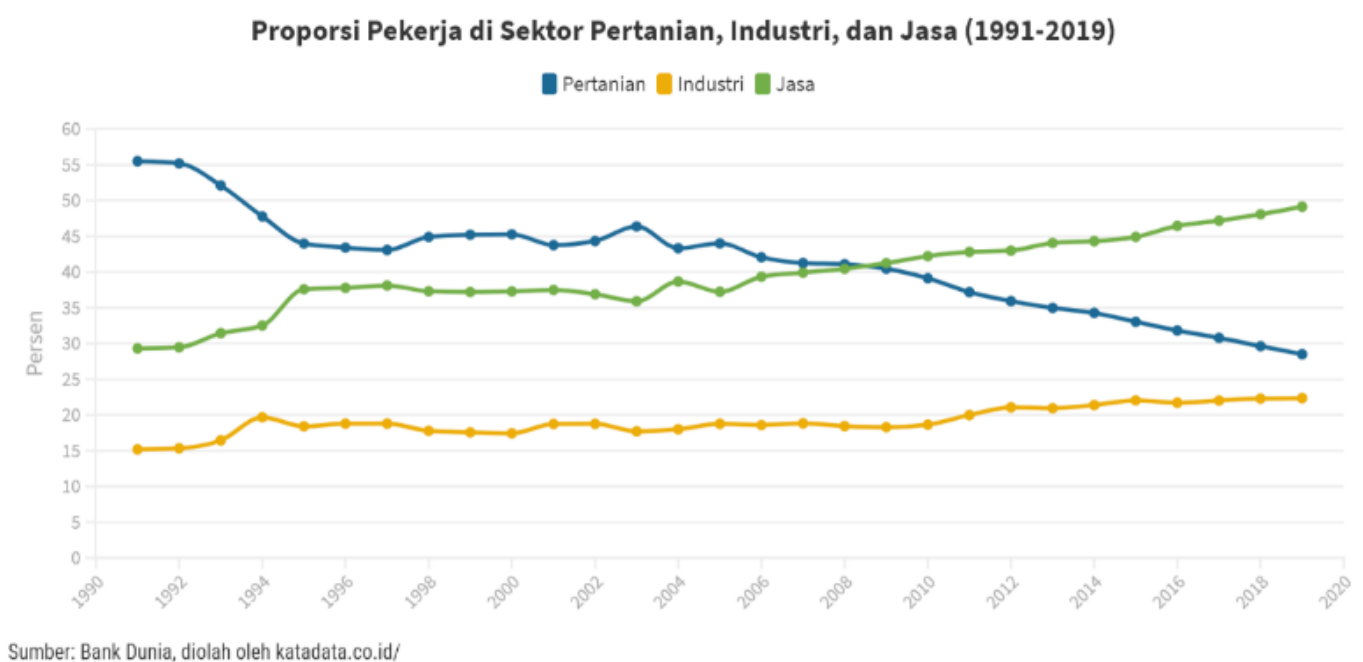
Millennial farmers are part of the farmer regeneration acceleration program aimed at increasing the number of farmers and expanding the supply of entrepreneurs in the agricultural sector. This study was conducted to predict the behavior of millennial farmers through their intentions, based on the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), comprehensively integrating individual aspects with their environment. The purpose of the study is to analyze the factors that influence the entrepreneurial intentions of millennial farmers. The research method employed a survey method, with sampling carried out using a saturation sampling method involving 54 respondents. Data analysis was conducted using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) analysis utilizing Smart Partial Least Squares (PLS) 3.0. The research findings revealed that 81.49% of millennial farmers have entrepreneurial intentions, specifically in agriculture. Entrepreneurial intention is significantly influenced by variables such as attitude toward the behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavior control. The entrepreneurial intention of millennial farmers is predominantly influenced by attitude toward the behavior and subjective norms. For millennial farmers deciding to venture into entrepreneurship, relying solely on the importance of belief and self-evaluation is not enough; the motivation and desire to meet expectations also play a crucial role in enhancing intention.

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## 1. Introduction

The declining trend in the number of people working in the agricultural sector continues, and this needs the attention of researchers, given the strategic role of agriculture in development. The proportion of agricultural sector workers published by the World Bank ([Figure 1](#)) shows that the proportion of the population working in agriculture has decreased, especially from 2010 to 2019, when it dropped to 28.5%. This information is corroborated by data on the percentage of Informal Agricultural Workers in Indonesia, which has declined over the last three years. The percentage of Informal Agricultural Workers was 87.59% in 2019 and 88.43% in 2021 ([Badan Pusat Statistik, 2022](#)).



**Figure 1. The proportion of workers in Agriculture (*Pertanian*), Industry (*Industri*), and Services (*Jasa*) (1991-2019)**

Source: World Bank, processed by Katadata ([Katadata, 2021](#))

The declining percentage of Informal Agricultural Workers also occurred in the Bangka Belitung Islands Province, from 71.75% in 2019 to 69.98% in 2021 ([Badan Pusat Statistik, 2022](#)). Agriculture is one of the prioritized sectors in the post-tin mining era; therefore, the issue of the declining number of agricultural workers needs to be addressed.

Aging farmers is an issue of farmer aging, with an increase in the number of farmers aged over 55 years while the number of young farmers decreases simultaneously ([Susilowati, 2016](#)). This reality can become a serious problem; while aging among farmers cannot be avoided, the issue of decreasing numbers of young farmers may still be preventable. Therefore, studies regarding the intentions or interests of the younger generation to engage in the agricultural sector are still necessary. Setiawan et al. in 2020, state that the “young generation” or

“millennial generation” refers to those born between 1980 and 2000, typically growing up alongside technology and the internet (Sandi, 2021).

The results of the People’s Coalition on Food Sovereignty research show that the younger generation has a less favorable perception of jobs in the agricultural sector (Koalisi Rakyat untuk Keadaulatan Pangan, 2018), with few millennials deciding to become farmers (Ilyas, 2022). The interest in young labor in the agricultural sector is declining because agricultural sector jobs are known for their less prestigious image, high risks, and lack of certainty in income stability and continuity (Susilowati, 2016). The findings of previous research sufficiently indicate that jobs in the agricultural sector are less attractive to the younger generation. This results in the decision of the younger generation to engage in the agricultural sector, which is generally not their first choice; various forms of compulsion influence many decisions. However, millennial farmers have the potential to maintain their commitment to operating in the agricultural sector (Haryanto, Anwarudin, et al., 2021).

The government’s concrete step to address the aging farmer issue has been pursued through farmer regeneration, including the program to produce one million millennial farmers annually (Kementerian Pertanian Republik Indonesia, 2020). The main characteristics of the millennial farmers targeted in this program are those aged 19 to 39 years, possessing a millennial spirit, being adaptive to technology, and having business networks (Badan Penyuluhan dan Pengembangan Sumber Daya Manusia Pertanian, 2020). Implementing the millennial farmer program in the Bangka Belitung Islands Province has involved the younger generation from various districts, including the Bangka Regency. One of the flagship agricultural products in the Bangka Regency is vegetable production, with the vegetable production center located in the Merawang sub-district. The presence of millennial farmers is considered as one alternative to accelerate farmer regeneration (Haryanto, Effendy, et al., 2021). The existence of millennial farmers also has the potential to increase the number of entrepreneurs in the agricultural sector. Previous research found a positive influence of millennial farmer characteristics on the growth of new entrepreneurship in the agricultural sector (Haryanto et al., 2022).

The question is whether the presence of millennial farmers in this vegetable production center area can potentially increase the supply of entrepreneurs in the agricultural sector. The young generation involved in the millennial farmer program has diverse backgrounds in making decisions to engage in agricultural business. Hence, issues related to sustainability, group activity, and willingness to learn are relatively uneven. Therefore, millennial farmers’ entrepreneurship intentions must be identified in the vegetable production center area of the Bangka Regency. This study is necessary to determine whether millennial farmers in that area can be relied upon to increase new entrepreneurship in the agricultural sector potentially, thus solving the farmer regeneration issue. Specifically, this entrepreneurship intention study among millennial farmers will analyze how the intention is formed and what factors influence it. This research aims to analyze entrepreneurship intentions and the factors shaping the entrepreneurship intentions of millennial farmers using the variable approach of the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB).

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1. Entrepreneurial Behavior Intention**

Intention or intentionality originates from Latin, meaning the initial step towards a specific behavior target. According to Reynolds & Miller, entrepreneurial intention is also demonstrated by an individual’s determination to consider starting a business (Tung, 2011). According to

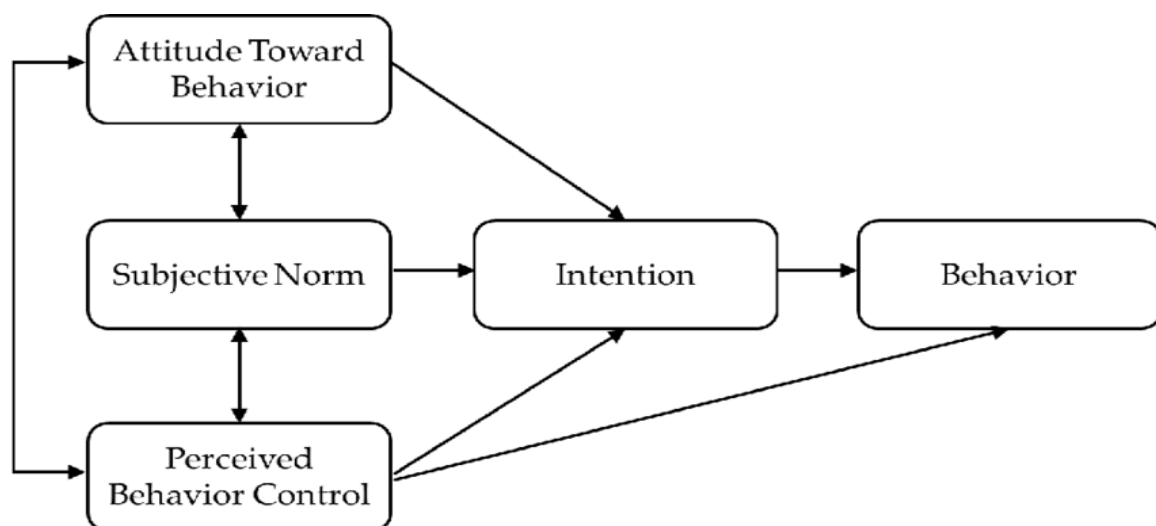
Ajzen, an individual's entrepreneurial behavior can be predicted by assessing entrepreneurial intention, which is the link between one's attitude toward entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial behavior (Tung, 2011). Intention resides within individuals, indicating a desire to act (Handaru et al., 2015). Entrepreneurial intention is explained by entrepreneurial attitude, subjective norms, and perceived risk or behavior control (Tjahjono et al., 2013; Tjahjono & Palupi, 2014).

Factors influencing intention in entrepreneurship are also widely studied using the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) approach, with intention factors being attitude, subjective norms, perceived feasibility, and intention. There are three antecedents of technology-based entrepreneurial intention: attitude, perceived risk or behavior control, and subjective norms (Tjahjono et al., 2013; Tjahjono & Palupi, 2014). In addition, Sulistyaningrum and Palupi identified three antecedents of student entrepreneurial intention: attitude, subjective norms, and self-efficacy, with attitude being the most dominant antecedent explaining entrepreneurial intention (Sulistyaningrum & Palupi, 2016).

Based on the previous research findings, the entrepreneurial intention in this study refers to the intention of farmers to behave entrepreneurially in pursuing their profession as millennial farmers. The entrepreneurial intention of millennial farmers will be examined based on the factors of the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), including attitude, subjective norms, and behavior control, as factors influencing the formation of intention.

## 2.2. Theory of Planned Behavior

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) is developed from the extension of the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), assuming that attitude and subjective norms are two determinants of intention to behave. Ajzen examined human behavior formation and stated that attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavior control (PBC) determine intention and behavior (Tung, 2011). Ajzen modified his theory into TPB (Theory of Planned Behavior) – Figure 2. TPB is appropriately used to study the planning of human behavior formation based on its intention, including entrepreneurial behavior.



**Figure 2. Model of human behavior formation in the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)**

The study of entrepreneurial intention is also based on the theory of entrepreneurial behavior. Ducker defines entrepreneurship as behavior or work practices based on theory (Kennard, 2021). At the same time, Wesper views entrepreneurial behavior as work, where the



choice of workplace and field of work also determines the success of entrepreneurship (Sulaiman, 2021). Based on the theoretical framework and hypothesis formation outlined, the model in this study is constructed by integrating the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), Ducker's theory of entrepreneurial behavior, and Wesper's theory.

### **3. Research Methodology**

#### **3.1. Research Location and Time**

The research was conducted in the Merawang District, Bangka Regency, Bangka Belitung Islands Province, Indonesia. The research was carried out from July to September 2022.

#### **3.2. Data Type and Sources**

The data used in this research involved primary and secondary data. Primary data included information on entrepreneurial intention, attitudes, subjective norms, and behavioral control of millennial farmers in agriculture. Meanwhile, secondary data were obtained from the BPS-Statistic of Indonesia of the Bangka Belitung Islands Province.

#### **3.3. Sample Determination Method**

The sampling method used was simple random sampling (saturated sample), with 54 farmer respondents.

#### **3.4. Design, Data Processing Method, and Analysis**

Quantitative data were processed using Microsoft Excel 2010 and analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) analysis using the Smart Partial Least Squares (PLS) 3 method. The reason for using SEM was its ability to depict direct relationships between constructs in the model (Wijanto, 2008). The data analysis using SEM PLS involved one endogenous latent variable, namely entrepreneurial intention (EI), measured through indicators of the desire to behave entrepreneurially in agriculture, and three exogenous latent variables, namely Attitude Toward the Behavior (ATB), Subjective Norms (SN), and Perceived Behavioral Control (PBC).

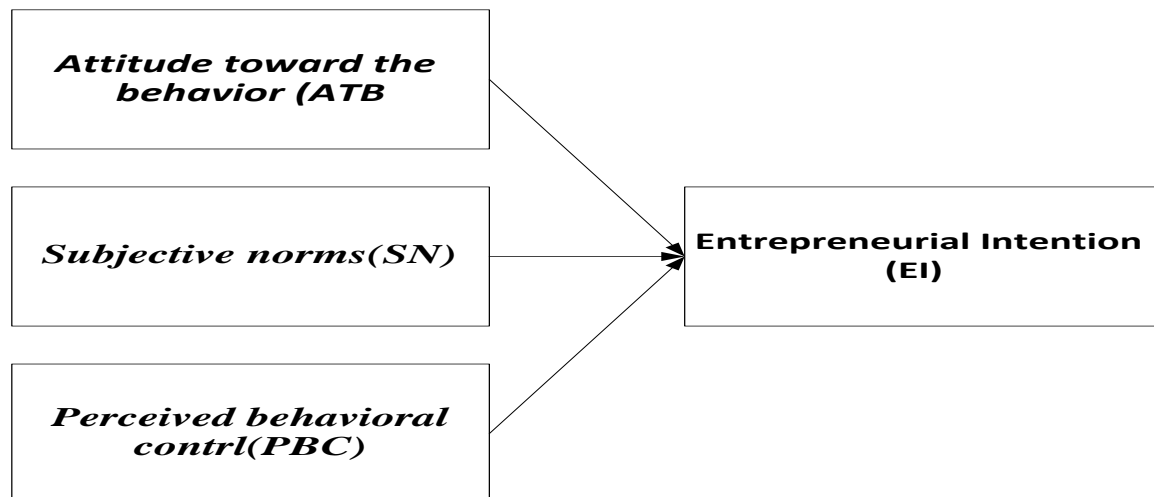
Attitude Toward the Behavior (ATB) was measured through eight indicators, such as beliefs about the consequences of hard work behavior (ATB1), willingness to take risks (ATB2), honesty (ATB3), confidence (ATB4), perseverance (ATB5), creativity-innovation (ATB6), independence (ATB7), and leadership (ATB8). Additionally, Attitude Toward the Behavior (ATB) was also measured through seven indicators evaluating the consequences of behavior, such as hard work (ATB9), willingness to take risks (ATB10), honesty (ATB11), confidence (ATB12), creativity-innovation (ATB13), independence (ATB14), and leadership (ATB15).

Subjective Norms (SN) were measured through five indicators, namely beliefs about organizational expectations (SN1), parents (SN2), family (SN3), extension workers (SN4), and friends (SN5). Furthermore, Subjective Norms (SN) were also measured through five indicators of motivation to comply with organizational expectations (SN6), parents (SN7), family (SN8), extension workers (SN9), and friends (SN10).

Perceived Behavioral Control (PBC) was measured through three indicators of belief in the ease or difficulty of accessing institutions (PBC1), overcoming boredom (PBC2), and the complexity of entrepreneurship (PBC3). Moreover, PBC was also measured through three indicators: strength of ability to control access to institutions (PBC4), control of overcoming boredom (PBC5), and control of overcoming the complexity of entrepreneurship (PBC6).

The data analysis process was conducted in two stages. First is the model analysis stage, or Outer Model Analysis (Measurement Model) and Inner Model Analysis (Structural Model). The

Outer Model Analysis aimed to explain the relationship between indicator variables (manifest) and latent variables, while the Inner Model Analysis explained the relationship between latent. Second, significance testing is based on estimating path coefficient parameters using resampling methods, namely bootstrapping. The structural model constructed in this research can be seen in [Figure 3](#).

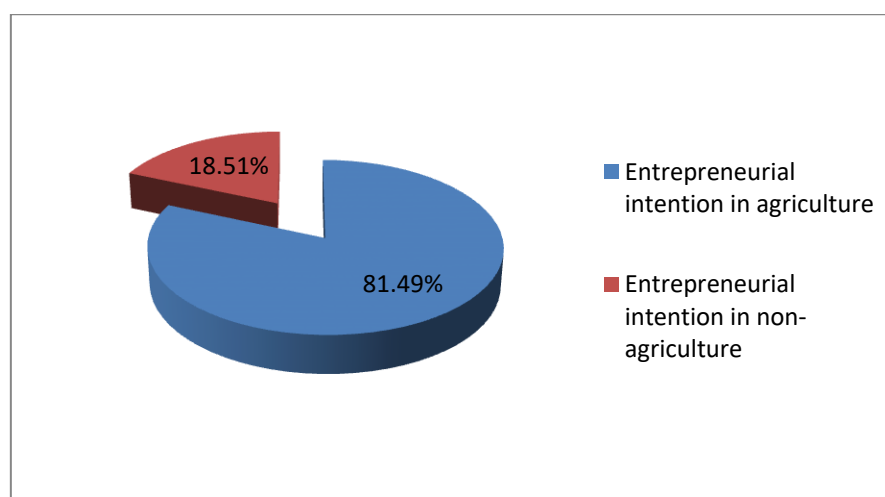


**Figure 3. Millennial Farmer Entrepreneurial Intention Research Model**

## 4. Results and Discussion

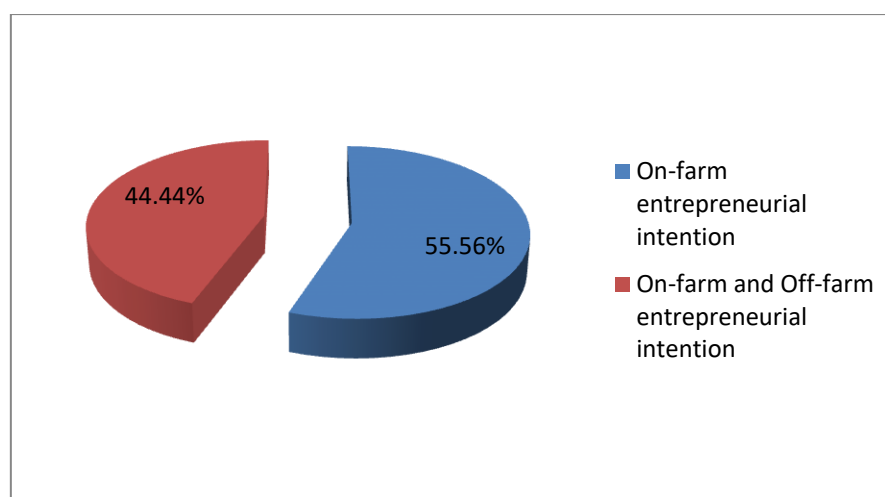
### 4.1. Entrepreneurial Intention of Millennial Farmers

Agricultural activities have predominantly become the livelihood of the Indonesian population; thus, the agricultural sector has the potential to generate new entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurs from non-agricultural sectors dominate more than those from the agricultural sector ([Burhanuddin et al., 2019](#)). Many factors influence the decision to become an entrepreneur in the agricultural field. The presence of coercion among millennial farmers is suspected in making decisions to engage in agriculture ([Haryanto et al., 2018](#)).



**Figure 4. Entrepreneurial Intentions of Millennial Farmers**

This research found that 81.49% of millennial farmers have entrepreneurial intentions in the agricultural field, with only a small percentage of 18.51% showing no interest in agriculture.



**Figure 5. Entrepreneurial Intentions of Millennial Farmers in Bangka Regency: On-Farm vs. Off-Farm Activities**

Millennial farmers in the vegetable production center area of Bangka Regency generally conduct on-farm business activities. Still, the entrepreneurial intentions for on-farm and off-farm activities are not significantly different. 55.56% of farmers prefer to only engage in on-farm activities or cultivation. The remaining 44.44% have entrepreneurial intentions for both on-farm and off-farm activities, including cultivation and marketing.

Entrepreneurship is a work ethic that plays an important role in determining the success of farmers in managing their businesses. Entrepreneurship is one of the human capital variables of Muntok white pepper farmers, unlike farmers in vegetable production centers. Muntok white pepper farmers already exhibit entrepreneurial behavior when managing their businesses (Astuti et al., 2019). The entrepreneurial intention held by farmers in vegetable production centers indicates their desire to behave entrepreneurially in managing their businesses. However, this behavior is not yet fully evident in their business management practices.

## 4.2. Entrepreneurial Intention Model Analysis

The entrepreneurial intention model of millennial farmers in this vegetable production center area is built based on the theory of planned behavior. Therefore, the developed model assumes that millennial farmers have entrepreneurial intentions influenced by three antecedent variables: attitude toward the behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control.

### 4.2.1. Measurement Model Evaluation

The main objective of the measurement model evaluation is to determine whether the indicator variables used can truly measure the constructs. Measurement model evaluation is carried out through 2 stages. First, assessing validity based on the Loading Factor ( $\lambda$ ) value must be greater than 0.5 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Second, the reliability scale indicated by the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value, which must be greater than 0.5 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981), and the Composite Reliability, which must be greater than 0.7 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

The results obtained from the PLS algorithm process in the research model show that all indicators used are valid based on the evaluation criteria in the PLS measurement model after undergoing the validation process of stage 2 (Table 1).

**Table 1. Validity and reliability of indicators for each variable based on Loading Factor, Composite Reliability, and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values**

Variable	Indicator	Loading Factor	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)	Description
<b>Attitude Toward the Behavior</b>	ATB1	0.642	0.910	0.890	Valid and Reliable
	ATB2	0.528			
	ATB3	0.726			
	ATB4	0.877			
	ATB5	0.826			
	ATB7	0.657			
	ATB8	0.559			
	ATB9	0.705			
	ATB10	0.654			
	ATB11	0.633			
	ATB12	0.770			
<b>Subjective Norms</b>	SN1	0.575	0.745	0.505	Valid and Reliable
	SN4	0.751			
	SN5	0.689			
	SN6	0.759			
	SN8	0.527			
	SN9	0.844			
<b>Perceived Behavioral Control</b>	SN10	0.775	0.875	0.598	Valid and Reliable
	PBC1	0.562			
	PBC2	0.534			
	PBC3	0.555			
	PBC5	0.736			
<b>Entrepreneurial Intention</b>	PBC6	0.641	1.000	1.000	Valid and Reliable
	El.1	1.00			

The PLS algorithm process with the validated model also yields reliable results, as indicated by the Composite Reliability and Average Variance Extracted values exceeding 0.5 and 0.7, respectively, in **Table 1**. This means that all indicator variables are reliable in measuring their constructs, and the final model obtained is considered suitable for hypothesis testing in structural model evaluation.

#### 4.2.2. Structural Model Evaluation

Structural model evaluation examines the relationship between latent constructs through the estimation results of path coefficient coefficients and significance levels (Ghazali & Latan, 2012). Structural model evaluation is conducted in stages, examining the R-square (R<sup>2</sup>) values and conducting significance tests. The analysis results show the distribution of R-square values: 60.5% for the attitude toward the behavior variable, 48.0% for subjective norms, 17.3% for perceived behavioral control, and 20.2% for Entrepreneurial Intentions. This indicates that the exogenous latent variables of each variable can explain the attitude, subjective norms, and



behavioral control of individuals to engage in entrepreneurship. In contrast, the rest is explained by other factors not included in the model. The significance test results based on the path coefficient parameter values show that all structural relationships significantly influence the confidence level ( $\alpha$ ) 0.05, with a t-value greater than or equal to 1.96 (**Table 2**).

**Table 2. Path Coefficient Parameter Values**

Hypothesis	Original Sample	t-value	Conclusion
Attitude Toward the Behavior -> EI	0.558	4.197	Significant
Perceived Behavioral Control -> EI	0.368	2.556	Significant
Subjective Norms -> EI	0.498	3.253	Significant

Based on the data in **Table 2**, it is known that the entrepreneurial intentions of millennial farmers are strongly influenced by the attitude (attitude toward the behavior) and subjective norms variables. However, perceived behavioral control also plays an important role as it significantly influences the formation of intentions. Previous studies (Tjahjono et al., 2013; Tjahjono & Palupi, 2014) state that attitude and subjective norms are antecedents of entrepreneurial intentions. Attitude toward entrepreneurship is the most dominant factor and an antecedent to entrepreneurial intentions among students (Sulistyaningrum & Palupi, 2016). Positive values for the attitude toward entrepreneurship and subjective norms imply that the higher the positive attitude toward entrepreneurship and subjective norms of millennial farmers, the higher the intention to engage in entrepreneurship, and vice versa.

Indicators of belief in behavioral consequences strongly reflect millennial farmers' attitudes. The highest loading factor values in **Table 1** are observed for variables such as confidence, perseverance, and honesty, while risk-taking and leadership have the lowest values. This indicates that for millennial farmers, leadership and risk-taking are not the primary assets for starting a business; instead, confidence, perseverance, and honesty are the main assets. Millennial farmers also believe that hard work and self-reliance are necessary to start a business, while leadership and risk-taking are seen as processes that can be learned.

Millennial farmers' subjective norms are reflected by indicators of belief in normative reference expectations and motivation to comply with expectations. The desire among millennial farmers to engage in entrepreneurship is formed by the encouragement and opinions received from agricultural extension workers. Millennial farmers also value the belief in the expectations of extension workers who provide opinions and advice on running their businesses as important. Data in **Table 1** show that besides extension workers having the highest loading factor values, millennial farmers also believe in the expectations and motivation to comply with the expectations of people around them, including parents, family, friends, and organizations. These results indicate that the role of extension workers has a relatively stronger influence than the role of friends, parents, family, and organizations in shaping the entrepreneurial intentions of millennial farmers. The results of previous research found a major influence of the role of people around, such as family, parents, husband/wife, and friends, on the entrepreneurial intention of entrepreneurs in agribusiness. Motivation and encouragement from important people, such as close friends and family, also significantly affect student entrepreneurial intention with a positive influence (Azwar, 2013).

Other studies found that the influence of the role of people is considered important in forming entrepreneurial intentions. Arisandi states that in addition to complying with parental advice, the entrepreneurial intention of IPB University postgraduate students in agribusiness is

most strongly influenced by the encouragement of friends (Arisandi, 2016). This condition follows the characteristics of students, who usually interact and communicate more with friends. This is unlike the case with millennial farmers, who interact more with agricultural extension workers to communicate farming activities carried out as millennial farmers. This is because millennial farmers are part of the Ministry of Agriculture's program, which is disseminated through the assistance of agricultural extension officers.

The entrepreneurial intentions of millennial farmers are reflected by their willingness to behave entrepreneurially in managing farming businesses. Based on interview results, millennial farmers currently do not exhibit entrepreneurial behavior in managing their farming businesses. However, the entrepreneurial intentions found within millennial farmers indicate their potential willingness and ability to become entrepreneurial farmers who behave entrepreneurially in managing their farming businesses. Individuals' intentions demonstrate their desire to act (Handaru et al., 2015). Thus, Ajzen argues that a person's entrepreneurial behavior can be predicted by assessing their entrepreneurial intentions, which link an individual's attitude towards entrepreneurship and their entrepreneurial behavior (Tung, 2011).

The presence of millennial farmers in the vegetable production center area of Bangka Regency can potentially increase the supply of entrepreneurs in the agricultural sector. Millennial farmers' self-confidence, perseverance, and honesty are the main assets for further developing their potential. Government support continues to be necessary through programs that can enhance innovation, creativity, risk-taking, leadership, and self-reliance, which are still considered weak, to realize millennial farmers as entrepreneurial farmers.

## 5. Conclusion

Millennial farmers have entrepreneurial intentions, particularly in the agricultural sector, with a rate of 81.49%. Entrepreneurial attitudes, subjective norms, and behavioral control influence entrepreneurial intentions. Attitudes and subjective norms predominantly influence the entrepreneurial intentions of millennial farmers. In the vegetable production center area of Bangka Regency, the entrepreneurial intentions of millennial farmers are most strongly influenced by the role of agricultural extension officers. Farmers still rely on self-confidence, honesty, and perseverance as their main assets to start their businesses.

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## 7. Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The authors have declared no potential conflicts of interest concerning this article's research, authorship, and/or publication.

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