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WHAT MAKES GEN Z MORE ENTREPRENEURIAL? EXPLORING THE POWER OF SELF-LEADERSHIP AND ACTIVE LISTENING

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Abstract

Purpose*: Although there is a growing interest in entrepreneurship among Gen Z, many young adults find it difficult to transform entrepreneurial aspirations into entrepreneurial capabilities. This study investigates the relationship between Self Leadership, Active Listening, and Entrepreneurial Orientation (EO) and the mediating role of Active Listening among Gen Z students.* ***Methodology****: A quantitative cross-sectional survey was conducted among 403 Gen Z university students from the higher education institutions in Greater Jakarta, Indonesia. The data were collected via an online questionnaire through purposive sampling and analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM).* ***Findings****: The study indicates that Active Listening has a significant positive relationship with EO. Self-leadership greatly enhances Active Listening. Moreover, Active Listening plays a significant mediating role in the relationship between self-leadership and EO, implying that communication competence is an important channel through which self-regulatory abilities promote entrepreneurial tendency.* ***Originality****: This research contributes to entrepreneurship and self-leadership literature by introducing Active Listening as a mediating mechanism between individual leadership capability and EO among Gen Z.* ***Implications****: The findings indicate that educational institutes and entrepreneurship development programs should enhance both self-leadership and active listening competencies to develop entrepreneurial capabilities among younger generations.*

Keywords : self-leadership, active listening, entrepreneurial orientation, Generation Z, entrepreneurship

A. INTRODUCTION

The swiftness of technology development, digital transformation (Lazar et al., 2023), and evolving workforce dynamics has profoundly reshaped the characteristics and behavioral patterns of younger generations, especially Generation Z or Gen Z (Syafani et al., 2025). Gen Z is the group of people born in the mid-1990s to early 2010s that witnessed the rise of digital technologies, social media, and online communication systems (Wajdi et al., 2024). Gen Z are digital natives. They are predisposed to certain behaviors – adaptability, tech savviness, independence, entrepreneurial tendencies (Rumayanto et al., 2025). Gen Z has been described as valuing flexibility, autonomy, innovation, and meaningful career development in today's

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organizations, creating new challenges and opportunities for organizational leadership and entrepreneurial growth (Wajdi et al., 2024).

The growing participation of Gen Z in entrepreneurial ventures is becoming an increasingly global phenomenon (Wajdi et al., 2024). Gen Z is more likely to have entrepreneurial aspirations than previous generations because they are more accustomed to digital platforms, online business models, and innovation-driven environments (Rumayanto et al., 2025).

While entrepreneurship is increasingly attractive for Gen Z, many young people find it difficult to translate entrepreneurial aspirations into entrepreneurial capabilities. Digital technologies have expanded access to business opportunities, but they have also created fast-paced communication patterns that can limit deep interpersonal engagement. As a result, many Gen Zs possess strong technological skills but lack self-regulatory and communication skills. Those are needed to identify opportunities, build relationships, and respond effectively to entrepreneurial challenges. Thus, understanding how self-leadership and active listening influence EO has become an important research concern.

Entrepreneurship is not just about the formation of traditional businesses but about the ability to identify opportunities, add value, adapt to uncertainty, and persist with innovation in highly competitive environments (Nazarwin et al., 2026). Thus, Entrepreneurial Orientation (**EO**) is an important construct to understand how people develop proactive, innovative, and risk-taking behaviors that support entrepreneurial activities (Nikitina et al., 2023). EO is also a strategic orientation characterized by innovativeness, proactivity, autonomy, competitive aggressiveness, and risk-taking to pursue opportunities (Seo et al., 2023). EO is increasingly relevant for Gen Z, as this generation is highly exposed to dynamic digital ecosystems that foster creativity, flexibility, and independent career pathways (Hamdi et al., 2023). In such fast-paced environments, success requires more than an entrepreneurial mindset – it's a high level of personal autonomy and self-regulation. This highlights the importance of the concept of self-leadership, which acts as the internal engine driving these adaptive behaviors.

Self-leadership is an individual's ability to regulate, motivate, and direct themselves toward achieving personal and professional goals through self-influencing processes (Satwika et al., 2025). Self-leadership helps people to develop self-awareness, self-discipline, initiative, and proactive behavior. These are critical competencies in uncertain and fast-changing environments (Coronado-Maldonado & Benítez-Márquez, 2023). Those who have strong Self Leadership generally have clear goals, intrinsic motivation, evaluate their own performance, and proactively adapt to changes in their environment (Coronado-Maldonado & Benítez-Márquez, 2023). These skills are particularly relevant for Gen Z, who often navigate complex career transitions, technological disruptions, and evolving workplace expectations (Satwika et al., 2025).

Previous research has shown that self-leadership contributes positively to entrepreneurial development and innovative behavior (Furtner et al., 2025). People with high self-leadership skills tend to demonstrate confidence in decision-making, independent

problem-solving, and innovative actions (Amita et al., 2024). Moreover, Self Leadership strengthens proactive personality traits and increases individuals' readiness to pursue entrepreneurial opportunities despite uncertainty and potential failure (Kang et al., 2022). Entrepreneurship typically requires people to deal with uncertainty, take calculated risks and be constantly changing with the market. Therefore, self-leadership can be an important psychological resource to support Entrepreneurial Orientation for Gen Z (Dahlawi et al., 2025). With the growing importance of self-leadership and EO, the interpersonal communication competencies essential to entrepreneurial success are also becoming increasingly important. Active Listening is one of the most important communication skills (Andriani et al., 2024).

Active Listening is a communication process in which people not only hear spoken information, but also understand, interpret and respond empathetically to the message being conveyed (Abrahams & Groysberg, 2021)). Active listening is a cognitive, emotional and social engagement that allows individuals to create meaningful interactions, enhance understanding and develop collaborative relationships (Paramole et al., 2024). In entrepreneurial contexts, Active Listening enables individuals to grasp customer needs, assess feedback, spot opportunities and foster stronger interpersonal relationships with stakeholders. Effective listening skills also lead to better teamwork, negotiation, leadership effectiveness, and problem-solving skills (Bhimani, 2024).

The widespread use of fast-paced digital communication patterns underscores the importance of Active Listening for Gen Z (Paramole et al., 2024). While Gen Z is highly connected to technology, overexposure to digital content can reduce attention spans and hinder the ability to communicate deeply with others (Prabowo et al., 2026). Many people in Gen Z tend to respond quickly rather than fully understand the messages, which may negatively affect communication quality and interpersonal understanding (Moin et al., 2024). This phenomenon shows that Active Listening might become a key competency that helps Gen Z to improve the effectiveness of communication and interpersonal engagement in entrepreneurial activities (Azahra & Pratama, 2026).

The increasing participation of Gen Z in entrepreneurial activities highlights the importance of understanding the factors that encourage EO among young adults. Despite being digitally connected and highly adaptable, many Gen Z members struggle to develop strong interpersonal communication skills. Although the importance of self-leadership as an antecedent of entrepreneurial behavior has been recognized, the behavioral processes by which self-leadership promotes EO have not been sufficiently studied. This problem raises several important questions: Does Active Listening contribute to EO among Gen Z? Can Self-Leadership be a mechanism linking Active Listening to EO? Therefore, this study aims to examine the relationships between self-leadership, Active Listening, and EO, and to identify the mediating role of self-leadership among Generation Z students.

Previous research also shows the positive impact of Active Listening on leadership effectiveness, organizational communication, and interpersonal resilience (Macnamara,

2022). Listening skills greatly improve interpersonal communication and resilience (Kercher et al., 2025). Active Listening enhances leadership effectiveness and communication quality within organizations. Moreover, active-empathetic listening supervisors are better able to foster work engagement and positive interpersonal relationships (Jonsdottir & Kristinsson, 2020). These findings indicate that Active Listening may be a key mechanism that links individual leadership competencies and entrepreneurial behavior ((Jonsdottir & Kristinsson, 2020).

Although there has been increasing research on Self Leadership and EO, little research has been conducted on the mediating role of Active Listening, particularly among Gen Z. Most of the previous studies were conducted on the individual factors of self-leadership, entrepreneurial intention, communication skills, or organizational behavior, but little attention has been given to understanding how Active Listening can explain the relationship between Self Leadership and EO. This gap highlights the need for a more integrated understanding of the interplay between intrapersonal competencies and interpersonal communication skills in shaping entrepreneurial tendencies among younger generations. This research is conducted to address the gap by examining the mediating effect of Active Listening on the relationship between Self-Leadership and Entrepreneurial Orientation among Gen Z students.

Theoretically, this study contributes to the literature on Self Leadership and Entrepreneurial Orientation by incorporating Active Listening as a mediating factor. The study also adds to the human resource management and entrepreneurship literature by emphasizing the role of interpersonal communication competencies in developing entrepreneurial behavior of Gen Z. Practically, the findings may provide some insights to educational institutions, organizations, and entrepreneurial development programs on the importance of nurturing self-leadership and active listening skills for better entrepreneurial capabilities among the younger generations.

Hypotheses Development

Active Listening and Entrepreneurial Orientation

Entrepreneurial Orientation is the tendency of individuals to show innovativeness, proactiveness, autonomy and risk-taking behavior in the identification and pursuit of opportunities (Seo et al., 2023). In highly dynamic competitive environments, the entrepreneurial success depends more and more not only on technical knowledge and creativity but also on interpersonal communication competencies (Israel & Rutainurwa, 2025). An important communication competency is Active Listening, which pertains to an individual's ability to listen carefully, understand, interpret, and respond with empathy to the information provided by others (Abrahams & Groysberg, 2021). Active Listening helps people to collect useful information, understand customer needs, correctly interpret feedback and build collaborative relationships with stakeholders (Jonsdottir & Kristinsson, 2020).

Listening skills in entrepreneurial environments allow individuals to better identify emerging market trends, understand customer expectations and recognise potential business opportunities (Belgasm et al., 2025). Good communication through active listening also

facilitates teamwork, negotiation, problem solving and adaptive decision making that are key dimensions of entrepreneurial behaviour (Bhimani, 2024). Those who listen well are more likely to internalize knowledge from outside, to process information from the environment and to respond proactively to uncertainty and change (Kluger & Itzchakov, 2022).

Active Listening is more and more relevant for Gen Z as they are brought up in highly digitalized environments with high-speed information exchange and shortened communication patterns (Prabowo et al., 2026). Gen Z is technologically connected, but excessive exposure to digital communication may reduce interpersonal engagement and attentiveness. Consequently, Active Listening can serve as a crucial interpersonal skill that enhances the quality of communication, cooperation, and entrepreneurial flexibility in younger generations (Azahra & Pratama, 2026).

Prior research also shows that Active Listening positively impacts leadership effectiveness, interpersonal resilience, organizational communication, and collaborative engagement (Kercher et al., 2025). In addition, the quality of relationships is enhanced by effective listening behaviors and positive interactions are created, which facilitate entrepreneurial learning and innovation (Jonsdottir & Kristinsson, 2020). Based on these arguments, it is expected that Active Listening will positively support Entrepreneurial Orientation among Gen Z individuals.

H1: There is a significant relationship between Active Listening and Entrepreneurial Orientation.

Self Leadership and Active Listening

Self-leadership refers to an individual's ability to regulate, motivate, and direct oneself towards the achievement of desired goals through self-influencing behavioral and cognitive strategies (Satwika et al., 2025). Self-leadership enables individuals to develop self-awareness, emotional regulation, self-discipline, initiative, and proactive behavior, competencies relevant in uncertain and rapidly changing environments (Coronado-Maldonado & Benítez-Márquez, 2023). Those who score high in Self Leadership are expected to demonstrate reflective thinking, intrinsic motivation, behavioral control, and adaptability to challenges and interpersonal situations (Kang et al., 2022).

These internal capacities for self-regulation may have a large effect on communication effectiveness, including Active Listening behavior. Active Listening requires attentiveness, empathy, patience and openness to understand the perspectives of others, all of which are closely related to self-regulation and emotional management (Kluger & Itzchakov, 2022). Greater levels of conscious management of distraction, the ability to sustain attention during interactions, and responsiveness to communicated messages are associated with higher levels of Self Leadership. As a result, Self Leadership may promote more meaningful and effective listening behaviors (Belgasm et al., 2025).

Previous studies have shown a positive relationship between Self Leadership and interpersonal communication competencies. Research has shown that Self Leadership enhances emotional intelligence, communication quality, collaborative behavior, and

interpersonal engagement (Amita et al., 2024). Effective leaders of themselves tend to be better able to manage their emotional responses, stay focused, and develop empathic understanding in the process of communication. Furthermore, reflective self-regulation enhances interpersonal awareness and encourages positive social interactions (Kamal & Israr, 2026).

In the case of Gen Z, Self Leadership is becoming more crucial as digital communication, technological disruptions, and workplace expectations are becoming complex. (Satwika et al., 2025). Gen Z members with stronger Self Leadership skills may be better equipped to communicate mindfully and meaningfully despite the fast-paced digital interactions. Therefore, it is anticipated that Self Leadership will have a positive influence on the Active Listening behavior of Gen Z students.

H2: There is a significant relationship between Self Leadership and Active Listening.

The Mediating Role of Active Listening

Self Leadership has been identified as an important psychological resource that facilitates entrepreneurial behavior, proactive thinking, and innovative actions (Dahlawi et al., 2025). Those with strong Self Leadership have confidence, independence, self-discipline, and adaptive problem-solving skills that are critical for entrepreneurial activities. However, the success of an entrepreneur depends not only on intrapersonal capabilities but also on interpersonal communication skills that allow cooperation, learning and opportunity recognition (Amita et al., 2024).

Active Listening could be a significant mechanism through which Self Leadership effects Entrepreneurial Orientation. Self Leadership People with Self Leadership are usually better at attentive and empathic communication since they have more self-awareness, emotional regulation and behavioral control (Sumanti et al., 2025). These listening skills also enhance their ability to understand market needs, interpret feedback from stakeholders, establish networks and identify entrepreneurial opportunities more effectively. Here, Active Listening may enhance the translation of self-regulatory skills into entrepreneurial behavior (Tantawy et al., 2026).

Previous studies suggest that communication competence has an important role in translating leadership characteristics into entrepreneurial and organizational outcomes (Jonsdottir & Kristinsson, 2020). Active listening fosters interpersonal trust, collaborative learning and information exchange, thus contributing to the promotion of entrepreneurial adaptability and innovation. Similarly, Self Leadership encourages proactive behavior and intrinsic motivation that encourage development of communication effectiveness and entrepreneurial readiness (Kokkonen & Koponen, 2020).

While research on Self Leadership and Entrepreneurial Orientation has increased, little research has been done on the mediating role of Active Listening, particularly among Gen Z. Most previous research on entrepreneurial intention, communication skills or leadership behavior has been carried out separately. Little research has examined the mediating role of interpersonal communication. Therefore, this research underscores the importance of Active

Listening as a key behavioral pathway between Self Leadership and Entrepreneurial Orientation among Gen Z students.

H3: There is a significant mediating role of Active Listening on the relationship between Self Leadership and Entrepreneurial Orientation.

B. METHOD

This study employed a quantitative cross-sectional survey design to examine the relationships among Self Leadership, Active Listening, and Entrepreneurial Orientation among Gen Z students. The quantitative approach was chosen because it enables systematic, objective measurement and statistical analysis of relationships among variables. The study focused on Gen Z students as the research population due to their high exposure to digital technologies, dynamic communication patterns, and increasing entrepreneurial tendencies in contemporary environments.



Figure 1. Research Framework (Source: Authors)

The data were collected using an online questionnaire distributed to respondents through digital platforms. The questionnaire consisted of structured statements rated on a Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The measurement items were adapted from prior studies on Self-Leadership, Active Listening, and Entrepreneurial Orientation to ensure content relevance and conceptual appropriateness. Self-leadership was measured using indicators of self-regulation, self-awareness, initiative, and proactive behavior (Nikitina et al., 2023). Active Listening was measured using indicators of attentiveness, empathy, understanding, and responsiveness during communication (Abrahams & Groysberg, 2021). Entrepreneurial Orientation was measured using dimensions such as innovativeness, proactiveness, autonomy, and risk-taking behavior (Bhimani, 2024).

The sample for this study consisted of Gen Z university students enrolled in higher education institutions in Greater Jakarta, as the largest educational hubs in Indonesia. Greater Jakarta is home to public and private universities, and students from all over the country come to study. Higher internet penetration and advanced digital infrastructure in this region also enable higher participation in online surveys, leading to greater representation from this region.

The respondents were selected through purposive sampling based on three criteria: (1) being part of Generation Z (born between 1995 and 2010), (2) currently being enrolled as university students, and (3) experience in digital communication environments. The sampling technique used in this study was purposive sampling, in which respondents were selected

based on specific criteria relevant to the research objectives (Creswell, 2014). This approach was considered appropriate because the study specifically aimed to explore entrepreneurial tendencies and communication competencies among younger generations.

Data were collected via a web-based questionnaire distributed through academic networks, student organizations, and social media. A total of 403 valid responses were received for use in analysis. The respondents were from several regions in Greater Jakarta. The participants completed the questionnaire voluntarily using a 5-point Likert scale, with 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree.

The data analysis was conducted using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS software 3.2.9 PLS-SEM was selected because it is suitable for predictive and exploratory research models involving latent constructs and mediation analysis. The analysis consisted of two stages, namely measurement model evaluation and structural model evaluation. The measurement model assessment included validity and reliability testing using factor loadings, Average Variance Extracted (AVE), Cronbach's Alpha, and Composite Reliability. Indicators with loading factors above 0.70 were considered acceptable, while AVE values above 0.50 and reliability values above 0.60 indicated satisfactory convergent validity and internal consistency reliability (Ghozali, 2021; Sarstedt et al., 2014).

The structural model evaluation was conducted to assess the relationships among constructs through path coefficients, T-statistics, p-values, and R-Square values obtained from the bootstrapping procedure. Hypotheses were considered supported when the T-statistic exceeded 1.96 and the p-value was below 0.05. In addition, the mediation effect of Active Listening was examined to determine its role in explaining the relationship between Self Leadership and Entrepreneurial Orientation.

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Respondents' Characteristics

The study took 403 university students of Gen Z as research subjects. They were selected using purposive sampling from higher education institutions in Greater Jakarta, as described in the Method section. Respondent characteristics were reported by gender, age, level of study, semester level, GPA and region of residence . The demographic profile gives an overall picture of the sample and adds to the contextual explanation of the findings.

In terms of gender, most of the respondents were female (n=297, 73.7%), while there were 106 respondents (26.3%) male. This indicates that female students were overrepresented in the study sample. Regarding age, most respondents were between 21 and 25 years old. The largest group were 227 respondents (56.3%) followed by 164 respondents (40.7%) aged 16–20 years and 12 respondents (3.0%) aged above 25 years. These results are consistent with the sample being primarily representative of young adults of Generation Z. Regarding educational level, majority of the respondents were still pursuing undergraduate (Bachelor's) degrees, representing 355 respondents (88.2%). In the meantime, 29 respondents

(7.2%) were enrolled in diploma programs and 19 respondents (4.7%) were post graduate students. In terms of academic progression, 127 respondents (31.5%) were in semesters 3-4, 110 respondents (27.3%) in semesters 5-6, 98 respondents (24.3%) in semesters 7-8, and 68 respondents (16.9%) in semesters 1-2. This distribution indicated that most respondents had gained enough academic experience and exposure to university learning environments. Regarding academic achievement, almost half of the respondents (49.1%) had a GPA of 3.00–3.50 and 36.0% of the respondents had a GPA of more than 3.50. Less than one quarter (23.8%) had a GPA of 3.00 to 3.99, and smaller proportions reported GPAs of 2.00 to 2.99 (13.9%) or below 2.00 (1.0%). These results indicate that the sample had satisfactory academic achievement in general.

Geographical distribution The respondents came from different regions of Indonesia. The largest proportion was in DKI Jakarta (46.9%), followed by West Java (18.9%), Banten (8.4%), Central Java (7.2%), East Java (7.2%), Sumatra (6.0%), Bali and Nusa Tenggara (2.7%), Sulawesi (1.5%), Kalimantan (1.0%), and Maluku-Papua (0.2%). While the broad regional representation ensures diversity in the sample, the Greater Jakarta area, with its concentration of educational institutions and digital connectivity, results in a predominance of respondents from this region.

The profile of respondents generally shows that the study mostly gains the point of view from undergraduate Generation Z students who are mostly female, aged 21 to 25 years old, with relatively high academic achievement, and living mostly in the Greater Jakarta area. These characteristics are consistent with the target population of digitally connected young adults who are increasingly exposed to entrepreneurial opportunities and contemporary communication environments.

Measurement Model Analysis

The measurement quality was tested using validity and reliability tests and it was found that the indicators validly represented the constructs they were intended to measure. All the item factor loadings in Table 3 were above 0.70, indicating that they met the indicator reliability criteria (Ghozali, 2021; Sarstedt et al., 2014) and were adequate in terms of item-to-construct contribution.

All the scores were below 5.0, thus there is no serious multicollinearity (Ghozali, 2021; Sarstedt et al., 2014). This means each indicator provides different information. Internal consistency was checked using Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability. The Cronbach's Alpha values and the values of Composite Reliability are above the minimum limit of 0.60 (Ghozali, 2021; Sarstedt et al., 2014).

Table 1. Validity and Reliability Test Result

Item	*Loading Factor* (> 0.7)	*Cronbach's Alpha* (> 0.6)	*Composite Reliability* (≥ 0.6)	*AVE* (≥ 0.5)	*Remarks*
A 1	0.725	0.692	0.813	0.521	Valid and Reliable
IN 1	0.719				
P 1	0.757				

Table 1. Validity and Reliability Test Result					
Item	*Loading Factor* (> 0.7)	*Cronbach's Alpha* (> 0.6)	*Composite Reliability* (≥ 0.6)	*AVE* (≥ 0.5)	*Remarks*
RT 4	0.684				
EM 2	0.699	0.706	0.819	0.531	Valid and Reliable
EM 3	0.761				
EM 5	0.718				
PR 5	0.734				
U 1	0.798	0.623	0.798	0.569	Valid and Reliable
U 5	0.786				
U4	0.673				

Source: Primary Data. 2025

The constructs showed acceptable levels of internal consistency. The results of the Cronbach's Alpha were between 0.623 and 0.706, and the Composite Reliability between 0.798 and 0.819, all of them above the recommended minimum threshold of 0.60. The results demonstrate that the indicators consistently measure the same underlying construct and that reliability is satisfactory. Furthermore, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values ranged from 0.521 to 0.569, exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.50. This result supports an adequate convergent validity, i.e., constructs explaining more than 50% of the variance of their indicators. Thus, the measurement model can be considered statistically sufficient for subsequent structural model analysis and hypothesis testing.

These results confirm the psychometric quality of the research instrument, with high validity in measuring the conceptual dimensions and high reliability in response consistency. These results mitigate measurement error, permitting more confident interpretation of the structural relationships. Finally, these positive results enhance the credibility of the study's empirical findings and support the instrument's use in similar future research settings.

The R-Square analysis shows the explanatory power of the structural model to predict the endogenous constructs. The R Square value for Active Listening is 0.385. This indicates that Self Leadership explains 38.5% of the variance in Active Listening. This result indicates a moderate explanatory capability, meaning that Self Leadership has an important role in shaping Active Listening behavior among Gen Z students. The remaining 61.5% of variance may be due to other factors outside the model at the same time.

R-Square Value

The R-Square value for Entrepreneurial Orientation is 0.369, further, indicating that Self Leadership and Active Listening explain 36.9% of the variance in Entrepreneurial Orientation. This implies that the model has a moderate predictive power in explaining entrepreneurial tendencies of Gen Z. The results show that intrapersonal competencies and interpersonal communication skills have an important role in the development of entrepreneurial orientation. However, the entrepreneurial behavior might also be influenced by other psychological, social and environmental factors . Overall, the R-Square results

validate the proposed model's adequate explanatory power and reinforce the significance of Self Leadership and Active listening in understanding Entrepreneurial Orientation.

Hypotheses Testing

The results of hypothesis testing show that all the proposed relationships in the structural model are statistically significant. The importance was assessed by means of the path coefficient, T-statistics and p-values obtained from the bootstrapping procedure. The results provide strong empirical support for all hypotheses proposed in the study. The first hypothesis (H1) suggested that active listening is significantly related to entrepreneurial orientation. The output shows a positive path coefficient of 0.607 with a T-statistic of 15.364 and a p-value of 0.000, suggesting a statistically significant association. This finding implies that the higher the number of active listening behaviors people have, the more likely they have a higher entrepreneurial orientation. The result implies that the ability to receive, understand and respond to information with attention enhances creativity, opportunity recognition, collaboration and proactive entrepreneurial behavior. The high coefficient also indicates that active listening is an important determinant of entrepreneurial attitudes and strategic responsiveness.

This result is consistent with previous studies that highlight the relevance of communication quality and listening competence on innovation, entrepreneurial decision-making, and opportunity identification (Seo et al., 2023). Previous studies have argued that active listening improves interpersonal trust, knowledge exchange, and collaborative problem solving, all of which are essential characteristics of entrepreneurial orientation (Israel & Rutainurwa, 2025). This finding also lends further support to social interaction and communication theories, which hold that good listening is a prerequisite for absorbing external knowledge and environmental information for entrepreneurial adaptability and innovation (Jonsdottir & Kristinsson, 2020).

Theoretically, this finding extends understanding of entrepreneurial orientation by emphasizing the importance of interpersonal communication competencies, particularly active listening, as a behavioral antecedent to entrepreneurial capability. While entrepreneurial orientation has been widely studied from strategic and personality perspectives, this study contributes to literature by considering active listening as a relational and communicative mechanism that influences entrepreneurial behavior. In practice, the result suggests that organizations and educational institutions should focus on developing communication and listening skills in entrepreneurship training programs. Enhancing active listening can improve collaboration, innovation potential, and responsiveness to market opportunities in organizations.

Table 2. Hypothesis Testing Results

Hypothesis	*Original Sample (O)*	*T Statistics* (|O/STDE V|)	*P Values (<0.05)*	*Remarks*
Active Listening → Entrepreneurial Orientation	0.607	15.364	0.000	H1 Supported
Self Leadership → Active Listening	0.620	18.118	0.000	H2 Supported

Table 2. Hypothesis Testing Results

Hypothesis	*Original Sample (O)*	*T Statistics* (|O/STDE V|)	*P Values (<0.05)*	*Remarks*
Self Leadership → Active Listening → Entrepreneurial Orientation	0.377	9.611	0.000	H3 Supported

Source: Primary Data, 2025

Hypothesis 2 (H2) proposed that there is a significant relationship between self-leadership and active listening. The statistical result has a positive path coefficient of 0.620 with a T-statistic of 18.118 and a p-value of 0.000. This means that the statistical result is highly statistically significant. This finding implies that individuals with a high level of self-leadership are likely to possess good active listening skills. Self-leadership is a process by which individuals can control their own thoughts, behaviors, and emotional responses, and in this way become more open, attentive, and willing to understand others in the processes of communication.

The finding is consistent with previous studies indicating self-leadership as an important predictor of communication effectiveness, emotional regulation, and interpersonal competence (Satwika et al., 2025). Previous research has shown that self-leadership increases self-awareness, empathy, and behavioral control, which, in turn, improve listening quality and engagement in communication (Coronado-Maldonado & Benítez-Márquez, 2023). People who are good at leading themselves tend to be more reflective, disciplined, and responsive to social cues and thus better able to listen constructively (Kang et al., 2022).

From a theoretical perspective, this finding extends self-leadership theory by showing that self-leadership is not only relevant to personal performance and motivation, but also to interpersonal communication behavior. The study extends the conceptual link between self-regulation mechanisms and communication competence, showing that self-leadership can promote relational effectiveness through active listening. Basically, the finding implies that organizations need to develop self-leadership capacity through training, mentoring, and reflective learning programs to improve communication quality and teamwork effectiveness. The development of self-leadership can indirectly reinforce organizational collaboration and entrepreneurial culture through improved listening behavior.

The third hypothesis (H3) tested the mediating role of active listening on the relationship between self-leadership and entrepreneurial orientation. The indirect effect path coefficient is 0.377 with a T-statistic of 9.611 and a p-value of 0.000, indicating a significant mediating effect. This suggests that self-leadership positively influences entrepreneurial orientation through active listening as a mediating variable. That is to say, people with high self-leadership tend to develop active listening skills, which can further promote their entrepreneurial orientation.

This finding supports previous studies that communication competence is an important behavioral mechanism linking personal leadership qualities to entrepreneurial outcomes (Dahlawi et al., 2025). Studies have shown that self-leadership enables adaptive communication behavior, while active listening promotes knowledge acquisition, collaboration, and recognition of opportunities that promote entrepreneurial orientation. The

mediation results demonstrate that entrepreneurial tendencies are shaped not only by internal self-management skills but also by effective interpersonal interaction processes (Amita et al., 2024).

This finding extends the theoretical contribution by integrating the self-leadership theory and communication-based perspectives in the context of entrepreneurial orientation. The findings suggest that active listening is a significant psychological and behavioral pathway through which self-leadership translates into entrepreneurial behavior. This contributes to the literature by providing a more holistic explanation of how individual leadership capabilities transform into entrepreneurial competencies through relational communication mechanisms.

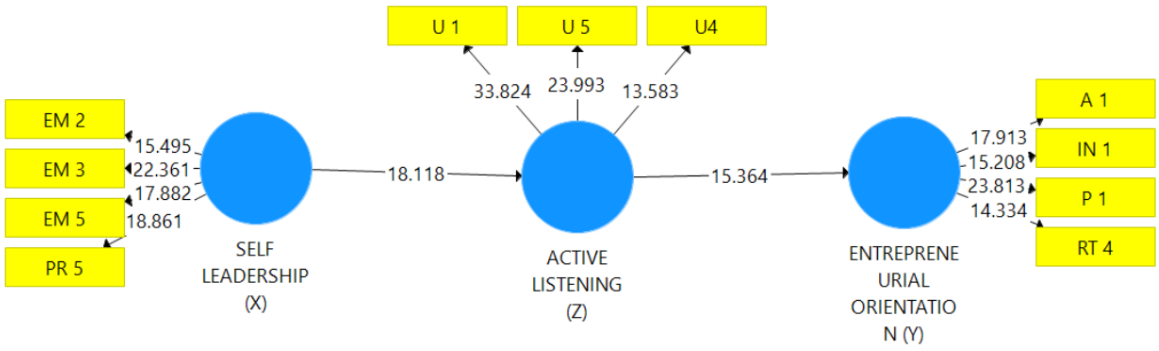


Figure 2. Path Coefficient (Source: Authors)

The practical implication of the finding is that entrepreneurship development programs should not only be based on strategic or technical competencies but also include the enhancement of self-leadership and communication skills. Organizations can concurrently promote self-regulation, reflective leadership behaviors, and active listening practices to improve employees' entrepreneurial orientation. This integrated development approach may promote innovation, collaboration, adaptability, and organizational responsiveness in dynamic business environments.

D. CONCLUSION

This study examined the relationship of Self Leadership, Active Listening and Entrepreneurial Orientation in Gen Z students. The findings answer the research questions by demonstrating a significant positive relationship between Active Listening and Entrepreneurial Orientation, and that Self Leadership significantly enhances Active Listening. Moreover, Active Listening mediated significantly the relationship between Self Leadership and Entrepreneurial Orientation. This means that Generation Z students who are more skilled in self-leadership are more likely to demonstrate better active listening behaviors, which, in turn, support a higher entrepreneurial orientation.

The study's limitations are its cross-sectional design and focus on Generation Z university students, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other populations. Finally, it is recommended that future research involve more diverse respondents and employ

longitudinal designs to examine the relationships among Self Leadership, Active Listening, and Entrepreneurial Orientation over time. Other variables, such as emotional intelligence, entrepreneurial self-efficacy, or digital literacy, could also be included to provide a broader understanding of entrepreneurial development among younger generations.

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