

Digital Literacy and Entrepreneurial Education as Drivers of Entrepreneurial Intention and Success

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Abstract: *In the contemporary digital economy, entrepreneurial success depends not only on business knowledge but also on the ability to navigate technological advancements and believe in one's own capabilities. This study examines the combined influence of digital literacy, entrepreneurship education, and self-efficacy on individuals' entrepreneurial intentions, readiness, and performance. Digital literacy equips learners with the skills to access, evaluate, and utilize digital information effectively, enabling informed decision-making, market analysis, and digital communication. Entrepreneurship education provides structured knowledge and practical frameworks that foster creativity, innovation, opportunity recognition, and risk-taking. Self-efficacy strengthens confidence and resilience, motivating individuals to apply learned competencies in real-world entrepreneurial contexts. Through a comprehensive review of secondary data, the study highlights the synergistic effect of integrating these three factors, demonstrating how this combination enhances problem-solving, strategic decision-making, and innovative capabilities. The findings underscore the importance of a holistic approach to developing digital and entrepreneurial competencies, emphasizing continuous skill development to prepare students and emerging entrepreneurs for sustainable success in a technology-driven, competitive business environment.*

Keywords: Digital literacy, Entrepreneurship education, Self-efficacy, Entrepreneurial intention, Entrepreneurial performance, Digital economy

I. INTRODUCTION

In today's rapidly evolving world, the combination of entrepreneurial skills and digital literacy has become essential for success across all fields. Entrepreneurial skills—such as creativity, innovation, problem-solving, leadership, adaptability, and risk-taking—enable individuals to identify opportunities and turn ideas into impactful solutions. These skills are no longer limited to starting a business; they are equally important for students, professionals, and anyone who wants to think independently and respond effectively to challenges. As industries transform and competition increases, having an entrepreneurial mindset helps individuals remain future-ready, confident, and capable of contributing meaningful value in any environment.

Alongside this, digital literacy has emerged as a core competency in the 21st century. It includes the ability to use digital tools, understand online information, communicate through digital platforms, and work efficiently with modern technologies. From online learning and e-commerce to artificial intelligence and social media marketing, digital literacy shapes the way we access information and interact with the world. When combined, entrepreneurial skills and digital literacy create a powerful synergy—enabling individuals to innovate, make informed decisions, build strong digital identities, and navigate today's digital economy with confidence. This presentation explores the importance of these two skill sets and highlights how mastering them can open doors to new opportunities, enhanced creativity, and long-term success.



II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Digital literacy refers to the capacity to understand and use information delivered through digital technologies (Gilster, 1997; Spires et al., 2017). It includes the ability to read, write, and create content across multiple digital formats such as text, images, audio, and video, enabling individuals to interpret technology-based information more effectively (Chen et al., 2021). This skill is essential for enhancing productivity, improving decision-making, and ensuring managerial success, especially within business environments (Reddy et al., 2020). Countries like the United States, China, and Japan have already witnessed the strong influence of digital literacy, supported by their advanced economies and high technological access (Cunningham, 2019; Spires et al., 2017). Pires and Bartlett (2012) classify digital literacy development into three main processes: locating and using digital content, creating digital material, and communicating that content. Entrepreneurial literacy, meanwhile, involves the attitudes, knowledge, and skills required to identify and take advantage of business opportunities (Perez-Bustamante, 2014; Mutanda & Moyo, 2021). It also includes creativity, ethical values, responsibility, and goal setting to build and sustain a business (Purwati et al., 2023), along with the ability to define, understand, design, and manage business activities through effective time management, strategy formation, and performance assessment (Perez-Bustamante, 2014).

Entrepreneurship education supports the development of innovation, creativity, initiative, and risk-taking abilities among learners (Farny et al., 2016). Students exposed to such education gain practical experience in business planning and interact with successful professionals, which helps them generate new ideas, solve business challenges, and build confidence for their future careers (Boldureanu et al., 2020). This educational process equips students with the essential knowledge and practical skills needed to develop and manage business ventures (Lee & Yun, 2020). Gibson (2024) describes entrepreneurship education as a source of motivation and inspiration that prepares learners for success in the business world (Fan et al., 2024). In today's digital era, digital business skills have become especially crucial, with digital marketing emerging as one of the most important functions for companies (Guitert et al., 2020). Entrepreneurs and students must therefore develop competencies that allow them to navigate technological advancements, including basic digital skills, the ability to use modern tools continuously, and the capacity to evaluate new technologies effectively (Alkalah, 2016; Wang & Kim, 2023; Varenky & Piskova, 2024).

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), introduced by Ajzen (1991), explains that a person's intention—defined as their readiness to perform a behavior—strongly predicts actual action. In entrepreneurship, intention reflects an individual's willingness and effort to engage in entrepreneurial activities (Paul et al., 2017; Linan & Chen, 2009). This readiness is a cognitive state that influences behavior and helps explain why individuals choose entrepreneurial paths (Normalasari, 2023). Digital literacy, as first described by Paul Gilster (1997), refers to the ability to understand, access, and use information from digital sources. It includes technical skills to operate digital tools, critical thinking to evaluate digital content, and the ability to create information for communication (Supriyanto & Hirmawan, 2024). Digital literacy also supports business processes and customer value creation (Na & Lee, 2022; Hyunseung & Chankoo, 2024). Based on Gilster's framework adapted by Nasionalita (2020) and Mutiah (2022), digital literacy can be measured through four indicators: internet searching, hypertext navigation, evaluating information content, and compiling knowledge. Entrepreneurship education has also grown globally as governments and institutions promote entrepreneurial attitudes, creativity, and opportunity recognition among students (Ismail et al., 2009; Yousaf et al., 2021; Hermawan et al., 2022). It aims to strengthen entrepreneurial competencies by helping learners identify opportunities, manage resources, and build sustainable ventures (Boahemaah et al., 2021; Yousaf et al., 2021). Overall, entrepreneurship education shapes mindsets by enhancing creativity, critical thinking, and innovation, with key indicators involving entrepreneurial attitudes and entrepreneurial knowledge and skills (Mensah-Williams & Derera, 2023).

Self-efficacy refers to a person's belief in their ability to handle challenges and achieve desired outcomes. According to Bandura (1997), it represents a personal judgment of one's capability to complete tasks successfully, especially when faced with obstacles, and is strengthened through effort and perseverance (Graham, 2022).

Individuals with high self-efficacy demonstrate better problem-solving abilities, critical thinking, and confidence in dealing with complex situations (Prajono, 2022; Senemoğlu, 2018; Choi & Song, 2020). Bandura identifies three components of self-efficacy: magnitude, generality, and strength. Readiness for entrepreneurship, meanwhile, reflects



an individual's willingness, confidence, and ability to handle risks and challenges involved in starting a business (Hendrayanti & Fauziyanti, 2021; Kumar et al., 2021). It involves being prepared physically, mentally, and materially to pursue entrepreneurial activities (Hidayat et al., 2019). Entrepreneurial readiness depends on understanding business ideas, receiving support, having motivation, and securing financial resources (Kumar et al., 2021). According to Meredith in Lubis (2020), core indicators of entrepreneurial readiness include possessing business skills, taking risks, having self-confidence, and being future-oriented.

Digital literacy for entrepreneurs is defined as one's ability to adapt to the continuous development in technology, which allows them to communicate through various mediums and market their products, analyse trends, and thereby respond to the market demand for the goods and services. As asserted by Sariwulan et al. (2020), this ability doesn't just need to be at par with the changes in technology but needs to be proactive, extending the new tools and methodologies in one's business as a way of competing. Digital literacy among entrepreneurs can help in the effective use of digital media for communication and marketing, thus influencing their entrepreneurial performance positively.

Study by Achmad et al. (2024) highlights the significant role of digital literacy in empowering farmers to leverage digital technologies for business operations. Other studies underscore the critical importance of digital literacy and digital transformation in enhancing entrepreneurial performance and boosting competitiveness in the digital economy (Duc et al., 2024; Mičić & Mastilo, 2022). In fact, such digital literacy combined with entrepreneurial interest may be clearly outlined among students, according to Mulyati, (2023), and this could have significant implications for building the entrepreneurial spirits of their youth. The combination of digital literacy and entrepreneurial efficacy, in fact, is an essential factor affecting entrepreneurial intentions when complemented by experiential entrepreneurship education, as seen by Setiawati et al., (2022).

All these findings put together indicate that digital literacy plays a crucial role in enabling entrepreneurs to access, manage, and utilize digital media effectively to communicate and market themselves, leading to better entrepreneurial performance, interest and intention in entrepreneurship. It is a dynamic skill set in simple terms, which involves much more than the basic usage of technology. In its core, it involves continuous learning and adaptation with changing technology, using digital media to enhance communication and marketing, data analysis for proper decision-making, and understanding demand for services and goods required through the digital marketplace. A holistic approach to digital literacy empowers the entrepreneur to understand how complex the digital world is and grasp its opportunities.

Additionally, Ji and Zhuang (2023) investigated the relationship between farmers' digital literacy and their entrepreneurial success in Jiangsu Province. They discovered that farmers who were more proficient with technology had more success in their businesses. The research indicated that two key elements, entrepreneurial bricolage (the creative use of available resources) and opportunity identification (recognizing new business opportunities), play a significant role in linking digital skills to better business outcomes. Farmers with digital literacy are more inclined to optimize their resources, discover new opportunities, and enhance their entrepreneurial performance. The study emphasizes the significance of digital literacy in enabling farmers to thrive and reinforces the notion that enhancing digital skills may assist in fostering long-term economic and social development in rural areas.

Besides, Firmansyah et al. (2023) investigated the connection between market orientation, digital literacy, digital transformation, and entrepreneurial performance in the context of the digital economy and found that, either individually or in combination, digital transformation and digital literacy significantly improve market orientation. Digital literacy and digital transformation also have a direct impact on entrepreneurial success. The study revealed that market orientation serves as a mediator, increasing the impact of digital transformation on entrepreneurial performance. The study finds that digital literacy and digital transformation play a vital role in enhancing market orientation and entrepreneurial performance within the digital economy. It indicates that businesses need to alter their marketing strategies to align with these changes. Future research may explore the influence of innovative marketing models on digital transformation, digital literacy readiness, and market orientation, as well as the approaches in which these factors ultimately affect business performance.

Moreover, Mulyati's (2023) study examined the impact of entrepreneurship education, digital literacy, and self-efficacy on students' interest in entrepreneurship. A survey conducted with 106 students from Economics Education found that entrepreneurship education, digital literacy, and self-confidence (self-efficacy) positively influence students' interest in



entrepreneurship. The study additionally indicated that students exhibited strong skills in both entrepreneurial and digital literacy. The importance of providing entrepreneurship education and fostering digital skills, both in formal education and informal settings, is highlighted as essential for encouraging young people to start their own businesses. The study emphasizes the importance of improving digital literacy in education, especially for startup businesses, to bolster students' entrepreneurial interest.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To analyse how digital literacy, entrepreneurship education, and self-efficacy collectively influence individuals' entrepreneurial intentions and performance.
- To identify the impact of integrating digital skills and entrepreneurial competencies on innovation, opportunity recognition, and effective decision-making in the digital economy.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study examines the role of entrepreneurial skills and digital literacy in enhancing students' career readiness and entrepreneurial intention. It is based entirely on secondary data collected from journals, books, research articles, and credible online sources. Using secondary data is appropriate as it helps analyse existing evidence, understand established relationships among key variables, and draw meaningful conclusions about how digital and entrepreneurial competencies influence readiness and innovation.

IV. INTERPRETATION

The *combined influence* of three foundational elements—digital literacy, entrepreneurship education, and self-efficacy—on an individual's motivation and readiness to engage in entrepreneurial activities. In the digital era, entrepreneurial behaviour is shaped not only by business knowledge but also by one's ability to navigate technology and believe in their own capabilities. Digital literacy equips individuals with the skills to search for market information, interpret digital trends, utilise online platforms, and engage with customers through digital tools. Entrepreneurship education provides structured knowledge about opportunity identification, business planning, strategic thinking, and risk management. Meanwhile, self-efficacy strengthens a person's belief that they can successfully perform entrepreneurial tasks even when faced with challenges or uncertainty.

The objective seeks to interpret how these three variables interact rather than operate in isolation. For example, strong digital literacy may increase the effectiveness of entrepreneurship education, while high self-efficacy may encourage individuals to apply what they learn in real-life contexts. Together, they influence the degree of confidence, preparedness, and behavioural intention towards starting and managing a business. This objective therefore examines whether the synergy among these competencies leads to improved problem-solving, better decision-making, greater opportunity recognition, and enhanced entrepreneurial performance. In essence, the goal is to understand how an integrated set of digital, educational, and psychological factors shapes a robust entrepreneurial mindset and contributes to long-term success in entrepreneurial ventures.

The significance of *combining digital capabilities with entrepreneurial competencies* and how this integration influences key outcomes such as innovation, opportunity identification, and strategic decision-making. In today's digital economy, individuals must not only understand traditional business principles but also adapt to emerging technological tools and platforms. Digital literacy enables individuals to collect and interpret online information, analyse customer behaviour, evaluate digital marketplaces, and use technological tools for communication, marketing, forecasting, and business operations.

The objective interprets how digital–entrepreneurial integration amplifies an individual's capacity to understand changing market dynamics, anticipate customer needs, and respond proactively to technological disruptions. It examines how individuals who are digitally skilled and entrepreneurially competent are better positioned to innovate, either by developing new products, improving processes, or adopting digital business models. Furthermore, the objective addresses how this combination supports effective decision-making, as individuals can rely on data-driven



insights, digital tools, and entrepreneurial judgment to evaluate alternatives and choose the most strategic course of action.

V. FINDINGS

The study reveals that digital literacy, entrepreneurship education, and self-efficacy collectively have a significant influence on individuals' entrepreneurial intentions, readiness, and performance. Digital literacy emerges as a critical competency in the contemporary digital economy, enabling individuals to access, evaluate, and utilise digital information effectively. Individuals who are proficient in digital tools are better able to search for relevant market data, analyse trends, and interpret complex online information, which strengthens their decision-making processes. They can engage with customers through digital communication channels, implement digital marketing strategies, and leverage online platforms to enhance visibility and operational efficiency. This ability not only improves their day-to-day business functioning but also fosters an innovative mindset that is necessary to identify and seize new business opportunities. Studies cited in the literature, including those by Gilster (1997), Chen et al. (2021), and Ji & Zhuang (2023), emphasize that digital literacy equips entrepreneurs with the capacity to respond proactively to technological disruptions, adapt to changing market dynamics, and sustain long-term competitive advantage.

Entrepreneurship education plays a complementary role by providing structured knowledge and practical frameworks that enhance creativity, innovation, and problem-solving skills. Exposure to entrepreneurship learning environments allows individuals to engage in business planning, interact with successful professionals, and participate in experiential exercises that cultivate initiative, opportunity recognition, and risk-taking abilities. This educational foundation strengthens learners' capacity to strategize, manage resources efficiently, and evaluate business opportunities critically. The literature highlights that entrepreneurship education fosters both cognitive and practical entrepreneurial competencies, including goal setting, ethical decision-making, leadership, and adaptability (Perez-Bustamante, 2014; Boldureanu et al., 2020; Lee & Yun, 2020). Individuals who receive such education exhibit higher confidence in their ability to execute business ideas and are better prepared to respond to complex challenges in dynamic market environments.

Self-efficacy acts as a psychological mechanism that further enhances entrepreneurial intention and performance. Individuals with high self-efficacy demonstrate greater confidence in their capacity to handle challenges, persist in the face of setbacks, and achieve desired outcomes (Bandura, 1997; Prajono, 2022). The study identifies self-efficacy as a critical factor that motivates individuals to apply both digital and entrepreneurial competencies effectively. By believing in their capabilities, individuals are more likely to take calculated risks, implement innovative solutions, and persist in entrepreneurial efforts despite uncertainties.

The integration of digital literacy and entrepreneurial competencies enhances innovation, opportunity recognition, and strategic decision-making. Individuals who combine these skills are more capable of adopting modern business models, developing new products and services, and responding to emerging technological and market trends. The findings indicate that digital literacy supports data-driven decision-making, allowing entrepreneurs to analyse consumer behaviour, evaluate digital marketplaces, and anticipate future demand. When complemented by entrepreneurial knowledge and planning skills, these capabilities result in improved problem-solving, better risk assessment, and more effective business strategies.

VI. SUGGESTIONS

Firstly, educational institutions should integrate digital literacy training into entrepreneurship curricula to ensure that learners are not only familiar with technological tools but are also able to apply them strategically in business contexts. This includes practical training on online market analysis, digital marketing, social media engagement, and the use of emerging technologies such as data analytics, artificial intelligence, and e-commerce platforms. Providing hands-on experiences through simulations, workshops, and project-based learning can reinforce theoretical knowledge and improve practical competence.

Secondly, entrepreneurship education programs should focus on fostering creativity, innovation, and problem-solving skills alongside core business knowledge. Exposure to real-world case studies, mentorship from successful



entrepreneurs, and collaborative projects can help learners develop critical thinking, opportunity recognition, and strategic decision-making abilities. Encouraging experiential learning through internships, business competitions, and startup incubators can further strengthen students' ability to translate ideas into actionable business ventures.

Thirdly, initiatives to enhance self-efficacy among students and entrepreneurs are essential. Programs that build confidence, resilience, and risk-taking capacity can encourage individuals to pursue entrepreneurial opportunities despite uncertainties. This can be achieved through mentorship, goal-setting exercises, success story sharing, and structured feedback mechanisms that allow learners to reflect on their progress and overcome challenges.

Fourthly, the integration of digital literacy, entrepreneurship education, and self-efficacy development should be emphasized as a holistic approach. Policies and training programs should aim to combine these elements to create a synergistic effect, enhancing innovation, market readiness, and business performance. Encouraging collaborative learning environments where students can experiment with digital tools and business ideas under guidance can foster both competence and confidence.

Overall, by implementing these measures, students and emerging entrepreneurs can be better prepared to navigate the digital economy, identify opportunities, innovate, and achieve sustainable success in their entrepreneurial endeavours.

VII. CONCLUSION

The study underscores the critical role of digital literacy, entrepreneurship education, and self-efficacy in shaping entrepreneurial intentions, readiness, and performance in the contemporary digital economy. The findings indicate that digital literacy equips individuals with the ability to access, interpret, and utilise digital information effectively, enabling informed decision-making, market analysis, and the strategic use of online tools for communication and marketing. Entrepreneurship education complements this by providing structured knowledge and practical frameworks that foster creativity, innovation, opportunity recognition, risk-taking, and business planning.

The integration of these three factors produces a synergistic effect that enhances problem-solving, strategic thinking, and innovative capabilities. Individuals who possess both digital competencies and entrepreneurial knowledge, supported by high self-efficacy, are better positioned to adopt modern business models, respond proactively to market changes, and implement innovative solutions. This holistic combination not only increases the likelihood of entrepreneurial success but also ensures that learners and entrepreneurs remain adaptable and competitive in an increasingly complex and technology-driven environment.

In conclusion, fostering a combination of digital literacy, entrepreneurial knowledge, and self-efficacy is essential for preparing students and emerging entrepreneurs for sustainable success. Educational institutions, policymakers, and industry stakeholders must collaborate to create supportive environments that integrate these competencies, thereby equipping individuals with the mindset, skills, and confidence needed to innovate, identify opportunities, and achieve long-term entrepreneurial growth in the digital era. This integrated approach lays the foundation for a future-ready workforce capable of contributing meaningfully to both local and global economic development.

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