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Article

University Ecosystem Matters: How Perceived Support Moderates Digital Competence-Entrepreneurship Linkages Among Private College Students

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Abstract

This research seeks to investigate the association between digital competence and entrepreneurial intentions among students enrolled in private higher education institutions, placing specific emphasis on the moderating influence of perceived support from universities. The study aims to explore how students' digital skills, in conjunction with institutional backing, collectively shape their inclination towards entrepreneurial pursuits. This study is underpinned by the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) and the Resource-Based View (RBV). TPB offers a framework for interpreting the psychological factors that influence entrepreneurial intentions, whereas RBV highlights the significance of institutional assets, including university support, in fostering entrepreneurial outcomes. A quantitative research design was employed, utilising a structured questionnaire distributed to a sample of 349 students from private colleges, selected through stratified random sampling. The gathered data were examined through correlation analysis, linear regression, and moderation analysis in order to evaluate the proposed relationships among digital competence, perceived university support, and entrepreneurial intentions. The findings reveal that digital competence, in isolation, does not serve as a significant predictor of entrepreneurial intentions. Conversely, perceived university support demonstrates a clear and statistically significant positive influence on students' entrepreneurial intentions. Nonetheless, the moderating role of perceived university support in the relationship between digital competence and entrepreneurial intentions was determined to be statistically non-significant. These results imply that institutional support systems may hold greater significance than technical digital proficiency in promoting entrepreneurial intentions among students. Therefore, enhancing both the prominence and accessibility of support services offered by universities is essential. Simultaneously, embedding digital competence within entrepreneurship curricula is recommended to cultivate more conducive entrepreneurial environments within private higher education institutions. This research adds to the scarce empirical body of work exploring the joint influence of individual capabilities and institutional resources on entrepreneurial intentions. By integrating the TPB and RBV theoretical frameworks, it provides a refined understanding of how universities contribute to the development of entrepreneurial outcomes among students within the context of private higher education.

Keywords

Digital Competence, Entrepreneurial Intentions, Perceived University Support, Private Colleges, Moderation Analysis.

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Introduction

Background

In the context of today's rapidly transforming digital economy, entrepreneurship is increasingly recognised as a pivotal force in driving innovation, job creation, and socio-economic advancement. As highlighted by [Chen \(2023\)](#), entrepreneurial intentions among young adults, particularly university students, are progressively viewed as indicators of prospective startup activity and broader economic participation. However, the formation of such intentions is not developed in isolation, but rather shaped by a combination of individual competencies and contextual influences. One notable personal attribute is digital competence, defined as the capability to utilise digital technologies and tools effectively for communication, problem-solving, and value generation ([Rațiu, Maniu, & Pop, 2023](#)). [Prokopenko et al. \(2024\)](#) further contend that the digitalisation of business models and entrepreneurial processes suggests that students proficient in digital literacy are better positioned to identify entrepreneurial opportunities, devise innovative solutions, and respond to the evolving demands of the contemporary entrepreneurial environment.

While the cultivation of individual competencies is vital, the broader institutional ecosystem within universities also plays a fundamental role in shaping entrepreneurial mindsets. Within this ecosystem, perceived university support—which encompasses access to mentorship, funding, entrepreneurial training, and an enabling institutional culture—significantly influences how students convert their capabilities into tangible entrepreneurial intentions ([Ferrandiz, Fidel, & Conchado, 2018](#); [Mengyao, Norman, & Hafizah Adnan, 2023](#)). Students who perceive their institutions as supportive are more likely to feel empowered and motivated to pursue entrepreneurial activities, using their skills to effect meaningful impact ([Galvão et al., 2025](#)). Although existing literature acknowledges the relevance of both digital competence and institutional support, limited research has explored their combined influence on entrepreneurial intentions. This gap is particularly pronounced in the context of private higher education institutions, where organisational cultures and resources often differ from those found in public counterparts ([De Carolis & Litzky, 2019](#); [Dewie, Norman, & Md Yunus, 2021](#)). Notably, the moderating role of perceived institutional support remains underexplored in developing countries, where digital literacy and structured support systems are still in the process of maturation.

Problem Statement

In the digital era, students' entrepreneurial intent is increasingly shaped by their ability to utilise digital tools effectively. Although digital competence is widely acknowledged as a key driver of entrepreneurial development, the extent to which perceived university support influences this relationship remains insufficiently explored, particularly within privately managed colleges. As noted by [Mir, Hassan and Khan \(2022\)](#), substantial variability exists among private institutions regarding the provision of support services, often resulting in uneven entrepreneurial outcomes. Gaining a clearer understanding of how perceived university support moderates the link between digital competence and entrepreneurial intentions is vital for the formulation of effective and targeted strategies to promote student entrepreneurship. This study seeks to address this research gap by examining the moderating role of perceived university support in the relationship between digital competence and entrepreneurial intentions among students attending private colleges. Through this focus on interaction effects, the study aims to determine whether a supportive institutional environment enhances or diminishes the influence of digital competence on students' entrepreneurial aspirations. The results are expected to enrich academic discourse and inform practical measures for improving entrepreneurship education and institutional backing in the private higher education sector.

Research Objectives

- To analyse the influence of digital competence on students' entrepreneurial intentions.
- To explore the moderating role of perceived university support in the relationship between digital competence and entrepreneurial intentions.
- To evaluate the direct impact of perceived university support on entrepreneurial intentions.

Research Questions

- How does digital competence influence entrepreneurial intentions among students in private colleges?

- To what extent does perceived university support moderate the relationship between digital competence and entrepreneurial intentions?
- What is the direct influence of perceived university support on entrepreneurial intentions among private college students?

Significance of the Study

This study provides meaningful insights for educators and policymakers by revealing the interplay between digital competence and perceived university support in shaping entrepreneurial intentions. The outcomes can inform the development of more effective support structures and entrepreneurship initiatives within private colleges, particularly in developing contexts where entrepreneurial ecosystems are still evolving. Additionally, the research contributes to scholarly discourse by addressing the relatively unexplored moderating effects involved in student entrepreneurial development.

Literature Review

Overview

This section offers a critical review of the literature pertaining to the core variables examined in this study. It discusses the underlying theoretical frameworks, analyses key constructs and their interrelations, introduces the proposed hypotheses, and identifies gaps within existing research that this study seeks to address.

Digital Competence and Entrepreneurial Intentions

Digital competence encompasses an individual's capacity to utilise digital technologies efficiently and ethically across diverse contexts, as illustrated in [Figure 1](#).

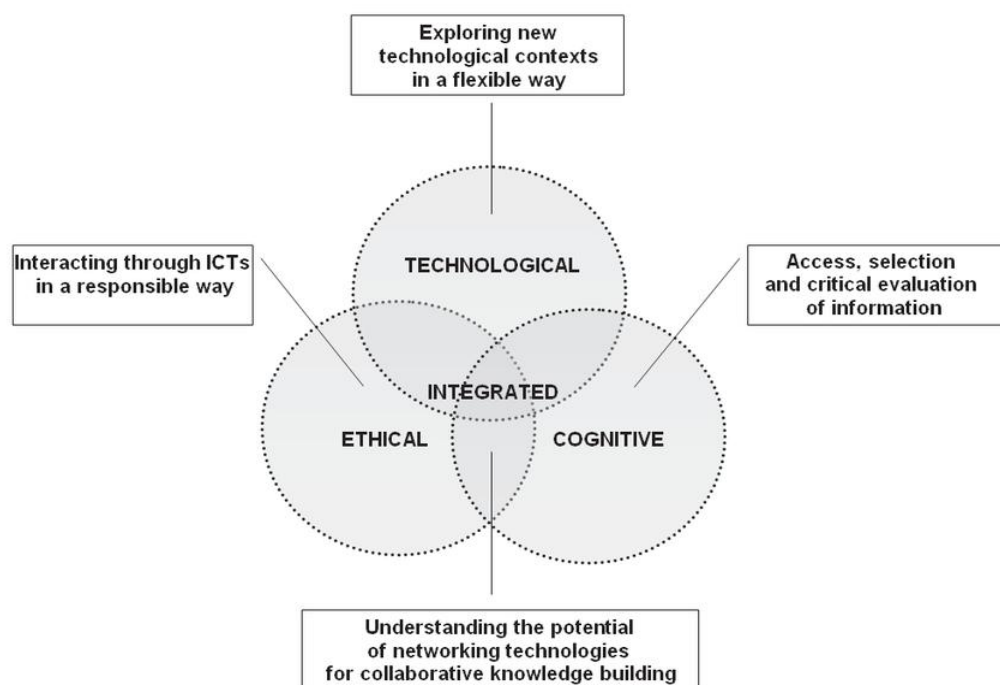


Figure 1: *Digital Competence Framework.*

Source: [Calvani et al. \(2008\)](#)

In this context, [Triyono et al. \(2023\)](#) emphasised that digital competence has become a pivotal factor in cultivating an entrepreneurial mindset within the rapidly evolving digital economy. The relationship between digital competence and what is commonly referred to as entrepreneurial intentions has garnered increasing scholarly attention, as proficiency in digital technologies is now regarded as essential for opportunity recognition, innovation, and operational efficiency in business. [Abaddi \(2023\)](#) further highlighted the importance of

individuals with strong digital skills in identifying and capitalising on entrepreneurial opportunities, particularly in environments characterised by digital disruption. Through the use of online platforms and digital tools, aspiring entrepreneurs can access information, establish networks, and initiate ventures with comparatively lower startup investment. Additionally, Singh et al. (2023) noted that such digital tools include social media platforms, e-commerce functionalities, cloud-based applications, and digital sales channels. The integration of these technologies into routine entrepreneurial activities not only enhances operational efficiency but also broadens access to markets. Consequently, individuals who possess advanced digital capabilities may feel more assured in pursuing entrepreneurial careers, perceiving themselves as better prepared to navigate conventional barriers to market entry. Figure 2 illustrates key entrepreneurial competencies necessary for success in an increasingly digital and interconnected global economy.

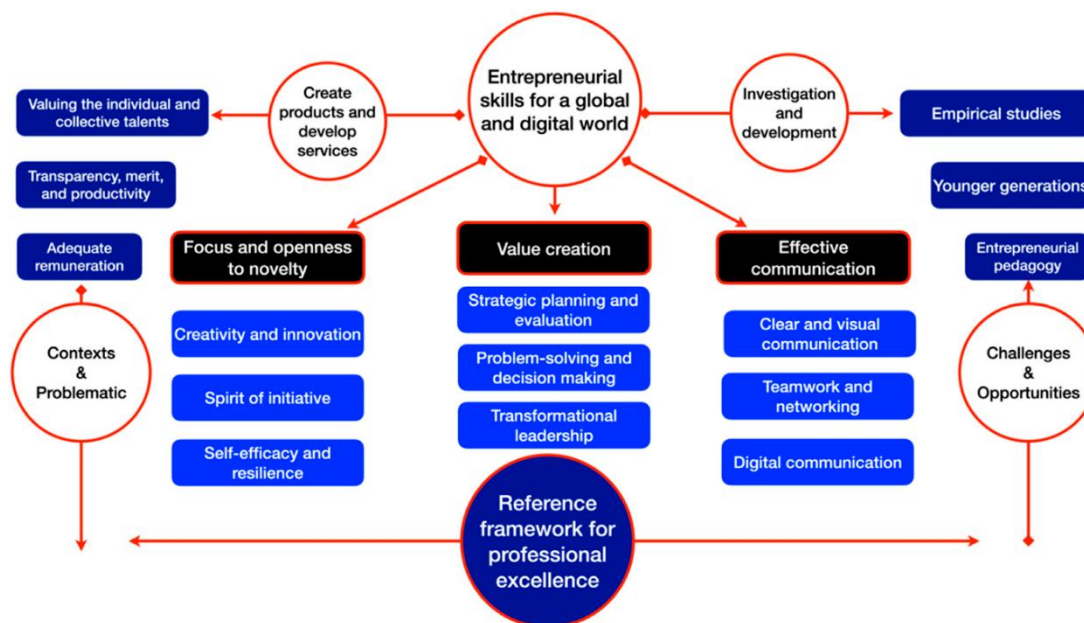


Figure 2: *Entrepreneurial Skills to Be Successful.*

Source: Jardim (2021)

In addition, digital competence has the potential to enhance self-efficacy, a key psychological construct known to influence entrepreneurial intentions. Individuals who possess confidence in their digital abilities are more inclined to believe in their capacity to establish and sustain a business, thereby reinforcing their entrepreneurial motivation. In contrast, limited digital proficiency may serve as a barrier, particularly in industries where technological integration is extensive (Nasri & Mansor, 2016; Ngoasong, 2017). Embedding digital competence into academic curricula or through extracurricular initiatives can thus be considered a strategic approach to fostering entrepreneurial engagement from an early stage. As higher education increasingly prioritises innovation and startup culture, digital fluency is emerging as a critical foundational skill for future entrepreneurs (Jia & Nasri, 2019; Lv et al., 2021). It is also essential to acknowledge that digital competence does not operate in isolation; rather, it interacts with various cognitive and contextual factors that collectively influence the development of entrepreneurial intentions.

University Support as a Moderator

According to Aldhaen (2023), perceived university support refers to students' perceptions of the extent to which their institution offers resources, encouragement, and an environment conducive to entrepreneurial development. This form of support may include access to start-up funding, mentorship programmes, business incubation facilities, and entrepreneurship-focused workshops and events. Galvão et al. (2025) introduced a conceptual model illustrating the connection between educational and institutional support and entrepreneurial intention, comprising seven proposed pathways mediated by factors such as entrepreneurial self-efficacy, planned behaviour, and entrepreneurial mindset.

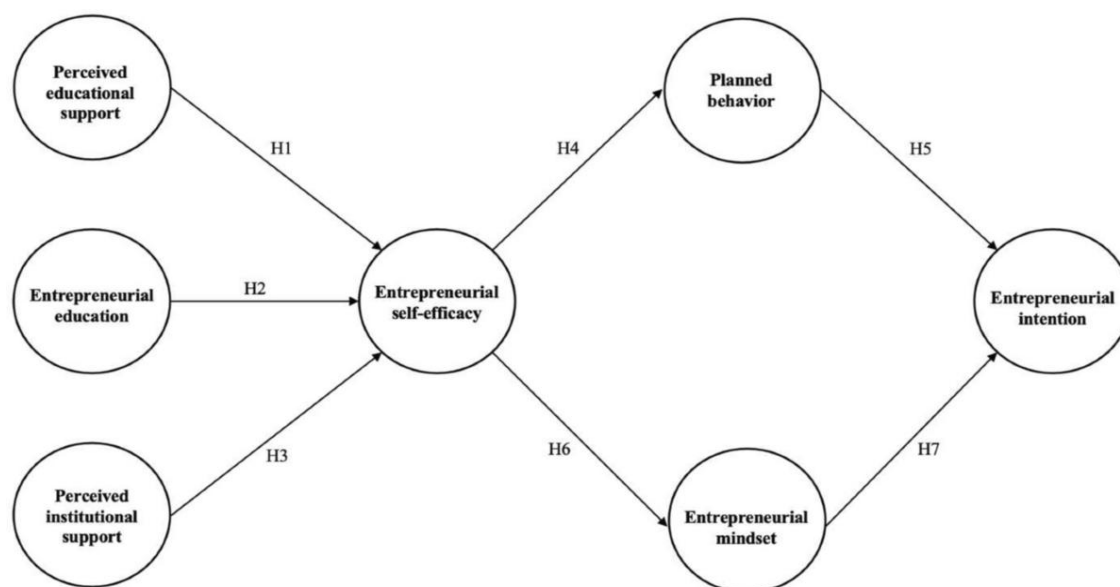


Figure 3: *Perceived University Support Boost Students' Entrepreneurial Intentions.*

Source: Galvão et al. (2025)

While digital competence equips individuals with the ability to identify and act upon entrepreneurial opportunities, the presence of institutional support can either amplify or diminish this influence. For instance, Wongwatkit et al. (2020) observed that a student possessing high digital competence may feel capable of launching a venture, yet such intentions are more likely to materialise when the university provides mentorship, initial funding, or opportunities to engage with successful entrepreneurs. This form of support reinforces students' intentions and mitigates perceived risks associated with entrepreneurial failure.

Conversely, even students who are digitally proficient may hesitate to initiate entrepreneurial activities if they perceive their academic environment as unsupportive. In the absence of an enabling institutional ecosystem, valuable opportunities may be missed, regardless of students' digital capabilities. Therefore, the moderating role of perceived university support becomes essential, acting as a catalyst or gateway in the digital competence–entrepreneurial intention relationship (Sahek & Nasri, 2019; Sahrah et al., 2023). This underscores the need for institutions aiming to promote entrepreneurship to focus not only on enhancing students' digital literacy but also on establishing comprehensive support systems. These systems should be actively introduced and promoted among students, enabling them to utilise their competencies more effectively (Wang et al., 2023). With a clearer understanding of the moderating influence of perceived university support, universities can more strategically design policies and initiatives that respond to both the digital skillsets and entrepreneurial aspirations of their students.

University Support and Entrepreneurial Intentions

In addition to its moderating role, theoretical perspectives suggest that perceived university support at the undergraduate level may exert a direct influence on students' entrepreneurial intentions. Anjum et al. (2021) highlighted that when students perceive their institution as actively promoting and supporting entrepreneurial activities, they are more likely to develop an interest in launching their own ventures. This form of support may manifest in various ways, including academic offerings such as entrepreneurship-related courses, practical infrastructure such as incubators and makerspaces, or cultural elements such as the celebration of student entrepreneurial achievements. Abhayarathne (2021) further noted that the environment in which individuals study and grow significantly shapes their attitudes and behavioural patterns. Similarly, Bazan et al. (2020) found that when a university clearly positions entrepreneurship as an institutional priority, it sends a strong message to students that pursuing business creation is a legitimate and encouraged career path. Even students with no initial interest in entrepreneurship may be motivated to explore it as a viable option based on this perception. Moreover, perceived emotional support from instructors contributes to the development of psychological attributes such as self-efficacy and academic resilience, as illustrated in Figure 4.

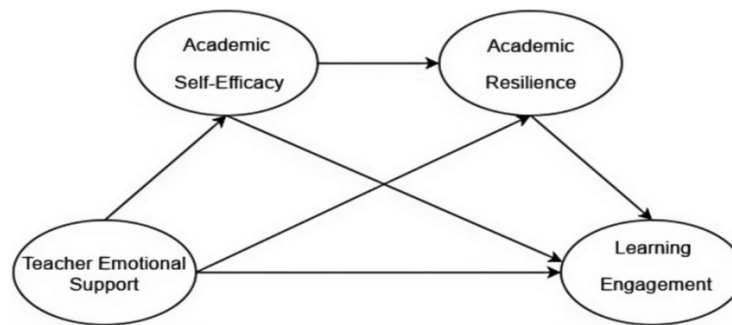


Figure 4: *Perceived Teacher Emotional Support Contribution.*

Source: Guo et al. (2025)

Students' fear of failure tends to diminish when they perceive their institution as a reliable source of guidance, training, and resources. In the field of entrepreneurship—where risk tolerance and resilience are essential—this psychological reassurance becomes particularly significant. The credibility and visibility of university support also play a crucial role in encouraging students to translate entrepreneurial intentions into concrete actions, especially when they observe real-world outcomes such as peers launching successful start-ups or institutions facilitating industry partnerships (Barba-Sánchez, Mitre-Aranda, & Brío-González, 2022). These tangible successes reinforce the perception that the university not only advocates for entrepreneurship in theory but also actively provides meaningful opportunities for students to engage in practice. In this regard, university support functions both as a motivator and an enabler. It fosters a culture of innovation while equipping students with practical tools and accessible pathways to develop entrepreneurial ventures (Passaro, Quinto, & Thomas, 2018). Therefore, enhancing the visibility, availability, and operational effectiveness of institutional support services should be considered a strategic imperative for universities committed to cultivating future entrepreneurs.

Theoretical Framework

This study is grounded in two key theoretical frameworks: TPB and RBV, both of which offer foundational insight into the core variables under investigation—digital competence, perceived university support, and entrepreneurial intentions.

Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB)

TPB posits that an individual's intention to engage in a specific behaviour serves as the most immediate and reliable predictor of that behaviour (Su et al., 2021).

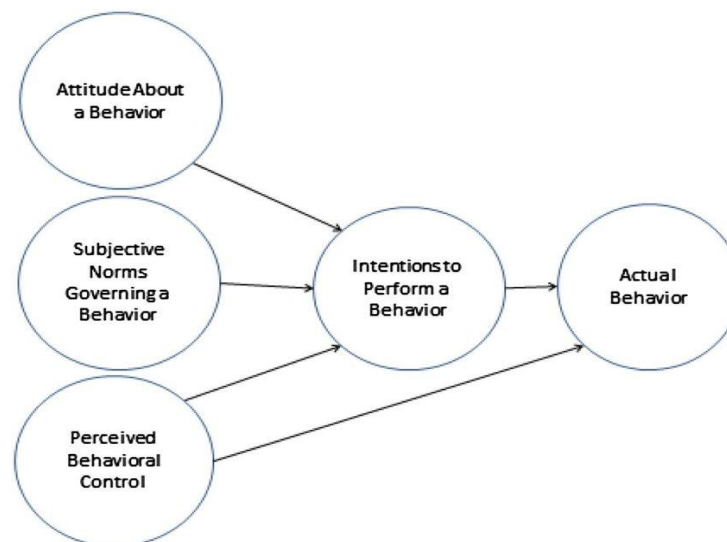


Figure 5: *Theory of Planned Behaviour.*

Source: Ishoy (2016)

The TPB explains entrepreneurial intention through three factors: attitude towards entrepreneurship, perceived social norms, and perceived behavioural control. These elements shape students' willingness to start a business. Al-Jubari (2019) further highlighted that digital competence enhances perceived behavioural control, as students who are confident in their digital abilities tend to feel more capable of navigating the complexities of entrepreneurial ventures. This sense of control fosters a stronger inclination to pursue business creation, as they believe they can manage the technical and operational challenges involved. Consequently, TPB serves as a valuable framework for explaining the direct influence of individual competencies, such as digital literacy, on the emergence of entrepreneurial intentions.

Resource-Based View (RBV)

RBV, originally formulated to explain the internal sources of competitive advantage, asserts that long-term success stems from an organisation's possession of resources that are valuable, rare, difficult to imitate, and non-substitutable (VRIN).



Figure 6: Resource-Based View.

Source: Niloshini (2024)

Within the academic context, perceived university support can be conceptualised as a strategic resource that students draw upon during their entrepreneurial pursuits. Elements such as mentorship, financial assistance, and entrepreneurship-focused training serve as institutional assets that facilitate the translation of digital competence into entrepreneurial activity. Under the RBV framework, the university is viewed as a supportive environment that enhances students' internal capabilities by offering external resource access (Diaz-Gonzalez & Dentchev, 2022). Collectively, TPB and RBV offer a comprehensive theoretical lens through which both individual-level cognitive factors (digital competence and entrepreneurial intentions) and contextual-environmental factors (perceived support) can be understood. TPB explains the psychological mechanisms underlying intention formation, while RBV accounts for the role of institutional resources in facilitating or amplifying those intentions, particularly within the higher education landscape.

Hypotheses

The hypotheses formulated for this study are outlined in Table 1.

Table 1: Research Hypothesis.

Hypothesis	Statement	Null Hypothesis (H ₀)
H1	Digital competence has a significant positive impact on entrepreneurial intentions.	H ₀₁ : Digital competence has no significant impact on entrepreneurial intentions.
H2	Perceived university support significantly moderates the relationship between digital competence and entrepreneurial intentions.	H ₀₂ : Perceived university support does not moderate the relationship between digital competence and entrepreneurial intentions.
H3	Perceived university support has a significant positive effect on entrepreneurial intentions.	H ₀₃ : Perceived university support has no significant effect on entrepreneurial intentions.

Literature Gap

While existing research recognises the significance of digital competence and university support in influencing entrepreneurial outcomes, limited attention has been given to their interactive effects—particularly among students in private colleges within developing countries. Much of the current literature centres on public institutions or settings within developed economies, often neglecting the institutional disparities and specific challenges encountered by private colleges. This study addresses that gap by investigating the moderating role of perceived university support in the relationship between digital competence and entrepreneurial intentions, focusing on an underrepresented educational context.

Methodology

Research Method

This study employs a quantitative research design to investigate the relationships between digital competence, perceived university support, and entrepreneurial intentions. This approach allows for objective measurement and statistical analysis, making it suitable for examining both direct and moderating effects among the variables.

Research Design

This study adopts a primary research design, relying on first-hand data collected directly from respondents through a questionnaire survey. This approach facilitates the analysis of students' current attitudes and perceptions within private colleges concerning their digital competence, perceived university support, and entrepreneurial intentions. The use of primary data ensures both relevance and accuracy by capturing real-time insights and experiences from the target population.

Data Collection Method

Data were collected through a structured questionnaire based on validated scales, covering digital competence, perceived university support, and entrepreneurial intentions. A 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree) was used to assess participants' attitudes and perceptions.

Sampling Technique and Sample Size

A probability-based stratified random sampling technique was employed to ensure a representative sample of students across different departments and academic levels within private colleges. This method enhances the external validity of the findings by accounting for subgroup variability within the target population. The final dataset comprised 349 valid responses, which were subjected to analysis. This sample size meets the minimum requirements for conducting regression and moderation analyses, thereby allowing for robust hypothesis testing with a high degree of confidence.

Ethical Considerations

The study followed ethical guidelines, ensuring informed consent, voluntary participation, and the right to withdraw at any time. Anonymity and confidentiality were maintained, with data used solely for academic purposes. Furthermore, the questionnaire was designed to avoid sensitive or intrusive content, thereby minimising any potential for psychological or emotional discomfort.

Data Analysis

Overview

This section presents the findings derived from the data analysis, encompassing respondent demographics, assessments of reliability and normality, correlation trends, and regression results. The analysis is intended to evaluate the relationships among the core variables and to test the proposed hypothesis concerning moderation effects.

Demographics

Among the 349 participants, 144 (41.3%) were female and 205 (58.7%) were male, reflecting a moderate gender imbalance with a slightly higher representation of male respondents. This distribution holds relevance for

interpreting variations in perceptions and behaviours related to digital competence and entrepreneurial activity, as gender may influence levels of confidence, access to digital resources, or engagement with institutional support. Nevertheless, the disparity is not substantial, allowing for a reasonably balanced consideration of both male and female perspectives within the scope of the study.

Table 2: Gender.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Female	144	41.3	41.3	41.3
	Male	205	58.7	58.7	100.0
	Total	349	100.0	100.0	

The sample comprises respondents across four age categories. The largest proportion falls within the 18–22 age range (30.9%), followed by those aged 28 and above (25.8%), 23–27 years (24.6%), and individuals under 18 (18.6%). This distribution indicates that while the majority are of conventional college age, a notable segment consists of older or returning students. Such age diversity enhances the generalisability of the study's findings, enabling broader insights that reflect varied developmental stages and life experiences which may influence entrepreneurial intentions and perceptions of university support.

Table 3: Age Group.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	18–22	108	30.9	30.9	30.9
	23–27	86	24.6	24.6	55.6
	28 and Above	90	25.8	25.8	81.4
	Under18	65	18.6	18.6	100.0
	Total	349	100.0	100.0	

The participants were relatively evenly distributed across academic years, with first-year students accounting for 27.5%, second-year students 27.2%, third-year students 21.5%, and those in fourth year or beyond representing 23.8%. This balanced representation across academic levels enables the analysis to reflect perspectives from students at different stages of their educational and personal development. While senior students may possess greater exposure to entrepreneurial programmes and institutional support mechanisms, junior students are likely in the early stages of forming their attitudes toward entrepreneurship.

Table 4: Year of Study.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1st Year	96	27.5	27.5	27.5
	2nd Year	95	27.2	27.2	54.7
	3rd Year	75	21.5	21.5	76.2
	4th Year	83	23.8	23.8	100.0
	Total	349	100.0	100.0	

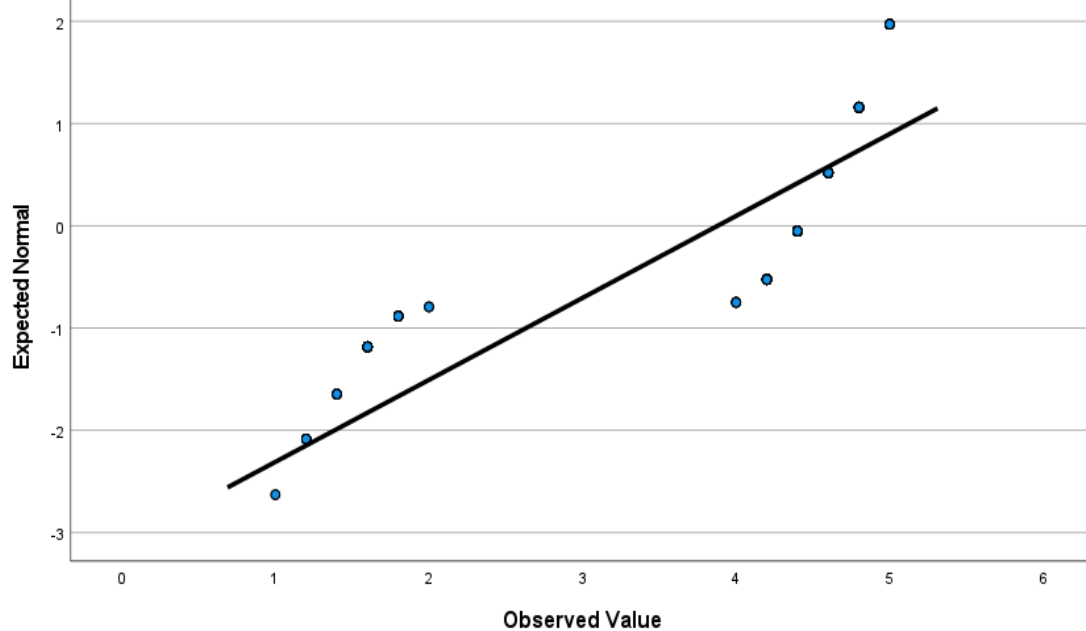
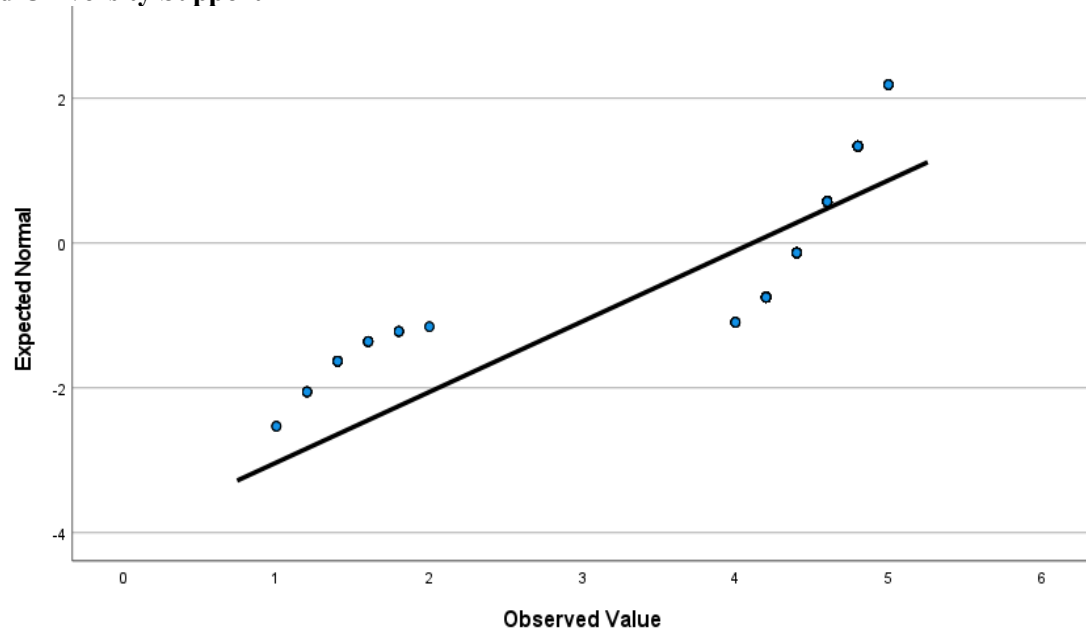
Normality Analysis

The normality of the primary variables—digital competence, perceived university support, and entrepreneurial intentions—was evaluated using the Kolmogorov–Smirnov and Shapiro–Wilk tests. Both tests produced statistically significant results ($p = .000$) across all three variables, indicating a departure from the assumption of normality. Specifically, the Shapiro–Wilk statistics were .681 for digital competence, .590 for perceived support, and .538 for entrepreneurial intentions, all of which fall below the .90 threshold commonly associated with approximate normality. Although the data violate normality assumptions, the relatively large sample size ($N = 349$) permits the application of parametric tests such as regression, which are generally robust against such violations in larger samples. Nevertheless, the deviation from normality should be acknowledged as a methodological limitation and considered when interpreting outcomes, especially those related to correlation and regression analyses. Supplementary visual tools, such as histograms or Q–Q plots, may further substantiate the non-normal distribution of the data.

Table 5: *Tests of Normality.*

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Digital Competence	.367	349	.000	.681	349	.000
Perceived University Support	.389	349	.000	.590	349	.000
Entrepreneurial Intentions	.351	349	.000	.538	349	.000

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Digital Competence**Figure 7:** *Normal Q-Q Plot of Digital Competence.***Perceived University Support****Figure 8:** *Normal Q-Q Plot of Perceived University Support.*

Entrepreneurial Intentions

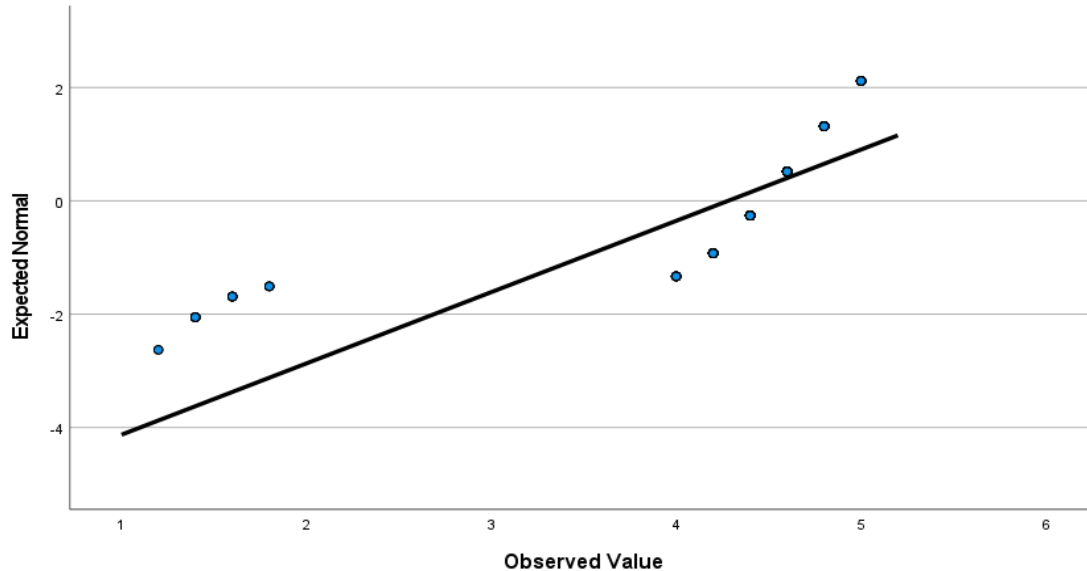


Figure 9: Normal Q-Q Plot of Entrepreneurial Intentions.

Reliability Analysis

Scale: Digital Competence

The digital competence scale demonstrated excellent internal consistency, with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .960 across its five items. This high value indicates a strong interrelationship among the items, suggesting that they consistently measure the same underlying construct. In the context of psychological and educational research, an alpha value exceeding .9 is considered highly desirable, reflecting that respondents interpreted and answered the items in a uniform manner. The scale's high reliability supports its validity and reinforces its suitability for subsequent correlation and regression analyses.

Table 6: Reliability Statistics.

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.960	5

Scale: Perceived University Support

The perceived university support scale yielded a Cronbach's alpha of .876, reflecting strong internal consistency across its five items. An alpha value exceeding .8 indicates that the items reliably measure a common underlying construct, thereby affirming the scale's suitability for research purposes. This level of reliability suggests that participants responded to the support-related items in a consistent manner, enhancing the scale's validity as both a predictive and moderating variable in statistical analyses. Accordingly, the scale can be confidently employed in further examining its relationship with entrepreneurial outcomes.

Table 7: Reliability Statistics.

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.876	5

Scale: Entrepreneurial Intentions

The entrepreneurial intentions scale achieved a Cronbach's alpha of .921, reflecting a high level of internal consistency across its five items. This strong reliability score indicates that students responded consistently to the items designed to assess their entrepreneurial motivation. Such consistency suggests that the scale effectively captures the construct it intends to measure and is therefore highly suitable for analysing patterns of entrepreneurial interest or behaviour within the sample. The robustness of this scale enhances the validity of any subsequent statistical analyses, including regression and moderation procedures, involving this variable.

Table 8: Reliability Statistics.

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.921	5

Correlation Analysis

To examine the interrelationships among digital competence, perceived university support, and entrepreneurial intentions, a Pearson correlation analysis was conducted. The results revealed several noteworthy insights. Firstly, a statistically significant negative correlation was identified between digital competence and perceived university support ($r = -.212$, $p < .01$). This indicates that students who rated themselves higher in digital competence were slightly less likely to perceive their university as supportive of entrepreneurial initiatives. Although the relationship is statistically significant, its weak strength suggests it should be interpreted with caution. One possible explanation is that more digitally capable students may feel a greater sense of independence and therefore perceive less reliance on institutional support. A small but significant positive link ($r = .171$, $p = .001$) shows that greater perceived university support increases students' entrepreneurial intentions, supporting prior research. Lastly, the analysis showed no significant correlation between digital competence and entrepreneurial intentions ($r = .030$, $p = .574$), indicating that digital skills alone do not directly predict students' entrepreneurial motivation. This finding implies that, although digital competence is a beneficial attribute, it may not be sufficient in isolation to drive entrepreneurial ambition. Overall, these results underscore the more prominent role of institutional support, relative to digital skills, in shaping students' entrepreneurial intentions.

Table 9: Correlations.

		Digital Competence	Perceived University Support	Entrepreneurial Intentions
Digital Competence	Pearson Correlation	1	-.212**	.030
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.574
	N	349	349	349
Perceived University Support	Pearson Correlation	-.212**	1	.171**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.001
	N	349	349	349
Entrepreneurial Intentions	Pearson Correlation	.030	.171**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.574	.001	
	N	349	349	349

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Regression Analysis

The model summary evaluates the overall capacity of the regression model to account for variation in the dependent variable, entrepreneurial intentions. The analysis produced an R value of .185 and an R^2 of .034, indicating that the combined predictors—centred digital competence, centred perceived university support, and their interaction term—explain approximately 3.4% of the variance in entrepreneurial intentions. Although this proportion is modest, such low R^2 values are not unusual in social science research, where human behaviour is typically shaped by a wide array of interrelated factors. The Adjusted R^2 , which accounts for the number of predictors included in the model, was .026, reaffirming the limited explanatory power of the model even after statistical adjustment. Despite its modest predictive strength, the model provides valuable insights by highlighting the relative influence of the examined variables. The low R^2 suggests that additional, unmeasured factors may exert a more substantial impact on entrepreneurial intentions among students. However, this does not undermine the validity of the model; rather, it reflects the complexity of entrepreneurial behaviour and the multifactorial nature of its determinants.

Table 10: Model Summary.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.185 ^a	.034	.026	.784364050567214

a. Predictors: (Constant), Int_Centered, c_DigCom, c_UniSupp

The ANOVA Table 11 assesses whether the overall regression model provides a statistically significant prediction of the dependent variable, entrepreneurial intentions. The model yielded an F-statistic of 4.064 with 3 and 345 degrees of freedom, accompanied by a p-value of .007, which is significant at the 0.01 level. This result confirms that the regression model, in its entirety, offers a significantly better fit than a model lacking predictor variables. In other words, there is a statistically meaningful association between the combined predictors—centred digital competence, centred perceived university support, and their interaction term—and entrepreneurial intentions. Although the proportion of variance explained is limited ($R^2 = .034$), the statistical significance of the model indicates that the predictors collectively contribute to explaining variation in the outcome variable. The significance test confirms that the regression coefficients are not all equal to zero, thereby validating the model for further interpretation. Subsequent analysis at the level of individual predictors will help clarify which variables exert meaningful influence on students' entrepreneurial intentions.

Table 11: ANOVA^a.

	Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	7.500	3	2.500	4.064	.007 ^b
	Residual	212.253	345	.615		
	Total	219.754	348			

a. Dependent Variable: EntInt

b. Predictors: (Constant), Int_Centered, c_DigCom, c_UniSupp

The coefficients Table 12 offers detailed insights into the individual impact of each predictor on entrepreneurial intentions. The constant (intercept) is reported as 4.275 ($p = .000$), representing the estimated value of entrepreneurial intentions when all predictors are held at their mean. Centred perceived university support (c_UniSupp) emerges as a statistically significant positive predictor ($B = .157$, $p = .049$), indicating that students who perceive higher levels of institutional support are more likely to exhibit stronger entrepreneurial intentions. Conversely, centred digital competence (c_DigComp) does not demonstrate a statistically significant effect ($B = .052$, $p = .322$), suggesting that digital proficiency, in isolation, does not substantially influence entrepreneurial motivation within this sample. Most notably, the interaction term (Int_Centered), which represents the moderating effect of perceived support on the relationship between digital competence and entrepreneurial intentions, is also non-significant ($B = -.020$, $p = .846$). This result indicates that perceived university support does not significantly alter the strength or direction of the relationship between digital competence and entrepreneurial intentions. In summary, while university support directly contributes to entrepreneurial motivation, the anticipated moderating effect is not empirically supported within this analysis.

Table 12: Coefficients^a.

	Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	4.275	.051		84.501	.000
	c_DigCom	.052	.052	.082	.991	.322
	c_UniSupp	.157	.080	.203	1.979	.049
	Int_Centered	-.020	.104	-.021	-.195	.846

a. Dependent Variable: EntInt

Discussion

Despite the high internal consistency of the digital competence measurement instrument and the growing scholarly consensus emphasising its pivotal role in contemporary entrepreneurial frameworks (Abaddi, 2023; Triyono et al., 2023), these findings diverge from established theoretical assumptions. Prior research has frequently suggested that individuals endowed with advanced digital proficiency exhibit superior capacity to detect and exploit entrepreneurial opportunities (Ngoasong, 2017; Singh et al., 2023). Nevertheless, the absence of a significant direct relationship in the present context indicates that digital competence functions more as a foundational skillset rather than an autonomous motivator for entrepreneurial engagement. Without the presence

of conducive environmental stimuli—such as tangible institutional support or a prevailing culture that actively fosters entrepreneurial behaviour—students may construe their digital skills merely as generic competencies rather than entrepreneurial enablers. This observation also intimates that the entrepreneurial process requires additional psychological and contextual dimensions—such as a well-formed entrepreneurial identity, heightened risk tolerance, and intrinsic motivational drivers—which are not inherently encapsulated by digital competence alone (Lv et al., 2021). Accordingly, this underscores the imperative for private higher education institutions to integrate digital literacy within broader pedagogical and cultural frameworks designed explicitly to cultivate entrepreneurial aspirations, rather than relying solely on skill acquisition.

Conversely, perceived university support manifested as a robust and statistically significant predictor of entrepreneurial intentions, accentuating the critical role of institutional facilitation in shaping students' entrepreneurial motivations. This outcome corroborates extant literature positing that a comprehensive and supportive university ecosystem—encompassing mentorship programmes, targeted entrepreneurial training, and accessible resources—serves as a catalyst for fostering students' proclivity toward venture creation (Anjum et al., 2021; Galvão et al., 2025). The palpable presence of such institutional support mechanisms signals to students that entrepreneurship constitutes a legitimate and attainable career trajectory, thereby enhancing its perceived viability (Barba-Sánchez et al., 2022). Moreover, these supportive environments engender a psychological milieu conducive to confidence-building, mitigating the debilitating fear of failure that frequently impedes entrepreneurial endeavour (Guo et al., 2025). Notably, this supportive effect appears to transcend the threshold of digital competence; even students with only moderate digital proficiency demonstrate elevated entrepreneurial intentions when buoyed by strong institutional backing (Passaro et al., 2018). Such findings underscore the potentially preeminent influence of contextual institutional variables over individual technical skillsets. Particularly within private colleges operating in developing economies, prioritising the development of visible and effective entrepreneurial support structures may yield greater practical impact than exclusive emphasis on digital skill enhancement.

In contrast to expectations grounded in prior theoretical postulations, perceived university support did not exert a statistically significant moderating influence on the relationship between digital competence and entrepreneurial intentions. Although previous studies have suggested that institutional backing can amplify the effects of personal competencies by alleviating perceived risks and reinforcing entrepreneurial self-efficacy (Biclesanu et al., 2023; Wongwatkit et al., 2020), such an interactive effect was not substantiated in this investigation. A plausible interpretation is that students cognitively segregate digital competence and institutional support as discrete, independent constructs rather than as integrated, synergistic resources. Alternatively, students exhibiting high digital competence might experience a heightened sense of autonomy and self-reliance, diminishing their perceived need for institutional facilitation, a dynamic reflected in the observed inverse correlation between digital competence and perceived university support. This phenomenon aligns with the Resource-Based View framework (Diaz-Gonzalez & Dentchev, 2022), which asserts that competitive advantage is contingent upon the strategic alignment and integration of resources. In the absence of such alignment—where digital skills and university support are not perceived as complementary—the anticipated synergistic moderating effect does not emerge. Accordingly, universities should prioritise the deliberate alignment of digital literacy initiatives with entrepreneurial support services, ensuring that digital competencies are explicitly linked to entrepreneurial praxis to fully harness their collective potential.

Conclusion

Firstly, although digital competence is widely acknowledged as a crucial skill within the entrepreneurial domain, it did not exhibit a statistically significant direct effect on students' entrepreneurial intentions. This indicates that possessing digital skills alone is insufficient to stimulate entrepreneurial motivation without the presence of appropriate contextual or psychological incentives. Secondly, perceived university support demonstrated a robust positive association with entrepreneurial intentions, confirming that institutional environments that actively promote entrepreneurship—through mechanisms such as mentorship, funding opportunities, and targeted education—can effectively encourage students to contemplate venture creation. Thirdly, the analysis found no evidence to support the hypothesis that perceived university support moderates the relationship between digital competence and entrepreneurial intentions. This finding suggests a possible

disconnect in students' perceptions, whereby digital skills and institutional support are regarded as separate constructs rather than as mutually reinforcing resources. Collectively, this study contributes to the extant literature by emphasising the predominant role of perceived institutional support over individual technical proficiency in the entrepreneurial intention formation process within private college contexts. Moreover, it underscores the necessity for comprehensive and well-integrated support frameworks within entrepreneurship education programmes. Institutions seeking to cultivate entrepreneurial mindsets must therefore prioritise not only the development of technical competencies but also the establishment of clear, accessible, and empowering support ecosystems that facilitate the translation of these competencies into entrepreneurial action.

Recommendations

Include Digital Competence in Entrepreneurship Curricula: Private colleges should prioritise the development of entrepreneurship courses that explicitly link digital competence with the entrepreneurial journey. Such curricula must illustrate the critical role of digital marketing, data analytics, and e-commerce platforms in achieving entrepreneurial success.

Increase Promotion of Support Services: Institutions ought to enhance the visibility and accessibility of entrepreneurship support services—such as seed funding, mentorship programmes, business incubators, and networking events—ensuring these resources are actively promoted, particularly among students outside business disciplines.

Build Collaborative Innovation Spaces: It is essential for educational establishments to establish interdisciplinary innovation hubs where students with advanced digital skills can partner with peers possessing entrepreneurial inclinations, thus facilitating the transformation of technical knowledge into viable business ventures.

Enhance Entrepreneurial Attitude with Mentorship: The creation of mentorship schemes involving alumni entrepreneurs and industry experts is recommended to assist students in applying both their digital competencies and entrepreneurial mindset to practical, real-world situations.

Establish Targeted Support Systems and Digital Entrepreneurs: Universities must implement tailored support frameworks focused on digital entrepreneurs, including virtual incubation initiatives, to fortify the nexus between venture creation and digital skill utilisation.

Limitations

The study's cross-sectional design and reliance on self-reported data represent notable limitations, given that self-report measures are inherently vulnerable to response biases. Furthermore, the research focused exclusively on students from private colleges, thereby limiting the extent to which the findings can be generalised to students in public institutions or other educational contexts.

Future Research Directions

Future research should consider employing a longitudinal design to explore how digital competence and perceived university support evolve over time and subsequently affect entrepreneurial behaviour. Additionally, qualitative methodologies could provide richer insights into students' intrinsic motivations and their perceptions of institutional support in the pursuit of entrepreneurial endeavours.

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