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Digitalization, Entrepreneurship Education, And Entrepreneurial Potential: A Human Capital Theory Perspective

Amit Singh[1], Rajkiran Prabhakar[2]
[1]Research Scholar, Institute of Management Studies, Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi-221005, India
ORCID: 0009-0004-6366-2340
[2]Associate Professor, Institute of Management Studies, Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi-221005, India
ORCID: 0000-0003-2083-091X

ABSTRACT: Digitalization is changing how entrepreneurship is learned, practiced, and supported, yet the relationship between digitalization, entrepreneurship education, and entrepreneurial potential remains conceptually fragmented. Existing research has examined digital entrepreneurship, entrepreneurship education, entrepreneurial intention, and digital transformation as related but often separate areas. This conceptual paper brings these strands together and explains how entrepreneurship education may function as a pathway through which digital resources are translated into entrepreneurial knowledge, skills, and capabilities. Drawing on Human Capital Theory, the paper distinguishes entrepreneurial potential from entrepreneurial intention and positions entrepreneurial potential as a broader state of entrepreneurial readiness that can be developed through learning and experience. A conceptual literature review was undertaken using peer-reviewed studies and established theoretical work on digitalization, entrepreneurship education, entrepreneurial potential, and human capital. The literature was synthesized around four relationships: digitalization and entrepreneurship education, entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial potential, digitalization and entrepreneurial potential, and the role of entrepreneurship education as an intervening mechanism. The resulting framework proposes that digitalization can influence entrepreneurial potential both directly and through entrepreneurship education, while the strength of this relationship depends on the extent to which digital resources are converted into meaningful learning and capability development. Two propositions are developed to guide future empirical testing. The paper contributes by clarifying the conceptual boundaries between digitalization, entrepreneurship education, entrepreneurial potential, and entrepreneurial intention and by providing a Human Capital Theory-based framework for future research.

KEYWORDS: Digitalization, entrepreneurship education, entrepreneurial potential, human capital theory, digital entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial capabilities.

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**Corresponding Author: Amit Singh*

1. INTRODUCTION

Digital technologies have altered the conditions under which entrepreneurial opportunities are identified, developed, and pursued. Digital platforms, online markets, data-based tools, cloud services, social media, and other technologies have lowered some traditional barriers to market access while also creating new forms of entrepreneurial activity. Research on digital entrepreneurship shows that digital technologies are not simply tools added to existing business processes; they can change the ways in which entrepreneurs access resources, interact with markets, develop opportunities, and create value (Berger et al., 2021; Lamine et al., 2023). Empirical evidence also indicates that digitalization is associated with entrepreneurial entry and entrepreneurial activity, although its effects differ according to the type of work, skills available to individuals, and the form of entrepreneurship being pursued (Dabbous et al., 2023; Fossen & Sorgner, 2021; Nguyen & Nguyen, 2024).

These changes have direct implications for entrepreneurship education. If the entrepreneurial process is increasingly shaped by digital technologies, education cannot focus only on conventional business planning, finance, or venture creation. Learners also need opportunities to develop digital capabilities, adapt to changing technologies, work with online networks, identify opportunities in digital markets, and learn through practical and technology-supported activities. Sitaridis and Kitsios (2024) show that the

intersection between digital entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship education has developed as an important but fragmented research area, with particular attention to pedagogy, learning, behavioral outcomes, and entrepreneurial ecosystems. Similarly, research on entrepreneurship education suggests that educational experiences can develop entrepreneurial competencies and influence entrepreneurial attitudes and intentions (Boldureanu et al., 2020; Liu et al., 2019; Lv et al., 2021; Prabhakar & Singh, 2025).

A related but less clearly developed issue concerns entrepreneurial potential. Entrepreneurial potential is broader than the intention to start a business. Krueger and Brazeal (1994) positioned entrepreneurial potential as a condition that precedes entrepreneurship and emphasized the importance of potential entrepreneurs in the entrepreneurial process. More recent research defines entrepreneurial potential in terms of individuals who possess or perceive the skills necessary to engage in entrepreneurship and shows that individual and institutional conditions can influence the development of such potential (Aparicio et al., 2021). This distinction is important because a person may possess entrepreneurial capabilities and readiness without having a current intention to establish a venture. Potential can remain dormant, be developed gradually, or be expressed through different forms of entrepreneurial activity.

Despite the growing literature on digital entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship education, the connection between digitalization and entrepreneurial potential remains insufficiently integrated. Existing studies often focus on entrepreneurial intention, digital entrepreneurial activity, firm performance, or digital competencies. Less attention has been given to how digitalization may create learning conditions through which entrepreneurship education develops the broader capabilities associated with entrepreneurial potential. This gap is particularly relevant from a Human Capital Theory perspective because education and training are understood as investments that develop knowledge and capabilities with productive value (Sweetland, 1996).

Accordingly, this paper addresses the following research question: *How can digitalization, through entrepreneurship education, contribute to the development of entrepreneurial potential from a Human Capital Theory perspective?* The paper has three objectives: (1) to clarify the conceptual relationship between digitalization, entrepreneurship education, and entrepreneurial potential; (2) to explain the role of entrepreneurship education as a possible pathway through which digital resources are translated into entrepreneurial capabilities; and (3) to develop a conceptual framework and propositions that can guide future empirical research. The contribution is therefore conceptual rather than statistical. The paper does not claim to establish causal effects; instead, it integrates established findings and theoretical arguments into a coherent framework for empirical examination.

2. REVIEW APPROACH

This study adopts a conceptual literature review approach. The purpose of the review is not to estimate an overall effect size or to conduct a systematic review in the strict methodological sense. Instead, the review brings together established theoretical work and peer-reviewed empirical studies that help explain the relationships among digitalization, entrepreneurship education, entrepreneurial potential, and human capital. This approach is appropriate because the central problem addressed in the paper is conceptual fragmentation: relevant research exists across entrepreneurship, education, technology, and human capital literatures, but these strands have not always been connected around entrepreneurial potential.

The literature was identified from peer-reviewed journal articles and established scholarly sources dealing directly with the main constructs. Priority was given to articles published in recognized academic journals and to studies whose titles, abstracts, or theoretical discussions explicitly addressed digitalization or digital entrepreneurship, entrepreneurship education, entrepreneurial potential or entrepreneurial competence, and human capital. Searches were organized around combinations of terms such as "digitalization" AND entrepreneurship, "digital entrepreneurship" AND "entrepreneurship education," "entrepreneurship education" AND "entrepreneurial potential," and "human capital" AND entrepreneurship education. Foundational theoretical work was retained where it was necessary to establish the meaning and boundaries of the constructs.

The selected literature was then examined thematically rather than article by article. Four themes were used to organize the synthesis. The first concerns how digitalization changes the entrepreneurial environment and the requirements of entrepreneurship. The second considers how entrepreneurship education develops knowledge, skills, attitudes, and entrepreneurial competence. The third examines the meaning and development of entrepreneurial potential. The fourth brings these relationships together through Human Capital Theory and considers whether entrepreneurship education can function as an intervening pathway between digitalization and entrepreneurial potential.

This approach also provides an important boundary for the interpretation of the paper. The framework is a theoretically informed proposal, not an empirically validated mediation model. Statements about relationships are therefore expressed as theoretical expectations rather than established causal findings. This distinction is necessary because much of the existing literature examines related outcomes such as entrepreneurial intention, entrepreneurial entry, competence, or business activity rather than entrepreneurial potential itself. The conceptual model developed below should consequently be treated as a basis for future empirical testing.

3. CONCEPTUAL BACKGROUND

3.1 Digitalization in entrepreneurship

Digitalization has become an important contextual force in entrepreneurship because it changes how opportunities, resources, markets, and relationships are organized. Digital technologies can reduce transaction and communication costs, increase access to information, support new forms of market participation, and allow entrepreneurs to reach customers beyond conventional geographic boundaries. Lamine et al. (2023) argue that digital technologies are transforming the entrepreneurial landscape and creating new ways of pursuing entrepreneurship. Similarly, Berger et al. (2021) identify digitalization as a major force shaping contemporary entrepreneurship and innovation, while Galindo-Martín et al. (2023) show that digitalization and entrepreneurship are closely connected to competitiveness and market opportunities.

Digitalization also changes the requirements placed on entrepreneurs. Access to technology alone does not ensure effective entrepreneurial action. Individuals must be able to understand digital environments, evaluate information, adapt to technological change, communicate through digital channels, and use digital resources to create or capture value. Fossen and Sorgner (2021) demonstrate that digitalization is associated with entry into entrepreneurship, but the relationship varies across types of digitalization and types of entrepreneurial entry. Dabbous et al. (2023) similarly show that dimensions of digitalization such as connectivity, internet use, and digital integration can influence entrepreneurial activity. These findings suggest that digitalization should be understood as both an opportunity structure and a source of new capability requirements.

The distinction is important for education. When entrepreneurial activity becomes more digitally mediated, learners need more than access to digital tools; they need the capacity to use those tools purposefully. Entrepreneurship education therefore becomes an important setting in which digital resources can be connected with entrepreneurial knowledge and practice. Sitaridis and Kitsios (2024) identify this intersection as an emerging research area and show that digital entrepreneurship education involves changes in pedagogy, learning, skills, behavioral outcomes, and ecosystem relationships. The implication is that digitalization creates a context for entrepreneurial learning, but education determines how effectively that context is converted into capability development.

3.2 Entrepreneurship education

Entrepreneurship education is concerned with developing the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and capabilities required to understand and engage with entrepreneurial processes (Branca et al., 2025). Its scope has increasingly moved beyond the narrow objective of teaching students how to prepare business plans or launch firms. De Carolis and Litzky (2019) argue for a broader view of entrepreneurship education that develops an entrepreneurial mindset, including the ability to think creatively, respond to uncertainty, learn from failure, and act on opportunities. Boldureanu et al. (2020) similarly demonstrate that entrepreneurship education can influence students' attitudes and entrepreneurial intentions when learning incorporates entrepreneurial role models and relevant experiences.

Empirical studies also indicate that entrepreneurship education can operate through competence development. Liu et al. (2019) found relationships among entrepreneurial education, entrepreneurial self-efficacy, entrepreneurial attitude, and entrepreneurial intention among college students. Lv et al. (2021) further show that entrepreneurial competence provides an important pathway connecting university entrepreneurship education with entrepreneurial intention. Deng and Wang (2023) report that entrepreneurship education is associated with entrepreneurial intention across different groups of college students. These findings do not mean that education automatically creates entrepreneurs. Rather, they suggest that education can influence the capabilities and psychological conditions that support entrepreneurial action.

In a digital environment, the educational role becomes broader. Digital entrepreneurship requires learners to understand changing technologies, identify digitally enabled opportunities, use online resources, and develop adaptive capabilities (Ivanović et al., 2025). Sitaridis and Kitsios (2024) therefore call attention to the need for entrepreneurship education to respond to the knowledge and skills required by digital entrepreneurship. The central argument of this paper follows from this point: digitalization provides new resources and learning environments, while entrepreneurship education provides a mechanism through which those resources may be converted into entrepreneurial capabilities.

3.3 Entrepreneurial potential

Entrepreneurial potential refers to a broader state of preparedness for entrepreneurial activity. Krueger and Brazeal (1994) describe entrepreneurial potential as an antecedent to entrepreneurship and focus attention on the conditions under which potential entrepreneurs may emerge. Aparicio et al. (2021) define entrepreneurial potential in terms of non-entrepreneurs who perceive that they possess the necessary skills to engage in entrepreneurship and show that institutional conditions can affect such potential. This perspective distinguishes potential from actual entrepreneurial behavior: an individual may have entrepreneurial potential without having created a venture.

Entrepreneurial potential should also be distinguished from entrepreneurial intention. Intention is a more specific motivational orientation toward performing entrepreneurial behavior, whereas potential captures a wider set of capabilities, dispositions, and perceived readiness. Research on potential entrepreneurs indicates that self-efficacy, anticipatory cognitions, and personality-related factors can shape entrepreneurial intentions (Fuller et al., 2018). This supports a conceptual distinction between the resources and

capabilities that make entrepreneurship possible and the decision or commitment to pursue it. For the present paper, entrepreneurial intention is therefore treated as a possible downstream outcome rather than as a component of entrepreneurial potential.

Entrepreneurial potential is also not necessarily fixed. Raappana and Pihkala (2024) show that entrepreneurial potential among adolescents is associated with school, family background, and leisure-time activities, suggesting that potential develops through multiple environments rather than through a single educational intervention. This finding is consistent with the broader argument that entrepreneurial potential can be shaped by learning and experience. Entrepreneurship education can therefore be understood as one institutional context within which potential may be developed, while digitalization changes the resources and forms of learning available within that context.

3.4 Human Capital Theory

Human Capital Theory provides the theoretical foundation for connecting education with capability development. The theory views knowledge and skills acquired through investment in education and training as forms of capital that can increase productive capacity. Sweetland's (1996) review shows the long-standing connection between human capital research and education, while the entrepreneurship literature has extended this logic to entrepreneurial knowledge and capabilities. From this perspective, entrepreneurship education represents an investment in individuals that can strengthen the resources they bring to entrepreneurial activity.

Applied to digitalization, Human Capital Theory suggests that technology does not by itself constitute entrepreneurial capability. Digital tools become economically and entrepreneurially useful when individuals possess the knowledge and skills required to understand, adapt, and apply them. Digitalization can therefore expand the resources available for learning, but the conversion of these resources into entrepreneurial capability requires human learning. This provides the theoretical rationale for placing entrepreneurship education between digitalization and entrepreneurial potential in the proposed framework.

4. THEORETICAL RELATIONSHIPS

4.1 Digitalization and entrepreneurship education

The relationship between digitalization and entrepreneurship education is increasingly visible in research on digital entrepreneurship education. Digital platforms can provide access to learning materials, entrepreneurial networks, simulations, mentoring, market information, and collaborative activities that are difficult to provide through conventional classroom teaching alone(Chotisarn & Phuthong, 2026). Sitaridis and Kitsios (2024) show that digital entrepreneurship education has developed as a distinct area of research because digital entrepreneurship changes the knowledge and skills that educational programmes are expected to provide. Digitalization therefore affects not only the delivery of education but also what learners need to learn.

The relationship should nevertheless not be understood as a simple technological upgrade. The educational value of digitalization depends on how technologies are incorporated into learning activities. A platform may improve access to information without necessarily developing entrepreneurial capability. Conversely, digital tools combined with practical assignments, opportunity analysis, interaction with entrepreneurs, collaborative problem solving, and feedback can create richer learning experiences. Thus, digitalization provides enabling conditions, while educational design determines how those conditions are translated into learning (Duong et al., 2024).

4.2 Entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial potential

Entrepreneurship education can contribute to entrepreneurial potential by developing the knowledge and competencies needed to identify and respond to opportunities. The evidence on entrepreneurial education and intention supports the broader view that education can influence entrepreneurial attitudes, self-efficacy, competence, and intention (Liang et al., 2025; Liu et al., 2019; Lv et al., 2021; Shah et al., 2020). De Carolis and Litzky (2019) emphasize that entrepreneurship education can develop a broader entrepreneurial mindset, while Boldureanu et al. (2020) show the value of entrepreneurial role models in education. These studies collectively suggest that education can influence several elements that form the foundation of entrepreneurial readiness.

However, it is important not to reduce entrepreneurial potential to entrepreneurial intention. Education may increase a learner's capabilities without producing an immediate intention to start a business. A student may develop opportunity-recognition skills, confidence, creativity, networking ability, or digital competencies and later use them in a startup, an existing organization, social entrepreneurship, or another form of entrepreneurial activity. Treating these capabilities as part of potential allows the construct to capture a broader developmental process.

4.3 Digitalization and entrepreneurial potential

Digitalization can influence entrepreneurial potential by changing the opportunity and resource environment in which individuals learn about entrepreneurship. Digital technologies provide access to information, markets, communities, tools, and forms of experimentation that can support entrepreneurial learning. Lamine et al. (2023) describe digital technologies as transforming the entrepreneurial landscape and creating new ways of pursuing entrepreneurship. Galindo-Martín et al. (2023) show that digitalization is connected with entrepreneurship and competitiveness, while Fossen and Sorgner (2021) provide evidence that digitalization is associated with entrepreneurial entry.

These findings suggest a plausible relationship between digitalization and entrepreneurial potential, but they do not establish that digitalization automatically develops potential. The effects depend on whether individuals can access and use digital resources effectively. Differences in skills, educational opportunities, institutional support, and learning experiences can shape whether digitalization becomes a source of entrepreneurial capability. This is why the educational pathway is central to the present framework.

4.4 Entrepreneurship education as an intervening pathway

The literature provides a basis for viewing entrepreneurship education as a pathway connecting digitalization with entrepreneurial potential. Digitalization expands the resources and environments available for entrepreneurial learning; entrepreneurship education organizes these resources into structured learning experiences; and these experiences may develop knowledge, skills, attitudes, and competencies associated with entrepreneurial potential (Nguyen-Viet & Nguyen, 2025). Human Capital Theory provides a coherent explanation for this sequence because it treats education and training as mechanisms through which investments are converted into human capabilities (Sweetland, 1996).

The proposed pathway is therefore not a claim that entrepreneurship education is the only mechanism connecting digitalization and potential. Informal learning, family background, peer networks, work experience, institutional support, and personal characteristics may also contribute. Raappana and Pihkala (2024), for example, demonstrate that entrepreneurial potential develops through multiple environments. The proposed model instead identifies entrepreneurship education as an important institutional mechanism that can translate digital resources into structured capability development.

The distinction between direct and indirect effects is also important. Digitalization may directly expose individuals to entrepreneurial opportunities, networks, and information. At the same time, entrepreneurship education may strengthen the ability to recognize and use those resources. The conceptual model therefore allows both a direct relationship between digitalization and entrepreneurial potential and an indirect relationship through entrepreneurship education. Future empirical work can determine whether the indirect pathway is stronger than the direct pathway and under what conditions.

5. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The proposed framework integrates the preceding arguments into a simple developmental model. Digitalization represents the changing technological environment and the availability of digital resources, platforms, information, networks, and new forms of entrepreneurial activity. Entrepreneurship education represents the structured educational mechanism through which learners can acquire and apply knowledge and skills relevant to entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurial potential represents the broader readiness and capability base that may support entrepreneurial activity.

Human Capital Theory underpins the model by explaining why educational investment can contribute to capability development. The framework does not treat digitalization as a substitute for human capital. Instead, digitalization expands the resources and learning possibilities from which human capital can be developed. Entrepreneurship education is positioned as the pathway that organizes these resources into learning experiences. Entrepreneurial potential is then expected to reflect the resulting combination of entrepreneurial knowledge, competencies, adaptability, opportunity-related capabilities, and other forms of readiness.

The model contains two paths. The first is a direct path from digitalization to entrepreneurial potential. This path recognizes that digital environments can expose individuals to opportunities, markets, information, networks, and entrepreneurial practices. The second is an indirect path through entrepreneurship education. This path captures the argument that digital resources are more likely to contribute to entrepreneurial potential when they are incorporated into meaningful educational experiences. The second path is the main theoretical contribution of the framework because it explains how technology may be translated into human capability rather than assuming that access to technology is sufficient.

Figure 1 presents the proposed conceptual relationship. Human Capital Theory is positioned as the theoretical lens surrounding the model rather than as another variable in the causal chain. This distinction prevents the theory from being treated as an empirical construct and makes clear that the model is theoretically informed rather than statistically tested in the present paper.

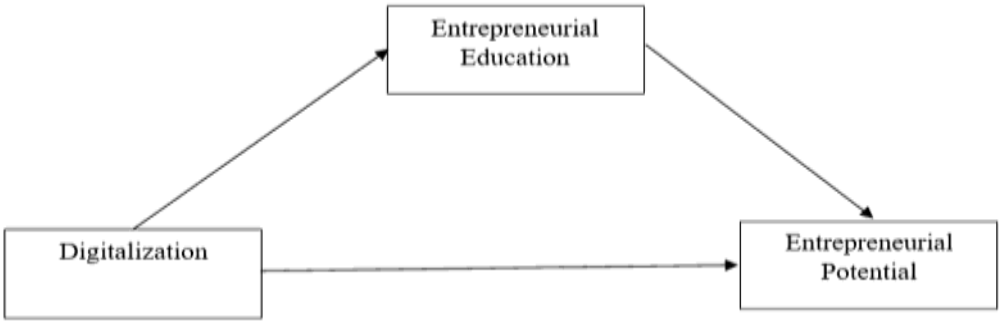

Figure 1. Proposed conceptual framework linking digitalization, entrepreneurship education, and entrepreneurial potential.

6. PROPOSITIONS

The first proposition concerns the relationship between digitalization and entrepreneurial potential. Digitalization changes the opportunity structure available to individuals and increases access to information, digital markets, networks, and entrepreneurial tools. Research has linked digitalization with entrepreneurial entry, entrepreneurial activity, innovation, and new opportunities (Dabbous et al., 2023; Fossen & Sorgner, 2021; Galindo-Martín et al., 2023). On this basis, the following proposition is advanced:

P1: Digitalization is positively associated with entrepreneurial potential.

The second proposition focuses on the educational pathway. Digitalization can provide resources, but entrepreneurship education can help learners interpret, apply, and transform those resources into entrepreneurial knowledge and competencies. Research on entrepreneurship education supports its role in developing competence, entrepreneurial attitudes, self-efficacy, and intention (Boldureanu et al., 2020; Liu et al., 2019; Lv et al., 2021; Shah et al., 2020). From a Human Capital Theory perspective, this suggests that education may operate as a mechanism through which digital resources contribute to human capability development. The proposition is therefore:

P2: Entrepreneurship education mediates the positive relationship between digitalization and entrepreneurial potential.

7. THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

The paper contributes theoretically in three ways. First, it brings digitalization, entrepreneurship education, and entrepreneurial potential into a single conceptual model. Much of the existing literature examines these constructs separately or connects entrepreneurship education to entrepreneurial intention. The proposed framework shifts attention toward the broader development of entrepreneurial potential and asks how digital environments may support that development. This distinction is useful because potential and intention describe different stages or aspects of entrepreneurial development.

Second, the paper extends the application of Human Capital Theory to the digital entrepreneurship education context. The theory provides a way to explain why digital resources should not be viewed as automatically productive. Their value depends on the knowledge and capabilities of individuals who use them. Entrepreneurship education becomes important because it can convert access to digital resources into learning and capability development. This interpretation is consistent with the literature showing that entrepreneurship education can develop competence and entrepreneurial mindset (De Carolis & Litzky, 2019; Lv et al., 2021).

Third, the framework provides a basis for connecting research on digital entrepreneurship education with research on entrepreneurial potential. Sitaridis and Kitsios (2024) identify fragmentation in the digital entrepreneurship education literature and call for stronger conceptual integration. The present framework responds to this need by specifying entrepreneurial potential as a developmental outcome and entrepreneurship education as a possible mechanism.

The practical implications are relevant to higher education institutions. Entrepreneurship education programmes should not treat digital tools merely as methods for delivering lectures. Digital platforms can be used for opportunity identification, digital market analysis, entrepreneurial simulations, collaborative projects, interaction with entrepreneurs, online mentoring, and experimentation with digital business models. Such activities can make digitalization part of the learning process rather than simply part of the delivery system.

For educators, the implication is that digital capability and entrepreneurial capability should be developed together. Students may need opportunities to solve problems using digital resources, evaluate online information, communicate with potential customers, work with digital communities, and test ideas in low-cost environments. For policymakers, the framework suggests that investment in digital infrastructure should be accompanied by investment in educational capacity. Access to technology without appropriate learning support may not produce the expected entrepreneurial outcomes. For entrepreneurship support organizations, digital mentoring, incubator platforms, and networking systems can complement formal education and create additional opportunities for capability development.

8. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

The conceptual nature of the study imposes several limitations. First, the framework is based on synthesis of existing literature rather than primary empirical data. The proposed relationships therefore require empirical validation. In particular, future research should test whether entrepreneurship education actually mediates the relationship between digitalization and entrepreneurial potential and whether the strength of this pathway varies across educational settings.

Second, entrepreneurial potential is multidimensional and may not be fully captured by a single measure. Future studies should carefully distinguish potential from entrepreneurial intention, self-efficacy, entrepreneurial competence, personality, and entrepreneurial attitude. Measurement models should also establish convergent and discriminant validity before testing the proposed relationships. This is especially important because several existing studies use related constructs interchangeably, which can blur the conceptual boundary between entrepreneurial potential and intention.

Third, digitalization is itself multidimensional. Future studies should distinguish between digital access, digital literacy, digital learning environments, digital entrepreneurial activity, and broader organizational or institutional digital transformation. Treating

digitalization as one undifferentiated construct may hide important differences in how particular technologies affect learning and entrepreneurial development.

Fourth, future research should examine boundary conditions. Institutional support, digital infrastructure, socioeconomic background, prior entrepreneurial experience, digital self-efficacy, access to mentors, and quality of entrepreneurship education may strengthen or weaken the proposed relationships. Longitudinal studies would be particularly valuable because entrepreneurial potential is developmental and may change as individuals gain education, work experience, and exposure to entrepreneurial environments.

Finally, future studies should examine whether entrepreneurial potential leads to different forms of entrepreneurial action. Potential may lead to venture creation, but it may also be expressed through intrapreneurship, social entrepreneurship, innovation within existing organizations, or opportunity-oriented career choices. Examining these outcomes would help move research beyond the assumption that the ultimate consequence of entrepreneurial potential is simply startup intention.

9. CONCLUSION

Digitalization is changing the environment in which entrepreneurship is learned and practiced. It creates new opportunities for access to information, markets, networks, tools, and entrepreneurial activity, but these opportunities do not automatically become entrepreneurial capabilities. The central argument of this paper is that entrepreneurship education can provide an important pathway through which digital resources are translated into knowledge, skills, competencies, and broader entrepreneurial potential.

Drawing on Human Capital Theory, the proposed framework positions digitalization as an enabling context, entrepreneurship education as a developmental mechanism, and entrepreneurial potential as a broader capability-oriented outcome. The framework also distinguishes entrepreneurial potential from entrepreneurial intention. Potential concerns the resources, characteristics, and readiness that support entrepreneurial activity, whereas intention reflects a more specific commitment to pursue entrepreneurial behavior. Maintaining this distinction helps avoid treating intention as both a component and an outcome of entrepreneurial potential.

The paper contributes a conceptual model and two propositions for future empirical research. The first proposes a positive relationship between digitalization and entrepreneurial potential, while the second proposes that entrepreneurship education mediates this relationship. These propositions should be tested rather than treated as established causal findings. Future empirical work can examine the model across different countries, educational systems, student populations, and forms of digital learning. Such research can help determine when digitalization genuinely contributes to entrepreneurial capability development and when access to technology remains disconnected from meaningful entrepreneurial learning.

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