

THE NEED FOR DIGITAL SKILLS IN SHAPING THE PROFILE OF THE SUCCESSFUL ENTREPRENEUR

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Abstract: : Digital transformation has reframed the pillars of entrepreneurship, where digital competencies have become a foundational driving force of entrepreneurship. This study aims to explore the impacts of digital competencies on essential mechanisms that reflect the current entrepreneurship paradigm, which includes creativity, adaptability, opportunity recognition, development of business relationships, and risk monitoring. By adopting current literature on digital entrepreneurship and innovation management, the study develops a conceptual framework that highlights the driving forces of cognitive enhancement and adaptability driven by digital competencies. The empirical and conceptual literature suggests that digital technology amplifies creativity, the process of adaptability, the assessment of potential opportunities, engagement of digital business relationships, and predictive management of risks. This study aims to provide innovative insights that highlight the integrated importance of digital competencies for generating competitive, innovative, and adaptable entrepreneurship processes within the digital economy.

JEL classification: M14, O32

Key words: digital competencies; entrepreneurial creativity; adaptability; opportunity recognition; business networking; risk monitoring; digital entrepreneurship

1. INTRODUCTION

The deep changes brought about by digitalization have altered the paradigm of entrepreneurship conceptualized and practiced in the new economy. In a context characterized by uncertainty, innovation, and growing competitiveness at the global level, digital skills have assumed the role of a fundamental pillar in the definition of the successful entrepreneur. Current literature suggests that digital skills, moving beyond their status as simply technological aptitudes, have the role of innovation triggers that strengthen the competitiveness of new ventures (Nambisan, Siegel, & Kenney, 2018; Kraus et al., 2021).

Digitalization allows for a reinterpretation of the entrepreneurship approach because the availability of new technologies, ranging from AI and data analysis to collaborative platforms, promotes the acquisition of a mindset that is open to experimentation, adaptability, and problem-solving. Empirical evidence highlights that the presence of high digital skills among founders allows for higher creativity and the ability to recognize opportunities, even when faced with uncertainty or untapped markets (Scuotto, Del Giudice 2025).

Additionally, digital skills contribute immensely to the adaptability and mobility of entrepreneurship because they ensure easy access to information and innovation. For example, the current digital economy, access to technological environments, and the

integration of technology tools and solutions for business processes have significantly influenced the identification of opportunities and the subsequent creation of value. Many studies have shown that digitally savvy entrepreneurs are capable of optimizing business processes, acting faster, and growing faster too (Elia et al., 2020; Kraus et al., 2022).

Therefore, the issue of the development of digital competencies extends well beyond the boundaries of technology, becoming a key characteristic of the contemporary entrepreneurial model. In this regard, the current study aims to explore the relationship between digital competencies, creativity, and the performance of entrepreneurship, providing valuable insights into how these factors can contribute to the construction of the competitive and innovative entrepreneur identity. This will also take into consideration the issue of how digital competencies can contribute to the creativity of the entrepreneur.

2. OBJECTIVES

This paper aims to explore the role of digital competencies in shaping the current identity of the successful entrepreneur, focusing on their effects on creativity, adaptability, innovation, relationship building, and risk surveillance. Firstly, the paper aims to explore the specific role of digital competencies in increasing the creativity of the entrepreneur and facilitating the development of innovative approaches within the context of rapidly changing and technologically driven markets. Secondly, the paper aims to explore the specific effects of digital competencies on the adaptability and mobility of the entrepreneur.

Additionally, the study aims to explore the significance of the use of digital technology for enhancing the identification and exploitation of opportunities, including how the presence of data, platforms, and technological knowledge promotes a more informed approach to the identification of emerging markets. Additionally, the study aims to explore the significance of digital competencies for the development of business relationships, including the role of the use of global networks, cooperation, and the promotion of digital communities for the sharing of knowledge. Finally, the study aims to explore the significance of digital competencies for the monitoring of risks faced by new businesses, including the use of predictive analysis, digital systems, and technological support. Each of these aims helps the researcher understand the meaning of the effects of digital competencies on the entrepreneur's mindset.

3. METHODOLOGY

The approach used for the study will offer a comprehensive analysis of the relationship between digital competencies and the other factors of success that pertain to creativity, adaptability, the identification of opportunities, relationship building, and risk monitoring. For the topic of the study, which is conceptual, the study will need to use a qualitative approach that combines a literature review with an integrative approach.

The initial phase of the approach entails a structured literature analysis of existing literature, using articles sourced from peer-reviewed journals that are of a high rank, listed on Web of Science, Scopus, and other credible sources. The selection approach of the literature is determined by specific criteria that include studies undertaken since 2018, literature on digital competencies for entrepreneurship, and scholarly work that explores creativity, business adaptability, opportunity recognition, networking, and the management of digital risk. Literature for the study was identified using specific keywords that include

“digital competencies,” “entrepreneurial creativity,” “digital transformation,” “opportunity recognition,” and “risk monitoring for entrepreneurship.”

The second stage will entail the synthesis of the literature that has been selected using the integrative analysis approach that brings together the theoretical findings from diverse fields of study, for example, digital entrepreneurship, innovation management, cognitive psychology, and strategic management. This will make it easier to identify the similarities in the theories, as well as the gaps that need to be addressed. This stage will help the researcher build on the interpretation of how digital competencies affect entrepreneurship.

The third methodological step includes the identification of a conceptual framework, which explains the mechanisms through which the digital competencies shape the identified dimensions. The conceptual framework is developed on the basis of the comparative theoretical analysis that explores how creativity, adaptability, opportunity recognition, business networking, and risk monitoring are conceptualized across different studies on digital entrepreneurship. This framework allows the researcher to make theoretical assertions on the basis of the causal mechanisms proposed by the literature.

Furthermore, the study incorporates a critical evaluation methodology for the examination of the strength and limitations of existing literature. Through the comparison of frameworks, samples, and definitions, the analysis draws upon areas where the empirical support is deficient. This approach adds rigor to the academic nature of the study, providing the findings with foundation through the interpretation of the literature.

Taken together, these methodological approaches allow the study to build a consistent, empirically supported view of the central importance of digital competencies with respect to the characterization of the successful entrepreneur in the contemporary digital economy.

4. ANALYSES

There is a preliminary stage of the analysis that aims to identify the manner by which digital competencies operate as entrepreneurship creativity drivers. In contemporary literature, digital competencies go beyond the technology they utilize, meaning they encompass a wide range of processes that include the integration of information processing, creation, data literacy, and critical evaluation within the digital sphere. Studies on digital competencies for educational and other purposes have shown that creativity and entrepreneurship growth often come about when people use digital technology not only for retrieving information but also for the reconstruction of said information, meaning for creating something new (Guillén-Gámez, Ruiz-Palmero, & Gómez-García, 2024). Specifically, these studies are not only applicable within the academic setting, given the processes that are involved.

Empirical studies that targeted entrepreneurship specifically verify that digital technology can “unleash” the creativity of entrepreneurs because it allows for the widening of the range of potential knowledge, partners, and business model combinations. According to Hisrich and Soltanifar (2021), the use of technology allows for the evaluation of ideas on a shoestring budget, the reach of distant markets, and the concurrent experimentation of new ideas, hence the conversion of creativity from a solitary trait of the entrepreneur into a technology-based process. This view of creativity, which conceives creativity as a process, is especially relevant for the digital economy, where the adaptability of solutions often overrides the significance of creativity.

More recent studies have begun to identify the measures of digital skills and their relationship with entrepreneurship creativity. Duong et al. (2024) employed the stimulus-organism-response model, indicating that the level of ICT skills positively predicts the level of entrepreneurship creativity and digital entrepreneurship activities.

They argue that digital skills provide a stimulus that excites thinking and feelings associated with creativity, including idea-generation confidence, experimentation, and new ways of creating value. This affirms the argument that developing digital skills is not only about technology enhancement but also about the intervention that clearly impacts the creativity aspect of entrepreneurship.

Nevertheless, the literature on digital entrepreneurial capability appears to identify creativity as a subset of a range of competencies that integrate technological knowledge with the sensing of opportunities and problem-solving. According to Skandalis (2025), digital entrepreneurial capability can be seen as the comprehensive capability that drives the sensing, evaluation, and exploitation of opportunities within the context of platform markets, where data analysis, the creation of content, and engagement with the online community contribute to the formulation of innovative business solutions.

Analyses of entrepreneurship during the digital era reveal that digitalization not only affects the technology that entrepreneurship uses, but it also affects the environment where creativity occurs. According to Ferreira-Leite, Solano-Solano, & Ramírez-Elías (2024), digital business models transform the environment for entrepreneurship. This results in heightened opportunities for experimentation, together with enhanced competitiveness and information overload. It is within this environment that the entrepreneur, who needs to creatively operate within the digital environment, identify the valuable cues, and access resources, will have the best opportunity to create the uncommon value proposition. It follows that digital competencies, among other requirements, are needed for keeping creativity alive.

Digital skills are essential for helping the entrepreneur remain agile. In the dynamic environment of technology, when the entrepreneur is very adept at digital skills, they are better equipped at reading the market, changing their strategies, and even modifying their business model. According to studies, digital technology helps enhance and accelerate strategic thinking by allowing instant access to data, forecasting, and innovation spaces where they can test their ideas (Elia, Margherita, & Passiante, 2020). Also, digital readiness helps the entrepreneur remain agile. More digital skills among the entrepreneur translate to their receptiveness to learning and their adaptability when faced with changes. Digital skills, hence, not only enhance the work routine of the entrepreneur, they also help the entrepreneur adapt, remain competitive, and remain mobile in the economy.

Opportunity recognition is also essential for entrepreneurship, and current studies reveal that digital skills are of huge benefit. Digital skills make it possible for the entrepreneur to identify areas of untapped need, new trends, and market gaps by processing large amounts of data and picking up on the smallest hints of opportunity that otherwise go unrecognized. Digital skills also allow the entrepreneur access to various environments, hence increasing the likelihood of recognizing new opportunities (Nambisan, Siegel & Kenney, 2018). Digital skills, therefore, enhance entrepreneurship, especially when they bring about accurate analysis together with awareness of the bigger picture of the environment.

Digital skills also enhance the relationship-building capabilities of the entrepreneur within the business environment. Digital means of communication, professional networks, and collaboration platforms offer the chance to connect with larger networks, hence

facilitating engagement with business partners, clients, investors, and mentors. It has been shown that digital relationship building helps in the faster development of trust, resource sharing, and the spread of knowledge, hence offering the entrepreneur a competitive advantage within innovation ecosystems (Scuotto, Del Giudice 2025).

Digital competencies enhance the skills of the entrepreneur in risk monitoring and management, especially when faced with the complexity of the business environment. The use of digital dashboards, predictive analysis, and monitoring systems allows the entrepreneur to detect threats early and make informed choices, especially when faced with uncertainty. Studies on digital risk management have shown that data-driven technology tools enhance the risk management mechanisms of the entrepreneur, who is better positioned to respond to threats (OECD, 2023).

5. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The conceptual framework developed in the study combines the main processes through which digital competencies affect the identity and performance of modern-day entrepreneurs. This is because digital competencies are seen to affect several interlocking cognitive processes that are central for achieving success. These processes include creativity, adaptability, recognizing opportunities, relationship-building, and monitoring risk. The conceptual framework proposed here brings together insights that relate to management studies of innovation and digital entrepreneurship, management, and strategy building.

The central tenet of the proposed framework is the role of digital competencies in unleashing creativity for entrepreneurship. Digital technology stretches the mental space for idea creation. Easy access to information, experimentation, and prototyping are provided. Previous studies have shown that technology skills not only strengthen the problem-solving areas of entrepreneurship but also contribute positively to creativity (Hisrich & Soltanifar, 2021; Duong et al., 2024). According to this proposed framework, creativity is the initial mechanism that triggers the effects of digital competencies on entrepreneurship.

Creativity, on the other hand, is the premise of the adaptability of the entrepreneur, which is defined as the adjustment of behavior, strategies, and business model on the basis of environmental changes. Digital competencies enhance adaptability since the entrepreneur gets access to data, experience, and the learning environment. Studies on digital transformation have shown that these technologies enhance the adaptability of the entrepreneur since they augment the strategic behavior of the entrepreneur and the flexibility of their behavior (Elia, et al., 2020). Therefore, adaptability is the result of creativity and digital competencies.

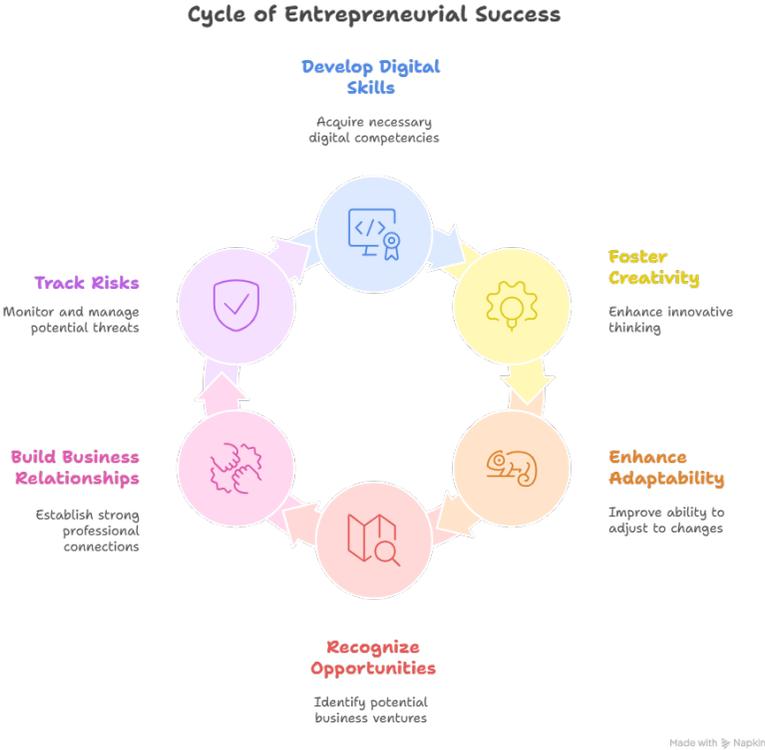
As adaptability rises, the skills of the entrepreneur enhance their ability to participate effectively in the process of opportunity recognition. Opportunity recognition encompasses the processes of sensing, interpreting, and assessing new opportunities that arise within dynamic markets. Digital skills enhance these skills by allowing the analysis of big data. Empirical analyses have shown that the use of big data allows better opportunity recognition by the entrepreneur (Kreuzer, et al., 2022; Nambisan, Siegel, & Kenney, 2018). The model therefore portrays adaptability and opportunity recognition as a sequential process.

After the process of opportunity identification, it is essential for successful businesspeople to leverage business relationships and social capital around these identified opportunities. Digital competencies enhance the process of relational capital for businesspeople because they help individuals participate in online networks, improve the efficiency of communication, and facilitate the speedy transfer of knowledge. Online

ecosystems provide a conducive environment for businesspeople to forge connections, entice partners, and connect with stakeholders irrespective of their location. Studies have shown that online networking helps build trust, access, and cooperation for innovation-related collaborations (Scuotto, Del Giudice 2025).

The last element of the conceptual framework regards risk monitoring and management. In dynamic environments, it is essential for entrepreneurs to identify potential risks and make predictions about threats. Digital skills provide the ability to make use of predictive analysis, real-time monitoring software, and digital dashboards that promote risk awareness and management. It is reported that studies on digital risk governance highlight that digital instruments greatly enhance the organization's capacity for the early observation of warning signs and the implementation of preventive measures (OECD, 2023). Risk monitoring, according to the conceptual framework, is the stabilizing force that allows for the sustainable exploitation of opportunities.

Overall, the conceptual framework suggests the following sequential and interconnected structure: Digital Skills → Creativity → Adaptability → Opportunity Recognition → Building Business Relationships → Risk Tracking → Success for the Entrepreneur



Source: manually processed by the author
Figure no. 1 Entrepreneurial Success

This model also aptly depicts the accumulative and symbiotic process involved with the mentioned constructs. Digital competencies drive the process, which starts with the

enhancement of cognitive and technological skills, and the other processes define how well the entrepreneurs can capitalize on opportunities amidst the digitalized economy.

6. CONCLUSIONS

This paper explores the complex relationship of digital competencies with the current identity of the successful entrepreneur. Through the combination of concepts about digital entrepreneurship, innovation management, and the theory of strategic capability, the paper develops a comprehensive approach toward the relationship of digital competencies with fundamental processes for the successful entrepreneur. It is clear that the current digital competencies of the successful entrepreneur are not only about specific skills, but instead provide the essential foundation for cognitive processes, adaptability, and decision-making.

The conceptual framework that will be explained below illustrates how digital competencies form the starting point for a sequential process that begins with greater entrepreneurial creativity. Digital competencies provide access to the tools and information environment that allows for experimentation, perspective transformation, and the construction of new solutions. Such creativity helps facilitate adaptability, which, in the end, helps transform the activity of opportunity recognition by increasing awareness of the environment.

Additionally, the importance of digital competencies is shown to lie in their role in business relationship-building, where they facilitate participation within a digital network where collaboration, knowledge sharing, and resource sharing are critical. Lastly, the integration of digital tools for risk monitoring enhances the entrepreneur's predictive nature when it comes to vulnerabilities. Each of these processes demonstrates that a system-wide approach of digital competencies is essential for the success of the entrepreneur, affecting his or her innovation, adaptability, connectivity, and strategic actions.

Critical thinking is an active and purposeful thinking process that is required to perform contemporary accounting and auditing tasks. Several task characteristics (e.g., task novelty) were identified as those that require critical thinking. It was also noted that several action-oriented attributes such as meaning imposition are necessary to understand the tasks and to perform them effectively.

This paper explores the complex link between digital competencies and the current identity of the successful entrepreneur. Through the integration of concepts of digital entrepreneurship, innovation management, and the theory of strategic capability, it provides a comprehensive model for the definition of the relationship between current digital competencies of the successful entrepreneur and the basic processes that guarantee the success of entrepreneurship. It is clear that current digital competencies of the successful entrepreneur go beyond skills and form the basic framework for cognitive processes, adaptability, and decision-making.

The emerging conceptual framework reveals that digital competencies are the initial condition of the sequential process that results in enhanced creativity for entrepreneurship. Digital competencies provide access to the tools and environment of information that facilitate the transformation of perspective, experimentation, and the development of new solutions. This creativity helps with adaptability, which eventually aids the awareness of opportunity.

Furthermore, the relevance of digital competencies also lies in their role as the engine of building business relationships, since participation in digital networks, where collaboration, the sharing of knowledge, and the sharing of resources have particular importance, becomes possible. Finally, the use of digital tools for risk analysis enhances the

predictive potential of the entrepreneur regarding risks. Overall, these processes make it clear that the adoption of digital competencies at the system level is critical for entrepreneurship.

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