

The Role of Founders' Entrepreneurial Mindset in Shaping the Journey of Digital Startups

I Wayan Ruspendi Junaedi^{1*} and Dermawan Waruwu²

¹Faculty of Economics Business and Humanities, Universitas Dhyana Pura, Bali, Indonesia. Email: ruspendijunaedi@undhirabali.ac.id

²Faculty of Economics Business and Humanities, Universitas Dhyana Pura, Bali, Indonesia. Email: dewaruwu@undhirabali.ac.id

*Corresponding Author: ruspendijunaedi@undhirabali.ac.id



Paper type: Article

Received: 03 September 2024

Revised: 11 October 2024

Accepted: 10 November 2024

Published: 30 December 2024

Citation: Junaedi, I. W. R., & Waruwu, D. (2024). The Role of Founders' Entrepreneurial Mindset in Shaping the Journey of Digital Startups. *American Journal of Business Science Philosophy*, 1(2), 201-210. <https://doi.org/10.70122/ajbsp.v1i2.21>

Abstract

This study investigates the critical role of entrepreneurship in driving the growth and success of digital startups, highlighting its significance in fostering innovation, technological advancement, and economic transformation. Using a qualitative approach, semi-structured interviews were conducted with ten digital startup founders to explore the opportunities, challenges, and strategies shaping their ventures. The findings reveal that entrepreneurship enables startups to leverage technological advancements, access global markets, and optimize operational costs through digital tools, scalable platforms, and partnerships with accelerators and venture capitalists. Despite these opportunities, digital startups face significant challenges, including limited funding access, intense competition, and regulatory compliance issues. The research identifies effective strategies such as adopting agile methodologies, building robust networks, fostering innovation, and emphasizing leadership, team-building, and customer-centric approaches as critical to sustaining growth and achieving long-term success. By addressing gaps in existing literature that often focus on technological and operational factors, this study underscores the strategic importance of entrepreneurship in navigating the complexities of the digital business landscape. The implications extend beyond academic discourse, providing actionable insights for entrepreneurs to refine their approaches, policymakers to create enabling regulatory environments, and ecosystem stakeholders to support innovation. These findings contribute to a deeper understanding of entrepreneurship's transformative potential and its role in empowering digital startups to thrive in a dynamic and competitive global economy.

Keywords: entrepreneurship; startups; innovation; startup ecosystem; strategic leadership

© 2024 The Authors. Published by American Open Science Philosophy. This is an open access article under the CC BY-NC-ND license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>).

1. Introduction

The digital revolution has profoundly reshaped the global business environment, giving rise to digital startups that utilize technology to disrupt traditional industries (Hokmabadi et al., 2024). These startups play a critical role in driving innovation, creating jobs, and fostering economic growth, making them indispensable to competitive economies. At the center of this transformation is entrepreneurship, which enables individuals to harness technological advancements and establish ventures that cater to shifting market demands (Jayakani, 2024). However, digital startups face numerous challenges that threaten their survival and growth. These include market volatility, limited financial resources, and gaps in managerial expertise. Entrepreneurship is pivotal in overcoming these obstacles, shaping how startups adapt to challenges, operate efficiently, and sustain long-term growth. Through strategic decision-making, effective leadership, and proactive risk management, entrepreneurs build resilience and enhance the prospects of startup success (Prokopenko et al., 2024). Despite the importance of these contributions, there remains a significant gap in understanding the specific role of entrepreneurship in digital startups, especially within dynamic and rapidly evolving market

environments. Much of the existing research has predominantly emphasized technological and operational factors, often overlooking the vital role played by soft skills, strategic decisions, and the broader entrepreneurial ecosystem (DeCoito & Briona, 2023; Kaggwa et al., 2023). These aspects are critical in navigating the complexities of digital startups, where adaptability and continuous innovation are indispensable. This study seeks to bridge this gap by exploring the comprehensive role of entrepreneurship in digital startups, focusing on leadership, risk management, and ecosystem interactions (Thomas et al., 2019).

The research examines how entrepreneurial actions influence the success and sustainability of digital startups, addressing key questions such as the impact of entrepreneurship on these ventures, the challenges they face, and the critical success factors that help them thrive in competitive markets. By delving into these aspects, the study aims to provide actionable insights into how entrepreneurs can drive growth, manage risks, and foster innovation within their startups. This comprehensive exploration seeks to enhance the understanding of entrepreneurship's transformative potential in digital startups. It also offers valuable strategies and recommendations for entrepreneurs and stakeholders in the startup ecosystem. By highlighting the interplay between entrepreneurial capabilities and digital innovation, the study underscores the pivotal role of entrepreneurship in navigating the digital economy and ensuring the sustainability and success of startups in a competitive global landscape.

2. Literature Review

Digital startups have significantly transformed the global business landscape, driven by their reliance on advanced technologies to create innovative solutions and disrupt traditional industries (McGrath & MacMillan, 2000). These ventures, often centered around digital tools and platforms, have become essential drivers of innovation, economic growth, and employment opportunities (Crnogaj & Rus, 2023). Unlike traditional businesses, digital startups leverage cloud computing, artificial intelligence, and big data analytics to enhance operational efficiency, provide better customer experiences, and scale rapidly. Innovation plays a central role in their success, as it helps them differentiate themselves in competitive markets and build unique value propositions that cater to ever-evolving consumer demands (Abdelwahed, 2023). Entrepreneurship within digital startups is crucial for driving innovation, identifying new opportunities, and adapting to the fast-paced digital economy (Soltanifar & Smailhodžić, 2021). Entrepreneurs are often the visionaries behind the development of new products or services and bring fresh ideas to market. They are also responsible for navigating the inherent risks involved in digital ventures, including market volatility, financial constraints, and technological disruptions (Zaki et al., 2021). Risk management, therefore, becomes a critical factor in determining the success and sustainability of digital startups, as entrepreneurs must make strategic decisions that balance innovation with the need for stability and growth (Bezhovski & Temjanovski, 2024).

Effective leadership in digital startups is closely tied to the ability of entrepreneurs to manage risks and make decisions quickly in dynamic environments. Entrepreneurs often take on multiple roles, which include managing product development, scaling operations, and securing funding (Joel & Oguanobi, 2024). The leadership styles of digital entrepreneurs differ from traditional businesses, as they often need to be more agile, flexible, and proactive in responding to technological changes and market demands. Risk-taking behaviors are common in digital startups, as entrepreneurs experiment with new technologies or enter uncharted markets in search of growth. However, these risks must be managed effectively, and successful entrepreneurs are those who can mitigate potential failures while continuing to innovate (Stolze et al., 2018). Startup ecosystems play a significant role in supporting the growth of digital startups. These ecosystems consist of a network of resources, including funding, mentorship, industry partners, and government support, which help entrepreneurs access the capital, expertise, and infrastructure necessary to scale their businesses (Kutieshat et al., 2024). Many digital entrepreneurs rely on accelerators, tech hubs, venture capitalists, and strategic partnerships to overcome the challenges they face in the early stages of their ventures. By collaborating with these stakeholders, entrepreneurs gain valuable insights, financial backing, and opportunities to scale, which are crucial for the growth and success of digital startups (Zaheer et al., 2022).

The digital economy presents several opportunities for digital startups, including access to global markets, reduced operational costs, and efficient customer acquisition strategies. With the help of digital marketing

tools and social media platforms, entrepreneurs can reach a broader audience at a fraction of the cost of traditional advertising. Furthermore, the global nature of the internet allows startups to expand beyond geographic boundaries, offering their products and services to customers worldwide (Zaheer et al., 2019). These opportunities make digital startups an attractive option for entrepreneurs seeking to scale their businesses rapidly and cost-effectively. Despite the opportunities, digital startups face numerous challenges that can impede their growth. Access to funding remains one of the biggest hurdles, as many digital entrepreneurs struggle to secure the necessary investment to scale their operations (Zaheer, 2015). The high-risk nature of these ventures, coupled with concerns about their scalability, often deters investors from providing financial backing. Additionally, digital startups must navigate fierce competition, as the low barriers to entry in the digital space mean that many new ventures compete for limited market share. To maintain a competitive edge, entrepreneurs must constantly innovate and refine their offerings to meet changing consumer needs (Dilshodovich, 2023).

Another challenge faced by digital startups is the regulatory environment. As technology advances, regulations surrounding data privacy, intellectual property, and industry-specific compliance requirements become more complex (Stolze et al., 2018). Digital entrepreneurs must stay abreast of these regulations to avoid legal pitfalls and ensure their businesses remain compliant. These challenges, combined with the fast-paced nature of the digital economy, make it necessary for entrepreneurs to remain adaptable and responsive to external factors that could impact their business models. Building strong networks and partnerships is another critical strategy for digital startups. Entrepreneurs should actively seek out collaborations with industry experts, investors, and other entrepreneurs to enhance their growth prospects (Ghezzi, 2020). These partnerships can provide access to new resources, markets, and opportunities that would otherwise be unavailable. By fostering relationships within the startup ecosystem, entrepreneurs can gain valuable knowledge and insights, which can help them navigate the challenges they face and grow their businesses more effectively.

Effective leadership is also essential for the success of digital startups. Entrepreneurs must cultivate a customer-centric approach that focuses on delivering value and solving problems for their target audience. In addition, building strong, cohesive teams that are aligned with the startup's mission is critical for scaling and sustaining long-term growth (Nasar et al., 2022). Entrepreneurs should prioritize team-building, as a motivated and skilled team can contribute to the development of innovative solutions and the execution of business strategies. The ability to inspire and lead a diverse team is one of the key factors that differentiate successful digital entrepreneurs from those who struggle to sustain their ventures. Entrepreneurship plays a vital role in the growth and success of digital startups. Entrepreneurs drive innovation, create new market opportunities, and navigate the challenges of the digital economy. They manage risks, lead their teams, and leverage startup ecosystems to access the resources needed to scale their businesses. Despite the challenges posed by competition, funding, and regulatory requirements, digital entrepreneurs who embrace agility, adaptability, and collaboration are well-positioned to succeed in the digital economy. The ability to manage risks, innovate continuously, and lead with a customer-centric mindset are essential traits for digital entrepreneurs who seek to build sustainable and successful ventures.

3. Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative research approach to explore the critical role of entrepreneurship in the growth and success of digital startups. Data was collected through semi-structured interviews with ten founders of digital startups, selected using purposive sampling to ensure a diverse representation of experiences in Indonesia. Table 1 presents demographic of the study participants. The participants were chosen based on their leadership roles in digital startups, ensuring that the insights gathered were from individuals with firsthand knowledge of the entrepreneurial process. The interviews were conducted remotely, lasting between 30 to 60 minutes each, and focused on understanding key factors such as innovation, challenges, risk management, leadership styles, and ecosystem dynamics. The interview guide was designed to explore the role of entrepreneurship in fostering innovation, the challenges startups face, and the strategies entrepreneurs use to navigate these challenges, along with the importance of ecosystem collaboration. Thematic analysis was employed to analyze the interview data, allowing for the identification of patterns and themes related to the

research questions. Transcripts were reviewed and coded manually, focusing on themes such as innovation, risk management, leadership, and collaboration. To ensure the trustworthiness of the findings, triangulation was used by comparing the insights from different participants with existing literature. Member checking was also employed, where a subset of participants validated the key findings. Ethical guidelines were followed throughout the research process, with informed consent obtained from all participants. Confidentiality and voluntary participation were assured, and the data was anonymized to maintain privacy. This methodology provides a comprehensive understanding of how entrepreneurial actions and decisions influence the success and sustainability of digital startups, offering valuable insights into the challenges faced and strategies employed by entrepreneurs in the digital economy.

Table 1. Demographics of participants.

Founder Code	Age Range	Gender	Educational Background	Field of Study	Years of Experience	Industry	Company Size
Founder 1	30-35	Male	Master's degree	Business Administration	5 years	E-commerce, SaaS	10 employees
Founder 2	35-40	Female	Bachelor's degree	Computer Science	7 years	Fintech	15 employees
Founder 3	28-32	Male	Master's degree	Marketing	3 years	Digital Marketing	8 employees
Founder 4	33-38	Male	Bachelor's degree	Engineering	6 years	E-commerce, SaaS	20 employees
Founder 5	40-45	Male	Master's degree	Business Administration	10+ years	Mobile App Development	30 employees
Founder 6	35-40	Female	Bachelor's degree	Marketing	5 years	Digital Marketing	12 employees
Founder 7	28-33	Male	Bachelor's degree	Business Administration	4 years	E-commerce	5 employees
Founder 8	30-35	Female	Master's degree	Computer Science	6 years	SaaS, Fintech	25 employees
Founder 9	28-33	Male	Bachelor's degree	Engineering	4 years	Mobile App Development	10 employees
Founder 10	35-40	Male	Master's degree	Marketing	6 years	Digital Marketing	15 employees

4. Results

The results of the study provide deep insights into the critical factors that shape the growth and success of digital startups. These factors are categorized into four main themes: Opportunities & Innovation, Challenges, Success Strategies, and Entrepreneurial Mindset. Below is a more detailed narrative of the findings, enhanced with quotes and perspectives directly from the startup founders interviewed. Table 2 presents the thematic analysis.

4.1. Opportunities & Innovation

Entrepreneurship in digital startups has largely been driven by opportunities created through technology and innovation. Technology has been repeatedly identified as a cornerstone of growth by the interviewees, underscoring its pivotal role in enabling operational efficiencies and scaling businesses. Founder 1 explained:

"Technology is the backbone of our business... Without digital tools, this wouldn't have been possible."

This statement reflects the universal belief among the founders that the availability of digital tools allows startups to streamline processes, manage tasks effectively, and expand without needing extensive physical infrastructure. Digital tools also help startups track and analyze customer behavior, manage supply chains, and ensure product delivery efficiently, all of which would be impossible in the traditional brick-and-mortar model. Another significant opportunity identified by the founders was the power of global reach enabled by the internet and digital marketing tools. The internet has broken geographical barriers and allowed digital startups to reach customers worldwide at relatively low costs. Founder 4 highlighted this aspect:

"The internet has removed geographical boundaries... Digital marketing tools have given us a cost-effective way to reach a global audience."

Table 2. Thematic analysis.

Theme	Sub-Themes	Nodes
Opportunities & Innovation	Leveraging Technology	Use of Technology for Growth Digital Marketing and Global Expansion
Challenges	Access to Funding	Funding Challenges Market Competition and Differentiation
	Regulatory Constraints and Compliance	Navigating Regulatory Constraints
Success Strategies	Lean Startup & Agile Methodologies	Adopting Lean Startups and Agile Approaches
	Networking & Partnerships within Ecosystem	Building Networks and Ecosystem Partnerships
Entrepreneurial Mindset	Leadership & Team-Building	Importance of Teamwork and Leadership
	Risk Management & Uncertainty	Managing Risks and Uncertainty
	Customer-Centric Approach	Focus on Customer Needs and Pain Points

This reflects the universal advantage that digital marketing provides: startups no longer have to rely on traditional methods such as expensive TV advertisements or print media. With social media, search engine optimization (SEO), email marketing, and other digital tools, they can engage with international audiences effectively, thereby expanding their market base. The founders further emphasized that leveraging technology and digital platforms not only provides new opportunities for growth but also enables startups to create innovative products and services. By utilizing emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence, big data analytics, and automation, startups can offer personalized experiences, optimize their operations, and stay ahead of industry trends. This technological innovation has become a competitive differentiator in the rapidly evolving digital landscape.

4.2. Challenges

Despite these numerous opportunities, the interviewees also highlighted the significant challenges that digital startups face. The primary challenges included securing funding, dealing with competition, and navigating regulatory constraints. These challenges have the potential to hinder the growth and sustainability of startups if not managed carefully. One of the most persistent obstacles identified was access to funding. Digital startups, especially in their early stages, often struggle to secure the necessary financial backing to grow. Founder 5 shared:

"One of our biggest hurdles has been securing funding... It took us a long time to find the right partners who believed in our vision."

This aligns with the reality that many digital startups find it difficult to obtain investment from venture capitalists or other sources, as investors are often risk-averse and cautious about new, unproven businesses. Additionally, many digital startups lack the traditional assets (like physical properties) that investors typically look for as collateral, making it more challenging to secure funding. Market competition was another significant hurdle. The digital space is highly saturated with numerous players, and staying ahead of the competition requires constant innovation and adaptability. Founder 7 shared:

"The digital space is highly competitive... staying ahead of the competition requires constant innovation."

This statement resonates with many startups that face constant pressure to evolve their offerings to differentiate themselves from competitors. The founders stressed the importance of continuously improving products and services to meet changing customer demands and stay relevant in an industry marked by rapid technological advancements. Furthermore, regulatory constraints were mentioned as a critical challenge that hinders growth. As digital businesses grow, they must comply with various local and international regulations, especially regarding data protection, privacy, and digital advertising. Founder 9 explained:

"Regulatory constraints... can really hinder growth... ensuring we were in line with privacy laws was crucial."

The founders indicated that managing compliance with various laws, such as GDPR in Europe or data protection regulations in different markets, can consume considerable time and resources. Moreover, the evolving nature of regulations means that startups must remain flexible and adaptable to changing rules to avoid penalties or legal challenges that could potentially stifle their growth.

4.3. Success Strategies

Despite the many challenges faced, the founders shared various strategies that they have implemented to achieve success in the competitive digital landscape. One of the most commonly mentioned strategies was the adoption of lean startup and agile methodologies. Founder 1 explained:

"Lean startup principles allowed us to test our assumptions... It was all about learning and adapting quickly."

The lean startup model emphasizes rapid experimentation, customer feedback, and the iterative development of products or services. By testing ideas and models early and adjusting based on real-world feedback, digital startups can minimize waste and avoid investing significant resources into untested concepts. This approach allows them to scale efficiently, especially when operating under financial constraints. Similarly, agile methodologies were highlighted by several founders as an effective approach to managing teams and projects. These methodologies emphasize collaboration, flexibility, and continuous improvement, which are essential in the fast-paced digital environment. Startups that adopt agile principles can quickly respond to changing market dynamics, customer needs, and technological advancements, enabling them to stay competitive. Another key success strategy discussed was the importance of networking and partnerships. Several founders spoke about the value of building strong relationships within the startup ecosystem, particularly with accelerators, incubators, and venture capitalists. Founder 2 noted:

"Partnerships with accelerators and venture capitalists helped us access resources and knowledge."

These partnerships provide not only financial resources but also valuable mentorship, strategic advice, and access to an extended network of potential customers, partners, and collaborators. Collaborating with other startups and organizations in the ecosystem can provide startups with the necessary tools and resources to grow faster and more sustainably. Moreover, leadership and team-building were identified as fundamental to long-term success. A strong, cohesive team aligned with the startup's vision and goals is crucial for overcoming the challenges that startups face. Founder 4 shared:

"A strong team is everything... Team cohesion and a clear vision are critical."

The success of a digital startup largely depends on the talent, commitment, and collaborative efforts of the team. Effective leadership plays a vital role in setting the vision, guiding the team, and fostering an environment that promotes creativity and innovation.

4.4. Entrepreneurial Mindset

In addition to the strategies mentioned, a critical success factor identified was the entrepreneurial mindset, specifically regarding risk management and maintaining a customer-centric approach. Founder 9 highlighted:

"Risk management is a huge part of entrepreneurship... being able to manage and mitigate those risks makes a huge difference."

Entrepreneurs in the digital startup space are constantly dealing with uncertainty, whether related to market dynamics, technological changes, or financial pressures. Effective risk management strategies allow startups to make calculated decisions and mitigate potential pitfalls. Founders stressed the importance of balancing boldness with caution and making informed decisions to manage uncertainty. Moreover, a customer-centric approach was deemed essential by the founders. Founder 10 emphasized:

"Understanding our customers' pain points and continuously improving our product has been key to our success."

Digital startups that prioritize their customers' needs, preferences, and challenges are better equipped to deliver products or services that resonate with their target market. By maintaining a deep understanding of customer pain points and iterating on products based on real feedback, startups can build strong customer loyalty and ensure sustainable growth.

5. Discussion

The findings of this study provide valuable insights into the opportunities, challenges, success strategies, and entrepreneurial mindset of digital startups, aligning with and expanding upon existing literature in entrepreneurship and digital transformation. By analyzing the themes derived from the interviews with founders, several key takeaways emerge, highlighting the critical elements that shape the trajectories of digital startups.

The overwhelming emphasis on technology as a growth enabler among the founders aligns with contemporary views on the digital economy, where technology acts as the backbone for business operations and scalability. As noted by Founder 1, the reliance on digital tools not only streamlines operations but also unlocks new possibilities for growth. This observation highlights the importance of technology adoption as a crucial factor for enhancing operational efficiency and creating a competitive edge. Furthermore, the ability to leverage emerging technologies like artificial intelligence, big data, and automation enables startups to optimize operations, personalize customer experiences, and innovate their business models (Nasar et al., 2019). Digital marketing, as emphasized by Founder 4, has further enabled startups to reach global markets, removing geographical barriers and providing cost-effective means for expansion. Digital tools have democratized marketing, allowing smaller businesses to compete with larger enterprises using affordable tools (Zaheer et al., 2022).

The findings further emphasize that leveraging emerging technologies can offer startups a competitive advantage in personalizing customer experiences and optimizing operations. This also ties into the broader conversation about disruptive innovation, where startups adopting cutting-edge technologies can introduce new value propositions that existing competitors are not providing (Ghezzi, 2020). The study underscores several significant challenges that digital startups face, including funding, competition, and regulatory constraints. The challenge of accessing funding, particularly for early-stage startups, is a familiar and well-documented issue (Bezhovski & Temjanovski, 2024). As observed by Founder 5, obtaining financial backing is often difficult, and many startups struggle to find investors who believe in their vision. Many startups rely on venture capital, crowdfunding, and angel investors to meet their financial needs. However, the risk-averse nature of investors, particularly in untested business models, often means that securing funding can be a lengthy and challenging process.

Another significant challenge is the competition in the digital space. The founders noted the intense market pressures within the digital economy, where innovation is key to differentiation. As highlighted by Founder 7, the digital market is constantly evolving, and maintaining a competitive edge requires continuous innovation. In a highly competitive digital environment, startups must differentiate themselves through unique value propositions, novel product offerings, or superior customer service to stand out from competitors. Regulatory constraints also present significant hurdles for digital startups (Soltanifar & Smailhodžić, 2021). Compliance with data privacy laws, advertising regulations, and other legal frameworks is often resource-intensive and can delay growth. This is especially challenging as digital businesses scale and operate globally, making it essential for startups to navigate complex regulatory environments.

The findings also suggest several success strategies that can aid digital startups in overcoming these challenges. The widespread adoption of lean startup and agile methodologies is one of the most notable strategies (Zaheer et al., 2019). As described by Founder 1, the lean startup approach, with its emphasis on rapid testing, iteration, and customer feedback, allows startups to avoid wasting resources on unvalidated ideas. By validating ideas early and iterating based on real-world feedback, startups can reduce the risks

associated with product development and increase the likelihood of success. Furthermore, the importance of networking and partnerships within the startup ecosystem was emphasized by several founders, with Founder 2 noting the benefits of working with accelerators and venture capitalists (Joel & Oguanobi, 2024). This finding aligns with the research on the significance of ecosystem relationships in fostering startup success. By building strong networks, startups can gain access to essential resources, including funding, mentorship, and industry expertise, which are crucial for growth. Collaboration allows startups to leverage external expertise and networks, enhancing their chances of success in a competitive market (Nasar & Akram, 2022).

Additionally, leadership and team-building were identified as key success factors. Founder 4 highlighted the importance of a strong, cohesive team, where team members share a common vision and are committed to the startup's mission. This is consistent with the literature on the importance of entrepreneurial leadership in guiding startups through challenging times. Effective leadership helps navigate uncertainties, inspire innovation, and maintain a motivated team (Kutieshat et al., 2024). A clear vision and strong team dynamics are vital for the startup's ability to execute its business strategy and achieve long-term success. Finally, the study emphasizes the importance of an entrepreneurial mindset, particularly regarding risk management and a customer-centric approach. As noted by Founder 9, managing risk is a critical part of entrepreneurship, and startups must develop strategies to mitigate uncertainties. Entrepreneurs who can effectively manage and navigate risks are more likely to succeed in the volatile and uncertain environment of digital startups (Zaki et al., 2021). The customer-centric approach identified by Founder 10 is also crucial for success. By deeply understanding customer needs, pain points, and preferences, startups can design products and services that directly address market demand. Prioritizing customer satisfaction and continuously improving offerings based on customer insights enhances customer loyalty and promotes sustainable growth.

The study provides valuable insights into the opportunities, challenges, and strategies that shape the success of digital startups. The findings confirm the central role of technology and innovation in driving business growth but also highlight the significant challenges that startups must navigate, particularly in securing funding, dealing with competition, and complying with regulatory frameworks (Dilshodovich, 2023). By adopting success strategies such as lean startup principles, agile methodologies, and ecosystem partnerships, digital startups can enhance their chances of overcoming these obstacles. Furthermore, an entrepreneurial mindset focused on risk management and customer-centricity is essential for achieving long-term success. These findings contribute to the growing body of knowledge on digital entrepreneurship and offer practical guidance for founders aiming to build successful startups in an increasingly competitive and regulated digital landscape.

6. Conclusion

This study highlights the pivotal role of entrepreneurship in the growth and success of digital startups. The insights gathered from the founders emphasize the importance of leveraging technology to drive innovation, enhance operational efficiency, and access global markets. However, the study also reveals the challenges that digital startups face, including difficulties in securing funding, navigating intense competition, and adhering to complex regulatory frameworks. To overcome these obstacles, adopting strategies such as lean startup methodologies, forming strong ecosystem partnerships, and fostering effective leadership and team-building are essential. Furthermore, an entrepreneurial mindset focused on risk management and customer-centric approaches is crucial for sustaining long-term success. The findings contribute to a deeper understanding of the factors influencing digital startup success and offer valuable lessons for entrepreneurs seeking to navigate the challenges and seize the opportunities in the digital economy.

Funding: This research received no external funding.

Institutional Review Board Statement: Not applicable.

Informed Consent Statement: Not applicable.

Data Availability Statement: Data is available upon request from the authors.

Conflicts of Interest: The author declares no conflicts of interest.

References

- Abdelwahed, N. A. A. (2023). Nurturing the Entrepreneurial Path: Unraveling the Interplay Between Entrepreneurial Mindset and Intention Through the Lens of Entrepreneurial Culture. *Journal of Law and Sustainable Development*, 11(12), e2269-e2269.
- Bezhovski, Z., & Temjanovski, R. (2024). Shaping the Next Generation of Online Entrepreneurs: A Policy Framework. *Journal of Economics*, 9(2), 42-53.
- Crnogaj, K., & Rus, M. (2023). From Start to Scale: Navigating Innovation, Entrepreneurial Ecosystem, and Strategic Evolution. *Administrative Sciences*, 13(12), 254.
- DeCoito, I., & Briona, L. K. (2023). Fostering an entrepreneurial mindset through project-based learning and digital technologies in STEM teacher education. In *Enhancing entrepreneurial mindsets through STEM education* (pp. 195-222). Cham: Springer International Publishing.
- Dilshodovich, P. D. (2023). Entrepreneurship and Start-Up Culture: Nurturing Innovation and Growth. *Procedia on Economic Scientific Research*, 4, 36-41.
- Ghezzi, A. (2020). How Entrepreneurs make sense of Lean Startup Approaches: Business Models as cognitive lenses to generate fast and frugal Heuristics. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, 161, 120324.
- Hokmabadi, H., Rezvani, S. M., & de Matos, C. A. (2024). Business Resilience for Small and Medium Enterprises and Startups by Digital Transformation and the Role of Marketing Capabilities—A Systematic Review. *Systems*, 12(6), 220.
- Jayakani, S. (2024). Analytical Study On Factors Shaping The Skill Development Towards Entrepreneurial Mindset Among Generation Z—Study Limited To Chennai City. *Educational Administration: Theory and Practice*, 30(5), 5421-5427.
- Joel, O. T., & Oguanobi, V. U. (2024). Entrepreneurial leadership in startups and SMEs: Critical lessons from building and sustaining growth. *International Journal of Management & Entrepreneurship Research*, 6(5), 1441-1456.
- Kaggwa, S., Akinoso, A., Dawodu, S. O., Uwaoma, P. U., Akindote, O. J., & Osawaru, S. E. (2023). Entrepreneurial strategies for AI startups: navigating market and investment challenges. *International Journal of Management & Entrepreneurship Research*, 5(12), 1085-1108.
- Kutieshat, R. J., Al Sarayreh, A., Masadeh, M., Mohammad, S., Keir, M. Y. A., Al-Tit, A. A., ... & Mohammad, A. A. S. (2024). Entrepreneurial Mindset and Business Growth: An Empirical Investigation of High-Growth Startups. In *Frontiers of Human Centricity in the Artificial Intelligence-Driven Society 5.0* (pp. 81-95). Springer, Cham.
- McGrath, R. G., & MacMillan, I. C. (2000). *The entrepreneurial mindset: Strategies for continuously creating opportunity in an age of uncertainty* (Vol. 284). Harvard Business Press.
- Nasar, A., & Akram, M. (2022). COVID-19 crisis and parameters for sustainable entrepreneurship. *World Journal of Entrepreneurship Management and Sustainable Development*, 18(3), 321-329.
- Nasar, A., Akram, M., Safdar, M. R., & Akbar, M. S. (2022). A qualitative assessment of entrepreneurship amidst COVID-19 pandemic in Pakistan. *Asia Pacific Management Review*, 27(3), 182-189.
- Nasar, A., Kamarudin, S., Rizal, A. M., Ngoc, V. T. B., & Shoaib, S. M. (2019). Short-term and long-term entrepreneurial intention comparison between Pakistan and Vietnam. *Sustainability*, 11(23), 6529.
- Prokopenko, O., Järvis, M., Bielialov, T., Omelyanenko, V., & Malheiro, T. (2024, June). The Future of Entrepreneurship: Bridging the Innovation Skills Gap Through Digital Learning. In *International Conference Innovation in Engineering* (pp. 206-230). Cham: Springer Nature Switzerland.
- Soltanifar, M., & Smailhodžić, E. (2021). Developing a digital entrepreneurial mindset for data-driven, cloud-enabled, and platform-centric business activities: practical implications and the impact on society. *Digital entrepreneurship*, 3.
- Stolze, A., Sailer, K., & Gillig, H. (2018, September). Entrepreneurial mindset as a driver for digital transformation—a novel educational approach from university-industry interactions. In *International Conference on Innovation and Entrepreneurship* (pp. 806-XXI). Academic Conferences International Limited.

- Stolze, A., Sailer, K., & Gillig, H. (2018, September). Entrepreneurial mindset as a driver for digital transformation—a novel educational approach from university-industry interactions. In *International Conference on Innovation and Entrepreneurship* (pp. 806-XXI). Academic Conferences International Limited.
- Thomas, A., Passaro, R., & Quinto, I. (2019). Developing entrepreneurship in digital economy: The ecosystem strategy for startups growth. *Strategy and Behaviors in the Digital Economy*, 1-20.
- Zaheer, H. (2015). How do innovative digital start-ups achieve success?: perspectives of Australian founders (Doctoral dissertation, Macquarie University, Faculty of Business and Economics, Department of Marketing and Management).
- Zaheer, H., Breyer, Y., Dumay, J., & Enjeti, M. (2019). Straight from the horse's mouth: Founders' perspectives on achieving 'traction' in digital start-ups. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 95, 262-274.
- Zaheer, H., Breyer, Y., Dumay, J., & Enjeti, M. (2022). The entrepreneurial journeys of digital start-up founders. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, 179, 121638.
- Zaki, Y., Al Muwali, A., & Mahdi, N. (2021). The Role of Nurturing Technopreneurship Education and Building University Students' Entrepreneurial Mindsets and Skill Sets in Fostering Digital Innovation and Augmenting the Tech Start-Up Ecosystem in Bahrain. *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research*, 20(6), 152-173.