ENHANCING STUDENTS ENTREPRENEURIAL CAPABILITIES THROUGH DIGITAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP

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Abstract
Digital entrepreneurship has become a pivotal element in the global economy, transforming conventional business models and generating fresh avenues for innovation and expansion. Within the modern business environment, digital entrepreneurship stands out as a powerful catalyst, redefining traditional entrepreneurial frameworks and the skill sets necessary for achieving success. The study focuses on the effect of digital entrepreneurship on students entrepreneurial capabilities in Dennis Osadebay University, Asaba. The study adopted a cross sectional survey research design and the sample size of 185 respondents was selected from the population of 344 students in faculty of management sciences, Dennis Osadebay University. Data collected was analyzed using multiple regression. Findings revealed that digital innovation has significant influence on entrepreneurial driven capabilities. E-commerce has significant influence on entrepreneurial driven capabilities. Data analytics has significant effect on entrepreneurial driven capabilities. The study comes to the conclusion that students possess both the enthusiasm and foundational skills needed to succeed in the digital innovation and entrepreneurial space. However, the full potential of these capabilities is not being maximized due to a lack of institutional frameworks, mentorship opportunities, and real-world practice. The study recommended that real-world entrepreneurial and digital experience through internships or startup collaborations should be encouraged to bridge the gap between classroom learning and business practice.

Key words: *Digital Entrepreneurship, Digital Innovation, E-Commerce, Data Analytics, And Entrepreneurial Driven Capabilities*

Introduction

In recent years, the swift evolution of digital technologies has significantly altered the entrepreneurial landscape, giving rise to digital entrepreneurship as a unique area of academic inquiry. This phenomenon has become a pivotal element in the global

economy, transforming conventional business models and generating fresh avenues for innovation and expansion. Within the modern business environment, digital entrepreneurship stands out as a powerful catalyst, redefining traditional entrepreneurial frameworks and the skill sets necessary for achieving success (Bock et al., 2021). Digital entrepreneurship encompasses the use of digital technologies and platforms to establish and manage new business initiatives, thereby promoting innovation and value creation across various sectors (Choudary et al., 2020). The widespread impact of digital technologies spanning social media, e-commerce, artificial intelligence, and big data analytics has not only enabled the development of novel business models but has also improved the entrepreneurial experience, allowing individuals and organizations to navigate complexities, swiftly adapt to market needs, and seize emerging opportunities (Elia et al., 2021). One of the most notable effects of digital entrepreneurship is its capacity to enhance entrepreneurial capabilities (Eze & Chinedu, 2022). These capabilities include a variety of skills, resources, and characteristics that enable individuals and organizations to recognize opportunities, innovate, and manage ventures effectively. In the context of the digital era, these capabilities have been expanded and diversified, with technology serving as both a driver of growth and a means for strategic implementation (Kraus et al., 2021).

Digital entrepreneurship cultivates essential skills such as adaptability, leadership, and risk management by fostering an environment that encourages experimentation with new ideas, optimizes iterative learning processes, and streamlines access to information (Kuckertz et al., 2020). Additionally, the globalization facilitated by digital platforms has reshaped the competitive environment, providing entrepreneurs with access to a wider market and a varied customer base. This increased accessibility demands improved capabilities in areas such as digital marketing, customer relationship management, and data-driven decision-making, which are crucial for comprehending consumer behavior and customizing offerings to meet specific needs (Nambisan & Baron, 2020).

In Nigeria, especially within Delta State, the emergence of digital platforms has transformed the operational landscape for entrepreneurs, fostering the development of distinctive entrepreneurial skills that are vital for thriving in the digital environment. The focus of this study is Dennis Osadebay University, Asaba, which exemplifies the wider entrepreneurial ecosystem in Nigeria. The Nigerian economy is marked by a robust level of entrepreneurial engagement, fueled by both necessity and opportunity (Afolabi et al., 2020). Nevertheless, the adoption of digital technologies in entrepreneurial practices varies significantly across different faculties and disciplines within the university. This variation offers a chance to investigate how digital entrepreneurship impacts the enhancement of entrepreneurial capabilities among students from diverse academic fields. Research suggests that digital entrepreneurship

can improve entrepreneurial capabilities by granting access to resources, networks, and information that were previously inaccessible (Uche & Nwankwo, 2020). Although there are potential advantages, empirical research investigating the specific effects of digital entrepreneurship on entrepreneurial capabilities within higher education institutions in Nigeria is limited. Prior research has predominantly concentrated on developed countries, resulting in a lack of insight into how these dynamics manifest in developing countries (Olanrewaju et al., 2020). This study seeks to address this gap by performing a cross-sectional analysis of students at Dennis Osadebay University, examining the ways in which their involvement in digital entrepreneurship affects their entrepreneurial skills.

Objectives

The main objective of the study is to examine the effect of digital entrepreneurship on entrepreneurial capabilities of students in Dennis Osadebay University, Asaba. The specific objectives are to:

1. Examine the effect of digital innovation on entrepreneurial capabilities of students in Dennis Osadebay University, Asaba.
2. Ascertain the effect of E-commerce on entrepreneurial capabilities of students in Dennis Osadebay University, Asaba.
3. Determine the effect of data analytics on entrepreneurial capabilities of students in Dennis Osadebay University, Asaba.

Literature Review

Entrepreneurial Capabilities

Entrepreneurial capabilities constitutes an organization's proficiency in recognizing, leveraging, and adjusting to opportunities within ever-changing environments through innovative thinking and entrepreneurial approaches. These capabilities are crucial for securing a competitive edge, especially in sectors marked by swift transformations and unpredictability (Ed-Dafali et al., 2023). They are understood as dynamic competencies that empower firms to identify and take advantage of market opportunities through proactive, innovative, and risk-taking actions. Jin et al. (2024) associates these capabilities with the broader framework of dynamic capabilities, which entails the processes of sensing opportunities, seizing them, and reorganizing resources to

establish and maintain a competitive advantage.

Digital Entrepreneurship

Digital entrepreneurship involves the creation, development, and management of new business ventures that predominantly leverage digital technologies (Nambisan, 2017). This concept includes various activities such as e-commerce, digital marketing, and the creation of digital products and services. The advent of the internet and mobile technologies has revolutionized conventional business models, allowing entrepreneurs to access global markets more effortlessly (Kraus et al., 2021). The pursuit of success in today's rapidly evolving digital economy has become increasingly complex, and to thrive, individuals must develop competencies that foster effective participation in digital entrepreneurial activities. These competencies include digital innovation, e-commerce, and data analytics.

Digital Innovation

Digital innovation has emerged as a crucial catalyst for transformation across various sectors, allowing organizations to secure competitive advantages and respond effectively to swiftly evolving market conditions. Researchers largely concur that digital innovation encompasses the development and implementation of digital technologies to create innovative solutions or improve existing systems. According to Hund et al. (2021), digital innovation is characterized as "the execution of new combinations of digital and physical components to generate innovative products." Their research underscores the distinctive function of digital technologies in facilitating innovation, owing to their reprogrammable, distributable, and data-driven characteristics. Furthermore, Nambisan et al. (2017) contend that digital innovation transcends simple technology adoption; it necessitates modifications in organizational strategies and processes to leverage digital tools effectively. They highlight its dynamic and ecosystem-focused nature, setting it apart from conventional innovation methodologies.

E-Commerce

E-commerce has emerged as a pivotal element in the global economy, facilitating businesses in reaching larger audiences while providing consumers with convenient access to products and services. It is generally understood as the utilization of electronic networks, especially the internet, for conducting commercial activities. According to Efraim Turban et al. (2015), e-commerce is defined as "the process of buying, selling, transferring, or exchanging products, services, and/or information via computer

networks, including the internet." The origins of e-commerce can be traced back to the 1960s with the introduction of Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) systems, which underwent significant transformation with the rise of the World Wide Web in the 1990s (Laudon, 2020). Chaffey, (2019) highlights that e-commerce fosters entrepreneurial capabilities by lowering traditional barriers to entry. Digital platforms enable individuals and small firms to establish businesses with relatively minimal capital investment, eliminating the need for physical storefronts and extensive distribution infrastructure. This accessibility enhances opportunity recognition, a core entrepreneurial capability, by allowing entrepreneurs to identify and exploit market gaps in real time. However, Satar et al. (2023) found that e-commerce entrepreneurship requires a broad set of pre-existing competencies, including managerial, digital, and strategic skills, rather than automatically generating them. This suggests that entrepreneurs must already possess key skills to effectively utilize e-commerce platforms, indicating that e-commerce alone is insufficient for capability development.

Data Analytics

Data analytics serves as a fundamental element of the digital era, revolutionizing various sectors by facilitating data-driven approaches and enhancing overall performance. It is typically characterized as the methodical examination of data through statistical and computational methods to derive valuable insights. Adesina et al. (2024) assert that this process involves utilizing data to refine decision-making, encompassing everything from straightforward descriptive analysis to intricate predictive modeling. Liu et al. (2023) underscore the significance of analytics in connecting data collection with actionable insights, thereby highlighting its strategic relevance in the business landscape. The field of data analytics has broadened significantly due to technological advancements, including big data analytics, artificial intelligence, and real-time processing, allowing its application in a variety of sectors such as healthcare, finance, marketing, and education. Conversely, Chen et al. (2023) highlights that the effect of data analytics on entrepreneurial outcomes is often indirect and mediated, rather than direct. It may only enhance entrepreneurial capabilities when combined with other factors such as entrepreneurial orientation, opportunity recognition, or business model innovation. Firms must still possess complementary resources and skills (e.g., managerial ability, human expertise) and without these, analytics may fail to be effectively converted into actionable entrepreneurial behavior.

Conceptual Framework

Independent Variable **Dependent Variable**

Digital Entrepreneurship Capabilities

Entrepreneurial

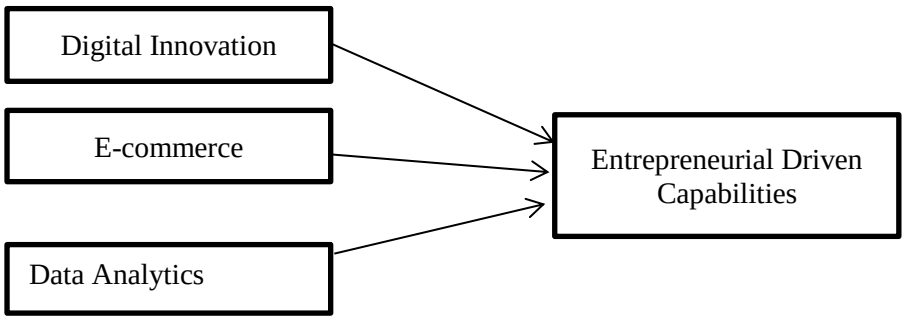


Figure 1: (Source: Researcher's Model, 2025).

Theoretical Review

Diffusion Theory

Everett Rogers (1995) developed the theory known as the diffusion of innovations, which explores how inventions, ideas, and technologies spread within cultures. This theory has been the subject of extensive research by numerous scholars. It posits that individuals possess varying characteristics that influence their willingness to accept or reject an innovation. Additionally, the inherent traits of the innovations themselves can also affect people's decisions regarding their acceptance. According to this framework, the adoption of an innovation unfolds in five distinct stages. The initial stage is information, where an individual becomes aware of an innovation but lacks detailed knowledge about it. The subsequent stage is persuasion, during which the individual expresses a genuine interest in acquiring more information about the concept. In the third stage, the individual evaluates the advantages and disadvantages of the innovation before making a decision on whether to adopt it. Once a decision is reached, the individual must implement the innovation by actively using it. The final stage is confirmation, where the individual seeks validation of their choice. Ultimately, individuals determine whether to persist with the use of an invention based on their experiences. These phases impact various groups of people to differing extents.

This theory is relevant to the current research, as the ease of use remains a critical factor in the acceptance of new technologies, aligning with the theoretical framework. Regardless of the innovation's potential, individuals are likely to be reluctant to embrace

it if it presents challenges in usability and learning. However, the most significant element is the observable benefits. Once individuals recognize the advantages of adopting an innovation, they are less likely to resist it (Luo et al., 2024). According to diffusion theory, these attributes of innovation are crucial, as they pertain to the rate at which new concepts are adopted. Some individuals may embrace the innovation immediately, while others may take a more gradual approach, continuing to rely on traditional methods. Various factors influence adoption rates; if a diverse group holds negative perceptions of the innovation, it is likely that others will also be hesitant or reject it altogether.

Methodology

A survey constitutes an examination of the views or experiences of a specific group, derived from a set of questions pertaining to a particular subject (Nayak & Narayan, 2019). This methodology was utilized to collect data aimed at empirical analysis, concentrating on a specific time frame. The justification for using the cross-sectional survey research design lies in its capacity to collect data from respondents at a defined moment. The population consists of students enrolled at Dennis Osadebay University in Asaba, focusing particularly on those in the 300 and 400 levels within the Faculty of Management Sciences. The current statistics of students in the highlighted faculties are displayed in Table 3.1 below:

Table 1: Dennis Osadebay University, Asaba Population Description

Name of University	**Faculty**	**Number of 300 Level Student**	**Number of 400 Level Student**	**Total**
Dennis Osadebay University, Asaba	Management Sciences	241	103	344
Total		241	103	**344**

Source: analysis of school fees payment released from the ICT unit in March (2025)

The total population of the study is 344, which comprises of 300 and 400 levels students in Faculty of Management Sciences, Dennis Osadebay University, Asaba under study. The sample size was drawn with Taro Yamani formula below:

$n = N / 1 + N (\alpha)^2$

Where:

n= the sample size,

N= the sample frame (population=344)

α= the margin of error (0.05%).

$n = 344 / 1+344(0.05)^2 = 185$

The sample size is 185.

The data presented and analyzed in this study is categorized into three parts; the first is the descriptive analysis of respondents profile with percentage weighting attached. The second is the correlation analysis of the research questions and their respective variables. The third is the testing of hypotheses formulated for the study with the use of regression analysis. Out of the 185 sets of questionnaire administered, one hundred and eighty (180) were returned; therefore, the analysis in this chapter is based on the sample size of one hundred and eighty (180) copies.

Data Presentation and Analysis

Table 2 Correlation matrix between studied variables

		Digital innovation	E-commerce	Data analytics	Entrepreneurial driven capabilities
digital innovation	Pearson correlation	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)				
	N	180			
E-commerce	Pearson correlation	.166*	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000			
	N	180	180		
data analytics	Pearson correlation	.246**	.283**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		
	N	180	180	180	
entrepreneurial driven capabilities	Pearson correlation	.288**	.085*	.066	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	
	N	180	180	180	180

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

Source: SPSS version 21

The result in table 2 shows that the tested variables showed an overwhelming positive correlation ranging from (.066 to .288) Implying that, there is a significant positive association between the variables of digital entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial capabilities.

Table 3: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Sig. F Change (P-value)
1	.755[a]	.570	.560	1.9995	0.000

1. Predictors: (Constant), data analytics, E-commerce, digital innovation

Source: Field Survey (2025).

The P-value of 0.000 (Less than 0.05) implies that the model of data analytics, E-commerce, digital innovation are significant at the 5% level of significance. As illustrated in the table, the significance value is 0.000 which is less than 0.05 thus the model is statistically significance. Digital entrepreneurship accounted for change in entrepreneurial driven capabilities as indicated by the adjusted R Squared value which showed that 56.0% (0.560) of the change in entrepreneurial driven capabilities is brought about by digital entrepreneurship.

Table: 4 ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	173.000	4	43.250	10.820	.000[b]
	Residual	699.677	175	3.998		
	Total	716.978	179			

a. Dependent Variable: entrepreneurial driven capabilities

b. Predictors: (Constant), data analytics, E-commerce, digital innovation

Table 5: Multiple Regressions- Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.239	1.013		2.210	.028
	digital innovation	.262	.046	.278	5.712	.000
	E-commerce	.032	.043	.034	.754	.000
	data analytics	.269	.051	.290	5.324	.000

a. Dependent Variable: entrepreneurial driven capabilities

The result from the regression analysis on table 5 showed that digital innovation exhibit a significant effects on entrepreneurial capabilities ($\beta = 0.278$, $P < 0.05$). E-commerce exhibit a significant effects on entrepreneurial capabilities ($\beta = 0.034$, $P < 0.05$), data analytics exhibit a significant effects on entrepreneurial capabilities ($\beta = 0.290$, $P < 0.05$).

Discussion of Findings

Table 4 shows the multiple regression analysis for digital innovation, e-commerce, data analytics and entrepreneurial capabilities. Regression analysis result for digital innovation which exhibited a significant positive relationship with entrepreneurial capabilities, giving the Beta value ($\beta = .278$, $p = 0.00$) were $p < 0.05$. More so, the result in table 2 shows that .560 (56.0%) variations in entrepreneurial capabilities are accounted for by changes in digital innovation dimensions. However, the result of the tested hypothesis indicates that there is significant positive effect of digital innovation on entrepreneurial capabilities. This implies that digital innovation plays a crucial role in enhancing entrepreneurial capabilities. Academic institutions who adopt innovative digital technologies are more likely to produce students that are equipped with entrepreneurial and problem-solving skills, which can improve their employability, business opportunities, and ability to compete effectively in a digital-driven economy. This view is consistent with Lu, (2024) which stated that digital innovation transcends simple technology adoption; it necessitates modifications in organizational strategies and processes to leverage digital tools effectively. They highlight its dynamic and ecosystem-focused nature, setting it apart from conventional innovation methodologies. Many students exhibited entrepreneurial traits such as creativity, risk-taking, problem-solving, and opportunity recognition. However, while the mindset was present,

practical application and real-world business exposure were somewhat limited.

Regression analysis result for E-commerce exhibited a significant positive relationship with entrepreneurial capabilities, giving the Beta value (β= .034, p= 0.00) indicating that p <0.05. Moreover, the result of the tested hypothesis indicates that there is significant positive relationship between E-commerce and entrepreneurial capabilities. This indicates that exposure to E-commerce platforms and digital business activities can enhance students' readiness for self-employment and participation in the digital economy. Integrating E-commerce knowledge and practical digital business experiences into academic activities can help students become more technologically inclined, economically independent and competitive in today's business environment. This is in line with findings by Chaffey, (2019) which highlights that e-commerce includes not only transactional activities but also pre-sale and post-sale functions such as marketing, customer support, and data analysis, thereby integrating into a larger digital business ecosystem. The study found limited institutional support in terms of entrepreneurship programs, mentorship opportunities, and incubation centers. Students indicated a need for more structured programs to guide their entrepreneurial journeys.

Finally, the regression analysis result for data analytics exhibited a positive relationship with entrepreneurial capabilities, giving the Beta value (β=.290, p=0.00) with p<0.05. However, the result of the tested hypothesis indicates that there is significant positive effect of data analytics on entrepreneurial capabilities. This is in agreement with Omorede et al. (2025) found that big data analytics significantly enhances entrepreneurial processes by enabling deeper insights into opportunity recognition and market trends. The authors noted that big data analytics supports innovation by facilitating the identification of new business opportunities and improving customer understanding, which ultimately strengthens competitiveness and performance. This underscores the significance of analytics in connecting data collection with actionable insights, thereby highlighting its strategic relevance in the business landscape. Consequently, students who apply data-driven decision-making in entrepreneurial contexts will perform better in business simulations or real-world startup scenarios.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Digital innovation had a statistical significant effect on entrepreneurial capabilities. The findings of this study highlight that students possess both the enthusiasm and foundational skills needed to succeed in the digital innovation and entrepreneurial space. However, the full potential of these capabilities is not being maximized due to a lack of institutional frameworks, mentorship opportunities, and real-world practice. Despite these challenges, the students' readiness and eagerness to engage in

entrepreneurial ventures especially those driven by digital innovation indicate a promising future if appropriate support systems are established.

E-commerce has a positive effect on entrepreneurial capabilities. The study concludes that students exhibit high potential for success in e-commerce and entrepreneurship, driven by growing digital literacy and a desire for self-reliance. However, this potential is often underutilized due to skill gaps, limited mentorship, and institutional constraints. With proper education, mentorship, and infrastructural support, students can become significant contributors to the digital economy. Strengthening their e-commerce and entrepreneurial capabilities will not only benefit individual students but also contribute to national economic growth

Data analytics has a positive effect on entrepreneurial driven capabilities. Data analytics and entrepreneurship are increasingly interdependent. Students equipped with both have a competitive advantage in the modern innovation-driven economy.

The study therefore recommends that:

1. Real-world entrepreneurial and digital experience through internships or startup collaborations should be encouraged to bridge the gap between classroom learning and business practice.
2. Students should be encouraged to undertake internships with successful e-commerce businesses or participate in industry-led workshops to bridge the gap between theory and practice.
3. The school management should provide platforms for students to pitch data-backed business ideas to industry experts and investors

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