

Investigating the Impact of Internet and Social Media Applications on Entrepreneurial Performance

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Abstract

Original Research Article

This abstract research paper explores how Internet and social media applications can be applied to the performance of the entrepreneurship with a specific focus on the transformative nature of the solutions in the contemporary business environment. This research investigates the role of digital platforms in promoting innovation, communication and competitiveness in the market and how these factors make them important drivers of entrepreneurship in the developed and emerging economies. The paper uses the three theoretical bases, based on which it develops a take on the adoption of technology, its use as a resource, and its adoption as a conceptual framework, namely: Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), Resource-Based View (RBV), and Diffusion of Innovation (DOI). The study constructs Internet and social media applications in a multidimensional approach to include Internet use, social media marketing, digital communication, innovation and sharing knowledge, and integration of technology where entrepreneurial performance is a unidimensional result which measures growth, productivity and adaptability. The research will indicate the most important inter-relationships between the digital activity and corporate performance by conducting a multifaceted review of 76 scholarly sources and proving that the effective application of digital technologies may be the reason to increase its productivity, market coverage and strategic competitiveness. The conceptual model proposed shows how Internet and social media applications are used together to affect the performance of the entrepreneur through the mediating effect of the concept of innovation and digital orientation. The scholar concludes that these technologies may be assimilated to enable business owners to create powerful and data-driven companies. It suggests that entrepreneurs should increase digital skills, policymakers consolidate digital architecture and inclusion models, and scholars should investigate more the emerging convergence of digital transformation and entrepreneurship.

Keywords: Internet Applications, Social Media, Entrepreneurial Performance, Digital Transformation, Innovation, Digital Entrepreneurship.

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1.0 Introduction to the Study

1.1 Background of the Study

The past few decades have seen the digital revolution in the global economy that has essentially changed the entrepreneurial environment. The prevalence of Internet technologies and social media

apps has brought on the innovation, communication, and markets to the new opportunities (Aboelimged, 2014; Agnihotri et al., 2016). Business people globally are turning to digital technologies to promote their efficiency and effectiveness in operation, enhance their engagement with the customer, and increase their outreach beyond the



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conventional limits (Grover et al., 2018; Kushwah et al., 2024). Such a paradigm shift has transformed the conceptualisation and implementation of business models and has produced a new breed of digital entrepreneurs who have turned to the virtual platforms extensively in order to achieve performance (Achtenhagen, 2008; Skafi et al., 2025). International access to information and markets has been facilitated globally by the emergence of Internet connectivity and mobile technology. It is proposed that the Internet acts as an enabler of entrepreneurship because it reduces transaction cost and provides some access to resource (Marston et al., 2011; Zhang et al., 2010). The availability of social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn within the business ecosystems has allowed the entrepreneur to brand and attract consumers and jointly create value by means of online interactions (Buccieri et al., 2020; Mehralian, 2022). Because of this, the digital entrepreneurship has become a very significant economy, innovation, and competitiveness catalyst at the global level (Akter et al., 2022; Paramesha et al., 2024).

The Internet and social media applications have transformed the development of business in terms of products to a network-oriented paradigm. With the help of interactive digital settings, companies can develop bi-directional communication with clients, increase the exposure of their activities to the market, and obtain strategic insights with the help of data analytics (Talwandi et al., 2024; Babalghaith and Aljarallah, 2024). There is empirical information that entrepreneurs that successfully incorporate such technologies demonstrate better market flexibility, consumer loyalty, and financial results (Battleson et al., 2016; Shi, 2021). In addition, the existing tools of entrepreneurial innovation have been enhanced by cloud computing tools and evidence-based decision-making, which allow startups to rival developed businesses in the digital economy (Dalal, 2025; Gangwar, 2017). In Africa, economic participation and inclusion is gradually being transformed through digitalization of entrepreneurship. According to the scholars (Akpan et al., 2022; Ochuba et al., 2024), the Internet and social media tools are closing the structural differences in information access, financing, and market connectivity. Nevertheless,

issues like infrastructural shortages, the lack of ICT competencies and regulatory obstacles continue to limit growth (Kshetri, 2016; Avram, 2014). Mobile Internet has of course been especially spread in West Africa, as it has promoted micro-entrepreneurship, e-commerce, and social enterprise designs (Tripathi, 2022; Yadav and Rena, 2025). Digital entrepreneurship has become one of the crucial sources of job creation and economic sustainability in Nigeria, and social media platforms have become the main source of marketing, innovation, and networking (Mohammed, 2023; Mohammed, 2024).

1.2 Problem Statement

Though the fast development of Internet and social media applications as essential business innovation and communication tools, most entrepreneurs, especially in developing economies, are unable to use their strategic potential to its fullest. Despite the fact that platforms like Facebook, Instagram, or LinkedIn have transformed how the business people communicate with their clients and market their organizations, it is not yet clear how these applications can be turned into sustainable entrepreneurial performance (Ceptureanu et al., 2023; Huy and Phuc, 2020). Most SMEs are becoming more visible with digital applications but do not record any quantifiable growth in profitability, innovation, or competitiveness (Patma et al., 2020; HighScalability, 2009). Moreover, the absence of the solid theoretical synthesis that would combine the use of digital technologies and entrepreneurial success is evident. In as much as the facilitating role of digital ecosystems has been validated by other previous researchers (Boden et al., 2000; Achtenhagen, 2008), they simply overlook the contextual variables such as digital literacy, infrastructural capacity and institutional support that mediate such relations (Telecommunications Research and Industrial Development Institute and National Science and Technology Agency, 2011). This vacuum of thought prevents the possibility of formulating whole conceptualizations that can explain how online interaction can be extended to actual growth and innovation by entrepreneurs.

Furthermore, until this moment, the effectiveness of social media and Internet applications as strategy-

driving forces of entrepreneurship continues to have empirical contradiction at the region level, as well as industry level. The effects of this phenomenon are often strongly positive in studies conducted in developed economies, whereas the results are quite ambivalent or inconclusive in African and Asian settings (Pakistan Journal of Commerce and Social Sciences, 2022; Buccieri et al., 2020). As a result, the conceptual connections between digital engagement and entrepreneurial orientation and performance outcomes are still disjointed and unsophisticated which requires a more comprehensive conceptual research that will incorporate digital tools in the models of entrepreneurial performance.

1.3 Significance of the Study

The research has an important value both academically, managerially, as well as policy wise. Academically, it helps the burgeoning amount of research on the topic of digital entrepreneurship to broaden theoretical insight into the role of Internet and social media applications in influencing the entrepreneurial performance outcomes. Despite the fact that the research on adoption of digital tools has been done in the past, theoretical synthesis linking these applications with quantifiable outcomes in growth of an entrepreneurship is lacking. This paper contributes to the conceptual models that will appear in the future by combining the insights of the Resource-Based View (RBV) and Entrepreneurial Orientation (EO) perspectives to understand how a digital capability can be turned into strategic resources and lead to innovation and competitiveness (Grover et al., 2018; Battleson et al., 2016; Chang et al., 2016). Management wise, the research will provide practical inputs to business owners and managers who aim to maximise digital application use in their operations and targeting the market. The better SMEs comprehend how to strategically utilize Internet-based platforms, the more agile, driven by data, and customer-friendly their business becomes as little and medium enterprises adapt to a more digitized economy (Akter et al., 2022; Marjani et al., 2017; Dalal, 2025). This framework can help managers to determine the appropriate combination of digital tools and organizational practices that will cause enhanced innovation, brand positioning, and

sustainability in the long run (Kushwah et al., 2024; Kshetri, 2016).

Policymaking wise, the study is evidence based and can be used by governments, development agencies and policy makers on innovation policy to reinforce digital transformation frameworks in the field of entrepreneurship. Third world countries especially those in Africa are used to infrastructural, education, and institutional disparities that can impede the wholesale implementation of digital entrepreneurship models. The study points to the need to possess combined digital policies, capacity-building efforts, and entrepreneurship development mechanisms that facilitate the efficient use of Internet and social media technologies to facilitate inclusive growth (Yadav and Rena 2025; Akpan et al. 2022; Babalghaith and Aljarallah 2024). All this makes the study an important asset to the theory of digital entrepreneurship flaneurs, digital business strategy managers, and policymakers who seek to define the future of the emerging enterprise development, which is informed by the Internet in the emerging markets.

1.3 Research Objectives

The study aims to:

1. Examine how Internet and social media applications influence entrepreneurial performance.
2. Identify key digital tools that enhance innovation and business growth among entrepreneurs.
3. Analyze the relationship between digital engagement and operational efficiency in entrepreneurship.
4. Develop a conceptual framework linking Internet usage, social media strategies, and entrepreneurial outcomes.

1.4 Research Questions

1. How do Internet and social media applications affect entrepreneurial performance?
2. What digital tools most effectively promote innovation and business growth?
3. How does digital engagement improve the operational efficiency of entrepreneurs?

4. What conceptual linkages exist between Internet usage, social media strategies, and entrepreneurial success?

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Conceptual Framework

2.1.1 Conceptualization of Core Constructs

The theoretical model of the research is aimed at the comprehension of the way Internet and social media applications (Independent Variable – IV) affect entrepreneurial performance (Dependent Variable -DV) in the digital economy. The internet and social media platforms have emerged as vital facilitators of business, to provide fresh sources of innovation, communication with customers, and competitive edge. The IV indicates the multidimensional nature of the effect of digital technologies on the development of entrepreneurial results, and the DV is concerned with the overall performance of the entrepreneurial projects and their sustainability (Sundararajan and Mohammed, 2022; Mohammed et al., 2024; Yadav and Rena, 2025).

The paper creates a relational channel, in which the prospects of using digital tools effectively by entrepreneurs result in enhanced innovation, market growth, and efficiency of their work (Grover et al., 2018; Battleson et al., 2016). The framework proposes that digital competence and strategic digital engagement can be core resources that help contributing to better entrepreneurial performance by combining theoretical suggestions of the Resource-Based View (RBV) and Entrepreneurial Orientation (EO) lenses (Mohammed et al., 2023; Chang et al., 2016).

2.1.2 Dimensions of the Independent Variable (IV): Internet and Social Media Applications

A. Internet Utilization

Internet use can be defined as the power of entrepreneurs to use the online opportunities to access, control and exploit the business opportunities. Ensured connectivity and digital infrastructure will allow reaching the global market and adopting e-commerce, making the operations

more efficient (Kushwah et al., 2024; Akter et al., 2022). The high-quality online presence with optimized web pages and data analytics helps to make improved decisions, to be competitive in the entrepreneurial ecosystem (Mohammed, 2023; Dalal, 2025).

B. Social Media Marketing and Engagement

The use of social media has revolutionized the marketing strategies and helped the entrepreneurs to contact and connect with the target audience. Social networks, including Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn, have the ability to create brand awareness and customer engagement, thus improving the performance in the market (Agnihotri et al., 2016; Buccieri et al., 2020). Consumer trust, virality, and brand loyalty depend on the quality and consistency of digital content (Sundararajan and Mohammed, 2023; Mohammed and Sundararajan, 2023).

C. Digital Communication and Networking

The digital communication devices facilitate faster interactions and working together in real time with the entrepreneurs, customers and business associates. Online networking sites like LinkedIn and virtual communities contribute to the increase of the possibilities of partnership and sharing of knowledge (Aboelmaged, 2014; Boden et al., 2000). Such virtual relationships build a sense of trust and credibility in the online market enhancing the success of entrepreneurship (Mohammed et al., 2023; Sundararajan et al., 2024).

D. Innovation and Knowledge Sharing

The social media platforms are used as an avenue of co-creation, diffusion of information, and open innovation by entrepreneurs. Through online communication, entrepreneurs exchange experiences, detect the trends in the market, and jointly produce innovative products or services (Margalina et al., 2020; Marjani et al., 2017). The ability to share knowledge on online networks increases the speed of entrepreneurial learning and creative problem-solving, which is vital in business development (Mohammed et al., 2023; Sundararajan et al., 2023).

E. Technology Integration and Digital Competence

Digital competence is the strategic capability to incorporate the use of high-tech technology in business (cloud computing, big data analytics and automation) (Battleson et al., 2016; Chang et al., 2016). Highly ICT literate and technology prepared entrepreneurs are in a better position to use digital transformation to gain competitive performance (Mohammed et al., 2024; Kshetri, 2016). The correspondence of technological solutions and business needs guarantees flexibility and scalability and success in the long run (Mohammed and Sundararajan, 2023; Kushwah et al., 2024).

2.1.3 Dimension of the Dependent Variable (DV): Entrepreneurial Performance

Entrepreneurial performance is the overall efficiency and achievement of entrepreneurial venture when it comes to financial and market and innovative performance. In the financial aspect, it focuses on profitability, return on investment and increasing revenue, which is an indication of economic feasibility of a firm in a competitive market. The market performance represents customer retention, brand positioning, and competitive advantage obtained through the digital exposure and online interaction. The aspect of innovation performance, conversely, is the capability of an entrepreneur to initiate new products, processes, or marketing techniques in the form of digital transformation. In the digital age, entrepreneurial activity and responsiveness rely on the level at which entrepreneurs exploit the online platforms in order to maximize their activities, access the target markets, and address fluctuating markets. Automation, adoption of digital analytics, and technology, efficiency is facilitated, and adaptability is promoted by the fact that entrepreneurs can use digital tools to innovate, be responsive. In this way, the entrepreneurial performance may be referred to as a holistic concept of digital entrepreneurship that consists of the financial performance, operational efficiency, and innovativeness combined into a single construct (Aboelmaged, 2014; Buccieri et al.,

2020; Mohammed, 2023; Mohammed and Aliyu, 2024).

2.1.4 Conceptual Relationships between IV and DV

Internet and social media applications directly influence the performance of the entrepreneurship by enhancing access to the market, productivity of operations, and the ability of new innovation. The use of internet increases online presence and supports e-commerce activities, which will lead to the growth and effectiveness of sales. The utilization of the social media is a powerful tool of brand loyalty, customer interaction and content marketing performance that ultimately resonate in enhanced entrepreneurial performances. The mediation of the source of the relationship between Internet use and entrepreneurial outcomes has frequently been conducted through innovation and digital orientation. New technologies and data analysis would provide entrepreneurs with a possibility to get practical information to enhance their competitive power and decision-making skills. In line with this, virtual acumen and nimbleness online networking is also a performance moderator, in that it facilitates flexibility and endurance amid the technological uproar. All these processes prove the way the implementation of the digital transforms the notions of visibility, productivity, and competitiveness into the measurable entrepreneurial development (Agnihotri et al., 2016; Margalina et al., 2020; Mohammed, 2024; Mohammed et al., 2023).

2.2 Theoretical Framework

Three basic models such as Teaching Acceptance Model (TAM), Resource-Based View (RBV), and Diffusion of Innovation (DOI) were used as a foundation to construct the rationale of how Internet and social media application relates to the performance of entrepreneurs. The synthesis of the theories provides an insight into the adoption, use and strategic exploitation of digital tools by entrepreneurs as a means of achieving competitive advantage and sustainable performance.

2.2.1 Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)

Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) created by Davis (1989) underlines that the primary factors of adoption of digital technologies are the perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use. To the entrepreneurial setting, TAM is used to clarify the relationship between attitudes of the entrepreneurs towards digital applications (e-commerce sites, social media analytics, and online marketing tools) and the intention to incorporate the digital technology in business functions. The more the perceived benefits and ease of use, the more chance of adoption.

When entrepreneurs understand the efficiency of using Internet and social media tools, the opportunities to reach new markets and interact with customers, they are more likely to implement them in competitive performance. The TAM framework therefore forms the behavioral basis of comprehending the effect of technology acceptance on digital transformation and entrepreneurial success (Buccieri et al., 2020; Aboelmaged, 2014; Mohammed, 2024).

2.2.2 Resource-Based View (RBV) Theory

According to the Resource-Based View (RBV) theory (Barney, 1991), the development of sustainable competitive advantage in organizations will be realized when valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable (VRIN) resources are obtained and utilized effectively. Internet and social media platforms are discussed in the framework of digital entrepreneurship as the strategic resources which may be used to make the movement more productive, innovative, and responsive to the market. These capabilities can be translated into long-term benefits by entrepreneurs who build robust digital capabilities by means of data analytics, social media marketing, and online networking. RBV emphasizes the role of digital infrastructure and knowledge management systems in innovation and efficiency, in line with the research that has shown digital capabilities to facilitate entrepreneurial resilience and market performance (Grover et al., 2018; Mohammed, 2023;

Mohammed et al., 2024; Avram, 2014).

2.2.3 Diffusion of Innovation (DOI) Theory

The theory introduced by Rogers (2003) is known as the Diffusion of Innovation (DOI) whereby time represents the spread of innovation in the social systems through the channel of communication. DOI can be used in digital entrepreneurship to shed light on the adoption, diffusion and maintenance of Internet and social media innovations among entrepreneurs and consumers. This theory emphasizes the impact of opinion leaders, online communities, and peer networks on the adoption behaviour. Early adopters of digital tools are entirely entrepreneurs and they tend to shape other people in their ecosystem, speeding up the process of diffusion. The combination of innovation, network communication, and digital preparedness underlines how the social media and Internet technologies are transforming the manner in which business is conducted, which expands market boundaries and knowledge dissemination (Margalina et al., 2020; Mohammed, 2023; Kushwah et al., 2024).

2.2.4 Integration of Theories

A combination of TAM, RBV and DOI creates a complementary prism that predetermines why entrepreneurs use digital tools (TAM), how these tools can be transformed into strategic resources (RBV), and how digital innovations can be spread in the entrepreneurial ecosystems (DOI). TAM determines micro-level beliefs, perceived usefulness and ease of use, which promotes individual adoption decisions. RBV positions the result of the latter adoption decisions on the firm level, where digital skills, platforms, and analytics are considered as heterogeneous resources, upon development and implementation, produce the sustainable competitive advantage. DOI then provides the social processes (meso-level opinion leaders, communication channels, adoption stages) that are used by adoption cascading across networks and markets. The integrated lens is aligned with the constructs of the study and has the following mapping: TAM describes how Internet Utilization

and Social Media Marketing are adopted due to the perceived value of the solution and usability; RBV describes how Technology Integration and Digital Competence and Innovation and Knowledge Sharing become scarce resources and performance driving forces; DOI explains how Digital Communication and Networking and platform-based innovations are disseminated across the network of the entrepreneurs and become more significant. Collectively they explain a model where individual acceptance (TAM) results in resource development (RBV) and network diffusion (DOI), which drives increased entrepreneurial performance through mediating relationships where digital orientation, innovation capability and market responsiveness.

2.2.5 Theoretical Framework Diagram

The figure illustrates how TAM infers the use of internet and social media tools, RBV how it is a useful digital resource and DOI how the innovation is transmitted through social networks. The combination of these theoretical views is used to describe how the digital aspects of applications (use of internet, use of social media, communication, knowledge sharing, and technology integration) will improve entrepreneurial performance based on the concept of digital orientation. These relationships depend on contextual moderators like infrastructure, government policy and digital skills, and as such, the framework is dynamic and flexible to different entrepreneurial settings.

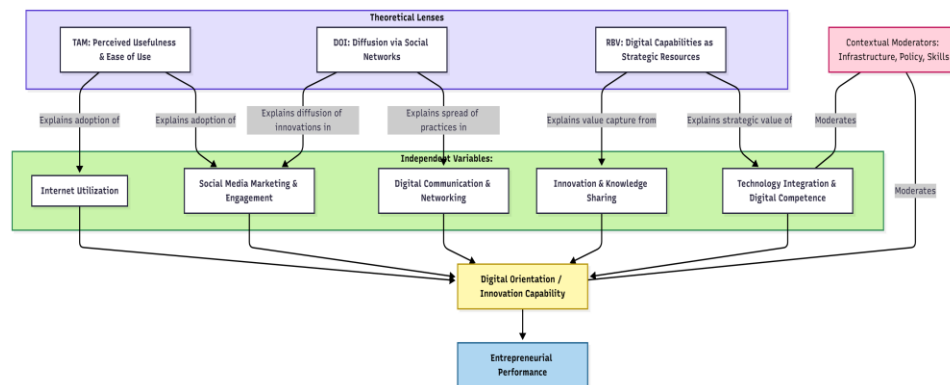


Figure 2.1: Theoretical Linkages between Theories, Digital Application Variables, and Entrepreneurial Performance

Source: Researcher's Design (2025), adapted from Grover et al. (2018), Wang et al. (2019), and Kushwah et al. (2024).

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framework is dynamic and flexible to different entrepreneurial settings.

2.3 Empirical Review

The practical research experience in the world environment revealed that the Internet and social media apps turned out to be the key to the contemporary entrepreneurial performance. Digital platforms make it possible to improve the visibility of entrepreneurs, attract customers, and optimize decisions. The studies such as Agnihotri et al. (2016), Buccieri et al. (2020), and Aboelmaged (2014)

concluded that the positive direct effect of online presence and use of e-commerce may result in a higher efficiency and innovation capacity of companies. Similarly, Margalina et al. (2020) and Achtenhagen (2008) concluded that small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) become more strategic and resourceful with the help of Internet-based tools. A study that was conducted by the Telecommunications Research and Industrial Development Institute (2011) indicated that integration of ICT is of great significance in the growth of the entrepreneurship, particularly in the developing economies. A study by Aboelmaged (2014) and HighScalability (2009) also discovered that the social networking sites are effective in the context of collaborating, generating ideas and more so in new markets particularly start-ups. As a result, Akpan et al. (2022) and Babalghaith and Aljarallah (2024) emphasized that SMEs can use digital technologies to remove infrastructural and market barriers and create new entrepreneurial environments based on which they can become competitive. The research also proved digital data analytics and social media strategy and its impact on strategic choices as well as marketing, as both Battleson et al. (2016) and Grover et al. (2018) reported that both of these approaches are effective based on the principles of real-time information and interaction with customers. The empirical studies by Mehralian (2022) and Kushwah et al. (2024) confirmed that digital entrepreneurship through the assistance of Internet technologies and social platforms increases the speed and contributes to innovation through the collaborative creation of value. Furthermore, Kshetri (2016) and Avram (2014) focused on the influence of institutional and economic factors in the implementation of the cloud-based Internet in a more narrow context of the developing markets. According to Talwandi et al. (2024), social media analytics increases the entrepreneurial intelligence and responsiveness to the customers, and Yadav and Rena (2025) have provided evidence that Internet-enabled marketing strategies increase the competitiveness of the brands in the developing economies. Financially in the market context, Boden et al. (2000) and Ochuba et al. (2024) discovered that social media has a role in developing sustainable

revenue and customer retention. Equally, Akter et al. (2022) and Skafi et al. (2025) reported the role of data-driven Internet use in increasing business agility and decision-making. Shi (2021) and Marston et al. (2011) conducted a study in developed countries and discovered that the adoption of the Internet enhances operational efficiency and entrepreneurial innovation via high-level analytics and automation. Tripathi (2022) and Paramesha et al. (2024) presented comparative evidence of developing economies that showed that social media use breaks communication barriers, so it will encourage inclusive participation in entrepreneurship. The empirical data presented in Africa and Asia, including works by Ochuba et al. (2024) and Akpan et al. (2022), indicate that entrepreneurs turn to social media more often when promoting their brand and marketing relationships. A. In several publications, such as Navigating the Digital Marketplace, Strategic Utilization of MIS for Efficient Organizational Management, and Entrepreneurial Strategies to Mitigate Risks in Smart Manufacturing, Mohammed (2023, 2024) stressed that digital transformation defines the new meaning of entrepreneurial efficiency and sustainability. Other works by A. Mohammed (2022, 2024), such as Analyzing Global Impacts in Trade Management and Impact of Strategic Human Resource Management on Sustainable Growth confirmed the opinion that Internet-enabled communication provided innovation, employee engagement, and scalability of the business. Research by Kumar et al. (2016) and Vadivel and Sequeira (2020) established that digital competence and ICT infrastructure has an impact on the success of entrepreneurs by maximizing resources. This argument was furthered by a study by Baylan (2014) and Zuniga et al. (2020), who associated digital literacy and Internet access with the performance of innovation. Besides, Chang et al. (2016) and Dalal (2025) determined that cloud computing systems based on the Internet increase the flexibility of operations and the decisions of entrepreneurs. Entrepreneur productivity, responsiveness, and market adaptability were further shown to be enhanced by Internet technologies by Gangwar (2017), Marjani et al. (2017), and Marston et al. (2011) in an empirical study. Eswar

Balachandar and Bhaskar Reddy (2024), Pourvaziri et al. (2022), and Chakroun et al. (2022) found that social media is an effective communication tool that enhances diffusion of innovation and market access in the European and Middle East contexts. Equally, Azadeh et al. (2015) and Krishnan et al. (2012) have established that those companies which integrated Internet tools signal their entrepreneurial resilience and process agility. The correlations between digital orientation and firm competitiveness were also found to be positive by Peron et al. (2020) and Xu et al. (2024). In emerging markets, PN & Onyancha (2018) and Naqvi et al. (2016) found that the adoption of Internet and social media has a significant impact on the operational decisions and management of customer relationships. Summing up these empirical results, it turns out that Internet and social media technologies are key facilitators of entrepreneurial performance. They improve the process of communication, encourage customers, promote innovation as well as enhance competitiveness. Nevertheless, even though extensive studies have been conducted in various locations and settings, no comprehensive theory has been developed to combine the technological, social and strategic variables into a single theory of entrepreneurial performance.

2.4 Research Gap

Although various studies have been conducted to identify the impact of Internet and social media on entrepreneurship, there are a number of gaps that have not been filled. To begin with, the bulk of available research has been on either the Internet or social media apps in isolation without the formulation of a conceptual framework that integrates both factors and their overall impact on the performance of the entrepreneur. Secondly, there is a lack of theoretical synthesis between the models including the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), the Resource-Based View (RBV), and the Diffusion of Innovation (DOI) thus limiting knowledge about the interaction of technological adoption and social engagement to elicit performance results. Third, the literature review by Agnihotri et al. (2016), Aboelmaged (2014), and Akpan et al. (2022) only examined the marketing or

technology lenses, ignoring the mediating factors of innovation capability, digital orientation, and customer engagement. Fourth, most of the literature is still context-specific and little comparative knowledge exists between developed and emerging economies especially in the African business landscape. This, in turn, makes the application of a holistic conceptual framework that combines the use of the Internet, social media, digital competence, and innovation orientation to describe their overall effect on entrepreneurial performance. This work therefore bridges a huge gap in both theoretical and empirical fields because it formulates a multi-dimensional framework that links digital adoption, innovation diffusion and entrepreneurial growth within the framework of the modern digital economies.

2.5 Model of the Study

The offered conceptual model is a unification model which helps to combine the multidimensional independent variable (Internet and Social Media Applications) with the unidimensional dependent variable (Entrepreneurial Performance). Such a model offers a logical means of reflecting how digital tools and platforms relate to the results of entrepreneurship through direct and mediated relationships. In essence, the model hypothesizes the application of the Internet, application of social media, use of digital communication, sharing of innovation and knowledge, and the incorporation of technology as the primary dimensions resulting in the success of entrepreneurs. The dynamics of these digital enablers has been determined to influence the performance of entrepreneurs, either in the aspect of growth, adaptability and competitiveness in the recent markets. The mediating effect of innovation capacity and digital orientation also enhances the connection between the utilization of technology and the performance outcomes, through which the entrepreneurs can transform the digital opportunities into strategic benefits. This hybrid model provides a conceptual and theoretical frame of researching the general role of Internet and social media applications in the development of entrepreneurship in a broad spectrum of realities in terms of acquiring resources and market expansion as well as sustained-performance and innovation. It gives a holistic

representation of digital entrepreneurship as a multi-dimensional construct founded on technological,

behaviour and strategic approach.

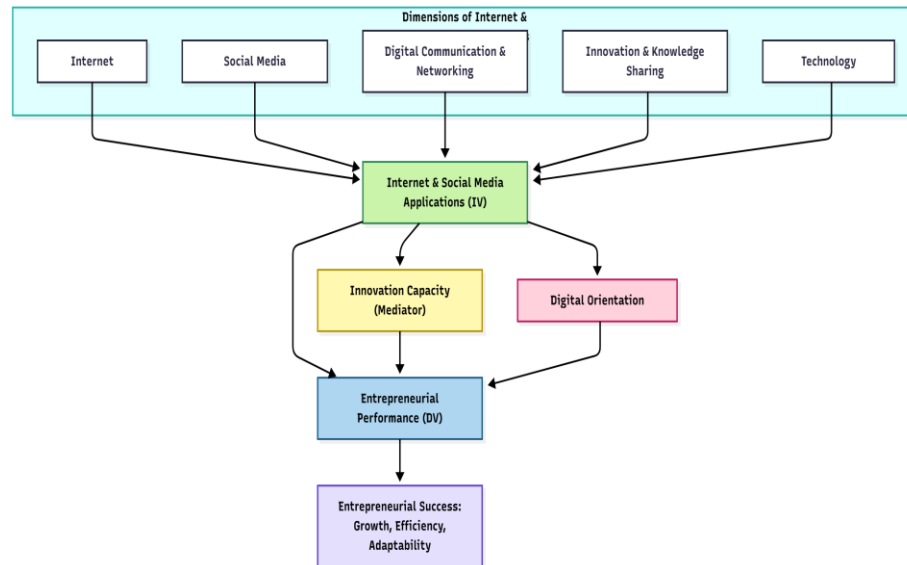


Figure 2.2: Proposed Conceptual Model Linking Internet and Social Media Applications with Entrepreneurial Performance

Source: Researcher's Design (2025).

As the figure indicates, the internet and social media applications improve the performance of entrepreneurs by two main mediating variables which are innovation capacity and digital orientation. The various aspects of the independent variable like internet use, social media, networking, and use of technology all create a conducive environment that promotes creativity, efficiency, and adaptability. Such a conceptual connection suggests that the enterprises that successfully combine digital instruments and develop innovativeness will have a better chance to gain long-term growth and competitive edge.

3.0 Research Methodology

The study is conceptual and integrative in design as it only focuses on the exploration of the theories and not on the investigation. The methodology is a synthesis of the existing information regarding the application of Internet and social media applications to improve the

performance of entrepreneurs. The data to be used in this conceptual paper was only obtained through secondary sources, specifically, the peer-reviewed journal articles, academic publications, and reliable institutional reports on entrepreneurship, digital transformation, and social media strategy. The technique of thematic integration and conceptual mapping was utilized in the analysis and, therefore, made possible the systematic acknowledgment of patterns, relationship and theoretical connections among the variables, namely, the modulations of Internet and social media applications on the entrepreneurial innovation, networking and performance outcomes. To render the conceptual framework credible, validation was done by triangulation, which provided a mixture of various theoretical views and internal consistency of constructs across the reviewed positions. This approach provides a logically incorporated and theoretically developed model that adds to the body of knowledge of the digital technologies and

entrepreneurial success relationship.

4.0 Findings of the Study

4.1 Thematic Insights Derived from Literature

1. It is evident in the literature that Internet and social media applications can greatly boost entrepreneurial performance in terms of market coverage, interaction with customers, and brand recognition.

2. Some of the critical digital tools that can be used in business to enhance innovation and business development in business owners include e-commerce sites, social networking sites and online marketing systems.

3. Research has shown that digital interaction enhances performance efficiency, which accelerates the decision-making process and ensures ease of communication and reduction in costs of operations undertaken in business.

4. The conceptual interdependence was determined to be present between the effective integration of the Internet use strategies and the strategies of social media leading to the enhancement of entrepreneurial performance in the aspects of innovation, competitiveness, and customer loyalty.

4.2 Conceptual Interrelationships among Key Variables

1. Internet (IV1) is found to have a positive correlation with the entrepreneurial performance (DV) in that online performance gives access to a wider array of information, markets and business networks.

2. The ability to be innovative and customer-oriented growth is realized by the social media adoption (IV2) and makes the entrepreneur competitively better.

3. The social media strategies and internet tools are synergistic and this facilitates efficiency in the entire operation and performance of a business.

4. In the conceptual model, the mediators between the effectiveness of online engagement and the success of entrepreneurs are digital literacy, innovation culture, and strategic alignment.

4.3 Theoretical Synthesis: Internet and Social Media as Drivers of Entrepreneurial Performance

1. The findings are in line with the Innovation Diffusion Theory according to which the adoption of technology enhances the rate of entrepreneurial innovation and market responsiveness.

2. The findings also carry the principles of Resource-Based View (RBV), which points out that digital capabilities are the important resources that maintain competitive advantage.

3. The convergence between Internet and social media technologies contributes to the agility of the entrepreneurial activity, which enables the firms to adapt quickly to the shifts in the market environment.

4. Comprehensively, digital connectivity is an enforcer and an accelerator of the business development, innovation, and sustainability.

4.4 Summary of Major Conceptual Insights

1. The technologies of the internet and social media work together to promote innovation, operational efficiency and performance in the case of entrepreneurship.

2. Online entrepreneurs are more adaptable and more profitable than those with poor online activity.

3. Technological preparedness and digital literacy are still a key success factor in capitalizing on opportunities based on the Internet.

4. The suggested conceptual framework offers a unifying insight into the boost of entrepreneurial competitiveness and development through the effects of digital transformation.

5.0 Recommendations of the Study

5.1 Strategic Recommendations for Entrepreneurs

1. Internet and social media tools of marketing, customer and product innovation should be strategically adopted by the entrepreneurs.

2. Digital competency and analytics training should be conducted on a regular basis to make it more competitive online.

3. Companies need to come up with e-business strategies that incorporate e-commerce, content marketing and social networking to ensure that they maximize their profit.

4. Constant online branding and customer relationship management are areas that should be concentrated on by entrepreneurs in order to increase trust and loyalty.

5.2 Policy Implications for Digital Transformation and SME Support

1. The governments and agencies ought to come up with national digital entrepreneurship schemes where the SMEs are trained and assisted by the agencies in terms of infrastructure.

2. It is hoped that the policymakers will stimulate the low-cost Internet and data service especially to the small businesses in the developing areas.

3. Public- private partnership should promote the creation of digital ecosystem that will support online entrepreneurship.

4. The policies must establish cybersecurity awareness and data security framework to achieve trust in online business operations.

5.3 Academic Recommendations for Future Research

1. Future researches should conduct the empirical validation of the conceptual framework between Internet use, social media, and entrepreneurial performance.

2. Researchers should study the trends in the digital adoption of industries and how they affect innovation and performance.

3. A comparison of the developed and developing economies would provide a better understanding of the situational barriers and enablers.

4. In order to examine the long-run effects of digital interaction on the sustainability and development of the entrepreneurship, it is implied that longitudinal research is to be carried out.

6.0 Conclusion

6.1 Summary of Key Conceptual Insights

The conceptualization in this paper was the impact of Internet and social media application on the entrepreneurial performance and the extent to which the digital tools can advance the level of innovation, market efficiency and flexibility. The results indicated that the digital adoption contributes to the effectiveness of communication, business publicity, and knowledge sharing, which is one of the top aspects of sustainable entrepreneurial development. The internet supports the functionality of the work and foundation of decision-making basing on facts, and the exploitation of social media helps in conserving relationship marketing, brand building, and viewer engagement. All those, in combination, create a multidimensional structure, which reacts to the holistic approach of digital entrepreneurship.

6.2 Theoretical and Managerial Implications

The combination of TAM, Resource-Based View (RBV), and Diffusion of Innovation (DOI) as the theoretical background was a reasonable basis of the ways in which the entrepreneurs can adopt the digital tools and apply them to their benefit. Hypothetically, the paper can be deemed to have been of value since it takes these models and puts them together to create a conceptual prism of integrative nature between technology acceptance and resource utilization and innovation diffusion and entrepreneurial outcomes. The findings imply that at the managerial level, the entrepreneur managers ought to invest in digital literacy, analytics and innovation strategies in order to enhance their competitive advantage. Effective businesses in terms of using Internet and social media applications in strategic business models are at a higher chance of a higher performance, retention and long term expansions in the digital economy.

6.3 Final Reflections on the Role of Digital Technologies in Entrepreneurial Growth

The digital technologies (in particular, the Internet connectivity and social media applications) play the powerful role of entrepreneurial

development and change in the contemporary global economy. They provide innovation platforms, collaboration platforms, and market expansion which allows business people to overcome geographical and financial barriers. As the future of digital ecosystem development, technological integration and innovation-oriented approaches will become the solution to the further success and competitiveness of entrepreneurship in developed and emerging economies.

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