

ENTREPRENEURSHIP DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA: OVERCOMING CHALLENGES AND EXPANDING OPPORTUNITIES IN THE DIGITAL ECONOMY

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Abstract: Entrepreneurship development in Nigeria plays a critical role in fostering economic growth, especially within the context of the digital economy. Despite its significance, entrepreneurship faces multifaceted challenges that hinder its growth and impact. This study investigates the barriers that impede entrepreneurship in Nigeria and proposes strategies to surmount these obstacles while expanding opportunities. The research employed a descriptive survey design methodology, with data primarily gathered through questionnaire administration. The study encompassed a total population of 3156 individuals, and a sample size of 355 was determined using the Cochran formula. Of these, 302 respondents returned accurately completed questionnaires. Descriptive statistics were utilized for data presentation and analysis, while correlation analysis was employed to test the hypotheses. The findings revealed a strong positive correlation between access to digital infrastructure and entrepreneurship activity, indicating that regions with better digital resources exhibit higher levels of entrepreneurial dynamism. Conversely, higher regulatory barriers are associated with reduced growth and success of digital entrepreneurship ventures, highlighting the need for streamlined regulatory frameworks. While entrepreneurial intentions show minor variations between digital and non-digital sectors, the overall similarity suggests a shared entrepreneurial mindset across different sectors in Nigeria. Based on these findings, the study recommends prioritizing investments in digital infrastructure, streamlining regulatory processes, and implementing sector-specific support programs to foster a conducive environment for entrepreneurship and stimulate economic growth.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship development, digital infrastructure, regulatory barriers, opportunities, challenges, access to finance & Technologies.

1. Introduction

In recent years, the global shift towards digitalization has presented both opportunities and challenges for Nigeria's entrepreneurial landscape. Digital technologies have the potential to democratize access to markets, reduce operational costs, and foster innovation across various sectors. However, their effective adoption and

integration into entrepreneurial ventures require overcoming barriers such as limited internet infrastructure, digital literacy gaps, and cyber security concerns (Odeyemi, 2023).

Entrepreneurship in Nigeria has traditionally been driven by necessity due to high unemployment rates, particularly among youth (Bhat & Gulzar, 2020). However, there is a growing trend towards opportunity-driven entrepreneurship, spurred by technological advancements and changing consumer behaviors in the digital age. Tagwai (2020) explained that startups and SMEs (Small and Medium Enterprises) are increasingly leveraging digital platforms to scale their businesses and access global markets, contributing to economic diversification and resilience.

The government of Nigeria has recognized the importance of entrepreneurship as a catalyst for economic development and has introduced various initiatives and policies to support startups and SMEs (Giwa, 2019). These include financial incentives, incubation centers, regulatory reforms, and capacity-building programs aimed at enhancing entrepreneurial skills and fostering a conducive business environment.

Despite these efforts, persistent challenges continue to impede the growth of entrepreneurship in Nigeria's digital economy. Addressing these challenges requires a comprehensive understanding of the barriers faced by entrepreneurs, as well as innovative strategies and policies that promote inclusive growth and economic sustainability.

Hence, this contemporary study underscores the critical need to examine the evolving landscape of entrepreneurship in Nigeria's digital economy, identifying barriers, exploring opportunities, and proposing practical solutions to foster a vibrant entrepreneurial ecosystem that drives sustainable economic development.

Statement of the Problem

In Nigeria's evolving digital economy, the development of entrepreneurship is crucial for fostering economic growth and innovation. However, several significant challenges hinder this potential. Access to finance remains a formidable barrier, especially for startups and SMEs lacking collateral or credit history. Moreover, inadequate digital infrastructure, such as unreliable internet connectivity and inconsistent power supply, restricts entrepreneurs from fully leveraging digital technologies to scale their businesses efficiently.

Regulatory complexities further complicate the entrepreneurial landscape, creating bureaucratic hurdles that stifle innovation and deter new ventures. Additionally, there is a notable skills gap in digital literacy and specialized business skills among entrepreneurs, limiting their ability to effectively utilize digital platforms for growth and competitiveness.

If these challenges persist without effective resolution, Nigeria's entrepreneurial ecosystem risks stagnation. Startups and SMEs may struggle to survive or scale, hindering job creation and economic diversification efforts. This could exacerbate unemployment, particularly among the youth, and perpetuate economic disparities. There is a lack of sufficient research in this field, highlighting the necessity for investigating this study on entrepreneurship development in Nigeria: overcoming challenges and expanding opportunities in the digital economy.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study is to ascertain entrepreneurship development in Nigeria: overcoming challenges and expanding opportunities in the digital economy. While the specific objectives of the study are:

- Identify and analyze the primary challenges hindering entrepreneurship in Nigeria's digital economy.

- Examine existing strategies and innovative approaches aimed at overcoming the identified challenges in entrepreneurship development.
- Formulate practical recommendations for policymakers, stakeholders, and entrepreneurs to enhance Nigeria's entrepreneurial ecosystem in the digital economy context.

Research Questions

The study provided answers to the research questions:

- ❖ What are the main challenges faced by entrepreneurs in Nigeria's digital economy?
- ❖ How effective are current strategies and initiatives in addressing these challenges?
- ❖ What practical measures can be recommended to improve the entrepreneurial ecosystem in Nigeria's digital economy?

Statement of Hypotheses

The following hypotheses in null form guided the study

- There is no significant relationship between access to digital infrastructure and the level of entrepreneurship activity in Nigeria.
- The level of regulatory barriers does not significantly impact the growth and success of digital entrepreneurship ventures in Nigeria.
- There is no significant difference in entrepreneurial intentions and actions between digital and non-digital sectors in Nigeria.

Significance of the study

This study holds relevance for the following individuals and institutions:

Individuals: Entrepreneurs and aspiring entrepreneurs in Nigeria would benefit from insights into overcoming specific challenges within the digital economy, helping them to seize opportunities and achieve sustainable business growth.

Government Officials and Policymakers: This study can inform Nigerian policymakers on how to formulate supportive policies and regulatory frameworks that encourage and facilitate digital entrepreneurship, thereby stimulating economic growth and job creation in the country.

Investors and Financial Institutions: Investors and financial institutions can use the findings to identify promising sectors and startups within Nigeria's digital economy, making informed decisions about where to allocate resources and support entrepreneurial ventures effectively.

Academic and Research Community: Researchers and academics can utilize the study's findings to contribute to the body of knowledge on entrepreneurship in developing economies, exploring empirical data and case studies to inform future research and educational programs tailored to digital entrepreneurship.

Institutions: Business incubators, accelerators, and NGOs can tailor their support programs to address the specific challenges faced by digital entrepreneurs in Nigeria, providing mentorship, resources, and advocacy aligned with the study's insights to foster innovation and sustainable growth.

Society at Large: Job seekers and employees can explore new career paths and opportunities within Nigeria's expanding digital economy, benefiting from increased innovation and competition fostered by entrepreneurial ventures, while consumers gain access to diverse products and services that meet their evolving needs and preferences.

Definition of Terms

The following terms operationalized the study

- ❖ **Digital Infrastructure:** It refers to the physical and virtual components that enable digital connectivity and communication, including broadband networks, mobile internet coverage, cloud computing services, digital payment systems, and cybersecurity frameworks.
- ❖ **Regulatory Barriers:** it denote the legal and administrative constraints that impede the establishment, operation, and growth of digital enterprises. These barriers may include complex licensing procedures, ambiguous regulatory frameworks, compliance costs, bureaucratic delays, and restrictive trade policies.
- ❖ **Entrepreneurial Intentions:** This refers to the predisposition or motivation of individuals to engage in entrepreneurial activities within the digital economy. This includes their willingness to pursue business opportunities, take risks, innovate, and create value through digital innovations.
- ❖ **Digital Skills Development:** It involves the acquisition and enhancement of competencies related to using digital tools, technologies, and platforms effectively. This includes skills in digital marketing, social media management, website development, data analytics, cybersecurity, and e-commerce strategies.
- ❖ **Entrepreneurship Activity:** It refers to the creation, management, and growth of new ventures or startups within the digital economy.

2. Review of Related Literature

Conceptual Review

Overview of Entrepreneurial Challenges in Nigeria's Digital Economy

Entrepreneurship in Nigeria's digital era faces a myriad of challenges that collectively hinder its growth and sustainability. Foremost among these obstacles is the issue of access to finance, where startups encounter difficulties securing capital due to stringent lending conditions, high interest rates, and risk aversion among financial institutions (The Authors, 2019). This financial constraint severely limits innovation and prevents digital ventures from scaling their operations effectively to reach broader markets.

Infrastructure deficits also pose significant hurdles for digital entrepreneurs. Inconsistent electricity supply, inadequate broadband infrastructure, and poor road networks diminish operational efficiency, increase costs, and restrict market access. These deficiencies not only hinder day-to-day business operations but also impede the ability of startups to compete on a global scale and deliver products and services efficiently (Ogamba, 2019).

Navigating Nigeria's regulatory environment further complicates matters for entrepreneurs. Bureaucratic bottlenecks, inconsistent regulations, and complex licensing procedures create uncertainties and compliance burdens that deter potential investors and stifle business growth. These regulatory challenges require entrepreneurs to allocate considerable time and resources towards navigating legal frameworks rather than focusing on innovation and business development (Pan et al., 2018).

A critical challenge also lies in the skills gap among entrepreneurs, particularly in emerging technologies and digital marketing. Many startups lack the technical expertise needed to leverage digital platforms effectively for growth and customer engagement. This shortfall in skills limits digital innovation, reduces competitiveness, and prevents startups from capitalizing fully on the opportunities presented by the digital economy (Yusuf, 2017).

Moreover, accessing markets and competing against established players remain daunting tasks for digital startups. Limited market penetration, intense competition, and the dominance of larger firms often marginalize smaller

enterprises. Without robust support mechanisms and strategies to enhance market access, startups struggle to gain visibility, attract customers, and achieve sustainable growth (Abasilim et al., 2017).

Cultural attitudes towards entrepreneurship also play a role, as societal norms that favor traditional career paths over entrepreneurial ventures can discourage risk-taking and innovation. Additionally, gender disparities in access to resources and societal expectations further constrain the participation of certain groups in entrepreneurial activities, limiting diversity and innovation within the startup ecosystem (Akinwale et al., 2017).

To effectively confront these challenges, holistic strategies are essential. These strategies should encompass comprehensive policy reforms aimed at improving the ease of doing business, increasing investment in critical infrastructure such as reliable power supply and broadband internet, fostering capacity-building initiatives to enhance digital literacy and technical skills among entrepreneurs, and providing targeted support programs specifically tailored to the needs of digital startups.

Innovative Approaches to Overcoming Barriers in Nigeria's Digital Economy

In Nigeria's digital economy landscape, innovative approaches are essential for overcoming barriers that hinder entrepreneurship and economic growth. According to Coron and Gilbert (2020), one innovative approach involves leveraging financial technology (fintech) solutions to enhance access to finance for startups. Fintech platforms offer alternative funding channels such as peer-to-peer lending and crowdfunding, bypassing traditional banking constraints and enabling entrepreneurs to secure capital more efficiently (Egbefo & Abe, 2017).

Additionally, infrastructure challenges are being addressed through innovative solutions such as renewable energy-powered co-working spaces and technology hubs. These initiatives improve electricity reliability and provide affordable, high-speed internet access, crucial for digital business operations and scalability in a resource-constrained environment (Ogbondah & Nwogu, 2017).

Policy innovation plays a pivotal role in creating an enabling environment for digital startups. Regulatory sandboxes, for instance, allow entrepreneurs to test new business models under controlled regulatory conditions, fostering innovation while ensuring compliance. Moreover, streamlined licensing processes and targeted tax incentives incentivize entrepreneurship and attract investment into the digital economy (Ayoade & Agwu 2016). Skills development is another area where innovative approaches are making a difference. Collaborations between industry leaders, educational institutions, and online learning platforms offer tailored training programs in digital marketing, e-commerce strategies, and emerging technologies. These initiatives equip entrepreneurs with the necessary skills to navigate the digital landscape, drive innovation, and enhance their competitiveness (Ekong & Ekong 2016).

Furthermore, innovative market access strategies focus on expanding market opportunities for Nigerian startups. Initiatives such as trade missions, international business incubators, and digital export promotion platforms facilitate global market entry and enable startups to forge strategic partnerships and access new customer bases worldwide.

Strategies for Stakeholders and Entrepreneurs to Thrive in the Digital Economy

Stakeholders and entrepreneurs can employ several strategies to thrive in Nigeria's digital economy. Embracing digital transformation is foundational, leveraging technology to streamline operations, enhance efficiency and broaden market reach (Beckman et al., 2012). This involves adopting cloud computing, digital marketing strategies, e-commerce platforms, and digital payment systems to optimize business processes and customer engagement (Afolabi, 2015).

Fostering collaboration and partnerships is equally crucial. Entrepreneurs benefit from working with startups, established businesses, universities, research institutions, and industry associations. Collaborative efforts lead to shared resources, knowledge exchange, market access, and joint innovation initiatives (Chete et al., 2014).

Continuous learning and skills development should be prioritized. Stakeholders and entrepreneurs need to stay updated on emerging technologies, market trends and digital skills. Investing in training programs, workshops and online courses equips them with technical and business management skills necessary to navigate the digital landscape effectively (Obaji et al., 2014).

Customer-centric strategies are imperative. Entrepreneurs must understand customer preferences, behaviors, and expectations in the digital era. Utilizing data analytics and customer feedback enables personalization, enhances user experience, and fosters long-term customer relationships (Sadegh-vaziri, 2013).

Diversifying revenue streams and exploring new business models are essential. Innovating with new products, services, or scalable digital solutions meets evolving market demands. Subscription-based services, digital content creation, and software as a service (SaaS) are potential avenues (Obaji et al., 2012).

Maintaining cybersecurity measures is critical. Stakeholders and entrepreneurs must ensure data protection, secure transactions, and safeguard customer information against cyber threats. Implementing robust cybersecurity protocols, conducting regular audits, and complying with data protection regulations builds trust with customers and partners (Bailetti, 2012).

Adapting to regulatory changes and policy developments is necessary. Staying informed about regulatory frameworks, tax policies, and industry standards affecting the digital economy is vital (United Nations, 2020).

Engaging with policymakers, industry associations, and legal advisors aids in navigating regulatory challenges and seizing growth opportunities (Siyanbola et al., 2011).

Theoretical Review

This study is theoretically underpinned on Resource-Based Theory (RBT)

Resource-Based Theory

Resource-Based Theory (RBT) posits that a firm's competitive advantage and performance are primarily determined by its unique resources and capabilities. These resources can be tangible (such as financial capital, physical assets) or intangible (such as knowledge, reputation & innovation).

Resource identification and utilization are critical imperatives for entrepreneurs in Nigeria's digital economy. This entails effectively recognizing and leveraging essential resources such as digital infrastructure, technological expertise, and skilled human capital proficient in digital technologies. Resource-Based Theory (RBT) offers valuable insights into how entrepreneurs can strategically deploy these resources to gain competitive advantages and surmount challenges.

One significant aspect highlighted by RBT is the concept of competitive advantage, which hinges on resources meeting the VRIN criteria: being valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable. For Nigerian entrepreneurs navigating the digital landscape, this theory underscores the strategic importance of acquiring and leveraging unique resources that competitors struggle to replicate. Examples include innovative business models, proprietary technology solutions, or exclusive strategic partnerships.

Moreover, RBT underscores the necessity for adaptation and innovation among entrepreneurs operating within the dynamic realm of the digital economy. Given the rapid pace of technological evolution and market shifts, continuous adaptation is crucial for maintaining relevance and competitiveness. Effectively developing and

deploying resources can empower Nigerian entrepreneurs to navigate uncertainties and capitalize on emerging opportunities in digital markets.

From a policy perspective, Resource-Based Theory also informs governmental interventions aimed at creating an environment conducive to resource acquisition and utilization. Policies should focus on bolstering digital infrastructure, incentivizing technology adoption and innovation, and supporting tailored educational and training initiatives for entrepreneurial skills aligned with the demands of the digital economy. These measures can foster a robust ecosystem where Nigerian entrepreneurs can thrive and contribute meaningfully to economic growth and development.

3. Methodology

This study employs a mixed-methods research design to comprehensively investigate entrepreneurship development in Nigeria's digital economy. The mixed-methods approach ensures robustness by triangulating data from diverse sources, thereby enhancing the study's validity and breadth of findings. Quantitative data provide statistical insights into trends and patterns, while qualitative data offer a deeper understanding of the experiences, perceptions, and challenges encountered by digital entrepreneurs.

The study targets a population of 3156 individuals, comprising both current and aspiring entrepreneurs engaged in digital ventures across sectors such as e-commerce, digital services, fintech, and technology startups. Additionally, stakeholders including government officials, policymakers, and industry experts contribute insights into regulatory frameworks, policy impacts, and ecosystem dynamics.

Using the Cochran formula, a sample size of 355 respondents was determined. A stratified random sampling technique ensures representation across different sectors and geographic regions of Nigeria. Stratification criteria encompass sector (e-commerce, fintech, digital services, etc.), business size (small, medium, large), and geographical location (North, South, East, West), thereby facilitating broader generalization of findings across the entrepreneurial landscape.

The study employs descriptive statistics and correlation techniques to analyze and interpret the qualitative data effectively.

4. Results and Discussions

Table 1: Return Rate of Distributed Questionnaire

Return Rate	Frequency	Percentage (%)
No. returned	302	85%
No. not returned	53	15%
Total	355	100%

Sources: Field Survey, 2024

From table 1, 85% which represents 302 respondents of the total copies distributed were returned while 15% which represents 53 copies distributed were not returned. Hence, the analysis was conducted with the total copies returned by the respondents.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics on Primary Challenges Hindering Entrepreneurship

Primary Challenges	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Access to reliable internet connectivity	91	30
Lack of access to finance	72	24
Regulatory barriers and bureaucratic red tape	60	20
Limited digital skills among entrepreneurs	48	16
Market competition and saturation	30	10
Total	302	100%

Sources: SPSS Output of Field Survey, 2024.

From table 2, based on the survey responses, the primary challenges hindering entrepreneurship in Nigeria's digital economy include access to reliable internet connectivity (30%), lack of access to finance (24%), regulatory barriers and bureaucratic red tape (20%), limited digital skills among entrepreneurs (16%), and market competition (10%). These findings underscore the multifaceted nature of challenges entrepreneurs face in leveraging digital opportunities.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics on Existing Strategies and Innovative Approaches

Strategies and Approaches	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Government support programs	88	29
Capacity-building initiatives	79	26
Digital skills training programs	57	19
Private sector partnerships	45	15
Innovation hubs and incubators	33	11
Total	302	100%

Sources: SPSS Output of Field Survey, 2024.

Table 3 illustrates existing strategies and innovative approaches aimed at overcoming challenges in entrepreneurship development. These include government support programs (29%), capacity-building initiatives (26%), digital skills training programs (19%), private sector partnerships (15%), and innovation hubs/incubators (11%). These efforts reflect diverse interventions aimed at enhancing entrepreneurial capabilities and fostering innovation in Nigeria's digital economy.

Test of Hypotheses

Test of Hypothesis One

Restatement of the Hypothesis in Null and Alternate forms:

Null Hypothesis: There is no significant relationship between access to digital infrastructure and the level of entrepreneurship activity in Nigeria.

Alternative Hypothesis: There is significant relationship between access to digital infrastructure and the level of entrepreneurship activity in Nigeria.

Table 4: Correlation between Access to Digital Infrastructure and Entrepreneurship Activity

	Digital_Infrastructure	Entrepreneurship_activity
Digital_infrastructure	1	.681*
Pearson Correlation		.001
Sig. (2-tailed)	302	302
N		
Entrepreneurship_activity	.681*	1
Pearson Correlation	.001	
Sig. (2-tailed)	302	302
N		

*correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Sources: SPSS Output of Field Survey, 2024.

Decision:

The correlation analysis in table 4 above, conducted in SPSS indicates that there exists a moderate strong positive correlation ($r = 0.68$ to 2dp. approximately) between access to digital infrastructure and the level of entrepreneurship activity in Nigeria. This finding suggests that regions or sectors with better digital infrastructure tend to exhibit higher levels of entrepreneurial activity. Improved access to digital resources such as internet connectivity, technological tools, and digital platforms likely enhances the environment conducive to entrepreneurial ventures. Therefore, investments in enhancing digital infrastructure could potentially foster greater entrepreneurial dynamism and economic development in Nigeria.

Test of Hypothesis Two

Restatement of the Hypothesis in Null and Alternate forms:

Null Hypothesis: The level of regulatory barriers does not significantly impact the growth and success of digital entrepreneurship ventures in Nigeria.

Alternative Hypothesis: The level of regulatory barriers have significantly impact the growth and success of digital entrepreneurship ventures in Nigeria.

Table 5: Correlation between regulatory barriers and Digital Entrepreneurship

	Regulatory_barriers	Digital_Entrepreneurship
Regulatory_barriers	1	.420*
Pearson Correlation		.004
Sig. (2-tailed)	302	302
N		
Digital_Entrepreneurship	.420*	1
Pearson Correlation	.004	
Sig. (2-tailed)	302	302
N		

*correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Sources: SPSS Output of Field Survey, 2024.

Decision:

The correlation analysis in table 5 above revealed a moderate negative correlation ($r = -0.42$ to 2dp. approximately) between the level of regulatory barriers and the growth of digital entrepreneurship ventures in Nigeria. This implies that higher regulatory barriers are associated with lower rates of growth and success for digital entrepreneurship ventures. Regulatory obstacles such as bureaucratic procedures, legal complexities, and compliance costs may inhibit the scalability and sustainability of digital businesses. Policymakers and stakeholders in Nigeria should consider streamlining regulatory frameworks and implementing supportive policies to mitigate barriers and promote a more favorable environment for digital entrepreneurship to thrive.

Test of Hypothesis Three

Restatement of the Hypothesis in Null and Alternate forms:

Null Hypothesis: There is no significant difference in entrepreneurial intentions and actions between digital and non-digital sectors in Nigeria.

Alternative Hypothesis: There is significant difference in entrepreneurial intentions and actions between digital and non-digital sectors in Nigeria.

Table 6: Correlation of Entrepreneurial Intentions between Digital and Non-Digital Sectors

		Digital_sectors	Non_Digital_Sectors
Digital_sectors Correlation	Pearson	1	.102*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.341	.341
	N	302	302
Non_Digital_Sectors Correlation	Pearson	.102*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.341	.341
	N	302	302

*correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Sources: SPSS Output of Field Survey, 2024.

Decision:

The correlation analysis in table 6 above showed a weak positive correlation ($r = 0.10$ to 2dp.) between entrepreneurial intentions in digital sectors and those in non-digital sectors in Nigeria. This suggests that while there is a slight positive relationship, the difference in entrepreneurial intentions between digital and non-digital sectors is not statistically significant (p-value of $0.341 > 0.05$). Entrepreneurial intentions in both digital and non-digital sectors appear to coexist without significant divergence. This finding underscores the importance of considering sector-specific dynamics and challenges in fostering entrepreneurial intentions across various domains within Nigeria's economy. Policymakers and industry stakeholders should tailor strategies that cater to the unique needs and opportunities present in both digital and non-digital sectors to stimulate balanced entrepreneurial growth and innovation.

5. Summary of Findings, Conclusion and Recommendations

Summary of Findings

The study investigated several hypotheses concerning entrepreneurship in Nigeria, focusing on the impact of digital infrastructure and regulatory barriers, as well as comparing entrepreneurial intentions across digital and non-digital sectors.

One significant finding was a positive correlation ($r = 0.68$, $p < 0.001$) between access to digital infrastructure and entrepreneurship activity in Nigeria. Regions with better digital resources, such as internet connectivity and technological tools, exhibited higher levels of entrepreneurial activity. This suggests that improving digital infrastructure could enhance the entrepreneurial environment and stimulate economic development.

The study also found a negative correlation ($r = -0.42$, $p = 0.004$) between regulatory barriers and the growth of digital entrepreneurship ventures in Nigeria. Higher regulatory obstacles, including bureaucratic procedures and compliance costs, were associated with lower rates of success for digital businesses. Policymakers are encouraged to streamline regulatory frameworks to support digital entrepreneurship and remove barriers to growth.

Furthermore, while there was a slight positive correlation ($r = 0.10$, $p = 0.341$) between entrepreneurial intentions in digital and non-digital sectors, the difference was not statistically significant. This indicates that entrepreneurial intentions across sectors in Nigeria are generally similar. Policymakers should consider sector-specific dynamics to foster balanced entrepreneurial growth and innovation strategies nationwide.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the findings of this study highlight crucial insights into the factors influencing entrepreneurship in Nigeria. The research underscores the pivotal role of digital infrastructure, showing that improved access to digital resources correlates positively with higher levels of entrepreneurial activity. This correlation suggests that investments in enhancing digital infrastructure could significantly bolster Nigeria's entrepreneurial ecosystem, fostering economic growth and innovation.

Additionally, the study emphasizes the detrimental impact of regulatory barriers on digital entrepreneurship ventures. Higher regulatory hurdles were found to hinder the growth and success of digital businesses, underscoring the need for streamlined regulatory frameworks and supportive policies to facilitate entrepreneurial endeavors in Nigeria.

Moreover, while entrepreneurial intentions showed minor variations between digital and non-digital sectors, the overall similarity suggests a shared entrepreneurial mindset across different sectors. Policymakers are encouraged to tailor strategies that account for these sector-specific dynamics to promote balanced entrepreneurial development across Nigeria's economy.

Ultimately, addressing these findings through targeted policies and investments can create a more favorable environment for entrepreneurship, driving sustainable economic growth and fostering a vibrant ecosystem of innovation in Nigeria.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study on entrepreneurship in Nigeria, the following recommendations are proposed to enhance the entrepreneurial landscape:

- i. Given the positive correlation between access to digital infrastructure and entrepreneurship activity, policymakers should prioritize investments in improving digital resources such as internet connectivity, technological tools, and digital platforms. This includes expanding broadband access to underserved regions and promoting digital literacy programs. By enhancing digital infrastructure, Nigeria can create a more conducive environment for startups and small businesses to thrive in the digital economy.
- ii. The study highlights the negative impact of regulatory barriers on digital entrepreneurship. To support the growth of digital ventures, there is a need to streamline regulatory processes, simplify bureaucratic procedures, and reduce compliance costs. Policymakers should collaborate with industry stakeholders to identify and address

regulatory bottlenecks that hinder business scalability and innovation. Implementing clear and supportive regulatory frameworks can encourage entrepreneurship and attract investment in Nigeria's digital sector.

iii. While entrepreneurial intentions are similar across digital and non-digital sectors, understanding sector-specific challenges is crucial for fostering balanced entrepreneurial growth. Policymakers should develop targeted support programs that cater to the unique needs of different sectors. This could include sector-specific incubators, mentorship programs, and access to finance tailored to the demands of digital and traditional businesses alike. By providing sector-specific support, Nigeria can nurture a diverse and resilient entrepreneurial ecosystem that drives sustainable economic development.

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