The use of social media as a tool for digital entrepreneurship among young Algerians

استخدام وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي كأداة لريادة الأعمال الرقمية لدى الشباب الجزائري

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Abstract:

This article analyzes the role of social media in the development of digital entrepreneurship among young Algerians, focusing on the practices adopted, the perceived benefits, and the constraints encountered. Based on a quantitative survey of 100 young entrepreneurs who use social media to market products or services, the results show that these platforms are a key lever for visibility, communication, and value creation, particularly via Instagram. However, the effectiveness and sustainability of projects remain limited by a lack of digital marketing skills, difficulties related to online payments, logistical constraints, and an unsuitable regulatory framework. The study thus highlights a gap between the potential offered by digital technology and the institutional conditions necessary for sustainable digital entrepreneurship in Algeria.

Keywords: *Digital entrepreneurship; Social media; Young entrepreneurs; Digital marketing; Algeria*
Jel Classification Codes : L26, M15, M31, O32, O33

ملخص :

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تحليل دور شبكات التواصل الاجتماعي في تطوير ريادة الأعمال الرقمية لدى الشباب الجزائري، من خلال تسليط الضوء على الممارسات المعتمدة، والمنافع المدركة، والعوائق التي تواجههم. واعتمدت الدراسة على منهج كمي من خلال استبيان موجّه إلى 100 شاب جزائري يستخدمون شبكات التواصل الاجتماعي في تسويق المنتجات أو تقديم الخدمات. وتُظهر النتائج أن هذه المنصات تمثل رافعة أساسية لتعزيز الظهور والتواصل وخلق القيمة، لاسيما عبر منصة إنستغرام. غير أن فعالية واستدامة المشاريع الريادية تبقى محدودة بفعل نقص الكفاءات في التسويق الرقمي، وصعوبات الدفع الإلكتروني، والإشكالات اللوجستية، إضافة إلى إطار تنظيمي غير ملائم بشكل كافٍ. وتخلص الدراسة إلى وجود فجوة بين الإمكانات التي يتيحها التحول الرقمي ومتطلبات بناء ريادة أعمال رقمية مستدامة في الجزائر

كلمات مفتاحية: ريادة الأعمال الرقمية؛ شبكات التواصل الاجتماعي؛ الشباب الريادي؛ التسويق الرقمي؛ الجزائر
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Introduction

Over the past two decades, digitalization has profoundly transformed economic and social dynamics around the world. Among the major innovations, digital social networks have established themselves as powerful drivers of communication and economic development. Their role today goes beyond simple entertainment or information exchange: they are platforms for promotion, commerce, and even business creation. Several international studies highlight that social networks facilitate access to new markets, reduce marketing costs, and contribute to the internationalization of small businesses. (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010)

In developing countries, particularly in North Africa, these platforms offer new opportunities in the face of structural challenges such as youth unemployment, lack of funding, and rigid institutional frameworks. Algeria is no exception. With more than 28 million mobile internet users and a strong presence of young Algerians on Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok (DataReportal, 2023), the country is undergoing a digital revolution that is transforming entrepreneurial practices. Many young Algerians are now transforming their personal pages into commercial showcases, developing micro-enterprises in various sectors such as fashion, catering, crafts, and digital services.

However, this dynamic of digital entrepreneurship remains ambivalent. On the one hand, it is an innovative response to economic constraints and labor market limitations. On the other hand, it raises questions about the sustainability and structure of these initiatives. As some studies have shown (Chatterjee & Kumar Kar, 2020), entrepreneurial success via social media depends not only on mastery of digital tools, but also on the institutional framework and available resources. In Algeria, young people still face difficulties related to a lack of digital training, a lack of adequate financing, and regulations that are sometimes ill-suited to the realities of online commerce.

These findings raise the following question: to what extent does the use of social media contribute to the development of digital entrepreneurship among young Algerians, and what factors promote or limit its impact? To answer this question, several hypotheses guide our research.

- The use of social media is thought to have a positive impact on the visibility and growth of entrepreneurial projects led by young people
- A lack of digital marketing and digital management skills would hinder the effectiveness of these practices.
- Social media would be favored as an alternative to traditional business creation channels due to its accessibility and low cost.
- Institutional and regulatory constraints are said to limit the sustainability of projects undertaken through this channel.

In this context, the objectives of the research are to:
- Analyze the digital entrepreneurial practices of young Algerians through their use of social media.

- Identify the benefits perceived by young Algerians (visibility, communication, customer loyalty, sales).
- Highlight the difficulties encountered (lack of skills, institutional obstacles, financial constraints).
- Propose recommendations likely to strengthen the role of social media as a tool for sustainable entrepreneurship.

In order to test these hypotheses and achieve these objectives, we adopted a quantitative methodology based on administering a structured questionnaire to young Algerians who own social media pages or accounts used for entrepreneurial purposes. The sample, selected using the convenience sampling method, aims to reach at least 100 respondents who are active in the sale of products or services. The questionnaire, distributed online via digital platforms, focuses on the socio-demographic characteristics of respondents, their type of activity, the social networks they use, the benefits they perceive, and the difficulties they encounter. The data collected will be analyzed using descriptive statistics and cross-tabulation to verify the hypotheses and provide answers to the questions raised.

I. Theoretical and conceptual framework

Within this theoretical and conceptual framework, we will address several complementary areas. First, the role of digital social networks as tools for interaction, communication, and opportunity creation. Next, the place of digital entrepreneurship, perceived as a new form of innovation and economic revitalization. We will also analyze the involvement of young people as key players in this transformation, thanks to their mastery of digital technologies. Finally, we will present an overview of digital entrepreneurship in Algeria, highlighting the progress made and the challenges that remain.

1. Social media as an economic tool

Social networks are no longer limited to a communication function: they are now establishing themselves as genuine economic tools. They are transforming consumer practices, promoting new forms of entrepreneurship, and redefining organizational strategies. Their growing role in value creation and the competitiveness of contemporary economies makes them an essential subject of analysis, particularly in the context of developing countries.

We can define social networks as a website that allows Internet users to create a personal page in order to share and exchange information, photos, or videos with their community of friends and network of acquaintances. Kaplan and Haenlein's definition is also well known in academic circles. They define social media as "a group of Internet applications based on the ideology and technology of Web 2.0 that enable the creation and exchange of user-generated content." (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010)

Social networks therefore allow users to create content and share it with other users. The focus is therefore on creation, sharing, and participation by internet users.
The first typologies or maps, developed in the professional world, propose differentiating social networks according to their technical characteristics, which lead to the identification of their

functionalities. They make it possible to distinguish between sites for sharing photos, videos, consumer reviews, etc., all of which are based on some form of user participation through the principle of User Generated Content (UGC) (Le Roux, Stenger, & Thébault, 2016). For Ito et al. (2010), for example, "the most popular types of social media include instant messaging, blogs, social networking sites, and video or photo sharing sites." (Ito, 2010)

Social networks can therefore be divided into different types, each serving specific purposes and offering a variety of opportunities to individuals and organizations alike: (Besson, 2025)

- **General social networks**: These include platforms such as Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter. They connect individuals and organizations, promote knowledge sharing, and encourage interaction. They allow users to share ideas and multimedia content, create interest groups, and participate in discussions. For businesses, these networks are a lever for strengthening their brand image, increasing their visibility, connecting with their target audience, and optimizing customer relations.
- **Content sharing platforms**: These include Instagram, YouTube, and Snapchat. Focused on sharing photos, videos, and other visual content, they capture attention and elicit emotional engagement. They offer individuals and brands alike a prime space to showcase their content, generate leads, and strengthen their image.
- **Social bookmarking and curation networks**: Representative examples include Pinterest and Flipboard. These platforms facilitate the discovery, saving, and sharing of quality content (ideas, trends, news). They help increase awareness, generate traffic, and encourage engagement, while enabling active monitoring.
- **Blogs and publishing platforms**: Among the best known are WordPress, Blogger, Medium, and Tumblr. They provide a space for expression and distribution of articles, promoting connection with a wide audience. They are a key content marketing tool, helping to improve online visibility and search engine optimization, attract prospects, and convert an audience into customers.
- **Discussion forums**: Reddit and Quora are prime examples of this. They are used to share and discuss information, opinions, and advice. Companies use them to conduct market research, understand consumer expectations, and boost their brand awareness thanks to their high online visibility.
- **Review and rating media**: Yelp, TripAdvisor, Google My Profile, and Glassdoor represent this category. These platforms directly influence consumer decisions by centralizing reviews and ratings. They enable companies to better understand their customers' perceptions, highlight reassuring elements, build customer loyalty, and strengthen their proximity to the public.

2. Digital entrepreneurship: concepts and approach

Entrepreneurship is the set of activities related to identifying an opportunity, mobilizing resources, and creating an economic organization with a view to generating value, innovation, or profit.

Entrepreneurship is also seen as "the examination of how, by whom, and with what effects opportunities to create goods and services are discovered, evaluated, and exploited". (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000)

Entrepreneurship, as it is traditionally understood, is based on conventional methods of creating and managing economic activities. However, changes linked to globalization and, above all, the rapid development of information and communication technologies have profoundly altered entrepreneurial thinking. This evolution has fostered the emergence of new forms of initiatives based on the intensive use of digital technology, giving rise to digital entrepreneurship. This is characterized by the use of technological tools and digital platforms to create, develop, and distribute products or services to a wider market, often transcending traditional boundaries.

Digital entrepreneurship is an evolution of the traditional definition of entrepreneurship, incorporating a group of participants who are constantly on the move in a digital environment. Digital entrepreneurship can be defined as "a process of starting new businesses via the internet and technology" (Davidson & Vaast, 2010). It is similar to traditional entrepreneurship in terms of seeking entrepreneurial opportunities by creating new businesses or marketing products and services. (Davidson & Vaast, 2010)

To complete this initial draft definition of digital entrepreneurship, we need to consider the nature of the products and services offered: "Does digital entrepreneurship refer only to companies offering dematerialized products, or can it also encompass any company that exclusively uses new digital technologies, regardless of the nature of the product?" (Bensaid & Azdimousa, 2021)

Following the definition proposed by Mankevich and Holmström, who view digital entrepreneurship as "the pursuit of entrepreneurial opportunities leading to the creation of exclusively digital products and services " (Mankevich & Holmström, 2016), several authors argue that digital entrepreneurship is limited to the production of intangible goods and services, devoid of physical substance (Balachandran & Sakthivelan, 2013) (Quinones, Nicholson, & Heeks, 2015).

Conversely, other researchers believe that the essence of digital entrepreneurship lies not in the nature of the products or services offered, but rather in the partial or total digitization of the entrepreneurial process. Ziyae et al. define digital entrepreneurship as "a new way of doing business through e-commerce " (Ziyae, Sajadi, & Mobaraki, 2014). Similarly, Jelonek considers digital entrepreneurship to be "a subcategory of entrepreneurship, focused on the digitization of some or all of the business activities and processes previously carried out physically in a traditional organization." (Jelonek, 2015)

Digital entrepreneurship is an entrepreneurial process that extensively integrates digital technologies to create, manage, and develop businesses. There is low-level digital entrepreneurship, which involves integrating activities into the digital economy while relying on more traditional establishments. A second category exists called moderate digital entrepreneurship, which focuses more on digital products, digital distribution, and other digital

elements of the business that could not exist without a solid digital infrastructure. Finally, there is extreme digital entrepreneurship, which refers to a model where the entire business is digital, encompassing production, products or services, advertising, distribution, and customers.

This type of business stands out through platforms, technological tools, and data exploitation. It encompasses the creation of new businesses as well as the transformation of existing ones, aiming to generate economic and social value by exploiting the opportunities offered by digitization.

According to Hull et al., the distinction between digital entrepreneurship and traditional entrepreneurship is based on ease of market access, ease of production and storage, ease of distribution in the digital marketplace, digital workplace, digital products, digital services, and digital engagement. (Hull, Hair, Demartino, & Hung, 2007)

Digital entrepreneurship and traditional entrepreneurship are two distinct forms of entrepreneurial initiative, differentiated by their approaches, tools, and development dynamics. Digital entrepreneurship is based on the integration of information and communication technologies into the process of creating and managing businesses. It relies on the use of the Internet, social networks, and various digital tools to increase the visibility of activities, reach a wider audience, and offer innovative products and services.
Traditional entrepreneurship, on the other hand, is characterized by more conventional methods based on the physical presence of the business, conventional communication strategies, and direct interactions with customers. Development is based primarily on local networks, trust, and interpersonal relationships.

3. Advantages and disadvantages of digital entrepreneurship

Digital entrepreneurship today represents an innovative and dynamic form of economic initiative, based on the use of digital technologies to design, manage, and develop entrepreneurial activities. Thanks to the rise of the Internet and digital tools, it offers business creators unprecedented opportunities, while raising new technical, economic, and human challenges.

3.1. The advantages of digital entrepreneurship

One of the main advantages of digital entrepreneurship is the significant reduction in barriers to entry. Starting an online business requires limited financial resources: a domain name, web hosting, and a few digital marketing tools may be all that is needed to launch a viable business (Nambisan, 2017). This accessibility allows many individuals, including those with limited means, to bring their entrepreneurial ideas to fruition.

Digital entrepreneurship also promotes access to a global customer base. Unlike traditional entrepreneurship, which often relies on a local presence, digital technology makes it possible to reach an international audience thanks to the visibility offered by search engines, e-commerce platforms, and social media. This geographical openness amplifies business opportunities and strengthens competitiveness, even for small businesses.

Digital tools and platforms are another major asset. They enable small and medium-sized businesses to compete with larger players by offering low-cost marketing and communication solutions. Advertising campaigns on social media, search engine optimization (SEO), and content marketing offer entrepreneurs increased visibility without requiring massive investment.

In addition, digital technology stimulates innovation and creativity. Entrepreneurs can experiment with new business models, quickly test their products or services, and adapt their offerings to changing consumer needs. This ability to adapt quickly has become a key factor for success in an ever-changing economic environment.

Finally, digital entrepreneurship is characterized by greater organizational flexibility and professional freedom. Working online offers spatial and temporal independence, allowing entrepreneurs to manage their businesses remotely, autonomously, and without direct hierarchy. This autonomy promotes creativity, a sense of personal fulfillment, and a taste for challenge, values often associated with entrepreneurial vocations.

3.2. The limits of digital entrepreneurship

Despite its many advantages, digital entrepreneurship has several structural and operational limitations. The first concerns the need for advanced technical and managerial skills. The success of an online business depends on mastery of various areas such as search engine optimization, customer data management, digital marketing, and IT security. Entrepreneurs who do not possess these skills must invest time or resources in training, which can be a barrier to entry.

Technological dependence is another major constraint. Digital entrepreneurs are dependent on digital platforms (such as Meta and Google) and hosting infrastructures, which sometimes limits their strategic autonomy. A change in algorithm or account suspension can have immediate consequences on the visibility or viability of the business.
Risks related to cybersecurity and personal data protection are also a crucial issue. Companies must comply with strict regulations on data collection and use, while protecting their systems from cyberattacks, which are often costly and destabilizing.

On a human level, digital entrepreneurship can lead to a certain degree of precariousness and professional isolation. The lack of physical contact with customers or partners can limit the creation of lasting bonds of trust. In addition, the pressure associated with managing the business, financial instability, and individual responsibility increases entrepreneurial stress, sometimes to the detriment of personal balance.

Finally, digital technology amplifies global competition. Low market entry costs lead to market saturation and make differentiation more difficult. In this context, only entrepreneurs who are able to innovate, specialize, or effectively retain their customers are able to survive in the long term.

In short, digital entrepreneurship is a key driver of innovation, economic democratization, and value creation on a global scale. It allows individuals to express their creativity, access vast markets, and enjoy unprecedented professional autonomy. However, it remains technically and psychologically demanding, and its success largely depends on the entrepreneur's ability to acquire solid digital skills, adapt to a changing environment, and manage the risks inherent in digital technology.

4. Social media and digital entrepreneurship

In a context marked by the rise of digital technology, social networks have established themselves as essential levers for digital entrepreneurship. Beyond their initial function of communication, they now offer real opportunities: increased visibility, direct interaction with customers, the creation of engaged communities, and the rapid development of new business models. Integrating social media into an entrepreneurial strategy is no longer a choice, but an essential condition for ensuring the competitiveness and growth of digital projects.

Social media has enabled entrepreneurs to establish an online presence, promote products and services, attract new investors, and build relationships with customers. These social networks have also led to the emergence of influencers who have now become entrepreneurs, with a large audience and a strong online presence, capable of promoting their products and services and influencing their community to embark on the path of entrepreneurship. (Olanrewaju, Hossain, Whiteside, & Mercieca, 2020)

Social media has profoundly transformed entrepreneurial practices by offering business creators unprecedented tools for visibility, communication, and business development. Platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, Facebook, and Twitter now make it possible to build an online presence, promote products and services, interact directly with customers, and, more broadly, access a global market.

The emergence of social media in the early 2000s, combined with the development of smartphones, marked a new era for digital entrepreneurship. These platforms are no longer limited to communication spaces: they have become powerful instruments of influence, capable of shaping behaviors, opinions, and consumer choices thanks to the speed at which content is disseminated and the decisive role played by algorithms.

In this context, the figure of the influencer has emerged. Officially recognized by dictionaries, it refers to a person with a large audience and strong credibility within their community. Influencers (content creators, YouTubers, Instagrammers, digital marketers, etc.) now play a central role in corporate communication strategies. Their ability to generate engagement, create attractive content, and build trust with their followers makes them key players in digital marketing.

Instagram is a prime example of this phenomenon. With over a billion active users, it is an ideal platform for promoting brands, thanks in particular to its features designed for businesses. Many influencers have developed a real entrepreneurial activity there by launching their own products or services, giving rise to the concept of "instapreneurs." They use their fame to market a variety

of products (cosmetics, clothing, training, accessories, etc.) and inspire a new generation eager to start their own businesses through their content.

However, becoming an instapreneur also comes with challenges: increased competition, dependence on algorithms, changing platform policies, and the need to invest time and resources to maintain a consistent digital presence. Success depends less on the number of followers than on the ability to create value, build community loyalty, and develop a strong brand identity.

Social media is now a major driver of digital entrepreneurship, enabling not only the promotion and development of innovative activities, but also the emergence of new types of entrepreneurs who are redefining the economic and cultural dynamics of the digital world.
According to the study by Olanrewaju et al (2020), the effects of social media use by entrepreneurs can be grouped into four main dimensions: value creation, improvement of entrepreneurial processes, performance enhancement, and stimulation of innovation: (Olanrewaju, Hossain, Whiteside, & Mercieca, 2020)

- **Value creation**: Social media helps create value by reducing transaction costs, facilitating access to and circulation of information through more efficient communication channels, and improving companies' marketing strategies.
- **Improvement of entrepreneurial processes**: They positively influence entrepreneurial initiatives by helping to identify, analyze, and capitalize on new opportunities. They also promote business creation by supporting innovation and the development of professional networks.
- **Improved performance**: Social media helps improve overall business performance by reducing costs, expanding markets, optimizing internal processes (such as customer relationship management), increasing the success of crowdfunding campaigns, and boosting innovation capabilities.
- **Stimulating innovation**: Finally, social media acts as a lever for innovation by reducing certain costs, mobilizing new resources, and developing co-creation practices with customers, which enriches innovation processes and strengthens competitiveness.

In short, social media is now an essential strategic lever for entrepreneurs, offering opportunities to create value, improve processes, enhance performance, and stimulate innovation. Integrating social media into business practices is no longer a choice, but a necessity for remaining competitive in an ever-changing digital environment. It is profoundly redefining the dynamics of development, communication, and growth for modern businesses.

5. Digital entrepreneurship in Algeria: current situation

In recent years, and particularly since the early 2020s, digital entrepreneurship in Algeria has undergone gradual change, driven by the increased spread of digital technologies, widespread access to mobile internet, and the rise of social media as the main channels for marketing and communication. These transformations have fostered the emergence of new forms of entrepreneurial initiatives, particularly among young people, who are using digital tools to offer innovative products and services, often outside traditional entrepreneurial models.

In this context, the Algerian government has embarked on a process of structuring and supporting digital entrepreneurship, recognizing its strategic role in diversifying the national economy and transitioning to a knowledge-based economy. This approach has resulted in the accelerated development of e-government services, which have been integrated across the board into the action plans of several ministries, thereby contributing to the modernization of public administration and the improvement of the business environment. At the same time, efforts have been made to strengthen the regulatory framework governing digital activities, particularly in the areas of electronic payments, data management and protection, and digital identity systems, with the aim of creating a climate of trust conducive to the development of online transactions.

The structuring of the digital entrepreneurial ecosystem has also been based on an integrated approach involving various stakeholders, including entrepreneurs, financing institutions, universities, and large companies. Several public support mechanisms for employment and business creation, such as ANSEJ, ANGEM, and CNAC, as well as dedicated infrastructure such as cyber parks, have been mobilized to encourage innovation, stimulate the creation of startups, and support the spread of digital technologies throughout the country. This institutional dynamic aims to reduce the fragmentation of the ecosystem and promote the emergence of more structured and sustainable entrepreneurial projects.

Alongside public action, initiatives from players in the field have helped strengthen the digital ecosystem. The creation of the Algerian Digital Players Group (GAAN) illustrates this mobilization of professionals in the information and communication technology sector. By positioning itself as an interface between players in the digital ecosystem and decision-making centers, the GAAN seeks to bring together initiatives, support the development of the digital economy, and assist entrepreneurs in entering national and international markets, in particular by facilitating their participation in international technology events.

Economically speaking, digital entrepreneurship in Algeria is developing in an environment characterized by both growing opportunities and persistent constraints. While the increase in the number of Internet users and the potential size of the digital market offer favorable prospects, many entrepreneurs continue to face difficulties related to electronic payments, logistics, access to financing, and the formalization of activities. As a result, a significant proportion of digital initiatives remain informal and heavily dependent on social networks, which limits their capacity for growth, scalability, and long-term sustainability.

Digital skills are also a key issue in the current state of digital entrepreneurship in Algeria. Although younger generations are highly adept at using digital tools, the lack of specialized training in key areas such as digital project management, advanced digital marketing, data analysis, and cybersecurity is hindering the transition to more innovative and competitive economic models. However, recent efforts to develop schools and training programs dedicated to information technology and digital technology reflect a growing awareness of this issue.

Finally, the emphasis placed on digital entrepreneurship and startups in recent policy guidelines demonstrates a clear desire to make this sector a strategic lever for economic development. The

creation of ministerial departments specifically dedicated to startups, incubators, and the knowledge economy, as well as the announcement of incentives such as tax exemptions, the implementation of support mechanisms, the creation of support funds, and the "startup city" project, are strong signals in favor of the digital economy. Nevertheless, the effectiveness of these initiatives will depend on the consistency of their implementation, their alignment with the real needs of entrepreneurs, and the ecosystem's ability to transform digital opportunities into projects that create sustainable value.

II. Research methodology

This research is part of an exploratory quantitative approach aimed at analyzing the use of social networks as a tool for digital entrepreneurship among young Algerian entrepreneurs.

1. Data collection method

Empirical data was collected using an online questionnaire, designed based on a review of the literature and the research objectives. The questionnaire was administered via the Google Forms platform, which made it possible to reach a geographically dispersed audience that is active on social media.

The link to the questionnaire was distributed mainly through digital social networks (Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp), which are the main channels of activity and marketing for the young entrepreneurs targeted by the study.

2. Population and sample

The target population consists of young Algerian entrepreneurs who use social media to sell products or offer services (e-commerce, digital services, coaching, crafts, etc.).

The sampling is non-probabilistic and based on convenience, given the difficulty of identifying an official database covering this category of informal entrepreneurs operating mainly on social media.

A total of 100 usable responses were selected for analysis, which is considered sufficient for an exploratory study aimed at identifying trends and behaviors rather than producing results that can be generalized to the entire population.

3. Questionnaire structure

The questionnaire is structured around the following areas:

- General information about respondents (age, gender, type of activity, length of service, etc.);
- Use of social media, including platforms used, frequency of use, and entrepreneurial purposes;
- Training and skills related to digital entrepreneurship and the use of digital tools;
- Perceived advantages and limitations of social media as a tool for entrepreneurial development;

- Regulatory framework and institutional environment, including perceptions of public support, the legal framework, and support mechanisms;
- Outlook and future, focusing on development intentions, future projects, and the sustainability of the business.

The questionnaire consists mainly of multiple-choice and single-choice questions. An open-ended question appears at the end of the questionnaire to allow respondents to freely express their comments, suggestions, or remarks regarding digital entrepreneurship via social media.

4. Data analysis method

The data collected was processed using descriptive statistical analysis, based on frequency and percentage calculations, to identify the main trends in the use of social media as a lever for digital entrepreneurship among young Algerians. The responses to the open-ended question were subjected to a simple qualitative analysis, grouped by theme, in order to supplement and enrich the quantitative analysis.

5. Methodological limitations

Despite efforts to collect data, the research encountered certain methodological limitations. The dissemination of the questionnaire via social media resulted in a low response rate, with several entrepreneurs viewing the invitation but not responding. This difficulty can be explained by the informal nature of online entrepreneurial activity, the lack of availability of respondents, or a certain mistrust of academic surveys.

Furthermore, the use of non-probability sampling limits the generalizability of the results to all young Algerian entrepreneurs. Nevertheless, given the exploratory nature of the study, the data collected provide a relevant and realistic overview of current practices.

III. Results and discussions

This section is devoted to analyzing and discussing the results of a questionnaire survey conducted among young Algerians engaged in digital entrepreneurship activities via social media. It aims to examine how these platforms are used, the skills involved, and the perceived advantages and limitations in the context of entrepreneurial activity. The analysis is based on the use of the data collected in order to identify the main trends observed and understand the specificities of the Algerian context.

1. Respondent profile

This section presents the main characteristics of the respondents who participated in the survey, focusing on their general information and entrepreneurial profile. It provides context for the sample studied and a better understanding of the context in which the results analyzed below are set.

1.1.General information

Table 1. General Information

General Information				
GENDER				
Male	**30%**		Female	**70%**
AGE GROUP				
Under 20 **: 4%**	21-25**: 27%**	26-30 **: 34%**	31-35**: 25%**	
EDUCATION LEVEL				
Primary : **0%**	Secondary: **5%**	Undergraduate: **29%**	Postgraduate (Master/Doctorate): **66%**	

Source: Survey results

The sample is predominantly female (70%), reflecting the growing interest among young Algerian women in digital entrepreneurship, particularly via social media, which offers a flexible and accessible space. The majority of respondents are between 21 and 30 years old (61%), the most active age group in the digital sector in the face of youth unemployment. In terms of educational attainment, 66% have a higher education degree and 29% have a university degree, highlighting the importance of educational capital for online entrepreneurship. These characteristics show that the sample consists of educated young Algerians, mostly female and aged between 20 and 30, providing a relevant context for analyzing entrepreneurial practices and strategies in the following sections.

1.2. Entrepreneurial profile of the respondent

Table 2. Entrepreneurial Profile of Respondents Engaged in Sales Activities via Social Media

Variable	Modalities	Percentage
Duration of activity on social media	Less than 6 months	12%
	Between 6 months and 1 year	16%
	Between 1 and 3 years	32%
	More than 3 years	40%
Nature of the activity	Main activity	49%
	Secondary (complementary) activity	51%
Motivations for choosing this activity	Passion for entrepreneurship	47%
	Search for additional income	25%
	Difficulty in finding traditional employment	13%
	Opportunities related to demand on social media	10%
	Low start-up costs compared to traditional commerce	3%
	Ability to work from home and reconcile professional and family responsibilities	2%

Source: Survey results

An analysis of the length of time respondents have been engaged in entrepreneurial activity via social media shows that Algerian respondents have reached a relative maturity in their digital practices. A significant proportion say they have been engaged in this activity for over a year, with 40% having done so for over three years and 32% for between one and three years, indicating stability and continuity in digital entrepreneurial engagement. This longevity suggests that entrepreneurship via social media is no longer an emerging or opportunistic

phenomenon, but is becoming part of a sustainable dynamic, despite the economic and institutional constraints that characterize the Algerian context.

Regarding the nature of the activity, the results reveal an almost equal split between respondents for whom this activity represents a main source of income (49%) and those for whom it is a supplementary activity (51%). This distribution reflects the diversification of livelihood strategies adopted by Algerian entrepreneurs in a context marked by instability in the formal labor market. Social networks thus appear to be a flexible lever, enabling either a complete career change or a boost to existing income.

Analysis of the motivations behind choosing this activity highlights a predominance of intrinsic factors, particularly a passion for entrepreneurship, cited by 47% of respondents. This result underscores the emergence of an entrepreneurial culture driven by autonomy, creativity, and self-fulfillment, beyond economic constraints alone. However, economic factors remain significant, with 25% of respondents citing the search for additional income and 13% citing the difficulty of accessing traditional employment, reflecting the realities of the job market in Algeria.

Furthermore, more structural motivations, such as the opportunities offered by growing demand on social media (10%) and low start-up costs compared to traditional commerce (3%), confirm the role of digital platforms as accessible entry points to entrepreneurship, particularly for young people and women. Finally, although marginal in proportion (2%), some qualitative responses highlight social and family issues, in particular the possibility of working from home and balancing professional activity with family responsibilities, which reinforces the idea that digital entrepreneurship is a tool for socio-economic inclusion in the Algerian context.

2. Use of social media in entrepreneurial activity

Table 3. Use of Social Media in Sales Activities by Respondents

Variable	Modalities	Percentage
Mode of sales	Exclusively online	70%
	Partially online and partially in-person	23%
	Social media only for advertising	7%
Social media platform most used for sales	Instagram	66%
	Facebook	22%
	TikTOK	2%
	WhatsApp	1%
	All four platforms	9%
Perceived most effective social media platform for sales	Instagram	50%
	Facebook	17%
	TikTok	10%
	WhatsApp	0%
	Facebook + Instagram	19%
	Instagram + TikTok	4%
Reasons for using social media	Large audience / visibility	57%
	Easy access	30%
	Difficulty accessing traditional channels	7%
	Low costs	6%

Source: Survey results

Analysis of respondents' use of social media for sales activities reveals a predominance of online sales, with 70% of respondents conducting their sales exclusively via social media, while 23% combine online and in-person sales, and 7% use social media solely as an advertising medium. These results illustrate the central role of digital platforms as the main marketing channel, particularly in the Algerian context, where traditional distribution infrastructures can present logistical or geographical constraints.

In terms of platforms used, Instagram dominates, with 66% of respondents using it as their primary sales tool, followed by Facebook (22%). TikTok, WhatsApp, and combinations of networks represent marginal proportions, indicating that entrepreneurial strategies focus on networks that offer both visibility and interactivity with customers. This concentration reflects Instagram's ability to provide a visual environment suited to product presentation, which is particularly attractive to young entrepreneurs and products geared toward the urban Algerian market.

When respondents were asked about the perceived effectiveness of platforms, 50% considered Instagram to be the most effective for their sales, followed by 19% who combined Facebook and Instagram, and only 17% for Facebook alone. This perception confirms the strategic importance of Instagram for maximizing visibility and driving consumer engagement as part of targeted and interactive social marketing.

The motivations behind the use of social media reveal a combination of economic and operational factors. The majority of respondents (57%) highlight the possibility of reaching a wide audience, while 30% mention ease of access, 7% use as an alternative to traditional channels, and 6% the low cost associated with it. These results highlight that social media are not only communication tools, but also strategic levers for expanding and consolidating entrepreneurial activity, particularly in a context where access to traditional distribution channels may be limited or restrictive.

In short, the use of social media by Algerian entrepreneurs appears to be integral to the digital economic model, combining visibility, accessibility, and efficiency, and reflects an adaptation to new digital consumption practices in the country.

3. Training and skills for young entrepreneurs

Table 4. Entrepreneurial Training and Digital Skills of Young Entrepreneurs

Indicators	Yes (%)	No (%)
Respondents who have completed studies in entrepreneurship and/or marketing	**39%**	**61%**
Respondents who have undertaken training in digital entrepreneurship	**33%**	**67%**
Respondents who have received training aimed at improving online audience and visibility (advertising, algorithms, digital marketing)	**40%**	**60%**

Source: Survey results

The results relating to the training and skills of young entrepreneurs reveal that formal training in the key areas of entrepreneurship and marketing is still limited. In fact, only 39% of respondents reported having studied entrepreneurship and/or marketing, compared to 61% who had no academic training in these areas. This suggests that most people entering entrepreneurship, particularly digital entrepreneurship, are self-taught, without structured institutional support.

This lack of training is even more pronounced when it comes to digital entrepreneurship. The results show that only 33% of respondents have taken specific training courses related to digital entrepreneurship, while 67% have not taken any. This situation highlights a significant gap between the rapid spread of online entrepreneurial activities and the level of preparedness of young entrepreneurs for the technical, strategic, and organizational requirements of digital technology.

Furthermore, training focused on improving online audience and visibility (digital advertising, understanding algorithms, digital marketing) also remains insufficient. Only 40% of respondents say they have taken this type of training, compared to 60% who have not. However, in a highly competitive environment dominated by social media, a lack of digital marketing skills can limit the scope of entrepreneurial initiatives and hinder their growth.

Overall, these results highlight a lack of formal skills among the majority of young entrepreneurs, despite their active involvement in digital entrepreneurship. They underscore the need to strengthen training, support, and awareness-raising initiatives focused on entrepreneurial and digital skills in order to promote the performance, sustainability, and professionalization of entrepreneurial projects.

4. Advantages and limitations of using social media in entrepreneurial activity

The use of social media by young entrepreneurs has both advantages and limitations that influence the development of their business.

4.1. The advantages of using social media

The results show that social networks primarily offer young entrepreneurs a high degree of organizational flexibility. Indeed, 37% of respondents indicate that one of the main advantages is the ability to work from home, which reduces time and space constraints. This flexibility is a major factor in the appeal of digital entrepreneurship, particularly for young people.

In addition, 36% of respondents highlight the increased visibility offered by social media, which allows them to reach a wider audience without resorting to traditional communication channels. Direct interaction with customers is also seen as a significant advantage by 19% of entrepreneurs, promoting proximity, responsiveness, and personalization of customer relations.

Finally, cost reduction, particularly in relation to advertising and commercial property rental, is mentioned by 8% of respondents. Although less frequently cited, this aspect remains an important structural advantage of online entrepreneurial activity.

4.2. Limits of entrepreneurship on social media

Despite these advantages, the results highlight several major constraints. The most frequently cited difficulty is increased competition, mentioned by 28% of respondents, reflecting the gradual saturation of digital markets and the difficulty of standing out from the crowd.

Logistical problems, particularly those related to delivery and returns, affect 26% of entrepreneurs. These constraints highlight the structural limitations of the e-commerce ecosystem. Lack of customer confidence, mentioned by 17% of respondents, is also a significant barrier to sales growth.

Furthermore, the lack of online payment methods, cited by 16% of entrepreneurs, appears to be a significant obstacle to the smooth flow of transactions. Finally, 13% of respondents mention the lack of training, confirming the previous findings regarding the lack of entrepreneurial and digital skills.

4.3. Monthly income from online activity

Analysis of monthly income reveals a high concentration in the lower income brackets. Indeed, 43.8% of respondents report earning less than 40,000 DA per month, indicating that, for a large proportion of entrepreneurs, online activity is a supplementary source of income rather than a main source of livelihood.

Income between 40,000 and 60,000 DA applies to 15.5% of respondents, while 11.5% report earning between 60,000 and 80,000 DA. The upper brackets remain in the minority: 9.4% earn between 80,000 and 100,000 DA, 8.3% between 100,000 and 120,000 DA, and 11.5% report monthly incomes above 120,000 DA.

Overall, these results suggest that, despite the potential of social networks in terms of flexibility and visibility, economic profitability remains limited for the majority of young entrepreneurs due to structural, logistical, and institutional constraints.

5. Regulatory framework and institutional environment

Entrepreneurial activity, particularly via social media, operates within a regulatory and institutional environment that governs practices, defines legal obligations, and influences business development.

5.1. Knowledge of the regulatory framework

The results show that knowledge of laws and regulations related to e-commerce and online sales in Algeria remains limited. In fact, 46% of respondents say they are "somewhat" familiar with the framework, while 18% say they are very familiar with it. Conversely, 22% of entrepreneurs are not familiar with it at all, and 14% responded negatively. These data reveal that young entrepreneurs have only partial awareness of legal obligations, which may influence their compliance and digital strategy.

5.2. Perception of the regulatory framework for digital entrepreneurship

Respondents are divided in their assessment of the regulatory framework: 34% are neutral, 34% say they don't know, 18% consider the framework to be favorable and encouraging, while 14% perceive it as restrictive, particularly due to administrative, legal, and tax obstacles. This distribution highlights uncertainty and a lack of clarity in the perception of existing regulations.

5.3. Regulatory and administrative obstacles encountered

Entrepreneurs identify several major obstacles:

- 43% mention the lack of legally recognized online payment methods, which limits the fluidity of transactions.
- 33% criticize the lack of clear regulations for sales via social media, which creates legal uncertainty.
- 13% cite the difficulty of officially registering their business, which hinders the formalization of companies.
- 11% highlight the complexity of tax procedures, which can discourage the development and regularization of entrepreneurial activities.

Overall, these results suggest that the regulatory and institutional framework, although in place, remains little known and sometimes restrictive, which may hinder the growth of digital entrepreneurship in Algeria and limit the formalization of start-ups.

6. Future prospects and challenges for young entrepreneurs

The responses show that the majority of young entrepreneurs plan to continue their online business even if they find stable employment. In fact, 62% say they would continue their business alongside their job, while 31% would focus primarily on their online business. Only 7% plan to abandon this activity completely. These results suggest that digital entrepreneurship is perceived as a complementary source of income and a way to remain active in the entrepreneurial market, even when faced with external professional stability.

The assessment of economic viability shows that opinions are divided. For 39% of respondents, online activity is not viable as a primary source of long-term income without social security coverage. Thirty-five percent believe that the activity can be viable if combined with another source of income, while 26% consider that it can be viable even without contributions, due to the potential income generated. These results confirm that, despite the appeal of digital entrepreneurship, institutional and social uncertainties limit its perception as a main source of income.

Young entrepreneurs identify several priority areas for strengthening the digital ecosystem. 43% want secure online payment methods, reflecting the importance of reliable infrastructure to facilitate local and international transactions. 27% mention government support and appropriate regulation, highlighting the role of public policy in formalizing and protecting activities. 17% believe that digital marketing training is necessary to improve the visibility and performance of

businesses, while 13% call for the implementation of financing and support programs to sustain the growth and longevity of projects.

One notable point is the strong desire to formalize activities, with 78% of respondents wishing to set up an official business or micro-enterprise in the future. 20% are still undecided, and only 2% do not wish to formalize their activity. This trend indicates an awareness of the importance of legality and official structuring to ensure the development and sustainability of digital businesses.

The open-ended comments provided by respondents at the end of the questionnaire illustrate the specific needs of entrepreneurs, including the facilitation of online payments, including for international orders, independence from the state in managing e-commerce, the need for training in digital marketing and content creation to compete, and the proposal of institutional initiatives, such as the creation of a dedicated bank card (e.g., Redotpay), to simplify transactions. These observations highlight that the success of digital entrepreneurship depends as much on institutional adaptation as on the acquisition of digital and marketing skills.

Overall, the results suggest that young entrepreneurs see digital entrepreneurship as an opportunity to earn extra income, but they clearly identify limitations related to regulation, payment methods, and the need for training. The future of this activity looks promising, provided that appropriate institutional measures and support mechanisms are put in place, while strengthening entrepreneurs' skills to cope with a competitive environment.

Conclusion

The aim of this research was to analyze the extent to which the use of social networks contributes to the development of digital entrepreneurship among young Algerians, while identifying the factors likely to promote or limit its impact. The empirical results provide a clear answer to this question: social media plays a decisive role in the emergence and development of digital entrepreneurship in Algeria, as it provides accessible, flexible tools that are strongly geared towards visibility and interaction with customers. However, their contribution remains conditioned by structural, institutional, and human factors that influence the performance and sustainability of entrepreneurial projects.

The results confirm the first hypothesis, which is that using social media has a positive impact on the visibility and development of entrepreneurial projects led by young people. Intensive use of platforms such as Instagram allows entrepreneurs to quickly reach a wide audience, promote their products or services at a lower cost, and interact directly with their customers. This increased visibility promotes value creation and market expansion, confirming the central role of social media as a lever for entrepreneurial growth.

The second hypothesis is also confirmed by the survey results. The lack of skills in digital marketing and digital management appears to be a major obstacle to effective entrepreneurial practices on social media. A significant proportion of respondents have not received any formal training in digital entrepreneurship or online marketing, which limits their ability to fully exploit

the potential offered by digital platforms, particularly in terms of targeting, customer loyalty, and visibility optimization.

The third hypothesis, according to which social networks are favored as an alternative to traditional channels for business creation because of their accessibility and low cost, is strongly corroborated by the results. The majority of entrepreneurs surveyed use social networks as their main, or even sole, sales and communication channel. This preference can be explained by the reduction in barriers to entry, the absence of high fixed costs, and the possibility of starting a business without physical infrastructure, which makes digital entrepreneurship particularly attractive in an economic context marked by youth unemployment and labor market rigidity.

Finally, the fourth hypothesis is confirmed in a nuanced way. Institutional and regulatory constraints do indeed limit the sustainability of entrepreneurial projects developed via social networks. Difficulties related to the lack of suitable online payment methods, the lack of clarity in the regulatory framework, and the complexity of formalization procedures hinder the structuring and sustainability of activities. Nevertheless, the strong desire expressed by entrepreneurs to formalize their projects in the future demonstrates a potential for professionalization, provided that the institutional environment evolves in a more favorable direction.

Despite the interest of the results obtained, this study has certain limitations, notably the small sample size and the use of non-probabilistic sampling, which limit the generalizability of the conclusions. In addition, difficulties encountered during data collection, particularly the lack of cooperation from certain online sales pages and delivery companies, restricted access to a larger and more diverse population of digital entrepreneurs.

These limitations open up promising avenues for further research. Future work could draw on larger samples and include other key players in the digital ecosystem, such as payment platforms, logistics companies, and public institutions. The adoption of mixed methodological approaches, combining quantitative and qualitative analyses, would also deepen our understanding of entrepreneurial trajectories and success factors. Finally, assessing the impact of recent reforms in digitization, electronic payments, and startup support would be a relevant area of research to support the sustainable development of digital entrepreneurship in Algeria.

Ultimately, this research highlights that social networks are a key driver of digital entrepreneurship among young Algerians, while emphasizing that their potential can only be fully exploited through skills development, a more appropriate regulatory framework, and institutional mechanisms that promote the structuring and sustainability of entrepreneurial projects.

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