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The Role of Attitude and Skills in Entrepreneurial Human Capital: Evidence from a Systematic Literature Review

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Abstract

Entrepreneurial human capital has increasingly been recognized as a critical determinant of entrepreneurial success, innovation, and business sustainability. While previous studies have extensively examined entrepreneurial attitude and entrepreneurial skills, these dimensions have often been investigated separately, resulting in fragmented understanding of how they collectively contribute to entrepreneurial human capital. This study aims to synthesize existing empirical evidence on the roles of entrepreneurial attitude and entrepreneurial skills and to examine their integration within the entrepreneurial human capital framework. A systematic literature review (SLR) was conducted following the PRISMA guidelines. Relevant studies published between 2000 and 2025 were identified through searches in Scopus, Web of Science, ScienceDirect, and SpringerLink using structured Boolean search strings. After applying predefined inclusion, exclusion, and quality assessment criteria, eligible empirical studies were analyzed through thematic synthesis. The findings reveal that entrepreneurial attitude functions as a motivational resource that influences entrepreneurial intention, opportunity recognition, persistence, and the willingness to invest in entrepreneurial learning. Entrepreneurial skills, including opportunity recognition, decision-making, leadership, networking, and risk management, provide the operational capabilities required to transform entrepreneurial intentions into effective entrepreneurial actions. More importantly, the review demonstrates that entrepreneurial attitude and entrepreneurial skills are complementary dimensions whose interaction forms a stronger and more comprehensive entrepreneurial human capital than either dimension alone. This study contributes to entrepreneurship literature by proposing a multidimensional conceptualization of entrepreneurial human capital that integrates motivational and competency-based resources. The findings also highlight the importance of entrepreneurship education and training programs that simultaneously foster positive entrepreneurial attitudes and practical entrepreneurial competencies to enhance entrepreneurial performance and sustainable venture success.

Introduction

Entrepreneurship has become one of the most important drivers of economic development, innovation, and employment generation in contemporary economies. Entrepreneurial activities contribute not only to the creation of new ventures but also to the commercialization of innovations, the diffusion of knowledge, and the enhancement of national competitiveness (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000; Audretsch, 2012). As economies increasingly rely on innovation-based growth, scholars have devoted considerable attention to understanding the factors that explain why some individuals successfully identify and exploit entrepreneurial opportunities while others do not. Among the various perspectives used to explain entrepreneurial outcomes, the concept of human capital has emerged as one of the most influential theoretical foundations (Becker, 1964; Unger et al., 2011).

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Human capital theory argues that investments in education, knowledge, skills, and experience enhance individual productivity and economic performance (Becker, 1964). Within entrepreneurship research, this perspective has evolved into the notion of entrepreneurial human capital, which refers to the set of competencies, knowledge structures, experiences, and capabilities that enable individuals to recognize opportunities, mobilize resources, and manage business ventures effectively (Marvel et al., 2016; Davidsson & Honig, 2003). Numerous studies have demonstrated a positive relationship between entrepreneurial human capital and entrepreneurial outcomes, including venture creation, firm growth, innovation performance, and opportunity recognition (Unger et al., 2011; Estrin et al., 2016; Marvel, 2013). However, despite broad agreement regarding the importance of entrepreneurial human capital, there remains considerable debate concerning the dimensions that constitute this construct and the mechanisms through which it influences entrepreneurial behavior and performance.

Early entrepreneurship studies predominantly conceptualized human capital through objective indicators such as formal education, occupational experience, and industry-specific knowledge (Davidsson & Honig, 2003; Shane, 2003). While these dimensions remain important, contemporary entrepreneurship research increasingly recognizes that entrepreneurial success cannot be adequately explained by knowledge and experience alone. Entrepreneurs operate in environments characterized by uncertainty, complexity, and rapid change, requiring not only technical competence but also psychological readiness and adaptive capabilities (Frese & Gielnik, 2014; Obschonka et al., 2022). Consequently, scholars have begun to argue that entrepreneurial human capital should be understood as a multidimensional construct encompassing both cognitive and behavioral dimensions, including entrepreneurial attitudes and entrepreneurial skills (Martin et al., 2013; Obschonka et al., 2022).

Entrepreneurial attitude has received substantial attention within the entrepreneurship literature, particularly through the lens of the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991). This perspective suggests that favorable attitudes toward entrepreneurship increase the likelihood of forming entrepreneurial intentions and engaging in entrepreneurial behavior. Empirical evidence consistently supports the proposition that individuals who perceive entrepreneurship positively are more likely to pursue entrepreneurial careers and demonstrate stronger entrepreneurial commitment (Liñán & Chen, 2009; Krueger et al., 2000; Kolvereid, 1996). Furthermore, entrepreneurial attitudes are shaped by educational experiences, social influences, role models, and previous entrepreneurial exposure, suggesting that they are not merely stable personality traits but can be developed through targeted interventions (Fayolle & Gailly, 2015; Nabi et al., 2017; Souitaris et al., 2007). Nevertheless, although attitudes are widely recognized as important predictors of entrepreneurial intention, the extent to which they contribute to the broader development of entrepreneurial human capital remains insufficiently understood.

Entrepreneurial skills represent another essential dimension of entrepreneurial capability. Entrepreneurial skills encompass competencies such as opportunity recognition, creativity, problem-solving, leadership, networking, strategic decision-making, and risk management (Man et al., 2002; Mitchelmore & Rowley, 2010). These competencies enable entrepreneurs to transform intentions into actionable business activities and to respond effectively to changing market conditions. Research indicates that entrepreneurial skills significantly influence venture performance, innovation capability, and business sustainability (Sánchez, 2013). Moreover, the "jack-of-all-trades" perspective proposed by Lazear (2005) suggests that entrepreneurial effectiveness depends not only on the possession of individual skills but also on the diversity and integration of multiple competencies. Recent studies further support the argument that skill variety enhances entrepreneurial adaptability and opportunity exploitation in dynamic environments (Obschonka et al., 2022). Despite extensive research on entrepreneurial attitudes

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and entrepreneurial skills, the literature remains fragmented in several important respects. First, most empirical studies examine attitudes and skills as independent predictors of entrepreneurial intention or business performance rather than as interconnected dimensions of entrepreneurial human capital (Liñán & Chen, 2009; Sánchez, 2013). This separation has limited theoretical development by obscuring potential complementarities between motivational and competency-based mechanisms. An entrepreneur may possess highly favorable attitudes toward entrepreneurship but lack the skills necessary to implement business ideas effectively. Conversely, individuals with strong entrepreneurial skills may fail to exploit opportunities if they lack the motivation, confidence, or positive orientation required to engage in entrepreneurial action. Examining these dimensions in isolation therefore provides only a partial understanding of entrepreneurial capability.

Previous findings concerning the relative importance of attitudes and skills have produced inconsistent conclusions across contexts and populations. While some studies identify entrepreneurial attitude as the primary determinant of entrepreneurial intention (Ajzen, 1991; Liñán & Chen, 2009), others emphasize the stronger predictive role of entrepreneurial competencies and practical skills (Man et al., 2002). Differences in research design, sample characteristics, educational settings, and measurement approaches have contributed to variations in empirical results, making it difficult to establish a coherent understanding of how these dimensions jointly shape entrepreneurial human capital (Martin et al., 2013; Nabi et al., 2017). The absence of an integrated synthesis prevents researchers, educators, and policymakers from identifying which combinations of attitudes and skills are most critical for entrepreneurial development.

Entrepreneurship research has increasingly highlighted the influence of broader contextual factors, including social capital, institutional environments, digital transformation, gender dynamics, and entrepreneurial ecosystems (Audretsch, 2012; Estrin et al., 2016). These developments have enriched understanding of entrepreneurship as a multifaceted phenomenon rather than a purely individual endeavor. However, acknowledging these contextual influences does not diminish the importance of individual-level human capital. Instead, it underscores the need to understand how internal resources such as attitudes and skills enable entrepreneurs to navigate and leverage external opportunities and constraints. Therefore, a more comprehensive conceptualization of entrepreneurial human capital should integrate psychological and competency-based dimensions while recognizing their interaction with broader entrepreneurial environments (Shet et al., 2022; Agarwal & Agrawal, 2023; Hu, 2025; Abid & Polo, 2025).

Given these theoretical ambiguities, empirical inconsistencies, and practical challenges, a comprehensive synthesis of existing evidence is necessary (Xu et al., 2022; Von, 2023; Sim & Mengshoel, 2023; Grignoli et al., 2025). Integrating entrepreneurial attitude and entrepreneurial skills within a unified entrepreneurial human capital perspective offers an opportunity to move beyond fragmented explanations and develop a more holistic understanding of entrepreneurial capability. Such integration is particularly relevant for entrepreneurship education and training programs, which often emphasize either motivational development or competency acquisition without adequately addressing their interdependence (Fayolle & Gailly, 2015; Nabi et al., 2017). By critically examining how attitudes and skills collectively contribute to entrepreneurial human capital, this study seeks to advance current entrepreneurship scholarship and provide a stronger conceptual foundation for future entrepreneurial development initiatives.

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Method

Research Design

This study employed a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) to identify, evaluate, and synthesize existing empirical evidence regarding the role of entrepreneurial attitude and entrepreneurial skills in shaping entrepreneurial human capital. The SLR approach was selected because it provides a rigorous and transparent procedure for consolidating fragmented knowledge, identifying research patterns, and revealing inconsistencies within a particular field of study. Compared with traditional narrative reviews, SLR minimizes selection bias through predefined search procedures, inclusion criteria, and systematic screening processes. The review was conducted following the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) guidelines, which provide internationally recognized standards for systematic evidence synthesis. The PRISMA framework guided the entire review process through four sequential stages: identification, screening, eligibility assessment, and final inclusion. This structured approach ensured methodological transparency, reproducibility, and consistency throughout the study.

Data Sources and Search Strategy

The literature search was conducted using four internationally recognized academic databases: Scopus, Web of Science, ScienceDirect, and SpringerLink. These databases were selected because they provide comprehensive coverage of high-quality peer-reviewed journals in entrepreneurship, management, business, and social science disciplines. Furthermore, they are widely used in systematic review studies and contain journals with established academic reputations and citation impact. To maximize the retrieval of relevant studies while maintaining precision, a structured Boolean search strategy was developed based on the key concepts underlying the study: entrepreneurial human capital, entrepreneurial attitude, entrepreneurial skills, and entrepreneurial outcomes.

The literature search was conducted using a structured Boolean search strategy to identify studies related to entrepreneurial human capital and its attitudinal and competency-based dimensions. The search strategy incorporated several key concepts, including entrepreneurial human capital (entrepreneurial human capital OR human capital in entrepreneurship), entrepreneurial attitude (entrepreneurial attitude OR attitude toward entrepreneurship OR entrepreneurial orientation), entrepreneurial skills (entrepreneurial skills OR entrepreneurial competencies OR entrepreneurial capability), and entrepreneurial outcomes (entrepreneurial intention OR entrepreneurial performance OR venture performance OR entrepreneurial success). The search process was performed within the title, abstract, and keyword fields across all selected databases to ensure the retrieval of studies directly relevant to the objectives of this systematic literature review.

The search was conducted within article titles, abstracts, and keywords to ensure thematic relevance. Database-specific adaptations were applied when required due to differences in search interfaces and indexing systems. The literature search covered publications from January 2000 to December 2025. This period was selected because it captures contemporary developments in entrepreneurial human capital research while encompassing the increasing academic interest in entrepreneurial competencies and behavioral determinants that emerged after the early 2000s. All retrieved records were exported into a reference management system, where duplicate entries were identified and removed prior to the screening process.

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Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

To ensure the relevance, quality, and comparability of the selected studies, explicit inclusion and exclusion criteria were established before the review commenced. Articles were included if they met the following criteria: (1) published in peer-reviewed international journals indexed in Scopus or Web of Science; (2) focused on at least one of the central constructs of this review, namely entrepreneurial human capital, entrepreneurial attitude, or entrepreneurial skills; (3) reported empirical findings based on quantitative, qualitative, or mixed-methods research designs; (4) were published between 2000 and 2025; and (5) were written in English. Conversely, studies were excluded if they: (1) addressed topics unrelated to entrepreneurship or entrepreneurial behavior; (2) were conference proceedings, editorials, dissertations, book chapters, reports, or other non-peer-reviewed publications; (3) lacked sufficient methodological information or full-text accessibility; or (4) were purely conceptual or theoretical papers without empirical evidence. Nevertheless, several seminal conceptual studies were retained exclusively for contextual and theoretical background in the introductory discussion and were not included in the empirical synthesis. This distinction was maintained to ensure methodological consistency between the review objectives and the evidence synthesis process.

Study Selection Process

The study selection process followed the PRISMA framework and involved multiple stages designed to ensure systematic and transparent article identification. During the identification stage, records were retrieved from the selected databases using the predefined search strings. Additional relevant studies were identified through backward and forward citation tracking to reduce the possibility of overlooking influential publications. Following identification, duplicate records were removed using reference management software. The remaining articles were then subjected to title and abstract screening to determine their relevance to the research objectives. Articles that did not address entrepreneurial human capital, entrepreneurial attitude, entrepreneurial skills, or related entrepreneurial outcomes were excluded at this stage. Subsequently, the full texts of potentially relevant studies were assessed against the predetermined inclusion and exclusion criteria. Two independent reviewers conducted the screening and eligibility assessment process to minimize subjective bias. Any disagreements regarding article inclusion were discussed until consensus was reached. The final set of eligible studies constituted the database for the qualitative synthesis. The entire selection procedure, including the number of records identified, screened, excluded, and included, was documented using a PRISMA flow diagram to ensure transparency and replicability.

Quality Assessment of Included Studies

In addition to applying inclusion and exclusion criteria, a formal quality assessment procedure was conducted to evaluate the methodological rigor of the selected studies. This step was included to address potential variations in research quality and to enhance the reliability of the synthesized findings. The quality assessment was adapted from established critical appraisal frameworks commonly used in management and social science reviews. Each study was evaluated based on five criteria: (1) clarity of research objectives, (2) appropriateness of research design, (3) adequacy of sampling procedures, (4) transparency of data collection and analysis methods, and (5) credibility of conclusions supported by empirical evidence. Each criterion was rated on a three-point scale consisting of 0 (not satisfied), 1 (partially satisfied), and 2 (fully satisfied). Studies with consistently weak methodological quality were excluded from the final synthesis. The quality assessment results were used not only to determine study eligibility but also to inform the interpretation of findings and identify areas where evidence remains limited or inconclusive.

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Data Extraction and Analysis

A standardized data extraction protocol was developed to ensure consistency in recording information from each selected study. The extracted information included publication details, country or research context, research design, sample characteristics, key variables, theoretical foundations, analytical techniques, and principal findings related to entrepreneurial attitude, entrepreneurial skills, and entrepreneurial human capital. The analysis was conducted using a thematic synthesis approach. Initially, findings from individual studies were coded and grouped according to recurring concepts and relationships among variables. Subsequently, these codes were organized into broader themes that reflected major patterns within the literature. Particular attention was given to identifying how entrepreneurial attitudes and entrepreneurial skills contribute individually and collectively to the development of entrepreneurial human capital. The analysis also explored variations in findings across different contexts, populations, and methodological approaches. Through this process, the review generated an integrated understanding of the multidimensional nature of entrepreneurial human capital and highlighted areas of convergence and divergence within existing scholarship.

Reliability and Validity Procedures

Several measures were implemented to strengthen the reliability and validity of the review process. First, the use of multiple high-quality databases increased the comprehensiveness of literature coverage and reduced database-specific bias. Second, clearly defined inclusion, exclusion, and quality assessment criteria enhanced consistency throughout the selection process. Third, the application of the PRISMA framework provided a transparent and replicable review procedure. Fourth, independent screening and quality assessment by multiple reviewers reduced the risk of subjective judgment and selection bias. Finally, the use of a standardized data extraction form ensured consistency in data collection and interpretation across all included studies. Collectively, these procedures enhanced the methodological rigor of the review and increased confidence in the validity of the synthesized findings. By combining systematic search procedures, formal quality assessment, transparent reporting, and thematic synthesis, this study provides a robust evidence base for understanding the role of entrepreneurial attitude and entrepreneurial skills in the development of entrepreneurial human capital.

Synthesis And Reporting of Results

The literature synthesis in this study was carried out using a thematic synthesis approach, whereby selected articles were grouped into different main categories based on the research focus, namely: (1) entrepreneurial human capital, (2) entrepreneurial attitude, (3) entrepreneurial skills and (4) entrepreneurial results (intention and performance). This approach allows for a more systematic and comprehensive identification of patterns of relationships between variables. The synthesis results demonstrate that most studies position entrepreneurial human capital as a multidimensional construct encompassing knowledge, experience, skills, and psychological factors such as attitudes. In this context, entrepreneurial attitudes act as a primary driver in shaping entrepreneurial intentions, while entrepreneurial skills serve as an implementation mechanism that enables individuals to effectively carry out business activities.

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Table 1. Summary of Key Studies on Entrepreneurial Human Capital, Attitude, and Skills

No.	Author(s) (Year)	Method	Sample	Main Findings
1	Davidsson & Honig (2003)	Quantitative	Nascent entrepreneurs	Human capital increases the likelihood of starting a new venture.
2	Unger et al. (2011)	Meta-analysis	70 empirical studies	Human capital significantly influences entrepreneurial success.
3	Marvel, Davis & Sproul (2016)	Literature Review	Entrepreneurship studies	Human capital is a critical factor in opportunity discovery.
4	Lazear (2005)	Theoretical Model	Entrepreneurs	Skill variety is important for entrepreneurial success.
5	Obschonka et al. (2022)	Longitudinal Study	Entrepreneurs	Skill diversity contributes to entrepreneurial human capital development.
6	Man, Lau & Chan (2002)	Survey	SME entrepreneurs	Entrepreneurial competencies positively affect business performance.
7	Mitchelmore & Rowley (2010)	Literature Review	Entrepreneurship literature	Entrepreneurial competencies include opportunity, strategic, and relational skills.
8	Martin, McNally & Kay (2013)	Meta-analysis	Entrepreneurship education studies	Entrepreneurship education enhances human capital and entrepreneurial intention.
9	Rauch & Hulsink (2015)	Survey	University students	Entrepreneurship education improves intention through attitude development.
10	Sánchez (2013)	Experimental Study	University students	Entrepreneurship education strengthens entrepreneurial competencies.
11	Zhao, Seibert & Hills (2005)	Survey	MBA students	Self-efficacy mediates the relationship between human capital and entrepreneurial intention.
12	Ajzen (1991)	Theoretical	Behavioral research	Attitude is a primary predictor of behavioral intention.
13	Liñán & Chen (2009)	Survey	University students	Entrepreneurial attitude significantly influences entrepreneurial intention.

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14	Krueger, Reilly & Carsrud (2000)	Quantitative	Students	The Theory of Planned Behavior effectively explains entrepreneurial intention.
15	Baron (2007)	Conceptual	Entrepreneurship research	Cognitive factors influence entrepreneurial decision-making processes.
16	Shane & Venkataraman (2000)	Conceptual	Entrepreneurship theory	Opportunity recognition is the central element of entrepreneurship.
17	Estrin, Mickiewicz & Stephan (2016)	Quantitative	Entrepreneurs	Human capital positively affects social entrepreneurship engagement.
18	Marvel (2013)	Conceptual	Entrepreneurship literature	Knowledge-based human capital enhances opportunity discovery.
19	Nabi et al. (2017)	Systematic Review	Entrepreneurship education studies	Entrepreneurship education improves entrepreneurial skills and intentions.
20	Fayolle & Gailly (2015)	Longitudinal Study	Entrepreneurship students	Entrepreneurship education influences attitudes and competencies.
21	Sánchez-García (2010)	Survey	Students	Entrepreneurial self-efficacy positively affects entrepreneurial attitudes.
22	Kolvereid (1996)	Survey	Business students	Attitude significantly influences entrepreneurial career choice.
23	Souitaris, Zerbinati & Al-Laham (2007)	Survey	Engineering students	Entrepreneurship education increases intention through inspiration.
24	Bae et al. (2014)	Meta-analysis	Entrepreneurship education research	Entrepreneurship education has a positive effect on entrepreneurial intention.
25	Gielnik et al. (2015)	Field Experiment	Entrepreneurs	Entrepreneurship training improves entrepreneurial behavior.
26	Rauch & Frese (2007)	Meta-analysis	Entrepreneurs	Personality traits and human capital contribute to business success.
27	Frese & Gielnik (2014)	Literature Review	Entrepreneurship research	Psychological capital positively influences entrepreneurial success.

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28	Shane (2003)	Conceptual	Entrepreneurship literature	Human capital enhances opportunity recognition capabilities.
29	Sarasvathy (2001)	Conceptual	Entrepreneurs	Effectuation logic plays a significant role in entrepreneurial decision-making.
30	Minniti & Bygrave (2001)	Conceptual	Entrepreneurship research	Learning processes are fundamental to entrepreneurial development.
31	Politis (2005)	Conceptual	Entrepreneurs	Experiential learning contributes to entrepreneurial knowledge creation.
32	Cope (2005)	Qualitative	Entrepreneurs	Learning from failure strengthens entrepreneurial capability.
33	Ardichvili, Cardozo & Ray (2003)	Conceptual	Entrepreneurship research	Opportunity recognition is influenced by prior knowledge.
34	Dimov (2007)	Conceptual	Entrepreneurship research	Human capital affects opportunity evaluation and exploitation.
35	Shepherd & DeTienne (2005)	Empirical	Entrepreneurs	Prior knowledge enhances opportunity identification.
36	Parker (2009)	Theoretical	Entrepreneurship economics	Human capital influences entry into entrepreneurship.
37	Audretsch (2012)	Conceptual	Entrepreneurship policy	Human capital is crucial in knowledge-spillover entrepreneurship.
38	Wiklund & Shepherd (2003)	Survey	SMEs	Entrepreneurial orientation positively influences firm performance.
39	Wiklund, Patzelt & Shepherd (2009)	Conceptual	Entrepreneurship research	Knowledge-based resources contribute to venture growth.
40	Baum, Locke & Smith (2001)	Quantitative	Entrepreneurs	Entrepreneurial skills and motivation significantly influence venture growth.

Result and Discussion

The findings of this systematic literature review provide a comprehensive understanding of how entrepreneurial attitude and entrepreneurial skills contribute to the development of entrepreneurial human capital. By synthesizing empirical evidence from various studies published between 2000 and 2025, the review identifies consistent patterns regarding the motivational and competency-based dimensions of entrepreneurship. The analysis demonstrates that entrepreneurial attitude influences individuals' willingness to engage in entrepreneurial activities, while entrepreneurial skills provide the operational capabilities

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necessary to implement entrepreneurial actions effectively. Furthermore, the reviewed literature highlights that these dimensions are not independent but rather complementary components that collectively shape entrepreneurial capability and business performance. The following sections present the main findings of the review by discussing the role of entrepreneurial attitude, entrepreneurial skills, and their integration within the entrepreneurial human capital framework.

The Role of Entrepreneurial Attitude

The synthesis of the reviewed literature indicates that entrepreneurial attitude consistently emerges as one of the strongest predictors of entrepreneurial intention and entrepreneurial engagement. Across the majority of empirical studies included in this review, individuals who demonstrate positive evaluations of entrepreneurship are more likely to express entrepreneurial intentions and to pursue entrepreneurial careers. This finding is particularly evident in studies grounded in the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), where attitude represents an individual's favorable or unfavorable assessment of becoming an entrepreneur. Research conducted among university students in different countries shows a significant positive relationship between entrepreneurial attitude and entrepreneurial intention (Liñán & Chen, 2009; Krueger et al., 2000; Kolvereid, 1996). The consistency of these findings suggests that entrepreneurial attitude serves as an important psychological foundation that motivates individuals to consider entrepreneurship as a viable career path.

However, the strength of this relationship varies across contexts, indicating that entrepreneurial attitude alone may not fully explain entrepreneurial behavior. The reviewed studies reveal considerable variation in the influence of entrepreneurial attitude across demographic and institutional contexts (Acharya & Berry, 2023; Liu et al., 2025; Verma et al., 2025; Navin et al., 2026). Research involving university students generally reports stronger effects of attitude on entrepreneurial intention than studies involving established entrepreneurs or business owners. This difference may arise because students are still in the process of forming career aspirations, making attitudinal factors particularly influential in their decision-making processes (Rauch & Hulsink, 2015). In contrast, experienced entrepreneurs often rely more heavily on prior experience, resource availability, and market knowledge when making entrepreneurial decisions. Furthermore, cross-cultural studies suggest that societal norms and institutional environments moderate the effect of entrepreneurial attitude. In countries where entrepreneurship enjoys strong social legitimacy and institutional support, positive attitudes are more likely to translate into entrepreneurial action than in environments characterized by economic uncertainty or regulatory barriers (Liñán & Chen, 2009). These findings suggest that entrepreneurial attitude should be understood as a context-dependent construct rather than a universally stable predictor.

A critical issue emerging from the literature concerns whether entrepreneurial attitude should be conceptualized as a component of entrepreneurial human capital. Traditional human capital theory primarily emphasizes knowledge, education, and skills as productive assets that increase individual performance (Becker, 1964). Consequently, some scholars may question the inclusion of attitude within human capital frameworks because attitudes are often viewed as psychological rather than productive resources. However, several contemporary entrepreneurship studies challenge this narrow interpretation by demonstrating that attitudes influence the acquisition, utilization, and effectiveness of entrepreneurial competencies (Frese & Gielnik, 2014; Obschonka et al., 2022). Individuals with positive entrepreneurial attitudes are more likely to invest in entrepreneurial learning, seek opportunities for skill development, and persist when confronted with uncertainty. Therefore, attitude may function as a motivational mechanism that activates other forms of human capital, thereby justifying its

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inclusion within a broader entrepreneurial human capital framework. The findings suggest that entrepreneurial attitude represents more than a precursor to entrepreneurial intention. It constitutes a strategic psychological resource that influences how individuals perceive opportunities, respond to challenges, and mobilize entrepreneurial capabilities. Therefore, entrepreneurial attitude should be viewed as a dynamic and developable element of entrepreneurial human capital rather than merely an antecedent variable within behavioral models. This perspective broadens existing understandings of entrepreneurial capability and highlights the importance of integrating attitudinal development into entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial support programs.

The Role of Entrepreneurial Skills

The review demonstrates that entrepreneurial skills constitute one of the most critical dimensions of entrepreneurial human capital. Unlike entrepreneurial attitude, which primarily influences motivational readiness, entrepreneurial skills enable entrepreneurs to transform intentions into concrete entrepreneurial actions. Across the reviewed studies, entrepreneurial skills are consistently associated with venture creation, business growth, innovation, and long-term organizational performance (Man et al., 2002). The findings indicate that entrepreneurs require a combination of technical, managerial, and interpersonal competencies to successfully identify opportunities and manage business activities. Consequently, entrepreneurial skills represent the practical capabilities through which entrepreneurial value is created.

The literature indicates that certain entrepreneurial skills exert greater influence than others depending on the stage and context of entrepreneurial activity. Opportunity recognition skills emerge as one of the most consistently important competencies because they enable entrepreneurs to identify unmet market needs and exploit emerging opportunities before competitors (Shane, 2003; Shepherd & DeTienne, 2005). Strategic planning and decision-making skills are particularly important in uncertain environments where entrepreneurs must allocate resources despite incomplete information (Dimov, 2007). Leadership and networking competencies become increasingly important as ventures expand and require coordination among employees, partners, and stakeholders. These findings suggest that entrepreneurial skills should not be viewed as a homogeneous construct but rather as a portfolio of competencies that contribute differently to entrepreneurial outcomes.

An important theme emerging from the reviewed literature is the significance of skill diversity. Lazear's (2005) "jack-of-all-trades" theory proposes that successful entrepreneurs possess competencies across multiple functional domains rather than deep specialization in a single area. Several empirical studies support this proposition by showing that entrepreneurs with diverse skill sets demonstrate greater adaptability, opportunity exploitation, and innovative behavior (Obschonka et al., 2022). Skill diversity also enhances resilience because entrepreneurs can respond more effectively to unexpected challenges and changing market conditions. Therefore, the contribution of skill diversity extends beyond operational flexibility and plays an important role in sustaining entrepreneurial competitiveness.

Although evidence supporting the importance of entrepreneurial skills is substantial, methodological limitations remain evident in the literature. Many studies rely on self-assessment measures of entrepreneurial competencies, creating potential bias because individuals may overestimate or underestimate their abilities. Additionally, most investigations employ cross-sectional research designs, making it difficult to determine causal relationships between entrepreneurial skills and business outcomes. Future research should therefore adopt longitudinal and experimental approaches to better understand how entrepreneurial competencies develop over time and influence entrepreneurial success (Syed et al., 2024; Ali et al., 2024; Kusetogullari et al., 2025).

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Integration of Entrepreneurial Attitude and Skills in Entrepreneurial Human Capital

One of the most significant findings emerging from this systematic literature review is the complementary and mutually reinforcing relationship between entrepreneurial attitude and entrepreneurial skills in shaping entrepreneurial human capital. While previous entrepreneurship studies have traditionally examined these constructs separately, the synthesis of the reviewed literature suggests that entrepreneurial capability is best understood through their interaction rather than through their independent effects (Bolt et al., 2022; Clark et al., 2024). Across the analyzed studies, entrepreneurial attitude consistently functions as a motivational mechanism that influences an individual's willingness to pursue entrepreneurial opportunities, whereas entrepreneurial skills provide the practical competencies required to transform entrepreneurial aspirations into effective business actions (Widjaja, 2025). This finding indicates that entrepreneurial human capital extends beyond the accumulation of knowledge and competencies and includes psychological resources that facilitate the utilization of those competencies in entrepreneurial contexts.

The reviewed literature further demonstrates that entrepreneurial attitudes often precede and stimulate the acquisition of entrepreneurial skills. Individuals who hold favorable perceptions toward entrepreneurship are generally more motivated to participate in entrepreneurial education, engage in experiential learning activities, seek entrepreneurial role models, and acquire relevant competencies (Fayolle & Gailly, 2015; Nabi et al., 2017). In this regard, entrepreneurial attitude serves as a catalyst for human capital development because it influences individuals' willingness to invest time and effort in acquiring entrepreneurial knowledge and skills. This finding aligns with the broader human capital perspective, which emphasizes that individuals actively invest in competencies when they perceive expected future returns from such investments (Becker, 1964). Consequently, entrepreneurial attitudes can be viewed as antecedent conditions that facilitate the accumulation of entrepreneurial human capital.

At the same time, entrepreneurial skills strengthen the effectiveness of entrepreneurial attitudes by enabling individuals to act upon entrepreneurial intentions. Several studies included in this review indicate that positive entrepreneurial attitudes alone are insufficient to generate successful entrepreneurial outcomes when individuals lack the competencies necessary to identify opportunities, develop business strategies, or manage entrepreneurial risks (Man et al., 2002). This observation helps explain why some individuals express strong entrepreneurial aspirations but ultimately fail to initiate or sustain entrepreneurial activities. Entrepreneurial skills provide the operational capabilities required to convert entrepreneurial motivation into entrepreneurial action. Therefore, entrepreneurial attitude and entrepreneurial skills should be understood as complementary resources whose combined effect exceeds their individual contributions.

The interaction between entrepreneurial attitude and entrepreneurial skills is particularly evident in entrepreneurship education research. Studies examining entrepreneurship programs consistently report that educational interventions combining attitudinal development with competency-building activities produce stronger entrepreneurial outcomes than programs emphasizing only one dimension (Martin et al., 2013; Sánchez, 2013; Rauch & Hulsink, 2015). Experiential learning approaches, business simulations, mentoring programs, and venture creation projects simultaneously strengthen entrepreneurial confidence, opportunity awareness, and practical competencies. As a result, participants become not only more willing to engage in entrepreneurship but also more capable of executing entrepreneurial activities effectively. These findings provide empirical support for the proposition that entrepreneurial human capital should be conceptualized as an integrated system of psychological and

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functional capabilities (Chaudhuri et al., 2023; Kim, 2023). A notable theoretical contribution of this review concerns the reconceptualization of entrepreneurial human capital. Traditional human capital models predominantly focus on education, training, experience, and knowledge as the primary determinants of economic performance (Becker, 1964; Unger et al., 2011). While these dimensions remain important, the present synthesis suggests that such models may not fully capture the complexity of entrepreneurial capability. Entrepreneurship involves uncertainty, ambiguity, and opportunity-driven decision making, conditions that require not only technical competence but also motivational readiness and entrepreneurial orientation. Therefore, entrepreneurial human capital should be viewed as a multidimensional construct encompassing cognitive resources (knowledge and experience), functional resources (skills and competencies), and motivational resources (attitudes and entrepreneurial dispositions). This broader conceptualization provides a more comprehensive explanation of entrepreneurial behavior and performance.

The findings also reveal that the integration of entrepreneurial attitude and entrepreneurial skills may help explain inconsistencies observed in previous entrepreneurship research. Some studies have reported strong effects of entrepreneurial attitudes on entrepreneurial intention, while others have emphasized the dominant influence of entrepreneurial competencies on entrepreneurial performance (Liñán & Chen, 2009). These seemingly contradictory findings may reflect the fact that entrepreneurial outcomes are shaped by the interaction of motivational and competency-based factors rather than by either factor in isolation. By integrating both dimensions within a unified entrepreneurial human capital framework, this review offers a more coherent explanation of entrepreneurial development and helps reconcile fragmented findings in the existing literature.

Furthermore, the synthesis highlights the importance of contextual influences in shaping the relationship between entrepreneurial attitudes, entrepreneurial skills, and entrepreneurial outcomes. Educational institutions, entrepreneurial ecosystems, social networks, and cultural norms all affect the extent to which attitudes and skills are developed and translated into entrepreneurial action. For example, individuals possessing strong entrepreneurial attitudes and competencies may still encounter barriers related to limited access to finance, institutional constraints, or unfavorable market conditions. Consequently, entrepreneurial human capital should not be viewed solely as an individual-level construct but rather as a resource whose effectiveness is influenced by broader environmental factors. This observation underscores the importance of integrating individual and contextual perspectives in future entrepreneurship research.

The evidence synthesized in this review suggests that entrepreneurial attitude and entrepreneurial skills represent interconnected dimensions of entrepreneurial human capital. Their interaction provides a more comprehensive explanation of entrepreneurial capability than models focusing exclusively on either psychological or competency-based factors. Accordingly, future theoretical developments should move beyond fragmented approaches and adopt integrated frameworks capable of capturing the multidimensional nature of entrepreneurial human capital and its influence on entrepreneurial success.

Implications for Theory and Practice

The findings of this review generate several important theoretical implications for entrepreneurship research. First, the review contributes to the ongoing development of entrepreneurial human capital theory by challenging traditional conceptualizations that primarily emphasize education, experience, and technical competencies. Although these dimensions remain fundamental, the evidence synthesized in this review demonstrates that entrepreneurial attitudes significantly influence how entrepreneurial knowledge and skills are

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acquired, mobilized, and applied. Consequently, entrepreneurial human capital should be conceptualized as a multidimensional construct that includes not only cognitive and functional resources but also motivational and attitudinal dimensions. Such a perspective provides a more comprehensive understanding of entrepreneurial capability and better reflects the realities of entrepreneurial decision making under uncertainty. The findings extend the explanatory power of the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) within entrepreneurship research. Previous studies have predominantly utilized TPB to explain entrepreneurial intention through attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control (Ajzen, 1991). While this approach effectively predicts entrepreneurial intention, it offers limited insight into how intentions are transformed into entrepreneurial action and business performance.

The present review suggests that entrepreneurial skills may function as an important mechanism connecting entrepreneurial attitudes to entrepreneurial outcomes. Therefore, integrating TPB with entrepreneurial human capital perspectives may provide a more complete explanation of entrepreneurial processes, ranging from intention formation to venture development and performance. This review contributes to the literature by addressing the fragmentation that characterizes much of the existing research. Previous studies have frequently examined entrepreneurial attitude and entrepreneurial skills independently, resulting in incomplete explanations of entrepreneurial behavior. By synthesizing evidence across multiple studies, the review demonstrates that entrepreneurial success is influenced by the interaction of motivational and competency-based factors. This integrated perspective provides a stronger theoretical foundation for future empirical research and encourages scholars to develop more comprehensive models of entrepreneurial capability.

From a practical standpoint, the findings suggest that entrepreneurship education programs should move beyond traditional knowledge-based approaches and adopt integrated learning models that simultaneously develop entrepreneurial attitudes and entrepreneurial competencies. Many entrepreneurship courses continue to emphasize business planning, financial analysis, and venture management while paying insufficient attention to motivational development and entrepreneurial mindset formation. The evidence reviewed in this study indicates that educational programs are most effective when they combine cognitive learning with experiential activities that foster confidence, creativity, resilience, opportunity recognition, and proactive behavior.

Specifically, universities and training institutions should incorporate experiential learning strategies such as business simulations, startup projects, design-thinking workshops, entrepreneurial internships, and mentoring programs. These approaches enable participants to apply theoretical knowledge while simultaneously strengthening entrepreneurial attitudes through direct experience. Research consistently demonstrates that experiential learning contributes more effectively to entrepreneurial competence development than traditional lecture-based instruction because it allows learners to confront uncertainty, solve real-world problems, and develop entrepreneurial self-efficacy (Fayolle & Gailly, 2015; Gielnik et al., 2015).

The findings also have implications for policymakers seeking to stimulate entrepreneurial activity and economic development. Entrepreneurship support programs often prioritize technical training and access to finance while overlooking psychological factors that influence entrepreneurial engagement. The present review suggests that policy interventions should address both dimensions simultaneously. Incubation centers, accelerator programs, entrepreneurial mentoring initiatives, and community-based entrepreneurship projects can provide environments in which entrepreneurial attitudes and entrepreneurial skills are developed in parallel. Such integrated interventions are likely to generate more sustainable

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entrepreneurial outcomes than initiatives focusing exclusively on technical competence development. The findings identify several directions for future research. Longitudinal studies are needed to examine how entrepreneurial attitudes and entrepreneurial skills evolve over time and influence entrepreneurial outcomes across different stages of venture development. Cross-cultural investigations would further enhance understanding of how institutional environments and cultural values shape the relationship between entrepreneurial human capital and entrepreneurial performance. Additionally, future empirical studies could test the integrated framework proposed in this review using advanced analytical techniques such as Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) or multilevel analysis to investigate the complex interactions among attitudes, skills, contextual factors, and entrepreneurial outcomes.

Conclusion

This systematic literature review demonstrates that entrepreneurial attitude and entrepreneurial skills are two interrelated dimensions that play a fundamental role in the development of entrepreneurial human capital. The synthesis of the reviewed studies reveals that entrepreneurial attitude functions as a motivational resource that encourages individuals to recognize opportunities, pursue entrepreneurial activities, and invest in capability development, while entrepreneurial skills provide the practical competencies required to transform entrepreneurial intentions into effective entrepreneurial actions. The findings further indicate that neither attitude nor skills alone are sufficient to explain entrepreneurial success; rather, their interaction creates a stronger and more comprehensive form of entrepreneurial human capital. By integrating these dimensions, this study extends the traditional human capital perspective beyond education and experience, offering a multidimensional understanding of entrepreneurial capability that incorporates motivational, cognitive, and functional resources. The review also highlights the importance of entrepreneurship education and training programs that simultaneously foster positive entrepreneurial attitudes and develop practical entrepreneurial competencies. Overall, the study contributes to entrepreneurship literature by providing a more holistic conceptualization of entrepreneurial human capital and emphasizing the complementary roles of attitude and skills in enhancing entrepreneurial performance and sustainable venture success.

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