

Perception of High School Students Regarding Entrepreneurial Activities in Hanoi

Nguyen Mai Trang¹ & Nguyen Mai Chi²

^{1&2} 12D5 Students, Viet Duc High School, Hanoi, Vietnam.

*Corresponding Author: Nguyen Mai Chi

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Article History	Abstract	
Original Research Article	<i>In the Industry 4.0 era, entrepreneurial education is no longer merely an economic trend but has become a core competency enabling high school students to adapt to a volatile labor market. This paper examines the perceptions of high school students in Hanoi regarding entrepreneurial activities to propose solutions for building a sustainable school-based startup ecosystem. The study was conducted through a quantitative survey of 1,200 students at 6 representative high schools in both urban and suburban areas.</i> <i>The findings reveal a significant shift in the mindset of students in the capital: 41.9% define entrepreneurship as a creative activity associated with social value, rather than purely profit-oriented goals. Although the entrepreneurial spirit is widespread, with 65% of students highly valuing the importance of this field, a "perception gap" persists, as nearly 30% of students consider it merely a secondary option. Notably, the school startup ecosystem lacks practical connectivity: 70% of students access information primarily through social media, while only 4% have had direct experiential opportunities at enterprises.</i> <i>Based on empirical evidence, this paper asserts that entrepreneurship at the high school level should be framed as a process of "experiential learning" and "creation." Consequently, the authors propose a set of strategic solutions: developing a standardized entrepreneurial competency framework, establishing a connectivity network between schools and local enterprises, and transitioning training methods from passive communication to direct practical engagement. These solutions aim to elevate awareness and transform students' creative entrepreneurial ideas into practical actions, contributing to the realization of the innovation-oriented education strategy in Hanoi.</i> Keywords: Entrepreneurial education, entrepreneurial mindset, high school students, startup ecosystem, Hanoi.	
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1. Introduction

In the context of globalization and the rapid development of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, an entrepreneurial mindset is no longer limited to the economic sphere but has become a core competency necessary for the younger generation to adapt to a volatile labor market. In Vietnam, the national entrepreneurial spirit is spreading vigorously, with entrepreneurship education for high school students viewed as a strategic approach to forming proactive mindsets, problem-solving skills, and creativity from an early age.

Hanoi, as the country's largest center for education, politics,

and economy possesses the most favorable conditions regarding technology environments, startup ecosystems, and educational resources. In recent years, the Hanoi Department of Education and Training has implemented various policies to promote experiential activities, career guidance, and school-based startup projects. However, implementation shows a significant gap between theory and practice. Defining and realizing startup projects at the high school level remains largely movement-based, lacking sustainable integration with academic thinking and practical skills.

Despite immense potential, understanding the current status, psychological barriers, practical competencies, and factors influencing the entrepreneurial intention of high school students in Hanoi remain a subject requiring systematic and scientific inquiry. The lack of empirical data as a foundation for educational policy adjustments has caused startup support activities in many high schools to remain formalistic, failing to truly awaken the latent creative potential within students.

Originating from this reality, this paper focuses on researching "The perception of high school students regarding entrepreneurial activities in Hanoi." This paper aims to evaluate students' perceptions of entrepreneurship to orient educational solutions, aiming to create a substantive and sustainable school-based startup ecosystem, contributing to the realization of the innovation-oriented education direction that the capital's education sector is pursuing.

2. Content

2.1. Entrepreneurial Activities and Entrepreneurship Among Students

Entrepreneurship is not merely a single business act but a strategic activity requiring serious investment in resources and mindset. According to Acs and Szerb (2007), entrepreneurship serves as a driver for national economic development by creating new value, fostering competition, and promoting innovation. For policymakers, entrepreneurship is considered a "health index" of the economy, requiring a full awareness of its role in maintaining market dynamism (BarNir et al., 2011).

However, from the perspective of modern economics, entrepreneurship is defined as a process of creative risk-taking. Shane (2012) and Balan & Metcalfe (2012) emphasize that the core of entrepreneurship is not just running a business, but the willingness to accept risks to proactively exploit opportunities, thereby creating added value through innovation. This requires entrepreneurs not only to have capital but, more importantly, the ability to identify opportunities and the fortitude to face uncertainty.

In the knowledge era, entrepreneurship has shifted from an economic choice to a common career development model that young people need to access (Schwarz, Wdowiak, Almer-Jarz & Breiteneker, 2009). Entrepreneurship education for students does not prioritize short-term profit goals but focuses on forming "entrepreneurial competencies." In the school environment, entrepreneurship acts as a form of experiential learning. Instead of merely absorbing academic theory, students are

trained in critical thinking, problem-solving, and adaptability through building projects, business models, or creative solutions.

The process of forming entrepreneurial intentions and behaviors can be deeply explained through behavioral theories, notably the Theory of Planned Behavior. Accordingly, entrepreneurial intention is nurtured by the close interaction between perception, attitude toward risky behavior, subjective norms, and the surrounding supportive environment. When the school educational environment harmoniously combines with the actual innovation ecosystem, students will reduce psychological barriers regarding failure. Thus, promoting entrepreneurship among students is not just preparing them with a foundation to create businesses in the future, but a process of education aimed at creating a high-quality workforce, possessing a spirit of engagement and readiness to create breakthrough values for the economy.

2.2. Current Status of Student Perception on Entrepreneurship in Hanoi

a) Research Subjects

The perception of high school students in Hanoi regarding entrepreneurial activities was surveyed among 1,200 students. To ensure high representativeness regarding cultural characteristics, economic conditions, and educational ecosystems, the research sample was stratified at 6 representative high schools, including urban schools with traditional backgrounds (Viet Duc, Thang Long, Kim Lien) and suburban schools with strong development in infrastructure and innovation orientation (Dong Anh, Lien Ha, Bac Thang Long).

This selection reflects similarities and differences in entrepreneurial perception between students in the central area with abundant resources and students in suburban areas undergoing rapid urbanization. Surveyed students included all grades (10, 11, and 12), ensuring diversity in academic performance, conduct, and career orientation (natural sciences, social sciences). The sample structure was controlled to ensure correlation with the actual distribution ratio of students at each school, allowing for generalization of results across the capital's high school education.

Cronbach's Alpha reliability tests showed that all variables in the survey reached a reliability coefficient of 0.7 or higher, ensuring "good" to "very good" usage quality. All observed variables reached a Corrected Item – Total Correlation ≥ 0.3 , meeting all technical standards in scientific statistical analysis.

Table 1. Overview of research subjects by educational institution

High School	Number of students	Percentage (%)
Viet Duc High School	200	16.7
Thang Long High School	200	16.7
Kim Lien High School	200	16.7
Dong Anh High School	200	16.7
Lien Ha High School	200	16.7
Bac Thang Long High School	200	16.7
Total	1200	100%

Table 2. Distribution by demographic and academic characteristics

Factor	Classification	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Grade level	Grade 10	450	37.5
	Grade 11	410	34.2
	Grade 12	340	28.3
Gender	Male	580	48.3
	Female	620	51.7
Academic performance	Excellent/Very Good	540	45.0
	Good/Average	660	55.0
Level of interest in entrepreneurship	Very interested	360	30.0
	Interested	580	48.3
	Not interested	260	21.7

Table 3. Status of access to entrepreneurial activities

Indicator	Classification	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Participation in entrepreneurship workshops/clubs	Participated	340	28.3
	Never participated	860	71.7
Source of knowledge about entrepreneurship	School/Club	280	23.3
	Internet/Social Media	720	60.0
	Family/Relatives	200	16.7

b) Research results*b1. Perception of the definition of entrepreneurial activities**Table 4. Students' perception of the definition of entrepreneurial activities*

No.	Definition Content	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Entrepreneurship is creating a business similar to the market to generate personal income.	212	17.7
2	Entrepreneurship is creating a business similar to the market to generate income for oneself and society.	360	30.0
3	Entrepreneurship is creating a new, highly creative business to generate personal income.	125	10.4
4	Entrepreneurship is creating a new, highly creative business to generate value for oneself and society.	503	41.9
Total		1,200	100

The survey results regarding students' perception of the definition of entrepreneurship reveal diversity and depth in the mindset of current high school students. Their perception is no longer limited to traditional business models but is strongly directed toward innovation and social responsibility. Specifically, the view that entrepreneurship is "creating a new, highly creative business that generates value for oneself and society" dominates with a rate of 41.9%. This demonstrates that the majority of students in Hanoi have formed a modern entrepreneurial mindset, where innovation and social impact are the focus. This is a positive signal, reflecting a shift in students' mindset from seeking pure profit to a desire to solve community problems through creative solutions.

Alongside the creative mindset group, the data also records differentiation in students' perceptions of the purpose of entrepreneurship. About 30.0% of students define entrepreneurship as taking advantage of existing market opportunities to generate income for themselves and society. When combined with the creative group serving the community, up to 71.9% of students agree that

entrepreneurial activities must be associated with humanistic values and social benefits. Conversely, the view that entrepreneurship is merely a business activity similar to the market aimed at optimizing personal income accounts for a relatively low rate (17.7%), showing that a "pure personal enrichment" mindset is no longer the core goal students aim for.

It can be affirmed that high school students in Hanoi are viewing entrepreneurship through the lens of a process characterized by creation and breakthroughs. Although a small percentage still approach entrepreneurship in the direction of imitative business, in general, the foundation of perception regarding "socially-oriented innovative entrepreneurship" dominates. This is an important practical basis for educational managers and schools to build specialized training programs focusing on ideation skills and innovation thinking, thereby elevating students' perception from understanding "entrepreneurship is business" to "entrepreneurship is solving problems through innovation."

b2. Perception of the importance of entrepreneurial activities

Table 5. Perception of the importance of entrepreneurial activities

Level of assessment	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Very important	221	18.4
Important	559	46.6
Relatively important	352	29.3
Not important	61	5.1
Completely not important	7	0.6
Total	1,200	100

The survey results regarding the perception of high school students in Hanoi on the importance of entrepreneurial activities (Table 5) reveal a multidimensional picture of students' interest and attitudes toward this career model. In general, the majority of students give positive recognition to the value of entrepreneurship, evidenced by 65.0% of students rating this activity as "Important" (46.6%) and "Very Important" (18.4%). This reflects that the mindset of current high school students has caught up with the labor market shift, where entrepreneurship is no longer seen as a peripheral activity but as a necessary component in an individual's career development path.

However, deep analysis shows an interesting point: the percentage of students choosing "Relatively Important" is up to 29.3%. This shows that a significant portion of students, while acknowledging the usefulness of entrepreneurship, still hold a neutral or cautious attitude. In the context of high school education facing heavy pressure from transfer exams and university major selection, many students tend to view entrepreneurship as a "back-up

option" or a skills-based experiential activity rather than a top-priority career path.

Furthermore, the group rating entrepreneurship as "Not Important" and "Completely Not Important" accounts for a very low rate, totaling only 5.7%. This confirms that the entrepreneurial spirit has created widespread diffusion, receiving near-absolute consensus from students in Hanoi.

In summary, the survey data shows that students' faith in the value of entrepreneurship is very high, but the differentiation in interest level reflects the gap between "value perception" and "actual engagement intention." To convert the 29.3% group from "Relatively Important" to "Important" or "Very Important," educators need to change the approach: not just propagating theoretical importance, but realizing entrepreneurship through highly practical projects, helping students clearly see entrepreneurship as a feasible path to realize their own value, thereby enhancing motivation and commitment.

b3. Perception of the timing of entrepreneurship

Table 6. Perception of the ideal time to start a business

Timing	Frequency	Percentage (%)
While still a high school student	218	18.2
During university	321	26.7
After graduation (within 5 years)	429	35.8
After 5 years of graduation	232	19.3
Total	1,200	100

The survey results in Table 6 elucidate the career mindset path of high school students in Hanoi through the perception of the "ripe" time to start a business. The data shows diversity in students' viewpoints, reflecting the psychological shift from waiting for opportunities to proactively accumulating capacity.

Notably, the percentage of students choosing to start a business while still in high school accounts for 18.2%, and this increases to 26.7% when students consider the university stage. In total, 44.9% of students support starting a business early – a testament to the spirit of engagement and the desire to gain practical experience right from the learning stage. For these students, entrepreneurship is not merely business but is viewed as a form of "experiential learning," helping them forge bravery and essential soft skills before facing a harsh labor market.

However, the largest proportion in the sample is the group choosing the time "Within 5 years after graduation" with 35.8%. This figure reflects the cautious mindset typical of high school students, placing top priority on completing academic knowledge and accumulating work experience at

organizations before making independent business decisions. The group choosing to start a business "After 5 years of graduation" accounts for 19.3%, showing that a significant portion still views entrepreneurship as a long-term goal, associated with stability in capital, management skills, and life experience.

Thus, the differentiation in perception regarding the timing of entrepreneurship shows that Hanoi students have two parallel mindsets: the "progressive" mindset wanting to realize ideas while young and the "accumulation" mindset wanting to build a solid foundation before starting. This coexistence is perfectly consistent with educational reality. This suggests to educational policymakers that instead of forced early entrepreneurship, schools need to create "entrepreneurial ladders": starting from clubs (for high school), practical projects at university, to incubators after graduation. This approach respects students' natural development path while ensuring startup quality, helping to minimize failure risks.

b4. Methods students use to know about experiential activities

Table 7. Channels for accessing entrepreneurship information among high school students in Hanoi

No.	Information access channel	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	School subjects/Experiential programs	216	18.0
2	Courses/Seminars from external organizations	120	10.0
3	Online courses (E-learning)	264	22.0
4	Mass media/Social networks	840	70.0
5	Referrals from friends, relatives	300	25.0
6	Entrepreneurship events (Festivals, Talkshows)	144	12.0
7	Student entrepreneurship competitions	96	8.0
8	Direct experience at enterprises	48	4.0
9	Startup support projects by the Youth Union/Association	84	7.0

The data shows that 70.0% of students access information on entrepreneurship through mass media and social networks, becoming the most popular channel. This is perfectly consistent with the psychological characteristics of the Gen Z generation – "digital citizens" capable of exploiting information quickly in the online environment. Besides, 22.0% learn through online courses (E-learning)

and 25.0% receive information from friends and relatives. Thus, the majority of students are forming perceptions of entrepreneurship through non-formal, spontaneous, and self-learning channels. Under the lens of education economics, this is a channel with wide coverage but usually only provides "surface-level communication," helping students know about entrepreneurship but lacking depth in

skills and critical thinking.

Contrary to the explosion of online channels, forms of access involving methodical education and career orientation record quite low rates. Only 18.0% of students know about entrepreneurship through courses or experiential programs at school. This figure shows that entrepreneurship education activities in schools are still "movement-based" and have not been integrated deeply into the formal curriculum. Simultaneously, only 8.0% of students access it through startup competitions and a mere 4.0% have experienced it directly at enterprises. These are alarming figures, showing the break in connectivity between schools and the business ecosystem in Hanoi.

2.3. Discussion

The research results on the perception of high school students in Hanoi regarding entrepreneurship reveal a multidimensional picture, reflecting the intersection between the creative innovation aspirations of Gen Z and barriers from current high school educational reality.

a) Mindset Shift: From "Livelihood Entrepreneurship" to "Creation Entrepreneurship"

The research data shows a strong shift in the mindset of Hanoi students. The fact that over 41.9% of students define entrepreneurship as being associated with "creativity" and "social value" shows that their perception has gone far beyond the traditional business concept (which focuses mainly on personal income). From the perspective of economics, this is a positive signal for the formation of an "Entrepreneurial Mindset." They not only view entrepreneurship as an economic tool but have started to view it as a method to solve social problems. This is consistent with modern theories of *Sustainable Entrepreneurship*, where community value is considered a measure of success alongside profit.

b) The Gap Between "Positive Perception" and "Actual Engagement Intention"

Although the entrepreneurial spirit is widespread with nearly 65% of students rating entrepreneurship as "Important," 29.3% still choose the "Relatively Important" level. This shows a "mismatch" between the belief in the value of entrepreneurship and the readiness to engage. In the context of academic pressure at key high schools in Hanoi (such as Viet Duc, Kim Lien, Thang Long...), entrepreneurship is at risk of being viewed as a "peripheral activity." Without "realization" policies through practical projects, students' interest may stop at theoretical perception rather than becoming entrepreneurial behavior.

c) "Progressive" Mindset vs. "Accumulation" Mindset

The research indicates that 44.9% of students support early

entrepreneurship (right from high school or University), while the remaining 55.1% choose the "accumulation" path (after graduation). This is not a contradiction but a reflection of the natural development path. For the group choosing early entrepreneurship, this is the best "experiential learning" form. For the group choosing "accumulation," entrepreneurship is a long-term career choice requiring careful preparation. From the perspective of educational management, this suggests that the education system in Hanoi needs to build "entrepreneurial ladders": it is not necessary to force every student to start a business early, but it is necessary to create a safe testing environment so that students can engage as soon as they feel ready.

d) "Bottlenecks" in Communication and Practical Connectivity

The most alarming result is that 70.0% of students access entrepreneurship through non-formal channels (social media), while only 4.0% access it through enterprise experience and 8.0% through competitions. This shows that the startup ecosystem in current high schools is still in a state of "isolation." Schools are lacking engagement with enterprises – the most important "practice centers." Without a shift from passive information access (reading social media) to active interaction (experience at enterprises), the practical ability of students cannot be shaped. Over-reliance on surface-level information on social media easily leads students to misunderstand the glamor of entrepreneurship, leading to distorted expectations and easy abandonment when facing actual risks.

Particularly, the issue needs to be viewed in the context of Hanoi being the largest economic, political, and educational center in the North, where the most dynamic innovation ecosystem in the country converges. High schools in the area, whether in inner-city districts with high urban density or suburban areas developing strongly in industrial infrastructure (like Dong Anh, Bac Thang Long), are all benefiting from a dense network of business incubators and co-working spaces. The existence of a gap between the "available ecosystem" and students' practical experience (only 4% of students accessing enterprises) is a paradox that needs to be resolved. If schools know how to "leverage" this local advantage to establish direct connectivity corridors with nearby economic entities, this will be the key to realizing an entrepreneurial mindset for the capital's students.

3. Conclusion and recommendations

3.1. Conclusion

The paper has outlined a panoramic view of the entrepreneurial perception of high school students in Hanoi. The results show that the capital's students have initially formed a progressive entrepreneurial mindset, aiming for

innovation and community values instead of pure profit goals. However, there are still significant gaps in realizing these ideas. The "mismatch" between positive perception of the importance of entrepreneurship and the reality of passive information access (via social media) is creating a major barrier to forming true entrepreneurial capacity. Schools have not yet fulfilled their role as a "bridge" guiding students from surface-level perception to in-depth practice.

3.2. Recommendations

Based on the research results, we propose several strategic solutions to promote the school startup ecosystem:

For the Hanoi Department of Education and Training:

- -Build a "High School Entrepreneurial Competency Framework": Integrate entrepreneurship education into the list of mandatory experiential activities with specific evaluation criteria, rather than stopping at movement-based competitions.
- -Establish an Entrepreneurial Connection Network: Build an online connectivity platform between high schools and startup enterprises and incubators in the area, creating conditions for students to participate in short-term internships (Job Shadowing).

For High Schools:

- -Transition from "Communication" to "Guidance": Schools need to act as information filters, organizing specialized seminars and startup clubs supported by mentors from enterprises, helping students access knowledge from practitioners.
- -Realize Ideas: Encourage the building of small project support funds (micro-grants) within the school so students can directly test business models on a small scale.

For Students:

- -Shift from "Know" to "Try": Students need to be more proactive in seeking practical opportunities, participating in community projects, and not fearing failure while still in school. Entrepreneurship at school age should be seen as a process of forging bravery rather than the only path to get rich.

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