

DEVELOPING A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF THE INSTITUTIONAL ENVIRONMENT FOR STUDENT ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN UKRAINE

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Maliarchuk O. H., Hrebeshkova O. M., Kubareva I. V. Developing a Conceptual Framework of the Institutional Environment for Student Entrepreneurship in Ukraine

Aim. This study aims to assess students' awareness of the institutional environment for entrepreneurship in Ukraine and to develop a conceptual framework to enhance institutional support for student entrepreneurship, aligned with European approaches, including the Entrepreneurship Competence Framework (EntreComp). *Design/methodology/approach.* The study is based on a quantitative research design using a survey of 235 university students from different regions of Ukraine. Descriptive statistics and clustering methods were applied to analyze students' awareness of support mechanisms at macro and micro levels, as well as their perceptions of institutional support. *Findings.* The results indicate that entrepreneurship is perceived as a valuable activity among students, particularly at the individual level. However, a low level of awareness of institutional support mechanisms has been identified, especially regarding business incubators, accelerators, and venture financing. The institutional environment is perceived as fragmented and not fully accessible. The findings also indicate that awareness does not strongly depend on students' entrepreneurial experience. Based on these results, a conceptual IESE framework of the institutional environment for student entrepreneurship is proposed, integrating principles, activities, and outcomes across macro and micro levels. *Research limitations/implications.* The study is limited to a sample of Ukrainian students and focuses on self-reported perceptions. Future research may involve testing the proposed framework across different institutional contexts and conducting longitudinal and cross-country analyses. *Practical implications.* The results highlight the need to improve coordination and visibility of entrepreneurship support mechanisms. Universities and policymakers can use the proposed framework to design integrated support systems, enhance awareness, and foster student entrepreneurial activity. *Social implications.* The development of student entrepreneurship contributes to economic recovery, social inclusion, and the engagement of diverse social groups, including vulnerable populations. *Originality/value.* The study contributes to the literature by linking students' awareness of institutional support with the development of a multi-level conceptual framework, providing a structured approach to improving the institutional environment for student entrepreneurship in Ukraine.

Keywords: student entrepreneurship; institutional environment; entrepreneurship support; entrepreneurial ecosystem; entrepreneurship education; student awareness; support mechanisms; Ukraine.

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Малярчук О. Г., Гребешкова О. М., Кубарева І. В. Розробка концептуальної рамкової структури інституційного середовища для студентського підприємництва в Україні

Мета. Дослідження має на меті оцінити обізнаність студентів щодо інституційного середовища для підприємництва в Україні та розробити концептуальну рамкову структуру для посилення інституційної підтримки студентського підприємництва, у відповідності з європейськими підходами, включаючи Рамкову структуру компетенцій у сфері підприємництва (EntreComp). *Дизайн/методологія/підхід.* Дослідження базується на кількісному дослідженні з використанням опитування 235 студентів університетів з різних регіонів України. Для аналізу обізнаності студентів щодо механізмів підтримки на макро- та мікрорівнях, а також їхніх уявлень про інституційну підтримку, були застосовані описова статистика та методи кластеризації. *Результати.* Результати дослідження показують, що підприємництво сприймається як вартісна діяльність серед студентів, особливо на індивідуальному рівні. Проте було виявлено низький рівень обізнаності про механізми інституційної підтримки, особливо щодо бізнес-інкубаторів, акселераторів та венчурного фінансування. Інституційне середовище сприймається як фрагментоване та не

повністю доступне. Результати також свідчать, що обізнаність не сильно залежить від підприємницького досвіду студентів. На основі цих результатів запропоновано концептуальну рамкову структуру IEFSE інституційного середовища для студентського підприємництва, інтегруючи принципи, діяльність та результати на макро- та мікрорівнях. Обмеження/наслідки дослідження. Дослідження обмежено зразком студентів з України і зосереджено на самооцінювальним сприйнятті. У майбутньому дослідження можуть включати тестування запропонованої рамкової структури в різних інституційних контекстах та проведення як довготривалого, так і транскордонного аналізу. Практичні наслідки. Результати підкреслюють потребу у покращенні координації та видимості механізмів підтримки підприємництва. Університети та політики можуть використовувати запропоновану структуру для розробки інтегрованих систем підтримки, підвищення обізнаності та сприяння підприємницькій діяльності студентів. Соціальні наслідки. Розвиток студентського підприємництва сприяє економічному відновленню, соціальній інклюзії та залученню різноманітних соціальних груп, включаючи вразливі верстви. Оригінальність/цінність. Дослідження сприяє збільшенню літературних джерел, поєднуючи усвідомлення студентами інституційної підтримки з розробкою багаторівневої концептуальної рамкової структури, що забезпечує структурований підхід до покращення інституційного середовища для студентського підприємництва в Україні.

Ключові слова: студентське підприємництво; інституційне середовище; підтримка підприємництва; підприємницька екосистема; освіта з підприємництва; обізнаність студентів; механізми підтримки; Україна.

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Entrepreneurship plays a crucial role in addressing Ukraine's urgent challenges, including economic recovery, social cohesion, and integration into the European economic space. In the context of war and ongoing crises, the intensification of entrepreneurial activity is essential for revitalizing the national economy [1]. It contributes to the development of key sectors such as services and information technology, facilitates job creation, attracts foreign investment, and supports overall economic stabilization and GDP growth.

Beyond its economic impact, entrepreneurship also performs an important social function. It promotes the inclusion of vulnerable groups, including older people, individuals with disabilities, veterans, and internally displaced persons (IDPs). Their involvement in entrepreneurial activity enhances social integration, expands employment opportunities, and contributes to reducing inequality.

Against this background, increasing awareness among the younger generation - particularly students - about entrepreneurship and its support mechanisms is becoming increasingly important. A well-developed understanding of the entrepreneurial environment enables students to engage more actively in entrepre-

neurial activities and to integrate more effectively into both university-based and national entrepreneurial ecosystems. At the same time, entrepreneurial activity does not develop in isolation but is strongly shaped by the institutional environment in which it is embedded. This environment includes formal institutions, such as regulatory frameworks, government support programs, and legal conditions, as well as informal institutions, including cultural norms, social attitudes, and trust. For students as potential entrepreneurs, the ability to navigate this institutional landscape is a critical component of their entrepreneurial readiness.

Within higher education, the formation of such understanding is closely linked to entrepreneurship education, which increasingly emphasizes not only the development of business skills but also the ability to interpret and respond to institutional conditions. However, students' perceptions of the institutional environment often remain fragmented and unsystematic, which may limit their capacity to identify opportunities and effectively engage in entrepreneurial activity.

Therefore, a structured conceptualization of the institutional environment for student entrepreneurship is necessary, as it enables the systematization of its key components and facilitates a deeper understanding of how they influence students' entrepreneurial development. Such an approach creates a basis for integrating institutional factors into educational practices and for enhancing the effectiveness of entrepreneurship education in the Ukrainian context.

Theoretical background and literature review.

Student entrepreneurship and the development of entrepreneurial ecosystems within higher education institutions have become important areas of academic research. Policymakers, academics, and practitioners increasingly recognize academic entrepreneurs as key actors in addressing major societal challenges, including climate change, sustainable development, poverty reduction, inequality, and healthcare [2; 3]. Recent studies further emphasize the growing role of university-based entrepreneurial ecosystems and institutional conditions in shaping entrepreneurial activity and value creation [4].

In this context, a growing body of literature focuses on academic entrepreneurship [5–7], with particular attention to student entrepreneurship as a distinct and evolving phenomenon [8; 9]. Contemporary research increasingly conceptualizes student entrepreneurship through ecosystem-based approaches, in which universities serve as central actors that integrate institutional support, knowledge transfer, and entrepreneurial networks [10].

From a theoretical perspective, entrepreneurship is embedded in an institutional environment that shapes the behavior of economic actors. According to D. North, institutions represent the formal and informal “rules of the game” that structure social interactions [11]. W. Scott further conceptualizes institutions through three key pillars – regulative, normative, and cultural-cognitive, which together determine the stability and meaning of social behavior [12]. In the context of entrepreneurship, this implies that entrepreneurial activity depends not only on individual capabilities but also on the institutional conditions that enable or constrain it. Recent empirical studies confirm that institutional factors and perceived support significantly influence entrepreneurial intentions and opportunity-driven behavior, particularly in emerging and transition economies [13; 14].

In the Ukrainian academic context, student entrepreneurship is gaining increasing attention. Existing studies examine the development of entrepreneurial culture in higher education institutions, emphasizing the importance of surveying students across different fields and regions [15]. Other researchers analyze

the structure of students' entrepreneurial competence and identify educational tools to develop it [16]. In addition, the creation of institutional support systems for student entrepreneurship has been explored, highlighting the need for multi-level support mechanisms within universities [17]. However, most of these studies focus primarily on competencies and educational instruments. At the same time, the institutional dimension of student entrepreneurship remains insufficiently structured and weakly connected to students' perceptions of available support mechanisms and their behavioral responses.

The process of European integration has further intensified interest in entrepreneurship education in Ukraine. In this regard, the Entrepreneurial Competence Framework (EntreComp) plays a significant role, defining entrepreneurship as a lifelong competence and providing a structured approach to developing entrepreneurial skills [18]. The framework has become an important reference point for educational initiatives aimed at fostering entrepreneurial mindsets among students. At the same time, recent studies highlight that entrepreneurship education alone is insufficient without integration into institutional support ecosystems, including mentoring, financing, and incubation mechanisms [19; 20].

At the same time, despite the growing body of research, the institutional dimension of student entrepreneurship remains insufficiently systematized. In particular, limited attention has been paid to how students perceive institutional support mechanisms and how this awareness influences their entrepreneurial activity [21]. Existing studies primarily focus on competencies and educational tools, while the role of institutional factors and their structured representation in the context of student entrepreneurship is still underdeveloped. Moreover, recent research emphasizes the importance of perceived university support as a critical mediator between institutional structures and students' entrepreneurial intentions, highlighting the need for integrated analytical approaches [22].

Thus, the research gap lies in the insufficient integration of institutional factors, students' awareness, and behavioral outcomes within a unified conceptual framework. Addressing this gap enables a more comprehensive understanding of how institutional environments influence student entrepreneurship and provides a basis for designing more effective, coordinated support systems, particularly in the context of transition economies such as Ukraine.

In this context, the aim of the study is to develop a conceptual framework of the institutional environment for student entrepreneurship in Ukraine. The object of the study is institutional support for student

entrepreneurship, while the subject is students' awareness of institutional mechanisms and how they are formed and implemented. The study aims to explore how students perceive the institutional environment, whether differences exist in their attitudes toward support mechanisms depending on their experience, and to propose a structured model of institutional support.

The scientific contribution of the study lies in the systematization of institutional factors influencing student entrepreneurship and in the development of a conceptual framework that integrates students' awareness with formal and informal elements of the institutional environment. Unlike prior studies that tend to examine entrepreneurial competencies and institutional support mechanisms separately, this study integrates these dimensions into a unified analytical framework. This approach contributes to a better understanding of the mechanisms that support student entrepreneurship and provides a basis for improving educational practices and for developing policies and programs that foster entrepreneurial activity among students.

To achieve this goal, the study focuses on several key research directions. First, it examines how students perceive the institutional environment of entrepreneurship in Ukraine. Second, it examines whether attitudes toward institutional support differ among students with varying levels of entrepreneurial experience. Third, it seeks to develop a conceptual framework of institutional support for student entrepreneurship (IESE). The study shifts the focus from the availability of institutional support to its perceived accessibility and usability by students.

Such an approach enables the systematization of knowledge about the mechanisms supporting student entrepreneurship and allows for the assessment of their influence on youth entrepreneurial activity. Furthermore, it provides stakeholders with a basis for designing effective policies, programs, and strategies to foster entrepreneurial skills among students, stimulate the creation of new businesses, and support Ukraine's economic development.

Methodology. To achieve the research objective, the study is based on survey results from a study conducted in April–May 2023 within the research project “*Entrepreneurial Opportunities, Competencies and Intentions among University Students in a Cross-Cultural Dimension*”. Respondents were recruited through open communication channels without prior selection, indicating the exploratory nature of the study and suggesting limitations in sample representativeness.

The online questionnaire, developed by the authors [23], was administered via the Qualtrics platform and completed anonymously. The questionnaire consisted of four blocks combining closed- and open-

ended questions: (1) general respondent characteristics (age, gender, region of origin and study, academic status, and entrepreneurial experience); (2) awareness of the entrepreneurial environment (including questions on support programs at the national and university levels); (3) entrepreneurial competencies; and (4) entrepreneurial intentions. Most of the closed-ended questions were measured using a Likert scale.

A total of 247 students participated in the survey; however, 235 valid responses were retained for further analysis after excluding responses with incomplete or inconsistent data. The analysis focuses on students aged 17–22 and considers their entrepreneurial experience (*Tbl. 1*).

Table 1

Statistical parameters of the student sample

Indicator	Age	Entrepreneurial experience
Mean	19.0383	-0.09787
Standard Error	0.057633	0.055396
Median	19	0
Mode	19	-1
Standard Deviation	0.883503	0.849205
Sample Variance	0.780578	0.721149
Kurtosis	0.724689	-1.59078
Skewness	0.749991	0.188396
Range	5	2
Minimum	17	-1 (without experience)
Maximum	22	1 (with experience)
Count	235	235
Confidence Level (95,0%)	0.113547	0.109139

Source: concluded by the authors based on their own research using the Data Analysis package in Excel.

It should be noted that the sample is dominated by students in economics-related fields (94%) and bachelor-level programs (96%), which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other fields of study and educational levels. At the same time, this sample structure allows for a focused analysis of economically oriented student groups, which are more likely to engage in entrepreneurial activity.

The statistical characteristics indicate that the age distribution of respondents is close to normal, as evidenced by skewness (0.75) and kurtosis (0.73). The distribution of entrepreneurial experience also approximates normality, although with some deviations,

including low kurtosis (-1.59) and skewness close to zero (0.19).

The sample includes 139 females (59%) and 96 males (41%) respondents from different regions of Ukraine (Fig. 1). Participants represent 11 Ukrainian universities, with the majority enrolled in bachelor's programs (96%) and specializing in economics (94%). Approximately 31.5% of respondents report having prior entrepreneurial experience. Percentages are calculated based on the number of valid responses.



Fig. 1. Number of respondents by region of Ukraine

Source: constructed by the authors.

Given the survey's broader scope, this study focuses specifically on students' awareness of entrepreneurship support at the national and university levels, as well as their satisfaction with it.

Data processing and analysis were conducted using MS Excel (Data Analysis tools) and RStudio. Descriptive statistics were applied to summarize the data, while cluster analysis was used to identify patterns in students' perceptions and to test the research assumptions.

The cluster analysis was applied as an exploratory analytical tool to identify groups of students with similar patterns of perception regarding the institutional environment of entrepreneurship. The clustering procedure was implemented in RStudio using standard distance-based clustering techniques, enabling the identification of homogeneous response profiles without imposing predefined classifications. The clustering was based on variables related to students' awareness of national and university-level support mechanisms, as well as their perceptions of accessibility and effectiveness of the entrepreneurial environment.

Overall, the methodological approach can be characterized as exploratory and descriptive, combining quantitative survey analysis with clustering techniques to reveal patterns in students' awareness and perceptions of institutional support

mechanisms. This approach is appropriate given the research objective of conceptualizing the institutional environment and identifying key tendencies rather than testing causal relationships.

Results and analysis. The analysis of student entrepreneurship in Ukrainian universities begins by examining the value perceptions associated with entrepreneurial activity across different social levels, including the individual, peers, family and friends, and the broader community and society [24]. The respons-

es to the question "Indicate your level of agreement with the following statements about the values society puts on entrepreneurship" (Fig. 2) indicate a generally positive attitude toward entrepreneurship among students, particularly at the individual level [25]. This finding suggests that individual-level entrepreneurial values constitute a strong internal driver of entrepreneurial behavior, which is consistent with contemporary studies emphasizing the role of individual perceptions and motivations in shaping entrepreneurial intentions [20].

A significant proportion of respondents (60%) consider entrepreneurial activity more valuable than other career paths, reflecting a strong personal interest in entrepreneurship. At the same time, only 16% of students expressed disagreement with this statement, indicating a relatively low level of negative perception. Such a distribution indicates a favorable cognitive and motivational basis for entrepreneurial engagement, which can be interpreted as a necessary precondition for the effective functioning of institutional support mechanisms.

Perceptions at the peer level are slightly less pronounced: 50% of respondents believe that their peers value entrepreneurship, while 17% hold the opposite view. This suggests that, despite generally positive attitudes, entrepreneurship is not yet fully embedded in

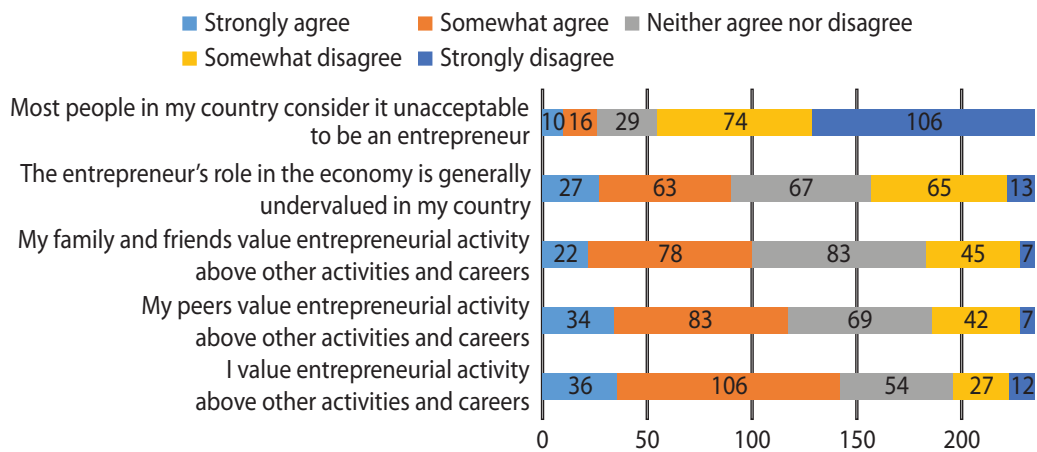


Fig. 2. Students' perceptions of entrepreneurial values across social levels

Source: developed by the authors based on survey data.

the value system of student communities. This gap between individual and peer-level perceptions may limit the diffusion of entrepreneurial behavior, as social validation and peer influence are important components of entrepreneurial ecosystems.

Even lower levels of perceived support are observed within the closest social environment. Only 42% of respondents agree that their family members and friends value entrepreneurial activity, whereas a considerable share (38%) remains neutral. This indicates a potential misalignment between individual aspirations and immediate social support, which may act as an informal institutional barrier to entrepreneurial activity.

At the societal level, perceptions appear more heterogeneous. Approximately 38% of students believe the role of entrepreneurs in the national economy is underestimated, while 28% disagree. This reflects differing views on the societal recognition of entrepreneurship. At the same time, only a small proportion of respondents (12.8%) agree that entrepreneurship is considered socially unacceptable in Ukraine, whereas 45% strongly disagree. These findings suggest that entrepreneurship is generally socially legitimized, aligning with institutional theory, which posits that normative and cultural-cognitive elements support entrepreneurial behavior [12].

Overall, the findings suggest that entrepreneurship is recognized as a valuable activity among Ukrainian students, particularly at the individual level, while perceptions become less consistent at broader social levels. This multi-level inconsistency underscores the importance of coordinated institutional interventions to strengthen entrepreneurial culture across diverse social contexts.

To identify potential gaps in the institutional infrastructure for entrepreneurship, students' awareness

of the macro-level entrepreneurial environment was examined (Fig. 3).

The results reveal a generally low level of awareness of institutional support mechanisms among students in Ukrainian universities. On average, only about 3% of respondents reported being fully aware of the functioning of relevant institutions, while approximately 15% indicated a good level of awareness. In contrast, around 27% of respondents stated that they are not aware of such institutions at all. This indicates a significant informational asymmetry within the entrepreneurial ecosystem, which may constrain students' ability to identify and utilize available support opportunities. This may be explained by insufficient communication between institutional support providers and students, as well as the lack of integrated information channels within the entrepreneurial ecosystem.

A more detailed analysis shows that students are least informed about the activities of business incubators and accelerators, as well as venture capital funds, with approximately 75% and 70% of respondents, respectively, reporting low or no awareness. Such low awareness of key entrepreneurial infrastructure elements suggests weak integration between institutional support providers and the student environment.

Relatively higher levels of awareness are observed with regard to technology and innovation parks, start-up schools, entrepreneurship centers, and business angels, although even in these cases, the share of uninformed respondents remains substantial (up to 53%). Overall, the findings indicate significant informational gaps in students' understanding of national-level institutional support, which may lead to underutilization of available institutional resources and reduce the effectiveness of entrepreneurship support policies.

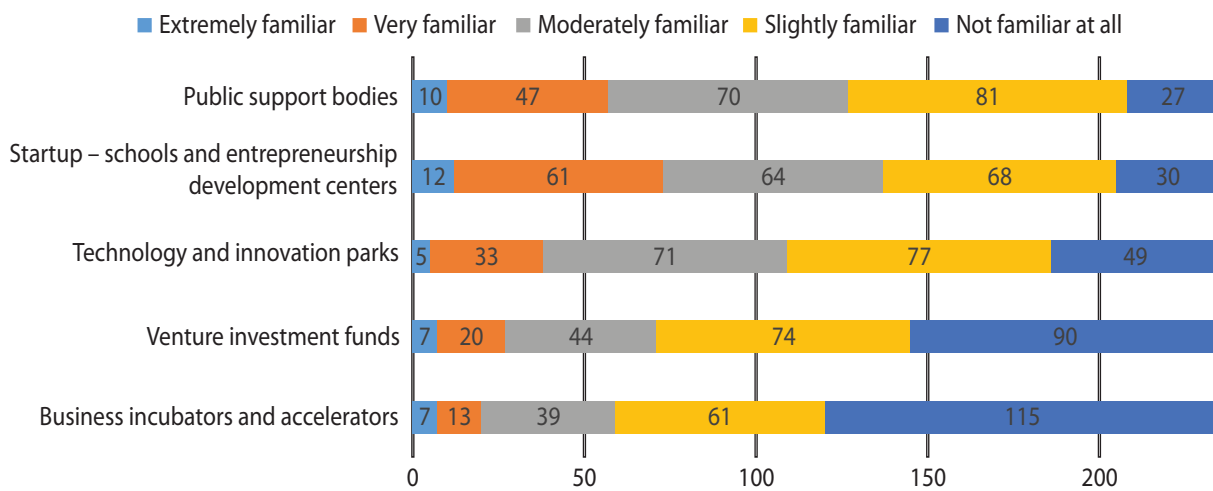


Fig. 3. Students' awareness of business support organizations in Ukraine

Source: developed by the authors based on survey data.

The analysis of responses to the question “Which types of support related to entrepreneurship are offered at your university?” (Fig. 4) reveals a relatively low level of students' awareness of the entrepreneurial environment within universities.

Nearly half of the respondents (48%) reported not being aware of the state of the entrepreneurial environment at their university. Notably, 28% of these respondents indicated having prior entrepreneurial experience. At the same time, the presence or absence of entrepreneurial experience does not appear to significantly affect students' awareness of university institutional support mechanisms. This finding is particularly important, as it indicates that entrepreneurial experience alone does not ensure better integration into institutional support systems, highlighting systemic weaknesses in communication and accessibility.

In terms of specific forms of support, students most frequently identified entrepreneurship-related courses (including webinars and workshops), reported

by 83% of respondents, as well as startup competitions and mentoring programs (58%). This suggests that universities primarily rely on educational formats of support, while more structured institutional mechanisms remain less visible to students.

In contrast, institutionalized forms of support – such as entrepreneurship support centers, technology transfer offices, and academic business incubators—were mentioned considerably less often (26%, 22%, and 12%, respectively). This imbalance indicates a predominance of soft support mechanisms over infrastructural and organizational ones, which may limit the practical implementation of entrepreneurial initiatives.

Open-ended responses further indicate that students associate entrepreneurial support primarily with educational activities, including training sessions, business master classes, lectures by successful entrepreneurs, and additional educational programs. This perception reinforces the conclusion

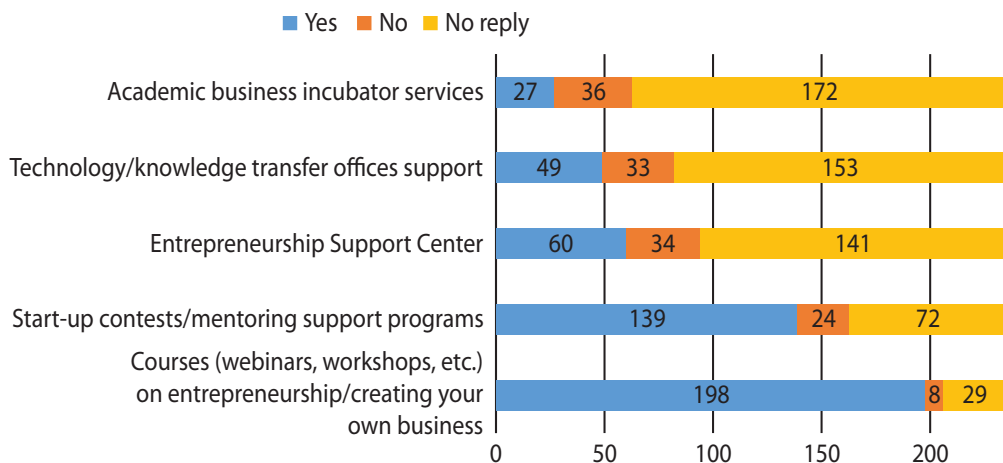


Fig. 4. Students' awareness of institutional support for entrepreneurship at universities

Source: developed by the authors based on survey data.

that students interpret the institutional environment mainly through an educational lens rather than as a comprehensive support system.

Some respondents also referred to informal channels, such as Telegram-based platforms for career opportunities and self-development, as well as participation in short-term initiatives such as entrepreneurship summer schools organized in cooperation with national programs (e. g., Diiia.Business). The growing role of informal and digital channels highlights the importance of integrating formal institutional support with flexible communication platforms.

Overall, the findings suggest that entrepreneurial support within Ukrainian universities is perceived as fragmented and predominantly educational, with limited visibility of structured institutional mechanisms. This indicates insufficient communication and integration of entrepreneurship support initiatives, which may constrain students' engagement with available opportunities.

Students who reported having experience in receiving university support for their entrepreneurial initiatives (54% of respondents) were asked to assess their level of satisfaction. Among them, 24% were generally satisfied, 6% were dissatisfied, and 24% remained undecided. Such a distribution indicates moderate effectiveness of existing support mechanisms and a lack of clearly perceived value among a significant share of students.

In terms of specific services, the highest levels of satisfaction were associated with general university support for student entrepreneurship (28%) and consulting on business idea development (26%). Financial and legal advisory services were evaluated positively by 22% of respondents, while support related to potential investment received the lowest level of satisfaction (19%). The relatively low satisfaction with investment-related support points to a critical gap in the entrepreneurial ecosystem, as access to funding is a key factor in transforming entrepreneurial intentions into actual business activity.

These results suggest an imbalance in the university-level institutional support system, with a predominance of general advisory services over more specialized, professionally oriented support for entrepreneurial initiatives. This imbalance may reduce the overall effectiveness of institutional interventions, as it limits the transition from idea generation to venture implementation.

At the same time, students demonstrate a clear demand for the further development of entrepreneurship support programs within universities. This demand reflects a mismatch between existing institutional offerings and students' expectations, indicat-

ing the need for more targeted and integrated support strategies.

The analysis of open-ended responses identifies several key directions. From a sectoral perspective, students expressed interest in programs related to women's entrepreneurship, agribusiness, IT, social media-based business, and post-war reconstruction initiatives. From an institutional perspective, there is strong demand for mentoring programs, incubation and acceleration programs, opportunities to gain practical experience in successful startups, and international exchange with foreign entrepreneurs.

In addition, students emphasize the need for practical guidance and mentorship, as approximately every fifth respondent, whether explicitly or implicitly, indicated a lack of practical entrepreneurial training. From a functional perspective, respondents highlighted the importance of financial, investment, and organizational support, with approximately one in four expressing interest in access to funding opportunities and investors.

Based on the obtained results regarding students' awareness, available forms of support, and their perceptions, a conceptual model (IESE framework) of the institutional environment for student entrepreneurship in Ukraine is proposed (Fig. 5).

The IESE framework is structured around the logic of "vision – action – result", which is widely applied in contemporary management approaches, including the PDCA cycle, SMART methodology, theory of change, and strategic management. This approach enables aligning strategic objectives with practical implementation tools and evaluating achieved outcomes. In this context, the IESE framework can be interpreted as a system model that integrates institutional inputs, transformation mechanisms, and expected outputs within the entrepreneurial environment of higher education. Within this framework, students' awareness serves as a mediating factor, linking institutional inputs and support mechanisms with entrepreneurial behavior and outcomes.

The key elements of the framework include principles, activities, and results. Principles define the strategic orientation and conditions for the functioning of the institutional environment. Activities ensure the practical implementation of these principles, while results provide a basis for evaluating effectiveness and guiding further development. From a structural perspective, principles can be considered as input conditions (institutional and cultural factors), activities as transformation mechanisms (organizational and process-based interventions), and results as output indicators (behavioral and performance outcomes related to student entrepreneurship).

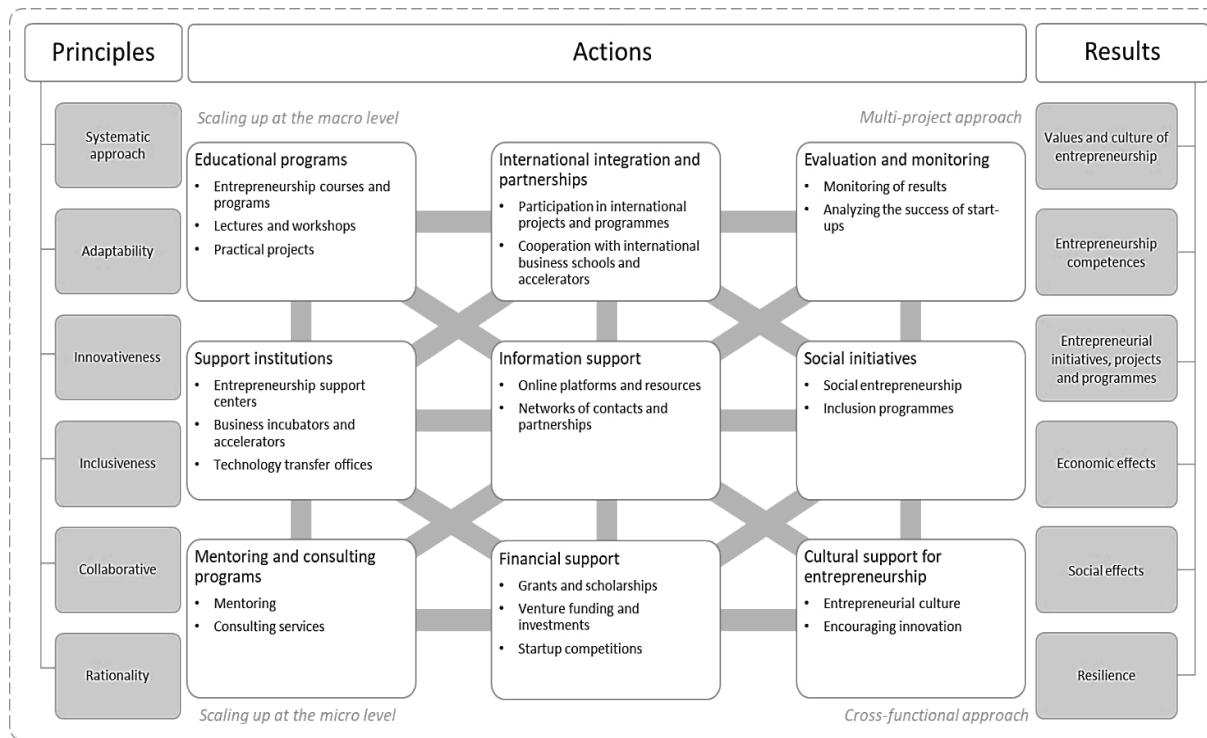


Fig. 5. Conceptual framework of the institutional environment for student entrepreneurship in Ukraine

Source: developed by the authors.

Taking into account the empirical findings, particularly the identified fragmentation of support and the low level of student awareness, the following core principles are defined: systemicity, adaptability, innovativeness, inclusiveness, collaboration, and rationality. These principles reflect both formal institutional dimensions (policies, programs, organizational structures) and informal elements (values, norms, perceptions), which together shape the entrepreneurial environment in accordance with institutional theory [11; 12].

The principle of systemicity implies integrating all support elements – educational programs, institutional structures, mentoring, and financial mechanisms – into a coherent system at the university, regional, and national levels. Adaptability reflects the need to respond to changes in the external environment, including economic transformations, technological trends, and European integration processes. Innovativeness is associated with the development of modern approaches to business creation, including the use of digital technologies. Inclusiveness ensures access to entrepreneurial opportunities for diverse student groups. Collaboration emphasizes active interaction between universities, businesses, governmental bodies, and international organizations. Rationality focuses on the efficient use of resources.

The implementation of these principles is carried out through a set of activities of informational, process, and functional nature. Based on the research

findings, the key activities include: the development of practice-oriented educational programs; the establishment and development of support institutions (entrepreneurship centers, business incubators and accelerators, technology transfer offices); the implementation of mentoring and consulting programs; the expansion of financial support mechanisms (grants, investments, startup competitions); the development of information platforms and communication networks; international integration; monitoring and evaluation systems; support for social entrepreneurship; and the promotion of entrepreneurial culture. These activities can be grouped into three functional domains: (1) educational and competence-based support, (2) institutional and infrastructural support, and (3) financial and network-based support, which together form an integrated entrepreneurial support system.

These activities should be implemented at both macro and micro levels. At the macro level, this involves developing public policy, building national support infrastructure, and engaging international partners. At the micro level, universities play a key role in supporting student initiatives through educational, advisory, and institutional mechanisms. Thus, the IESE framework operates as a multi-level system in which macro-level institutional conditions shape the availability of resources. At the same time, micro-level university environments determine their accessibility and practical implementation for students.

The effectiveness of the framework largely depends on the application of cross-functional and multiproject approaches. The cross-functional approach involves interactions among various stakeholders, including universities, businesses, governmental bodies, and international organizations, thereby ensuring a comprehensive support system. The multiproject approach enables the simultaneous implementation of interconnected initiatives, enhancing their synergy and overall effectiveness. In this regard, stakeholders (universities, government agencies, businesses, and support organizations) can be considered key actors within the system, whose coordinated interactions determine the overall performance of the institutional environment.

Overall, the proposed IESE framework provides a foundation for developing a coherent, flexible, and innovation-driven system of student entrepreneurship support in Ukraine. The model's causal logic can be summarized as follows: institutional principles shape the design and implementation of support activities, which, in turn, influence students' awareness, engagement, and entrepreneurial behavior, leading to measurable outcomes in terms of entrepreneurial intentions and activities.

From a practical perspective, the IESE framework can be used by universities and policymakers as a diagnostic and design tool to identify gaps in existing support systems, align institutional interventions, and improve the effectiveness of entrepreneurship support programs.

CONCLUSIONS

The results of the study confirm the importance of a comprehensive, multi-level approach to developing the institutional environment for student entrepreneurship in Ukraine.

The findings indicate that entrepreneurship is perceived as a valuable activity among Ukrainian students, particularly at the individual level, which creates a favorable basis for the development of student entrepreneurship. At the same time, a low level of awareness of institutional support mechanisms has been identified, limiting students' ability to engage effectively with the entrepreneurial ecosystem. Students tend to perceive the institutional environment as fragmented and not fully accessible, which constrains their entrepreneurial activity. These findings demonstrate that the key limitation of the current institutional environment lies not in the absence of support mechanisms but in their insufficient visibility, accessibility, and systemic integration.

The results also indicate limited differences in perceptions of institutional support among students with varying levels of entrepreneurial experience. While students with prior experience demonstrate a

slightly higher level of understanding, the overall findings do not reveal a strong influence of experience on awareness of institutional support mechanisms. This suggests that entrepreneurial experience alone does not ensure effective interaction with institutional structures, underscoring the need for more structured, coordinated support systems.

These findings highlight the need to strengthen communication and improve the integration of entrepreneurship support mechanisms across different levels. In particular, greater coordination between universities, regional structures, and national institutions is required to ensure a coherent and accessible support system. From a systemic perspective, this implies the need to align institutional actors, support instruments, and communication channels within a unified entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Based on the results obtained, several practical implications can be formulated. First, existing support mechanisms should be systematized into integrated programs combining educational, practical, and infrastructural components, including courses, mentoring programs, and business incubators. Second, greater emphasis should be placed on improving students' awareness through centralized digital platforms, social media, and university communication channels. Third, the institutional infrastructure should be strengthened, including expanding entrepreneurship support centers and establishing new incubators and accelerators. In addition, strengthening collaboration with businesses and experienced entrepreneurs through mentoring programs is essential. The integration of Ukrainian universities into international entrepreneurial networks can further improve the quality of support programs and provide students with access to global experience. Special attention should also be given to social entrepreneurship and inclusive initiatives, ensuring vulnerable groups have access to entrepreneurial opportunities.

The proposed IESE framework, structured around the "vision – action – result" logic, provides a conceptual basis for developing a coherent institutional environment for student entrepreneurship. Unlike existing approaches that primarily focus either on entrepreneurial competencies or on institutional structures in isolation, the proposed IESE framework integrates institutional factors, students' awareness, and behavioral outcomes into a unified analytical model. The scientific contribution of the study lies in: (1) the systematization of institutional factors influencing student entrepreneurship; (2) the identification of awareness as a key mediating element between institutional support and entrepreneurial behavior; and (3) the development of a multi-level conceptual framework that

links macro- and micro-level institutional conditions with student-level outcomes.

Such an approach extends existing research by demonstrating that the effectiveness of entrepreneurship support systems depends not only on their availability but also on how students perceive, interpret, and use them.

By integrating formal and informal support mechanisms at the macro and micro levels, the framework increases students' awareness, enhances entrepreneurial activity, and supports the creation of new businesses, thereby fostering the economic development of Ukraine. Thus, the IESE framework can be considered not only as a conceptual model but also as a practical tool for diagnosing and improving institutional support systems in higher education.

Future research may focus on empirically validating the proposed framework, including its application across different universities and regions. Further studies could examine the effectiveness of specific support mechanisms, the role of digital tools in increasing awareness, and cross-country comparisons of institutional environments for student entrepreneurship. In addition, longitudinal studies would allow for assessing the long-term impact of institutional support on students' entrepreneurial behavior and outcomes. Particular attention in future research should be paid to the quantitative validation of relationships among institutional factors, awareness, and entrepreneurial outcomes, as well as to the comparative analysis of different institutional configurations across international contexts. ■

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