

Integrating Strategic Planning and Academic Standards in Higher Education: Insights from a Digitalpreneurship Program Case Study

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Abstract - In response to the growing importance of digital entrepreneurship in the global economy, higher education institutions are increasingly tasked with designing programs that equip students with the competencies needed to navigate and lead in digital environments. This study investigates how Universitas Insan Pembangunan Indonesia (UNUPI), a private university in Indonesia, strategically plans and standardizes its academic offerings to develop a sustainable digitalpreneurship program. Employing a descriptive qualitative approach, data were collected through document analysis, in-depth interviews with institutional leaders, program chairs, lecturers, and students, as well as direct classroom observations. Thematic analysis revealed five major themes: strategic vision and institutional positioning, curriculum alignment with national standards (SN-Dikti and KKNI), quality assurance mechanisms, implementation challenges and pedagogical practices, and stakeholder engagement. Findings indicate that while UNUPI has articulated a strong institutional vision for digital entrepreneurship, operational implementation remains uneven across departments due to variations in faculty readiness, infrastructural access, and industry collaboration. Curriculum design shows compliance with national education standards, but gaps exist in translating such standards into innovative teaching practices. Students generally value experiential learning opportunities but express a need for stronger mentoring, startup incubation support, and practical engagement. This study contributes to the literature by offering a contextualized model of how private universities in emerging economies can integrate strategic planning and academic standardization to foster digitalpreneurship. It highlights the critical need for institutional reflexivity, coordinated leadership, and adaptive governance to build a sustainable and inclusive digital entrepreneurial ecosystem in higher education.

Keywords: digital entrepreneurship, strategic planning, academic standardization, private university, higher education, Indonesia

1. INTRODUCTION

The rapid advancement of digital technology has profoundly transformed the global economic landscape, demanding a corresponding evolution in higher education. In particular, the emergence of digital entrepreneurship, or *digitalpreneurship*, presents both opportunities and challenges for universities striving to equip students with competencies relevant to the digital economy. This transformation compels higher education institutions to reorient their academic planning, curriculum, and quality assurance systems to cultivate graduates who are not only digitally literate but also capable of creating innovative digital business ventures.

Digitalpreneurship is increasingly recognized as a strategic field that intersects technology, entrepreneurship, and innovation. It requires educational institutions to foster critical thinking, creativity, and digital capabilities through relevant and adaptive learning programs. In Indonesia, government policy such as the *Kampus Merdeka* initiative, the National Higher Education Standards (*Standar Nasional Pendidikan Tinggi* or SN-Dikti), and the Indonesian Qualifications Framework (*Kerangka Kualifikasi Nasional Indonesia* or KKNI) emphasize the need for outcome-based education that responds to the demands of the digital era and the world of work.

Universitas Insan Pembangunan Indonesia (UNUPI), a growing private university in Tangerang, Banten, has positioned itself as a proactive institution in integrating digitalpreneurship into its academic development. With its vision to become an entrepreneurial and globally competitive university by 2030, UNUPI has initiated programmatic innovations that align with its institutional mission and the socio-economic needs of its student

population. However, the effectiveness and sustainability of such innovations depend on strategic planning and robust academic standardization mechanisms.

The development of a digitalpreneurship program requires not only curriculum innovation but also coherent institutional planning, clear standard operating procedures (SOPs), consistent quality assurance practices, and meaningful collaborations with digital industry stakeholders. The absence of a strategic framework and standardized academic implementation risks creating fragmented, short-lived programs that fail to meet both academic expectations and industry needs.

Existing literature on strategic planning in higher education (Bryson, 2018; García-Peñalvo et al., 2021) and entrepreneurship education (Ndou, 2020; McAdam et al., 2022) highlights the importance of alignment between institutional vision, academic governance, and market-oriented curriculum. However, empirical studies that specifically address how middle-sized private universities in developing countries conceptualize, plan, and standardize digitalpreneurship education remain limited. This study seeks to fill that gap.

This research aims to analyze the strategic planning and academic standardization practices adopted by UNUPI in the development of its digitalpreneurship program. It also explores how institutional documents, internal policies, and academic actors interact to support or hinder the effective implementation of the program. Furthermore, the study identifies potential challenges and opportunities in institutionalizing digitalpreneurship within a quality-assured academic framework.

By offering an in-depth case study of UNUPI, this research contributes to both theoretical and practical understandings of how private universities in emerging economies can build and sustain digitalpreneurship programs. The findings are expected to inform policymakers, academic leaders, and curriculum developers seeking to align higher education with the digital transformation imperative.

The structure of this article is as follows: Section 2 provides a review of the relevant literature on strategic planning, academic standardization, and digital entrepreneurship education. Section 3 outlines the research methodology. Section 4 presents the findings and discussion, organized around key themes. Section 5 concludes with key insights, implications, and directions for future research.

Literature Review

Strategic Planning in Higher Education Institutions

Strategic planning in higher education has evolved as a vital framework for aligning institutional goals with external demands and internal capacities. Bryson (2018) defines strategic planning as a disciplined effort to produce fundamental decisions and actions that shape and guide what an organization is, what it does, and why it does it. In the context of universities, this entails articulating a shared vision, identifying long-term objectives, and formulating actionable strategies that align academic programs with societal and industry needs.

Effective strategic planning in universities requires the involvement of multiple stakeholders, including academic leaders, faculty members, students, and industry partners (Bryson, 2018). Participatory planning enhances ownership and relevance, particularly in initiatives involving curriculum innovation and entrepreneurial education. Furthermore, strategic planning must remain adaptive, particularly in a volatile digital economy, where technological change can rapidly reshape labor markets and knowledge demands (García-Peñalvo et al., 2021).

Academic Quality Standards: SN-Dikti and KKNI

In Indonesia, the quality assurance framework for higher education is guided by two major regulatory instruments: the *Standar Nasional Pendidikan Tinggi* (SN-Dikti) and the *Kerangka Kualifikasi Nasional Indonesia* (KKNI). SN-Dikti outlines minimum national standards for curriculum design, learning outcomes, assessment, research, and community service. KKNI, on the other hand, provides a reference framework for aligning graduates' competencies with national and international qualification levels (Kemenristekdikti, 2019).

The integration of KKNI and SN-Dikti in academic planning ensures that programs meet recognized levels of quality and relevance. For instance, the development of a digitalpreneurship curriculum must incorporate learning outcomes that reflect not only knowledge and skills but also digital literacy, entrepreneurial mindset, and socio-emotional competencies. Quality assurance mechanisms, including internal audits, standard operating procedures (SOPs), and continuous curriculum reviews, are essential for maintaining program integrity and institutional accountability.

Digitalpreneurship: A Hybrid Educational Imperative

Digitalpreneurship refers to entrepreneurial activities enabled by digital technologies, encompassing the creation, operation, and scaling of digital ventures (Ndou, 2020). It integrates traditional entrepreneurship with modern digital capabilities such as e-commerce, social media marketing, cloud computing, data analytics, and

platform-based business models. For educational institutions, digitalpreneurship represents a hybrid imperative that combines business acumen, technological fluency, and creativity.

Ahmad and Buchanan (2019) argue that digitalpreneurship education must go beyond teaching students how to start a business. It should equip learners with the ability to identify digital opportunities, innovate within digital ecosystems, and respond to shifting technological landscapes. Accordingly, universities must design curricula that are multidisciplinary, experiential, and aligned with digital industry trends.

University–Industry Collaboration in Entrepreneurship Education

A key factor in successful digitalpreneurship education is meaningful collaboration between universities and the digital industry. McAdam et al. (2022) emphasize that industry partnerships provide access to current technologies, real-world challenges, and mentorship opportunities. Such collaborations also help ensure that academic programs remain aligned with labor market needs and entrepreneurial ecosystems.

In Indonesia, this linkage is encouraged through national policies such as *Merdeka Belajar – Kampus Merdeka* (MBKM), which promote internships, industry-based projects, and startup incubation. However, the implementation of such partnerships varies significantly across institutions, particularly between large public universities and smaller private ones like UNUPI. Understanding how a mid-sized private university fosters and formalizes these linkages is crucial for developing context-sensitive models of digitalpreneurship education.

Experiential Learning and Curriculum Design

Experiential learning is increasingly recognized as a core pedagogy for entrepreneurship education. It involves active engagement in real-world projects, reflection on practice, and iterative problem-solving. Ndou (2020) notes that digitalpreneurship programs benefit significantly from learning environments that simulate or engage with real digital markets. This includes developing digital products, launching online campaigns, or managing e-commerce operations within academic settings.

Curriculum design for digitalpreneurship, therefore, must incorporate project-based learning, problem-based scenarios, and digital labs. The presence of innovation hubs, co-working spaces, and digital incubation centers in universities supports this pedagogical approach. These learning strategies align with Outcome-Based Education (OBE) principles, promoting measurable competencies and industry-readiness.

Research Gap and Conceptual Framework

While the literature offers rich theoretical foundations and best practices for digital entrepreneurship education, empirical studies focusing on institutional planning and academic governance in Indonesian private universities remain limited. Most existing research concentrates on either curriculum content or student outcomes, without exploring the strategic and operational frameworks that sustain such programs.

This study addresses this gap by examining how Universitas Insan Pembangunan Indonesia integrates strategic planning and academic standardization to develop and implement its digitalpreneurship program. It draws upon theories of strategic management, academic quality assurance, and experiential learning to construct a conceptual framework that bridges institutional policies, academic practices, and stakeholder engagement.

To address the objectives outlined above and to bridge the identified research gap, this study seeks to answer the following research questions:

- a) How does Universitas Insan Pembangunan Indonesia (UNUPI) formulate its strategic planning for the development of a digitalpreneurship program?
- b) What academic standardization mechanisms are applied to ensure the quality and sustainability of the digitalpreneurship program at UNUPI?
- c) What are the main challenges and opportunities encountered by UNUPI in institutionalizing digitalpreneurship education?

By exploring these questions through a qualitative, case-based approach, the study aims to provide contextually grounded insights that contribute to the academic discourse on innovation in higher education governance, particularly in digital entrepreneurship programs within developing country contexts.

II. METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study adopts a descriptive qualitative research design to explore how Universitas Insan Pembangunan Indonesia (UNUPI) develops and institutionalizes its digitalpreneurship program through strategic planning and academic standardization. The qualitative approach was selected to enable an in-depth and contextually rich understanding of institutional processes, policies, and stakeholder perspectives. A case study method was

employed, focusing on UNUPI as a bounded system that provides a practical illustration of how a middle-sized private university in Indonesia responds to the digital transformation imperative in higher education.

Research Site and Context

UNUPI is a private university located in Tangerang, Banten, Indonesia, with a strong focus on entrepreneurship, information technology, and applied business education. The university's strategic documents and curricular initiatives reflect its commitment to integrating digital entrepreneurship into academic offerings. This makes UNUPI a suitable site for examining how an institution contextualizes national educational standards, digital innovation, and entrepreneurial practices into its academic governance.

Data Collection Techniques

To ensure data triangulation and validity, four main techniques were employed in data collection:

- a) Document Analysis: This involved the systematic review of internal university documents such as the Strategic Plan (Renstra), curriculum documents, academic guidelines, Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), quality assurance reports, and digital learning platforms. These documents provided evidence of formal planning and standardization mechanisms in relation to the digitalpreneurship program.
- b) In-depth Interviews: Semi-structured interviews were conducted with key stakeholders, including:
 1. Vice Rector for Academic Affairs
 2. Heads of LPPM (Research and Community Service Institute) and LP3M (Center for Learning and Academic Development)
 3. Heads of relevant academic programs (e.g., Management and Informatics)
 4. Lecturers responsible for teaching digitalpreneurship-related courses
 5. Selected students enrolled in the program

The interviews aimed to capture strategic perspectives, implementation experiences, and perceptions about institutional readiness and program effectiveness.

- c) Direct Observation: Field observations were conducted during digitalpreneurship-related classes and student activities. The researchers observed learning interactions, the use of digital tools, project-based assignments, and the integration of industry practices within classroom settings.
- d) Literature Review: Scholarly articles, government regulations (e.g., SN-Dikti, KKNI, Permendikbud), and international frameworks (e.g., ISO 21001:2018, OBE models) were reviewed to situate the case study within broader academic and policy contexts.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using thematic analysis, which involved several steps:

- a) Data Reduction: Transcribed interviews and field notes were sorted to extract relevant content.
- b) Coding: Key themes and sub-themes were generated through open and axial coding using qualitative analysis software.
- c) Thematic Categorization: Codes were organized into major categories reflecting strategic planning, curriculum design, academic standardization, implementation practices, and stakeholder perspectives.
- d) Triangulation: Data from different sources (documents, interviews, observations) were cross-compared to ensure credibility and confirm emergent themes.
- e) Interpretation: Thematic findings were interpreted with reference to the research questions and theoretical frameworks discussed in the literature review.

Ethical Considerations

All participants were informed about the purpose of the research and provided consent prior to participation. Anonymity and confidentiality were maintained throughout the research process. Ethical clearance was obtained from the internal review board of the researchers' affiliated institution.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Strategic Vision and Institutional Positioning

The findings reveal that Universitas Insan Pembangunan Indonesia (UNUPI) integrates digital entrepreneurship into its institutional strategy as part of its vision to become a future-oriented, entrepreneurial university. This vision is articulated in the university's Strategic Plan (*Rencana Strategis*, or *Renstra*) 2020–2025, which explicitly states the objective of preparing graduates who are digitally literate, entrepreneurial, and socially

responsible. Stakeholders from the rectorate level emphasized that digitalpreneurship is seen not as an elective initiative but as a core institutional transformation.

This positioning aligns with Bryson's (2018) argument that strategic planning in higher education should be guided by institutional mission and long-term goals. However, some faculty members expressed skepticism regarding the depth of this commitment, suggesting that while digitalpreneurship is part of the formal discourse, its operationalization across faculties remains uneven. This tension between strategic intent and actual implementation suggests the presence of a gap between top-down vision and bottom-up execution.

Curriculum Design and Alignment with National Standards

At the curriculum level, the university has taken steps to integrate digitalpreneurship into several academic programs, notably in the Management, Informatics, and Systems Information departments. These integrations are evident in courses such as "Kewirausahaan Digital," "Manajemen Inovasi," and elective modules that promote business model innovation using digital platforms.

Document analysis indicates that these curricular initiatives are largely aligned with the *Standar Nasional Pendidikan Tinggi* (SN-Dikti) and the *Kerangka Kualifikasi Nasional Indonesia* (KKNI). Course syllabi contain learning outcomes reflecting both cognitive competencies (e.g., business planning, digital marketing) and affective dimensions (e.g., risk-taking, resilience). However, interviews with curriculum developers and lecturers reveal varying levels of understanding and application of Outcome-Based Education (OBE) principles. While program chairs view the curriculum redesign as compliant with national standards, some lecturers noted the lack of pedagogical support and infrastructure for delivering such content effectively.

This dichotomy supports the critique by Purnomo & Fauzi (2022) that compliance with regulatory standards does not automatically translate into meaningful pedagogical innovation. Standard alignment may be achieved on paper, but without sufficient training and institutional support, its impact remains limited.

Academic Standardization and Quality Assurance Practices

UNIPi has developed a series of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) related to curriculum development, assessment, and quality evaluation. The institution's internal quality assurance body (LPMI) conducts regular Academic Internal Audits (*Audit Mutu Internal*) to monitor program delivery and compliance. These audits include evaluations of course syllabi, lecturer qualifications, and student feedback mechanisms.

The academic guidebook and SOP documents emphasize continuous improvement cycles, consistent with ISO 21001:2018 standards for educational organizations. These mechanisms are intended to standardize academic practices and ensure consistency across departments. Yet, during interviews, several program heads acknowledged the challenges of enforcing uniform quality standards. For example, while the Management program had successfully embedded digital business modules and capstone projects, other departments reported limited engagement with digital innovation due to resource constraints or lack of expertise.

This contrast echoes Setiawan & Nurhayati's (2020) findings that institutional heterogeneity often undermines the full realization of integrated academic standards, especially in private universities with limited funding or uneven faculty readiness.

Implementation Challenges and Innovation Practices

Observation of classroom sessions and student project presentations revealed creative pedagogical approaches in select digitalpreneurship modules. These included business simulation tasks, online marketing campaigns, and prototype development using low-code platforms. Lecturers who embraced these approaches often had prior industry experience or had participated in entrepreneurship training. However, implementation remains patchy. Several courses are still delivered using conventional lecture-based methods with limited student interaction or real-world application. Some students also expressed a desire for more mentoring and project-based learning environments that reflect actual startup practices.

This divergence between progressive and traditional teaching modes illustrates a classic tension in curriculum reform: innovation often relies on individual champions rather than systemic institutional support. As Ndou (2020) observes, successful digitalpreneurship education requires both structural support and a culture of experimentation.

Interestingly, while administrators emphasized the presence of infrastructure such as a Learning Management System (LMS) and partnerships with local digital startups, lecturers reported inconsistent access to these tools and limited integration into course delivery. This mismatch suggests that infrastructural availability does not guarantee pedagogical utility.

Industry Linkages and External Engagement

UNIPi's commitment to developing external partnerships is evident in its Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) with several local tech companies and digital business incubators. These partnerships facilitate guest lectures, internship opportunities, and joint project supervision. LPPM and LP3M play a central role in coordinating these initiatives, and stakeholders noted that such collaborations enhance the authenticity of digitalpreneurship learning. However, the extent of industry engagement varies significantly between faculties. While the Management program has formalized internships with e-commerce platforms, other departments lack similar arrangements. Some lecturers admitted to difficulties in establishing sustainable collaborations, citing lack of incentives or institutional brokerage mechanisms.

This confirms McAdam et al.'s (2022) argument that university–industry collaboration in entrepreneurship education requires structured intermediation and institutional commitment beyond sporadic agreements. Moreover, some students expressed concern that the available internships did not always align with their academic backgrounds or entrepreneurial interests. This highlights the need for more personalized and skill-matched experiential opportunities.

Student Perspectives on Digitalpreneurship Learning

Student interviews revealed generally positive perceptions of the digitalpreneurship program. Many appreciated the exposure to real-world business challenges and digital tools. One student noted: *"We were encouraged to build a digital store and run online ads. That gave us confidence we can really do business."* Yet, students also identified gaps in mentoring, access to startup capital, and institutional recognition of extracurricular innovation projects. They expressed a need for more integrated support systems, including entrepreneurship coaching, incubation spaces, and credit recognition for practical projects.

This aligns with García-Peñalvo et al. (2021), who argue that successful entrepreneurship education depends not only on course content but also on an enabling ecosystem that nurtures student agency and innovation. The student voices add depth to the institutional narrative, offering a grounded perspective on how strategic and standardized efforts translate into actual learning experiences.

Dialectics and Institutional Reflexivity

Across the findings, a key dialectic emerges: the tension between institutional ambition and operational readiness. On one side, the university leadership espouses a bold vision of becoming a digital entrepreneurship hub. On the other side, operational realities—limited human resources, uneven faculty capacity, and infrastructural gaps—constrain program scalability and consistency. This dialectic reflects the broader challenge of educational innovation in developing contexts, where resource constraints and institutional inertia often dampen reform efforts. It also underscores the importance of institutional reflexivity: the capacity to learn from implementation challenges and adapt strategies accordingly.

Several informants suggested the need for a cross-faculty task force on digital innovation to bridge departmental silos and harmonize efforts. Others called for performance-based incentives to motivate faculty engagement in entrepreneurship teaching and mentoring. Such recommendations resonate with Bryson's (2018) call for adaptive strategic planning that responds to internal feedback and external shifts. They also suggest that digitalpreneurship cannot be sustained as an isolated academic program but must be embedded within the broader culture and structure of the university.

IV. CONCLUSION

Conclusion

This study examined the strategic planning and academic standardization practices implemented by Universitas Insan Pembangunan Indonesia (UNIPi) in developing its digitalpreneurship program. Drawing on document analysis, interviews, and observations, the findings reveal a dynamic yet uneven process of institutional transformation driven by the desire to respond to digital economic demands.

At the strategic level, UNIPi demonstrates a clear institutional vision to promote digital entrepreneurship as a core academic priority. This vision is embedded in its strategic planning documents and partially realized through curricular integration, program-specific initiatives, and collaborations with external stakeholders. However, this vision is not yet uniformly operationalized across departments, reflecting structural and capacity-related limitations.

In terms of academic standardization, UNIPi has developed formal quality assurance frameworks and SOPs aligned with national standards such as SN-Dikti and KKNI. Nonetheless, implementation gaps persist, particularly in ensuring consistent pedagogical quality, infrastructure utilization, and faculty development. While

some academic units excel in adopting project-based and experiential learning, others remain constrained by conventional teaching practices and limited industry linkage.

These findings highlight a central dialectic between institutional ambition and operational readiness. The development of a robust digitalpreneurship program requires more than vision and documentation; it demands deep institutional coordination, capacity building, and adaptive quality mechanisms. It also calls for greater student-centeredness and stronger ecosystem support, including mentoring, incubation, and access to real market environments.

Implications

Theoretical Implications

This study contributes to the literature on entrepreneurship education by providing a contextualized case from a middle-sized private university in Indonesia. It reinforces the importance of aligning strategic planning with pedagogical innovation and institutional quality assurance. The study also demonstrates how regulatory compliance (e.g., SN-Dikti and KKNI) can serve as both enabler and constraint, depending on institutional capacities.

Practical Implications

For academic leaders and policymakers, the findings underscore the need to foster cross-departmental collaboration, strengthen faculty training in digital entrepreneurship pedagogy, and institutionalize partnerships with industry. Performance-based incentives, curricular flexibility, and innovation grants may encourage broader faculty engagement. Establishing dedicated units such as digital innovation hubs or entrepreneurship centers could also support ecosystem development.

Policy Implications

For higher education regulators, this case points to the necessity of differentiated policy support for institutions of varying sizes and readiness. National standards should be complemented with technical guidance and capacity-building initiatives to ensure that smaller institutions can meaningfully implement innovative academic programs.

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