



Research Article

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Digital Skills for the Entrepreneurship of Artisan Women Linked to the Native Cotton Line from Mórrope - 2022

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Abstract

Tourism as a social, cultural and economic phenomenon, nowadays in the 21st century, has an impact on the economy of the places that have tourist attractions and that manage to develop platforms of digital tourist services, according to the situation, for the benefit of visitors in such a way that allows a better experience of the visit and a growth of the influx of visitors. This research, which aims to strengthen digital skills for entrepreneurship of women artisans, will be framed in a descriptive type of research, non-experimental design, and the population will be made up of artisan women linked to the native cotton line from Mórrope. In the research it was concluded that, according to the evaluation of digital skills, in their different dimensions, there was evidence of a low qualification of artisan women entrepreneurs in Mórrope in general. They showed little initiative to undertake projects related to information technologies because of the little knowledge they had about them. Therefore, digital skills are considered essential for success in entrepreneurship and it is important that women have access to education and training in technology to develop those skills.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship, digital skills, craftswomen, entrepreneurial skills

1. Introduction

Tourism in the world has grown exponentially, as a result of the free vaccination systems in different countries, the lifting of population confinements, and the reopening of borders. In general, there was a peak of sustained growth in 2021, reaching a growth of 62%, surpassing the behavior before the pandemic.

The new outbreaks of Covid-19, and its different variants, have led to a slight decrease in consumer confidence in tourism, which is expected to be restored by early 2022. Despite this, tourism activities increased by 19% in 2021, generating \$1.9 billion in revenue, evidencing increased spending by tourists (World Tourism Organization [WTO], 2021). The stoppage in the tourism sector dazzled the deficiencies with respect to the lack of planning. Faced with this, some opted for other activities, finding better alternatives for tourism services, which represent an advantage to improve the current services.

Research related to the problem has been found in which Li *et al.* (2018) stand out. They detected entrepreneurs of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) with inadequate capabilities and limited resources, but drove digital transformation in their companies. Inductively deriving a process model that aims to describe and explain how SME entrepreneurs, with the support of the digital platform service provider, drove digital transformation through managerial cognition renewal, managerial social capital development, business team building, and organizational capability building.

For their part, Purbasari *et al.* (2021), based on the analysis of elements of Digital Business Ecosystem in SMEs on digital platforms in Indonesia, it is known that the element Digital User Citizenship is still in a rather weak situation due to strict policies, limited in regulating explicit and implicit legitimacy of social norms of digital society in Indonesia. Meanwhile, the Digital Technology Entrepreneurship (DTE) and Digital Multilateral Platform (DMP) elements are in a very promising position to continue to grow along with the rise of digital platform-based SMEs and the broadening of the online market base.

The Iranian entrepreneurial ecosystem has grown dramatically over the last decade. The number of women digital entrepreneurs has been increasing and their entrepreneurial activities have profoundly changed the competition scene having a better position of women entrepreneurs in this ecosystem (Salamzadeh and Ramadani, 2021).

Tourism activities in Peru are related to the handicrafts industry, which has been affected and its commercial situation is not encouraging due to the scarcity of the main raw materials, confinements and the lack of buyers. The temporary disappearance of tourism activities and demand for handicrafts forced artisan guilds to shift their focus to other activities, such as agriculture, fishing and others. In addition, the precarious situation of the artisans, together with the lack of support from the state and the lack of activation activities, exacerbated the problem (Instituto de Altos Estudios Peruanos, 2021).

In the local context, CITE SIPAN in the Lambayeque Region, in 2019 conducted a study on artisan workshops, identifying native cotton artisans, who presented common problems, such as poor storage of raw materials and finished products, lack of signage essential for artisan workshops to identify their community of origin. The latter makes it impossible for visitors and tourists to identify and position these productive units. There was also a need to improve the entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation skills of the craftswomen, which would enable them to improve their production units, the management of their workshops and customer service.

According to the research conducted by Ayala (2019), the members of the Mórrope craftswomen's association are characterized by being mothers who are very enterprising and are responsible for raising their families. However, in general, due to their condition, the members have some limitations such as lack of time, the geographic distance between their homes and their workplace, and the lack of skills to handle technology and manage a business. In addition, the craftswomen lack the technical knowledge to add value to their handicrafts and market them

properly. They need the support of specialized organizations to achieve better positioning in the market. The specialized organization should serve as a link to train the associates and provide them with the necessary knowledge to capture the market and achieve a development value proposition in all their activities, which will allow the economic development of the guild and also improve the positioning and perception of the handicraft products of the Lambayeque region.

Morropo is known for its native cotton, which is grown in the region. This cotton is of high quality and has been used for centuries for the creation of textiles. Here, artisans use traditional weaving methods, such as the backstrap loom, to create beautiful pieces of clothing and textiles, considering that these methods have been passed down from generation to generation. Considering that, the dyeing of the textiles is done naturally using dyes extracted from local plants and minerals. This not only preserves the authenticity of the colours but is also environmentally friendly.

The craftswomen of Morropo have contributed significantly to the local economy and to the dissemination of Peruvian culture through their textiles. Most of the enterprises and businesses that produce and sell handicrafts are disappearing or will be totally paralyzed due to the low or null demand for their products. Due to advances in modern technology and mechanisation, which may threaten the traditional weaving and dyeing techniques used by craftswomen. Also, lack of access to modern machinery may limit their production capacity. It is necessary to prioritize the incorporation of different initiatives that seek to reinvent the handicraft sector with strategies based on the use of information technologies, hence the need to introduce them to the digital market, turning them into digital entrepreneurs.

From the above ideas, the formulation of the research problem arises: What are the digital skills needed to strengthen the entrepreneurship of women artisans linked to the line of native cotton from Mórrope - 2022? Therefore, the following objective is planned: to analyze the digital skills for entrepreneurship of women artisans linked to the line of native cotton from Mórrope - 2022.

2. Theoretical Framework

The concept of entrepreneur was first established in the 1700s, and the meaning has evolved since then. In the 20th century, an eminent economist, Schumpeter (1934), had focused his research on what drives entrepreneurs to be innovative and thus creates agitation and change. It was from this study that he coined the term "creative destruction", which later became one of the main attributes of an entrepreneur. Specifically, an entrepreneur's 'task' is to carry out a mission to help, destroy old and/or obsolete industries and in their place a new one is established. In other words, their mission is considered accomplished, if an entrepreneur is able to destroy an established business by creating new and better ways to replace them (Abdullah, *et. al.*, 2018).

For Vuorikari *et al.* (2016) human competence refers to the skills, knowledge and personal characteristics that enable an individual to perform effectively in a specific task or activity. These skills may include technical knowledge, interpersonal skills, problem-solving ability, ability to adapt to change, among others. Human competence is developed through education, training and experience, and can be assessed and measured through tests and evaluations. Likewise, digital competences refer to the skills, knowledge and abilities needed to use digital technologies effectively. These skills include the handling of digital devices, the use of software and applications, the ability to navigate the Internet, the ability to communicate and collaborate online, the ability to manage and protect information, and the ability to solve technical problems. In an increasingly digital world, these skills are becoming increasingly important both in the workplace and in everyday life. Education and continuing education are important to develop and maintain these skills.

In the same vein, Bacigalupo *et al.*, (2016) state that entrepreneurship competence refers to the skills and knowledge needed to create and grow a business. It includes skills such as entrepreneurial thinking, the ability to identify business opportunities, the ability to plan and execute projects, the ability to take risks, the ability to adapt to change and leadership skills. This competency also includes knowledge in areas such as finance, marketing and human resources. Education and training

in entrepreneurship can help develop this competence.

According to Messina and Hochsztain (2015), competences are a transversal set of attitudes, knowledge and skills that allow entrepreneurs to achieve their personal goals and aspirations. One of the main competences that the entrepreneur must have is to detect new business opportunities. The entrepreneur must have entrepreneurial aspiration, a competence that is characterized by foreseeing the future or visualizing trends that will be successful in the future, as well as hard entrepreneurial competences, which are oriented to complement real concepts on topics or techniques for entrepreneurship. Finally, one must have an entrepreneurial attitude, which is characterized by the ability to overcome obstacles, resilience and perseverance to achieve the objectives set.

In the 2000s, the emergence of social networks, mobile devices and apps made digital technologies increasingly accessible and easy to use. This led to an increased reliance on digital technology in people's daily lives, and a greater need to develop and maintain digital competences in order to fully participate in society and the labor market. Today, digital competences are seen as an essential skill for employment and for society in general. Education and training in these skills are becoming a necessity in order to be competitive in the labor market and in everyday life (Ratten and Usmanji, 2020).

In similar appreciation Prendes *et al.*, (2018) highlight that the history of digital competences dates back to the 1950s, when computers began to be used in business and government. In the 1960s, computers became an increasingly common tool in education and research. As digital technology continued to evolve, it became increasingly present in people's daily lives. In the 1980s, the emergence of personal computers and the development of the Internet led to greater availability and accessibility of digital technologies. In the late 1990s, the Internet became an essential tool in the business world and more and more people began to use it to communicate, collaborate and access information.

For Prendes *et al.*, (2020) digital entrepreneurship competences refer to the skills and knowledge needed to use digital technologies to create and grow a business. These skills include the use of digital tools to research and analyze the market, the use of online platforms to promote and sell products and services, the use of online collaboration and communication tools to work with virtual teams, and the use of project management and data analysis tools to make informed business decisions. In addition, digital entrepreneurship skills also include the ability to protect and manage company data, and the ability to adapt and leverage new technologies to improve the business. It is essential for today's entrepreneurs to be familiar with digital technologies, as these are increasingly important to the success of a business in an increasingly digital world.

Finally, Vuorikari *et al.*, (2016) highlight some digital competences for entrepreneurship: opportunity identification skill refers to the ability to recognize and seize commercial or business opportunities. This skill is essential for entrepreneurship and can be crucial for the success of a business. The action planning skill in entrepreneurship refers to the ability to create and follow a detailed plan to carry out a project or business initiative. Initiative and collaboration skills in a venture refer to the ability to take initiative and work as a team to achieve business objectives. Security management skill in a venture refers to the ability to plan, implement and monitor security measures to protect assets and ensure business continuity. It includes information protection, risk prevention, regulatory compliance and intellectual property protection.

On the other hand, the literature review indicates that the entrepreneur must have the ability and talent to detect business opportunities and evaluate them in a technical way. In addition, it is also found that the entrepreneur must have scientific and technical knowledge to govern an organization, and finally there is a series of personal traits that make a person entrepreneurial, among them is risk management, self-confidence, leadership, charisma, planning and decision making (Ovalles, *et al.*, 2017).

Entrepreneurs are characterized by being very innovative people, who generally create new organizations or can also adapt organizations to new trends or new processes, but entrepreneurs necessarily need the support of companies that can provide financing or seed capital (Hernández, *et al.*, 2019). In this same context, Ibáñez and Zabala (2018) refer to the entrepreneur as an agent of change, which is concerned with generating economic, knowledge and also ecological wealth. An entrepreneur is characterized by being optimistic and linked to discovering new business

opportunities, which any person does not visualize or does not take into account. Entrepreneurs are also characterized by being very critical of conservative ways of doing something and are always looking for new ways of doing things.

Women today are visionary and mostly participate in actions aimed at forming their own business. Women generally identify with each other easily; sharing experiences can help them become aware of different issues and share new initiatives, but also discover that one's difficulties are not an individual problem but shared by many other women generating solidarity which increases trust among them and helps to strengthen women's networks. In many societies, it is men who have to share more of the workload and decision making with their wives, rather than women taking on more responsibility for starting or improving their businesses.

In light of these considerations, female entrepreneurship has gained an increasingly important place in the global economy in recent years. However, there is still a gender gap in entrepreneurship, especially in the area of digital skills. Women often have less access to education and training in technology, and consequently have fewer opportunities to develop the digital skills needed to succeed in entrepreneurship. However, as the world becomes increasingly digital, digital skills are becoming a growing necessity for entrepreneurship. Whether for researching and analyzing the market, promoting and selling products and services, or working with virtual teams, digital skills are essential for success in entrepreneurship (Saavedra *et al.*, 2022).

3. Methodology

The research adopted a quantitative approach and a questionnaire was developed to analyze the level of digital skills of artisan women seen from a multidimensional perspective. A Likert scale based on 5 points was used to determine the degree of skills that the artisan women from Morropé had with the statements about information and communication technologies. (1: completely disagree, 2: disagree, 3: neutral, 4: agree, 5: completely agree). The questionnaire consists of 4 questions on socio-demographics and 45 questions divided into 4 dimensions (use of information and communication technologies, action planning, initiative and collaboration and, security management) and 14 sub-dimensions (tics knowledge, creativity and innovation, foresight , achievement orientation, leadership, planning and management of digital identity, initiative , communication and collaboration, digital value creation , responsibility and commitment, learning from experience, problem solving, planning and organization, motivation and confidence).

Considering, that the dimensions allowed to assess the readiness of the craftswomen to take advantage of digital technologies in their work. This is crucial in an increasingly digitised world where ICTs play a key role in the promotion and marketing of products, so it is important to understand their capacities to adopt and effectively use digital technology in their work.

The responses to these statements represented the perceptions and points of view of the women artisans from Morropé about the use and level of acceptance of information technologies. It should be noted that the instrument has undergone content validity, for which an expert panel made up of seven recognized researchers in the field was used, and a concordance level of 0.91 (good concordance level) was obtained based on Ayken's method. The instrument was then subjected to a pilot test of 60 women artisans, in order to obtain the level of internal consistency with the Cronbach's alpha and Omega coefficient statistics, obtaining 0.83 and 0.85 respectively.

The questionnaire was designed using Google forms and then we assisted the artisans in filling out the questionnaire in order to minimize the bias in filling it out, showing them at all times the necessary help with their concerns. The sampling method used was non-probabilistic by convenience using the closest contacts and points of reference where the artisans with experience in weaving with native cotton and who had a technological device, because they may have a device, but do not know how to use it to enhance their enterprise. The responses determined the level of knowledge and acceptance of ICTs from the perspective of each of the 4 dimensions or factors of knowledge of information and communication technologies and their respective 14 sub-dimensions, and then,

based on the knowledge of the values of the sociodemographics of the unit of analysis, we proceeded to perform a group comparison analysis in order to determine whether there is a significant difference between the level of knowledge of ICTs of the various sociodemographic groups.

Informed consent was also obtained virtually, which occurred at the same time the form was filled out (at the beginning). With the results of the survey, we proceeded to consolidate the sociodemographic data, to perform a descriptive analysis of minimum and maximum scores per dimension, an analysis of comparison of means between sociodemographic factors (Mann Whitney U test and Kruskal Wallis test) taking into account that these are two non-parametric tests used to compare groups where the data are ordinal or nominal variables, helping to determine whether there are significant differences in the distribution of these factors between specific groups without making strict assumptions about the nature of the data.

4. Results

According to the analysis of the sociodemographic profile, it was found that the age of the women artisans from Mórrope is between 40 and 60 years with 52.1% (86), of which 81.2% (134) are married, 42.4% (70) have only secondary education and 89.1% (147) have their own home (Table 1).

Table 1. Sociodemographic profile of the sample

		n	Percentage
Age	Under 40 years of age	58	35,2%
	From 40 to 60 years	86	52,1%
	Over 60 years of age	21	12,7%
Marital Status	Single	31	18,8%
	Married	134	81,2%
Level of education	No studies	37	22,4%
	Primary school	42	25,5%
	High school	70	42,4%
	Technical studies	16	9,7%
Housing	It is not your own house	18	10,9%
	It is your own house	147	89,1%
	Total	165	100,0%

Table 2. Evaluation of digital skills

Digital skills	(Arithmetic) Mean	Standard deviation
Knowledge of ICTs	2.173	0.854
Creativity and innovation	2.170	0.719
Prospecting	2.233	0.737
Achievement orientation	2.691	0.699
Leadership	2.661	0.623
Digital identity planning and management	2.238	0.777
Initiative	1.958	0.926
Communication and cooperation	2.297	0.961
Digital value creation	2.715	0.636
Responsibility and commitment	2.418	0.666
Learning from experience	2.398	0.699
Problem solving	2.671	0.496
Planning and organization	2.297	0.612
Motivation and confidence	2.356	0.479

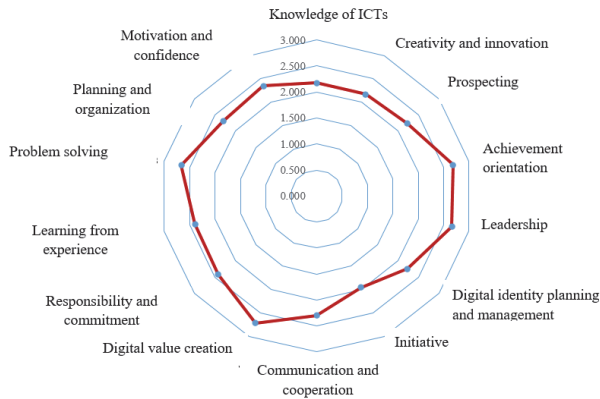


Figure 1. Specific digital skills

The evaluation of digital skills in its different dimensions allowed observing a low qualification in general in Morrope’s artisan women entrepreneurs, being scarce the initiative to undertake projects that are related to information technologies because of the little knowledge they have about them. This also prevents them from seeing the impact that projects involving ICTs could have in the future, in addition to considering that this lack of knowledge would not allow them to undertake projects in which they can guarantee information security. On the other hand, not knowing how to use digital tools discourages them from launching projects in which they might need such knowledge to succeed.

Table 3. Digital skills by age

Summary of Kruskal-Wallis test for independent samples	
N total	165
Test statistics	38,873 ^a
Degree of freedom	2
Asymptotic sig. (bilateral test)	0,000

a. Test statistics are adjusted for ties.

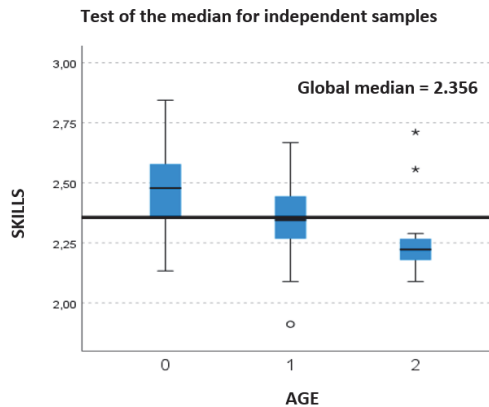


Figure 2. Digital skills by age of the respondent

In terms of age, it was determined that digital skills according to age groups showed a clear difference (Sig. < 0.05), being higher in entrepreneurs under 40 years of age, which shows an opportunity for training and promotion of ventures that take advantage of information technology tools.

Table 4. Digital skills by marital status

Summary of Mann-Whitney U-test for independent samples	
N total	165
Mann-Whitney U	3410,000
W of Wilcoxon	12455,000
Test statistics	3410,000
Standard error	239,438
Standardized test statistics	5,567
Asymptotic sig. (bilateral test)	,000

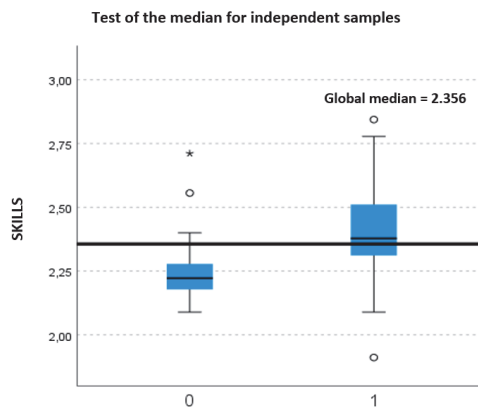


Figure 3. Digital skills by marital status

In relation to marital status, a significant difference was also found between single and married women artisans (Sig. < 0.05), with married women having a higher qualification, which establishes a greater willingness to train and learn in order to achieve personal growth and development for their homes given the family burden they have.

5. Discussion

According to the results, it was evident that women artisans from Mórrope have undergone major changes due to advances in technology, communications and globalization. The acquisition of digital skills and technology has become much more imperative as a result of the pandemic, and has become mandatory in order to generate greater production and quality of work. This is how smart organizations are giving preference to new generations of employees who are characterized by being digital natives, who have a wide knowledge of new technologies. In the commerce sector, there is a marked orientation towards the use of digital channels to carry out commercial activities, leaving aside traditional channels and giving way to new business models, more disruptive and more dynamic. Definitely the adoption of digital models by companies and the formation of digital skills by consumers are the characteristics that mark this new business scenario (Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean [ECLAC], 2021).

It should be noted that the evaluation of digital skills in its different dimensions allowed us to

observe a low score in general in Mórrope's artisan women entrepreneurs, with little initiative to undertake projects related to information technologies because of the little knowledge they had about them. It is essential to develop support and training programmes that help these craftswomen to improve their digital skills, boost their businesses and adapt to an increasingly digitalised economic environment.

Recent results from the Digital Economy and Society Index, (DESI), (52, 45%) and the European Digital Entrepreneurship Index Systems, (EIDES) (48%), illustrate an improved level of digital performance in European Union countries and significant progress towards unlocking digital productivity, value co-creation and collaborative networks. It is also agreed that the rapid digitization of the economy and digital entrepreneurship, the approach, fosters a transition from traditional business models to network and digitally integrated, platform business models (Baranauskas and Raišienė, 2022).

However, it must be taken into account that tourism activities are one of the main drivers of the economies of many countries, including Latin America, the Caribbean and Mexico. Due to the contact needs of tourism, this activity has been hit and prohibited by the confinements of the pandemic. The economic reactivation has considered, in the first place, to give the tourist activities the opportunity to continue with the activities through the implementation of certain protocols, such as distancing, sample testing, hand disinfection, etc. Tourism is purely face-to-face. It requires on-site visits to the different attractions in the locality or country of choice. While it is true that tourism is face-to-face, the emergence of COVID-19 has generated the use of digital activities aimed at virtualizing visits to museums or archaeological remains. Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean ECLAC (2021).

In the same context, Meurer et al., 2022, taking into account the affordance perspective, investigated how entrepreneurs interact with online communities, conducting a qualitative analysis on conversation data (76,365 posts) from an online community of entrepreneurs during the COVID-19 pandemic. The findings denote four possibilities that online communities offer entrepreneurs (problem solving, problem reframing, reflecting on situations, refocusing thinking and efforts), resulting in a framework for building entrepreneurial support in online communities.

It is important that women have access to education and training in technology to develop these skills. This can include online training programs, workshops and mentoring programs specifically for women entrepreneurs. It is also important to foster an environment of inclusion in entrepreneurship, where women have the same opportunities and resources as men in order to develop and apply their digital skills. In addition, it is important to promote women's entrepreneurial culture and provide resources and support to help women overcome the specific challenges they face in entrepreneurship, such as the capital gap and gender discrimination.

Promoting women's entrepreneurial culture also means highlighting and celebrating the successes of women entrepreneurs, which can inspire other women to follow in their footsteps. Providing resources and targeted support to overcome common challenges faced by women, such as lack of funding or gender discrimination, helps to close the gap and foster a more equitable and diverse business environment. This not only benefits women entrepreneurs, but also enriches the economy as a whole by harnessing the full potential of female talent and innovation.

Thus, digital entrepreneurship represents an emerging research topic in innovation and entrepreneurship studies and other disciplines. The variety of entrepreneurial ventures encountered that can be classified as numerous variants of digital entrepreneurship represents a great challenge to the goal of arriving at a joint understanding and a shared definition of digital entrepreneurship. Innovation studies cover many facets of new product and process development, as well as organizational innovation in both the economy and society. Network governance is the result of the understanding that digital entrepreneurship processes are embedded in ecosystems with multiple stakeholders, including users and public actors (Leick and Aldogan, 2021).

Start-ups or digital ventures are characterized by facilitating the management of new goods and services that are characterized by the ease of reaching their target markets due to the use of new

technologies and digitization. In this sense, it should also be taken into account that these ventures generate facilities for entrepreneurship. It should also be taken into account their own challenges that their managers and leaders must face, such as the acquisition of new technologies and the adoption of skills for the management of new technologies (Torres, 2020).

However, despite these advantages, digital startups also face significant challenges. One of the most notable challenges is the acquisition and adoption of new technologies. Keeping up with the latest technological innovations is essential to remain competitive. This includes investing in hardware, software and information systems that support business operations. In addition, training and adoption of skills related to new technologies are essential to ensure that employees can effectively use these tools.

In the context of digital entrepreneurship and technology skills, it is essential to promote technology education and training for women entrepreneurs, as this not only empowers them in a digital environment, but also contributes to closing the gender gap in entrepreneurship. At the same time, it is important that native cotton artisans are prepared to face challenges related to the acquisition of new technologies, cybersecurity and online competition, as effective management of these aspects is crucial for their success in a highly competitive and constantly evolving market.

6. Conclusions

The evaluation of digital competences or skills, in their different dimensions, evidenced a low qualification in women entrepreneurs in handicrafts in Mórrope, in general, having a low initiative to undertake projects that are related to information technologies because of the little knowledge they have of them. This also prevents them from seeing the impact that projects involving ICTs could have in the future; in addition, they consider that this lack of knowledge would not allow them to undertake projects in which they can guarantee information security.

Therefore, digital skills are considered to be essential for success in entrepreneurship, and it is important that women have access to education and technology training to develop these skills. It is important to promote an environment of inclusion in entrepreneurship and provide resources and support to help women overcome the specific challenges they face.

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