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INNOVATIVE METHODS FOR MOTIVATING STUDENTS TO CREATE STARTUPS

In the current context of educational development and an innovation-driven economy, universities are increasingly serving as key platforms for the development of students' entrepreneurial competencies. The ability to implement innovative ideas and create startups has become an important factor in socio-economic development. However, practical entrepreneurial activity often reveals several systemic barriers that prevent students from actively engaging in startup processes. A primary challenge is the insufficient readiness to implement innovative ideas at an early stage of study, which creates a perceived gap between academic knowledge and the practical demands of the market. While the university environment provides a theoretical foundation, it often lacks mechanisms for practically testing ideas and receiving feedback from real users and partners.

The issue of low motivation to create startups is multidimensional, encompassing both psychological and social aspects, and reflects the effectiveness of the learning system and the environment in which the student operates, as well as the environment's ability to integrate theory with practice. Early involvement of students in practical entrepreneurial activities is crucial for developing skills that enable them to effectively apply acquired knowledge in professional practice. Therefore, an important task for modern universities is to create an integrated environment in which learning, research, and entrepreneurial practice mutually enrich each other, gradually overcoming psychological, technical, and social barriers to startup creation.

To assess students' motivation for startup creation and identify the main barriers to entrepreneurial activity, a survey was conducted among 87 students of the Central Ukrainian Institute of Human Development and the Central Ukrainian Vocational College of the University "Ukraine". Students from various majors and courses participated, providing representative data on young people's attitudes toward the practical implementation of innovative ideas.

The survey included questions on personal motivation levels, factors limiting the initiation of startups, awareness of university opportunities, skills deficits, psychological barriers, attitudes toward teamwork, and potential support formats. The comprehensive structure of the questionnaire enabled a quantitative assessment of motivational aspects and the identification of qualitative trends in students' perceptions of entrepreneurial activity.

Data analysis indicates an average motivation level of 5.4 points on a 10-point scale, with 23% of respondents reporting high motivation (scores of 8–10), 48% reporting medium motivation (scores of 5–7), and 29% reporting low motivation (scores of 1–4). The most frequently cited barriers were insufficient knowledge (62%) and lack of funding (57%). Other obstacles included the absence of a team (49%), fear of failure (38%), lack of time (31%), and insufficient support (27%). Only 12% of students considered themselves well-informed about university opportunities, 39% were partially informed, 28% had limited knowledge, and 21% were completely unaware of existing programs and resources supporting startup initiatives.

The survey also identified key skill deficits affecting students' readiness for startup activity: 54% reported a lack of entrepreneurial competencies, 47% reported insufficient technical skills, 31% faced organizational challenges, and 26% had underdeveloped communication skills. Psychological barriers were also significant: 56% of students felt uncertain about their competencies, 44% experienced fear of failure, 21% noted the lack of external support, and 14% reported emotional burnout. At the same time, students recognized the importance of teamwork: 52% considered the team "very important," 34% "important," and only 3% regarded it as unimportant for the implementation of a startup.

Regarding support formats and motivation enhancement, practical tools proved most attractive, with real cases from companies engaging 58% of

students, mentorship at 58%, financial support and grants at 61%, mini-incubators at 41%, hackathons at 37%, and gamified courses at 29%. The most common student suggestions for increasing motivation included more practical exercises (46%), involvement of business mentors (34%), financial support (29%), reducing theoretical content in favor of real cases (25%), and creating a student startup center (18%). These data highlight clear student needs for practical support and entrepreneurship stimulation, forming a foundation for developing effective university motivation strategies (Table 1).

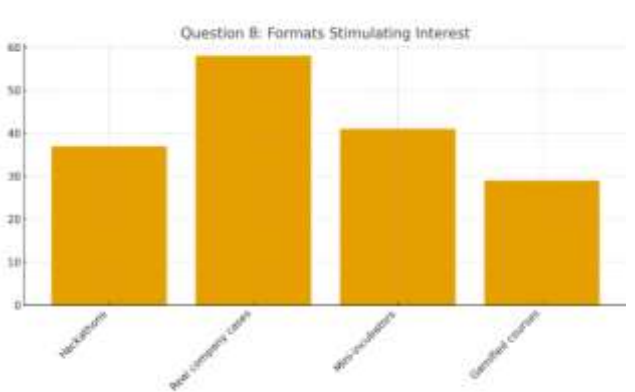
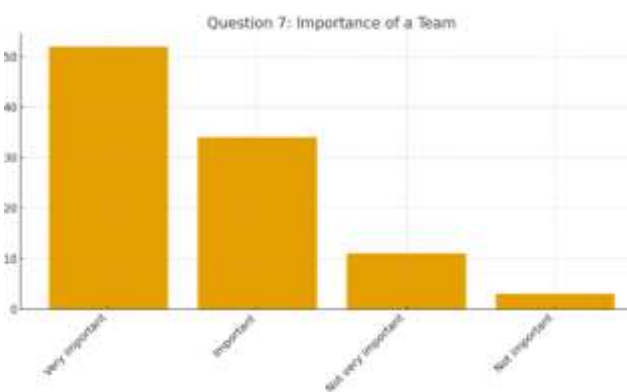
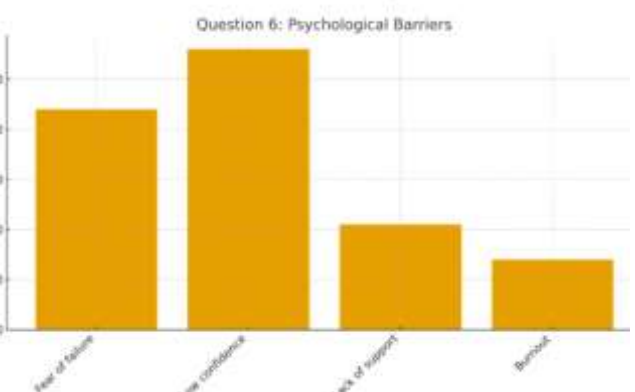
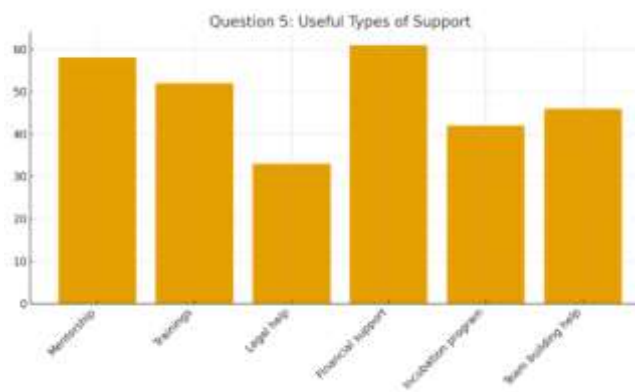
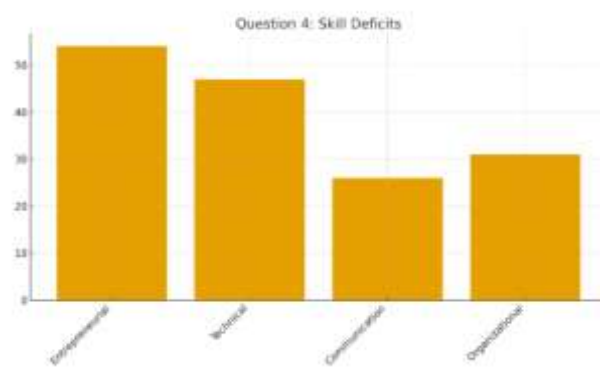
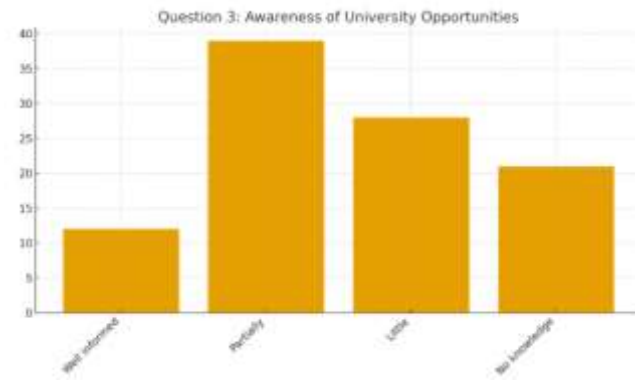
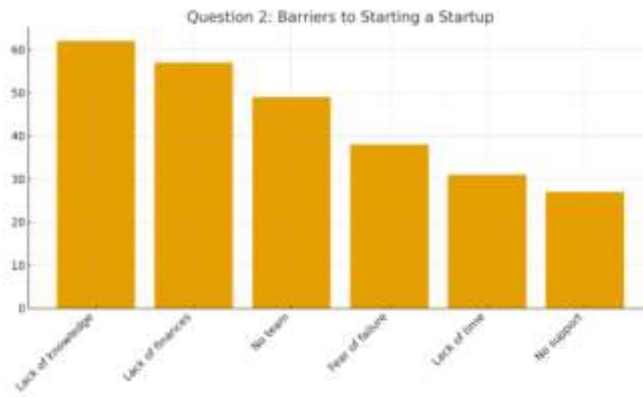
Table 1. Summary of survey results on students' motivation to create startups (n = 87)

№ питання	Зміст питання	Узагальнені результати серед 87 студентів
No.	Survey Question	Summary of Results among 87 Students
1	Personal motivation level (1–10)	Average = 5.4; high motivation (8–10) – 23%, medium (5–7) – 48%, low (1–4) – 29%
2	Factors limiting startup initiation	Insufficient knowledge – 62%; lack of funding – 57%; no team – 49%; fear of failure – 38%; lack of time – 31%; lack of support – 27%
3	Awareness of university opportunities	Well-informed – 12%; partially informed – 39%; limited knowledge – 28%; not aware – 21%
4	Skills deficits	Entrepreneurial – 54%; technical – 47%; communication – 26%; organizational – 31%
5	Useful types of support	Mentorship – 58%; training sessions – 52%; legal consultations – 33%; financial support – 61%; incubation programs – 42%; team-building assistance – 46%
6	Psychological barriers	Fear of failure – 44%; lack of confidence in competencies – 56%; absence of external support – 21%; emotional burnout – 14%
7	Importance of team	Very important – 52%; important – 34%; not very important – 11%; not important – 3%
8	Formats that stimulate interest	Hackathons – 37%; real cases from companies – 58%; mini-incubators – 41%; gamified courses – 29%
9	Suggestions to increase motivation	Most frequent responses: more practical exercises – 46%; business mentors – 34%; financial support and grants – 29%; less theory, more real cases – 25%; creation of a student startup center – 18%

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The research results indicate that students' motivation to create startups is shaped by a combination of interconnected factors. Often, uncertainty in their own ideas coincides with a lack of practical skills and fear of failure, which inhibits initiative at the early stages. To overcome these barriers, universities can organize live sessions with companies, where students receive real tasks and work on developing prototype solutions. This approach allows them to test their ideas in conditions closely resembling the market, receive feedback, and experience the tangible results of their work, gradually building confidence in their competencies and fostering motivation for further development.

Fear of technical complexity often represents a significant obstacle for students aspiring to launch their own startups. Many perceive the process solely as programming or working with complex technological systems, generating insecurity and a tendency to postpone attempts. No-code and low-code laboratories enable students to create minimally viable products, simple web services, chatbots, interactive applications, or landing pages without deep programming expertise or advanced IT tools. In these labs, each student engages in concrete tasks, including idea generation, prototype development, basic functionality testing, and presentation of results. Practical work in such environments enables students to observe firsthand how an abstract idea is transformed into a tangible product, with mistakes viewed as an integral part of the learning process. Over time, students acquire essential skills, gain a sense of control over the process, and overcome fears related to the technical aspects of starting a business. These laboratories foster a habit of experimentation and testing different solutions, increasing risk readiness and stimulating intrinsic motivation to work on their projects.

The social and team-based dimension is also crucial for cultivating a startup culture among students. Young people often feel isolated, lacking opportunities to exchange experiences and unsure where to seek support. Microgroups, where students from different disciplines support each other throughout the project cycle, effectively address this issue. Within these groups, participants share knowledge and resources, assist in solving organizational challenges, test ideas collaboratively, and receive regular constructive feedback. Collaborative work facilitates the rapid identification of project weaknesses, develops effective communication and team-planning skills, instills

the perception that entrepreneurial activity is normative, fosters shared responsibility, and motivates participants to continue developing their ideas.

Overcoming bureaucratic and organizational barriers represents another critical factor. Students often refrain from initiating projects due to uncertainty regarding legal matters such as registration, patents, intellectual property, or contracts with partners. Legal consultations and expert support create a safe space for idea testing. For example, a university startup legal clinic could allow students to quickly verify required registrations for their product, access sample contracts, and understand intellectual property protection regulations. Such support reduces bureaucratic anxiety, enabling students to focus on product development and functional testing.

Short project marathons and sprints, in which teams work to create a functional product within a limited timeframe—from a few days to a week—also play a significant role. In these conditions, students experience rapid results, observe how their solutions evolve into working prototypes, and have the opportunity to present them to mentors or potential investors. This practice enhances emotional engagement, encourages experimentation, and generates a sense of completed cycles even within a short timeframe.

The emotional dimension cannot be overlooked. Storytelling sessions, analysis of creative crises, and work on internal barriers help students perceive mistakes as part of the process, develop resilience, and cultivate the drive for self-improvement. The combination of practical tasks, mentorship, and attention to emotional factors creates an environment where motivation naturally increases, and students feel active participants in the university's and local community's innovation processes.

In conclusion, the findings confirm that students' motivation to create startups depends on the interplay of personal, social, technical, and organizational factors and is effectively enhanced through comprehensive support: engagement with real business cases, teamwork, laboratory practice, short sprints, mentorship, legal consultations, development of creative and strategic thinking, and addressing emotional barriers. The integration of these activities establishes an environment in which students gradually overcome fears, acquire practical skills, perceive progress and the significance of their

work, ultimately stimulating active participation in innovative projects and fostering a sustainable entrepreneurial culture within the university.

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