How do Artificial Intelligence-facilitated enablers influence international entrepreneurship: Does the Trump 2.0 tariff policy matter?

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A B S T R A C T
Objective: Applying the integrated framework of the entrepreneurial event model (EEM) and theory of planned behaviour (TPB), this study examined how Artificial Intelligence self-efficacy, competency, and knowledge shape perceived desirability and feasibility of international entrepreneurship, which in turn influence attitudes and intentions. It also tested how global mindset and tariff policy uncertainty moderate the attitude-intention link.
Research Design & Methods: This study surveyed 336 Vietnamese international business students and applied linear and polynomial regression with response surface analysis to test core effects and interactions with contextual moderators.
Findings: The results indicate that AI capabilities significantly enhance perceived desirability and feasibility, which in turn positively influence attitudes and entrepreneurial intentions. Polynomial regression revealed that congruence between desirability and feasibility strengthens entrepreneurial outcomes, whereas incongruence weakens them. Moreover, global mindset positively moderates, and tariff uncertainty negatively moderates, the attitude-intention relationship.
Implications & Recommendations: The findings offer actionable insights for educators, policymakers, and aspiring entrepreneurs, highlighting the importance of cultivating AI literacy, a global perspective, and clarity in trade policy communication to foster entrepreneurial engagement.
Contribution & Value Added: This study extends the EEM-TPB model by incorporating digital (AI-related) and political (policy uncertainty) dimensions into entrepreneurial cognition. It provides empirical evidence for how psychological and contextual mechanisms jointly shape international entrepreneurial intentions in emerging economies.

INTRODUCTION

The spread of AI technologies is reshaping entrepreneurship, creating new opportunities, and transforming how ventures identify and exploit them. Indeed, in recent years, generative AI has become integral to startups, automating routine tasks, amplifying creativity, and allowing entrepreneurs to focus on strategy. This transformation coincides with globalisation, as many new ventures pursue international markets from inception ('born global') (Knight *et al.*, 2025), making international entrepreneurship (IE) a critical engine of economic growth (Wach, 2026). In this study, I defined international entrepreneurship as

the process of discovering, enacting, evaluating, and exploiting opportunities across national borders to create future goods and services (McDougall & Oviatt, 2000). International entrepreneurial intentions are defined as the self-acknowledge convictions of individuals to start a business that will operate internationally, reflecting both willingness and planning to engage in cross-border ventures (Ammeer *et al.*, 2022). In this context, examining how AI-related factors shape perceptions of cross-border ventures is timely. While prior studies address technology adoption, we know little about how students' AI self-efficacy, competencies, and knowledge influence entrepreneurial cognition. Bridging this gap is vital, as tech-savvy youths may perceive international opportunities as more feasible and attractive.

An issue adding to this complex environment is rising geopolitical uncertainty, particularly the prospect of a renewed 'Trump 2.0' administration, which has reintroduced volatility into global trade (Ferriani *et al.*, 2025). President Trump's platform strongly embraces tariffs as a core foreign policy tool, with the 2025 campaign pledging sweeping increases under a renewed 'America First' agenda. For export-driven economies like Vietnam, reports of potential 46% tariffs highlight severe risks to growth. In this climate, entrepreneurs face uncertainty: will tariffs restrict market access or spark innovative ways to bypass trade barriers? However, the effects of AI-enabled capabilities and tariff uncertainty on international entrepreneurial intentions remain unexplored. Few studies have examined how major policy shocks shape students' attitudes towards international entrepreneurship, even though global mindset and perceptions of political risk likely influence the translation of these attitudes into intentions.

To address these issues, this study integrates the entrepreneurial event model (EEM) (Shapero & Sokol, 1982) and the theory of planned behaviour (TPB) (Ajzen, 1991) into a unified framework that incorporates novel AI-related drivers and contextual moderators. The EEM (Shapero & Sokol, 1982) posits that entrepreneurial intentions hinge on perceptions of an idea's desirability and feasibility (Krueger, 1993). Similarly, TPB (Ajzen, 1991) holds that attitude towards a behaviour strongly predicts intention. By integrating EEM and TPB, I will demonstrate how attitudes toward international entrepreneurship (TPB) and evaluations of desirability and feasibility (EEM) jointly influence intention. However, little work explains why people see IE as desirable or feasible, with AI-related competencies largely overlooked. We posit that AI self-efficacy, competency, and knowledge serve as enablers, strengthening perceptions of both feasibility and desirability. Meanwhile, the turbulent trade environment under a potential Trump 2.0 administration represents an entrepreneurial event. Consistent with EEM, tariff policy uncertainty can act as a 'fence' that weakens the attitude-intention link by heightening risk. Thus, our model incorporates macro-level shocks and individual orientations, highlighting global mindset as a facilitator that enables positive attitudes to translate into intentions even under uncertainty.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

Integrating the Event Entrepreneurial Model With the Theory of Planned Behaviour

This study builds on two classic intention models. Shapero and Sokol's (1982) EEM holds that entrepreneurial intention depends on perceptions of an idea's desirability (the attractiveness of venturing) and feasibility (one's sense of capability to pursue it). Similarly, Ajzen's (1991) TPB posits that an individual's attitude towards a behaviour strongly predicts the intention to perform that behaviour. By integrating EEM and TPB, I captured both cognitive evaluations and affective judgments: personal attitudes towards international entrepreneurship (a TPB construct) and beliefs about its desirability/feasibility (from EEM) jointly influence intention. Consequently, attitudes and desirability can be viewed as complementary facets of overall evaluation: attitudes represent a general favourable judgment, whereas desirability reflects a specific belief about opportunity attractiveness. Feasibility, in turn, corresponds to Ajzen's (1991) concept of perceived behavioural control, *i.e.*, the belief that one can successfully perform the venture.

Prior research has shown that one can integrate TPB and EEM into a single predictive framework of entrepreneurial intention. For instance, Iakovleva and Kolvereid (2009) demonstrated among Russian students that attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control shaped desirability and feasibility, which then predicted intentions. Eid *et al.* (2019) extended this approach by incorporating personality traits with the combined model, explaining over 70% of the variance in intentions.

These studies confirm the robustness of the integrated EEM-TPB model. However, limitations remain. Most applications emphasise personality or cultural moderators while overlooking digital competencies, such as AI knowledge and self-efficacy, that are increasingly central to feasibility appraisals. Likewise, scholars have rarely considered macro-level uncertainties, including geopolitical or trade policy shocks. Thus, while EEM and TPB integration is well established, its scope requires extending to contemporary determinants of entrepreneurial intention in digital and international contexts.

The Role of AI Drivers

Artificial intelligence self-efficacy refers to students' confidence in their ability to use and learn AI technologies. Those with high AI self-efficacy feel capable of managing complex tools and solving technical problems (Bewersdorff *et al.*, 2025). From the EEM perspective, such confidence enhances perceived feasibility, as self-efficacy underpins one's sense of control in executing a venture (Esfandiar *et al.*, 2019). In TPB, perceived behavioural control similarly fosters favourable attitudes and stronger intentions (Ajzen, 1991). Extending this to desirability, students who believe they can master AI may not only feel more capable but also see international entrepreneurship as more attractive, anticipating an AI-enabled advantage. Thus, confidence in AI skills should enhance both feasibility and desirability. Therefore, I hypothesised that:

H1: AI self-efficacy positively relates to (a) perceived desirability and (b) perceived feasibility.

Artificial intelligence competency refers to the perceived level of one's AI-related skills and practical knowledge (Duong, 2024), such as using AI-driven analytics or automation in business contexts. Higher AI competency should enhance perceived feasibility by reducing the anticipated difficulty of international tasks. Students confident in their AI skills expect to navigate cross-border challenges more effectively. It should also increase perceived desirability, as proficiency makes international opportunities, often requiring novel solutions, more attractive. Carolus *et al.* (2023) emphasise 'use & apply AI' as a core element of AI literacy, showing that individuals who feel competent applying AI envision clearer pathways to innovative international strategies. Thus, AI competency was expected to strengthen both feasibility and desirability. I hypothesised that:

H2: AI self-competency positively relates to (a) perceived desirability and (b) perceived feasibility.

Artificial intelligence knowledge refers to familiarity with AI concepts and awareness of its capabilities (Chiu *et al.*, 2024). Beyond hands-on skills, knowing what AI can accomplish can inspire entrepreneurial ideas and enhance the perceived attractiveness of international opportunities, thereby increasing desirability. Simultaneously, strong AI knowledge reduces uncertainty and complexity, elevating feasibility. Students with greater AI knowledge can better envision innovative cross-border ventures, identify market opportunities, and leverage AI tools such as predictive analytics, natural language processing, or automation to streamline operations and strengthen decisions (Uriarte *et al.*, 2025). In this way, AI knowledge lowers cognitive barriers by clarifying how AI can practically solve business problems and support international market entry. Accordingly, I hypothesised that:

H3: AI knowledge positively relates to (a) perceived desirability and (b) perceived feasibility.

The Role of EEM-related Drivers

In my integrated model, perceived desirability captures how attractive international IE appears to an individual (Ambad & Rafiki, 2025). When students view international venturing as personally appealing, for instance, aligned with their aspirations, it should strengthen their overall attitude towards IE. Prior studies emphasise that intentions hinge on the opportunities' attractiveness (Bui *et al.*, 2025). Moreover, high desirability should also directly increase intention. Following Shapero and Sokol (1982), desirability is a central driver of entrepreneurial action. Accordingly, I hypothesised that:

H4: Perceived desirability positively relates to (a) attitude towards international entrepreneurship and (b) international entrepreneurial intention.

Similarly, higher perceived feasibility, *i.e.*, the belief that one can successfully launch an international venture, can also enhance attitude and intention (Krueger, 1993). Feeling that a venture is doa-

ble generates confidence and optimism, which contributes to a more positive attitude (Ambad & Rafiki, 2025). In TPB terms, feasibility is akin to perceived control, and greater perceived control typically reinforces intention (Bui *et al.*, 2025). Hence, students who believe they have the resources, support, or skills (beyond AI factors) to start an international business will not only judge the idea more favourably but will also form stronger intentions to act. Formally, I hypothesised that:

H5:   Perceived feasibility positively relates to (a) attitude towards international entrepreneurship and (b) international entrepreneurial intention.

The EEM suggests that entrepreneurial drive arises when one views opportunities as both desirable and feasible, underscoring the need for alignment between these evaluations (Ambad & Rafiki, 2025; Esfandiar *et al.*, 2019). Building on this, we argue that desirability and feasibility interact synergistically: when both are high, the motivation to pursue international entrepreneurship should be strongest (Duong, 2025). In such cases, students perceive ventures as attractive and attainable, reducing cognitive conflict and fostering maximal commitment. Accordingly, I hypothesised that:

H6:   The degree of (a) attitude towards international entrepreneurship and (b) international entrepreneurial intention is higher when the congruent degree of perceived desirability and perceived feasibility is higher than when the congruent degree is low.

By contrast, misalignment between desirability and feasibility dampens entrepreneurial motivation by creating cognitive dissonance and uncertainty (Duong, 2025). For instance, if students find international entrepreneurship attractive but doubt their ability or resources to pursue it, internal tension is likely to weaken both attitude and intention. Such incongruence reduces psychological clarity and makes entrepreneurial outcomes less stable (Sassetti *et al.*, 2022). Accordingly, I hypothesised that:

H7:   The degree of (a) attitude towards international entrepreneurship and (b) international entrepreneurial intention is lower when the incongruent degree of perceived desirability and perceived feasibility increases in either direction.

The Role of TPB-related Driver

Attitude towards international entrepreneurship constitutes a key determinant of entrepreneurial intention within the TPB framework (Ajzen, 1991). Students who perceive cross-border ventures as beneficial, prestigious, profitable, and personally fulfilling are more likely to be motivated to engage in such activities. Prior empirical research confirms that positive attitudes reliably predict stronger intentions, particularly in uncertain and complex entrepreneurial contexts (Maheshwari & Kha, 2022). Thus, I hypothesised that:

H8:   Attitude towards international entrepreneurship positively relates to international entrepreneurial intention.

Global Mindset as a Facilitator

Global mindset, defined as openness and adaptability to diverse cultures and markets (Iddris, 2024), acts as a facilitating trait that strengthens the attitude-intention link. Individuals with a strong global orientation view cross-border variation as an opportunity rather than a risk (Mitan *et al.*, 2024). As Shahzad and Xu (2024) emphasise, such a mindset enables entrepreneurs to translate positive attitudes into concrete actions, even in uncertain situations. Accordingly, students with a high global mindset are expected to form stronger intentions at the same level of favourable attitude. Thus, I hypothesised that:

H9:   Global mind positively moderates the relationship between attitudes towards international entrepreneurship and international entrepreneurial intention.

Perceived Tariff Policy Uncertainty as a Fence

Finally, we conceptualise perceived uncertainty about potential 'Trump 2.0' trade tariffs as an external contextual barrier, a 'fence' that weakens the attitude-intention link in international entrepreneurship. The EEM highlights that external shocks and disruptive policy changes can reshape entrepreneurial perceptions and decision-making (Esfandiar *et al.*, 2019; Krueger, 1993; Shapero & Sokol, 1982). Heightened

tariff uncertainty increases environmental ambiguity, making ventures appear riskier and less sustainable. This volatility reduces students' confidence in converting positive attitudes into actionable entrepreneurial behaviour. Thus, even when attitudes toward international entrepreneurship are favourable, uncertainty about tariff policies may suppress entrepreneurial intentions. Consistent with prior findings that environmental uncertainty impedes entrepreneurial action (Zayadin *et al.*, 2022), I hypothesised that:

H10: Perceived tariff policy uncertainty negatively affects the relationship between attitudes towards international entrepreneurship and international entrepreneurial intention.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Sampling and Data Collection

To ensure contextual relevance, the sample focused on students from international-related disciplines, including international business, economics, logistics and supply chain management, relations, commercial law, and international studies. I recruited participants from seven major Vietnamese universities and collected data over three weeks (April 9-29, 2025) using a mixed-mode strategy (hard-copy and digital surveys) facilitated by lecturers and academic staff. Of 500 questionnaires distributed, I returned 357. After excluding 21 invalid cases, 336 valid responses formed the dataset.

The sample comprised 63.4% female and 36.6% male students, with most aged 20-24 (56.3%), followed by 18-19 (42.0%), and over 24 (1.8%). Academic majors among participants included international economics (28.6%), international business (21.4%), international commercial law (18.2%), logistics and supply chain management (17.6%), international relations (7.7%), and international studies (6.5%).

Scales

I measured all constructs with previously validated five-point Likert scales (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). I assessed international entrepreneurial intention with five items from Iddris (2024) and measured attitudes with Liñán's (2008) five-item scale. I captured perceived desirability and feasibility using items from Chaudhary and Biswas (2024) and Krueger and Carsrud (1993). I drew scales for global mindset and AI-related constructs from Shahzad and Xu (2024), Carolus *et al.* (2023), Duong (2024), and Chiu *et al.* (2024). I measured perceived tariff policy uncertainty with a five-item scale developed from Baker *et al.* (2016) and McMullen and Shepherd (2006). Following Hardesty and Bearden (2004), independent experts in tariff policy and entrepreneurship reviewed and refined item wording to ensure content validity.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Scales and Validation

To evaluate the reliability and validity of the measurement instruments, I assessed Cronbach's alpha coefficients, composite reliability (CR), and average variance extracted (AVE), and conducted confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). I removed items with standardised loadings below 0.50; PD6 = 0.148, PF2 = 0.461, PF5 = 0.054, GM1 = 0.186). As shown in Table 1, all retained constructs exhibited satisfactory reliability (α = 0.728-0.933; CR > 0.70) and convergent validity (AVE > 0.40). Discriminant validity was also supported, as the square roots of AVEs exceeded inter-construct correlations (Hair *et al.*, 2020). Furthermore, CFA results indicated strong model fit for the nine-factor structure: χ^2 (732) = 1 041.168, GFI = 0.872, AGFI = 0.850, CFI = 0.956, TLI = 0.950, NFI = 0.866, RMSEA = 0.036. Comparisons with alternative models (eight-to-one-factor solutions) yielded significantly worse fits ($\Delta\chi^2$, p < 0.001), confirming the superiority and robustness of the nine-factor model. Together, these results established the distinctiveness and validity of the constructs for subsequent structural analyses.

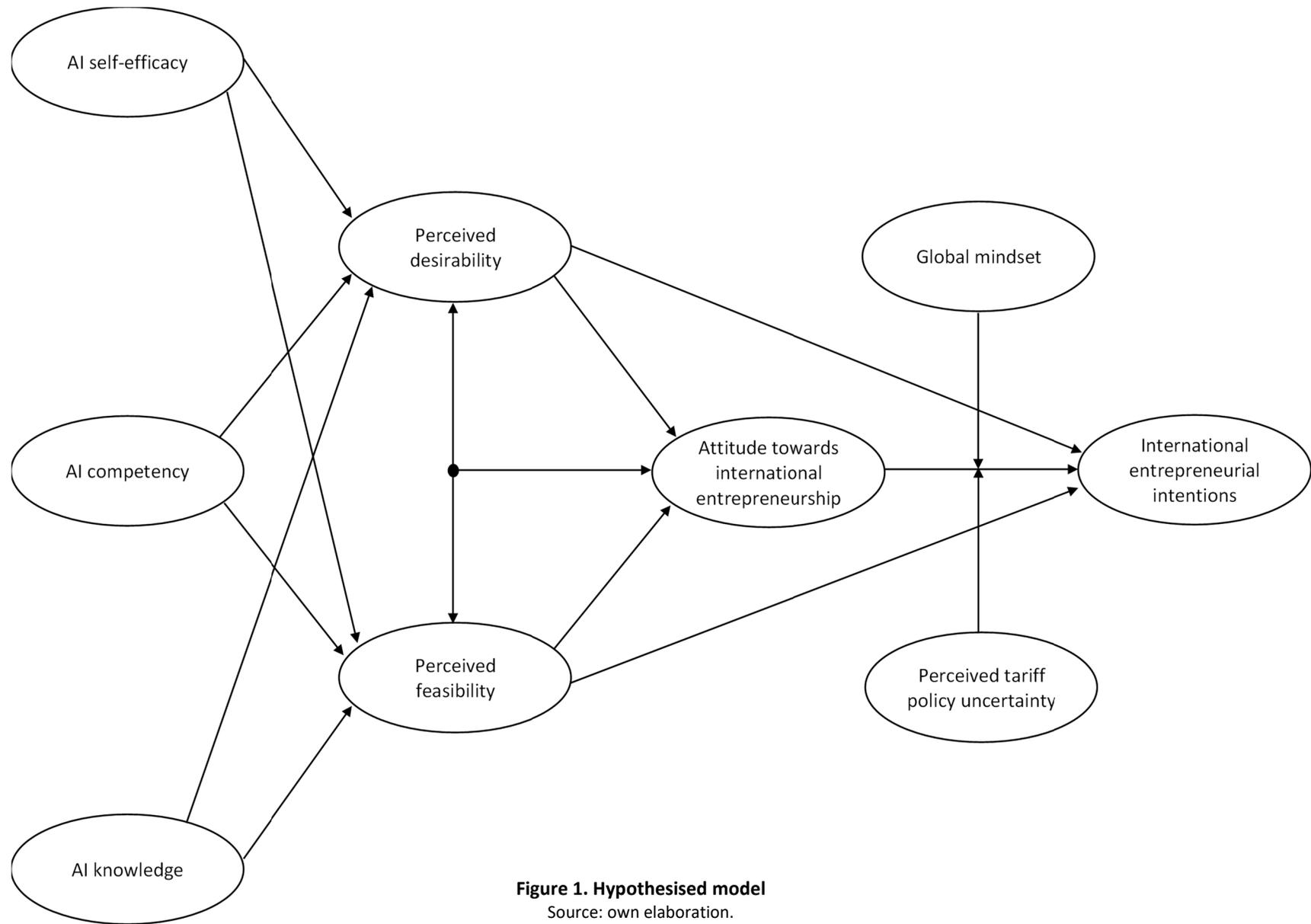Figure 1 illustrates the conceptual framework

Figure 1. Hypothesised model
Source: own elaboration.

Common Method Variance

Since the data originated from a single source, I employed a combination of methodological and analytical strategies to mitigate concerns regarding common method bias (CMB). To ensure validity, I guaranteed confidentiality and anonymity to participants and randomised the arrangement of survey questions to minimise response bias and priming effects. From a statistical perspective, Harman's single-factor test showed that the leading factor accounted only for 24.02% of the variance, which is below the acceptable 50% threshold (Podsakoff *et al.*, 2003). A single-factor CFA model also fit poorly: χ^2 (779) = 4 671.235, GFI = 0.507, AGFI = 0.455, CFI = 0.440, TLI = 0.411, NFI = 0.399, RMSEA = 0.122. Finally, comparing standardised regression weights with and without a common latent factor revealed all differences < 0.20, confirming that CMB was not a significant concern.

Hypothesis Testing

I conducted multiple regression and polynomial regression analyses to examine the theoretical framework, with Tables 2-5 and Figures 2-3 presenting the results. I performed hierarchical regressions to assess the impacts of AI-facilitated drivers, *i.e.*, AIE, AIC, and AIK, on PD and PF. As Table 2 indicates, AIE ($\beta = 0.146$, $p < 0.05$), AIC ($\beta = 0.108$, $p < 0.01$), and AIK ($\beta = 0.270$, $p < 0.001$) significantly influenced PD. Similarly, all three constructs positively predicted PF, with AIE ($\beta = 0.252$, $p < 0.001$), AIC ($\beta = 0.136$, $p < 0.01$), and AIK ($\beta = 0.257$, $p < 0.001$). These findings fully support H1a-b, H2a-b, and H3a-b.

To evaluate the downstream effects of PD and PF, I conducted polynomial regression analyses. Table 3 demonstrates that both PD and PF positively impacted ATI (PD: $\beta = 0.403$, $p < 0.001$; PF: $\beta = 0.208$, $p < 0.001$) and IEI (PD: $\beta = 0.354$, $p < 0.001$; PF: $\beta = 0.699$, $p < 0.001$), thus supporting H4a-b and H5a-b. In terms of congruence and incongruence effects, the slope along the congruence line (PD = PF) was significantly positive for both ATI ($\varepsilon_1 = 0.610$, $p < 0.001$) and IEI ($\varepsilon_1 = 0.105$, $p < 0.001$), while curvature (ε_2) was non-significant, suggesting that congruent high values of PD and PF strengthened entrepreneurial outcomes. Along the incongruence line (PD = -PF), the slope was positive for ATI ($\varepsilon_3 = 0.200$, $p < 0.05$) but negative for IEI ($\varepsilon_3 = -0.300$, $p < 0.001$), whereas curvature (ε_4) remained non-significant in both cases. These results confirm the support for H6a and H7a, while H67 and H7b were partially supported. As depicted in Figures 2 and 3, the highest ATI and IEI values occurred when both PD and PF were jointly high and aligned, whereas incongruence reduced outcome levels.

Table 4 presents further tests of the role of ATI and its moderators. Notably, ATI had a significant positive effect on IEI ($\beta = 0.599$, $p < 0.001$), supporting H8. Moreover, GM strengthened this relationship (GM × ATI: $\beta = 0.046$, $p < 0.05$), confirming H9. In contrast, TPU weakened the ATI-IEI relationship (TPU × ATI: $\beta = -0.034$, $p < 0.05$), providing evidence for H10. Figures 4 and 5 indicate the interaction plots. Table 5 presents the results of the mediation analysis, indicating that all three AI-related enablers (AIE, AIC, AIK) had significant indirect effects on IEI through PD, PF, and ATI. Specifically, the indirect effects via the paths PD → ATI → IEI and PF → ATI → IEI were all significant, with 95% confidence intervals excluding zero. These findings confirm that ATI operates as a key mediating mechanism linking AI capabilities to entrepreneurial intentions.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics and correlation matrix

Variables	M	SD	α	CR	AVE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1. Gender	1.634	0.482	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a											
2. Age	1.598	0.526	n/a	n/a	n/a	-0.134*	n/a										
3. Majors	2.923	1.593	n/a	n/a	n/a	0.037	-0.326**	n/a									
4. TPU	3.920	0.742	0.871	0.873	0.580	0.023	-0.075	0.031	(0.761)								
5. IEI	3.468	0.883	0.933	0.935	0.743	-0.172**	0.142**	0.030	-0.118*	(0.7862)							
6. ATI	3.286	0.596	0.815	0.817	0.472	-0.048	0.075	0.032	-0.052	0.476**	(0.687)						
7. PD	2.597	0.617	0.818	0.826	0.445	-0.091	0.141**	0.060	-0.139*	0.526**	0.532**	(0.667)					
8. PF	3.549	0.760	0.863	0.863	0.677	-0.042	0.102	0.077	-0.121*	0.720**	0.448**	0.435**	(0.823)				
9. GM	3.816	0.650	0.806	0.806	0.586	-0.050	0.063	0.078	-0.023	0.238**	0.194**	0.112*	0.277**	(0.765)			
10. AIK	3.418	0.609	0.728	0.737	0.415	-0.067	0.088	-0.002	-0.055	0.319**	0.381**	0.357**	0.307**	0.428**	(0.644)		
11. AIE	3.669	0.565	0.854	0.853	0.498	-0.032	0.098	-0.015	0.034	0.249**	0.392**	0.231**	0.265**	0.178**	0.266**	(0.706)	
12. AIC	3.084	0.846	0.839	0.846	0.582	-0.025	-0.029	0.139*	-0.029	0.231**	0.307**	0.243**	0.236**	0.226**	0.277**	0.095	(0.763)

Notes: N = 336. **: $p < 0.01$. α refers to Cronbach's alpha; AVE stands for average variance extracted; CR indicates compo-site reliability. Values in parentheses represent the square root of each construct's AVE.
Source: own study.

Table 2. Hierarchical regression models for the impacts of AI-facilitated drivers on perceived desirability and perceived feasibility

Variables	Perceived desirability (PD)				VIF	Perceived feasibility (PF)				VIF
	Model 1					Model 2				
	β	SE	t	p-value		β	SE	t	p-value	
Constant	0.572	0.295	1.940	0.053		0.993**	0.368	2.695	0.007	1.022
Gender	-0.065	0.064	-1.020	0.308	1.022	-0.014	0.080	-0.173	0.863	1.153
Age	0.153*	0.063	2.449	0.015	1.153	0.143	0.078	1.836	0.067	1.140
Majors	0.033	0.021	1.627	0.105	1.140	0.044	0.026	1.711	0.088	1.083
AIE	0.146*	0.056	2.583	0.010	1.083	0.252***	0.070	3.571	<0.001	1.108
AIC	0.108**	0.038	2.825	0.005	1.108	0.136**	0.048	2.859	0.005	1.165
AIK	0.270***	0.054	4.972	<0.001	1.165	0.257***	0.068	3.790	<0.001	1.022
R^2	0.190					0.201				
Adjusted-R^2	0.175					0.189				
F Change	12.875***					18.065***				

Notes: N = 336, *p < 0.05. **p < 0.01, ** p < 0.001.
Source: own study.

Table 3. Polynomial regression models for the effects of perceived desirability and perceived feasibility on international entrepreneurial attitudes and intentions

Variables	Attitudes towards international entrepreneurship (ATI)				VIF	International entrepreneurial intentions (IEI)				VIF
	Model 3					Model 4				
	β	SE	t	p-value		β	SE	t	p-value	
Constant	0.062	0.156	0.399	0.690		0.344	0.182	1.895	0.344	
Control variables										
Gender	0.007	0.056	0.122	0.903	1.029	-0.211**	0.065	-3.248	0.001	1.029
Age	-0.003	0.055	-0.048	0.962	1.208	0.061	0.065	0.951	0.343	1.208
Major	-0.004	0.018	-0.251	0.802	1.151	-0.007	0.021	-0.348	0.728	1.151
Polynomial terms										
h_1: PD	0.403***	0.050	8.002	<0.001	1.375	0.354***	0.059	6.026	<0.001	1.375
h_2: PF	0.208***	0.041	5.085	<0.001	1.372	0.699***	0.048	14.649	<0.001	1.372
h_3: PD^2	-0.096	0.062	-1.540	0.125	1.731	-0.119	0.072	-1.645	0.101	1.731
h_4: PD x PF	0.069	0.083	0.825	0.410	2.642	0.092	0.097	0.954	0.341	2.642
h_5: PF^2	-0.058	0.040	-1.452	0.148	1.748	-0.086	0.047	-1.832	0.068	1.748
R^2	0.350					0.599				
Adjusted-R^2	0.335					0.589				
F Change	22.053***					60.973***				
Surface tests										
Congruence line (PD = PF)										
ε_1: Slope ($h_1 + h_2$)	0.610***	0.050	13.083	<0.001		0.105***	0.060	17.116	<0.001	
ε_2: Curvature ($h_3 + h_4 + h_5$)	-0.090	0.070	-1.291	0.198		-0.110	0.070	-1.631	0.105	
Incongruence line (PD = -PF)										
ε_3: Slope ($h_1 - h_2$)	0.200*	0.080	2.480	0.014		-0.350***	0.090	-3.910	<0.001	
ε_4: Curvature ($h_3 - h_4 + h_5$)	-0.220	0.160	-1.430	0.155		-0.300	0.018	-1.640	0.103	

Notes: N = 336, *p < 0.05. **p < 0.01, ** p < 0.001.
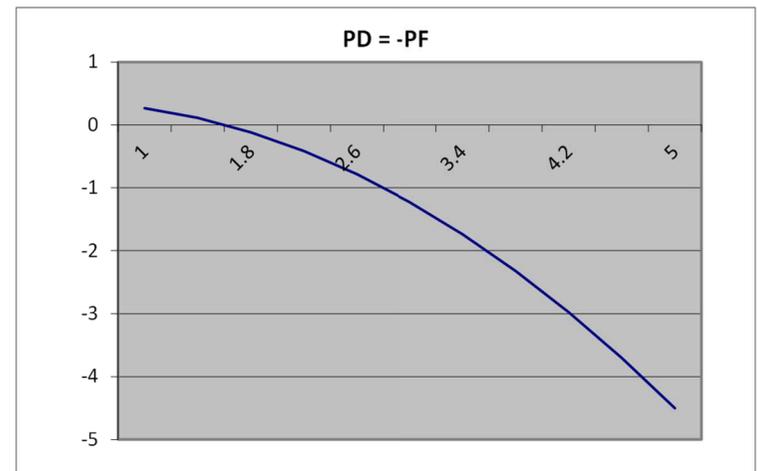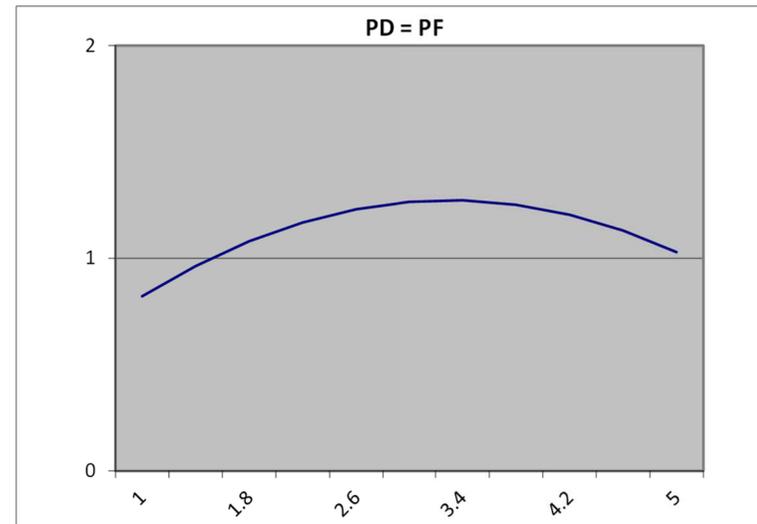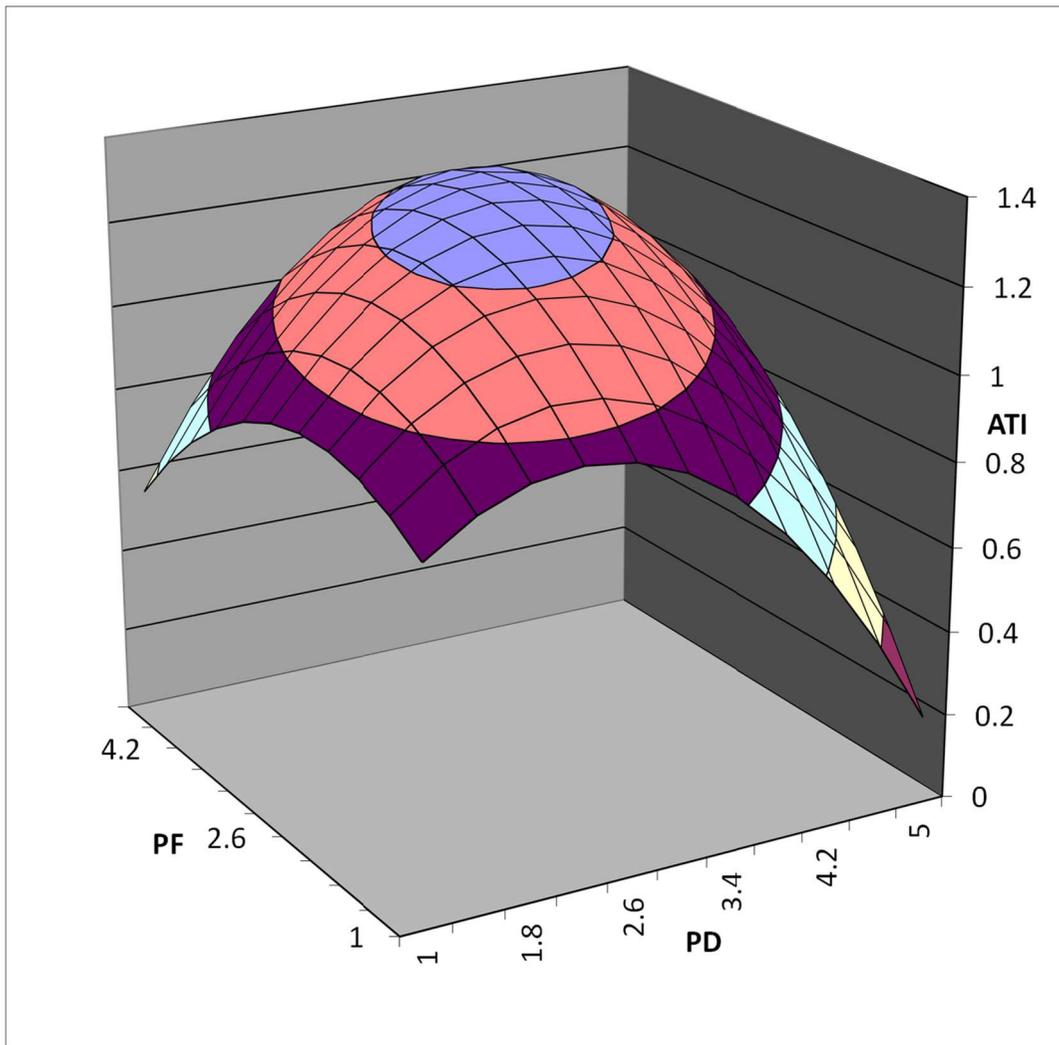
Source: own study.

Figure 2. Response surface for ATI as predicted by PD and PF
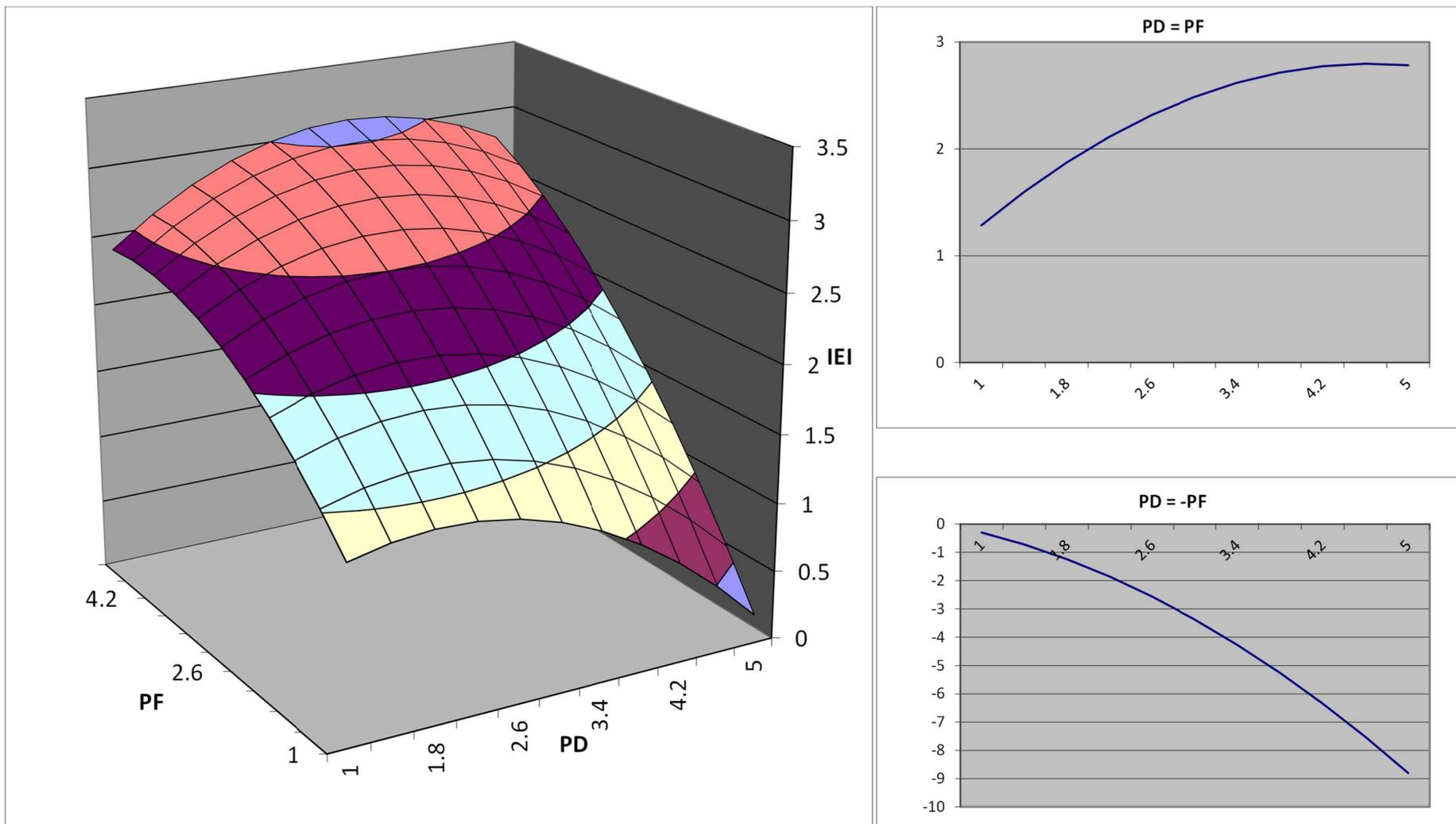Source: own elaboration.

Figure 3. Response surface for IEI as predicted by PD and PF
Source: own elaboration.

Table 4. Hierarchical regression model for the impacts of international entrepreneurial attitudes and their inter-action with global mindset and perceived tariff policy uncertainty on international entrepreneurial intentions

Variables	International entrepreneurial intentions (IEI)				VIF
	Model 5				
	β	SE	t	p-value	
Constant	1.438***	0.330	4.357	<0.001	
Gender	-0.249**	0.086	-2.882	0.004	1.021
Age	0.157	0.084	1.865	0.063	1.154
Majors	0.025	0.028	0.912	0.362	1.134
ATI	0.599***	0.126	4.745	<0.001	3.308
GM x ATI	0.046*	0.019	2.379	0.018	2.565
TPU x ATI	-0.034*	0.017	-1.996	0.047	1.751
R^2	0.281				
Adjusted-R^2	0.268				
F Change	21.424***				

Notes: N = 336, *p < 0.05. **p < 0.01, ** p < 0.001.
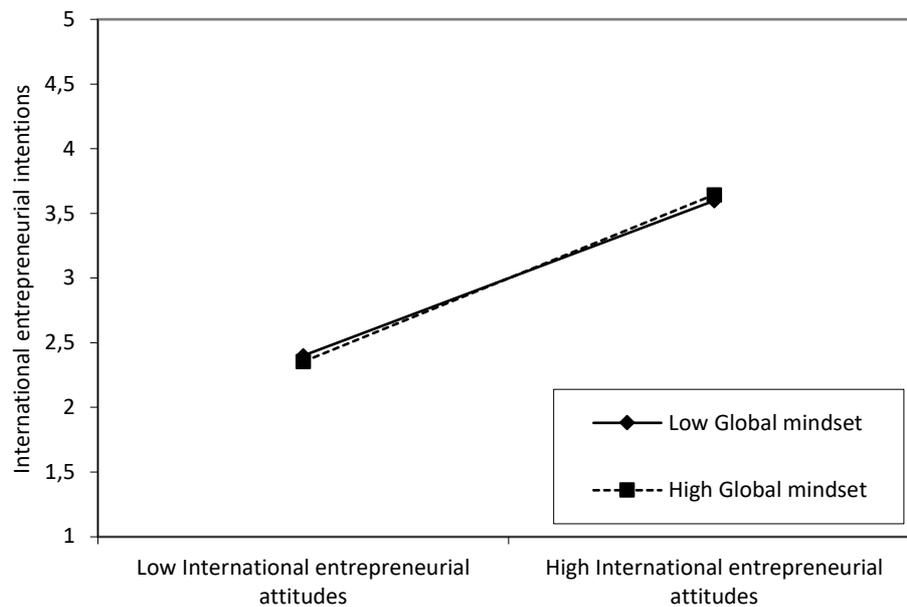Source: own study.

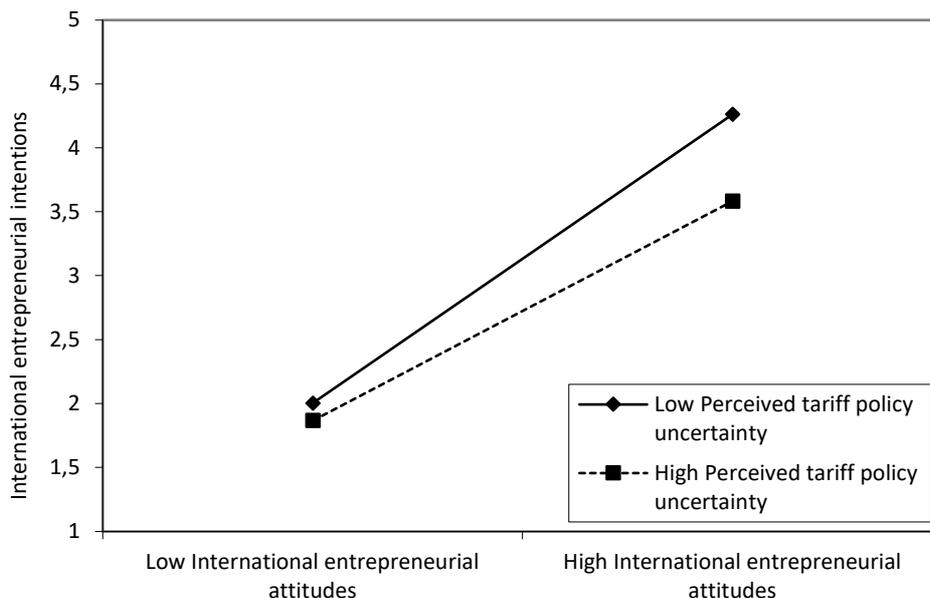**Figure 4. Interacted impact of GM and ATI on IEI**
Source: own elaboration.

Figure 5. Interacted impact of TPU and ATI on IEI
Source: own elaboration.

Table 5. Mediation analyses

Indirect coefficients					Effects	BootSE	Bootstrap 95% CIs	
							LLCI	ULCI
AIE	→	PD	→	ATI	0.093	0.023	0.025	0.107
AIE	→	PD	→	ATI	→ IEI	0.042	0.014	0.018	0.074
AIE	→	PF	→	ATI	0.061	0.021	0.025	0.107
AIE	→	PF	→	ATI	→ IEI	0.029	0.010	0.012	0.053
AIC	→	PD	→	ATI	0.066	0.017	0.035	0.101
AIC	→	PD	→	ATI	→ IEI	0.032	0.011	0.013	0.056
AIC	→	PF	→	ATI	0.040	0.015	0.015	0.074
AIC	→	PF	→	ATI	→ IEI	0.018	0.007	0.006	0.035
AIK	→	PD	→	ATI	0.128	0.025	0.082	0.179
AIK	→	PD	→	ATI	→ IEI	0.059	0.017	0.030	0.095
AIK	→	PF	→	ATI	0.070	0.023	0.031	0.121
AIK	→	PF	→	ATI	→ IEI	0.028	0.010	0.012	0.052
PD	→	ATI	→	IEI	0.209	0.049	0.119	0.309
PF	→	ATI	→	IEI	0.100	0.025	0.053	0.149
BV	→	ATI	→	IEI	0.263	0.069	0.121	0.391

Notes: N = 336, BV: Block variables; results are based on trimmed scales. LLCI: Lower level of confidence interval. ULCI: Upper level of confidence interval. SE: Standard errors.
Source: own study.

DISCUSSION

Key Findings

This study revealed several key patterns regarding international entrepreneurial intentions in a technology-driven, uncertain environment. Firstly, all three AI-related enablers, *i.e.*, self-efficacy, competency, and knowledge, positively shaped students' perceptions of international entrepreneurship. Greater confidence in engaging with AI technologies enhanced both desirability and feasibility evaluations, consistent with the EEM's emphasis on these appraisals (Shapero & Sokol, 1982) and TPB's per-

ceived behavioural control (Ajzen, 1991). Thus, AI self-efficacy serves as a psychological resource fostering control, echoing findings by Duong (2024) on digital self-efficacy in entrepreneurship. Beyond this, technological competence, particularly fluency with AI tools, emerges as a 'cognitive co-founder,' reducing cognitive load and sharpening strategic clarity in cross-border venturing.

Secondly, consistent with both EEM and TPB, the results confirm that perceived desirability and feasibility significantly shape entrepreneurial attitudes and, subsequently, intentions. This supports prior work (Esfandiar *et al.*, 2019) showing that opportunity attractiveness and perceived capability are central to entrepreneurial intent, and extends these effects into international contexts. Crucially, I identified a congruence effect: attitudes and intentions were strongest when both desirability and feasibility were high, lending empirical support to Duong (2025) on their joint influence. By contrast, incongruence weakened outcomes, reflecting the cognitive dissonance entrepreneurs experience when aspirations exceed perceived capabilities (Sassetti *et al.*, 2022).

Thirdly, the study demonstrates that attitude constitutes the central mediator in intention formation, in line with TPB's view of attitude as the most proximal predictor of intention. Mediation analysis revealed that AI drivers influenced intention indirectly, through desirability and feasibility influencing attitude. This highlights that technological confidence alone is insufficient; action requires a favourable evaluative judgment. Extending this principle to high-tech, global contexts, the findings confirm that entrepreneurial intentions depend on attitudinal assessments shaped by cognitive precursors.

Fourth, the study underscores the moderating role of boundary conditions, *i.e.*, global mindset and tariff policy uncertainty, in the attitude-intention link. Students with a strong global mindset were more effective at translating favourable attitudes into international entrepreneurial intentions, echoing (Shahzad & Xu, 2024) that global orientation enhances responsiveness in volatile contexts. By contrast, perceived tariff policy uncertainty significantly weakened this link, consistent with Shapero and Sokol's (1982) view that external shocks reshape entrepreneurial pathways. This finding extends research on policy uncertainty (McMullen & Shepherd, 2006; Zayadin *et al.*, 2022), showing that macroeconomic threats, such as 'Trump 2.0' tariffs, act as psychological barriers that suppress entrepreneurial momentum, even among motivated individuals.

Theoretical Contributions

This study advances international entrepreneurship (IE) literature by extending the EEM and TPB with digital and political dimensions, enriching classical intention models for contemporary contexts. By incorporating AI self-efficacy, competencies, and knowledge into the EEM-TPB framework, I showed that technology-specific cognitions significantly shape perceived desirability and feasibility, *i.e.*, the core antecedents of entrepreneurial intention. These findings highlight digital confidence as a critical cognitive resource in evaluating cross-border ventures. This aligns with recent work highlighting the rising role of digital skills in shaping entrepreneurial intentions (Abaddi, 2023) and extends evidence that digital transformation reshapes entrepreneurial cognition. Our findings modernise Shapero and Sokol (1982) and Ajzen (1991) by showing that entrepreneurial perceptions are now under the strong influence of familiarity with and mastery of emerging technologies.

Moreover, this research contributes to theory by identifying a global mindset as a meaningful boundary condition. While prior studies have recognised the role of cross-cultural competence in entrepreneurship (Giacomin *et al.*, 2022), my results empirically establish global mindset as a moderator that strengthens the relationship between attitude and intention. This is consistent with calls in the IE literature to better capture how international orientation and cognitive frames influence venture creation across borders (Shahzad & Xu, 2024). This suggests that internationally oriented individuals are better able to translate positive attitudes into intentions, even in uncertain situations, which constitutes a nuance often overlooked in TPB models. By incorporating tariff policy uncertainty as a contextual 'fence,' this study shows how political volatility can disrupt established cognitive pathways: even when desirability, feasibility, and attitude are strong, unpredictable macroeconomic policies (*e.g.*, U.S. tariffs) weaken the attitude-intention link. These findings underscore the need for entrepreneurship theory to incorporate geopolitical uncertainty, particularly in global or export-sensitive contexts.

Finally, this study expands the empirical scope of EEM-TPB by situating the research in Vietnam, an emerging and export-dependent economy. In doing so, the study contributes evidence from a non-Western, underrepresented context, demonstrating that entrepreneurial cognition is shaped not only by individual and technological factors but also by institutional and policy environments. This responds to long-standing calls for diversifying the geographic scope of entrepreneurship research (Knight *et al.*, 2025), thereby affirming the relevance of intention-based models beyond mature economies. This contextual extension reaffirms the relevance of intention-based models beyond mature economies and underscores the need for theory to evolve in tandem with digitalisation and geopolitical flux.

Practical Implications

This study offers valuable implications for educators, policymakers, and entrepreneurs in Vietnam and other emerging economies navigating rapid technological change and policy uncertainty.

The findings indicate that AI-related confidence enhances perceptions of desirability and feasibility, thereby influencing international entrepreneurial intentions. Therefore, higher education institutions should embed AI literacy into entrepreneurship and business curricula, combining theory with hands-on projects, real-world case studies, and digital innovation challenges. Moreover, programs should foster a global mindset through international case studies, cultural immersion, and exchange opportunities, thereby building the cross-cultural agility necessary to act effectively in uncertain situations.

From a policy perspective, this study highlights the negative impact of tariff uncertainty on entrepreneurial intention. Policymakers in export-dependent economies, such as Vietnam, should recognise that volatile trade signals can discourage even highly motivated young people. Transparent communication, diversification of export markets, and instruments such as bilateral trade agreements, export guarantees, or digital market-entry support can reduce uncertainty and sustain international engagement.

For practitioners and aspiring founders, the findings emphasise the importance of investing in both AI capabilities and global competencies. Practical AI skills gained through coursework, innovation labs, or experiential learning empower entrepreneurs to identify opportunities and manage cross-border challenges more effectively. Simultaneously, global orientation fostered through international networking, partnerships, and mentorship enhances the ability to act on positive entrepreneurial attitudes amid turbulence. For instance, in Vietnam, entrepreneurs could use AI-driven analytics to explore alternative export destinations or redesign supply chains to mitigate risks from shifting tariff regimes.

CONCLUSIONS

This study shows how AI-related capabilities and tariff policy uncertainty jointly shape international entrepreneurial intentions through the EEM-TPB framework. Furthermore, AI knowledge, self-efficacy, and competency enhance perceptions of desirability and feasibility, which in turn strengthen attitudes and intentions. Importantly, congruence between desirability and feasibility amplifies outcomes, while incongruence weakens clarity and commitment. At the same time, perceived tariff uncertainty acts as a contextual barrier, dampening the attitude-intention link and underscoring the influence of macro-level constraints.

Several limitations merit acknowledgment. Firstly, the cross-sectional design limits causal inference, suggesting that future longitudinal work is necessary to assess temporal dynamics. Secondly, the student-based sample from Vietnam limits generalisability (Huynh *et al.*, 2025; Ip, 2025). Expanding to broader geographic and demographic contexts would enhance external validity. Finally, while this study focuses on tariff uncertainty, future research could examine other macro-level forces, such as economic volatility, political instability, or technological disruption, that similarly shape entrepreneurial intentions.

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Use of Artificial Intelligence

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Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.