

A Study On Entrepreneurial Attitude Among Technical Graduates

* *Dr. N. Shani*

INTRODUCTION

The role of quality entrepreneurship education and training in identifying and nurturing the entrepreneurial potential among youth is becoming apparent to students, policy makers, and educators. Entrepreneurship has been recognized as an important element in the dynamics of modern economies. Many businesses, small and medium, have become the major source of new job creation. They have made great contributions in introducing valuable new products and keeping the economy competitive in the world markets.

This impressive and rapid growth of entrepreneurship is attributed to the power of education in promoting social, economic, political, and spiritual well-being of an individual and social development. Education has been the instrument in the development of man to enable him to live an effective and meaningful life and to be able to contribute towards the development of society in which he finds himself.

The growth of entrepreneurship programs in educational institutions has been remarkable for over two decades now, aiming to change the mindset of the youth. Colleges and universities provide entrepreneurial programs to undergraduate and graduate students, including practicing potential entrepreneurs outside the educational institutions.

Today, entrepreneurship programs have extended to the secondary and primary levels of education and have become the focus of discussion among many scholars. They believe that the introduction of entrepreneurship programs to children at the lower level of education would enhance children's attributes and further develop awareness of entrepreneurial opportunities and skills to form an entrepreneurial venture.

It was also argued and discussed that the introduction of entrepreneurship program in the pre-school years is a crucial stage of children's cognitive and personality development, which is imperative to entrepreneurial development. Various government and non-government agencies working for the development of entrepreneurship also provide training for dropouts and unschooled youths.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Entrepreneurs are people who venture into an enterprise of their own on a small scale level. They cannot do business on a grand scale, as it requires huge investment. To take up a venture of their own, they should possess a natural attitude. Attitude consists of one's ability to assume risk, invest capital, and manage the enterprise successfully. For this, the entrepreneurs should possess organizing and leadership qualities.

In the opinion of A.H. Cole, *"Entrepreneurship is the purposeful activity of an individual, or a group of individuals, undertaken to initiate, maintain or aggrandize profit by production or distribution of economic goods and services"*.¹

Entrepreneurship is the process of creating something new with value by developing the necessary time and effort, assuming the accompanying financial, psychic and special risks and receiving the resulting rewards of monetary and personal satisfaction and independence².

✿ **Aspects Of Entrepreneurship** : As a catalytic agent, the entrepreneur has to change the mindset of the workers so that the latter accepts radical changes in system structure and processes, which the organization is contemplating to introduce in order to compete with the rivals. What is most important is to change the key values, beliefs and norms established and accepted by workers. As a developer, an entrepreneur has to play a pivotal role in developing among the employees, the requisite knowledge, skills and suitable attitudes and improve their performance.

✿ **Environment For Entrepreneurship** : The entrepreneurs do not emerge spontaneously. While the factors of production are atleast, in principle, hireable, but an enterprise is not. They have to come from different vocations.

*Professor, Department of Management Studies, Karpagam Institute of Technology, Coimbatore - 641021, Tamil Nadu.

Email : shani2000@rediffmail.com

Even the educational system in most of the developing countries is designed in such a way so as to develop more of Job creators. In many countries, to sum-up, entrepreneurs appear to have been motivated by a combination and interaction of the following factors of the environment.

- ✿ Socio-Economic environment;
- ✿ Family Background;
- ✿ Standard of education and technical Knowledge;
- ✿ Financial Stability;
- ✿ Political stability and government policy;
- ✿ Caste and religious affiliation;
- ✿ Availability of supporting facilities;
- ✿ Achievement motivation;
- ✿ Personality and personal skill;

The environment factors may be summarized as follows:

- ✿ Entrepreneurship is not influenced by a single factor, but is the outcome of the interaction and combination of various environmental factors.
- ✿ By changing the environment, society can be recreated.
- ✿ It is the “*Desire to make money*” that drives one to start an industry, rather than the amount of money one owns.
- ✿ Encouraging government policy and social recognition influences a person to become an entrepreneur.

ENTREPRENEUR

For a long time, it was thought that entrepreneurs were special, that they were just born with the ability and desire to go their own way, on their own. Over the past twenty years or so, we have discovered that entrepreneurs learn to do what they do that they also learn, to a large extent, to be who they are. That's why we say they are made, not born.

Richard Cantillon, was the first who introduced the term entrepreneurs in economics in the 18th century. He defined, “*Entrepreneurs as an agent who buys factors of production at certain prices in order to convert them into a product with a view to selling it at uncertain prices in future.*”³

Here's a handy way to remember some facts about entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship:

E:xamine needs, wants, and problems to see how they can improve the way needs and wants are met and problems overcome.

N:arrow the possible opportunities to one specific “*best*” opportunity.

T:hink of innovative ideas and narrow them to the “*best*” idea.

R:esearch the opportunity and idea thoroughly.

E:list the best sources of advice and assistance that they can find.

P:lan their ventures and look for possible problems that might arise.

R:ank the risks and the possible rewards.

E:valuate the risks and possible rewards and make their decision to act or not to act.

N:ever hang on to an idea, no matter how much they may love it, if research shows it won't work.

E:mploy the resources necessary for the venture to succeed.

U:nderstand that they will have to work long and hard to make their venture a success.

R:ealize a sense of accomplishment from their successful ventures and learn from their failures to help them achieve success in the future.

NEED FOR ENTREPRENEURS

Entrepreneurship is becoming more and more important, for a number of reasons:

- ✿ Big companies are no longer the dominant players in developing new products and services that are based on scientific discoveries and new scientific concepts. This role is increasingly taken over by small companies backed by high risk venture money, most often founded by the scientists themselves who created the scientific discovery and concept in the first place.

✿ Now-a-days, in order to remain effective or competitive, companies -if not organizations in general- need to continuously adapt to all sorts of regulatory and technological changes. It has generally been recognized that a top-down approach is not the best way to face this challenge. In order to be flexible, people at various levels in the organization have to take initiative to exploit new opportunities, create new business and activities, etc. This requires an entrepreneurial attitude and entrepreneurial skills.

✿ The necessity of an entrepreneurial attitude and entrepreneurial skills also explicitly applies to scientists in academia. Research funding does no longer come top-down out of a university budget, but has to be attracted from a variety of funds ranging from charities to seed capital organizations. This requires careful planning, budgeting, leadership and sometimes, taking considerable risks as it can involve setting up and working in multi disciplinary teams and international collaborations. Also, science in academia is more and more practiced in parallel with a company in which, under the direction of university staff members, the science is applied with considerable revenues to the benefit of the scientific research.

However, "*Entrepreneurial Opportunities*" most often come quite unexpectedly. They will be recognized easier by someone with a prepared mind, and will be better seized by someone with at least some previous knowledge of developing a business plan. Once the opportunity is there, it may not be too late to learn how to swim.

THE ENTREPRENEURIAL ATTITUDE (VISION, EXCITEMENT AND PERFORMANCE: THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF ATTITUDE)

The entrepreneurial attitude enables one to spend time creating a life instead of wasting it making a living. Why do some people succeed against all odds? What's their secret of success? Is it possible to imitate them and get similar results? These are questions would-be entrepreneurs frequently ponder. Many think the key to success is a plentiful supply of capital. Growing companies do need cash, of course. And good ideas, timing and experienced management are important, too. But one or more of these elements won't create the highest probability of success. In fact, for some entrepreneurs, having money means they can afford to fail.

✿ **Entrepreneurship Education:** Entrepreneurship development education is undertaken in all countries. There are specific institutions promoting entrepreneurs. Governments of developing countries also promote entrepreneurship thorough institutions. Government of India and State Governments play a significant role in entrepreneurship development programmes. Entrepreneurship as a subject has been introduced in undergraduate and postgraduate courses. Many degree programmes like B.Com., B.B.M., M.Com., and MBA, include entrepreneurship as one of the subjects. In some states, this subject is being taught in technical courses.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Entrepreneurial attitude exists among all human beings. It is because mankind has an instinct to survive by earning some means. Means are necessary to meet ends. There are many ways of earning the means. One way is enterprise. Entrepreneurship is chosen when entrepreneurial capability dominates the character. When it weakens, man chooses other walks of life like employment to earn the means. Entrepreneurial attitude is not equal among all human beings. It varies among individuals. Even though the attitude is inborn, it can also be induced in young minds through education. There are educational curriculums designed to instill the entrepreneurial attitude among the students. Technical courses like engineering and polytechnic are such vocational streams designed to cultivate the entrepreneurship attitude among all the youth so that they would promote self employment and entrepreneurship. This situation raises the following issues:

- ✿ Whether the technical education has any impact on the entrepreneurial attitude of the students?
- ✿ If so, how many are willing to take up entrepreneurship? and
- ✿ What factors influence their entrepreneurial attitude?

A study on the entrepreneurial attitude among the students of polytechnic colleges will give an answer to these issues.

OBJECTIVES

The study was undertaken with the following objectives:

- ✿ To measure the level of entrepreneurial attitude among the students of polytechnic college.

- ✿ To identify the factors that influences their entrepreneurial attitude.
- ✿ To offer suggestions for promoting entrepreneurial attitude among them.

SAMPLING

Multiple sampling method was adopted for the study. In the first stage, four colleges were chosen. In the second stage, 50 students were chosen from each college, making a total of 200 samples from all the four colleges. The selection of students was made on simple random basis.

DATA COLLECTION

The study used only primary data collected from the selected students through interview schedule. An interview schedule was first prepared and a pilot survey was conducted. Based on the survey, the questions were modified and necessary improvements were made on the schedule. Proper rapport was established with the Heads of the selected institutions and the Heads of respective Departments for contacting the students. Personal interview was held with each and every students to explain the questions and to collect the required data. Cross-questions were made to verify the answer and to ensure accuracy of data given by the students.

METHODOLOGY

The data collected were processed and analyzed in this chapter. The analysis was made in order to measure the levels of entrepreneurial attitude of various kinds of students. The entrepreneurial attitude of the selected students were quantified with the help of a five point scale suggested by Rensis Likert and a scoring scheme. Twelve components pertaining to entrepreneurial attitude were used to measure the levels of attitude. The respondents were asked to state their agreement or otherwise for each statement. Their level of agreement ranged from “Strongly Agree” to “Strongly Disagree” on a five point scale. Scores were given @ Strongly Agree = 5, Agree = 4, Neutral = 3, Disagree = 2, Strongly Disagree = 1. The total scores for each respondent was calculated to find their level of attitude. The total scores were $12 \times 5 = 60$.

DATA ANALYSIS

The collected data were converted with suitable tables for the purpose of analysis. Wherever necessary simple averages and statistical tool like chi-square technique were adopted to analyse the data. Chi-square formula is a useful technique to identify the influence of dependant variable on the independent variables. The formula used is :

$\chi^2 = \sum (O-E)^2/E$ where O is observed frequency and E is expected frequency.

FINDINGS (FACTORS INFLUENCING ENTREPRENEURIAL ATTITUDE)

The following (see Table 1) are the important findings pertaining to the factors of entrepreneurial attitude: Nine independent variables were considered for examining their influence on the entrepreneurial attitude. Out of the nine,

Table 1 : χ^2 Calculation - Summary

S.No	Factors	Df	Table value	χ^2 Value	Result
01	Gender	2	5.99	1.44	NS
02	Family size	4	9.49	8.87	NS
03	Branch of study	4	9.49	16.92	S
04	Parents' occupation	4	9.49	10.79	S
05	Parents' Income	4	9.49	6.04	NS
06	Business interest	2	5.99	10.61	S
07	Career plan	4	9.49	21.36	S
08	Entrepreneurial awareness	4	9.49	20.68	S
09	Place of living	2	5.99	10.15	S

NS = Not significant S = Significant

six variables viz., Branch of study, Parent Occupation, Career plan, Business interest, Entrepreneurial awareness and Place of living of the students were found to have influenced the Entrepreneurial attitude of students. The other three factors, viz., Gender of the students, family size, and parents' income did not influence their entrepreneurial attitude. The Table 1 exhibits a summary of findings relating to the identification of factors that influence the entrepreneurial attitude. The findings lead to the conclusion that the entrepreneurial attitude of polytechnic college students are influenced by their branch of study, their parents' income, parents' occupation, their own interest in business, their career plan, their awareness about entrepreneurship development and their place of living like rural and urban areas.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following suggestions are offered as policy implications for promoting entrepreneurial attitude among the college students :

- ✿ As only a few students opted to become entrepreneurs among the 200 respondents , the level of ambition for entrepreneurship is very low. Hence, steps must be taken to motivate students to become entrepreneurs in future.
- ✿ Special education programmes should be planned and implemented to encourage the students to take up self-employment.
- ✿ All the students' should be taught the subject Entrepreneurship as a compulsory subject.
- ✿ As the students who come from rural areas are lacking the entrepreneurial attitude, they must be asked to undergo intensive training in entrepreneurship.
- ✿ There are a number of schemes available for young entrepreneurs - Govt.Grants, bank loans, training programmes by SISI, Loan facilities from TIIC, Tax concessions, export concessions etc should be made aware to the students.
- ✿ Student should be exposed to real time projects by involving entrepreneurs in the educational field.
- ✿ Successful entrepreneurs should be invited to the campus for interaction with the students.
- ✿ Technical entrepreneurship should be introduced as a subject in the curriculum of polytechnic colleges.
- ✿ Orientation workshops may be conducted with the help of NGOs and technical institutions to induce students to be self-employed.
- ✿ As a motivational measure, educational institutions may be given the duty of identifying potential entrepreneurs and recommend the same to the government to issue financial assistance.

CONCLUSION

The development of entrepreneurial talent is important to sustaining a competitive advantage in a global economy that is catalyzed by innovation. Increase in the level of entrepreneurial attitude will enlarge the number of potential and actual entrepreneurs, who in turn generate more employment and create national wealth. The suggestions may be carried out for motivating students to become young entrepreneurs who will help in building a self-sufficient country by contributing their efforts to the Indian economy as a whole.

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