

Chapter 2

Are Technical Graduates Best Suited for Entrepreneurship?

Examining Entrepreneurial Attitude as a Moderator Between Characteristics and Intention

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ABSTRACT

Converting technical students into entrepreneurs is not a new concept, but now it is a necessary one to effectively address the unemployment issue. The present study explores the moderation effect of entrepreneurial attitude dimensions (i.e., achievement, innovation, personal control, and self-esteem) in the link between entrepreneurial characteristics and self-employment intention among technical undergraduates studying in different government and private technical institutions of Chhattisgarh state. Authors incorporated stratified random sampling method for collecting primary data. About 1245 questionnaires were sent to the technical students in which 1000 questionnaires were returned usable for analysis. Analysis revealed that the entrepreneurial attitude dimensions (i.e., achievement, innovation, personal control, and self-esteem) were found statistically significant moderator in the link between entrepreneurial characteristics and self-employment intention

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-6684-7127-2.ch002

among technical undergraduates of Chhattisgarh state. However, the interaction effect was found to be negative.

1. INTRODUCTION

India boasts the youngest population among major global economies. However, the challenge lies not just in job creation but also in equipping its youth with the necessary employability skills. Rao (2017) suggests that student entrepreneurship can offer a dual solution by both upskilling students and fostering job creation. While the influence of entrepreneurship in shaping modern engineering education and guiding potential entrepreneurs' career trajectories remains largely unexplored, an increasing number of engineering students are being introduced to entrepreneurial programs. Despite this, only a handful of studies have delved into how entrepreneurial attitudes shape their learning or assess their professional competency. It's noteworthy that incorporating entrepreneurship within engineering curricula is a relatively recent initiative, aimed at nurturing engineers to also consider entrepreneurial paths (Standish-Kuon & Rice, 2002).

Given India's rapid population growth, there's an urgent need to create jobs for its youth at an accelerated pace. Bhagchandani (2017) discussed this in his article, "How India can up its start-up game by bolstering student entrepreneurship," drawing insights from India's diverse experiences. He highlighted the critical need for adequate support, mentorship, and guidance for budding entrepreneurs and innovators. Despite the steady rise in incubators, support remains scarce at the grassroots level and is largely limited to major urban centers. Bhagchandani further noted that while India has the potential to be a global start-up hub, it still lacks the vital components for a robust start-up ecosystem.

Bhagchandani further delved into the symbiotic relationship between premier universities and the flourishing entrepreneurship ecosystems they foster, drawing a parallel between Stanford University and Silicon Valley. He emphasized the direct benefits these institutions offer potential entrepreneurs: (i) Universities grant budding entrepreneurs access to vital resources such as experimental labs, valuable connections, and seasoned mentors who provide practical insights; (ii) University students possess both the foundational knowledge needed to kickstart businesses and ample time to refine potential business ideas; and (iii) at this juncture in their lives, students typically have a lower risk threshold. Consequently, if an entrepreneurial venture does not succeed, they have the resilience and opportunity to regroup and try again. At last, Bhagchandani advocated for greater student engagement in entrepreneurship and innovation-focused endeavors. He projected that if even 20% of these engaged students, which translates to just 1% of the entire student body,

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