

College Students Perceptions and Attitudes Towards Startups: A Study on Motivations, Challenges, and Educational Implications in Kanniyakumari District, Tamil Nadu

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ABSTRACT

Startups play a crucial role in fostering innovation and economic growth globally. Understanding college students' perceptions and attitudes towards startups is essential for shaping effective entrepreneurship education programs and policies. This paper explores the perceptions and attitudes of college students towards startups, examining their motivations, perceived challenges, and the implications for entrepreneurship education. The study employs a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative interviews and quantitative surveys to gather insights from a diverse sample of undergraduate college students across various disciplines and educational backgrounds in Kanniyakumari District.

KEYWORDS: Startups – Entrepreneur – Students – Attitude - Perception

INTRODUCTION

The word 'entrepreneur' is derived from the French word 'entreprendre' which means 'to undertake'. "An entrepreneur is one who always searches for change, responds to it, and exploits it as an opportunity. Innovation is the specific tool of entrepreneurs, the means by which they exploit change as an opportunity for a different business or service" - Peter F Drucker.

As per unacademy resources "A startup is a business that is still in its early phases of development. The startup is established by one or more entrepreneurs to produce services or products for which they consider a scope in the market. Usually, these businesses begin with increased prices and limited revenue; that's why they look for funding from several sources, counting venture capitalists. A startup is a business that aims to grow and expand swiftly, sometimes to dizzying heights. This is one of the characteristics that distinguishes a small business startup. While every startup's path is unique, most firms can go through the same stages as they grow and evolve, referred to as the five stages of startup operations. One can anticipate what each step will bring and adjust their preparations accordingly.

Characteristics of a Startup

Age - A startup is a young firm still figuring out how to manage its brand, sell its products, and hire workers. This idea frequently applies to firms that have been in the industry for less than three years; nevertheless, we can still call a company a startup even after existing for seven years.

Growth - A startup is a business that aims to develop and expand quickly, sometimes to enormous dimensions. One characteristic that distinguishes a startup from a small business is this.

Risk - There are always various linked uncertainties regarding a company's success once it has departed its unique stronghold. As a result, these companies are regarded as high-risk investments with a high failure rate.

Flexibility - A startup is extremely dynamic, and it is prepared to respond to whatever obstacles it may encounter. Since your business idea must be verified, these businesses must be willing to change their product to meet the wants of your customers.

Solving a problem - This type of company, which is tied to your shed, focuses on tackling any existing market problem. As a result, they focus on making a difference in the market and also in people's lives through their service or product.

Scalability - A startup is a company that is always striving for a scalable business model, which means one that can expand without needing to raise further capital".

CONCEPTS

Startup - A startup or start-up is a company or project undertaken by an entrepreneur to seek, develop, and validate a scalable business model.

Student Startup - Student startups are owned, conceived and lead by undergraduate or graduate students.

Startup scheme - Startup India scheme is an important government scheme that was launched on 16th January 2016 with an aim to promote and support the start-ups in India by providing bank finances. The Startup India scheme is based majorly on three pillars namely providing funding support and incentives to the various start-ups of the country, providing Industry-Academia Partnership and Incubation and Simplification and Handholding.

IMPORTANCE OF STARTUPS IN FOSTERING INNOVATION AND ECONOMIC GROWTH.

- 1. Innovation Drivers** - Startups are typically agile and innovative and they often bring fresh perspectives and creative solutions to market challenges. Startups are more willing to take risks compared to established companies, experimenting with novel ideas and business models that can lead to breakthrough innovations.
- 2. Job Creation and Economic Impact** - Startups are significant job creators, particularly in sectors like technology, biotech, and digital services. They contribute to reducing unemployment rates and diversifying job markets. Startups inject dynamism into economies by attracting investment, generating tax revenues, and stimulating demand for ancillary goods and services from other businesses.
- 3. Market Competition and Consumer Benefits** - Startups introduce competition into markets, encouraging established firms to innovate, improve efficiency, and respond better to consumer needs and preferences. Innovations from startups result in a wider range of products and services for consumers, enhancing quality, affordability and customization options.
- 4. Regional Development and Global Competitiveness** - Startups can act as catalysts for regional development, attracting talent and investment to specific geographic areas. Successful startups can elevate a country's reputation as a hub for innovation and entrepreneurship on the global stage, attracting international partnerships and investment.

- 5. Long-term Sustainability and Resilience** - Startups are more adaptable to changing market conditions and societal needs, enabling them to pivot quickly and capitalize on emerging opportunities or address pressing challenges such as sustainability and social impact.
- 6. Social Impact** - Many startups are dedicated to addressing social and environmental issues, driving positive change through innovative solutions and business practices.

RATIONALE FOR STUDYING COLLEGE STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF STARTUPS.

- 1. Career Aspirations:** Understanding how college students perceive startups can help identify their career aspirations and preferences. This knowledge is essential for startups in attracting and retaining young talent.
- 2. Skills and Knowledge:** Insight into students' perceptions can inform entrepreneurship education programs, ensuring they equip students with relevant skills and knowledge needed to thrive in startup environments.
- 3. Entrepreneurial Ambitions:** By studying perceptions, researchers can gauge students' interest in entrepreneurship and their intentions to start their own ventures. This data is crucial for fostering an entrepreneurial ecosystem.
- 4. Innovation Dynamics:** Startups drive innovation. Understanding how students perceive startups can shed light on potential future trends in innovation and entrepreneurship, influencing policy and investment decisions.
- 5. Job Creation:** Startups are significant contributors to job creation. Studying students' perceptions can help predict future trends in employment preferences and inform workforce development strategies.
- 6. Economic Growth:** Startups play a vital role in economic growth. Analyzing perceptions can provide insights into the potential impact of startups on local and national economies.
- 7. Curriculum Design:** Insights into students' perceptions can inform the design of entrepreneurship education curricula, ensuring they meet the needs and expectations of future entrepreneurs.
- 8. Policy Formulation:** Policymakers can use data on students' perceptions to formulate policies that support entrepreneurship, address barriers, and create conducive environments for startup success.
- 9. Social Impact:** Many startups focus on social and environmental impact. Understanding students' perceptions can highlight potential areas for social innovation and sustainable development.
- 10. Comparative Studies:** Comparative studies across regions or demographic groups can provide nuanced insights into variations in perceptions and their underlying factors.

OBJECTIVES

- To investigate college students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship and their inclination towards starting or working for startups in Kanniyakumari District, Tamil Nadu.
- To determine the factors influencing students' motivations to join startups or pursue entrepreneurial ventures.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In recent years, the landscape of entrepreneurship has evolved significantly, with startups emerging as pivotal drivers of innovation and economic growth. Understanding college students' attitudes towards startups is crucial for several reasons. First, it provides insights into the factors influencing their career aspirations and decisions regarding employment in innovative, fast-growing enterprises. Second, it sheds

light on how educational institutions can better prepare students for the dynamic and often unpredictable startup environment. Third, it offers valuable perspectives for policymakers aiming to foster entrepreneurial ecosystems that attract and retain young talent. So this research paper aims at understanding the attitude and perceptions of college students’ towards startups.

METHODOLOGY

This study is based on both primary and secondary data. Simple random sampling method was administered for selecting the sample. The population of the study included 100 undergraduate students. The primary data was collected by questionnaire method. There were questions consisting of demographic factor and perception towards new venture creation intentions and entrepreneur’s image. The secondary data was collected from books, reports and online resources.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The study conducted by Dr. Mohsin Shaikh (2012) found the educational background of the students influence the intention of students to become an entrepreneur. He also recognizes age, autonomy, independence, self-efficiency and ownership have a greater influence on the intention to start venture. Another finding is that the likelihood of venturing into entrepreneurship decrease whiles the level of education increases.

Athulya (2017) carried out a study to evaluate the attitude of commerce students towards entrepreneurship. The objectives of the study were to analyse the factors that influenced intention of students towards entrepreneurship. They selected a sample of 200 students in Calicut city. Study was solely based on primary data which was collected through structured questionnaire. Simple statistical tools like Percentage analysis and Chi- square analysis were used to analyze the data. The study found that there was significant relation between gender and students’ awareness regarding Govt. EDP schemes. They also concluded that concluded that most of the students are willing to start their own business. But majority of them fear about chance of failure

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

1. Only 100 respondents are selected for the study due to shortage of time.
2. The primary data is collected from only one district.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table: 1 Demographic Factors

Demographic Variable		No. of Respondents	Percentage
Gender	Male	57	57
	Female	43	43
Parent’s Own business	Yes	24	24
	No	76	76
Parents Monthly Income	< 10,000 per month	13	13
	10,000- 25,000 per month	36	36

	25000 - 50,000 per month	46	46
	Above 50,000 per month	5	5

Source: Primary Data

Out of 100 respondents, 57 percentage are male and 43 percentage are female respondents, 24 percentage of the respondents' parents have their own business whereas 76 percentage of the respondents' parents are not involved in any entrepreneurial activity, 13 percentage of the respondents' parents have per month income below Rs.10,000, 36 percentage have income between Rs.10,000 to Rs.25,000, 46 percentage have income between Rs.25000 to Rs.50,000 and 5 percentage have income above Rs.50,000.

Table: 2 Students' Perception towards startups in Kanniyakumari District

Sl. No	Variable	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
1.	It gives freedom to pursue own vision	78	5	7	10	0	100
2.	It gives more flexibility in personal and family life	57	24	15	4	0	100
3.	Entrepreneurs are almost always inventors	53	27	2	8	10	100
4.	It helps to become a business leader	43	18	8	22	9	100
5.	Helpful to give social contribution.	31	20	0	38	11	100
6.	Entrepreneurship is a good way to make lots of money.	7	3	37	39	14	100
7.	It gives potential for career growth and learning.	67	18	2	13	0	100
8.	Entrepreneurship is an honourable profession	52	21	14	4	9	100
9.	Colleges should encourage students to consider entrepreneurship	82	11	7	0	0	100
10.	It gives opportunity for innovation and creativity	48	27	12	6	7	100

Source: Primary data

The above table depicts that 78 percentage of the respondents strongly agree that it gives freedom to pursue own vision, 57 percentage agree that it gives more flexibility in personal and family life. 53 percentage are of the view that entrepreneurs are almost always inventors, 43 percentage believes that it helps to become a business leader, 31 percentage agree that it is helpful to give social contribution, 67 percentage are of the view that it gives potential for career growth and learning, 52 percentage agree that entrepreneurship is an honourable profession, 82 percentage agree that colleges should encourage students

to consider entrepreneurship, 48 percentage agree that it gives opportunity for innovation and creativity and only 7 percentage agrees that entrepreneurship is a good way to make lots of money.

CONCLUSION

In summary, startups are pivotal in driving innovation across various sectors, creating jobs, stimulating economic growth, fostering competition, and contributing to societal and environmental progress. Supporting startups through policies, investment, and ecosystem development is essential for nurturing a vibrant entrepreneurial landscape that benefits economies and societies globally. To conclude, studying college students' perceptions of startups is essential for preparing the future workforce, fostering innovation, promoting economic development, shaping educational programs, informing policy decisions, understanding cultural shifts, and contributing to academic research. This research helps build a robust foundation for supporting and advancing the role of startups in society.

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