

Exploring the Associations Between Emotional Maturity, Competency, and Sensitivity on Entrepreneurial Success Among Indian Entrepreneurs

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Abstract

This research explores into the pivotal role of emotional maturity, competencies, and sensitivity in contributing to entrepreneurial success. The study employs a rigorous quantitative approach to investigate these dynamics among 422 entrepreneurs operating across various sectors within the Dindigul District of Tamil Nadu, located in the southern region of India. Data collection was meticulously executed using a comprehensive questionnaire, designed on a 5-point Likert scale, to capture nuanced responses concerning the emotional attributes of the participants. The responses were subsequently analysed using SPSS software (version 24), focusing on the interplay between these emotional traits (exogenous variables) and their influence on entrepreneurial success (endogenous variable). The findings from the statistical analysis are particularly illuminative. Emotional maturity, though beneficial, exhibited only a moderate correlation with entrepreneurial success. In contrast, emotional competencies and sensitivity were found to have a robust positive relationship with entrepreneurial success, underscoring their critical importance. Among these, emotional sensitivity emerged as the most potent predictor, indicating that the ability to perceive, interpret, and respond to the emotions of oneself and others plays a crucial role in navigating the complex demands of entrepreneurship. The implications of these results are significant for policy and practice. They suggest a need for a paradigm shift in entrepreneurial training and development programs, advocating for the integration of modules that enhance emotional competencies and sensitivity.

Keywords: emotional maturity, emotional competencies, emotional sensitivity, entrepreneurial success

Introduction

The entrepreneurial landscape is in a constant state of flux, influenced not just by economic and technological shifts but also by a growing understanding of the psychological and emotional factors that underpin entrepreneurial success. Emotional intelligence, encompassing aspects such as emotional maturity, competency, and sensitivity, has become a pivotal focus in this realm. In India, where business operations are often deeply embedded within cultural and interpersonal dynamics, the impact of these emotional traits on entrepreneurship is particularly significant. This research focuses on entrepreneurs in Dindigul District, Tamil Nadu, providing a nuanced exploration of how emotional maturity, competency, and sensitivity contribute to entrepreneurial success in a culturally rich and diverse economic environment.

Historically, the field of entrepreneurial psychology has centred on traits such as risk tolerance, innovation, and leadership. However, recent scholarly work has begun to spotlight emotional intelligence (EI) as a critical predictor of entrepreneurial success, potentially even surpassing traditional traits in importance. Emotional maturity relates to effectively managing and controlling one's emotions; emotional competency refers to the use of emotional understanding to facilitate cognitive activities and adapt to environmental demands; and emotional sensitivity involves the ability to perceive, evaluate, and react to one's own emotions and those of others. These dimensions of EI are crucial for navigating interpersonal relationships, strategic decision-making, and maintaining resilience amid business challenges [1]–[3].

The context of Dindigul District, characterized by its rapid economic changes and high competition, underscores the necessity for a robust emotional foundation among entrepreneurs. The significance of this study is highlighted by its empirical approach to assessing the impact of emotional attributes on effective entrepreneurial practices and outcomes. With a diverse economic base that includes agriculture, manufacturing, and service industries, the findings from this district may offer broad implications for understanding the emotional drivers of entrepreneurial success across various sectors [4], [5].

The timing of this investigation coincides with significant transformations in India's entrepreneurial ecosystem, driven by digital advancements and supportive economic policies. The outcomes of this study have the potential to inform the development of targeted educational initiatives and workshops aimed at enhancing emotional competencies, thereby fostering more resilient and economically viable business practices. Understanding the complex interplay between components of emotional intelligence and entrepreneurial success not only advances the theoretical framework of entrepreneurial studies but also offers practical guidance for the design of development programs tailored to India's evolving class of entrepreneurs [6].

Literature Review

Research explores a theoretical model that links emotional intelligence (EI) with creativity, proactivity, and entrepreneurial intent through attitudes towards entrepreneurship [7]. Utilizing a questionnaire survey of 280 business, engineering, and science students from three Greek universities, the study employs structural equation modelling to analyse the data. The findings robustly support the theory that creativity and proactivity mediate the positive impact of trait EI on attitudes towards entrepreneurship, which in turn fully mediate the relationship between these traits and entrepreneurial intent. This research not only underscores the connection between EI and key entrepreneurial traits but also contributes valuable insights to the academic discussions on entrepreneurial motivation. Furthermore, the results have practical implications for enhancing entrepreneurship education, highlighting the importance of fostering EI to cultivate creativity and proactivity among aspiring entrepreneurs [8].

Findings of many research underscore the necessity for human resource managers and trainers to evaluate and enhance the interpersonal skills and emotional maturity of both new hires and current managerial staff [9]. In the evolving landscape of the deregulated finance sector, the entrepreneurial approach of the branch manager is expected to become increasingly significant. The branch manager, currently acting as a corporate entrepreneur, is likely to transition to an independent entrepreneur within a franchise banking model. Path analysis was employed to explore the relationships among three key competency factors for bank branch managers. The analysis models how emotional maturity and interpersonal skills influence the entrepreneurial style of the manager. The study confirms all proposed effects through the decomposition of the zero-order correlations [10].

Emotional intelligence (EQ) plays a vital role in enhancing the entrepreneurial capabilities of business leaders, particularly in decision-making processes. It explores how high EQ enables leaders to better understand the needs and emotions of others, fostering an environment conducive to innovation and risk-taking. The study delves into the ways in which entrepreneurs with high EQ can develop products and services that closely align with customer expectations and how they can cultivate strong interpersonal relationships that motivate employees, thereby enhancing business success, operational performance, and overall effectiveness. The analysis investigates the interplay between emotional and intellectual intelligence, the various models and components of EQ, and the crucial dimensions and factors of emotional intelligence. Supported by secondary research and a primary survey of 30 entrepreneurs in North Macedonia, this study highlights the significance of assessing, developing, and upgrading emotional skills for achieving entrepreneurial success [11].

The literature review highlights the crucial role of emotional intelligence (EI) in entrepreneurship, emphasizing its impact on creativity, proactivity, and entrepreneurial intent. This body of research not only underpins the theoretical connections between EI and essential entrepreneurial competencies but also suggests practical applications in enhancing entrepreneurship education to foster these skills among students. Additionally, researchers stress the importance of developing interpersonal skills and emotional maturity within organizational settings, where managerial roles are evolving. Studies advocate for the integration of EI training in entrepreneurial development to better equip leaders with the emotional and interpersonal skills necessary for effective leadership and innovation.

Theoretical Background

Emotional maturity

Emotional Maturity (EM) arises from healthy emotional development, enabling individuals to manage and express their emotions appropriately, politely, and timely. This aspect of emotional intelligence is critical in shaping personality and fostering maturity, essential for various life and business challenges [8], [12], [13]. Indicators of emotional maturity relevant to this context include self-awareness, which involves understanding one's emotions and their impact on others; developing others, which focuses on recognizing and enhancing others' growth potential; delaying gratification, the ability to prioritize long-term goals over immediate rewards; and adaptability and flexibility, crucial skills for managing change and uncertainty in the entrepreneurial environment [14].

Emotional competencies

Emotional Competency (EC) refers to a collection of individual skills vital for recognizing, interpreting, and responding appropriately to one's own emotions and those of others [15]. According to Ngigi (2018), emotional competency is instrumental in guiding individuals to regulate their internal states, controlling emotions and ego while taking responsible actions in response to external events [16]. This study incorporates the definition of Emotional Competency used in the research [17], focusing on specific competencies such as controlling emotions, which ensures emotional responses are appropriate and measured; maintaining self-esteem, which involves upholding one's self-respect and confidence even under stress; and responding to problems wisely, which includes managing one's ego to foster rational and thoughtful reactions to challenges.

Emotional sensitivity

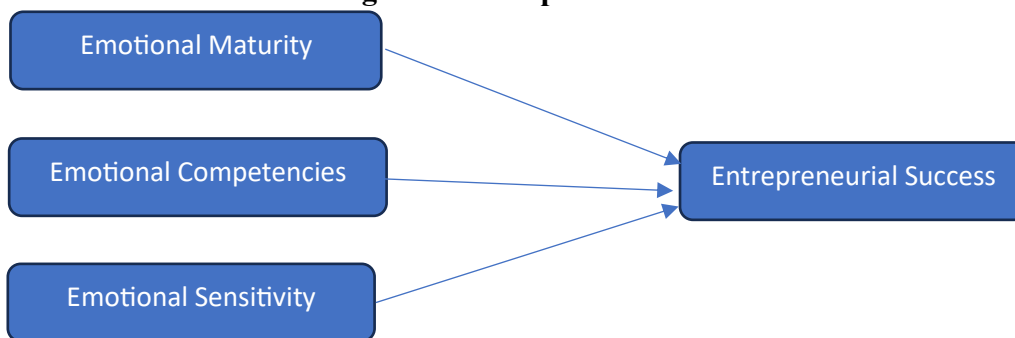
Emotional Sensitivity (ES) is characterized by an individual's emotional reactions to their surrounding conditions. Those with high emotional sensitivity tend to respond excessively to situations, which can complicate their ability to adapt to new environments. Furthermore, emotionally sensitive individuals often base their work and personal decisions on their emotional states, impacting their decision-making processes. This study adopts the definition of Emotional Sensitivity, which includes several key components: empathy, which involves understanding and sharing the feelings of others; enhancing personal relationships, which focuses on deepening connections with others; warm communication, the ability to convey messages in a kind and friendly manner; and controlling, which pertains to managing one's emotional responses effectively [18]–[20].

Entrepreneurial success

Entrepreneurial success (ENTS) is a multifaceted concept that encompasses various dimensions such as financial performance, market expansion, innovation, and personal satisfaction [21]. It is typically measured by the sustainability and growth of the business, profitability, and the achievement of set goals [22]. Successful entrepreneurs are not only defined by their ability to generate substantial revenue but also by their impact on their industry and community, their contribution to creating employment, and their capacity for innovation and resilience in the face of challenges [23]. Additionally, entrepreneurial success is often associated with personal achievements and the realization of personal goals and visions, making it both a subjective and objective measure [24], [25].

Conceptual Model of the Present Study

Figure 1 Conceptual Model



Objectives

The objectives of this study are as follows:

1. To quantify the level of entrepreneurial success among entrepreneurs.
2. To evaluate the influence of emotional maturity, emotional competencies, and emotional sensitivity on entrepreneurial success.

Research Methodology

The study employed an exploratory research design, aimed at assessing the influence of emotional maturity, emotional competencies, and emotional sensitivity on entrepreneurial success. The causal relationships between the exogenous variables (those that influence other variables) and the endogenous variables (those influenced by exogenous variables) were examined based on the framework proposed by

Hair et al. (2021). The population of the study were the entrepreneurs registered under the District Industries Centre (DIC), Dindigul District, South India. Sample were taken as many as 478 using a purposive sampling technique with the Slovin formula. Primary data were sourced with informed consent obtained from all participants, ensuring voluntary participation. Out of these, 422 responses were deemed valid for analysis, including 212 from male participants (50.2%) and 210 from female participants (49.8%), with their ages ranging from 26 to 54 years.

The structured questionnaire was developed by the researcher based on the reviews, encompassing 16 items divided into four statements each to measure the constructs of emotional maturity, emotional competencies, emotional sensitivity, and entrepreneurial success. The questionnaire was structured in two parts: the first part gathered demographic data of the respondents, and the second part comprised the 16 items designed to assess the four key emotional and entrepreneurial metrics. Responses to each item were scored using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), facilitating the measurement of each construct's influence on entrepreneurial success.

Analysis and Discussion

The research utilized the Cronbach’s Alpha Reliability Test to evaluate the internal consistency of the questionnaire designed to measure the effects of emotional maturity, competencies, and sensitivity on entrepreneurial success. Nunnally (1978) posits that an alpha value between 0.5 and 0.6 is acceptable for preliminary research phases. Conversely, Zikmund et al. (2013) argue that an alpha value of 0.70 is indicative of good reliability. The Cronbach’s alpha for this study was 0.916, indicating excellent internal consistency and reliability of the questionnaire. This robust alpha value validates the dependability of the survey instrument in capturing the variables related to entrepreneurial success.

Interdependence between Emotional Maturity (EM), Emotional Competencies (EC), and Emotional Sensitivity (ES) as Independent Variables and Entrepreneurial Success (ENTS) as the Dependent Variable

Table 1. Output of Pearson Correlation Coefficient

		Correlations			
		EM	EC	ES	ENTS
Emotional Maturity (EM)	Pearson Correlation	1	0.662**	0.404**	0.492**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000	0.000	0.000
	N	422	422	422	422
Emotional Competencies (EC)	Pearson Correlation	.662**	1	0.360**	0.504**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		0.000	0.000
	N	422	422	422	422
Emotional Sensitivity (ES)	Pearson Correlation	.404**	0.360**	1	0.536**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	0.000		0.000
	N	422	422	422	422

Entrepreneurial Success (ENTS)	Pearson Correlation	.492**	0.504**	0.536**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	0.000	0.000	
	N	422	422	422	422

Source: Researchers' calculation

Note: **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 2. Model summary (Regression)

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.644 ^a	0.414	0.410	0.735
a. Predictors: (Constant), ES, EC, EM				

Source: Researchers' calculation

Table 3. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	159.819	3	53.273	98.531	0.000 ^b
	Residual	226.001	418	0.541		
	Total	385.820	421			

Source: Researchers' calculation

a. Dependent Variable: ENTS

b. Predictors: (Constant), ES, EC, EM

Table 4. Regression Coefficients

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	0.344	0.108		3.182	0.002
	Emotional Maturity (EM)	0.148	0.044	0.172	3.337	0.001
	Emotional Competencies (EC)	0.216	0.043	0.255	5.057	0.000
	Emotional Sensitivity (ES)	0.377	0.042	0.375	9.081	0.000

Source: Researchers' calculation

Note: ^a.Dependent Variable: ENTS.

Correlations Between Variables

Table 1, presents the Pearson correlation coefficients indicating the relationships between Emotional Maturity (EM), Emotional Competencies (EC), Emotional Sensitivity (ES), and Entrepreneurial Success

(ENTS). The coefficients reveal significant positive correlations among all variables, suggesting that higher levels of EM, EC, and ES are associated with greater ENTS. Specifically, the correlation between EM and EC is strong ($r = 0.662$, $p < 0.001$), suggesting that those who are emotionally mature tend also to be highly competent emotionally. The correlation between EM and ENTS is moderate ($r = 0.492$, $p < 0.001$), indicating a significant but less strong relationship with entrepreneurial success compared to ES, which shows a stronger relationship with ENTS ($r = 0.536$, $p < 0.001$).

Model Summary (Regression)

The regression model summary in Table 2 indicates that the independent variables (EM, EC, ES) collectively explain 41.4% of the variance in Entrepreneurial Success (Adjusted $R^2 = 0.410$). This substantial proportion underscores the significant impact of emotional attributes on entrepreneurial outcomes. The model's predictive power is considered strong, with a standard error of estimate at 0.735, highlighting the accuracy of the model in predicting ENTS.

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

The ANOVA table tests the overall fit of the regression model is shown in Table 3. The significant F-statistic ($F = 98.531$, $p < 0.001$) indicates that the model is statistically significant, suggesting that at least one of the predictor variables (EM, EC, ES) reliably predicts entrepreneurial success. The ratio of the regression sum of squares to the residual sum of squares shows that the model explains a significant portion of the total variability in entrepreneurial success.

Regression Coefficients

The coefficients in Table 4 details the individual contributions of each independent variable. Emotional Sensitivity (ES) has the highest standardized coefficient ($\beta = 0.375$), indicating it has the strongest impact on ENTS, followed by Emotional Competencies (EC; $\beta = 0.255$) and Emotional Maturity (EM; $\beta = 0.172$). All predictors are statistically significant, with ES showing the most substantial influence on ENTS ($t = 9.081$, $p < 0.001$). The constant term ($\beta = 0.344$, $p = 0.002$) suggests that when EM, EC, and ES are at zero, the predicted level of ENTS is 0.344.

The analyses suggest robust evidence that emotional maturity, competencies, and sensitivity play crucial roles in entrepreneurial success. These emotional dimensions collectively contribute to a significant portion of the variance in success among entrepreneurs, with emotional sensitivity being the most influential. This understanding is crucial for developing targeted interventions and training that enhance these emotional skills to foster entrepreneurial success.

To develop the regression equation for entrepreneurial success (ENTS) based on the coefficients provided in Table 4 of the data analysis, the general form of a regression equation, which combines the intercept with the sum of each variable's coefficient multiplied by its respective predictor.

The regression equation for Entrepreneurial Success (ENTS) based on the given coefficients is:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{ENTS} &= \beta \text{ Constant} + \beta \text{EM} + \beta \text{EC} + \beta \text{ES} \\ &= 0.344 + 0.148 \text{ EM} + 0.216 \text{ EC} + 0.377 \text{ ES} \end{aligned}$$

This equation means that for each unit increase in Emotional Maturity, holding all other factors constant, the Entrepreneurial Success score increases by 0.148 units. Similarly, each unit increase in Emotional Competencies and Emotional Sensitivity results in increases of 0.216 units and 0.377 units in the

Entrepreneurial Success score, respectively. This model provides a quantitative framework for predicting entrepreneurial success based on varying levels of emotional attributes.

Conclusion

The study utilized a robust exploratory research design and purposive sampling technique to assess the causal relationships between emotional attributes and entrepreneurial success, collecting data from a substantial sample through a well-structured questionnaire. Results from Pearson correlation coefficients and regression analyses underscored significant positive relationships between all key emotional traits and entrepreneurial success, with emotional sensitivity identified as having the most substantial impact. The statistical analyses, including Cronbach's Alpha for reliability, Pearson correlation, and regression analysis, collectively confirmed the hypothesized effects, highlighting the critical roles played by emotional maturity, competencies, and sensitivity in shaping entrepreneurial success. Emotional sensitivity emerged as a crucial predictor, indicating its strong influence on entrepreneurial outcomes. This study not only enriches the existing literature on the role of emotional intelligence in entrepreneurship but also provides practical insights for developing training programs that enhance these essential emotional skills. Furthermore, the regression model developed offers a predictive framework for assessing the impact of these traits on entrepreneurial success, suggesting that increases in emotional competencies and sensitivity significantly boost entrepreneurial outcomes. This research has important implications for policy-makers and educators, recommending the integration of emotional intelligence development into entrepreneurial training programs to cultivate successful and resilient entrepreneurs.

Managerial Implication

This study's findings underscore the significant role that emotional competencies and sensitivity play in driving entrepreneurial success, highlighting the need for targeted managerial and training programs that focus on these areas. Emotional sensitivity, identified as the strongest predictor of success, suggests that entrepreneurs who can adeptly perceive and respond to emotional cues are more likely to thrive. This insight is especially pertinent for designing entrepreneurial training initiatives and managerial development programs that incorporate emotional intelligence training to enhance these critical skills. Moreover, the moderate impact of emotional maturity on success indicates that while important, prioritizing the development of emotional competencies and sensitivity may yield more immediate benefits. Implementing these findings in managerial practices could lead to more effective support structures for entrepreneurs, potentially increasing success rates and contributing to economic growth. Therefore, business incubators and educational policymakers should consider integrating comprehensive emotional intelligence components into their training curricula and managerial support programs to cultivate a new generation of adept and emotionally intelligent entrepreneurs.

Policy Recommendations

Educational institutions and business incubators should develop and integrate training modules that focus on enhancing emotional intelligence, particularly competencies and sensitivity, into their entrepreneurial programs. Governments and funding agencies should support initiatives that incorporate emotional intelligence assessments into the entrepreneurial development process, helping entrepreneurs identify and improve their emotional skills. Incorporate emotional intelligence education early in academic curricula, from secondary schools to higher education, to prepare future entrepreneurs with the necessary emotional

skills for business success. Funding for Emotional Skills Development: Policy makers should consider providing grants or subsidies for startups that prioritize emotional intelligence development, recognizing its impact on business success and overall economic health.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

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