

# Achieving Self-Reliance Through Entrepreneurial Education In India: Towards Sustainable 'Vocal For Local' Mantra

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## Abstract

India is a growing country and tops the list of nations with the highest rates of educated unemployment, which is a matter of concern. For our constantly expanding and changing economy, skilled workers and entrepreneurs are needed. Additionally, it was seen that the global economy had gone through a turbulent phase during the COVID 19 Pandemic crisis, forcing many individuals to leave their jobs. Due to their lack of practical experience in the various industries, it was quite harder for them to make ends meet in this situation. The emergence of pandemic has caused a very devastating impact on the lives of people. Since future is uncertain and we need to be open to it and ready to face. Witnessing such pandemic like situation and keeping in mind the emerging needs, the present paper focussed on what kind of educational environment must be created by the institutions to develop future ready learners, in order to confront the changing time and realities context? It is thus acclaimed that entrepreneurship can be the best option to prepare future ready learners. Moreover, UNESCO, in line with Sustainable Development Goal 4 and the Education 2030 Framework for Action, has also developed a TVET Strategy to strengthen Member States' technical education related systems and policies to promote employment, respectable work, entrepreneurship, and chances for life skills in certain national contexts. So, in present paper researchers studied the perception of the students towards entrepreneurship education with respect to gender, locale and stream. The study while adopting a descriptive method surveyed 100 students studying in Central University of Jammu. Data was collected online and analysed by using t-test. The findings revealed there was no significant difference in the perception of university students towards entrepreneurship with respect to gender, locale and stream and further strategic plan was suggested to incorporate entrepreneurship education along with mainstream to make youth self-reliant while leading towards a sustainable Indian market and economy.

**Keywords:** Education for All, Entrepreneurship, Vocational education, Covid-19, Future ready learners

## INTRODUCTION

The emergence of the pandemic had caused a devastating impact on the lives of the people along with the conditions of economic shrinkages all over the world. Overall, COVID 19 pandemic was a dreadful experience and it has caused a great impact on all the spheres of life whether we talk of financial, emotional, economic, and educational. Like the whole world, India too had faced exceptional difficult times due to the outbreak of pandemic. Many people were forced to get out of jobs, rendering to substantial decline in their income and as such increased rate of unemployment made it difficult for the people to earn their livelihood during that unprecedented period. In order to mitigate the crisis during the Covid-19 Pandemic and to stabilize the economy of the nation, Hon'ble Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, had launched

an *Atamnirbhar Bharat Abhiyan* (Self-Reliant India) by calling upon the people to be '*Vocal for Local*', Self-sustaining and Self-generating by being entrepreneurs. "Vocal for Local" is the latest trending slogan in India. However, it is in the Swadeshi movement, which Mahatma Gandhi supported and popularized in 1905 during the Indian independence war, where the idea for this movement originated. It was viewed as a means of instilling in Indians a sense of nationalism and nationalistic pride. Vocal for Local's motto is to support regional businesses and encourage consumers to buy locally wherever feasible so that domestic industries can eventually grow and become self-sufficient thanks to the long-term impacts of increased demand. This will facilitate production ramping up and eventually turn India into a global hub for manufacturing. Besides this, if we look at the present era of technological advancement and

industrialization, there is a dire need of the skilled persons to cope up with the demands of present time and to cater the issues such as unemployment in many countries. But the prime question is how we should make ourselves as well as our younger generations be prepared for such situations and what kind of education should be provided to them? Moreover, the creation of a skilled work force has been a challenge in many countries in recent years, where there is a growing demand for skilled workers that has gone unmet. More emphasis has been placed on VET in order to meet the demand for skilled employees. The main issue in Indian context is that the people are not having a positive attitude towards skill education. Even though the focus has been also laid on skill-based education right from Indian Education Commission (Kothari commission) but the things remain only up to the policy level because of no proper implementation at the ground level. An insufficient educational system, academic inefficiencies, improper curriculum, and students' lack of entrepreneurial skills and self-efficacy also are the major barriers in the effectiveness of the entrepreneurial education (Nowiński et al., 2019). UNESCO collaborates with different organisations throughout the world to achieve a shared understanding that allows everyone to work effectively together for ensuring peace and security and promoting the well-being of all. Additionally, UNESCO manages worldwide collaboration that helps people to have access to education, to develop and live in a varied environment, benefit from technological breakthroughs, and express themselves freely. This collaboration allows UNESCO to collaborate with other organisations to provide possibilities for children and other citizens all around the world. Goals are set in place to ensure that all children receive a basic education, by developing educational programmes. The top priority of UNESCO is education, and they are working with Education for All (EFA) to improve education for all children and encouraging quality education.

Also, while addressing the issues of growing unemployment, UNESCO, in line with Sustainable Development Goal 4 and the Education 2030 Framework for Action, has also developed a TVET Strategy to strengthen Member States' technical education related systems and policies to advance youth employment, decent work, entrepreneurship, and lifelong learning opportunities in specific national contexts.

### **How to prepare future ready learners?**

Education plays a significant role in fostering the information, entrepreneurial skills, perception, and

values that enable individuals to contribute to and benefit from a more inclusive and sustainable future. Hence, the education system of the country needs to be such that it should meet the demands of the current time and will also prepare the learners for future. We want to be ready for anything and provide our younger generations with the skills they need to succeed in the future. However, we lack much of the necessary technical knowledge to instruct them. What we can teach children are prospective soft skills that will be useful regardless of our technological environment. Entrepreneurship education is recognised as a motivator for changing the dominant paradigms in developing countries about economic growth and education from a sustainable development viewpoint (Strachan, 2018). Schools must train students for occupations that are expected to be emerge in upcoming future, challenges that have yet to be acknowledged and technologies that have yet to be perceived. Taking advantage of possibilities and figuring out solutions will be a shared duty. With the emerging needs and realities of the future such as the technological advancements and the scenario created during the pandemic times, it is realised that the current educational practices demand the shift in order to be aligned with the developing realities in terms of time, purpose and context. Therefore, the school environment, as well as teaching and learning processes, must change in order to encourage healthy habits and skills among students, preparing them to actively contribute to a sustainable future. This necessitates the establishment of work-readiness among students. Students should have a high degree of work-readiness in order to be more equipped for a job and also to confront the working world in the future (Santrock, 2012). Recent National Education Policy (NEP 2020) is too based on democratic and sustainable principle, and will be a blueprint for Atamirbhar Bharat. It also recommends for the Integration of Indigenous knowledge and skills to promote the localized knowledge, tradition and culture. Efforts should be made to integrate this knowledge into formal education for enhancement in the understanding of the community, one is part of.

Keeping in view all the above facts, it can be said that inculcation of entrepreneurial values and skills among students at a young age by providing entrepreneurship education can be seen as the pathway to prepare our younger generations for future. Students might also benefit from cultivating an entrepreneurial attitude by setting and attaining realistic goals. Young brains may be taught how to attain long-term and short-term goals by providing entrepreneurship education. Entrepreneur education has been increasingly important in recent years.

This understanding will aid future entrepreneurs in their search for business prospects. We all know how important entrepreneurs are to India's economic development. Entrepreneurship education is important for aspiring business owners. It helps students to build entrepreneurial skills and expertise that will help them launch their business in the future. This education assists students in becoming industry-ready entrepreneurs with skills for future firms, as well as contributing to the Indian economy and moving on the path of success and growth.

### Review of the literature

Mani (2018) describes the perspective of students towards entrepreneurship education and found that the students were highly interested in venturing into their own businesses. The factors that motivated them were mainly intrinsic like being their own boss, independent decision maker and chasing their dreams. Despite this, the lack of experience and lack of funds had been mentioned as the deterring factors. Verma (2020) in his study found that entrepreneurship positively leads to the capital formation, to generate employment, to improve the way of living, creation and distribution of wealth and hence facilitating overall development. Verma & Viswanathan (2021) in his study also explored the role of entrepreneurship towards Self-Reliant India and revealed that Atamnirbhar Bharat Abhiyaan has become a movement for promotion of entrepreneurship in India. It not only generates income for the owner but also provide employment and boosts the productivity of the economy. Students will be more motivated if they have clear objectives and plans for the future. The first major challenge is determining how school systems and educators can more analyse and scaffold the development of competencies related to "new knowledge economy" – not only at the individual but also at the collective level – while paying special attention to the current life-worlds' highly-networked, technology-mediated social and learning environments. (Jennifer Tan et al, 2017). Jayanthi (2019) carried out a study to enlighten the scenario of entrepreneurship in India by discussing about the function and scope of entrepreneurship, its characteristics and scope, and also the challenges faced by the Indian entrepreneurs before starting up. Findings of the study revealed that entrepreneurship in India is still dominated by small enterprises and India still face some acute challenges in terms of networking and cultural support. Also, according to Global Entrepreneurship and Development Index GEDI, the rank of India is 68 out of 137 countries showing a middling

performance. Going through the literature review, it is viewed that one of the predicted long-term benefit of the entrepreneurship education is the establishment and evolution of the eco-system that assists students' self-reliance, entrepreneurial mentality, inventiveness, the development of new manufacturing techniques, goods, and marketing. So, the entrepreneurship education and the knowledge of the skills need to be promoted among students.

### The study

Believing that recourse to entrepreneurship can help to control unemployment and economic shrinkages, it can be felt that, there is, now more than ever, a need for youth to come up with sustainable ventures. This reveals that the entrepreneurship education needs to be provided to the students. Hence, the researchers in the present investigation also studied the perception of students towards entrepreneurship, because it's a great concern that how the education should be provided to the students. In this aspect, primarily it becomes important to understand what actually is the mindset of the students towards entrepreneurship for considering it as a career pathway and also to know what kind of curricular reforms and strategies should be adopted to promote entrepreneurship for making youth and nations self-reliant.

### Objectives of the Study

To study the difference in perception of university students towards entrepreneurship with respect to the gender, locale and stream.

### Hypotheses of the Study

There is no significant difference in the perception of university students towards entrepreneurship with respect to gender, locale and stream.

### Methodology

The study was descriptive survey-type in nature. Data was collected through self-administered online survey tool. A five-point Likert scale was constructed for studying the perception of the students towards entrepreneurship. A Scale comprised of total 45 items which were further divided into five dimensions namely- Awareness, Personal traits of Entrepreneurs, Motivational factors, Role towards Self-reliance, Barriers of entrepreneurship. Five alternatives were given against each statement such as SA- Strongly Agree, A- Agree, N- Neutral, D-Disagree, SDA- Strongly

Disagree. Respondents were required to answer each statement by choosing the option that matches with their own view/perception. A total no. of 100 students studying in Central University of Jammu constituted the sample of the study

**Data Analysis**

**Table 1:** Value of N, Mean, S.D and t-ratio computed for difference in perception towards entrepreneurship among male and female university students

Dimensions	Gender	N	Mean	S. D	t-Value	Significance
Awareness	Male	66	46.33	4.97	0.32	Not Significant
	Female	34	46.73	6.34		
Personal traits	Male	66	41.69	3.67	1.69	Not significant
	Female	34	43.08	4.63		
Motivational factors	Male	66	26.83	3.298	0.14	Not significant
	Female	34	26.94	3.67		
Key for Self-reliance	Male	66	46.33	4.97	0.32	Not significant
	Female	34	46.73	6.34		
Barriers	Male	66	16.53	2.02	1.59	Not significant
	Female	34	17.23	2.24		

Table 1 reveals there is no significant difference in mean scores of male and female university students with respect to entrepreneurship and its dimensions (Awareness: the calculated t value is 0.32 for 98 df which is not significant even at 0.05 level of confidence; in case of personal traits of entrepreneurs, the calculated t value is 1.69 which is not significant even at 0.05 level of confidence; in case of motivational factors, the calculated value is 0.14, which is also not significant even at 0.05 level of confidence; Key for self-reliance, the calculated value is 0.32, which is not significant even at 0.05 level of confidence; and for the Barriers to entrepreneurship: the calculated t value is 1.59 which is not significant even at 0.05 level of confidence. It implies that there is no difference in perception towards entrepreneurship among male and female university students. Hence null hypothesis that there is no significant difference in perception towards entrepreneurship among male and female university students was accepted.

**Table 2:** Value of N, Mean, S.D and t-ratio computed for difference in perception towards entrepreneurship among rural and urban university students

Dimensions	Locale	N	Mean	S. D	t-Value	Significance
Awareness	Rural	59	32.40	3.46	0.95	Not Significant
	urban	41	33	2.85		
Personal traits	Rural	59	41.57	3.67	1.74	Not significant
	urban	41	43.02	4.45		
Motivational factors	Rural	59	26.75	3.36	0.343	Not significant
	urban	41	27	3.83		
Key for Self-reliance	Rural	59	46.28	5.19	0.40	Not significant
	urban	41	46.73	5.82		
Barriers	Rural	59	16.49	2.08	1.65	Not significant
	urban	41	17.17	2.12		

Table 2 reveals there is no significant difference in mean scores of rural and urban university students with respect to entrepreneurship and its dimensions (Awareness: the calculated t value is 0.95 for 98 df which is not significant even at 0.05 level of confidence; in case of personal traits of entrepreneurs, the calculated t value is 1.74 which is not significant even at 0.05 level of confidence; in case of motivational factors, the calculated value is 0.343, which is also not significant even at 0.05 level of confidence; Key for self-reliance, the calculated value is 0.40, which is not significant even at 0.05 level of confidence; Barriers to entrepreneurship: the calculated t value is 1.65 which is not significant even at 0.05 level of confidence. It implies that there is no difference in perception towards entrepreneurship among rural and urban university students. Hence null hypothesis that there is no significant difference in perception towards entrepreneurship among rural and urban university students was accepted.

**Table 3:** Value of N, Mean, S.D and t-ratio computed for difference in perception towards entrepreneurship among science and social science stream university students

Dimensions	Stream	N	Mean	S. D	t-Value	Significance
Awareness	Science	48	32.84	2.87	0.30	Not Significant
	Social-science	52	32.65	3.55		
Personal traits	Science	48	42.25	3.78	0.20	Not significant
	Social-science	52	42.09	4.33		
Motivational factors	Science	48	26.70	3.30	0.49	Not significant
	Social-science	52	27.02	3.31		
Key for Self-reliance	Science	48	46.60	5.23	0.24	Not significant
	Social-science	52	46.34	5.68		
Barriers	Science	48	16.52	2.17	1.17	Not significant
	Social-science	52	17	2.05		

Table 3 reveals there is no significant difference in mean scores of science and social science stream university students with respect to entrepreneurship and its dimensions (Awareness: the calculated t value is 0.30 for 98 df which is not significant even at 0.05 level of confidence; in case of personal traits of entrepreneurs, the calculated t value is 0.20

which is not significant even at 0.05 level of confidence; in case of motivational factors, the calculated value is 0.49, which is also not significant even at 0.05 level of confidence; Key for self-reliance, the calculated value is 0.24, which is not significant even at 0.05 level of confidence; and in case of Barriers to entrepreneurship: the calculated t value is 1.17 which is not significant even at 0.05 level of confidence. It implies that there is no difference in perception towards entrepreneurship among science and social science stream university students. Hence null hypothesis that there is no significant difference in perception towards entrepreneurship among science and social science stream university students was accepted.

## Findings

There was no significant difference in perception towards entrepreneurship among rural and urban university students

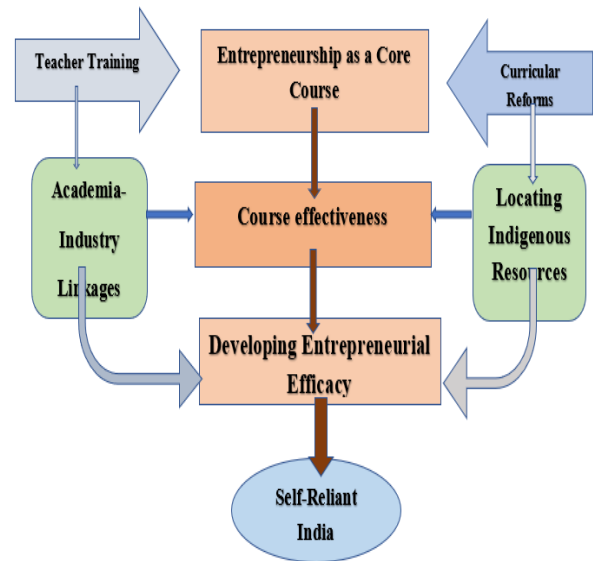
There was no significant difference in perception towards entrepreneurship among male and female university students

There was no significant difference in perception towards entrepreneurship among science and social science stream university students

## Discussion

It is clear from the findings that students are interested in and feel motivated to consider entrepreneurship as a career. On the basis of these results, the researchers explored the possibilities to sensitize the youth to get involved in 'Make in India' and 'Vocal for Local' campaigns. Because the jobs of the future are not yet defined, we must equip learners with the technical and non-technical abilities they will need today and tomorrow. Learners gain abilities such as creativity, cooperation, and computational thinking while participating in technology, skills development and practical aspects of curriculum. Integrating more multi-disciplinary learning methodologies and including a platform of social and emotional skills allows learners to explore new avenues of discovery, preparing them to be future ready so that they will create jobs for themselves. Identify specific future-ready skills in children: In order to accommodate students with a broader skill set, education needs to be evolved as per the demand. Students must develop certain skills that will enable them to effortlessly adapt to and blend into the workforce of the future. Teachers can then determine what the child requires and customise the educational demands of the students accordingly.

Keeping all the points in view, it can be asserted that the proper integration and enhancement in the quality of entrepreneurship education and VET can be brought about by following the suggested strategic plan given as under:



**Fig 1(a)** showing the strategic plan regarding the integration of entrepreneurship education in

## mainstream education and how it will lead towards self-reliant

The quality of education is being used as the major agenda to be addressed in the creation of each education policy. Our recent National Education Policy (NEP 2020) also places a strong focus on the integration of vocational education with mainstream education in order to make youth self-reliant. Therefore, the entrepreneurship must be introduced as a core course in the education but this requires the consideration of the certain factors such as the reforms in the curriculum, the training of the teachers to develop their entrepreneurial efficacy as well as of the students.

**Curriculum:** The curriculum must be refined through increased content of vocational knowledge and abilities, as well as greater course alignment with skill sets and interdisciplinary content. The curriculum for vocational education must be designed for to meet the needs of the community. As a result, society must be considered when designing the curriculum's content and hence qualifications and courses should be set perceiving the social and economic needs.

**Teachers and trainers:** One of the main challenges in vocational education is incompetent and untrained teachers for teaching skill-based courses. Therefore, for the preparation of quality vocational teachers, proper training courses should be organised for the teachers related to innovative

pedagogical approaches to teaching and learning. Collaborations between VET institutions and industry or research institutions will also help in fostering innovation in teachers' training. There is also a need to establish teams which are multidisciplinary in nature involving the professional's expert in Vocational education and training, and they must have defined roles and also work in collaboration with others. Despite this, for promoting open Vocational education, methods of virtual learning will be employed such as introducing innovative learning techniques and digital technologies, such as Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), flipped learning, and blended learning.

### Course effectiveness:

**Collaboration with private sector:** Also, collaboration and partnership with the private sector and industries must be promoted to incorporate various industrial and vocational skills among students. For imparting skills orientation and to provide entrepreneurial exposure, Collaboration with ITIs, polytechnics, local enterprises, industries, hospitals, and agriculture farms, local artists should be maintained.

**Locating Indigenous Resources:** Students should be aware about the locally available resources and they can be utilized positively and sustainably for the growth and welfare of the nation. So, they would also have access to 'Lok Vidya,' or vital occupational knowledge generated in India, through incorporation into vocational education courses. And for this internship programmes should be organised for providing indigenous practices and the knowledge related to vocational crafts to students.

### Developing Entrepreneurial efficacy:

No doubt, entrepreneurship is seen as a possible solution to socioeconomic challenges, for which mainly education serves as a catalyst for the development of entrepreneurial culture and behaviour. But it also becomes important that the education provided should be based on the need and abilities of the students.

**Learners:** Before imparting the training in particular skill to the student, it becomes important to know about the interest and carry out aptitude test to determine one's readiness in the field of skill-based education.

**Incorporating Life skills:** Students must be exposed to different areas such as creativity and innovation, critical and problem-solving skills, entrepreneurial and other life-skills. In order to

prepare youth for the upcoming prospects in future, there must be teaching, modelling and engagement of students in entrepreneurship opportunities. Therefore, Educational institutions and community can partner together and consider entrepreneurship as a joint venture. Institutions may make a difference in the learning process by providing students with the tools, resources, and knowledge they need to learn about business management. Every child is talented and creative in their own way. They can improve their abilities and inventive thoughts with effective instructions and training. This would imply more students succeeding in the real world for schools, institutions, and colleges.

### Educational implications

- The global economy is rapidly evolving, with technological advancements affecting every business. Schools and universities may educate and prepare the students for the unmapped road through entrepreneurship education. Consequently, the study proposes more resolute and collaborative action on the part all the concerned stakeholders that are government, communities, educational institutions and all others to pave the way for the emergence of more entrepreneurs from student population, and hence preparing the learners for future.
- The knowledge of Indigenous Vocations should be integrated in the curriculum to make youth self-reliant.
- Educational institutions should create interest among students towards entrepreneurship by creating awareness programs about benefits that students can earn by choosing entrepreneurship as a career.
- The finding showing that there is no significant difference in the perception of male and female students, signifies that the equal entrepreneurial opportunities must be provided to the women to harness their potential so that they can also contribute on their part towards the welfare and development of the nation

### Conclusion

While concluding, it can be said that there is a great need to acknowledge the importance of skill development in children. Teachers must guarantee that imagination and creativity flow freely, and that pupils are provided with opportunities to discover and improve their abilities. Students and teachers must work together to achieve this goal because, in the end, students must be taught how to think rather than what to think. Overall viewing the skill-based education as the need of an hour, it can be

proclaimed that the learning of various skills becomes necessary in order to promote a culture where entrepreneurship and vocational education is seen as a part of life as well as a new economic world. Based on the finding and above discussion, it is true to say that the skill is the most valuable asset a person can possess. Furthermore, VET enhances people's ability to benefit from entrepreneurial activities and stimulates them to participate in them so that they can become self-sufficient. Vocational courses allow students to develop and polish their natural talents and skills. They have a lot of success in their industry and in other fields. Furthermore, both the government and the private sector have a significant demand for highly qualified workers. It benefits students, society, the nation, and employers most of all. Thus, there is a great need that all the stakeholders should carefully analyse and seriously consider the strategies for skill-based education and training in order to yield and improve the quality of human capital of the country. Provided with special support, the path of VET, will obviously generate graduates who are competent and skilled enough of competing in the present world of demand, where technical education will be seen as the key factor for success in career. Likewise, a great emphasis has been laid down from time to time by different policies of the government but the dearth is at the proper implementation of those policies. Now it is up to all interested shareholders to guarantee that the plans and the policies should be properly implemented.

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