



Entrepreneurial Orientation Among Diploma Students in Tiruchirappalli: Exploring Motivations, Institutional Support, and Employment Impact

¹Mohan Alex Medayil ²Dr. R. S. Balakumar

¹Research Scholar, Department of Management, Christhu Raj College (Affiliated to Bharathidasan University), Tiruchirappalli - 620 012, INDIA

²Research Supervisor and Assistant Professor, Department of Management, Christhu Raj College (Affiliated to Bharathidasan University), Tiruchirappalli - 620 012, INDIA

Abstract : Entrepreneurship as a source of employment in Tiruchirappalli District, Tamil Nadu: When small businesses act as a source of employment growth it would result in a decrease in the unemployment rate in the country especially for the youth population. Despite a succession of studies on entrepreneurship education and its policies and challenges in the region, the factors influencing entrepreneurial orientation outside formal education are unclear. The current study aims to determine the major motivations for entrepreneurship among Diploma students at Tiruchirappalli. And the continuing discussion of whether entrepreneurs are born or made highlights the importance of understanding these forces. Through a review of existing literature, this study aims to identify the factors that influence students' ability to create their own business ventures or continue with their family businesses. Because these students can launch and grow their own businesses, Diploma students are a significant target for this study.

Keywords: Entrepreneurial Orientation, Entrepreneurship Education, Diploma Students, Business Factors

INTRODUCTION

The very essence of entrepreneurship fuels economic development, innovation, and creates jobs, but no more so than in the issue of youth unemployment, which is now an epidemic (Chukwuka and Imide, 2023). Such as in Tiruchirappalli District, Tamil Nadu, especially, local (especially rural) economic development can be boosted, if the youth engage in the proclamation of entrepreneurship. Although much has been written about entrepreneurship education and policy frameworks in India, less is known about the factors that drive entrepreneurial orientation outside of formal education (Chhabra et al., 2021). They are necessary to make interventions that promote the creation of existing businesses by young graduates.

Entrepreneurship is a topic that has long fascinated researchers, sparking debates as to whether entrepreneurs are naturally predisposed, or rather, what environmental or educational influences impact their respective journeys (Kolade et al., 2024). Hence, this discussion illustrates the need to explore the motivational drivers behind students' entrepreneurial decisions. More specifically, diploma students are often considered an exclusive demographic, obtaining in-demand skills relevant to business applications. Exploring why they pursued their respective careers can shed light on why one succeeds over the other. It can also shed light on the impact of external factors (like family background, availability of market opportunities, and personal ambition) on the formation of entrepreneurial tendencies in career paths (Wang et al, 2019).

The study aims to study the factors influencing Diploma students at Tiruchirappalli to become entrepreneurs (starting a venture or developing a family business). Using existing literature and students' views on this gap concerning factors other than education that are relevant for aspiring entrepreneurs, this paper aims to elaborate on the role of relevant actors. The results may help create approaches that provide a basis for educators, policymakers and industry stakeholders to think about to nurture minds entering the entrepreneurial space. This could significantly develop the dynamism and sustainability of businesses in the area.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Youth unemployment has become a major problem in Tiruchirappalli District, Tamil Nadu as it has not seen various education and policy interventions directed towards promoting entrepreneurship and therefore is focused on youth unemployment. Although existing literature has made extensive contributions concerning entrepreneurship education and policy frameworks, there remains a limited understanding of external factors impacting entrepreneurial orientation that are not directly related to formal education. In particular, what motivates and drives Diploma students to become entrepreneurs, whether through the establishment of their own

firms or engagement in family firms, is less understood. Knowledge of these patterns is vital to effective interventions that improve entrepreneurial success and develop local economic wellbeing.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To pick the main drivers to consider Diploma students in Tiruchirappalli for entrepreneurship.
2. The entrepreneurial orientation influences both overall business success and family continuity.
3. To determine the extent to which a student's entrepreneurial tendency is influenced by social and environmental factors rather than formal education.
4. To help educators, policymakers, and industry representatives understand how to promote entrepreneurship among Diploma students.
5. For the development of strategies that support sustainable business growth and job creation in the region.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Entrepreneurship is the backbone of economic growth, job creation, and innovation. Guerrero et al. Argue that entrepreneurs are the agents of economic development who develop innovations in products and processes that destroy the former existing ones. Recent research agrees that entrepreneurship contributes to the economy's vibrancy and economic development. In a “ global and highly impoverished operating climate, underemployment, and scarcity of available jobs, entrepreneurship can lead to energetic economies.” This suggests the significance of entrepreneurship in promoting local economic development through the youthful generation. Youth unemployment is a persistent problem in various economies around the world, particularly in low-income countries. Chukwuka and Imide state that stimulating youth entrepreneurship may eradicate youth unemployment. It also implies that young people want freedom from typical work and aspire to formulate their work. Research further demonstrates that young entrepreneurship contributes to community development and millennials' financial independence. Entrepreneurial orientation is the probability of starting one's own business given proactiveness, risk-taking propensity, and creativity. Arshad et al. Assert that entrepreneurs are motivated to start businesses by both internal and external forces. This ambition might develop due to lucrative job openings or challenging the status quo motivated by intrinsic motivations such as ambition. This definition is critical in guiding entrepreneurship among Diploma students. Although entrepreneurship education is seen as a prerequisite for the success of businesses, its impact on students' entrepreneurial behavior is still unclear. Qadhi argues that while formal education may offer theoretical knowledge, it may not help pupils develop the requisite skills to confront business obstacles or to get family background and assistance.

Entrepreneurs are highly influenced by their family background. Research by Zaman et al. (2021) Organizations can seem overwhelming, yet children raised in business-oriented families grow up practicing risk-oriented approaches. Similarly, Mthembu et al. (2023) explore the formal experience at family-run establishments and reveal that these businesses double as incubators, giving students all the training to become managers and operators in their future entrepreneurial ventures. Market opportunities: The availability of market opportunities guides an entrepreneur's decision to set up a venture. Kakeesh (2024) says entrepreneurship flourishes in settings with unmet needs or unused assets. Almusawi and Alubadi (2021) suggest that diploma students may have the upper hand, given their finely honed skills in specialized industries, allowing for access to niche markets, if they can successfully recognize business opportunities. Should we consider entrepreneurs born or made? This has been debated in both popular and entrepreneurship research. This was linked to entrepreneurial inclination in a few traditional research studies (Hamzah and Othman, 2023), and the more recent studies assert that inclination through entertainment and familiarity factors with ecological influences could be picked up. This details the requirement to investigate the impact of environmental factors on nurturing student behaviour towards entrepreneurship. There are plenty of barriers young entrepreneurs have to overcome, including money, experience and networks. According to Rusu et al. According to annual research conducted by Jovetic et al. This adds another layer of difficulty, and this simple issue illustrates the need for supportive policies and mentorship programs that help marginal groups (such as new entrepreneurs) succeed in business.

Government policies and regulations have a significant impact on entrepreneurship. According to Kuratko et al. (2021) demonstrated that supportive policies granting access to funding, training, and mentorship programs can improve entrepreneurial success by 5 times. While initiatives such as the Startup India program have been established to promote entrepreneurship within the country, challenges in ensuring that such policies reach entrepreneurs, particularly in rural areas, exist (Singh, 2021). Students who study the Diploma program learn technical and practical skills through the area of entrepreneurship. According to Cai and Kosaka (2024), students who pursue vocational training are more likely to launch businesses — especially in the service sector. By examining what drives and impedes their journeys, interventions may be created to help them pursue their entrepreneurial ambitions while bolstering economic development.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This descriptive research utilized a technical approach with the target population comprising students enrolled in diploma colleges in Tiruchirappalli district in Tamil Nadu state, India. These institutions constitute a major part of technical education in India. From the UGC Web site, we obtained a list of colleges affiliated with the Directorate of Technical Education, Tamil Nadu. These colleges offer AICTE approved diploma programs in the Tiruchirappalli Region. A total sample size of 400 was determined scientifically by using a systematic random sampling method among the school-going adolescent population of Karachi. Out of which, 80 respondents were from each of the five institutions or diploma programs related to Technical Education in India. We

conducted a pilot test with 30 participants to prepare the questionnaire before the main study. The survey content reliability and validity were examined as well. Data were retrieved through structured self-administered questionnaires and data analysis using statistical methods (e.g., frequency analysis, ANOVA and multiple regression analysis) with SPSS software (version 29).

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

1. Demographic analysis

Category	Sub-Category	Frequency	Percentage
Age of diploma students	18 to 22	216	54.00%
	23 to 27	112	28.00%
	Above 27	72	18.00%
Gender of diploma students	Male	312	78.00%
	Female	88	22.00%
Location of diploma students	Urban	271	67.75%
	Rural	67	16.75%
	Semi-Urban	62	15.50%
Diploma students Parent's Occupation	Public Sector	127	31.75%
	Private Sector	42	10.50%
	Self-Employed	91	22.75%
	Retired	48	12.00%
	Others	92	23.00%
Diploma students Parent's Qualification	SSLC	7	1.75%
	HSC	59	14.75%
	UG	118	29.50%
	PG	202	50.50%
	PhD or Others	14	3.50%
Parent's Annual Income of diploma students	Below 3L	118	29.50%
	3L-5L	207	51.75%
	6L-8L	54	13.50%
	9L-10L	13	3.25%
	Above 10L	8	2.00%
Institutional Support of diploma colleges	Entrepreneurship Club	132	33.00%
	IT Club	98	24.50%
	Startup Club	63	15.75%
	Entrepreneurship Development Cell (EDC)	68	17.00%
	Other	39	9.75%
Willingness to Start a New Business	Yes	318	79.50%
	No	82	20.50%

In table 1, Diploma students are predominantly (54.00%) between 18 to 22 years of age, a large portion (28.00%) between 23 to 27 years, and over half (18.00%) are above 27 years. However, the gender division is deeply unequal — male students dominate at 78.00%, compared to female students at just 22.00%. Classified by student locality, 67.75% of students reside in urban areas, 16.75% in rural areas, and 15.50% in semi-urban areas. For parental occupation, 31.75% of students' parents work in public settings; 22.75% are self-employed, and 10.50% work in private-sector jobs. Also, parents 12.00% retired, and 23.00% of other (doctors, teachers, engineers, etc.) About 50.50% of the surveyed are postgraduate-qualified parents, whereas, about 29.50% of the parents hold an undergraduate degree, while 14.75% right before the PhD level and only about 3.50% of them reach PhD level, and finally 1.75% only completed the Secondary School Leaving Certificate.

So economic and institutional factors are very significant for students' career aspirations. 51.75% of students are from families earning 3L-5L/year and 29.50% earning below 3L/year and 13.50% bringing up to 6L-8L/year Only 3.25% of the students are from the 9L-10L bracket and 2.00% are from the above 10L bracket, which indicates few students are from the upper-income group. There are clubs and initiatives available at the institute. The highest number of participants belong to the Entrepreneurship Club (33.00%), followed by IT Club (24.50%) and Entrepreneurship Development Cell (17.00%). A large number also check The Startup Club (15.75%) and 9.75% do other stuff. The results showed a significant proportion of diploma students who agreed (79.50%) to becoming an entrepreneur, suggesting good potential for entrepreneurship among diploma students.

2. Chi-Square Test

Table 2 Chi-Square Test Results for the Relationship Between Diploma colleges Institutional Support and Various Entrepreneurial Factors

Test Description	Pearson Chi-Square	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Likelihood Ratio	Linear-by-Linear Association	Observations (N)	Notes
Diploma colleges Institutional support vs. Economic independence through entrepreneurship	39.638	12	0.000	40.412	0.076	400	Significant relationship; 4 cells (20%) have expected count < 5.
Diploma colleges Institutional support vs. Inclination towards high-risk tasks	54.318	16	0.000	71.119	14.318	400	Significant correlation; 7 cells (28%) have expected count < 5.
Diploma colleges Institutional support vs. Impact of entrepreneurship programs on diploma college campuses	48.810	12	0.000	52.228	8.008	400	Significant relationship; 4 cells (20%) have expected count < 5.

In table 2, statistical results of the Chi-Square test demonstrate that institutional support for diploma colleges is significantly associated with different entrepreneurial factors. There was a statistically significant association between students who feel they have institutional support, and a sense of economic independence through entrepreneurship ($\chi^2 = 39.638$, $df = 12$, $p = 0.000$), indicating a significant relationship between the amount of institutional support and feelings of economic independence through entrepreneurship. The relationship with financial backing to exhibit high-risk acts came out to be another revealing outcome ($\chi^2 = 54.318$, $df = 16$, $p = 0.000$), strengthening the importance of a nurtured environment that promotes high-risk behavior in students. That said, 20% and 28% of cells had expected counts <5 in both cases, indicating that results should be interpreted with caution. Furthermore, it is evident that the relationship between support at the institution and the impact of entrepreneurship programs on diploma college campuses is highly significant ($\chi^2 = 48.810$, $df = 12$, $p = 0.000$). This suggests that colleges that offer considerable institutional support benefit entrepreneurial programs. Moreover, the likelihood ratio and linear-by-linear association values strongly support these results. The findings underscore the need for institutional support in entrepreneurship development among diploma students, with an overall observation size of 400 across all tests. Future studies could investigate the types of support that contribute most positively to the entrepreneur and their context.

3. Regression analysis

Table 3 Regression Analysis of the Impact of Diploma Colleges Institutional Support on Entrepreneurial Perceptions of Diploma College Guidance and Government Support

Analysis Component	Details
Model Summary	R: 0.461, R²: 0.193, Adjusted R²: 0.179, Std. Error of Estimate: 0.712
ANOVA Results	Regression Sum of Squares: 71.019, Residual Sum of Squares: 289.592, Total Sum of Squares: 360.611
F-Statistic	F: 91.542, p-value: 0.000 (statistically significant)
Coefficients	Constant: 2.293 ($p = 0.000$), Institutional Support Coefficient (B): 0.341 (SE = 0.040), Beta: 0.491 ($t = 9.501$, $p = 0.000$)
Key Findings	- Institutional support explains 19.75% of the variance in entrepreneurial success. - The ANOVA test confirms a statistically significant relationship ($p < 0.001$) between Diploma colleges institutional support and entrepreneurial perceptions. - For every unit increase in institutional support, the perceived importance of diploma college guidance and government support rises by 0.361 units . - The high t-value (9.501) and significant Beta (0.491) confirm a strong positive effect of diploma college institutional support on entrepreneurial views.
Conclusion	Diploma college Institutional support has a moderate yet statistically significant impact on entrepreneurial perceptions, with additional factors influencing outcomes.

In table 3, analysis shows the institutional support of diploma colleges is statistically significant on entrepreneurial perception ($R^2 = 0.193$), thus it holds about 19.3% variance. The ANOVA results ($F = 91.542$, $p < 0.001$) confirmed the significance of the model, highlighting the importance of institutional support in linking entrepreneurial perspectives. The regression coefficient indicates that as the degree of institutional support ($B = 0.341$, $p = 0.000$) rises, the contribution of diploma college guidance and government

support to the perceived importance of diploma college guidance and government support will also increase by 0.361 units. The Beta value is very positive with a Beta value of 0.491 and a t-statistic of 9.501 which highlights the importance of institutions for success in entrepreneurship. Thus, although institutional support is critical, other sixty-one determinants also influence entrepreneurs' stories, reflecting the need for a wider scope for entrepreneurship promotion in diploma colleges.

CONCLUSION

To conclude, this study's findings emphasize entrepreneurship as a crucial employment and economic growth driver for diploma graduates in Tamil Nadu's Tiruchirappalli District. The study's findings provide insight into how motives (internal and external) shape the entrepreneurial orientation of these students that extend beyond formal training. The findings demonstrate that institutional support is vital in nurturing entrepreneurship aspirations. The different Chi-Square test results affirm that good academic backing has a strong correlation with how students perceive economic independence, risk-taking behavior, and the effectiveness of entrepreneurship programs. Regression analysis further demonstrates that institutional support significantly influences entrepreneurial perceptions; however, institutional support is not the sole determinant of entrepreneurship growth. One of the insights from the study is that entrepreneurship among diploma students is driven by a range of factors, which include family support, market demand and personal ambition. He concluded that while education builds the core of knowledge needed for entrepreneurship, it is primarily the social and economic realm that drives students towards entrepreneurship. Furthermore, the research highlights the importance of tailored efforts by educators, policymakers, and industry professionals to strengthen entrepreneurship education, mentorship initiatives, and access to financing. In the end, developing an entrepreneurial ecosystem among diploma students contributes to job creation, business sustainability, and economic growth in the region. This study highlights the importance of support systems and the necessity of removing barriers such as financial hindrance and lack of experience; these factors will help prepare aspiring entrepreneurs to successfully establish sustainable enterprises. Further studies can cover a number of other factors related to entrepreneurial success. They can also investigate the best practices of entrepreneurship education combined with real business opportunities. A well-prepared and motivated diploma graduate can play a pivotal role in economic growth, innovation, and job creation to alleviate youth unemployment while improving economy sustainability.

REFERENCES

1. Agarwal, S., Ramadani, V., Gerguri-Rashiti, S., Agrawal, V., & Dixit, J. K. (2020). Inclusivity of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurial attitude among young community: evidence from India. *Journal of Enterprising Communities: People and Places in the Global Economy*, 14(2), 299-319.
2. Almusawi, A. D., & Alubadi, S. A. (2021). The role of entrepreneurial mindset skills in strategic niche management: An applied study in the Training and Development Department Presidency of ministers. *Review of International Geographical Education Online*, 11(8), 2234-2245.
3. Arshad, M., Farooq, O., & Farooq, M. (2019). The effect of intrinsic and extrinsic factors on entrepreneurial intentions: The moderating role of collectivist orientation. *Management Decision*, 57(3), 649-668.
4. Cai, J., & Kosaka, M. (2024). Conceptualizing technical and vocational education and training as a service through service-dominant logic. *Sage Open*, 14(2), 21582440241240847.
5. Chhabra, M., Dana, L. P., Malik, S., & Chaudhary, N. S. (2021). Entrepreneurship education and training in Indian higher education institutions: a suggested framework. *Education+ Training*, 63(7/8), 1154-1174.
6. Chukwuka, E. J., & Imide, I. (2023). Entrepreneurship Development as a strategy for curbing youth Unemployment in Developing Economy. *Ijagun Journal of Social and Management Sciences*, 7(1), 215, 229.
7. Guerrero, M., Liñán, F., & Cáceres-Carrasco, F. R. (2021). The influence of ecosystems on the entrepreneurship process: a comparison across developed and developing economies. *Small Business Economics*, 57(4), 1733-1759.
8. Hamzah, M. I., & Othman, A. K. (2023). How do locus of control influence business and personal success? The mediating effects of entrepreneurial competency. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 13, 958911.
9. Julien, P. A. (2019). The regional variations of entrepreneurial dynamism: a mixed methods study. *Entrepreneurship & Regional Development*, 31(9-10), 874-907.
10. Kakeesh, D. F. (2024). Female entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial ecosystems. *Journal of Research in Marketing and Entrepreneurship*, 26(3), 485-526.
11. Kolade, S., Jones, P., Amankwah-Amoah, J., Ogunsade, A., & Olanipekun, K. (2024). Entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial intention in a turbulent environment: The mediating role of entrepreneurial skills. *International Review of Entrepreneurship*, 21(3), 399-430.
12. Kucharcikova, A., Miciak, M., Malichova, E., Durisova, M., & Tokarcikova, E. (2019). The motivation of students at universities as a prerequisite of the education's sustainability within the business value generation context. *Sustainability*, 11(20), 5577.
13. Kuratko, D. F., Neubert, E., & Marvel, M. R. (2021). Insights on the mentorship and coachability of entrepreneurs. *Business Horizons*, 64(2), 199-209.
14. Mthembu, T. G., Christiansen, N., Kriel, S., Marone, C., Mason, J., & Zwane, S. (2023). Entrepreneurial knowledge and skills transmitted from parents to their children: An occupational legacy strategy for family-owned businesses. *South African Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 53(3).
15. Qadhi, S. (2023). Knowledge Dynamics: Educational Pathways from Theories to Tangible Outcomes. In *From Theory of Knowledge Management to Practice*. IntechOpen.

16. Rusu, V. D., Roman, A., & Tudose, M. B. (2022). Determinants of entrepreneurial intentions of youth: the role of access to finance. *Engineering Economics*, 33(1), 86-102.
17. Singh, V. K. (2021). Policy and regulatory changes for a successful startup revolution: Experiences from the startup action plan in India. In *Investment in Startups and Small Business Financing* (pp. 33-67).
18. Wang, S., Hung, K., & Huang, W. J. (2019). Motivations for entrepreneurship in the tourism and hospitality sector: A social cognitive theory perspective. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 78, 78-88.
19. Zaman, S., Arshad, M., Sultana, N., & Saleem, S. (2021). The effect of family business exposure on individuals' entrepreneurial intentions: an institutional theory perspective. *Journal of Family Business Management*, 11(4), 368-385.