

Entrepreneurship Education in Nagaland: A Study of College Students in Dimapur District

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Abstract

Nagaland is a small state, with a population of around 20 lakhs, where eight lakhs in the age group of 18-35 years are job seekers. In addition, according to the live register of employment exchange, as on April 30, 2019, there are 73,903 educated unemployed in the state (Department of employment, skill development and entrepreneurship, 2019). The study is focused on Nagaland education on entrepreneurship; the objective is to find the awareness and effectiveness of entrepreneurship education, which is highly encouraged as a part of the regular curriculum (especially for the commerce and management department) for the students. The level of entrepreneurial intentions and skills of college students in the Dimapur district has been studied. Some measures for strengthening entrepreneurship education has been suggested, as it is the key towards improvement of tomorrow, and the most important tool for increasing employment opportunities. This needs to be widely implemented. Today, India's higher education system produces a large number of graduates every year. However, the economy is not in a position to absorb these graduates, which leads to unemployment of the educated (Pradhan & Sahoo, 2013). With this aspect in mind, entrepreneurship education is widely being encouraged in colleges and universities, with the hope of motivating students to take up entrepreneurship as a career.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship, Entrepreneurship Education, Unemployed

Introduction

Entrepreneurship Education in post-independence India has been focused on measures designed to encourage self-employment and funding of small and medium enterprises (SMEs). In the 60s and 70s, entrepreneurship education was exclusively delivered in the form of training programmes offered by institutions under the state and central government, and by financial institutions receiving support from the government (Pradhan & Sahoo, 2013). However, over a period of time, with the increase in the number of educated unemployed, entrepreneurship education is widely being encouraged and implemented in the colleges and universities.

India has the largest share of youth population in the world and will continue to hold so for the next 20 years (Anant, 2017). According to a UN report in 2014, the world's largest youth population of about 356 million (10-24 years old) is in India. According to NSSO (National Sample Survey Organization) figures at every level of education, the unemployment rate is higher among the 15-29-year-olds compared to the broader population as a whole. A report from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), released in April 2016, showed that India will face a serious challenge of finding jobs for a growing population over the next 35 years.

Furthermore, as per the census of 2011, Nagaland had a population of around 20 lakhs, where eight lakhs in the age group 18-35 years are job seekers. According to the live register of employment exchange, as on April 30, 2019, there are 73,903 educated unemployed in the

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state. In this condition, entrepreneurship is considered an instrument of economic growth, as it has immense potential for employment opportunities. Entrepreneurship education will show the young people that they have to create their own destiny by starting their own ventures, without depending on a job.

Entrepreneurship education programmes are based on the assumption that entrepreneurial intentions and skills can be taught and learned. Entrepreneurship is seen as a key to economic development in many countries across the globe. Entrepreneurship has been considered the key for socioeconomic growth and development, because it provides millions of job opportunities, offers a variety of consumer goods and services, and generally increases national prosperity and competitiveness (Zahra, 1999).

The purpose of entrepreneurship education is to motivate the students to take up entrepreneurship as a career, show them the potential of the market, generate knowledge through conducting seminars or workshops, and create a path of support for students through networking, with support agencies like banks, technology providers, infrastructure providers, and so on; this helps them set up their new enterprise, familiarise them with industries and other government and non-government organisations engaged in promotion of entrepreneurship, and so on.

Objectives

This study is focused on various objectives.

- To find the various entrepreneurship programmes or subjects offered by the colleges in Dimapur.
- To study the awareness of students about entrepreneurship.
- To study the effectiveness of the programme or subject offered to the students.
- To suggest some measures for strengthening entrepreneurship education.

With the goal of achieving the objectives, research was carried out with the help of a questionnaire given to all the Dimapur colleges with a commerce and business administrative department. Students of that department were the target respondents, as the questionnaire and the objectives are to study the effectiveness of entrepreneurship education; the other unmentioned departments do not

have entrepreneurship education as part of their curricula, and so were not included in the survey.

Before reaching out to the respondents it was found that a total of seven colleges consist of a commerce and business administrative department. Only the final year students were selected as the target respondents. The total number of final year students in all the seven colleges were 473 in number. With the help of Raosoft sample size calculator, a sample size of 213 was selected, which was distributed using stratified random sampling.

The study is exploratory and both primary and secondary methods were used. A personal interview with the respective class teachers was conducted, and the questionnaire was both open- and close-ended, with responses rated on the Likert scale. The analysis of the questionnaire was done with the help of SPSS, using basic tools like the frequencies, descriptive statistics, and so on.

Various Entrepreneurship Programmes or Subjects Offered by the Colleges

The liberalisation of the Indian economy in the 1990s has encouraged entrepreneurship in the country by reducing the barriers of entry to start businesses, making financing more easily available, and the setting up of institutions for the development of entrepreneurial talent. The present status of entrepreneurship teaching in higher education in India leaves much to be desired. The University Grants Commission (UGC) developed a curriculum for the under-graduate level way back in 2000, and circulated it to all the universities and colleges for their consideration. The All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) has been promoting Entrepreneurship Development Cells (EDCs) in engineering and technology colleges. Courses in entrepreneurship is the core activity of the Entrepreneurship Education (EE) in India (Ilayaraja & Ganesh, 2016).

A major portion of the students' knowledge is imparted through educational institutions. Introducing entrepreneurship education in the curriculum has many dimensions, from encouraging and motivating the students to become entrepreneurs to implementing both theoretical and practical entrepreneurship activities (which needs to be equally balanced). Students are in a formative stage in deciding their careers and an educational institution plays

an important role in helping them with their decision through their activities. Entrepreneurship education can be most effective when it is accessible, latest, current, and relevant to the learner (Paltasingh, 2005). According to the survey conducted on college students in the Dimapur district, it was seen that entrepreneurship education is being offered starting from class 11/higher secondary level for the students of the commerce department. In addition, through the survey conducted, it was found that a majority of the students/respondents were first introduced to entrepreneurship through the educational institutions. Entrepreneurship education is carried out as part of a regular paper/subject for the students of the commerce and business department. According to a majority of the students/respondents, above 26% and below 50% was the approximate entrepreneurship focus of the total course (Table 1).

Table 1: In Your Opinion, Approximately What Proportion of the Total Course was Focused on Entrepreneurship?

	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Under 25%	37	17.4
26%-50%	78	36.6
51%-75%	76	35.7
76%-99%	22	10.3
Total	213	100.0

Source: Primary

Through the survey conducted, it was found that intense focus and encouragement is being provided to the students as part of the academic study, where the potholes that are required to be filled is left the way it is, i.e., lack of practical training, workshops, exposure, and so on. At the college level, a maximum of one or two seminars or workshops are conducted in a year, which is also carried out only for a day. At the college level, the general methods of teaching entrepreneurship education can be classified into the following categories: case study, group discussion, individual presentation, individual written report, group project, formal lectures, guest speakers, action learning, seminars, and so on. The three most used methods are lectures, case studies, and group discussions. These are actually the same methods used in other business-related courses, which are passive and less effective in influencing entrepreneurial attributes. Most authors

categorise teaching methods into two groups, which are termed traditional methods (comprising normal lectures) and innovative methods (which are more action-based), also known as passive methods and active methods, respectively. Compared to passive methods, active methods are those that require the instructor to facilitate learning, not to control and apply methods that enable students' self-discovery (Ilayaraja & Ganesh, 2016).

Awareness of Students about Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship in education institutions helps students prepare themselves to identify the right opportunity at the right time, recognise appropriate resources, and be ready to take risks. Awareness of various successful business persons, companies, enterprises, skills and resource requirements, current business/economy scenario, and various existing business support groups is required. At the primary level, the children can only be oriented towards entrepreneurship through interesting success stories. However, the real implementation and inculcation of ideas can take place during the secondary level of education, since at that time children are in a more formative stage. Apart from textual information, students should be encouraged to take up a vocational stream. This can only be possible by introducing entrepreneurship as a part of the curriculum. Unless the curriculum is introduced, students may not take the initiative to learn entrepreneurship education.

Through the survey conducted, it was seen that institutes are the introducing platform of entrepreneurship to a maximum number of students/respondents, whereas family and social media are a platform to a minimum number of respondents. The theory content of the academic curricula includes entrepreneurial opportunity recognition, small business start-up process/planning, leadership, marketing, basic business research methods, and so on. Case studies, workshops, seminars, and internships or projects help in gaining awareness of current entrepreneurship positions. In addition, continuous increase in the number of educated unemployed has led to a wider awareness of entrepreneurship.

From Table 2, it can be seen that 85% of the respondents learned about entrepreneurship from schools/colleges,

whereas 7% learned through their family, 5% through social media, 2% through seminars/workshops, and 1% through friends.

Table 2: Where did You Get to Know about Entrepreneurship?

	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Family	16	7.5
Friends	3	1.4
Schools/Colleges	180	84.5
Seminars/Workshops	4	1.9
Social Media	10	4.7
Total	213	100.0

Source: Primary

Through the survey conducted by reaching out to the college students, it can be seen that various theoretical requirements relating to business/entrepreneurship is being implemented and adopted by the students. However, in Table 3 we can see that awareness regarding existing support groups or association is very low. For a student to gain more ideas relating to running or starting up a business, they require not only the ideas, skills, leadership quality, business environment, and so on, but also the basic need to start any business, i.e., support system or capital. Today, the Government of India, along with various private groups, have set out schemes to encourage the rise of more entrepreneurs; the reach needs to be widened (its process and procedures) for easy reach, as it can be seen that several previous studies have suggested that entrepreneurs faced major problems in obtaining

Table 4: To What Extent has Entrepreneurship Education Helped You in Building the Following Capacity? Indicate from 1 (to No Extent) to 5 (to Great Extent)

Descriptive Statistics

	<i>N</i>	<i>Range</i>	<i>Minimum</i>	<i>Maximum</i>	<i>Mean</i>
Knowledge about the entrepreneurial environment	213	4.0	1.0	5.0	3.685
Greater recognition of the entrepreneur’s figure	213	4.0	1.0	5.0	3.559
The preference to be an entrepreneur	213	4.0	1.0	5.0	3.582
The necessary abilities to be an entrepreneur	213	4.0	1.0	5.0	3.634
The intention to be an entrepreneur	213	4.0	1.0	5.0	3.803

Source: Primary

Through the study of entrepreneurship it can be seen that the major impact of high entrepreneur quality and zeal to be an entrepreneur is adopted through the

start-up capital, where financial institutions are reluctant in granting credit facilities. Chander and Arora (2013), in their study, found that inadequate broadcasting of information and knowledge, and shortage of finance are the major problems faced by entrepreneurs.

Table 3: Are You Aware of Any Existing Business Support Group/Association?

	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Yes	24	11.3
No	189	88.7
Total	213	100.0

Source: Primary

Effectiveness of the Programme or Subject Offered to the Students

Entrepreneurship education at universities has motivated students to become entrepreneurs or self-employed in the short-term (immediately after graduation) and in the long-term (five years after graduation). Overall, the results indicate that entrepreneurship education may improve the quality of labour market matches, the allocation of resources and talent, and increase social welfare. Through the survey given in Table 4, it can be seen that entrepreneurship education has helped in providing knowledge about the entrepreneurial environment; recognition of the entrepreneur’s figure, preference, ability, and intention to be an entrepreneur are equally associated to a good extent.

educational institution. Thus, it can be stated that the most effective source for the growth or encouragement of entrepreneurship is educational institutions. Therefore,

institutes/colleges/schools can effectively help in increasing the number of entrepreneurs.

Suggestion/Measures for Strengthening Entrepreneurship Education

Keeping in mind the increasing number of educated unemployed in the country, as well as the state (Nagaland), education based on entrepreneurship needs to be widely encouraged. Some suggestions with regard to the survey carried out are listed below.

- Exposure to basic knowledge of what entrepreneurship is, at least at the primary level of education. Entrepreneurship education can also be included in the primary level curriculum. Students can be introduced to short stories of successful entrepreneurs; it can help them inculcate the spirit of entrepreneurship (Paltasingh, 2005).
- To change the educational context by taking the students out of the classroom into the community and real businesses. To engage in business through visits, role models, sharing experiences, and organising student mini-companies with business mentors.
- To establish closer cooperation between business and academia. Education should be better linked with practice to ensure that future skills match jobs.
- More focus on current and relevant scenario, with activities like case study, role play, business planning process, and so on.
- Awareness regarding various existing business support system, agencies, processes, and procedures on availing loans from banks and other financial institutions, and so on.
- Creating awareness and encouraging students to choose entrepreneurship as a career, through the classroom, and conducting seminars, workshops, and so on. Ensuring that the focus is not only on some specific departments, but all.
- Giving equal importance to both theory and practical activities, since, in most cases, the importance given to practical activities tends to be lighter.

Conclusion

Considering that entrepreneurship education is the most important tool for increasing employment opportunities, it needs to be widely implemented. Nagaland, with 73,903 educated unemployed registered, clearly shows the need to encourage entrepreneurship education. Today, the state (Nagaland) government is unable to absorb all the educated graduates, and therefore, highly encourages entrepreneurship in the education sector, and provides skill development workshops, seminars, and so on. In spite of all this, continuous effort needs to be provided to the students in building the confidence to cope with the changing scenario.

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