

Entrepreneurial Competencies of Commerce Students' At Higher Secondary Level

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ABSTRACT: Nations spend huge amount of money for education as it consider as an investment in human asset. Commerce stream of education offers a lot of opportunities for higher studies and self-employment to students. Self-employment through entrepreneurship is a better option to students for earning good return. The success rate of entrepreneur is highly depending on the competencies they possess. This study aimed to find out the extent of entrepreneurial competencies of higher secondary school commerce students. In this survey, 500 students are selected as the sample for study. The selected sample has only average entrepreneurial competency level. In sub-group comparison of entrepreneurial competencies test scores, there exist significant differences concerning gender and school type but there exists no significant difference among low, medium and high SES of students at higher secondary level. Female students' performance is better than male students. Government school students' competencies score is higher than aided school students.

KEY WORDS-entrepreneurship; entrepreneurial competencies

I. INTRODUCTION

Education, one of the basic pillars of society transforms the life of people over centuries. People invest immensely on education considering it as a profitable investment in human assets. The education system in Kerala follows a system in which after seven years of elementary education comes secondary education which lasts for three years. Then a student under goes two years of higher secondary education. The area of specialisation encompasses three major disciplines science commerce and humanities. Commerce stream offers a lot of scope for higher studies, job opportunities and self-employment. This may equip themselves to start new business enterprises and many would get in to business.

Small scale enterprises are pivotal in the economic development of a nation. It brings an equilibrium in economic development with minimum capital outlay. It provides the youth better job opportunities. Various factors such as proper use of local resources, eco-friendly enterprises, dispersion of economic power, least pollution, indigenous technology, immense support of government, decentralized industrial structure, flexible nature etc. are the chief attractions of small-scale industrial units.

Entrepreneur is a person who raises an undertaking in to reality. Entrepreneurs usually undertake to set-up units in small scale basis. He alone conducts project plans, implementation and management of enterprises. Entrepreneurship is essential for social and economic well-being, as new ventures are the dominant source of job creation, market innovation, and economic growth in many societies.[1] Entrepreneurship is a viable, satisfying, rewarding and valued career option; if it is considered a source of innovation, job creation and economic growth for a country, then it is pivotal to attract the young and the educated to become entrepreneurs. [2] Entrepreneurship education enhances the entrepreneurial potentials of students, leading them to take up an entrepreneurial career.[3] An entrepreneur as a change agent, an innovator, a risk taker, who exploits business opportunities in his/her environment and utilize resources effectively to

develop new technologies, produces new products and services to maximize his/her profits and contributing significantly to society's development.[4] For this they possess a lot of competencies. Competencies are the combination of skills, knowledge, motives and traits that an individual possess to perform the task. "Entrepreneurial competencies can be defined as underlying characteristics such as generic and specific knowledge, motives, traits, self-images, social roles, and skills that result in venture birth, survival, and/or growth".[5] Entrepreneurial intentions, entrepreneurs' states of mind, experience, and action toward a business concept, frames the form and direction of organizations.[6] Entrepreneurial Competence Theory combines resources and opportunities. Entrepreneurial intention and adaptability convert opportunities into entrepreneurial Competencies and finally leads to monetization. [7]

II. Need and significance of the study

Though the objectives of education are many, it empowers students to exploit in various sectors job opportunities. Students, generally commerce students are absorbed in the industrial sectors and commerce after education. Commerce students have better prospects of higher education in management studies and business administration. It is generally influenced by family back-ground, previous experience of students and the environment in which he was brought up. Most of the commerce students turn to entrepreneurs in future but the rate of success is dependent on their competencies in the respective field. McClell and (1987) identified 15 major entrepreneurial competencies that contribute towards top performance. They were Initiative, Sees and Acts on Opportunities, Persistence, Information Seeking, Concern for High Quality of Work, Commitment to Work Contract, Efficiency Orientation, Systematic Planning, Problem Solving, Self Confidence, Assertiveness, Persuasion, Use of Influence Strategies, Monitoring and Concern for Employee Welfare.

Man (2001). In his behavioural approach, identified six entrepreneurial competency areas. These were: - opportunity; relationships; conceptual; organising; strategic; and commitment competencies.[8] Mitchel more & Rowley (2013) were identified four main clusters of competencies: personal and relationship; business and management; entrepreneurial; and human relations competencies.[9] Baum et al.(2001) formed ten entrepreneurship competencies: -knowledge; cognitive ability; self-management; administration; human resource; decision skill; leadership; opportunity recognition; opportunity development; and organisation skill.[10]Yeh & Chang (2018) identified six key entrepreneurial competencies in microenterprises i.e., opportunity exploration competencies, opportunity exploitation competencies, organizing competencies, strategic competencies, relationship competencies, and commitment competencies.[11] All these competencies are interrelated and can be developed through systematic training.

Entrepreneurship education helps individuals develop self-concepts and the social roles of entrepreneurs.[12] Entrepreneurship education programmes had increased students' entrepreneurial competencies and intention towards self-employment.[13] Entrepreneurial competences play an influential role in organizational capability, competitive scope, and a direct effect on firms' performance.[14] By measuring these entrepreneurial competencies of higher secondary school students, teachers can easily guide the students according to the competencies they possess in their future studies and employment. Higher secondary education is the early stage of specialization of education. Hence it is necessary to channelize the students in the right path to avoid their wastage of time, money and effort. Twenty first century generation labelled as generation entrepreneur.[15] Government of Kerala were started Student Entrepreneurship Scheme in the year 2012 for the Universities, Colleges and Polytechnics students to promote entrepreneurial talents and innovation during their studies. The specific entrepreneurial competencies such as managerial competencies, technical competencies, marketing competencies, financial competencies, human relations competencies, and the specific working attitude of entrepreneur had a positive and significant effect on business model canvas.[16] Work experience from the previous firms shape entrepreneurial competencies and commitment in entrepreneurial role but the employer size on the prospective entrepreneur had a negative effect on both entrepreneurial competence and commitment. [17] It was found that the direct relationship between entrepreneurial competency and business success as an entrepreneur role of managing venture. [18] Government of Kerala decided to include entrepreneurship in school curriculum; revealed the relevance of entrepreneurship.

Many studies were found on entrepreneurial competencies, entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial

attitudes, entrepreneurial intension etc. But no such studies were found on entrepreneurial competencies among higher secondary school commerce students in Kerala. Hence the present study is a relevant one in terms of its sample and population.

1. Statement of the problem

The topic selected for the present study is 'Entrepreneurial competencies of Commerce students at Higher Secondary level.'

2. Operational definitions

2.1. Entrepreneurial competencies:-

For the present study entrepreneurial competencies means the score obtained by the students in entrepreneurial competencies test based on the competencies area of Initiative, Sees and Acts on Opportunities, Persistence, Information Seeking, Concern for High Quality of Work, Commitment to Work Contract, Efficiency Orientation, Systematic Planning, Problem Solving, Self Confidence, Assertiveness, Persuasion, Use of Influence Strategies, Monitoring and Concern for Employee Welfare only.

2.2. Higher secondary commerce students: -

Higher secondary commerce students refer to students studying in standards XI and XII in the higher secondary schools of Kerala. For the present study higher secondary commerce students mean that those students studying in class XI of commerce stream in higher secondary schools of Kerala.

3. Objectives of the study

1. To find out the extent of entrepreneurial competencies of commerce students at higher secondary level for the total sample.
2. To find out whether there exists any significant difference of entrepreneurial competencies between male and female commerce students.
3. To find out whether there exists any significant difference of entrepreneurial competencies between govt. and aided school commerce students.
4. To find out whether there exists any significant difference of entrepreneurial competencies among low, medium and high SES of commerce students.

4. Hypotheses

1. There exist significant entrepreneurial competencies mean score difference between male and female students at higher secondary level.
2. There exist significant entrepreneurial competencies mean score difference between government and aided school students at higher secondary level.
3. There exist significant entrepreneurial competencies mean score difference among low, medium and high SES of students at higher secondary level.

5. Method

In the present study the investigator has used descriptive survey as the method of research.

6. Sample

In the present study the investigator used systematic cluster sampling techniques for selection of sample. The sample for the study consists of five hundred first year higher secondary commerce students selected from nine aided and government higher secondary schools from Wayanad district, Kerala.

7. Tool used

The investigator prepared and validated a well-structured tool to measure entrepreneurial competencies of commerce students at higher secondary level namely Entrepreneurial Competencies Test (ECT). ECT measures entrepreneurial competencies of higher secondary commerce students. The preliminary draft comprises sixty multiple choice questions, out of which forty-five items were selected in the final test. Item analysis was done and reliability tested. In each test item, correct responses assigned a score of one and wrong responses have zero score. By using the above tool, the investigator collected the required data from the selected sample.

8. Statistical techniques used

The statistical techniques used were - Preliminary statistics, test of significance of differences between means.

III. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

Descriptive statistics for entrepreneurial competencies of commerce students at higher secondary level are explained with the help of mean and standard deviation; and extent of entrepreneurial competencies of the total sample are given in the following tables. The difference of the mean scores of sub-samples was tested for significance by finding the t-value and ANOVA.

1. Descriptive statistics for entrepreneurial competencies of the total sample

Descriptive statistics for entrepreneurial competencies of commerce students at higher secondary level were found out and described in table 1.

Table:1.

Descriptive statistics of the total sample

Mean	Median	Mode	SD	N
25.84	26	25	7.21	500

From the table-1 it can be found that the mean, median and mode are approximately equal. Hence, obtained data is normally distributed. The mean score of the total sample is 25.84 and the standard deviation is 7.21, which is very closer to the test score middle value of 22.5. It indicates that the selected samples have only average entrepreneurial competencies level.

2. Extent of higher secondary commerce students' performance in entrepreneurial competencies test

Based on the performance in entrepreneurial competencies test, higher secondary commerce students were classified into four. The criteria used for classification are given below.

Scores up to 40%	- Poor
Scores between 40% to 60%	- Average
Scores between 60% to 80%	- Good
Scores above 80%	- Excellent

Table: 2.

The extent of Entrepreneurial Competencies test scores of the total sample

Poor		Average		Good		Excellent	
No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
87	17.4	222	44.4	207	41.4	35	7

For the total sample, 17.4% (87) students fall in poor level, 44.4% (222) students fall in average level, 41.4% (207) students fall in good level and 7% (35) students fall in excellent level. It can be interpreted that majority of students (more than 85%) fall in average and good levels; least number of students fall in excellent level.

3. Comparison of sub-samples

Comparison of sub-group helps to identify the variable that shows significant differences. The sub-

sample variables are gender, school type and SES. Gender considered are male and female. School type are government and aided schools. SES are low, medium and high.

3.1 Testing of significance of differences between means

In order to find out the difference of entrepreneurial competencies scores on the basis of gender and school type hypotheses 1 and 2 are tested by using t-test. Gender wise and school type wise comparisons and their results are presented in the table 3.

Table: 3.

Gender and School type wise comparison of entrepreneurial competencies scores of higher secondary commerce students.

Variables		Mean	SD	N	t-value	Level of significance	
Gender	Male	24.01	7.15	262	6.2	P<0.01	S
	Female	27.86	6.75	238			
School type	Govt. schools	27.6	6.73	283	6.41	P<0.01	S
	Aided schools	23.55	7.19	217			

Results:

From the above table, it is observed that, in gender wise comparison, the calculated t-value is 6.2 which is higher than the table value at 0.01 level of significance, hence there exists significant gender difference in students' entrepreneurial competencies. That means, female students' entrepreneurial competencies are higher than that of male students' entrepreneurial competencies.

In school type-wise comparison, the calculated t-value is 6.41 which is higher than the table value at 0.01 level of significance, hence there exists a significant difference between government and aided school students' entrepreneurial competencies. Government school students' entrepreneurial competencies are higher as compared to aided school students.

3.2 One-way Analysis of variances

To find out the difference of entrepreneurial competencies scores on the basis of SES hypothesis three is tested by carrying out one way ANOVA. Analysis and result are shown in table-4.

Table:4.

One way ANOVA for SES wise comparison

Source of variation	Sum of squares	df	Mean squares	F	P
Between group	29.5167	2	14.7584	0.2828	0.75
Within group	25933.5839	497	52.1802		

Results:

From the table-3 it is observed that, in SES wise comparison calculated F value is 0.2828, which is less than the F critical value of 3.0262. Hence there exist statistically no significant difference among the mean scores of three groups. There is no significant difference of entrepreneurial competencies scores of low, medium and high SES students.

IV. CONCLUSION

In this study, the selected sample have average entrepreneurial competencies levels. In sub-group comparisons there exist significant differences concerning gender and school type. Female students' competencies levels are higher than male students. Government school students seem to be better than aided school students. There exists no significant difference with respect to SES.

1. Educational implications

1. Deliberate efforts must be needed to improve entrepreneurial competencies of commerce students as the level of competencies are just an average one.
2. There should be a mandatory functioning of entrepreneur development club in schools and it should be strengthened to enhance entrepreneurial competencies.
3. At the time of curriculum construction, activities should be included for developing entrepreneurial competencies.
4. School authorities may organise industrial visits and provide facility to students for interact with successful entrepreneurs in the locality.

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