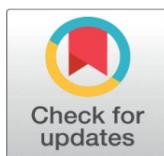


# EXPLORING ENTREPRENEURIAL INTENTIONS AND ATTITUDES AMONG POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS ACROSS GENDER, REGION, AND COURSE

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## ABSTRACT

The shortage of job opportunities in the formal sector is a significant problem faced by graduates in the country, leading to increased interest in entrepreneurship, especially in developing economies. This study aims to explore the entrepreneurial intentions and attitudes among postgraduate students in the Shimoga district, focusing on differences across gender, region, and academic courses (M. Com vs. MBA). Despite the growing emphasis on entrepreneurship, many students still prefer employment in private or government sectors over starting their own businesses, highlighting the need to enhance their understanding of enterprise management and business risks. The research adopts a descriptive and exploratory approach, utilizing primary data collected through a structured questionnaire administered to M. Com and MBA students. The study finds a moderate positive correlation between entrepreneurial attitudes and intentions, with no significant differences based on gender, regional background, or course of study. These findings suggest that demographic factors do not substantially influence students' entrepreneurial outlook, emphasizing the importance of strengthening entrepreneurship education uniformly to foster a positive entrepreneurial culture.

**Keywords:** Entrepreneurship, Businesses, Entrepreneurial Culture

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The shortage of job opportunities in the formal sector is one of the major problems faced by graduates in the country. Because of this shortage entrepreneurship has been viewed with great interest and encouraged ever since in many economies, especially in developing and underdeveloped economies. (Sridevi (2021)) The continuous increase in uncertainties of the world economy,

government and organizations staff strength reduction; and a decline in the number of job opportunities have encouraged the appeal for new venture creation and entrepreneurship. The entrepreneurial attitude and intention encourage more people to develop new ideas and create new ventures. (Rathee & Rajain (2017)) Croci & Barot (2020) C defined Entrepreneurship as the steps to turn an idea into a business. It encompasses resource acquisition, risk-taking, and managing the venture's growth. Entrepreneurship development today has assumed great significance as it is a key to economic development. The objective of industrial development, regional growth, and employment generation depend upon entrepreneurial development. (Sridevi (2021)) entrepreneurship is a powerful tool that influences the health of the economy and it can be thought and entrepreneurship education many of the colleges in India offer entrepreneurship education with tailored elective courses to teach a wide range of skills encompassing a multi-disciplinary approach among mature students. (Basu (2014)) Entrepreneurship education is the combination of formal knowledge that informs, educates, and trains one to start their enterprise. Entrepreneurship Education Programs promote and revitalize the entrepreneurial culture among students. (Mary & Rajashekar (2021))

## 2. REVIEW OF LITRATURE

**Fasla (2017)** focused on assessing the mindset and inclination towards entrepreneurship among students, identifying factors that influence their entrepreneurial attitudes, and discussed the significance of studying entrepreneurship attitudes among college students as they represent a potential pool of future entrepreneurs. It highlighted the importance of fostering an entrepreneurial mindset among students to promote innovation and economic growth.

**Çolakoğlu and Gözükara (2016)** The study compared personality traits based on the attitude of university students toward entrepreneurship. Researchers included 226 vocational school students through a convenience sampling method. Respondents were questioned on their entrepreneurial intention, innovativeness, need for achievement, alertness, and locus of control. concluded that entrepreneurial intention is significantly related to personality traits and it must be considered in entrepreneurial education.

**Potishuk and Kratzer (2017)** investigated the factors that influence entrepreneurial intentions and attitudes in higher education. The study aimed to identify the individual, institutional, and environmental factors that affect students' intentions to become entrepreneurs and their attitudes towards entrepreneurship. Data was collected from 407 students in Germany, and the results showed that individual factors such as self-efficacy and risk-taking propensity, institutional factors such as entrepreneurial education and mentoring, and environmental factors such as social norms and perceived support had a significant impact on students' entrepreneurial intentions and attitudes.

**Remeikiene et al., (2013)** explored the relationship between entrepreneurial education and entrepreneurial intention among university students. The study aimed to determine whether entrepreneurial education played a role in shaping students' attitudes and intentions towards entrepreneurship. The results of the study showed that entrepreneurial education positively influenced students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship and their perceived behavioural control, which, in turn, predicted their entrepreneurial intention.

**Lunavath (2015)** studied entrepreneurial intention among students. The results of the study showed that personal attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control were significant predictors of entrepreneurial intention among students. The study provides valuable insights for policymakers and educators to design effective interventions that can encourage students to pursue entrepreneurial careers.

### **3. PROBLEM STATEMENT**

Despite the growing emphasis on entrepreneurship, a significant number of postgraduate students in the Shimoga district prefer employment in private or government sectors over starting their own businesses after graduation. This inclination underscores the need to enhance students' understanding of enterprise management and business risks, and to strengthen entrepreneurship education in colleges and universities. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the entrepreneurial intentions and attitudes of postgraduate students, conducting a comparative analysis across gender, regional backgrounds, and specific courses (M. Com vs. MBA).

#### **3.1. OBJECTIVES**

- To examine the attitudes towards entrepreneurship among M. Com and MBA students.
- To analyze the entrepreneurial intentions among M. Com and MBA students.

#### **Hypothesis**

H1: There is no significant difference in entrepreneurial intentions between gender, region, and course of postgraduate students.

H2: There is no significant difference in entrepreneurial intentions between gender, region, and course of postgraduate students.

H3: There is no significant positive correlation between entrepreneurial intentions and entrepreneurial attitudes toward entrepreneurship among postgraduate students.

#### **3.2. SCOPE**

The study focuses exclusively on postgraduate students enrolled in M. Com and MBA programs within the Shimoga district. By comparing gender differences, regional influences, and course-specific impacts, the research aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of how commerce and management education shape entrepreneurial competencies.

### **4. METHODOLOGY**

The study was descriptive and exploratory. Primary data consisting of entrepreneurial attitude and entrepreneurial intention as variables of the study. The data was collected through a structured questionnaire from 70 respondents addressing postgraduate students of M.com and MBA. The questions on the variables were adapted from [Liñán et al., 2011](#). The collected response was analysed through SPSS Software using independent sample t test and correlation analysis

## 5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

**Table 1**

Table 1 Demographic Characteristics			
Variable		Frequency	Percent
<b>Gender</b>	Female	46	65.7
	Male	24	34.3
	Total	70	100.0
<b>Course</b>	M.Com	42	60.0
	MBA	28	40.0
	Total	70	100.0
<b>Region</b>	Rural	53	75.7
	Urban	17	24.3
	Total	70	100.0

Source Primary Data

The sample of 70 respondents reveals that 65.7% are female and 34.3% are male, indicating a female majority. Course enrolment shows 60.0% are in M.Com and 40.0% in MBA, with a preference for M.Com. Regionally, 75.7% are from rural areas and 24.3% from urban areas, highlighting a significant rural dominance.

## 6. ENTREPRENEURIAL INTENTION

Increasing entrepreneurial activities in a country start with an intention that leads to increased innovative activities, wealth creation, industrialization, employment generation, economic growth, and development (Amofah) (Xueshi 2021) entrepreneurial intention is the mindset or plan of individuals to create and manage new business ventures, driven by their perceptions, attitudes, and readiness to embark on entrepreneurial paths. Kuttim Used students intentions to define entrepreneurship education and stated students' intentions of becoming a founder of an enterprise would be entrepreneurship education. Boldureanu (2020) Analyzed the impact of exposure to successful entrepreneurial role models on students' entrepreneurial intention and attitude to words entrepreneurship. The study utilized qualitative and quantitative research methods to analyze the responses of 30 graduate students who enrolled in a business creation course. The finding suggests that entrepreneurship education based on successful role models positively influences the students' attitudes and intentions toward entrepreneurship. Studied Various support factors such as educational, structural, and relational support impact personal attitude and perceived behavioral control and found a direct relationship between educational support and entrepreneurial intention. (Yurtkoru 2019)

**Table 2**

Table 2 Entrepreneurial intention of students			
Variables	Mean	Standard deviation	
My professional goal is to become an entrepreneur	4.03	.816	
I will make every effort to start and run my firm"	4.13	.797	
I'm determined to create a firm in the future"	3.91	.756	
I have very seriously thought in starting a firm	3.86	.767	

I've got the firm intention to start a firm someday"	3.77	.854
------------------------------------------------------	------	------

Source Primary Data

The mean values for the statements range from 3.77 to 4.13, indicating that on average, respondents generally agree with the statements, suggesting a high level of entrepreneurial intention. Specifically, the statement "I will make every effort to start and run my firm" has the highest mean (4.13) and a relatively low standard deviation (.797), indicating strong agreement and a consistent response among participants. This suggests that the effort to start and run a firm is a widely shared and strongly held intention. The statement "My professional goal is to become an entrepreneur" has a mean of 4.03 and a standard deviation of .816, indicating a high level of agreement, though slightly more variability in responses compared to the previous statement. This suggests that while many see entrepreneurship as a professional goal, there is some variation in how strongly this is perceived. For "I'm determined to create a firm in the future" and "I have very seriously thought in starting a firm," the means are 3.91 and 3.86, respectively, with standard deviations of .756 and .767. These values indicate that respondents are generally determined and have seriously considered starting a firm, but these intentions are slightly less strong and more varied compared to the effort and goal-related statements. The statement "I've got the firm intention to start a firm someday" has the lowest mean (3.77) and the highest standard deviation (.854), suggesting that while there is a significant intention among respondents to start a firm someday, this intention is the least strongly held and most variable across the sample. Overall, the data suggests a strong entrepreneurial intention among the respondents, with a particularly high commitment to the effort required to start and run a firm. However, there is some variability in how strongly different aspects of entrepreneurial intentions are perceived, with the concrete intention of starting a firm someday being the most varied. This variability could be attributed to differences in personal circumstances, risk tolerance, or confidence in their ability to start a business

**Table 3**

**Table 3 Comparison of Entrepreneurial intention among Gender Region and Course of students**

		N	Mean	Standard Deviation	T	Sig (2 tailed)
<b>GENDER</b>	Female	46	3.9261	0.69839		.801
	Male	24	3.9667	0.49578	-.253	
<b>REGION</b>	Rural	53	3.8943	0.65352	-1.067	.290
	Urban	17	4.0824	0.55704		
<b>COURSE</b>	M.Com	42	3.9048	0.75513	-.568	.572
	MBA	28	3.9929	0.39056		

Source Primary Data

For gender, the mean intention scores are very similar between females (Mean = 3.9261, SD = .69839) and males (Mean = 3.9667, SD = .49578), with a T value of -.253 and a P value of .801, indicating no significant difference in entrepreneurial intentions based on gender. When considering the region, individuals from rural areas have a slightly lower mean intention score (Mean = 3.8943, SD = .65352) compared to those from urban areas (Mean = 4.0824, SD = .55704). However, with a T value of -1.067 and a P value of .290, this difference is not statistically significant, suggesting regional background does not significantly influence entrepreneurial

intentions. Lastly, comparing courses of study, M. Com students have a mean score of 3.9048 (SD = .75513), while MBA students have a slightly higher mean score of 3.9929 (SD = .39056). The T value here is -.568 with a P value of .572, indicating no significant difference in entrepreneurial intentions between students of these two courses. Overall, the data suggests that gender, region, and course of study do not significantly affect entrepreneurial intentions among the respondents. Hence, we fail to reject the null hypothesis.

## 7. ENTREPRENEURIAL ATTITUDE

Entrepreneurial attitude as a combination of traits. It emphasizes characteristics like having a clear vision, actively seeking and seizing opportunities, being comfortable with calculated risks, being resourceful with limited means, and effectively managing growth. Krueger et al. (2000) stated that entrepreneurship is a typical example of planned behaviour and the study of attitudes towards behavior is thus a relevant route of inquiry for researchers. educational factors can influence how students develop their entrepreneurial spirit and attitude. (Widayat1\*, Ni'matuzahroh2) Jaleel et al. (2017) examined the commerce graduating students in Kerala towards entrepreneurship. It was found that most of the students had a positive attitude towards entrepreneurship, with 62.5% responding saying they would like to start their own business after graduation. Ebewo et al. (2017) the study finds that participation in entrepreneurship education positively influences students' attitudes toward entrepreneurship and perceived entrepreneurial abilities, consequently increasing their intention to become entrepreneurs. entrepreneurship education based on successful role models positively influences the students' attitudes and intentions toward entrepreneurship. (Boldureanu)

**Table 4**

Table 4 Entrepreneurial attitude of students		
Variables	Mean	Standard deviation
I would love to be an entrepreneur.	4.11	.826
A career as an entrepreneur is very appealing to me.	4.00	.637
I would like to start a business if I had the opportunity and resources.	4.19	.666
Being an entrepreneur would entail more advantages than disadvantages.	4.00	.742
I'm ready to do anything to be an entrepreneur	3.89	.86
Being an entrepreneur would give me great satisfaction.	4.09	.631

Source Primary Data

The data regarding entrepreneurial attitudes reveals significant insights into how individuals perceive entrepreneurship as a career path. The statement "I would love to be an entrepreneur" has a high mean score of 4.11 with a standard deviation of .826, indicating that a substantial portion of respondents have a strong desire to become entrepreneurs. However, the variation in responses suggests that while many are enthusiastic, there are differing levels of intensity in this desire. The appeal of a career as an entrepreneur is affirmed by the statement "A career as an entrepreneur is very appealing to me," which has a mean of 4.00 and a lower standard deviation of .637. This indicates a consistent and strong appeal of

entrepreneurship as a career choice among respondents, with relatively little variation in the responses. Moreover, the statement "I would like to start a business if I had the opportunity and resources" received the highest mean score of 4.19 and a standard deviation of .666, showing that the potential to start a business is highly attractive to respondents, provided they have the necessary resources. The low variation further reinforces the widespread agreement on this point. The perception of entrepreneurship as having more advantages than disadvantages is reflected in the mean score of 4.00 for the statement "Being an entrepreneur would entail more advantages than disadvantages," with a standard deviation of .742. This suggests that respondents generally view entrepreneurship positively, though there is some variability in how strongly they perceive these advantages. When considering the readiness to make sacrifices for entrepreneurship, the statement "I'm ready to do anything to be an entrepreneur" has a mean of 3.89 and a higher standard deviation of .860. This indicates a strong, yet varied, willingness to make significant efforts and sacrifices to pursue entrepreneurship. Finally, the statement "Being an entrepreneur would give me great satisfaction" has a mean score of 4.09 and the lowest standard deviation of .631, indicating that most respondents believe that entrepreneurship would bring them significant personal satisfaction, with a high level of agreement and little variation. The data reveals a strong inclination toward entrepreneurship among respondents, characterized by a high appreciation for the potential satisfaction and advantages it offers. The enthusiasm for starting a business, especially if provided with the necessary resources, underscores a generally positive outlook on entrepreneurial ventures. However, there are varying degrees of willingness to make sacrifices, indicating differing levels of commitment and risk tolerance among individuals.

**Table 5**

Table 5 Comparison of Entrepreneurial Attitude among Gender Region and Course of students						
		N	Mean	Standard Deviation	T	Sig (2 tailed)
<b>GENDER</b>	Female	46	4.0616	.53675	.355	.724
	Male	24	4.0139	.52914		
<b>REGION</b>	Rural	53	4.0597	.53618	.401	.689
	Urban	17	4.0000	.52705		
<b>COURSE</b>	M.Com	42	4.0397	.59561	-.106	.916
	MBA	28	4.0536	.42565		

Source Primary Data

The analysis of attitudes towards entrepreneurship among postgraduate students reveals no significant differences across gender, region, or course. Female students ( $M = 4.0616$ ,  $SD = 0.53675$ ) and male students ( $M = 4.0139$ ,  $SD = 0.52914$ ) show similar attitudes ( $t = 0.355$ ,  $p = 0.724$ ). Similarly, students from rural ( $M = 4.0597$ ,  $SD = 0.53618$ ) and urban areas ( $M = 4.0000$ ,  $SD = 0.52705$ ) exhibit comparable attitudes ( $t = 0.401$ ,  $p = 0.689$ ). Additionally, attitudes between M.Com ( $M = 4.0397$ ,  $SD = 0.59561$ ) and MBA students ( $M = 4.0536$ ,  $SD = 0.42565$ ) are almost identical ( $t = -0.106$ ,  $p = 0.916$ ). As the results show that the p-values (.724, .689, .916) are greater than the significance level we fail to reject the null hypothesis. These results suggest that gender, regional background, and course enrolment do not significantly influence students' attitudes toward entrepreneurship, indicating a general uniformity in entrepreneurial attitudes across these groups.

**Table 6**

<b>Table 6 Correlation between Entrepreneurial Intention and Attitude</b>			
		<b>Intention</b>	<b>Attitude</b>
<b>Intention</b>	Pearson Correlation	1	.608**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	70	70
<b>Attitude</b>	Pearson Correlation	.608**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	70	70

Source Primary Data

The table above demonstrates the Pearson correlation coefficient between entrepreneurial intention and attitude among postgraduate students. The correlation coefficient ( $r = .608$ ) indicates a moderate positive relationship between students' entrepreneurial attitudes and their intentions to engage in entrepreneurial activities. The p-value (Sig. (2-tailed) = .000) suggests that this relationship is statistically significant at the 0.01 level. This implies that as students' positive attitudes towards entrepreneurship increase, their entrepreneurial intentions are also likely to rise.

## 8. CONCLUSION

The study reveals that entrepreneurial intentions and attitudes among postgraduate students are robust and generally positive, with a significant inclination towards starting and running their businesses if provided with the necessary resources. Despite this overall enthusiasm, the analysis reveals no significant differences in entrepreneurial intentions and attitudes based on gender, region, or course of study. Female and male students, those from rural and urban areas, and students enrolled in M. Com and MBA programs all exhibit similar levels of entrepreneurial intent and positive attitudes towards entrepreneurship. This suggests that demographic factors such as gender, regional background, and academic discipline do not substantially shape students' entrepreneurial outlook, highlighting a uniformity in entrepreneurial aspirations across different groups within the postgraduate student population.

## CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

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