

Evaluative study of Entrepreneurship Awareness and skills among the Diploma in Engineering Students

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ABSTRACT

The study examined the entrepreneurship awareness and skills among the diploma in engineering students of Sureshchandra Dhariwal Polytechnic situated in the rural taluka of Jamner in Jalgaon district of Maharashtra. The congested job market of Jalgaon district is compelling hundreds of engineering graduates into joblessness and its associated consequences of under payment, exploitation, youth restiveness and poor standard of living. This has made it imperative that graduates be equipped with skills that are required to achieve self-reliance. Specifically examined in this paper were the level of entrepreneurship awareness and characteristics of an entrepreneur, entrepreneurship opportunities created by engineering and technology, modern entrepreneurship skills, problems associated with entrepreneurship and skills in diploma holders and the strategies for enhancing entrepreneurship awareness and skills in diploma holders. Descriptive survey design was adopted in which one hundred and five (105) final year students from all the five courses namely Mechanical, civil, electrical, electronics and computer engineering students of 2014-15 batch were purposively sampled using a self-structured questionnaire. Frequency tables, means and simple percentages were used to analyze the collected data. Finding showed that up to 75% of the final year students of diploma in engineering were not aware of entrepreneurship opportunities within the respective branch of study. Moreover they were yet to expand the culture and approach towards entrepreneurship, because of inadequate and poor quality education and training. This paper recommends that entrepreneurship courses and practical training in various aspects engineering be included in the engineering curriculum.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship awareness, Entrepreneurship skills, Entrepreneurship opportunities.

I. INTRODUCTION

Thousands of students, along with their parents, line up before “good” engineering colleges to get a seat with the hope of landing lucrative jobs on completion of their professional education, but the reality is very different. According to exchange statistics today only 12% of engineering graduates employment is suitable to their qualification. Another 10% are poorly employed as constables, supervisors in hotels, telephone operators in BPOs. Nearly 70% are unemployed out of the 15 lacs students churned out every year by our engineering colleges in India. The situation of unemployment has rose to increased rural urban migration for job opportunities. The government is heavily relied upon as the sole provider of the means of production and livelihood. Further youth restiveness, alongside high poverty levels have resulted in declining standards of living. However economic self-reliance appears to be the only recourse in addressing these associated problems. Hence there is improved interest in the entrepreneurial careers and education in universities all over the world.

The study of entrepreneurship has relevance today not only because it helps entrepreneurs better fulfill their personal need but because of economic contributions of the new venture. The term “entrepreneurship” has been viewed from different conceptual perspectives although all revolves around innovation and creativity, competency, risk taking, self-reliance and rewards in the context of this work. Entrepreneurship may be considered as the process through which entrepreneurs create, nurture, and grow enterprises using a reasonable degree of initiative, skills and competencies necessary to transform change into opportunities thereby deriving personal satisfaction, monetary rewards and independence. Today the global emphasis on the development of small and medium scale enterprises can only succeed if it is reinforced by strong entrepreneurial skills. This can help “MAKE IN INDIA” come reality!

II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The extent of unemployment and its related social ills have been traced to poor entrepreneurship and skills development among the students of Polytechnic. This is manifested in a number of deficiencies that these students exhibit in their work places such as lack of analytical and ICT skills, lack of entrepreneurial and problem solving and decision making skills, inadequate technical skills, and ignorance in the use of modern equipment. It has become imperative to embark on competency based education and entrepreneurship awareness as a means through which the students can convert their education into an intellectually productive venture. With increased information generation and usage in this information age, the roles of diploma holders as well as their job market has stretched. This requires the students to acquire knowledge in the various aspects of engineering and ICT which will empower them to offer quality information generation. The problem of the study therefore is to examine the level of entrepreneurship awareness and skills among Diploma students of the region since the possession of these skills has become crucial in this century.

III.OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objective of the study is to examine the entrepreneurship awareness and skills possessed by the diploma students of this region with the aim of inspiring them and boost entrepreneurship as a viable means of combating the growing unemployment challenges. The specific objectives are listed below:

1. To investigate the students level of awareness of entrepreneurship
2. To investigate the skills possessed by students which are necessary for entrepreneurship
3. To investigate the problems related with acquisition of entrepreneurship skill in students
4. To investigate the strategies for boosting entrepreneurship awareness and skills in students

IV.RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions have guided the study:

- 1 What is the students' level of awareness of entrepreneurship in the students?
2. What are the skills possessed by the students essential for self-employment?
3. What are the issues related with acquisition of entrepreneurship skills by the students?
4. What are the strategies for boosting entrepreneurship awareness and skills in students?

V. POPULATION

The population of the study comprised of all the final year students of the five courses presently offered for Diploma in Engineering during the session 2014-15. The total population of which was 110. The questionnaire were distributed to the entire population of 110 and **84** useable questionnaire were retrieved.

VI.DATA AND ANALYSIS

Table No.1: Entrepreneurship awareness in students

Sr. No	Particulars	Yes	No
1	I became aware of entrepreneurship through pleasure reading and public lectures	63	24
2	I became aware of entrepreneurship through the media	30	54
3	Entrepreneurship is among the general courses offered	78	06
4	Entrepreneurship is among the departmental courses offered	10	74

Table No.2 Extent of agreement on the characteristics of an entrepreneur

No	Particulars	SA	A	D	SD	X
5	An entrepreneur must have clear, realistic and achievable goals and procedures	75	06	00	00	1.92
6	An entrepreneur may not bother to acquire more knowledge as long as there is progress in business	03	18	30	30	3.20

7	An entrepreneur has a reasonable degree of initiative, imagination, skills and creativity	36	39	6	3	3.2
8	An entrepreneur can create his own business without any basic entrepreneurial skills or expertise.	21	24	27	12	2.6
9	An entrepreneur can create business or provide to any group of people and excel.	27	42	9	3	3.14
10	An entrepreneur has a lot of organizational abilities with efficient management skills.	21	51	3	0	3.22
11	An entrepreneur has no fear of taking risks but has confidence & determination to succeed.	51	24	3	0	3.61
12	An entrepreneur searches for opportunities & makes good use of them to promote business and income	51	24	0	0	3.69
13	An entrepreneur should never be afraid of economic uncertainties and high probability of failures	27	36	15	6	3.0
14	An entrepreneur is good at bringing together components of business venture & considerate in working with public	15	57	3	0	3.16
15	An entrepreneur do not have the potential to be successful unless supported by government or individuals	9	15	30	30	2.03
16	An entrepreneur is not in control of anybody and so can work at his leisure	30	12	36	6	2.78
17	An entrepreneur reaps a huge financial rewards and prestige becomes self-reliant and independent as the business progress	39	30	12	3	3.25

Table No.3 Extent of ability students' professional skills using ICT

No	Particulars	SA	A	D	SD	X
18	Friendly with computer	42	18	27	0	3.17
19	Online working	15	6	30	24	2.16
20	Desk top publishing	24	27	24	6	2.85
21	Network/internet services	9	18	12	33	2.04
22	Creating a web/web designing	21	39	15	3	3.0
23	Information literacy skill	15	36	21	0	2.9
24	Knowledge management skills	6	30	30	18	2.2
25	Digitization skills	12	42	21	3	2.8
26	Hardware selection & analysis	18	39	18	9	2.7
27	software selection & analysis	12	24	21	21	2.3
28	Information Technology skills	12	40	23	3	2.8

Table No.4 Extent of awareness on the roles of entrepreneurship in the economy

No	Particulars	SA	A	D	SD	X
29	Entrepreneurship is a means of creating jobs and wealth for both young and old	51	27	3	3	3.1
30	It serves as an opportunity for one to show ones talent and do what one loves doing	54	21	9	0	3.4
31	It serves as an alternative to the meager income in paid employment	45	24	9	6	3.2
32	It serves as a means in bridging the gap between science and the market place	9	42	12	21	2.4
33	It serves as a means of interfacing with such entities as banks NGOs and government	15	45	9	12	2.6
34	It is the way of maximizing the usage of ones time for oneself	33	30	12	3	3.2

35	It serves as a link in the process of innovation, development and economic growth	51	30	3	0	3.4
36	It is a way of deriving personal satisfaction in business and overcoming poverty	45	24	15	0	3.3

Table No.5 Extent of agreement on the problems associated with entrepreneurship and skills in students

No	Particulars	SA	A	D	SD	X
37	Inadequate qualified teachers with suitable professional experience	33	36	9	3	3.2
38	Inadequate ICT facilities and training	33	36	6	0	3.2
39	Students are more interested in paid employment and so do not want to develop entrepreneurship spirit and culture	27	33	21	0	3.4
40	It is difficult to secure the financial support necessary to start a business venture	33	42	6	0	3.3
41	Financial institutions normally require collateral before offering loan to start a new business	33	45	3	0	3.3
42	The zeal to get rich quickly do not allow students to pass through the requirements of entrepreneurship	36	36	6	0	3.3
43	Huge sums of money is required for further entrepreneurial training after graduation	12	36	21	6	2.7
44	Many graduates are afraid of competition and taking risks in business	15	21	36	6	2.7
45	Many lack self-confidence and encouragement and so are afraid of failure	24	36	12	6	3.0
46	Inadequate State Boards Programs do not prepare students for entrepreneurship	30	33	15	0	3.1

Table No: 6 Strategies to enhance entrepreneurship awareness as skills in students.

No	Particulars	%
1	Financial institutions , NGOs and private sector organizations should offer free entrepreneurship training to students	14.4
2	The students, industrial work scheme should include entrepreneurship issues.	18.0
3	Government should provide soft loans to students who are worthy to be entrepreneurs	13.8
4	Students should avail themselves to training opportunities in the environment	13.7
5	Students should maintain state of the art in the business through participation at seminars workshops journals etc	12.5
6	Students must recognize changes in their environment and be able to identify business opportunities	13.8
7	Restructuring the academic curriculum of Diploma in engineering course to accommodate entrepreneurship courses.	13.8

VII.DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS

Findings show that even though students are aware of entrepreneurship through the media and the general subject of Industrial management and Organization, entrepreneur courses are not offered at the Diploma level. In spirit the general courses and EDP camps do not gratify the specific demands of the diploma students. This implies that students do not attain the relevant skills that can make them compatible with and accessible to the variety of the entrepreneurship opportunities in the profession. However the respondents generally agreed on the items on the characteristics of entrepreneurs, the roles of entrepreneurship in economic development. In addition, they also agreed on all the items dealing with the problems of entrepreneurship and the strategies for enhancing entrepreneurship awareness and skills in diploma students.

VIII. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations have been made in the light of the findings: The students should begin to undertake courses in entrepreneurship and practical trainings in modern ICT. This implies the restructuring and strengthening of the Diploma in Engineering to include courses in entrepreneurship. There should be a workshop with an information processing laboratory where students should carry out practical assignments and project based on real life problems which the students face in their work places.

IX. CONCLUSION

The syllabus of the Diploma in Engineering should be modernized if the students will be made to obtain skills that will facilitate them to have access to the wide variety of entrepreneurship jobs and opportunities.

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