



ISSN (E): 2277-7695
ISSN (P): 2349-8242
NAAS Rating: 5.23
TPI 2023; SP-12(12): 1166-1170
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www.thepharmajournal.com
Received: 19-10-2023
Accepted: 24-11-2023

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Attitude of youth of Jorhat district of Assam towards start-ups

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Abstract

Start-up is regarded as a company or organization in the early stages of operation which focuses for developing a unique product or service in order to grow and establish itself as a successful business. Attitude of the youths play an important role in their inclination towards starting a start-up so a study on "Attitude of Youth of Jorhat district of Assam towards Start-ups" was conducted. The study was conducted in Jorhat District of Assam. The sample of the study included the final year students from professional and non-professional degree colleges. A total of 278 respondents were included for the present research study from six colleges. For collection of data an Interview Schedule consisting Attitude scale was prepared under the present research study. The data related to the attitude of the respondents towards start-up business, revealed that 76.04 percent respondents from professional colleges and 62.09 percent from non-professional colleges had a favorable attitude towards start-up business.

Keywords: Attitude of youth, start-up business, non-professional colleges

Introduction

Start-up is mainly regarded as a company or organization which in its early stages of operation, mainly focuses on developing unique product or service in order to grow and establish itself as a successful business. The specific criteria for start-up can vary depending upon the type of business, but some common characteristics include a small team of founders or employees, a focus on innovation and disruption, and a need for capital to fund growth and development. Start-ups are often associated with the technical industry, but the term can apply to any business that is in the early stages of operation. Start-ups are considered as engines of growth because it not only helps in making money for own self but also for employees and the shareholder of a country. In today's world, start-ups are regarded as an important vehicle for job creation, which enable an individual to be self-dependent and financially independent. Moreover, it helps in reducing the rate of unemployment to some extent by making an individual to be self-reliant and obtaining a good social status in the society. The ability to provide job by the start-up reduces the dynamism gap between the large cities and rural areas. Start-ups helps in exploring unique and necessary innovative ideas which are considered essential in the society. While increasing the local economy, the start ups also builds a better socio-ecosystem. Start-up brings out the talented people in front of the society and also accelerates partnership. Start-ups have become a vital component of India's economy, driving innovation, creating jobs, attracting investments, and addressing societal challenges. They contribute to the overall economic development, enhance technological capabilities and foster an entrepreneurial ecosystem that encourages individuals to pursue their ideas and aspirations. Starting one's own business helps in expressing and implementing one's own skills and knowledge in the society. Start-up not only enables an individual to be self-dependent but also to be financially independent. Recently, in many countries, it is seen that there is an increase in the establishment of various innovative business start-ups which are able to provide innovative products and services. Such businesses are built on commercialization of highly sophisticated modern research. These start-ups are able to hire manpower and procure raw materials locally, from which impact can be seen on the local economy. However, it is necessary to implement wide variety of managerial strategies for continuous growth of successful business with limited.

The state of Assam is rich source of natural resources and minerals. Taking the advantage of this, it is observed that from the last decades a few educated youths took bold steps and started new venture with some new ideas in Assam which encourage them to become independent individual and be their own boss in their business.

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Assam is regarded as India's expressway to Association of Southeast Asian Nation (ASEAN). 'Assam Start-up - The Nest' has been recognised as an emerging start-up ecosystem in the country from Ministry of skill development and entrepreneurship (2019).

During the financial year 2020-21, 76 start-ups firms were able to generate Rs 42.6 crore revenues and 54 incubated start-ups firms were able to rise funding of Rs 30 cores in Assam (The Sentinel, 2022). In 2017, Government of Assam has introduced "Start-ups" programmes to empower the youths for becoming job creator and pursue their entrepreneurial dreams under Assam Start-up Policy Draft 2017. This eventually helps in recognising Assam as a leader in the category of developing a start-up ecosystem by the end of 2021 (Press trust of India, 2022). Various incubation hubs were set up in different parts of Assam by the well-known national and multinational organisations. One of such well-known incubation hubs in Assam is "Innovation Park", which has successfully incubated 76 startups since its inauguration on January 20, 2019 giving direct employment to 1,690 people and impacting 3.2 lakh lives. North East Agri-Technology entrepreneurs Hub (NEATeHUB) is under Assam Agricultural University, Jorhat has also been rendering its services as incubation hub or the entire North-East India. Thus, Assam is becoming a single-point window to realize the entrepreneurial dreams of all the aspiring startups and entrepreneurs of the State. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, start-up firms all around the world had to experience huge impacts no matter how well established they were, which enabling them to re-look at how they manage and operate their business including re-visitation and re-actualizing of their working business plan. Due to such facts many start-ups business might develop some negative attitude. However, in this pessimistic scenario, there are few Indian start-ups that are growing well. These start-ups are on a rapid growth and setting a good example for other companies on how to fight with and survive in this lockdown period.

Start-up, which is independent, has great career opportunity and may provide the scope to become job provider and role model in the society. Youths, if possess knowledge on start-up may opt for it and can contribute to the society besides being satisfied in their careers. Favourable attitude towards start-up and knowledge on it among the youths may play an important role, in their inclination towards starting a start-up. Moreover, during the pessimistic scenario of Covid-19, many youths who were engaged in start-up business had developed some negative attitude towards start-up, which resulted in diversification from common fields in starting start-up business to new and unique fields such as Agrotourism, Trading etc. Measuring the attitude towards start-up will contribute to further policy formulation and policy modification, Hence the present study on "Attitude of youth of Jorhat district of Assam towards Start-up". Was conducted.

Review of literate: A start-up business is mainly regarded as a company or project undertaken by an entrepreneur to seek, develop, and validate a scalable business model. (Wikipedia, 2019) whereas start-up is mainly defined as a business or undertaking that has recently begun operation (American Heritage Dictionary, 2020).

Attitude are the result from positive or negative appraisal when a person is absorbed in certain behavior than influenced by psychological emotion (Prabandari and Sholihah, 2015) [18]. Attitude towards a behaviour refers to "the degree to

which a person has a favorable or unfavorable evaluation or appraisal of the behavior in question" (Ajzen, 1991) [1] whereas the same author refers attitude to be a person's personal feelings based on the favorableness of stimulus objects (Ajzen, 2011) [2]. While defining the attitude towards entrepreneurship, Linan and Chen, 2009 stated that attitude is the degree to which the individual holds a positive or negative personal valuation about being an entrepreneur. Similarly attitude towards self-employment has been defined as the difference between perceptions of personal desirability in becoming self-employed and organizationally employed (Souitaris *et al.*, 2007) [25].

Athulya (2017) [4] conducted a study on "Attitude of commerce students towards entrepreneurship with special reference to Calicut district, Kerala", revealed that there was significant relation between gender and students' awareness regarding Government Entrepreneurship Development Programme (EDP) schemes. They also concluded that most of the students are willing to start their own business. But majority of them fear about chance of failure whereas Bhattacharjee (2020) [7] in her research study found lack of entrepreneurial career related to the attitude of college students towards entrepreneurship.

Covid-19 had caused worldwide lockdown and Seah (2021) [20], conducted a study related to the effects on attitudes toward opportunity-motivated entrepreneurship before and after Lockdown found that opportunity-motivated, or pull, entrepreneurship had become more positive after lockdown measures are eased. Next, women hold stronger beliefs in entrepreneurship's capacity to fulfil agentic-type goals (e.g., power, achievement). For both genders, the extent to which entrepreneurship can achieve prosocial, communal-type goals is a key post-lockdown determinant of positive attitudes to entrepreneurship. He also stated that his study provides clues into what to expect regarding post-lockdown entrepreneurship, and bears practical implications for entrepreneurship educators and policymakers. In a study conducted by Joshi *et al.* (2018) [13], related to the perception and attitude of management students towards startups found that 43.3 percent students are strongly agreed and 47.8 percent are agreed while 2.2 percent are disagreed to pursue their own vision. There were 42 percent students said that Entrepreneurs are almost always inventors while 5.6 percent are disagreed. Around 40.00 percent students agreed that start-up helps to become a business leader while 5.3 percent each strongly disagreed and disagreed. More than 30.00 percent students viewed that entrepreneur gives more flexibility in personal and family life while 17.8 percent students were disagreed. There were 47.8 percent students strongly agree that entrepreneurs are helpful to give contribution to the community by developing a successful business, 40 percent are agreed while only 1.1 percent are strongly disagreed. 62.2 percent students had strongly agreed that Entrepreneurship is an honorable profession while 12.2 percent are neutral and 6.7 percent are strongly disagreed. 75.6 percent students had strongly agreed that Entrepreneurship gives better career prospects, 7.8 percent are agreed and 4.4 percent are strongly disagreed. There were 56.7 percent students that agree that entrepreneurship is a good way to make lots of money while 11.1 percent were neutral and 3.3 percent had strongly disagreed. There were 40 percent students who had strongly agree that academic institutions encourage students to consider entrepreneurship 35.6 percent were agree and 3.3 percent had strongly

disagreed. 43.3 percent students had strongly agreed that entrepreneurship is helpful to become a business leader, 35.6 percent had agreed while 9 percent had strongly disagreed. Jones *et al.* (2008)^[12] in their study focusing on the students' attitude towards enterprise education in Poland found that Polish students had limited prior entrepreneurial experience and expectation and welcomed the opportunity to undertake enterprise education. The findings mainly suggested that an equal proportion of male and female students aged 18-24 favoured a future entrepreneurial career and the entrepreneurial education informs entrepreneurial intent and career aspirations. On the other hand, Veciana *et al.* (2005)^[23], in the study on attitude of the university students' towards entrepreneurship of two countries showed a positive entrepreneur's image. It was also found that both the sample of their research study had a favorable perception of desirability of new venture creation, although the perception of feasibility is by far not so positive and only a small percentage has the firm intention to create a new company. While reviewing about the attitude towards start-up, several studies revealed a positive entrepreneur's image and favorable perception for new venture creation. Moreover, after lockdown, it was found from reviewing that majority of the people gained a positive attitude towards start-ups and it was also found that the involvement of the women in starting a start-up business had rapidly increased. Some other studies also reported negative or neutral attitude towards start-up.

Material and Methods

The study was conducted in Jorhat District of Assam. The sample of the study included the final year students from professional and non-professional degree colleges. A total of 278 respondents were included for the present research study from six colleges.

Operational definition and the measurement for the dependent variable

Youth: In India, Ministry of Youth Affairs, defined Youth, as

those aged 15 to 29 in the national youth policy (2014). This age-group constitutes 27.5% of India's population. According to Oxford Dictionary (2020), meaning of youth is the time of life when a person is young, especially the time before a child becomes an adult. In the present study, youth is operationally defined those students who had and attained final year of the degree programme from different professional and non-professional colleges of Jorhat districts of Assam.

Start-up: According to Finance Ministry of Government of India, an entity will be recognised as a start-up after 10 years of its existence and turnover up to Rs 100 crore per annually. According to Ministry of Commerce and Industry, India (2015), an entity will be identified as a start-up when they possess the three basic points namely its existence, turnover in last five years and innovation, development, deployment and commercialisation of new products, processes or services driven by technology or intellectual property. The period of existence should not exceed 25 crores in the last five financial years. According to Cambridge Dictionary (2020), a start-up is a young company established by one or more entrepreneurs to create unique and irreplaceable products or services. It aims at bringing innovation and building ideas quickly. In the present research study, a start-up is operationally defined as an entrepreneurial venture in the early stages of operations, typically for self-employment along with creating new jobs for others.

Attitude: According to Cambridge dictionary (2019), attitude is defined as a feeling or opinion about something or someone. In psychology, an attitude refers to a set of emotions, beliefs, and behaviours toward a particular object, person, thing, or event. In the present study, attitude is operationally defined as the strong feeling, belief and values of the respondent towards starting start-up. Attitude of the respondents towards start-ups was measured with an attitude scale containing 42 statements covering different aspects of start-up business with responses as Yes and No and with assigned score 1 and 0 respectively.

Table 1: On the basis of the obtained score, the attitude of the respondents was categorized as follows

Category	Score Range
Unfavourable	Below (Mean - SD)
Favourable	Mean-SD to Mean + SD
Highly favourable	Above (Mean + SD)

Development of data collection instrument: An attitude scale was developed to find out the attitude of the youth towards start-up business. This part consisted of the statement related to the attitude towards a start-up. The statements were framed by reviewing different journals, books, research reports and by interviewing with the respondents. Attitude towards start-ups was measured in 5-point continuum scale for the given statements as 'strongly agree', 'agree', 'neutral', 'disagree' and 'strongly disagree' with assigned scores 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively in terms of positive statements and 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 in case of negative statements.

Statistical analysis of data: The collected data were coded, tabulated and analysed in accordance with the objectives of the study by using appropriated statistical techniques.

Findings: An attitude Scale was constructed covering various dimensions of start-up which consist 41 attitude statements. Fig. 1 reflects that 76.04 percent of the respondents from professional colleges and 62.09 percent from non-professional colleges had favorable attitude towards start-up, followed by 15.63 percent from professional colleges and 32.42 percent respondents from non-professional colleges had highly favorable attitude towards start-up. While only 8.33 percent respondents from professional colleges and 5.49 percent respondents from non-professional colleges had unfavorable attitude towards start-up business. It is encouraging to note that majority possess either favorable or highly favorable attitude in both professional colleges and non-professional colleges which might have resulted from the efforts made by placement cells and entrepreneurial development cell of the respective colleges.

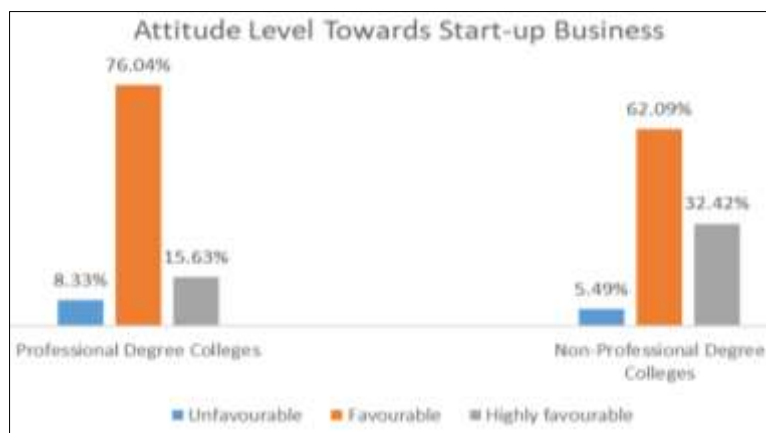


Fig 1: Distribution of the respondents according to the attitude level towards start-up business

There were 41 statements related to the attitude of the respondents towards start-up business. From the Table 4.1, it was found that, statement related to starting own business helps in learning a lot ranked I with a mean score of 4.07, followed by, knowledge of different technology helps in taking decision regarding start-up business ranked II with a mean score of 4.01, start-up business as a career option in today’s globalized world ranked III with a mean score 3.96. On the other hand, statement related to start-up is for only rich

people was ranked with the lowest ranked XXXII with a mean score of 2.57.

The findings are in line with Hussain *et al.* (2018) [26] and Bhattacharjee (2020) [7] respectively where they found that students demonstrated positive attitude towards entrepreneurship. While in another study done by Jonas *et al.* (2018) [27], it reported that the students from Poland had a limited prior entrepreneurial experiences and expectation to undertake enterprise education.

Table 2: Ranking of attitude statement based on the obtained mean scores

Statements	Mean score	Rank
1. Start-up business is considered as a career option in today’s globalized world	3.96	III
2. Entering into Start-up business is a risky affair	3.57	XXI
3. Those who cannot get a decent job venture into Start-up business	3.1	XXXI
4. It is really difficult to get finance / loans for Start-up business	3.29	XXX
5. A sound technical knowledge helps in taking a start-up business	3.78	XII
6. Lack of finance is one of the main reasons in a start-up business	3.84	IX
7. A good knowledge on different products and services helps in selecting right kind of start-up.	3.92	V
8. Start-up facilitates to be one’s own boss rather than work for someone else	3.72	XV
9. Start-up business is not everyone’s cup of tea.	3.55	XXIII
10. Owning a start-up business can fetch good social status.	3.74	XIII
11. Start-up is only for rich people.	2.57	XXXII
12. Start-up Business is for those who want to become rich.	3.41	XXVI
13. Money is what motivates an individual towards start-up business.	3.48	XXVI
14. Forbearance is important in a start-up business.	3.61	XIX
15. Start-up business is a rewarding career	3.57	XXI
16. There is no limit to what one can earn in Start-up business.	3.73	XIV
17. One cannot earn in one’s lifetime in a job, what one can earn in a couple of years in a start-up business	3.54	XXIV
18. There are huge profit margins in a start-up business	3.56	XXII
19. Different social networks provide opportunities for start-up ideas.	3.9	VI
20. Success stories of different entrepreneurs motivates the potential entrepreneurs	3.92	V
21. Mass Media do not provide enough information to the potential entrepreneurs	3.29	XXX
22. Starting own business helps in learning a lot.	4.07	I
23. There is always a possibility in transforming start-up into well- established company.	3.64	XVII
24. Easy access to credit helps in establishing start-up business.	3.71	XVI
25. Knowledge of different technology helps in taking decision regarding start-up business	4.01	II
26. There is provision of institutional support for the growth of start- up in India.	3.6	XX
27. Support from the family is as important as financial support for starting and running a start-up business	3.94	IV
28. Start-up helps in recognizing the needs of the common people.	3.89	VII
29. Start-up helps in breaking the chain of gender biasness.	3.61	XIX
30. Lack of professional education is a major constrains to start a career in a start-up business.	3.57	XXI
31. Social media acts as a good platform for start-up ideas	3.86	VIII
32. Failure of different enterprise reduces the confidence for start-up business	3.38	XXVII
33. Never motivated for any start-up because of no exposure to training	3.31	XXVIII
34. Provision of different awards for enterprise are really attracting	3.83	X
35. Having business as a family occupation can easily motivate for start-up	3.63	XVIII
36. Starting a business is really satisfying as it can provide livelihood to others.	3.82	XI
37. Unsuccessful business stories/ study also inspired an individual for start-up ideas.	3.89	VII
38. It is too scary to risk starting a start-up	3.3	XXIX
39. Confidence level of an individual plays a significant role in starting a start-up business	3.89	VII
40. Starting own business helps in learning a lot in one’s career	3.92	V
41. Service to the society is more important than a social status in a start-up business	3.74	XIII

It may be summarized that majority of the respondents from professional college (76.04%) and non-professional colleges (62.09%) had a favorable attitude towards start-up business. It was also found that the unfavorable attitude of the respondents towards start-up business was below 10 percent from both professional and non-professional degree colleges. The respondents had a favorable attitude in the areas such as 'Start-up business is considered as a career option in today's globalized world', 'Starting own business helps in learning a lot', 'Knowledge of different technology helps in taking decision regarding start-up business', 'Support from the family is as important as financial support for starting and running a start-up business', 'This may be due to low amount of knowledge and information acquired related to start-up business from the entrepreneurial development cells of their respective colleges' and so on.

Conclusion

The data related to the attitude level of the youth of Jorhat district of Assam towards start-up business, can be summarized that 76.04 percent respondents from professional degree colleges and 62.09 percents respondents from non-professional degree colleges had a favorable attitude towards start-up business. And 15.63 percent from professional colleges and 32.42 percent respondents from non-professional colleges had highly favorable attitude towards start-up. It is encouraging to note that majority of the respondents had either favorable or highly favorable attitude in both professional colleges and non-professional colleges.

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