

A Descriptive Study of Entrepreneurial Attitudes among Pre-service Teachers at Thiagarajar College of Preceptors (TCP), Madurai

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Abstract

The current study investigates entrepreneurial attitudes among pre-service teachers at Thiagarajar College of Preceptors (TCP) in Madurai. A questionnaire with 26 questions was issued to 88 first-year pre-service teachers, and 48 responses were collected (15 men and 33 women). The study's goal was to gaze at the respondents' overall characteristics and attitudes towards entrepreneurship. The questionnaire contained two sections: Section (A) covered broad topics such as demographics, educational credentials, prior entrepreneurial experience, and perceptions of entrepreneurship as a realistic career option for teachers. Section (B) contained 20 statements examining entrepreneurial attitudes, including beliefs about entrepreneurship and its role in society, confidence and self-efficacy in entrepreneurship, training and education in entrepreneurship, motivation and personal drivers for entrepreneurship, and innovation and risk in entrepreneurship. The study sheds light on the possibilities for incorporating entrepreneurship into teacher education programs, emphasizing the importance of entrepreneurial skills for both professional development and societal impact.

Keywords: Entrepreneurial Attitudes, Pre-service Teachers, Teacher Education, Entrepreneurship Education, Career Development, Social - Entrepreneurship

Introduction

Entrepreneurship has emerged as an important driver of economic growth and social development in modern society. It encourages innovation, generates job opportunities, and addresses societal issues. Integrating entrepreneurial attitudes and abilities among educators is gaining popularity in the educational profession. Teachers, as role models and mentors, have the power to encourage and foster entrepreneurial mindsets in their students, resulting in a more dynamic and self-sufficient workforce.

Pre-service education programs provide an excellent opportunity to introduce and foster entrepreneurial attitudes. These programs not only train teachers for typical classroom duties, but also provide them with a variety of skills that will help them grow personally and professionally. Recognizing the relevance of entrepreneurship in education, this study seeks to investigate the entrepreneurial attitudes of pre-service teachers at Thiagarajar College of Preceptors (TCP) in Madurai.

The current study aims to better understand the readiness and ability of pre-service teachers to embrace entrepreneurial paths by studying factors such as prior entrepreneurial experience, interest in establishing a business, and perceptions of entrepreneurship as a career option. The present study also investigates their attitudes on including beliefs about entrepreneurship and its role in society, confidence and self-efficacy in entrepreneurship, training and education in entrepreneurship, motivation and personal drivers for entrepreneurship, innovation and risk in entrepreneurship, offering a thorough summary of their perspectives on this crucial aspect of modern education.

Statement of the Problem

Entrepreneurship is widely recognized as a critical ability for personal and professional growth, but the entrepreneurial attitudes of pre-service teachers are understudied. The purpose of this study is to gaze into the entrepreneurial attitudes of first-year pre-service teachers at Thiagarajar College of Preceptors (TCP) in Madurai, specifically their opinions of entrepreneurship as a career option and their desire in starting their own firms. Despite the increased emphasis on entrepreneurship education, there is little understanding of how these prospective educators perceive entrepreneurship, particularly in terms of their professional roles as teachers. This study aims to fill this gap by examining pre-service teachers' entrepreneurial attitudes, interest, and experiences, providing significant insights for incorporating entrepreneurship into teacher education curricula.

Scope of the Study

The study aims to investigate the entrepreneurial attitudes of pre-service teachers at Thiagarajar College of Preceptors (TCP) in Madurai, with an emphasis on demographics, entrepreneurial inclinations, and attitudes towards entrepreneurship as a career. It covers 88 first-year pre-service teachers, 48 of whom completed a survey on their personal information and attitudes towards entrepreneurship, such as beliefs about entrepreneurship and its role in society, confidence and self-efficacy in entrepreneurship, training and education in

entrepreneurship, motivation and personal drivers for entrepreneurship, innovation and risk in entrepreneurship. Data analysis techniques include percentage analysis, mean score analysis, and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). The study delves into pre-service teachers' entrepreneurial mindsets and proposes ways to include entrepreneurship into teacher education programs.

Research Gap

The research gap demonstrates a lack of emphasis on entrepreneurship in teacher education programs, despite its importance in business education and professional growth. While entrepreneurial skills are addressed in general education, little attention is paid to pre-service teachers' attitudes towards entrepreneurship as a profession or as part of their teaching responsibilities. Existing research ignores pre-service teachers' interest in entrepreneurial behaviors and creating their own firms. The present study seeks to fill this gap by investigating the entrepreneurial attitudes of pre-service teachers at Thiagarajar College of Preceptors (TCP) and how these perceptions may influence their future careers and entrepreneurial potential, thereby contributing to the integration of entrepreneurship into teacher education programs.

Research Design

The current study utilizes a descriptive research approach to investigate the entrepreneurial attitudes of first-year pre-service teachers at Thiagarajar College of Preceptors (TCP), Madurai. A standardized questionnaire was distributed to 88 pre-service teachers, yielding 48 valid replies (15 men and 33 women). The questionnaire has questions for demographics, prior entrepreneurial experience, and views towards entrepreneurship. Data analysis techniques include percentage analysis, mean score analysis, and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA).

Sampling Design

In the current study, individuals were chosen using a non-probability convenience sampling method. The study included 88 first-year pre-service teachers enrolled at Thiagarajar College of Preceptors (TCP) in Madurai, an autonomous institution

associated with Tamil Nadu Teachers Education University (TNTEU). Out of the total number of students, 48 responses were gathered, representing a broad group of pre-service teachers (15 men and 33 women). The participants were chosen based on their willingness to participate and relevance to the study's objectives. The data was collected using a structured questionnaire with two sections: one for demographic and background information and one for assessing entrepreneurial inclinations.

Objectives of the Study

The following objectives have been established for this study:

- To analyze the general demographic profile and entrepreneurial interests of pre-service teachers at Thiagarajar College of Preceptors (TCP), Madurai.
- To assess pre-service teachers' entrepreneurial attitudes, with a focus on their beliefs about entrepreneurship and its role in society, confidence and self-efficacy in entrepreneurship, training and education in entrepreneurship, motivation and personal drivers for entrepreneurship, innovation and risk in entrepreneurship.

Hypothesis of the Study

Hypothesis employed in the present study is as follows:

Null hypothesis (H_0): There is no significant difference in the entrepreneurial attitudes of pre-service teachers across different categories.

Alternative hypothesis (H_1): There is significant difference in the entrepreneurial attitudes of pre-service teachers across different categories.

Tools Utilized for Analysis

Relevant statistical tools were employed for the interpretation of the survey data. The tools utilized include:

- Percentage analysis
- Mean score analysis
- Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

Data Analysis and Results

Demographic Characteristics and Entrepreneurial Interests of Pre-service Teachers

To analyze the demographic characteristics and entrepreneurial interests of pre-service teachers in the study area, the researchers focused on following components: gender, age, educational qualification, previous entrepreneurial experiences, interested in starting own business in future and entrepreneurship as a career option for teachers.

Table 1 Demographic Characteristics and Entrepreneurial Interests of Pre-service Teachers

S. No	Particulars	No. of Respondents	Percent (%)
1	Gender		
	Male	15	31.3
	Female	33	68.8
	Total	48	100
2	Age		
	20-25	42	87.5
	26-30	6	12.5
	Above 30	-	-
	Total	48	100
3	Educational Qualification		
	Undergraduate	28	58.3
	Postgraduate	20	41.7
	Total	48	100
4	Prior Entrepreneurial Experience		
	Yes	5	10.4
	No	43	89.6
	Total	48	100
5	Interested in starting own business in future		
	Yes	33	68.8
	No	15	31.2
	Total	48	100
6	Entrepreneurship as a career option for teachers		
	Yes	35	72.9
	No	13	27.1
	Total	48	100

Table 1 show that the demographic study reveals a disproportionately young and female group of pre-service teachers at Thiagarajar College of Preceptors (TCP). 68.8% of the 48 responses are women, while

31.3% are men. The majority of responders (87.5%) are between the ages of 20 and 25, with only 12.5% being between 26 and 30 years old. 58.3% of participants are undergraduates, with 41.7% having completed postgraduate degrees.

When it comes to entrepreneurial experience, only 10.4% of respondents acknowledged having prior experience, whereas the vast majority (89.6%) had never entered into entrepreneurship before. Despite having no past experience, a considerable proportion of respondents (68.8%) reported a desire to establish their own firm in the future. Furthermore, 72.9% of respondents perceive entrepreneurship as a realistic career path for teachers, indicating a positive attitude towards entrepreneurship as part of their professional future.

As a result, pre-service teachers at Thiagarajar College of Preceptors (TCP) are very interested in entrepreneurship, despite having little direct entrepreneurial experience. This demonstrates the possibility for incorporating entrepreneurial education into teacher preparation programs to foster these inclinations and promote entrepreneurial mindsets in the future educators.

Entrepreneurial Attitudes of Pre-service Teachers

To investigate the entrepreneurial attitudes of pre-service teachers in the study area, researchers tend to concentrate on five important components: beliefs about entrepreneurship and its role in society, confidence and self-efficacy in entrepreneurship, training and education in entrepreneurship, motivation and personal drivers for entrepreneurship, innovation and risk in entrepreneurship.

Table 2 Entrepreneurial Attitudes of Pre-service Teachers

S. No.	Factors	Total	Mean score	Rank
Beliefs about Entrepreneurship and its Role in Society				
1	Entrepreneurship can solve many social problems	194	4.04	2
2	Interested in social entrepreneurship	191	3.98	3

3	Entrepreneurship can provide more job opportunities	203	4.23	1
4	Entrepreneurial skills can help in addressing educational challenges	187	3.90	4
Confidence and Self-efficacy in Entrepreneurship				
1	Feeling confident about starting own business	184	3.83	3
2	Willing to take risks to achieve entrepreneurial goals	173	3.60	4
3	Willing to seek external help for business ideas	193	4.02	2
4	Feeling the need for financial knowledge to be an entrepreneur	198	4.13	1
Training and Education in Entrepreneurship				
1	Teacher should be trained in entrepreneurship	191	3.98	3
2	Entrepreneurship education should be a part of the teacher education curriculum	192	4.00	2
3	Teacher can inspire students to become entrepreneurs	201	4.19	1
4	Entrepreneurship teaching can develop leadership skills in students	201	4.19	1
Motivation and Personal Drivers for Entrepreneurship				
1	Interest in learning more about business management	194	4.04	1
2	Motivated by financial independence to start a business	180	3.75	4
3	Entrepreneurship is a viable career option for teachers in the current job market	187	3.90	3
4	Prefer to work independently rather than in a traditional job setting	188	3.92	2

Innovation and Risk in Entrepreneurship				
1	Innovation plays a key role in entrepreneurship	200	4.17	2
2	Failure is a part of the learning process in entrepreneurship	202	4.21	1

Table 2 demonstrates that pre-service teachers at Thiagarajar College of Preceptors (TCP) have significant entrepreneurial mindsets. In terms of entrepreneurship beliefs, the statement “Entrepreneurship can provide more job opportunities” had the highest mean score (4.23), followed closely by “Entrepreneurship can solve many social problems” (4.04). This demonstrates a positive attitude towards entrepreneurship as a driver of society and economic prosperity.

In terms of confidence and self-efficacy, participants showed a strong need for financial knowledge (4.13), indicating an understanding of the financial abilities essential for successful entrepreneurship. However, their willingness to accept risks was significantly lower (3.60), indicating a possible obstacle to entrepreneurial enterprise.

When it comes to training and education, the highest results (4.19) were for the statements “Teacher can inspire students to become entrepreneurs” and “Entrepreneurship teaching can develop leadership skills in students.” This emphasizes teachers’ ability

to instill entrepreneurial ideals in children and the need of include entrepreneurship in teacher education programs.

Motivation and personal drives for entrepreneurship were most significantly associated with a desire to learn about business management (4.04), with financial freedom being a less influential motivator (3.75).

Finally, creativity and risk-taking in entrepreneurship were assessed highly, with “Failure is a part of the learning process in entrepreneurship” receiving the highest score (4.21), indicating that pre-service teachers have a growth mentality when it comes to entrepreneurial problems.

Overall, results indicate that pre-service teachers at Thiagarajar College of Preceptors (TCP) have strong entrepreneurial tendencies that can be cultivated through specific educational interventions in teacher training program.

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) on Entrepreneurial Attitudes among Pre-service Teachers in Different Categories

Null hypothesis (H_0): There is no significant difference in the entrepreneurial attitudes of pre-service teachers across different categories.

Alternative hypothesis (H_1): There is significant difference in the entrepreneurial attitudes of pre-service teachers across different categories

Table 3 Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) on Entrepreneurial Attitudes among Pre-service Teachers in Different

Variable	Source of variation	Sum of squares	Degree of freedom	Mean of squares	‘F’ calculated value	‘F’ table value	5% level of significance
Entrepreneurial attitudes	Between sample	1.58	4	0.40	17.02	3.18	Significant
	Within sample	0.3055	13	0.0235			

Table 3 clearly shows that the calculated F-value (17.02) is more than the critical F-value (3.18) at the 5% significance level; thus we reject the null hypothesis. Thus, there is a considerable variance in entrepreneurial attitudes among pre-service teachers across different categories. This implies that several elements (beliefs about entrepreneurship, confidence and self-efficacy, training and education, motivation, and education) influence pre-service teachers’ entrepreneurial views.

Summary of Findings

The study on entrepreneurial attitudes among pre-service teachers at Thiagarajar College of Preceptors (TCP) in Madurai revealed several key findings:

Demographics and Entrepreneurial Interests

The majority of participants were young (87.5% aged 20-25) and predominantly female (68.8%). Despite the fact that just 10.4% of pre- service

teachers had prior entrepreneurial experience, a sizable number (68.8%) reported an interest in starting their own firm. 72.9% of respondents viewed entrepreneurship as a feasible career option for teachers, demonstrating a positive attitude towards entrepreneurship in their professional setting.

Entrepreneurial Attitude

Pre-service teachers demonstrated a strong entrepreneurial attitude. They believed that entrepreneurship might address societal difficulties, create job possibilities, and help solve educational problems. Confidence in beginning a firm was moderate, with a clear focus on the importance of financial understanding for success in entrepreneurship. There was widespread support for incorporating entrepreneurship into teacher education, with 72.9% seeing it as a viable career path for teachers. The ability to encourage students to become entrepreneurs and build leadership skills was highly rated, indicating the teachers' confidence in their ability to instill entrepreneurial attitudes in students.

The most important motivators for entrepreneurship were an interest in learning about business management (4.04) and financial independence (3.75). Pre-service teachers were generally receptive to innovation and perceived failure as an important element of the entrepreneurial learning process, with the statement "Failure is a part of the learning process" receiving a high rating (4.21).

The ANOVA analysis indicated significant differences in entrepreneurial attitudes across categories such as beliefs, confidence, training, and motivation, implying that a variety of factors influence pre-service teachers' entrepreneurial mindsets.

Suggestions

Based on the findings of the study, the following suggestions are made to enhance the understanding and development of entrepreneurial attitudes among pre-service teachers at Thiagarajar College of Preceptors (TCP):

Sampling Methodology: The study utilizes convenience sampling, which may restrict the

generalizability of the findings to a broader population. Explicitly acknowledge this limitation in the discussion section and suggest avenues for future research to enhance the representativeness of the sample. For example, future studies could employ randomized or stratified sampling techniques to ensure a more diverse participant pool.

Implementation of Entrepreneurship

Education: To effectively incorporate entrepreneurship education into teacher training programs, the following strategies can be considered:

- **Curriculum Models:** Introduce courses or modules that focus on entrepreneurial skills, such as leadership, innovation, and problem-solving, with activities like project-based learning or real-world case studies.
- **Collaborations with Local Businesses:** Create partnerships with local businesses or startups to offer internship opportunities, practical exposure, or collaborative projects for pre-service teachers.
- **Workshops and Seminars:** Organize workshops, guest lectures, or panel discussions featuring successful entrepreneurs to inspire and educate pre-service teachers on entrepreneurial thinking and application.

Practical Entrepreneurship Experiences:

While many pre-service teachers express a strong interest in entrepreneurship, the majority lack practical entrepreneurial experience. To address this gap, it is recommended that pre-service teachers be provided with hands-on experiences such as internships with local businesses, mentorship from entrepreneurs, or simulation exercises where they can engage in real-world entrepreneurial scenarios. This would allow them to gain practical insights into the challenges and rewards of entrepreneurship.

Social Entrepreneurship Education: Given the high interest in social entrepreneurship, teacher education programs could include a special focus on social entrepreneurship. This could involve training teachers to address social issues through entrepreneurial solutions and incorporating social impact into the entrepreneurial curriculum, thus equipping future educators to encourage social responsibility among their students.

Encouraging Entrepreneurial Mindsets in Students: Pre-service teachers expressed a belief in the importance of fostering entrepreneurship in students. To support this, it is recommended that teacher training programs provide pedagogical strategies to help teachers integrate entrepreneurial thinking into their teaching practices, especially in fostering creativity, innovation, and problem-solving among students.

Encouragement of Self driven Entrepreneurial Initiatives: Although pre-service teachers are interested in starting their own businesses, many lack prior experience. Encouraging self-driven entrepreneurial projects, such as business idea competitions, start-up incubators, or school-based entrepreneurial ventures, could help instill practical entrepreneurial skills and boost confidence among teachers to pursue entrepreneurship after their training.

Gender-Inclusive Entrepreneurship Education: With a higher proportion of female pre-service teachers showing an interest in entrepreneurship, it is important to ensure that entrepreneurship education is accessible, inclusive, and responsive to the needs of female educators. Gender-sensitive entrepreneurial support and mentorship should be part of the teacher education framework to empower women to engage in entrepreneurial ventures.

Further Research on Entrepreneurial Behaviors across Different Institutions: While the study provides valuable insights into pre-service teachers' entrepreneurial attitudes at TCP, further research could explore similar studies across different teacher education institutions to compare and generalize the findings. This will help build a more comprehensive understanding of the entrepreneurial attitudes of pre-service teachers nationwide or globally.

Conclusion

The study on entrepreneurial attitudes among pre-service teachers at Thiagarajar College of Preceptors (TCP) in Madurai has provided valuable insights into the perceptions, interests, and potential of future educators regarding entrepreneurship. The findings indicate a predominantly young and female demographic, with a significant interest in

entrepreneurship despite limited prior experience. A notable 68.8% of respondents expressed a desire to start their own businesses, and 72.9% viewed entrepreneurship as a viable career option for teachers, highlighting a positive attitude towards integrating entrepreneurial principles into their professional roles.

The analysis of entrepreneurial attitudes revealed that pre-service teachers possess a strong belief in the potential of entrepreneurship to address societal challenges and create job opportunities. Their confidence in starting a business is moderate, with a clear recognition of the importance of financial knowledge for entrepreneurial success. Furthermore, the study underscores the necessity of incorporating entrepreneurship education into teacher training programs, as pre-service teachers expressed a strong desire for such training to enhance their ability to inspire and cultivate entrepreneurial mindsets in their future students.

The significant differences identified through ANOVA analysis suggest that various factors, including beliefs, confidence, training, and motivation, play a crucial role in shaping the entrepreneurial attitudes of pre-service teachers. This indicates the need for targeted educational interventions that can foster these attitudes and equip future educators with the skills necessary to navigate the entrepreneurial landscape.

In light of these findings, it is essential for teacher education programs to implement comprehensive entrepreneurship education strategies, provide practical experiences, and promote social entrepreneurship. By doing so, they can empower pre-service teachers to not only embrace entrepreneurial opportunities for themselves but also to instill an entrepreneurial spirit in their students, ultimately contributing to a more innovative and self-sufficient workforce.

Future research should continue to explore the entrepreneurial attitudes of pre-service teachers across different institutions and contexts, allowing for a broader understanding of how these attitudes can be nurtured and developed. By addressing the identified gaps and implementing the suggested strategies, educational institutions can play a pivotal role in shaping the next generation of educators who

are not only skilled in teaching but also equipped to foster entrepreneurship in their classrooms and communities.

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