

# Antecedents of Entrepreneurship as a career choice for students in India

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## Abstract

In recent years, the world economy has seen its fair share of difficulties. With active hostilities worldwide, including drug wars, terrorist insurgencies, ethnic disputes, and civil wars, there is a dire need for the influx of more income generating business to help economies stay afloat. Startups made for about \$140 billion of India's GDP in FY23. By 2030, this contribution is expected to total \$1 trillion. (business-standard.com, 2024)

Approximately 83% of Indian youngsters want to start their own business, indicating that the country's youth are also interested in pursuing this career path. (Tharran, 2024). An increase in business owners may result in more jobs being created, more consumer spending, and higher tax receipts which results in economic diversification (www.forbesindia.com, 2023) (www.studyiq.com, 2023). This article examines the role of entrepreneurial education, or conducive programs in shaping the entrepreneurial mindset of students in India. The study confirmed that entrepreneurship education can influence entrepreneurial self-efficacy, entrepreneurial interests and entrepreneurial mindset in making entrepreneurship as a choice of career goal. The study shall help the course providers strategize their pedagogy or facilitators to provide a more conducive environment for the students, thus creating Entrepreneurs to foster economic growth.

**Keywords:** Entrepreneurship, Career choice, self-efficacy, Outcome expectations, interests

## Introduction

The simmering tensions between India and Pakistan due to Pahalgam terror attack (May 2025) may lead to upcoming war which will be not be good for the economy and markets of both the countries, also other wars like Russia-Ukraine conflict have impacted the world economy and markets negatively. These wars have negative impacts by draining the country's resources, deteriorate the trade relations between the countries leading to increased input costs, decreased demand of exports. Because of this, the markets are extremely erratic and unpredictable, which increases challenges for already established companies. (<https://grm.institute>, n.d.) (Nishtha Awasthi, 2025)

The uncertainty and instability caused by war often lead to job loss and unemployment. Industries, particularly those not involved in the war effort, may shut down, leading to massive layoffs. (Alusaid, 2024). Basis which there is a dire need for new business and start-ups to increase employment and productivity on holistic scale in the given constraints. Over 16.6 lakh jobs across more than 55 industries are generated by startups (cfo.economictimes.indiatimes.com, 2024). It is anticipated that startups would generate up to 50 million jobs by 2030, including direct, gig, and indirect employment. (economictimes.indiatimes.com, 2025)

Different countries are undertaking numerous initiatives to encourage entrepreneurship. With their Global Entrepreneurship Program, Purdue University in the US and Zhejiang University in China have combined their strengths to educate the upcoming generation of global entrepreneurs (topuniversities, 2016). Some of the best countries to study the entrepreneurship are The Czech Republic known as a hotbed for startups, while South Korea known to be a hub for trade and

commerce, provide premier business programs. Then there are some competitive economies like those of Canada and Ireland who have steady economic growth and provide impressive career opportunities (globalscholarships, 2022).

Most studies say that entrepreneurial intent, or EI, is higher in developing nations than in developed nations. Due to fewer employment opportunities for university graduates in less developed or developing countries. University students in less developed countries report higher EI and see entrepreneurship as the preferred career path after graduation, whether as a matter of choice or as a last resort (repec, n.d.) .

The number of startups in India has increased significantly; as of December 2024, the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) had recognized over 157,000 of them. In addition to creating jobs, these firms are expected to boost the economy by almost \$1 trillion by 2030. However, the global startup success rate is still between 8 and 10%. (www.pib.gov.in, 2024) with India ranking third globally in the number of unicorns as of December 2024 (manufacturing.economictimes.indiatimes.com, 2024). According to the GUESSS India 2023 Report, 32.5% of Indian students want to launch their own businesses, demonstrating the strong entrepreneurial spirit among the youth (Education, 2024).

This makes indispensable for nations to support entrepreneurship at the education level so that there is a continued mindset being developed. Institutes like EDII and IIE play a key role in promoting entrepreneurship by offering training, research, and consultancy, especially for small and micro enterprises (<https://ediindia.org/>, n.d.). Entrepreneurship education at the school level is encouraged under the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. The Entrepreneurship Mindset Curriculum (EMC), which was introduced in Delhi government schools for students in grades 9 through 12, is one example of how to foster entrepreneurial thinking at a young age (Chayanika Bhayana, 2023). Top universities like IITs and IIMs have responded by launching specific courses in innovation and entrepreneurship to give students real-world experience and guidance. (Gupta, 2024)

### **Purpose of the study**

The Purpose of this study is to understand the antecedents of Entrepreneurship as a career choice amongst students in India with respect to the students who undertake Entrepreneurship courses at the college level. The article takes Social Cognitive career theory as a base model to comprehend the student's reflection of their learning through entrepreneurial courses. The research objective is to understand the antecedents of entrepreneurial mindset of upcoming entrepreneurs in India leading to Entrepreneurship as their career choice.

### **Literature review**

Education in entrepreneurial courses aids in the development of knowledge, skills, and attitudes as well as the capacity to reflect on one's own entrepreneurial abilities and personality traits. Through a thorough review of the literature, we came across factors like the environment, familiarity with entrepreneurship programs, and the role of entrepreneurial self-efficacy, experience, and expectation, all of which pointed to the well-known Choice model of Social Cognitive career theory. The environment of the person has an impact on their decision-making process. People don't make choices that are influence-free and value-free. (career.iresearchnet.com, n.d.) (marcr.net, marcr.net, n.d.).

Social cognitive career theory (SCCT) emphasizes the relationship between personal factors, environmental influences, and cognitive processes in shaping a person's career choice (marcr.net, marcr.net, n.d.). This theory studies the variety of concepts like interest, abilities, values, environmental factors. Three interlinked variables—self-efficacy beliefs, outcome expectations, and goals serve as the basic building blocks of choice model of SCCT.

The studies have at various places shown the role of perceived self-efficacy as an effective measure in formation of entrepreneurial attitude and the role of outcome expectations has been significantly discussed in choosing a career interest or career goal (Wardana, et al., 2020).

Positive experiences usually raise self-efficacy, identity, and outcome expectations. Academic entrepreneurship programs may have both direct impact on intentions and indirect impact on key constructs of self-efficacy, identity, or outcome expectation.

The gesticulation of education approach from teacher-centered to learner-centered education enables students to enhance their critical thinking on entrepreneurship (Wardana, et al., 2020). After interviewing 154 Dutch students, the authors discovered that improved and encouraging relationships between students-teachers and student-student have a beneficial influence on students' aspirations to pursue entrepreneurial careers (Liu, 2023)

Since the escalating study of the importance of cognition, some scholars have highlighted the role of self-efficacy as a variable in affecting individual behaviour (Pihie & Bagheri, 2010). The association between perceived formal education, entrepreneurial experience, and entrepreneurial mindset can be explained by entrepreneurial self-efficacy (Burnette, 2019)

**H1:** The entrepreneurial self-efficacy has the positive impact in forming the individual's career goals towards entrepreneurship.



The theory states that individuals tend to pursue those outcomes which they perceive as achievable and interesting which set their **outcome expectations**.

Self-efficacy and expected results are closely related. This means that people anticipate success if they have a high level of self-assurance in their abilities. People are also more likely to feel more confident and engage in specific behavior if they anticipate a positive outcome. (Pfeifer, Šarlija, & Sušac, 2016). Research has empirically proven that Entrepreneurial education influences the self-efficacy, which in turn also significantly influences entrepreneurial intention and career choice as an entrepreneur. (Agus Timan1, 2024)

**H2:** Outcome Expectations have positive influence on an individual's career goals of being an entrepreneur



The development of self-efficacy and the acquisition of relevant skills and knowledge are facilitated by learning experiences such as formal education, training, work experiences, and interactions with mentors and peers.

According to SCCT scholars, an individual's self-efficacy beliefs and outcome expectations are shaped by their inputs (demographics, individual differences) and background factors (environmental influences). These factors then have an impact on the formation of intentions and interest. (Lent & Brown, 2006)

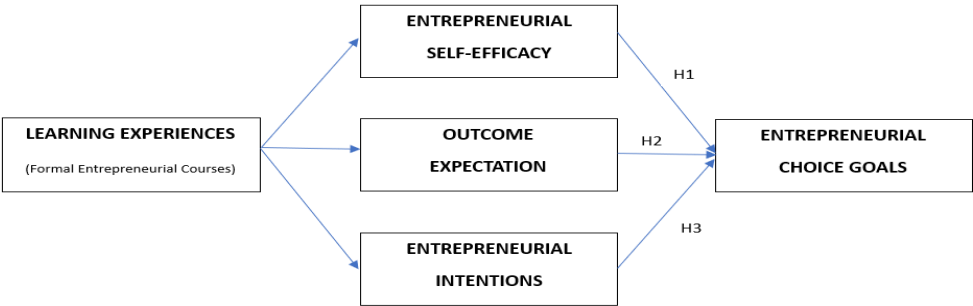
Based on their learning experiences, exposure to role models, and personal preferences, people develop interests in particular career domains. People choose careers and goals that are in line with their passions and values based on their interests (career.iresearchnet.com) 400 respondents from different Bandung universities were surveyed, and the results show that entrepreneurship education

has a major impact on entrepreneurial intention. (WIDYA MARGARETHA, 2025) this could eventually lead to entrepreneurship as a career choice if supported. Therefore, in addition to self-efficacy and positive outcome expectation, we assumed that other constructs that will describe the interest in or attractiveness of the entrepreneurial career may be introduced.

**H3:** Entrepreneurial intentions have the positive impact in forming the individual’s entrepreneurial career goals.



**Figure1:**  
**Proposed Model**



The model bridges the gap to understand the role of entrepreneurial conducive learning courses in shaping the entrepreneurial mind set and making entrepreneurship as their career choice.

**Methodology**

To gain an in-depth knowledge of how entrepreneurial education can create an entrepreneurial mindset and understand its antecedents, this study used quantitative research methodology. The method used in this study, is a convenient random sampling of the students enrolled in the entrepreneurial courses. Since, evaluation of social cognitive career constructs cannot be done in a single format, therefore, construct scales have been customised to suit the study in context (Lent & Brown, 2006). Approximately 400 questionnaires were administered, of which 350 were answered. But after data cleaning from duplication and incompleteness, 324 participants have been considered for this study. Participants were asked to respond on a 5-point Likert scale, where 1 stands for "strongly disagree" and 5 for "strongly agree." The survey’s construction was guided by a review of the same body of literature cited above. The items for all the constructs were taken from already established and tested scales from literature. Questions were grouped on the survey in separate sections of each variable. The scales are however assessed through reliability testing and conceptual and initial construct validity through measures such as Cronbach alpha, factor analysis of items, and Principal component Analysis using SPSS 27.

**Results and Findings**

Of the total respondents, 61.3% were males, 38.4% were females and 0.3% were others out of which almost 45.9% respondents belong to 20-25 years age category and 46.2% to 18-20 age category. All

the respondents are pursuing the courses and degrees related to the entrepreneurship. So, they are best suited for us to conduct the study.

### Self-Efficacy

The study was addressed to know Self-efficacy in students. It was assessed via by a 6-item questionnaire developed and empirically proven by a study (Blanco, 2011).

**Table 1:**  
**KMO and Bartlett's Test**

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.	.915
Bartlett's Test of Approx. Chi-Square	2956.860
Sphericity df	153
Sig.	.000

KMO is a test conducted to examine the strength of the partial correlation (how the factors explain each other) between the variables. KMO values closer to 1.0 are consider ideal while values less than 0.5 are unacceptable (statisticshowto, n.d.). The KMO value in our test is greater than 0.5, so our result is acceptable.

**Table 2:**  
**Reliability Statistics**

ch's	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of
	.832	6

Considering the factor loadings and principal component analysis and the theoretical backing of the construct, this scale was used as is, exhibiting a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.832 as shown (Table 2), which shows a good scale reliability and item consistency (technology, 2023)

### Outcome Expectations

Outcome expectations of the students were assessed via by a 5-item questionnaire developed and empirically proven by a study (Blanco, 2011). In the context of this research, the sampling adequacy has been validated by KMO and Bartlett's Test done using SPSS. Table 3 shows the KMO and Bartlett's Test.

**Table 3:**  
**KMO and Bartlett's Test**

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.	.862
Bartlett's Test of Approx. Chi-Square	902.511
Sphericity df	10
Sig.	.000

KMO values closer to 1.0 are considered to be ideal while values less than 0.5 are unacceptable. The KMO value in our test is greater than 0.5, so our result is acceptable. (statisticshowto, n.d.)  
Table:4

**Reliability Statistics**

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
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.892	.892	5
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Considering the factor loadings and principal component analysis and the theoretical backing of the construct, this scale was used as is, exhibiting a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.892 as shown (Table 4), which shows good scale reliability and item consistency (technology, 2023)

### Entrepreneurial Intent

Entrepreneurial Intent in students were assessed via by an 18 items questionnaire developed and empirically proven by a study (Blanco, 2011). In the context of this research, the Self-efficacy scale has been validated by KMO and Bartlett's Test done using SPSS. Table 5 shows the KMO and Bartlett's Test. In table 6, Cronbach's Alpha of 0.914 is shown.

**Table 5:**

#### KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.915
Bartlett's Test	of Approx. Chi-Square	2956.860
Sphericity	df	153
	Sig.	.000

KMO values closer to 1.0 are considered ideal while values less than 0.5 are unacceptable. The KMO value in our test is very close to 1 i.e. 0.92, so it shows high sampling adequacy. (statisticshowto, n.d.)

**Table 6:**

#### Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.919	.920	18

The Cronbach alpha test resulted in a stronger scale of items with 0.920 value, showcasing the higher reliability.

### Choice Goals

Choice Goals of students were assessed via by a 3-item questionnaire developed and empirically proven by a study (Blanco, 2011).

**Table 7:**

#### KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.674
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	176.345
	df	3
	Sig.	.000

KMO values closer to 1.0 are considered ideal while values less than 0.5 are unacceptable. The KMO value in our test is greater than 0.5, so our result is acceptable. (statisticshowto, n.d.)

**Table 8:**

#### Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.705	.708	3

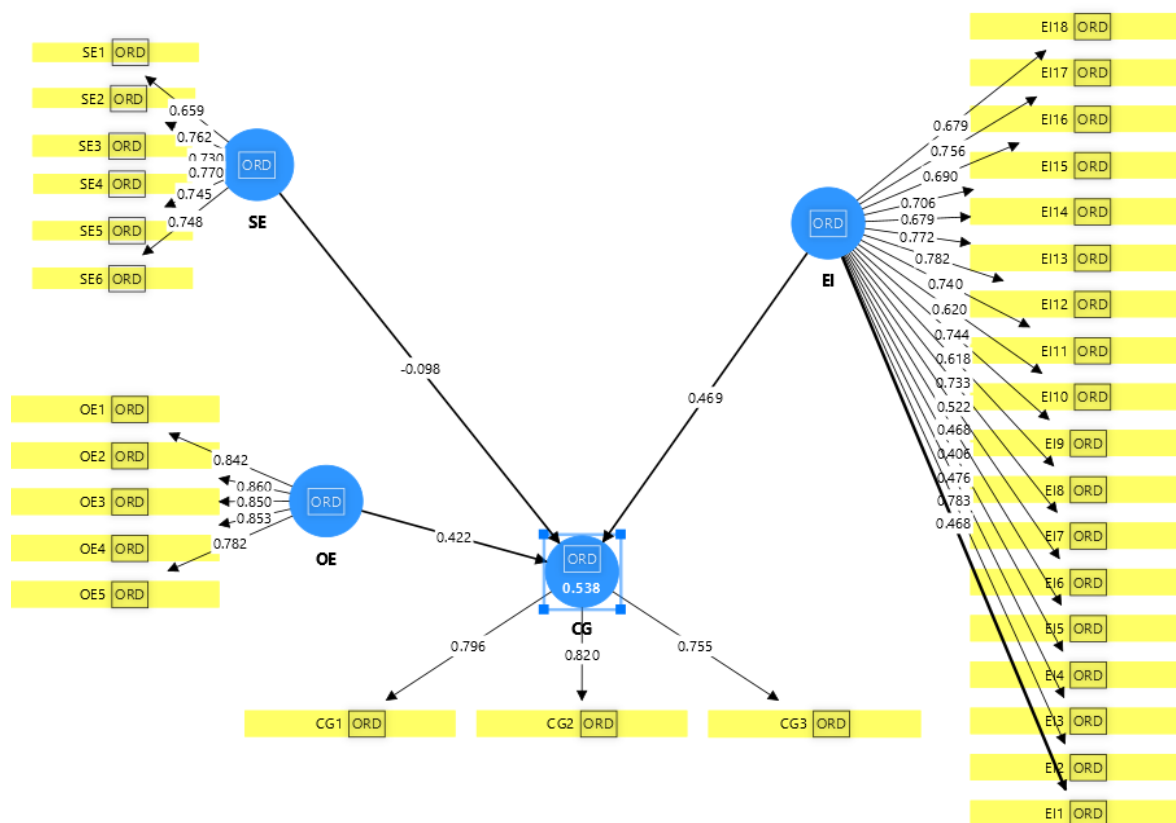
Considering the factor loadings and principal component analysis and the theoretical backing of the construct, this scale was used as is, exhibiting a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.708 as shown (Table 8), which shows good scale reliability and item consistency (technology, 2023)

Considering the above positive statistics of sampling adequacy and scale reliability, the model fit indices like SRMR (standardized root mean square residual) were derived at the value 0.078. Since values less than 0.08 are acceptable, so average discrepancy between observed and predicted was within the threshold.

### Hypothesis Testing Using PLS-SEM4

A path model was drawn to conduct the structured analysis and directional relationship amongst variables.

**Figure 2:**



The path coefficients in the above figure show cases the percentage of effect on Career choice goals with self-efficacy being the weakest link.

**Table 12:**

		Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	P values
EI	->	0.469	0.47	0
OE	->	0.422	0.422	0
SE	->	-0.098	-0.094	0.103

The above path model showcases  $p\text{-value} > 0.05$ , thus we accept our null hypothesis  $H_{01}$ . This establishes an insignificant relationship between Self efficacy and Entrepreneurship as a career goal. The above path model (Figure 2) showcases a respectable linear relationship between the observed variables. The results in Table with  $p\text{ value} < 0.05$  show that  $H_{02}$  stands rejected. Therefore, we accept the alternate hypothesis which empirically proves the positive influence of outcome expectations on career goals with path coefficients as 0.41 between the two variables.

With respect to  $H_{03}$ , the  $p\text{ value}$  is  $< 0.05$  (Table 12), thus we reject null hypothesis and accept the alternate hypothesis. The path model (Figure 2) further exhibits the acceptable relationship amongst the Entrepreneurial Intention and Entrepreneurship as a career choice.

	R-square	R-square adjusted
CG	0.538	0.533

Overall, the model turned out to be a moderate fit. The above table shows that 53.8% of the variance in the dependent variable is explained by the predictors. This in align with the literature brings about other factors like gender, family models, demographic factors, contextual factors, and individual attitude and beliefs also play a role in making entrepreneurship a career choice. (Dinis, 2024)

## Discussion and Conclusion

The empirical evidences in the study have clearly established Entrepreneurial intention and outcome expectations as antecedents of developing entrepreneurship as a career goal. However, self-efficacy did not turn out to be strong direct antecedent of developing entrepreneurship as a career goal.

These findings help suggest the importance of entrepreneurship courses in setting up entrepreneurship as a career goal. Although data were collected in several courses of entrepreneurship, the findings cannot be generalized to represent real conditions in all countries. Future research needs to involve public and private universities in varied countries and across other programs so that research results are more diverse and generalizable. To make the model more robust, other influencing factors can also be discussed. Since the research is at a very nascent stage, much work is expected in the near future.

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