A study on entrepreneurial spirit among college students in Chennai with special reference to Don Bosco Arts and Science College, Kilpauk, Chennai-10

[1]Dr. Jebaseeli Novaleena S, [2]Ms.A.Kenisha
[1]Assistant Professor & Head, [2]Assistant Professor
[12]Department of Commerce (General)
[12]Don Bosco Arts and Science College, Kilpauk, Chennai-10, India

***Abstract*—A study on entrepreneurial spirit among college students in Chennai with special reference to Don Bosco Arts and Science College, Kilpauk, Chennai-10 examines the entrepreneurial spirit among college students, with special reference to Don Bosco Arts and Science College, Kilpauk, Chennai. Primary data were obtained from 65 student responses collected through a structured questionnaire. The study analyses entrepreneurial interest, willingness to take calculated risks, prior entrepreneurial exposure, career intention and perceived institutional support. Percentage analysis, one-way analysis of variance, the chi-square test and exploratory factor analysis were applied. The results indicate that 64.6 percent of respondents were interested or very interested in entrepreneurship and 58.5 percent considered it a possible career after graduation. Financial independence emerged as the leading motivation, while lack of finance and knowledge were prominent barriers. The ANOVA and chi-square tests did not show statistically significant differences in the tested comparisons. Factor analysis suggested an exploratory entrepreneurial-orientation dimension and an exposure or initiative dimension. The findings highlight the importance of practical entrepreneurial learning, mentoring and access to start-up resources.**

***Index Terms*—Entrepreneurial spirit, college students, entrepreneurship education, career intention, factor analysis**

I. Introduction

Entrepreneurship contributes to economic development through innovation, employment generation and the creation of new products and services. Colleges can encourage an entrepreneurial mindset by developing creativity, opportunity recognition & confidence, problem-solving and calculated risk-taking. Students may show interest in entrepreneurship but hesitate to pursue it because of financial constraints, limited experience, inadequate knowledge or fear of failure. Understanding these perceptions helps institutions design relevant learning opportunities.

II. Review of literature & Research gap

Entrepreneurship research commonly links entrepreneurial intention with attitudes, perceived behavioural control and social influences. Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behaviour explains intention through attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control. Recent Indian studies have highlighted the growing importance of entrepreneurial intention, entrepreneurship education and institutional support among college students. Mitra, Sharma and Purohit (2023) examined the role of entrepreneurship education programmes and perceived social support in developing students' entrepreneurial intentions. Their study among 395 university students in Gujarat highlighted the importance of educational programmes and social support in encouraging entrepreneurship**.** Razi-ur-Rahim, Uddin, Dwivedi and Pandey (2024**)** studied

entrepreneurial intentions among polytechnic students in India. Their findings highlighted the influence of peer groups, institutional support and course curriculum on students' entrepreneurial intentions. Sharma, Khandelwal and Mehta (2024) conducted an empirical study on factors contributing to entrepreneurial intention among higher education students. The study examined the role of personality, motivation and entrepreneurial competencies in developing entrepreneurial intentions, Nayak and Joshi (2024) explored entrepreneurial intentions by integrating experiential learning theory with the Theory of Planned Behaviour. Their research emphasized the importance of practical learning experiences in developing entrepreneurial intentions. Singh and Jaiswal (2025) investigated factors influencing entrepreneurial intentions among university students in India, based on 223 responses from Banaras Hindu University. The study found that perceived behavioural control plays an important role in shaping entrepreneurial intentions. Chaudhary and Biswas (2024) examined entrepreneurial intentions among 730 students from five central universities in India. Their research highlighted the importance of business feasibility, innovativeness, altruism and uncertainty in shaping students' entrepreneurial intentions. Existing studies focus mainly on entrepreneurial intention, attitudes and entrepreneurship education, with limited attention to students' actual entrepreneurial spirit and practical involvement. There is a need to examine students' motivations, risk-taking abilities, career aspirations and barriers to entrepreneurship. Hence, this study focuses on entrepreneurial spirit among college students, with special reference to Don Bosco Arts and Science College, Kilpauk, Chennai-10.

III. Objectives of the study

1) To assess the level of entrepreneurial interest among students.
2) To identify the major motivations and barriers influencing entrepreneurship.
3) To examine differences in entrepreneurial interest across years of study.
4) To test the association between gender and entrepreneurial career intention.
5) To explore underlying dimensions of entrepreneurial spirit.

IV. Research methodology

The study adopts a descriptive and analytical research design. Primary data were drawn from the uploaded questionnaire response sheet, comprising 65 responses. The study is confined to the respondents represented in that sheet and should not be generalized to all college students in Chennai. Data were analyzed using frequencies, percentages, one-way ANOVA, Pearson's chi-square test and an exploratory principal-component-based factor procedure with varimax rotation. Entrepreneurial interest was coded from 1 (not interested) to 4 (very interested) for ANOVA. The factor procedure used five coded indicators: venture attempt, interest, risk willingness, Programme participation and career intention. Statistical results are interpreted cautiously because most questionnaire items are categorical and the sample is modest.

V. Data analysis and interpretation

A. Demographic profile

Table 1. Selected demographic characteristics (N = 65)

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender – Male	46	70.8%
Gender – Female	19	29.2%
Age – Below 18	23	35.4%
Age – 18–20	39	60.0%
First year	46	70.8%
Second year	14	21.5%
Third year	5	7.7%

Source: Primary Data

The sample consisted of 46 male students (70.8%) and 19 female students (29.2%). Most respondents were aged 18–20 (39 students) and were first-year students (46 students). B.Com students formed the large majority of the sample. One age response and some Programme/family-business entries contained combined or non-standard categories; these were retained as recorded and are not used in the main inferential tests.

B. Entrepreneurial interest and career intention

Interest level	Frequency	Percentage
Not Interested	7	10.8%
Neutral	16	24.6%
Interested	30	46.2%
Very Interested	12	18.5%

Source: Primary Data

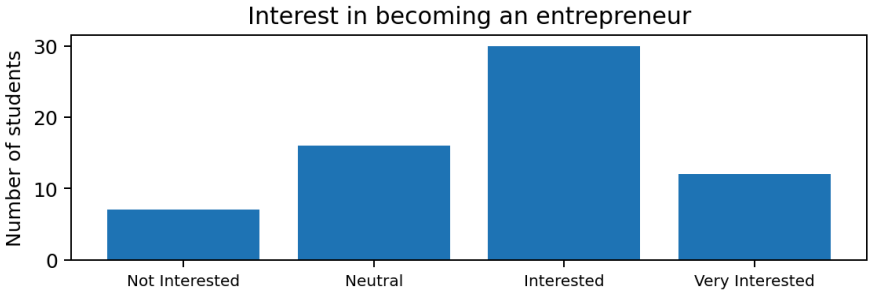


***Figure 1**. Respondents' interest in becoming entrepreneurs.*

A total of 42 respondents (64.6%) were either interested or very interested in becoming entrepreneurs. Sixteen (24.6%) were neutral and seven (10.8%) were not interested. This indicates a generally positive orientation, although interest alone does not guarantee start-up action.

Indicator	Yes	No
Willing to take calculated risks	35 (53.8%)	30 (46.2%)
Previously tried a business/project	7 (10.8%)	37 (56.9%); Maybe 32.3%
Attended an entrepreneurship Programme	9 (13.8%)	56 (86.2%)
Entrepreneurship as a career after study	38 (58.5%)	27 (41.5%)

Source: Primary Data

The gap between interest (64.6%) and prior business/project experience (10.8%) suggests that students may need more opportunities to translate interest into practice. Only 9 respondents (13.8%) reported participation in an entrepreneurship-related Programme.

VI. MOTIVATIONS, BARRIERS AND STATISTICAL TESTING

A. Motivations and perceived barriers

Major motivation	Frequency	Percentage
Financial independence	25	38.5%
Career independence	15	23.1%
Innovation and creativity	15	23.1%

Passion for business	5	7.7%
Social impact	5	7.7%

Source: Primary Data

Financial independence was the most frequently selected motivation (25; 38.5%). Career independence and innovation/creativity each accounted for 15 responses (23.1%). The leading barrier was lack of finance (20; 30.8%), followed by lack of knowledge (16; 24.6%). Lack of confidence and lack of experience were each reported by 10 students (15.4%).

B. One-way ANOVA: entrepreneurial interest by year of study

Year	N	Mean interest score	SD
First Year	46	2.65	0.95
Second Year	14	3.00	0.55
Third Year	5	2.60	1.14

Source: Calculated Data

ANOVA result: $F(2, 62) = 0.862$, $p = 0.427$. At the 5% significance level, the p-value exceeds 0.05; therefore, the null hypothesis of equal mean entrepreneurial-interest scores across the three study years is not rejected. The observed mean scores were 2.65, 3.00 and 2.60, respectively. The small third-year group ($n = 5$) warrants caution.

C. Chi-square test: gender and entrepreneurial career intention

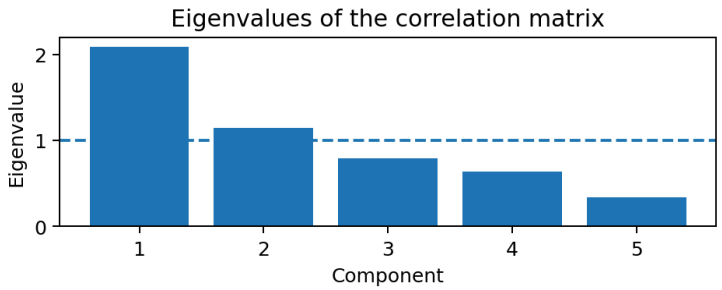
Gender	Career: No	Career: Yes	Total
Female	6	13	19
Male	21	25	46
Total	27	38	65

Source: Primary Data

Pearson chi-square: $\chi^2(1) = 1.097$, $p = 0.295$. Since $p > 0.05$, there is no statistically significant association between gender and the stated intention to choose entrepreneurship as a career in this sample. This result does not establish that gender has no influence; it indicates that the present sample does not provide sufficient evidence of an association.

D. Exploratory factor analysis

The five coded indicators produced a Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) measure of 0.569, indicating mediocre sampling adequacy. Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant ($\chi^2(10) = 55.875$, $p < 0.001$), suggesting that the correlation matrix is not an identity matrix. Two components had eigenvalues above 1 (2.09 and 1.15) and together explained 64.7% of the variance. Given the KMO value, categorical coding and sample size, the solution is exploratory and should not be treated as a validated measurement scale.



Source: Primary Data

Figure 2. Eigenvalues; dashed line indicates the Kaiser criterion (eigenvalue = 1).

VII. Factor structure, findings and conclusion

Table 4. Rotated exploratory factor loadings (absolute values)

Indicator	Factor 1	Factor 2
Venture attempt	0.52	0.59
Entrepreneurial interest	0.80	0.13
Calculated risk willingness	0.85	0.01
Programme participation	0.06	0.91
Career intention	0.62	0.17

Source: Calculated Data

Factor 1 is primarily associated with entrepreneurial interest (0.80), risk willingness (0.85) and career intention (0.62), and may be interpreted as entrepreneurial orientation. Factor 2 is strongly associated with Programme participation (0.91) and also venture attempt (0.59), and may represent exposure and initiative. The signs of factor loadings are arbitrary; absolute loadings are shown for ease of interpretation. The structure requires confirmation with a larger sample and a multi-item Likert-scale instrument.

VIII. Major findings

1) Nearly two-thirds of respondents (64.6%) expressed interest or strong interest in entrepreneurship.

2) A majority (58.5%) indicated that they would choose entrepreneurship as a career after graduation.

3) Financial independence was the leading motivation (38.5%).

4) Lack of finance (30.8%) and lack of knowledge (24.6%) were the most frequently reported barriers.

5) Only 13.8% had participated in entrepreneurship-related programmes and 10.8% had tried a business or project.

6) ANOVA did not identify a significant difference in mean interest by year of study.

7) The chi-square test did not identify a significant association between gender and career intention.

8) Exploratory factor analysis indicated two tentative dimensions, but the adequacy measure suggests cautious interpretation.

IX. Suggestions

The college may strengthen entrepreneurship education through practical workshops, business-plan and idea competitions, start-up internships, interaction with entrepreneurs and structured mentoring. Students can be encouraged to undertake small campus-based projects, market surveys and prototype development. Sessions on business finance, government support schemes, registration, and marketing and risk management may address knowledge gaps. Alumni entrepreneurs and local business owners can be invited to share experiences. A follow-up study with a larger and more balanced sample, validated multi-item scales and representation from different colleges in Chennai is recommended.

X. CONCLUSION

The study reveals encouraging entrepreneurial interest among the surveyed students of Don Bosco Arts and Science College, Kilpauk. However, the relatively low levels of prior entrepreneurial activity and Programme participation indicate a gap between intention and action. Institutional initiatives should therefore move beyond awareness and provide experiential learning, mentoring and practical access to resources. The statistical tests did not establish significant differences by year of study or an association between gender and career intention. Since the analysis is based on 65 responses from one college, the conclusions are limited to this respondent group and should be tested through broader research.

XI. Acknowledgment

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