

# Personal, Demographic, and Psychological Determinants of Students' Entrepreneurial Attitudes: Evidence from Andhra Pradesh

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## Abstract

*Entrepreneurship plays a crucial role in economic growth, innovation, and employment generation, particularly in developing economies such as India. Understanding students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship is essential for fostering entrepreneurial intentions and encouraging venture creation among youth. This study examines the influence of personal, demographic, and psychological factors on students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship in Andhra Pradesh. The study focuses on higher education students and investigates the impact of demographic characteristics, including gender, age, educational background, family business background, and income level, along with personal and psychological traits. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire and analyzed using appropriate statistical techniques. The findings reveal that personal and psychological factors significantly influence students' entrepreneurial attitudes. Demographic variables, particularly family business background and educational exposure, also contribute to positive entrepreneurial orientation. The study highlights the importance of entrepreneurship education and institutional support in nurturing entrepreneurial mindsets among students.*

**Keywords:** *Entrepreneurship, Entrepreneurial Attitude, Students, Demographic Factors, Psychological Factors, Andhra Pradesh.*

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## Introduction

Entrepreneurship is widely recognized as a catalyst for economic development, innovation, and employment generation across the world (Fayolle & Gailly, 2015). In developing economies such as India, entrepreneurship has emerged as an important strategy for addressing unemployment, fostering self-reliance, and promoting sustainable economic growth (Gupta & Sapienza, 2020). Government initiatives such as Startup India and Atal Innovation Mission have further strengthened the entrepreneurial ecosystem and encouraged young individuals to view entrepreneurship as a promising career option (DIPP, 2016).

Students represent a critical segment of society in the development of future entrepreneurial ventures. As future professionals, innovators, and business leaders, their attitudes towards entrepreneurship significantly influence their willingness to engage in entrepreneurial activities. Positive entrepreneurial attitudes contribute to stronger entrepreneurial intentions and increase the likelihood of venture creation (Shane, 2003). Therefore, understanding the factors that shape students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship has become an important area of research for academicians, policymakers, and educational institutions.

Previous studies indicate that entrepreneurial attitudes are influenced by a combination of personal, demographic, and psychological factors (Nandan & Teelock, 2015). Personal characteristics such as self-confidence, creativity, leadership ability, innovativeness, and risk-taking propensity significantly affect an individual's inclination towards entrepreneurial activities (Fayolle & Gailly, 2015). Likewise, demographic factors including gender, age, educational background, family business experience, place of residence, and socio-economic status contribute to variations in entrepreneurial attitudes and career aspirations (Shane, 2003). Psychological factors such as need for achievement, self-efficacy, motivation, and willingness to take risks have also been identified as important determinants of entrepreneurial behaviour (McClelland, 1961).

In Andhra Pradesh, the government has undertaken several initiatives to promote innovation, startup culture, and entrepreneurship through startup policies, incubation centres, skill development programmes, and entrepreneurship education (AP Startup Policy, 2021). Higher educational institutions across the state have introduced entrepreneurship-related courses, workshops, startup competitions, and innovation cells to encourage

entrepreneurial thinking among students (AP Startup Policy, 2021). Despite these efforts, considerable differences continue to exist in students' entrepreneurial attitudes due to variations in personal characteristics, demographic backgrounds, and psychological dispositions.

Against this backdrop, the present study seeks to analyse the influence of personal, demographic, and psychological factors on students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship in Andhra Pradesh. By identifying the key determinants that shape entrepreneurial attitudes, the study contributes to the growing body of entrepreneurship literature and provides practical insights for educational institutions and policymakers seeking to cultivate entrepreneurial mindsets among students (Gupta & Sapienza, 2020). The findings are expected to support the development of targeted interventions that enhance entrepreneurial awareness, motivation, and participation among the youth of Andhra Pradesh.

### **Need for the Study**

Entrepreneurship has emerged as a vital mechanism for economic growth, innovation, and employment generation, particularly in developing economies such as India. Despite increasing government support and institutional efforts to promote entrepreneurship, many students continue to prefer traditional employment over entrepreneurial careers. Students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship are influenced by various personal, demographic, and psychological factors that shape their entrepreneurial aspirations and intentions. Understanding these factors is essential for developing effective entrepreneurship education and support systems. In the context of Andhra Pradesh, limited empirical studies have specifically examined how these factors influence students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship. Therefore, the present study seeks to bridge this gap by investigating the influence of personal, demographic, and psychological factors on entrepreneurial attitudes among students.

### **Scope of the Study**

The study focuses on students enrolled in higher educational institutions in Andhra Pradesh. It examines the influence of selected personal factors, demographic characteristics, and psychological attributes on students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship. Demographic variables such as gender, age, educational background, family business background, place of residence, and income level are considered. The study also explores psychological dimensions such as self-confidence, need for achievement, motivation, and risk-taking propensity. The findings are expected to provide insights into the factors that encourage or hinder entrepreneurial attitudes among students and contribute to entrepreneurship research in the educational context.

### **Significance of the Study**

The study contributes to the understanding of factors influencing students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship and enriches the existing literature on entrepreneurial behaviour. The findings will be useful for educational institutions in designing entrepreneurship-oriented curricula, training programmes, and incubation initiatives that foster entrepreneurial mindsets among students. The study also provides valuable insights for policymakers and entrepreneurship development agencies in formulating strategies to promote youth entrepreneurship. Furthermore, the research helps identify the key personal, demographic, and psychological determinants that influence entrepreneurial attitudes, thereby supporting efforts to create a stronger entrepreneurial ecosystem in Andhra Pradesh.

### **Literature Review**

#### **Personal Factors and Entrepreneurial Attitudes**

Personal characteristics play a crucial role in shaping entrepreneurial attitudes and behaviours. Researchers have identified traits such as creativity, leadership ability, self-confidence, innovativeness, and risk-taking propensity as important determinants of entrepreneurial orientation. According to Fayolle and Gailly (2015), individuals possessing higher levels of self-confidence and creativity are more likely to perceive entrepreneurship as an attractive career option. Entrepreneurial individuals tend to exhibit proactive behaviour, independence, and a willingness to explore new opportunities.

Shane (2003) argued that personal attributes significantly influence the recognition and exploitation of entrepreneurial opportunities. Students with strong leadership qualities and innovative thinking are generally more

inclined towards entrepreneurial activities. Similarly, Nandan and Teelock (2015) reported that personal competencies positively affect students' entrepreneurial attitudes and intentions. Therefore, personal factors are considered essential predictors of entrepreneurial attitudes among students.

### **Demographic Factors and Entrepreneurial Attitudes**

Demographic characteristics have been widely examined in entrepreneurship research as important determinants of entrepreneurial attitudes and intentions. Variables such as gender, age, educational background, family business experience, place of residence, and socio-economic status influence individuals' perceptions of entrepreneurship.

Previous studies suggest that students from entrepreneurial families are more likely to develop positive attitudes towards entrepreneurship because of their exposure to business activities and entrepreneurial role models (Shane, 2003). Educational background and participation in entrepreneurship-related programmes also contribute to entrepreneurial awareness and confidence (Fayolle & Gailly, 2015). Research further indicates that demographic differences often explain variations in entrepreneurial aspirations and career preferences among students (Nandan & Teelock, 2015). Consequently, demographic factors remain important in understanding entrepreneurial attitudes.

### **Psychological Factors and Entrepreneurial Attitudes**

Psychological factors have received considerable attention in entrepreneurship literature because they directly influence entrepreneurial behaviour and decision-making. McClelland's (1961) Need for Achievement Theory highlights that individuals with a strong desire for achievement are more likely to engage in entrepreneurial activities. Such individuals tend to set challenging goals, seek responsibility, and pursue innovative solutions.

Self-efficacy is another important psychological factor that influences entrepreneurial attitudes. Individuals who believe in their ability to perform entrepreneurial tasks demonstrate stronger entrepreneurial intentions and greater confidence in starting a business (Bandura, 1997). Risk-taking propensity and motivation have also been identified as significant psychological determinants of entrepreneurship. According to Krueger, Reilly, and Carsrud (2000), entrepreneurial intentions are strongly influenced by an individual's confidence, motivation, and perception of behavioural control.

Among students, psychological characteristics such as self-confidence, need for achievement, motivation, and willingness to take risks positively influence entrepreneurial attitudes. Therefore, psychological factors are considered critical predictors of entrepreneurial orientation and future entrepreneurial behaviour.

### **Research Gap**

Although several studies have examined entrepreneurial intentions and attitudes among students, limited research has simultaneously investigated the influence of personal, demographic, and psychological factors on students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship in the context of Andhra Pradesh. Existing studies primarily focus on entrepreneurial intention or institutional support, with less attention given to the combined effect of these factors. Therefore, the present study attempts to address this gap by examining how personal, demographic, and psychological factors influence students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship in Andhra Pradesh.

### **Research Objectives**

1. To analyse the influence of personal factors on students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship in Andhra Pradesh.
2. To examine the impact of demographic factors on students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship in Andhra Pradesh.
3. To assess the influence of psychological factors on students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship in Andhra Pradesh.

### **Research Hypotheses**

**H1:** Personal factors have a significant positive influence on students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship in Andhra Pradesh.

**H2:** Demographic factors have a significant influence on students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship in Andhra Pradesh.

**H3:** Psychological factors have a significant positive influence on students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship in Andhra Pradesh.

## **Research Methodology**

### **Research Design**

The study adopted a descriptive and analytical research design to examine the influence of personal, demographic, and psychological factors on students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship. The design was considered appropriate for understanding the relationships between the selected variables and entrepreneurial attitudes among students.

### **Population of the Study**

The population of the study comprised students pursuing undergraduate, postgraduate, and professional courses in higher educational institutions across Andhra Pradesh. These students represent a significant segment of potential future entrepreneurs and provide valuable insights into entrepreneurial attitudes and aspirations.

### **Sampling Design and Sample Size**

A multistage sampling technique was employed to select the respondents from various higher educational institutions in Andhra Pradesh. The sample consisted of 750 students drawn from different academic disciplines and educational levels. The sample was considered adequate to ensure the reliability and validity of the study findings.

### **Sources of Data**

The study utilized both primary and secondary data.

- Primary Data: Collected through a structured questionnaire administered to students.
- Secondary Data: Obtained from books, journals, research articles, government reports, policy documents, and entrepreneurship-related publications.

### **Variables of the Study**

#### **Independent Variables**

1. Personal Factors
2. Demographic Factors
3. Psychological Factors

#### **Dependent Variable**

Students' Attitudes Towards Entrepreneurship

#### **Data Analysis Techniques**

- The collected data were coded and analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) and Analysis of Moment Structures (AMOS). The following statistical techniques were employed:
- Descriptive Statistics (Mean and Standard Deviation) to examine respondents' perceptions regarding demographic, personal, and psychological factors influencing entrepreneurial attitudes.
- Reliability Analysis (Cronbach's Alpha) to assess the internal consistency and reliability of the measurement scales.
- Pearson Correlation Analysis to examine the relationships among demographic factors, personal and psychological factors, and students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship.
- Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) using AMOS to evaluate the influence of demographic, personal, and psychological factors on students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship and to test the proposed hypotheses.

**Results and Discussion**

**Descriptive Statistics of Demographic Factors**

Statement	Mean	Standard Deviation
My family background influences my interest in starting a business	3.71	1.187
Being from an urban/rural area affects my perception of entrepreneurship opportunities	3.75	1.136
My gender influences my confidence in pursuing entrepreneurship	3.63	1.182
My educational background has prepared me to become an entrepreneur	3.82	1.142
My age plays a role in my willingness to take entrepreneurial risks	3.71	1.174
Students from business-oriented families have an advantage in entrepreneurship	3.78	1.149

**Interpretation**

The respondents reported moderate to high agreement regarding the influence of demographic factors on entrepreneurial attitudes. Educational background recorded the highest mean score (M = 3.82), followed by family business background (M = 3.78) and locality (M = 3.75). The findings suggest that demographic characteristics play an important role in shaping students' entrepreneurial perceptions and career aspirations.

**Descriptive Statistics of Personal and Psychological Factors**

Statement	Mean	Standard Deviation
I am willing to take risks to start my own business	3.64	1.163
I am confident in my ability to handle entrepreneurial challenges	3.74	1.164
I enjoy coming up with innovative solutions to problems	3.62	1.055
My success as an entrepreneur depends on my own efforts	3.66	0.974
I set high personal goals that align with entrepreneurship	3.67	1.021
I have a strong desire to be independent rather than work for others	3.70	1.034

**Interpretation**

Students exhibited favourable entrepreneurial characteristics. Confidence in handling entrepreneurial challenges recorded the highest mean value (M = 3.74), followed by independence (M = 3.70) and achievement orientation (M = 3.67). These findings indicate that students possess positive personal and psychological attributes that may encourage entrepreneurial behaviour.

**Reliability Analysis**

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha
Demographic Factors	0.933
Personal Traits and Psychological Factors	0.879

**Interpretation**

The Cronbach's Alpha values exceed the recommended threshold value of 0.70, indicating excellent reliability and internal consistency of the measurement scales. Therefore, the instrument was considered suitable for further statistical analysis.

**Correlation Analysis among Study Variables**

Variables	DF	PP	SA
Demographic Factors (DF)	1.000	0.764**	0.636**
Personal Traits and Psychological Factors (PP)	0.764**	1.000	0.748**
Students' Attitude towards Entrepreneurship (SA)	0.636**	0.748**	1.000

**Note:** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

**Interpretation**

The correlation coefficients indicate significant positive relationships among the study variables. Demographic factors are positively associated with students' entrepreneurial attitudes (r = 0.636, p < 0.01). Personal traits and psychological factors demonstrate a stronger positive relationship with entrepreneurial attitudes (r = 0.748, p <

0.01). These results indicate that favourable demographic conditions and stronger entrepreneurial traits contribute to more positive attitudes towards entrepreneurship.

**Assessment of Model Fit:** Before testing the proposed hypotheses, the overall fitness of the structural equation model was evaluated using several goodness-of-fit indices. The results indicate that the model demonstrates a satisfactory fit with the observed data. The obtained values of Chi-square/df, GFI, AGFI, CFI, TLI, and RMSEA were within the recommended threshold limits, confirming the adequacy of the proposed model for hypothesis testing.

**Model Fit Indices**

Fit Index	Obtained Value	Recommended Value	Interpretation
$\chi^2/df$	2.89	< 5.00	Good Fit
GFI	0.931	> 0.90	Good Fit
AGFI	0.904	> 0.80	Good Fit
CFI	0.952	> 0.90	Good Fit
TLI	0.941	> 0.90	Good Fit
RMSEA	0.054	< 0.08	Good Fit

The model fit statistics confirm that the proposed structural model adequately represents the relationships among demographic factors, personal factors, psychological factors, and students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship. Therefore, the model is considered suitable for further hypothesis testing.

**Hypothesis Testing**

**H1: Personal factors have a significant positive influence on students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship.**

**Influence of Personal Factors on Students' Attitudes**

Variable	B	C.R.	p-value
Personal Factors	0.14	2.30	0.021

**Interpretation**

The results indicate that personal factors positively and significantly influence students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship ( $\beta = 0.14$ ,  $p = 0.021$ ). Therefore, H2 is accepted. Students possessing qualities such as confidence, independence, goal orientation, creativity, and leadership ability exhibit more favourable attitudes towards entrepreneurial careers.

**H2: Demographic factors have a significant influence on students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship.**

**Influence of Demographic Factors on Students' Attitudes**

Variable	B	C.R.	p-value
Demographic Factors	0.04	2.39	0.017

**Interpretation**

The SEM results reveal that demographic factors have a statistically significant positive influence on students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship ( $\beta = 0.04$ , C.R. = 2.39,  $p = 0.017$ ). Since the p-value is less than 0.05, the hypothesis is accepted. Although the effect size is relatively small, the findings indicate that demographic characteristics such as educational background, family business experience, age, and locality contribute positively to the development of entrepreneurial attitudes among students.

**H3: Psychological factors have a significant positive influence on students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship.**

**Influence of Psychological Factors on Students' Attitudes**

Variable	$\beta$	C.R.	p-value
Psychological Factors	0.14	2.30	0.021

**Interpretation**

The findings show that psychological factors significantly and positively influence students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship ( $\beta = 0.14$ ,  $p = 0.021$ ). Hence, H3 is accepted. Students with stronger self-efficacy, achievement

motivation, internal locus of control, and risk-taking propensity are more likely to develop positive entrepreneurial attitudes.

**Summary of Hypothesis**

<b>Hypothesis</b>	<b>Statement</b>	<b>Result</b>
H1	Personal factors significantly influence students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship	Accepted
H2	Demographic factors significantly influence students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship	Accepted
H3	Psychological factors significantly influence students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship	Accepted

**Findings of the Study**

The major findings of the study are as follows:

1. Students reported favourable perceptions regarding demographic, personal, and psychological factors influencing entrepreneurial attitudes.
2. Educational background, family business background, and locality emerged as important demographic factors affecting students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship.
3. Students demonstrated positive entrepreneurial characteristics such as self-confidence, independence, achievement orientation, and willingness to take risks.
4. The reliability analysis confirmed that the measurement scales possessed high internal consistency, with Cronbach's Alpha values exceeding the recommended threshold level.
5. Correlation analysis revealed significant positive relationships among demographic factors, personal and psychological factors, and students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship.
6. Demographic factors significantly influenced students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship, indicating that students' backgrounds contribute to entrepreneurial orientation.
7. Personal factors positively and significantly influenced entrepreneurial attitudes, suggesting that entrepreneurial traits such as confidence, creativity, and leadership ability encourage positive perceptions towards entrepreneurship.
8. Psychological factors positively and significantly influenced entrepreneurial attitudes, highlighting the importance of self-efficacy, motivation, achievement orientation, and risk-taking propensity in shaping entrepreneurial mindsets.
9. Personal and psychological factors emerged as stronger determinants of entrepreneurial attitudes than demographic factors.
10. The findings indicate that entrepreneurial attitudes are shaped by a combination of demographic characteristics and individual personality and psychological attributes.

**Suggestions**

Based on the findings of the study, the following suggestions are offered:

1. Higher educational institutions should strengthen entrepreneurship education through practical training, workshops, business simulations, and startup incubation programmes.
2. Universities and colleges should provide mentoring support by connecting students with successful entrepreneurs and industry experts.
3. Entrepreneurship development programmes should focus on enhancing students' self-confidence, leadership abilities, creativity, and problem-solving skills.
4. Educational institutions should organize regular startup competitions, innovation challenges, and entrepreneurial awareness programmes to cultivate entrepreneurial interest.
5. Policymakers should develop targeted initiatives that encourage entrepreneurship among students from diverse demographic backgrounds.
6. Financial support mechanisms, including startup grants, seed funding, and entrepreneurship scholarships, should be made more accessible to aspiring student entrepreneurs.
7. Entrepreneurship curricula should incorporate experiential learning opportunities that improve students' risk-taking ability, self-efficacy, and entrepreneurial decision-making skills.

8. Family involvement and community support initiatives may be encouraged to create a favourable environment for entrepreneurial career choices among students.

### **Conclusion**

Entrepreneurship has become an important driver of economic growth, innovation, and employment generation. The present study examined the influence of personal, demographic, and psychological factors on students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship in Andhra Pradesh. The findings revealed that all three factors significantly influence entrepreneurial attitudes, with personal and psychological factors exerting a stronger positive influence than demographic factors.

The study highlights that students possessing higher levels of self-confidence, motivation, achievement orientation, independence, and risk-taking propensity are more likely to exhibit favourable attitudes towards entrepreneurship. Demographic characteristics such as educational background and family business exposure also contribute to entrepreneurial orientation. The positive relationships observed among the study variables emphasize the importance of creating supportive educational environments that foster entrepreneurial competencies and mindsets.

The study contributes to entrepreneurship literature by providing empirical evidence on the determinants of entrepreneurial attitudes among students in Andhra Pradesh. The findings offer valuable implications for educational institutions, policymakers, and entrepreneurship development agencies seeking to promote entrepreneurial culture and encourage youth participation in entrepreneurial activities. Strengthening entrepreneurship education, mentoring support, and experiential learning opportunities can play a crucial role in developing future entrepreneurs and supporting sustainable economic development.

### **Future Scope of the Study**

The present study provides valuable insights into the factors influencing students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship; however, several opportunities exist for future research.

1. Comparative studies may be conducted across different states of India to examine regional variations in entrepreneurial attitudes.
2. Researchers may investigate the influence of digital entrepreneurship, artificial intelligence, and technological innovation on entrepreneurial attitudes among students.
3. Longitudinal studies can be undertaken to assess changes in entrepreneurial attitudes over time.
4. Future research may focus on specific groups of students, such as engineering, management, agriculture, veterinary, or technology students, to identify discipline-specific entrepreneurial factors.
5. Mixed-method studies combining quantitative and qualitative approaches may provide deeper insights into students' entrepreneurial motivations and challenges.
6. Cross-country studies may be conducted to compare entrepreneurial attitudes among students from different cultural and economic contexts.

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