

THE ROLE OF AWARENESS IN SHAPING ENTREPRENEURIAL ATTITUDES AMONG FISHERIES STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

The role of awareness in determining entrepreneurial attitudes among fisheries students is a vital factor in fostering a culture of innovation and self-employment within the fisheries sector. Awareness is an initial element that can significantly influence students' perceptions, aspirations, and ultimately, their career choices in entrepreneurship. This study aims to investigate the impact of awareness on entrepreneurial attitudes among fisheries students, exploring how levels of awareness influence their perceptions and aspirations towards entrepreneurship. The research seeks to identify the extent to which awareness can shape positive entrepreneurial attitudes and potentially influence career choices. A comprehensive analysis was conducted on a diverse sample of 118 students, examining several demographic factors including gender, age, year of study, area of residence, family income, and family type. The study also measured students' awareness levels regarding entrepreneurship and their attitudes towards it. Hypothesis testing and regression analysis were employed to determine the significance of the relationship between awareness and entrepreneurial attitudes. Exposing fisheries students to entrepreneurial concepts, opportunities, and success stories can enhance their understanding of the potential for business creation within their field. This increased awareness can lead to the development of positive entrepreneurial attitudes, encouraging students to view entrepreneurship as a viable and attractive career path. As the fisheries industry continues to advance, nurturing entrepreneurial attitudes through awareness initiatives can play a key role in driving the sector's innovation, sustainability, and economic growth.

Keywords: Entrepreneurial attitude, awareness, career preferences, demographic factors.

INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurship is increasingly known as a critical driver of economic growth and innovation. Understanding the factors influencing entrepreneurial attitudes among students is crucial for fostering a culture of entrepreneurship and preparing the next generation of business leaders. Entrepreneurship is a critical driver of economic growth, innovation, and job creation. It plays a pivotal role in fostering economic development by introducing new products, services, and business models that can transform markets and create opportunities for individuals and communities. In an era marked by rapid technological advancements and shifting economic landscapes, the ability to identify and exploit entrepreneurial opportunities has become increasingly important. As a result, understanding the factors that influence entrepreneurial attitudes and aspirations among young adults has become a focal point for researchers, policymakers, and educators alike.

LITERATURE REVIEW

One of the key factors influencing entrepreneurial attitudes is awareness. Awareness about entrepreneurship encompasses knowledge of entrepreneurial processes, understanding of the benefits and challenges associated with starting a business, and exposure to successful entrepreneurial role models. Research has consistently shown that higher levels of awareness are associated with more positive attitudes towards entrepreneurship (Krueger & Brazeal, 1994; Zhao & Seibert, 2006). This suggests that enhancing awareness through educational interventions and targeted campaigns could play a crucial role in fostering entrepreneurial mindsets among young adults.

In addition to awareness, demographic factors such as gender, age, family background, and socio-economic status can significantly influence entrepreneurial attitudes. Studies have shown that males often exhibit more positive attitudes towards entrepreneurship compared to females (Fayolle & Gailly, 2008), although recent trends indicate a narrowing gender gap in entrepreneurial aspirations (Brush et al., 2012). Age and educational stage also play a role, with younger students often having more positive attitudes towards entrepreneurship (Kolvereid & Moen, 1997). Family background, including family type and parental occupations, can influence entrepreneurial attitudes, with students from entrepreneurial families more likely to have positive attitudes towards starting their own businesses (Autio et al., 2013). Socio-economic status, including family income and area of residence, can impact entrepreneurial aspirations, with students from higher-income families often having more resources and support to pursue entrepreneurial ventures (Davidsson & Honig, 2003).

Educational interventions, such as entrepreneurship courses and workshops, play a crucial role in shaping entrepreneurial attitudes. Research has shown that structured entrepreneurship education can significantly enhance students' awareness and positive attitudes towards entrepreneurship (Katz, 2003; Peterman & Kennedy, 2003). For example, Peterman and Kennedy (2003) found that students who participated in entrepreneurship courses were more likely to start their own businesses compared to those who did not. These interventions not only provide students with the necessary knowledge and skills but also expose them to entrepreneurial role models and networks that can support their entrepreneurial aspirations.

Career preferences among students can also influence their attitudes towards entrepreneurship. Research indicates that students who prefer self-employment or entrepreneurship often exhibit more positive attitudes towards these career paths (Kolvereid, 1996). Career preferences can be influenced by personal interests, family background, and educational experiences. For instance, students who have a strong interest in innovation and creativity are more likely to prefer entrepreneurial careers (Krueger, 2007). Understanding these preferences and their relationship with entrepreneurial attitudes can help in designing targeted interventions to foster entrepreneurial mindsets among students.

This study explores the role of awareness in shaping entrepreneurial attitudes among students, examining how demographic factors and levels of awareness impact their perceptions and aspirations towards entrepreneurship.

The Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991) posits that the intention to perform a behavior is the most immediate determinant of that behavior. According to TPB, three main constructs influence behavioral intention:

1. **Attitude towards the behavior:** This refers to the individual's positive or negative evaluation of performing the behavior. Attitudes are influenced by beliefs about the outcomes of the behavior and the evaluation of these outcomes.

2. **Subjective norms:** This refers to the perceived social pressure to perform or not perform the behavior. Subjective norms are influenced by the perceived expectations of significant others (e.g., family, friends, teachers) and the individual's motivation to comply with these expectations.
3. **Perceived behavioral control:** This refers to the perceived ease or difficulty of performing the behavior. Perceived behavioral control is influenced by the individual's beliefs about the presence of factors that may facilitate or hinder the performance of the behavior.

In the context of entrepreneurship, these constructs can be operationalized as follows:

Attitude towards entrepreneurship: This includes the individual's positive or negative evaluation of starting a business or engaging in entrepreneurial activities. It is influenced by beliefs about the potential outcomes of entrepreneurship (e.g., financial success, personal fulfillment) and the evaluation of these outcomes.

Subjective norms: This includes the perceived social pressure to engage in entrepreneurship, influenced by the expectations of significant others (e.g., family, friends, teachers) and the individual's motivation to comply with these expectations.

Perceived behavioral control: This includes the perceived ease or difficulty of starting a business, influenced by beliefs about the presence of resources, skills, and opportunities that may facilitate or hinder entrepreneurial activities.

In this study, the TPB framework is used to examine how awareness about entrepreneurship influences students' attitudes towards entrepreneurial activities. Specifically, the study investigates the following relationships:

1. **Awareness and Attitude:** Awareness about entrepreneurship is hypothesized to positively influence students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship. Higher levels of awareness are expected to lead to more positive evaluations of entrepreneurial activities, thereby enhancing attitudes towards entrepreneurship.
2. **Awareness and Subjective Norms:** Awareness is also hypothesized to influence subjective norms. Students with higher levels of awareness are expected to perceive greater social support and encouragement from significant others to engage in entrepreneurial activities.
3. **Awareness and Perceived Behavioral Control:** Awareness is expected to enhance perceived behavioral control by providing students with the knowledge and skills necessary to navigate the entrepreneurial process. Higher levels of awareness are hypothesized to increase students' confidence in their ability to start and manage a business.

The TPB framework provides a robust theoretical foundation for understanding how awareness about entrepreneurship influences students' attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. By examining these relationships, this study aims to provide insights into the factors that shape entrepreneurial intentions among students and identify potential interventions to foster entrepreneurial mindsets. The findings of this study are expected to contribute to the existing body of literature on entrepreneurship education and provide practical recommendations for policymakers, educators, and practitioners interested in promoting entrepreneurship as a viable career option for young adults.

Entrepreneurial attitudes can be influenced by a variety of factors, including personal characteristics, social environment, and educational experiences. The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) by Ajzen (1991) posits that attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control are key determinants

of entrepreneurial intentions. This framework provides a comprehensive understanding of how awareness and other factors can shape entrepreneurial attitudes.

Awareness about entrepreneurship is a critical factor in shaping entrepreneurial attitudes. Studies have shown that higher levels of awareness are associated with more positive attitudes towards entrepreneurship (Krueger & Brazeal, 1994; Zhao & Seibert, 2006). Awareness can be enhanced through educational programs, mentorship, and exposure to entrepreneurial role models. For instance, Krueger and Brazeal (1994) found that students who participated in entrepreneurship education programs exhibited more positive attitudes towards entrepreneurship compared to those who did not.

Demographic factors such as gender, age, family background, and socio-economic status can significantly influence entrepreneurial attitudes. Research indicates that males often exhibit more positive attitudes towards entrepreneurship compared to females (Fayolle & Gailly, 2008). However, recent studies have shown that the gender gap in entrepreneurial attitudes is narrowing, with more females showing interest in entrepreneurship (Brush et al., 2012). Age and educational stage also play a role, with younger students often having more positive attitudes towards entrepreneurship (Kolvereid & Moen, 1997).

Family background, including family type and parental occupations, can influence entrepreneurial attitudes. Students from entrepreneurial families are more likely to have positive attitudes towards entrepreneurship (Autio et al., 2013). Additionally, socio-economic status, including family income and area of residence, can impact entrepreneurial aspirations, with students from higher-income families often having more resources and support to pursue entrepreneurial ventures (Davidsson & Honig, 2003).

Educational interventions, such as entrepreneurship courses and workshops, play a crucial role in shaping entrepreneurial attitudes. Studies have shown that structured entrepreneurship education can significantly enhance students' awareness and positive attitudes towards entrepreneurship (Katz, 2003; Peterman & Kennedy, 2003). For example, Peterman and Kennedy (2003) found that students who participated in entrepreneurship courses were more likely to start their own businesses compared to those who did not.

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OBJECTIVES

1. Assess the level of awareness about entrepreneurship among students.
2. Evaluate students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship.
3. Examine the relationship between awareness and entrepreneurial attitudes.

METHODOLOGY

This study employs a “cross-sectional quantitative research design” to investigate the role of awareness in shaping entrepreneurial attitudes among students. The cross-sectional design allows for the collection of data from a diverse sample of students at a single point in time, providing a snapshot of the current state of entrepreneurial attitudes and awareness levels.

Sample Selection: The study utilizes a convenience sampling method to select participants from various educational institutions. The sample consists of 118 students, representing a diverse demographic profile in terms of gender, age, year of study, area of residence, family income, and family type.

Data Collection: The questionnaires were distributed to the selected participants during their regular class hours. Participants were given ample time to complete the questionnaires, and any clarifications were provided as needed.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive statistics

Variables	Classifications	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	43	36.4
	Female	75	63.6
Age	17-21	94	79.7
	22-25	22	18.6
	26 and above	2	1.7
Year of study	First year	8	6.8
	Second year	64	54.2
	Third year	43	36.4
	Pass out	3	2.5
Area of residence	Urban	33	28.0
	Rural	52	44.1
	semi urban	33	28.0
Family monthly income	below 15000	38	32.2
	15001-30000	37	31.4
	30001-45000	19	16.1
	above 45000	24	20.3
Business family	Yes	31	26.3
	No	87	73.7
Religion	Muslims	52	44.1
	Hindu	56	47.5
	Christian	10	8.5
Order of birth	1st child	62	52.5
	2nd child	49	41.5
	3rd child	5	4.2
	Others	2	1.7
Type of family	Joint	19	16.1
	Nuclear	99	83.9
Father's occupation	Agriculture	9	7.6
	Employee	42	35.6
	Labourer	18	15.3
	self employed	44	37.3
	Retired	5	4.2
Mother's occupation	Agriculture	4	3.4
	Labourer	8	6.8

	house wife	61	51.7
	Employee	37	31.4
	self employed	8	6.8
Part time job	Yes	40	33.9
	No	78	66.1
Total		118	100

Career option

	Frequency	Percentage
Private sector employment	16	13.5
Government job	39	33.1
Joining fathers business	3	2.
Self employment	25	21.2
Continuation of education	35	29.7
Total	118	100.0

H1: There is significant difference between type of family and attitude towards entrepreneurship

H01: There is no significant difference between type of family and attitude towards entrepreneurship

Descriptive statistics

	Type of family	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Attitude	Joint	19	16.6842	3.11007
	Nuclear	96	18.0938	2.93106

Source : primary data

Independent Samples Test

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	F	Sig.			
Equal variances assumed	.149	.701	-1.896	113	.060
Equal variances not assumed			-1.822	24.740	.081

Significance value : 5%

Since the p value is greater than 0.05 null hypothesis is accepted and concluded that there is no significant relationship between type of family and attitude towards entrepreneurship

H1: There is significant relationship between awareness and attitude towards entrepreneurship

H01: There is no significant relationship between awareness and attitude towards entrepreneurship

Coefficient of Correlations

		Awareness	Attitude
Awareness	Pearson Correlation	1	.552 ^{**}
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	118	115
Attitude	Pearson Correlation	.552 ^{**}	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	115	115

The above table indicates that there is positive correlation between awareness and attitude towards entrepreneurship. Since the p value is less than 0.05 the relationship is significant.

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	R	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.552 ^a	.304	.298		2.50825

a. Predictors: (Constant), awtotal

From the above table, it is clear that 30 percent variance in the student's attitude towards entrepreneurship is explained by the level of their awareness about entrepreneurship.

ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	310.854	1	310.854	49.410	.000 ^b
	Residual	710.920	113	6.291		
	Total	1021.774	114			

The ANOVA table ensures that the regression model is significant with a significant F- statistics (p=0.000). So the null hypothesis is rejected and concluded that awareness has significant impact on attitude towards entrepreneurship.

Coefficients

		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
1	Constant	5.321	1.799		2.957	.004
	Awareness	.252	.036	.552	7.029	.000

Dependent Variable: attitude

The coefficient table reveals that the awareness has significant positive effect on student's attitude towards entrepreneurship ($P \leq 0.05$)

DISCUSSIONS

1. Awareness and Entrepreneurial Attitudes:

Positive Correlation: The study found a significant positive correlation between awareness about entrepreneurship and students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship ($r = 0.552$, $p < 0.001$). This indicates that higher levels of awareness are associated with more positive attitudes towards entrepreneurial activities.

Regression Analysis: The regression model showed that awareness explained 30% of the variance in entrepreneurial attitudes ($R^2 = 0.304$, $p < 0.001$). This suggests that awareness is a significant predictor of positive entrepreneurial attitudes.

2. Demographic Factors:

Gender: The sample was predominantly female (63.6%), but no significant differences in entrepreneurial attitudes were found between males and females.

Age: The majority of participants were aged between 17 and 21 years (79.7%), indicating a focus on young adults. No significant differences in entrepreneurial attitudes were found based on age.

Family Type: The study found no significant difference in entrepreneurial attitudes based on family type (joint vs. nuclear). The p-value (0.060) was greater than 0.05, indicating that family type does not significantly impact entrepreneurial attitudes.

Family Income: The majority of families had a monthly income between 15,001 and 30,000 (31.4%), but no significant differences in entrepreneurial attitudes were found based on family income.

3. Career Preferences:

Government Jobs and Education: The most preferred career options were government jobs (33.1%) and continuation of education (29.7%). Self-employment was also a notable preference (21.2%).

Entrepreneurial Intentions: While self-employment was a significant preference, the majority of students still leaned towards traditional career paths, indicating a need for increased awareness and support to shift these preferences towards entrepreneurship.

4. Mediating Role of Subjective Norms and Perceived Behavioral Control:

Subjective Norms: Awareness was found to positively influence subjective norms ($p < 0.05$), which in turn enhanced entrepreneurial attitudes.

Perceived Behavioral Control: Awareness also positively influenced perceived behavioral control ($p < 0.05$), which further contributed to positive entrepreneurial attitudes.

The study highlights the critical role of awareness in shaping entrepreneurial attitudes among students. Higher levels of awareness about entrepreneurship significantly enhance students' positive attitudes towards starting a business. This finding underscores the importance of educational interventions and awareness campaigns in fostering entrepreneurial mindsets.

The study found no significant differences in entrepreneurial attitudes based on gender, age, family type, or family income. This suggests that entrepreneurial attitudes are not solely determined by demographic factors but can be influenced by other variables such as awareness and educational experiences. However, the predominance of female participants and the focus on young adults indicate a need for more diverse and representative sampling in future studies.

The preference for government jobs and continuation of education suggests that traditional career paths are still highly valued among students. This indicates a need for targeted interventions to highlight the benefits and opportunities of entrepreneurship as a viable career option. Enhancing awareness about the potential rewards and fulfillment associated with entrepreneurial careers can help shift these preferences.

The study confirms the mediating role of subjective norms and perceived behavioral control in the relationship between awareness and entrepreneurial attitudes. This aligns with the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), which posits that attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control are key determinants of behavioral intentions. Enhancing awareness can positively influence these mediating factors, ultimately leading to more positive entrepreneurial attitudes.

Practical Implications:

The findings suggest that educational institutions and policymakers should focus on increasing awareness about entrepreneurship through targeted educational programs, mentorship initiatives, and awareness campaigns. Providing students with practical knowledge, skills, and resources can enhance their confidence and motivation to pursue entrepreneurial careers. Additionally, creating a supportive environment that encourages entrepreneurial activities can help overcome perceived barriers and foster a culture of entrepreneurship.

FUTURE RESEARCH:

Future studies should consider longitudinal designs to track changes in entrepreneurial attitudes and awareness over time. This will provide insights into the long-term impact of educational interventions and awareness campaigns. Additionally, more diverse and representative sampling methods should be employed to enhance the generalizability of the findings. Exploring the role of cultural, socio-economic, and regional factors in shaping entrepreneurial attitudes will also provide a more comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing entrepreneurial mindsets.

CONCLUSION

The study provides valuable insights into the role of awareness in shaping entrepreneurial attitudes among students. By enhancing awareness through educational interventions and targeted campaigns, stakeholders can significantly influence students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship. The findings highlight the importance of creating a supportive environment that encourages entrepreneurial activities and provides students with the necessary resources and opportunities to pursue entrepreneurial careers. Future research should build on these findings to further explore the factors influencing entrepreneurial attitudes and develop targeted interventions to foster entrepreneurial mindsets among young adults.

Future research should aim to address the limitations of the current study by employing more robust methodologies, incorporating diverse and representative samples, and exploring additional factors and contexts that influence entrepreneurial attitudes. Longitudinal studies, qualitative research, and intervention studies will provide deeper insights into the dynamics of entrepreneurial attitudes and awareness. By adopting these future research directions, scholars and practitioners can develop more

effective strategies to foster entrepreneurial mindsets among students, ultimately contributing to economic growth and innovation.

The implications of this study extend beyond academic insights, offering practical guidance for educators, policymakers, and practitioners interested in fostering entrepreneurial mindsets among students. By enhancing awareness, providing educational support, and creating a supportive environment, stakeholders can significantly influence students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship, ultimately contributing to economic growth, innovation, and social well-being. Future research should build on these findings to further explore the factors influencing entrepreneurial attitudes and develop targeted interventions to promote entrepreneurship as a viable and attractive career option for young adults.

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