

## **DO SUBJECTIVE NORMS INFLUENCE ENTREPRENEURIAL INTENTION IN A MATRILINEAL SOCIETY?**

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**Abstract**—Subjective norms measure the social pressure to either undertake or not undertake entrepreneurship as a career. It refers to the perception that "significant people" would or would not approve of the decision to become an entrepreneur (Ajzen, 1991). Subjective norm, as a social construct, usually influences young people's entrepreneurial intention. However, it is interesting to investigate whether it does influence the entrepreneurial intention of the youth in the matrilineal society of Meghalaya, a state situated in the north-eastern region of India. This paper is based on the outcome of primary research carried out among undergraduate and postgraduate students studying in Meghalaya.

**Keywords**—Subjective Norms, Matrilineal Society, Entrepreneurial Intention, Meghalaya.

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Entrepreneurship development has remained a constant focus area in developing countries' long-term economic growth strategy. It has played an important role in the advancement of modern civilization throughout history, and this has been true throughout all periods of human history (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000). Literature indicates that a large percentage of economic growth rates in developed nations can be attributable to entrepreneurs with high expectations who capitalise on government investments in knowledge creation and regulatory freedom (Valliere & Peterson, 2009). Similarly, entrepreneurship is an activity that can contribute significantly to the growth of the Indian economy (Dutta & Debnath, 2011). It is a decisive factor in a region's economic development (Sikidar, 2011). Entrepreneurship is essential for resolving unemployment and underemployment and ensuring that everyone has a fair share of income and wealth (Singha & Singha, 2011). However, a lack of entrepreneurs among the indigenous societies of North East India has hindered the economic progress of the region. In North East India, and particularly in Meghalaya, entrepreneurship is not a preferred career option since most of the youth still prefer employment in the public sector. According to the Government of Meghalaya's Sixth Economic Census (2013), the total number of establishments engaged in economic activities in Meghalaya (other than crop production, plantation, public administration, defence, and compulsory social services) stood at 1,06,758 which accounted for only 3.95 percent of the total number of establishments in the North-Eastern region and a meagre 0.18 percent of the total number of establishments in the country. Given that the Central Government of India has designated the states in North Eastern Region (NER) as special category states and developed many programmes for the development of the region's infrastructure and economy, these findings are astonishing.

### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

An important aspect of entrepreneurship research of recent years is to study the entrepreneurial intention of future potential entrepreneurs as intention has been found to play a key role in the decision to start a new business (Vesalainen & Pihkala, 1999; Linán & Chen, 2006; Linán & Chen, 2009; Engle et al., 2010; Fitzsimmons & Douglas, 2011; Israr & Hashim, 2015).

Entrepreneurial intention can impact behaviour in two ways: First, individuals with high self-perceived entrepreneurial intention exhibits increased tolerance to stress and environmental stressors and secondly, individuals with high entrepreneurial intention becomes more proactive and creative (Zampetakis et al., 2009). Ajzen (1991) in his Theory of Planned Behaviour states that subjective norm does play a role in entrepreneurial intention along with personal attitude

and perceived behaviour control. However, the relative importance of subjective norm in predicting entrepreneurial intention varies across different situations.

Subjective norm refers to the social pressure exerted by the environment on the individual to engage in or abstain from a particular behaviour (Ajzen, 1991). Some researchers have found subjective norm to be a significant predictor of entrepreneurial intention (Kolvereid, 1996; Kolvereid & Isaksen, 2006; Tkachev & Kolvereid, 1999). However, Krueger et al., (2000) opines that more empirical evidence is required to establish an exact relationship between subjective norm and entrepreneurial intention. Particularly when a research is done to investigate the relationship between subjective norm and entrepreneurial intention in a state of north eastern region of India and that too in a matrilineal society of Meghalaya, it is expected to help to address the long-standing research gap in this area.

### **OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY**

This study's primary objective is to research and comprehend perceptions of the youth of Meghalaya on self-employment as an alternative lucrative and promising career path. The present study also seeks to examine these concerns via the lens of patrilineal and matrilineal kinship structures. In light of this, the purpose of this research is to determine whether subjective norms are predictors of entrepreneurial intention in the context of the matrilineal society of Meghalaya.

### **RESEARCH QUESTION**

The following research question was conceived of in light of the objective of the study, which is as follows:

Do subjective norms prevailing in the matrilineal form of society influence students' intention to start a business venture?

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This paper is based on the study of both undergraduate and postgraduate students studying Commerce and Business Administration/Management at various colleges, institutions, and universities in Meghalaya. Final-year or final-semester undergraduate and postgraduate students were selected as the population because they are more likely to have received entrepreneurial education and be able to understand the concepts. In addition, they are viewed as potential entrepreneurs who are nearing a career choice point at the conclusion of their postgraduate degrees, where they may enter or return to the workforce or become self-employed (Fitzsimmons & Douglas, 2011). Furthermore, business students form a very important clientele for global research on entrepreneurship (Achchuthan & Nimalathan, 2012; Dissanayake, 2013; Gelderen et al., 2008; Mahendra et al., 2017; Trivedi, 2017).

With the help of pre-tested and modified questionnaires, data were collected from 1,227 students. However, only 929 questionnaires were used for data analyses and interpretations as the remaining questionnaires were found to be incomplete and missing data. Appropriate statistical techniques and tools are then used to draw relevant and meaningful conclusions.

### **DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

Following an analysis of the respondents' profiles and characteristics is a discussion of the findings. In addition, a more comprehensive analysis based on the objectives is offered.

Among the respondents, 57.91 percent belonged to the matrilineal society and the remaining 42.09 percent belonged to patrilineal society.

**Table 1: Distribution of the respondents in terms of the Kinship System and Gender**

	Kinship System		Total
	Matrilineal	Patrilineal	
Male	278	187	465
Female	260	204	464
Total	538	391	929

**Source: Primary Data**

*Do subjective norms influence entrepreneurial intention in a matrilineal society?*

**Table 2: Regression Analysis for Examining Relationship between Subjective Norm and Entrepreneurial Intention**

	Estimate	Std. Error	t-value	p-value
<b>Intercept</b>	0.01413	0.14593	0.097	0.923
Subjective Norm	0.25103	0.03174	7.909	< 0.01

Source: Primary Data

**Table 3: Residual Statistics**

Min	1Q	Median	3Q	Max
-4.2803	-0.4994	0.0837	0.5382	3.9986
Residual standard error: 0.8958 on 925 degrees of freedom				
Multiple R-squared: 0.5956,			Adjusted R-squared: 0.5943	
F-statistic: 454.1 on 3 and 925 DF			p-value: < 2.2e-16	

Source: Primary Data

As evident in the above tables, subjective norms do have an impact on entrepreneurial intention as the p-value is less than 0.05.

**Table 4: One-way ANOVA between Forms of Society and Subjective Norms**

	Sum of Square	df	Mean Square	F-value	p-value
Forms of Society	15.7	1	15.651	11.74	0.000639
Residuals	1235.9	927	1.333		

Source: Primary Data

As per the above table 4, the p-value is found to be less than 0.05. Therefore, it can be stated that the effect of forms of society or kinship system (matrilineal or patrilineal) on subjective norm is significant. The mean and standard deviation of the subjective norm for matrilineal society is found to be  $4.274 \pm 1.165$ , while it is  $4.011 \pm 1.140$  for patrilineal society. Therefore, it can be said that students from matrilineal society are having higher influence of subjective norm on entrepreneurial intention compared to students from patrilineal society. So, it means that students from matrilineal society are more concerned with the opinion of their family members, relatives and friends on their career choice as entrepreneurs.

## CONCLUSION

Subjective norms do play a significant role in the formation of entrepreneurial intention. It has also been discovered that the influence of this factor on students' choices of careers as entrepreneurs is more pronounced in students who come from a matrilineal society than in students who come from a patrilineal society.

In this study, an effort was made to empirically investigate into the Entrepreneurial Intention of the youth in Meghalaya and examine the various factors that may help in predicting the youth's intention to embark on a career as an entrepreneur. Also included in this study was an examination of the various factors that may help in predicting the youth's intention to pursue a career as an entrepreneur. As a consequence of this, policymakers and academics may be better able to devise strategies for creating an active entrepreneurial ecosystem on college and university campuses. Such an ecosystem would assist in the promotion and support of new as well as aspiring entrepreneurs.

## LIMITATIONS TO THE STUDY

The study has certain limitations. This study is founded primarily on cross-sectional data from the state of Meghalaya. The sample was comprised of undergraduate and graduate students in their final year or semester of business, commerce, and management studies in the state of Meghalaya. Due to this limitation, it is impossible to apply the findings of the study to all college and university students in Meghalaya. In addition, this research does not apply to students from states other than Meghalaya.

Second, the impact of various factors on students' entrepreneurial intention (EI) is of greater interest than the students' actual behaviour. As a result, the researcher cannot determine the number of students who engage in entrepreneurial activities after completing their education.

Thirdly, the research was restricted to examining a small number of independent variables. There may be additional variables that influence college and university students' entrepreneurial intent. Meghalaya's lack of empirical evidence hinders the study's ability to be empirically grounded.

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