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ACADEMIC STREAMS AND ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILL DEVELOPMENT: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF ARTS, SCIENCE, AND COMMERCE STUDENTS

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Abstract:

The increasing emphasis on entrepreneurship as a driver of economic growth has prompted educators and policymakers to investigate how academic environments influence entrepreneurial development among students. This study aims to explore the impact of academic streams—Arts, Science, and Commerce—on the development of entrepreneurial skills among higher education students. By examining entrepreneurial traits such as creativity, risk-taking, innovation, leadership, and business acumen, the research seeks to compare the entrepreneurial mindset across the three streams. A structured questionnaire was used to collect data from undergraduate and postgraduate students across various disciplines. The hypothesis tested whether Commerce students demonstrate significantly higher entrepreneurial skills compared to their Arts and Science counterparts. Preliminary findings suggest notable differences in entrepreneurial tendencies, often shaped by curriculum content, teaching approaches, and exposure to real-world business concepts. This study contributes valuable insights into how academic backgrounds influence entrepreneurial potential, with implications for curriculum design and skill-building interventions in higher education.

Keywords: *Commerce, Arts, Science, Entrepreneurial skills, Students, streams*

Introduction:

Entrepreneurship is increasingly recognized as a critical skill set for students across all academic disciplines. While traditionally associated with business education, entrepreneurial thinking is now seen as essential in various fields. This study explores how students from different academic streams—Arts, Science, and Commerce develop entrepreneurial skills and mind sets.

Each stream provides unique training, Arts encourages creativity and communication, Science fosters analytical and problem-solving abilities, while Commerce emphasizes business knowledge and financial literacy. These differences may influence students' readiness for entrepreneurship.

This comparative study aims to examine the entrepreneurial skill development among undergraduate and postgraduate students in these three streams. The research will identify key strengths, gaps, and influencing factors in each academic group, contributing to a better understanding of how academic background shapes entrepreneurial potential

Objectives:

- To explore how different academic streams influence the development of entrepreneurial skills among students.
- To compare the entrepreneurial mind set and traits among Arts, Science, and Commerce students.

Literature review:

Fayolle, A., & Gailly, B[1] his study aimed at entrepreneurial skills-encompassing technical, managerial, and soft skills like leadership and problem-solving-are essential across all academic disciplines. Entrepreneurship Education (EE) fosters innovative thinking and a risk-taking mind set, particularly when employing experiential learning methods such as

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simulations, internships, and start up incubators, which are more effective than traditional lectures.

Pittaway, L., & Cope, J.[2] his study explores that students from various streams benefit uniquely: Arts students leverage creativity and soft skills; Science students enhance problem-solving and technical abilities; Commerce students strengthen financial literacy and business planning. Institutional support, including incubators and industry partnerships, further enhances entrepreneurial outcomes. However, there's a notable lack of long-term, stream specific EE studies, indicating a need for future research to explore cultural differences and develop tailored EE models.

Nabi, G.[3] This study aimed at academic streams significantly influence students' approach toward entrepreneurship. According to Nabi et al. (2017), Commerce students are more inclined toward entrepreneurship due to their exposure to business-related subjects such as economics, marketing, and finance. Conversely, Science students often focus on research-based innovations but lack managerial and risk-assessment skills (Mwasalwiba, 2010). Arts students, on the other hand, show high levels of creativity and communication skills but may lack financial literacy and business planning capabilities.[1]

Significance of the Study:

This study is important in the context of modern higher education, where entrepreneurship plays a vital role in tackling unemployment and promoting innovation. By examining how academic streams like Arts, Science, and Commerce impact students' entrepreneurial mindset and skills, this research aims to.

This study supports educators in tailoring Entrepreneurship Education (EE) to each stream, guides policymakers in creating stream-specific programs, and fills a research gap through cross-disciplinary analysis. It helps students identify and develop entrepreneurial skills based on their academic background, ultimately contributing to more inclusive and effective entrepreneurship ecosystems in higher education.

Research Methodology:

For the research purpose, Data has been collected by Primary and Secondary sources. The tool used in primary data collection is questionnaire. While the secondary data is collected from Research articles and websites. Sampling size is 47 respondents. And the population is graduate and post graduate students. Percentage method has been used for data analysis. Graph and Table are used for the systematic presentation and analysis of data.

Hypothesis:

(H_0): There is no significant difference in the level of entrepreneurial mindset and skills between Commerce students and students from Science and Arts streams.

(H_1): Commerce students exhibit a significantly higher level of entrepreneurial mindset and skills compared to Science and Arts students.

[1] Fayolle, A., & Gailly, B. (2008). From craft to science: Teaching models and learning processes in entrepreneurship education. *Journal of European Industrial Training*, 32(7), 569–593.

[2]Pittaway, L., & Cope, J. (2007). Entrepreneurship education: A systematic review of the evidence. *International Small Business Journal*, 25(5), 479–510.

[3]Nabi, G., Walmsley, A., Liñán, F., Akhtar, I., & Neame, C. (2017). Does entrepreneurship education in the first year of higher education develop entrepreneurial intentions? The role of learning and inspiration. *Studies in Higher Education*, 43(3), 452–467.

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IMPACT OF ENTERPRENEURIAL SKILLS AMONG ARTS, SCIENCE & COMMERCE

TABLE 1.1

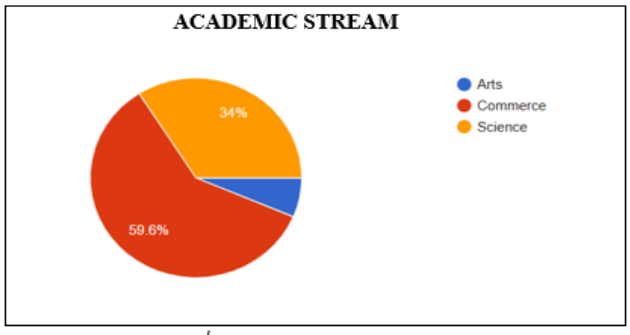
AGE

AGE	NO. OF STUDENTS	%
Below 18	1	2.1%
18-21	37	78.7%
22-25	5	10.6%
Above 25	4	8.5%

Source: Primary Data

The data shows that 78.7% of respondents are aged 18–21, followed by 10.6% aged 22–25, 8.5% above 25, and 2.1% below 18. The majority being in the 18–21 age group reflects a key stage in higher education where academic streams can significantly influence entrepreneurial skill development.

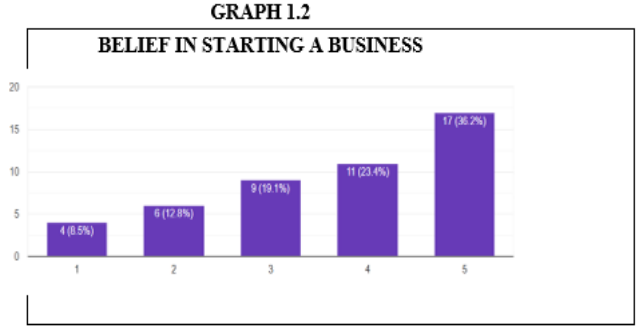
GRAPH 1.1



Source: Primary Data

The majority of respondents (59.6%) belong to the Commerce stream, followed by 34% from the Science stream, and a small proportion from the Arts stream. This distribution highlights a strong representation from Commerce students, providing valuable insight into how different academic backgrounds may influence entrepreneurial skills.

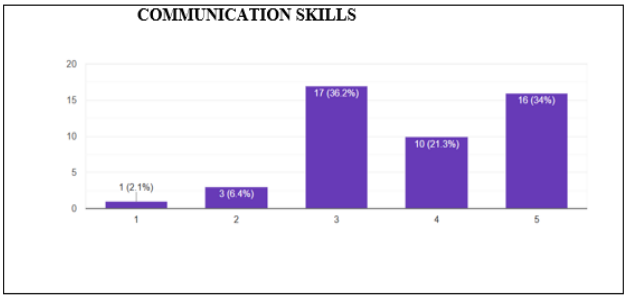
GRAPH 1.2



Source: Primary Data

The assessment shows that 36.2% of respondents strongly agree they can start their own business, with 23.4% agreeing, 19.1% neutral, 12.8% disagreeing, and 8.5% strongly disagreeing. Notably, the majority of those who strongly agree are from the Commerce stream. Overall, the results highlight a strong entrepreneurial mind set, particularly among Commerce students.

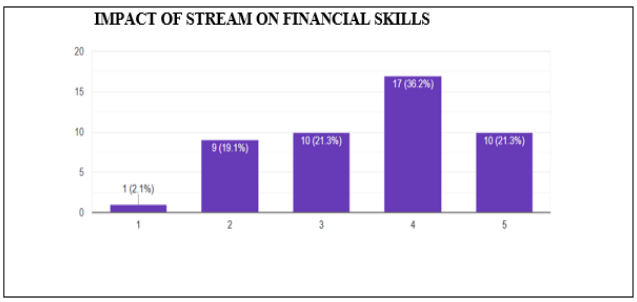
GRAPH 1.3



Source: Primary Data

The bar graph reveals that most students rated their communication skills as moderate to high, with 36.2% at level 3, 34% at level 5, and 21.3% at level 4. Commerce students generally showed higher confidence, with most rating themselves at levels 3 and 5. Science students rated themselves mostly at moderate to good levels, while Arts students had a mix. Overall, Commerce students had stronger perceived communication skills, important for entrepreneurial growth.

GRAPH 1.4



Source: Primary Data

The analysis of financial literacy across different academic streams highlights notable variations in skill development. Among Commerce students, a

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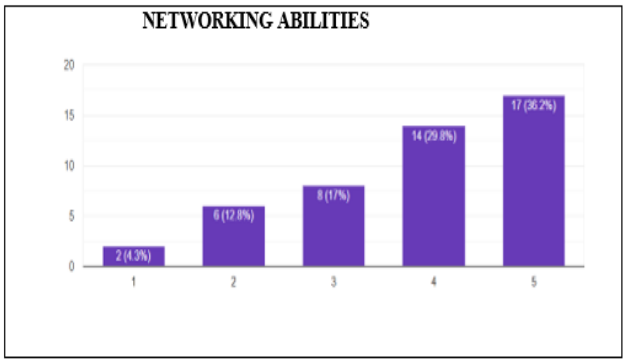
significant proportion rated their financial literacy as high (36.2%) or very high (21.3%), reflecting strong exposure to financial concepts. Science students predominantly assessed their skills as moderate (21.3%) to high (36.2%), indicating a reasonable level of competency but comparatively less confidence than Commerce students. In contrast, Arts students showed a wider distribution, with 19.1% rating their financial literacy as low and 21.3% as moderate, suggesting a need for stronger financial education within this stream. Overall, these findings suggest that the academic stream significantly influences the development of financial literacy, which is a crucial component of entrepreneurial capability.

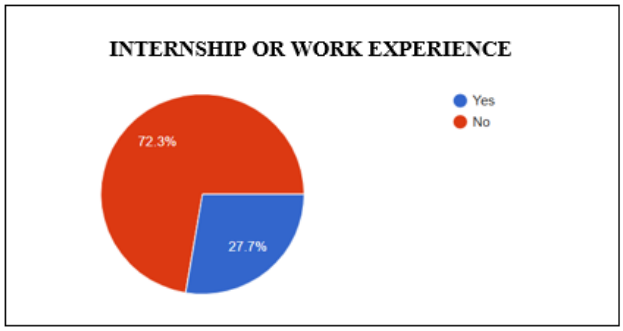
GRAPH 1.5



Source: Primary Data

This research explores how academic streams—Arts, Science, and Commerce—affect the development of networking abilities, a key entrepreneurial skill. Findings show that while only 4.3% of students rated their networking skills very low, a strong 66% rated themselves at high levels (4 and 5), reflecting strong capabilities. Commerce students generally demonstrated better networking skills than their Arts and Science peers, highlighting the influence of academic background on entrepreneurial skill growth.

GRAPH 1.6



Source: Primary Data

This pie chart shows that **72.3% of students lack internship or work experience,** while only **27.7% have such experience.** In the context of your research on **entrepreneurial skill development among Arts, Science, and Commerce students,** this suggests that **most students have limited real-world exposure,** which could impact the development of key entrepreneurial traits like risk-taking, leadership, and business acumen. It highlights the need for **stream-specific experiential learning opportunities** (e.g., internships, startup projects) to better prepare students across all academic backgrounds for entrepreneurship. So, **H0** Null hypothesis got rejected. While, **H1** is Accepted, because according to my collected data it tells that Commerce students demonstrate **stronger entrepreneurial traits** across key areas: mind-set, communication, financial literacy, and networking. This indicates that **academic stream significantly influences entrepreneurial skill development**, with **Commerce having a notable advantage**.

Findings:

- The Majority of Respondent (78.7%) are aged 18-21 representing a crucial phase in higher education where academic influence is strongest on mind-set and skill development.
- **Commerce students formed the majority (59.6%),** followed by Science (34%) and Arts students (a small proportion), giving the study a

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solid base for evaluating the entrepreneurial tendencies of Commerce stream students.

- ❖ The majority (59.6%) of students believed they could start a business, with most strong believers from the Commerce stream, showing their strong entrepreneurial inclination.
- ❖ Students mostly rated their communication skills as moderate to high, with Commerce students showing greater confidence, indicating stronger perceived communication skills essential for entrepreneurship.
- ❖ The Majority (66%) of students rated their networking skills as high, with Commerce students leading, reflecting stronger entrepreneurial networking abilities.

Conclusion:

The research concludes that academic stream significantly influences entrepreneurial skill development. Commerce students consistently showed stronger traits—entrepreneurial mindset, communication, financial literacy, and networking—compared to their Science and Arts peers. Most students lacked practical experience, highlighting the need for more experiential learning. Overall, Commerce students are better positioned for entrepreneurship, supporting the rejection of the null hypothesis.

Suggestion:

1. Introduce internships, startup projects, and entrepreneurship workshops across all streams to provide real-world exposure.
2. Include entrepreneurship modules in Science and Arts curricula to build key skills like risk-taking, leadership, and business planning.
3. Encourage cross-stream projects where Commerce, Science, and Arts students work together to foster diverse entrepreneurial thinking.
4. Offer regular sessions on communication, networking, and financial literacy to build essential entrepreneurial capabilities.
5. Connect students with entrepreneurs and industry experts to guide and inspire them across all academic backgrounds.

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5. *https://arxiv.org/abs/2306.09678?utm_*

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