

**A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF STUDENT MINDSET ON  
ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND WHITE-COLLAR JOBS**

**Project Report**

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**Under the guidance of**

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**In partial fulfillment of the requirement for the Degree of**

**BACHELOR OF COMMERCE**



**ST. TERESA'S COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS), ERNAKULAM**

**COLLEGE WITH POTENTIAL FOR EXCELLENCE**

**Nationally Re-Accredited with A++ Grade**

**Affiliated to**

**Mahatma Gandhi University**

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**March-2025**

**ST. TERESA'S COLLEGE, ERNAKULAM (AUTONOMOUS)**

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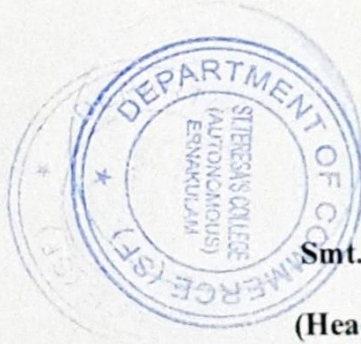
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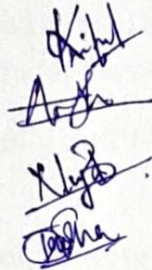
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### DECLARATION

We, Ms. Krishnendu V A, Ms. Anna Shyn, Ms. Niya Benny, Ms. Trisha Peter, final year B.Com students(Taxation), Department of Commerce (SF), St. Teresa's College (Autonomous) do hereby declare that the project report entitled "A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF STUDENT MINDSET ON ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND WHITE-COLLAR JOBS" submitted to Mahatma Gandhi University is a Bonafide record of the work done under the supervision and guidance of Ms. Sneha Abraham, Assistant Professor of Department of Commerce (SF), St. Teresa's College (Autonomous) and this work has not previously formed the basis for the award of any academic qualification, fellowship, or other similar title of any other university or board.

PLACE: ERNAKULAM

DATE: 25 03 2025.



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# **CHAPTER 1**

## **INTRODUCTION**

## **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

Entrepreneurship has long been a driving force behind economic growth and innovation, providing individuals with opportunities to create, lead, and scale their own ventures. In recent years, the landscape of entrepreneurship has evolved significantly, influenced by technological advancements, globalization, and changing consumer preferences. The rise of digital platforms and the gig economy has lowered entry barriers, allowing more individuals to pursue entrepreneurial endeavors.

White-collar jobs are typically associated with professional, administrative, and managerial roles that require formal education and specialized skills. These positions are often seen as stable and prestigious, offering structured career growth, financial security, and benefits. Sectors such as finance, healthcare, technology, and consulting have traditionally attracted fresh graduates looking for well-paying, secure employment.

Recently, the availability of numerous government schemes and support programs aimed at fostering entrepreneurship has made starting a business more accessible than ever. The evolving dynamics of the job market has influenced many young Indians to turn towards entrepreneurship, freelancing, and gig works. It's visible from the study by LinkedIn in 2024 that there has been a 30% increase in self-employed professionals compared to previous years, as many young graduates opt for freelance work or entrepreneurial ventures instead of traditional employment.

With the abundance of opportunities in both domains, students often face uncertainty, unsure whether to take the entrepreneurial plunge or follow the more conventional route of corporate employment. They are often pressured from family and society when making career choices, which can influence their decisions. These external influences can make it difficult for students to make decisions based on their true interests.

This research will delve into the factors influencing this career shift, such as the perceived limitations of white-collar employment, the allure of entrepreneurship, and the socio-economic and technological changes shaping the job market. By conducting a comprehensive analysis of survey data among college students, the study aims to

provide a nuanced understanding of the motivations and challenges faced by today's youth.

## **1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

With the evolution in the labour market, changes in established career routes and the emergence of new choices, many students struggle with the decision between pursuing stable, traditional employment or embracing the risks and opportunities of entrepreneurship. This dilemma is further complicated by factors such as job security, financial stability, technological advancements, achievement motivation and the evolving nature of the workforce post-COVID-19. In recent years, the rise of entrepreneurship has provided an alternative career path to traditional white-collar jobs, particularly for college students, as the academic curriculum focuses on nurturing entrepreneurial mindsets. This fluctuation reflects the broader economic environment, where job security is no longer guaranteed, and entrepreneurship offers an appealing, albeit risky and an alternative path.

This study seeks to investigate the factors and perceptions behind the career mindset among college students in regards to employment or entrepreneurship as a suitable career. Understanding these dynamics is critical for shaping future educational policies and supporting students in making more informed career decisions for long-term success and satisfaction.

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## **1.3 SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

This study aims to conduct a comparative analysis of students' mindsets toward entrepreneurship and traditional white-collar jobs. It seeks to understand how students are evaluating both career paths by exploring their attitudes, preferences, and perceptions, providing a balanced view of the appeal of each option. The study will examine key factors shaping these perspectives, such as technological advancements, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, and changing societal attitudes toward work. Additionally, it will take into account students' demographic situations, including age, family background, and stress levels. While some students may be drawn to the flexibility and independence of entrepreneurship, others may prefer the stability and structure of traditional white-collar jobs. As part of our primary data collection, we will be administering a questionnaire to approximately 143 students from colleges

within the locality of Ernakulam. This survey will gather insights into their perspectives on both entrepreneurship and white-collar jobs, focusing on the risks, rewards, and opportunities associated with each. By comparing these mindsets, we hope to contribute valuable insights into the evolving employment landscape and how students are navigating the choices available to them.

## **1.4 OBJECTIVES**

- To identify the factors driving students toward entrepreneurship.
- To analyse the domination of the current curriculum and activities among college students
- To investigate the demographic factors that contribute to the dominance of white-collar jobs over entrepreneurship
- To analyse the influence of motivational factors on students' choice between entrepreneurship and white-collar jobs.

## **1.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **1.5.1 Research Design**

The present study is descriptive, quantitative and analytical in nature. It is descriptive in the sense that it tries to identify various characteristics of research problems. It is quantitative because it involves numerical expression. And it is analytical since it examines, analyses and interprets the collected data in order to arrive at the conclusion.

**Research Instrument:** Questionnaire is a research instrument consisting of a series of questions and other prompts for the purpose of gathering information from respondents.

### **1.5.2 Sample Design**

Sampling is a process used in statistical analysis in which a predetermined number of observations is taken from a larger group. Cluster Sampling technique was used to select the samples from the population.

**Sample Size:** Out of all students of autonomous colleges in Ernakulam, a sample size of 143 was selected for the survey.

### **1.5.3 Collection of Data**

Both primary and secondary data were used for data collection.

- **Primary data:** The data which is collected from primary sources that is a source of origin from where the data is generated, they are collected for the first time by an investigator or an agency for any statistical analysis. For collecting primary data, we use the method of questionnaire. The questionnaire is a major technique for collection of primary data. The structured questionnaire was distributed to samples for gathering primary data.
- **Secondary data:** Secondary data on the other hand is the one which has already been collected by someone else and has been passed through the statistical process. Information from secondary sources like journals, websites, newspapers, books, magazines, reports etc. has contributed to this study.

### **1.5.4 Research Instruments for Data collection and analysis**

The collected data was used with the help of statistical tools like percentages. In the questionnaire five-point scales were used several times and three-point scales were also used. Tabular and graphical presentations were used for presentation of data. Graphical presentation includes bar diagram, histogram, pie chart etc.

## **1.6 LIMITATIONS**

This study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. Firstly, it relied on a relatively small sample of 143 recent graduates from a single university, which may not represent the broader experiences of graduates from diverse educational backgrounds and regions. The use of self-reported data introduces potential biases, such as social desirability bias, affecting the accuracy of responses regarding career aspirations. Additionally, the research was conducted during a specific economic period, which may influence the findings' relevance over time. Time constraints limited the depth of interviews and data collection, potentially impacting the richness of the insights gathered. The focus on college students excludes insights from individuals who may have transitioned into the workforce earlier, and cultural factors were not extensively explored, potentially limiting the applicability of the findings across different contexts. Lastly, the lack of longitudinal data restricts the understanding of how graduates navigate their career decisions over time.

## **1.7 CHAPTER OUTLINE**

This research study has been presented in five chapters. Each part of the study has a significant role in the completion of the study.

Here is the chapter segmentation followed for the study.

### **1.7.1 Introduction**

This chapter gives a brief idea about the dilemma young graduates face when choosing between entrepreneurship and job placements.

### **1.7.2 Literature Review**

This section explores previous studies and research related to entrepreneurship and job placements.

### **1.7.3 Theoretical Framework**

This chapter explains the key concepts and theories that help understand the dilemma faced by young graduates.

### **1.7.4 Data Analysis and Interpretation**

This section examines the collected data and presents insights based on analysis.

### **1.7.5 Findings, Recommendations and Conclusion**

This chapter summarizes the key findings, provides suggestions and concludes the study.

# **CHAPTER 2**

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

## **2.1 INTERNATIONAL LEVEL**

**Soh Ze Qing, Jugindar Singh and Wong Huey Wern (2024)** researched on the topic “Impact of Mindfulness Dimensions on Work Engagement Among White-Collar Employees During the New Normal in Malaysia” explores how different facets of mindfulness—attention, awareness, present focus, and acceptance—affect work engagement among white-collar employees. Through a survey of 227 employees, the research reveals that each mindfulness dimension positively influences work engagement, with acceptance having the strongest effect, followed by awareness. The findings suggest that mindfulness practices, particularly acceptance and awareness, can enhance employee engagement, a vital factor in the evolving post-pandemic work culture where remote work has grown in prominence. The study underscores the importance of integrating mindfulness into organizational strategies to improve engagement and decrease turnover.

**Zhu R, Zhao G, Long Z, Huang Y, Huang Z (2022)** These researchers conducted research on “Entrepreneurship or Employment, A Survey of College Students’ Sustainable Entrepreneurial Intentions” which explores how the COVID-19 pandemic significantly impacted the global job market, leading to increased unemployment, which affected college students' career prospects. Using field theory, they examined data from 4,926 college students in Hangzhou, a digital city in China, to analyse the effects of entrepreneurship education on sustainable entrepreneurial intention (SEI). Results indicate that students with entrepreneurship education, practical experience, and exposure to supportive environments such as entrepreneurship parks are more inclined towards entrepreneurship. Male students and those with family entrepreneurial backgrounds show higher SEI. The paper suggests that higher education institutions can foster sustainable entrepreneurial intentions by integrating entrepreneurship courses across disciplines, updating faculty training, and creating digital monitoring tools. These findings provide a good reference for universities to promote entrepreneurial intentions among college students and provide advice on the construction of entrepreneurship education fields.

**Dr. Hartono, MM, STIAMI – Institute of Social Sciences and Management. Jakarta, Indonesia (April 2021)** The thesis on “Changing University Students mindset: from job seekers to job creators” discusses the need for Indonesian university

students to shift from seeking employment to creating their own businesses, to drive economic growth. He performed a qualitative study using the phenomenological approach for data collection by means of semi structured interviews on selected 20 students from private universities in Jakarta. It emphasizes the low percentage of students aspiring to entrepreneurship, with only 4% of graduates wanting to become entrepreneurs while 83% aim to be employees, due to fears about capital, competition, and lack of business talent. The study points out that many students have a "fixed mindset"—viewing challenges and failure negatively—due to theoretical entrepreneurship education that lacks practical application. The results indicate that a change in students' mindset from job seekers to job creators cannot be achieved without improving entrepreneurship education at universities. The curricula and learning methods should be transformed into learning that emphasizes practical elements and entrepreneurial mental development. In the era of competition, Indonesia needs more entrepreneurs to support the national economy. The paper concludes that for a successful shift to entrepreneurship, universities need to foster a "growth mindset," improve practical entrepreneurship education, and provide better support systems like start-up incubators and mentorship programs.

**Carvalho L, Mavlutova I, Lesinskis K & Dias R (September 2021)** Another study on “Entrepreneurial perceptions of students regarding business professional career” investigates entrepreneurial perceptions among Latvian students, focusing on gender differences in career aspirations and influences from macro factors such as economic circumstances and public policy, and micro factors like personal resources, which are thought to maintain individuals' ability to interact with the environment. The researchers used a survey of 360 respondents, revealing that males are generally more inclined toward entrepreneurship than females, with males displaying greater self-confidence in possessing necessary entrepreneurial skills. While both genders value independence and profit as motivations, females emphasize financial management skills and fear of failure as significant concerns. Additionally, females report needing more support in terms of idea validation and financial resources, whereas males cite ethical workforce issues. The study also found that Latvian students have a high perception of bureaucracy and tax rates as obstacles to starting a business. This perception is not supported by reality as Latvia ranks high in the World Bank's Doing Business index. The research highlights the impact of educational

factors and suggests that policy adjustments could better support entrepreneurship education and address gender-specific challenges in Latvia. The study concluded that gender has a significant influence on entrepreneurial intentions, and further research is needed to better understand these differences.

**Adebakin, Adelabu and Subair, Obafemi Awolowo University (2020)** The three researchers together on their research on “Entrepreneurship or Paid Employment: The Post-School Job Preference of Undergraduates in Nigerian Public Universities” investigated the job preferences of final year undergraduates in six Southwestern states of Nigeria. They used a survey approach and a simple random sampling technique to collect data from 1,500 students across three public universities. The study investigates the post-graduation employment preferences of undergraduates in Nigeria, focusing on the choice between entrepreneurship and paid employment. They found that there is a relationship between entrepreneurship education and post-school job preferences of undergraduates. With Nigeria's labour market becoming increasingly competitive and unemployment rates high, the majority of students favour salaried jobs over entrepreneurship, associating paid employment with job security, social prestige, and career growth. While universities offer entrepreneurship education, it has not significantly influenced students' desire to pursue self-employment due to challenges such as unfavourable government policies, lack of startup capital, and the risks involved in running a business. Students are also discouraged by inadequate preparation for business and the poor support for locally made goods and services. Despite entrepreneurial education, undergraduates still lean toward seeking formal employment in large companies. The study concludes by recommending that entrepreneurship education be integrated across all disciplines to reshape students' career aspirations and encourage entrepreneurial ventures, as this could ease the school-to-work transition and foster job creation.

## **2.2 NATIONAL LEVEL**

**Mr. Sujit Bhattacharjee (April 25, 2024)** published an article on “Entrepreneurship vs. Traditional Employment”. The article explores the advantages and challenges of both career paths. It emphasizes entrepreneurship's freedom and potential for growth while highlighting traditional employment's stability and benefits. This guide aims to help readers make informed decisions about their career choices. The article discusses

the key differences between entrepreneurship and traditional employment, highlighting factors such as risk, rewards, work-life balance, and job security. It outlines the independence and growth potential associated with entrepreneurship while emphasizing the stability and benefits often found in traditional jobs. The author encourages readers to weigh their personal preferences and circumstances when choosing between these career paths.

**Research Center for Human Resource Management & Development (August 16, 2024)**, published "At a Bunch of Companies, White-Collar Jobs Slip Into the Red". The article details the troubling trend of job reductions in the white-collar sector in India, underscoring a significant shift in employment dynamics. A key example is Reliance Industries, which has slashed its workforce by 42,000 in FY24, primarily driven by cuts in its retail business, where over 38,000 jobs were eliminated. This trend reflects a broader stagnation in job growth among major corporations, with reports indicating that other firms are also reevaluating their staffing needs amid economic uncertainty and a push for increased operational efficiency. As companies adapt to these changing conditions, the implications for job security and the overall job market are becoming increasingly concerning for professionals across various industries.

**Dr. T. Suresh, Dr. A. Madhuri, and Dr. B. R. Kumar (2023)** examines the career preferences of commerce and management students in Vijayawada, India, specifically their inclination towards either entrepreneurship or employment under the research project "Perception of Young Graduates Towards Entrepreneurship and Employment as Their Career Choice". Based on data gathered from 251 undergraduate and postgraduate students through online surveys, the study reveals that the majority, both male and female, favored employment, citing job security, stable income, and lower risk as primary factors. A smaller group showed interest in entrepreneurship, motivated by independence, family business continuity, and government support. The study suggests that educational institutions and government bodies could promote entrepreneurship as a viable career option by integrating skill-development programs and raising awareness about entrepreneurial opportunities.

**Dr. Arun Kumar Choudhary and Ramesh Kumar, Shimla University, Himachal Pradesh (April 30, 2021)**. The thesis emphasizes that entrepreneurship is vital for

India's economic growth, supported by a young demographic, as over 50% of the population is under 25 years old. This demographic contributes to the country's status as the third-largest startup ecosystem globally, with nearly 50,000 startups and a consistent growth rate of 12-15% as of 2018. The education sector has been criticized for neglecting entrepreneurship, with low employability rates among graduates and inadequate support for entrepreneurial training in institutions. Despite recommendations for teachers to act as social entrepreneurs and inspire students, challenges such as a lack of trained educators and insufficient institutional frameworks persist. Collaborative efforts and technology can enhance entrepreneurship education, enabling holistic skill development and fostering job creation. This review highlights the critical need for integrating entrepreneurial education within higher education to address economic constraints and empower diverse populations, including women and farmers.

**Rekha, Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda (2015)** The research titled "Career Aspirations and Academic Achievement Among College Students: A Social Work Perspective" aimed to understand the career aspirations and academic outcomes of college students and identify factors influencing these areas, such as gender, age, schooling background, socio-economic status, parental work status, and whether the student worked while studying. Focusing on final-year undergraduate students within the Suvrat Municipal Corporation area, the study employed a mixed-method approach, using structured questionnaires and interview guides to capture both quantitative and qualitative data. The structured questionnaire assessed students' socio-demographic profiles, academic performance from the 10th grade to the undergraduate level, and parental expectations. Interviews with college principals and department heads provided additional perspectives on factors influencing students' career choices, career-related anxieties, and aspirations. The findings explored both the level of achievement in undergraduate years and students' future career plans, presenting a comprehensive view of the interplay between academic achievement, socio-demographic factors, and career aspirations among youth.

**Rituparna Basu (2014)** published the article "Entrepreneurship Education in India: A Critical Assessment and a Proposed Framework". The article critically examines the effectiveness of entrepreneurship education in India. Published in the Technology Management Innovation Review, Basu highlights the various challenges these

educational programs face, such as a lack of practical application and inadequate curriculum design. She proposes a comprehensive framework designed to enhance the relevance and quality of entrepreneurship education, stressing the importance of integrating practical experiences and skills necessary for successful entrepreneurship, which is vital for the economic development of India. It develops a working framework for an entrepreneurship education ecosystem in India. She proposes an effective eco-system for integrating and promoting entrepreneurship education as fundamental to mainstream business education in India.

**Sanjeev Swami and Rajesh K. Porwal (2003)** The article titled “Entrepreneurship, Innovation and Marketing: Conceptualization of Critical Linkages” in the Journal of Advances in Management Research, volume 2, the authors examine the interconnectedness of entrepreneurship, innovation, and marketing, emphasizing their critical role in driving business success. The article posits that innovation serves as a key driver for entrepreneurial ventures, while effective marketing strategies are essential for communicating the value of innovations to consumers. They discuss the concept of innovation, its sources and its types such as radical and incremental innovations. By conceptualizing these linkages, the authors argue for a holistic approach to business strategy that integrates entrepreneurship, innovation, and marketing to foster sustainable growth, with insights drawn from practices relevant in the Indian context.

## **2.3 STATE LEVEL**

**Rinu Raju and Dr. Samna M (2024)** The research on “The contribution of IEDC to entrepreneurial mindset development among higher education students in Kerala” encompasses the evaluation of Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Centers (IEDCs) concentrating on their impact on college students' entrepreneurial mindsets in the particular setting of Kerala, India. This research gathers insights from higher education students who have participated in Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Center (IEDC) programs, using surveys and interviews to collect data. The study focuses on understanding students' perceptions of the programs and the impact they had on their entrepreneurial mindset. This study uses the mixed approach of both qualitative and quantitative data collection method. This research concludes that students have the potential to develop an entrepreneurial and start-up mindset,

especially when supported by state governments and universities. However, significant barriers remain, as 42% of respondents cited lack of capital and 41% cited inadequate government guidance and mentoring. Despite these challenges, 51% of students involved in IEDC activities felt their creativity was enhanced, suggesting that exposure to entrepreneurial programs positively impacts students' readiness to pursue start-up ventures.

**Rajesh S (2022)** "A study on the attitude of students towards entrepreneurship in Kerala" research examines students' attitudes toward entrepreneurship, focusing on how their educational background and work-related concepts shape these perspectives. The study explores factors such as government support, personal initiative, and mindset toward entrepreneurial pursuits. This investigative approach sheds light on the influences and motivations driving students' entrepreneurial interests and aspirations. Primary data required for the study have been collected from the selected students from the selected colleges affiliated to select Universities from the state of Kerala. A well-structured interview schedule is used for collecting the opinion of students from the higher educational institutions in Kerala. Judgment sampling technique was used for the selection of sample districts. The study found that internal and external factors have an influence on the entrepreneurial intention among students in Kerala. Leadership quality and effective communication skill is the most important internal and external factor that should be imparted among students to become a successful entrepreneur. The study also identified that the educational system should focus on creating skills that can be used in practices, education and situations supporting innovation.

**Sreekanth I.S and Sreenath I.S (2019)** "A Study On Employability Of Commerce Students In Trivandrum And Kollam Region". This study aims to analyze the employability of commerce students in the Trivandrum and Kollam regions, addressing the pressing challenge of employability, which extends beyond the issue of unemployment. A survey by the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India highlighted this concern, revealing that only two percent of MBA graduates from Indian business schools secure employment immediately upon graduation. The survey was conducted using a structured questionnaire and informal interviews. Secondary data sources included websites, articles, magazines, and other projects to gain insights into corporate recruiters' perspectives on the quality of commerce

graduates. This research concludes that enhancing soft skills is essential for students' successful transition into the workforce. Education plays a vital role in a nation's development, as prosperity is closely linked to its human resources. In this context, India's higher education system is highly developed, providing training in various fields such as arts, humanities, commerce, and management. However, as the landscape of higher education expands and competition intensifies, it has become clear that graduates must possess skills beyond academic knowledge to thrive in the workforce. While every child is unique, there is a common expectation for essential workplace skills that transcend individual differences.

**Mr. Abdul Jaleel, Dr. P Vijayaraghavan and Mr. Muhammed Unais (2017)** "A Study on Attitude of Commerce Graduating Students Towards Entrepreneurship in Kerala". This research aims to assess the attitudes and perceptions of commerce students in Kerala universities toward entrepreneurship, examine how the entrepreneurial environment within colleges enhances students' entrepreneurial intentions, and explore the role of society in fostering entrepreneurial attitudes. This research employs a structured empirical approach, following a clear research design to obtain participants and collect data. The design defines the study population, selects appropriate measurement tools, and determines suitable statistical techniques for data analysis. Higher education students from institutions in Kerala district were selected as the sample for this study. This research concludes that the majority of respondents recognize numerous entrepreneurial opportunities within their area of study, have multiple business ideas, but view the cost of starting a business as prohibitive. Most commerce students strongly agree that increased interaction with the business sector would further encourage entrepreneurship. Additionally, tests indicate a positive correlation between the entrepreneurial attitude of students and the entrepreneurship environment within colleges or universities, suggesting that the college environment significantly enhances students' entrepreneurial attitudes.

**Sonia Katherin Mathew, School of Management and Business Studies, Mahatma Gandhi University (27th November 2015)** explores the complex attitudes of young individuals in Kerala towards entrepreneurship and the factors that influence their entrepreneurial intentions on her research project "A study on the attitude of youth towards entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship HIP in Kerala,". This research delves into the role of various demographic variables, such as gender, family background, and

socio-economic status, in shaping the entrepreneurial attitudes among youth. It also highlights the need for targeted support mechanisms to empower aspiring youth entrepreneurs, particularly women and individuals from entrepreneurial families, to further enhance their confidence and business acumen. These insights contribute to a better understanding of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in Kerala and the potential strategies to cultivate a stronger entrepreneurial spirit among the younger population.

## **2.4 SUMMING UP**

The studies and articles collectively examine how students' employment trends and occupational preferences are changing. These sources highlight the conflict between regular employment and entrepreneurship as well as the difficulties of seeking self-employment in highly competitive labour markets. These findings collectively emphasize the importance of tailored education, supportive environments, and mentality changes in promoting entrepreneurship and enhancing work engagement accordingly. Important trends in India's employment and entrepreneurial scene in the national level articles highlight the difficulties and possibilities of striking a balance between job stability and the expansion of entrepreneurship in the Indian economy. State-level research examines students' entrepreneurial attitudes and mindsets, emphasizing the ways in which government and educational programs affect them. It emphasizes how crucial skill development is in encouraging student entrepreneurship by establishing focused policies, promoting community involvement, and cultivating a positive learning environment.

# **CHAPTER 3**

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

In today's rapidly evolving society, the discussions about career choices among students have become more important than ever. The choices students make regarding their careers are influenced by various factors, including their mindsets about entrepreneurship and traditional white-collar jobs. As the traditional employment landscape shifts, young individuals face a pivotal decision between entrepreneurship and white-collar jobs. Understanding these differing mindsets is crucial because they shape students' decisions about their futures.

For instance, consider a student studying business who is weighing job options. One path might lead them to a corporate role at a major company, ensuring job security, structured career growth, and benefits. This white-collar route offers stability but may come with fixed routines and potentially limited creative freedom. Alternatively, the same student might choose to start a venture in digital marketing. This entrepreneurial path offers flexibility and the freedom to bring innovative ideas to life, but it also comes with risks like inconsistent income and challenges in establishing a market presence.

Recently, it is reported that graduates are increasingly valuing autonomy and the ability to create their paths. As per '2023 Deloitte Millennial Survey' 47% of millennials and Gen Zs aspire to become entrepreneurs within five years, driven by dissatisfaction with traditional corporate structures. This fluctuation in mindset between the present workforce reflects the broader economic environment, where job security is no longer guaranteed, and entrepreneurship offers an appealing, albeit risky, alternative path, which further troubles students in choosing a career.

The need for a comparative analysis of mindset towards entrepreneurship and white-collar jobs arises from several key factors. First, the global economy is witnessing innovation and technological advancements in a highly influential way, giving rise to entrepreneurial endeavours. Simultaneously, the stability and security often associated with white-collar jobs remain attractive amidst the economic uncertainties.

By looking at how personal beliefs, societal influences, and educational experiences shape students' attitudes, we can better understand what drives their career choices.

Understanding students' perceptions and attitudes toward these pathways is crucial, as it reflects broader societal trends.

Moreover, as educational institutions adapt to better prepare students for the workforce by launching several initiatives focused on skill developments, insights from this analysis can be useful for curricula, mentorship programs, and career counselling services.

With increasing global unemployment rates, rapid automation, and an unpredictable economic environment, reported from several surveys like The World Economic Forum in 2023, a comparative analysis will help to identify the socio-economic factors influencing career preferences between entrepreneurship and traditional employment. By examining how mindset influences decision-making and aspirations among students, we can better equip the next generation to navigate the complexities of their career choices in an ever-changing world and the broader implications for economic growth and stability.

### **3.2 ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

“Entrepreneurship is the pursuit of opportunity beyond resources controlled” where “Pursuit” implies a singular, relentless focus. “Opportunity” implies an offering that is novel in one or more of four ways. The opportunity may entail pioneering a truly innovative product, devising a new business model, creating a better or cheaper version of an existing product, or targeting an existing product to new sets of customers. And “Beyond resources controlled” implies resource constraints.

#### **3.2.1 Importance of entrepreneurship**

Entrepreneurship drives the growth and diversification of the economy and contributes to the creation of wealth. Entrepreneurship’s importance lies in the following:

- Drives economic growth and creates new jobs. Encourages innovation by bringing new ideas, products, and services to the market.
- Contributes to social change by developing products or services that reduce people’s dependence on outdated technologies.

- Addresses social and economic problems by creating solutions that meet the needs of society.
- Enables competition which improves business efficiency and lowers prices for consumers.

### **3.2.2 Role of entrepreneurship in economic development**

- **Economic Advancement:** Entrepreneurship plays a crucial role in advancing economic growth by fostering innovative technologies. It also contributes to a country's GDP and promotes self-reliance by reducing the country's dependency on imported goods and services. Through hard work and dedication, entrepreneurs control their financial stability and generate income.
- **Improving Per Capita Income & Gross National Product:** Entrepreneurship helps improve the per capita income of a country by generating new job opportunities. It plays a significant role in increasing Gross National Product. As the GNP grows, the per capita income (PCI) also rises, leading to enhanced economic well-being for the population.
- **Generating Employment Opportunities:** As more people start their own businesses, they continue to recruit, generating more employability opportunities across various sectors. Through entrepreneurship, the growth of employment opportunities advances professional development.
- **Improving Living Standards:** Entrepreneurship improves the living standards of people by introducing innovative services that enhance daily life and address the requirements of the community. Establishing job opportunities in various sectors leads to an increase in income and an enhancement in quality of life. Entrepreneurs are professionals who contribute to a higher quality of life for people.
- **Reducing Poverty Rate:** Entrepreneurship plays a major role in reducing poverty by generating new job opportunities and fostering economic inclusion. Entrepreneurship has the potential to support individuals in creating sustainable livelihoods and lowering poverty rates within the country.

- **Financial Independence:** Through entrepreneurship, individuals develop financial independence and learn to manage their businesses positively. By thoroughly understanding critical skills, entrepreneurs learn to navigate complex challenges.

### **3.2.3 Entrepreneur**

A person who makes money by starting or running businesses, especially when this involves taking financial risks. The different types of entrepreneurs are given below:

- **Innovative Entrepreneur:** An innovative entrepreneur is visionary and seeks new opportunities to create and develop groundbreaking ideas, products, or services. They are known for their ability to think creatively, take calculated risks, and disrupt traditional business models.
- **Imitative Entrepreneur:** An imitative entrepreneur is an individual who focuses on replicating existing business ideas, products, or services with minor modifications or adaptations. They are skilled at identifying and duplicating successful business models in different markets or contexts.
- **Fabian Entrepreneur:** A Fabian entrepreneur adopts a cautious and incremental approach to entrepreneurship. They tend to proceed gradually, making calculated decisions and mitigating risks as they progress. Fabian entrepreneurs prioritize stability and long-term sustainability over rapid growth.
- **Drone Entrepreneurs:** Drone entrepreneurs are another type of entrepreneur. These individuals resist embracing new opportunities and fail to capitalize on them. They adhere to conventional methods and are unwilling to adapt their production processes, even if it results in losses. Their resistance to change earns them the label of “laggards.”

### **3.2.4 Characteristics of an entrepreneur**

- **Passion and Self-Motivation:** Entrepreneurs are driven by a strong passion for their ideas and ventures. They have a deep-rooted enthusiasm for what they do, which fuels their motivation and keeps them focused and dedicated to achieving their goals.

- **Risk-Taking and Tolerance for Uncertainty:** Entrepreneurs are comfortable with taking risks and are willing to embrace uncertainty. They understand that starting and running a business involves inherent risks and are prepared to face and manage them to pursue their entrepreneurial vision.
- **Creativity and Innovation:** Creativity and innovation are the lifeblood of an entrepreneur. Entrepreneurs are often creative thinkers who can generate new ideas and think outside the box.
- **Adaptability and Flexibility:** Entrepreneurs must be adaptable and flexible in their approach. They can adjust their strategies and plans based on changing circumstances, market conditions, and customer feedback.
- **Resilience and Perseverance:** Entrepreneurship can be challenging, and setbacks and failures are part of the journey. Entrepreneurs demonstrate resilience by bouncing back from failures, learning from their mistakes, and persisting in facing obstacles.

### **3.3 White-collar jobs**

A white-collar job is defined as a type of occupation typically associated with fixed income, job security based on specialized knowledge, and certain legal privileges such as protection against dismissal and paid vacation. These jobs historically enjoyed higher prestige compared to manual labor. A white-collar job typically involves working in an office setting. These jobs often requiring specialized education or training beyond high school and do not require manual labor. Examples are accountants, lawyers, doctors, engineers, consultants, office managers, and marketing executives.

#### **3.3.1 Characteristics of a white-collar worker**

- **Professional or Administrative Role:** Typically works in office settings with roles in management, administration, or technical fields, rather than manual labor.
- **Formal Education and Training:** Often requires higher education, specialized skills, or certifications related to fields like finance, law, marketing, or tech.

- **Standard Working Hours:** Generally, follows a 9-to-5 schedule, though hours may extend based on project deadlines or job demands.
- **Focus on Problem-Solving and Analysis:** Often involves tasks that require analytical skills, critical thinking, and decision-making.
- **Use of Technology:** Heavy reliance on computers, software, and digital communication tools for daily tasks and productivity.

### **3.3.2 Values of white-collar jobs to society**

- **Economic Growth:** White-collar jobs, particularly in finance, technology, and professional services, are vital to economic growth as they support high productivity and innovation. By driving advances in industries and helping distribute resources efficiently, these roles play a core role in boosting GDP and wealth generation.
- **Innovation and Technological Advancement:** White-collar roles often contribute to research and development, leading to breakthroughs across sectors. These advancements promote “creative destruction,” where innovations help develop new markets and jobs, essential for sustained economic growth.
- **Social Stability:** By providing stable, skilled employment, white-collar jobs support social stability, as they often offer competitive wages, job security, and career development. These roles help workers achieve financial security, which in turn fosters broader social stability by lowering poverty levels and improving quality of life.
- **Employee Development and Skill Enhancement:** Organizations heavily invest in training white-collar workers, which not only boosts productivity but also raises job satisfaction and employee loyalty.
- **Attracting and Retaining Talent:** High-quality white-collar jobs help attract talent and maintain a stable workforce, contributing to sustainable economic progress. Skilled, satisfied employees are more likely to remain in their roles, reducing turnover and supporting organizational and societal stability.

### **3.4 DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND WHITE-COLLAR JOBS**

	ENTREPRENEURSHIP	WHITE COLLAR JOBS
RISK	Typically involves higher risk, as entrepreneurs invest their time, money, and resources with no guaranteed income.	Generally lower risk, as employees have a stable salary, benefits, and fewer financial responsibilities.
INCOME STABILITY	Income fluctuates based on business performance and market conditions.	Offers predictable, stable income through regular salaries or hourly wages.
WORK HOURS	Often demands irregular, long hours, as business owners work as needed to grow the business.	Typically follows a softer demands irregular, long hours, as business owners work as needed to grow the business. Ruptured 9-to-5 schedule with designated working hours.
JOB SECURITY	Job security is tied to the business's success, so entrepreneurs may face instability if the business struggles.	Usually offers higher job security, especially in established organizations, along with benefits like retirement plans.
GROWTH OPPORTUNITY	Provides limitless growth potential, allowing entrepreneurs to scale their	Career advancement may be limited to the hierarchical structure of the organization.

	businesses and increase profits as much as possible.	
LEARNING CURVES	Requires a broader skill set across various business functions (e.g., marketing, finance, operations).	Involves specialized skills and focused responsibilities within a particular field.
CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION	Encourages creativity and innovation, as entrepreneurs often bring new ideas to the market.	Although some roles allow for creativity, most have structured guidelines and standardized practices.
OWNERSHIP AND DECISION MAKING	Entrepreneurs make all major decisions, bearing full responsibility for the company's direction.	Employees typically follow established processes and have limited decision-making authority.
WORK LIFE BALANCE	Work-life balance can be challenging, especially in the early stages of a business.	Generally, offers better work-life balance, with fixed hours and benefits like paid leave.
PURPOSE AND FULFILLMENT	Can be deeply fulfilling, as entrepreneurs often pursue their passion or vision.	Fulfillment varies by role and organization, but some may feel constrained by routine tasks.

### 3.5 JOB SEEKERS AND JOB CREATORS

A job seeker is an individual actively looking for employment, typically aiming to find a position that matches their skills, experience, and career goals. Job seekers may be recent graduates, experienced professionals seeking a change, or individuals re-entering the workforce. Their goal is to secure a role that provides financial stability,

career growth, or personal fulfillment. Job searching can be a challenging process due to various reasons. For instance, the competition for desirable roles or in oversaturated job markets can be overwhelming, making it difficult for job seekers to stand out. Additionally, entry-level positions often require a few years of experience, which is difficult to gain without first getting a job. Furthermore, with the advent of technology and automation, some traditional roles are becoming obsolete, requiring job seekers to reskill or upskill. Some companies have extensive and lengthy recruitment processes, leading to prolonged periods of uncertainty for job seekers. Customizing resumes and cover letters for each position can also be time-consuming. While networking can open many doors, not everyone has access to professional networks or feels comfortable leveraging them. Both younger and older job seekers can face biases based on their age. Those who have taken time off may find it challenging to explain employment gaps to potential employers.

To help job seekers overcome common obstacles:

- **Continuous Learning:** Keep up to date with industry trends and developments by taking online courses, workshops, and seminars that can help you gain new skills and knowledge.
- **Networking:** Attend industry-specific events, conferences, and workshops, join professional associations, and social platforms like LinkedIn to connect with professionals in your field. Seek informational interviews with individuals in roles or companies you aspire to.
- **Tailored Applications:** Customize your resume and cover letter for each job application, highlighting relevant skills and experiences. Use keywords from the job description to pass through Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS).
- **Use Multiple Platforms:** In addition to popular job boards, explore company websites, industry-specific job boards and networking events. Engage with recruitment agencies that specialize in your field.
- **Practice Interviewing:** Conduct mock interviews with friends, family, or career counselors. Prepare answers for common interview questions and develop a list of questions to ask the interviewer.

- **Seek Feedback:** If you're not getting interviews or job offers, consider seeking feedback on your resume, cover letter, or interview techniques. This can come from mentors, peers, or professional services.
- **Stay Resilient:** Set realistic expectations and be prepared for rejections. Develop a daily routine that includes time for job searching, learning, and breaks. Focus on self-care and mental health to avoid burnout.
- **Bridge Employment Gaps:** Consider freelance work, internships, volunteering, or temp jobs related to your field. Use this time for personal development, like pursuing a certification or course.
- **Salary Research:** Research typical salaries for the positions you're applying for using platforms like Glassdoor or Payscale. Practice salary negotiation techniques and be clear about your worth.
- **Seek Mentorship:** Find someone in your desired industry to guide you, provide feedback, and share insights.

### 3.5.1 Types of Job seekers

- **Passive Job Seeker:** Passive job seekers are individuals who are generally satisfied with their current employment situation. They make an effort to stay informed about new job opportunities but are not actively looking to switch jobs. They may occasionally browse job listings, update their LinkedIn profile, or attend industry events, but they are not in a hurry to leave their current position.
- **Active Job Seeker:** Active job seekers are individuals who are currently looking for a new job. They are proactively searching for job openings, submitting applications, and attending interviews. This group includes those who are unemployed, as well as those who are employed but dissatisfied with their current position and actively seeking a change.
- **Monitoring Job Seeker:** Monitoring job seekers are individuals who keep a close eye on the job market without actively applying for jobs. They regularly check job boards, company websites, and professional networks to stay

informed about industry trends and potential opportunities. They are somewhat in between passive and active job seekers.

- **Seeking Job Seeker:** Seeking job seekers are highly motivated individuals who are actively and aggressively looking for new job opportunities. They often invest significant time and effort into their job search, applying to multiple positions, networking extensively, and continuously updating their skills and knowledge.

A job creator refers to an individual, organization, or entity that generates employment opportunities within an economy. Typically, these are entrepreneurs, business owners, companies, and sometimes even government initiatives or policies that lead to the hiring of employees. Job creators play a crucial role in economic growth by establishing businesses or expanding operations, which increases the demand for labor and can reduce unemployment rates. In a broader sense, they contribute to overall economic development by enhancing productivity, fostering innovation, and potentially improving the standard of living within a community or region.

### 3.5.2 Types of Job Creators

- **Entrepreneurs and Startups:** Individuals or small teams who launch new businesses or startups, creating jobs as they expand their operations. These businesses often bring innovation and respond to emerging market needs.
- **Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs):** Small to medium-sized businesses are significant job creators globally. SMEs are essential for local economies, as they provide employment opportunities within communities and drive local economic development.
- **Large Corporations:** Major companies and multinational corporations create substantial employment due to their extensive operations. They often offer a variety of job roles across different departments and locations.
- **Government and Public Sector:** Governments create jobs through public sector employment (e.g., education, healthcare, public safety) and through infrastructure projects, policies, and programs designed to stimulate job growth.

- **Nonprofit Organizations and NGOs:** Nonprofits and non-governmental organizations create jobs in areas such as social services, healthcare, and community development, often focused on specific causes or social impact.
- **Gig Economy Platforms and Freelance Marketplaces:** Digital platforms like Uber, Upwork, and Fiverr create freelance or gig work opportunities, connecting service providers with clients for temporary, flexible jobs.
- **Export-Oriented Companies:** Companies that focus on exports often create jobs in manufacturing, logistics, and trade. These businesses contribute to job creation by generating demand beyond the domestic market.
- **Innovation Hubs and Research Institutions:** Centers dedicated to research and development (R&D) in fields like technology, pharmaceuticals, and engineering create specialized jobs and can drive further employment through spin-offs and collaborations.
- **Agricultural Enterprises and Cooperatives:** In many regions, agriculture remains a significant source of employment. Farms, agribusinesses, and cooperatives create jobs directly in farming and indirect

### 3.6 Role of undergraduate students

According to Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary, a student is a person who is learning at a college or university, or sometimes at a school. College or university students are actually referred to as undergraduates. They've graduated from high school and have been accepted to college, but they haven't graduated yet. Being registered as a student at a college or University is only an administrative requirement of being a student, but being a student contains a broader meaning than just an administrative problem itself.

The role and function of students in society is very important. Students have a duty not only to acquire knowledge but also to use that knowledge for the betterment of their community and country. Acquiring knowledge is not just a personal endeavor but also a societal duty. Students are expected to use their education for the benefit of their society and nation.

College students play a vital role in society by actively engaging in community service, influencing social change, and contributing to local economies. Through volunteer work and service learning, they enhance community well-being, while their involvement in social movements fosters activism and advocacy for various issues. Economically, college students stimulate local markets through their spending, supporting businesses and job creation. Additionally, student organisations significantly impact university governance, shaping policies and initiatives. Overall, college students serve as agents of change, driving progress both within their institutions and in the broader community.

### **3.7 Attitudes of undergraduates**

The attitudes that students bring to their college or university experience play a significant role in determining their success. Developing a positive and proactive attitude towards learning and education is essential and significantly impacts academic performance, overall well-being, and future prospects.

- A positive attitude can foster a sense of purpose, motivation, and drive. The right attitude can create an environment conducive to learning, helping students be more motivated, engaged, and focused. Furthermore, having a positive attitude can also help students overcome challenges and setbacks, providing them with the resilience they need to persevere and achieve their goals
- On the other hand, A negative perspective can lead to reduced motivation, ignoring learning opportunities, and lacking engagement and participation in fulfilling the academic coursework. These factors can result in poor grades, leading to a lack of confidence and a belief that success is unattainable. Furthermore, negative attitudes can also impact mental health and well-being.

Students with a positive attitude are more likely to take an active approach to their learning, seeking opportunities to engage with coursework and expand their knowledge. It helps students to maintain a growth mindset. It can develop a collaborative learning environment and motivate them. These attitudes further look out on different types of mindsets that students prevail.

### **3.8 MINDSET OF STUDENTS**

The mindset of students refers to the prevailing attitudes, beliefs, and perspectives that influence how students approach their education, career goals, and future aspirations. This includes their views on topics like learning, problem-solving, job satisfaction, entrepreneurship, and the pursuit of traditional employment. Students' mindsets are shaped by various factors, including their backgrounds, experiences, personal motivations, and external influences such as technological advancements, societal expectations, and economic condition

In today's world, students are increasingly divided between pursuing traditional jobs and venturing into entrepreneurship. This split reflects a changing landscape where career choices are influenced not only by traditional factors like income and stability but also by values of flexibility, personal fulfillment, and innovation. On one side, entrepreneurship has gained appeal among students who seek the independence and potential for impact that comes with creating their own ventures. For these students, the idea of launching a business aligns with a desire for freedom, creativity, and ownership. Entrepreneurship offers them the chance to work on something they are passionate about, make a unique mark, and reap potentially high rewards. Moreover, they see entrepreneurship as a flexible career option that can be adapted to fit their lifestyle, balancing both personal and professional goals.

Conversely, a considerable number of students remain drawn to traditional white-collar jobs, which offer a structured path with defined benefits like job security, steady income, and clear career progression. These roles appeal to students who prefer stability and a predictable work environment. For many, traditional employment represents a gateway to professional growth, skill development, and networking opportunities within established industries. In times of economic uncertainty, the reliable paycheck and benefits associated with traditional jobs are reassuring for students who prioritize financial stability.

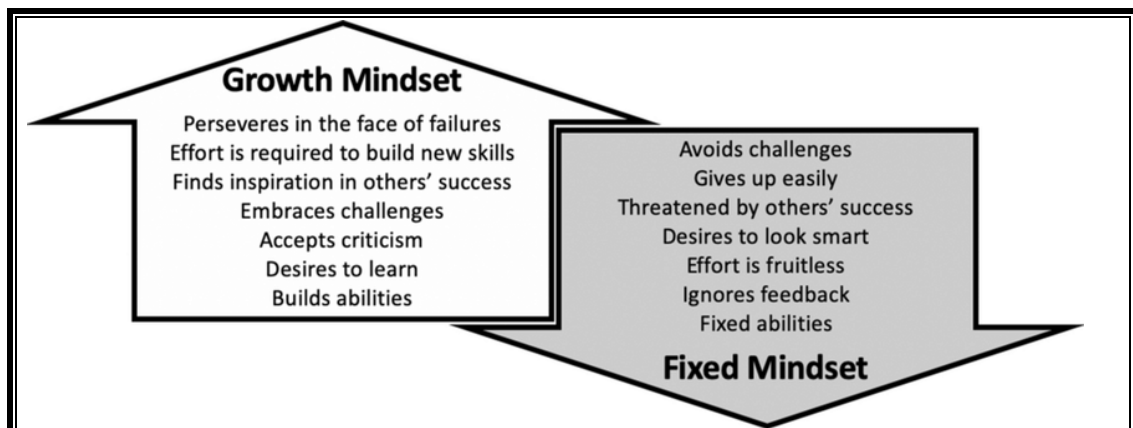
However, as career paths become more flexible and varied, an increasing number of students are exploring a hybrid approach. Many young people are choosing to work full-time jobs while pursuing entrepreneurial ventures on the side. This allows them to benefit from the security of steady employment while gaining the satisfaction and autonomy that come with running their own business. Ultimately, students' career

choices are heavily shaped by personal goals, risk tolerance, and economic circumstances. While some are drawn to the reliability of traditional jobs, others are excited by the possibility of shaping their own career through entrepreneurship.

According to C.S Dweck (2006) in one of his books, *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success*, in this world there are two kinds of mindset:

- **Growth mindset.** This growth mindset is based on the belief that a person's basic qualities are things that can be processed through certain efforts. Although humans may differ in all respects, in their initial talents and abilities, interests, or temperaments everyone can change and develop through treatment and experience. The characteristics of people with a growth mindset are as follows: (a) have the belief that intelligence, talents, and traits are not a function of heredity, (b) accept challenges and are sincere in carrying them out, (c) keep a forward view of failure, (d) have a positive view of business, (e) learn from criticism, (f) find lessons and get inspiration from the success of others.
- **Fixed mindset.** This fixed mindset is based on the belief that a person's qualities are assigned. If a person has a certain amount of intelligence, a certain personality, and a certain moral character. The characteristics of people with a fixed mindset are as follows: (a) have a belief that intelligence, talents, and traits are a function of heredity, (b) avoid challenges, (c) give up easily, (d) think effort does not exist point is, (e) ignore criticism, (f) feel threatened by the success of others.

Based on the characteristics of the growth mindset and fixed mindset mentioned above, the two can be distinguished by: (a) belief in intelligence, talents and traits, (b) taking risks against challenges, (c) attitudes towards obstacles and obstacles, (d) the effort made, (e) acceptance of criticism and suggestions, (f) willingness to find lessons and inspiration from the experiences of others.



(Source: Research gate)

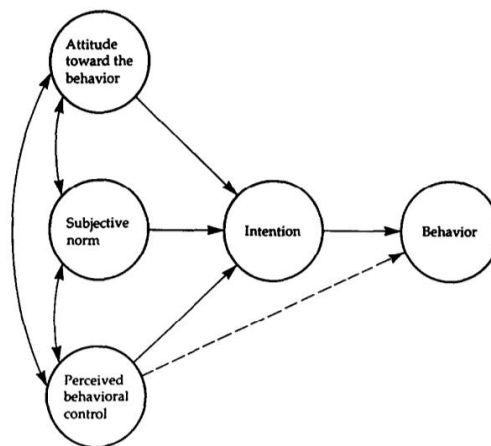
### 3.9 Theory of planned behaviour

The theory of planned behaviour explains individual behaviour as resulting from intentions, which in turn are influenced by attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control.

According to the theory of planned behaviour (Ajzen, 1991), behaviours are influenced by intentions, which are determined by three factors: attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control. Attitudes toward teaching and learning generally, and toward the use of Evidence based instructional practices, specifically, are both relevant in this context. Subjective norms can be considered social pressures, and include both the perceived expectations of others and how much the individual values those expectations. Perceived behavioural control is how able an individual feels to perform a specific behaviour, in their context.

- Attitudes - This refers to the degree to which a person has a favourable or unfavourable evaluation of the behaviour of interest. It entails a consideration of the outcomes of performing the behaviour.
- Behavioural intention - This refers to the motivational factors that influence a given behaviour where the stronger the intention to perform the behaviour, the more likely the behaviour will be performed.
- Subjective norms - This refers to the belief about whether most people approve or disapprove of the behaviour. It relates to a person's beliefs about whether peers and people of importance to the person think he or she should engage in the behaviour.

- Social norms - This refers to the customary codes of behaviour in a group or people or larger cultural context. Social norms are considered normative, or standard, in a group of people.
- Perceived power - This refers to the perceived presence of factors that may facilitate or impede performance of a behaviour. Perceived power contributes to a person's perceived behavioural control over each of those factors.
- Perceived behavioural control - This refers to a person's perception of the ease or difficulty of performing the behaviour of interest. Perceived behavioural control varies across situations and actions, which results in a person having varying perceptions of behavioural control depending on the situation.



(Source: Ajzen (1991))

### 3.10 THE IMPACT OF COVID 19 ON JOB DYNAMICS IN INDIA

The COVID-19 pandemic, beginning in early 2020, brought unprecedented disruption to the global economy, affecting every sector and reshaping the world of work. In India, one of the hardest-hit countries, the virus triggered massive changes in employment dynamics, leading to significant job losses, shifts in work practices, and redefined job roles.

Lockdowns and social distancing measures forced businesses to rapidly adapt, either by pivoting to remote work where feasible or by downsizing in response to reduced demand, particularly in sectors like retail, tourism, and hospitality. The pandemic's impact exposed vulnerabilities in traditional job structures and intensified existing issues in India's labor market, including a high dependency on informal employment, which left millions without job security or social safety nets.

At the same time, COVID-19 accelerated certain trends, such as digital transformation, automation, and the rise of the gig economy, fundamentally altering job expectations and the skills in demand. This challenging environment has underscored the need for adaptability, upskilling, and policy shifts to support a more resilient workforce in a post-pandemic world.

The first wave of Covid-19 started around March 2020 and introduced us to many unknown scenarios like containment zone, quarantine, masks, sanitizers, PPE kits, rushing to hospitals, shortage of health staff, and most shockingly, helpless deaths. It resulted in many people losing their livelihood and becoming unemployed or underpaid due to lockdowns of various sectors of industry. The unemployment rate in India went up to nearly 24 percent in April 2020. This was due to the result of a decrease in demand, as well as employment disruption faced by companies.

Work from home is the big change, the pandemic brought in the routine lives of these workers belonging to the organized sector. But the workers belonging to the unorganized sector suffered more compared to the former category. A beeline formed, with the majority of these workers either who left due to fright of uncertainty, or, have lost their jobs, all headed towards their native places along with families

With COVID-19 as a pretext, many states have reduced even the little security which was available to these unorganized workers by eliminating or diluting various laws so as to favour businesses. For example, in Uttar Pradesh, at least 14 labour laws like the Minimum Wages Act and Industrial Disputes Act are being suspended for three years in an effort to attract capital. Similar is the case with Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat.

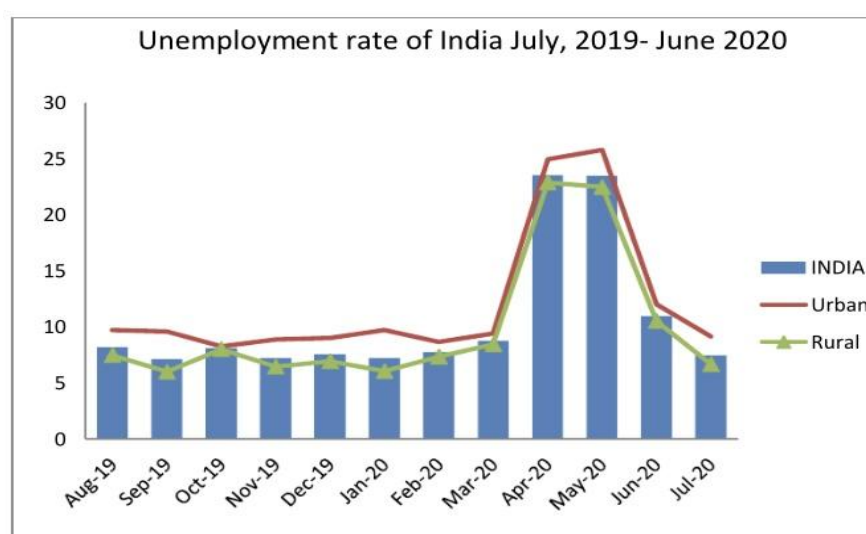
Few research reports like McKinsey says that though large firms like TCS and Infosys are said to continue remote work after the pandemic, the majority of the Indian workforce is employed in jobs that cannot be performed remotely like agriculture, retail trade, facilities & housekeeping support etc.

The manufacturing and engineering sectors were affected largely by the lockdown during the 2nd wave. But the recruitment situation in IT/ITES, Technology research, E-commerce, Pharma and HealthCare sectors have started showing some improvements. Sri Aditya Mishra, CEO, CIEL, has said that though the companies have the intent to hire in tier 2-3 cities, they have not been able to actually hire due to the spread of pandemics to these markets also. According to him, the gap between the

intent of hiring and the actual hiring in these markets is 50%. The PLI scheme announced for 10 key sectors, including textile and automobiles by the Centre, is aimed at helping the country's economy recover faster after the pandemic, to promote mass employment.

As per the data released by the National Statistical Office (NSO) on 7th September 2021, India's economic growth surged to 20.1 per cent in the April-June quarter of this fiscal, helped by a low base of the year-ago period, despite a devastating second wave of COVID-19. The Indian economy's gross domestic product (GDP) had contracted by 24.4 per cent in the corresponding April-June quarter of 2020-21.

In conclusion, COVID-19 has had a transformative impact on the job landscape in India, reshaping work structures, accelerating digital adoption, and bringing new challenges and opportunities to the forefront. While the pandemic exposed critical vulnerabilities, particularly in sectors reliant on informal labour, it also fostered resilience by pushing businesses and workers to adapt to new realities, such as remote work, automation, and the gig economy.



(Source: Centre for monitoring Indian economy private limited)

**CHAPTER 4**  
**DATA ANALYSIS AND**  
**INTERPRETATION**

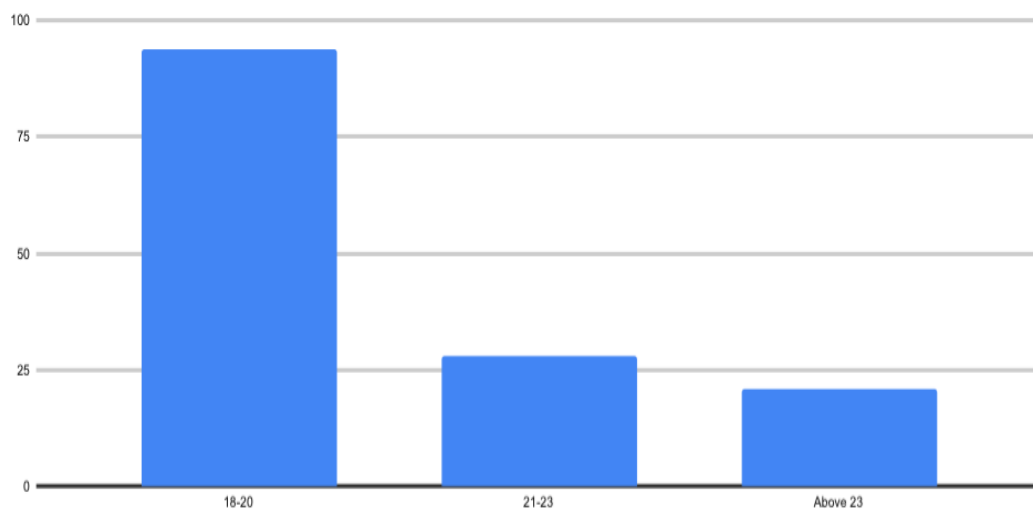
## AGE OF RESPONDENTS

**TABLE 4.1 AGE OF RESPONDENTS**

Age	Responses	Percentage
18-20	94	65.73
21-23	28	19.58
Above 23	21	14.69
Total	143	100

(Source: Primary data)

**FIGURE 4.1 AGE CATEGORY OF RESPONDENTS**



(Source: Primary Data)

**INTERPRETATION:** - The data indicates that the majority of respondents (65.73%) are aged between 18-20, followed by 19.58% in the 21-23 age group, and only 14.69% above 23. This suggests that younger individuals, particularly those in the 18-20 range, are more actively represented in the survey.

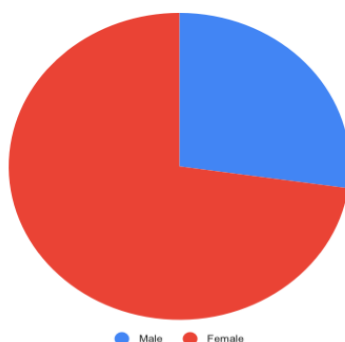
## GENDER OF RESPONDENTS

**TABLE 4.2 GENDER OF RESPONDENTS**

Gender	Responses	Percentage
Male	39	27.27
Female	104	72.73
Total	143	100

(Source: - Primary data)

**FIGURE 4.2 GENDER OF RESPONDENTS**



(Source: - Primary Data)

INTERPRETATION: - The survey data reveals a gender imbalance in the responses, with a majority of 72.73% female participants, compared to only 27.27% male participants. There were no responses from individuals identifying as "Other."

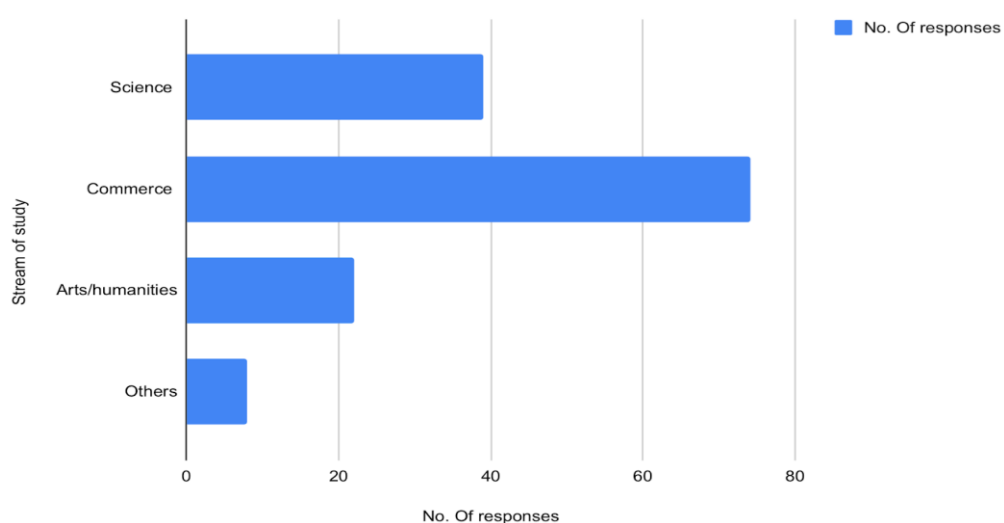
## STREAMS OF STUDY OF RESPONDENTS

**TABLE 4.3 STREAMS OF STUDY OF RESPONDENTS**

Stream of study	No. Of responses	Percentage
Science	39	27.27
Commerce	74	51.74
Arts/humanities	22	15.38
Others	8	5.59
Total	143	100

(Source: - Primary data)

**FIGURE 4.3 STREAMS OF STUDY OF RESPONDENTS**



(Source: - Primary data)

**INTERPRETATION:** - The data highlights that Commerce is the most popular stream of study, with 74 responses, accounting for over half (51.7%) of the total responses. Science follows with 39 responses, making up approximately 27.3% of the total. Arts/Humanities and “Others” collectively contribute a smaller share, with 22 (15.4%) and 8 (5.6%) responses, respectively.

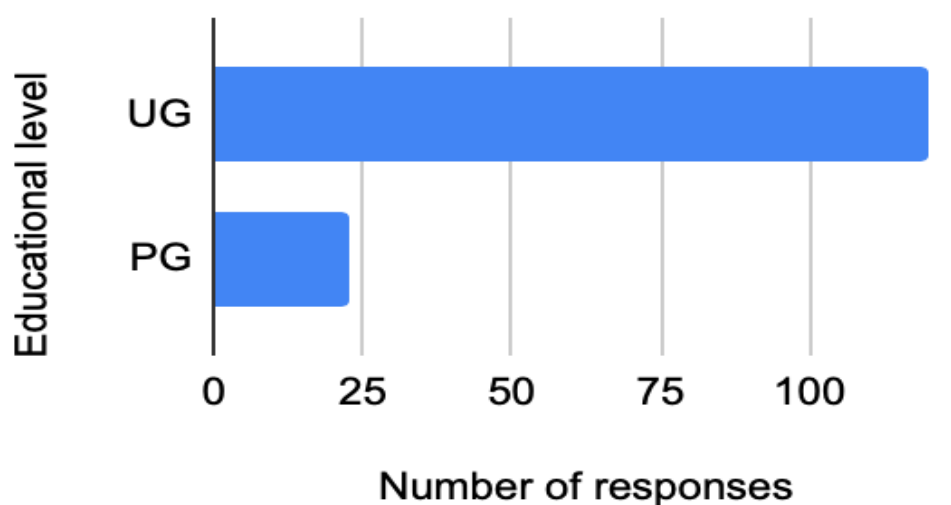
### **EDUCATIONAL LEVEL OF RESPONDENTS**

**TABLE 4.4 EDUCATIONAL LEVEL OF RESPONDENTS**

Educational level	Number of responses	Percentage
UG	120	83.91
PG	23	16.08
Total	143	100

(Source: - Primary Data)

**FIGURE 4.4 EDUCATIONAL LEVEL OF RESPONDENTS**



(Source: - Primary data)

**INTERPRETATION:** - The data indicates that the majority of respondents, 83.92%, have an undergraduate (UG) level of education, while 16.08% have a postgraduate (PG) level of education. Out of a total of 143 participants, 120 are UG students, and 23 are PG students. This suggests that the sample is predominantly composed of undergraduates.

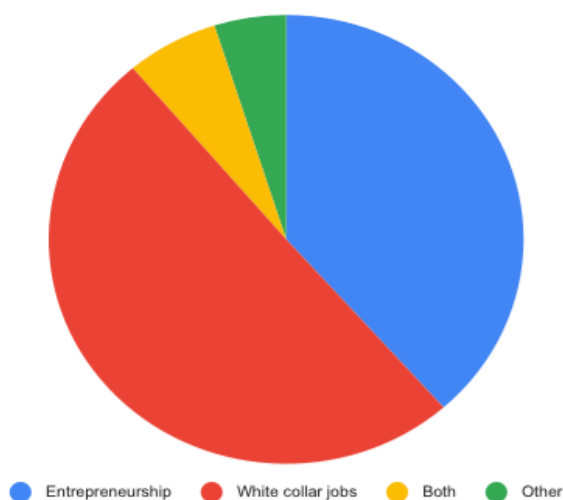
### **INTERESTED CAREER PATH OF RESPONDENTS**

**TABLE 4.5 INTERESTED CAREER PATH OF RESPONDENTS**

Options	Responses	Percentage
Entrepreneurship	55	38.46
White collar jobs	72	50.35
Both	9	6.29
Other	7	4.9
Total	143	100

(Source: - Primary data)

**FIGURE 4.5 INTERESTED CAREER PATH OF RESPONDENTS**



(Source:- Primary data)

**INTERPRETATION:-** Based on the survey results, a significant portion of students (50.35%) prefer white-collar jobs, while 38.46% lean toward entrepreneurship ventures. The 6.29% of respondents who chose "Both" indicates a growing interest in combining elements of both career types. A small percentage (4.9%) selected "Other," which included Law, Chartered accountant, Cinematography, Industrial job, & Doctor, reflecting alternative career aspirations or uncertainties.

### **FACTORS INFLUENCING ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

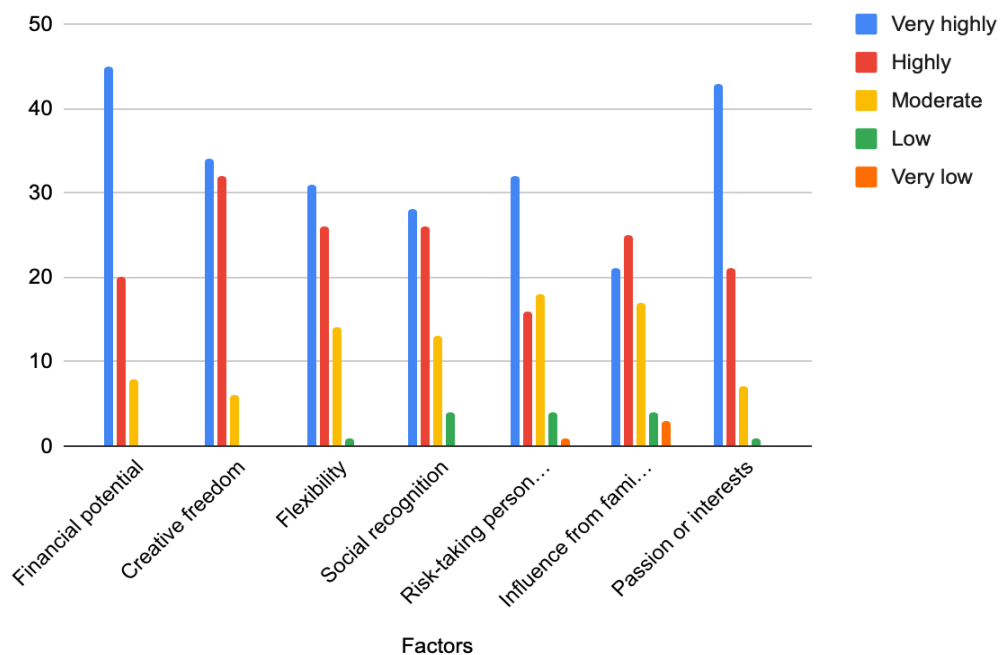
**TABLE 4.6 FACTORS INFLUENCING ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

Factors	Extremely High	Highly	Moderately	Poor	Extremely Low
Financial	45	20	8	0	0
Creative freedom	34	32	6	0	0
Flexibility	31	26	14	1	0
Social	28	26	13	4	0
Risk-taking	32	16	18	4	1

Influence from family/peers	21	25	17	4	3
Passion or interests	43	21	7	1	0

(Source:- Primary data)

#### 4.6 FACTORS INFLUENCING ENTREPRENEURSHIP



(Source: - Primary data)

**INTERPRETATION:** - The data highlights how various factors influence decision-making across five-point Likert scale: very high, high, moderate, low, and very low. Financial potential and passion/interests are the most significant motivators, with the majority ranking them very highly. Creative freedom, flexibility, and social recognition are predominantly rated highly or moderately. Risk-taking personality and influence from family/peers show a balanced spread across all levels but lean towards moderate and high influence.

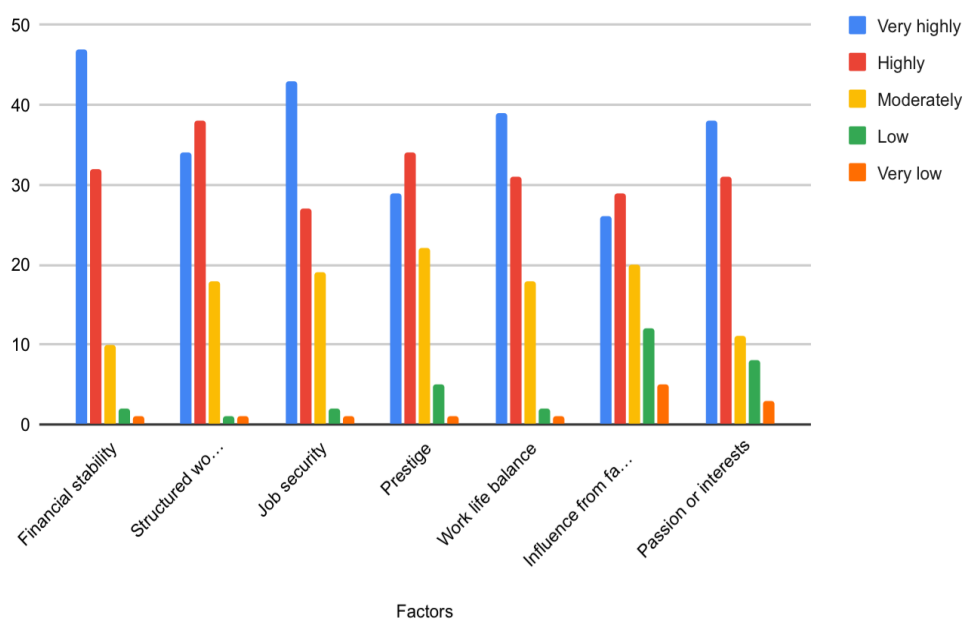
## FACTORS INFLUENCING WHITE-COLLAR JOBS

**TABLE 4.7 FACTORS INFLUENCING WHITE-COLLAR JOBS**

Factors	Very Highly	Highly	Moderately	Low	Very Low
Financial stability	47	32	10	2	1
Structured work environments	34	38	18	1	1
Job security	43	27	19	2	1
Prestige	29	34	22	5	1
Work life balance	39	31	18	2	1
Influence from family or peers	26	29	20	12	5
Passion or interests	38	31	11	8	3

(Source:- Primary data)

**FIGURE 4.7 FACTORS INFLUENCING WHITE-COLLAR JOBS**



(Source :- Primary Data)

**INTERPRETATION:-** The data reveals that financial stability and job security are rated “very highly” by the majority, emphasizing their significant influence on decision-making. Structured work and work-life balance are also considered important, predominantly rated as “highly” or “moderately” influential. Prestige and passion/interests has notable value but display a more varied distribution across all levels. Similarly, influence from family or peers is less impactful, with most respondents assigning it “moderate” or lower significance.

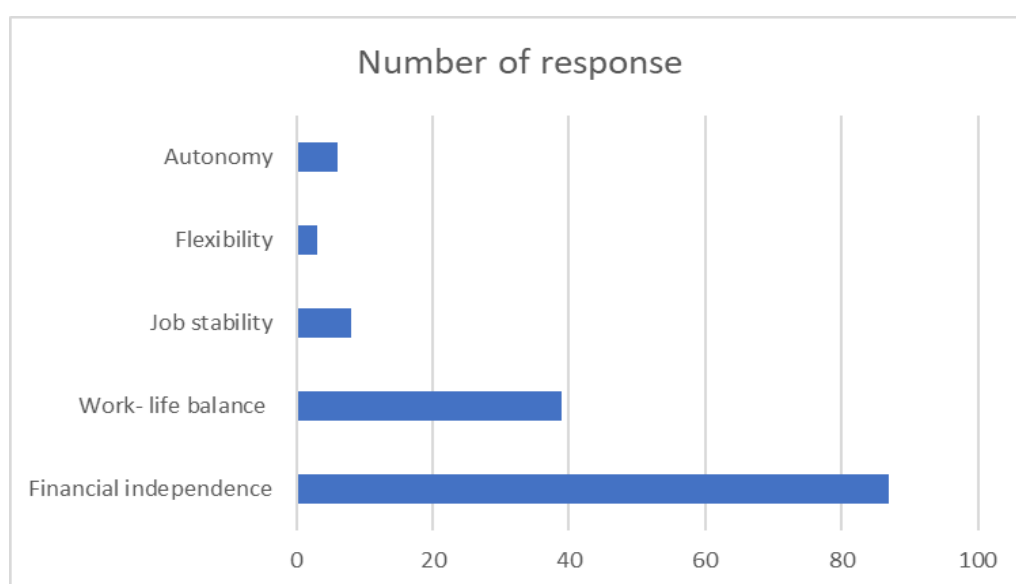
### **FUTURE CAREER VALUE FACTORS**

**TABLE 4.8 FUTURE CAREER VALUE FACTORS**

<b>Future career values</b>	<b>Number of responses</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Financial independence	87	60.8
Work- life balance	39	27.3
Job stability	8	5.6
Flexibility	3	2.1
Autonomy	6	4.2
Total	143	100

(Source :- Primary data)

**FIGURE 4.8 FUTURE CAREER VALUE FACTORS**



(Source:- Primary data)

**INTERPRETATION:-**The table reflects an individual's prioritization of career values in the future, with financial independence being the most significant factor, accounting for 60.8% of the focus. Work-life balance follows at 27.3%, indicating that while personal time and well-being are important, they are secondary to financial goals. Job stability, flexibility, and autonomy are relatively less important, with job stability at 5.6%, flexibility at 2.1%, and autonomy at 4.2%. This suggests a strong emphasis on achieving financial security and maintaining a balance between work and personal life, while the desire for a stable, flexible, or autonomous work environment is less of a priority.

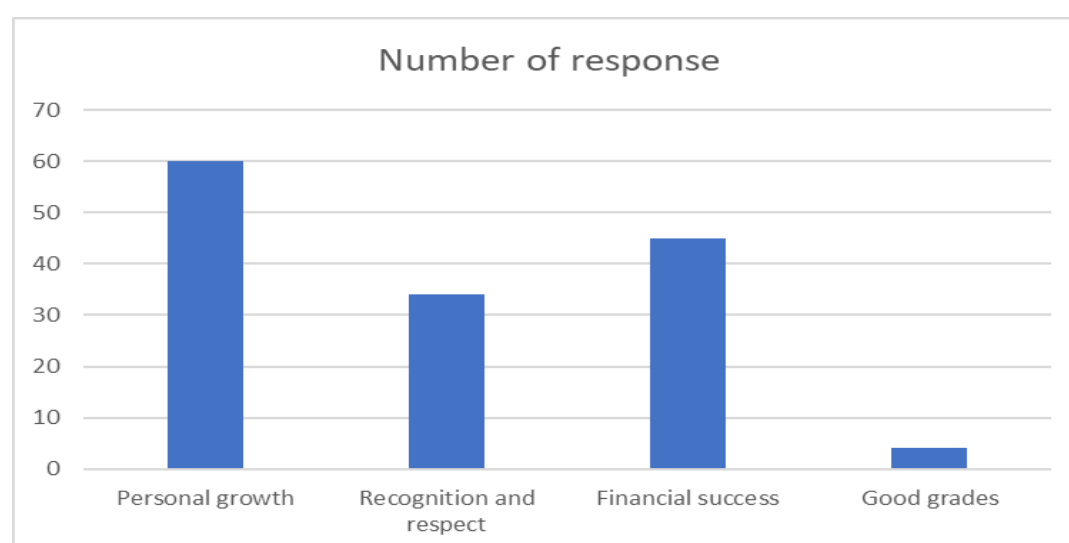
## **MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS**

**TABLE 4.9 MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS**

<b>Motivational Factors</b>	<b>Number of responses</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Personal growth	60	42
Recognition and respect	34	23.8
Financial success	45	31.5
Good grades	4	2.8
Total	143	100

(Source :- Primary data)

**FIGURE 4.9 MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS**



(Source :- Primary data)

INTERPRETATION :-The table highlights the key motivations driving career goals, with ‘personal growth’ being the most significant factor, accounting for 42% of responses. This suggests that individuals are primarily focused on developing their skills and potential. ‘Financial success’ follows by 31.5%, indicating a strong motivator. ‘Recognition’ and ‘respect’ are important for 23.8% of respondents, emphasizing acknowledgment and esteem in their professional lives. Lastly, ‘good grades’ are the least motivating factor, contributing only 2.8%, suggesting that academic achievement is viewed as less central to long-term career aspirations compared to personal development and financial success.

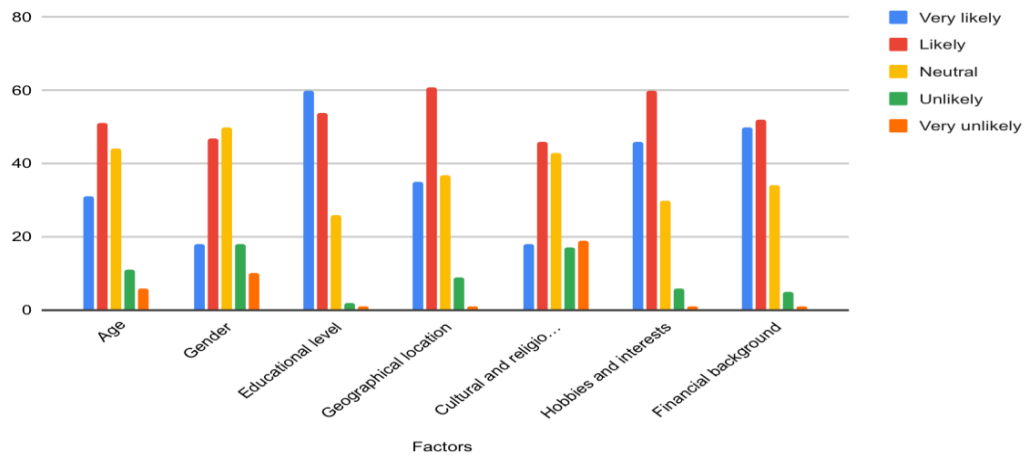
## **DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS INFLUENCING CAREER DECISIONS**

**TABLE 4.10 DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS INFLUENCING CAREER DECISIONS**

<b>Factors</b>	<b>Very likely</b>	<b>Likely</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Unlikely</b>	<b>Very unlikely</b>
Age	31	51	44	11	6
Gender	18	47	50	18	10
Educational level	60	54	26	2	1
Geographical location	35	61	37	9	1
Cultural and religious beliefs	18	46	43	17	19
Hobbies and interests	46	60	30	6	1
Financial background	50	52	34	5	1

(Source: Primary data)

**FIGURE 4.10 DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS INFLUENCING CAREER DECISIONS.**



(Source :- Primary data)

**INTERPRETATION:-**The bar chart shows the likelihood of different factors influencing decision-making across five levels: very likely, likely, neutral, unlikely, and very unlikely. Educational level and geographical location are the most impactful factors, with about 60% rating them as “very likely” and an additional 30–40% as “likely.” Cultural and religious factors, along with hobbies and interests, also hold importance, with roughly 40% marking them as “likely” and 20–30% as “very likely.” Financial background and age are moderately influential, with around 30% in the “neutral” category and smaller percentages in “very likely” or “likely.”

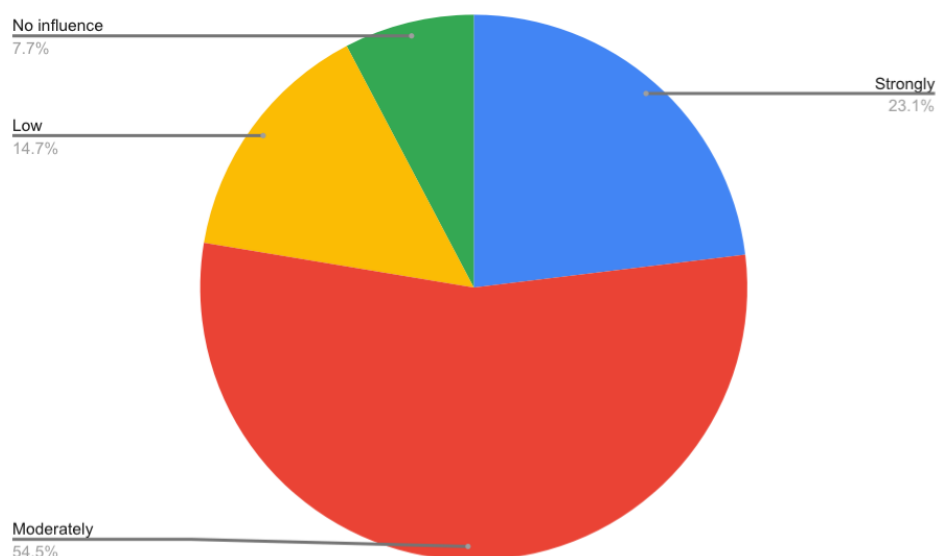
### **PEER INFLUENCE IN DECISION MAKING**

**TABLE 4.11 PEER INFLUENCE IN DECISION MAKING.**

Agreement	Responses	Percentage
Strongly	33	23.07
Moderately	78	54.54
Low	21	14.68
No influence	11	7.62
Total	143	100

(Source:- Primary data)

**FIGURE 4.11 PEER INFLUENCE IN DECISION MAKING.**



(Source:- Primary data)

**INTERPRETATION :-** The pie chart shows the level of peer influence over career decisions of the respondents. A majority, 54.5%, rated as having a “Moderate” influence, followed by 23.1% indicating a “Strong” influence. Meanwhile, 14.7% considered the influence “Low,” and only 7.7% felt there was “No influence.”

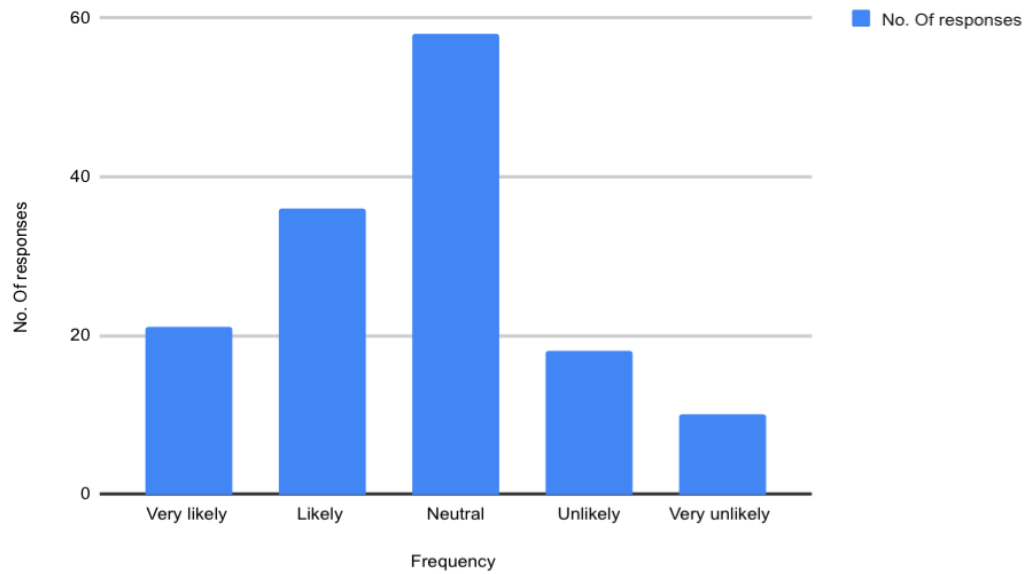
### **FAMILY PRESSURE TOWARDS WHITE-COLLAR JOBS**

**TABLE 4.12. FAMILY PRESSURE TOWARDS WHITE-COLLAR JOBS.**

Frequency	No. Of responses	Percentage
Very likely	21	14.68
Likely	36	25.17
Neutral	58	40.55
Unlikely	18	12.58
Very unlikely	10	6.99
Total	143	100

(Source:- Primary data)

**FIGURE 4.12. FAMILY PRESSURE TOWARDS WHITE-COLLAR JOBS.**



(Source:- Primary data)

**INTERPRETATION:-** The bar chart displays the frequency of responses across five likelihood categories. The majority, with 60 responses, fell into the “Neutral” category, indicating indifference or uncertainty. “Likely” received 40 responses, while “Unlikely” garnered 30 responses. On the extremes, “Very likely” and “Very unlikely” accounted for 20 responses each, reflecting lower levels of certainty.

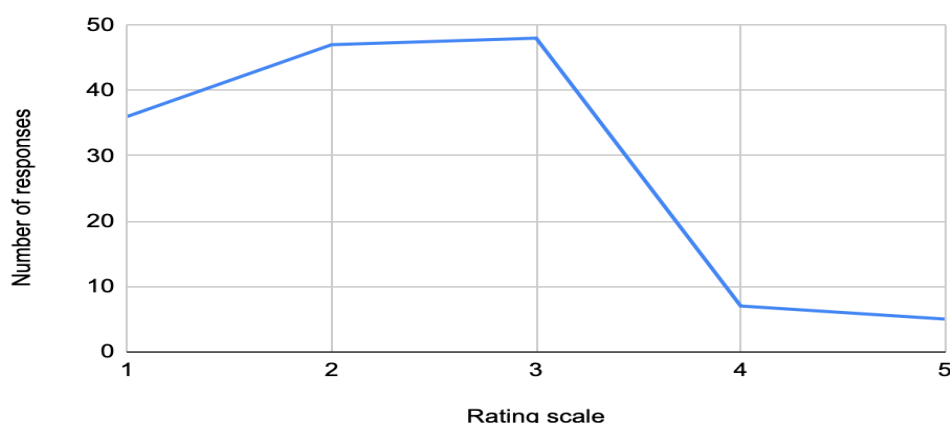
### **LEVEL OF RISK OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

**TABLE 4.13 LEVEL OF RISK OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP.**

Rating	Number of responses	Percentage
Very Low Risk	36	25.17
Low Risk	47	32.86
Moderate Risk	48	33.56
High Risk	7	4.89
Very High Risk	5	3.49
Total	143	100

(Source: - Primary data)

**FIGURE 4.13. LEVEL OF RISK OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP.**



(Source: - Primary data)

**INTERPRETATION:** - The data reflects respondents' perceptions of the level of risk in entrepreneurship compared to white-collar jobs. The majority gravitate toward moderate risk levels, with 33.57% and 32.87% assigning low risk. However, a notable 25.17% of respondents perceive entrepreneurship as having the least risk. Higher risk levels are perceived by fewer respondents, with only 4.90% and 3.50% assigning the highest risk level. This distribution suggests that while most respondents acknowledge some risk in entrepreneurship, it is not overwhelmingly considered a high-risk endeavor compared to white-collar jobs.

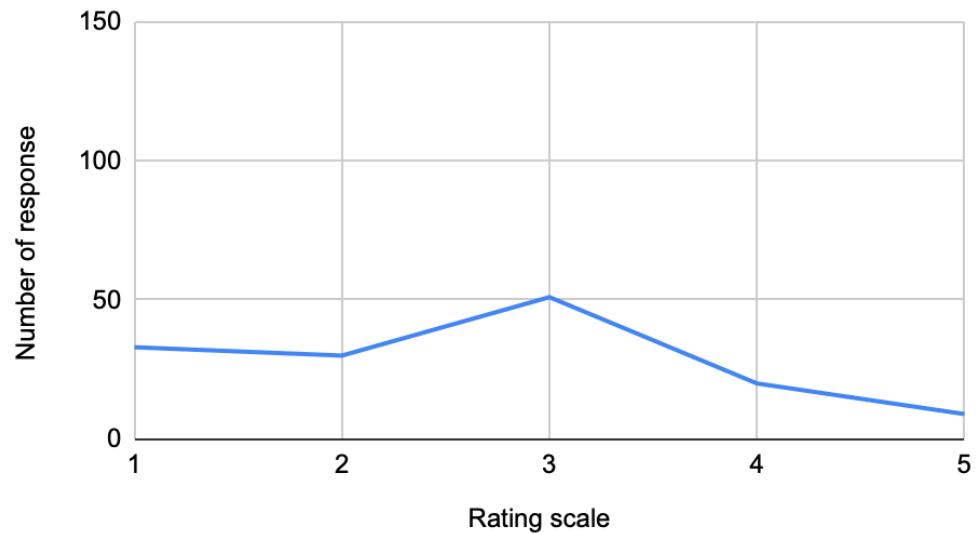
### **RATING OF CURRENT ACADEMIC CURRICULUM IN SUPPORTING ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

**TABLE 4.14. RATING OF CURRENT ACADEMIC CURRICULUM IN  
SUPPORTING ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

Rating	Number of responses	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	33	23.07
Disagree	30	20.97
Neither Agree/Disagree	51	35.66
Agree	20	13.98
Strongly Agree	9	6.29
Total	143	100

(Source: - Primary data)

**FIGURE 4.14. RATING OF CURRENT ACADEMIC CURRICULUM IN SUPPORTING ENTREPRENEURSHIP**



(Source: - Primary data)

**INTERPRETATION:** - The data reveals that while 35.66% of respondents rated the academic curriculum as average in preparing them for their careers, a significant 44.06% expressed dissatisfaction. Only 20.28% provided positive feedback indicating that the curriculum may need improvement to better align with students' career goals. The high neutral response suggests mixed opinions or uncertainty about its effectiveness.

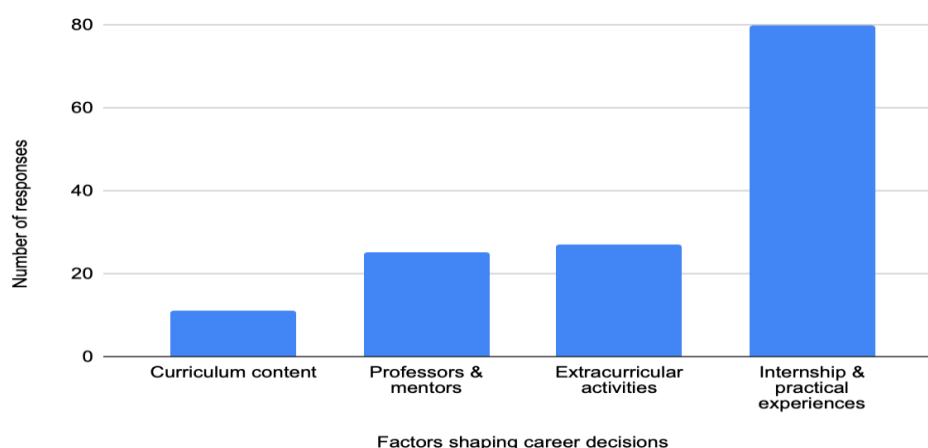
### **ACADEMIC FACTORS SHAPING CAREER DECISIONS**

**TABLE 4.15 ACADEMIC FACTORS SHAPING CAREER DECISIONS.**

<b>Factors shaping career</b>	<b>Number of responses</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Curriculum content	11	7.69
Professors & mentors	25	17.48
Extracurricular activities	27	18.88
Internship & practical experiences	80	55.94
Total	143	100

(Source: - Primary data)

**FIGURE 4.15 ACADEMIC FACTORS SHAPING CAREER DECISIONS.**



(Source: - Primary data)

**INTERPRETATION:** - The significant factors influencing career decisions among respondents in an academic context. Out of 143 responses, Internship & practical experiences emerged as the most influential factor, accounting for 55.94% of the responses, indicating the critical role of hands-on exposure in shaping career paths. This is followed by Extracurricular activities (18.88%) and Professors & mentors (17.48%). Meanwhile, Curriculum content accounted for only 7.69%, suggesting that while theoretical knowledge is foundational, practical applications and mentoring play a more substantial role in career decision-making.

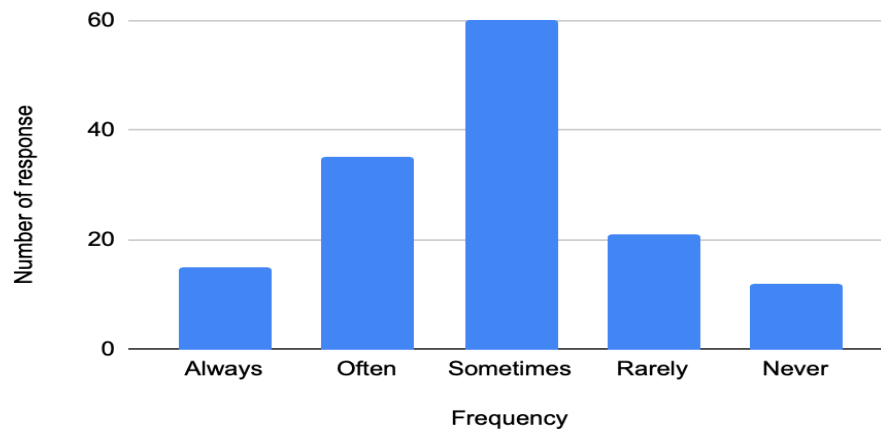
#### **FREQUENCY OF CURRICULUM PROVIDING SUFFICIENT PRACTICAL CAREER SKILLS**

**TABLE 4.16 FREQUENCY OF CURRICULUM PROVIDING SUFFICIENT PRACTICAL CAREER SKILLS**

Frequency	Number of responses	Percentage
Always	15	10.48
Often	35	24.47
Sometimes	60	41.95
Rarely	21	14.68
Never	12	8.39
Total	143	100

(Source: - Primary data)

**FIGURE 4.16 FREQUENCY OF CURRICULUM PROVIDING SUFFICIENT PRACTICAL CAREER SKILLS**



(Source: - Primary data)

**INTERPRETATION:** - Table 4.16 examines the extent to which respondents feel their curriculum provides sufficient practical skills for their careers. The majority (41.96%) reported that the curriculum "sometimes" offers adequate practical skills, indicating inconsistency in its applicability to real-world needs. A smaller proportion, 24.48%, felt it "often" meets this requirement, while only 10.49% stated it "always" does. Conversely, 14.69% responded with "rarely," and 8.39% said "never," highlighting a significant gap in practical skill development for nearly one-fourth of the respondents. These findings suggest a need for curricula reform, focusing on enhancing consistent and relevant practical skill integration to better prepare students for career challenges.

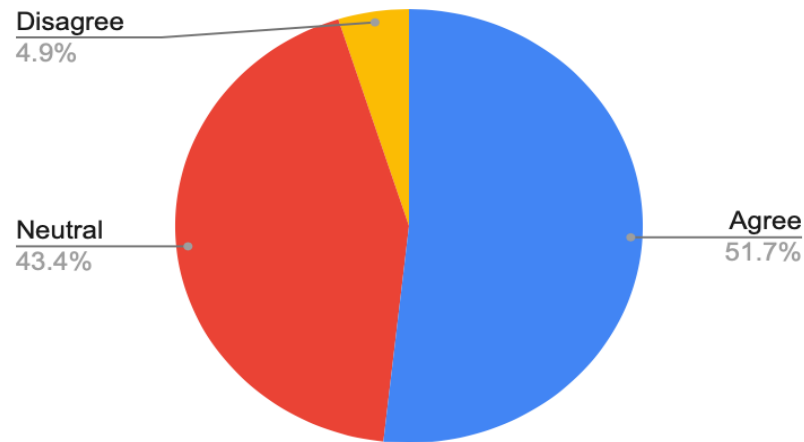
## **GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP OVER WHITE-COLLAR JOBS**

**TABLE 4.17 GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP  
OVER WHITE-COLLAR JOBS**

Options	Number of responses	Percentage
Agree	74	51.74
Neither Agree/ Disagree	62	43.35
Disagree	7	4.89
Total	143	100

(Source: - Primary data)

**FIGURE 4.17 GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP  
OVER WHITE-COLLAR JOBS**



(Source: - Primary data)

**INTERPRETATION:** - The survey results indicate that the majority of respondents, 51.75%, agrees that entrepreneurship has more growth opportunities when compared to white-collar jobs. Meanwhile, 43.36% of participants maintained a neutral stance, suggesting a significant portion of respondents neither strongly agreed nor disagreed. A small minority, 4.89%, expressed disagreement. In conclusion, the majority of student respondents favours entrepreneurship as a successful career providing growth opportunities.

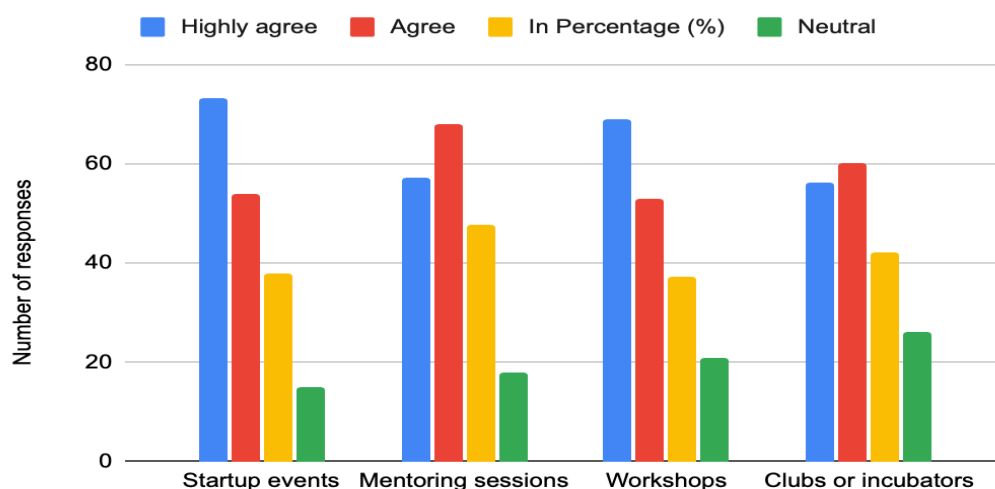
### **FACTORS PROMOTING ENTREPRENEURSHIP SKILLS**

**TABLE 4.18 FACTORS PROMOTING ENTREPRENEURSHIP SKILLS.**

Factors	Number of responses				
	Highly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Highly Disagree
Startup events	73	54	15	1	0
Mentoring sessions	57	68	18	0	0
Workshops	69	53	21	0	0
Clubs or incubators	56	60	26	1	0

(Source: - Primary data)

**FIGURE 4.18 FACTORS PROMOTING ENTREPRENEURSHIP SKILLS**



(Source: - Primary data)

**INTERPRETATION:** - Among the factors, startup events were deemed most impactful, with 51.05% of respondents highly agreeing to their relevance. Mentoring sessions followed with 39.86% of participants highly agreeing, closely aligned with workshops at 48.25%. Clubs or incubators were also considered valuable, with 39.16% in strong agreement. The data highlights that structured activities, such as startup events and workshops, play a significant role in fostering entrepreneurial skills, while mentoring sessions and clubs also hold notable importance.

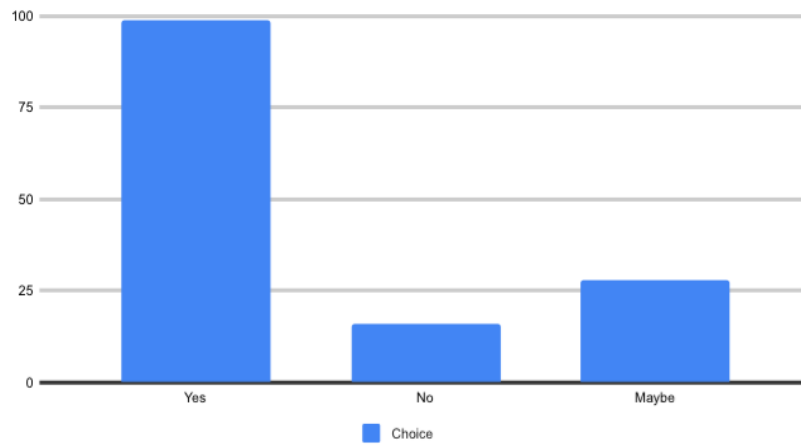
#### **INFLUENCE OF TECHNOLOGY IN STARTING BUSINESS OR IN PROMOTING ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

**TABLE 4.19 INFLUENCE OF TECHNOLOGY IN STARTING BUSINESS OR IN PROMOTING ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

Options	Responses	Percentage
Yes	99	69.23
No	16	11.19
Maybe	28	19.58
Total	143	100

(Source: Primary data)

**FIGURE 4.19 INFLUENCE OF TECHNOLOGY IN STARTING BUSINESS  
OR IN PROMOTING ENTREPRENEURSHIP**



(Source: - Primary data)

INTERPRETATION:-The survey results indicate that a significant majority of respondents (69.23%) are in favor of the choice being surveyed, while a smaller portion (11.19%) are opposed to it. Interestingly, 19.58% are uncertain, selecting the "Maybe" option. This suggests that while the majority hold a positive stance, there is still a notable segment of people who are either undecided or require more information before making a definitive decision.

### KEY CHALLENGES OF STARTING A BUSINESS

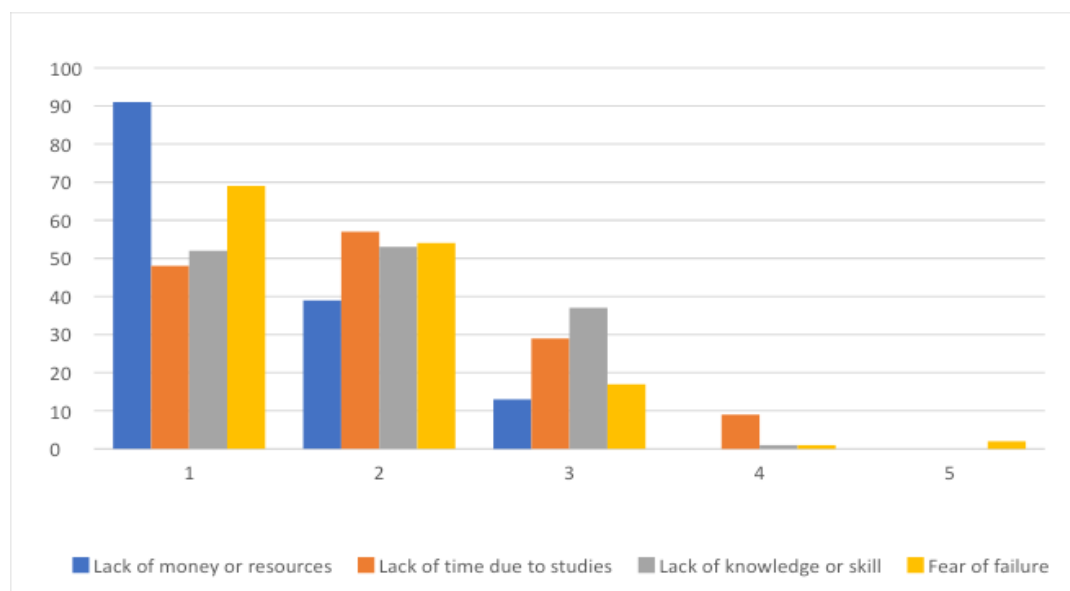
**TABLE 4.20 KEY CHALLENGES OF STARTING A BUSINESS.**

Opinions	Number of responses				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Lack of money or resources	91	39	13	0	0

Lack of time due to studies	48	57	29	9	0
Lack of knowledge or skill	52	53	37	1	0
Fear of failure	69	54	17	1	2

(Source:- Primary data)

**FIGURE 4.20 KEY CHALLENGES OF STARTING A BUSINESS.**



(Source:- Primary data)

**INTERPRETATION :-**The survey results highlight that the majority of respondents feel that lack of money or resources (63.64%) and fear of failure (48.25%) are significant barriers. Lack of time due to studies (39.86%) and insufficient knowledge or skills (37.06%) also emerge as notable challenges, though fewer people disagree with these factors. Overall, financial constraints, time management, skill gaps, and fear of failure are the main concerns influencing the respondents' perspectives.

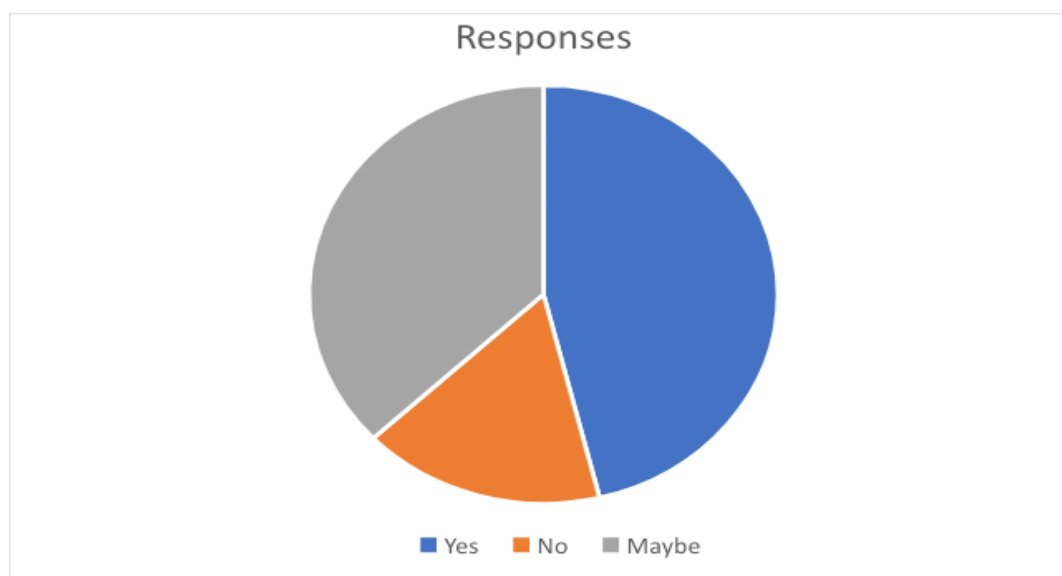
## WHITE-COLLAR JOBS CONSIDERED AS A SAFER CAREER OPTION

**TABLE 4.21 WHITE-COLLAR JOBS CONSIDERED AS A SAFER CAREER  
OPTION.**

Options	Responses	Percentage
Yes	66	46.15
No	24	16.78
Maybe	53	37.06
Total	143	100

(Source: Primary data)

**FIGURE 4.21 WHITE-COLLAR JOBS CONSIDERED AS A SAFER  
CAREER OPTION**



(Source:- primary data)

**INTERPRETATION :-**The survey results show that 46.15% of respondents support the idea that white-collar jobs are a safer option, while 16.78% oppose it. A significant 37.06% are uncertain, indicating that while there is more support than opposition, a large portion remains undecided.

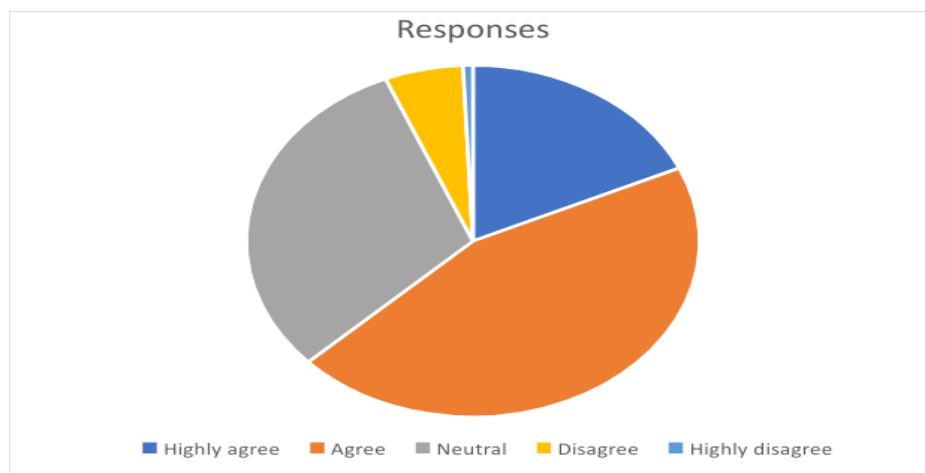
## INFLUENCE OF ACADEMIC CURRICULUM IN SHAPING CORPORATE ROLES

**TABLE 4.22 INFLUENCE OF ACADEMIC CURRICULUM IN SHAPING  
CORPORATE ROLES.**

Opinion	Responses	Percentage
Highly Agree	26	18.18
Agree	64	44.76
Neutral	44	30.77
Disagree	8	5.59
Highly Disagree	1	0.7
Total	143	100

(Source:- Primary data)

**FIGURE 4.22 INFLUENCE OF ACADEMIC CURRICULUM IN SHAPING  
CORPORATE ROLES.**



(Source: - Primary data)

**INTERPRETATION:** - The survey results indicate that around 45% agree, and 18% strongly agree, showing a positive view of the curriculum's effectiveness in preparing students for such roles. However, 31% remain neutral, suggesting some uncertainty or lack of strong opinion, while only 5.6% disagree, indicating minimal opposition to the idea. Overall, the data suggests that the majority view the academic curriculum as adequate for preparing students for traditional corporate roles.

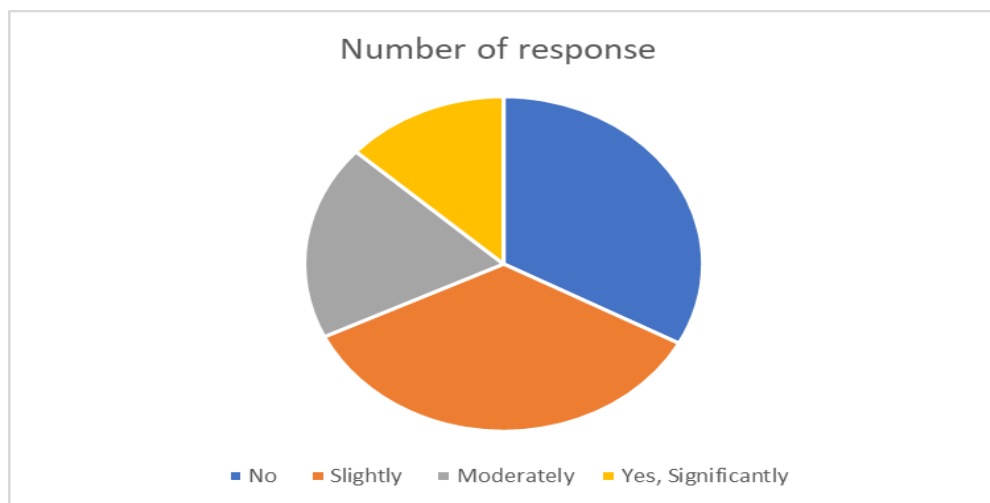
## IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON CAREER GOALS

**TABLE 4.23 IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON CAREER GOALS.**

Impact of the COVID-19 on Career Goals	Number of responses	Percentage
No Influence	47	32.9
Slightly Influenced	50	35
Moderately Influenced	27	18.9
Yes, Significantly Influenced	19	13.3
Total	143	100

(Source: Primary data)

**FIGURE 4.23. IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON CAREER GOALS.**



(Source: - Primary Data)

**INTERPRETATION:** - The table shows varying degrees of impact the COVID-19 pandemic has had on individuals' career goals. While 35% report a 'slight' impact and 32.9% say there has been no impact at all, a significant portion (18.9%) has experienced a moderate effect, and 13.3% feel the pandemic has affected their career goals significantly. This suggests that while many have been able to adapt without major changes to their career paths, a considerable number have had to reassess or adjust their goals due to the disruptions caused by the pandemic.

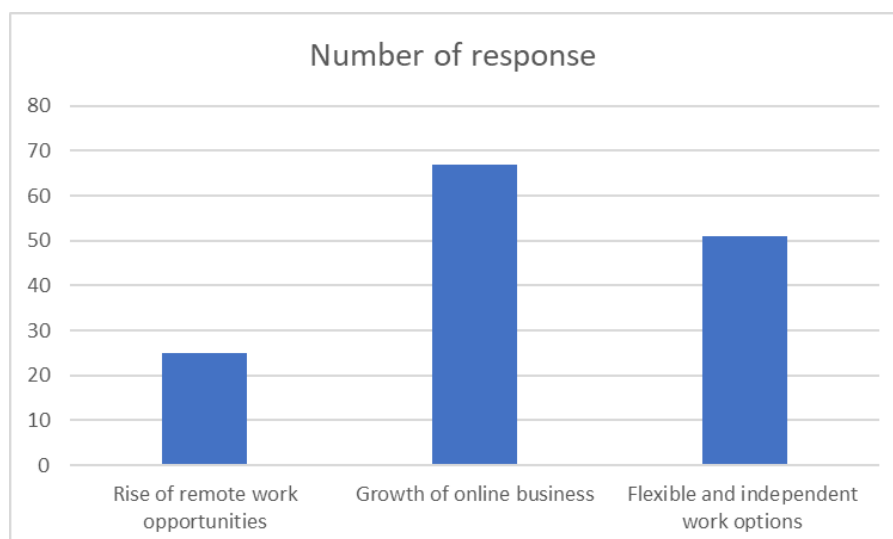
## POST- COVID CAREER INFLUENCES

**TABLE 4.24 POST- COVID CAREER INFLUENCES.**

Post-COVID Career	Number of responses	Percentage
Rise of remote work	25	17.5
Growth of online business	67	46.9
Flexible and independent work options	51	35.7
Total	143	100

(Source :- Primary data)

**FIGURE 4.24 POST- COVID CAREER INFLUENCES.**



(Source: - Primary data)

**INTERPRETATION: -** The table highlights the key post-COVID factors influencing career decisions. The ‘growth of online business’ stands out as the most significant factor, with 46.9% of respondents identifying it as a major influence. ‘Flexible and independent work’ options follow closely at 35.7%, indicating a strong interest in work environments that offer greater autonomy. Meanwhile, 17.5% of respondents are most influenced by the ‘rise of remote work opportunities’, reflecting the growing preference for location-independent jobs. These trends suggest that individuals are increasingly drawn to career paths that offer flexibility and independence, with a strong focus on the digital economy.

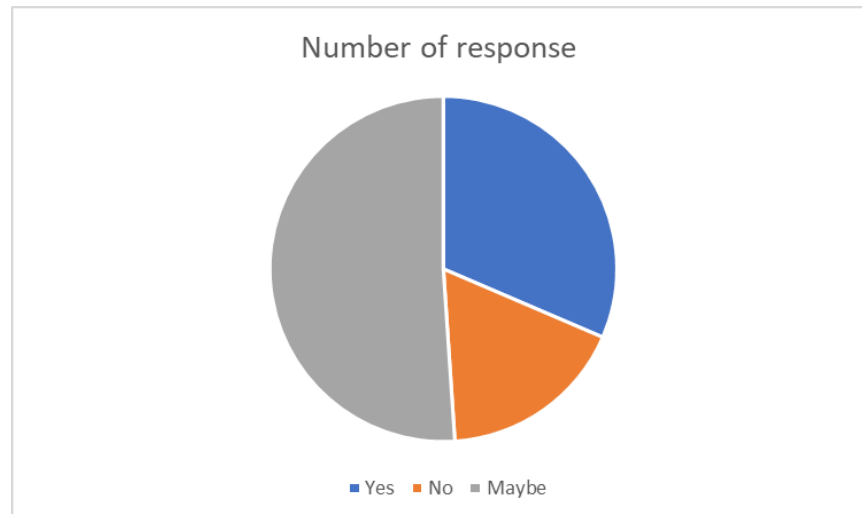
## **BALANCING ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND WHITE-COLLAR JOB**

**TABLE 4.25 BALANCING ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND WHITE-COLLAR JOB.**

<b>Balancing Entrepreneurship and White-Collar Jobs</b>	<b>Number of responses</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Yes	45	31.5
No	25	17.5
Maybe	73	51
Total	143	100

(Source: - Primary data)

**FIGURE 4.25 BALANCING ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND WHITE-COLLAR JOB.**



(Source: - Primary data)

**INTERPRETATION:** - The table shows that a majority of respondents (51%) believe that balancing entrepreneurial ventures and white-collar jobs is possible, with 31.5% answering affirmatively 'yes' and 17.5% disagreeing. The results highlight a mixed outlook, with a significant number of individuals open to the idea but unsure about the challenges it may present.

**CHAPTER 5**  
**FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS**  
**AND CONCLUSION**

## 5.1 FINDINGS

- Majority of respondents are aged 18-20 (65.73%), mostly at the undergraduate level (83.92%), predominantly female (72.73%) and primarily pursuing Commerce (51.7%).
- Most respondents prefer for white-collar jobs, with notable interest in entrepreneurship and hybrid careers.
- Financial potential and passion are key drivers of entrepreneurship, while creative freedom, flexibility, and social recognition hold moderate influence. Risk-taking and peer influence are balanced but lean toward moderate to high impact.
- Financial stability, job security, structured work, and work-life balance strongly influence white-collar job preferences.
- Students prioritize future career values, with family influence playing a big role in shaping their preference for white collar jobs.
- Academic achievement has little influence on long-term job objectives, while students' personal development is the main factor influencing their career goals.
- Educational level and geographical location are the most influential factors, while cultural, religious, and personal interests hold moderate importance, and financial background and age have a more neutral impact.
- White-collar job preferences are heavily influenced by family, steering individuals toward stability and conventional career pathways over personal ambition.
- Most respondents perceive entrepreneurship as a moderate-risk endeavor, while only a small percentage view it as highly risky.
- About 44.06% of respondents found academic curriculum inadequate for their career preparation, indicating need for improvement.

- While examining the key elements that influence student's career choices, Internship and practical experiences (55.94%) are the top priority whereas curriculum content (7.69%) plays a lesser role.
- One-fourth of respondents believe that their curriculum rarely provides practical skills for their careers.
- Majority of the respondents believe entrepreneurship offers more growth opportunities than white-collar jobs (51.75%)
- Majority respondents consider startup events and workshops as the most impactful in fostering entrepreneurial skills. It is further followed by mentoring sessions and clubs.
- Majority of respondents believe that technical advancements have greatly eased starting a business.
- Most respondents see financial constraints (63.64%) and fear of failure (48.25%) as major barriers to starting a business.
- Most of the respondents view white-collar jobs as a safer option, while some disagree.
- Most of the respondents believe the curriculum prepares students for corporate roles, though some remain uncertain.
- Majority are of the opinion that covid 19 has only slightly influenced their career goals. Only a significant portion had to reassess or adjust their aspirations due to its disruptions.
- The post-COVID career decisions are increasingly influenced by the growth of online business, flexible work options, and remote opportunities, highlighting a strong preference for autonomy and the digital economy.
- A majority believe balancing entrepreneurial ventures and white-collar jobs is possible.

## **5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Academic curricula should incorporate internships, mentorship programs, workshops, and certifications to provide students with practical, skill-based

learning and industry insights from experts and entrepreneurs, rather than relying solely on theoretical education.

- Career counselling should be strengthened to help students identify their skills, explore balanced job opportunities, and mitigate risks related to family influence, finances, and anxieties through personalized guidance.
- Encourage mental health programs to assist students in managing stress related to their careers, failure-associated anxiety, and future uncertainty.
- Increase funding, financial literacy programs, and low-interest loans to help aspiring business owners overcome financial challenges and launch their ventures.
- Conducting workshops to address entrepreneurship misconceptions, break stereotypes, and help students balance job security with aspirations through side hustles and hybrid career choices.

### **5.3 CONCLUSION**

Critical goals of the study on students' attitudes toward entrepreneurship and white-collar jobs include determining what motivates students to pursue entrepreneurship, analyzing how prevalent the current curriculum and extracurricular activities are among college students, examining demographic factors that contribute to the preference for white-collar jobs over entrepreneurship, and comprehending the impact of motivational factors on students' career choices.

Following data analysis and interpretation, it is determined that although students' interest in entrepreneurship is growing, their job decisions are still greatly influenced by the current curriculum and extracurricular activities. According to the survey, the majority of participants—mostly undergraduate commerce students—incline toward white-collar jobs because they offer financial stability, job security, and work-life balance. However, a sizable percentage also indicates interest in entrepreneurship, driven by passion and financial potential. While elements like family influence is vital in determining professional preferences and frequently leads people toward traditional career pathways. Despite the fact that many people see entrepreneurship as a good way to progress, there are still many obstacles to overcome, including lack of funds, fear of failing, time limits, and skill shortages. Notably, respondents favor internships

and real-world experience over theoretical knowledge, and many feel that their academic program does not sufficiently prepare them for their employment.

With growing interest in remote work, flexible work schedules, and digital entrepreneurship, the post-COVID landscape has further changed people's perceptions of careers. There are differing opinions about the viability and difficulties of juggling white-collar jobs with entrepreneurial endeavors, despite the widespread belief that it is feasible. This suggests that students' perspectives on career choices are changing.

All things considered, these changing viewpoints draw attention to how job goals are changing and stress the necessity of flexible educational programs and encouraging workplaces that promote contemporary career goals.

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# **ANNEXURE**

## QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Age:

- 18 - 20 ☐
- Above 23 ☐

2. Gender:

- Male ☐
- Female ☐
- Other ☐

3. Stream of study:

- Science ☐
- Commerce ☐
- Arts / humanities ☐
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_ ☐

4. What is your current educational level?

- Undergraduate ☐
- Postgraduate ☐

5. Which of the following career path interests you more?

- Entrepreneurship ☐
- White-collar jobs ☐
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_ ☐

6. How much do these factors influence your career choice?

*(only for entrepreneurship candidates)*

Extremely High   Highly   Moderately   Poor   Extremely Low

Financial potential	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Creative freedom	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Flexibility	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social recognition	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Risk taking mentality	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Influence from family / peers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Passion or interests	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. How much do these factors influence your career choice ?

( Only for white-collar job candidates )

Very Highly   Highly   Moderately   Low   Very Low

Financial stability	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Structured work environments	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Job security	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Prestige	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Work life balance	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Influence from family/peers	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Passion or interests	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

8. What do you value the most in your future career?

- Financial independence
- Work-life balance
- Job stability
- Flexibility
- Autonomy

9. What motivates you the most to achieve your career goals as a student?

- Recognition and respect
- Personal growth
- Financial success
- Good grades

10. How does the following demographic factors influence you to choose your favourable career ?

Very likely   Likely   Neutral   Unlikely   Very Unlikely

Age	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Gender	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Educational level	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Geographical location	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Cultural and religious beliefs	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Hobbies and interests

Financial background

11. How much does peer influence affect your career preference?

- Strongly
- Moderately
- Low
- No influence

12. How likely are you to choose a white-collar job over entrepreneurship due to family pressure?

- Very likely
- Likely
- Neutral
- Unlikely
- Very unlikely

13. According to you, rate the level of risk in entrepreneurship over white-collar jobs.

Very high risk

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

Low risk

14. "Current academic curriculum prepares students for their desired career".  
Rate your agreement on a scale of 1-5.

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

15. Which of the following academic factors plays the biggest role in shaping your career decisions?

- Curriculum content
- Professors & mentors
- Extracurricular activities
- Internship & practical experiences

16. How often do you feel that your curriculum provides sufficient practical skills for your career?

- Always
- Often
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

17. "Entrepreneurship is offering more growth opportunities compared to white-collar jobs". Give your opinion.

- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree

18. Do you think the following are relevant in promoting entrepreneurship skills in college ?

Highly agree   Agree   Neutral   Disagree   Highly disagree

Startup events	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Mentoring sessions	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Workshops	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Clubs or incubators	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

19. Do you believe technological advancements have made it easier to start a business?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

20. Give your opinion on the following challenges that refrain students from starting a business?

Strongly agree   Agree   Neutral   Disagree   Strongly  
disagree

Lack of money or resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lack of time due to studies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lack of knowledge or skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fear of failure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

21. Do you see white-collar jobs as a safer career option?

- Yes ☐
- No ☐
- Maybe ☐

22. " The academic curriculum prepares students for a traditional corporate job ".  
State your opinion.

- Highly agree ☐
- Agree ☐
- Neutral ☐
- Disagree ☐
- Highly disagree ☐

23. Has the COVID-19 pandemic affected your career goals?

- No ☐
- Slightly ☐
- Moderately ☐
- Yes, Significantly ☐

24. Which of the following post-COVID factors has influenced your career decision the most?

- Rise of remote work opportunities ☐
- Growth of online business opportunities ☐
- Flexible and independent work options ☐

25. Do you think a balance can be achieved between entrepreneurial ventures and working in a white-collar job?

- Yes ☐
- No ☐
- Maybe ☐