

Review Article

Creativity, Innovation and Entrepreneurship: Agenda for India

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A B S T R A C T

Innovation and entrepreneurship are the source of hope for the future. The future generations of entrepreneurs have to understand the principles of entrepreneurship. This is a paper, where the author looks at the creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship in India. The problems and the possible solutions are discussed. The author recommends transformation of educational institutions, transformation of government institutions, development of new institutions and fostering a culture for development of appropriate system. The author recommends that the common people of India should be the target of all developmental interventions. The elitist model should be discarded and efforts should be made to support the masses.

Keywords: Startup, Entrepreneurship, Entrepreneur, Innovation, MVP, SDG

Introduction

The evolution of the society depends on the quality of its citizens. The quality of citizens depends on the quality of education, culture, freedom, literature and overall environment. These multiple factors shape the society of the future. The present challenges of the society can be solved through the creative and innovative faculties of the citizens and their ability to put in unified efforts to solve the problems. Creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship are the three qualities that can enable any society to progress and prosper over a long period of time. These qualities enable societies to fight against the problems of the present times and enable the society to rise and prosper in the future. These three characteristics should be nurtured and developed in every society. These characteristics are in born in all of us. However, due to the overall system of education, grooming, cultural practices, literature, overall sense of accomplishment, these qualities are either nurtured or reduced. Those societies that are able to nurture these qualities are able to progress and prosper, those societies that are notable to nurture these qualities, face problems in their development.

Creativity in Indian Society

Creativity is spread out among masses. It is there with everyone. It is based on an individual's capabilities to create new idea or object. It is directly related to the ability to visualize and imagine. It is directly related to overall confidence and sense of accomplishment. Creativity is very high among younger persons. Children are the most creative, however, they lack experience, and so their ideas are generally ignored or rejected. As we grow older, our tendency to be creative reduces due to our willingness to accept the established way of life. Creativity is a way to challenge the existing situation and a desire to create a new solution through perseverance and constant efforts. Creativity happens when we are dissatisfied with the existing situation. When we immerse ourselves in a work, we are able to understand its depth and we are able to create a better solution through our mental processes and imagination. Creativity is not encouraged in our system. On the contrary, it is discouraged. Creativity at preliminary may be in the form of new ways of doing, new ways of presenting oneself. Our primary and secondary schools curtail the creative potential of students in the first stage.

Creativity requires confidence and support. It is directly related to ability to express and ability to present divergent ideas. The overall culture in India contributes to creativity because India is a confluence of divergent cultures. There are plenty of rituals, plenty of ideas and plenty of festivals. The overall culture of freedom permits people to express and speak out and experiment. People are not stopped even for going against the existing practices. Divergence is accepted, tolerated and supported sometimes. However, this thing doesn't apply to schools and colleges, which are working on factory system trying to produce prototypes of successful students. Students pursue limited careers and they try to follow limited role models. However, these tendencies curtail the overall creative potential of the students.

Hurdles Created by Education System in India

Our education system is based on the factory system of education. Here the prime objective is to create clerks. The students are supposed to write exactly the same words that the teacher has used. The students are asked to be good in copying others. There is same uniform for each student. The student is expected to copy other students. The student is expected to speak the same language as others, have the same expressions, present the same ideas and have the same habits as others. How can we nurture innovative capabilities in this kind of system? There is encouragement for creativity and innovation. Look at the education system of yesteryears, which we have forgotten. The students were permitted to speak mother tongue. Primary education used to be provided only in mother tongue. The student used to develop the ability to be creative through the overall environment, where creativity and innovative skills were rewarded. What we are doing at present is dangerous for our country, because it will completely deprive students of their creative potential.

Look at the contrast between entrepreneurship and education system: -

1. We need to prepare students in team building but our education system prepares them for individualistic goals and achievements.
2. We need to prepare students to tolerate uncertainty education system prepares them for only certainties.
3. We need to prepare students willing to accept diversity and prepare innovations to create and enrich diversity the educational institutions are running on factory model and they are trying to copy and prepare students who are just similar and are just good in copying.
4. We need to prepare students who are risk takers educational institutions do give any training in risk taking.
5. We need to prepare students who understand the importance and role of finance and cultivate habits of small-scale businesses from childhood so that they are able to take right decisions there is no such training or provision for learning in educational institutions.
6. We need to broaden our mental framework to apply technologies for solving problems of the society we need to understand how technologies work it is not taught in educational institutions.
7. We need to discourage students from going towards fixed service jobs to prepare them for entrepreneurship both government and educational institutions are actively preparing, training and encouraging students to go for fixed service job and giving them many alluring proposals.
8. We need to provide easy finance for starting first venture with regular guidance and mentoring— there is no such provision in educational institutions, however, now incubators are supposed to provide this support but they give guidance and mentoring only for those projects, which can be scaled to national level. They are not interested in very small business (which may be otherwise very creative business ventures).

Overall System of Support for Entrepreneurship

Different governments have opened different systems for promotion of entrepreneurship. Most of these centers are run by government to provide financial and other support to entrepreneurs. These centers are taking away huge money and resources of the governments. Take Rajasthan for example the giant building of Bhama Shah Techno hub has been prepared spending crores of rupees. This huge building can accommodate about seven hundred entrepreneurs. However, what is the outcome? What is the result of such initiatives? Are such initiatives needed? Where is the fault? Let us try to analyze. Being in touch with most of the entrepreneurs, I find that the entrepreneurs are not generally excellent in English. In fact, they are those, who are not fit in the typical education system, which is trying to prepare copy-cats. The typical education system is designed to kill entrepreneurship. How can we expect the education system to generate entrepreneurs for us? The entrepreneurs that are emerging are those, who have preserved their creative and innovative capabilities in spite of suffering through the typical education system, which would kill creative and innovative capabilities of any person. If some persons are able to survive and they are able to remain creative, it is due to their own stubbornness and therefore such persons are generally not very good in education and in spoken English. Their mother tongue is not English and they are not very proficient in their schools, so they are not able to speak English very well. However,

most of the executives managing the entrepreneurship cells or the incubation centers are English speaking persons (generally such persons are very good in academics, so they get a chance to manage this center). The outcome is a disaster; the entrepreneur comes with a dream, but the hurdles of English speaking stop the person from moving forward. The spirit of entrepreneurship gets a hit. There are plenty of government institutions to foster entrepreneurship.

However, look at their outcome. There are plenty of incubation cells. However, most of these cells are not able to support entrepreneurship. They invite Venture Capitalists, who are interested in only scalable business projects. Entrepreneurs are generally not very good in presentations and in modern tools. They are not able to give presentations which can get them some kind of funding. What is the outcome? A large number of venture capitalists and a large number of angel investors are now operating and they are searching for innovative business enterprises. However, those who are innovative, are out of educational system (they are innovative because they didn't join the typical educational system). Those who are in the educational system are not able to nurture innovative capabilities due to lack of required training (they have been trained to be not be innovative). Entrepreneurship requires understanding of technological advances. However, most of the technology development centers are focusing on developing large scale technologies, which cannot be implemented by entrepreneurs. Traditional Indian technologies were useful for micro-entrepreneurs; however, these technologies have been neglected by both governments and by entrepreneurs. Traditional technologies are environment friendly also and they enable an entrepreneur to start at a very small scale and from his home itself, however, these technologies have been completely neglected.

The Path Towards Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship depends on the capabilities of the person to understand the needs of the society and the ability to apply some new technology or new methods to solve the problems of the society at large. Entrepreneurs are generally extrovert persons, who are able to connect different people together to generate business. The entrepreneurs are able to get rid of their ego early in life and they are able to carry the basic ideas about the society well. They are able to understand the changing society and help the society in the process of transition through some technological upgradation or application. Entrepreneurs are good in observing, good in analyzing and good in innovating. They visit a lot, identify the changing society, identify new technologies and identify the ways and means to give innovative solutions to the society. Entrepreneurs spend considerable time in interacting with

their customers to understand their needs and aspirations. They spend considerable time in experimentation and carry self-confidence to introduce and update technologies to meet the requirements of the society. They carry qualities like perseverance, patience, risk taking ability, ability to change as per changing situation and ability to visualize the future and proceed ahead for the desired change. These entrepreneurs are able to introduce changes to meet the needs and expectations of the society.

Sectors for the Entrepreneurs

Entrepreneurs go with the flow of time and prepare to predict the future and proceed ahead to be forerunner of the time. They try to gauge the changing dynamics of the society and try to prepare innovative products and technologies to help the society at large. They constantly innovate and experiment to generate some new solutions for the society. There are many sectors that are emerging as the promising sectors for the society. These sectors need entrepreneurs, because the society is in the process of transition and the society needs new products and services to meet their changing requirements. Some of these sectors are: -

- Solar energy, renewable energy etc.
- High technology-based education, online education and vocational training
- Health-care using latest technologies
- Green technologies based new technologies
- Organic agriculture-based products and services
- Technology based logistics
- Business support services including expert manpower provider
- Event management companies
- Research based businesses
- Matrices based ranking and rating services
- Infrastructure development companies
- Design and creative solution providers

These are only a few examples, there are many such sectors, where there will be considerable demand of expertise and entrepreneurship in the years to come. The entire world would be emphasizing on SDG sustainable development goals. Thus, new products, services and new solutions would be required to meet the SDGs. India has many old technologies, traditional knowledge-based practices, and old products and technologies, which are best suited for achieving SDGs. However, many of these practices have now become extinct. There is a need of entrepreneurs, who can revive these technologies and create products for the next generations, which are based on proper friendly relations with the environment. Traditional knowledge and practices of India would create opportunities for the entrepreneurs in the years to come.

Societal Trends and Opportunities for the Entrepreneurs

Society is evolving (changing) and these changes are creating opportunities for the entrepreneurs. Take some examples: -

Urbanization - rising population in urban areas would create many opportunities – development of smart cities, development of urban infrastructure, development of services in rising cities for better entertainment, better recreation, better food, better essential services including health care, education, counseling and personality development training programs etc.

Health consciousness - more and more people are now becoming fat and they are falling ill due to excessive eating and no physical work. We will need entrepreneurs, who can promote yoga, meditation, walking, cycling, guided health-care, dieting, and health counseling. We will need a large number of entrepreneurs, who can help people in remaining fit.

Rising middle class - middle class is rising and with this there are new hopes, needs, new aspirations, which are emerging. People are now migrating from poor class to middle class and with that they require new products and services, which earlier they were not able to enjoy.

Rising urban wastes - urban wastes are rising and people are also becoming conscious about the impact of the waste on their lives. There will be need of a number of entrepreneurs in the field of waste management.

Digital marketing and E-business - the entire business is now changing. Companies are now relying on digital marketing and e-business for their business. There will be huge opportunities for entrepreneurs in these fields.

Fashion and beauty industry - everyone wants to look beautiful and appealing. Industries are now emerging and growing to encase these opportunities. Some are running image management training institutions, some are running beauty parlors, some are preparing cosmetics and some are engaged in business relating to fitness and appearance. Thus, there will be huge scope of entrepreneurship in the years to come.

Philanthropy - philanthropic activities will also need entrepreneurs. The rising budget of CSR and social development activities will call for entrepreneurs in the sectors relating to philanthropic activities.

Entertainment and adventure - people today have plenty of leisure time and plenty of surplus funds available with them. Rising income of people is now being spent in sectors like health care, education, entertainment, adventure etc. people are now interested in participating in such ventures, which can give them some refreshment and

relieve them from the stress arising due to rising competition and rising threats of uncertainties. Thus, there is a need of entrepreneurship in these sectors.

Day care, home care and support services - now there is a family in which everyone is earning. Who will take care of little children? Who will take care of repairs and maintenance of home? Who will take care of the needs of home? Who will ensure cleanliness of the home? Thus, there will be plenty of opportunities for entrepreneurs.

Special food - the future generations will be having far more healthcare problems than the present. They would require special food – which would be lighter, less oily, freshly cooked and would be easy to digest. They would require food which would be nutritious as well as good in taste. They would require entrepreneurs in hospitality and restaurant industry to prepare special food for them. Everyone in the home will be busy, there will be need of home delivery (or office delivery during day time) of food and other such products.

Institutional Support Mechanisms

Creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship can be developed through well established and supporting institutions for this purpose. There is a need of such institutions in India. Although educational institutions should nurture these – but it is not happening. Most of the institutions are not able to nurture these qualities as they themselves are suffering through many cultural bottlenecks and they lack the required vision. Many institutions are trying to focus only on placement, or development of students on prescribed roles. These factors would curtail the growth of the students because the emphasis would be on preparing students only on prescribed roles or prescribed careers. Creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship cannot flourish in such circumstances. We need institutions that can foster these qualities in all the educational institutions through faculty development, faculty orientation and faculty encouragement. For promotion of innovation, we have an excellent institution - National Innovation Foundation. For entrepreneurship, there are many institutions. Now the government is setting up incubation centers all over the country for supporting innovation and entrepreneurship, however, these incubation centers are working in a biased manner, they are not able to connect to the masses. They are not willing to be open for everyone. They have not been able to support common people. Their willingness to follow only the well-established American model is their biggest hurdle. What is required in India cannot be found in other developed countries. Learning from developed countries should be welcome, but the grass root reality and the inner strengths of India should be used for the purpose of development of appropriate institutional model. The present institutions work on elitist model

of development. They go with an assumption that only students from premier institutions can become innovators and entrepreneurs. This is a false assumption. They also go with the assumption that educational institutions spread out in far of cities, villages and remote locations cannot nurture and promote entrepreneurship. This is again a false notion. The efforts are made to establish and promote incubation centers in well-established institutions, this will again create problems. Existing institutions cannot embrace the concept of innovation and entrepreneurship because they have been nurturing a philosophy which is contrary to the spirit of entrepreneurship. They have been designed and prepared to nurture placement-oriented education. The qualities that are needed in entrepreneurs are different. Thus, there is a need of new institutions or new mechanisms. There is a need to open institutions for common people. Creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship are found among common people, therefore there should be efforts to use local language, mobile apps, local resources, and support mechanisms. The bureaucratic machinery is biggest hurdles for entrepreneurs. There is a need to create a simple system for entrepreneurs. Business laws and regulations should be simplified and bureaucratic hurdles should be curtailed. Transformation of educational institutions, government institutions, bureaucratic systems and legislations can create a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship.

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