

Effects Of Teaching Entrepreneurship Skills Amongst Students (11 To 13 Years) on the Psychological and Mental Well-Being of Adolescents

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Abstract

Entrepreneurship is important because it creates jobs, shows the risk taking ability of an individual, and helps in bringing new innovative ideas into action. It plays a vital role in psychological and mental development during the formative years of adolescents. The role of entrepreneurship in the overall development of adolescents is substantial. One of the biggest advantages of getting started with entrepreneurship at a young age is the opportunity to learn important skills such as teamwork, networking, problem-solving, critical thinking, innovation, self-discipline, etc. and above all Experiential Learning. All these skills can help make school performance better and later in life they are able business folks. Students not only develop a range of skills and competencies that are valuable in both their personal and professional lives but also get prepared for the ups and downs in professional web. It teaches them how to think creatively and critically, how to identify and solve problems, and how to take calculated risks. Business management skills are the better learnt when the teenagers have ever expanding horizons because of their mental development. And when the goal of learning entrepreneurship skills is PHILANTHROPY, it adds icing to the cake. The enthusiasm and thrill, adds to the experiential learning feathers in their caps. This project aimed at developing interpersonal communication skills, thinking skills, critical analytical skills, leadership skills, entrepreneurship cell skills and philanthropic skills.

Keywords: entrepreneurship, psychological and mental development, experiential learning, developing competency, business management, philanthropy.

Preface

This research is based on the fact that adolescents of middle school have never been exposed to any kind of entrepreneurial activities. Some of them only belong to business families and they are young enough to participate in family business. So even the smallest changes and improvements were notified and included.

Another major fact is this research is that the first ever core team that had **ONLY AND ONLY GIRLS**. My research is based on direct experience/ observation and employ facts and evidence collected through rigorous investigations and interviews conducted on the budding entrepreneurs.

Introduction

Oosterbeek, Hessel; van Praag, C. Mirjam; IJsselstein, Auke (2008) presented a paper on the impact of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurship competencies and intentions: an evaluation of the junior achievement student mini-company program and highlighted the analysis of the impact of a leading entrepreneurship education program on college students' entrepreneurship competencies and intentions. Another research was taken by Elvir Munirovich Akhmetshin, Galina Nikolaevna Larionova, Elena Vladimirovna Lukiyanchina, Yulia Petrovna Savitskaya, Roman Aleksandrovich Aleshko, Olga Sergeevna Aleynikova, from various Russian Universities, on the influence of educational environment on the development of entrepreneurial skills and competencies in students. The above referrals lead to a thought that a research on entrepreneurship education in adolescents from middle school should also be there. The development of entrepreneur skills at school stage can be a catalyst for the students in middle school and can transform them into young entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurship leading to innovation can help students become independent and channelizes their energy and creativity into creating something of their own and they can carve a niche for themselves when they actually enter the competitive world as an entrepreneur. Keeping this in mind a detailed discussion was done between Mrs. Komal Arora, Incharge Middle School, and Project Incharge Mrs. Anuradha and the idea of creating an **Entrepreneurship Club** for middle school students was floated. A Google form was circulated for students to select clubs of their choice (including Entrepreneurship Club) and hence an action research began in October 2022 (which continues till date of writing this research paper, ie, January 24) with creating an actual pilot project under the name '**NAVODAYA – KAUSHAL KISHORE KUSHAL KISHORE**'.

Objective of Research –

The vision of the project is to

- help students to cultivate a startup business idea
- teach students basic strategies like estimating costs
- writing a business plan
- help them network their ideas towards source of funding
- cultivate skills for a successful entrepreneurial venture which will make them enterprising graduates
- create entrepreneurs who will be able to compete in local and global business industry
- to teach them the noble act of philanthropy.

Methodology

The decision for this course of “Action of Charity” was taken in October 2022 by Mrs. Anuradha, the Facilitator Incharge. For implementing the same an efficient core team (17 members) was created. This team was supposed to create, market and profitize the new venture to earn for helping and funding underprivileged students with their school fees and other education-related necessities.

Project In-charge (Teacher-Facilitator) – Mrs. Anuradha

The **Pilot Core Team** comprised of following student leaders –

Student Project Head and Marketing Head – Navriti

Assistant – Suhani

Creative Head – Suvidhi

Assistant – Pragti

Sales Department Head – Samridhi

Assistant Sales Department Head – Suvidhi

Treasurers – Suhani

Assistant Treasurer - Samridhi

Production Department Head – Geet

Inventory In-charge – Trisha

Assistant Inventory In-charge - Palak

Purchase Committee Head – Samridhi

Assistant Purchase Committee Head – Saachi

Quality Inspector – Saachi

Assistant Quality Inspector – Nitya

Sales Manager – Gargee

Documentation Head - Jaya

Assistant – Sana

Other students headed the salesman committee for employing the students.

After the evolution of the core team other adequate members (30 students), to be a part of the above committees were chosen out. Meetings were held by the core team (Student Leaders) with the other students to discuss the strategical applications of the project. They were made responsible for getting the cheapest raw material, manufacturing the product, finishing and packaging the final product, strategizing marketing policy (for maximizing the profit) and finally selling the product.

The First Product launch

After many discussions amongst the core team, the first ever product chosen for the project was – selling hand-painted hankies. The excitement for the launch was unmatched.

Team work starts

Plain white hankies were picked as raw material, from the local market. Our motive was to design them best and further sell them away. The hankies were then passed on to the manufacturing team. They were painted in different designs - tie and die, block painted with different designs hand painted with – logos, cartoon character faces, stationary items one liners and many more designs. The upshot hankies were mind blowing and so pleasing. Moving forward the designed hankies were passed to the core team for quality check, finishing and editing wherever required. After passing all quality tests they were ready for sale.

Launch day

The project was launched on the Eve of ‘THE DIWALI MELA 2022 KVM’, an event on the Mandate: **By The Students, For The Students, Of The Students**. The super excited students were ready for the First Event. Now to sell hankies up here the students advertised them by going to each classroom and promoting the sale using samples. The best part of this was the idea of customization. Under this people

could get their own modified hankies (with their names written on them or their favourite logo, cartoon character, favourite quote or anything of their choice) and also could see making of them live and this highlighted our event further serving as an icing on the cake and the event was a grand success. A member who knew how to play guitar was seated adjacent to stall table and played beautiful tunes to Bollywood songs, another stood on the top of a stool to shout out loud and attract customers while few others went into the field and marketed from there. All the hankies (approx. 500 sets) were sold out, and there was a heavy demand for more such events. The stall was overcrowded and everyone praised the efforts of the students. The turning point of this was that the stall altogether from scratch was managed by the core-team under the guidance of Mrs. Anuradha (PROJECT INCHARGE).

This further motivated the team and the **experiential learning** process started bearing fruits. The students who were introverts became potential raw material buyers and sales executives, and some who never painted showed their interest in contributing in the labor and few others became marketing executives.

On seeing the enthusiasm **more students joined the team.**

The excitement, enthusiasm amongst the buyers took the learning experience of our budding entrepreneurs to level next, wherein they learnt entrepreneurship skills viz, buying raw material, processing the material, quality checking packing and finally selling, managing cash, strategizing to increase profit margins and stock management. Since the experience was first hand so the learning outcome was **HANDS ON EXPERIENCE and EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING.**

The second successful event for the Session 2023-24 was celebrated during books sale days in March 23. We sold hankies, some stationary items and jute bags for book sets. This event further motivated the team and the experiential learning process started bearing fruits with **involved students started showing positive changes.**

The new session (2023-2024) began, carrying the legacy further, with creating all the new team and the new batch was equally good and eager in learning. This new team had a whole new variety of ideas and the products sold started having variety –

Event 1 - Dated – May 2023:

Mothers Day Celebrations – T Shirts with name of the child written on them – and the stock was sold out.

Event 2 – Dated – July 2023:

Teej Celebrations – Sale of Bangles and Bindis (forehead stickers) and Henna cones and another stall where students applied henna on ladies' palms.

Event 3 - Dated – August 2023:

Sale of hankies, Independence Day souvenirs – again whole stock sold was out

Event 4 - Dated – November 2023:

Diwali Mela – Sale of hankies, hand-made copies, diyas and home made candles.

Event 5 - Dated – January 2024:

Sale of Republic Day souvenirs – again the stock was sold out.

The students never showed any remorse if the stock didn't sale out completely. They were conditioned to try to sale the stock out and incase that doesn't happen we can always preserve it for next event or time same as the shopkeepers do. One more very important lesson was learnt. Many a times the sales person were outrightly rejected and discouraged by some buyers and they felt really bad but then this is life and you can't be accepted and encouraged by all you meet. So their morals were boosted telling them not to

loose heart. The real life examples (given by the Project In-charge) played an important role in teaching valuable life lessons to these budding entrepreneurs. The success stories of each entrepreneur were taken as a live experience and used in next sales. The whole client army was **efficiently**, **effectively** and **effortlessly** handled and managed by our Student Entrepreneurs. They talked and managed so smoothly that people around were easily attracted to the charm of their stall and skills. The Experiential learning in the process was par excellence when these young entrepreneurs set their foot with a promise to themselves that they would master the Entrepreneurship Skills that day only.

The Gala Events out of which the team Navodaya began its career lead the new team with fresh experience. The attraction of the team and their hard work was so **charismatic** and **magnetic** that the raw material was also contributed by non-members and they were more than happy to carry home an experience of being an entrepreneur worth millions.

Till date they have sold innumerable items and made a profit of more than 1,00,000/- (One Lakh Rupees) which is deposited with the school.

Skill list

Studying entrepreneurship and innovation has enhanced the following skills in the students

- Analytical skills, Logical skills, Critical thinking
- Problem solving skills
- Leadership
- Networking
- Marketing skills
- Teamwork
- Financial skills
- Resilience
- Risk tolerance
- Time management
- Goal setting
- Negotiation
- Collaboration
- Emotional intelligence
- Business management strategy
- Communication
- Enhancing creativity and innovation
- Empathy

They learnt many valuable life lessons too, following which helped these students in their holistic development.

Life Lessons Learnt

- Accepting rejection/ failure
- Prioritizing well-being
- Building Relationships
- Self-care

- Social welfare
- Independence
- Increased self-esteem
- Intellectual development.

Taking a holistic approach to education in entrepreneurship helped in focusing on all aspects of a students' overall growth. Most importantly, it lead to establishing the child's overall mental, physical, social and emotional wellbeing.

They besides being young entrepreneurs stepped in another set of shoes, ie, Philanthropy. This Experiential learning approach provided students with the opportunity to study social problems and make decisions about investing funds in them. Giving helped the students to develop a genuine concern and interest in the cause. Philanthropy contributed to the following positive effects:

- Greater overall happiness.
- Lower stress levels.
- Better physical health.
- Heightened sense of connection to others.

This part of the club received an open arms welcome from the society. They earned a great amount of respect and tremendous support from their clients and some over paid to encourage our **budding Philanthropist Entrepreneurs**. They discovered that giving should be –

- Regular
- Participatory
- Intentional
- Proportional
- Anticipatory
- Effective
- Accountable

They understood that these timeless principles of giving are applicable to all and improve the well-being of mankind by eliminating the cause of suffering.

Result

This research is an ongoing process and has been continuing since its conception (2 years now) whereby students kept learning through their experiences and their excitement for success motivated them further. The results show that entrepreneurial education and prior experiences played an important role in the foundation for improving students' creative innovative behavior and its usefulness, formation of their entrepreneurial motivation became an important platform for promoting their entrepreneurial intent more effectively. As a result, they were efficient enough to scale and float new ideas from scratch and ably manage the whole process on their own. Students of the core team are smart Entrepreneurs of their age. Most of them learnt more than one skill and are trusted to be an asset to the society and Nation by successfully contributing to the economy and being capable and able businessmen. When interviewed they were bountifully elaborating how this Entrepreneurship Club has nurtured their bodies, minds and souls. Some said they would hardly speak and avoid gathering but now they were happy being called potential salesmen. Some others said they would out rightly reject the idea of shopping but now they were able purchasers, few others had developed the confidence of public speaking, still others were all

ready to float spot innovative ideas on the marketing strategies, and many became managers, defying all negations that this younger lot of adolescents could be successful businessman!!! The research result can be well summarized as below –

Trait	Competent Level – Able To
Creativity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • create new innovative solutions to same problem. • experiment, explore and add new innovations to existing situation.
Teamwork and team building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • investigate and locate required talent. • add qualified ones to the team. • help team members with empathetic listening and approach.
Problem solving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • apply experimentation and experience to generate innovative solutions to the problems.
Analytical, logical, critical thinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • critically analyze situations. • find logical ways and means to define, find solutions. • manage favorable outcome.
Confidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • trust their knowledge. • use their skills to enhance their talent. • explain mutual benefits.
Self discovery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • realize they own capabilities, competencies, strengths, weaknesses. • overcoming negative situations through experience.
Public speaking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • successfully market their products out of competition. • resolve arising conflicts by overcoming their shyness. • negotiate. • convince.
Picture perfect planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • systematically derive, plan the sequential steps in business management. • introspect shortcomings. • find appropriate solutions. • improve on their shortcomings.
Decision making and being responsible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • decide ways and means to unscramble whole business process including developing new business ideas, prioritizing the necessities, taking hard calls, and shouldering responsibility for wrong decisions.
Taking lead/initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • take lead wherever required. • enhance readiness to work beyond boundaries. • be eager to do more and fast. • convert unfavorable situation to favorable response.
Never die attitude	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • convert and overcome all discouraging situation, rejections/failures.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • learning to encouraging and successful morale boosting stories.
Respect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • resolve/ solve all disputes amicably. • respect decisions of fellow workers.
Learning to Accept and Adapting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • accept the situations as they are (if out of control). • adapt accordingly to seek mental peace and happiness.

Discussions

In two years of this ongoing research the students learnt to explore the opportunities knocking at their door and exploiting them to the fullest. The experiment proved to be a success and growth of the entrepreneurial mindset bore fruits. It was seen that the raw material (students) successfully turned to budding Entrepreneurs and Philanthropist. The degree of success achieved cannot be measured but can definitely be guaranteed. Holistic development is the key word achieved through their experiences.

Further Suggestions

Seeing the results it is hereby suggested that:-

1. The concerned education boards' job is to formulate a specific defined syllabus like other subjects and age relevant course to help students develop entrepreneurial mindset by performing various activities that will help in the holistic development.
2. Entrepreneurial mindset takes a flight when existing entrepreneurs as guest lecturers.
3. Organizing various competitions on innovative business ideas at district, state and national levels by government agencies.
4. Introducing certified courses for developing entrepreneurship skills.
5. Employing trained faculty to identify Entrepreneurship skills in early adolescents and update the existing ones to be competent enough.
6. Hands on experience to adolescents by visits to real industrial sector, shops, malls etc, for gaining skills – entrepreneurial, marketing, product purchase, raw material, managing accounts, IT training, networking, investment, marketing trends.
7. Enabling adolescents on technological advances in entrepreneurship.
8. Creating awareness seminars to notify importance of skill education in their lives (including entrepreneurship skills).
9. Promoting vocational training at younger ages to develop business mindsets.
10. Opening small tuck shops in schools run and managed by students (**BY THE STUDENTS, FOR THE STUDENTS, OF THE STUDENTS**) the principal of NAVODAYA.
11. Orientation programs for adolescents on various fields and types of businesses at basic level.

APPENDIX

(Learning Outcomes as mentioned by students

When interviewed this is what the students said:

- These events pumped a great level of confidence in us.
- We all have earned a great amount of appreciation, experience of teamwork, purchasing-selling, sampling, marketing strategies and managing the money collected.

- It's magical. I had never ever thought in the wildest of my dreams that I would be called an entrepreneur at this age.
- I will win the businessman of the year award one day.

And the confidence stories continue.....)

Testimonials by students

Students shared their learning outcomes for which links of videos are attached herewith -

1. <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1OELLktGzbWDGonsHDgtPvzeHTXsyHxiO/view?usp=drivesdk>
Entrepreneur Navriti
2. <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1i8LgU9VgjoP33e00M7cOq2pI1hbGyvbq/view?usp=drivesdk>
Entrepreneur Suhani
3. <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1BUUzuRSso45voWszJpnSBVcoHuJimPG7/view?usp=drivesdk>
Entrepreneur Suvidhi
4. https://drive.google.com/file/d/1X1BnLLMsKgZI4G-qNgV-WF-6qZmQy66_/view?usp=drivesdk
Entrepreneur Sachi
5. https://drive.google.com/file/d/1_jY3KNcGods-3NxxOHmQxToI-lrkA0FS/view?usp=drivesdk
Entrepreneur Jaya
6. <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1LftSQcZe2eug0ZF0CUEMSH5FO2BR9XTh/view?usp=drivesdk>
Entrepreneur Pragti
7. <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1L7ID3rd1bqarInEh6x9pTZvEzmrLOzk9/view?usp=drivesdk>
Entrepreneur Geet
8. <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1PFvY1aclc1fv7EfuokY8dVVVaxsO32Mc/view?usp=drivesdk>
Entrepreneur Samridhi

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