

Role of Socio Emotional Resilience in Developing Entrepreneurial Skills among Higher Secondary School Students

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Abstract

The paper explores how Socio-Emotional Resilience shapes the Entrepreneurial mindset of higher secondary school students. It provides insights into the psychological, emotional and social competencies that empower learners to innovate, take risks and recover from setbacks which are essential traits for Entrepreneurial success. Descriptive method is used to analyse the role of Socio-Emotional Resilience on Entrepreneurial Skills among Higher Secondary School Students. The investigators analysed the challenges faced by students in their career journey as young entrepreneurs and the need for integrating the activities which fosters Socio-Emotional Resilience in their curriculum for developing Entrepreneurial Skills. It also suggests that preparing students not just to launch businesses but to sustain them with confidence, empathy and adaptability thereby fostering well-rounded, future-ready individuals poised for both personal and professional success.

Keywords: Socio-Emotional Resilience, Entrepreneurial Skills, Higher Secondary School Students

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I. Introduction

Entrepreneurial Skills are no longer confined to starting a business; it represents a broader mindset, one that values creativity, initiative, risk-taking and the ability to solve real-world problems. In today's global and rapidly evolving economy, Entrepreneurial Skills are essential not just for aspiring business owners, but for anyone entering the workforce. For students at the Higher Secondary school level, this means learning to think independently, generate innovative ideas and take ownership of their learning and future careers.

At this stage of life, students are still developing their identities, values, and social understanding. Introducing entrepreneurship education at this level helps build not only business acumen but also life skills such as critical thinking, goal-setting, and collaboration. Possessing technical or business knowledge alone cannot guarantee success. Many challenges in entrepreneurship such as dealing with failure, navigating complex human relationships and making ethical decisions require emotional maturity and psychological strength. In this context Socio-Emotional Resilience (SER) becomes essential.

The individuals acquired through SER training apply it effectively in knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, develop caring and concerned relationships, make responsible decisions, and handle challenging situations constructively. In the school setting, this includes fostering emotional intelligence, empathy, self-confidence, resilience, and interpersonal communication skills. These competencies are not only vital for personal well-being but also closely aligned with entrepreneurial success.

Integrating Socio-Emotional Resilience and Entrepreneurial Skills equips students with the emotions resistance they need to persist through setbacks, manage stress and bounce back from failures. It also means nurturing a sense of social responsibility and Entrepreneurial Skills where students understand the impact of their ideas and actions on others. When resilience is cultivated alongside Entrepreneurial Skills, students are better prepared to face real-world problems with confidence, empathy, and adaptability traits that are increasingly valuable in both local and global contexts.

Objective

- To analyse the role of Socio-Emotional Resilience (SER) in developing Entrepreneurial Skills among Higher Secondary Students

Review of related literature of Socio-Emotional Resilience

Lahar, C. J., Nadeau, A. L., Violette, J., Roberts, S., & Reindl, D. (2023) investigates the Socio-Emotional Resilience of older adults during the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly examining how they coped with social isolation and stress. Semi-structured interviews 21 adults between the age 62 to 86 based on the Socioemotional Selectivity Theory (SST) as its guiding framework revealed the participants found peace through nature, mindfulness, and hobbies by consciously maintaining a positive outlook to combat negative emotions. Suárez Cretton, X., & Castro Méndez, N. (2022) explores the level of development of socio-emotional skills and their relationship with academic performance of the child population of the Araucanía region of Chile reveal a good level of development of the social-emotional and resilience skills in children and a positive correlation of these with academic performance. Guo et al. (2023) used a multi-informant (self, teacher, and parent) and multi cohort (ages 10 and 15 from Finland, N = 5,533) perspective to study the association between 15 social-emotional skills and 20 educational, social, psychological health and physical health outcomes reveals that traits like self-regulation and perseverance predict success beyond academics, highlighting the importance of SEL in education. Romano, L., Angelini, G., Consiglio, P., & Fiorilli, C. (2021) aimed to examine the links between academic resilience, perceived teacher emotional support, and school engagement. Moreover, the mediating role of perceived teacher emotional support was investigated and results showed that academic resilience was associated with perceived teacher emotional support, and both of them were related to school engagement and also perceived teacher emotional support partially mediated the relationship between academic resilience and school engagement.

Steve Burns (2015) book *The Resiliency Skills Handbook: How to Develop Lifelong Skills in Social and Emotional Resilience* is a comprehensive, teacher-ready resource designed to build essential social and emotional competencies in adolescents integrates methods from NLP, life coaching, and positive psychology to deliver engaging exercises, stories, games, and puzzles suitable for use in classrooms or developmental workshops.

The OECD's Survey on Social and Emotional Skills (SSES) 2023 represents the largest global initiative to gather comparable data on the development of social and emotional skills - including creativity, empathy, achievement motivation, responsibility and collaboration skills - among 10- and 15-year-old students. The report - *Nurturing Social and Emotional Learning Across the Globe* - reveals striking disparities both within and between participating countries and subnational entities in how these critical skills are fostered in schools, homes and society.

Review of related literature of Entrepreneurial Skills

Pennetta, S., Anglani, F., & Mathews, S. (2023) aims to define, classify and interconnect the wide range of known entrepreneurial abilities with terms such as skills, capabilities and competencies, which have been used inconsistently within the entrepreneurial field. This study proposes an evolving entrepreneurial ability model which interconnects genetic and acquired skill types, capabilities and competencies and is equipped with an Entrepreneurial Skills Map essential to operate in the 21st century. Listyaningsih et al., (2023) examines the relationship between entrepreneurship education, entrepreneurship intentions, entrepreneurship motivation and entrepreneurship interests of tertiary students, both public and private universities in Bandar Lampung reveals that the effect of entrepreneurship education on entrepreneurship motivation is not influenced by entrepreneurship intention. Shahin, M., Ilic, O., Gonsalvez, C., Whittle, J.(2020) designed to explore the effects of a one-day female-focused STEM-based entrepreneurship program (for brevity, we call it the OzGirlsEntrepreneurship program) on the entrepreneurial intention of secondary school female students reveal that a key factor in the development of entrepreneurial attitudes in young female students is associated with soft-skills development, particularly in the areas of creative thinking, risk-taking, problem-solving, and leadership development. Soomro, B. A., & Shah, N. (2021) undertook an empirical investigation of entrepreneurship education, self efficacy, need for achievement and entrepreneurial intention among Pakistan's commerce students reveals a significant positive effect of constructs of entrepreneurship education (EE), that is, opportunity recognition (OR) and entrepreneurship knowledge acquisition (EKA) on entrepreneurial self-efficacy (ESE), entrepreneurial intention (EI) and need for achievement (NFA). Besides, ESE and NFA are found to be the robust predictors of EI.

Review of related literature of Socio-Emotional Resilience and Entrepreneurial Skills

Thomas Hedner, Adli Abouzeedan, and Magnus Klofsten (2017) examines in the article "*Entrepreneurial Resilience*" how entrepreneurs adapt to adversity through both internal traits like optimism and external support systems. It introduces the concept of "spiritual capital," emphasizing the role of self-transcendence and purpose in sustaining motivation during difficult times. The authors argue that resilience is not just about resources or strategy, but also about deeper psychological and spiritual strength. They advocate

for a holistic approach to entrepreneurial development that includes emotional, social, and purpose-driven support. Ahmed et al. (2022) critically reviews how psychological resilience, stress, and coping mechanisms are conceptualized and studied within entrepreneurship research and proposes a research agenda that emphasizes longitudinal studies, contextual factors, and integrating diverse theoretical perspectives to better understand how entrepreneurs adapt and thrive under pressure. Schutte, F., & Mberi, F. (2020). aims to provide clarity relating to the factors that influence entrepreneurs' resilience, as this has an impact on the sustainability of their business ventures and identified two sets of factors which act as influencers of entrepreneurial resilience, namely self-factors such as passion, personality traits, support systems, vision, belief systems and networks, with the second set, employees, financial resources and venture structure. There is a constant interaction between these two sets of factors, resilience and the survival of an entrepreneurial venture.

II. Methodology

The investigators analysed various literatures related to the variables Socio-Emotional Resilience and Entrepreneurial Skills. The in-depth analysis of literature gave insights towards the need of integrating strategies to develop Entrepreneurial Skills in alignment with Socio-Emotional Resilience in Higher Secondary curriculum. The reviews reveal that infusing so-called strategies into the existing curriculum would mould the young learners with necessary Entrepreneurial Skills by coping with adversities in their life. The focus towards bridging the gap in their prone areas are essential for the upcoming socio-economic development of the society. This paper adopts a qualitative research approach, drawing on existing studies, literature and case examples to explore the relationship between Socio-Emotional Resilience and Entrepreneurial Skills. A systematic review of relevant academic articles, books and reports is conducted to synthesise the emerging knowledge on the topic. Data for this research is primarily gathered from peer reviewed journals, educational reports and entrepreneurship related literature. Studies that focus on resilience development programs and entrepreneurial education are included to build a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between Socio-Emotional Resilience and Entrepreneurial Skills.

III. Results and Discussion

a) The Role of Emotional Regulation in Entrepreneurship

Emotional regulation is the capacity to observe, evaluate, and manage emotional responses—is an essential psychological trait for entrepreneurs. Strong emotional resilience and self-regulation are essential in the path of entrepreneurship filled with uncertainty, risk, challenges, and high pressure, all of which demand.

Entrepreneurs often face unclear situations, financial pressures, and the constant risk of failure. To cope with stress and anxiety without losing control, enabling more logical and focused decision-making resilience will be able to regulate emotions effectively. Since entrepreneurship typically involves long working hours and delayed gratification, emotional regulation also supports sustained motivation, resilience, and concentration. Intense emotions such as fear or excitement can impair judgment.

entrepreneurs can stay composed and make objective, data-driven decisions, especially when managing these heightened emotional states. Successful entrepreneurship with interpersonal skills leads a team, negotiates agreements, and builds relationships with investors and clients. Emotional regulation plays a key role in maintaining calm, demonstrating empathy, and communicating effectively, even during difficult or tense situations. Entrepreneurs with strong emotional regulation are also more likely to see failure as a valuable learning experience rather than a defeat. This perspective is crucial in a field where obstacles and setbacks are inevitable. Emotional regulation is not merely a “soft skill”; it is an important capability that promotes psychological health, strengthens leadership abilities, and supports long-term success. Incorporating emotional regulation training into entrepreneurship programs can equip future entrepreneurs with the emotional tools needed to navigate the mental demands of starting and running a business.

b) Social support and entrepreneurial success

Social support is a key element in achieving entrepreneurial success. According to studies by Zimmerman and Clary, both emotional and instrumental forms of support positively influence an entrepreneur's motivation to start a business, their ability to handle stress, and their overall chances of succeeding. This support can come from family, friends, mentors, and government-supported programs. Emotional support can significantly boost an entrepreneur's confidence and passion, making them more likely to pursue business ventures. Emotional support such as encouragement and empathy and instrumental support like help with practical tasks can help entrepreneurs manage pressure and maintain their mental well-being in entrepreneurship. Social networks provide vital access to resources, information, and opportunities that are essential for navigating the challenges of starting and scaling a business. Emotional support fosters a sense of being understood and cared for, which can be especially beneficial during tough times. On the other hand, instrumental support includes practical help such as business planning assistance, financial advice, or hands-on

help with daily tasks. Government initiatives also serve as a form of social support by offering start-up funding, mentorship, and other resources that help ignite entrepreneurial drive and support business growth.

c) Optimism and entrepreneurial mindset

Optimism within the entrepreneurial mindset refers to the confident and enduring belief that one's efforts will ultimately result in success, even when facing uncertainty, risk, or setbacks. In entrepreneurship, optimism functions as a fuel in motivating resilience, and willingness to take risks, the qualities that are essential for starting new ventures. Entrepreneurs frequently encounter challenges such as limited resources, failures, and unpredictable outcomes. Optimism enables them to view these difficulties as manageable and temporary rather than as obstacles. Hopeful perspective helps maintain confidence, encourages faster recovery from failures, and reinforces long-term goals. According to research by Carver and Scheier (2005), optimism fosters goal-oriented behavior while supporting flexible thinking. Optimistic entrepreneurs are more capable of pivoting strategies when needed, rather than giving up or rigidly adhering to ineffective approaches. A positive mindset significantly influences how entrepreneurs approach challenges. Optimistic individuals are more likely to act with determination and energy toward their goals—traits that are particularly important when dealing with the unpredictability of entrepreneurship. Carver's findings show that optimism not only supports the initiation of ambitious ventures but also helps build emotional strength when facing adversity.

Entrepreneurs with a high level of optimism typically interpret failures as temporary setbacks, using them as chances to refine their strategies rather than as reasons to quit. Carver also highlights that optimism involves more than persistent effort; it includes the flexibility to reassess goals. When a particular goal becomes unrealistic, optimists tend to let it go and redirect their efforts toward more attainable objectives, preserving both energy and emotional health. Carver also warns that excessive or unrealistic optimism can have negative consequences. It may cause entrepreneurs to overlook risks, dismiss constructive criticism, or continue investing in failing projects. Optimism is a powerful force that encourages innovation, perseverance, and opportunity recognition with realistic evaluation and adaptive strategies truly contribute to entrepreneurial success.

d) Overcoming adversity and persistence

Developing entrepreneurial skills requires knowledge, technical expertise and capacity to overcome adversity and demonstrate persistence. The entrepreneurial journey is filled with uncertainty, competition, resource limitations, and frequent setbacks. The ability to face challenges and continue pursuing goals despite failures is crucial for Entrepreneurial Skill. Adversity in entrepreneurship may include financial loss, market rejection, operational difficulties, or emotional burnout. Entrepreneurs who succeed are often those who can remain resilient, adapting their strategies, learning from mistakes, and maintaining forward momentum rather than being discouraged by obstacles. Persistence refers to sustained effort and long-term commitment to goals, even when progress outcomes are unclear. It enables entrepreneurs to stay focused through the difficult, tedious, or risky phases of building a venture. Persistent individuals engage in continuous problem-solving, take feedback seriously and are willing to revise their approach without abandoning their vision. Persistence also supports the development of the core Entrepreneurial Skills such as creativity, opportunity recognition, and leadership. Overcoming adversity and persistence and turning challenges into opportunities for growth and learning enables individuals to transform ideas into lasting impact.

Angela Duckworth's (2016) concept of grit, which combines passion and perseverance toward long-term goals, offers a vital framework for understanding how entrepreneurs overcome adversity. In the entrepreneurial journey, individuals frequently encounter setbacks such as funding challenges, product failures, market rejection, or operational crises. Duckworth emphasizes that success is not defined by talent alone but by the capacity to persist in the face of difficulty. Entrepreneurs with high levels of grit exhibit emotional resilience, reframing failure as a learning opportunity rather than a defeat. This mindset enables them to stay motivated and committed to their vision, even when progress is slow or uncertain. Rather than being discouraged by obstacles, gritty individuals adapt their strategies and continue to work toward their objectives with determination.

Implications for educational programs

a) Integrating resilience training into the curriculum

Resilience can be integrated into the existing curriculum by aligning it with subject-specific objectives. In literature, students can explore characters' emotional development and their coping mechanisms in the face of adversity, fostering empathy and self-awareness. Science and social studies provide opportunities to discuss mental health, human behavior, and the physiological effects of stress, helping students understand resilience from both a scientific and societal perspective. In the arts, creative expression becomes a valuable tool for processing emotions and building self-confidence. Math and science classes can focus on perseverance by encouraging students to tackle complex problems with logical reasoning and determination. Language arts can

promote critical thinking, communication, and empathy through various activities, while physical education can teach students to use physical activity as a means of managing stress and maintaining emotional well-being.

Beyond integrating resilience into existing subjects, schools can offer dedicated courses or modules focused solely on building resilience. These programs can teach essential skills such as emotional regulation, stress management, goal setting, and problem-solving. Experiential learning, through activities like role-playing, group discussions, and real-world scenario analyses, allows students to practice these skills in a supportive environment. To further reinforce resilience, schools should provide access to counseling services and emotional support, ensuring that students have the necessary resources when facing personal challenges.

Creating a supportive school culture is critical for resilience to thrive. Classrooms must be safe and inclusive spaces where students feel emotionally secure and respected. Fostering a positive relationship between peers and teachers can significantly boost students' sense of belonging and support. Acknowledging students' efforts and progress rather than just their achievements reinforces a growth mindset and resilience. Open communication helps students express their challenges and seek help, reducing stigma around vulnerability and mental health.

Technology can play a significant role in supporting resilience-building initiatives. Schools can utilize online platforms, apps, and digital resources that offer guided activities, mindfulness exercises, and mental health support. Virtual support groups could also be established to create safe, peer-led spaces for students to share their experiences and struggles. The digital tools are helpful for students who may be reluctant to engage in face-to-face discussions or require flexible access to support.

Teachers are crucial in modeling and teaching resilience. Professional development programs should equip educators with the necessary tools and knowledge to foster resilience in their students. Training should include strategies for integrating social-emotional learning into everyday lessons, recognizing signs of emotional distress, and responding with empathy. The advantages of embedding resilience training into the school experience equips students to handle pressure, setbacks, and the demands of exams and valuable coping mechanisms for managing stress and challenges. Social-Emotional skills like empathy, collaboration, and communication are enhanced, improving classroom dynamics. Resilience training prepares students for the challenges of adulthood, higher education, and the workplace. By addressing these needs proactively, schools can reduce the long-term risk of mental health issues, ensuring that students are not only able to succeed but also thrive.

b) Fostering entrepreneurial environment

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 introduces a transformative vision for India's education system, with a strong emphasis on fostering Entrepreneurial Skills among students. It recognizes that education must equip learners with the ability to think critically, solve real-world problems, and adapt to dynamic environments, core traits of an entrepreneurial mindset. NEP 2020 promotes 21st-century skills such as creativity, collaboration, communication, and digital literacy, which are essential for entrepreneurship. The policy advocates for experiential and holistic learning through project-based activities, internships, and real-life problem-solving. Initiatives like 'bagless days' and vocational exposure from Grade 6 onwards aim to nurture practical skills and self-initiative.

The integration of vocational education into the curriculum, with a goal of exposing 50% of learners to such training by 2025, helps break the traditional divide between academic and skill-based learning, encouraging students to explore entrepreneurial opportunities in various sectors. NEP's multidisciplinary and flexible curriculum enables students to combine diverse subjects such as science, business, arts, and technology allowing them to tailor their education according to their interests and potential entrepreneurial goals. The policy also emphasizes the importance of life skills, including financial literacy, digital proficiency, and emotional resilience, which are crucial for managing ventures effectively. NEP 2020 supports the development of innovation hubs, tinkering labs, and collaborations with industries to promote a startup culture within educational institutions. NEP calls for teacher training programs that equip educators to mentor students in entrepreneurship, further embedding an entrepreneurial culture in schools. NEP 2020 aims to shift the focus from rote learning to building future-ready individuals who are capable of becoming job creators rather than job seekers.

c) Strategies outlined in NEP 2020 to foster Entrepreneurial Skills

Integration of Vocational Education

NEP 2020 places strong emphasis on vocational education to help students acquire practical and job-relevant skills. From an early age, and more intensively at the higher secondary level, students are introduced to a variety of trades and professions. This hands-on learning encourages creativity, problem-solving, and independent thinking—core components of entrepreneurship. The policy sets a target for at least 50% of learners to be

exposed to vocational education by 2025, helping them become self-reliant and ready for entrepreneurial ventures.

Multidisciplinary and Flexible Curriculum

The policy promotes flexibility in subject choices, allowing students to select combinations across traditional streams such as science, commerce, and arts. This approach supports the development of innovative and cross-disciplinary thinking, essential for identifying opportunities and launching new ideas. Students can explore their interests more freely, which encourages ownership and a proactive mindset. Such a structure nurtures entrepreneurial skills by helping students apply knowledge creatively and in diverse contexts.

Emphasis on Experiential Learning

NEP 2020 advocates for experiential, project-based learning that allows students to apply theoretical knowledge in real-world situations. Through activities like internships, community projects, and school-based enterprises, students develop leadership, collaboration, and decision-making abilities. These experiences cultivate initiative and resilience critical traits for entrepreneurs. Students also gain insight into the functioning of businesses, giving them the confidence to consider launching ventures of their own.

Focus on 21st-Century Skills

The policy identifies critical 21st-century skills such as communication, collaboration, creativity, and digital literacy—as fundamental to future success. These skills are embedded across subjects and activities to prepare students for the modern, innovation-driven world. Entrepreneurial thinking thrives in environments where students are encouraged to take initiative, work in teams, and think critically about problems and solutions. Developing these competencies empowers students to adapt and lead in an ever-changing economy.

Inclusion of Financial and Digital Literacy

NEP 2020 encourages the integration of financial literacy into the curriculum, teaching students how to manage money, create budgets, and understand the basics of investment. Digital literacy is also emphasized, helping students become comfortable with online platforms, tools, and communication—essential in today's digital business environment. These skills lay the foundation for building and managing small enterprises or freelance careers. Understanding finances and technology prepares students to make informed, strategic decisions in entrepreneurial settings.

Establishment of Innovation Hubs and Incubation Centers

The policy supports the creation of innovation labs, tinkering spaces, and idea incubators within schools and higher education institutions. These centers encourage students to brainstorm, prototype, and test new ideas in a safe and supportive environment. By engaging in innovation challenges and startup simulations, students gain confidence in their creative abilities. This fosters a culture of entrepreneurship and positions schools as launchpads for future ventures.

Introduction of Life Skills and Leadership Training

NEP highlights the importance of life skills such as emotional intelligence, decision-making, stress management, and goal setting. These skills are essential for young entrepreneurs, who must navigate uncertainty, take risks, and lead others effectively. Leadership training activities can help students take initiative and learn to manage both success and failure constructively. Embedding such training in the curriculum prepares students to lead not only ventures but also change within their communities.

Collaboration with Industry and Local Entrepreneurs

NEP encourages schools and colleges to form partnerships with businesses, startups, and local entrepreneurs. These collaborations bring industry insights into the classroom through mentorship, guest lectures, and project-based learning. Students gain exposure to real-world challenges, understand market needs, and receive practical guidance on launching and sustaining ventures. Such engagements bridge the gap between education and enterprise, motivating students to think entrepreneurially.

IV. Conclusion

Socio-Emotional Resilience is not merely a supplementary skill but a foundational pillar of the entrepreneurial mindset, crucial for navigating the uncertainty, setbacks, and interpersonal complexities that entrepreneurs routinely encounter. The ability to manage emotions, build healthy relationships, and recover from failure enables entrepreneurs to stay motivated, focused, and innovative in the face of challenges. Integrating Socio-Emotional Resilience training into higher secondary education helps nurture these qualities

from an early age, providing students with the psychological strength needed for effective problem-solving, teamwork, and leadership. By embedding resilience into the heart of entrepreneurship education, institutions help shape empathetic, adaptable, and confident leaders prepared to thrive in a rapidly evolving world and contribute meaningfully to economic and social progress. Future research should explore the specific interventions and programs that most effectively enhance Socio-Emotional Resilience and Entrepreneurial Skills in higher secondary school students.

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