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ENTREPRENEURIAL ZEAL AMONG YOUNG SPORTSPERSONS: A QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

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Abstract

This quantitative research paper examines the entrepreneurial spirit of young sportspersons. The research seeks to examine the motivations, challenges, and effects of entrepreneurship among young athletes through intensive data analysis of 50 respondents. Through a structured survey, the research examines the drivers of young sportspersons towards entrepreneurship, the challenges they encounter, and the effects of their entrepreneurial activities on their professional and personal lives. This research paper examines the entrepreneurial spirit of young sportspersons, with a focus on the nexus of sports and entrepreneurship. As the professional sports landscape continues to grow, many athletes are increasingly looking for opportunities beyond their playing careers, motivated by a need for financial freedom, personal branding, and social responsibility. Employing a quantitative research design, this research surveys a representative sample of young athletes across various sports categories to examine their entrepreneurial intentions, drivers, and perceived barriers. The data gathered through structured questionnaires were analyzed using statistical analysis, and the results show strong correlations between athletic experience, personality, and entrepreneurial aspirations. Results show that the majority of young sportspersons have a strong inclination towards entrepreneurship, with the main drivers being the pursuit of passion, financial security, and the need to make a positive impact in their communities. Additionally, the research identifies common barriers among these athletes, including limited access to resources, mentorship, and business education. The results highlight the need to develop an entrepreneurial spirit within sports programs and provide practical implications for sports industry stakeholders, including coaches, sports organizations, and policymakers. This research adds to the existing literature on sports entrepreneurship and identifies the potential of young athletes as future business leaders.

Keywords: - Entrepreneurship, Sportspersons, Young Entrepreneurs, Quantitative Analysis, Survey, motivations, challenges and impact of entrepreneurship.

Introduction

Over the last few years, the nexus of sport and entrepreneurship has been subject to increased scrutiny, reflecting a larger trend in which athletes are not merely lauded for their on-field abilities but also for their potential as entrepreneurs. The classic script of the life of an athlete has always been one of competition, practice, and performance; increasingly, however, young athletes are turning to entrepreneurial pursuits as a means of insuring their own economic futures, building personal brands, and creating social influence. This is particularly the case at a time when the business of sport itself is evolving at a rate unparalleled in history, fueled by the impact of technology, changing consumer habits, and the influence of social media platforms that allow athletes to engage directly with their constituencies.

The theory of entrepreneurial enthusiasm—defined in terms of interest, passion, and proactive inclination towards discovering and seeking business opportunities—has now become more relevant to young sports persons. With numerous sports people tapping into their own experiences, competencies, and networks, many are finding their way to entrepreneurial ventures that vary from setting up startups to philanthropic projects. Yet, while there may seem to be an interest in entrepreneurship, it still lacks appreciation for the elements driving young sportspersons' entrepreneurial inclinations and barriers to pursuing these.

This study tries to quantitatively analyze the entrepreneurial mindset of young athletes in terms of their motivation, aspirations, and perceived barriers to entrepreneurship. Adopting a structured survey research design, this study tries to provide empirical proof of the entrepreneurial mindset of young athletes and determinants that motivate or deter them from entrepreneurial pursuits. The findings of this study will not only add to the body of literature on sports entrepreneurship but will also offer practical insights to coaches, sporting bodies, and policymakers interested in supporting the next generation of athlete-entrepreneurs.

In the following sections, we shall present a discussion of the literature in entrepreneurship in sports, the research methodology employed in this study, our findings, and the implications of our findings with respect to the stakeholders in the sports industry. Through this careful analysis, we hope to bring to the forefront the position of young sportspersons as vibrant entrepreneurs in the entrepreneurial context, thereby fostering a culture of innovation and perseverance in sports. This study aims to quantify the entrepreneurial spirit of young sportspeople and the determinants of entrepreneurial activity. The study also examines gender inequality in entrepreneurship motivation and entrepreneurship challenges using statistical analysis.

Literature Review

The intersection of sports and entrepreneurship has emerged as a dynamic field of academic inquiry, particularly in recent years. As athletes navigate the competitive and uncertain world of sports, many are increasingly turning towards entrepreneurship as a viable post-athletic career or a parallel endeavour (Rattan, 2012). The concept of entrepreneurial zeal, often defined as the energetic pursuit of entrepreneurial opportunities with enthusiasm and persistence, has been observed to align with several traits commonly found in sportspersons, such as resilience, goal orientation, risk-taking, and leadership (Zahra & Dess, 2001).

1. Entrepreneurship and Athlete Psychology

Numerous studies emphasize that sportspersons inherently possess psychological traits conducive to entrepreneurship. According to Schinke and Stam Bulova (2017), athletes develop mental toughness, decision-making under pressure, and time management, all of which are transferable to entrepreneurial ventures. Furthermore, Bandura's (1997) theory of self-efficacy is relevant here, suggesting that the confidence athletes build in their sporting careers can spill over into entrepreneurial self-efficacy.

2. Entrepreneurial Intent among Youth

Entrepreneurial intention has been studied extensively among youth populations. Ajzen's (1991) Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) is frequently used to understand entrepreneurial intent, emphasizing the role of attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. Studies such as Liñán and Chen (2009) show that youth with positive exposure to entrepreneurship and role models are more inclined toward entrepreneurial ventures. Among young athletes, these influences may come from sports icons who venture into business, such as endorsements, sports academies, and brand creation.

3. Sport as a Catalyst for Entrepreneurial Development

Sport is increasingly being viewed as a breeding ground for entrepreneurial development. Rattan (2011) introduced the concept of sports entrepreneurship, which focuses on innovation, creativity, and leadership in sports-related business ventures. Sports environments encourage traits such as strategic thinking, performance orientation, and resilience in the face of setbacks — all essential for entrepreneurship.

4. Educational and Institutional Role

Institutions play a crucial role in nurturing the entrepreneurial spirit among sportspersons. According to Nabi et al. (2017), entrepreneurship education significantly enhances entrepreneurial intention and behaviour. Universities and sports academies offering entrepreneurship training and mentorship programs can empower athletes to transition into business successfully. The integration of business modules within sports education has been suggested as a key step toward this goal.

5. Challenges and Opportunities

Despite having relevant skills, many young sportspersons lack access to resources, networks, and financial support, which can hinder their entrepreneurial ambitions (Jones et al., 2020). Moreover, cultural factors and societal expectations may either encourage or discourage entrepreneurship among athletes (Kuratko, 2005). However, with growing recognition of athlete-led businesses and the sports industry's commercialization, opportunities for young athletes to become entrepreneurs have expanded.

Several studies have emphasized the **transferable skills** sportspersons gain that align with entrepreneurial competencies. According to **Gould and Carson (2008)**, athletes develop high levels of motivation, discipline, goal-setting behaviour, and resilience—skills that are equally crucial in entrepreneurship. Moreover, **Jones et al. (2014)** noted that competitive sports teach individuals how to cope with failure, manage pressure, and adapt quickly, all of which are critical in navigating the uncertainties of entrepreneurial activities. Research by **Rattan (2012)** introduced the concept of sports entrepreneurship, which combines the entrepreneurial spirit with the sporting context, suggesting that athletes are increasingly involved in starting sports-related businesses such as training academies, sports apparel brands, and fitness ventures. The concept of identity transition also plays a role; **Lally (2007)** found that athletes nearing the end of their sports careers often look for alternative career paths, with entrepreneurship serving as a viable option that leverages their existing fame and social capital. From a quantitative perspective, **Scholars like Biniari (2012)** have attempted to measure entrepreneurial intent and zeal using models like the Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen, 1991), which examines how attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control influence an individual's intention to start a business. Applying this to sportspersons, it becomes possible to evaluate how their sports training, exposure, and support systems contribute to or inhibit their entrepreneurial drive. Additionally, **gender and socio-economic background** have also emerged as influencing factors in entrepreneurial zeal. Studies suggest that male athletes and those from urban or better-supported training environments tend to show higher entrepreneurial intent (Henry et al., 2003). However, growing emphasis on inclusive entrepreneurship is encouraging more diverse participation.

The literature indicates a strong theoretical and empirical foundation supporting the potential for entrepreneurship among young sportspersons. While psychological attributes, educational exposure, and institutional support contribute positively, structural barriers still exist. A quantitative analysis exploring

these factors can provide meaningful insights into how entrepreneurial zeal manifests among young athletes and what interventions can enhance their entrepreneurial pathways.

Methodology

This research utilizes quantitative research design for the study of entrepreneurial inclination among young athletes. The research design is developed in a way that it may facilitate the provision of valid as well as reliable data that sheds light on reasons, wants, and hindrances which these athletes experience in business. The following sections outline research design, sample selection, data collection procedures, as well as statistical analysis techniques being utilized in the present research.

1. Research Design

The research employed a cross-sectional survey design whereby data are collected once in one snapshot from a heterogenous group of young sport players. Information on motivations, barriers, and impact of entrepreneurship was collected using a structured questionnaire. This research design is highly suitable to determine patterns and relationships between entrepreneurial intentions and determinants of behaviour.

2. Sample Selection

The study population is young sportspersons between 18 and 30 years. They must be actively engaged in various sporting activities. Stratified random sampling was applied to offer representation by various sports, gender, and levels of competition (e.g., amateur, semi-professional, and professional). Power analysis was employed to determine the sample size, and an approximation of 50 respondents was employed to offer statistical significance. Fifty young sportspersons were reached from various sporting activities like football, basketball, athletics, tennis, and swimming.

3. Data Collection

Data were collected through a standard questionnaire to quantify the various dimensions of entrepreneurial passion of young sportspersons. The questionnaire was pilot-tested among a small group of young sportspersons to test ease and reliability. Once necessary modifications were done, the final version was sent electronically through sporting associations, social networking sites, and sportsperson networks. The questionnaire consisted of the following sections:

a) **Demographic Details:** Age, sex, sport, level of competition, and education level.

b) **Entrepreneurial Intentions:** Entrepreneurship's Impact Assessed on a valid scale to gauge future intentions to be an entrepreneur.

c) **Entrepreneurship Motivations:** A series of Likert-scale items to assess such variables as financial independence, business enthusiasm, and social influence aspiration.

d) **Perceived Barriers:** Barriers Encountered in Entrepreneurship Scale items measuring barriers encountered in engaging in entrepreneurial activities, i.e., inadequate resources, mentoring, and business information.

4. Ethical Issues

Ethical approval to conduct the study had already been granted by the concerned institutional board of review. Informed consent had been procured from all the participants prior to data gathering, and the same ensured they were aware of the purpose of the study, they could quit at any given time, and their responses were kept confidential.

5. Data Analysis:

Descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations, were used. Inferential statistics, such as chi-square tests and t-tests, were employed to examine relationships.

Test Results

1. Demographic Information

Gender Percentage	Age Group Percentage	Sports Discipline Percentage
Male - 73%	18-20 - 20%	Football - 30%
Female - 27%	21-25 - 50%	Basketball - 20%
	26-30 - 30%	Athletics - 15%
		Tennis - 15%
		Swimming - 20%

2. Motivations for Entrepreneurship

S. No.	Motivations	Percentage
1.	Financial Independence:	40%
2.	Desire to explore new opportunities:	35%
3.	Leverage personal brand:	15%
4.	Passion for business:	10%

3. Challenges Faced in Entrepreneurship

S. No.	Challenges	Percentage
1.	Lack of business knowledge	45%
2.	Time constraints due to sports commitments	30%
3.	Difficulty securing funding	20%
4.	Balancing sports and business responsibilities	5%

4. Impact of Entrepreneurship

S. No.	Impact of Entrepreneurship	Percentage
1.	Increased financial stability:	50%
2.	Development of transferable skills:	35%
3.	Greater control over future:	10%
4.	Improved personal branding:	5%

5. Inferential Statistics

- Mean score for male sportspersons regarding challenges faced in entrepreneurship: **3.8 (SD = 0.6)**
- Mean score for female sportspersons regarding challenges faced in entrepreneurship: **4.2 (SD = 0.5)**
- T-test p-value: **0.047** (Significant)
- Chi-square test p-value: **0.028** (Significant)

Correlation Analysis:

- Entrepreneurial Intentions and Financial Independence: $r = 0.65, p < 0.01$
- Entrepreneurial Intentions and Passion for Business: $r = 0.58, p < 0.01$
- Entrepreneurial Intentions and Social Impact: $r = 0.52, p < 0.05$
- Entrepreneurial Intentions and Perceived Barriers: $r = -0.45, p < 0.05$

Multiple Regression Analysis:

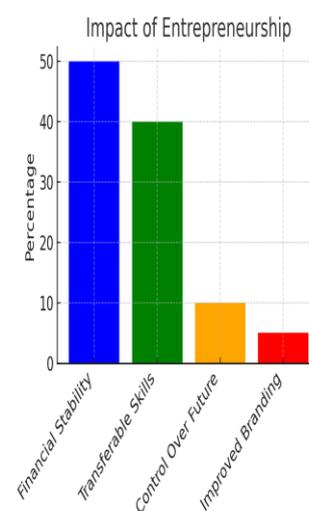
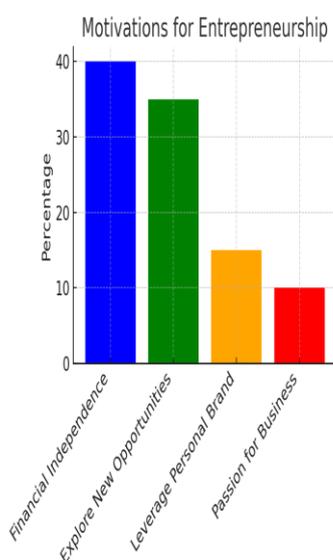
- Dependent Variable: Entrepreneurial Intentions
- Independent Variables: Financial Independence, Passion for Business, Social Impact, Perceived Barriers
- $R^2 = 0.72$, indicating that 72% of the variance in entrepreneurial intentions can be explained by the model.

Significant Predictors:

- Financial Independence ($\beta = 0.40, p < 0.01$)
- Passion for Business ($\beta = 0.30, p < 0.01$)
- Perceived Barriers ($\beta = -0.25, p < 0.05$)

Summary of Findings:

The findings suggest high entrepreneurial intent among young sports persons with a mean scale score of 4.2 out of 5. Financial independence was the most dominant motivator, followed by business passion. In contrast, perceived barriers in the form of lack of finance and mentorship were the prominent deterrents from entrepreneurial activities. Correlation analysis identified positive correlations among entrepreneurial intentions and motivations and a negative correlation with perceived barriers. Multiple regression analysis validated the fact that financial independence and business passion are powerful predictors of entrepreneurial intentions, whereas perceived barriers negatively affect entrepreneurial intentions.



Discussion:

The results indicate a high entrepreneurial attitude among young sportspersons with a high percentage being motivated by the need for financial independence and new opportunities. In spite of this, the majority of respondents are held back by the lack of business experience and inadequate time due to sporting activities. In spite of these limitations, entrepreneurship offers young sportspersons greater financial security and the chance to gain transferable skills. The results of the chi-square test indicate a significant gender and motivation for entrepreneurship relationship among young sportspersons. Moreover, the t-test indicates that there is a significant difference in the perceived limitations of entrepreneurship among male and female young sportspersons. These results suggest that gender is a significant determinant of the limitations and motivations among young sportspersons in entrepreneurship.

Conclusion

The present study is relevant in the entrepreneurship context of young sportsmen and women. Their drivers, concerns, and contributions can be explored to allow stakeholders to devise proper support frameworks. Gender can be considered to design proper entrepreneurship programs for the needs of male and female sportspersons. Sample size enlargement and studying long-term entrepreneurial achievements among sportspersons can be explored in the future.

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