

## **Studying the role played by Family in influencing entrepreneurial intentions of the youth of India**

I was awarded the **Santander and the Royal Holloway Travel award** in order to help to conduct fieldwork for collecting data for the final stage of my PhD.

The aim of my PhD is to analyse and elaborate upon the role that family has in influencing the entrepreneurial intentions of the youth of India. It has been suggested that entrepreneurial intentions are responsible for developing entrepreneurial behaviour of individuals. Considering the important role that entrepreneurs are now known to play in the development of an economy, especially for emerging economies like India, the aim of my project was to try and understand the factors that could lead to the development of entrepreneurial intentions and use them to potentially increase entrepreneurial behaviour in the population. This is even more relevant in a country like India where 65% of the population is below the age of 35 years. In order to maintain the growing economy, entrepreneurial spirit must be inculcated in the youth of the country. With this aim, I plan to exploit a gap in entrepreneurship literature and examine the role played by family in developing the entrepreneurial intentions of Indian youth. I will attempt to establish not only how and why family plays a role in development of entrepreneurial intentions but also whether it plays a role in either promoting or hindering the conversion of these intentions into actual entrepreneurial behaviour.

For the purpose of collecting data for this study, it had been decided to conduct a large-scale survey amongst final year university students from the University of Delhi (DU). The questionnaire contained questions regarding how the students assessed their own entrepreneurial capabilities, based on some established parameters. It also included questions pertaining to their families including issues such as the amount of support and encouragement offered to students who want to become entrepreneurs, amongst others.

DU is one of the largest public universities in India, as a result of which it attracts students from all over the country. Since it would not have been possible to collect a sample from several different locations in India, it was decided to collect a randomly selected sample from DU. I recruited almost 2500 students to complete the questionnaire. The survey was conducted on students from several different fields of study ranging from Management, Medicine to Architecture, who were at the brink of taking decisions regarding what career path they will follow once they graduate from University. The entire data collection was completed from February 2016 - March 2016.



This was a very enlightening and enriching experience for me as I was able to interact with several hundred students during the process of data collection. It gave me good insight into the minds of the young individuals that this study aims to target.

I received a very positive feedback from the faculty of the colleges that I visited. They all seemed to appreciate the importance of improving entrepreneurship within the country, especially from the perspective of creating new job opportunities for the expanding and highly skilled workforce. The students, especially, were very keen to know more about how entrepreneurial capabilities and skills can be developed, as several of them expressed great interest in following entrepreneurial career paths but seemed to be restricted by certain social and environmental factors.

I am extremely grateful to Santander and Royal Holloway for providing me with the funds to travel to India and conduct such a large scale survey. Although I am currently still in the process of analysing all the data that I collected during the study, I can already see some very interesting and novel ideas emerging from the data. These will form an integral part of my PhD and my career in general. But overall, I feel I will be able to add substantially to the knowledge surrounding the development of entrepreneurial intentions.

