

Determinants of Entrepreneurial Intentions in the Fisheries Sector: A Study of Agricultural Students in Kashmir

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ABSTRACT: This paper examines the factors influencing entrepreneurial intentions in the fisheries sector in Kashmir. We argue that an individual's entrepreneurial spirit is shaped by societal norms, institutional factors, and the knowledge they possess. A survey was conducted among 120 final-year agricultural students from various faculties, including horticulture, agriculture, fisheries, and veterinary sciences, with 30 students from each group. The analysis focused on the internship students of Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir, India, utilizing Hofstede's model of cultural dimensions. The findings reveal that the group exhibits high levels of individualism, strong masculinity, pronounced uncertainty avoidance, and a significant power distance. The lack of effective governance in the region has notably hindered the population's risk-taking capacity. Recommendations include exploring student engagement through initiatives like farming simulation games and fostering direct collaboration between students and the government to harness the available human resources better.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship, fisheries, intention, agriculture, culture, Kashmir.

INTRODUCTION

An entrepreneur must possess certain innate characteristics; at the same time, he is directly affected by the cultural and institutional variables of the environment in which he lives (Brancu *et al.*, 2012; Calza *et al.*, 2020). According to Hofstede's model (1980), society's culture tends to influence a person's beliefs, values and motivations, ultimately affecting entrepreneurial potential. Sutter *et al.* (2019); Shepherd *et al.* (2022) examined the review. They found that entrepreneurship opportunity is very important for alleviating extreme poverty, reforming substantive institutional changes and revolutionising the capital-based assumptions of business. Review shows a need for fundamental re-conceptualisation of entrepreneurial opportunities by using external enablers, new venture ideas and opportunity confidence (Davidsson, 2015; Kimjeon and Davidsson 2022). Entrepreneurs' self-efficacy and alertness promote new opportunities, and the factor that discourages them is their fear of failure (Boudreaux *et al.*, 2019; Nayak *et al.*, 2022). Besides National institutions and motivations, commercial entrepreneurship performance is directly affected by the abilities and skills of the available human capital (Estrin *et al.*, 2016; Braunerhjelm and Lippi 2023). Individual self-organisation and autonomy are strongly associated with more efficient accomplishment of entrepreneurial tasks (Shir *et al.*, 2018; Al-Mamary and Alshallaqi

2022). Entrepreneurial well-being is the sum of positive attitude and psychological coordination about developing, starting, growing and running a venture in which social, technological and institutional factors are the future thrust areas (Wiklund *et al.*, 2019; Tisu *et al.*, 2023).

In this paper, our focus will be on Kashmir Valley, a region which, according to Hofstede's model, does not have a similar cultural profile with any of the neighbouring states or countries and hence differs ethnographically, demographically and psychographically. In Kashmir Valley, the majority of the population, above 96%, belong to Muslims; the rest are Sikh, Hindu and Christian. Kashmir is a collectivist valley with a high uncertainty avoidance level, higher hierarchical distance, and high masculinity. However, we believe this cultural profile can be explained by certain average socio-demographic characteristics (age, rural/urban life, education level, source of income).

In this paper, our focus will be on a specific group that differs socio-demographically. It involves 4th-year internship students of Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir who study "Fisheries sciences, Horticultural sciences, Agricultural sciences, and Veterinary sciences" from different faculties located in different districts. These are the Faculty of Fisheries Rangil in Ganderbal, the Faculty of Horticulture Shalimar in Srinagar, the Faculty of Agriculture Wadura in Baramulla and the

Faculty of Veterinary Sciences and Animal Husbandry Shuhama in Ganderbal, respectively. From each faculty 30 students were interviewed, thus the overall sample size was 120. In the case of the veterinary faculty, 5th-year internship students were interviewed as the duration of the degree is five years, assuming that they have the same perception as that of other faculties where it is four years. Considering the national profile, the investigated population presents a specific profile. The propensity towards entrepreneurship is influenced by variables (1) related to human factors: motivational variables and cognitive variables and (2) variables from the institutional environment (Brancu *et al.*, 2012). The unemployment rate in Kashmir Valley is higher than any other state of India, which, on average, is 7.5% (CMIE, 2023). So, the students have to think about other possible options. According to an economic survey 2017, the state is bestowed with cold and warm water resources. There are 1245 lakes, including water bodies, which indicate the exponential potential of the fisheries sector as a source of powerful income and employment avenue. As students from an agricultural background, fisheries enterprise (aqua tourism, ornamental setup, pond fish culture) is one of their best choices. In this context, this study aims to identify whether the studied group has the same entrepreneurial propensity towards fisheries to curb rising unemployment, keeping in mind that the entire group presents a socio-demographic characteristic different from the national average. Therefore, the objective of this paper is (1) to study motivations and barriers that can affect students' propensity to start their own business in fisheries and (2) to suggest suitable solutions for improving the teaching plan and management faculties in the field. The research gap lies in the insufficient exploration of how Kashmir's unique cultural, socio-demographic, and institutional factors influence students' entrepreneurial propensity, particularly in the fisheries sector. More focus is needed on how tailored education could address these challenges and foster entrepreneurship in this context. The entrepreneurship phenomenon between countries and regions can be explained by economic factors and cultural and institutional variables (Freytag and Thurik 2010; Sendra *et al.*, 2022). An entrepreneur is directly affected by the cultural and institutional variables of the environment in which he lives (Brancu *et al.*, 2012; Nayak *et al.*, 2022; Martinez, 2022). Based on these studies, we are interested in whether the environmental variables, motivations, institutional and cognitive variables affect conscious behaviour and, hence, entrepreneur propensity towards fisheries in the Kashmir Valley. Culture is defined as the overall programming of mind which differentiates the members of one group from another (Hofstede, 1980). An individual's personality and behaviour are connected to his national culture of origin (Berger, 1991; Şahin and Asunakutlu 2014; Estrada Cruz *et al.*, 2019); people from different cultures may have different preferences when put under the same effectuation. Culture results

from how a person behaves and interacts with others (Maxell, 2013; Cronk, 2017).

The studies conducted on the role of culture in entrepreneurship in the last couple of decades have gained importance. Using Geert Hofstede's cultural dimension model (2010), the research used six cultural dimensions: masculinity/femininity (MAS/FEM), individualism/collectivism (IDV/COLL), uncertainty avoidance (UA), power distance (PD), long term and short term orientations (LTO), indulgence / restraint (IND) for identifying cultural variables affecting the entrepreneurship process.

Studies conducted such as those of Morris *et al.* (1994); Mueller and Thomas (2000); Gupta *et al.* (2004); Hancioglu *et al.* (2014); Stephan and Pathak (2016); Sahin *et al.* (2014); Gullupunar and Gumusok (2016); Contiua *et al.* (2012); Letaifa and Goglio (2016); Aragon *et al.* (2016); Crecente *et al.* (2016); EstradaCruz *et al.* (2018); Nagy and Konyha (2018); Jovanovic *et al.* (2018); Calza *et al.* (2020) have found that these cultural dimensions have significant influence on entrepreneurship performance. Based on these findings, we can conclude that culture is a very important variable affecting a person's beliefs, motivations, values, norms and hence propensity towards entrepreneurship (Brancu *et al.*, 2012). Culture differs within the nation; Indian culture is an amalgamation of several cultures. Each distinct region (state) has its own culture. These cultural differences may influence entrepreneurial propensity differently (George and Zahra 2002; Al-Bati *et al.*, 2022; Wanasika *et al.*, 2023). Researchers assume that cultures high in masculinity, low in power distance, low in uncertainty avoidance and high in individualism strongly favour entrepreneurship (Hayton *et al.*, 2002; Nyguen *et al.*, 2009; Czako *et al.*, 2023). Based on these findings, we could shape the entrepreneurial profile of the SKUAST-Kashmir students.

In this socio-demographic context, the investigated group has a unique profile: Young people aged between 21 and 25 years with a high education level from rural and urban regions studying at SKUAST Kashmir University. The only Agricultural University in the valley that produces quality human resources from different fields of agriculture, horticulture, fisheries, and veterinary sciences. The common courses they follow during their undergraduate degree programme are Entrepreneurship Development and Communication Skills, Financing and marketing management, Information and communication technology, Extension education, Economics and extension education, Meteorology and Geography, Soil and Water Chemistry, Disease Management, Ecology and Biodiversity, Statistical methods and Field Work Experience. Besides this, we believe that every professional student studying in SKUAST- Kashmir must know an "integrated farming system" in which fewer land resources are utilised with less investment and gain maximum benefits throughout the year. It could guide them in choosing fisheries enterprise as their career option. Therefore, because of their

professional knowledge, specific age and the fact that they want to pursue higher education in their respective fields, this group distinguishes itself by perceptions, needs and motivations from the group considered at the national level.

H1: The specific profile of the selected population represents the entire regional cultural profile of the valley.

As a less developed region, Kashmir Valley has high collectivism, associated with high levels of uncertainty avoidance and high masculinity. Literature shows that these two characteristics are not supportive of entrepreneurship. Kashmiri people are famous throughout the world for their hospitality and loyalty. These young people were born and raised after 1990 in a more collectivist environment. Literature shows because of corruption and the less developed private sector in the valley, there may be a high level of uncertainty avoidance and individualism among the studied group. Individualism can also be supported by the fact that these students have opted for higher education and want to cope with life with their abilities and qualities. Based on these statements, our second hypothesis is:

H2: UA and INV Indexes are stronger within the studied population. Kashmir Valley is one of the most unstable regions in the world. The political turmoil has affected the state economy so badly in all developmental aspects, (Binish and Mushtaq 2017). The main reasons are the lack of good governance, bad politics, failure of state government, corruption between public space and private one, and lack of trust in government. The industrial sector occupies the lowest place compared with other states; public spending is rare. Jammu and Kashmir have the highest unemployment rate among the 18–29 age group, surpassing all other states in India (CMIE, 2023, Economic Survey J&K 2015). Based on these circumstances, we can say that the region's institutional framework does not create a favourable environment to stimulate the entrepreneurial spirit. So, our third hypothesis is:

H3: Within the investigated population, institutional obstacles have a strong repulsive character. Literature available shows that there is a significant positive impact of education on entrepreneurial performance and spirit (Brancu *et al.*, 2014; Oosterbeek *et al.*, 2010; Carayannis *et al.*, 2003; Vinogradova *et al.*, 2023; Deng and Wang 2023). Entrepreneurship education is perceived as a skill development, additional experience and career choosing (Duval *et al.*, 2014; Wardana *et al.*, 2020; Deng and Wang 2023). The young investigated group shows the characteristics of high individualism and have chosen to be the students of agricultural sciences with specialisation in their respective fields; it shows that these students want to get a suitable education about entrepreneurship,

which could help them to live independently and take some possible initiative.

H4: The investigated population develops the need for entrepreneurial education.

METHODOLOGY

Quantitative methods of gathering information were used; a well-structured interview schedule was developed in the context of the research's objective, containing appreciating motivations and barriers in starting a new venture.

The methodology developed by Brancu *et al.* (2012) was found suitable in the present context, in which they have grouped the entrepreneurship process under three themes characteristic – “Entrepreneurship motivations”, “Obstacles in starting a new venture”, and “Entrepreneurial training requirements”. Each statement under these characteristics was further categorised into the six cultural dimensions of Hofstede's model – “Masculinity/Femininity”, “Individualism/Collectivism”, “Uncertainty Avoidance”, “Power Distance”, “Long Term and Short Term Orientations”, “Indulgence/Restraint”. The schedule also includes a section of socio-economic and cultural valuables considered relevant for testing the stated hypothesis: gender, age, household (rural/urban), source of income, monthly income, family type and size, number of children, religion, the existence of entrepreneurial tradition in the family (parents, brothers, relatives) or social circles (friends). A five-point Likert scale was used for each item, from not at all important (1) to very important (5).

Besides this, other relevant questions like perception towards fisheries in general, like promoting fisheries in the region is a “Good or Bad idea”, “Wise or Foolish idea”, “Beneficial or Harmful idea”, using a five-point scale from extremely bad or foolish or harmful (1) to very good or wise or beneficial (5). The other questions include the order of preference for career options for both male and female students, that is, a government job, continuing the family business, starting a new venture, any private job, working with family, relatives, friends or neighbours. Data collection were done at the end of the first semester in December to January of the 2018/19 academic year by distributing interview schedules to 140 final-year internship students from respective faculties of Fisheries, Horticulture, Agriculture and Veterinary sciences.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data collected were processed using SPSS version 22. Of the 140 questionnaires distributed, 120 were validated. The table below illustrates the characteristics of socio-cultural variables of the investigated population.

Table 1: Sample characteristics (N=120).

Socio-economic and cultural variables		Frequency	Percent
Age group	21	5	4.2%
	22	83	69.2%
	23	28	23.3%
	24	3	2.5%
	25	1	0.8%
Gender	Male	55	45.8%
	Female	65	54.2%
Family type	Nuclear	85	70.8%
	Joint	35	29.2%
Household	Rural	59	49.2%
	Urban	61	50.8%
Family size	2 - 4	28	23.3%
	5 - 7	64	53.3%
	>7	28	23.3%
Monthly income (₹)	20000 - 40000	30	25%
	>40000	90	75%
Existence of entrepreneurial tradition in family (parents, brothers, relatives) and in social circles (friends)	Yes	26	21.7
	no	94	78.3

Table 2: Average of monthly income, family members and children per family.

Average monthly income	₹66150
Average number of family members	6.05
Average number of children per family	0.83

Statements included in the questionnaire were categorised into different domains of Hofstede's cultural model. Validating the abovementioned hypothesis, we start our analysis with students' motivations. The responses obtained are heterogeneous. The percentages recorded by each of the statements are quite satisfactory.

The unemployment level in Kashmir Valley is increasing at a very high rate, the highest than in any other state of India. So, the students have to think about other possible options. As students from an agricultural

background, fisheries (aqua tourism, ornamental set-up, pond fish culture) are among the best choices they could make. In this regard, the student's perception of fisheries is whether it could boost the state economy and reduce the unemployment rate, as it is a sunrise sector with tremendous scope in the valley. All the SKUAST-K students have extremely good attitudes towards fisheries development in the state (normalised index = 0.88). Promoting fisheries in the state is a good, beneficial and wise idea (Cronbach alpha = 0.82).

Table 3: Motivations analysis (percent).

Entrepreneurial Motivations	Hofstede Index	Degree of importance (percent, N=120)				
		Not at all important	Slightly important	Moderately important	Important	Very important
Higher income	MAS	1.7%	7.6%	19.3%	35.3%	36%
To become famous	MAS			10%	46.7%	43.3%
Sense of achievement	INV/MAS			12.5%	36.7%	50.8%
To have a flexible schedule	INV/PD		8.3%	29.2%	37.5%	25%
To have a decision power	INV/PD	0.8%	1.7%	10.8%	36.7%	50%
To avoid unemployment	UA	5%	1.7%	3.3%	24.2%	65.8%
I like to take risks	UA	5.8%	15%	26.7%	31.7%	20.8%
To valorise the potential i am aware of	INV/MAS	0.8%	1.7%	21%	44.2%	31.7%
Good opportunity as fisheries is a sunrise sector and there are more chances of profit	LTO/IND	0.8%	10%	32.5%	27.5%	29.2%
Market opportunity	STO		2.5%	26.7%	40%	30.8%
By following successful entrepreneurs as role models	COLL	3.3%	10%	27.5%	35.8%	23.3%
Self-esteem	INV/PD	1.7%	2.5%	15%	27.5%	53.3%
Previous / family experiences	INV	8.3%	5%	28.3%	34.2%	24.2%
Professional knowledge	INV/MAS	3.3%	0.8%	6.7%	41.7%	47.5%
Availability of raw materials	INV/MAS	4.2%	0.8%	10%	28.3%	56.7%

Note: The percentages highlighted indicate the highest response obtained for each statement.

Individualism/Collectivism: the high importance of the following items: *sense of achievement* (50.8%), *valorise the potential I am aware of* (44.2%), *having a decision power* (50%), *professional knowledge* (47.5%), *availability of raw materials* (56.7%), *self-esteem* (53.3%), *to have a flexible schedule* (37.5%)

indicates, a high level of individualism, in the investigated population. The only statement under collectivism, *which followed successful entrepreneurs as role models*, showed a relatively lower percentage than the other statements (35.7%). It can be seen that the students want to harness the available raw materials

by using their professional knowledge, which is a very important motivation and a positive sign that affects individualism among the investigated population. As the Kashmir Valley is bestowed with abundant natural resources in the form of many beautiful tourist places, lakes and perennial streams flow throughout the year with gushing crystal clear cold water and land available as the valley is agrarian. The students want to achieve something in life, as seen from the statement *of sense of achievement*, which has a positive response. Due to the bad politics and corruption in the valley, there has been no space for success; one must go through many corruption steps to succeed. Due to the unrest conditions from the last three decades, children are forced to do what their keens think is right for them; despite this, the students have expressed a higher desire *to have decision-making power*, which is a very important motivation. The response for *previous/family experiences* is relatively lower than the other motivational statements (34.2%), which shows that it does not affect their entrepreneurial spirit. The response to the statement *to valorise the potential I am aware of* is quite satisfactory (44.2%); it shows that the students are more conscious about their innate characteristics. Due to the state's high unemployment level, they want to utilise their hidden potential in the other fields of career options available, especially in agriculture and allied sectors. Self-esteem has the second highest response given by the studied population; it shows that the students want to live a happy and prosperous life and should be treated with respect and dignity at home and in society. As in Kashmir, a person is only treated well if he either is a government employee or is earning on his own. Besides this, the students face an inferiority complex.

As the individualism dimension significantly influences the entrepreneurial spirit. In this regard we think a further analysis of socio-cultural variables necessary among the investigated population. As we see the average family income of students' family is ₹66150 which is quite good and only 21.7 per cent of the students have existence of entrepreneurial tradition in family (parents, brothers, relatives) and in social circles (friends). It indicates that entrepreneurial tradition at home does not affect them and are opportunity seekers.

They may or may not go for it depending on other factors in favour. The factor that matters is the availability of raw materials.

Masculinity/Femininity: four of the statements grouped for this domain also represented the INV/COLL domain (*sense of achievement, to valorise the potential I am aware of, professional knowledge, availability of raw materials*). The responses obtained in this domain - *higher income* (36.1%), *to become famous* (46.7%), *sense of achievement* (50.8%), *to valorise the potential I am aware of* (44.2%), *professional knowledge* (47.5%), *availability of raw materials* (56.7%) are considered as important, indicating a high level of masculinity in the investigated population.

Power distance: the statements under this domain - *to have a flexible schedule* (37.5%), *to have a decision power* (50%), and *self-esteem* (53.3%) are considered important; it depicts the students' resistance hierarchic inequalities that had become an everyday routine in the Kashmir Valley.

Indulgence: This can be seen from the statement: *good opportunity as fisheries are a sunrise sector, and there are more chances of profit* (32%), which was considered moderately important by the studied group. However, most of the students were willing to accept any change when it came to adopting a new venture like fisheries. Only 10% of the students found fisheries to be slightly important.

Uncertainty Avoidance: 65.8% are motivated by a desire to avoid unemployment, which is relatively higher than all the motivational statements. In comparison, only 31.7% are motivated by a desire to take risks, which is relatively lower than all motivational statements. It was considered that higher unemployment is the main reason that significantly affects the entrepreneurial spirit among the investigated population. A relatively lower percentage of the statement I like to take risks is because of uncertain conditions in the valley, which can affect any sector of the economy at any time. The government needs to create a peaceful environment to attract local and foreign investment, which multiplies employment and income. Further justification for this domain is illustrated in the obstacles portion in Table below.

Table 4: Obstacles analysis (percent).

Obstacles in starting a business	Hofstede Index	Degree of importance (percent, N=120)				
		Not at all important	Slightly important	Moderately important	Important	Very important
I don't have entrepreneurship knowledge	UA/COLL	20.8%	15%	30%	25%	9.2%
I don't have money/ capital/ resources	UA	14.2%	10%	15%	20.8%	40%
I don't have family / friends support	COLL	12.5%	12.5%	33.3%	21.7%	20%
I have seen no one doing this business	UA	20.8%	21.7%	21.7%	24.2%	11.7%
I am afraid of failure	UA	24.2%	6.7%	22.5%	20.8%	25.8%
Culturing fish in Kashmir lowers the social status of a person	Institutional variable	21.7%	12.5%	28.3%	22.5%	15%
I don't have enough time	UA	9.2%	20%	27.5%	28.3%	15%
Lack of government support	Institutional variable	6.7%	6.7%	20%	20%	46.7%
Current conditions in Kashmir are unfavourable	Institutional variable	4.2%	5.8%	20%	25.8%	44.2%

Note: The percentages highlighted indicate the highest response obtained for each statement.

The response obtained from the students indicates that they express a low level of Uncertainty Avoidance. However, it can be seen that the investigated population shows a strong repulsive response to the statement - *I don't have money/capital/resources* (40%). The responses for other statements - *I don't have entrepreneurship knowledge* (30%), *I have seen no one doing this business* (24.2%), *I am afraid of failure* (25.8%), *I don't have enough time* (28.3%) are almost neutral. The response obtained for the statement *I am afraid of failure* can be considered neutral because of the two equal extreme values, which indicates the students are opportunity seekers; they may or may not take risks depending on the other factors in favour. Response to the statement *I don't have enough time* (28.3%) depicts that the students want to continue their studies; they want to go for further studies and don't want a break from academics. *I have seen no one doing this business* (24.2%) has a relatively lower percentage than the other obstacles; it indicates that the students do not bother about others. They may go for it if it is profitable, thus harnessing their technical knowledge. The responses obtained under the individualism/Collectivism domain- *I don't have family/friends support* (33.3%), *I don't have entrepreneurship knowledge* (30%) indicate a neutral response towards collectivism. Compared with individualistic responses obtained from motivational statements, it reflects a high degree of individualism. Thus, we conclude that the investigated population shows an individualist character, which is a good sign of entrepreneurship spirit.

Indulgence: The statement *that culturing fish in Kashmir lowers a person's social status* has been given a moderately important response (28.3%); it depicts that besides profit from any source, students also want a good status in society. The students showed a moderate response to accepting fisheries as a new venture.

The above results show that this group distinguishes itself by perceptions, needs, and motivations from the group considered at the regional level, thus validating the **H1** hypothesis.

The studied population also shows high individualism and weak uncertainty avoidance characteristics, thus validating only half of the **H2** hypothesis.

The response obtained for **institutional obstacles** reflects the higher percentages, thus claiming the institutional obstacles. The statement *that culturing fish in Kashmir lowers a person's social status* (28.3%) is given a moderately important response. It depicts the students who want a good job and a decent salary, hence social status. The statements *that the lack of government support* (46.7%) and *current conditions in Kashmir are unfavourable* (44.2%) are considered very important by the studied group. It reflects the failure of regional government and lack of good governance, creating an "unhealthy" environment which significantly affects entrepreneurial skills, thus validating the **H3** hypothesis.

Considering the above-discussed issues, which significantly influence the entrepreneurship spirit of the investigated population, the need for **entrepreneurial education** was felt to improve the entrepreneurial skills of the said population.

Table 5: Requirement analysis (percent).

Entrepreneurial Training Requirements	Not at all important	Slightly important	Degree of importance		
			(percent, N=120)		
			Moderately important	Important	Very important
Contacts with the business environment	0.80%		14.2%	46.7%	38.3%
Intensive entrepreneurship courses		4.2%	9.2%	43.3%	43.3%
Consultancy from teachers		6.7%	15%	36.7%	41.7%
Presenting success models during the courses		0.8%	13.3%	52.5%	33.3%
Business simulation games	0.8%	3.3%	29.2%	34.2%	32.5%

It can be seen from the responses that students show a strong need towards entrepreneurial education. They considered it as an important element affecting the entrepreneurial spirit. Most respondents (43.3%) consider *intensive entrepreneurship courses* and *consultancy from teachers* (41.7%) very important to entrepreneurial development. Although entrepreneurship courses are being offered, the students felt that they are not sufficient enough to influence entrepreneurial performance significantly, followed in order of importance by *presenting success models during the courses* (52.5%), *contacts with the business environment* (46.7%), *business simulation games* (34.2%).

The high importance given to *presenting success models during the courses* shows that students want a real-life example from the Kashmir Valley. Keeping in mind the unfavourable conditions that have affected the economic corners of the valley, very few people dare to

have a new venture. In this context, it has become necessary for the students to be introduced to success stories from the valley during the degree programme. Success stories should be regularly invited to improve entrepreneurial skills. The statement *consultancy from teachers* is highly important as the students feel that they are their mentors and can be approached whenever they need. They can guide them with valuable suggestions at the right time. The students think the right suggestion from the right person at the right time could mean a lot to them.

The students also felt that *contact with the business environment* is important during the degree programme. The students believe if they are kept in touch with the business environment, it could alter their thinking process of developing an entrepreneurial attitude. The response to the statement *farming simulation games comes* under the importance column. The students believe they should be allowed to implement their ideas

and then find the best possible solution from their results. They believe in gaining practical experience by implementing their ideas.

Based on the results discussed in motivations' responses, we can add that the investigated population have a hidden potential that they are unaware of. If they are provided with proper guidance and financial support at the right time, their skills can be improved and,

hence, their self-confidence. Their abilities must be decentralised by creating different opportunities and a favourable environment.

The responses above indicate that the investigated group needed entrepreneurship education, thus validating the **H4** hypothesis. The students were also asked to give an order of preference among the following carrier options, as shown in the Fig. 1.

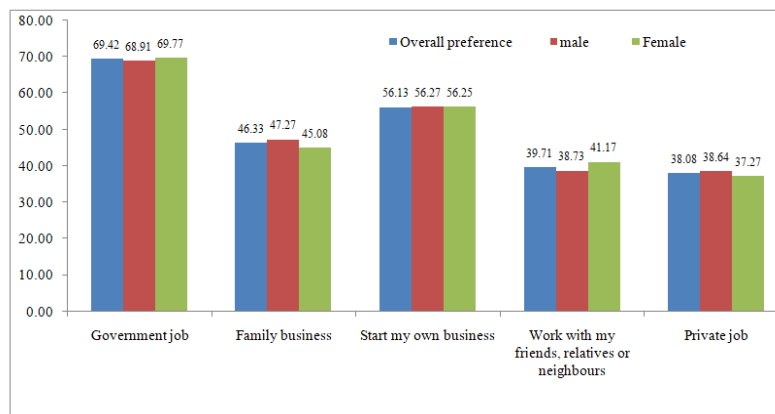


Fig. 1. Order of preference (percent).

All the students opted for *government jobs* as their first preference, whether male or female, rural or urban. It shows that the perception among male and female students is the same, and it was considered that the studied population is gender-neutral. Society offers equal opportunities when it comes to choosing career aspirations. They have opted for government jobs as a first preference because of unrest conditions, state corruption, and stagnant private sector development. Public spending is rare and very low. A person who may be doing a private job in a small company has no guarantee to be there for at least a long time; they will be kicked off at any time. So, the students want a permanent government job with a decent salary to maintain a social status. The second option is to *start my own business*, which is a good sign. There is no development in the private sector, which is uncertain. The third preference is to continue their family business; after losing all hope in the government or avoiding the risk factor, the students opted for *family business* as a third choice. The fourth preference is to *work with friends, relatives or neighbours*. It is because of the high level of individualism and corruption in the state. The last preference is to go for a private job which is unpredictable due to the lack of development and infrastructure in the Kashmir Valley. The reason is the need for better governance to fulfil the needs of the common people. The interesting point to be noted here is there is no difference in the order of preference among male and female students. It depicts that the carrier choosing perception is the same among them.

CONCLUSION

Besides the economic factors, culture and the institutional set-up of a region have a tremendous role to play, and they directly affect the entrepreneurial spirit of a person. It was the core idea behind this research. During our whole study, we demonstrated that

the investigated group, in its entrepreneurial spirit, is greatly influenced by cultural and institutional variables. The high level of individualism, high degree of masculinity, high power distance and weak uncertainty avoidance were observed in the investigated population. If the institutional set-up is improved, we can see an improvement in the entrepreneurial performance of the studied group. The students are showing strong uncertainty avoidance because of the lack of good governance. Otherwise, a tremendous hidden potential and professional knowledge could pave the way for them. We hope the institutional conditions will be improved to harness these students' hidden potential fully. The students showed a strong need and desire for entrepreneurship education, which they think significantly influenced their entrepreneurial skills and, hence, their performance. So, the important point to be noted here is that education changes the culture of a society. Farm simulation games are another important aspect; students should be allowed to implement their ideas, get results, find possible solutions, and gain experience. Because we believe the development of any nation depends on the impact of education on the minds of its people. If the impact is greater, the development will be high, hence the nation's standard of living and welfare. As Kashmir Valley is an agricultural region, considering these students are the best human resources available, their suggestions and valuable comments should be considered. Future studies can be done in different fields of agriculture and allied sciences by considering gender as a variable. Postgraduate students can also be included in future studies, as they are more practical and have more knowledge and need; hence, they can give better results.

Open debate should be held at least once a year, where all the SKUAST-Kashmir students, higher government authorities, and teachers should be there. It should be

the student-government interaction without involving the third party. The students should be allowed to offer their suggestions and demands so that the higher authorities can develop better solutions and fulfil their demands to the maximum possible extent. The government should take the first step to come forward; it is the need of the hour right now. The government should collaborate directly with the students, like helping them open a new set-up – aqua tourism in tourist places by providing them with financial support. It will not only improve their condition but also help bring harmony and hope to them. It can generate revenue and attract other people as well. Due to the lack of good governance, people, especially the younger generation born during the unrest, have lost all their hopes in government, so it can be one step in gaining trust. Good governance will reduce the corruption level considerably, reducing uncertainty avoidance because the students are afraid to take any risk due to the high level of corruption in the valley.

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