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Research paper

Gender Differences in Youth Entrepreneurship: A Comparative Study of Kerala and Tamil Nadu

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Abstract

This research study compares and contrasts the socio-cultural, economic, and institutional variables that contribute to gender inequalities in youth entrepreneurship in the Indian states of Kerala and Tamil Nadu. Based on their resource availability, goals, and gendered responsibilities to meet societal standards, this study aims to comprehend the various experiences of young men, women, and gender-diverse individuals. The research was conducted using primary data collected from 30 young entrepreneurs and statistical tools such as SPSS and Excel. In terms of mentorship, funding, performance, and the longevity of their businesses, the results reveal that young men enjoy sex-based advantages over young women. Entrepreneurship and small-scale business development are driven by necessity for young women, particularly those from rural backgrounds, who face financial precarity, restricted mobility, and gender norms and expectations. While government programs like Kudumbashree in Kerala and Startup missions in Tamil Nadu do offer support, they do not eliminate socio-cultural disadvantages simply because someone has access to them—respondents who identified as transgender experienced systemic exclusion. Despite the lack of statistically significant variations in perceived company performance based on gender in the quantitative data analysis, the qualitative data nonetheless demonstrated the persistence of gender bias in the region. The report acknowledges the need for programs to address gender inequalities in entrepreneurship to develop more comprehensive systems of support, including financial and mentorship assistance. It also calls for research into policies that have an impact on and are dependent upon businesses to narrow the gender gap.

Keywords: *Gender Differences; Youth Entrepreneurship; Comparative Study; Kerala; Tamil Nadu.*

1. Introduction

1.1. Gendered pathways in youth entrepreneurship: a comparative analysis of Kerala and Tamil Nadu

The hopes, dreams, and obstacles that young Indian entrepreneurs encounter are profoundly influenced by gender. Gender disparities in young entrepreneurship are influenced by several policy, economic, and socio-cultural issues, as observed in the contexts of Tamil Nadu and Kerala. Capital, networks, mentors, and opportunities for social mobility have historically been more readily available to young men in both states. This disparity, however, is beginning to close thanks to new efforts and an increased focus on gender equality (Santha, S. 2013).

As a result of progressive social policies and high literacy rates, young women in Kerala have greater opportunities to further their education and become politically active. Regardless, deep-seated gender stereotypes, a lack of financial resources, and unwavering family support continue to be major obstacles for women business owners. Conversely, men are more prevalent in formal entrepreneurial endeavors and continue to dominate high-growth industries. In empowering women to start their small businesses, Kudumbashree and Self-Help Groups (SHGs) have played a crucial role. Although they make strides, they don't always reach the same level of prominence as men.

Gender has a significant role in shaping the aspirations, challenges, and opportunities faced by young Indian entrepreneurs. Several policies, economic and socio-cultural factors influence the gender gap in youthful entrepreneurship, as demonstrated in the context of Tamil Nadu

and Kerala. In both states, young men have traditionally had easier access to resources such as money, social networks, mentors, and chances to climb the social ladder. New initiatives and a heightened emphasis on gender equality, however, are starting to bring this gap closer (Kumar et al, 2024).

Young women in Kerala have more chances to get degrees and get involved in politics because of the state's progressive social policies and high literacy rate. Regardless, women company owners still face significant challenges, such as persistent gender stereotypes, a lack of capital, and unfaltering family support. The high-growth industries are still dominated by men, and formal entrepreneurial ventures are more popular among them. A significant contribution to women's economic independence has come from Kudumbashree and other Self-Help Groups (SHGs). Despite their efforts, women don't always achieve the same degree of fame as men.

1.2. Gendered motivations in youth entrepreneurship in Kerala and Tamil Nadu

Gender disparities in youth entrepreneurship, in the Indian states of Tamil Nadu and Kerala, might be better understood through the prism of entrepreneurial motivation, which can be prompted by either necessity or opportunity. An entrepreneur's drive determines not just whether they launch a firm but also the kind, size, and longevity of their endeavors.

In both Tamil Nadu and Kerala, young men are more likely to start their businesses when they see a good chance. An abundance of young men can find opportunities in the market if they have the means, the connections, and the social approval to do so. Young men in Tamil Nadu are inspired to seek out opportunities and innovate by the state's flourishing startup ecosystem, particularly in major cities like Coimbatore and Chennai. Tech parks and startup incubators in Kerala have also given young men a place to launch their businesses, which they can view as a career path rather than a means of subsistence.

It is more common for young women to start their businesses due to financial pressures than any real interest in doing so. A lot of young women end up becoming self-employed because they have no other choice, due to social and cultural pressures, a lack of employment opportunities, and family obligations. Because conventional job opportunities in Kerala aren't always accommodating or socially acceptable, a lot of young women start their small enterprises doing things like cooking, tailoring, or providing beauty services. These necessity-driven endeavors receive funding from Kudumbashree and similar initiatives, but the businesses typically operate on a small scale and aim to supplement income rather than focus on expansion (Anilkumar et al, 2024).

Among young women in urban areas of Tamil Nadu, there is a slightly more progressive trend toward opportunity-driven businesses, especially in the service and creative industries, made possible by educational and support programs. Despite this, rural women still face barriers to mobility, skill development, and access to money, which forces them to be entrepreneurs driven by necessity.

Teens who identify as Other (transgender or non-binary) are more likely to be entrepreneurial because they feel they have no other choice. Many people are forced to become self-employed because of the systemic exclusion from official work caused by discrimination and stigma. There are a few underfunded and understaffed programs in Kerala that attempt to mainstream transgender entrepreneurship. Even though transgender people are legally recognized in Tamil Nadu, there are still structural impediments that make entrepreneurship more of a survival mechanism than a path to prosperity.

1.3. Young women and others still struggle to access business support in Kerala and Tamil Nadu

Gender plays a substantial role in shaping access to resources, which is an important factor in determining entrepreneurial success. There are clear gender differences in the availability of resources, including funding, training, mentorship, and networks, which impact the success or failure of entrepreneurial endeavors among young people in Kerala and Tamil Nadu.

The availability of resources is typically better for young men. When it comes to sources of funding like family money, bank loans, venture capital, and informal networks, young men in Tamil Nadu and Kerala tend to have it better. It is simpler for men to get investors and official institutional support since society trusts them more as leaders. Cities like Coimbatore and Chennai in Tamil Nadu have flourishing entrepreneurial ecosystems that give young men opportunities for regular training, startup accelerators, and growth-promoting business networks. Similar opportunities, supported by governmental agencies like the Kerala Startup Mission (KSUM), are more available to male entrepreneurs in the Indian state of Kerala.

However, young women frequently encounter barriers that prevent them from fully utilizing these opportunities. Women in Kerala have high levels of education, but they still face big obstacles when trying to get loans because no one is willing to put their money on the line and because society doesn't believe women can run businesses. While programs like the Tamil Nadu Startup and Innovation Mission do help female entrepreneurs in the state's cities get their businesses off the ground, rural residents still face barriers to education and funding. The specific demands of women, including adaptability, safety, and self-assurance, are frequently ignored in training programs that do not prioritize gender sensitivity. Similarly, there aren't many female role models in leadership roles to serve as mentors or role models for younger women.

Equally gendered is networking, an essential component of successful entrepreneurship. Social norms restrict the mobility and participation of young women in mixed-gender activities, while young men are more frequently included in official and informal business circles. In both states, networks catering specifically to women are taking shape, but they are still in their early stages and can't compare to more established, powerful organizations.

The difficulties are heightened for young people who identify as Other (transgender, non-binary, etc.). There is a dearth of resources to help entrepreneurs in the Indian states of Tamil Nadu and Kerala. Transgender youth face discrimination from financial institutions and are underserved by mentoring and training programs. There is a lack of robust infrastructure and early phases of Kerala's transgender-specific welfare and employment programs, notwithstanding the state's significant moves in this area. It is challenging for transgender entrepreneurs in Tamil Nadu to build trusting networks and find mentors due to the high levels of stigma they encounter.

1.4. Young men’s businesses grow faster than others in Kerala and Tamil Nadu

There is a clear gender gap in the entrepreneurial performance of young people in Tamil Nadu and Kerala as assessed by metrics like revenue production, company development, and long-term sustainability. The performance levels reported by young male entrepreneurs in both states tend to be greater. Their initiatives have a better chance of scaling and diversifying if they have better access to mentorship, funding, and market networks. Tech and manufacturing firms run by men in Tamil Nadu have it better when it comes to institutional backing and ecosystem integration, which means they can grow their income faster and stay in business longer. Male youngsters in Kerala are also at the helm of many of the innovation-driven businesses that receive funding from state-run incubators.

When compared to male entrepreneurs, female entrepreneurs in rural areas frequently face slower business growth and poorer income generation. They tend to focus on low-profit industries like tailoring, food processing, or handicrafts with their small-scale, home-based enterprises. Societal expectations, movement restrictions, and lack of access to cash all work together to limit their growth potential. But with the help of targeted government programs and SHG (Self-Help Groups) networks, more educated young women are joining more competitive sectors in urban Tamil Nadu and parts of Kerala, and they're doing it more sustainably. Anecdotal data suggests that gender-diverse youth businesses are generally survival-driven and confront systemic hurdles, making long-term sustainability problematic without targeted institutional assistance. However, records of their performance are scarce.

1.5. Culture and gender shape who gets to be an entrepreneur in Kerala and Tamil Nadu

There is a lot of gender inequality in the opportunities available to young entrepreneurs in Tamil Nadu and Kerala due to socio-cultural reasons. Since becoming a company owner is typically linked to being a man and a leader, families and communities often push their sons to follow this path. Social norms in both states support male entrepreneurs' willingness to take risks, which gives them more leeway and respect in the corporate world. They gain self-assurance, resources, and long-term commercial opportunities because of this social acceptability.

Patriarchal traditions, stringent gender roles, and a lack of family support, particularly in rural regions, disproportionately affect young women. It is common for women business owners to be expected to juggle personal and business responsibilities, which might restrict their freedom of movement. There is still widespread cynicism about women starting businesses, even though Kerala has a rather progressive gender climate that gives women better educational and professional chances. Urban parts of Tamil Nadu have made strides in empowering women entrepreneurs, but rural areas still suffer from long-established traditions that limit their opportunities. Though there have been legislative initiatives to encourage transgender participation in states like Tamil Nadu and Kerala, the greatest obstacles are faced by transgender youth, who endure extensive societal stigma and marginalization that hinders their ability to engage effectively in entrepreneurial settings.

2. Review of Literature

Shuvam et al (2023) stated that the gender gap in Indian unorganized business ownership and how it has changed structurally, using the most recent representative datasets from the National Sample Survey. Additionally, the essay pinpoints the important factors that influence women being sole proprietors in unorganized businesses. This study categorizes female entrepreneurs into two groups, necessity entrepreneurs and opportunity entrepreneurs, according to the reasons they start a business. Also investigated in this study are some of the possible causes of this split. The results reveal that the percentage of female proprietors has increased by just 2% over 5 years (2010-2011 to 2015-2016), and that most of these proprietors are engaging in informal, need-driven entrepreneurship.

HV et al (2023) focused on many rural small-scale entrepreneurs in Kerala who work in sectors like software services, food processing, agro-based industries, coconut-based businesses, khadi manufacture, and the coir industry, adding to the state's diverse economic environment. Promoting economic growth, creating jobs, and reducing urban-rural inequities all depend on our ability to comprehend their struggles. The divers' economic landscape of Kerala is the setting for this study, which examines the possibilities and threats encountered by small-scale businesses operating in rural areas. This study is guided by six main objectives that cover topics including financing accessibility, infrastructure shortcomings, market dynamics, labor availability, regulatory limits, and sociocultural impacts. The study gathers data from 300 rural entrepreneurs in Kerala, representing different industries, geographies, and firm sizes. The researchers use a mixed-methods approach, which includes quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews.

Zahari, A. (2023) examined the accessibility of formal and informal entrepreneurship education for Indian youths, highlighting the urgent need for comprehensive and inclusive learning opportunities. It finds that over-reliance on formal education leaves many without essential entrepreneurial skills, while informal channels lack resources and quality, creating a skill gap. The study calls for blended learning models integrating both channels and leveraging technology to bridge these gaps. Despite limitations like small sample size, potential biases, and online survey challenges, the research stresses the importance of improving accessibility and quality. A holistic approach can unlock India’s entrepreneurial potential, boost job creation, and foster economic growth. The work underscores the need for high-quality research to guide policy and practice in this sector.

Chandralekha et al (2025) stated that the disparities between coastal and non-coastal areas of Tamil Nadu are the primary focus of this study on women entrepreneurs. This study looks at how women business owners face different opportunities and problems depending on whether they're operating in coastal or inland industries. The research shows that women may succeed in business by utilizing their abilities and perseverance, even when faced with social obstacles. Important resources for a company's development include funding, expert advice, and technical know-how, all of which are evaluated here as well. This study compares entrepreneurial ecosystems to see if women from the coast have an advantage over those from other regions. Economic development can be fostered in both locations through the findings informing policies and support mechanisms that empower women entrepreneurs.

Raman, R. E. J. I. (2003) focused on using in-depth case studies of twelve people. This research examines rural entrepreneurship in Kerala with a focus on one hundred entrepreneurs from the Mulanthuruthy block in Ernakulam. Young, first-generation business owners with limited education and initial capital made up the bulk of entrepreneurs. Personal skills were more strongly associated with success than environmental variables. Women did somewhat better than male entrepreneurs and were not coerced into starting their businesses. Rather than being dissatisfied or unemployed, people started businesses because they wanted to be their own boss and pursue their ambitions. As a result of rural limitations, educational opportunities and other opportunity variables had little sway. While the "personality factor" (initiative, self-confidence) was less important in determining success, the study did identify two critical qualities for entrepreneurs: the "approach factor" (efficiency, persistence, planning) and the "personality factor" (confidence, self-assurance). It finds that enhancing entrepreneurial training and incorporating entrepreneurial concepts into curricula are crucial for bolstering entrepreneurship in rural areas.

Goel et al (2007) expressed that the backing of IIM Ahmedabad questions the idea that one-size-fits-all policies may be effective in every area by investigating how social support might encourage entrepreneurial activity. It stresses the importance of one's familial and geographical heritage in shaping one's attitude toward entrepreneurship. Individuals from entrepreneurial families displayed more favorable sentiments in both China and India, according to the study, which used data from more than 5,000 respondents. Also, in contrast to China, regional entrepreneurial development was more influential in India. The study delves into the difficulties of assessing attitudes in cross-cultural settings and stresses the importance of policies tailored to specific regions.

Sivaraman et al. (2024) find that the order to help women overcome the obstacles they face as entrepreneurs, current discussions on the topic propose digitization. Given that entrepreneurship is often associated with men, women business owners confront additional challenges related to gender stereotypes and self-perception. Studies have shown that digitization has a good effect on women entrepreneurs and acts as an enabler; however, it is not a panacea. Women business owners' use of digital tools is impacted by societal norms, particularly in underdeveloped nations. A study was conducted in the Indian federal state of Kerala to see if digitalization among female entrepreneurs is more effective in areas with stronger social and cultural systems.

Deshpande et al (2013) analyzed unit-level data from the registered manufacturing segment of the MSME census data for 2001-02 and 2006-07. This study aims to understand the involvement of Dalits and other marginalized groups, especially Adivasis and women, in the micro, small, and medium enterprise sector. Disparities based on gender and cast are evident and remain throughout. Aside from the states in the northeast, firms belonging to the scheduled castes and the scheduled tribes are underrepresented. But among SC-ST-owned businesses, the percentage of female-owned and -managed businesses is much higher. To further increase Dalit employment in the small company sector, there is evidence of homophily in enterprises held by other castes and by other backward classes. Consequently, Dalit entrepreneurship must take off.

Venugopalan et al (2021) investigated the effect of multi-actor participation on women's empowerment in Kerala's Kudumbashree program is the subject of this study. Here, they examine entrepreneurship through a lens that integrates top-down governmental assistance with bottom-up community mobilization, a strategy that has gained worldwide traction as a means to achieve gender equality. Projects funded by the Kudumbashree Foundation aim to empower women by fostering their skills and knowledge and by bringing them into closer contact with their communities. The program showcases the power of multi-level collaboration to bring about long-lasting social change and empower women. Lessons for inclusive rural and urban development program design can be gleaned from the findings, which emphasize the significance of integrated empowerment strategies.

Oommen et al (2022) studied that the public views Tamil Nadu as an exception among Indian states when it comes to gender equality, particularly when compared to the northern states. Signs of this include a more balanced representation of men and women in the state's workforce, a high literacy rate, and a favorable sex ratio. On the other hand, this hides the fact that many conservatives still hold good views. This study provides a comprehensive examination of the views of the people of Tamil Nadu on gender-related issues based on survey data collected from migrant, on-migrant, and return migrant families in the southern Indian state. Attitudes toward employment, decision-making, gender-based violence, and other topics are covered by the statistics. Their research shows that conservative opinions persist, particularly among the more affluent, rural, and less educated demographics, even though the prevailing opinion is generally one that supports women.

George, A. (2024) delved into the mental health of working women in Tamil Nadu and Kerala, specifically looking at the specific challenges they encounter because of their jobs, family obligations, and societal expectations. The research analyzes stress, well-being, and support networks in the two states by surveying and analyzing sociodemographic and occupational variables. Despite shared struggles with work-life balance, women in the two areas report different levels of social support and access to healthcare. Family dynamics and cultural values are also important factors. Findings from this research stress the importance of providing working women in these states with specialized mental health services.

- Objectives of the study:
- To examine the gender-specific factors influencing youth participation in entrepreneurship.
- To compare the entrepreneurial performance of male and female youth in Kerala and Tamil Nadu.
- To explore the socio-cultural and policy-related barriers and enablers affecting gender disparities in youth entrepreneurship.
- Hypothesis of the study:
- H1: There is a significant impact on the gender-specific factors influencing youth participation in entrepreneurship.
- H0: There is no significant impact on the gender-specific factors influencing youth participation in entrepreneurship.
- H2: There is a significant impact on the entrepreneurial performance of male and female youth in Kerala and Tamil Nadu.
- H0: There is no significant impact on the entrepreneurial performance of male and female youth in Kerala and Tamil Nadu.
- H3: There is a significant impact on socio-cultural and policy-related barriers and enablers affecting gender disparities in youth entrepreneurship.
- H0: There is no significant impact on socio-cultural and policy-related barriers and enablers affecting gender disparities in youth entrepreneurship.

3. Methodology

3.1. Study area: This research focuses on two southern indian states that are known for their cultural and socioeconomic differences

Tamil Nadu and Kerala. Tamil Nadu is characterized by industrialization and a vibrant urban entrepreneurship ecosystem, while Kerala is characterized by high literacy, strong social development, and active participation in self-help groups. To provide a fuller understanding of the experiences and barriers faced by young entrepreneurs, this study includes data from both rural and urban regions. Topics of discussion include financial capital, education, social norms, and social networks. The research also considers regional laws and cultural norms linked to gender, which affect entrepreneurial opportunities and outcomes.

3.2. Targeted population

The research study will be focused on entrepreneurial youth, aged 18 to 35 years, from the Indian states of Kerala and Tamil Nadu. This survey will also provide an opportunity to find out how men and women differ in starting their businesses. Entrepreneurs from all over the world, both in cities and on the farm, run their businesses in a wide range of official and informal settings. There is a focus on youthful entrepreneurs who are driven by both opportunity and necessity. For a well-rounded view, the survey also considers young people who are part of self-help groups, startups, and home-based businesses. To guarantee complete findings, participants are chosen from a wide range of educational, socioeconomic, and cultural backgrounds.

3.3. Sample size

The sample consisted of 30 young entrepreneurs, 15 each from the states of Kerala and Tamil Nadu. To allow for the adequate consideration of gender differences, the sample consisted of males and females, along with individuals who did not specify a gender. Participants were selected from all walks of life and corners of the country, with backgrounds and occupations spanning services, informal businesses, and small-scale manufacturing. The purposive sampling design focused on participants aged between 18 to 35 who are in the process of running their businesses. The sample is applicable to the community at large and replicates the community in terms of income level, level of education, and industry. This specific sample will also allow for a depth of comparison and relationship among the two states, along with a unique qualitative insight.

3.4. Sample technique

- Simple random sample technique: 30 entrepreneurs (15 each from Tamil Nadu and Kerala, respectively) were selected at random using the basic random selection method. In this study, they can ensure that the young entrepreneur who fits within their parameters belongs to their target population using this sampling method. The lists were compiled through youth organizations, small business registry documents, and local networks of entrepreneurship. The sampling strategy ensures more validity within the comparison of the sample by decreasing possible bias from selection. Furthermore, the sampling method should encourage participation from individuals from all walks of life and every corner of the world.
- Data Collection Method: primary and secondary data were used. Interviews were administered to the 30 young entrepreneurs selected from Tamil Nadu and Kerala, along with structured questionnaires to obtain primary data. The structured questionnaires identified participants' gender, ambition to be an entrepreneur, resources available, performance, and cultural factors. Secondary data was collected from academic journals, government reports, and business development initiatives to corroborate and substantiate the previous findings. The rigor of these variables together provided the findings about inequalities of gender within young entrepreneurship, and their findings are promising and compelling.

3.5. Statistical tools

- SPSS: The Data collected were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) program. The responses were summarized in many descriptive statistics, specifically, percentage, mean, standard deviation, and frequency statistics were completed in SPSS. In addition to descriptive statistics, t-tests and cross-tabulations were used to examine differences in entrepreneurship by gender in Tamil Nadu and Kerala using comparative statistics. All numeric data from the sample was efficiently and correctly analyzed using this software.
- Microsoft Excel: Microsoft Excel is a spreadsheet application that provides users with the opportunity to sort, calculate, and analyze data. One of its many limitations on data navigation and data manipulation is the number of cell references available to a user within a given worksheet. Some industry-standard worksheet tools for sorting data are the formula bar, pivot tables, and charts.

3.6. Statistical technique

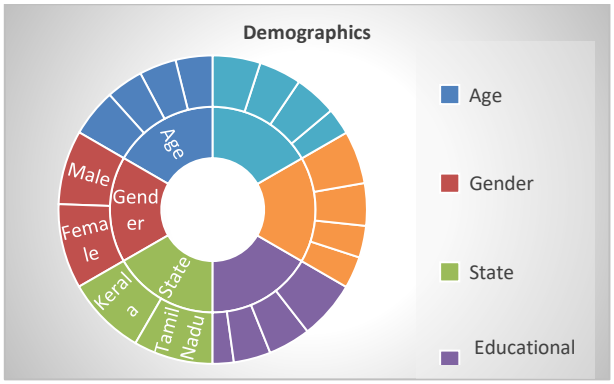
- Correlation: Correlation as a statistical tool to examine gender variations in youth entrepreneurship in Tamil Nadu and Kerala. This allowed us to measure the strength and direction of the link between gender, entrepreneurship motivation, access to funds, and training support, among other important variables. The results showed that there was a correlation between the availability of resources for entrepreneurs and their success rates, with variations across the sexes. Training and mentoring programs were more strongly linked to female entrepreneurs, but risk-taking and financial independence were more strongly linked to male youngsters. Indicated by these tendencies are the gender-specific conditions under which entrepreneurial results materialize. Consequently, correlation allowed us to determine the most strongly correlated variables across genders.
- Chi-Square: The Chi-Square test was used to examine the correlation between categorical factors and the degree of sustainable practice adoption, such as the kind of stakeholder (e.g., hotels, tour operators, government officials). Various stakeholder groups' adoption rates of sustainable practices varied significantly, according to the research. Some categories of stakeholders seemed to be more eager to embrace sustainable measures than others, and the results pointed out a significant link between the two. This allowed Chi-square to establish a pattern of behavior in terms of adoption. Stakeholder groups were also identified in the study, which helps plan future training and policy initiatives.
- Independent t-test: A statistical test that can be used to find out if two unrelated groups differ is the t-test for independent samples. Two separate samples are used in the T-test for independent samples to conclude the shared characteristics of the population. The t-test is used to compare the two samples' means. We can say that the two groups are distinct if there is a large enough difference between the means of the samples.

4. Results and Analysis

Table 1: Demographic Profile

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percent
Age	18–22	7	23.3
	23–27	7	23.3
	28–32	7	23.3
	33–35	9	30
Gender	Female	16	53.3
	Male	14	46.7
State	Kerala	15	50
	Tamil Nadu	15	50
Educational Qualification	12th Pass	4	13.3
	Graduate	11	36.7
	Postgraduate	7	23.3

	Professional degree	8	26.7
	Others	5	16.7
Nature of Business Ownership	Partnership	8	26.7
	Private Limited	9	30
	Sole Proprietorship	8	26.7
	1–3 years	10	33.3
Year of Business	4–6 years	8	26.7
	Above 6 years	6	20
	Less than 1 year	6	20



According to the respondents' demographic data, the age distribution of young entrepreneurs was reasonably equal, with the first three age groups—18–22, 23–27, and 28–32—making up 23.3% of the sample each. The age range of 33 to 35 comprised the biggest group (30%). There seems to be enough representation of female entrepreneurs, as seen by the respondents' higher than average percentage of females (53.3%) compared to males (46.7%). Respondents were almost evenly distributed geographically, with 50% hailing from Tamil Nadu and Kerala, respectively. Regarding educational background, there were applicants with professional degrees (MBA, CA) (26.7%), postgraduates (23.3%), and graduates (36.7%). The majority of entrepreneurs are highly educated, as seen by the small percentage of respondents (13.3%) who had only completed the 12th grade. The most prevalent company ownership form was private limited corporations (30%), closely followed by partnership firms and sole proprietorships (26.7% each). Only a tiny percentage (16.7%) had alternative ownership arrangements. Of those surveyed, 33.3% had been in business for one to three years, while 26.7% had been in business for four to six years. Remarkably, 40% of respondents were either new (less than a year) or seasoned (6 years or more) entrepreneurs, indicating that every responder in the sample was either an emerging or seasoned business owner.

Table 2: Correlations

		How many years have you been running this business	What is your average monthly revenue
How many years have you been running this business	Pearson Correlation	1	-0.231
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.219
	N	30	30
What is your average monthly revenue	Pearson Correlation	-0.231	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.219	
	N	30	30

The correlation study between the average monthly revenue of each responder and the number of years they have been in business shows a slight negative correlation of -0.231. Additionally, about the conventional threshold of significance (0.05), the association is not statistically significant (p = 0.219). This provides no proof that the length of time a firm has been in operation and the amount of money it makes are significantly or significantly correlated. To put it another way, companies that have been in operation for a longer period do not always make more money, and the average monthly revenue of these companies was unaffected by their age or experience level in our sample.

Table 3: Crosstabulation

Count				
		Did you face any challenges when deciding to start a business due to your gender?		Total
		1.00	2.00	
Gender	Male	3	11	14
	Female	4	12	16
Total		7	23	30

The crosstabulation looks at how respondents' gender and whether they encountered obstacles while choosing to start a company are related. Three (21.4%) of the 14 male respondents said they had faced difficulties, whereas 11 (78.6%) said they had not. Twelve (75%) of the 16 female respondents indicated they had no difficulties, while four (25%) said they did. In all, 7 out of 30 respondents (23.3%) acknowledged that they encountered gender-related difficulties in the early phases of their firm.

Table 4: Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.053[a]	1	0.818		
Continuity Correction	0.000	1	1.000		
Likelihood Ratio	0.053	1	0.817		
Fisher's Exact Test				1.000	0.581
Linear-by-Linear Association	0.051	1	0.821		

N of Valid Cases	30

a. 2 cells (50.0%) have an expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3.27.
b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

The Pearson Chi-square value of 0.053 and the significance rate of 0.818 were found in the Chi-square study that examined the association between gender and the difficulties faced by those who started a company connected to their gender. According to the high p-value, there is no statistically significant correlation between gender and encountering peculiar gender-related problems while launching a firm. With a significance value of 1.000, Fisher's Exact Test also confirms this discovery, which is especially pertinent given the small sample size and high number of predicted cells. Despite the lack of statistical significance in these results, qualitative replies from those who indicated difficulties revealed some major gender-related concerns. Some respondents needed more information on their experiences of being challenged because of their gender, stating that they had trouble persuading banks and/or investors because of their gender. The corporate world may be sexist, and certain companies are prejudiced and prone to stereotyping, according to the respondents. Female entrepreneurs spoke about not being a part of many business networks and receiving little assistance, as well as feeling insecure while traveling or working late. Because of their gendered needs, some female entrepreneurs said they felt disregarded by the government's current programs and schemes. Others had their special circumstances where they encountered the presumption that they were financially dependent on their husbands or families because of their gender. Gender-based hurdles to entrepreneurship still exist and should be addressed in the entrepreneurial environment, even though our results lack statistical significance.

Table 5: Crosstabulation

Count						
		What type of support do you think would reduce gender disparity in youth entrepreneurship?				Total
		1.00	2.00	3.00	4.00	
Gender	Male	3	4	3	4	14
	Female	4	5	4	3	16
Total		7	9	7	7	30

Male and female views were distributed fairly evenly in the gender, and what kind of assistance may be useful in addressing the gender imbalance in young entrepreneurship, crosstabulation. Support was evenly distributed across the four alternatives for males (n = 14): three selected simple loan access, four selected gender-based mentoring, three selected awareness initiatives, and four selected equitable representation in business forums. Three selected equal representation, four selected awareness initiatives, five selected mentoring, and four selected easy access to loans for females (n = 16). Gender-based mentoring was the most chosen item overall for both sexes (n = 9), with the remaining three items (each with seven picks) coming in equal order. According to this distribution, there is no one best way to help male and female young entrepreneurs overcome gender inequality. While mentorship is slightly more popular than other strategies, respondents still believe that equal representation, mentorship, access to capital, and awareness will be the most effective. In conclusion, respondents collectively feel that a multifaceted strategy including a range of assistance options would be necessary to overcome gender inequality in entrepreneurship.

Table 6: Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.408[a]	3	0.939
Likelihood Ratio	0.408	3	0.939
Linear-by-Linear Association	0.236	1	0.627
N of Valid Cases	30		

a. 8 cells (100.0%) have an expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3.27.

The association between gender and the provision of assistance that might help to reduce gender disparities in youth entrepreneurship was investigated using a chi-square test. The results of the investigation showed that p = 0.939 and Pearson Chi-square = 0.408. Compared to significant cutoff p-values, such as 0.05 for statistical significance, the p-value is much greater. Therefore, there is no evidence to support the idea that there is a statistically significant correlation between the gender of young entrepreneurs and the kinds of assistance they believe are helpful to them. As a result, respondents who were male and female showed comparable preferences for the kinds of assistance they thought would alleviate gender disparities in young entrepreneurship. Additionally, the chi-square test states: "Keep in mind that chi-square tests of significance are only calculated when 80% or more of the predicted counts are larger than five. In this instance, the predicted counts for each of the eight cells are fewer than five (100%). As a result, findings should be taken cautiously since the data broke one of the Chi-squared test's assumptions. The prior study of chi-square crosstabulations showed that both genders valued having a multifaceted support model, and the majority had the most positive opinion of gender-based mentoring, even though there was no statistical significance. However, this also suggested that gender was a crucial condition, even while there were no appreciable variations between gendered attitudes, and that there may be some agreement on the kinds of support systems.

Table 7: Group Statistics

Gender		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
How do you describe the performance of your business so far	1.00	14	2.5714	1.15787	0.30945
	2.00	16	2.5625	1.15289	0.28822

Male and female young entrepreneurs' self-reported company performance means are compared in the group data. A mean score of 2.57 (SD = 1.16) was assigned to their company performance by the 14 male respondents. A virtually comparable mean score of 2.56 (SD = 1.15) was supplied by female respondents (n = 16). There was little sample variance for either group, as seen by the standard error values of 0.31 for men and 0.29 for females. The mean scores are about the same overall. Therefore, there is no proof that male and female entrepreneurs in this sample vary significantly in how they view many aspects of company performance. A balanced assessment of either success or stability in their particular set of conditions within an entrepreneurial process is reflected in the almost equal ratings of company performance given by both genders. This conclusion supports the previous findings, which showed that gender disparities in how people see company success are not given much attention.

Table 8: Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference Lower	Upper
How do you describe the performance of your business so far	Equal variances assumed	0.002	0.968	0.021	28	0.983	0.00893	0.42276	-0.85706	0.87492
	Equal variances not assumed.			0.021	27.441	0.983	0.00893	0.42289	-0.85811	0.87597

The self-reported company success of male and female young entrepreneurs was compared using an independent samples t-test. The assumption of equality of variances was satisfied by the p-value of 0.968 obtained from Levine's Test for Equality of Variances. With a p-value of 0.983 and a t-value of 0.021, the results are well above the significance level at p=0.05. Therefore, it can be said that there is no statistically significant difference in the mean business performance scores of the male and female respondents. The two groups' mean business performance ratings vary by a very small 0.0089, and the 95% CI for the mean difference falls between -0.857 and 0.875, confirming that the difference is not significant.

5. Conclusion

The analysis adds to the findings by blending both quantitative and qualitative evidence, while underlining the lack of statistical significance of the gender differences present in entrepreneurial performance, yet noting qualitative understandings that reveal the patterns of overt gender biases. The gender biases are reflected in female and transgender people's access to capital, access to mentors, and socio-cultural restraints. Although the male and female respondents reported similar scores for business success, there are qualitative stories that reveal structural inequalities that shape women's and transgender people's experiences of entrepreneurship. The study thus realistically calls for more research into inclusive policy and support programs while highlighting the need for access to mentorship, access to capital, and training that is gender sensitive. The conclusion emphasizes gender inequities as a structural problem based on core socio-cultural norms, consistent with theoretical ideas like institutional theory that explain how formal rules and informal norms create inequitable outcomes. The resource-based view may also frame the unequal distribution of financial, social, and human capital as the mechanism for spatially disparate outcomes. Findings indicate that decision-making, resources, etc., must be tinkered to consider not only the immediate realities of resource (e.g., funding and mentoring) inequities but also the systems that create inequities in place to catalyze it. In dissecting all the requirements for interventions, scalability now emerges as a vital feature – interventions, like gender-specific industrial parks, financial products for women entrepreneurs, and industrial cosmetic surgery to create maps of curated, inclusive incubators, need to be transferable across and in consideration of all socio/cultural contexts. Portability of technology-enabled platforms for mentorship and funding could certainly lessen the reach of interventions to rural or marginalized courts, in particular. Ultimately, this research contributes to theory, while framing gender inequity in an entrepreneurial context as a structural issue that inevitably requires systemic, multi-level solutions. The evidence presented here indicates that sustainable change requires collaboration between policymakers, financial institutions, community organizations, and entrepreneurs to ensure future entrepreneurial ecosystems are equitable, inclusive, and resilient.

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