

Big-Five Personality Traits as Predictors of Entrepreneurial Intention among Students in Assam

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ABSTRACT: This study examines the role of Big-Five personality traits in predicting entrepreneurial intention among students in Assam. Using a sample of 400 undergraduate and postgraduate students, data were collected through a structured questionnaire and analyzed with SPSS (version 27) and AMOS (version 26). Reliability analysis yielded Cronbach's alpha of 0.946, indicating strong internal consistency. Factor analysis confirmed construct validity, while structural equation modeling (SEM) demonstrated that all five personality traits significantly influenced entrepreneurial intention. Contrary to expectations, independent samples t-test results revealed no significant gender differences in entrepreneurial intention. The findings highlight that openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism all shape students' entrepreneurial mindset. The study suggests that educational institutions should integrate personality-driven training modules into entrepreneurship education to foster entrepreneurial intentions among youth.

KEYWORDS: Big-Five Personality Traits, Entrepreneurial Intention, Students, Assam, Structural Equation Modeling

INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurship is increasingly recognized as a vital driver of innovation, employment generation, and economic growth. For students in higher education, entrepreneurial intention represents a precursor to actual entrepreneurial behavior. In India, where youth unemployment remains a pressing issue, fostering entrepreneurship among students is particularly critical.

The Big-Five personality traits—openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism—are widely accepted as core determinants of individual behavior. Previous studies suggest these traits influence entrepreneurial tendencies, but evidence from Northeast India remains limited. This study investigates how personality traits predict entrepreneurial intention among students in Assam and whether gender differences exist.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Prior research demonstrates strong links between personality and entrepreneurial behavior. For example, Bazkiaei et al. (2020) found that entrepreneurial education and personality traits jointly predict entrepreneurial intention. Similarly, Zhao, Seibert, and Lumpkin (2010) concluded that personality influences both entrepreneurial intentions and performance.

Extraversion, openness, and conscientiousness are often positively associated with entrepreneurial intention, while agreeableness and neuroticism tend to show negative relationships. However, these patterns vary across contexts, cultures, and genders.

Studies in developing economies emphasize the importance of personality traits in motivating students toward entrepreneurship. Building on these findings, this study applies factor analysis and SEM to assess the predictive role of Big-Five traits on entrepreneurial intention among Assamese students.

1. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research adopted an experimental design with convenience sampling. Data were collected from 400 students (undergraduate and postgraduate) across colleges and universities in Assam.

- Data collection: Structured questionnaire (5-point Likert scale).
- Analysis tools: SPSS v27 for reliability and factor analysis; AMOS v26 for CFA and SEM.
- Reliability: Cronbach's alpha = 0.946, indicating excellent internal consistency.
- Sample profile: Equal representation of male (200) and female (200) respondents; majority between 18–27 years of age.

2. RESULTS

Factor and Reliability Analysis: KMO value = 0.719 confirmed sample adequacy. Bartlett's test was significant ($p < 0.001$). CFA

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validated all constructs with acceptable factor loadings (> 0.5).

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM): SEM revealed that all Big-Five traits significantly predicted entrepreneurial intention:

- Openness $\rightarrow$ EI ($\beta = 0.929$, $p < 0.001$)
- Conscientiousness $\rightarrow$ EI ($\beta = 0.985$, $p < 0.001$)
- Extraversion $\rightarrow$ EI ($\beta = 0.977$, $p < 0.001$)
- Agreeableness $\rightarrow$ EI ($\beta = 0.859$, $p < 0.001$)
- Neuroticism $\rightarrow$ EI ($\beta = 0.935$, $p < 0.001$)

Gender Differences: Independent samples t-test found no significant difference in entrepreneurial intention between male and female students ($p = 0.976$).

3. DISCUSSION

Findings indicate that personality traits significantly shape entrepreneurial intention. Openness, conscientiousness, and extraversion foster proactive, innovative, and achievement-oriented behavior, which strengthens entrepreneurial drive. Interestingly, agreeableness and neuroticism—often considered negative predictors—were also significant in this study, suggesting cultural or contextual influences in Assam.

The absence of gender differences contrasts with some prior studies but reflects evolving dynamics in India, where women increasingly participate in entrepreneurial activities.

These insights underline the importance of integrating personality-focused interventions into entrepreneurship education programs.

4. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

This study confirms that Big-Five personality traits are strong predictors of entrepreneurial intention among students in Assam. While gender does not significantly affect entrepreneurial inclination, personality plays a decisive role.

Practical implications:

- Universities should design entrepreneurship curricula that account for diverse personality profiles.
- Policymakers can leverage personality-based training to strengthen youth entrepreneurship initiatives.
- Future research should explore longitudinal outcomes of personality-driven entrepreneurial education.

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