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AGRIPRENEURIAL INTENTIONS AMONG BUSINESS STUDENTS: THE ROLE OF TEACHERS' ENTREPRENEURIAL LEADERSHIP, CREATIVITY, AND SELF-EFFICACY

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ABSTRACT

Agripreneurship has received increased attention in recent years as a solution to youth unemployment and rural development, particularly in regions like Nagaland, where agriculture plays a significant role in the economy. Despite the incorporation of entrepreneurship education in the academic curriculum, its influence on the students remains unclear. This study examines the effect of Teachers' Entrepreneurial Leadership, along with Students' Creativity and Self-Efficacy, on agripreneurial Intention among business studies students in Nagaland. The study employed a simple random sampling method to collect primary data using structured questionnaires from 250 students enrolled in BBA and MBA programs from the five institutions offering business studies courses in Nagaland. Statistical tools, such as Cronbach's alpha reliability test, Correlation, and Regression analysis, were employed to analyze the collected data. The study findings indicate a positive and significant correlation between Agripreneurial Intention and Teachers' Entrepreneurial Leadership ($r = 0.338$), Creativity ($r = 0.368$), and Self-efficacy ($r = 0.376$), with p-values < 0.01. Regression analysis showed that the model explained 21.4% of the variance in Agripreneurial Intention ($R^2 = 0.214$), with a statistically significant value model ($F = 22.365$, $p < 0.01$). Self-efficacy emerged as the strongest contributor ($\beta = 0.419$), followed by Teachers' Entrepreneurial Leadership ($\beta = 0.372$) and Creativity ($\beta = 0.247$). The study concludes that although business students in Nagaland generally exhibit a positive intention towards agripreneurship, not all the relevant factors influencing agripreneurial Intention were captured.

INTRODUCTION

Agripreneurship is the transformation of farming activities into a business by utilizing innovative ideas and methods to enhance productivity and profitability (Rao & Kumar, 2016). It plays a crucial role in the development of rural areas by increasing job opportunities and improving income levels (Mehta, 2012). The majority of India's population resides in rural areas and relies significantly on the agricultural sector for both employment and livelihood. Agriculture and allied sectors form the foundation of the Indian economy, as they engage more than 50% of the workforce and contribute approximately 21% of the country's Gross Value Added (GVA). This sector accounts for approximately 14-20 percent of the country's total GDP (Chand, 2019). Recognizing the potential of this sector, countries have come to realize the importance of creating an environment that encourages entrepreneurship among young people (Devonish et al., 2010). Society and the government

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are encouraging the youths to take up agripreneurship to maximize the supply of locally produced foods (Mohammad et al., 2023). A key step in promoting entrepreneurship in the country is to understand the intentions of educated youths (Singh & Mpanme, 2023).

Intention is the desire or commitment of a person to do something in the future. Having the Intention to become an agripreneur is a sign of a person's interest in engaging in agri-entrepreneurship (Suwanan, 2021). However, Intention alone is not enough. Studies show that acquiring entrepreneurial competencies through education and training is also critical to initiating and sustaining a business (Masoomi et al., 2016).

Academic institutions have, therefore, incorporated entrepreneurship development into the academic curriculum, as it is considered one of the best solutions to address unemployment issues (Chaudhry et al., 2023). Atchoarena and Holmes (2005) have further emphasized the importance of an agripreneurship curriculum in academics to encourage the younger generation to be involved in agriculture and allied activities. This is why universities, in collaboration with the government, are investing more effort in creating an entrepreneurial environment that fosters innovation and new ideas among students (Sher et al., 2017). For instance, students in Nigerian universities are required to study entrepreneurship courses due to their importance and to develop entrepreneurial skills before graduation (Ikuemonisan & Akinbola, 2021).

Nevertheless, there are concerns that students are only taught how to start their business in theory rather than being prepared to pursue entrepreneurship in real life (Kirby, 2004). Skilled and qualified teachers, along with effective leadership, become crucial for providing an adequate education (Jones & Iredale, 2010; Sagar, 2013). Despite its importance, few studies specifically examine the influence of entrepreneurial leadership skills on shaping students' entrepreneurial intentions in the agricultural sector (Leffler, 2020).

Hence, this study aims to address the following research question: What is the level of agripreneurial Intention among business studies students in Nagaland? Second, does teachers' entrepreneurial leadership influence students' agripreneurial Intention? Third, do students' Creativity and self-efficacy have a significant effect on their agripreneurial Intention?

Thus, the purpose of this study is to ascertain how the agripreneurial Intention (AI) of Nagaland business studies students is impacted by their teachers' entrepreneurial leadership (TEL). It also looks at how students' self-efficacy and Creativity affect their Intention to pursue agribusiness. As a result, the literature reviews in Section 2 were carried out, followed by the materials and methods in Section 3, the study results in Section 4, the discussions in Section 5, and the conclusions in Section 6.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Teachers' Entrepreneurial Leadership (TEL) and Agripreneurial Intention (AI)

Inspiring students to pursue entrepreneurship as a career is made possible by teachers who exhibit entrepreneurial leadership traits because they are constantly inventive and creative in their instruction (Suyudi et al., 2020). Entrepreneurial teachers are dynamic leaders who place more emphasis on opportunities than difficulties (Leffler, 2020). Through their innovative and adaptable teaching methods, they encourage students to think critically, make connections between concepts for deeper learning, and develop entrepreneurial attitudes and behaviors (Joensuu-Salo et al., 2021). Entrepreneurial leadership inspires people to put in extra effort and work hard, just like the other types of leadership. Its flexibility and emphasis on innovation, however, make it memorable because it allows people to adapt and react to unforeseen changes or new challenges in their surroundings (Surie & Ashley, 2008). According to Renko et al. (2015), entrepreneurial leadership involves leading and inspiring a group of people to achieve their objectives by capitalizing on new opportunities. Therefore, it is possible to view teachers' entrepreneurial leadership as a dynamic approach wherein they act as creative leaders who focus on opportunities and motivate students through their inventiveness and flexibility. According to Diegoli and Gutierrez (2018), students who receive practical guidance and inspiration from their teachers through real-world entrepreneurial experience are more likely to pursue entrepreneurship themselves. Teacherpreneurship and entrepreneurial passion are important mediators in the relationship between entrepreneurial leadership and students' entrepreneurial goals, according to recent studies by Hassona et al. (2023) and Li and Huang (2023). Entrepreneurial aspirations are influenced by various factors, including mentors, role models, and educational settings (Bosma et al., 2012). In the context of Agripreneurship, while no studies have directly linked teachers' entrepreneurial leadership to agripreneurial Intention, Dobermann and Nelson (2013) pointed out that agro-entrepreneurs' management abilities, especially in self-management, are the primary focus of agro-entrepreneurship leadership. By improving performance and fostering increased participation of young male and female entrepreneurs in the rice and maize subsectors, agripreneurial leadership in Europe played a crucial role in advancing sustainable agribusiness and rural development. On the other hand, Suwanan and Allya (2023) discovered that while teachers' and other parties' influence can support and enhance young people's entrepreneurial aspirations, it has little effect on their decision to pursue agribusiness. However, a person's Intention to become an agripreneur is significantly influenced by their level of education. Therefore, encouraging students to view agripreneurship as a feasible career path requires the right leaders and curriculum in schools and colleges (Asiyanbola et al., 2024).

Creativity and AI

Creativity is a person's ability to think of new ideas and identify new opportunities, enabling the creation of innovative solutions (S. Wang et al., 2018). It involves creating unique and original products, methods, or approaches (Hsu et al., 2014) and helping businesses grow rapidly by uncovering new and innovative ideas (Berglund & Wennberg, 2006). Entrepreneurs think differently to come up with new and unique ideas (Sarooghi et al., 2015). Creativity is a dynamic trait that needs to be encouraged among people to foster entrepreneurship (Murad et al., 2021). Existing entrepreneurial literature suggests that Creativity is an essential element of entrepreneurial personality (Zampetakis & Moustakis, 2006). Encouraging Creativity

in youths will not only inspire them to develop an intention for entrepreneurship but also help them to bring new and innovative ideas (Koellinger, 2008). A key agripreneurial characteristic among young graduates in Nigeria is found to be Creativity, reflecting high levels of innovation and serving as a powerful tool to combat poverty and hunger (Aribifo et al., 2019). Young people who consider themselves more creative have higher entrepreneurial intentions (Zampetakis et al., 2011). Likewise, numerous studies have found both direct and indirect influences of Creativity on entrepreneurial Intention (Biraglia & Kadile, 2017; Hu et al., 2018; Law & Breznik, 2017; Liang et al., 2019; Saeed et al., 2018). However, it does not necessarily mean it influences how prepared a person is to start a business (Chia & Liang, 2016). Some studies have concluded that Creativity does not have a substantial impact on people's Intention to become entrepreneurs (Van Gelderen et al., 2008). Being creative alone is not enough for a person to become an entrepreneur (Bignetti et al., 2021).

Self-Efficacy and AI

Self-efficacy plays a crucial role in guiding human behavior (Bandura, 1982). It is critical for making effective and sound decisions (Bandura, 2014). Self-efficacy has a strong influence on a person's choice of action, effort exertion, persistence in overcoming challenges, and overall success in task performance(Bandura & Wessels, 1997; Dwyer & Cummings, 2001). A person with high self-efficacy for a specific task is more likely to start and persist in that task compared to others who doubt their abilities (Bandura & Wessels, 1997). Entrepreneurial self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief in their ability to perform an entrepreneurial task and achieve it (Chen et al., 1998; Kickul et al., 2008; McGee et al., 2009). A strong sense of self-efficacy positively influences university students to pursue agripreneurship as a career option (Pihie & Bagheri, 2013). Enhancing women's entrepreneurial self-efficacy is a key factor in encouraging more women to start their agribusiness (Kickul et al., 2008). Ephrem et al. (2021) in their study highlighted that psychological capital variables such as self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience influence agripreneurial Intention. (Solesvik, 2017) also stated that students are more confident in their ability to succeed as an agripreneurship when they have higher agripreneurial self-efficacy. The impact of covert behavioral control on starting an agribusiness, as studied by Wee and Ting (2024), suggests the need to strengthen internal motivation, such as self-efficacy, among youths.

The primary objectives of this study are threefold: first, to examine the extent to which business studies students in Nagaland intend to engage in agripreneurial activities; second, to assess the influence of teachers' entrepreneurial leadership on students' agripreneurial Intention; and third, to evaluate the effect of students' Creativity and self-efficacy on their agripreneurial Intention. This study, therefore, considers the following hypotheses.

H_1: *There is no significant correlation between the independent variables (TEL, Creativity, Self-efficacy) and dependent variable (AI)*

H_2: *There is no significant predictive effect of TEL, Creativity, and Self-efficacy on AI among business studies students in Nagaland.*

Conceptual Framework

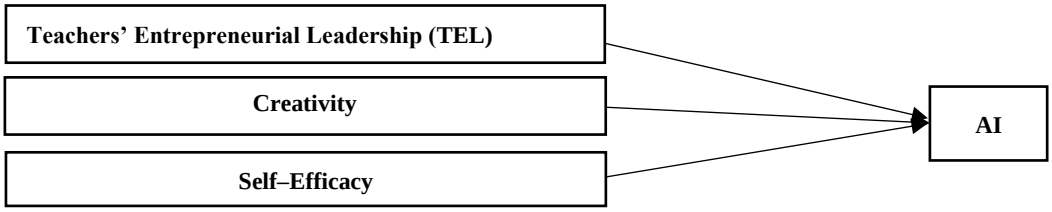

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Population and Samples

The respondents for this study were business studies students enrolled in BBA and MBA programs in Nagaland. They were specifically chosen for this study because business education equips individuals with the right skills and knowledge to succeed as entrepreneurs in addressing unemployment issues (Odike & Nnaekwe, 2019), and most entrepreneurs develop the Intention to start their business at an early stage of life (Fuller et al., 2018). Thus making them ideal for this study. Primary data was collected from 250 students using simple random sampling from the five institutes that offer business courses in Nagaland.

Research Instrument

The structured questionnaire used in this study comprised five sections (S0, S1, S2, S3, S4). The first section (S0) focused on the respondents' demographic information, including age, gender, education level, and parental profession. The second section (S1) assessed the students' perceptions of Teachers' Entrepreneurial Leadership using eight items adapted from a study by Zhou and George (2001), which included thirteen items to assess Creativity in the third section (S2). With seven items, the fourth section (S3) assessed self-efficacy, primarily using the scales created by Ephrem et al. (2019) and Ephrem et al. (2021). Lastly, 12 items modified from Ephrem et al. (2021) were used in the fifth section (S4) to evaluate students' agribusiness intention. Items from every section were rated on a 5-point Likert scale to capture the participants' opinions and perceptions.

Collection of Data

Structured Google Forms questionnaires with multi-item scales were used to collect in-depth answers through the online data collection process. A simple random sampling technique was used to ensure a representative sample of participants. The questionnaire was distributed to students in August 2024, and a total of 250 responses were received and analyzed.

Data Analysis

The relationship between dependent variables (AI) and each independent variable (TEL, Creativity, Self-efficacy) was examined in this study. To thoroughly investigate the relationship between these variables, multiple statistical analyses were conducted, including Cronbach's alpha reliability test, Correlation, and regression analyses. The results are summarized in Tables 1 to 4, which present the reliability assessment, hypothesis tests, Pearson correlation coefficients, analysis of variance, and linear regression outcomes, providing a clear summary of the key outcomes of the study.

RESULTS

Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Test

Nunnally (1978) suggested that Cronbach's alpha value up to 0.6 is acceptable for measuring reliability, while Trevena et al. (2013) asserted that values of 0.70 or higher indicate a strong level of adequacy. In this study, Cronbach's alpha values, as shown in Table 1, ranged from 0.855 to 0.948, demonstrating the reliability of the measures used.

Table 1. Reliability analysis for each variable

Construct	Items	Cronbach's Value
TEL	S1.1, S1.2, S1.3, S1.4, S1.5, S1.6, S1.7, S1.8	0.855
Creativity	S2.1, S2.2, S2.3, S2.4, S2.5, S2.6, S2.7, S2.8, S2.9, S2.10, S2.11, S2.12, S2.13	0.881
Self-efficacy	S3.1, S3.2, S3.3, S3.4, S3.5, S3.6, S3.7	0.898
AI	S4.1, S4.2, S4.3, S4.4, S4.5, S4.6, S4.7, S4.8, S4.9, S4.10, S4.11, S4.12	0.948

Table 2. Hypothesis testing result

Hypothesis	Statement	Test Used	Result	p-value	Decision
H_1	There is no significant correlation between the independent variables (TEL, Creativity, Self-efficacy) and dependent variable (AI)	Pearson Correlation	r = 0.338, 0.368, 0.376	< 0.01	Rejected
H_2	There is no significant predictive effect of TEL, Creativity, and Self-Efficacy on AI among business studies students in Nagaland.	Multiple Regression	β = 0.372, 0.247, 0.419; R^2 = 0.214	< 0.01	Rejected

Correlation and Regression

The correlation coefficient between TEL and AI is found to be 0.338 in Table 3, with a p-value of 0.00 < 0.01, reflecting a moderate positive association. Likewise, the correlation coefficients for Creativity and AI, and Self-efficacy and AI, are 0.368 and 0.376, respectively, both with p-values of 0.00 < 0.01, indicating statistically positive relationships with AI. Therefore, the null hypothesis stating that there is no significant correlation between the independent variables (TEL, Creativity, and Self-efficacy) and dependent variable (AI) is rejected, as shown in Table 2.

Table 3. Output of Pearson Correlation Coefficient

Correlations					
		TEL	**Creativity**	**Self-efficacy**	**AI**
TEL	Pearson Correlation	1	.432**	.315**	.338**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000
Creativity	Pearson Correlation	.432**	1	.496**	.368**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000
Self-efficacy	Pearson Correlation	.315**	.496**	1	.376**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000
AI	Pearson Correlation	.338**	.368**	.376**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	

Source: Researchers' calculation.
Note: Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

The results from Table 4 indicate that the multiple correlation coefficient (R) of 0.463 corresponds to an R-squared value of 0.214, meaning that 21.4% of the variability in Agripreneurial Intention (AI) is explained by the predictors of Teachers' Entrepreneurial Leadership (TEL), Creativity, and Self-efficacy. Consequently, the remaining 78.6% of the variance in AI must be attributed to other factors not included in this model. Moreover, the adjusted R-squared of 0.205 confirms that, after accounting for model complexity, approximately 20.5% of the variability in AI can still be reliably predicted by the combined effects of TEL, Creativity, and Self-efficacy, underscoring the substantive, albeit partial, explanatory power of these independent variables. With a p-value of 0.000 (p < 0.01), the model is statistically significant

and shows a significant predictive effect. Therefore, the null hypothesis stating that there is no significant predictive effect of TEL, Creativity, and Self-efficacy on AI among business studies students in Nagaland is rejected, as shown in Table 2.

Table 4. Regression Result

Variable	Coefficient (β)	Sig.	F	Sig.	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square
Constant	10.903	.000					
TEL	0.372	.003					
Creativity	0.247	.014	22.365	.000	0.463	0.214	0.205
Self-efficacy	0.419	.001					

Source: Researchers' calculation.
Note: Dependent Variable: AI

The ANOVA results presented in Table 4, with an F-value of 22.365, demonstrate statistical significance, indicating that the combined effects of TEL, Creativity, and Self-efficacy substantially contribute to predicting AI. The regression coefficients for each predictor variable are outlined in Table 3, leading to the following regression equation for AI:

$$AI = \beta Constant + \beta TEL + \beta Creativity + \beta Selfefficacy$$
$$= 10.906 + 0.372TEL + 0.247Creativity + 0.419Selfefficacy$$

The estimated equation reveals that Teachers' Entrepreneurial Leadership (TEL), Creativity, and Self-efficacy each maintain a moderate positive relationship with Agripreneurial Intention (AI), suggesting that these factors collectively foster a meaningful level of AI among students. In particular, Self-efficacy emerges as the most influential predictor: holding TEL and Creativity constant, a one-unit increase in Self-efficacy is associated with a 0.419-unit rise in AI. TEL and Creativity likewise contribute positively, with coefficients of 0.372 and 0.247, respectively, but neither exceeds the impact of Self-efficacy, underscoring its primary role in shaping students' agripreneurial intentions.

DISCUSSIONS

To investigate how Teachers' Entrepreneurial Leadership (TEL), Creativity, and Self-efficacy affect Agripreneurial Intention (AI) among Nagaland business studies students, the study tested two null hypotheses. According to the first hypothesis (H_1), AI and the independent variables do not exhibit a significant correlation. Since correlation analysis revealed significant positive relationships between TEL, Creativity, self-efficacy, and AI, this hypothesis was rejected.

According to the second hypothesis (H_2), TEL, Creativity, and Self-efficacy have no significant predictive influence on AI. This hypothesis was also rejected, as regression analysis showed that the model was statistically significant and AI was significantly predicted by all three independent variables, with Self-efficacy being the most potent predictor, followed by TEL and Creativity.

The moderately positive Correlation of TEL with AI aligns with previous studies by Asiyanbola et al. (2024) and Benawa (2018), indicating that educators who demonstrate entrepreneurial behaviors may significantly influence students to pursue agripreneurship as a career option. Similar conclusions were drawn by Suyudi et al. (2020), who emphasized that entrepreneurial leadership and a supportive learning environment help students develop a positive attitude towards agripreneurship, and with the proper teaching and guidance, learners become empowered, and they feel more confident and capable, which help them to overcome personal weaknesses and develop a more agripreneurial approach to farming.

Similarly, the positive correlations between Creativity and self-efficacy and agripreneurial Intention are also in line with what other studies have found (Bignetti et al., 2021; Chen et al., 1998; Coughlan, 2015; Kickul et al., 2008; Pihie & Bagheri, 2013; Sarooghi et al., 2015; Q. Wang et al., 2023) which shows that these relationships are consistent across a variety of study settings.

The substantial impact of self-efficacy on agripreneurial Intention suggests that students' belief in their capabilities plays a crucial role in motivating them to pursue agripreneurship. This aligns with the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB), particularly its antecedent, Perceived Behavioral Control (PBC), which reflects an individual's perception of how easy or difficult it is to perform a behavior (Ajzen, 1991). Previous studies, such as those by Ephrem et al. (2021) and more recently by Wee and Ting (2024), have shown that higher self-efficacy is positively linked to youths' agripreneurial Intention.

Although Nagaland has the lowest number of enterprises among the Northeastern states of India (Oniya, 2024), the findings of this study indicate that students in Nagaland generally hold a positive intention toward agripreneurship, as each independent variable (TEL, Creativity, and Self-Efficacy) showed a moderately positive association with agripreneurial Intention. This aligns with the study by Jamir and Jha (2020), which reported that king chili growers in Nagaland exhibited a medium level of entrepreneurial behavior.

Despite these positive relationships, the regression analysis findings in this study are associated with a relatively low adjusted R-square of 20.5%, indicating that only a limited proportion of variance in the dependent variable is explained by the model's independent variables**;** this result aligns with previous research on the perception of students on teachers' leadership by Gao et al., (2024). While TEL, Creativity, and Self-efficacy are significant contributors, they do not account for most of the variation in student scores. Indicating a possibility that the correlation and regression models employed may not fully capture all relevant factors influencing students to become agripreneurs (Bignetti et al., 2021), potentially omitting other significant variables that could enhance the assessment.

CONCLUSIONS

This study examines the significant yet limited impact of Teachers' Entrepreneurial Leadership, Creativity, and Self-Efficacy on the agripreneurial intentions of business students in Nagaland. This research contributes to the entrepreneurial literature by explaining these dimensions within an agricultural framework and providing insights from a region of the country that has been less explored (Kumar & Konyak, 2023). Although the above traits are significant, the minimal variance explained by the model shows the complex nature of agripreneurial intention development. Therefore, it is essential to consider a wider array of influences, including external, environmental, and cultural factors, to educate a future generation of agripreneurs effectively.

Future research should extend beyond the current study's focus, as the present study was conducted with a special focus on business studies students in Nagaland. As a result, the findings of this study may not apply to individuals from other educational backgrounds or regions. Additionally, future studies should consider exploring the impact of other external and personality factors on agripreneurial Intention, which would provide a more inclusive and thorough understanding of the subject. The mediation and moderation effects of various underlying variables could also be explored in future studies. Employing longitudinal study designs and mixed-method approaches could also yield a more comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing agripreneurial Intention.

Based on the results of this study, we suggest that educational institutions support teachers in strengthening their entrepreneurial leadership skills by providing training and resources, as it can boost agripreneurial intentions among students. It is also recommended that educational institutions should focus on enhancing students' Creativity and self-efficacy through targeted programs and activities. Drawing on the insights of Singh and Mpanme (2023), integrating more entrepreneurship-centered courses into academic institute curricula, along with organizing programs to develop entrepreneurial skills, would offer continuous support and foster agripreneurial intentions among students, encouraging them to consider agripreneurship as a career option. Universities, policymakers, and government bodies also need to enhance activities related to Teachers' Entrepreneurial Leadership (TEL), Creativity, and self-efficacy to cultivate greater agripreneurial intentions (AI) among business students.

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