A Study on Awareness Level Among Youth Towards Infopreneurship

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ABSTRACT

The Current age in which we all exist is an information age characterised by abundance of information which is typically across the society, and as a people in a particular society we seek for availability and accessibility of information and indulging those information to keep up with the flow. Also in the past decades, Youth have been suffering from Unemployment opportunities; Infopreneurship will make an individual to be successful and Self-empowered. This study deals with identifying the implications of Infopreneurship among Youth. The study also has identified the various areas where the youth can explore Infopreneurship as their career choice. The study has listed the plethora of challenges faced by the infopreneurs. This study will also give futuristic guidance to enhance the knowledge of Infopreneurship as part of their curriculum. In turn these Young information specialists will be compelled to use new skills and strategies in order to change and survive in this competitive virtual world using social media. The study has recommended some suggestions to flourish as a successful infopreneur.

KEYWORDS: Information, Infopreneur, Youth, Challenges, Employability skills.

INTRODUCTION

A couple of decades ago, chasing after self-employment particularly in information field was a strenuous task as it may endanger in risk. As sharing the professional knowledge with others was a pipe dream, the increase in usage of information technology has brought a new concept called Infopreneurship. The wide range of web and emerging technologies, everyone and anyone can attain information which is value-added.

Information which is essential constituent of this changing world and knowledge-based economy. Information has become an utmost resource for every aspect like labour, land, capital and entrepreneur. These factors are been needed for each individual, social and as an aggregate it will be significant in national development. Infopreneurs are those who provide these kinds of information for sustainability and productive results. An infopreneur will make a blue print of creating innovative products and services through creation of new organisation. For each individual infopreneurial skills are been developed and supplemented at different parts of life. Being a mind of creativity and innovation in ideas these Infopreneurship will make a greater impact in national Economy.

This Infopreneurship should serve the purpose of unmet needs and must imply on future generation. This technological world in the 21st century is witnessing a high wave of entrepreneurship dealing with enormous digits of people looking for self-empowerment and business ownership and the digital age. This information is gathered, communicated and disseminated through infopreneurs. In this busy world, we are struggling to get information and even we have access it is not accurate. To fulfill these needs, infopreneurs role plays a major role in arranging and organizing information, making it in a logical manner. Infopreneurship is important as it sift, screen, sort and present information in a way as needed by the society.

Infopreneurship is not a new concept, whereas it is not been popularized. It is because our educational institutions, libraries, and organizations are government supported. But the private organizations, institutions are developing higher model of sustainability innovation and information. The inopreneurship attitude should be in build and also has to be supported socially by people surrounded by them. The infopreneurs will make their work successful by sharing their product or resources in websites, blog, e-mail marketing software, where there will be a demonstration of knowledge which is easily accessible by everyone even in remote areas. These infopreneurs need not invest much during their startup and risk of losing money is very low, which is the big hindrance in becoming an entrepreneur.

Massive growth in the use of internet and rapid usage of Smart phones among people has created many infopreneurs to explore the market. The versatile activities done by infopreneurs are content development, Freelance training services, Analytics, blogging services, digital marketing of products and services, Design thinking and analysis, Graphical designing and so on.

Establishing a new programme among college students in an emerging topic will always be a challenging one. Furthermore, universities should stress the significance and scope of its in future. The growth and development of these courses solely depends on the interest among students.

There is a plethora of challenges and hindrance among students who pursue their graduation to enter into job opportunities that is prevailing in the society. Students who have completed their graduation is been left unemployed due to the lack of social support. And when this Infopreneurship training happens during their course of time, it will empower the students to develop the skills to start business and even create employment for other practitioners.

In a survey conducted in US, it says that about 10 million people are involving in information industry and gaining more than 20billion dollars yearly. Every individual who involved themselves in information sharing is earning much than those who are employed under a company. In few years, this Infopreneurship will emerge as such an innovative and expensive topic among the Youth and has bright scope in developing countries. Even these infopreneurs will become a part of Small and Medium scale enterprises.

INFOPRENEUR

The term is new to many people. Infopreneur is an entrepreneur who set up a business based on product or a service which needs more information. In simple terms the entrepreneur will sell information which already recognised by him to the needy who are ready to buy online. Trend has changed from entrepreneurship to Infopreneurship. As they have given a new meaning where there is no requirement of more staff/more investment which involves more technology with less financial risks for a tech savvy person. With each page review, comments of the visitors will make infopreneur stronger to penetrate the business world.

QUALITIES REQUIRED FOR AN INFOPRENEUR IN THE DIGITAL ERA

- Tactical thinking ability
- Consistency
- Innovation
- Visionary
- Good communicator
- Risk taker
- Nous
- Opportunist
- Technologist
- Learn from Mistakes
- Tenacity

INFOPRENEURSHIP

Many will be engaged in online business as an entrepreneur. But Infopreneurship emerged seriously with technological penetration when the entire world was affected by novel corona virus.As the words imply, Infopreneurship is about sharing one's knowledge and experience about a product /service with the intent of providing value. It's the combination of the word "Information" and "Entrepreneurship" .As the clients were more conscious, information providers should address the changing needs of the people. Infopreneurship will make an individual to be successful and Self-empowered. Content creation; niche blogging etc is the first step towards Infopreneurship.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

(Gloria Chinyere Chux-Nyehe& Patrick NkiinebariNwinyokug ,2020) have made an attempt to study the values and implications on employment sustainability of SMEs in Nigeria with Infopreneurship. Parameters analysed was knowledge creation, increasing value of the product, credibility of the information, availability of necessary information, profits expected, independence of business and technology involved. Study was made with owners of

SMEs. The study suggested that unemployment problems can be reduced to an large extent by involving students in Infopreneurship related businesses such as knowledge enhancement, value creation ,freelance writing cum teaching, management consultancies , content development, blogging services etc by using tested models as it may increase sustainability.

(Aregbesola et al ,2019) has made a study on Infopreneurship in a developing country exploring its opportunities and challenges in Nigeria. Developed countries were able to curb unemployment, disruptiveness, theft & robbery, terrorism activities etc by implementing Infopreneurship activities through government bodies and organizations. It is a strategic outcome to reduce unemployment which will develop the nation in the meanwhile.

(Ayooluwa Aregbesola et al ,2019) have explored the opportunities and challenges in a developing economy. The research has listed the contributions of Infopreneurship in Nigerian economy. Many advertising agencies has used tools of graphic design to create visuals and has contributed to the economy. Many young minds were using blogging for their earning by reduced unemployment condition. The research has highlighted the current trends of Infopreneurship in Nigeria as it has curbed unemployment, improved information services, increased demand in information products etc. The study concluded by listing the various challenges towards Infopreneurship such as plagiarism in publishing sector, central's negligence, arise of many cyber crimes has given an negative effect.

(Saiful Farik Mat Yatin, 2019) has highlighted Infopreneurship education as a tool for economic growth. The research has explored the employment opportunities for an infopreneur, listed the skills required for an information management business, adding Infopreneurship course in the curriculum. Results shows that specialised people are not working in their related jobs, they feel low in initiating an information related business. They were not exploring much about the importance of Infopreneurship. There is a high need for Infopreneurship education among the graduates which will definitely solve issues related to Infopreneurship.

(Isa Kamaluddeen ,2016) has explored a study that Infopreneurship will result in economic development and sustainability especially for a developing economy with special reference to Nigeria. The study has highlighted the Infopreneurship practices and its impact in economy and its sustainability. The study has recommended refocusing and updating the information related courses to meet out the current demand in digital services. Governments at all levels should give importance to capacity up gradation for technological innovations; Usage of ICT with good infrastructure may provide a conducive environment for sustainable economic growth in the country.

(Peterson Dewah & Stephen Mutula ,2016) has made a study on Students' perception about infopreneurship.It was a focus group study among the BSc RAM students in NUST Zimbabwe. Respondents has revealed that outcome of the course was highly influential and lead to social changes. The study has listed the various avenues of Infopreneurship such as e books publishing, e consultancies, e newsletters preparation, online problem

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solving, writing research proposals etc. students accepted that it enrich their knowledge in Infopreneurship in the mid of drastic changes in economy , it has improved their innovative skills.

(Wisdom U.Madu et al, 2016) has made a study on awareness level about Infopreneurship among LIS practitioners. List of areas to make money using information were web designing, online selling of e books, hosting online events, consultancy services, online publishing services and other e services. The study has identified the challenges towards Infopreneurship as it requires high literacy, internet connectivity issues, escalate in cost of maintenance, information management skills, poor awareness among the people. The research has torched the importance of Infopreneurship among the graduates which will improve country's performance, need to develop a curriculum which may equip the information management related skills.

(Mudia Osborne Ivwurie ,2015)Has made a study about creating awareness about Infopreneurship among the librarian science students, the necessary skills required for an infopreneur(previous experience, training) as it provides employability skills and removes poverty. The innovations in technology threatens the graduates to choose Infopreneurship as their career choice as they have to face many challenges. The research has listed the areas of Infopreneurship such as e publishing, database management services, mass broadcasting, information services etc. The various challenges in digital era were technological innovations, inflation in economy, poor power supply, high maintenance costs, lack of financial resources, unfavourable working space and environment etc.

(Khosrowjerdi , 2014) has made an interview with an infopreneur Dan Ponyter , has highlighted the importance of Infopreneurship from an infopreneur point of view. He has authored many books, empowered many writers, has suggested youngsters to write books with low investment with their personal experience. The interview has discussed the importance of writing a business plan, marketing avenues, information is treated as inventory.

(Adeline du Toit , 2000) has explored a study based on Infopreneurship among students. It talks about creating course on Infopreneurship for two different set of students. The study discusses the Weitzen's model in sharing information in a better way such as leveraged with customised information, accessing information, increasing the flow of information, organising information and finally delivering information at the right time. The study has concluded that adding Infopreneurship courses in curriculum was felt as expensive teaching methodologies were involved.

RESEARCH GAP

Many studies in the past focused on entrepreneurship, innovation, business studies, economic development etc. Their emphasis laid on developing entrepreneurship education and training. But this study focuses on Infopreneurship which is emerging concept and in developing countries like India should focus on developing curriculum and impose it among Youth during their course of time, in order to develop the essence of innovation. And in many articles and research, the study is been done especially in African countries and focus on its impact on

economic development. Whereas no study had made its discovery on strengthening the education and training among Youth , to know about the need of Infopreneurship and to create awareness among youth researcher have chosen this study.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- To study about Infopreneurship
- To find out the awareness level about Infopreneurship among the college students in Chennai.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study is been done as descriptive study so as to describe the concept of Infopreneurship. This study is also mention to be Empirical study, through which researcher has analysed primary data through the observation in the field. The Primary data was collected from college students in Chennai who falls under the category of Youth**.** The secondary data was collected from many articles, e-books, journals and previous studies.

SAMPLING PROCEDURE

For this research, researcher has used convenient sampling. The questionnaire prepared was distributed through Google form. It is distributed to 300 respondents, from which 288 were taken for the study.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The data collected was analysed and interpreted through percentage analysis. The study revealed that the majority of the respondents were unaware about the term Infopreneurship and Infopreneur.

The research study has identified the various areas pertaining to Infopreneurship as follows:

S.NO.	FIELD	CATEGORIES
1.	Records and Data Management	Data Base Management Data Analysis and interpretation (research analysts) On-line Data Collection and checking plagiarism On-line consultancy and Maintenance of records Freelance Research and preparing research proposals Automation of DBMS
2.	Library and Information Science	Writing stories, poems and other literary works and making it available online in regional languages. Graphic Designing, E-publishing, E-consultancy, Podcasts, Converting text books into e- books, reviewing research projects and consultancy related work Selling and marketing e-books
3.	Journalism and Mass communication using social media	Blogging service Editorial services, Project evaluation services

		Content Development, Designing, Hosting e-meetings,
4.	E-Publishing Services	Publishing edited volumes, books, journals, articles, designing the front page, transcriptions, and translating books into regional languages,
5.	E-Tourism and Hospitality Services	Consultancy, travel blogs, travel vlogs, generating you tube videos, online travel organising services, e-transport services, courier and parcel services
6.	InformationCommunication networkTechnology Services	Software development, app development, solving cyber security issues, testing and trouble shooting, online customer care services, solving issues via online mode.
7.	E-Learning Services	Developing apps for school children, women's safety, cracking competitive exams etc., Food blogs and vlogs, travel experience blogs and vlogs.

The research has identified the various challenges faced by the infopreneurs which can be listed as follows:

- Lack of awareness among youth towards Infopreneurship.

- It is suitable only for small size enterprises

- Infopreneurship is suitable exclusively for tech savvy aspirants who are ready to take risky ventures as it involves higher most technology and modern equipments

- As Infopreneurship is technology dependent it might be suitable for urban based businesses.

- Sourcing of Fund is strenuous as there is lack of awareness among the venture capitalists to support Infopreneurship

- Man power planning and recruiting suitable employees for this information based business is impediment.

- Lack of planning, budgeting, pooling of resources and effectiveness in utilisation of resources are the barriers for an infopreneur

- Poor infra-structure and instability in power supply with frequent interruptions is a major hindrance for the information based ventures.

- As the emerging technologies are quite expensive and requires more techie skills youth are reluctant to take this as their career.

- Solving the Cyber security related issues is a major crisis. Hacking the emerging business ideas is a threat for small business infopreneurs.

- Lack of appropriate government policies that doesn't support Infopreneurship is a major challenge.

- In Indian context there is much pressure on theoretical aspects and less focus on practical exposure. Lack of practical knowledge among the youth towards the emerging technologies which is already exploring globally is a challenge fro an infopreneur.

- Due to inappropriate identification of customer's need, penetrating the competitive markets is very difficult

RESEARCH FINDINGS:

S.NO.	DEMOGRAPHIC DETAILS	DETAILS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
1.	Sex	Male	179	62.2
		Female	109	37.8
2.	Age	15-19	33	11.5
		20-24	255	88.5
		25-30	-	-
2.	Family Type	Nuclear	207	72
		Joint	81	28
3.	Family Income (per month)	10000 - 25000	55	20
		More than 25000 –upto 40000	223	77
		More than 40000 - upto 55000	10	3
4.	Educational Qualification	HSC	12	4
		Diploma	40	14
		Under graduate	49	17
		Post graduate	187	65
5.	Are you aware of the term "Infopreneur?"	Yes	47	16.4
		No	241	83.6
6.	Are you willing to know about the concept?	Yes	265	92
		No	23	8

The data in table indicates that 62.2% of respondents are male, whilst 37.8% are female. Male respondents were higher proportion in the study.

· It can be seen that ages between 15 - 24 years represented that the respondents fall under the youth category.

· In addition 72% are living in nuclear family while 28% are living in joint family. This is not unusual because in recent days joint family has faded away and it's very rare to see people living in joint family scenario.

· Regarding education, 65% of participating respondents either completed or pursuing their post graduation in universities and 17% have done their under graduation courses and 14% of respondents completed technical college

education, and 4 % have completed their higher secondary education which being the least educational attainment. Observably, the results show that most respondents had obtained PG degree as the highest educational attainment.

In order to find out the level of awareness of the term infopreneur, respondents were asked to indicate whether they have heard the term infopreneur before, vast majority of the respondents 83.6% said 'no'. 16.4% of respondents said 'yes'. It can be noted that, Infopreneurship is not a popular term among youth.

-It is quite interesting to know that most of the respondents (92%) were willing to know and learn about Infopreneurship; only 8% were not interested to learn about it.

The study revealed irrespective of the educational qualification and educational stream the respondents was unaware of the term Infopreneurship.

CONCLUSION

In this smart world where things can be done smartly, it's our choice how to make smart and wise choices. In our country as we see increasing unemployment rates in all the decades we can neither depend on government nor private organization for our job, rather we can invest our knowledge and earn money from it. Infopreneur is one such emanating field where you can gain a lot. As the study reveals there is a very less awareness about the term itself, initiatives should be taken to bring it on par with the other vocational courses and other entrepreneurship programmes. Government can take up such measures to familiarise inopreneurship and make its people self employed. Infopreneurs who in turn can help build up the economy of the nation and relieve government from putting pressure on it seeking for a job. Government can also initiate to set up some bodies to give loan or other structural facilities to encourage infopreneurs. The study of Infopreneurship can be made available at higher secondary level itself, wherein poor students who cannot pursue higher studies can make ventures here and support their family. They can become self-reliant and independent financially.

Also it is interesting to know that infopreneur services can be utilised in diverse fields and it is not only meant for computer graduates or scholars. Student pursuing any course or whoever has expertise knowledge and practical exposure in any field can make use of this. However they should be creative and smart working.

Our knowledge is asset which cannot be stolen and that's the one which when shared multiplies, when it reaches others, they will also be enlightened. So today's smart youth who rely on valuable information can give it to others and earn successfully. In the present era of digitization, "Trust yourself, create your profile, share valuable information the needy people are awaiting to follow you, success is yours…"

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Government should take necessary initiatives to support Infopreneurship in the respective countries as it will solve the unemployment related issues among the youth.

- Ministry of Education should enforce Universities to design a course based on Infopreneurship which could be available on the online portals like NPTEL, SWAYAM MOOC and similar online education platforms.

- Teaching fraternities should be motivated to create content development, courses based on Infopreneurship.

- Awareness should be created among the students about Infopreneurship related concepts

- Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship should enhance the collaboration with Universities under its jurisdiction to provide free Certificate courses, e-learning courses and practical training sessions on Infopreneurship.

- Governments at all levels should give importance to capacity up gradation for technological innovations; Usage of ICT with good infrastructure may provide a conducive environment for sustainable economic growth in the country

- The "earn while you learn" concept will prepare the students to create their own ventures using social media and smart phone with cheap internet connection.

- Lectures, Practical assignments, Business plan preparation, Case studies, Field visits success story telling session by infopreneurs, Playing videos, Games on Infopreneurship in course curriculum will develop their innovative and creative skills among the students.

- Governments at all levels should give importance to capacity building among the teaching fraternity using technological innovations, as a result students will get motivated to take Infopreneurship as their career.

- Usage of ICT with good infrastructure in a affordable price in rural areas will give conducive learning environment for the learners which will lead to sustainable economic growth in the country crating employment generation.

SCOPE FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

While doing the literature survey the researcher found that as many research is not found especially in inopreneurship. The study revealed that few studies have been done on Infopreneurship in African countries such as role of Infopreneurship in economic development, awareness level etc. The study further recommends that future researchers can explore in the area of Infopreneurship particularly in topics such as, taking Infopreneurship as a career choice among the students, developing curriculum and courses by the Colleges and Universities and creating awareness among the youth in the field of Infopreneurship. Further stress and initiatives should be taken by the economists, educationalists, Government representatives, policy makers so as to disseminate the significance of Infopreneurship to the government. This study can be done in other states and countries to rule out the status of Infopreneurship.

LIMITATIONS

This research focuses mainly on Infopreneurship related data. Even secondary data relating to Infopreneurship was not available and it was very difficult for the researcher. As this research has considered both primary and secondary data, primary data was collected from youth who are living in Chennai. As the study has been done using a limited number of respondents in Chennai, the findings cannot be generalized as a whole.

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