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**Entrepreneurship Ecosystem for Viksit Bharat: An Empirical Study of
Entrepreneurship Exposure and Engagement of Youth in India**

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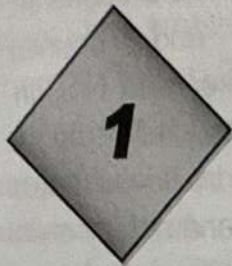
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Entrepreneurship Ecosystem for Viksit Bharat: An Empirical Study of Entrepreneurship Exposure and Engagement of Youth in India

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Abstract

Entrepreneurship is considered pivotal for the economic growth of the nations. The recent emphasis of the Government and Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) on developing an entrepreneurial ecosystem such as Viksit Bharat, Atmanirbhat Bharat, National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, and other entrepreneurial initiatives in alliance with UN's SDGs are eyeing upon the young generation with an inherent assumption of a high youth engagement in entrepreneurial ecosystem. However, the high entrepreneurship potential of Indian youth is reportedly not effectively utilized in converting them into successful entrepreneurs. The present research investigates this issue deeply by empirically analysing data from 305 undergraduate Indian students to identify their exposure and engagement in the entrepreneurship ecosystem provided by the Government and HEIs and their specific challenges. It further explores the reasons for the low exposure and engagement of the youth through personal interviews with 28 students. Results reveal that despite entrepreneurship exposure very few students engage in entrepreneurship activities leaving the ecosystem provided by the state and HEIs under-utilized. Lack of financial support, knowledge, and experiential training in startups are expressed as youth's top three challenges for a startup. Thematic analysis revealed insufficient institutional support, information overload, and personal reasons as the three prominent reasons for the low level of exposure among students; and insufficient institutional support, academic issues, and personal reasons as the three broader reasons underlying the low level of engagement in the entrepreneurial ecosystem. The results will help the policymakers and HEI executors to increase the engagement of Indian youth in entrepreneurship activities.

Keywords: Viksit Bharat, Entrepreneurship Ecosystem, SDGs, NEP 2020, HEIs.