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Entrepreneurial Mindset among Indian Youth: A Post-COVID Analysis

Ayush Mangal
Independent Researcher, Jaipur, India

Abstract: ***This paper examines the transformation in entrepreneurial mindset among Indian youth in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic led to a major shift in career aspirations, pushing many young individuals towards entrepreneurship due to job uncertainties, digital acceleration, and increased government support. The research utilizes secondary data and incorporates two relevant Indian startup case studies — Zomato and DeHaat — to demonstrate the diversity and adaptability of youth entrepreneurship in India. Findings reveal that technology, ecosystem support, and societal shifts have significantly influenced the post-COVID entrepreneurial drive.***
Keywords: Entrepreneurship, Indian Youth, Post-COVID Economy, Startup India, Zomato, DeHaat, Digital Economy, Entrepreneurial Ecosystem.

I. INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurship has long been associated with innovation, risk-taking, and economic dynamism. In India, the concept has gained renewed significance in the post-COVID era. The global pandemic brought about not only economic disruption but also behavioral and mindset shifts, especially among youth. As traditional jobs became unstable and the digital economy accelerated, young Indians began to perceive entrepreneurship not only as an alternative career path but as a primary aspiration. This paper explores how the mindset towards entrepreneurship evolved after the pandemic, the key enablers, challenges, and the broader impact on the Indian economy.

II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1) To study the change in entrepreneurial mindset among Indian youth post-COVID-19.
2) To explore the factors that enable or restrict youth entrepreneurship in the current scenario.
3) To understand the role of digital infrastructure, education, and government policy in entrepreneurship development.

III. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Several studies have explored the motivations behind youth entrepreneurship in emerging economies. According to the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) 2022, India has one of the highest intentions to start a business among youth globally. Reports by NITI Aayog and Startup India indicate that early-stage entrepreneurial activity has surged, especially in Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities. Studies also highlight that digital transformation, social media marketing, and online education platforms have played pivotal roles in skill development and startup incubation.

IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This paper employs secondary research methodology. Data is collected and synthesized from government reports, journal publications, startup ecosystem surveys, and credible news sources. Case studies are used to provide practical insight into how entrepreneurial ventures have evolved during and after the COVID-19 pandemic.

V. CASE STUDIES

A. Case Study 1: Zomato – Scaling During Uncertainty

Zomato, a food delivery startup founded in 2008, evolved significantly during the pandemic. While many industries struggled, Zomato restructured operations, partnered with grocery delivery platforms, and launched contactless delivery systems. It focused on user safety, employee well-being, and tech integration. The company's success story post-pandemic reflects a resilient and adaptive entrepreneurial mindset. Zomato's IPO in 2021 became a symbol of India's maturing startup ecosystem.

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B. Case Study 2: DeHaat – Agritech for Bharat

DeHaat is a Patna-based agritech startup offering end-to-end agricultural services to farmers, including seeds, fertilizers, expert advice, and market linkages. During COVID-19, DeHaat scaled its operations and digitized rural agricultural services. The startup onboarded more farmers through mobile-based services, ensuring continuity in agricultural supply chains. DeHaat showcases how young entrepreneurs are solving grassroots problems and empowering rural India using technology.

VI. FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

1) Young Indians are more willing to take risks and start ventures, especially in digital and social sectors.
2) Government initiatives such as Startup India, PMEGP, and Atmanirbhar Bharat have played a positive role.
3) Educational institutions and online platforms are nurturing startup culture via incubation, hackathons, and bootcamps.
4) Lack of access to funding and mentorship in rural areas continues to be a barrier.
5) Women entrepreneurship is on the rise, especially in e-commerce, crafts, and health-tech sectors.

VII. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

The post-COVID landscape in India has provided a fertile ground for entrepreneurial growth. Indian youth are increasingly seeing entrepreneurship as a viable career option, driven by digital access, shifting cultural values, and policy support. To sustain this momentum, government and private stakeholders should focus on rural inclusion, gender equity in entrepreneurship, and reducing the urban-rural digital divide. Strengthening local entrepreneurial ecosystems and including startup education in school curricula will further boost India's journey toward becoming a global startup hub.

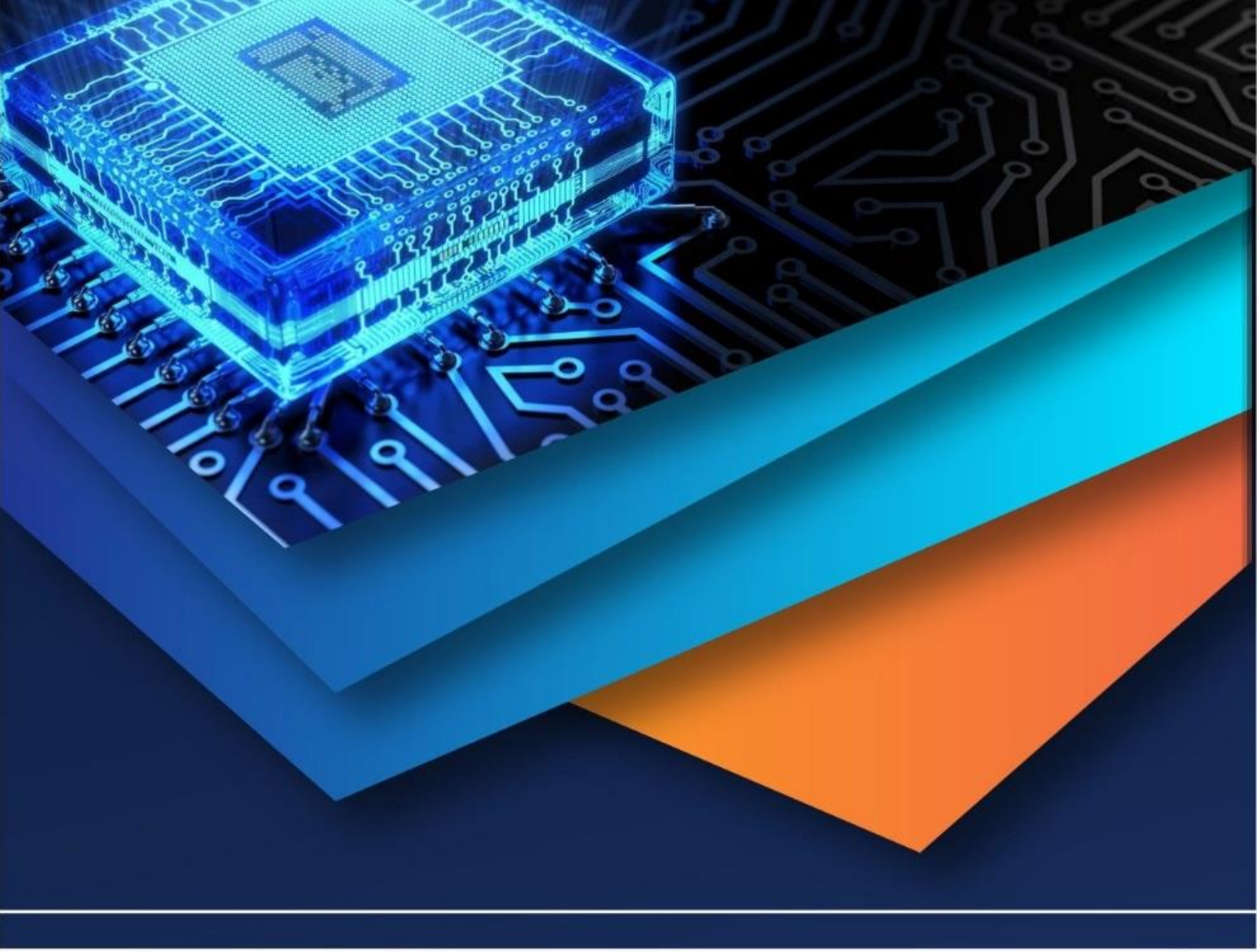
VIII. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE SCOPE OF RESEARCH

This study is limited to secondary data sources and illustrative case studies. Future research can include primary surveys of youth entrepreneurs, regional comparative analysis, and impact measurement of specific government schemes. A deeper dive into sector-specific entrepreneurship (e.g., healthtech, greentech) can also be explored.

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