

Entrepreneurial Ideation, Creativity, and Innovation through Structured Brainstorming Techniques: An Empirical Study in the Context of Indian Startups

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Abstract

Entrepreneurship and innovation are the foremost factors that helps the development of economy and startups in India. Considering that, ideation, creativity and innovation serve a crucial role in supporting entrepreneurs produce rare products, services and business models. This paper focuses on comprehending the capacity of planned thinking processes in improvising entrepreneurial ideation and creativity amongst other startups of India. Thinking strategies motivate towards liberal thinking, teamwork, and spawning of distinct ideas that in a way aids innovation and problem-solving. The research emphasizes the several theories of brainstorming like delay in decision-making, fostering unique ideas, production quantity, teamwork and community involvement. This aims at the significance of streamlined ideation strategies within entrepreneurial education and real-world application. By examining the several methods i.e. innovation, ideation, and brainstorming, the study focuses on analysing how planned brainstorming helps towards innovative thinking and entrepreneurial success within the Indian startup landscape. A sample of 271 was collected. All the factors Entrepreneurial Ideation, Creativity Enhancement, Team Collaboration, and Innovation Capability are showing significant impact on Indian start-ups.

Keywords: significant, brainstorming, strategies, involvement

Introduction

Entrepreneurship has surfaced as the most essential factor towards financial growth, employment generation and innovation within a contemporary economic setup. In the past few years, the Indian startup system has undergone significant development because of technical development, government schemes and rising entrepreneurial consciousness. Startups are constantly concentrating on innovation oriented strategies to pull through within an extremely competitive edged market. In such a setting creativity, ideation and innovation have been considered as the most importantly factors for entrepreneurial growth (NASSCOM, 2024; Startup India, 2025).

Ideation is considered as the base of entrepreneurship as every successful business starts with an idea which tries to solve a challenge or serves as a catalyst within a market. Entrepreneurs need organized processes to produce, polish and acknowledge innovative ideas effectively. Contemporary business techniques highlight teamwork, thought process, creativity and problem-solving strategies to improvise creative results. Planned brainstorming strategies are highly implemented by startups to motivate creative thought, produce several solutions and improvise team partnership (World Economic Forum, 2023; OECD, 2024).

Creativity and innovation are intensely related with the capability of entrepreneurs to adjust to the revolutionizing market shifts and user preferences. Within this age of digitalization, startups are needed to constantly maintain a competitive edge and longevity. Brainstorming strategies offer a streamlined approach for producing novel ideas by motivating open discussion, free involvement and contribution from a variety of employees. These strategies support entrepreneurs subvert traditional thought processes and build innovative business models (Deloitte, 2023; McKinsey & Company, 2024).

The Indian startup network specially receives advantages from systematic ideation practices as startups majorly function under situations of ambiguity, restricted resources and extremely cut-throat competition. Productive brainstorming not just improvises creativity but also develops judgmental skills, teamwork, problem-solving skills among business owners. Thus comprehending the purpose of a systematic brainstorming strategy in organizational ideation and innovation becomes extremely relatable within the Indian startup system. This research focuses on investigating the significance of creativity, ideation and brainstorming strategies in nurturing innovation and entrepreneurial upliftment.

Literature Review

Ideation is the imaginative process that generates, refines, and communicates new concepts. An idea, in this context, is a fundamental module of thought that can be visual, concrete, or abstract. Innovation, development and realization are all the processes covered in the stages of a thought cycle. It is true that the creation of ideas is one of the most important parts of all the sectors, but it is very crucial for the entrepreneurs, as new and unique ideas are the demand of the entrepreneurial process at every stage. Ideation plays a significant role in the entrepreneurial journey as it helps in the creation of novel products, services, and business models. Systematic approach, incorporation of steps like observation, forming a diverse ideation team, and utilizing various brainstorming techniques are all required for effective ideation. It is easy for the entrepreneurs to enhance the potential for successful innovation by combining different thinking methods and validating ideas (Kuratko et al., 2021; Nambisan et al., 2019). It is essential to teach and implement ideation in a systematic manner with good intention in the entrepreneurial activities which in turn help to enhance the efficiency of idea generation. Ideation is used by educators and practitioners also in teaching and executing ideation. There are several entrepreneurship programs that teach their students the process of entrepreneurship, they start it with the individual that reaches out with an idea. Mentors and teachers then focus on developing personal skills and business models required for a successful venture (Neck & Corbett, 2018).

Series of structured steps are involved in systematic ideation which includes to observe the environment, assemble a well-rounded ideation team, utilize diverse thinking and explore techniques that generate ideas simultaneously. It is also important to validate the ideas for refinement and improvement processes. It is observed that very limited attention is given to the foundation stage of idea creation. This stage is very crucial as it bridges the gap between entrepreneurship education and practice by adopting a systematic approach to teaching and implementing ideation. Ultimately, these steps foster the idea with higher success potential. Ideation is a very critical component of the design process in both educational and professional contexts, when it is undertaken by individuals, organizations, or crowds. It represents an important stage of the Design Thinking process that focuses mainly on the generation of ideas (Björklund & Magnusson, 2022).

On the other hand, Creativity is a very vital aspect of human life that influences many activities of day-to-day life. It stretches from a broad spectrum of scenarios that includes professional tasks, personal enjoyment, artistic

expressions like music composition, new media art and technological innovations as well. Creativity is recognized as a valuable organizational process that contributes to a competitive edge in design. Even though, it is very tough to quantify creativity, it is the main area of research across various disciplines. Topics like creative thinking processes, the role of media and technology, and the influence of technology on creative practices are all explored in the studies conducted on creativity and cognition. Specially in research that includes Human-Computer Interaction focus is more on developing tools to enhance the cognitive aspects of creativity (Amabile & Pratt, 2016; Lubart, 2020). These researches are mainly focussed on formalized idea generation practices within group design sessions, often highlighting brainstorming techniques to boost creativity in product development. But, at the same time, they have largely ignored the incorporation of such sessions into the broader context of the design process.

Ideation or idea generation, plays an important part in designing and marketing of new products. It also shapes the marketing strategies, and creates impactful advertising copy. When we talk about the development of new products, ideations play a vital role in the initial stages where it is said to be the “fuzzy front end” (Koen et al., 2002; Verworn & Herstatt, 2021). This phase is said to be the most effective phase for an organization where the primary focus of effective ideation is to generate a high quantity of ideas rather than prioritizing quality. This approach promotes eccentric thinking, reduces self-censorship, and benefits from the diverse viewpoints of cooperative teams. These approaches and strategies increase the pool of ideas and foster greater creativity. It is the fundamental step to generate innovative ideas and drive innovations to achieve growth in business, success in market and get advance in societal development. However, it is very tough and challenging to come up with ground breaking ideas and this is the time where the techniques related to ideation prove invaluable. The most popularly known ideation technique stem from “Brainstorming”. Brainstorming is the method introduced by Osborn in the 1950s (Osborn, 1953). These structured approaches are designed to stimulate creativity and facilitate the generation of a broad spectrum of ideas. This also help organizations to navigate challenges and grab the opportunities effectively.

Brainstorming

Brainstorming, a method for group problem-solving and idea generation, where participants contribute spontaneous and unrestricted suggestions. The method is effective in generating solutions to straight forward problems also but it is not sufficient enough to address any complex problem-solving or planning tasks on its own. The brainstorming method proves to be valuable when combined into a wider process that includes individual idea generation, followed by collective evaluation and selection. Particularly, it is very useful when we create components of plans, processes, solutions, or approaches and developing checklists as well. brainstorming is very effective due to the reason of its ability to influence the power of association. "Hitch-hiking" or "Piggybacking" are the popular phenomenon associated with brainstorming which means sharing of ideas by one participant and sparking related ideas in others. The impact of “Free Association” is improved by group brainstorming that makes it more potent as compared to working as an individual (Paulus & Brown, 2007). During the brainstorming session, positive support and strengthening plays a significant role in nurturing creativity. The positive point in the brainstorming method is that, it welcomes all the suggestions and record it without any criticism. It also creates a supportive environment that encourages participation and innovation. Effective brainstorming sessions follow a set of guiding rules that maximizes its creativity and productivity. The core rules of brainstorming are as follows:

Defer Judgment: The brainstorming sessions essentially avoid to evaluate and criticize any idea as its primary aim is to generate as many ideas as possible within the particular time which is allotted. The processes like Evaluation, judgment, and selection are all reserved for later stages. This approach helps to create a safe and open environment for creativity. This also helps to encourage participants and allow them to think freely and share their ideas without the fear of criticism. The idea generation phase, help the participants to withhold the criticism that makes them more comfortable and propose diverse and unconventional ideas. The process of brain storming becomes better as the participants are focussed on generating varied and unusual concepts without the fear of criticism. They also build upon and expand the existing ideas. The processes like critique and assessment are

postponed till the evaluation stage with an intention to create and maintain an atmosphere which is favourable to free thinking and innovation (Rietzschel et al., 2014).

Encourage Wild Ideas: For an effective brainstorming session, it is very important to encourage wild ideas, as it helps the participants to create and push themselves to think beyond the conventional boundaries. This approach and principle allow the participants to give apparently impractical or unusual suggestions to emerge and this will ultimately lead to innovative solutions or inspire more advanced ideas. The judgment-free environment created during brainstorming session help the team members to feel safe and share their bold thoughts without fear of criticism. This also unlocks their full potential of creativity. This approach extends the scope of possibilities, push the collaborations, out-of-the-box thinking, drives productive and dynamic discussions as well. The key principle of effective brainstorming is to encourage eccentric or "out there" ideas. This also help to push the boundaries which in turn leads to innovative solutions which might be missed otherwise (Sawyer, 2017). This process welcomes unusual ideas helps to create opportunities to explore new viewpoints, approaches and also yield more creative and effective outcomes. It is much easy to simplify or refine a bold idea as compared to improve or expand a conventional one. The participants of brainstorming process as able to overcome the thinking and viewing challenges by accepting new ways of ideas and go beyond the clear and much understandable way that offers greater potential for success.

Go for Quantity: It is the key rule in effective brainstorming which emphasizes on the importance of generating a greater number of ideas. Rather focusing on perfect ideas, brainstorming focus on volume which in turn rise the chance of getting innovative and viable solution from a large pool of ideas. The participants are encouraged by this approach where they are free to share without thinking more on perfect idea. This also fosters a dynamic and energetic environment. The team prioritize quantity and avoid the premature judgment alt the same time. This allows even eccentric or imperfect ideas to spark further creativity and collaboration (Paulus & Brown, 2007). During the brainstorming, this approach raises rich foundation to refine and select the best options is ultimately created where the group members are encouraged to contribute as many ideas as possible. It happens to uncover a greater number of useful ideas from the pool of high volume of ideas. The only focus is to generate quantity which ultimately leads to strong, creative, effective and good quality ideas and solutions.

Build on Ideas: This rule encourages collaboration and enhance the existing suggestions. It avoids dismissing or criticizing ideas and allows participants to expand their ideas by combining viewpoints to create innovative solutions. The rule nurtures the supportive environment where one idea pushes another one and leads to innovations which are not possible at individual level and isolation. This approach values contribution and promotes teamwork that maximizes the creativity and also ensures that the collective potential of the group is fully used (Hargadon & Bechky, 2006). The creative process involves "combining, adding to, and piggybacking" of ideas. Members are free to five suggestions for improvements, variations, and combinations of previous ideas. Instead of shutting down, they use "yes" and "thinking to expand on other's ideas". Collaborations helps to combine elements from different thoughts and create even a better idea.

Stay Focused on the Topic: This is an important rule that help to maximize the creativity and productivity during the brainstorming session. Focus is maintained ensuring that ideas remain relevant and aligned with the aim. This rule also prevents the process to get derail due to distractions. Participants remain grounded by clear and defined topic and channelise their energy and creativity in solving the particular challenge at hand. This "stay focussed on the topic" rule help group to make meaningful progress, nurture efficiency, and be sure that the brainstorming session gives some actionable and impactful result (Santanen et al., 2004). It also ensures that the group remains on the tract and focus on the main problem and maintain the productivity and significance as well.

One Conversation at a Time: An effective session of brainstorming follows this essential rule "One Conversation at a Time", promoting the clarity and respect among the participants. The rule allows only one person speaks at a time which prevent the ideas from being lost in cross-talk and everyone listen and engage actively in the session. It is easy to create a comprehensive environment with this "One Conversation at a Time" where the contribution of each participant is valued. This also nurtures the better teamwork and deep exploration of ideas (West &

Anderson, 1996). The approach improves focus, minimalize mis-understandings, and make sure that the brainstorming session remains organized and productive.

Be Visual: This is one of the most powerful and effective rules of the brainstorming session that help to clarify the idea and also stimulate creativity. It is easy to make the abstract concepts tangible and understandable with the help of visuals in the form of diagrams, mind maps, sketches, or charts. Memory retention is enhanced by visuals which in turn help the participants to build connection between different ideas and this usually is less possible in verbal discussions (Eppler & Burkhard, 2007). This approach helps to engage different reasoning related process by encouraging diverse thinking and this also makes the brainstorming session more active and productive.

Encourage Everyone to Contribute: This rule allows all participants get the chance to share their ideas and viewpoints. This approach prevents the quieter voices from leading voices that over comes their ideas and leads to a broader range of creative solutions. This also nurtures an inclusive environment that helps everyone to feel appreciated. The quality of idea is improved when diverse input is encouraged which also promotes the sense of teamwork and collaboration. This rule helps the team to show the full potential of their members and encourage them to generate innovative and well-rounded concepts (Hülshager et al., 2009). Inputs from all the sides brings in variety of ideas and solutions and also increase the potential of the participants to offer innovative solutions. Along with the variety of ideas, there is the need of solutions that helps to combine different ideas in order to get a better one

Following these rules is very helpful in fostering a positive, open-minded environment where participants feel encouraged to share ideas freely and build upon contribution of each other’s ideas.

Objective

1. To identify the role of Entrepreneurial Ideation, Creativity, and Innovation through Structured Brainstorming Techniques in Indian Start-ups.
2. To know the impact of structured brainstorming techniques on Indian start-ups.

Methodology

271 participants were surveyed from different income level people. The method of sampling was “Random sampling” for collection of data and examination was done by “Explanatory Factor Analysis and multiple regression” for results.

Findings

Table 1 demonstrates demographic details, it shows that 52.40% are Male, 47.60% are female. Looking at the age, 35.79% are between 35 to 40 years of age, 32.84% are between 40 to 45 years of age, and 31.37% are above 45 years of age. With regards to the Work Experience, participants between 2 to 5 years are 37.27%, 5 to 10 years are 26.94% and More than 10 years are 35.79%.

Table. 1 Respondent’s Details

Variables	Participants	Percentage
Gender		
Male	142	52.40%

Female	129	47.60%
Total	271	100
Ages in years		
35 to 40	97	35.79%
40 to 45	89	32.84%
Above 45	85	31.37%
Total	271	100
Work Experience		
2 to 5 years	101	37.27%
5 to 10 years	73	26.94%
More than 10 years	97	35.79%
Total	271	100

“Factor Analysis”

“KMO and Bartlett's Test”

Table 2 “Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy”

“Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy”		.787
“Bartlett's Test of Sphericity”	“Approx. Chi-Square”	4394.182
	df	91
	Significance	.000

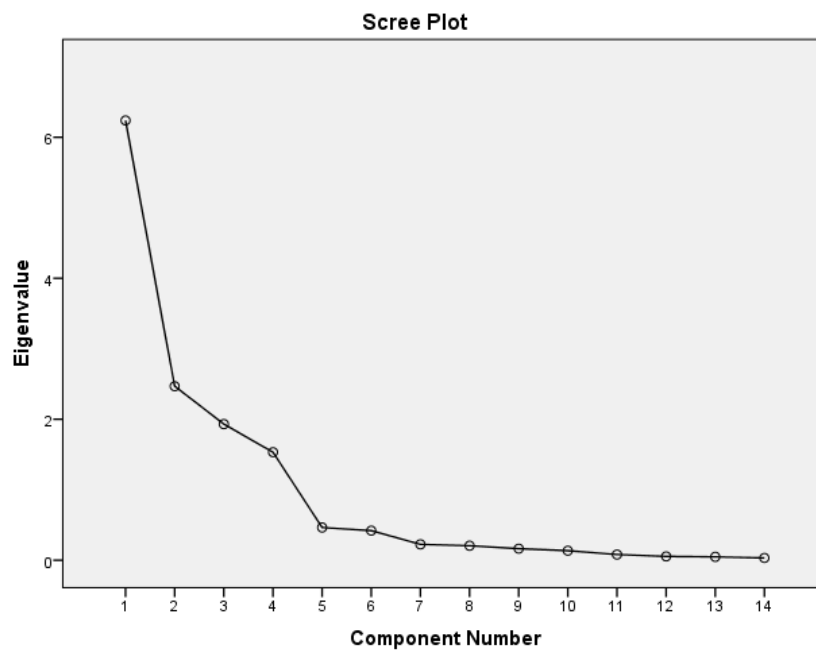
“KMO and Bartlett's Test”, value of KMO is .787 (Table 2).

Table 3 “Total Variance Explained”

“Component”	“Initial Eigenvalues”			“Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings”		
	“Total”	“% Of Variance”	“Cumulative %”	“Total”	“% Of Variance”	“Cumulative %”
1.	6.239	44.563	44.563	3.748	26.769	26.769
2.	2.469	17.634	62.196	3.636	25.969	52.738
3.	1.931	13.795	75.991	2.553	18.239	70.977
4.	1.533	10.948	86.939	2.235	15.963	86.939

5.	.464	3.315	90.254			
6.	.420	2.998	93.252			
7.	.225	1.606	94.859			
8.	.206	1.470	96.329			
9.	.164	1.174	97.502			
10.	.135	.962	98.464			
11.	.081	.578	99.042			
12.	.054	.389	99.431			
13.	.048	.341	99.773			
14.	.032	.227	100.000			

The four factors contribute towards explaining total 86.939% of variance. Variance explained by Entrepreneurial Ideation is 26.769%, Creativity Enhancement is 25.969%, Team Collaboration is 18.239%, and Innovation Capability is 15.963%. (Table 3).



“Scree Plot”

Table. 4 “Rotated Component Matrix”

S. No.	Statements	Factor Loading	Factor Reliability
	Entrepreneurial Ideation		.951

1.	Through brainstorming sessions, startups generate new business ideas	.947	
2.	Employees are encouraged to propose innovative business concepts	.897	
3.	Brainstorming sessions help in identification viable startup opportunities	.861	
4.	Team discussions contribute significantly for the development of new ideas	.860	
	Creativity Enhancement		.961
1.	Structured brainstorming sessions improve creativity among employees	.952	
2.	Team members are motivated to think creatively during discussions	.915	
3.	Creative thinking is recognized and appreciated in startups	.897	
4.	Brainstorming activities help employees generate unique solutions	.893	
	Team Collaboration		.886
1.	Team collaboration enhances quality of idea generated in startup	.911	
2.	Employees openly share ideas during brainstorming sessions	.873	
3.	Cross-functional teamwork promotes innovative thinking	.827	
	Innovation Capability		.821
1.	Innovation is a core component of organizational strategy	.930	
2.	New ideas are tested quickly and implemented	.920	
3.	Innovation improves competitiveness in the market	.611	

Factors of the study and its related variables

The first factor of the study is Entrepreneurial Ideation, it includes variables like Through brainstorming sessions, startups generate new business ideas, Employees are encouraged to propose innovative business concepts, Brainstorming sessions help in identification viable startup opportunities and Team discussions contribute significantly for the development of new ideas. The second factor is Creativity Enhancement, the variables it includes are Structured brainstorming sessions improve creativity among employees, Team members are motivated to think creatively during discussions, Creative thinking is recognized and appreciated in startups and Brainstorming activities help employees generate unique solutions. Team Collaboration is the third factor, its variables are Team collaboration enhances quality of idea generated in startup, Employees openly share ideas during brainstorming sessions and Cross-functional teamwork promotes innovative thinking. Last and fourth factor is Innovation Capability, the variables are Innovation is a core component of organizational strategy, new ideas are tested quickly and implemented and Innovation improves competitiveness in the market.

Table 5 “Reliability Statistics”

“Cronbach's Alpha”	“Number of Items”
.894	14

Total reliability of 14 items that includes variables for the “role of Entrepreneurial Ideation, Creativity, and Innovation through Structured Brainstorming Techniques in Indian Start-ups” is 0.894 (Table 5).

“Table 6 Model Summary”

“Model”	“R”	“R Square”	“Adjusted R Square”	“Std. Error of the Estimate”
1	.937 ^a	.877	.875	.22073

Predictors: (Constant), Entrepreneurial Ideation, Creativity Enhancement, Team Collaboration, and Innovation Capability

The adjusted R-squared value is 0.875 with approximately 87% of the variation.

“Table 7 ANOVA”

“Model”	“Sum of Squares”	“df”	“Mean Square”	“F”	“Sig.”	
1	“Regression”	92.538	4	23.135	474.842	.000 ^b
	Residual	12.960	266	.049		
	Total	105.498	270			

a. Dependent Variable: Overall impact of structured brainstorming techniques on Indian start-ups

b. Predictors: (Constant), Entrepreneurial Ideation, Creativity Enhancement, Team Collaboration, and Innovation Capability

Value under significant column indicates a significant relationship between “Entrepreneurial Ideation, Creativity Enhancement, Team Collaboration, and Innovation Capability” and Indian start-ups.

“Table 8 Coefficients”

“Model”	“Un standardized Coefficients”		“Standardized Coefficients”	“t”	“Sig.”
	“B”	“Std. Error”	“Beta”		
(Constant)	4.177	.013		311.534	.000
Entrepreneurial Ideation	.046	.013	.074	3.459	.001
Creativity Enhancement	.104	.013	.166	7.712	.000
Team Collaboration	.570	.013	.911	42.404	.000
Innovation Capability	.073	.013	.117	5.463	.000
DV: Overall impact of structured brainstorming techniques on Indian start-ups					

Conclusion

The research generates a conclusion that under within a business ideation, creativity and innovation are extremely incorporated processes which remarkably affect the longevity and growth of a startup in India. A planned brainstorming strategy offers a productive model for entrepreneurs to produce, polish and boost creative ideas via collaboration and creative thought process. Strategies like slow decision making, producing unique ideas, concentrating on quantity, visual creativity and community involvement assists in creating an environment which helps innovation and problem solving.

The study emphasizes that a streamlined ideas procedure is necessary for revolutionising creative thought process into practical business chances. Brainstorming not just develops a person's creativity but also improvises teamwork, communication and judgmental skills within a organisational arena. Within a Indian startup, wherein competition and unpredictability is constantly growing, a streamlined brainstorming strategy can assist entrepreneurs recognise opportunities, face challenges and boost innovative business ideas.

Altogether, the research highlights that creativity and innovation are not interlinked coincidentally but it could be a part of systematised procedure which is created via strong ideation practices and planned brainstorming methods. Thus, business owners, teachers and startup firms should motivate the implementation of brainstorming and ideation strategies to encourage innovation led flourishing in an organisation. All the factors Entrepreneurial Ideation, Creativity Enhancement, Team Collaboration, and Innovation Capability are showing significant impact on Indian start-ups. Highest impact is shown by Team Collaboration with beta value .911 followed by Creativity Enhancement (.166), Innovation Capability (.117), and Entrepreneurial Ideation (.074).

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