

## A STUDY ON SOCIO-CULTURAL FACTORS AFFECTING ENTREPRENEURIAL ACTIVITY: A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Syamala Devi Bhoganadam\* and Dasaraju Srinivasa Rao\*\*

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Entrepreneurship is considered as important factors for the economic development of a nation. After the Second World War economic transformation played an important role in the European nations and the few Asian nations. Much research was done in the entrepreneurship domain but relating to the socio economic and other dimensions but in the socio cultural dimension of entrepreneurship. There is a general agreement among experts that socio-cultural factors have influence on the personality and general behaviour of individuals in developing countries like India. Many sociologists identified that socio cultural environment has an influence on entrepreneurship. There is no definite process linking these factors and the entrepreneurship. Hence the objective of the paper is to study the process linking socio cultural factors and the entrepreneurship. Some of the identified factors were religion, caste, family background, language, race, norms, values, beliefs etc. Hence the study focuses on framing the socio cultural entrepreneurship framework along with relationship matrix.

**Keywords:** Conceptual framework, Cultural factors, relationship matrix, Entrepreneurship, Social factors, Transformation mechanism.

### INTRODUCTION

Global development is inflowing a phase where Entrepreneurship will gradually play an important role in the economic development. Entrepreneurship has been gaining power from the past decades. In the present scenario, Entrepreneurship was influenced by many factors like social, cultural, economic, political and etc (Brajaballav Kar, Dr. Ramakanta Mishra, & Dr. Jitendra Mohanty, 2014). Among all other factors the impact of socio cultural factors in the economy was large. Mostly in the developing countries like India the socio cultural factors play an important in influencing entrepreneurship. Most of the studies have concentrated on the economic, social dimensions of the entrepreneurship none of the study reveals the socio cultural factors of entrepreneurship. This study makes an attempt to study the socio cultural factors influencing entrepreneurship. From the basic review of literature on entrepreneurship explores the gap in the dimension of socio cultural factors influencing the entrepreneurship. Socio cultural factors can promote both normative (values and expectations) and cultural-cognitive (schema and awareness) legitimacy for an entrepreneur. Many of the sociologists believe that socio cultural

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\* Research Scholar, Department of Management, K L University, Vaddeshwaram, Guntur, AP., E-mail: [syamaladevi\\_b@kluniversity.in](mailto:syamaladevi_b@kluniversity.in)

\*\* Professor, Department of Management, K L University, Vaddeshwaram, Guntur, AP., E-mail: [Srinivasa\\_mba@kluniversity.in](mailto:Srinivasa_mba@kluniversity.in)

environment of entrepreneurship has to be studied because of the research gap in the domain of socio cultural entrepreneurship. Hence the study was taken to fill the gap by defining a conceptual framework of socio cultural factors influencing entrepreneurship.

The study reveals the following questions as how these socio cultural factors influence the entrepreneurial activity? What is the transmission mechanism? What are the intermediate variables? What are the extraneous variables? How they influence the dependent and independent variables is not clear yet? There is no unified theory explaining these issues and also there is a lack of empirical evidence regarding the linkages. In this context, the present study aims to explore the transmission mechanism of socio cultural factors influencing entrepreneurial activity in developing and developed countries and identify intermediate and extraneous variables in such a process. Further the study should like to propose a conceptual framework for the transmission mechanism

#### **DEFINITION OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

Research has been gone in the area of entrepreneurship since from last two decades but there is no universally accepted definition of entrepreneurship. The term 'Entrepreneur' was first identified in 18<sup>th</sup> century by Richard Cantillon which means that risk bearer and profit maker in the individualistic perspective (Nadim Ahmad & Richard G Seymour, 2008). But after that in the 19<sup>th</sup> century Schumpeter defined entrepreneur as an individual who directs the different factors of production for earning profit with the innovation orientation (Schumpeter, 1934). McClelland defines entrepreneurship as zeal of achievement orientation motivation. Peter F Drucker says that entrepreneurs as an individual who searches for opportunity and make that into profit oriented opportunity through innovation (Peter F Drucker, 1985). Till date entrepreneurship has changed a lot. Most of the researchers believe that entrepreneurship as opportunity driven, innovation driven, profit driven etc (Keith Godin, Jason Clemens, & Niels Veldhuis, 2008). But according from the past review of definitions it was defined as 'Entrepreneurship is an opportunity driven activity which involves innovation and creativity and aims for profit through risk bearing capacity'. Some of the definitions by most eminent scholars were as follows below table 1.1. Ronald May says that entrepreneurs commercializes their innovation by opportunity recognition.

From the above definitions it was clear that entrepreneurship has changed from one dimension to another. Researchers believe that entrepreneur should bear the risk, enhance their skills, exploit opportunity, create new markets, new methods, new levels of production, profit making motto, innovation, creativity etc. Still date there is no universally accepted definition for entrepreneurship due to the changing dimension of entrepreneurship concept based on the macro environmental factors like social, economical and cultural factors.

TABLE 1.1: DEFINITIONS OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP

<i>Year</i>	<i>Author</i>	<i>Definition</i>
1755	Richard Cantillion	Entrepreneurs buy at certain prices in the present and sell at uncertain prices in the future. The entrepreneur is a bearer of uncertainty.
1921	Knight	Entrepreneurs attempt to predict and act upon change within markets. The entrepreneur bears the uncertainty of market dynamics.
1934	Schumpeter	The entrepreneur is the innovator who implements change within markets through the carrying out of new combinations. These can take several forms: The introduction of a new good or quality thereof, The introduction of a new method of production, The opening of a new market, The conquest of a new source of supply of new materials or parts, and The carrying out of the new organisation of any industry.
1949	Von Mises	The entrepreneur is always a speculator. He deals with the uncertain conditions of the future. His success or failure depends on the correctness of his anticipation of uncertain events
1985	Peter F Drucker	Entrepreneurship is the act of innovation involving endowing existing resources with new wealth-producing capacity.
1990	Kent	Entrepreneurship by its results than by its characteristics it is a outcome based approach and it considered five statements as 1. To introduce a new product or service in the market or implement new approach to a social problem2. To develop and implement a new technology that lowers costs and improves efficiency3. To open a new market by introducing products, services, or technology not previously available4. To discover a new source of supply for a scarce resource or methods of increasing the supply from existing resources by more efficient exploitation5. To reorganize an existing enterprise either private or public by innovative management.
1999	Wennekers Thurik	Entrepreneurship is the manifest ability and willingness of individuals, on their own, in teams, within and outside existing organizations to perceive and create new economic opportunities (new products, new production methods, new organizational schemes and new product-market combinations), and to introduce their ideas in the market, in the face of uncertainty and other obstacles, by making decisions on location, form and the use of resources and institutions.
2000	Shane & Venkataraman	The field of entrepreneurship involves the study of sources of opportunities; the processes of discovery, evaluation, and exploitation of opportunities; and the set of individuals who discover, evaluate, and exploit them.
2003	Commission of the European Communities	Entrepreneurship is the mindset and process to create and develop economic activity by blending risk-taking, creativity and/or innovation with sound management, within a new or an existing organisation.
2005	Reynolds	The entrepreneurial function- can be conceptualized as the discovery of opportunities and the subsequent creation of new economic activity, often via the creation of a new organization.
2009	Rindova	Entrepreneurship is the efforts to bring about new economic, social, institutional, and Cultural environments through the actions of an individual or group of individuals.
2013	Ronald May	An Entrepreneur is someone who commercializes his or her innovation.

(Source: Authors Data on Definitions of Entrepreneurship)

**OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

- To study about the entrepreneurship dimensions, characteristics and the factors influencing them.
- To have a brief review on socio cultural factors influencing entrepreneurship.
- To make linkage between socio cultural factors and entrepreneurship.
- To design a conceptual framework for socio cultural factors influencing entrepreneurship.

**DIMENSIONS OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

Entrepreneurship dimensions were indentified from the OECD article (Keith Godin, Jason Clemens, & NielsVeldhuis, 2008) they had reviewed many articles from the past two decades and identified six dimensions of entrepreneurship as Enterprise, Innovation, Process, Risk-Taking, spectrum of Entrepreneurial action and Economic change. Ahmed says that entrepreneurship indicators are determined by the entrepreneurship dimensions as entrepreneurial capabilities, regulatory framework, R & D facilities, culture, financial perspectives and market conditions (NadimAhmad & AndersHoffman, A Framework for Addressing and Measuring Entrepreneurship, November 2007). Irrespective to their unique dimensions entrepreneurs are having some of the common aspects like enterprise, innovation, process, economic change, risk taking, spectrum of entrepreneurial action and self employment.

Enterprise in general refers to the creation of new business but in present entrepreneur era enterprise means that transforming the ideas of entrepreneurs into profits. Enterprise is a place where ideas were converted into profits through the entrepreneur's ability of conversion. Innovation means that screening the available opportunities and making the best opportunity into market with the suitable resources. This dimension was mostly referred by both Schumpeter and the knight in their research articles on entrepreneurship (Schumpeter, 1934) (H.KnightFrank, 1921). According to the Schumpeter innovation was the major element for the entrepreneur's success. Schumpeter proposed a dimension for entrepreneurship is process, which means that execution of ideas into market (Schumpeter, 1934). Many of the scholars haven't considered it as a dimension for the first time but on it was accepted.

Risk taking is one of the characteristic dimensions of the entrepreneurship. Uncertainty involves risk which is a fundamental characteristic of entrepreneurship. Most of the researchers in the field of entrepreneurship accepted the risk taking as a dimension for entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurs did not face any risk but the entrepreneurial process itself involves the risk it is the ability of the entrepreneurs to avoid the risk component in the formation of an enterprise and becoming an entrepreneur. Another dimension of entrepreneurship was the spectrum of

entrepreneurial action which means that the involving actions in starting of the business. Economic change is the dimension of entrepreneurship which means the entrepreneurship is the key element in the economic change agent.

Entrepreneurial capabilities involve all the entrepreneurial abilities to start a new business. The regulatory framework has involved how to start a business with the enhanced capabilities in the market. R&D is the new domain in the present era to capture all the opportunities with innovative and creative ideas into the market. Culture of the economy where the entrepreneurs live will enhance most because of their culture the values, beliefs, etc make them entrepreneurs. Culture contains religion, region, language, caste, race etc which enhance the entrepreneurial ability in either positive or negative manner. Financial and market conditions involve the external opportunities in the market.

### **SURVEY OF LITERATURE**

There are many researchers who were eminent in the domain of entrepreneurship like Schumpeter, McClelland's, Peter F Drucker, Hayton, Berger, Mueller, Thomas, Venkataraman, Shane etc who done their research in the domain of entrepreneurship. Some identified indirectly the importance of socio cultural factors in the field of entrepreneurship like Shane, Mueller and Thomas etc. There are many factors that influence entrepreneurship like social, economical, political, legal, environmental, cultural and technical problems that change continuously with time and status of the economy. In an article the evolving domain of entrepreneurship is identified that there is a research gap that socio cultural factors of entrepreneurship has not yet been studied compared to the socio economic study (BoCarlsson, PontusBraunerhjelm, MaureenMcKelvey, ChristerOlofsson, LarsPersson, & HakanYlinenpaa, 2013).

In an article by Shivani identifies that socio cultural factor as a research gap and to be studied to know the entrepreneurial structural interventions (Shardha Shivani, S. K. Mukherjee, & Raka Sharan, 2005). In the developing countries the role of socio cultural factors on entrepreneurship was identified as a research gap in the article women entrepreneurship in India (S. Tarakeshwara Rao, G. Tulasi Rao, & M. P. Suri Ganesh). Many scholars has identified that socio cultural factors play an important role in the formation of entrepreneurs. There are various socio cultural factors influencing entrepreneurship. Levent in his articles says that education, prior experience and religion play an important role in creating the entrepreneurial orientations the results reveal that education and prior experience make a positive relation where as religion has a negative relation with the entrepreneurial orientation (Levent Altinay & Catherine L Wang, 2011). Shivani identifies that religiosity; caste, family support, and education play an important role in defining the socio cultural factors of entrepreneurship (ShardhaShivani, S. K. Mukherjee, & Raka Sharan, 2005).

Thomas and Liang say that the relationship between culture and innovation, culture and social status of entrepreneurs and individual inclinations and social status of entrepreneurs (Thomas M. Begely & Wee-LiangTan, 2014). Education, poverty, values, gender, Hofstede's cultural dimensions were identified as socio cultural factors (Akpoy-Robaro & Masoje Oghenerobaro Mamuzo, 2012). David says that the socio-cultural dimension of entrepreneurship still need to be studied to grow the economy through entrepreneurship in his article they defined the social factors, cultural factors and the linkage of social networks to the entrepreneurship (Patricia H Thornton, Domingo Ribeiro-Soriano, & David Urbano, 2011).

Max Weber was the first person to identify culture as an influencing factor for entrepreneurship in the 20<sup>th</sup> century (M. Weber, 1930). Weber's theory says that religion determines a person's values and in-built beliefs which are most important for entrepreneur zeal to become entrepreneurs. Mueller and Thomas say that some cultures are very conducive to the entrepreneurship rather than others (Stephen L Mueller & Anisya S Thomas, 2001). Barjballav says that the factors that are responsible for the entry and success of entrepreneurship which includes the socio cultural factors of entrepreneurship. He designed a framework of entrepreneurship which involves all the three schools of thoughts of entrepreneurship. According to Barjballav education involves two levels of attitudes for becoming entrepreneurs one as motivating factors for becoming entrepreneurs with self efficacy and ambition and other involves for having of wage related motivation for entrepreneurs (Brajabalav Kar, Ramakanta Mishra, & Jitendra Mohanty, 2014).

Hamilton says that entrepreneur as a cultural hero means that entrepreneurs irrespective of their cultures have to become like successful entrepreneurs. These socio cultural factors of entrepreneurship were discussed by many in many dimensions like individual, organisational etc. But these socio cultural factors of entrepreneurship need to be studied as a conceptual framework with involving all the factors of socio cultural environment into the framework. Thomas (2014) says that the attitude towards entrepreneurship should in high levels then only the motive to be become entrepreneurs will be in success (Anisha Thomas & Ajit Prabhu, 2014). Some says that education, prior experience and religion play a vital role in the entrepreneurial orientation of an entrepreneur (Wing, 2011). Research gap has been identified from in India, due to socio-cultural factors entrepreneurs were late entry into the business. The identified socio cultural factors as education, type of business, experience, family support play an important role in framing of the entrepreneurship (Sinha, 2010). The article says that entrepreneurship was defined based on their status and the entrepreneurial orientations (Kumar, 2014).

### **IDENTIFIED SOCIO-CULTURAL FACTORS**

**Dharmendra (2014)** in his article "Socio-Cultural influence on women entrepreneurs: A study of Uttarakhand State says that age, gender, education, caste,

religion, marital status, family income and housing conditions play an important role in the socio cultural entrepreneurship. Sociologists say that socio cultural status of entrepreneurs, family, caste and religion play an important role in the socio cultural entrepreneurship. They conclude that socio cultural diversity, social acceptance, socio cultural support for entrepreneurs, socialization, socio cultural environment, family relations and support, social attitude play an important role in the socio cultural entrepreneurship.

**Rahma *et al.*, (2014)** in his article “socio cultural factors influencing entrepreneurship activities: A study on Bangladesh” say that religion, family, education, socio cultural features, poverty, gender role values, peer group influence to be an entrepreneurs, political instability play an important role in the socio cultural entrepreneurship. They concluded that this socio cultural factors influence on entrepreneurship will be positive or negative based on the society.

**Thomas (2014)** in his article “Attitude of rural women towards Entrepreneurship in Kerala” says that attitude contains norms, beliefs and values of the society in an individual. The study finding of result that Kerala entrepreneurs are having a positive towards the entrepreneurship. They had the concept because of that due to the lack of attitude majority of graduate and non graduate people are not entering into entrepreneurship.

**Maria (2013)** in his article “Economic and Entrepreneurship education- a Prerequisite for the Development of Local Entrepreneurship” says that education is responsible for the acceptance of economic changes in the society. Entrepreneurial education itself motivates for knowledge gaining and national culture oriented entrepreneurs. Culture itself also motivates an individual to become an entrepreneur and makes successful in their business growth and turnover.

**Rajesh kumar Shastri & Avanika Sinha (2010)** in his article “The socio-cultural and economic effect on the development of women Entrepreneurs (with special reference to India) says that women’s are starting business more in beauty and household activities. Educational background, husband’s educational profile, finance gathering and business experience were identified as socio cultural factors of entrepreneurs. They concluded that government should support women both families and social circles.

**Hayton *et al.*, (2002)** in his article “National culture and Entrepreneurship: A review of Behavioural Research” say that association between national cultural values characteristics, individual characteristics of entrepreneurs, total measures of entrepreneurship and aspects of corporate entrepreneurship. They constructed a conceptual framework with 8 dimensions as cultural values, cognition, needs and motives, beliefs and behaviours, institutional context, economic context and entrepreneurship.

**David *et al.*, (2011)** in his article “Socio-Cultural factors and transnational entrepreneurship: A multiple case study in Spain” say that role models,

entrepreneurial attitudes, social networks and entrepreneurial culture and opportunities play an important role in developing and emerging of transnational entrepreneurship. The study defines the socio cultural factors affecting the transnational entrepreneurs in multinational Spain.

**Masud Chand & Majid Ghorbani (2011)** in his article “National culture, networks and ethnic entrepreneurship: A comparison of Indian and Chinese immigrants in the US” say that social networks are crucial in the formation of entrepreneurial enterprises. He discusses Global project issues like assertiveness orientation, family collectivism, societal collectivism and performance orientation factors to describe the Entrepreneurship among Indian and Chinese Entrepreneurs in the US.

**Griffiths *et al.*, (2013)** in his article “The socio-political, economic and cultural determinants of social entrepreneurial activity” investigates the macro environmental factors of entrepreneurship and identifies some of the social factors as social norms, social values, and religion based social capital will affect entrepreneurship. Socio-cultural factors means that both social capital and the culture of the society. He discusses the role of culture values and norms in evolving the entrepreneurial behaviours. The study explores the factors determining entrepreneurial activity.

**Stephen L Mueller & Anisya S Thomas (2000)** in his article “Culture and Entrepreneurial potential: A Nine country study of Locus of control and Innovativeness” say that Hofstede’s did not explained the relationship between culture and entrepreneurial activity but in his article with the Hofstede’s cultural dimensions the relationship has been explained by taking two of four dimensions as individualism and uncertainty avoidance. The results of the study say that some cultures are really conducive to other cultures. High uncertainty avoidance cultures are taking low risks and low uncertainty cultures are willing to take risks hence becoming entrepreneurs. The study was well accepted by many eminent scholars in entrepreneurship.

**Per Davidson (1997)** in his article “Values, beliefs and regional variations in new firm formation rates” say that values and beliefs both has an effect on regional firm formation rates where as cultural variation is low in new firm formation rates. They believe that social factors have an important role compared to the cultural factors of socio culture environment of entrepreneurship

**Shane (1993)** in his article “Cultural influences on National rates of innovation” say that cultural values has to be changed for having increased innovation. Uncertainty plays a role in national rates of innovation. He in his study undertakes Hofstede’s cultural dimensions to explain the cultural variables. Most of the researcher’s used Hofstede’s cultural dimensions like uncertainty avoidance, power distance, individualism and masculinity for explaining the cultural factors of entrepreneurship.

**Robert J Baum *et al.*, (1993)** in his article “Nationality and work role interactions: A Cultural contrast of Israeli and U.S. Entrepreneurs versus Managers’



needs” say that need for achievement, need for affiliation, need for autonomy and need for dominance play an important role in the national culture. They concluded those cultural influences on the self and the expressed needs of entrepreneurs with the self-representation theory defined by Smith.

From the overall review of literature the identified socio cultural factors of entrepreneurship was listed in the below table 1.2. These factors will have a relationship with the entrepreneurial emergence of an economy. The social factors will come from the society where as a culture factors will come from the culture of a society. These factors will shape entrepreneurs to be in success. The socio cultural environment either a positive relation or neither depends on the society and some influencing factors of entrepreneurship. There are many researchers who done research in relation to the socio cultural entrepreneurship using mostly the Hofstede’s cultural dimensions. This can be operational zing with the empirical data taken from the sample of entrepreneurs which is the future scope of research.

TABLE 1.2: SOCIO CULTURAL FACTORS OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Socio-Cultural factors identified from Review of Literature		
<i>Beliefs</i>	<i>Family background</i>	<i>Gender</i>
Values	Tradition	Social networks
Attitudes	Language	Need for achievement
Norms	Religion	Education
Age	Caste	Prior experience in Business
Lifestyles	Race	Innovation
Uncertainty avoidance	Region	Individualism

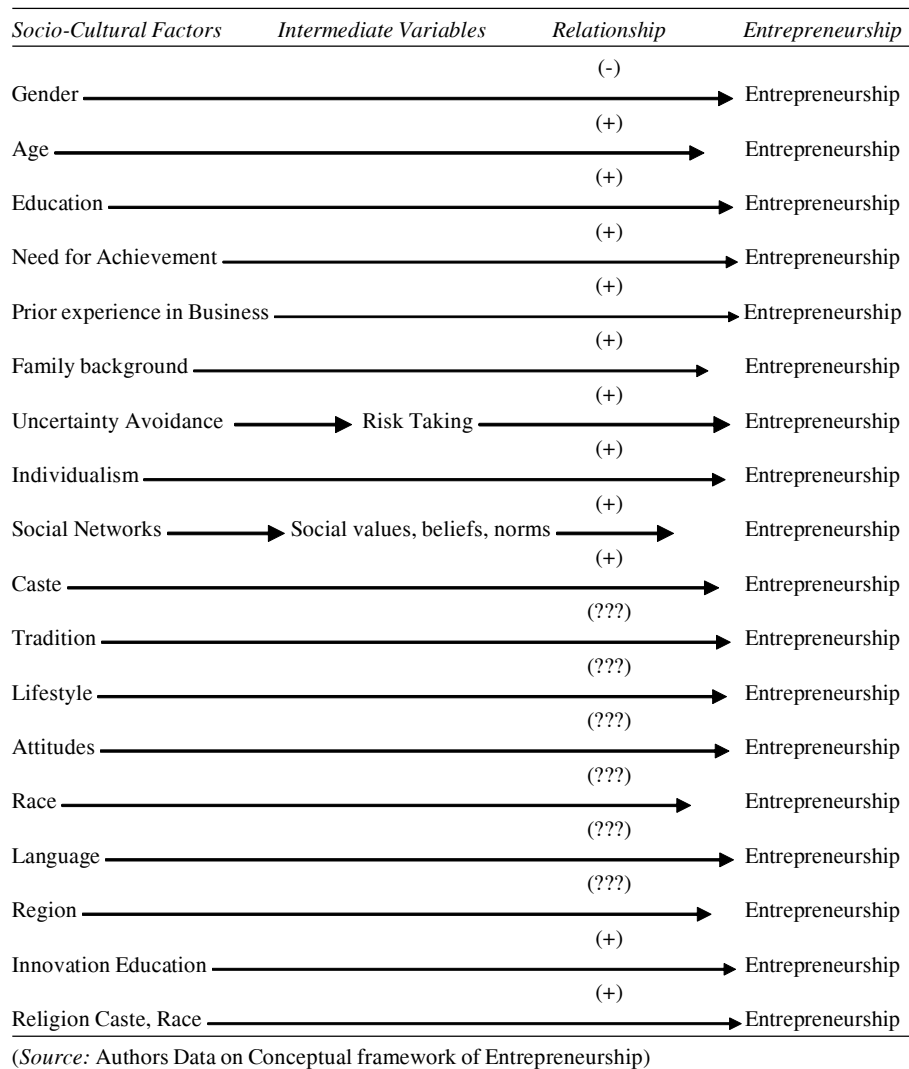
(Source: Authors Data on Socio-Cultural factors of Entrepreneurship)

**SUGGESTED FRAMEWORK**

Socio cultural factors of entrepreneurship were identified through review of literature from the eminent journal articles, books, report etc. Most of the research articles are from the sage, Elsevier and Scopus indexed databases. Report like OECD, NKC, TEA, GEA etc. the articles were taken from journal of business venturing, international journal of business and management, etc. From the review of literature the identified socio cultural factors were listed in the table 1.2. Here the relationship between those variables and the entrepreneurship were detailed explained using the conceptual framework. These factors of entrepreneurship will have an influence on the economy. In the developing countries the effect of these variables has a great role in comparing to the developed countries.

The following figure 1.1 explains the relationship between the socio-cultural factors and the entrepreneurship. In the figure the arrow indicates the relationship between the two variables like socio cultural variable and the entrepreneurship. Left of the arrow shows the socio cultural variable and the right side shows the

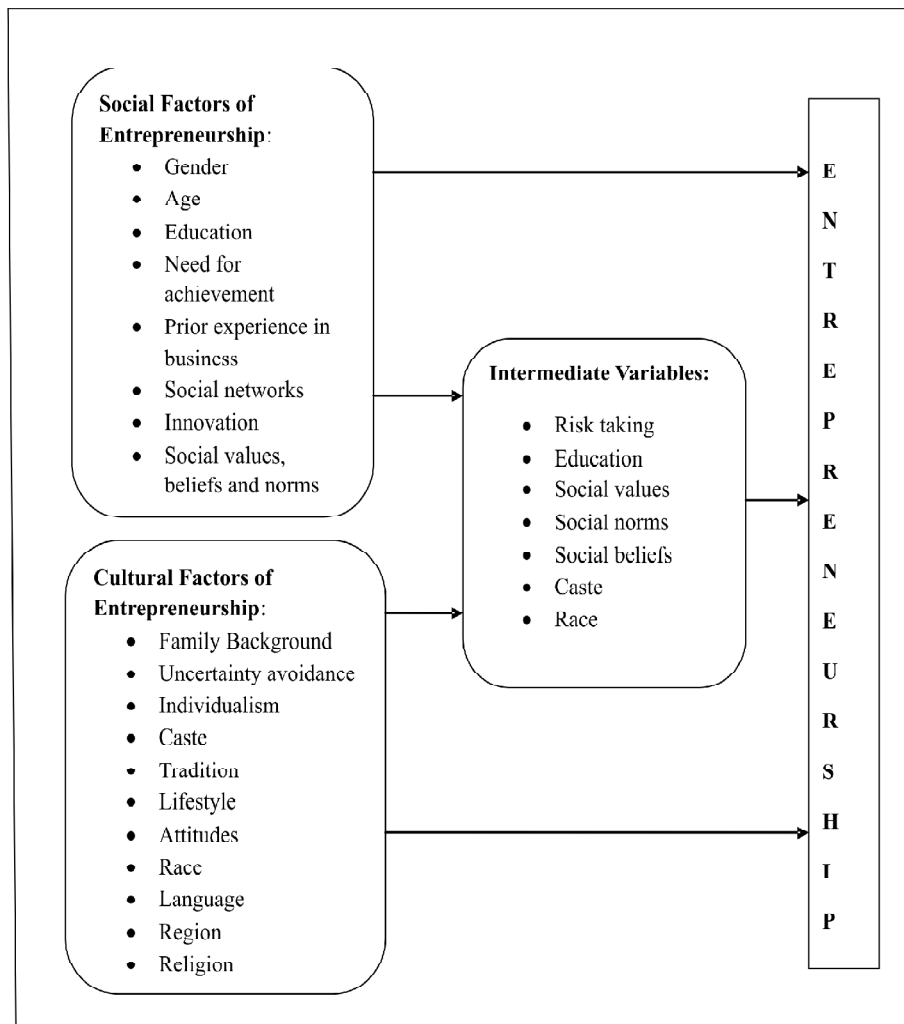
entrepreneurship in common in between the intermediate variables represents the influencing variables of both socio cultural factors and the entrepreneurship. The sign on the arrow represents the relationship between the socio cultural factors and the entrepreneurship. ‘(-)’ implies that from the past review of literature there is no relationship between the variables. ‘(+)’ implies that from the past review of literature there is a relationship between the variables. ‘(???)’ implies that from the past review of literature there is no data available.



(Source: Authors Data on Conceptual framework of Entrepreneurship)

**Figure 1.1:** A Conceptual framework of Socio Cultural factors influencing Entrepreneurship

This framework needs Operationalization to empirically evaluate the framework of socio-cultural factors and entrepreneurship. The study has listed around 18 socio cultural factors which can combined into 4 or 5 factors for testing the framework empirically this will be done in future studies. These all 18 factors of socio cultural entrepreneurship will definitely have a relationship with the entrepreneurship whether positively or negatively. The results may change with the considered set of sample data of entrepreneurs.



(Source: Authors Data on Conceptual framework of Entrepreneurship)

**Figure 1.2:** Conceptual Framework of socio-cultural factors influencing Entrepreneurship

The above conceptual framework is subjected to modification based on further review of literature and pilot studies to be conducted in future.

## CONCLUSION

The socio cultural environment has an impact on the entrepreneurship. Social and cultural factors of entrepreneurship indicates that the relationship between the socio cultural environment. From the review of literature the socio cultural factors influencing entrepreneurship were identified. The identified socio-cultural factors of entrepreneurship have been defined using a conceptual framework. From the literature it was believed that education, prior experience, age, family background, religion, region has an impact on entrepreneurship. There are some intermediate variables like risk taking, social values, beliefs and norms. Many of studies in the area of socio cultural factors of entrepreneurship have concluded that some cultures are really conducive to the entrepreneurship while others not to the entrepreneurship.

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