"Infopreneurship in the Era of Digitalization"

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Abstract:

Infopreneurship in the India holds immense potential for individuals to leverage digitalization, cater to the diverse needs of the Indian market, and drive socio-economic progress. By understanding the unique dynamics of the Indian ecosystem, infopreneurs can create innovative solutions, build sustainable businesses, and contribute to India's digital transformation journey. The present study is to explore infopreneurship in the era of digitalization. To analyse the profile of the respondents, to evaluate the conceptual familiarity of respondents on infopreneurship, to examine the engagement of infopreneurial activities amongst the respondents and to evaluate the benefits and challenges of infopreneurship were objectives of the study. 120 responses are collected from the respondents who involved in any form of infopreneurship activities. Structured questionnaire is used and one sample t-test and chi-square statistical tools are used to test the hypotheses. The p-value (0.000) of both testing of hypotheses were less than 0.05 at 5% level of Significance. Hence, Null hypotheses are rejected and alternative hypotheses stating, **"There is concept familiarity of infopreneurship amongst the respondents"** and **"There is engagement of infopreneurial activities amongst the respondents"** are accepted. In conclusion, studying infopreneurship in the era of digitalization offers valuable insights into the evolving nature of information-based entrepreneurship and its profound impact on economies, societies, and cultures worldwide.

Keywords: Infopreneur, Infopreneurship, Digitalization.

Introduction:

In India, infopreneurship in the era of digitalization presents a unique and promising opportunity for individuals to capitalize on the country's growing internet penetration, digital literacy, and burgeoning entrepreneurial ecosystem. The Indian government's Digital India initiative, along with advancements in technology and widespread internet access, has fuelled the growth of digital entrepreneurship in the country. With over a billion mobile phone users and increasing internet penetration, India offers a vast and diverse market for infopreneurs to tap into. India boasts a large population of tech-savvy millennials and Gen Z individuals who are increasingly turning to the internet for information, entertainment, and commerce. This demographic shift presents a significant opportunity for infopreneurs to cater to the needs and interests of this digitally native audience. As our country undergoes rapid socio-economic transformation, there is a growing demand for specialized knowledge and skills across various industries and sectors. Infopreneurs can capitalize on this demand by offering niche-specific information products or services tailored to the Indian market. Infopreneurs need to be mindful of the country's diverse languages, cultures, and socio-economic backgrounds. Localizing content, understanding cultural nuances, and addressing specific challenges faced by Indian audiences can enhance the relevance and effectiveness of infopreneurial offerings. While English remains a prominent language of communication in India, there is a rising demand for content in regional languages. Infopreneurs who can create content in languages such as Hindi, Kannada, Tamil, Telugu, Bengali, and Marathi stand to reach a broader audience and capitalize on the untapped potential of regional markets.

The Indian government has introduced various initiatives and policies to promote entrepreneurship, innovation, and digital literacy in the country. Programs such as Startup India, Skill India, and Digital Literacy Mission provide support and resources for aspiring infopreneurs to start and grow their ventures. While the market offers vast opportunities for infopreneurs, monetization can be challenging due to factors such as low purchasing power, price sensitivity, and competition. However, creative monetization strategies such as freemium models, tiered pricing, and partnerships with local businesses can help infopreneurs overcome these challenges and generate sustainable revenue streams. Infopreneurship in India has the potential to create significant social impact by democratizing access to knowledge, empowering individuals with skills and information, and driving socio-economic development. Infopreneurs who focus on addressing pressing social issues, promoting inclusive growth, and empowering marginalized communities can make a meaningful difference in the lives of millions of Indians.

Infopreneurship in the India holds immense potential for individuals to leverage digitalization, cater to the diverse needs of the Indian market, and drive socio-economic progress. By understanding the unique dynamics of the Indian ecosystem, infopreneurs can create innovative solutions, build sustainable businesses, and contribute to India's digital transformation journey. The present study posters on infopreneurship in the time of digitalization in every corner of the economy.

Review of Literature and Research Gap

Ali (2021) emphasised on some professional chances that library and information science students can venture into as entrepreneurs in the present-day society. It concentrated on information-based businesses possessed by Library and Information Science graduates; it also highlighted some skills needed for Library and information science students to becoming an infopreneurs. The study suggested that LIS graduates should acquire entrepreneurial philosophy and attitude and also acquire certain ICT skills in order to take advantage of the opportunities in the profession, that would make them realized independent and remain relevant in their profession. **Mubofu & Malekani (2023)** reviewed the literatures on the opportunities and challenges for infopreneurship using the systematic literature review (SLR) method. The study's specific goal was to look at the infopreneurship opportunities that are available and the obstacles that LIS graduates must overcome in order to take use of them. The study found out several opportunities that existed on infopreneurship, some of which include Internet blogging, software and hardware installation, graphic design, using information, customized information, facilitating access to information, repackaging information, increasing the flow of information, digitization and internetworking. The study further found a number of challenges that make it less likely for infopreneurs to seize and exploit these opportunities such as financial constraints, the price of necessary equipment, a lack of infrastructure, the legal registration process, graduates' lack of skills, and poor planning. The study concluded that information entrepreneurship is essential to any nation's economic sector. It also suggested that by reviewing LIS curricula we can increase student understanding of infopreneurship practice. **Lahm & Stow (2011)** opined that in the recent times the information products industry has undergone a virtual revolution. The revolution was sparked by two major technologies. Technological improvements in electronic products resulted in a rise of numerous mediums through which the information products are provided. The second technology was the development of the Internet as a means of both marketing and distribution. Researchers suggested that to be successful, infopreneurs must keep abreast of constant innovations in both hardware and software. **Aregbesola et. al. (2019)** discussed the opportunities and challenges of infopreneurship in a developing country. It showed the current state of infopreneurship in Nigeria. The paper further highlighted the benefits and challenges of the practice of

infopreneurship in Nigeria. It also stated that developed nations have been able to checkmate unemployment, hooliganism, robbery, terrorism and several other national challenges by encouraging infopreneurship through support from government and corporate organizations. The practice has been challenged in Nigeria by lack of structure and coordination from several operators. The paper concluded that infopreneurship plays a strategic role in the economic sector of Nigeria. Therefore, government at all levels should support the success of infopreneurship in Nigeria as this will help to reduce the rate of employment and at the same time led to the development of the nation. **Himma et. al. (2021)** aimed to determine the infopreneur profession in the new normal era. The research was conducted using mixed quantitative and qualitative methods. Data collection was carried out in two stages, firstly by distributing a questionnaire with a sample of online business actors, which were netted as many as 400 respondents. The second stage was in-depth interviews with 7 informants, followed by observation and documentation study. Data analysis was done descriptively. The data showed that the reasons respondents choose online businesses, namely: high demand and recession, low start-up capital, can work from anywhere, global market, businesses that run and open 24 hours, as well as helping people and getting paid, influence the respondent's decision to do business online business as a career choice. This study identified that to start an information business there are stages that must be followed to succeed. This study identified the skills needed to manage an information business, namely: expert on a particular topic, presentation skills and product marketing skills. The results showed that the infopreneur profession plays an important role in maintaining life in the new normal era. This study also recommended some suggestions for developing as a successful infopreneur in the new normal era.

Literally, there are a smaller number of studies carried out on Infopreneurship around the globe. The reason behind is the concept is at threshold level. Above reviewed articles were on opportunities specially for LIS students from library science to become infopreneurs. But the present is new in its approach in Indian context to find out opportunities and challenges in the role of infopreneur.

Need of the Study:

In India's digital era, infopreneurship has emerged as a critical avenue for individuals to monetize their knowledge and skills. Understanding this phenomenon is crucial for several reasons. Firstly, studying infopreneurship provides insights into India's evolving digital economy. With increasing internet penetration and government initiatives like Digital India, infopreneurs leverage digital platforms to create, market, and monetize their knowledge-based products and services, driving market dynamics. Secondly, infopreneurship promotes entrepreneurship and innovation. Aspiring entrepreneurs can enter the market with

minimal barriers, stimulating economic growth and fostering a culture of innovation across diverse sectors. Moreover, infopreneurship empowers individuals and addresses social challenges. By monetizing their expertise, infopreneurs create economic opportunities and offer solutions in education, healthcare, agriculture, and sustainability, driving positive social change. Additionally, studying infopreneurship enhances digital literacy and lifelong learning. Individuals acquire practical knowledge to navigate the digital landscape effectively, boosting employability and adaptability. From a policy perspective, insights from infopreneurship inform evidence-based policymaking. Streamlining regulations and providing access to resources can create a conducive ecosystem for digital entrepreneurship to thrive.

Finally, infopreneurship in India offers opportunities for global competitiveness. Analysing global trends and innovative strategies enables Indian infopreneurs to expand their reach, fostering cross-border collaborations and establishing India as a hub for digital entrepreneurship.

Objectives of the Study:

Following are broad objectives of the research. The study is made with the following intention to achieve.

1. To analyse the profile of the respondents
2. To evaluate the conceptual familiarity of respondents on infopreneurship
3. To examine the engagement of infopreneurial activities amongst the respondents
4. To evaluate the benefits and challenges of infopreneurship

Hypotheses of the Study:

Following null hypotheses are outlined to test in the study. Testing of hypotheses are backed by primary data collected through structured questionnaire.

H_{0a}= "There is no concept familiarity of infopreneurship amongst the respondents"

H_{0b}= "There is no engagement of infopreneurial activities amongst the respondents"

To test these hypotheses, one sample t-test and chi-square tests are employed in the data analysis part of this study.

Research Methodology:

1. **Type of Research:** the study is exploratory in nature. It explores concept familiarity to the respondents, their infopreneurial activities and their engagement, advantages, challenges, latest avenues to update, interest to invest in and evolving of infopreneurship with advancing digital technologies. It uses the opinion and experience of the infopreneurs in the era of digitalization.

2. **Collection of Data:** both primary and secondary data have been used in the study. Primary data comprised of data collected from the respondents through structured questionnaire. Targeted respondents were infopreneurs in the existence of student,

freelancer, entrepreneurs, employees and others. Google form is used to type the questionnaire and store the responses. The link has been shared amongst the respondents through social media and whatsapp and asked to respond. It was approached to 150 respondents, but it was possible to collect 120 responses and same is used for data analysis. Response rate was 80%. Collected data was stored in the google drive and downloaded in the Microsoft excel format to analyse. Secondary data from print media and google were used to review the literature and understand the conceptual background.

3. **Tools for Data Analysis:** Collected data from the respondents were used for analysis in SPSS version 20 software. Microsoft Excel is used to code the data. Descriptive statistics like percentage, mean, standard deviation is used to analyse demographic profile of respondents and certain variables of the study. One sample t-test and chi-square are used to test the hypotheses. Graph and Pie chart are also used to show the data pictorially.

Data analysis and Results discussion:

Collected Primary data are analysed against objectives of the study. It helps the study to be objective.

1. **Analysis of objective:1- To analyse the demographic profile of the respondents**

Profile of the respondents comprised of their age group and occupation. Following table shows the profile of the respondents and its analysis.

Table:1- Showing the profile of the respondents.

Demographic Profile of the Respondents					
Demographic Profile		**Frequency**	**Percent**	**Valid Percent**	**Cumulative Percent**
Age Group	18-25	111	88.1	88.1	88.1
	26-35	9	7.1	7.1	95.2
	36-45	3	2.4	2.4	97.6
	46-55	3	2.4	2.4	100.0
	Total	126	100.0	100.0	
Occupation	Student	75	59.5	59.5	59.5
	Freelancer	3	2.4	2.4	61.9
	Entrepreneur	9	7.1	7.1	69.0
	Employee (non-entrepreneurial)	30	23.8	23.8	92.9
	Other	9	7.1	7.1	100.0
	Total	126	100.0	100.0	

Source: Primary Data

Graph:1- Showing the profile of the respondents.
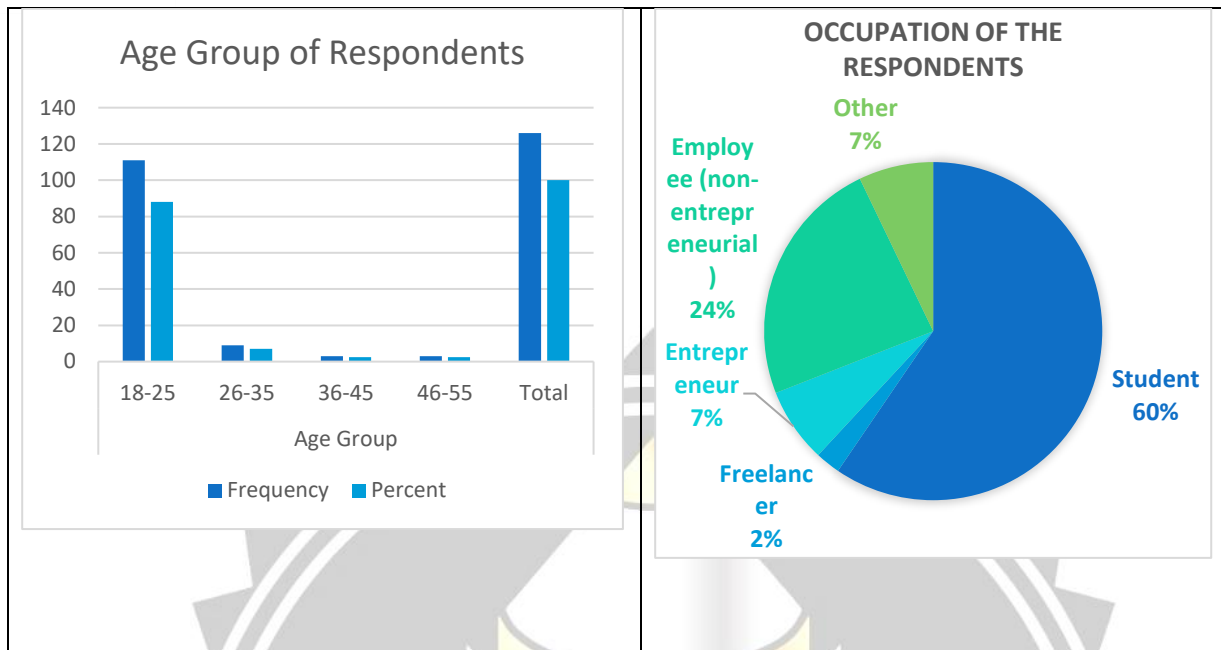
The above table-1 and graph-1 show the demographic profile of the respondents. Majority of the infopreneurs are from the age group of 18-25 which comprised of 88.10% of overall respondents. Remaining 11.90% of the respondents are from the age group of 26-35, 36-45, 46-55, 55 and above. It conferred that digitalization has influenced more of younger generation and found an opportunity to become infopreneurs. Becoming an entrepreneur requires experience, capital investment and age to bear the risk. But, to become infopreneur, it requires nothing except an intuition to search in depth the need under digital platforms. Main stream of the respondents are students (59.50%) and employees (23.80%) striving to serve their customers online. And rest of 16.7% of the respondents constitute freelancer, entrepreneurs and others. It shows that students and employees have got creative mind to utilize the digital platform and explore the opportunities of entrepreneurship.

2. Analysis of Objective:2- To evaluate the conceptual familiarity of respondents on infopreneurship

To analyse the conceptual familiarity of respondents on infopreneurship, following null and alternative hypotheses are framed.

H_0= "There is no concept familiarity of infopreneurship amongst the respondents"

H_1= "There is concept familiarity of infopreneurship amongst the respondents"

To test the above hypotheses, one sample t-test has been used and the output is portrayed below.

Table:2- Showing one sample t-test of conceptual familiarity of respondents on infopreneurship

					One-Sample Test			
					Test Value = 0			
	N	Mean	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
							Lower	Upper
Familiarity	N	2.4048	28.992	125	**.000**	2.40476	2.2406	2.5689

Source: Primary Data

In the above table, the p-value (0.000) appeared in the same row in the "Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)" column is less than 0.05 at 5% level of Significance. Hence, Null hypothesis is rejected and alternative hypothesis stating, *"There is concept familiarity of infopreneurship amongst the respondents"* is accepted.

3. **Analysis of objective:3- To examine the engagement of infopreneurial activities amongst the respondents**

To analyse the engagement of respondents on infopreneurial activities amongst the respondents, following null and alternative hypotheses are framed.

H_0= "There is no engagement of infopreneurial activities amongst the respondents"
H_1= "There is engagement of infopreneurial activities amongst the respondents"

To test the above hypotheses, chi-square test has been used and the output is shows below.

Table:3- Showing Chi-square test of engagement of infopreneurial activities amongst the respondents

Particulars	Engaged in infopreneurial Activities
Chi-Square	103.143[a]
df	1
Asymp. Sig.	**.000**
a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 63.0.	

Source: Primary Data

In the above table, the p-value (0.000) appeared in the same row in the "Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)" column is less than 0.05 at 5% level of Significance. Hence, Null

hypothesis is rejected and alternative hypothesis stating, *"There is engagement of infopreneurial activities amongst the respondents"* is accepted.

4. **Analysis of objective:4- To evaluate the benefits and challenges of infopreneurship**

To analyse the benefits and challenges of infopreneurship in the opinion of respondents, following variables are listed and percentage of their perceptions has been recorded in percentage.

Table:3- Showing factors and variables of benefits and challenges of infopreneurship

Factors	Variables	Percentage
1. Type of infopreneurial activities involved	Creating and Selling E-Books	7.10%
	Developing Online Courses	9.50%
	Podcasting	4.80%
	Blogging	23.80%
	Selling Digital Products	11.90%
	Others	61.90%
2. Advantages of infopreneurship	Flexibility in work schedule	18.48
	Low overhead costs	13.04
	Global reach and scalability	26.09
	Ability to monetize expertise and Knowledge	17.39
	Opportunity for passive income	18.48
	Other	6.52
3. Main challenges of infopreneurship	Intense Competition	17.98
	Difficulty in standing out in a crowded market	20.22
	Technical challenges (e.g., website development, SEO)	20.22
	Maintaining relevance and updating content	22.47
	Finding a profitable niche	11.24
	Other	7.87
4. Latest trends and developments in infopreneurship	Online forums and communities	16.90
	Blogs and websites	21.13
	Social media platforms	49.30
	Attending webinars and online courses	5.63

		Others	7.04
5.	Factors deciding whether to invest in infopreneurial ventures	Market demand for the niche/topic	17.68
		Level of competition	17.98
		Personal interest and expertise in the subject matter	17.98
		Potential profitability	19.10
		Time required to develop and maintain the venture	14.61
		Other	12.36
6.	Infopreneurship evolving in the future with advancing digital technologies	Becoming more competitive with lower barriers to entry	23.53
		Shifting towards niche-specific expertise and personalized content	14.71
		Incorporating emerging technologies such as AI and virtual reality	27.94
		Expanding into new markets and industries	23.53
		Other	10.29

Source: Primary Data

The above table shows the factors and variables concerning benefits and challenges of infopreneurship. Main group of respondents (61.90%) have opined that other infopreneurial activities such as online courses and training programmes, membership sites and subscription services, coaching and consulting services, webinars and workshops, seminars and speaking engagements etc are more in which they involved and found lucrative. Creating and selling e-books (7.10%), developing online courses (9.50%), podcasting (4.80%), blogging (23.80%) and selling digital products (11.90%) were also in preference of the respondents. Flexibility in work schedule (18.48%), low overhead costs (13.04%), global reach and scalability (26.09%), ability to monetize expertise and knowledge (17.39%) and opportunity for passive income (18.48%) were advantages of infopreneurship. Intensive competition (17.98%), difficulty in standing out in a crowded market (20.22%), technical challenges (22.47%), maintaining relevance and updating content (22.47%) and finding a profitable niche (11.24%) were main challenges of infopreneurship. Respondents also opined of latest trends and developments in infopreneurship viz., online forums and communities (16.90%), blogs and websites (21.13%), social media platforms (49.30%), attending webinars

and online courses (5.63%). Market demand for the niche/topic, level of competition, personal interest and expertise in the subject matter, potential profitability, time required to develop and maintain the venue are found important factors deciding whether to invest in infopreneurial ventures. Evolvement of infopreneurship will become more competitive with lower barriers to entry, shirting towards niche-specific expertise and personalized content, incorporating emerging technologies such as AI and virtual reality, expanding into new markets and industries.

Suggestions and Conclusion:

Studying infopreneurship in the era of digitalization presents a fascinating and dynamic field of inquiry, ripe with opportunities for research, analysis, and practical application. Following are important suggestions of the study.

1. **Explore Evolving Business Models:** Investigate how digitalization has transformed traditional business models and facilitated the emergence of new infopreneurial ventures. This could involve examining the strategies employed by successful infopreneurs to leverage digital tools and platforms for content creation, distribution, and monetization.

2. **Examine Technological Innovations:** Analyse the impact of technological innovations such as artificial intelligence, blockchain, virtual reality, and augmented reality on infopreneurial activities. Explore how these technologies are reshaping the landscape of information production, consumption, and exchange.

3. **Investigate Market Dynamics:** Study the evolving dynamics of digital markets and their implications for infopreneurial success. This could involve researching trends in consumer behaviour, market segmentation, competitive analysis, and pricing strategies within digital information ecosystems.

4. **Assess Legal and Ethical Considerations:** Consider the legal and ethical implications of infopreneurial activities in the digital age, including issues related to intellectual property rights, data privacy, cybersecurity, and online content regulation. Evaluate the effectiveness of existing legal frameworks and ethical guidelines in addressing these concerns.

5. **Evaluate Education and Training Programs:** Evaluate the effectiveness of education and training programs designed to support aspiring infopreneurs in developing the knowledge, skills, and resources needed to succeed in the digital marketplace. Identify best practices and areas for improvement in curriculum design, pedagogy, and instructional delivery.

6. **Recommend Policy and Regulatory Changes:** Propose policy recommendations and regulatory reforms to foster a conducive environment for infopreneurship in the digital era. This could involve advocating for measures to promote innovation, entrepreneurship, and access to digital infrastructure, as well as to address disparities in digital literacy and skills development.

7. **Promote Collaboration and Knowledge Sharing:** Encourage collaboration and knowledge sharing among researchers, practitioners, policymakers, and other stakeholders involved in the study and practice of infopreneurship. Facilitate interdisciplinary dialogue and partnerships to address complex challenges and seize emerging opportunities in the digital economy.

In conclusion, studying infopreneurship in the era of digitalization offers valuable insights into the evolving nature of information-based entrepreneurship and its profound impact on economies, societies, and cultures worldwide. By examining technological trends, market dynamics, legal considerations, educational programs, policy reforms, and collaborative initiatives, researchers and practitioners can contribute to advancing our understanding of infopreneurial phenomena and enhancing the prospects for sustainable and inclusive digital innovation.

Limitations of the Research:

Despite of time and efforts made in the study, it had its own limitations within which study completed.

a) **Limited Data Availability:** Access to comprehensive and reliable data on infopreneurship activities, market trends, and consumer behaviour is limited.

b) **Language and Cultural Barriers:** Language and cultural differences across diverse regions in Bengaluru posed challenges in data collection, interpretation, and analysis. Research conducted primarily in English and it overlooked insights from non-English-speaking infopreneurs.

c) **Access to Participants:** Accessing and engaging with infopreneurs and digital entrepreneurs in Bengaluru for research purposes was challenging specially for researchers having less network.

d) **Respondents' Bias and Subjectivity:** Respondents' biases or preconceptions about infopreneurship or the digital economy in India would influence the responses.

e) **Interdisciplinary Nature:** Infopreneurship intersects with various disciplines, including business, technology, sociology, and media studies. Integrating insights from multiple disciplines while maintaining methodological rigor was challenging.

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