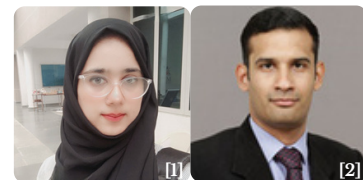


What makes a Tech Start-up competitive

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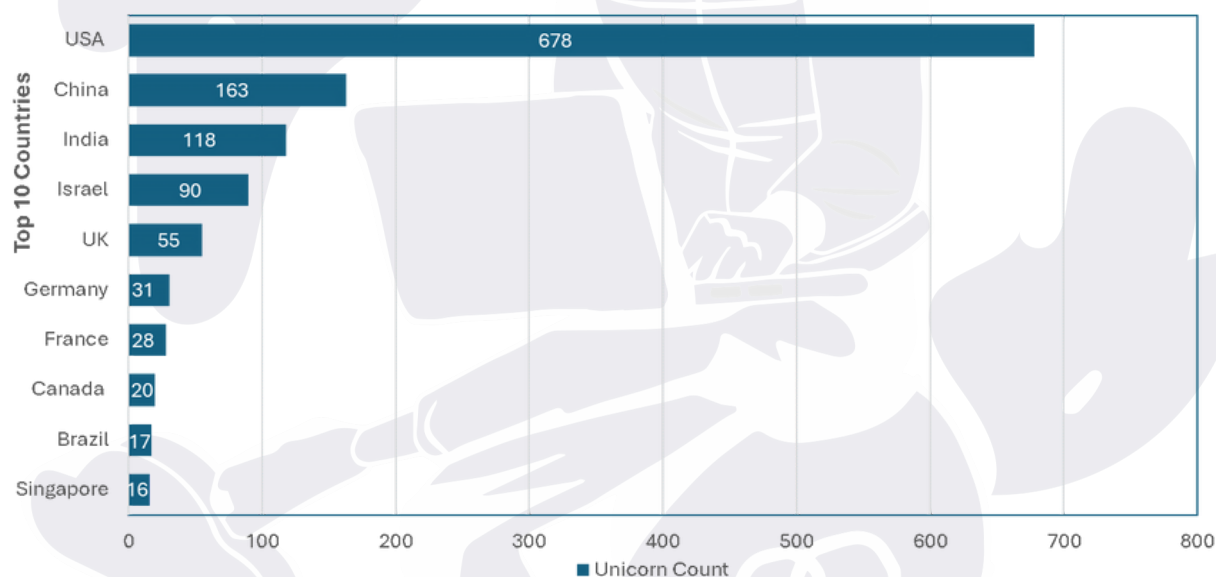
India has emerged as the third largest ecosystem globally with over 70000 tech start-ups, 100+ unicorns and a growing presence in global innovation indexes. Backed by a young population and various government support, tech startups are addressing a wide range of challenges, from agricultural supply chains and healthcare access to financial inclusion. Indian start-ups are no longer confined to traditional IT or software services.

Today, India is witnessing the rise of deep tech, AI platforms, climate tech and SaaS products, driven by entrepreneurs from diverse regions across the country. There is no doubt that start-ups are growing in India, but there is also a side we do not talk about enough – the high rate of failure.

In this context, Indian tech start-ups have a bigger responsibility to build on local knowledge and talent, so we are not always relying on foreign support. The aim of this research is to identify what factors make tech start-ups competitive and to validate these factors through real-world cases. This exploratory study is being undertaken through a multiple process including qualitative and quantitative tools, i.e., a mixed method approach.

The results indicated that factors such as team member commitment, organisational agility, transformational leadership, knowledge sharing, strategic alliances, organisational ambidexterity, entrepreneurial intensity, resource capability, innovation intensity and internationalisation are crucial for competitiveness.

India Has the Third Highest Number of Unicorn Globally



Source: Inc42 (Indian Unicorn), CB Insights

Despite the funding and support, a large number of tech start-ups shut down within just a few years of operation. They struggle to scale, retain customers and adapt to evolving markets. Although there's been a lot of buzz around India's start-up ecosystem, one important theme has received limited attention – and that's the competitiveness of tech start-ups.

Let me brief competitiveness so it is the ability and capacity to compete in a specific market and to produce and deliver high-quality goods and services at a low cost, and aim to fulfil several purposes in a sustainable manner: to increase its market share, to enter international markets and reward employees, to satisfy customers' needs and shareholders' values while making a profit."

Exploring the competitiveness of tech start-ups is important because many companies from developed countries try to tap into emerging markets like India by providing technological support.

We have also observed that these factors do not work in isolation- they are all connected and influence each other. To understand how they interact, we have developed a hierarchical model that shows which factors play a driving role and which ones are more dependent. This helped us see the bigger picture of how competitiveness takes shape within a start-up.

The findings have been supported by real-life cases from the agriculture, e-commerce and health care industries that supported the results and demonstrated why these factors matter.

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