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## MAKING THE STARTUP VISA ACT PROPOSAL EFFECTIVE: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY ON HIGH-GROWTH ASIAN INDIAN IMMIGRANT ENTREPRENEURS (SUMMARY)

Suresh Kumar

*NexAge Technologies and Green Earth LLC, drkumar@email.phoenix.edu*

Norris Krueger

*Entrepreneurship Northwest*

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≈ SUMMARY ≈

**MAKING THE STARTUP VISA ACT PROPOSAL EFFECTIVE:  
AN EXPLORATORY STUDY ON HIGH-GROWTH ASIAN  
INDIAN IMMIGRANT ENTREPRENEURS**

*Suresh Kumar, Founder & CEO, NexAge Technologies and Green Earth LLC, USA  
Norris Krueger, Entrepreneurship Northwest, USA*

**Principal Topic**

Several recent studies demonstrate that Indian American immigrant entrepreneurs play an increasingly important role in the economic growth in the United States. There is a renewed interest among policy makers in the StartUp Visa proposal the objective of which is to drive job creation by helping immigrant entrepreneurs secure visas to the United States. The new proposal will allow an immigrant entrepreneur to receive a two year visa if he or she can show that a qualified U.S. investor is willing to invest in the venture. However, the findings of our study show that there are several important gaps that need to be addressed to make the StartUp Visa proposal yield results.

**Method**

Our study involved a qualitative exploration of entrepreneurial cognitions, behaviors, and cultural factors involved with the seeing of and acting upon opportunities for this population. Our qualitative study with a multiple-case study design involved 5 cases of high-growth firms that were ranked in the 2009 Inc 500 list that had an Indian American founder, was in a high-tech industry, had been in business between 5 and 10 years, and was located in the East Cost of the United States. Data were collected from multiple sources using a triangulation strategy, including in-depth interviews with the entrepreneurs and key informants, public sources, and company records.

**Results and Implications**

The data collection process and the initial qualitative analysis have been completed. Thus far we find that the success of these entrepreneurs included critical factors that were all United States-centric: (a) varied and rich professional work experience, (b) mentoring relationships at work prior to starting their ventures, (c) the ability to see and act on a single unique opportunity that was related to prior work, (d) relationship with coworkers, (e) close ties with ethnic social and professional networks.

**Recommendations and Implications**

Our analysis suggests the following modifications to the StartUp Visa proposal: (a) program focus shifted from foreign entrepreneurs to immigrants who are already in the United States, (b) amend/extend the StartUp Visa to a StartUp Green Card targeted to immigrant groups with high human capital with a demonstrated higher proclivity for entrepreneurship, (c) remove some currently proposed restrictions such as the requirement to raise equity from qualified U.S. investors, (d) give preference to those who are currently providing products and services to clients in the United States.

**CONTACT:** Suresh Kumar; drkumar@email.phoenix.edu; (T): 732-494-4944.