6-11-2011

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Recommended Citation
Lindsay, Wendy A.; Lindsay, Noel J.; Jordaan, Anton; and Kropp, Frederic (2011) "GENDER DIFFERENCES IN FAMILY AND NON-FAMILY BUSINESS NASCENT NECESSITY ENTREPRENEURS (SUMMARY)," *Frontiers of Entrepreneurship Research*: Vol. 31 : Iss. 8 , Article 7.  
Available at: https://digitalknowledge.babson.edu/fer/vol31/iss8/7

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SUMMARY

GENDER DIFFERENCES IN FAMILY AND NON-FAMILY BUSINESS NASCENT NECESSITY ENTREPRENEURS

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Principal Topic
Various studies have examined motivations for starting family versus non-family businesses. Most of these studies focus on opportunity-based entrepreneurs in developed countries. This exploratory research examines gender differences in the personal values of nascent necessity-based entrepreneurs in a developing country.

We examine values because they are higher-order social cognitions that are representations of social interaction requirements of the individual. In line with previous research that has shown differences in entrepreneurial attitudes and behaviors by gender, we look at gender values differences. Our research question is, “Are there gender differences in nascent necessity entrepreneur values and how do these vary between family and non-family businesses?”

Methods
Using the List of Values scale (comprising internal, external, and interpersonal dimensions), repeated measures were taken at T1 commencement of the study, T2 immediately after a one-year training intervention, and T3 - 3.5 years after T2. Participants intended starting either family or non-family businesses.

Results and Implications
There was no change across groups in internal, external, and interpersonal values over the duration of the study. Although no differences were found in internal values between family and non-family business groups, female entrepreneurs demonstrated higher internal values in both groups.

Differences in external values also existed between family and non-family business groups with female family business entrepreneurs demonstrating higher external values. This is consistent with friends and family being more important to females and that females have a greater propensity to establish family businesses.

Female nascent entrepreneurs, more so than males, sought approval from family members about their intentions. Females also achieved greater resource commitment from their families to develop their businesses. Of note is a greater female commitment to family businesses after the training intervention.

Tentative conclusions include: (1) there may be different value structures between nascent family versus non-family business entrepreneurs as well as values gender differences; (2) since personal values appear invariant over time, gender-related differences are expected to continue as nascent entrepreneurs evolve into entrepreneurs; and (3) reasons for starting businesses differed between groups. This may be a reflection of societal norms in socially disadvantaged communities.

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