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INFLUENCE OF FAMILY BACKGROUND ON ENTREPRENEURIAL ASPIRATION: A STUDY OF POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS IN KARNATAKA

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ABSTRACT

In today's competitive economy, family businesses shape young individuals' entrepreneurial mindsets and influence their future career aspirations. Understanding how familial business backgrounds contribute to entrepreneurial development is significant, particularly among students pursuing commerce and management education. The present study aims to analyze how family business background impacts the entrepreneurial aspirations of postgraduate students. Employing a quantitative research design, data were collected from 73 M.Com and MBA students selected through convenience sampling using a structured questionnaire assessing various dimensions of entrepreneurial aspiration. An independent sample t-test was used to compare students from family business backgrounds with those without. The findings reveal a statistically significant difference ($p = 0.013$) between the two groups, indicating that students with family business backgrounds exhibit higher entrepreneurial aspirations than their counterparts. The study concludes that family business exposure develops entrepreneurial thinking, confidence, and skill development, thereby motivating students to pursue entrepreneurial careers and contribute to sustainable business growth in the future.

KEYWORDS: *Family Business, Career Aspirations, Students*

INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurial Aspiration refers to the willingness or mental commitment of an individual to start a new business (Leung et al., 2020). Many researchers have explored various factors that influence entrepreneurial intentions, including self-efficacy, attitude, emotional intelligence, social norms, and demographic factors such as gender, education, and prior experience (Campo, 2011; Mortan, 2014; Gregorio, 2021). Despite these insights, the influence of a family business background on an individual's entrepreneurial mindset remains less explored.

Family plays a Significant role in career decisions, students from business families often face expectations or encouragement to join or expand the family enterprise (Arif et al., 2019; Cohen, 2003). Family businesses play a vital role in global economies, often representing the majority of enterprises worldwide. They are unique because business operations and family relationships are deeply intertwined, influencing decision-making, leadership, and long-term goals. The sustainability of these businesses depends largely on effective succession planning and the willingness of the next generation to take over management responsibilities. Family support, shared values, and exposure to the business from an early age often strengthen entrepreneurial motivation and shape career aspirations. However, maintaining a balance between family dynamics and business growth can be challenging, as conflicts, differing interests, and lack of preparedness among successors may affect continuity. (Zellweger, 2011)

Family-owned businesses form a major part of the global economy, accounting for almost 80 percent of companies worldwide (Azhari, 2021). Most earlier studies on family firms have focused on topics like succession and business continuity. However, less attention has been given to how growing up in a business family influences the entrepreneurial intentions and aspirations of the younger generation. Previous studies have shown that students from business families often display stronger interest and confidence in entrepreneurship compared to those without such exposure (Sieger et al., 2014). This suggests that the family business environment plays an important role in shaping entrepreneurial thinking and motivation among youth.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Lefebvre (2024) emphasized that the legacy of a family business acts as a vital asset influencing the firm's strategy, identity, continuity, and innovation. It enhances legitimacy, attracts stakeholders, and strengthens market reputation, ensuring long-term sustainability. Similarly, Tarling et al. (2016) highlighted that family values and attachment to business traditions play a crucial role in shaping entrepreneurial motivation and career choices. Supporting this view, Schröder (2011) found that individuals who identify strongly with their family business and perceive their parents' entrepreneurship positively are less inclined toward external employment, as parental encouragement and involvement enhance their intention to continue the family enterprise. Hartono (2024) also confirmed that family support has a significant positive impact

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on students' willingness to sustain family businesses, demonstrating the importance of intergenerational encouragement for business continuity.

Ancheta et al. (2021) observed that students value family business experience for developing entrepreneurial and leadership skills but often lack deeper understanding of its challenges and opportunities for growth. Their study, along with findings by Zaman et al. (2021), revealed that exposure to family business environments positively influences individuals' entrepreneurial intentions. Together, these studies suggest that family businesses not only nurture entrepreneurial aspirations but also transfer essential business values and experiences across generations. However, they also highlight the need for better education and skill development to prepare the younger generation for the complex realities of sustaining and expanding family enterprises. Thus, the study's hypothesis is framed as follows.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To study the career aspirations of students
- To examine the entrepreneurial background of students and their career aspirations

HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

H_0 : There is no significant difference in entrepreneurial aspiration between students who have entrepreneurial background and those who do not.

METHODOLOGY

This study employs a quantitative research design to explore the relationship between family business background and career aspiration of students, specifically 73 students from M.Com and MBA, selected using simple random sampling. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire designed to measure students' entrepreneurial Aspirations. An independent sample t-test was used to analyze the data, comparing the mean scores of students with and without entrepreneurial intentions to identify significant differences.

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics

	Category	N	Frequency
Gender	Male	24	32.9
	Female	49	67.1
	Total	73	100.00
Course	M.com	35	47.9
	MBA	38	52.1
	Total	73	100.0
Region	Urban	55	75.3
	Rural	18	24.7
	Total	73	100.0
Family business	Yes	5	06.8
	No	68	93.2
	Total	73	100.0

(source: field survey)

The respondent's demographic character reveals that among the 73 respondents, a higher proportion are female (67.1%) compared to male (32.9%). The course of the respondents is nearly evenly split, with 47.9% in M.Com and 52.1% in MBA programs. The majority of students (75.3%) come from urban areas, while 24.7% are from rural regions. Notably, a significant majority (93.2%) express an intention to start their own business, indicating a strong entrepreneurial inclination among the postgraduate students.

Table 2: Entrepreneurial aspiration of students

Sl.No	Entrepreneurial Aspiration	Mean	Standard deviation
1	I often think about becoming an entrepreneur	3.79	.833
2	I would like to see myself as an entrepreneur	3.97	.687
3	Becoming an entrepreneur would be an important part of who I am	4.15	.544
4	The term "entrepreneur" would fit me pretty well	3.86	.673
5	One of my goal is to be an entrepreneur	4.00	.577
6	It is important for me to express my entrepreneurial aspirations	3.79	.833

(source: field survey)

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Table 3: Comparison of Entrepreneurial Aspiration of students with and without family business

	Family business	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	T	SIG. (2-TAILED)
Entrepreneurial Aspiration	Yes	5	3.9941	.48249	2.536	.013
	No	68	3.4400	.21909		

We reject the null hypothesis if the p-value (0.013) is less than the significance level (typically 0.05). This suggests a statistically significant difference in the mean entrepreneurial aspiration between postgraduates with family business and those without. Postgraduates with family business tend to have higher entrepreneurial aspirations than those without such intentions.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that family business background plays a significant role in shaping students' entrepreneurial aspirations and future career choices. Exposure to family enterprises provides practical business insights, risk-taking ability, and a sense of responsibility, which collectively enhance entrepreneurial motivation. The statistical results confirm that students belonging to family business backgrounds demonstrate stronger entrepreneurial aspirations compared to those without such exposure. This suggests that family influence acts as a catalyst in nurturing entrepreneurial intent among youth. Encouraging interaction between family enterprises and educational institutions can further strengthen entrepreneurial learning and promote self-employment opportunities. Overall, the findings highlight the importance of family environment in fostering the next generation of entrepreneurs who can drive innovation and business growth in a competitive economy.

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