

# **GENDER SELF-BIAS IN ENTREPRENEURIAL START-UP DECISION**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Entrepreneurship is an area of business research which is still evolving and requires further investigation. The objectives of this study are to identify if any gender differences exist in business students as to their decision to start-up an entrepreneurial venture. The study examines if there are any gender differences in belief of readiness to start-up a venture, past entrepreneurial opportunity exposure/experiences, and views towards adequacy of business education to prepare for entrepreneurial launch. Results indicate that women have a gender self-bias in which they perceive themselves to be less prepared for a business launch. This gender self-bias exists even though women have the same level of educational background and prior entrepreneurial exposure/experience level as males.

## **BODY**

There is a great deal of interest in entrepreneurship on women-owner businesses and the supporting/encouraging of start-ups by females. Most decisions to start-up a firm are considered at a young age. Past research studies have not fully examined gender differences in the attitudes of college students to start-up a business. The objectives of this study are to identify if any gender differences exist in business students as to their decision to start-up an entrepreneurial venture. The study examines if there are any gender differences in belief of readiness to start-up a venture, past entrepreneurial opportunity exposure/experiences, and views towards adequacy of business education to prepare for entrepreneurial launch.

The methodology consisted of a survey of over 500 business students (see instrument on next page). The survey was administered to males, females, graduate and undergraduate students, and was administered at both public and private universities. The instrument was analyzed with univariate and multivariate analysis.

### **Findings:**

1. Males were more likely to think of starting a business of their own in the future compared to females.
2. Both males and females felt that it would be hard to start a business.
3. Males felt more confident that they knew enough to start a business more than females believed in their knowing enough to start a business.
4. Males and females had equal levels of prior experience working for a small firm and both groups expressed high levels of satisfaction with the experience.
5. Males had a higher level of starting their own businesses in the past.
6. Females estimated the percent of small businesses failing slightly lower (67%) compared to the average estimate of males (74%).

Results indicate that women have a gender self-bias in which they perceive themselves to be less prepared for a business launch. This gender self-bias exists even though women have the same level of educational background and prior entrepreneurial exposure/experience level as males.