

# **INDIVIDUAL AND EXPERIENTIAL DETERMINANTS OF ENTREPRENEURIAL START-UP DECISION FOR BUSINESS STUDENTS**

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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 class level differences exist in business students as to their decision to start-up an entrepreneurial venture. The study examines if there are any class level 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 there are differences between graduate and undergraduate students and that class level differences exist at the undergraduate level.

## **BODY**

There is a great deal of interest in entrepreneurship and the supporting/encouraging of start-ups by college students. Most decisions to start-up a firm are considered at a young age. Past research studies have not fully examined class level differences in the attitudes of college students to start-up a business. The objectives of this study are to identify if any class level differences exist in business students as to their decision to start-up an entrepreneurial venture. The study examines if there are any class level 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. Students at all class levels report a high level of interest in starting a business of their own in the future.
2. Graduate and undergraduate students both feel that a business start-up would be hard.
3. Seniors and Graduate students believe they know more to start up a business than Freshmen, Sophomores or Juniors.
4. Freshmen showed a higher level of having started a business of their own compared to higher class levels.
5. Freshmen showed more desire for coverage of small business topics in their classes.

Results indicate that there are differences between graduate and undergraduate students and that class level differences exist at the undergraduate level.

The study has implications for degree programs, and government small business policy makers.