

QUALITIES OF FIRST-GENERATION ENTREPRENEURS – AN EMPIRICAL STUDY IN SALEM DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT

The first generation entrepreneurs are the initiators in their family to start up an enterprise of their own. They have no other family members who have started any enterprise ever before. However, these entrepreneurs have the zeal to start an enterprise of their own and run the enterprise successfully. It is obvious that running an enterprise successfully is difficult without any previous background. However, it should be noted that the first generation entrepreneurs are not at all new to the line of business which they are entering into. They would have gained experience in any such enterprise as an employee and the experience could have been the reason for starting an enterprise. The study has been conducted among 130 first generation entrepreneurs in Salem District. The sample respondents have been selected by systematic random sampling method out of the list of entrepreneurs obtained from the District Industries Centre. The primary data required for the study like personal variables, enterprise variables and qualities have been obtained from the sample respondents by administering a structured questionnaire. The statistical tools like simple percentage analysis, analysis of variance and t test have been used to analyze the data obtained from the sample respondents.

Keywords: first generation entrepreneurs; qualities; personal variables; enterprise variables.

INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurs could be defined as the person or group of persons promoting an enterprise. They contribute capital for establishing an enterprise and look after the affairs of the enterprise with a view to share the profits earned from the enterprise. In this regard, they should have a lot of qualities to become good entrepreneurs. The entrepreneurs are generally classified as first generation entrepreneurs and hereditary entrepreneurs. The first generation entrepreneurs are the entrepreneurs who have no entrepreneurial background. They have emerged as the entrepreneurs by their own interest and knowledge. However, the hereditary entrepreneurs are made to become entrepreneurs intentionally or unintentionally by their family. The advantage of hereditary entrepreneurs is that they have family support in the event of crisis. They have proper guidance from the elder members of the family. On the other hand,

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the first generation entrepreneurs have to struggle initially to overcome the challenges faced by them in establishing and running their enterprises.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Since the first generation entrepreneurs are the first in their family to become entrepreneurs, they have to stand on their shoes. Education and experience make the first generation entrepreneurs perfect. The qualities required to be possessed by the first generation entrepreneurs include focus on the business, confidence of success, creative thinking, deletion of work, determination to achieve the goal, building relationship, effective time management, good communication skill and seeking help from others in the event of necessity. However, the first generation entrepreneurs could not have all these qualities at the initial stage. Hence, an extensive study has been carried to examine the qualities of the first generation entrepreneurs in Salem District.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The present study has been undertaken with the following objectives:

1. To examine the personal and enterprise variables of the first generation entrepreneurs in Salem District.
2. To analyze the qualities possessed by the first generation entrepreneurs in Salem District.
3. To identify the relationship between the qualities of the first generation entrepreneurs and the personal variables.
4. To study the association between the qualities of the first generation entrepreneurs and the enterprise variables and
5. To offer suggestions to the first generation entrepreneurs for running their enterprises successfully.

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

1. There is no significant variation in the qualities of first generation entrepreneurs with reference to their age.
2. Gender of the first generation entrepreneurs has no significant influence on the qualities possessed by them.
3. The variation in the qualities of the first generation entrepreneurs is not significantly influenced by their educational level.
4. There exists no significant relationship between experience and qualities of the first generation entrepreneurs.
5. The relationship between size of enterprises and the qualities of the first generation entrepreneurs is insignificant.

RESEARCH DESIGN

The present study is exploratory in nature. The study aims to explore the qualities possessed by the first generation entrepreneurs in Salem District. The influence of personal variables such as age, gender and educational level and enterprise variables like experience and

size of enterprise on the qualities of the first generation entrepreneurs has been examined in this study.

SAMPLE SIZE AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

The first generation entrepreneurs in Salem District have been identified and selected out of the list of entrepreneurs collected from the District Industries Centre, Salem District. The size of sample has been determined to be 130 and the sample respondents have been selected by systematic random sampling method.

STATISTICAL TOOLS USED

In order to fulfill the objectives of the study, the researchers have collected data from the sample respondents by administering a structured questionnaire. The data so obtained have been analyzed by applying statistical tools like percentage analysis, ANOVA and t test.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

1. The present study is undertaken with the micro, small and medium size enterprises only.
2. The size of sample has been confined to 130 respondents only.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table 1: Personal and Enterprise variables

Age	Frequency	Percent
Below 25 years	53	40.8
25 to 35 years	51	39.2
35 to 45 years	20	15.4
Above 45 years	6	4.6
Total	130	100.0
Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	106	81.5
Female	24	18.5
Total	130	100.0
Educational Level	Frequency	Percent
School Level	30	23.1
UG Level	69	53.1
PG Level	25	19.2
Others	6	4.6
Total	130	100.0
Experience	Frequency	Percent
Less than 2 years	42	32.3
2 to 4 years	59	45.4

4 to 6 years	12	9.2
Above 6 years	17	13.1
Total	130	100.0
Size of enterprise	Frequency	Percent
Micro	67	51.5
Small	49	37.7
Medium	14	10.8
Total	130	100.0

Table 1 evinces that out of 130 sample respondents, 40.8 per cent of them belonged to the age group of below 25 years while 39.2 per cent of them belonged to the age group of 25 to 35 years and 15.4 per cent of them belonged to the age group of 35 to 45 years. The age group of 4.6 per cent of the respondents was found to be above 45 years. It denotes that majority of the respondents have become entrepreneurs before the age of 25 years. It is also understood that 81.5 per cent of the total respondents were males and 18.5 per cent of them were females. It reveals that men become the first generation entrepreneurs more than the women entrepreneurs. Out of the sample respondents, 23.1 per cent of them have completed their school level education whereas 53.1 per cent of the respondents have completed UG level education and 19.2 per cent of them have completed PG level education. The remaining 4.6 per cent of the respondents possessed other levels of education. It indicates that greater proportion of the first generation entrepreneurs have become entrepreneurs after having their graduation.

An attempt has been made in this study to examine the experience possessed by the first generation entrepreneurs in their field of business at the time of establishing their own enterprises. It could be realized that 32.3 per cent of the respondents have started their enterprises after having an experience of less than 2 years whereas the experience gained by 45.4 per cent of the respondents at the start of their own enterprises was 2 to 4 years and 9.2 per cent of the respondents have started their own enterprises after having gained 4 to 6 years of experience. The proportion of the first generation entrepreneurs who have started their own enterprises after more than 6 years of experience was found to be 13.1 per cent. It evinces that 2 to 4 years of experience has been gained by most of the first generation entrepreneurs before establishing their own enterprises. Among 130 sample respondents, 51.5 per cent of them have been running micro enterprises while 37.7 per cent of the respondents have been running small enterprises and 10.8 per cent of the respondents have been running medium scale enterprises. It denotes that most of the first generation entrepreneurs have been running micro level enterprises.

QUALITIES OF FIRST GENERATION ENTREPRENEURS

The sample respondents were asked to give their responses for the following statements relating to the qualities to be possessed by the first generation entrepreneurs. The responses have been obtained by using 5 point Likert Scale. The options given to the respondents include strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree and strongly disagree. These responses have been assigned scores such as 5 for strongly agree, 4 for agree, 3 for neutral, 2 for disagree and 1 for strongly disagree.

disagree. The statements selected for assessing the qualities of the first generation entrepreneurs include:

1. I always focus on the business
2. I am confident of succeeding in my business
3. I think creatively to run my enterprise
4. I delegate my work to the subordinates
5. I have a strong desire and determination to achieve the goal
6. I build good relationship with employees and customers
7. I take risks in taking quick decisions for the development of business
8. I manage the time effectively
9. I am listening and communicating well
10. I seek the help of others whenever needed

Table 2: GENDER AND QUALITIES OF FIRST GENERATION ENTREPRENEURS

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t TEST

Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t value	p value
Male	106	37.27	4.072		
Female	24	39.25	3.467	-2.438	0.019 *
Total	130				

Source: Computed from Primary data * Significant @ 5%

It could be observed from the Table 2 that the mean score of qualities of the male respondents was found to be 37.27 and that of female respondents was 39.25. It implies that the average score of qualities of female respondents was higher than that of male respondents. The t value and p value measuring the relationship between gender and qualities of the first generation entrepreneurs were -2.438 and 0.019 respectively. Since the p value is less than 0.05 ($P < 0.05$), it is concluded that the relationship between gender of the first generation entrepreneurs and their qualities is statistically significant.

The relationship between age and qualities of the first generation entrepreneurs has been examined by using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA.)

Table 3: AGE AND QUALITIES OF FIRST GENERATION ENTREPRENEURS – ANOVA

Qualities	Source of variation	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Sig.
I always focus on the business	Between Groups	9.149	3	3.050	1.759	0.158 NS
	Within Groups	218.459	126	1.734		
	Total	227.608	129			
I am confident of succeeding in my business	Between Groups	8.296	3	2.765	2.014	0.115 NS
	Within Groups	173.004	126	1.373		
	Total	181.300	129			
	Between Groups	6.968	3	2.323	2.012	0.116 NS

I think creatively to run my enterprise	Within Groups	145.463	126	1.154		
	Total	152.431	129			
I delegate my work to the subordinates	Between Groups	32.574	3	10.858	6.505	0.000**
	Within Groups	210.318	126	1.669		
	Total	242.892	129			
I have a strong desire and determination to achieve the goal	Between Groups	1.207	3	.402	.214	0.887 NS
	Within Groups	237.293	126	1.883		
	Total	238.500	129			
I build good relationship with employees and customers	Between Groups	9.649	3	3.216	2.592	0.056 NS
	Within Groups	156.381	126	1.241		
	Total	166.031	129			
I take risks in taking quick decisions for the development of business	Between Groups	11.883	3	3.961	2.732	0.047 *
	Within Groups	182.648	126	1.450		
	Total	194.531	129			
I manage the time effectively	Between Groups	28.880	3	9.627	7.458	0.000 **
	Within Groups	162.628	126	1.291		
	Total	191.508	129			
I am listening and communicating well	Between Groups	11.767	3	3.922	5.570	0.001 **
	Within Groups	88.725	126	.704		
	Total	100.492	129			
I seek the help of others whenever needed	Between Groups	17.601	3	5.867	9.726	0.000 **
	Within Groups	76.007	126	.603		
	Total	93.608	129			

Source: Computed from Primary data

NS – Not Significant; * Significant @ 5% ** Significant @ 1%

According to the Table 3, the p value stating the relationship between age and qualities of the first generation entrepreneurs like focus on the business and confidence, creative thinking has been found to be greater than 0.05 ($P > 0.05$). Hence, the respective null hypotheses have been accepted and it is concluded that there is no significant relationship between age and these qualities. However, there has been a significant relationship between age and delegation of work by the first generation entrepreneurs at 1 per cent level of significance as indicated by the p value which is less than 0.01 ($P < 0.01$). Since the p value indicating the relationship between age and determination has been found to be greater than 0.05, it falls in the rejection region. The null hypothesis is thus accepted and it is concluded that the relationship between age and determination is insignificant. A similar conclusion is drawn from the results that there exists no significant relationship between age and building good relationship as the p value is greater than 0.05. On the other hand, the qualities like risk taking, effective time management, communication skills and seeking help from others have been significantly related to the age of the first generation entrepreneurs since the respective p values have been found to be less than 0.05.

Table 4: Educational Level, Experience and Size of Enterprise of the first generation entrepreneurs and their qualities - ANOVA

Qualities	Educational Level		Experience		Size of enterprise	
	F value	p value	F value	p value	F value	p value
I always focus on the business	0.26	0.86 NS	2.60	0.06 NS	2.46	0.09 NS
I am confident of succeeding in my business	1.22	0.31 NS	0.17	0.91 NS	4.96	0.01**
I think creatively to run my enterprise	0.55	0.65 NS	4.54	0.01**	1.11	0.33 NS
I delegate my work to the subordinates	2.45	0.07 NS	0.60	0.62 NS	0.18	0.84 NS
I have a strong desire and determination to achieve the goal	1.02	0.39 NS	1.80	0.15 NS	0.84	0.44 NS
I build good relationship with employees and customers	4.46	0.01**	1.82	0.15 NS	2.76	0.07 NS
I take risks in taking quick decisions for the development of business	9.68	0.00**	1.17	0.33 NS	1.00	0.37 NS
I manage the time effectively	8.54	0.00**	4.34	0.01**	0.42	0.66 NS
I am listening and communicating well	0.40	0.75 NS	1.97	0.12 NS	0.54	0.58 NS
I seek the help of others whenever needed	9.21	0.00**	1.42	0.24 NS	5.31	0.01**

Source: Computed from Primary data

NS – Not Significant; * Significant @ 5% ** Significant @ 1%

From the Table 4, it is evident that there is no significant variation in the focus on the business of the first generation entrepreneurs in accordance with their educational level, experience and size of enterprise. Confidence of success possessed by the first generation entrepreneurs has not been significantly influenced by their educational level and experience while the variation in the confidence of success possessed by the first generation entrepreneurs has been significant in accordance with the size of enterprise. It also realized that the creative thinking of the first generation entrepreneurs has significant variation due to experience. No significant variation has been found between delegation of work and educational level, experience and size of enterprise of the first generation entrepreneurs. The relationship of educational level, experience and size of enterprise of the first generation entrepreneurs with the determination is found to be insignificant. Educational level of the first generation

entrepreneurs has significantly influenced the qualities like building good relationship and risk taking. Effective time management of the first generation entrepreneurs has been significantly varied in accordance with the educational level and experience. There has been no significant variation in the communication skills of the first generation entrepreneurs with reference to their educational level, experience and size of enterprise. The quality of seeking help from others has been significantly different among the first generation entrepreneurs according their educational level and size of enterprise.

KEY FINDINGS

The key findings of the study include the following:

It is found that the delegation of work, risk taking, effective time management, good communication skills and seeking help from others have been influenced by the age of the first generation entrepreneurs. The overall score of qualities of the first generation entrepreneurs is significantly different between male and female entrepreneurs.

Building good relationship, risk taking, effective time management and seeking help from others have strong association with the educational level of the first generation entrepreneurs. Creative thinking and effective time management have been strongly influenced by the experience of the entrepreneurs at the establishment of the enterprise. Confidence of success and the seeking help from others have statistically significant association with the size of enterprise.

SUGGESTIONS

The researchers have put forth the following suggestions:

It is suggested that the first generation entrepreneurs have to extend the focus on the business in accordance with the experience.

The first generation entrepreneurs should come forward to delegate the work to the subordinates without any fear.

They have to enhance the level of their determination towards achieving goal.

The first generation entrepreneurs have been suggested to improve their listening and communication skills with a view to run the enterprises successfully.

CONCLUSION

The first generation entrepreneurs in the study area, i.e., Salem District have started their own enterprises only after having gained an experience of at least two years. They have started their enterprises at micro level initially. The qualities of the first generation entrepreneurs like focus on the basis, delegation of work, determination to achieve the goal and communication skills are lacking among the first generation entrepreneurs in Salem District.

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