

# Assessment of Entrepreneurial Stress Based on Gender

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## Abstract

Entrepreneurs are the backbone in the economic development and employment of any country. Every country organizes many assistance and training programs to develop their skills and potential. But entrepreneurs face several barriers and problems. Stress is one of the major problems faced by them. In this paper an attempt has been made to analyze stress of entrepreneurs based on gender. Self imposed deadlines and quotas, feeling hurried and pressurized without time, feeling themselves as competitive, ambitious and achievement oriented are the potential sources of stress. Proper planning skills, time management skills are essential for entrepreneurs.

**Keywords:** Entrepreneur, Stress, Gender difference in stress

## 1. Introduction

Businesses play an important role in the economic development of any country. Entrepreneurs are the backbones of small businesses. An individual has to run his own business, when he wants to be his own boss. That is, he must turn out to be an entrepreneur and become a job provider and not a job seeker.

The dictionary meaning of entrepreneur is a person who organizes and manages a business undertaking, assuming the risk for the sake of profit. A.H. Cole defines entrepreneurship as “the purposeful activity of an individual or a group of associated individuals, undertaken to initiate, maintain or aggrandize profit by production or distribution of economic goods and services”. According to Evans, “entrepreneurs are persons who initiate, organize, manage and control the affairs of business unit that combines the factors of production to supply of goods and services whether the business pertains to agriculture, industry, trade or profession”. Entrepreneurs need several characteristics to be successful in their career. Similarly they face several barriers and problems too. They must start their work during sunrise and continue to work long time after sunset also, because of which they face several problems. They mostly look after all their business activities as they rarely have people to whom they can delegate the tasks. In order to solve these problems, tackle the situations and overcome the barriers, entrepreneurs need a personality. Vries identifies six main elements of entrepreneurial personality as environmental turbulence, struggles around issues of authority with one’s parents, a feeling of rejection, painful feelings of anger, hostility and guilt, identity confusion (identification with the person causing the hurt), adopting the reactive mode of painful feelings (guilt, rebellion, impulsiveness). This clearly shows that entrepreneurs have painful feelings in their career, which is an indication of stress. The entrepreneurial stress must be managed because long term exposure to such stress will lead to negative consequences affecting both the individual and their business. So, in this paper an attempt is made to analyze stress of entrepreneurs.

## 2. Objectives

The main objective of this paper is to identify the stress experienced by entrepreneurs. An attempt is also made to assess the sources of stress for them. Entrepreneurial stress is also assessed based on gender.

## 3. Methodology

The data were collected from entrepreneurs who attended a two weeks Entrepreneurship Development Program. The program was to train the participants with the various concepts on finance, accounting, marketing, customer relationships, savings and investments, business expansion, problem solving and decision making needed for the successful conduct of the business. The total number of participants in the particular batch was 115. A questionnaire to measure the stress was given to all participants, out of which 104 questionnaires were complete and usable.

### Profile of the respondents

The sample consisted of entrepreneurs doing various business including grocery shop, data processing centres, tailor shop, furniture shop, flour mill etc and their monthly income ranges from Rs. 5000 to Rs. 12,000. The sample had entrepreneurs with minimum age of 20 and maximum age of 43. They belong to big villages and small towns in the same district in Tamilnadu. Of the 104 respondents, 67 are female and 37 are male entrepreneurs (Table 1).

**Table 1:** Distribution of Respondents based on Gender

Gender	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Male	37	36
Female	67	64

Source: Primary data

## Results and Discussion

**Table 2:** Sources of Stress of Entrepreneurs

Q. No	Response	Average
1	Setting self-imposed deadlines and quotas	4.1
2	Feeling hurried and pressurized without time	3.6
3	Seeing themselves as competitive, ambitious and achievement oriented	3.5
4	Seeing everyday life as filled with problems	3.4
5	Feeling angry when interrupted in accomplishing goals	3.2
6	Bringing job problems and actual work home	3.1
7	Perception of spouse, friends as living pressurized life	3.0

8.	Doing more effort than an average worker.	2.8
9.	Having troubles in relaxing.	2.6
10.	Doing two or more activities or tasks at the same time.	2.5

Table 2 shows that entrepreneurs feel stressed by setting self imposed deadlines and quotas, followed by feeling hurried and pressurized without time, seeing themselves as competitive, ambitious and achievement oriented, seeing everyday life as filled with problems. The respondents also feel stressed due to interruption in goals, work interference with family, doing more than an average worker etc.

**Table 3:** Stress of Entrepreneurs Based on Gender

**Ho:** Male and Female entrepreneurs do not differ in the level of stress experienced.

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	f	P
Total Stress	Female	36	36.8	4.4	55.45	0.01<0.05
	Male	68	29.6	4.9		

It can be inferred from table 3 that female entrepreneurs have higher mean stress score (36.8) than the male respondents (29.6). The p value is less than 0.05, so the null hypothesis is rejected. Therefore there is significant difference in the level of stress experienced by male and female entrepreneurs. Similar are the findings of the study in which female IT personnel reported significantly higher scores than males on stress pertaining to role ambiguity, job satisfaction, job induced tension and intention to quit (Vivien and Thompson (1996).

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#### 4. Suggestion

Special Package exclusively for women entrepreneurs may be developed after studying their stressors experimentally in different dimensions and imparting training based on that might help them to reduce their stress and manage their business in a successful way.

#### 5. Conclusion

In the modern world, stress is unavoidable and every individual is subject to stress. Entrepreneurs doing business on their own also experience stress. The sources of stress for an entrepreneur are many. The entrepreneurs must possess proper planning, time management skills, vision to manage stress and identify ways to relax and manage stress. Training programs can be planned to develop stress coping skills. Such training programs will benefit the entrepreneurs and help them to have a stress free personal and business life.

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