

Comparative Study of Networking Impact on Entrepreneurship Development in Family Businesses Between Vertical and Horizontal Types of Entrepreneurial Networks

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Abstract

Entrepreneurial networks are known to provide valuable social capital to its member entrepreneurs nourishing their entrepreneurial growth and scalability of their family businesses. This article adds value through specific observations about two dimensions of entrepreneurial networks namely vertical networks and horizontal networks. These two dimensions of entrepreneurial networks are generally practiced exclusive of each other. EITHER vertical i.e., network among members having same type of business within the sector OR horizontal i.e., diverse businesses across value chain of the businesses of its members in same and allied sectors. The study details how these two dimensions of the networks enhance sustainability and scalability of entrepreneurship development of its members and their family businesses. Each type of the two networks contributes differently, individually and jointly. Sample population for this study has special focus on entrepreneurial growth of Indian women of family businesses in agriculture and agri allied sectors. This article highlights the methods and examples of combining the vertical AND horizontal networks together simultaneously for common members as a part of more comprehensive network. This research uses method triangulation across two entrepreneurial networks of family businesses and their business stakeholders. The three methods include direct observations, series of entrepreneurial development interventions and survey data analysis. Contributions by the comprehensive networks are observed in terms of entrepreneurial growth with sustainable development of their family businesses. The article concludes with clear recommendations about why and how to integrate vertical and horizontal dimensions of entrepreneurial networks. The findings indicate that this integration is vital not only for sustainable development of the family businesses but also for entrepreneurial growth of its members individually and collectively. These insights have significant potential to attract policy makers, facilitators and family business heads responsible for entrepreneurial growth and development of family businesses to adapt more wholesome and evolved ways of entrepreneurial networks. This is also likely to enhance the insights on eco-system approach to entrepreneurial networks as entrepreneurial communities for sustainable development of family businesses across different sectors within and beyond India.

Keywords

Family businesses, entrepreneurial networks; entrepreneurial communities, eco-system approach; entrepreneurial growth.