Entrepreneurship and the Impact of Managerial Role on Family Business Success

Linda S. Niehm
Iowa State University

Nancy J. Miller
University of Nebraska-Lincoln

ABSTRACT

Family businesses are commonly addressed as two separate entities (Weigel, Weigel, Berger, Cook, & Del Campo, 1995; Hollander & Elman, 1988; Langsberg, 1983). This view suggests that managerial processes are focused on the needs and demands of only one component, family or business. However, business and family decisions are interrelated and the approach to managing overlapping demands may indeed impact the long-term success of family firms.

The present study provides a unique, longitudinal view of family business entrepreneurs, their managerial roles, and their impact of managerial role on business success over time using a field theoretical approach (Lewin, 1951). Rather than relying on single respondents and a limited business sample, a pooled sample of longitudinal data was used from both 1997 and 2000 versions of the National Family Business Study (NFBS). Dual and single role family business entrepreneurs were profiled by personal and business demographics and compared by high/low levels of business success. Significant demographic differences were identified by managerial type and success level. Significant differences were also identified between single and dual role managers’ perceived and financial success over time.