GUESSS
Global University Entrepreneurial Spirit Students' Survey

The Entrepreneurial Career Intentions and Behavior of KSA University Students

2019

GUESSS National Report 2019
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA)

Executive Summary

Introduction to the GUESSS KSA 2019 Report

The GUESSS (Global University Entrepreneurial Spirit Students' Survey) project is a global research initiative designed to examine the entrepreneurial intentions and activities of students at university. The survey was conducted between September and November of 2018 involving 54 countries and over 208'600 students. In Saudi Arabia, 1641 students completed the survey, the results of which are reported herein.

Analysing the Saudi responses, the majority of students were under 25, Saudi nationals, unmarried and female (1446 or 88.7%). The majority of responses (88%) came from five universities: Princess Nourah University, Al-Baha University, King Saud University, Prince Sultan University and Jaizan University. Most students began their university degree in 2015/2016 and were full-time undergraduate students. 6.6% (109) noted they had a regular job in parallel to their studies. Together the disciplines of Business/management, Computer Sciences/IT, Arts/Humanities and Human medicine/health sciences accounted for over 60% of the students in the survey.

What are the career choice intentions of students in KSA?

Directly after university, most students would like to become an employee in a large business, or in the public service. The least popular career option for graduates was business succession (taking over a family or other business). When asked to consider their career five years after university, the most popular career was entrepreneur (36.44%, 598). There was an increase of 30.8% on the number considering the entrepreneurial career immediately after graduation. The option of succession rose marginally in the career intentions of students five years on, however the career option of working as an employee in a non-profit organisation was low at both stages.

What are the entrepreneurial intentions of students in KSA?

Findings indicate that students of Science of art (e.g., art, design, dramatics, music) were more likely to pursue entrepreneurship directly after their studies than any other field (15%), with natural sciences reporting the lowest intentions (2%). Students of business/management entrepreneurial intentions were 40% higher 5 years' post-graduation, moving from 32 students intending on entrepreneurship post-graduation to 211. In considering their entrepreneurial skills, students noted a highest perceived competence in "being a leader and communicator" but lowest in "building up a professional network".

730 (44.49%) of students were trying to start their own businesses or become self-employed, while 161 (9.81%) 0.19% had one at the time of survey. Male students had a statistically more positive association with being an entrepreneur than females. There were statistically higher entrepreneurial intentions from the children of entrepreneurial parents. Students perceived that close family, friends and fellow students would be supportive if they chose entrepreneurship as a career choice.

What do we know about aspiring student entrepreneurs in KSA?

In total 21% (N=345) of students were identified as aspiring or nascent entrepreneurs. 15% of these intended to start their company immediately after finishing their studies, and over half intended to start within eighteen months of completing studies. Just over half the students (51%) were unsure whether they wanted the business to be their full-time occupation. Almost 38% reported they were acting alone, 32.5% co-founders and 25.8% wished to find co-founders but had not yet. 47% had taken no tangible steps towards starting their business at the time of survey completion.

What do we know about active student entrepreneurs in KSA?

Of the 161 student entrepreneurs, the majority indicated their companies were recently formed with 0/1 employees. 28.1% wanted this business to become their main occupation once graduated. While respondents felt very connected to their companies, 34.5% (N=51 of 148) of the students did not feel that they would happily spend the rest of their career with their start-up. Over half noted they had relatives in their ownership team.

What are KSA students' intentions for family business succession?

513 or 31.3% students noted their parents were self-employed or were owners of a business, however despite this 64% (322) did not consider it a family business. The main areas of industry which respondents indicated their parents were involved in were: 1) Other; 2) Construction and 3) Trade. 68% of the children of business owners/founders indicated that they did not intend to engage in family business succession, i.e. they did not intend to take over the family business. Examining how much the business was discussed at home, visits made to the company, verbal and emotional encouragement for succession, the results indicate that family business parents in the KSA region have quite varied attitudes about succession. While 72% of the students felt a loyalty to the family business, many (71.8%) did not feel an obligation to take it over and 227 (46.4%) of the children of business owners did not feel they owed anything to their parents' business.

What do we know about students working in start-ups?

Thirty students indicated that they worked in a start-up company in a low to medium position. For the most part, responses indicated that the students tended to enjoy their culture and colleagues in their company. Many also indicated that they attend external events to network for the company to increase learning in the start-up ecosystem.

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Acknowledgements

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We would like to express our thanks to the GUESSS global project team led by Prof. Philipp Sieger for their efforts in organizing the global research project. Our gratitude extends to Dr. Zyad Alzaydi, Dr. Bedour Alrayes, and Mr. Khalid Alkhodair for their help in the survey distribution.

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DISCLAIMER

Although data used in this report is collected by the GUESSS consortium, its analysis and interpretation for the 2019 GUESSS Report for KSA is the sole responsibility of the authors. The authors, for their part, have attempted to ensure accuracy and completeness of the information contained in this publication. No responsibility can be accepted, however, for any errors and inaccuracies that occur.

The International GUESSS project: Key information

The GUESSS (Global University Entrepreneurial Spirit Students' Survey) project is a global research initiative designed to examine the entrepreneurial intentions and activities of students at university. The main goals of the GUESSS project relate to:

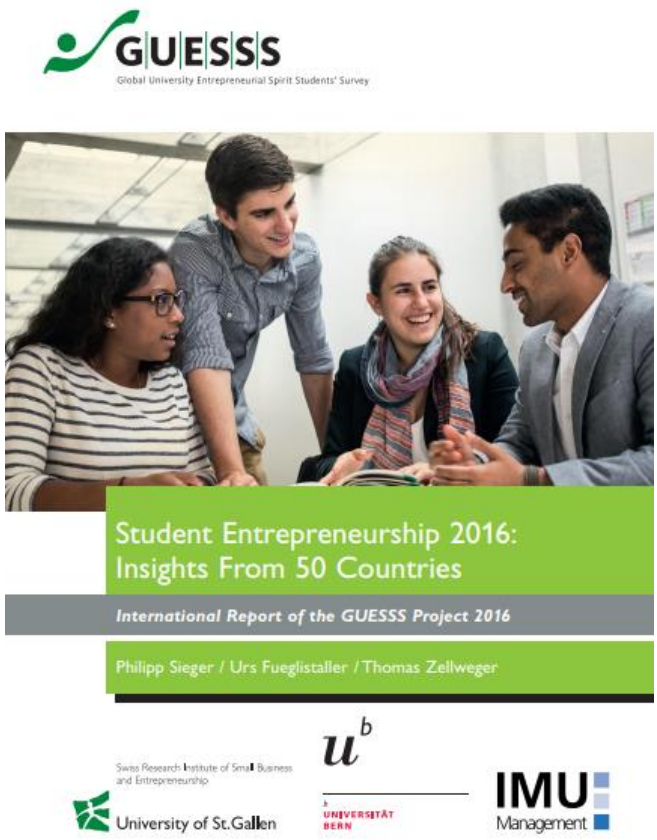
1. ***The start-up process:*** GUESSS helps to systematically record the founding intention and activity of students on a long-term basis, and makes a temporal and geographical comparison possible (panel study).
2. ***The University:*** GUESSS offers a temporal and geographical comparison providing universities with insight into the organization of entrepreneurship (e.g. in the form of entrepreneurship courses, founding climate, infrastructure, etc.).
3. ***The Individual:*** GUESSS allows for a temporal and geographical comparison of individual-based characteristics that impact the founding intention and activity of students. The survey is conducted every two years.

The international project was developed by Prof. Dr. Philipp Sieger (Swiss Research Institute of Small Business and Entrepreneurship at the University of St. Gallen). Every 2–3 years, a global data collection effort takes place and has previously been conducted seven times (2003, 2004, 2006, 2008, 2011, 2014, 2016).

In 2018, 54 countries participated in GUESSS. This led to a dataset with more than 208’600 completed responses from students from more than 1000 universities. For every participating country, there is one national team which coordinates data collection in that country. There have been numerous resulting academic articles and reports which have disseminated knowledge relating to family firm progression, career choice and entrepreneurial intentionality. GUESSS data has been used for several publications in leading international academic journals such as Journal of Business Venturing (JBV) and Entrepreneurship Theory & Practice (ETP). Impact in practice is generated through numerous international and national project reports, as well as policy recommendations and action.

The GUESSS data collected internationally is disseminated via a series of individual national reports and one integrated international report. The report herein pertains to the results obtained from the study undertaken in KSA in 2018. The global GUESSS report will be released in Summer 2019.

International Report 2016/17



http://www.guesssurvey.org/resources/PDF_InterReports/GUESSS_2016_INT_Report_final5.pdf

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Prof. Philipp Sieger University of Bern / GUESSS Project Manager

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Key Findings of International Report 2016-17

The international GUESSS Project 2016-17 received more than 122,000 completed responses from 50 countries and over 1,000 universities. Selected key findings include:

Career intentions directly after 3rd level: Internationally, the large majority (80.3%) of students intend to become employees directly after their studies, while 8.8% of students intend to work in their own business directly after studies.

Career intentions five years after 3rd level: 38.2% intend to work in their own business five years after completion of their studies. The share of intentional founders in developing countries is considerably higher than in developed countries.

Career intentions by gender: There appears to be a "gender gap" whereby females were found to have weaker entrepreneurial intentions than males, yet this margin varied between countries.

Career intentions toward entrepreneurship is linked to parental background: Students with entrepreneurial parents have stronger entrepreneurial intentions than students without entrepreneurial parents, yet this effect depends on the parents' entrepreneurial performance.

Aspiring Entrepreneurs: There were 21.9% of all students in the international study in the process of creating their own business. 34.9% of them plan to complete the venture creation process within one year. 18.6% intend to create the business alone; all others plan to have co-founders.

Current Entrepreneurs: In the international study, 8.8% of all students already run their own business. On average, these businesses employ 6.3 employees (full-time equivalents).

Ernst and Young (EY) is the global research partner for the GUESSS Research Project

Introduction to the KSA context

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) is an Islamic Arab country located in the Arab peninsula in south-west Asia. KSA is the second largest country in the Arab world, with a population of 33,413.660 million inhabitants in 2018, 37% of which are non-Saudi immigrants seeking economic opportunity. Of the Saudi citizen population, approximately 58% are under the age of 30.

KSA is one of the 20 largest economies in the world. It is the world's largest oil producer, where oil production has served as a source of capital for the government to fund developmental projects and support economic growth. However, the dependency on oil as the main source of income has made the Saudi economy volatile to fluctuations in oil prices leading the government to implement a plan to diversify the economy. In 2016, the government introduced Vision 2030, a plan to reform the Saudi economy towards a more diversified and privatized structure.

Today, entrepreneurship is an essential part of KSA strategic economic planning. In 2016, the Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) Authority (Monsha'at) was established with the aim to support entrepreneurship and SMEs in the country and increase their contribution to the economic development. The government has also introduced many policies and public programs to facilitate access to capital and support start-ups. Additionally, key stakeholders such as universities and corporates have initiated programs aimed at serving entrepreneurs.

According to the 2017/2018 KSA Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) report, 69.7% of the Saudi population believe that starting a new business is a desirable career choice. Similarly, 69.2% believe that those successful in starting a new business enjoy a high level of social status and respect. These results are very close to the global percentages reported in the global GEM report 2017/2018. Such positive perspective indicates that the societal environment in KSA is considered supportive for start-ups and entrepreneurial activities.

Historically, higher education in KSA has received a huge support from the government as part of the development process. Currently, KSA has 42 public and private universities, and 13 community colleges with a total number of around 2 million students. The Ministry of Education is currently encouraging the increased inclusion of entrepreneurship courses and initiatives in universities as part of the its strategic objectives to achieve Vision 2030. The establishment of Prince Mohammad bin Salman College of Business and Entrepreneurship (MBSC) in 2016 is one key example of this governmental support for entrepreneurship education in the country.

Since entrepreneurship is one of the main drivers in the development and diversification of the Saudi economy from reliance on oil, investigating the Saudi students' intention to pursue an entrepreneurial career path is pivotal for the future of the country. Thus, the results of this report are instrumental for practitioners and policy makers in making plans to enhance the entrepreneurial spirit of the young generation.

GUESSS Study – Saudi Arabia 2018/2019

The international data study was conducted between September and November of 2018. For the KSA study, the online survey was disseminated by Dr. Dalal Alrubaishi and Dr. Ghadah Alarifi through a number of participating universities in the country. In the KSA study 1641 students completed the survey. The analysis of the data and creation of the report (English edition) was conducted by Dr. Roisin Lyons and Dr. Ann Largey.

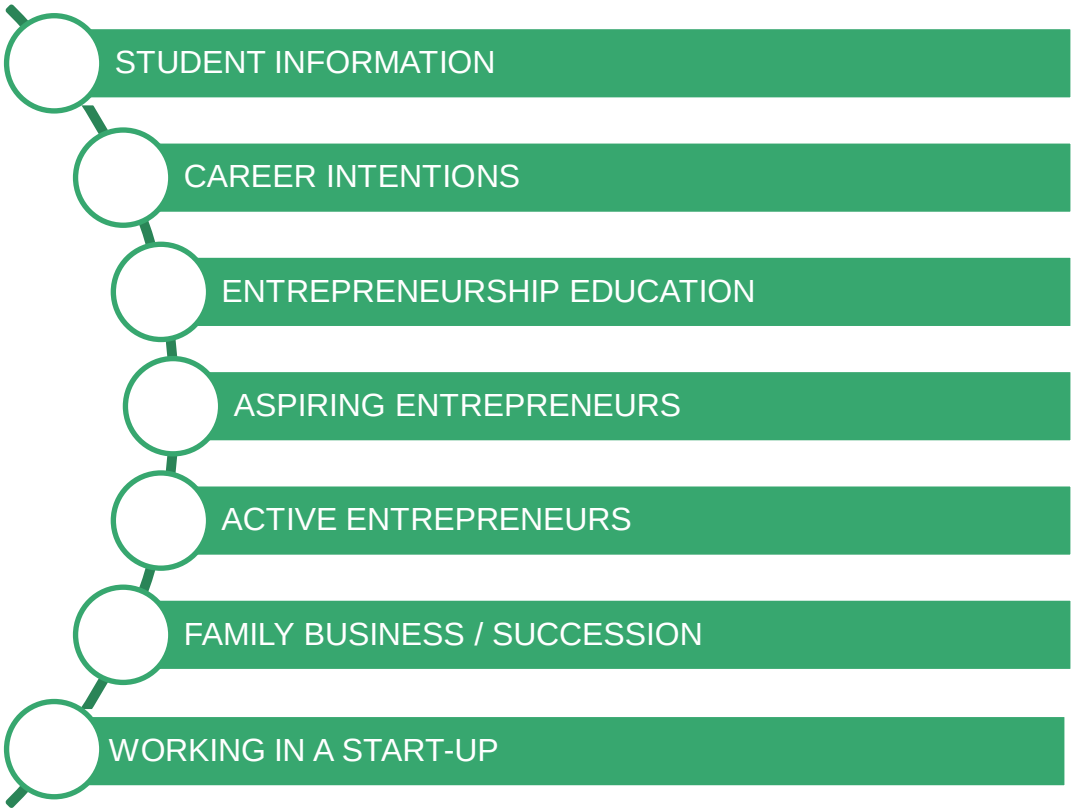

Figure 1: Elements in the Report

1. Student Information

1.1 Age and Gender of students

Student respondent ages ranged from 16 to 58 years old. However, they were predominantly under 25 years old (96.9% were 24 or younger, with the average age of respondents 21.3 years).

Age (years)	*Freq.*	*%*
<20	412	27.02
20-24	990	64.92
25-29	75	4.92
30-34	28	1.84
35-39	10	0.66
40+	10	0.65
Total	**1,525**	**100**

Table 1: Age of respondents

The majority of the student respondents of the survey were female (reasonably due to the participating universities). In total, 1446 or 88.7% of the sample was female, with 185 or 11.3% male student responses. This should be considered a factor which may skew the findings in the report.

1.2 Nationality and Marital Status

The majority of students stated their nationality was Saudi (N=1329, 94%), while 4.24% were identified as being of other Arab nationalities: Syrian (N=25, 1.77%), Yemeni (N=18, 1.27%), Egyptian (N=7. 0.5%), Jordanian (N=5, 0.35%) and Palestinian (N=5, 0.35%). Just 24 students stated 'other' nationalities (1.7%).

Nationality	*Freq.*	*%*
Saudi	1,329	94.06
Yemeni	18	1.27
Syrian	25	1.77
Palestinian	5	0.35
Egyptian	7	0.5
Jordanian	5	0.35
Other	24	1.7
Total	**1,413**	**100**

Table 2: Nationality of respondents

The vast majority of the group noted themselves as single (90.8% or 1'482) while 8.46% (138) were married. A further sample of twelve respondents (0.74%) noted they were divorced.

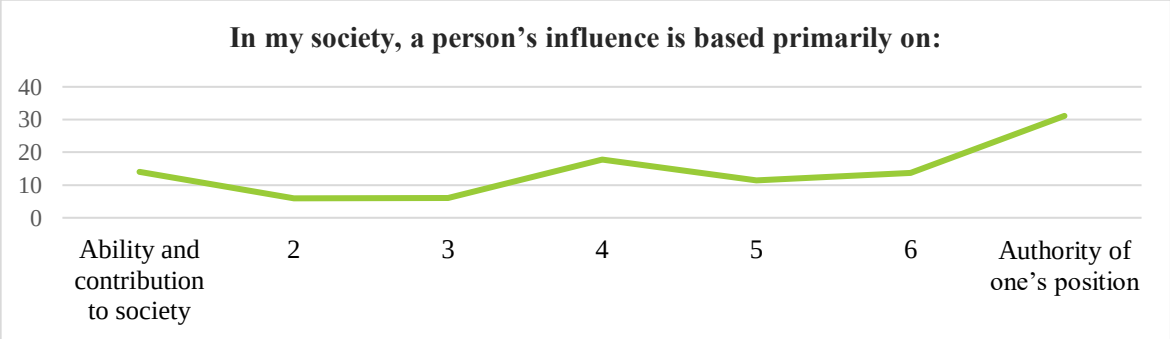

Figure 2: Power Distance Perceptions

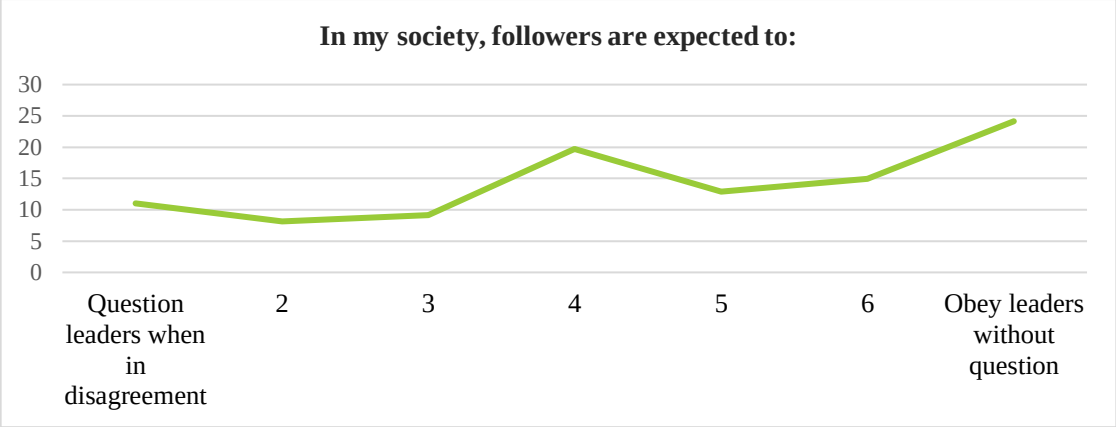

Figure 3: Power Distance

1.3 Universities

Students from more than 15 universities across Saudi participated in the survey. The majority of responses (88%) came from five universities: Princess Nourah University (N=948, 58%), Al-Baha University (N=200, 12%), King Saud University (N=145, 9%), Prince Sultan University (N=102, 6%) and Jaizan University (N=57, 3%). It is notable that more than half the responses were from Princess Nourah University, an all-female institution. This partly explains the gender imbalance in responses.

1.4 Level of Education and Field of Study

In line with the age range of the student respondents, the vast majority (N=1510, 92.3%) are enrolled in undergraduate programmes. Masters and PhD students account for 2.87% (N=47) of the respondents, while 4.83% (N=79) are enrolled in 'other' programmes of study.

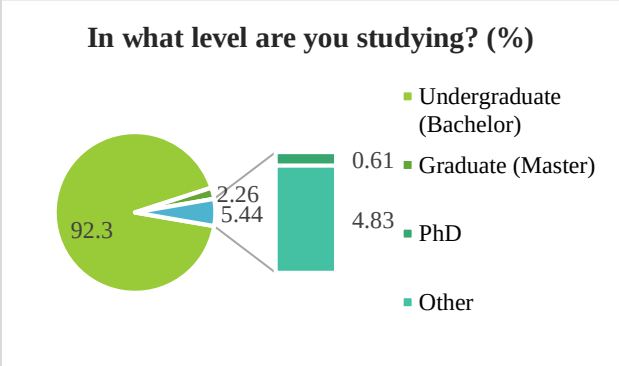

Figure 4: Level of Study of respondents

Almost 92% of student respondents (N=1466) started their studies in or after 2014, within five years of completing the survey. The larger proportion of students responding started in 2015 (N=374, 23.38%) and 2016 (N=333, 20.81%). These were most likely students in the 3rd or 4th year of their programme at the date of survey completion.

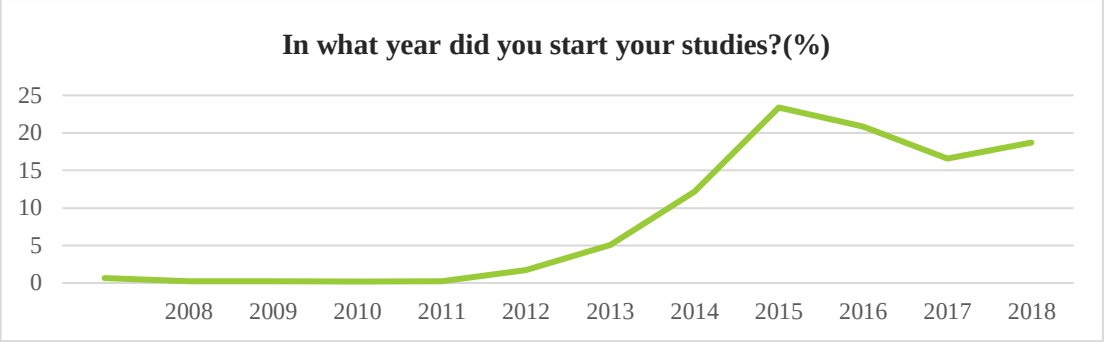

Figure 5: Year of Enrolment in University

The majority of students indicated that they were full time students (N=1532, 93.4%) with only 6.6% (109 students), noting they have a regular job in parallel to their studies.

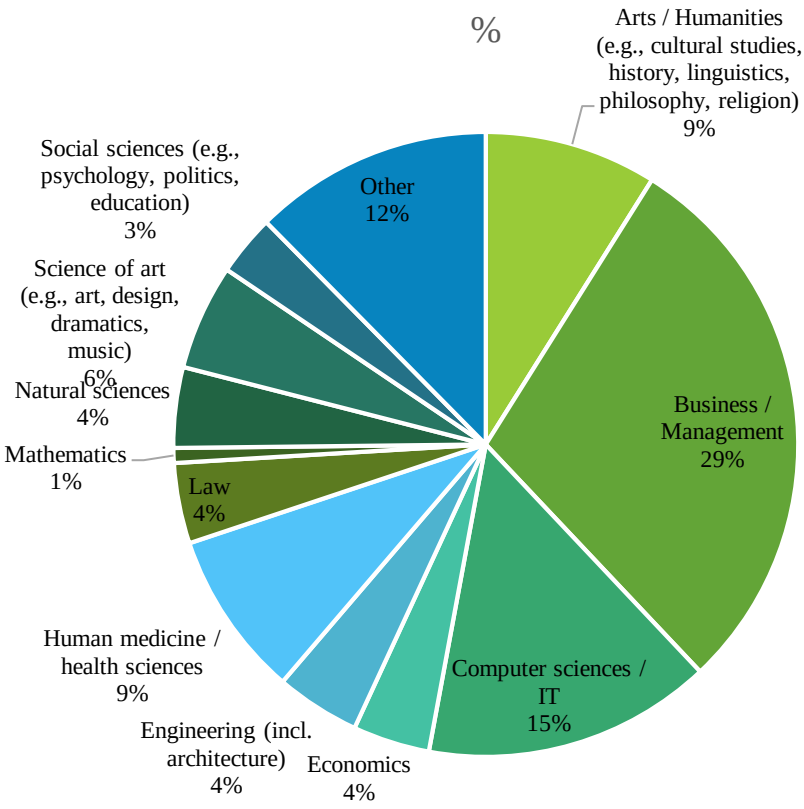

Figure 6: Programme of Study of respondents

Only 89 students or 5.5% of the sample noted that they were international exchange students. Students were also asked to state their degree or programme discipline within their university. The largest share of students stated their field of study was business/management (N=452, 29%). Together the disciplines of Business/management, Computer Sciences/IT (N=233, 15%), Arts/Humanities (9%) and Human medicine/health sciences (9%) accounted for over 60% of the students. Of the remaining 28% for whom disciplines were identified, responses were spread thinly across them, the smallest proportion identifying as mathematics students (1%).

2. Student Career Choice Intentions

2.1 Career Intentions of Student Sample

Students were asked their career plans for the future; focusing on what they intend to pursue immediately after graduation and where they could see themselves working five years following graduation.

Table 3: Career Intentions of respondents (Post-graduation and Five years post-graduation).

	Right after studies		5 years later		Change
I want to be….	***N***	***%***	***N***	***%***	
1. an employee in a small business (1-49 employees)	164	9.99	41	2.5	**7.49%**
2. an employee in a medium-sized business (50-249 employees)	272	16.58	66	4.02	**12.6%**
3. an employee in a large business (250 or more employees)	414	25.23	246	14.99	**10.2%**
4. an employee in a non-profit organization	31	1.89	27	1.65	**0.2%**
5. an employee in academia (academic career path)	163	9.93	178	10.85	**0.9%**
6. an employee in public service	320	19.5	263	16.03	**3.5%**
7. a founder (entrepreneur) working in my own business	93	5.67	598	36.44	**30.8%**
8. a successor in my parents'/family's business	17	1.04	20	1.22	**0.2%**
9. a successor in another business	6	0.37	13	0.79	**0.4%**
10. Other / do not know yet	161	9.81	189	11.52	**1.7%**

As seen in Table 3 above, directly after university the highest number of students (N=414) would like to become an employee in a large business with 250 or more employees (25.2%). The next favorable option is to be an employee in the public service (N=320, 19.5%), while the least popular career option for intending graduates is succession in either a family business (1.04%, N= 17) or another business (0.37%, N=6).

Considering the students intending career ambitions five years after graduation, a number of changes can be seen. The most popular career option at this stage is to be a founder (entrepreneur) with a majority of 36.44% of the student responses (N=598). This is an increase of 30.8% on the number considering the career immediately after graduation.

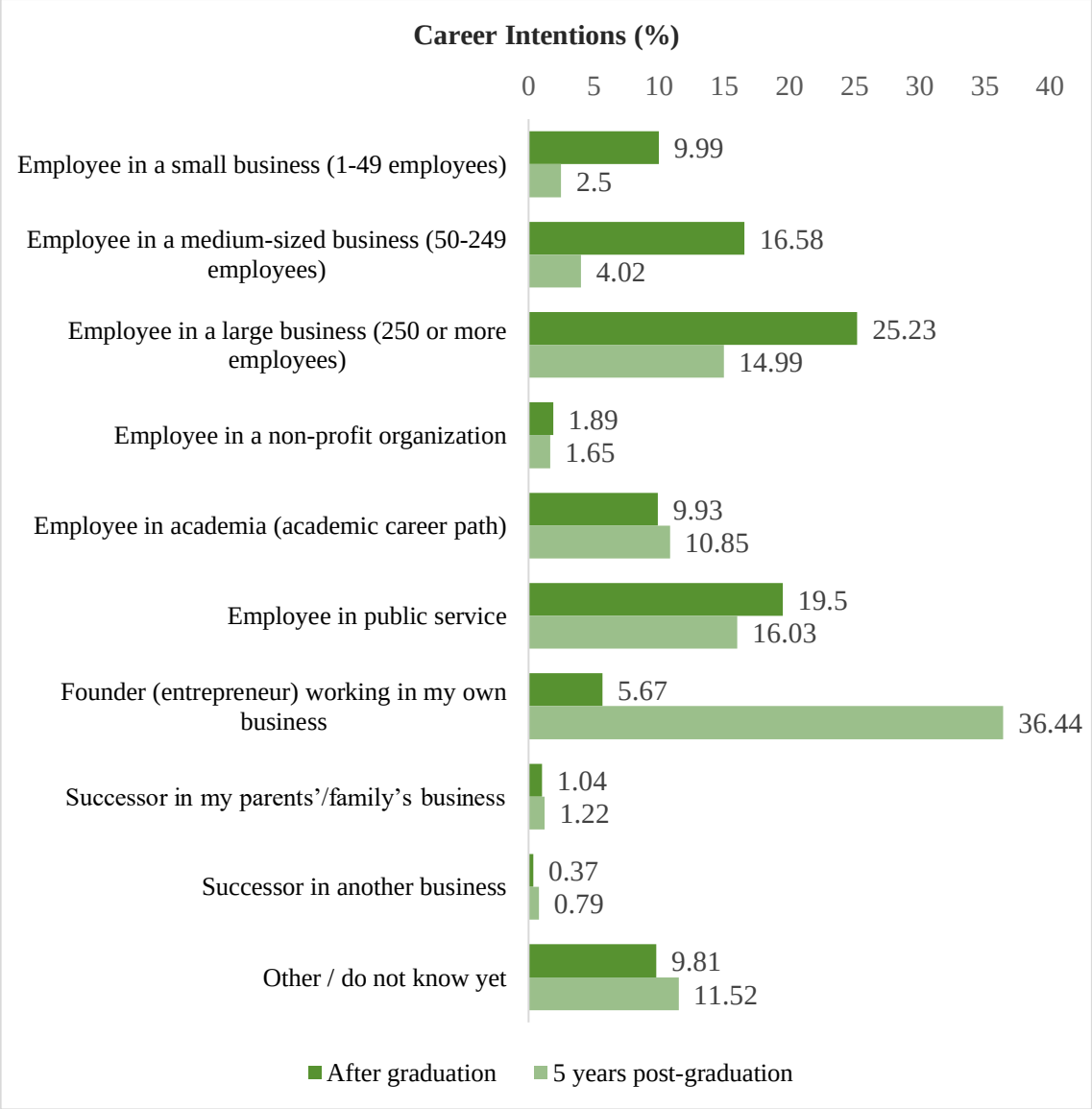

Figure 7: Career Intentions of Respondents (Post-graduation and Five years Post-graduation).

A drop of 12.6% and 10.2% was noted in the students who felt they would like to work in a medium and large business respectively. The option of succession rose marginally in the career intentions of students five years on, however the career option of working as an employee in a non-profit organisation was low at both stages (1.89% after graduation, 1.65% five years later).

In order to compare these results, the career intentions of the KSA sample was studied against the global average of the previous survey GUESSS collection (2016/17). The career options were grouped into four categories – employee, founder, successor and other. As seen in Table 4 below, in investigating the international dataset of the GUESSS report 2016/17, the employee to entrepreneur trend was noticed in almost all countries. The average 'founder' percentage was found to be an average of 8.8% of the international student sample directly after graduating

college. However, 5 years after finishing university level education, 38.2 percent of the student sample intended to be entrepreneurs. Comparing the other metrics to the average from the 16/17 GUESSS dataset, it is noted that the rates of intended succession are lower than the global average.

Table 4: Career intentions KSA 2018/19 versus Global GUESSS average 2016/17

	Post- graduation		5 years post-graduation		GUESSS 16/17 Post-graduation	GUESSS 2016/17 5 years post-graduation
	N	*%*	*N*	*%*	*%*	*%*
Employee	1364	83.12	821	50.04	80.3	46.6
Founder	93	5.67	598	36.44	8.8	38.2
Successor	23	1.41	33	2.01	2.7	4.8
Other	161	9.81	189	11.52	8.2	10.3

3. Intentions towards Entrepreneurship

3.1 Entrepreneurial Intentions of Students

Students were presented with a number of statements relating to their entrepreneurial intentions. A total of 897 students responded to this set of questions. As seen in Table 5 many students had strong intentions towards entrepreneurship, the mean entrepreneurial intentions of the cohort was 4.40.

Table 5: Entrepreneurial Intentions of KSA students

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Uncertain	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean
I am ready to do anything to be an entrepreneur.	12.15	9.59	11.82	17.06	14.72	8.92	***25.75***	4.42
My professional goal is to become an entrepreneur.	***18.84***	11.15	10.26	15.61	13.71	11.48	***18.95***	4.04
I will make every effort to start and run my own business.	11.93	9.03	11.71	15.61	14.94	11.93	***24.86***	4.48
I am determined to create a business in the future.	12.85	9.27	10.17	15.2	13.3	11.4	***27.82***	4.52
I have very seriously thought of starting a business.	17.15	11.21	12.33	15.81	16.03	9.08	***18.39***	4.03
I have the strong intention to start a business someday.	10.38	7.37	8.26	11.94	13.62	13.73	***34.71***	4.91

From the data it is found that the average percentage of the respondents with some degree of entrepreneurial intentions was 50.6%. Putting that into context, the GEM (Global Entrepreneurship Monitor) is recorded annually noting the entrepreneurial intentions of a sample of 16-64 year olds. In 2018 a selection of the calculated %EI rates were as follows:

- 38.2% in the UAE
- 26.8% in KSA
- 15.4% in Ireland
- 59.8% in Egypt
- 5.9% in Germany

3.2 Intentions to Found a Business by Field of Study

A comparison was drawn between students' field of study and student intentions (directly after graduation and five years after graduation).

Table 6: Entrepreneurial Intentions by Discipline

	Right after finishing studies		**5 years after finishing studies**	
	N	***%***	***N***	***%***
Arts / Humanities (e.g., cultural studies, history, linguistics, philosophy, religion)	4	3%	36	26%
Business / Management	32	7%	211	47%
Computer sciences / IT	12	5%	71	30%
Economics	4	6%	25	40%
Engineering (incl. architecture)	4	6%	29	43%
Human medicine / health sciences	6	4%	36	27%
Law	3	5%	23	35%
Mathematics	1	8%	4	33%
Natural sciences	1	2%	11	17%
Science of art (e.g., art, design, dramatics, music)	13	15%	46	54%
Social sciences (e.g., psychology, politics, ed)	3	6%	16	33%
Other	9	5%	59	31%

Does the field of study impact the student's intentions towards entrepreneurship? Findings indicate that students of Science of art (e.g., art, design, dramatics, music) were more likely to pursue entrepreneurship directly after their studies than any other field (15%), with natural sciences reporting the lowest intentions (2%). Five years after graduation, it was again the students of the Science of Art (including art, design, music etc.) that had the highest intentions towards founding their own business (54%) and the natural sciences lowest at 17%. Students of business/management entrepreneurial intentions were 40% higher 5 years' post-graduation, moving from 32 students intending on entrepreneurship post-graduation to 211 five years following their university degree.

3.3 Share of Aspiring (Nascent) and Active entrepreneurs

Students were asked: 1) Are you currently trying to start your own business/to become self-employed? 2) Are you already running your own business/are you already self-employed? (N=1641). As can be seen in Table 7, 55.1% of students indicated that they are not currently trying to start their own businesses/become self-employed, and 90.19% are not currently involved in their own businesses/are self-employed. Those that responded 'yes' to either question will be explored in more detail in Sections 5 and 6 of the report. Based on this response, Sections 6 and 7 will explore these students in more detail.

Table 7: Active and Nascent Entrepreneurs in KSA sample

	Are you currently trying to start your own business/to become self-employed?		**Are you already running your own business?**	
	Number	%	Number	%
Yes	730	44.49%	161	9.81%
No	911	55.1%	1480	90.19%
Total	1641	100%	1641	100%

Considering the gender of the respondent, these criteria were compared. Using statistical analyses (Chi-square analysis) the differing results between genders was found to be statistically significant, with results suggesting a positive association between being male and starting own business.

Table 8: Gender and Start-up stage

	Are you currently trying to start your own business /become self-employed			***Are you already running your own business/are you already self-employed***		
	Male	***Female***	***Total***	***Male***	***Female***	***Total***
No	84	823	907	158	1.316	1,474
Yes	101	623	724	27	130	157
Total	185	1,446	1,631	185	1,446	1,631

3.4 Attitudes and Perceptions of Entrepreneurship

When asked to consider entrepreneurship and being an entrepreneur, students were asked to rate the questions in Figure 8 below from 1 (not at all) to 7 (very much). The most positively rated question was "if I had the opportunity and resources, I would become an entrepreneur".

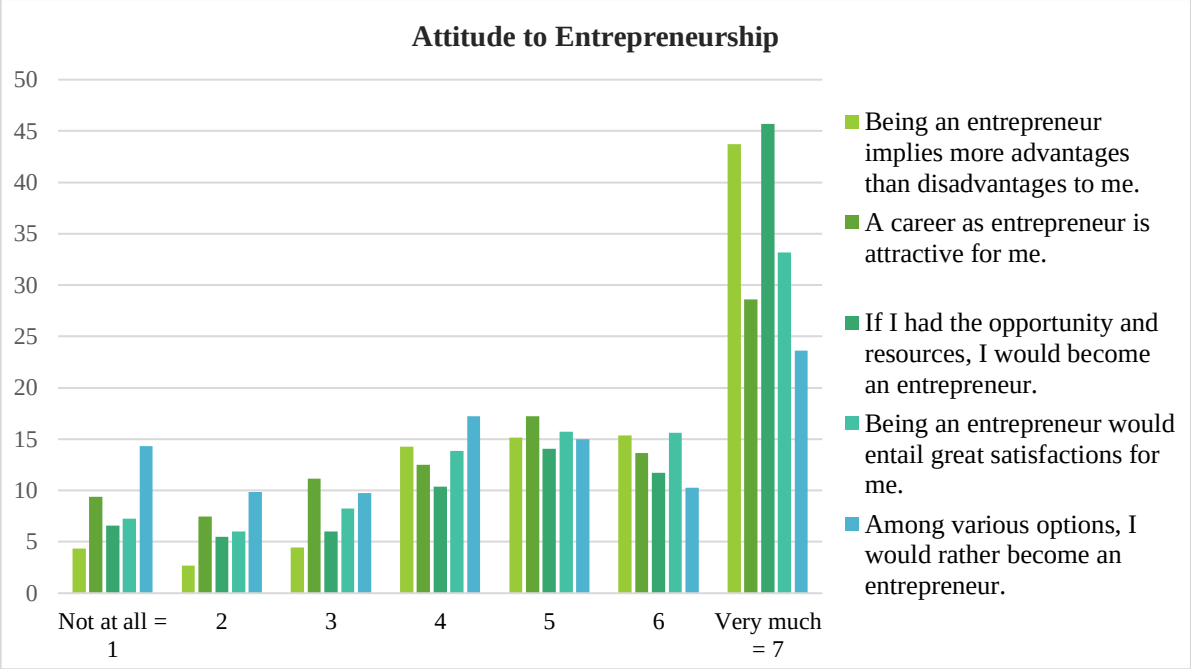

Figure 8: Respondent attitude to Entrepreneurship

3.5 Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy

Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy (ESE) is based on an individual's belief in their own capability to attain success and manage challenging goals during the new venture creation. The scale consists of items relating to an individual's perception of their own ability to do certain entrepreneurial tasks. As shown in Figure 9, the student sample noted the highest perceived competence in "being a leader and communicator" but the lowest in "building up a professional network".

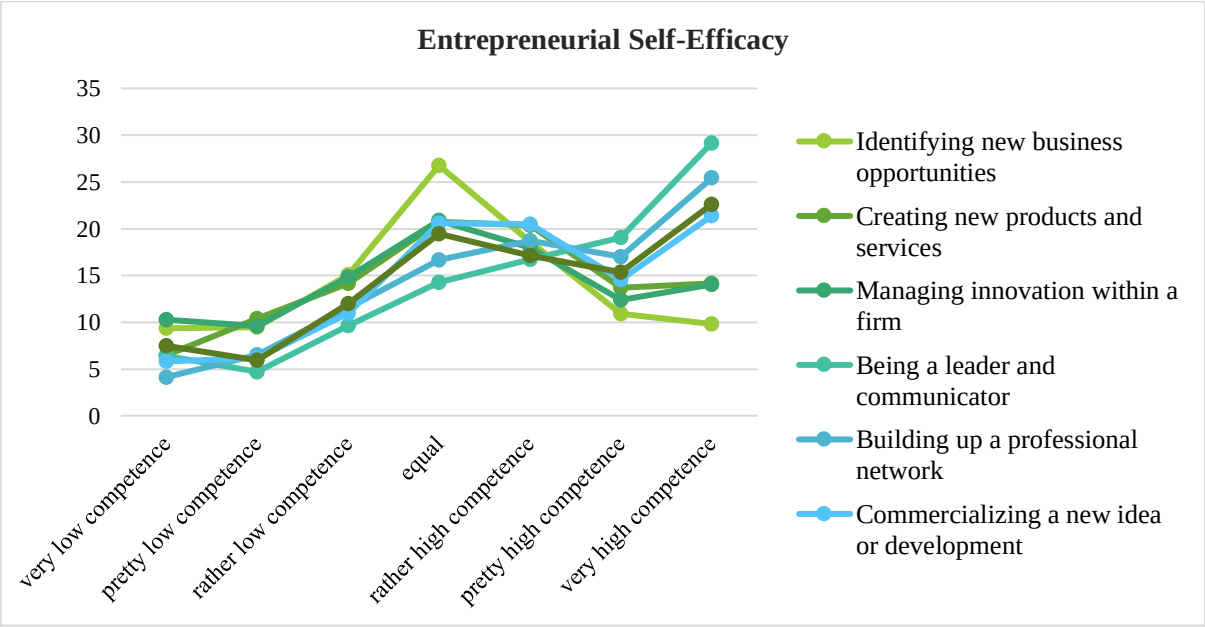

Figure 9: Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy

3.6 Society Perceptions

A factor which can affect the choice to become an entrepreneur is the reaction of the ecosystem surrounding the individual. Considering this aspect, the student sample were asked "If you would pursue a career as an entrepreneur, how would people in your environment react?" on a scale from 1 (very negatively) to 7 (very positively). They were asked to record the perceived reactions of close family, friends and fellow students. As shown in Table 9 and Figure 10 students considered that all would be very positive about such a career choice.

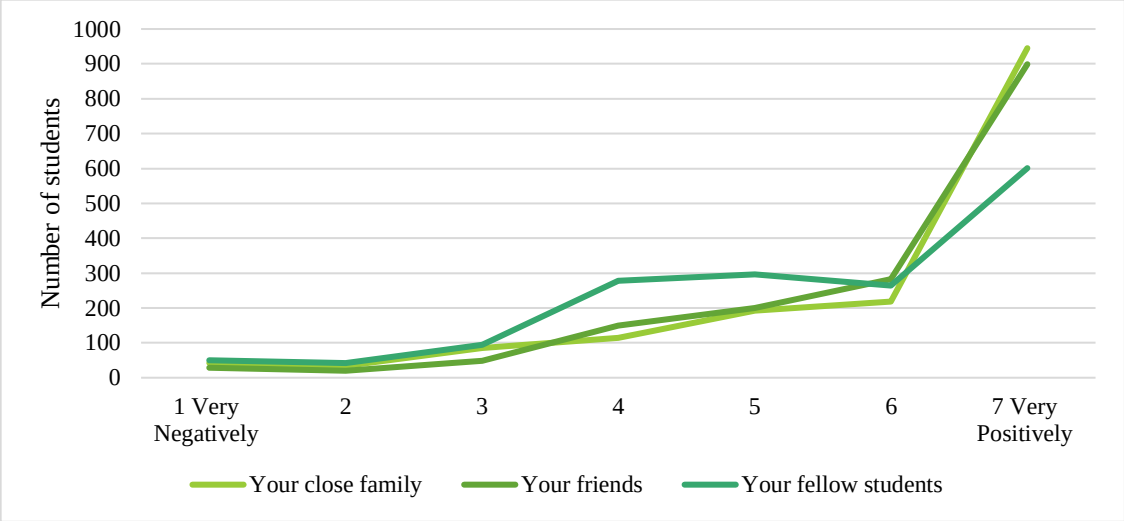

Figure 10: Reactions of Ecosystem to Entrepreneurship

Table 9: Reactions of Ecosystem to Entrepreneurship

	Your close family	Your close family	Your friends	Your friends	Your fellow students	Your fellow students
	N	*%*	*N*	*%*	*N*	*%*
1	42	2.58	28	1.72	50	3.08
2	34	2.08	20	1.23	42	2.58
3	85	5.21	48	2.95	94	5.78
4	115	7.05	150	9.21	278	17.1
5	192	11.77	200	12.29	297	18.27
6	218	13.37	283	17.38	264	16.24
7	945	57.94	899	55.22	601	36.96
Total	1,631	100	1,628	100	1,626	100

(1=very negatively, 7=very positively)

4. Entrepreneurship and Education

4.1 Institutional Support for Entrepreneurship

Students were asked to what extent the atmosphere at their university inspires them to develop ideas for new businesses. The results showed that 41% of the students agreed with the statement to some extent, whereas 37.8% disagreed to varying degrees (See Figure 11 below). When asked if their university encouraged students to engage in entrepreneurial activities, over half of the sample was in agreement to some extent (53.1%). Students were also asked if there was a favourable climate for becoming an entrepreneur at their university. The results showed a wide spectrum in this regard as that some students felt their university had a favourable climate for entrepreneurship with 15.9% indicating strong agreement with this statement, while 14.7 % were in total disagreement.

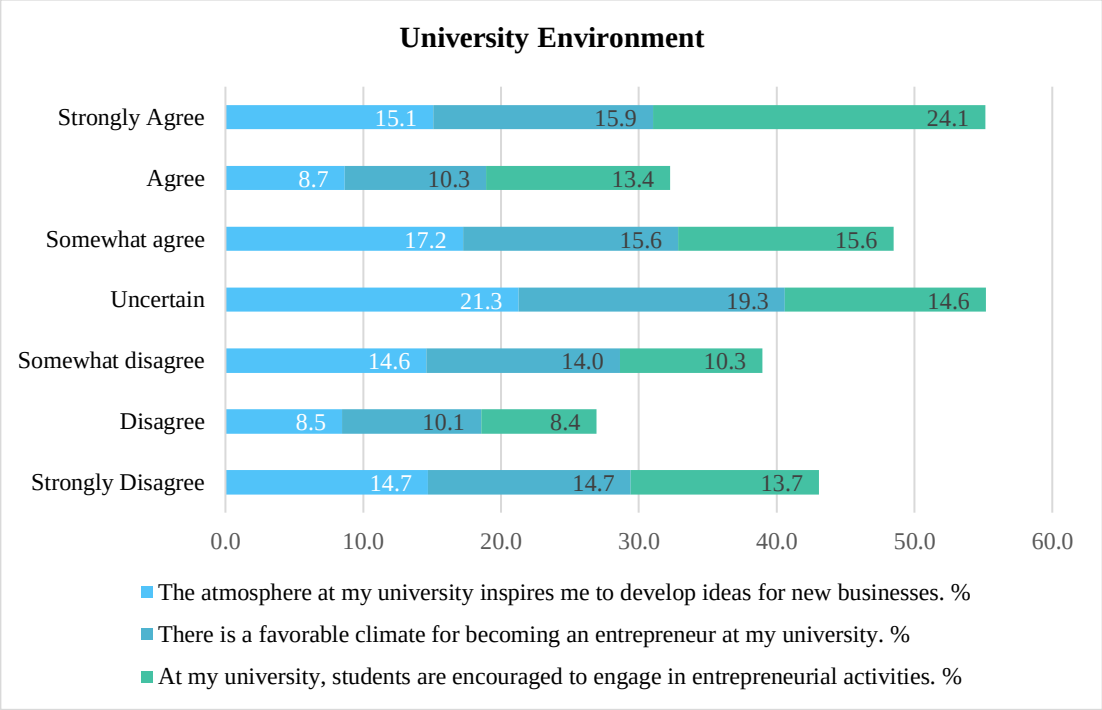

Figure 11: University Support for Innovation

4.2 Within Course Development of Entrepreneurial Competencies

The student sample was asked to what extent they would agree that their studies helped them to develop certain competencies and knowledge relating to entrepreneurship. Students strongly agreed with the item ‘my course enhances my ability to identify an opportunity’ (18.4%), and in their network building opportunities (23.4% Strongly Agree). The item that received the strongest disagreement was ‘my course enhanced my practical management skills to start a business’ (21.9%).

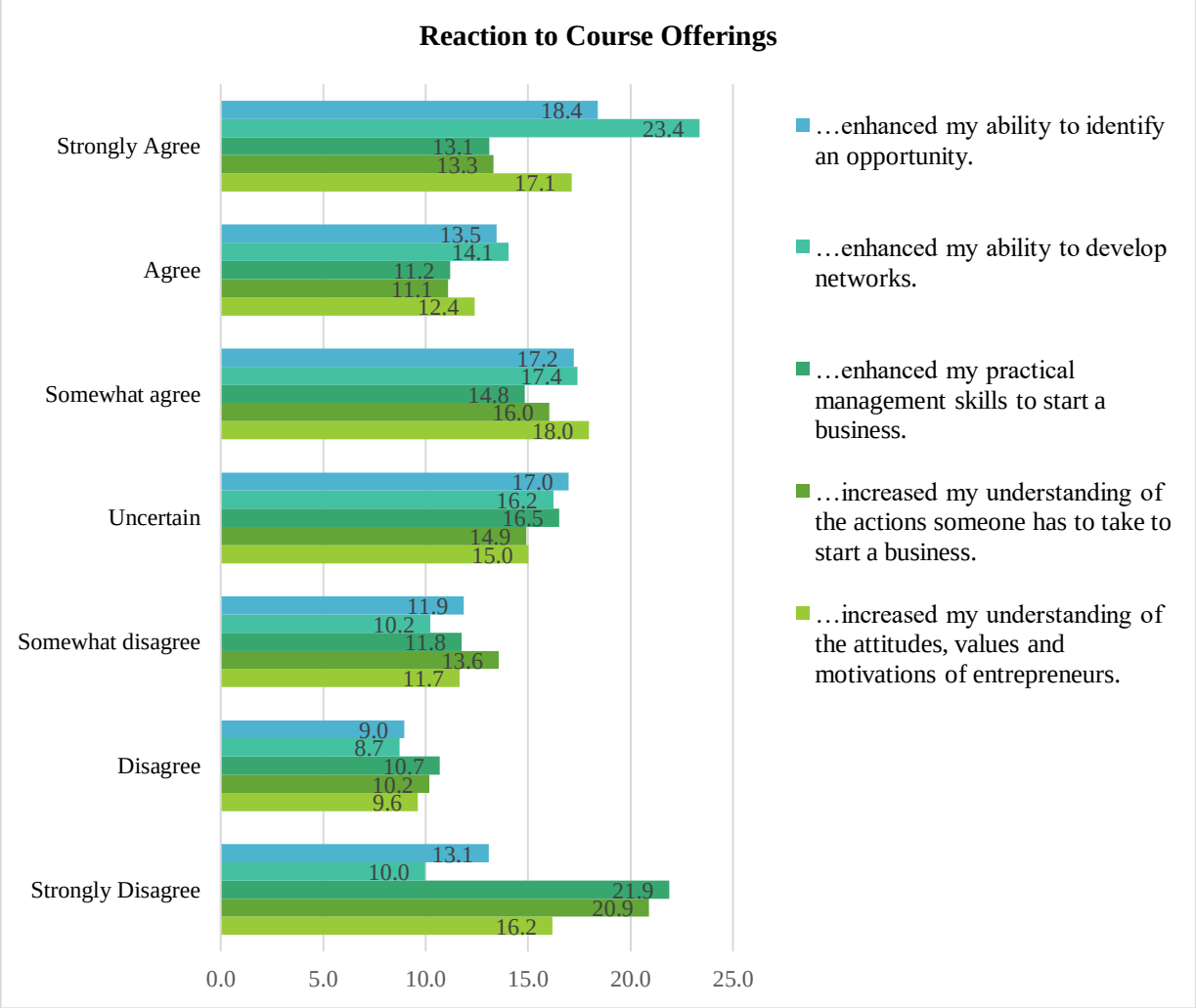

Figure 12: Reaction to course offerings

4.3 Students taking Entrepreneurship Related Classes

The graphic below (Figure 13) shows the extent to which students in the KSA university context reported to be taking an entrepreneurship course offering (ranging from an optional module to studying it in a specific programme). The results indicate that 48.3% (N=792) of students had not yet taken an entrepreneurship course. There were 11.0% of the students who had attended an entrepreneurship course as an elective (N=180), while 30.2% had attended at least one as a compulsory part of their course (N=496). Only 11.1% of the student sample were studying on a specific entrepreneurship program (N=182). When asked if the entrepreneurial reputation of the university was the deciding factor of choosing to study there, 86.4% of the students answered no.

Table 10: Participation in entrepreneurship courses

Participation in Entrepreneurship Courses	(N of 1641)	%
I have not attended a course on entrepreneurship so far.	792	48.3
I have attended at least one entrepreneurship course as elective.	180	11.0
I have attended at least one entrepreneurship course as compulsory part of my studies.	496	30.2
I am studying in a specific program on entrepreneurship.	182	11.1
I chose to study at this university mainly because of its strong entrepreneurial reputation.	223	13.6

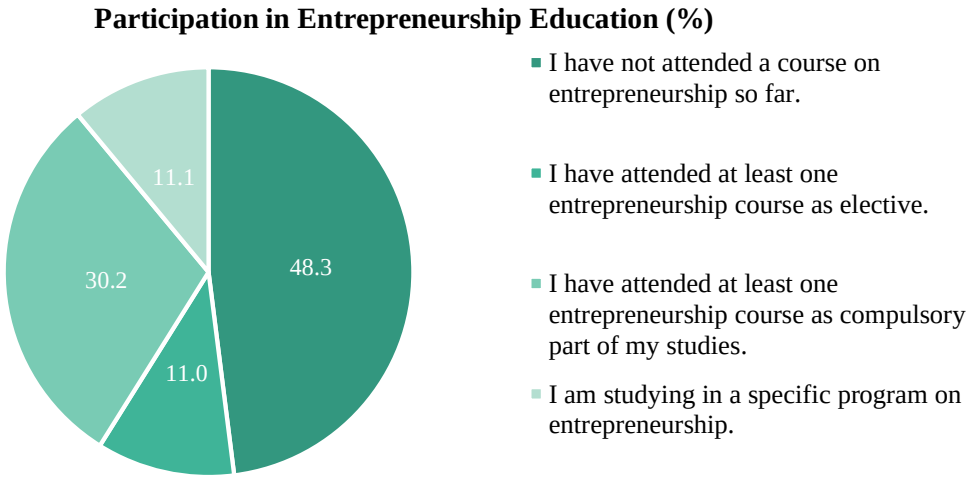

Figure 13: Participation in Entrepreneurship Education

5. Aspiring (Nascent) Entrepreneurs

5.1 Timing of Forthcoming Business

In total 21% (N=345) of students who responded were identified as Aspiring/Nascent Entrepreneurs and were asked about their plans for start-up. 15% intended to start their company immediately after finishing their studies and over half (55%) intended to start within eighteen months of completing studies.

Just over half the students (51%) were unsure whether they wanted the business to be their full-time occupation, with the remainder roughly equally split between stating certainly yes it would be their full-time occupation (23%) and no, it would not (24%).

22% of those who wished to found a new businesses had previous experience, having created another business before.

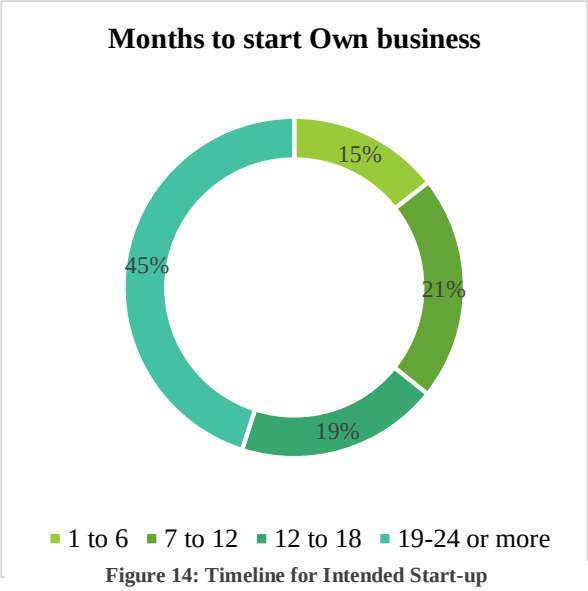

Figure 14: Timeline for Intended Start-up

5.2 Approximate Ownership in Business

From the nascent student entrepreneur sample (N=345) it was reported that 21.6% of students intend to have sole ownership of their company, with another 36.3% intending to maintain majority ownership (i.e., owning 51% to 99%) while 30.1% expect an equal ownership share.

When asked whether they were acting alone or with others to found the company, almost 38% reported they were acting alone. Approximately 21% had one co-founder and 11.5% had two co-founders. 25.8% wished to find co-founders but had not yet.

In terms of the idea for the company, 56% stated it was their idea, while 33% reported having developed the idea along with their co-founders.

5.3 Economic Sector of Forthcoming Business

The most popular sector for the new business was Advertising/Design/Marketing, with 20.1% indicating this area. Other relatively popular areas were Trade (8.84%), Financial services (8.84%), Information Technology and Communications (8.23%) and Consulting (7.6%). Notably, a large proportion (23%) indicated ‘Other’, considering their intended start-up industry did not fall into any of the categories itemised in the survey.

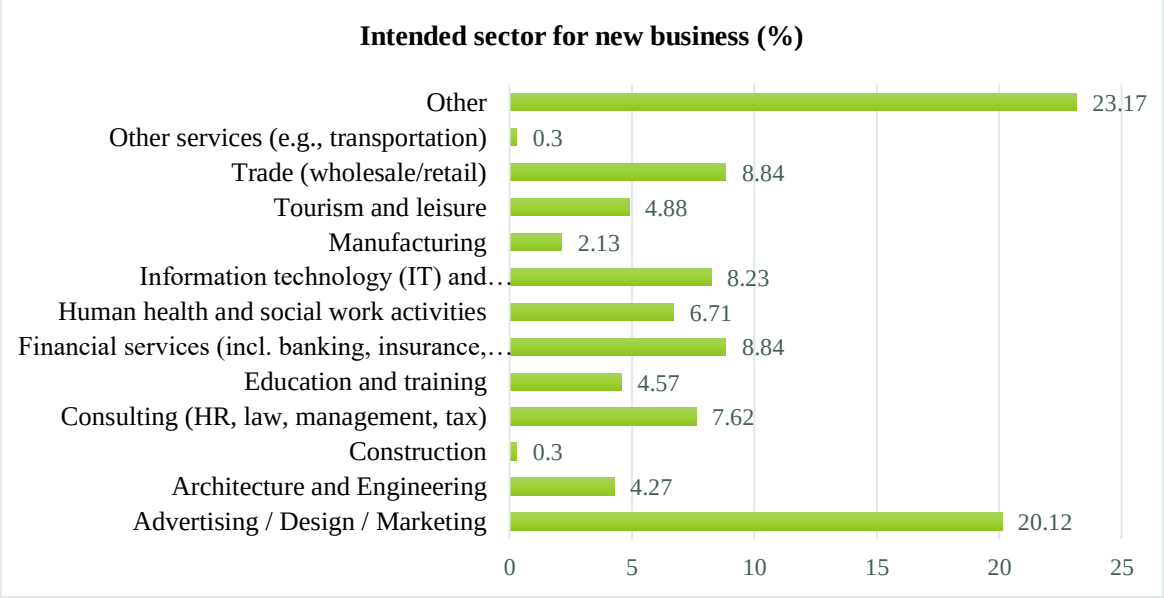

Figure 15: Industry for Intended start-up

5.4 Activities Undertaken towards Entrepreneurship

Students were asked to note the activities relating to start-up which they have already completed. Over a quarter of the nascent entrepreneurs had discussed their product or business idea with potential customers (26.7%), collected information about markets or competitors (25.5%) or written a business plan (23.2%). A lower proportion, approximately 8%, reported starting product or service development. Similar numbers (8%) reported purchasing material, equipment or machinery for the business. Almost half (47%) had, as yet, taken none of the listed actions towards starting their business at the time of survey completion (See Figure 16).

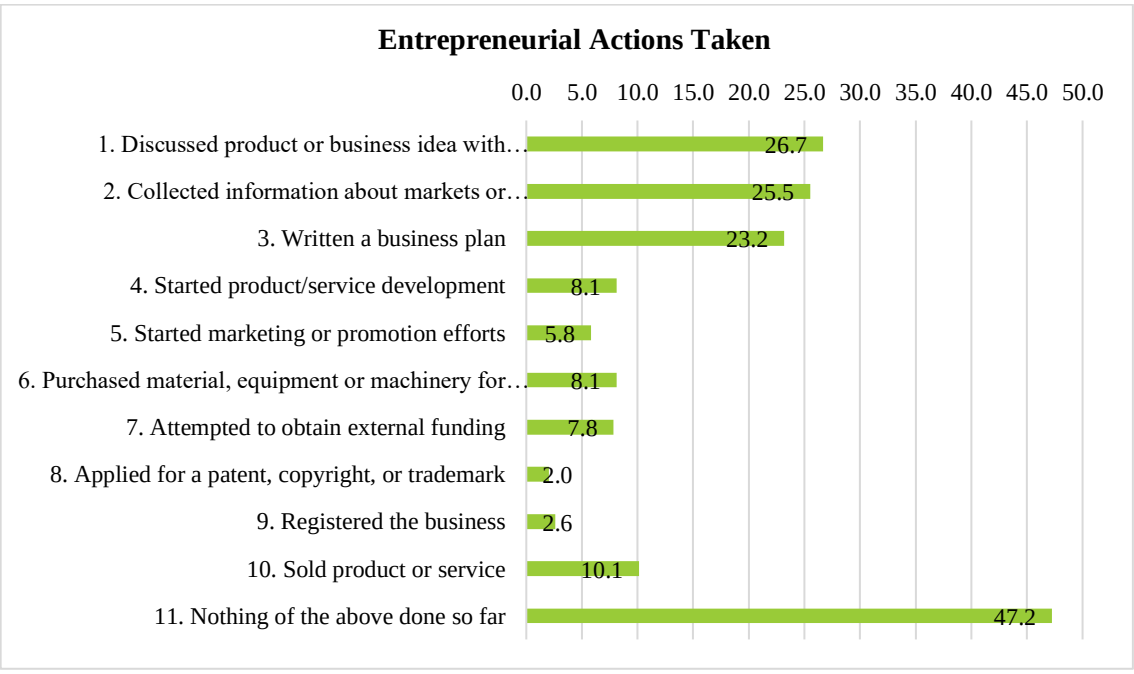

Figure 16: Entrepreneurial Actions Taken

6. Active Entrepreneurs

6.1 Student Company Information

Within the sample of 1641 students who took the GUESSS survey in Saudi Arabia, 161 (9.81%) students noted that they currently have their own company. This sample group were asked to discuss their start-up in more detail. From the survey responses it was noted that the majority of these companies are new with 31% noting establishment in 2017 and 33% in 2018. The student entrepreneurs noted that their companies are quite small with none (31.4%) and one (28.3%) employees at the time of survey. The majority of the companies started by the student respondents are in 'Other' (34.6%) and in 'Advertising/ Design/ Marketing' (23.1%).

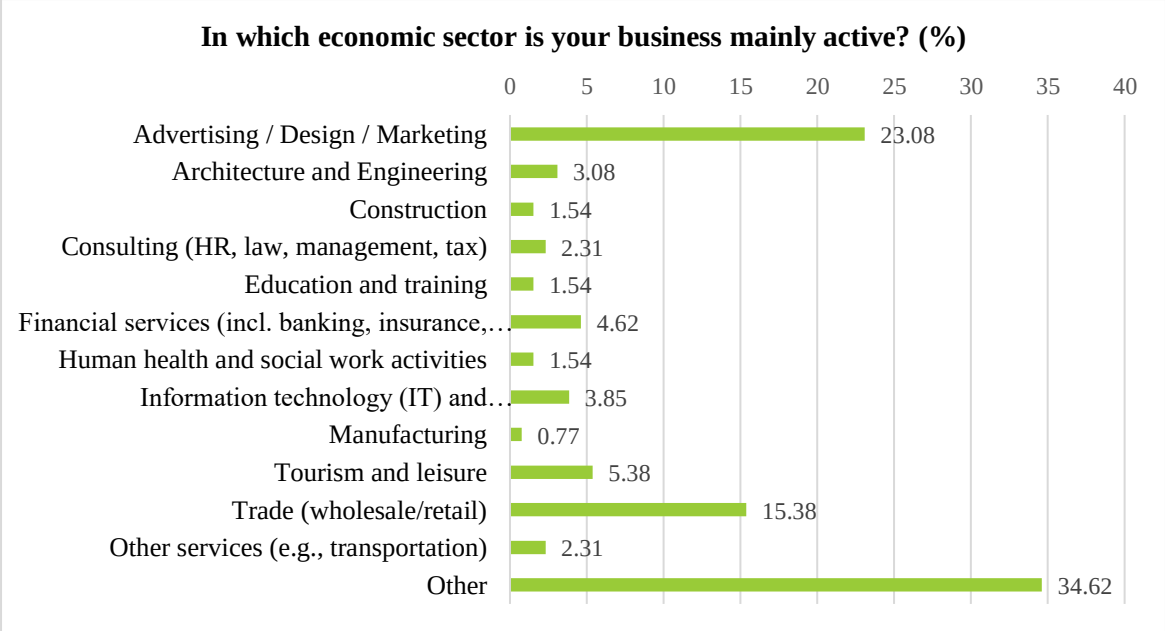

Figure 17: Sector of Start-up

Table 11: Gender Balance in Start-up

What is the share of females among all the persons working for your business, including yourself?		
	N	**Percent**
0%	48	33.1
1-49%	32	22.07
50%	12	8.28
51-99%	9	6.21
100%	44	30.34
Total	145	100

Of the student entrepreneur respondents, 28.1% (N=41/146) wanted this business to become their main occupation once graduated. The majority (N=54, 37%) did not know yet and 35.9% did not want it to be their main occupation.

A number of these startups were considered to have no females in the team (33.1%, N=48) which is high considering the number of male respondents to the overall survey. The next highest category was fully female start-up (30.3%, N=44).

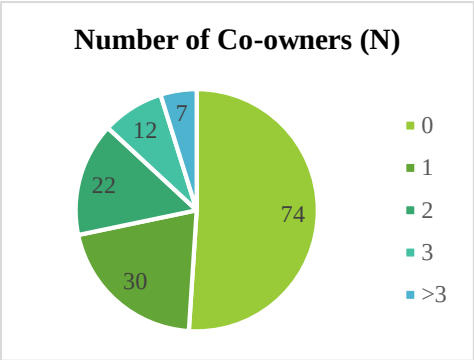

Figure 18: Start-up Team

When asked about the start-up team, 51% (N=74/145) noted that they were the sole founder of the company. However, of the students in a start-up team, the majority noted that they had relatives in their ownership team (N=40/71, 56.3%). In addition, 80.3% of the students noted that their ownership team did not consist of fellow students (N=57).

6.2 Student Company Business Environment, Behavior and Performance

Considering the start-up itself, students were asked to compare their company to competitors on a number of levels. The respondents feared their companies were underperforming on job creation, but were more innovative and had higher profit growth (Figure 19).

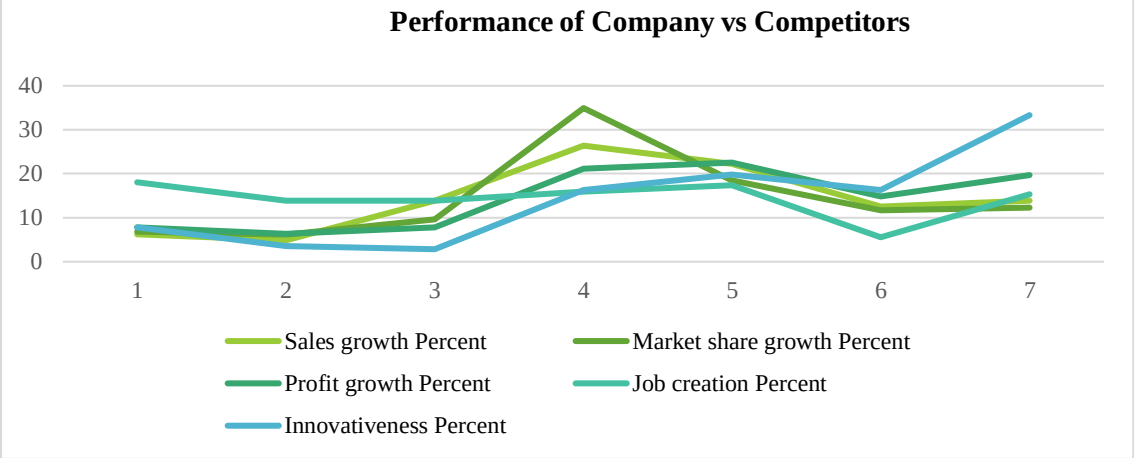

Figure 19: Company Performance (1=much worse, 7=much better)

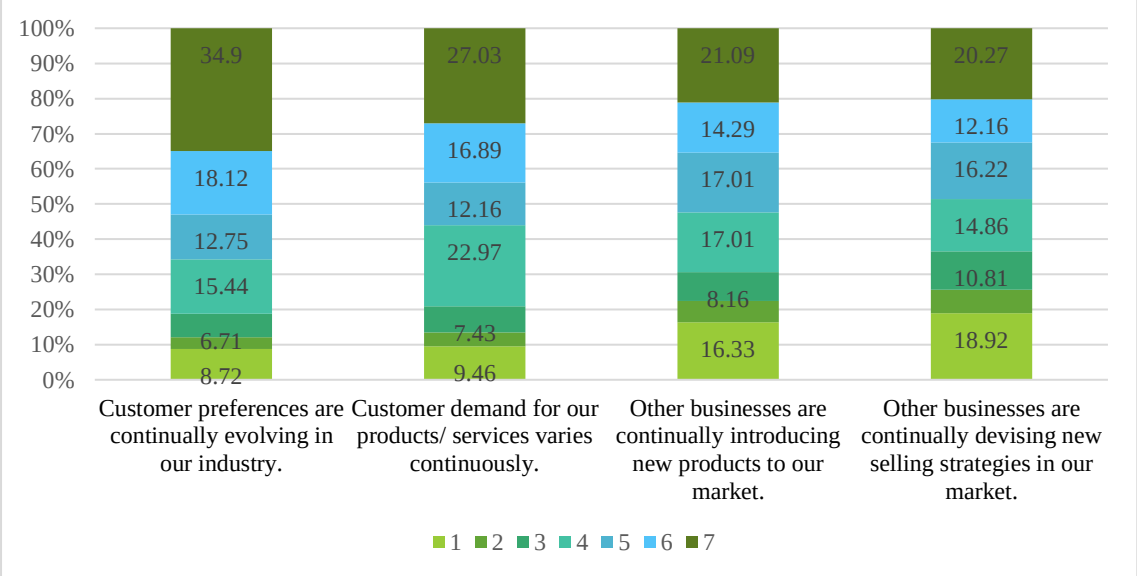

Figure 20: Perception of Market and Customers (1=Strongly Disagree, 7=Strongly Agree)

Student entrepreneurs gave their perception of the market and customer base, and were in strong agreement that customer preferences are continually evolving in the Saudi market. They were in less agreement about competitive action, with the highest portion strongly disagreeing in the series (18.9%) that 'other businesses are continually devising new selling strategies in our market'. As shown in Figure 21, the student entrepreneurs considered a number of elements essential for undertaking innovation in the company. The foremost was chosen as 'Improve existing product/service quality' with 55.1% noting it as very important. The least important elements were 'to reduce the cost of producing goods/services' and 'enter new technology fields' (9.6% believing this to be not important at all).

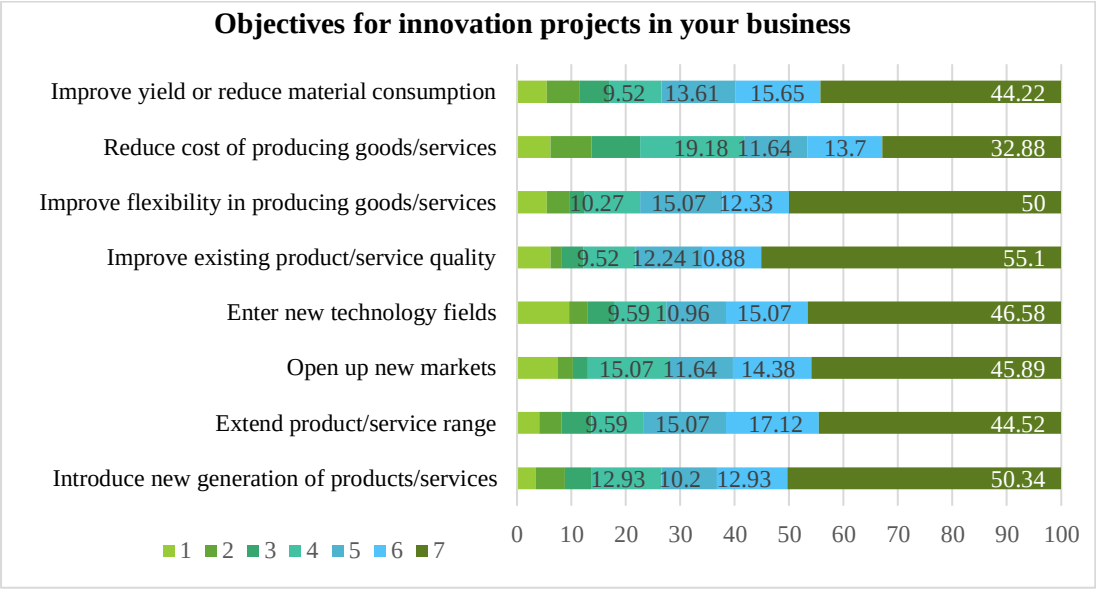

Figure 21: Strategic Plans (1=Not important at all, 7=Very Important)

Student entrepreneurs were also asked to reflect on their own feelings about their company. It is clear from the results that the respondents felt as though they were very connected to their companies. Despite this, it was observed that 34.5% (N=51 of 148) of the students did not feel that they would happily spend the rest of their career with their start-up (Figure 22).

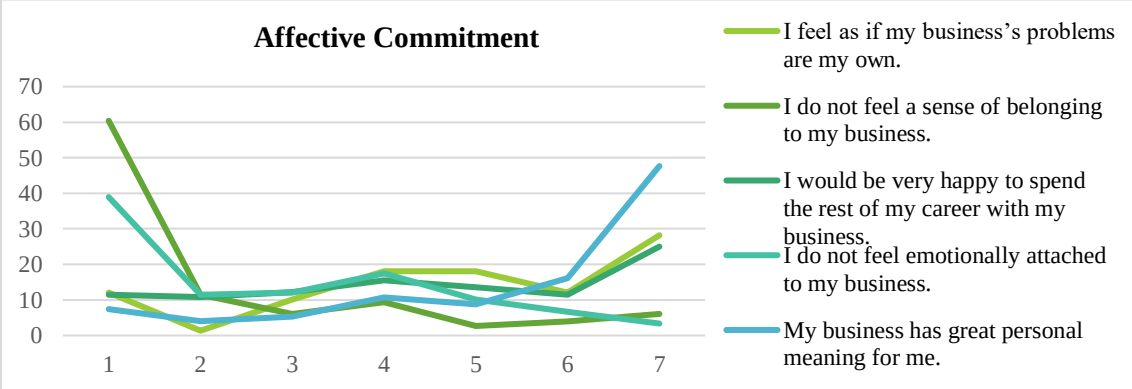

Figure 22: Affective Commitment (1=Strongly Disagree, 7=Strongly Agree)

7. Family Business and Succession

In the survey, respondents were asked to note whether their parents were self-employed or were owners of a business. The 513 (31.3%) students indicating in the affirmative were then asked a range of questions relating to these businesses. In addition, students were asked about their intentions of succession (i.e. taking on the company).

7.1 Family Business Information

Figure 23 below indicates the owner/founder careers of the parents of the survey participants. As seen below, 23.1% of the students (n=379) indicated that their father was self-employed and 21.4% (351) owned the majority share of a business. Notably less students indicated that their mother was self-employed (2.7%, n=45) or a majority owner (3.4%, n=56).

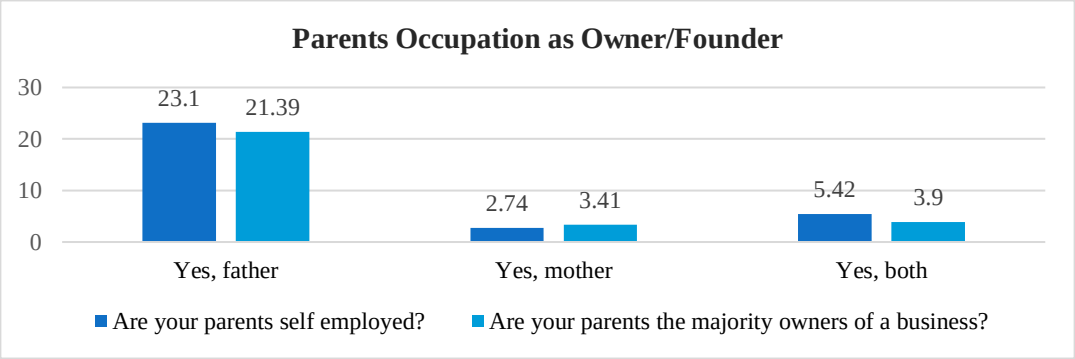

Figure 23: Parental Business Ownership

Students were asked "is your father or your mother leading the business operationally?". Of the 496 respondents, 298 students or 60.1% answered yes. They were also asked if they considered the company as a "family business". Of the 504 students who answered the question, 64% (322) did not consider it a family business, while 36% (182) did.

Of the sample of students indicating they were the children of founder/owner employees, 21% (109) respondents were the eldest child in their family. 15.6% had one older sibling, 16.7% had two and 46.7% (243) indicated they had three or more older siblings.

As shown in Figure 24, 36% of the respondents noted their family were the exclusive owners (100% share). It was noted that the majority of students who have founder/owner parents stated that they had not been working for their parents' business at the time of questioning. In a sample of 507 responses, 427 (84.2%) noted they had not worked in their parents' business.

The children of parents who have a business (507) were asked to indicate in how many years they may take over the business. Fifteen students (3% of owners' children) indicated they would succeed their parents' business within one year, 53 (10.5%) between two and five years, and 94 (18.5%) in over 5 years. However, 68% of this category which amounts to 345 students indicated that they do not intend on taking over their parents' business. That is, **68% of the children of business owners/founders do not intend to engage in family business succession.**

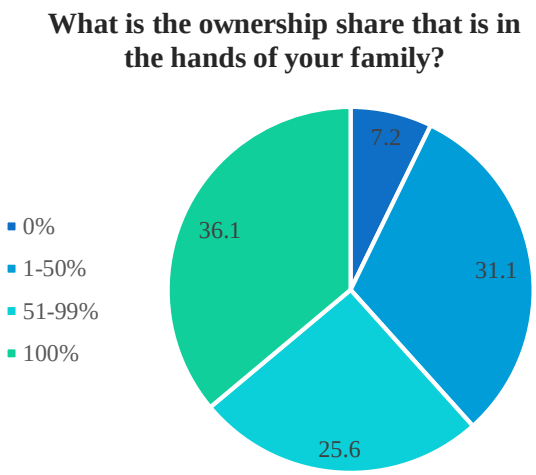

Figure 24: Percentage ownership of business

As shown in Figure 25, the main areas of industry which respondents indicated their parents were involved in were: 1) Other; 2) Construction and 3) Trade.

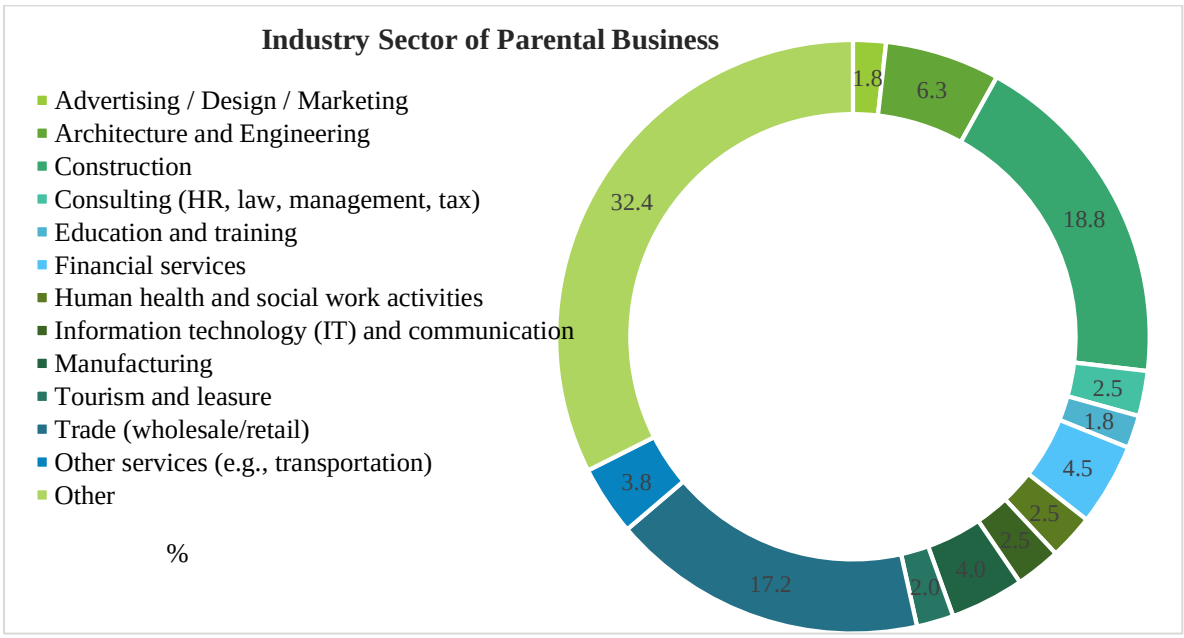

Figure 25: Industry of Parental Business

Respondents were asked to rate the performance of their parents' business compared to its competitors over the last three years on a number of dimensions (1=much worse, 7=much better). The results (See Figure 26) indicate that students perceived their parents' companies as being less effective than competitors at job creation and at innovativeness.

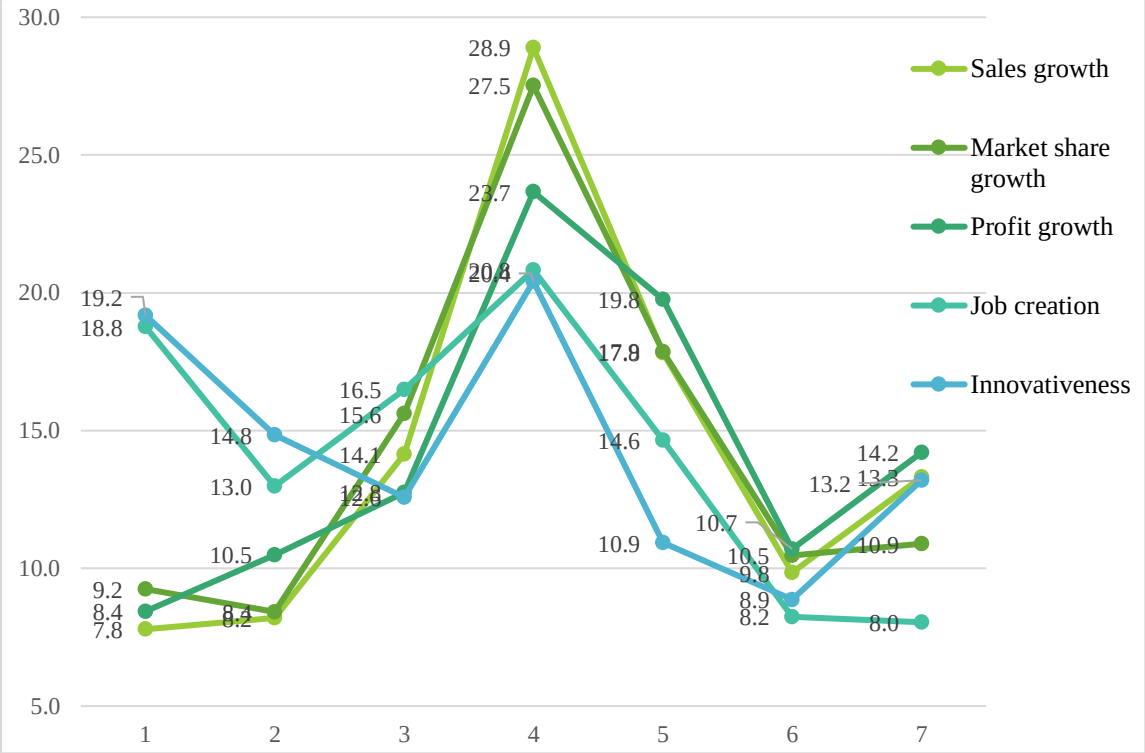

Figure 26:Parent Business Performance

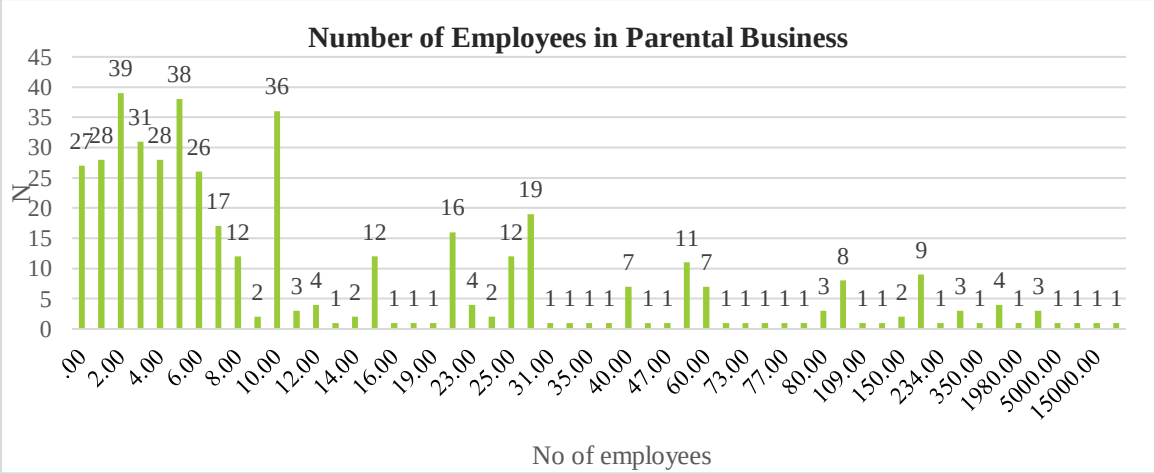

Figure 27: Number of Employees

7.2 Influence of Parents' Occupation on Entrepreneurial Intentions

It has been suggested that students whose parents engaged in entrepreneurship may have higher intentions to pursue the same career path. As can be seen in Table 12 below, this claim was somewhat supported by the present study as there are higher results found between those students intending to pursue entrepreneurship with entrepreneurial parents and those with non-entrepreneurial parents. Results are paralleled for many of the student career intentions, however of note is the higher percentage (%) of students who have at least one entrepreneurial parent and would prefer to work in a medium organisation directly after graduation, compared

to students with no entrepreneurial parents. Also, students with no parents in entrepreneurship have a higher intention for the public service five years post-graduation.

Table 12: Career Intentions of Students by Parents' Occupation (Owner/Founder versus Non-Entrepreneur)

Which career path do you intend to pursue:	Right after completion of your studies?		5 years after completion of your studies?	
Percent (%)	Neither parent self-employed or majority owner	At least one parent self-employed or majority owner	Neither parent self-employed or majority owner	At least one parent self-employed or majority owner
an employee in a small business (1-49 employees)	9.88	10.17	2.44	2.58
an employee in a medium-sized business	14.97	18.97	4.48	3.34
an employee in a large business (250 or more)	25.25	25.19	14.46	15.78
an employee in a non-profit organization	2.14	1.52	1.83	1.37
an employee in academia (academic career)	10.79	8.65	11.41	10.02
an employee in public service	20.67	17.75	17.62	13.66
a founder (entrepreneur) working in my own business	4.89	6.83	33.91	40.21
a successor in my parents' / family's business	0.2	2.28	0.41	2.43
a successor in another business	0.2	0.61	0.51	1.21
Other / do not know yet	11	8.04	12.93	9.41
No of respondents	982		982	982

7.3 Family Business Succession: Support and Encouragement from Parents

In considering the relationship that each student respondent had to their family business, a series of questions were asked about the emotional support or encouragement which the student received relating to succession.

Emotional Support

As shown in Table 13, there is a wide variation in the answering of this question with the highest number of students answering in the extremes (strongly agree, strongly disagree) for each item. For example, when asked whether the respondents parents 'discussed what fun their future job in the family business could be', 27.6% of the 493 respondents strongly disagreed while 21.7% strongly agreed. These results infer that families in the KSA region have widely different ways of treating their businesses and may have quite varied attitudes about succession.

Table 13: Emotional Support for Succession

My parents..	***...talked to me about what fun my future job in their business could be.***		***...said things that made me happy when I learned something I might use in their business.***		***...and I get excited when we talk about what a great job I might have someday in their business.***	
	N	***%***	***N***	***%***	***N***	***%***
Strongly Disagree	107	21.7	99	20.2	109	22.2
2	46	9.3	44	9.0	38	7.8
3	46	9.3	38	7.8	35	7.1
4	80	16.2	69	14.1	67	13.7
5	51	10.3	55	11.2	53	10.8
6	27	5.5	36	7.3	49	10.0
Strongly Agree	136	27.6	149	30.4	139	28.4
Total	493	100.0	490	100.0	490	100.0

(1 - Strongly Disagree to 7 - Strongly Agree)

Verbal Encouragement

In terms of the verbal encouragement which the student respondents receive from parents, it was extremely positive. For all three items (pertaining to verbal encouragement for academic success), students strongly agreed that their parents offer encouragement for their success.

Table 14: Verbal Encouragement from Parents

My parents..	***encouraged me to learn as much as I can at school.***		***encouraged me to make good grades.***		***told me they are proud of me when I do well in school.***	
	N	***%***	***N***	***%***	***N***	***%***
Strongly Disagree	15	3.0	14	2.8	17	3.4
2	6	1.2	5	1.0	17	3.4
3	14	2.8	13	2.6	14	2.8
4	31	6.2	29	5.8	35	7.0
5	35	7.0	35	7.0	29	5.8
6	50	10.0	48	9.6	44	8.9
Strongly Agree	349	69.8	356	71.2	341	68.6
Total	500	100.0	500	100.0	497	100.0

(1 - Strongly Disagree to 7 - Strongly Agree)

Career Related Modelling

Students who were connected to a family business (owner/self-employed) were asked to consider how their parents behaved towards them while growing up relating to the company. They were asked questions relating to the student awareness about their parents' business while growing up. The results (See Table 15) showed a variance in the results indicating that while most respondents heard descriptions about the business, less were physically brought to visit the company (See Figure 28).

Table 15: Career Related Modelling

My parents…	*…told me about the kind of work they do at their business.*		*…told me about things that happen to them at their business.*		*…have taken me to their business.*	
	N	***%***	***N***	***%***	***N***	***%***
Strongly Disagree	70	14.4	80	16.5	111	23.3
2	27	5.5	28	5.8	51	10.7
3	39	8.0	39	8.0	32	6.7
4	61	12.5	58	12.0	59	12.4
5	68	14.0	85	17.5	50	10.5
6	54	11.1	58	12.0	40	8.4
Strongly Agree	168	34.5	137	28.2	134	28.1
Total	487	100.0	485	100.0	477	100.0

(1 - Strongly Disagree to 7 - Strongly Agree)

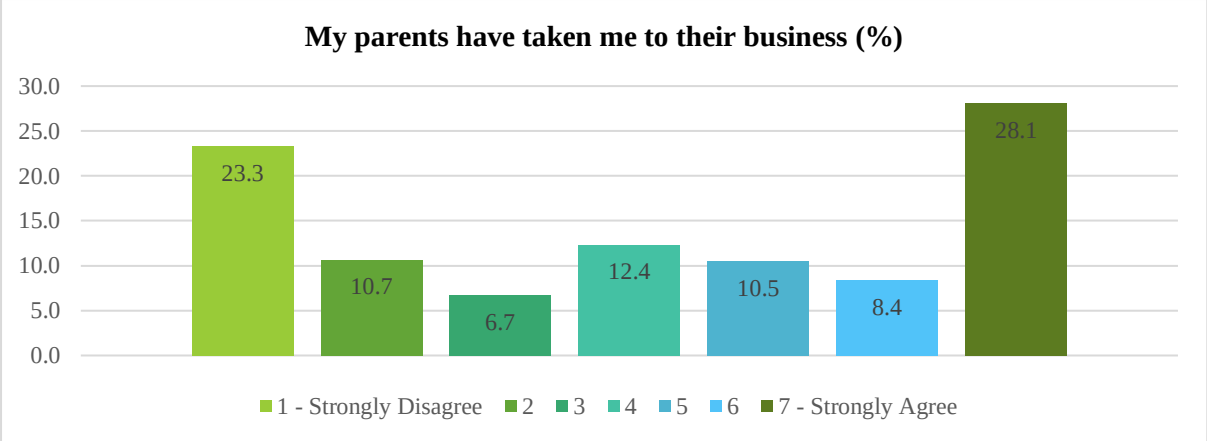

Figure 28: Career Related Modelling

Instrumental Assistance

Students were also asked to consider how much they were provided the opportunity to learn skills or knowledge relevant to succession, or connect own learning to necessary succession needs. Students tended to agree that they were provided these opportunities, however there was a wide spread of responses. From the survey 47.8% of the 488 respondents agreed that their parents had given them chores which developed their skillset for succession (See Table 16).

Table 16: Instrumental Assistance

My parents…	*…talked to me about how what I am learning will someday be able to help me in their business.*		*…taught me things that I will someday be able to use in their business.*		*…gave me chores that taught me skills I can use in my future career in their business.*	
	N	***%***	***N***	***%***	***N***	***%***
Strongly Disagree	129	26.2	118	24.1	103	21.1
2	32	6.5	32	6.5	40	8.2

3	48	9.8	49	10.0	46	9.4
4	68	13.8	70	14.3	66	13.5
5	64	13.0	76	15.5	60	12.3
6	51	10.4	48	9.8	57	11.7
Strongly Agree	100	20.3	97	19.8	116	23.8
Total	492	100.0	490	100.0	488	100.0

(1 - Strongly Disagree to 7 - Strongly Agree)

7.4 Family Business Succession: Perceived Sense of Obligation

Students were asked a series of questions relating to their normative commitment to their parents' company from 1= Strongly Disagree to 7= Strongly Agree. The results are presented in Table 17 and the following Figures 29 and 30.

Table 17: Normative Commitment for Succession

	I feel an obligation to my family to pursue a career with my parents' business.		***My parents' business deserves my loyalty.***		***I would feel guilty if I did not pursue a career with my parents' business.***		***I owe a great deal to my parents' business.***	
	N	***%***	***N***	***%***	***N***	***%***	***N***	***%***
Strongly Disagree	243	49.0	108	21.8	239	48.3	147	30.1
2	59	11.9	44	8.9	69	13.9	39	8.0
3	54	10.9	39	7.9	37	7.5	41	8.4
4	52	10.5	81	16.3	66	13.3	77	15.7
5	40	8.1	57	11.5	30	6.1	50	10.2
6	14	2.8	34	6.9	16	3.2	38	7.8
Strongly Agree	34	6.9	133	26.8	38	7.7	97	19.8
Total	496	100.0	496	100.0	495	100.0	489	100.0

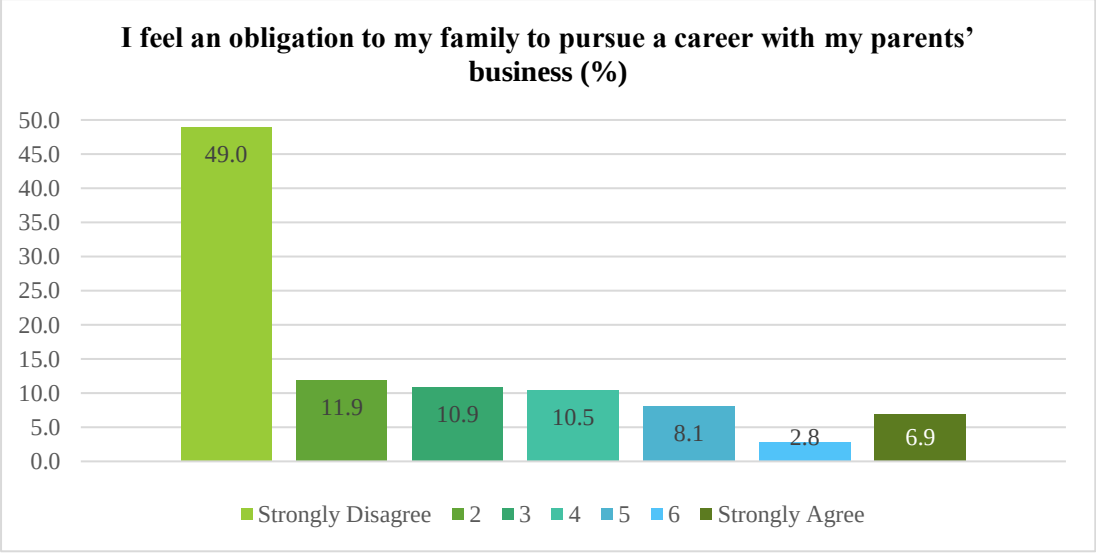

Figure 29: Perceived Obligation towards Succession

Respondents who indicated they were the children of entrepreneurs or business owners were asked if they felt an obligation to take over the company. A high result of 49% (N=243) students strongly disagreed with the statement, and overall 71.8% of the sample disagreed to some extent. 17.8% agreed with the statement to some extent (N=88) (See Figure 29).

When asked about their perceived loyalty to the company there was an even spread of results as seen in Figure 30 below. 21.8% strongly disagreed and 38.6% disagreed overall, 16.3% were uncertain and 26.8% strongly agreed, with 45.2% agreeing overall.

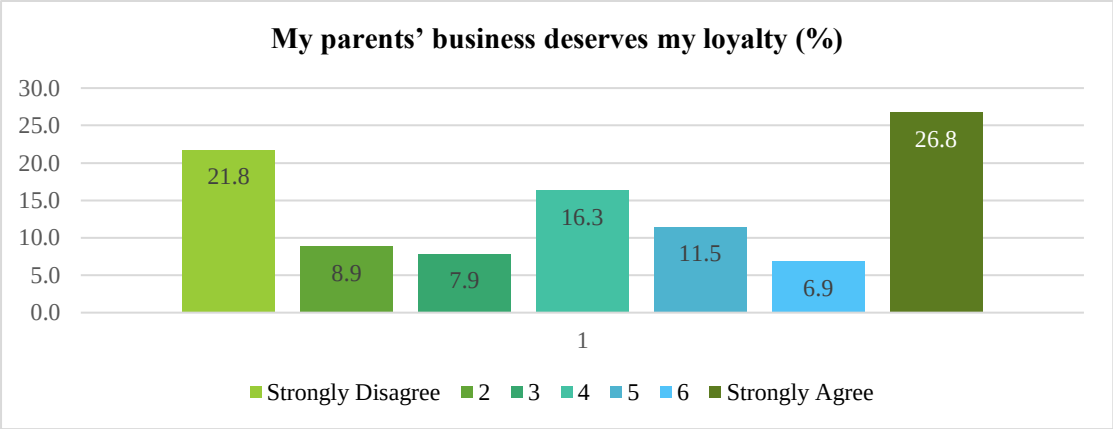

Figure 30: Student loyalty to Family Business

Focusing on the sense of obligation, students were asked about their potential perceived guilt if they were not to commit to succession of the family business (Figure 31). The majority of student respondents disagreed with this sentiment (69.7%, N=345).

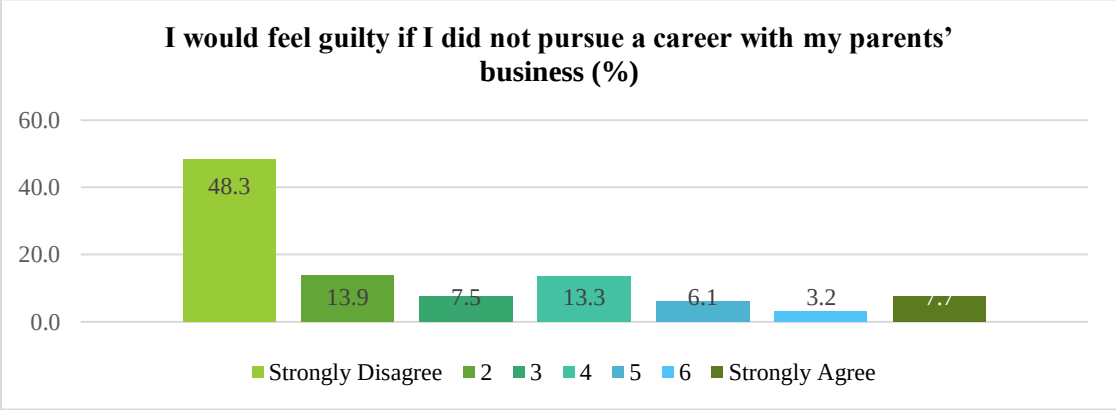

Figure 31: Student perceived guilt in rejecting succession (%)

When asked whether students perceived that they owed a great deal to their parents' business, 30.1% (N=147) strongly disagreed with this statement. In fact, a total of 227 students considered that they did not feel they owed anything to their parents' business. On the other hand, 19.8% of respondents strongly agreed that they were owing (N=97) and 37.8% agreed to some extent (N=185).

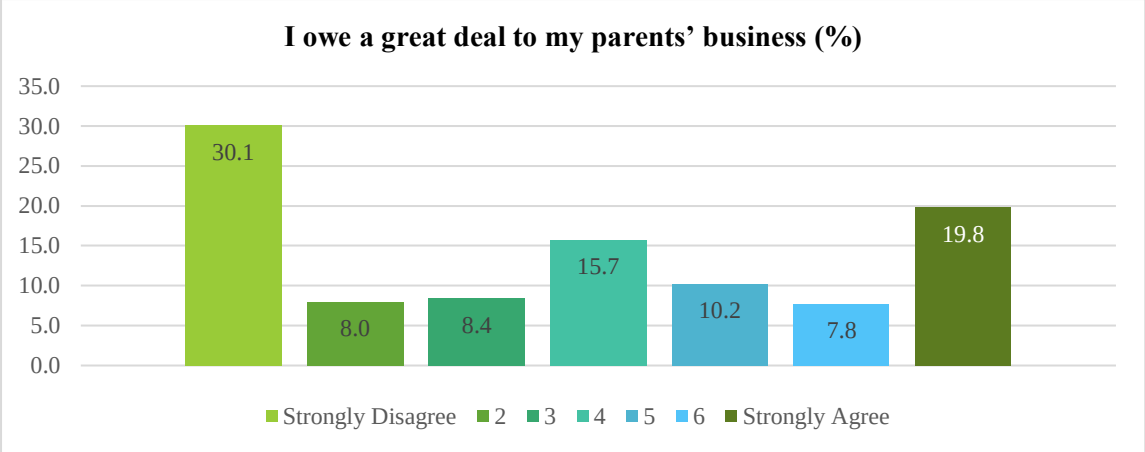

Figure 32: Debt of Gratitude to Family Business (%)

7.5 Family Business Succession: Affective Commitment

Students were asked about taking over their parents' business (family business succession) considering their affective or emotional commitment to the company. The student sample were asked a series of questions which they answered according to a Likert seven-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). As can be seen from Figure 33, the results indicate both strong affective commitment for the respondent's family business and very weak affective commitment. This is seen in the presence of high percentages at both ends of the scale criteria (strongly agree and strongly disagree). The highest results are noted in disagreement with the statement "I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with my parents' business" where it was found that 201 students (40.4%) strongly disagreed (and a further 116 or 23.4% also disagreed/somewhat disagreed). In addition, the statement "I feel emotionally attached to my parents' business" also received a strongly negative sentiment (N=180 of 492 students strongly disagreeing, 36.6%).

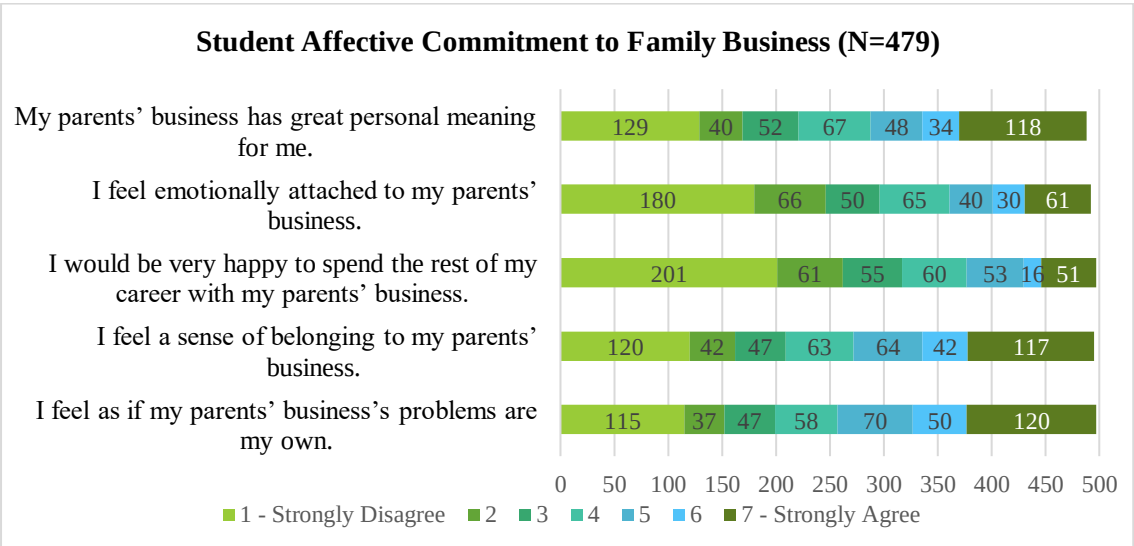

Figure 33: Affective Commitment to Family Business (Frequency)

7.6 Family Business Succession: Attitude to Succession

Students were asked a series of questions relating to their attitude to succession. The students had a predominantly negative attitude to business succession (See Table 18).

Table 18: Family Business Succession: Attitude to Succession

		Strongly Disagree	2	3	4	5	6	Strongly Agree
Being a successor implies more advantages than disadvantages to me.	N	121	51	61	108	46	28	87
	%	24.1	10.2	12.2	21.5	9.2	5.6	17.3
A career as a successor is attractive for me.	N	186	56	60	78	48	25	47
	%	37.2	11.2	12.0	15.6	9.6	5.0	9.4
If I had the opportunity and resources, I would become a successor in my parents' firm.	N	179	63	62	71	37	24	58
	%	36.2	12.8	12.6	14.4	7.5	4.9	11.7
Being a successor would entail great satisfactions for me.	N	185	66	51	66	52	20	53
	%	37.5	13.4	10.3	13.4	10.5	4.1	10.8
Among various options, I would rather become a successor in my parents' firm.	N	235	67	38	54	39	15	36
	%	48.6	13.8	7.9	11.2	8.1	3.1	7.4

(1 - Strongly Disagree to 7 - Strongly Agree)

Students were asked "If you would become a successor taking over your parents' business, how would people in your environment react (1=very negatively, 7=very positively)?". As per the results shown in Figure 34 the majority of students perceived that their parents, close family, other family and external parties would react very positively to their succession to the family business.

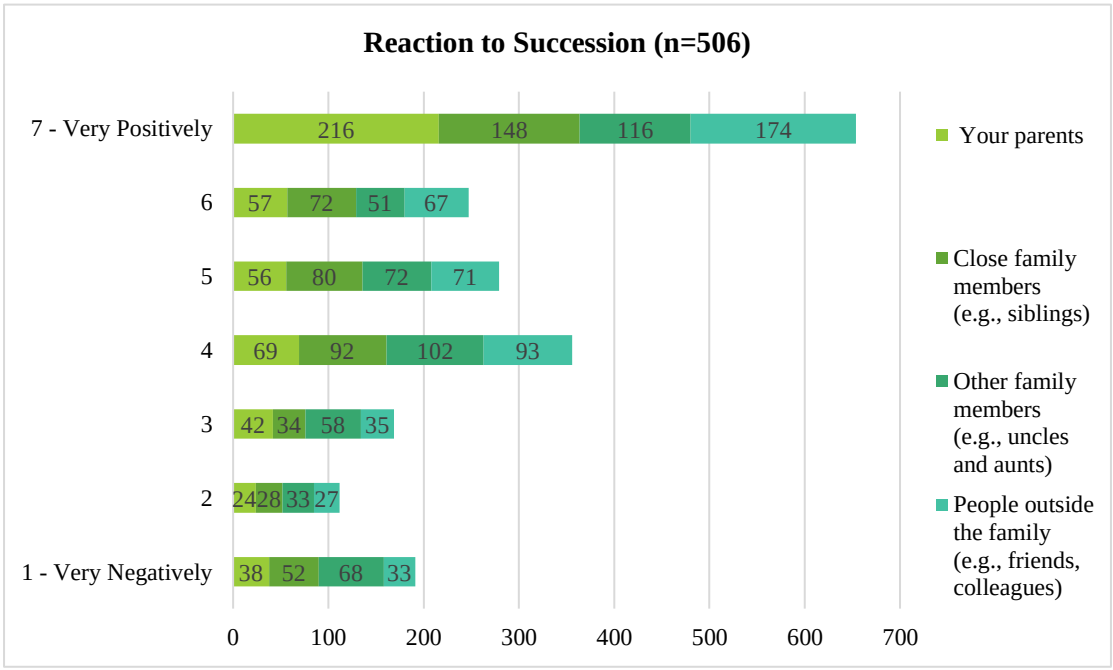

Figure 34: Social Reaction to Family Business Succession

8. Working in a Start-up

8.1 Students working in a Start-up Company

A very small sample of students indicated that they worked in a start-up company. The 30 respondents were in companies of which 24% were created before 2010. The majority (40%) worked between 10-40 hours per week and 80% indicated they had a low to medium position in the company. The majority of respondents indicated the company they worked in was in the Trade (wholesale/retail) sector (80%). Students indicated that their company had less females than males (N=12) as seen in Figure 35.

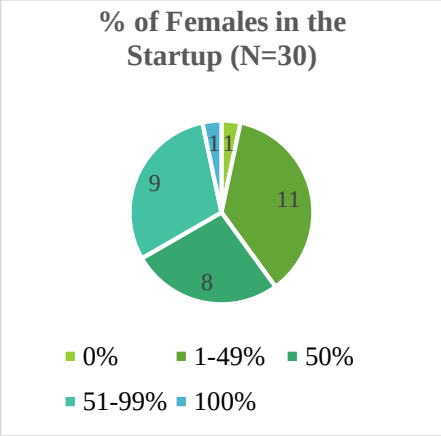

Figure 35: Gender Balance in Start-up

Students were asked some questions about the atmosphere in their company as shown in Table 19. For the most part, responses indicate that the students tended to enjoy their culture and colleagues in their company.

Table 19: Attitude towards Start-up and Colleagues

	Not at all	***2***	***3***	***4***	***5***	***6***	***Very much***
How much do you trust your colleagues?	1	1	5	5	10	4	4
How comfortable do you feel delegating to your colleagues?	2	2	7	5	4	5	5
Are your colleagues truthful and honest?		2	6	7	2	8	5
How much do you respect your colleagues?				1	1	8	20
Would you consider your colleagues as your friends?	1	6	7	4	6	1	5
How much open discussion of issues is there in the start-up?	2	2	4	4	8	3	7
To what degree is communication in the start-up open?	1	2	2	7	4	3	11
To what degree is conflict dealt with openly in the start-up?	4	7	2	7	5	2	3
To what extent is your team cohesive?		2		9	8	5	6
How much do you feel like your team has group spirit?		1	3	3	8	6	9
To what degree would you talk about the start-up as a great place to work at?	2			5	8	5	10

Students were additionally asked to indicate their involvement in the company and their related actions. The results (See Table 20) would suggest that the respondents attend external events to network for the company to increase learning in the start-up ecosystem.

Table 20: Behavior of Individual in Start-up

	Strongly Disagree	***2***	***3***	***4***	***5***	***6***	***Strongly Agree***
I attend non-required training or educational sessions on own time.	3	3	4	2	1	5	11
I make especially helpful suggestions to improve the start-up.	1	0	2	8	4	5	9
I work before or after regular working hours to finish a task.	2	2	2	0	2	7	14
I actively seek my suggestions to be adopted by the start-up.	1	1	1	3	9	9	5
I orient new people even though it is not required.	1	1	0	6	2	8	12
I make special attempts to gain more knowledge about job-related techniques and skills.	0	0	0	2	2	6	20
I go out of my way to help others with job-related problems.	0.0	1	3	4	5	5	12
I attend functions that are not required, but help the start-up.	0.0	2	1	4	4	4	15
I look for additional responsibilities despite the fact that it increases my work load.	1	2	2	8	6	2	9

GUESSS NATIONAL TEAM – SAUDI ARABIA

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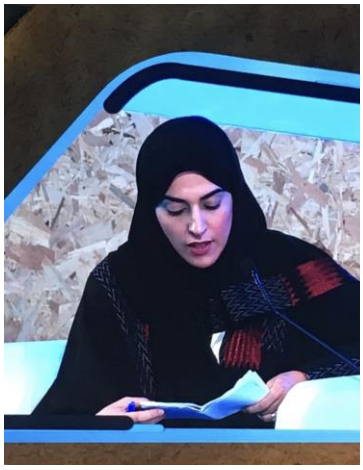

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