

Girls fight family pressure to learn business

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Setting up business can be a Herculean task, a word of caution that any entrepreneur would give you. Several budding women entrepreneurs at the Entrepreneurship Development Institute (EDI) got a taste of the tough path ahead while merely learning about the subject.

The campus, that saw a record number of girl students for its various programmes this year, is rife with inspiring stories of girls who fought familial pressure and general scepticism to pursue their dreams of being business women.

Take the case of Vishaka Surana, a BSC graduate who has enrolled for the post graduate diploma in business entrepreneurship being

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offered by the institute. This native of Bilwada in Rajasthan says that whenever she sets up her own business, she will probably be the first woman from her town to do so.

"Most of the women in my family are home-makers. And I belong to a family that is into the service sector. My family was keen on me getting a job instead of going into business. But this is what I wanted to do. In fact, the only one who supported my aspiration was

my father," said Surana. Interestingly, she wants to set up her own business so that she can eventually have the funds at her disposal to help contribute to causes close to her heart.

Prakriti Chohan from Rajasthan belongs to a family of bankers. "Most of the women in my family work with a bank, so needless to say, they didn't understand why I wanted to be a business woman," said Chohan.

In fact, Chohan said that her family has made it clear that none of them will be her loan guarantor if she decides to take a loan to set up her business. "But that's alright, they will come around. Anyway I plan to first work with a social enterprise before setting up mine," said the social enterprise student. ● Turn to p6



Many of the girl students who are pursuing a course at the institute will be the first woman in their families to join business.

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—Vishaka Surana, a student of PG diploma at EDI

Girls fight...

She too has found support from her father, although he remains a bit sceptical. Shrushti Agadi, who plans to join her father's business, said her parents were more worried about the marriage prospects. "They supported my decision but were worried what would happen to my plans once I got married. I asked them to find a guy who would support my aspirations," said the BCom graduate cheekily. Palak Chokhani, a chocolate moulder from Kolkata, didn't even tell her parents when she applied for the course. "They thought an MBA degree would be much better. But I plan to join the chocolate business and I thought this would be the right course for me to learn the nitty-gritties," she said.