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EFFECTS OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION: THE INTERPLAY OF MODES OF EDUCATION AND REGIONAL CONTEXT (INTERACTIVE PAPER)

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INTERACTIVE PAPER

**EFFECTS OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION:
THE INTERPLAY OF MODES OF EDUCATION AND REGIONAL CONTEXT**

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Principal Topic

The number of entrepreneurship classes at universities has grown rapidly in recent years. But (how) can such offers effectively motivate and qualify students for entrepreneurial careers? Empirical studies have shown a positive impact of taking entrepreneurship classes on students' entrepreneurial intentions (e.g. Souitaris et al., 2007; Peterman and Kennedy, 2003) but have not differentiated teaching styles and neglected the university and individual context. Teaching styles include active modes that emphasize active experimentation (e.g. business plan seminars) and reflective modes that emphasize reflective observation (e.g. lectures).

This paper illuminates how the extent of entrepreneurship education within university departments influences students' entrepreneurial intentions (and its drivers as suggested by the theory of planned behavior: attitudes to the behavior, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control). Specifically, we argue that the effect of such education is not the same for all contexts, but is (1) contingent on its mode (active vs. reflective), (2) contingent on the regional context and (3) complemented by individual-level influences.

Method

We employed hierarchical linear modeling (HLM) on data from 1,959 male students, 65 university departments (engineering, computer science, business) and 30 regions.

Results and Implications

The study extends prior research by providing large-scale evidence that the supply with entrepreneurship education substantially raises entrepreneurial intentions. However, this effect is contingent on the mode and context of such education: Active modes directly affect intentions, whereas reflective modes were only effective in regions high in human capital density and start-up intensity. Parental role models but not work experience were positively related to intentions. Only role models affected all drivers of entrepreneurial intentions (attitude toward the behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control). In contrast, entrepreneurship education (alone or in interaction with the context) enhanced students' attitudes toward self-employment, while work experience was positively related to perceived behavioral control. The findings have important implications for entrepreneurship research and education.

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