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POPULAR MEDIA AND INDIVIDUAL OPPORTUNITY SEARCH BEHAVIORS (SUMMARY)

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ENTREPRENEURIAL MOTIVATIONS

SUMMARY

POPULAR MEDIA AND INDIVIDUAL OPPORTUNITY SEARCH BEHAVIORS

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Principal Topic

The growing popularity of entrepreneurship focused television programs, such as Shark Tank and Dragon’s Den, has contributed to a growing interest in entrepreneurship among the general public. Individuals may have never considered the possibility of starting their own business but are encouraged by the “everyday” stories which these programs present. This research is focused on identifying the factors which promote greater interest in entrepreneurship and an increase in opportunity identification behaviors. The success of the top down approach utilized by the US government has been questioned and many believe that the bottom up approach is much more successful. Despite a range of literature examining entrepreneurial intent and attempts to examine intent as an antecedent, very little has been done to offer a clear understanding of how intentions translate into actions. By identifying important general environment trends and demographic factors, we are able to better describe the ideal approach for promoting entrepreneurial search behaviors.

Theory

Our arguments are based on past literature which has offered explanations for entrepreneurial intentions. Davidson and Wiklund (2001) suggested that entrepreneurial intentions are influenced by both organizational and individual factors, but studies have yet to adequately examine the interplay that these factors have. Sankar, et al. 1991 found that organizational factors have a distinct impact on individual perceptions concerning entrepreneurial intention, but there is little understanding concerning the inconsistent affects these factors have on individuals. According to Mitchell et al. (2002), entrepreneurial education, social context, and cultural values play a role in entrepreneurial intent. We argue, however, that by examining action rather than intention, we can better identify the factors which are most influential in the process.

Implications

Our inquiry contributes to literature in several ways. First, we extend previous understanding of entrepreneurial intentions. Second, we empirically examine the influence that popular culture has on an individual opportunity search behavior. We also provide additional context to the debate concerning entrepreneurial education and new venture startup. Our results indicate that environmental factors have a significant influence on decisions to engage in entrepreneurial opportunity exploration. Last, our data indicate that SBA funding and job creation rates do not have as significant an impact on entrepreneurial intent as described by previous literature.

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