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CREATIVELY EMBEDDED: EXPLORING THE EFFECTS OF CREATIVE CLASS, EMBEDDEDNESS, AND AGE ON ENTREPRENEURIAL INTENTIONS (SUMMARY)

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≈ SUMMARY ≈

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Principal Topic

To better understand the mechanisms of entrepreneurial ecosystems, more research is needed on entrepreneurship policy and community issues (Zahra & Wright, 2011), with an emphasis on individual factors making entrepreneurship attractive to individuals not engaged in entrepreneurial activities. This study investigates potential mechanisms—creative class, embeddedness, and age—that influence an individual's entrepreneurial intentions and, in so doing, increases the pool of potential entrepreneurs.

Method

Survey respondents indicated their levels of entrepreneurial intentions and embeddedness over four months, resulting in repeated measures for each respondent. We also collected demographic information, including age, occupation, educational attainment, and marital status. Occupations were measured with O*NET categories, and, based on creative class definitions from regional studies literature (Florida, 2002), we created a categorical variable for creative occupations. For robustness, we also used the critical thinking variable from O*NET (McGranahan & Wojan, 2007). We used ordinary least squares (OLS) to test the main effect and moderating relationships.

Results and Implications

First, we found individual-level support that an occupation in the creative class increases entrepreneurial intentions. This relationship was supported with the categorical measures and with the continuous critical thinking variable. Second, we found that embeddedness in the ecosystem increases entrepreneurial intentions. We did not find support for the moderating role of age on either occupation or embeddedness.

The study contributes to the literature on entrepreneurial intentions and ecosystems by linking embeddedness to entrepreneurial intention as a mechanism to both increase and maintain an ecosystem's levels of human capital and entrepreneurship. In well-known ecosystems, embedded individuals who have strong positive relationships with previous employers may be encouraged to start new firms in the same ecosystem (Saxenian, 1996).

We contribute to the regional development literature by cross-validating the relationship between creative classes and entrepreneurial intentions. Specifically, the impact of creative class occupations on entrepreneurial intentions increases our understanding of how particular occupations may serve as fertile entrepreneurial ground. Together, these factors increase the likelihood of entrepreneurial intent and new venture creation, two topics of importance for regional development.

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