AN EXAMINATION OF THE EFFECT OF SITUATIONAL AWARENESS ON OPPORTUNITY RECOGNITION (SUMMARY)

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AN EXAMINATION OF THE EFFECT OF SITUATIONAL AWARENESS ON OPPORTUNITY RECOGNITION

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Principal Topic
This research tests the premise that situational awareness, the perception of a dynamic and complex environment with a comprehension of meaning necessary to project future wants and needs (Endsley 1995), is a key component in the identification of unique entrepreneurial opportunities. Through the interaction of access to information and cognitive ability, evaluation of individuals’ level of situational awareness takes place to determine the effect this concept has on the identification of innovative or radical new entrepreneurial opportunities.

Method
Data collected from a population of potential and current entrepreneurs in a large Midwestern city that have been associated with an entrepreneurship center located at a midsized Midwestern university is used for this research. Although data were not collected specifically for this research, the population is uniquely suited to this study as respondents are actively searching for, or have recently recognized, an entrepreneurial opportunity.

Results and Implications
Results suggest that situational awareness does have a significant effect on individuals ability to recognize unique entrepreneurial opportunities ($\beta=.258$, $p < .05$). This study represents a substantial contribution to the field of entrepreneurship as it provides support for the concept of situational awareness in an entrepreneurial context. Such support suggests that unique opportunity search offers a greater the potential for the recognition of innovative and/or radical entrepreneurial opportunities than that of alertness or systematic search. Such knowledge provides academics with a means of assisting future entrepreneurs to prepare for the recognition of unique, and as such highly valuable, entrepreneurial opportunities.

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