Influences on Entrepreneurship in Communication

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Communication professionals, particularly media professionals, increasingly are finding they have to create their own jobs. Also, journalism and communication majors in college are witnessing a host of opportunities to start their own enterprises given technologies that allow them to do what previously would have required enormous resources. In the United States and other countries, there also is an emphasis on entrepreneurship and its role in providing jobs in an increasingly competitive environment. In this context, schools of communication are starting programs and courses in entrepreneurship, but the research on communication entrepreneurs is meager at best. This paper reports on a project that looked at diverse communication entrepreneurs from across the country—those starting print, public relations, video, web or other enterprises—as well as a set of undergraduate majors in communication. The focus is on factors influencing decisions to become entrepreneurs and reports of success.

Introduction

For years scholars and government have debated how to harness and stimulate human enterprise. With the rapid development of technologies and innovations needed to survive an increasingly competitive environment, discussion has focused on how to maintain a high level of creativity and move it to the marketplace. Mass media and communication enterprises are prime examples of this competitive situation, as jobs have disappeared and professionals and students entering the marketplace consider starting enterprises.

Schumpeter (1949) nominated entrepreneurship as the dynamic of economic development, making the non-economic concept of "creativity" the engine for economies. While the topic gets attention in business schools and popular media that celebrate entrepreneurial celebrities such as Steve Jobs and Bill Gates, little attention has been made to it in communication until recent years. Entrepreneurs examine opportunities and take a chance in starting their own enterprises (Armstrong & Hird, 2009). They not only come up with the idea, but also put it into practice (Kets de Vries, 1977). Schumpeter (1965) pointed to a strong connection between innovation, where we know that communication variables play important roles, and entrepreneurship (Schwartz & Malach-Pines, 2007, p. 2). Hisrich and Brush (1985) describe entrepreneurs as those taking a financial,
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psychological and social risk to invest in and market a product or business they hope will lead to financial and personal gains.¹

Drawing on the diffusion of innovations literature (Rogers, 2003), we would expect decisions to become entrepreneurs and subsequent satisfaction with the role to be dependent on several factors. First are individual characteristics that drive people’s decisions, including not only social categories but also motivations, characteristics such as creativity and the need for control (e.g., be your own boss); we would expect these to interact with environmental pressures represented by opportunities—positive factors that draw people into entrepreneurial roles and push factors like unemployment that propel people into such roles despite personal preferences for a stable, secure job. Second, over the long haul, people consider entrepreneurial roles through interpersonal communication processes, including both mentoring and modeling that may occur within families or friendship networks. Third, entrepreneurship has become more frequent in mass mediated messages, from television programs and news accounts to films that depict business entrepreneurs; thus, exposure to these messages and images portrayed could factor into one’s decision making and attitude formation.

Traits, Characteristics Influencing Entrepreneurship

The literature on entrepreneurship has linked a variety of concepts to entrepreneurs. Many deal with traits, or characteristics thought to be more prevalent among entrepreneurs than the general population. These include motivations and desires such as wanting to be one’s own boss, or creative aptitudes that require control and independence, for example, to be fulfilled. These factors are viewed as “pulling” people to become entrepreneurs. However, people do not become entrepreneurs in a vacuum. While personal goals and drive may stimulate entrepreneurship, a difficult job situation may “push” people to start enterprises because suitable or desirable jobs aren’t available.

Welsh (1983, pp. 55-69) identified 11 characteristics most found in successful entrepreneurs.² Kuhn (1983) developed a 10-part “entrepreneurial quotient” that includes how badly one wants to be one’s own boss.³ Studies looking to find out the background of entrepreneurs have shown that many have employment and management experience before becoming entrepreneurs. Additionally, research has indicated that entrepreneurs tend to have higher education levels, while entrepreneurs in the United States also tend to come from higher socioeconomic backgrounds.⁴
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Reasons found in the most recent studies for becoming or wanting to become entrepreneurs include freedom, opportunity, confidence and self-expression. Cromie (2000) found that entrepreneurs are often innovative, creative, imaginative, restless, proactive and adventurous. Armstrong and Hird (2009) found that entrepreneurs are more intuitive, but less analytic than non-entrepreneurs. In addition, Zhao and Seibert (2006) found significant differences between personalities of entrepreneurs and managers in a workplace. Entrepreneurs scored higher on conscientiousness and openness to experience, while scoring lower on neuroticism and agreeableness (p. 1582).

Key concepts include creativity, entrepreneurial drive, risk taking motivations, and attitudes toward or perceptions of entrepreneurship that include feasibility and desirability perceptions.

Creativity. Scoring high on openness to experience may explain why creativity is tied to entrepreneurship. Those with creative minds are often most interested (Rae, 2007). Entrepreneurship is an outlet that may satisfy creative minds and lead to new businesses or industries (Ko & Butler, 2007). Morris and Kuratko (2002) call creativity “the soul of entrepreneurship” (p. 104) since it is useful in determining what opportunities are best to pursue. Creativity is especially important then for communication entrepreneurs, as they must keep up with trends, have available the most up-to-date technology and be ready to implement cutting-edge plans to entice customers. Ohly, Kase, and Škerlavaj (2010) identified creativity as the process that must occur before innovation. In creativity research, personality scales are used to determine common characteristics found in creative individuals. Many theories of creativity link it to human interaction, suggesting that creativity is influenced by interactions with others (Perry-Smith, 2006). Thus, it is important to examine the influence of communication networks on people as well.

Entrepreneurial Drive. Studies suggest that some individuals possess more “entrepreneurial drive” than others. Those with the greatest level of entrepreneurial drive will be more highly driven in their attempts to create ventures and grow them to greater heights (Armstrong & Hird, 2009; Carland & Ensley, 2002). Carland and Carland (1992) conclude that entrepreneurship is best understood as an individual drive toward entrepreneurial activity—comprised of multiple personality factors – including cognition, innovation, risk-taking propensity and strategic posture. In a regional survey of a general population, Authors (1989) found half of respondents indicating interest in becoming an entrepreneur and half of these identified instrumental goals such
as making money as major reasons for their interest. Some 40 percent cited life-style factors, e.g., needing to be their own boss.

*Risk Taking Motivations.* The propensity for risk-taking has been researched in an attempt to understand why successful entrepreneurs display an ability to perceive and take advantage of opportunities that others fail to see or act upon (Armstrong & Hird, 2009). Risk-taking can be defined as one’s orientation toward taking a chance when making a decision. Some research has shown that founders of a company have a higher risk-taking propensity than owners not involved in the start-up of the company (Armstrong & Hird, 2009).^

*Feasibility and Desirability Perceptions.* Perceived feasibility and desirability also influence entrepreneurial decisions, reflecting both “pull” and “push” factors. Shapero (1982) argues that intentions depend on perceptions of personal desirability, feasibility and the propensity to act (Krueger, Reilly, & Carsrud, 2000). Perceived feasibility or self-efficacy is the degree to which one feels personally capable of starting a business (Krueger, Reilly, & Carsrud, 2000). According to Krueger and Brazeal (1994) “it appears critical to understanding planned, intentional behavior by influencing intentions through situational perceptions of feasibility.” A 1993 study by Krueger showed perceived feasibility, perceived desirability and the propensity to act explained more than half of the variance in intentions toward entrepreneurship; feasibility perceptions explained the most variance (cited in Krueger, Reilly, Carsrud, 2000).^

*Communication and Entrepreneurship*

*Communication Networks.* Research has found that entrepreneurs are well-connected individuals who find their communication networks to be useful (Brown & Butler, 1995; Ko & Butler, 2007). When idea sharing occurs, people get insights from others for comparisons (Ohly, Kase, & Škerlavaj, 2010). They can also gain self-confidence, receive support and be motivated to move forward with an idea or project (Madjar, 2008). While research supports the notion that people rely on their social networks for advice and support about ideas, it has generated conflicting evidence as to whether or not creativity is fostered more by those with whom people are most close, or those who are merely acquaintances.

Significance of the nature of one’s communication network is still uncertain.^

Some believe people benefit more from a network with weak ties (Granovetter, 1973). This “structural holes perspective” says that an
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individual is more likely to be creative and develop better ideas if he or she interacts frequently with may disconnected individuals, since each person will have a unique perspective. Since they come from different backgrounds, they may each interpret things differently (Burt, 2004). Others believe people benefit from being involved in a dense network filled with strong ties and populated with people who are well-connected to one another and are very close with the individual presenting the idea (Perry-Smith & Shalley, 2003).

Mentoring and Modeling. While the decision to become an entrepreneur can represent a personal choice, influence often comes from personal relationships that involve mentoring. Authors (1989) found in a survey that some two thirds of adults knew someone who ran their own enterprise. Mentoring has long been recognized as a strategy for developing individuals, both professionally and personally (Farmer, 2005). The communication between a mentor and a protégé may be what defines the motivations behind the protégé’s attempt to become an entrepreneur but research has not examined this directly. Entrepreneurs who have had a mentoring relationship have opportunities to discuss fears, anxieties, ideas, concerns, and questions about entrepreneurship possibilities. This can lead to increased motivations and more positive feelings or perceptions about entrepreneurship.

Authors (1989) looked at the potential importance of communication variables in stimulating entrepreneurship, noting that mass media and interpersonal communication networks are important for two functions—monitoring the economic environment for current or future entrepreneurs, and helping people learn about entrepreneurs as potential role models. Thus, people learn about entrepreneurship through the media and their interpersonal contacts.

Mass Media Exposure. Authors (1989) found that interest in entrepreneurship was positively related to daily newspaper reading and frequency of travel outside one’s home area but negatively related to watching local television news. In a report titled “measuring media entrepreneurship,” Hoag (2008) sought to find out more about small business media owners. Results showed that those in the media industry are more likely to start their own enterprises than those in other industries.

By conveying values and images attributed to entrepreneurship and promoting entrepreneurial spirit, media may be important factors influencing people’s perceptions of and decisions to become entrepreneurs (Hang & van Weezel, 2005). Entrepreneurship is becoming a more realistic option for individuals in an uneasy
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economy where job security is questionable. Individuals, not looking to stay at one job their whole career, equip themselves with ideas of starting a business from their home using new, accessible technologies (i.e. smartphones and social networking tools such as Facebook), making the thought of becoming an entrepreneur seemingly within easy reach (Boyle, 2008; Boyle & Magor, 2008). The changing media environment is increasingly an uncertain job market at a time when the resources required for starting an enterprise have declined dramatically. The media also serve as a place where college students learn values and ideals about what to expect as they graduate and move into careers.

When asked about characters in the media who run their own business, individuals in one study frequently mentioned a narrow range of TV soaps and few could relate to the media characters (Henderson & Robertson, 2000). Individuals also were asked to identify current entrepreneurs and many young adults could not identify entrepreneurs. These findings imply that individuals had little knowledge concerning entrepreneurship. Henderson and Robertson (2000) see an opportunity to inform young people and promote entrepreneurship through media exposure.

Cultivation theory (Gerbner & Gross, 1979) suggests that people's perceptions of other groups tend to reflect over time what they see portrayed in the media (Lee & Joo, 2005; Nabi, 2009). This theory may be applicable to the use of media images of entrepreneurs and individuals' perceptions of them and experiences entrepreneurs encounter. In social comparison theory, people compare themselves to others and, based on that comparison, evaluate themselves. The media representation of entrepreneurs as realistic may affect entrepreneurs' perceptions and those of younger people contemplating becoming entrepreneurs. Some research has found that young adults, ages 18-29 are most influenced by television shows featuring entrepreneurship, affecting views of possible careers (Boyle & Magor, 2008). Curran (1996) found television shows to be major influences on Scottish high school students' career choices (Cited in Henderson & Robertson, 2000).

Boyle (2008) notes that reality television shows like The Apprentice have had success because of their ability to merge traditional dramatic entertainment with ideas of business from the real world. Nicholson and Anderson (2005) conducted a content analysis on newspaper articles that featured the word “entrepreneur,” finding that the number of articles featuring “entrepreneur” increased from 1989 to 2000. Hang and van
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Weezel’s (2005) review of entrepreneurship in the media, found few scholarly articles and books that discussed the media images. The most common themes found in Hang and van Weezel (2005) search were those of media leaders and images of female entrepreneurs.

**Theory of Planned Behavior**

Numerous scholars looking at entrepreneurial behavior and intent have used the theory of planned behavior as their theoretical backbone. Martin Fishbein and Icek Ajzen first laid the groundwork for the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) in 1975. This theory says that people weigh the pros and cons of completing an action, while also considering how important others will perceive the action they’re considering. The theory of reasoned action has four parts, attitude toward the behavior, subjective norms, behavioral intention, and the behavior itself. In 1991, Ajzen added a component called perceived behavior control. With this addition the theory evolved into the Theory of Planned Behavior.

There are two components to the attitude toward the behavior—behavioral beliefs, what a person believes will be the consequences of his chosen actions, and outcome evaluations, which occur when the consequences of the actions are evaluated. Subjective norms refer to what a person believes others feel about him engaging in the behavior contemplated. The two components of subjective norms include the normative beliefs— the overall beliefs that a community has about specific behaviors—and the motivation to comply—how motivated a person is to following the norms put in place by the important others.

Subjective norms are influenced through both mass and interpersonal communication processes since we learn of what others think through our interpersonal networks as well as the mass media. In addition, people’s attitudes toward entrepreneurship are subject to the same set of influences communicated. Although both attitude toward the behavior and subjective norms play large roles in influencing intentions, many studies have found support for the notion that attitude toward the behavior plays the larger role (Burnkrant & Page, 1982; Farley, Lehmann, & Ryan, 1981).

The third part of the theory of planned behavior is perceived behavioral control— the combination of a person’s actual control of the behavior and his or her perceptions regarding this control—the feeling of how difficult or easy it is to become or continue as an entrepreneur.
Behavioral intention, the fourth concept of the theory, refers to the intention to complete the behavior. The attitude toward the behavior, the subjective norm and the perceived behavior control all influence behavioral intentions. Because all three of these help influence and predict intentions, intentions are able to predict behavior, the ultimate and final concept in the theory. According to Fishbein and Ajzen, intentions are the best predictors of behavior. Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) mentioned that external variables such as personality traits and social categories may also be important in explaining people’s intentions and behaviors.

A study by Autio, Keeley, Klofsten, Parker and Hay (2001) found support for the theory of planned behavior in explaining entrepreneurial intent. Subjective norms, attitudes toward entrepreneurship as a career and perceived control over the choice to become an entrepreneur were all positively related to entrepreneurial intent. Results were similar in a study done with students in Romania (Kautonen, Luoto, & Tornikoski, 2010).

Research Plan

A review of the literature found only one study whose focus was entrepreneurs in communication (Hoag, 2008). Thus, we will build on that and expand to include entrepreneurs who start all types of enterprises in communication, from traditional print media to broadcast vehicles, those delivered through the Internet, public relations, and interpersonal consulting enterprises. We also will examine students majoring in communication for a comparison. With this data base, we will ask whether relationships identified in the literature between traits and characteristics and entrepreneurship also are found for entrepreneurs in communication:

Hypothesis 1: Creativity, entrepreneurial drive, and risk taking will be positively related to students’ likelihood of becoming entrepreneurs and to the perceived success reported by entrepreneurs in communication.

We also will ask how the social categories and other traits are related:

Research Question 1: How are other traits, motivations, skills, and social categories related to students’ likelihood of becoming entrepreneurs and to the perceived success reported by entrepreneurs in communication?

Second, except for the Authors (1989) study, few researchers have examined the influence of communication variables explicitly. Applying the theory of planned behavior, we would expect communication to influence perceived norms and beliefs about entrepreneurship. Thus, we will ask:

Research Question 2: How are people’s communication networks and media exposure variables related to attitudes and perceptions concerning entrepreneurship?
Research Question 3: Do communication networks and media exposure variables directly influence or mediate any of the influence of traits/characteristics on students' likelihood of becoming entrepreneurs and to the perceived success reported by entrepreneurs in communication?

Figure 1 shows suggested paths of relationships among the variables in the study.

**Figure 1: Influences on Entrepreneurship**

**Methods**

Two surveys were conducted in late 2010 and early 2011, one of actual entrepreneurs who had started enterprises in communication, and a second of students at two universities who might have intentions of becoming communication entrepreneurs in the future.

Communication entrepreneurs were considered to be those who started their own newspapers, newsletters, websites, blogs, magazines, video and broadcasting enterprises, film production, or communication consulting and management businesses. The intent was to cover both mass and interpersonal communication contexts. Some examples of these include newspapers staffed with citizen journalists providing suburban residents with hyper-local news stories; magazines about business-oriented topics; websites providing health information; political consulting firms; direct mail providers; photojournalists; podcaster; national radio broadcasters; public relations firms; and advertising agencies.
Several types of professionals were excluded, including those who work for entrepreneurs or are freelancers (contract workers), and franchise owners who, although they own and operate their own business, still did not come up with the original idea. A database of communication entrepreneurs was developed and they were invited to participate in an online survey. Database compilation was done in several ways: searching online and using personal contacts to identify entrepreneurs in each type of enterprise; querying members of communication organizations, entrepreneurial groups and state development offices; placing a call for assistance using social networking sites. Word-of-mouth among entrepreneurs themselves helped, and efforts were made to have ample representation from the different types of communication entrepreneurs and to have variation in the geographic location of the entrepreneurs. Approximately 250 entrepreneurs from 25 states, the District of Columbia and Micronesia were eventually contacted via email after the researchers’ extensive search over a two month period.

A second survey focused on communication majors at two universities, one in a major Midwest metropolitan area and a second in a more rural setting in an adjoining state. The urban university had an enrollment of more than 16,000, while the other had an enrollment of about 8,600. Surveying students at schools with very different campus profiles allowed for data to come from those of varying backgrounds. The sample of students invited to take the survey at both universities were registered as communication majors and enrolled in some type of upper-communication level course during the 2011 Spring Semester.14

The database of approximately 250 communication entrepreneurs was sent an email message inviting them to take an online survey via Survey Monkey. In some instances, entrepreneurs requested the questionnaire be mailed to them instead, and those requests were fulfilled.

Student participants also were invited to complete a modified version of the survey sent to the entrepreneurs on Survey Monkey. The 25 questions in the survey given to students focused more on their desires to be entrepreneurs, past experiences, influences and skills. All participants were guaranteed confidentiality by the researchers.

Variables and Measures

A variety of measures was used to tap the background of communication entrepreneurs and their experiences; personal motivations, attitudes and perceptions linked to entrepreneurship; skills used in roles as
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entrepreneurs; mentoring and modeling behaviors; interpersonal communication network patterns; traditional media use; and exposure to representations of entrepreneurs in the media.

Enterprise Background and Social Categories of Entrepreneurs

Several open-ended measures obtained descriptions of the nature of the enterprise created, whether they had partners or investors, when the enterprise was founded\textsuperscript{15} and personal demographics (ethnicity, age, education, gender); for students, parental background and year in school were obtained along with the specific major.\textsuperscript{16}

Personal Motivations, Attitudes and Perceptions Linked to Entrepreneurship

Several different scales operationalized concepts thought to be linked to entrepreneurship in the general literature: risk-taking tendency; entrepreneurial drive; creativity; feasibility, desirability and other motivations for starting enterprises;

Risk Taking Tendency. Both entrepreneurs and students were told that “entrepreneurs have to make lots of decisions since they’re responsible and in charge,” and to respond to 10 items regarding their decision-making.\textsuperscript{17} Additionally, respondents were asked if they considered themselves to be a high or low risk taker on a semantic differential scale using a seven-point Likert scale. Responses for all participants were standardized and summed for a risk taking scale. Due to low alpha reliabilities, (students $\alpha = .55$; entrepreneurs $\alpha = .38$), a factor analysis (principal components, orthogonal rotation) was conducted to see what dimensions emerged.

For the student sample four dimensions emerged. The first dimension was labeled “cautious” decision makers (loading were these items: “I usually hesitate a great deal,” “I tend to postpone or delay,” and “I decide impulsively, and I’m often not sure if I’m right”; eigenvalue = 2.3, 23.1% of variance). The second factor is less clear but indicates an external focus (items loading were: “I decide after assessing prospects for success,” “I feel more confident when others approve,” and “I believe my actions are for everybody’s good”; eigenvalue = 1.5, 14.8% of variance). Items loading on the third factor indicate risk takers who are certain of themselves (“I take risks, testing my abilities and courage,” “I rely more on my own opinions than the opinions of others”; eigenvalue = 1.5, 14.8% of variance). Loading on the fourth factor was a single item: “I entertain little doubt about decisions”; eigenvalue =1.2, 11.8% of variance).

A factor analysis of responses for entrepreneurs also yielded four factors. One factor was similar to the “cautious” factor found for students, with three of the same four items loading (“I usually hesitate,” “I tend to postpone,”
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and "I often am not sure if I’m right."; eigenvalue = 2.0, 20.3% of the variance). A second factor reflected a self-reliance (items loading were: "I take risks, testing my abilities and courage," and "I rely more on my own opinions than on the opinion of others"; eigenvalue = 1.8, 17.6% of the variance). A third factor reflected an external focus (items loading: "I believe they are for everybody’s good when undertaking actions," and "I feel more confident when others approve of them when undertaking actions," and a negative loading of "I decide impulsively"; eigenvalue = 1.4, 13.7% of variance). The final factor indicated a rational confidence (two items loading: "I decide after assessing prospect of success," and "I entertain little doubt about my decision"; eigenvalue = 1.3, 13% of variance).

Entrepreneurial drive. Five items tapped entrepreneurial drive. Responses were standardized and summed for an entrepreneurial drive scale (students $\alpha = .81$; entrepreneurs $\alpha = .89$).

Creativity—Perceptions and Attributes. Five items used to measure self-perceptions related to creativity were adapted from the Runco Ideational Behavior Scale (Runco, Plucker, & Lim, 2000-2001). Responses were standardized and summed for a scale on self perceptions related to creativity (students $\alpha = .83$; entrepreneurs $\alpha = .87$). Respondents also used a seven-point semantic differential scale to indicate to what extent five attributes or characteristics of creativity identified in past research (Davis, 1992; Feist, 1998) applied to them. This allowed us to examine the entrepreneurs’ and students’ own perceived attributes of creativity. Responses were standardized and summed for a scale (students $\alpha = .63$; entrepreneurs $\alpha = .73$). Given the low alpha for the students, a factor analysis was conducted to see how the attributes grouped; two dimensions emerged, on one students identified themselves as spontaneous, adventurous and impulsive (eigenvalue =1.8, 35.2% of the variance), and on the second they saw themselves as creative and artistic (eigenvalue = 1.7, 34.6% of the variance). A factor analysis of the entrepreneur’s data found the same two factors (spontaneous factor, eigenvalue = 2.0, 40.7% of variance; and creative, artistic factor, eigenvalue = 1.6, 32.6% of variance).

Other Perceived Characteristics. Respondents also used a semantic-differential scale to tell how close each of nine other characteristics best describes them. Factor analyses were conducted to see what dimensions emerged. For the student sample, three factors emerged. The first factor identified those who saw themselves as optimistic, social, confident extroverts with energy (eigenvalue = 2.7, 29.6% of variance). The second dimension characterizes people who see themselves as disciplined, decisive realists (eigenvalue = 1.6, 17.5% of the variance). Those with
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high scores on the third dimension see themselves as introverts (eigenvalue = 1.3, 14.3% of the variance). Two factors emerged in the analysis of entrepreneurs’ perceived characteristics. The first reflects a confident, social, optimistic extrovert (eigenvalue = 2.3, 25.8% of variance) and the second reflects a realistic, decisive, disciplined, flexible decision maker (eigenvalue = 2.1, 23.2% of variance). The energetic attribute loaded almost equally on both factors.

Motivations for Entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurs also assessed three items measuring feasibility motivations, nine items measuring desirability motivations, and seven items measuring motivations for starting a business. The three sets of variables were entered into a factor analysis to see what dimensions would emerge. The first factor represents a desirability dimension of pursuing one’s passion and expression (items loading: “Being entrepreneur allows me to embrace, create opportunities,” “to be innovative, express myself,” “to pursue interests, passions”; eigenvalue = 2.6, 13.6% of variance), while the second represents a need to control one’s life (items loading: “wanted to be my own boss,” “freedom to do things my way,” “being entrepreneur allows more say over work,” “able to control own destiny,” “liked model of business-owning parents”; eigenvalue = 2.6, 13.4% of variance). The third factor suggests it was a matter of the moment, of the situation (items loading: “was no better choice for work,” “had a marketable idea, product”; eigenvalue = 1.6, 8.6% of variance). Loading on the fourth factor were the three feasibility motivations (eigenvalue = 1.6, 8.5% of variance). The fifth factor reflects encouragement from others to take advantage of a business opportunity (eigenvalue = 1.6, 8.6% of variance). The sixth factor reflects a long-term goal to own a company (two items; eigenvalue = 1.5, 7.8% of variance), and the seventh factor reflects a need to be creative and seeking better opportunities (two items; eigenvalue = 1.4, 7.5% of variance).

Student Feasibility and Desirability Motivations. Different items were used to tap feasibility and desirability motivations for students starting enterprises—two feasibility motivations and five desirability motivations were measured. For feasibility motivations, the two items were summed ($r=.44, p<.001$). For desirability motivations, responses were standardized and summed ($\alpha = .78$).

Skills Associated with Being an Entrepreneur.

Modifications of items in the Creative Behavior Inventory (Hocevar, 1979; 1980) and the Creative Achievement Questionnaire (Carson, 2005) were used to measure skills developed before becoming an entrepreneur. This
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inventory of 13 items examines communication and creative experiences that may have helped respondents create enterprises in communication. Responses were summed (student \( \alpha = .74 \)) measuring the skills developed while in college (Mean=23.8, s=14.6; range=0-57). Only the first nine items were included on the questionnaire for the entrepreneurs’ survey; their responses also were summed (entrepreneur, mean=22.2, s=15.3; range=0-60; \( \alpha = .79 \)).

**Interpersonal Communication Network.**

Both entrepreneurs and students were asked the following open-ended item to assess the size of their interpersonal communication network:

Thinking about the past day, about how many people did you speak to interpersonally--face-to-face or over the phone?

The mean for entrepreneurs was 16.4 (s=17.6; range =0-100) and the mean for students was 17.0 (s=21.6; range =0-150).

**Mentoring and Modeling Variables.**

Several items tapped whether entrepreneurs had mentors or students had models in their personal networks. All respondents were asked if they had any family members, relatives or close friends who work for themselves or have started their own enterprise; some 61% of entrepreneurs and 60% of students indicated that they did. And entrepreneurs were asked if they had someone who was a model or they thought of as mentors in getting started. They were also asked how helpful the mentor or model was and to describe any encouragement received from others in deciding to start their own business. A third of the entrepreneurs said they had someone they considered as a mentor or model, and almost all thought they were very or somewhat helpful.

**Perceived Support from Significant Others.** Entrepreneurs were asked if they knew lot of other entrepreneurs with whom they could share experiences. Both students and entrepreneurs were asked the following question: “How helpful do you feel your network is in providing support when you are making important decisions?” That was followed by items tapping level of support. Six items were modified from the MOS Social Support survey (Sherbourne & Stewart, 1991) and others were added to reflect the student’s context and gauge support respondents felt they received. Responses were standardized and summed for a student perceived support scale (N=156, \( \alpha = .85 \)) and an entrepreneurs perceived support scale (N=96, \( \alpha = .93 \)).

**Perceptions and Beliefs Concerning Entrepreneurship**
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**Perceptions of Entrepreneurship.** Eight items were used to assess respondents' own perceptions of entrepreneurship. Respondents also were asked for how they believe the public in general views entrepreneurs, using four Likert-type items. The 12 items were standardized and summed for a scale measuring perceptions of entrepreneurship (students $\alpha = .82$; entrepreneurs $\alpha = .73$). A factor analysis also was conducted to see what dimensions would emerge, but differential patterns appeared for each survey, students and entrepreneurs. Thus, the summary scale reflecting a positive attitude and set of beliefs was retained for further analysis.

**Entrepreneurs' Perceived Similarity with Media Representations.** Both students and entrepreneurs were asked if they thought that “The experiences in the media about individuals who have started their own business are similar to real life” (using a 1-7 scale, where 1=strongly disagree, 4=neutral and 7=strongly agree). In addition, entrepreneurs were asked to make a comparison with their own experiences in assessing the following item using the 1-7 scale: “The experiences in the media about people who've started their own businesses are similar to mine.”

**Entrepreneurs Perceived Success.** A single item assessed entrepreneurs' perceived success. They were asked to use the 1-7 scale to indicate agreement with the following, with 1=strongly disagree, 4=neutral and 7=strongly agree: “Starting my own business has been very rewarding.”

**Media Use and Exposure to Media Representations of Entrepreneurship**

Traditional mass media provide ample opportunity for seeking out information about entrepreneurship as well as incidental exposure while using media for entertainment or non-instrumental goals. Thus, we tapped general media use as well as more specific exposure measures dealing with the focus of this study.

**Traditional Media Use.** The usual items were used to measure frequency of media use, including the number of days in the past week one read a newspaper, the number of days in the past week have one watched the news on TV, how much time was spent watching television yesterday, the number of magazines read on a regularly basis, and the amount of time one spent listening to the radio yesterday. More specific measures of exposure to entrepreneurs were included for film and broadcasting.

**Exposure to Film Representations of Entrepreneurs.** All respondents were asked whether they had seen each of the following twelve films that featured entrepreneurs or figures in business, ranging from the classic “Citizen Kane” to more recent films: Citizen Kane, Glengarry Glen Ross, Risky Business, Wall Street, Wall Street: Money Never Sleeps, Jerry McGuire, Pirates of Silicon Valley, Startup.com, The Aviator, Pursuit of Happyness, High Fidelity, Tucker,
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the Man and His Dream. The number of films seen, whether in theaters or on television, was totaled for an exposure measure. The mean number of films seen by entrepreneurs was 4.3 (sd=2.9, N=96) and by students was 3.0 (sd=2.1, N=148).

Exposure to Television Representations of Entrepreneurs. There also is ample opportunity to see people compete to become entrepreneurs on reality and other programs featuring competition, as well as dramatic programs featuring entrepreneurs. Respondents were asked if they had seen the following television programs and a score was summed for a total: The Apprentice, Shark Tank, Property Ladder, Millionaire Matchmaker, America’s Next Great Restaurant, American Inventor, How to Make It in America, Mad Men, DC Cupcakes, Undercover Boss. The mean number of television programs viewed by entrepreneurs was 1.96 (s=1.81, Range=7, N=96) and by students was 2.38 (s=1.7, Range=6, N=148).

Patterns of Online Activity. Email and social network sites have become important for both personal and professional reasons. Thus, we obtained measures of concepts tapping these significant sources of influence.

Email Use. Respondents were asked how often they use email (1 several times a day, 2 once a day, 3 every couple days, 4 once a week, 5 less often than that, 6 almost never, 7 never). Some 73% of students check email several times a day, with another 11% checking once a day. Entrepreneurs used email even more frequently, almost all reporting use several times a day.

Frequency Use of Social Network Sites and YouTube for All Purposes. Respondents also were asked how often they use each of the five (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, MySpace, and YouTube) for all purposes, with 1=daily, 2=every couple days, 3=weekly, and 4=less often. These were used as individual measures and a summary figure was computed across all five.

Size of Social Networks. Respondents were asked how many friends they have in online social networks. The mean for students was 485, with a median and mode of 400 (N=124). The mean for communication entrepreneurs was 216, with a median of 70 and a mode of 0 (N=80).

Uses and Gratifications of Social Networks and YouTube. Two sets of items reflect uses and gratification measures. Respondents were asked if they used Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, MySpace and YouTube for personal and for business reasons. Among students, 15% use MySpace personally and 2% use it for work. Some 28% use
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LinkedIn personally and 14% use it for work. Some 39% use Twitter personally and 17% use it for work. Some 83% use Facebook personally and 41% use it for work.

Among communication entrepreneurs, 8% use MySpace personally and 2% use it for work. Some 54% use LinkedIn personally and 72% use it for work. Some 34% use Twitter personally and 47% use it for work. Some 69% use Facebook personally and 59% use it for work.

Then a more specific set of uses and gratifications measures was used for social networks as a whole. Respondents were asked to use a 1-7 scale to tell how much they agreed with five statements on business uses of social networks, and five statements on personal uses, with 1= strongly disagree, 4=neutral, and 7=strongly agree.

Eight items measuring business and personal uses were included in the survey of communication entrepreneurs. In a factor analysis (principal components, orthogonal rotation), two factors emerged: “Business uses” and “Personal uses.” Seven items measuring personal and work-related uses were included in the survey of students. In a factor analysis, the first three items loaded on a separate “work-job” related factor (accounting for 22% of the variance), and the others on a “personal-use” factor (accounting for 44% of the variance). Factor scores were retained for use as variables in analyses.

Interpersonal Communication about Entrepreneurship.

Students were asked how often they talked with a set of people about their career choices and entrepreneurs were asked how often they talked about the possibility of starting an enterprise when they were thinking about the prospect. They were asked to use a 1-8 scale to indicate how often they talked with parents, siblings, friends, co-workers at the time, other entrepreneurs, community leaders, other people in business and teachers/professors, with 1=almost never, 8= very often. A summary score was computed for frequency talk about entrepreneurship across all eight types of people.

In addition, two other items were used as indicators; respondents were asked to use a 1-7 scale to tell how much they agreed or disagreed with the following statements:

I often talk with family and friends about my work, my business.
I know a lot of other entrepreneurs with whom I can share experiences.

Subjective Norms: Perceived Importance of Others in Deciding on Career Choice
After indicating how often they talked with each group, students were asked to use a 1-7 scale where 1=not important and 7=very important to indicate the importance of each in deciding “on career choice.” Entrepreneurs were told the following and asked to use the same scale: “When you were thinking about starting your own enterprise, how often did you talk to the following about the possibility? And how important were they in making up your mind about what to do?” The individual frequency measures (for parents, siblings, and so forth) were weighted by relative importance and then summed up for another measure.

**Likelihood of Becoming an Entrepreneur**

To measure the likelihood of students becoming entrepreneurs down the road, students were asked to indicate the probability they would start their own business on a five-point scale, ranging from “have given it serious thought and will almost certainly happen” to “never thought about it.” While 7% were almost certain it would happen and 13% thought it was likely at some stage, 37% were in the middle—may possibly happen in the future—and 22% hadn’t given it much thought and 22% never thought about it.

**Entrepreneurs’ Perceived Success**

Entrepreneurs were asked to indicate how much they agreed with the following statement using a 1-7 scale where 1 = strongly disagree, 4 is neutral and 7 = strongly agree: Starting my own business has been very rewarding. The mean was 6.2 (s=1.3, Range=6, N=96).

**Analysis**

Of about 250 entrepreneurs invited, 95 participated in the survey, a 38 percent response rate. A description of the communication entrepreneurs shows that more than half were younger than 50, a majority had gone to college and received a bachelor’s degree, many doing postgraduate work, and 58 percent were male (See Tables 1-5 for further descriptions of the communication entrepreneurs surveyed).

A total of 172 students from both the urban university and rural university participated in the student survey, 75 from the rural campus and 97 from the urban university. Some 75% of the students designated themselves as being either juniors or seniors in college, and about 63% were female.

The communication entrepreneurs had been “in business” for an average of 13.6 years, with 14 percent starting their enterprise more than 20 years ago. The breakdown by type of enterprise was: 38% in public relations/advertising, 18% in print media, 16% online enterprises, 12% in research, 10% in video-film-audio-
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photography enterprises, 9% in political/consulting enterprises, and 8% in organizational/interpersonal enterprises.

Because of the size of both samples, we’re limited in the power of our statistical tests.

The first hypothesis predicted that creativity, entrepreneurial drive, and risk taking would be positively related to students’ likelihood of becoming entrepreneurs and to the perceived success reported by entrepreneurs in communication. Likelihood of becoming an entrepreneur among students was correlated with creativity ($r=.15$, $p<.03$) and the perceived creativity scale ($r=.26$, $p<.001$), but not entrepreneurial drive ($r=.08$, ns). Two of the four risk-taking factors were related to likelihood students would become entrepreneurs. The more certain students are of themselves ($r=.18$, $p<.01$) and the less cautious ($r=.26$, $p<.001$), the greater the likelihood students think they’ll be entrepreneurs. Thus, while our drive scale failed in the analysis, students who scored higher on the creativity scale and felt more certain and were less cautious were more likely to indicate they would become entrepreneurs.

The first hypothesis also predicted that communication entrepreneurs’ satisfaction with their decision to start an enterprise (“Starting my own business has been rewarding”) would be positively correlated with creativity, entrepreneurial drive and risk taking. We find a positive correlation with drive ($r=.80$, $p<.001$), and the creativity scale ($r=.63$, $p<.001$), as well as two of the four risk-taking dimensions that emerged in the factor analysis, self reliance ($r=.24$, $p<.02$), and rational-confidence ($r=.27$, $p<.01$). Only one of the two factors representing perceived creativity was related to satisfaction with one’s business, and that was negative; those who saw themselves as more spontaneous and adventurous were less likely to say their business enterprise has been rewarding ($r=-.25$, $p<.02$).

Analyses of both data sets generally confirmed the first hypothesis that relationships found in the literature for entrepreneurs in general also obtained for communication entrepreneurs and students majoring in communication.

The first research question asked how other traits, motivations, skills and social categories are related to students’ likelihood of becoming entrepreneurs and to the perceived success reported by entrepreneurs in communication. In the student data set, we find that likelihood one would become an entrepreneur was positively related to both feasibility motives ($r=.14$, $p<.05$) and feasibility motives ($r=.15$, <.03) but not to any of the three factors capturing other perceived characteristics. Students who had developed more of the skills measured ($r=.28$, $p<.001$),
older students ($r=.19, p<.01$) and males ($r=.24, p<.001$) were more likely to report a greater likelihood they’d become entrepreneurs. In the entrepreneurs data set, both feasibility motivations ($r=.64, p<.001$) and the factor representing motives to pursue one’s passion and expression ($r=.27, p<.01$) were positively correlated with satisfaction with starting one’s one business. None of the other motives were related. None of the social categories (gender, age, formal education), years one has been an entrepreneur, or the summary index for skills were related to satisfaction with starting an enterprise.

The second research question asked whether people’s communication networks and media exposure were related to attitudes and perceptions concerning entrepreneurship. In the student data, we find that the scale capturing perceptions of entrepreneurship is positively related to the belief that experiences of entrepreneurs in the media are similar to real life ($r=.37, p<.001$). Also, there is a pattern of exposure to media messages about entrepreneurs, with a positive correlation between the number of TV shows about entrepreneurship viewed and the number of films about entrepreneurship ($r=.22, p<.003$). But there are no relationships between exposure to these television programs and films on entrepreneurship and the scale capturing perceptions or beliefs that experiences of entrepreneurs in the media are similar to real life.

In the entrepreneurs data set, the same relationship was found between the scale capturing perceptions of entrepreneurship is positively related to the belief that experiences of entrepreneurs in the media are similar to real life ($r=.25, p<.03$). Similarly, there is a pattern of exposure to media messages about entrepreneurs, with a positive correlation between the number of TV shows about entrepreneurship viewed and the number of films about entrepreneurship ($r=.28, p<.01$). Unlike students, entrepreneurs beliefs that experiences of entrepreneurs in the media are similar to real life is related to frequency one watches news on television ($r=.24, p<.04$) and to time spent listening to the radio ($r=.25, p<.03$) but not to any of the print or other media. We also find that perceptions that experiences of entrepreneurs in the media are similar to real life are related to beliefs that media experiences of entrepreneurs are similar “to mine” ($r=.56, p<.001$). The correlation between the size of one’s personal communication network and beliefs that media experiences of entrepreneurs are similar “to mine” approaches statistical significance (partial $r=.22, p<.06$).

The third research question asked communication networks and media exposure variables directly influence or mediate any of the influence of traits/characteristics on students’ likelihood of becoming entrepreneurs and to the
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perceived success reported by entrepreneurs in communication? We find that student reports they’re more likely to become entrepreneurs is positively related to the number of films on entrepreneurship \(r=.20, p<.01\) but not to the number of television shows on the topic \(r=.05, \text{n.s.}\). A pattern of positive direct relationships is found for other media, with likelihood of becoming entrepreneurs correlated with how often students read the newspaper \(r=.18, p<.01\), frequency watch news on television \(r=.19, p<.01\), and the frequency students visit Facebook—the preferred social network site \(r=.15, p<.04\). Correlations with time spent listening to the radio \(r=.12, p<.06\) and the number of magazines read \(r=.13, p<.06\) approach statistical significance. Time spent watching television, frequency use email, size of one’s personal communication network (measured as number of people talked to face to face or by phone yesterday), and the scale tapping perceived support from family and friend were not related to perceived likelihood of becoming an entrepreneur.\(^{31}\)

In the entrepreneurs data set there are no relationships between communication variables and reports that starting their own business has been rewarding. Perceptions of entrepreneurship are positively related to reported satisfaction with one’s own business \(r=.33, p<.002\).

Despite the small sample size, we utilized regression analysis to detect relationships that might be constrained otherwise in predicting reports by entrepreneurs that starting “my own business has been very rewarding.” We entered the following variables: social categories—age, gender, formal education and years since became entrepreneur; entrepreneurial drive and the creativity scale; size of one’s communication network, number of TV shows and films viewed on entrepreneurship, number of days read the paper and watched TV news last week, frequency talk about entrepreneurship with others; perceptions of entrepreneurship scale and belief that media perceptions are similar to real life. The overall equation is statistically significant \([F(15, 80)=12.7, p<.001]\), with the following variables explaining significant amounts of variance: gender \((\beta = .18, p<.01)\), entrepreneurial drive \((\beta = .74, p<.001)\), perceptions that media experiences of entrepreneurs are similar to real life \((\beta = -.15, p<.04)\), and the scale tapping perceptions of entrepreneurship \((\beta = .13, p<.08)\). A similar regression analysis with the student data set failed to reach significance and only gender (being male) and skills developed were significant predictors.

**Discussion**

On balance, the results provide some support for a model derived from TRA, one outlining the importance of such factors as creativity and risk-taking as determinants of successful entrepreneurship. One limitation of this model,
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however, involves the failure of entrepreneurial drive to predict perceived likelihood of becoming a successful entrepreneur. This may reflect a belief among respondents that drive alone is not sufficient to ensure entrepreneurial success, which may instead see as hinging on other factors (i.e., creativity and risk-taking here) as well as organizational or external factors.

The regression analyses suggest that attitudinal variables are far more explanatory than measures of media use or social locators. This confirms parallel TRA work suggesting that one’s willingness to adopt or maintain a given course of action (e.g. technology adoption) is more likely a function of beliefs about the efficacy of said actions. Moreover, the relatively modest role played by media use variables reinforces the notion that highly personal ventures like entrepreneurship are more powerfully determined by proximal (psychological) factors (e.g., Zhao & Siebert, 2006) than more distal, external influences like the mass media. Recent fragmentation of media messages and audience attendance to mass-appeal information sources may be eroding the once monolithic media transmission belt (e.g., Nabi, 2009). Later work should test the conceptual model identified here across a larger and more diversified sample of respondents. Since entrepreneurship is influenced by personal as well as external (e.g., organizational) influences, a multi-methods approach combining qualitative measures in different business contexts with the present framework should be promising.
### Table 1: Demographics of Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Entrepreneurs (N=95)</th>
<th>Students (N=171)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ethnicity</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>77 (80%)</td>
<td>126 (73.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-caucasian (African</td>
<td>2 (2%)</td>
<td>22 (12.9%) Black</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American, Hispanic, Asian)</td>
<td></td>
<td>10 (5.9%) Hispanic, Asian, Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing information</td>
<td>17 (18%)</td>
<td>13 (7.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median (mid point)</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% 18-19</td>
<td></td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% 20s</td>
<td>8.9%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% 30s</td>
<td>20.2%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% 40s</td>
<td>21.5%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% 50s</td>
<td>29.1%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% 60s +</td>
<td>7.6%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td></td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Formal Education</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school degree or equivalent</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>4% Freshman; 6% sophomore; 40% juniors; 43% seniors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some college</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College degree</td>
<td>36.7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post graduate work</td>
<td>50.6%</td>
<td>6% graduate students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mother’s Level of Education</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some high school</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school degree or equivalent</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some college</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College degree</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post graduate work or degree</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Father’s Level of Education</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some high school</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school degree or equivalent</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some college</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College degree</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post graduate work or degree</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Students’ Major in School</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journalism</td>
<td>12.1%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public relations/advertising</td>
<td>29.3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital media, communication technology</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Film</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication management</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication/Communication science</td>
<td>26.1%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other/Graduate students</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2a: Background of Entrepreneurs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nature of Enterprise Started</th>
<th>Current Mean Age</th>
<th>Formal Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Started print enterprise</td>
<td>49.9</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Started public relations, adv. enterprise</td>
<td>47.8</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Started political com. enterprise</td>
<td>49.0</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Started video, film enterprise</td>
<td>38.9</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Started interpersonal com. enterprise</td>
<td>54.3</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Started com. research enterprise</td>
<td>52.0</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Started web enterprise</td>
<td>44.5</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Education ranges from 1=some high school to 4=college degree to 5=postgraduate work or degree.

Table 2b: Background of Entrepreneurs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nature of Enterprise Started</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Started print enterprise</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Started public relations, adv. enterprise</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Started political com. enterprise</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Started video, film enterprise</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Started interpersonal com. enterprise</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Started com. research enterprise</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Started web enterprise</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2c: Background of Entrepreneurs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nature of Enterprise Started</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Formal Education</th>
<th>Gender</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Started print enterprise</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>.24*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Started public relations, adv. enterprise</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>-.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Started political com. enterprise</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>-.24*</td>
<td>-.20*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Started video, film enterprise</td>
<td>-.26**</td>
<td>-.21*</td>
<td>-.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Started interpersonal com. enterprise</td>
<td>.17#</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Started com. research enterprise</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Started web enterprise</td>
<td>-.11</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>-.17#</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For gender, 1=male, 2=female.

Thus, younger people were more likely to start video or film enterprises and less likely to start an interpersonal com. enterprise. The more the education, the less likely one began a political com. or video/film enterprise. And women were more likely to start print and less likely to start web or political com. enterprises.

The youngest entrepreneurs in the sample are in video and film, followed by those who began web enterprises. Those who began enterprises in interpersonal communication and communication research are the oldest, and they also are the most educated, more likely to have done post graduate work. Only two non-Caucasians were included in the survey, one African American and one Hispanic, the former a web entrepreneur and the latter an entrepreneur in public relations/advertising.
Table 3: Differences in Motivations among Entrepreneurs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motivation (mean for sample)</th>
<th>Print</th>
<th>PR Adv</th>
<th>Pol Com</th>
<th>Video,Film</th>
<th>IPC</th>
<th>Research</th>
<th>Web</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Taking advantage of bus. Opp.(5.2)</td>
<td>4.94</td>
<td>5.53</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>4.70</td>
<td>5.38</td>
<td>5.55</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No better choice for work (3.36)</td>
<td>2.44*</td>
<td>3.35</td>
<td>4.56#</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>2.88</td>
<td>3.82</td>
<td>3.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sought better opportunities (4.64)</td>
<td>4.81</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>4.56</td>
<td>5.50</td>
<td>4.13</td>
<td>5.27</td>
<td>4.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had marketable idea, product(5.63)</td>
<td>5.75</td>
<td>5.35</td>
<td>5.88</td>
<td>5.70</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>6.09</td>
<td>5.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others thought I should (4.39)</td>
<td>4.63</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>3.22*</td>
<td>4.60</td>
<td>4.13</td>
<td>5.09</td>
<td>3.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Always wanted to start company(4.51)</td>
<td>4.40</td>
<td>4.22</td>
<td>3.44#</td>
<td>4.60</td>
<td>5.25</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>4.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liked model of my parents (2.51)</td>
<td>2.81</td>
<td>2.39</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>2.30</td>
<td>1.63</td>
<td>3.10</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desirability motivations (52.2)</td>
<td>14.9</td>
<td>16.4</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>15.7</td>
<td>17.9</td>
<td>17.9*</td>
<td>14.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feasibility motivations (16.0)</td>
<td>52.4</td>
<td>52.4</td>
<td>52.7</td>
<td>53.3</td>
<td>51.0</td>
<td>52.5</td>
<td>49.0*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = 16 36 9 10 8 11 13

Note: The top seven items were measured on a 1-7 scale where 1 means “not at all important,” 4 means neutral and 7 means “very important.” The bottom two items are scale means. The mean for the three-item Feasibility Motivation Scale was 16.0, with a standard deviation of 3.4 and a range of 17. The mean for the nine-item Desirability Motivation Scale was 52.2, with a standard deviation of 7.4 and a range of 36. The statistical significance refers to t-tests between those starting individual types of enterprises and the rest of the sample: #=p<.10, *=p<.05.

We see relatively few differences in motivations. However, those who started enterprises in print were less likely to say there was no better choice for work; those who began political communication enterprises also were more likely to agree with that assessment, and to disagree that they received encouragement from others or had always wanted to start their own company. Those who began research enterprises were higher on the Desirability Motivation scale and those who started web enterprises were higher on the Feasibility Motivation scale.

Table 4: Relation of Nature of Communication Enterprise to Exposure to Media Messages with Business or Entrepreneurial Themes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nature of Enterprise Started</th>
<th>Exposure to Entrep. Films</th>
<th>Exposure to Entrep. TV</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Started print enterprise</td>
<td>-.13#</td>
<td>-.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Started public relations, adv. enterprise</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Started political com. enterprise</td>
<td>.27**</td>
<td>-.15#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Started video, film enterprise</td>
<td>.18*</td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Started interpersonal com. enterprise</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>-.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Started com. research enterprise</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Started web enterprise</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Exposure to entrepreneurial films negatively related to starting print enterprises and positively related to starting political com. and video/film enterprises. Exposure to entrepreneurial TV programs negatively related to starting political com enterprises.

We see that those in print had less exposure to films with business or entrepreneurial themes, while those who began political communication or video/film enterprises were more exposed. Those in political communication were less likely to be exposed to television programs with similar themes.
Table 5: Media Use by Nature of Enterprise Started

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nature of Enterprise Started</th>
<th>Read paper</th>
<th>Watch TV news</th>
<th>Hrs. watch TV</th>
<th>No. mags read</th>
<th>Time listen to radio</th>
<th>No. people spoke to</th>
<th>Freq. use of email</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Started print enterprise</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.27*</td>
<td>-.13</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>-.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Started public relations, adv. enterprise</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>-.14#</td>
<td>.32**</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.22*</td>
<td>-.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Started political com. enterprise</td>
<td>.18*</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>-.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Started video, film enterprise</td>
<td>-.40**</td>
<td>-.17#</td>
<td>-.21*</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>-.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Started interpersonal com. enterprise</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>-.14#</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>-.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Started com. research enterprise</td>
<td>.24**</td>
<td>.18*</td>
<td>-.00</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>.21*</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.32**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Started web enterprise</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>.29*</td>
<td>-.21*</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>-.14</td>
<td>-.05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thus, those who started print enterprises watched more TV, those who started PR/advertising enterprises watched less TV, read more magazines and talk to more people, those who started political com. enterprises read the paper more often, those who started video/film enterprises read the paper less often, watched TV news less often and spent less time watching TV, those starting interpersonal com. enterprises watched less TV, those who began com. research enterprises read the paper and watch TV news more often, spent more time listening to the radio and use email more often. Those who began web enterprises watched more TV and read fewer magazines. Controlling for age reduces some correlations but not materially.
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References

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Notes

1 For more on definitions of entrepreneurship see Bygrave (1997) and Henderson and Robertson (2000).

2 They include good health, a basic need to control and direct, self-confidence, a never-ending sense of urgency, comprehensive awareness, or a general overview of the entire situation when they plan, being realistic, a superior conceptual ability, which involves quickly recognizing relations among functions and things in complex situations, a low need for status, an objective approach to interpersonal relationships, meaning they are more concerned with people’s accomplishments than with their feelings, and avoid becoming interpersonally involved, sufficient emotional stability with considerable self control, and ability to handle the anxieties and pressures of business and personal life, and an attraction to challenges, not risks, as they are neither high nor low risk takers but prefer situations where they can influence the outcome.

3 Others are a preference for job security versus personal independence, the importance of the job in one’s life, a willingness to work 60 hours a week for poor wages for a long time, an acceptance of the responsibility to meet employees’ payroll and paying bills, liking to think about business at home, whether a business idea is unique in some way (unique product, special method to make it, different place to sell it, etc., whether one has to be told what to do, importance of achievement or power, and a willingness to go into own business if given the chance.

4 See, for example, Burke, FitzRoy, and Nolan (2008), Collins, Moore, and Unwalla (1964), and Nafziger (1986).

5 There are varying definitions of creativity (Amabile, 1988; Hills & Shrader, 1998; Plucker, Beghetto, & Dow, 2004; Pretorius, Millard, & Kruger, 2005; Ulrich, 1998; Williams, 1999).

6 Researchers in recent years have suggested that there are six “Ps” of creativity. The six “Ps” each stand for a different aspect of creativity. They include process, product, person, place, persuasion and potential (Rhodes, 1961; Runco, 2003; Runco, 2004b; Simonton, 1990).


8 Begley and Boyd (1987) confirmed the hypothesis that entrepreneurs have a more positive attitude toward risk than non-entrepreneurs (Macko & Tyszka, 2009). Others have found no difference between entrepreneurs and non-entrepreneurs (Macko & Tyszka, 2009).

9 According to Shapero, significant life events (job loss, migration) can precipitate sizable increases in entrepreneurial activity (Shapero, 1982). Founders have not changed, only their perceptions of new circumstances in their lives.

10 See Baer (2007); Obstfeld (2005); Ohly, Kase, and Škerlavaj (2010); Zhou, Shin, Brass, Choi, and Zhang (2009).

11 Kram and Isabella (1985) note that mentoring relationships are intense, whereby a more experienced person (the mentor) provides two functions for a junior person (the protégé), providing advice or modeling about career development behaviors and providing personal support, especially psychosocial support (Bozeman and Feeney, 2007). Mentoring also has been described as a two way street where the mentor and protégé both benefit. While there are formal mentor relationships within some organizations, mentoring is usually characterized as informal, even casual, a friendship with a business function (Lea, J.W., 2004).
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12 Hoag (2008) defined media entrepreneurship as the development and opening of a business in the media industry, whether it is an advertising agency or film production studio that provides excellent services and contributes to the growth of small businesses in the media industry.

13 See: Davidsson (1995); Kolvereid (1997); Krueger (1993); Krueger and Carsrud (1993); and Shapero (1982).

14 As an added incentive to take the survey about their future intentions of being a communication entrepreneur, students at one university were entered into a drawing to win a monetary prize, while those at the other received extra credit in one of their communication courses.

15 Entrepreneurs were asked: Please provide a brief description of the enterprise you have created; How many people work for your enterprise including yourself?; Do you have any partners or investors? (If yes: How many partners or investors do you have?); What was your employment situation immediately before you started your own business?; When was your company/business founded?

16 Both entrepreneurs and students were asked: What is your ethnicity? (1 Black, 2 White, 3 Hispanic, 4 Asian, 5 Native American, 6 Other); What is your age?; Please check your gender (1-male; 2-female). Entrepreneurs were asked to “check your formal education (1 Some High School, 2 High School Degree or Equivalent, 3 Some College, 4 College Degree, 5 Postgraduate work or degree, 6 Other).” Students were asked: Please check your mother’s formal education (1 Some High School, 2 High School Degree or Equivalent, 3 Some College, 4 College Degree, 5 Postgraduate work or degree, 6 Other); Please check your father’s formal education (1 Some High School, 2 High School Degree or Equivalent, 3 Some College, 4 College Degree, 5 Postgraduate work or degree, 6 Other); Please check your year in school (1 freshman, 2 sophomore, 3 junior, 4 senior, 5 grad student); What is your major?

17 Respondents were asked to select a number that indicates how each of the following “best describes your decision making,” with 1=almost never, 4=sometimes, and 7=very often: I usually hesitate a great deal when making a decision. I decide after assessing the prospect of success. I entertain little doubt about my decision. I tend to postpone or delay. I decide impulsively. Then they were asked to “indicate how each of the following best describes you when undertaking actions” using the same scale: I often am not sure if I’m right. I feel more confident when others approve of them. I believe they are for everybody’s good. I take risks, testing my abilities and courage. I rely more on my own opinions than on the opinions of others.

18 For these items, respondents used a 1-7 scale to indicate how much they agreed or disagreed with each statement, with 1=strongly disagree, 4=neutral and 7=strongly agree: On the whole, I am satisfied with my life. I feel that I have a many good qualities. I am able to do things better than most other people. I feel that I’m a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others. I have ideas about new inventions or about how to improve things. (This last item was also used in the creativity scale.)

19 Respondents used a 1-7 scale to indicate how much they agreed or disagreed with each of the following statements, with 1= strongly disagree, 4= neutral and 7=strongly agree; for entrepreneurs, this was in regards
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to running an enterprise and life in general; for students, this was about attitudes toward careers and life in
general:
I like to play around with ideas for the run of it.
I have always been an active thinker – I have lots of ideas.
I am good at combining ideas in ways that others have not tried. (This items was also used in perceived
trepreneur feasibility motivations for entrepreneurs.)
Friends ask me to help them think of ideas and solutions.
I have ideas about new inventions or about how to improve things. (This items was also used in the
trepreneurial drive scale.)

20 The items were:
Spontaneous 1—7 Planner
Adventurous 1—7 Timid
Creative 1—7 Uncreative
Impulsive 1—7 Cautious
Artistic 1—7 Non-Artistic

21 The items were:
Confident 1—7 Insecure
Social 1—7 Private
Introvert 1—7 Extrovert
Optimist 1—7 Pessimist
Realist 1—7 Idealist
Decisive 1—7 Indecisive
Disciplined 1—7 Undisciplined
Flexible 1—7 Inflexible
Energetic 1—7 Lethargic

22 Respondents were asked to apply a response scale where 1=strongly disagree, 4=neutral, and 7=strongly
agree for the feasibility motivation items:
Family and friends were very supportive in my effort to start an enterprise.
I started a business because it was feasible.
I am good at combining ideas in ways that others have not tried. (This item was also used in the creativity
perceptions scale.)
The desirability motivations were tapped using a scale where 1= not at all important, 4= neutral, and 7= very
important:
I wanted to be my own boss.
I wanted the freedom of doing things my way.
I needed an outlet to be creative.
I had to achieve long-term goals.
Being an entrepreneur allows more say over workplace issues and to work on my own timetable
Being an entrepreneur allows me to embrace and create opportunities for myself.
Being an entrepreneur allows me to be innovative and express myself.
Engaging in an entrepreneurial enterprise allows me to pursue my personal interests and passions.
As an entrepreneur I am able to control my own destiny through my own efforts and abilities.
Finally, the seven motivations was for their decision to start a business were tapped using a 1-7 scale, with
1=not at all important, 4=neutral and 7=very important:
I was taking advantage of a business opportunity.
There was no better choice for work.
I had a job but sought better opportunities.
I had a marketable idea/product.
People who are important to me thought I should take the initiative.
I had always wanted to own a company.
I liked the model of my parents, who owned a business.

In all cases, respondents used a 1-7 scale to indicate how much they agreed or disagreed with each item, with 1=strongly disagree, 4=neutral and 7=strongly agree. The student feasibility motivations items were:
I am good at combining ideas in ways that others have not tried. (This item was also used in the perceived entrepreneur feasibility motivations for entrepreneurs.)
Family and friends would be supportive if I decided to start an enterprise rather than get a job. (This item was also used in the perceived support from significant others.)
The student desirability motivations items were:
Being an entrepreneur enhances one's social life.
Starting a business would allow a person to embrace and create opportunities for themselves.
Being an entrepreneur would allow someone to be innovative and express themselves.
Starting a business would allow a person to pursue their personal interests and passions.
People who start their own businesses are able to control their destinies.

Entrepreneurs were asked how often they took part in the following activities before becoming an entrepreneur using a 0-7 scale (0=never, 1=once, 2=twice, 3.5=3 or 4 times, 5.5=5 or 6 times, 7=7 or more times):
Worked as an editor or journalist for a magazine, newspaper, yearbook, or other publication
Wrote poems, novels, short stories, jokes, and/or song lyrics for fun
Made or helped make a music record, CD, film or video tape
Put on a radio show
Kept a sketch book, painted, made sculptures and/or ceramics
Participated in a communication workshop, club, or similar organization
Developed a website
Done some work in photography
Participated in some acting or dramatic or musical production
Founded a literary magazine or similar publication
Won an award for an achievement
Exhibited a work of art
Wrote something humorous such as jokes, limericks, satire, etc. for fun

Respondents used a 1-7 scale to tell how often the first eight items applied to them, with 1=almost never and 7= very often; the response set for the final two items was also a 1-7 scale, with 1=almost never and 7= very often:
Asked of both entrepreneurs and students:
Close friends and relatives are there for a comfortable talk.
I have someone I can count on to listen to me when I need to talk.
Someone's there with information to help me understand a situation.
There's someone whose advice I really want.
Someone's there for ideas about how to deal with personal problems.
Asked of entrepreneurs only:
Someone's there to give good advice about a crisis.
Someone is there who understands my problems.
There's someone to share my most private worries, fears.
Family and friends were very supportive in my effort to start an enterprise. (This item was also used in the perceived entrepreneur feasibility motivations scale.)
Asked of students only:
Family and friends would be supportive if I decided to start an enterprise rather than get a job. (This item was also used in the student feasibility motivations scale.)
Both entrepreneurs and students used a 1-7 scale to indicate how much they agreed with each of the following, where 1=strongly disagree, 4=neutral and 7=strongly agree:
People shouldn't start a business if they aren't sure they'll succeed.
The challenge of being successful is as important as the money.
The thing entrepreneurs miss most is security.
Enterpreneurs see more possibilities in a situation than other people.
Being an entrepreneur is time consuming, taking time away from one's family and friends.
Being an entrepreneur is a liberating experience.
Being an entrepreneur enhances one's social life.
Enterpreneurs are important for our economy.

The 1-7 response scale asked them to tell how much they agreed or disagreed with each of the following four items, with 1=strongly disagree, 4=neutral and 7=strongly agree:
People see entrepreneurs as risk takers.
The general public sees entrepreneurs as leading exciting lives today.
The public is intrigued with the idea of being an entrepreneur.
Enterpreneurs are generally well regarded in our society.

Five items loaded on the factor of “business uses” (accounting for 15% of the variance):
Use social networks because it helps my business.
Use social networks because it’s convenient searching for info.
Use social networks to keep in touch with partners, investors.
Use social networks for info about products or services.
Use social networks to seek, keep in touch w/ customers.
Loading on a second factor that accounted for 42% of the variance were the following, including the final item that loaded on both:
Use social networks to keep in touch with friends and family.
Use social networks because it’s entertaining.
Use social networks to share my ideas.
Use social networks to seek, keep in touch w/ customers.

The seven items were:
Use social networks for my work
Use social networks to find a job
Use social networks for information about products, services
Use social networks because it’s convenient searching for info
Use social networks to keep in touch with friends and family
Use social networks to share my ideas
Use social networks because it’s entertaining

This item also was used in perceived support from significant others.

Controlling for age, gender and father’s level of formal education did little to alter the pattern of relationships.