

NC State Innovation & Entrepreneurship Seed Grant Proposal

Students' Socialization through Living and Learning Communities and Entrepreneurship Outcomes

Project Synopsis

This proposal outlines a data collection effort to explore the effects of socialization on students' entrepreneurship choices after college. We have three main goals. First, we aim to document personal- and career-related effects over the last 10 years (10th year anniversary) of the Albright Entrepreneurs' Village (AEV). Second, we want to compare the career outcomes of those who did live in the Village to students who were not selected to live in the Village. Third, we hope to identify the specific components of the Village that most impacted students' career-related decisions and then develop insights related to better serving entrepreneurship students at NC State who are not in the Village yet would like to be a part of a community of aspiring entrepreneurs.

Project Personnel

Primary Investigator

Ahmed Ali (Director, Albright Entrepreneurs Village). Email: aali4@ncsu.edu

Co-Investigators

Sydney Russell (Graduate Assistant, Albright Entrepreneurs Village). Email: serusse3@ncsu.edu

Nathan Kyler (Ph.D. Student, Department of Psychology). Email: enkyler@ncsu.edu

Project Summary

For decades, researchers in the field of entrepreneurship have pondered the process by which individuals are socialized and then make choices about careers (Scherer, Brodzinski, & Wiebe, 1990; Starr & Fondas, 1992). Over the years, findings indicate that culture and socialization can play a role in individuals' choices related to entrepreneurship (Aviram, 2009; Chakraborty, Thompson, & Yehoue, 2016). And, with relevance to the current proposal, scholars are now beginning to recognize and study the effects of the university environment on culture and socialization for students (Middleton et al., 2020).

Despite advances in the literature here, there is much we do not know. Most importantly, we do not yet know how students who are socialized in a college culture filled with entrepreneurship opportunities make decisions compared to students who were not in such a college environment. This is the main focus of our proposal.

Research question(s)-

1. What are the personal- and career-related effects of students' participation in the Albright Entrepreneurs Village (AEV)?
2. How do the career outcomes of students who did live in the Village compare to students who were not selected to live in the Village?
3. Third, what are the specific components of the Village that most impacted students' career-related decisions? And, how can NC State Innovation & Entrepreneurship better serve entrepreneurship students at NC State who are not in the Village yet would like to be a part of a community of aspiring entrepreneurs?

Anticipated data collection and methodological approach- In terms of data, we will retrieve the names and emails/contact information for all applicants to the AEV—those who were selected to live there as well as those who were not. We will develop an online survey (roughly 7 minutes) to distribute. We will invite alumni to engage in short (15 minutes) interviews with us. And, we will access the LinkedIn pages of alumni to scrape career outcomes.

In terms of measures, we are particularly interested in the following:

- a. *Demographics* (e.g., immigrant status, family entrepreneurship history, career choices)
- b. *Personality variables* (e.g., risk taking, openness to new experience)
- c. *Emotional intelligence (EI), Entrepreneurial Mindedness*
- d. *Socialization* (e.g., how did being in the AEV or not, change your life?; if you could go back in time and change one thing about your college entrepreneurship experience, what would it be?)

Actions Steps and Expected contributions

- *Step 1.* Get access to all contact information for students who applied to AEV over the last 10 years (accepted as well as denied).
- *Step 2.* Scrape as much LinkedIn data as we can for these individuals.
- *Step 3.* Develop an online survey as well as follow-up interview protocol to delve more deeply into the variables above (e.g., demographics, personality, EI, and socialization, as well as career and life choices).
- *Step 4.* Data analysis
- *Step 5.* Follow-up with participants about findings, write up paper for conference/journal submission.

We are not aware of any research that has accumulated a dataset that tracks a population like this over the course of ten years. Our work here could highlight multiple theory-based (e.g., how entrepreneurs' identity forms) as well as practical implications (e.g., how to better serve college students interested in entrepreneurship).

Budget

\$2,000- graduate student hourly pay (literature review, survey development, IRB submission, data collection, data coding, etc.)

\$1,000- technology, LinkedIn data scraping, etc.

\$2,000- participant recruitment and rewards/incentives (e.g., 10th anniversary event)

Timeline

Spring 2024- participant contact information gathering, survey development, LinkedIn scraping

Summer 2024- survey deployment, interviews

Fall 2024- data analysis and 10th anniversary event

References

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- Middleton, K. M., Padilla-Melendez, A., Lockett, N., Quesada-Pallarès, C., & Jack, S. (2020). The university as an entrepreneurial learning space: The role of socialized learning in developing entrepreneurial competence. *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behavior & Research*, 26(5), 887-909.
- Starr, J. A., & Fondas, N. (1992). A model of entrepreneurial socialization and organization formation. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, 17(1), 67-76.
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Biosketches

Sydney Russell. Sydney attended UNC for her undergraduate degree where she researched interpersonal relationships in the Department of Psychology. For 2 years after graduation, she served with Carolina College Advising Corps, working with the Senior class to develop their postsecondary plans. Sydney is now a first year Masters student in Higher Education Administration program at NC State and works as the Graduate Assistant for the Albright Entrepreneurs Village.

Ahmed Ali. Ahmed attended NC State for his undergraduate degree. During that time, he volunteered and later worked at Marbles Kid's Museum which served as an introduction to the field of education. After spending 5 years as a stem educator and mentor in New York City, he returned to North Carolina to attend graduate school at UNC before joining the wolf pack as the Albright Entrepreneurs Village director.

Nathan Kyler is a first year Ph.D. student in the Applied Social and Community Psychology program in the Department of Psychology. Nathan is interested in researching the etiology and assessment of growth mindsets.