The Arts Alumni Have Spoken: The Impact of Academic Training in Higher Education on Their Entrepreneurial Career Choices

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Research Questions

1. What skills should academic institutions provide to prepare arts-focused students for self-reliant careers (venture creation and freelancing)?

1. What degree of impact do these entrepreneurial skills have on careers compared to other factors such as identity demographics, experience with arts careers within the family, and student loan debt?
Theory and Hypotheses
Theoretical Propositions

- Perceived Preparedness of Skills
- Skill Preparation Gap
- Student Loan Debt
- Family Resources as Social and Cultural Capital
- Race

- freelancing
- founding a business in general
- founding an arts-related business
Perceived Preparedness of Skills & Skill Preparation Gap

Hypotheses

H1.1: The perceived preparedness of the skills received from their degree-granting institutions have an impact on the propensity of arts alumni taking one or more of the three entrepreneurial career paths

H1.2: The preparation gap of the skills have impact on the propensity of arts alumni taking one or more of the three entrepreneurial career paths
Perceived Preparedness of Skills & Skill Preparation Gap

Entrepreneurship Skills

- Critical thinking and analysis of arguments and information,
- Broad knowledge and education
- Improved work based on feedback from others
- Creative thinking and problem solving
- Research skills
- Clear writing
- Persuasive speaking

- Project management skills
- Technological skills
- Artistic technique
- Financial and business
- Interpersonal relations and working collaboratively
- Leadership skills
- Networking and relationship building
- Teaching skills
Measurement: Perceived Preparedness of Skills & Skill Preparation Gap

● Preparedness in arts special skills/business management skills/critical thinking skills/leadership skills is the mean of the loaded skills for each factor

● Preparation gap in arts special skills/business management skills/critical thinking skills/leadership skills is the mean of (the perceived preparedness-perceived importance) of the loaded skills for each factor
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Critical thinking and analysis of arguments and information (.753)</td>
<td>Leadership skills (.766)</td>
<td>Financial and business management skills (.668)</td>
<td>Artistic technique (.811)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research skills (.706)</td>
<td>Interpersonal relations and working collaboratively (.764)</td>
<td>Technological skills (.656)</td>
<td>Teaching skills (.650)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clear writing (.689)</td>
<td>Networking and relationship building (.648)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broad knowledge and education (.687)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative thinking and problem solving (.610)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Persuasive speaking (.528)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin statistic = .883
**The eigenvalue of factor 1, 2, 3, 4 explains 21.35%, 16.18%, 10.60%, 8.69% of the variance, respectively.*
Race and Student Loan Hypotheses

H 2.1: Race influences the propensity of arts alumni taking one or more of the three entrepreneurial career paths

H 2.2: Student loan debt influences the propensity of arts alumni taking one or more of the three entrepreneurial career paths

H 2.3: There is an interaction effect of race and student loan debt on the propensity of arts alumni taking one or more of the three entrepreneurial career paths
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>American Indian or Alaska Native</td>
<td>983</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>1.25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian (including Indian subcontinent)</td>
<td>3472</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
<td>5.67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black or African American</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
<td>6.6%</td>
<td>13.31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic or Latino</td>
<td>3426</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
<td>10.6%</td>
<td>17.79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or More Races</td>
<td>3012</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>55279</td>
<td>86.5%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>61.27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2059</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>2.62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Valid Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>63894</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Family Resources as Social and cultural Capital and Race Hypotheses

H 3.1: Familial career path in the arts influences the propensity of arts alumni taking one of the three entrepreneurial career paths

H 3.2: Parental education attainment influences the propensity of arts alumni taking one of the entrepreneurial career paths

H 3.3: There is an interaction effect of race and familial career path in the arts on the propensity of arts alumni taking one of the entrepreneurial career paths

H 3.4: There is an interaction effect of race and parental education attainment in the arts on the propensity of arts alumni taking one of the entrepreneurial career paths
Control Variables

- Creative Industries share of all employees in 2014
  Local Arts Index (LAI)
    - Proxy for level of creative economy development in the alma mater community
- Gender
- Age
Logistic Regression Results
Perceived Preparedness of Skills

The perceived preparedness of arts specialty ($p<0.001$), business management ($p<0.001$), critical thinking ($p<0.001$; $p<0.05$), and leadership skills ($p<0.001$) are all relevant.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Arts Business Founder</th>
<th>General Business Founder</th>
<th>Freelancing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arts specialty</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business management</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical thinking</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership skills</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
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</table>
The perceived preparation gap in these four types of skills is also statistically significant in all the three models.

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<th>General Business Founder</th>
<th>Freelancing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arts specialty (Gap)</td>
<td>−</td>
<td>−</td>
<td>−</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business management (Gap)</td>
<td>−</td>
<td>−</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical thinking (Gap)</td>
<td>−</td>
<td>−</td>
<td>−</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership skills (Gap)</td>
<td>−</td>
<td>−</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
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## Race and Student Loan

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<thead>
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<th>Arts Business Founder</th>
<th>General Business Founder</th>
<th>Freelancing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Race (White)</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student loan debt</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race * Student loan debt</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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## Race and Family Career Path in the Arts

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Arts Business Founder</th>
<th>General Business Founder</th>
<th>Freelancing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Race (White)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Not significant</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parental education</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family career Path in the arts</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race * Family career Path in the arts</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race * Parental education</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What is your race or ethnic identification? Check all that apply: White

Not selected
Selected

Dependent Variable: Was any of your work as a founder of a nonprofit or for-profit organization arts-related?

How much student loan debt did you incur in order to attend [INSTITUTION]?
Dependent Variable: Was any of your work as a founder of a nonprofit or for-profit organization arts-related?

Were/are either of your parents, guardians, or close relatives professional artists?

- - - No
- - - Yes

What is your race or ethnic identification? Check all that apply: White
Takeaways for Colleges and Universities

1. Academic institutions should investigate how they are providing the training necessary for self-reliant careers.
2. What offerings and support are available to first-generation college students and students who do not come from arts-focused families?
3. Race, as well as the intersection of race and other factors, impacts alumni starting self-reliant careers.
4. Can academic institutions offer training in both the arts and arts entrepreneurship without creating financial barriers to careers in the arts?
References


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