

THE HONG KONG POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT AND MARKETING

Departmental Research Seminar



National Diversity Stimulates Entrepreneurship by Increasing Perspective-Taking: Evidence from Two Large-Scale Quasi-Experiments By

Dr Jackson Lu
MIT Sloan School of Management

Date : 3 Nov 2021 (WED)

Time : 9 am – 10:30 am

Venue : Online via Zoom

Abstract

Entrepreneurship is an engine of economic advancement and prosperity. Leveraging two large-scale, time-lagged quasi-experiments, I demonstrate that the national cultural diversity of social environments stimulates individuals to become entrepreneurs by increasing their perspective-taking, especially for individuals high on openness to experience. In Study 1, 3,632 MBA students from 98 countries were quasi-randomly assigned to 540 learning groups that naturally varied in national diversity (e.g., in some groups all students were from the same country, whereas in other groups students were from different countries). Analyses revealed that national diversity positively predicted whether individuals became entrepreneurs upon graduation (two years later). Moreover, among individuals who became entrepreneurs, national diversity positively predicted the novelty of their start-ups—a finding that further highlights the entrepreneurial benefits of national diversity. Study 2 replicated these effects in another MBA program in which 2,524 students from 90 countries were quasi-randomly assigned to 463 learning groups that naturally varied in national diversity. The positive effect of national diversity on entrepreneurial entry was (a) mediated by perspective-taking and (b) moderated by personality trait openness to experience, such that the positive effect of national diversity was especially strong for more (vs. less) open individuals. Overall, this research demonstrates the cognitive and entrepreneurial benefits of national diversity.

Dr Jackson Lu is the *Mitsui Career Development Professor* and an Assistant Professor of Work and Organization Studies at the MIT Sloan School of Management. He studies culture and globalization through two distinctive research streams. His first research stream examines the “Bamboo Ceiling” experienced by Asians despite their educational and economic achievements in the United States. His second research stream elucidates how multicultural experiences (e.g., working abroad, intercultural friendships) shape outcomes key to organizations, including leadership, creativity, and ethics.

He has published in top general science journals (*Nature Human Behaviour*, *PNAS*), management journals (*Journal of Applied Psychology*, *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, *Organization Science*), and psychology journals (*Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *Psychological Science*). His research has been featured in over 150 media outlets in different languages (e.g., *BBC*, *The Economist*, *The Financial Times*, *Harvard Business Review*, *NPR*, *The Boston Globe*, *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*).

He has received notable awards and honors, including the 40 Best Business School Professors Under 40, the 30 Thinkers to Watch, and the NLS Rising Star Award from the Academy of Management.

He received his PhD from Columbia Business School.

All interested are welcome.



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