CHARACTERISTICS OF TOP RANKED ENTREPRENEURSHIP CENTERS

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Principal Topic

The academic year 2001–2002 saw the largest number of academic positions in entrepreneurship available for candidates in the history of the field. Similar to this, the number of Centers of Entrepreneurship continues to grow in numbers and importance. Centers of Entrepreneurship are of vital importance at universities because they play such a versatile role in a variety of areas (e.g., curriculum, research, community service, fundraising, new business formation, external programs, recognition, etc.). Despite the increasing importance of Centers of Entrepreneurship, sparse empirical research has been performed in this area.

This study will examine the entire population of Centers of Entrepreneurship from all over the world. We break our sample into two categories, ranked versus non-ranked. The study will answer the following research questions: (1) What are the characteristics of top-ranked entrepreneurship centers? (2) Is there a difference between the characteristics of top-ranked entrepreneurship centers versus non-ranked centers? (3) How do Centers of Entrepreneurship evaluate the success of their programs?

Method

The sample for this study is all of the Centers of Entrepreneurship located throughout the world (excluding Family Business Centers). We break our sample into ranked entrepreneurship centers (as ranked in the Financial Times, U.S. News & World Report, or Success Magazine’s Top 50 Entrepreneurship Programs) versus non-ranked centers.

Data for the study has already been gathered. The survey was completed in the summer of 2002. We received 93 useable surveys out of 146 schools for a response rate of 64%. T-Tests will be used to test the differences between top-ranked centers versus non-ranked centers.

Results and Implications

This study will allow researchers and practitioners in the field to understand the characteristics of the top-ranked Centers of Entrepreneurship. The findings of this study will assist all Centers of Entrepreneurship in their startup stages and the growth of their programs.