

MENTORSHIP, ENTREPRENEURSHIP, AND LABOR MARKET OPPORTUNITY IN SAUDI ARABIA

Abstract

Mentorship is a little understood strategic mechanism for supporting successful young people into early careers, including entrepreneurship. This study works with Saudi universities, vocational colleges, and firms to understand the structural support for early career development among college students. In addition to gathering evidence to support policy interventions for youth entrepreneurship, the project evaluates early adoption into mentorship programs that connect fresh graduates with career development mentors. The theoretical mechanism tested is the fact that Saudi college students, particularly female students, have few opportunities to gather “weak” ties (Granovetter 1973) that previous literature would predict would help them place on the job market. In this study the researchers test mentorship as a mechanism by which students expand their networks beyond the strong ties of family and close friends in addition to receiving strategic advice and emotional support for youth in entrepreneurship and early careers.

Expected Impact

One of the most important concerns of Saudi Vision 2030 is how to diversify the economy and address youth unemployment. This project addresses both the diversification of economic labor demand through understanding successful structural supports for entrepreneurship in the Kingdom as well as a means of improving the search process for the abundant youth labor supply through early career mentorship. Saudi Arabia is poised to be a thought leader on how to improve entrepreneurial success and other early career aspirations among a highly educated youth population.

INVESTIGATORS

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PROGRAMS AND POLICIES EXAMINED

- NA

POLICY PARTNERS

- HRDF



HARVARD Kennedy School
Evidence for Policy Design



Ministry of Labor
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia



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