***This version updated November 2018***

**ETHICS APPLICATION FORM**

**Faculty of Social Sciences**

***Please note:***

* ***You must not begin data collection for your study until ethical approval has been obtained.***
* ***It is your responsibility to follow the University of Southampton’s Ethics Policy (https://www.southampton.ac.uk/about/governance/policies/ethics.page ) and any relevant academic or professional guidelines in the conduct of your study. This includes providing appropriate information sheets and consent forms, and ensuring confidentiality in the storage and use of data.***
* ***You are advised to read the Advice on Applying guidance document, downloadable from the ERGO II website, before you submit your application.***

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| **Important notice on Risk Assessment:**  Health and Safety-type risk assessment is no longer part of the ethics review process. Questions pertaining to ethical and reputational risks have been moved from the old ‘Risk Assessment Form for Assessing Ethical and Research Risks’ to this form. Please do NOT upload a separate Risk Assessment Form to your ethics application.  However, it is your responsibility to undertake a Risk Assessment for your research study. Depending on whether your study is office based, involves off-site data collection and/or international travel, there are different risk assessment forms you can use. Please use this link to access the forms:  [https://groupsite.soton.ac.uk/Administration/FSHS-Health-and-Safety/Documents/Forms/AllItems.aspx?RootFolder=%2FAdministration%2FFSHS%2DHealth%2Dand%2DSafety%2FDocuments%2FRisk%20assessments%20and%20risk%20register%2FERGO%20interim%20documents&FolderCTID=0x012000BE79A4A3B3DC1143ABB38DFA6B580A8C&View={A5E79215-986A-4471-8CF9-B11F85214687}](https://groupsite.soton.ac.uk/Administration/FSHS-Health-and-Safety/Documents/Forms/AllItems.aspx?RootFolder=%2FAdministration%2FFSHS%2DHealth%2Dand%2DSafety%2FDocuments%2FRisk%20assessments%20and%20risk%20register%2FERGO%20interim%20documents&FolderCTID=0x012000BE79A4A3B3DC1143ABB38DFA6B580A8C&View=%7bA5E79215-986A-4471-8CF9-B11F85214687%7d)  If you need guidance or are unsure about which form to use, please contact your Discipline Health and Safety Rep in the first instance, and the Faculty Health and Safety Officer, Aloma Hack (A.J.Hack@soton.ac.uk), if you have further questions. Supervisors and Line Managers are responsible for ensuring risk assessments are completed for all research studies. |

**1. Name(s):** Ivan Ivanov

**2. Current Position** Ph.D. Student

**3. Contact Details**

**Division/School:** Business school; Department of Strategy, Innovation and Entrepreneurship

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**4. Is your study being conducted as part of an education qualification?**

**Yes**  **No**

**5. If Yes, please give the name of your supervisor**

Dr. Stratos Ramoglou, Prof. Laura Costanzo, Dr. Mina Beigi

**6. Title of your project:**

Exploring the beliefs of lay people about the success of wealthy entrepreneurs.

**7. Briefly describe the rationale, study aims and the relevant research questions of your study**

The question of why some entrepreneurs perform better than others has attracted significant scholarly attention and various explanations from personal (e.g. Parker, 2009), genetic (Shane and Nicolaou, 2015) to the institutional (e.g. Zahra and Covin, 1995). More recently, ultra-rich individuals such as Mark Zuckerberg and Elon Musk have strengthened the ‘mythical’ role of the entrepreneur, reviving the capitalist dream: the idea of “the heroic entrepreneur who builds a better mousetrap, and in so doing, becomes deservedly wealthy” (Krugman, 2009: 23). Understood to deserve their riches because of their hard work and their ‘rags-to-riches’ narrative, extremely profitable entrepreneurs enjoy a moral position unattainable for most other wealthy elites (Hecht, 2017: 16).

To date the entrepreneurial success scholarship has not conceptualised lay people’s understanding of entrepreneurial success. Lay theories (also known as ‘lay beliefs’; sometimes referred to as ‘anecdotal evidence’ or ‘implicit theories’), like scientific theories, provide understanding, prediction, and a sense of control over one's social world. However, unlike scientific theories, lay theories need not be objective, testable, or true. Lay theories serve people's needs to label their observations as reflecting a correct social reality (Furnham, 2006). There is significant evidence in the psychological and sociological literature that points to the importance of lay people’s beliefs (implicit theories/lay theories) in a society. These theories guide person perception and stereotyping (e.g. Hong, Levy & Chiu, 2001; Levy, Chiu & Hong, 2006; Levy, Stroessner & Dweck, 1998; Molden & Dweck, 2006), goal-pursuit and achievement (Dweck & Leggett, 1988; Hong, Chiu, Dweck, Lin & Wan, 1998), interpersonal relations and aggression (e.g. Kammrath & Dweck, 2006; Rattan & Georgeac, this volume), and integroup judgements (Jayaratne et al., 2006; Rattan, Savani, Naidu & Dweck, 2012). These personal beliefs and intentions have causal effects on actions, and they have no necessary role in explaining the broader outcomes of these actions (Dimov, 2021).

The present article addresses this knowledge gap by analysing how lay people make sense of the financial success of top earning entrepreneurs. We aim to explore: (1) lay people’s beliefs of the indicators that enable entrepreneurial success and their attribution practices and moral assessments of extreme entrepreneurial wealth, and (2) how these beliefs had been formed. Our qualitative study among lay people from diverse backgrounds, bridges the knowledge gap by not only exploring lay people’s perceptions but also looking to understand the reasoning behind their beliefs, addressing the following research questions:

(a) How do lay people perceive the extreme financial success of entrepreneurs?

(b) How did lay people form their perceptions towards the extreme financial success of entrepreneurs?

**8. Describe the design of your study**

We adopt qualitative research methods, used when the research purpose is exploratory (Merriam et al. 2002). This approach allows us to elicit tacit knowledge, subjective understandings and interpretations (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). It also enables us to understand how our participants make sense of their own understandings, perceptions and experiences (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016) – in this case, the participants’ perceptions about entrepreneurial success. We will recruit a minimum of forty participants for interviews and we will stop when saturation is reached. The interviews will take place online, using Microsoft Teams. The interviews will follow a semi-structured format and will aim to capture the participants’ beliefs, opinions, views and values about entrepreneurial success and identify how they had formed these. Afterwards, we will use the transcribed data from the interviews to inform thematic analysis and create grounded theory.

**9. Who are the research participants?**

We look for a minimum of forty participants (Patton, 2015) and interviews will be conducted until we reach saturation (i.e. redundancy) (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The interviewees should be from various age, sex, occupation, and place of residence, to develop a rich and diverse sample. We look for lay people, by defining them as individuals, who had never been involved in entrepreneurship, do not identify as entrepreneurs and have no immediate family members who are involved in entrepreneurship or identify as entrepreneurs. We exclude (ex-) entrepreneurs, as they fall outside of our unit of observation, and lay people with immediate family members, who identify as entrepreneurs, as their views may be distorted. In the context of our study, the interview participants should be lay to entrepreneurship.

**10. If you are going to analyse secondary data, from where are you obtaining it?**

*Please note that if you are analysing individual-level secondary data (e.g. survey data), you must also fill in and upload the Ethics Application Form for SECONDARY DATA ANALYSIS.*

N/A

**11. If you are collecting primary data, how will you identify and approach the participants to recruit them to your study?**

We will follow theoretical sampling, where an initial sample will be chosen by its logical relevance to the research problem (N=5). As lay people are a large group to study, the choice will be based on convenience and fulfilling the aforementioned criteria, having in mind our diversity requirements. Therefore, the initial 5 participants will be selected from the personal network of the researcher. As data collection and analysis proceed, it is likely that we will find gaps in our data. Then we will go back to the field and fill in those gaps with more data (Charmaz, 2000). We will ask the initial participants to introduce us to other potential participants, following snowball sampling. As mentioned above, the sampling procedure will include individuals from diverse backgrounds. Comparing diverse groups quickly reveals the similarities and differences that give rise to theoretical categories and, in turn, the strength of these emerging categories is tested by collecting data from diverse groups (Merriam et al., 2002).

We will use semi-structured online interviews as our data collection method. Interviews will be conducted fully online, using Microsoft Teams, as it provides better personal data protection than other online video conference platforms. We will (optionally) record the video interviews with the participants’ consent and the audio on a separate device. The possibility of having a video recording will allow us to go back to interviews, to resolve potential ambiguities and look for additional cues that will help us understand the point of view of the interviewees better. Interviews are likely to last from between 40 to 60 minutes.

**12. Will you be collecting Special Category data as defined by UK data protection legislation? Will you be collecting Criminal Offence data? If so, please give details.**

*Special Category data are sensitive personal data that require greater protection. They include data on an individual’s religion; race; ethnicity; health; sex life and sexual orientation; politics; trade union membership; genetics; biometrics. For further information, see:* [*https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-the-general-data-protection-regulation-gdpr/lawful-basis-for-processing/special-category-data/*](https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-the-general-data-protection-regulation-gdpr/lawful-basis-for-processing/special-category-data/)

*Criminal Offence data are personal data relating to criminal convictions and offences, or related security measures. For further information, see* [*https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-the-general-data-protection-regulation-gdpr/lawful-basis-for-processing/criminal-offence-data/*](https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-the-general-data-protection-regulation-gdpr/lawful-basis-for-processing/criminal-offence-data/)

No

**13. Where will your data collection take place?**

Data collection will take place online, using Microsoft Teams.

**14. Will participants be taking part in your study without their knowledge and consent at the time (e.g. covert observation of people)? If yes, please explain why this is necessary.**

No

**15. If you answered ‘no’ to question 14, how will you obtain the consent of participants?**

*Please upload a copy of your consent form. A template consent form can be downloaded from the ERGO II site. Note that there is a separate template for UG/PGT applicants. If you are not using a consent form, please explain why.*

Consent will be obtained by sending a virtual copy of the consent form (attached), along with the participant information sheet and asking all participants to fill them in and send them back to the main researcher (Ivan Ivanov).

**16. Is there any reason to believe participants may not be able to give full informed consent? If yes, what steps do you propose to take to safeguard their interests?**

No

**17. If participants are under the responsibility or care of others (such as parents/carers, teachers or medical staff), what permission do you have to approach the participants to take part in the study?**

*Please upload evidence of approval from gatekeepers (e.g. Head Teacher, if conducting research in a school).*

N/A

**18. Describe what participation in your study will involve for study participants.**

*Specify in meaningful detail the experience of participation from the point of view of the participant. You MUST attach copies of any questionnaires and/or interview schedules and/or observation topic lists to be used.*

There will be no additional assistants and/or collaborators, apart from the researcher himself. Initial contact will be made via a form of ICT (Information Communications Technology) or a social media platform. Upon initial agreement, the researcher will send the consent form and information sheet, followed by setting up a date for the online interview.

The online interview will take approximately 60 minutes, going through several semi-structured questions, with additional probes, when the researcher considers a possibility for capturing in-depth information and unique insights.

After the study is completed, all participants will be contacted and given a copy of the finished paper.

**19. How will you make it clear to participants that they may withdraw consent to participate at any point during the research without penalty?**

*If there is a point after which it is not practicable to eliminate someone’s data (e.g. after submission of dissertation), then please state this clearly here and on the Information Sheet. Please note that in fully anonymous online or paper questionnaires, it is not possible to withdraw data after submitting / handing in the questionnaire.*

Participants have the right to withdraw from the interview process before or during the interview. Once the audio (and video) recording Is transcribed, the participant does not have the right to withdraw.

**20. Detail any possible distress, discomfort, inconvenience, harm or other adverse effects the participants may experience, including after the study, and how you will deal with this.**

*Give consideration to aspects such as emotional distress, anxiety, unmet expectations, unintentional disclosure of participants’ identity, and assess the likelihood and severity of risks. Specify what precautions you will take or suggest to your participants to minimise any risks of harm (e.g. providing information about support services).*

The nature of the interview questions do not predispose any emotional distress, anxiety or any similar negative experiences. In the rare case that this do occur, the interview process will be aborted/or continued at another convenient time, if possible.

**21. Specify any possible distress or harm to YOU arising from your proposed research, and the precautions you will take to minimise these.**

*Give consideration to the possibility that you may be adversely affected by something your participants share with you. This may include information of a distressing, sensitive or illegal nature.*

In the rare case of a possible distressing situation happening to the researcher, he will contact the research team or the University.

**22. Does your planned research pose any additional risks as a result of the sensitivity of the research and/or the nature of the population(s) or location(s) being studied?**

*Give considerations to aspects such as impact on the reputation of your discipline or institution; impact on relations between researchers and participants, or between population sub-groups; social, religious, ethnic, political or other sensitivities; potential misuse of findings for illegal, discriminatory or harmful purposes; potential harm to the environment; impacts on culture or cultural heritage.*

No

**23. How will you maintain participant anonymity and confidentiality in collecting, analysing and writing up your data?**

Linked anonymity. Even though complete anonymity cannot be promised, participants’ identity will be protected using alpha-numeric coding.

**24. How will you store your data securely during and after the study?**

*The University of Southampton has a Research Data Management Policy, including for data retention. The Policy can be consulted at* [*http://www.calendar.soton.ac.uk/sectionIV/research-data-management.html*](http://www.calendar.soton.ac.uk/sectionIV/research-data-management.html)

*Please note that for UGs and PGTs, it is NOT correct that the University will store data for 10 years or longer. Instead, UG and PGT dissertation study data should be destroyed securely after conferment of the degree, unless strong justifications are made to retain the data for longer.*

Personal data of respondents will only be processed for the purpose of the study. All data will be stored in an encrypted file on a password secured computer.

**25. Describe any plans you have for feeding back the findings of the study to participants.**

Once the paper is completed, the researcher will contact all participants, who ticked the consent box, which indicated their interest to be further contacted, and will send them.

**26. What are the main ethical issues raised by your research and how do you intend to manage these?**

In any qualitative study, ethical issues relating to protection of the participants are of utmost importance. In an online environment, these issues overlap the public debate about ownership of intellectual property, copyright and free speech. The researcher’s ability to deal with a large number of transcripts written by ‘faceless’ masses can lead to the researcher forgetting that these are the words of individuals. Ethical issues may arise related to the relationship between interviewer and interviewee, concerns about privacy or with regard to the dissemination of findings, conduct of online interviews and authenticity of responses.

(1) Treating the interviewees as real people and not as objects of study.

(2) Protecting the interviewees rights to privacy.

(3) Asking participants to determine which statements are public and which private.

(4) Prompt the interviewee to ask questions or make comments, after the interview, to ensure that no harm has occurred.

(5) Considering the effects of the context on the data.

(6) Considering the effects of the software functionalities on the data-gathering process.

**27. Please outline any other information you feel may be relevant to this submission.**

*For example, if you have professional qualifications or experience relevant to your study, you may wish to state this here.*

N/A