The Dark Side of Entrepreneurs' Creativity: Investigating How and When Entrepreneurs' Creativity Increases the Favorability of Potential Opportunities That Harm Nature

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Abstract

Entrepreneurs' creativity is the starting point of opportunity identification, exploitation, and innovation, so it is generally lauded by journalists, citizen observers, practitioners, and scholars. However, they may overstate the benefits of creative entrepreneurs while neglecting their potential costs. Building on moral disengagement theory, we theorize that a creative mindset enables entrepreneurs to generate reasons to justify their potentially environment-destroying behaviors (i.e., nature disengagement), which in turn increases their favorability of potential opportunities that harm nature. We first developed and validated a scale for measuring nature disengagement and then conducted two randomized between-subject experiments with active entrepreneurs. The empirical results largely supported our theoretical model of the dark side of creativity in the entrepreneurship context.

Keywords

creativity, entrepreneur, nature disengagement, opportunity evaluation, experiment

innovation (

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Figure I. Theoretical model.

Moral Disengagement Theory and Nature Disengagement

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Entrepreneurs' Creative Mindset and Nature Disengagement

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Hypothesis 1: Entrepreneurs' creative mindset is positively related to nature disengagement.

Entrepreneurs' Creative Mindset, Nature Disengagement, and Opportunity Favorability

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Hypothesis 2: The greater entrepreneurs' nature disengagement, the more favorably they assess potential opportunities that harm nature.

Hypothesis 3: Nature disengagement mediates the effect of entrepreneurs' creative mindset on the favorability of potential opportunities that harm nature.

Overview of the Current Research

Pilot Study

Phase I: Item Generation, Content Validity Assessment, and Exploratory Factor Analysis

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Phase 2: Confirmatory Factor Analysis and Criterion-Related Validity Assessment

Study | Method

Participants

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Procedures and Experimental Design

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Project 2: Tourism Project (Water Pollution)

Project 3: Indoor Polar Museum Project (Animal Cruelty)

Measures Opportunity Evaluation

Variable	Mean	SD	I	2	3	4
I.Entrepreneurs' creative mindset	0.50	0.50				
2.Entrepreneurs' nature disengagement	2.07	0.73	.23**			
3.Opportunity evaluation in Project 1	2.77	0.95	.22**	.42***		
4.Opportunity evaluation in Project 2	2.74	0.93	.19*	.46***	.42***	
5.Opportunity evaluation in Project 3	2.52	0.96	.04	.49***	.53***	.33***
Note $N = 136^{*}b < 05^{**}b < 01^{***}b < 001$						

 Table I. Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations for the Variables in Study I.

Analytical Strategy

Study | Results

Efficacy of Manipulation Check

Tests of the Hypotheses

	Nature disengagement		y evaluation oject I		y evaluation oject 2		y evaluation oject 3
Variables	Model I	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7
Entrepreneurs' creative mindset	0.33 ^{**} (0.12)	0.42 ^{**} (0.16)	0.25 (0.15)	0.35 [*] (0.16)	0.17 (0.15)	0.08 (0.16)	-0.14 (0.15)
Entrepreneurs' nature disengagement			0.50 ^{****} (0.10)		0.55 ^{***} (0.10)		0.66 ^{****} (0.10)
Constant	l.90 ^{***} (0.09)	2.56 ^{****} (0.11)	I.60 ^{***} (0.22)	2.56 ^{****} (0.11)	1.51 ^{****} (0.22)	2.48 ^{****} (0.12)	I.23 ^{****} (0.22)
R ² R ²	.05	.05	.19 .14 ^{****}	.04	.21 .17 ^{***}	.00	.24 .24 ^{****}
F	7.35**	7.03**	15.96***	4 .99 [*]	18.21***	0.26	21.22***

Table 2. the Effect of Entrepreneurs' Creative Mindset on Entrepreneurs' Nature Disengagement andOpportunity Evaluation in the Three Projects in Study 1.

Note. N = 136. Standard errors in parentheses. R^2 was calculated based on the parameters in Model 2, Model 4, and Model 6, respectively. b < .05. b < .01.

Supplementary Analyses

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self-eff cacy for solving environ-

Study 2 Method

Participants

Procedures and Experimental Design

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Table 5. Treatis, standard Deviations, and Correlations for			Study z			
Variable	Mean	SD	I	2	3	4
I.Entrepreneurs' creative mindset	0.50	0.50				
2.Entrepreneurs' nature disengagement	2.19	0.83	.26**			
3.Opportunity evaluation in the antienvironmental project	2.86	1.02	.24**	.42***		
4.Opportunity evaluation in the neutral project	3.85	0.84	.01	01	.27**	
5.Opportunity evaluation in the pro-environmental project	4.23	0.82	05	12	.07	.69***
Note. $N = 6.^* p < .05.^{**} p < .01.^{***} p < .00 .$						

Table 3. Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations for the Variables in Study 2.

Study 2 Results

Efficacy of the Manipulation Check

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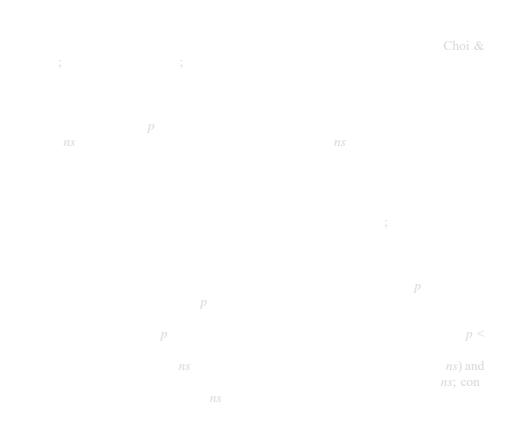
Tests of the Hypotheses

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Supplementary Analyses

Table 4. The Effect of Entrepreneurs' C	Creative Mindset on Entrepreneurs' Nature Disengagement and Opportunity Evaluation in the Three Projects in Study 2.	Entrepreneurs' N	Vature Disengag	ement and Oppo	ortunity Evaluati	on in the Three Pr	ojects in Study 2.
	Nature disengagement	Opportunity evaluation in the anti-environmental Project	aluation in the ental Project	Opportunity e neutral	unity evaluation in the neutral project	Opportunity evaluation in the Opportunity evaluation in the pro- neutral project environmental project	tunity evaluation in the pro- environmental project
Variables	Model I	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7
Entrepreneurs' creative mindset	0.43** (0.15)	0.49** (0.18)	0.29 (0.18)	0.02 (0.16)	0.02 (0.16)	-0.08 (0.15)	-0.03 (0.16)
Entrepreneurs' nature disengagement			0.47 ^{****} /0.11)		-0.01		-0.11
Constant	1.98*** (0.11)	2.62 ^{***} (0.13)	(0.11) 1.68*** (0.24)	3.84 ^{***} (0.11)	(0.10) 3.87*** (0.22)	4.26*** (0.11)	(0.10) 4.48 ^{***} (0.22)
R ² R ²	0.07	0.06	0.20 0.14 ^{****}	0.000	0.000	0.002	0.01
	8.06**	6.98**	 13.85***	0.01	0.01	0.27	0.81
Note. N = 116. Standard errors in parentheses. R ² was calculated based on the parameters in Model 2, Model 4, and Model 6, respectively. b < .05. b < .01. e > .001	s. R ² was calculated b	ased on the parame	eters in Model 2, N	lodel 4, and Mode	l 6, respectively. *	< .05. [*] p < .01. ^{**} p	<.001.







Implications for Theory

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Strengths, Limitations, and Future Directions

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