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IN THE MOOD TO INNOVATE:
A MULTILEVEL STUDY ON THE INTERACTION OF
ENTREPRENEURS' INNOVATIVE WORK BEHAVIOUR
AND AFFECT

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Amanda J Williamson

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Dedicated to Annabelle and Julián.

Affect is a hot topic in entrepreneurial research. However, extant literature is lagging behind in its use of affective theory and methodology, and furthermore, attention resides in isolated topics of inquiry, rendering the field stunted and disjointed. The purpose of this research is to adopt burgeoning affective theoretical perspectives to anticipate daily fluctuation in entrepreneurs' innovative behaviour. The circumplex model of affect is utilised in this research to challenge the rhetoric that all spectrum of pleasant moods lead to beneficial work behaviour. Though multilevel modelling based on 3360 data points nested within 160 entrepreneurs (21 surveys per participant, completed over two weeks), support is found for the proposition that pleasant moods do not necessarily result in productive behaviour. Specifically, activation (the energising dimension of affect) has greater influence on propelling entrepreneurs' innovative behaviour than valence (affect's pleasant or unpleasant nature), such that high activation unpleasant and pleasant affect (worried, anxious, inspired, enthusiastic) predicts innovative work behaviour, while low activation pleasant affect (calm, relaxed) does not.

The affect-behaviour relationship is examined from several perspectives resulting in a feedback model between high activation moods and innovative work behaviour engagement. Engagement in innovative work behaviour positively correlated to entrepreneurs' experience of high activation unpleasant affect, and negatively related to high and low activation pleasant affect. Thus although innovative work behaviour benefits from high activation pleasant moods, engagement essentially decreases them.

Affective dispositions correlated with daily affective experiences also, as such entrepreneurs with low levels of trait negative affect experienced more pleasant moods during the day and visa versa. Findings confirmed the hypothesis that the quality of previous night's sleep both moderates the link between affect and innovative work behaviour, plus predisposes entrepreneurs to pleasant or conversely unpleasant affective daily experiences – illustrating the importance of sleep in affective research. Additionally innovative work behaviour was predicted via “the affective shift model”, which was adapted to include the influence of activation. The results further attest to the relevance of temporal dynamics of affect perspectives in entrepreneurial research. Specifically, the model demonstrated that innovative work behaviour ensued when high activation unpleasant affect was followed by high activation pleasant affect, or simply with an increase in the level of high activation affect, of either valence between morning and afternoon. Empirical, theoretical, and practical implications of the findings are discussed.

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¹ Ronald Bledlow, Michael Frese, Michael Gielnik, Hector Madrid, Neal Ashkanasy, Robert Baron, Peter Warr, Maw-Der Foo, Marilyn Uy, Matthijs Baas, Carsten De Dreu, and Bernard Nijstad

I do not think there is any thrill that can go through the human heart like that felt by the inventor as he sees some creation of the brain unfolding to success... such emotions make a man forget food, sleep, friends, love, everything.

– Nikola Tesla (O'Shei, 2008, p. 5)

Sometimes I am happy and sometimes not. I am after all a human being, you know. And I am glad that we are sometimes happy and sometimes not. You get your wisdom working by having different emotions.

– Yoko Ono (Ono, 2012)

Entrepreneurship generates substantial emotions because it is an extreme context in terms of time pressures, uncertainty, and the extent of personal consequences tied up in the fate of the firm.

– (Cardon, Foo, Shepherd, & Wiklund, 2012, p. 7)

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