DISINHIBITION, INHIBITORY CONTROL, & ENTREPRENEURSHIP: INHIBITORY UNDERPINNINGS OF RISK TAKING, CREATIVITY, PROACTIVITY AND VENTURING (SUMMARY)

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SUMMARY

DISINHIBITION, INHIBITORY CONTROL, & ENTREPRENEURSHIP: INHIBITORY UNDERPINNINGS OF RISK TAKING, CREATIVITY, PROACTIVITY, AND VENTURING

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Principal Topic
Risk taking, creativity, and proactivity are characteristics and behaviors central to entrepreneurial activities and outcomes. Drawing on cognitive and other psychology literature, this paper identifies disinhibition as a lens for advancing research based on its connection to risk taking, creativity, proactivity, and entrepreneurship.

Methods
Scholars have theoretical and empirical advanced our understanding of risk taking, creativity, and proactivity in entrepreneurship. Presently however, theory integrating the origins of and the connections between the three constructs is limited in relation to entrepreneurship. The contribution of such theory would be that by understanding the three constructs based on a common root – their presence, interplay, and the interaction with the environment could be better predicted and ultimately influenced. Inconsistent empirical findings (e.g. between risk taking and outcomes) might be explained by expanding the theoretical model to include an underlying root. Overall, our understanding of the three constructs’ affect on action and outcomes could be sharpened by illuminating a superordinate (root) construct connecting them, particularly if it highlights contextual interactions/moderators.

The broad and general construct of disinhibition is one such root; it can speak to the origins of and interconnections between risk taking, creativity, and proactivity. Disinhibition, further defined in the paper, is essentially the lack of restraint at behavioral, cognitive, and motivational levels. The paper develops how disinhibition offers an integrating lens for understanding risk taking, creativity, and proactivity in relation to entrepreneurship. As the phenomena of ultimate concern involve behavior, cognition, and motivation – disinhibition is well suited for examining the three constructs’ linkages and outcomes.

Results and Implications
The paper focuses on explaining disinhibition and developing how it connects constructs and actions relevant to entrepreneurship. It is a first step, introducing disinhibition from psychology for potential exploitation in entrepreneurship and organizational research. Toward theory and consensus building, I speak to how/why disinhibition underlies risk taking, creativity, and proactivity and should predict entrepreneurial behavior.

To advance theorizing, the paper offers triangulating case support and results of a quantitative pilot study. Pilot results show a linkage between disinhibition and entrepreneurial behavior, intentions, and self-selection toward entrepreneurial environments.

The paper’s primary contribution is illuminating the linkage between disinhibition and existing research and phenomena recognized by organizational scholars, as a basis for future theoretical and empirical advancement. Ultimately, disinhibition may not only describe and predict, but could also inform prescriptive arrangements.

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