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BIOLOGICAL FACTORS, INDIVIDUAL TRAITS, AND ENTREPRENEURIAL INTENTIONS: THE MEDIATING ROLE OF ENTREPRENEURIAL SELF-EFFICACY AND NEED FOR COGNITION (SUMMARY)

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≈ SUMMARY ≈

**BIOLOGICAL FACTORS, INDIVIDUAL TRAITS, AND
ENTREPRENEURIAL INTENTIONS: THE MEDIATING ROLE OF
ENTREPRENEURIAL SELF-EFFICACY AND NEED FOR COGNITION**

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Principal Topic

It is the individual who discovers opportunities and brings them to life. Before one decides to exploit an opportunity, he/she should have developed a psychological intention to determine whether opportunity exploitation is a desirable and feasible option. Entrepreneurial intention, defined as one's intent to start a business, is thereby regarded as an important construct because it is considered as the first critical step in the process of becoming an entrepreneur and intention is the single best predictor of planned behavior. Despite a plethora of research studies related to entrepreneurial intention, several research questions still remain unresolved. The present study addresses several of these unresolved questions and makes several contributions.

Drawing from literatures on the biological characteristics of individuals and individual differences, we propose the 2D:4D ratio and several individual traits such as emotional intelligence, cognitive ability, and rebelliousness are antecedents to entrepreneurial intentions. Our theoretical model also examines entrepreneurial self-efficacy and need for cognition as mediators between psychological traits and entrepreneurial intentions.

Method

Our sample consists of business school students at a large, southeastern, urban university. In addition to collecting survey data on individual traits such as emotional intelligence, cognitive ability, rebelliousness, and entrepreneurial intentions participants' 2D:4D ratios were collected and the Wonderlic Classic Cognitive Ability Test was administered to measure participants' cognitive ability. We use structural equation modeling to analyze our proposed conceptual model and perform hierarchical multiple regression analyses to assess the incremental validity of observer ratings of individual traits relative to self-reported ratings of individual traits.

Results and Implications

This paper makes several important contributions to the biological characteristics and individual differences literatures. First, we contribute to the extant literature by testing several understudied individual traits such as emotional intelligence, cognitive ability, and rebelliousness. Second, we test mediating mechanisms between individual traits and entrepreneurial intention. For entrepreneurs, this research begins to clarify biological and individual trait influences on individuals' intent to pursue entrepreneurial opportunities.

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