THE DISCRIMINANT VALIDITY OF ENTREPRENEURIAL PASSION (SUMMARY)

Melissa Cardon
Pace University, USA, mcardon@pace.edu

Recommended Citation
Cardon, Melissa (2008) "THE DISCRIMINANT VALIDITY OF ENTREPRENEURIAL PASSION (SUMMARY)," Frontiers of Entrepreneurship Research: Vol. 28: Iss. 4, Article 3.
Available at: http://digitalknowledge.babson.edu/fer/vol28/iss4/3

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SUMMARY
THE DISCRIMINANT VALIDITY OF ENTREPRENEURIAL PASSION

Melissa Cardon, Pace University, USA

Principal Topic

Entrepreneurial passion may strongly influence cognitions, behaviors, and outcomes of entrepreneurs. For example, positive affective states such as passion may foster creativity and recognition of new patterns of information critical to opportunity recognition and exploitation in novel environments. However, to date there is no empirically validated scale of entrepreneurial passion, and attempts to use scales developed outside of entrepreneurship have met with mixed results at best.

The purpose of this study is to develop an original scale of entrepreneurial passion and test its empirical validity. In particular, the entrepreneurial passion scale is distinguished from scales measuring similar constructs including hope, optimism, state positive emotion, state negative emotion, self-efficacy, organizational commitment, and job satisfaction. Entrepreneurial passion is also differentiated from more general existing measures of obsessive and harmonious passion and passion for work.

Method

Data were collected through a survey of 300 single location non-subsidiary firms located in Westchester County, NY founded in 1998 or later, are privately owned, and have fewer than 250 employees. Twelve constructs were included in the survey, including: optimism, hope, positive emotion, negative emotion, affective organizational commitment, job satisfaction, general obsessive passion, general harmonious passion, passion for work, and three new passion scales developed for this study (passion for inventing, founding, and developing).

Results and Implications

Initial results suggest that passion may well be a distinct construct from optimism, hope, positive emotion, negative emotion, affective commitment, and job satisfaction. In addition, entrepreneurial passion appears to be distinct from general measures of passion, including passion for work and harmonious and obsessive passion.

Given the recent growth in research on affect and entrepreneurship, it is essential that empirical work is done in order to provide realism and relevance for our theories. The contribution of this paper is to begin such empirical work through the validation of a new scale to measure entrepreneurial passion. The inclusion of this or similar measures in further research in entrepreneurship should allow us to better understand the effects of passion on cognitions, behaviors, and outcomes important to entrepreneurs. Such work may also allow entrepreneurship scholars to provide more focused diagnostic advice to entrepreneurs concerning their own passion and how to best channel and focus it towards productive ends.

CONTACT: Melissa Cardon; mcardon@pace.edu; (T): 914-773-3618; (F) 914-773-3920; Pace University, Goldstein AC 227, 861 Bedford Road, Pleasantville, NY 10570.