

Entrepreneurship Study Proposal (Fall 2023)
Ratan Dheer, Ph.D.

Entrepreneurial Stress: The Role of Task Complexity and Work-Family Conflict

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Abstract.

Organizational management has devoted considerable attention to understanding the causes and consequences of stress experienced by employees in organizations. However, although starting new ventures is laden with high risk, uncertainty, workload, unanticipated changes, and financial constraints, stress has received little attention in entrepreneurship research. I contribute to filling this gap. Based on theoretical perspectives from the Job-Demand-Control-Support model, I intend to examine the effect of task complexity and work-family conflict on stress perceived by nascent entrepreneurs. This study's hypotheses will be tested using survey data. The findings will significantly advance our knowledge of the psychological process behind starting new ventures.

Statement of Objective.

A notable volume of organizational management literature has discussed the adverse effects of stress on individuals, organizations, and society. Work-related stress is the leading cause of ulcers, hypertension, diabetes, arthritis, heart attacks, and mental disorders. Further, individuals who experience stress perform poorly, display high absenteeism, and report low job satisfaction. These effects also levy a toll on the profitability of business organizations. A recent article, for example, indicated that stress costs the US economy \$300 billion annually (Mohney, 2018). While the issue of stress, as experienced by employees, has gained considerable attention in research, only a few studies have focused on understanding its role in entrepreneurship (Cardon & Patel, 2015; Wincent & Örtqvist, 2009).

Because starting a business venture is susceptible to increasing risk, uncertainty, and financial constraints, and because entrepreneurs play many roles, stress is inevitably an unavoidable part of this process. Despite this, our knowledge of the causes and consequences of stress in entrepreneurship is limited. In this study, I focus on nascent entrepreneurs and examine

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the psychological factors influencing their stress. Based on theoretical perspectives from the Job Demand-Control-Support model, I analyze the effect of task complexity and work-family conflict on the stress experienced by nascent entrepreneurs.

Significance and Contributions.

Increased job demand due to task and role stressors positively affects stress (Karasek, 1979). Consistent with this theorizing, this study will analyze whether perceived task complexity and work-family conflict positively affect stress by nascent entrepreneurs. By analyzing the role of psychological factors on entrepreneurial stress, this study will contribute by developing a deeper understanding of the pre-launch phase of venture creation. It will also respond to a call for research in this direction (Hessels, Rietveld, & van der Zwan, 2017). Second, this study will help us develop a deeper understanding of the venture creation process by exploring the constraints that entrepreneurs can perceive from managing dual careers or work-family situations. Properly managing stress can offer benefits to entrepreneurs and society.

Methodology and Timeline

The study will employ regression analyses to examine proposed hypotheses. The findings can be shared by the mid-fall 2024 semester.

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Curriculum Vitae

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PUBLICATIONS

- Dheer, R. J., & Castrogiovanni, G. J. (2023).** Cognitive adaptability's impact on entrepreneurial intent: The mediating roles of entrepreneurial passion and efficacy. *Journal of Business Research*, 160, 113798.
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- Dheer, R., Lenartowicz, T., & Peterson, M. F. (2015).** Mapping India's regional subcultures: Implications for international management. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 46(4), 443-467.
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