To: Erika Zynda, Robert Ducoffe, and Mark Fox  
From: Leon Schjoedt, recipient of a 2013 Research Summer Grant  
Date: September, 2013  
RE: Final report on the research project entitled “Goal Setting, Goal Striving, and Goal Attainment: A Longitudinal Study of Entrepreneurs’ Motivation”

Abstract from the proposal: “Although goal striving is important in people’s lives, little research has examined goal striving. In the motivation literature focus has been on goal setting and, to a much lesser degree, goal attainment. No published study has examined entrepreneurs’ goal striving, which constitutes the purpose of the study. A sample of entrepreneurs will provide the data for the study. The intended outcomes for the research are three-fold: a scholarly presentation to the IUSB faculty, presentation at an academic conference, and a publication in a recognized international journal in entrepreneurship. If granted, the Faculty Research Grant will provide me opportunity to focus on the research during the summer of 2013.”

A presentation entitled “Goal Setting, Goal Striving, and Goal Attainment: Entrepreneurs' Motivation” to the IUSB faculty will be held on Friday, September 27, 2013, at 2:30 pm, in the Alumni Room in the Administration Building. Please see the attached copy of the email invitation.

I presented the conceptual model at the 2013 Babson College Entrepreneurship Research Conference. This conference was held at EMLYON Business School, Écully, France, June 5-8, 2013. Specifically, I presented the paper at 8:30 am on June 8, 2013. Please see the attached copies of the summary, paper, and presentation slides.

Because I presented this paper at the Babson College Entrepreneurship Research Conference, at a minimum, the summary will be published in the recognized international publication, Frontiers of Entrepreneurship Research (FER). This publication is available online at http://www.babson.edu/Academics/centers/blank-center/bcerc/Pages/frontiers-of-entrepreneurship-research.aspx. If deemed appropriate by the editors, the entire paper will be published in FER. Thus, at a minimum, the summary will be made published in print and online as part of the publication Frontiers of Entrepreneurship Research in June, 2014.

While it was intended that the presentation and paper included the conceptual model and an empirical examination of this model, the data collection was halted because the director of a venture accelerator program rescinded his offer for me to collect data from the participants resulting in a presentation and paper based on a conceptual model only.

At the Babson College Entrepreneurship Research Conference, I have teamed up with a researcher at Chalmers University of Technology in Sweden, whom I met at the conference, to obtain data for the project. We have collaborated on a submission for the 2014 Babson College Entrepreneurship Research Conference based on an empirical study of the conceptual model. This was submitted on September 11, 2013. If accepted, it will result in another presentation and FER publication. It will also be the basis for a manuscript that will be submitted for publication in a peer-reviewed academic journal.

In conclusion, this constitutes my final report on the Research Summer Grant as I have achieved all the intended outcomes listed in the proposal. Even though I have achieved these outcomes, I continue with the project (e.g., data collection and analysis) because of the obstacles I encountered. I also continue with the project in the pursuit of a publication in a peer-reviewed academic journal.
Schjoedt, Leon

From: Schjoedt, Leon
Sent: Thursday, September 19, 2013 2:11 PM
To: Agbetsiafa, Douglas K; Agbetsiafa, Patricia Ann; Aghimien, Peter A; Anderson, Tracey A; Bindroo, Vishal Maharaj; Coleman, Catherine Elizabeth; Costea, Dana; Ducoffe, Robert H; Forsythe, Karla M; Fox, Mark A; Hall, Leda McIntyre; Hawkins, Gary R; Hong, Gi Hoon; Kenagy, Robert; Kern, Beth B; Kern, Gary M; Kohli, Raj K.; Lee, Monle; Liu, Nan; Lu, Xing; Mehran, Jamshid; Meisami, Alex; Mendez, Maria Jose; Mlotshwa, Nelson Dumile; Pant, Anurag Basant; Pathak, Bhavik K; Rudramuniyaih, Prasad Shambulinga; Sabbaghi, Asghar; Saksema, P N; Schjoedt, Leon; Schroeder, Mark Paul; Shively, Deanna M.; Vaidyanathan, Ganesan; Valencia, Vicar Serrano; Vasilopoulos, Harry; Vollrath, Dave; Yin, Haiyan; Zhuang, Hong

Subject: You are invited to attend a presentation on entrepreneurs motivation on Sept. 27, 2013

Hello:

I cordially invite you to attend my presentation entitled Goal Setting, Goal Striving, and Goal Attainment: Entrepreneurs’ Motivation. This presentation will be held immediately following our faculty meeting on Friday, September 27, 2013, in the Alumni Room, IUSB Administration Building. I expect my presentation will be about 30 minutes plus Q&A. I hope to see you at my presentation.

Best Wishes,

Leon

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SUMMARY

GOAL SETTING, GOAL STRIVING, AND GOAL ATTAINMENT: ENTREPRENEURS’ MOTIVATION

Principal Topic

Goal setting and goal striving are critical factors in goal attainment (Gollwitzer, 1990). Because goal setting focuses entrepreneurs’ behavior (Bird, 1989), goals are recognized as an important factor in entrepreneurship (Naffziger, Hornsby, & Kuratko, 1994). However, little work has been done beyond assessing entrepreneurs’ goal dimensions. One exception is provided by Davidsson (1989). Presently, no published study has addressed goal striving based on established theories.

Theory and Conceptual Model

Motivation theories are individually incomplete (Mitchell, 1982). Five motivation theories form the foundation for our goal striving model. Goal setting theory (Locke & Latham, 1990) advocates that goals are determinants of human action. Expectancy theory (Vroom, 1964) claims that motivation to accomplish a goal depends on the expected outcome of the goal. While both are cognitive theories, they have different foci and purposes. Goal setting theory focuses on the goal itself whereas expectancy theory focuses on the outcomes of goal attainment. The purpose of goal setting theory is to examine between-person relationships whereas the purpose of expectancy theory is to explain within-person relationships. Control theory (Carver & Scheier, 1990) recognizes entrepreneurs have, at any time, nascent, in-progress, revised, abandoned, and attained goals. By extension, self-management theory (Thomas, Jansen & Tymon, 1997) lays out a four step goal striving process. Combining these five theories into one provides a goal setting-goal attainment model that explains between- and within-person patterns in entrepreneurs’ goal striving and behavior.

Implications

The study advances the literature by identifying entrepreneurs’ goal striving process. By combining motivation theories into a cognitive model of the goal setting-goal attainment process that explains between- and within-person patterns in goal striving, a more comprehensive motivation model that holds potential to improve understanding of entrepreneurs’ behavior is provided.

An important implication from this study is the illustration of a need to move beyond between-person analyses in individual-level entrepreneurship research. This is because important findings maybe unearthed from the within-person analyses. Furthermore, the use of within-person analyses and self-set goals hold promise to enhance understanding of entrepreneurs’ escalation of commitment and entrepreneurs’ cognitive mechanisms (Baron, 1998) from a resource allocation perspective (Kanfer & Ackerman, 1997).
GOAL SETTING, GOAL STRIVING, AND GOAL ATTAINMENT: ENTREPRENEURS’ MOTIVATION

ABSTRACT

Motivation is a central concept in entrepreneurship. It holds potential to explain how and why individuals start new ventures and explain their behavior during the new venture creation process. Despite its importance little research has examined entrepreneurs’ motivation process. In this paper, we combine six recognized theories into a motivation process model. Our model describes the process of how entrepreneurs strive to achieve their goals with an emphasis on how self-efficacy influences goal setting, goal striving and goal attainment.

INTRODUCTION

Understanding why some individuals engage in new venture creation, and others do not, is a central theme in entrepreneurship research (Baron, 2002). This issue has been examined from a host of different perspectives, including cognition. Despite motivation, which is inferred from an individual’s direction, intensity, and persistence of efforts, is central to entrepreneurs’ behavior, it has received relatively little attention from entrepreneurship scholars (e.g., Shane, Baum, & Collins, 2003).

Motivation is a central construct in organizational behavior and psychology. It is central in management because it is a key aspect that, in part, explains behavior in organizational emergence and contexts. Since the 1950s, the motivation literature has grown substantially. Recently the growth of this type of research has declined. Some scholars point to the inadequacy of motivation theories as the reason for the decline in motivation research (e.g., Mitchell, 1997). Consequently, there have since been calls for more complex motivation models resulting, as an example, in a 2004-special issue in Academy of Management Review on the future of motivation theory. In their introductory article, the guest editors ask: “How can we extend or modify current models of work motivation so they continue to be relevant in the future?” (Steers, Mowday, & Shapiro, 2004, 379).

The purpose of this paper is to extend established motivation models by combining them into a more comprehensive model that explain motivation better per se, and entrepreneurs’ motivation and behavior in particular. The motivation literature shows that goals—“internal representations of desired states” (Austin & Vancouver, 1996, 338); or, phrased differently, “something an individual wants to attain” (Locke & Latham, 1990, 7)—are at the center of most, if not all, motivation theories (Mitchell, 1997). It had been argued that motivation consists of two components: goal setting and goal striving (Gollwitzer, 1990). For example, Locke and Latham (1990) developed their widely known goal setting theory based on numerous empirical studies. Goal setting theory (Locke & Latham, 1990) has dominated the motivation literature since the early 1990s (Locke & Latham, 1990) resulting in research efforts focused on empirical testing of the goal setting theory, or parts thereof, and in a little conceptual development. This may explain why motivation research has plateaued in terms of conceptual advancement and, in turn, calls for more complex motivation models (e.g., Steer et al. 2004). Thus, an avenue to advance motivation theory is by combining established motivation and related theories into a more comprehensive process model of motivation.

Our paper is structured as follows. In the next section, we present a process model of entrepreneurs’ goal striving. Then, we provide a discussion of how our model holds potential to advance the literature, and we consider the limitations of our model and provide suggestions for future research.
A PROCESS MODEL OF ENTREPRENEURS’ GOAL STRIVING

In the new venture creation process, entrepreneurs’ motivation acts as an antecedent and facilitator of behavior throughout the process (e.g., Dunkelberg, Moore, Scott, & Stull, 2013). Although the general impact that motivation has on entrepreneurs’ choices, intentions, and behaviors is widely recognized in the entrepreneurship literature, the specific impact motivation has on choices and behaviors in the new venture creation process is not well understood (Shane et al., 2003).

Considering that goal setting theory is “one of the best established theories in the field of management” (Audia, Kristof-Brown, Brown, & Locke, 1996, 483) and the foundation for goal setting theory is the notion that “human action is directed by conscious goals” (Locke & Latham, 1990, 4), it seems appropriate to begin the process model with goal setting.

We start by considering six theories for a goal striving model, which are as follows. Goal setting theory (Locke & Latham, 1990) advocates that goals are determinants of human action. Expectancy theory (Vroom, 1964) claims that motivation to accomplish a goal depends on the expected outcome of the goal. Control theory (Carver & Scheier, 1990) recognizes entrepreneurs have multiple goals at any time. Self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997), resource allocation theory (Kanfer & Ackerman, 1989), self-management theory (Thomas, Jansen & Tymon, 1997), and social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1997) provide the foundation for the four constructs upon which our process model of entrepreneurs’ goal striving is built.

The four constructs are as follows: goal dimensions [goal setting theory (Locke & Latham, 1990); expectancy theory (Vroom, 1964)]; goal progress [control theory (Carver & Scheier, 1998); resource allocation theory (Kanfer & Ackerman, 1989); and self-management theory (Thomas et al., 1997)]; goal attainment [goal setting theory (Locke & Latham, 1990)], and self-efficacy [social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1997)].

While goal setting theory constitutes the foundation for the process model, self-efficacy—a construct that has received considerable attention from entrepreneurship scholars and that may be enhanced via education and experience (i.e., mastery of skills; Bandura, 1997)—is the central construct in the process model. The process model is as follows: entrepreneurs’ initial perception of the dimensions of their self-set goals influences the entrepreneurs’ perceived goal striving and, in turn, perceived goal attainment. In addition, goal specific self-efficacy influences entrepreneurs’ initial perception of the goal dimensions of their self-set goals, perception of their goal striving, and their perception of goal attainment. This is illustrated graphically in figure 1.

As it appears from the figure, it is beneficial to consider the theories, and their individual contributions, in accordance to the four elements of the model—goal dimensions, goal progress, goal attainment, and self-efficacy.

Goal Dimensions

Goal dimensions refer to an individual’s perception of his or her goal (Austi & Vancouver, 1996). Goal setting theory and expectancy theory form goal dimensions. Goal setting theory (Locke & Latham, 1999) emphasize two broad categories of goal dimensions—goal content and goal intensity. Each of these categories contains two goal dimensions: for goal content the two dimensions are goal difficulty and goal specificity; and for goal intensity the two dimensions are goal commitment and goal importance.

Goal content refers to “the object or result being sought” (Locke & Latham, 1990, 25). This is typically some external object or measurement (e.g., X amount of sales in a time period) although
it may reflect an internal state (e.g., a higher level of job satisfaction). Once a goal has been established, goal difficulty (i.e., the perceived amount of task proficiency needed for goal attainment) and goal specificity (i.e., the individual’s rating of perceived goal clarity) are assessed.

Goal intensity refers to “the degree to which the individual is committed to the goal, and the importance of the goal” (Locke & Latham, 1990, 26). Goal commitment is an individual’s “attachment to or determination to reach a goal” (Locke & Latham, 1990, 125); whereas goal importance refers to the value or relative weight of a goal relative to other goals (Locke & Latham, 1990, 55). An individual’s tenacity towards goal attainment is indicated by goal intensity (Brunstein, 1993).

Goal setting theory does not thoroughly address the expected outcomes an individual associates with goal attainment; although it should be noted that modified versions of expectancy theory do (Hollenbeck & Klein, 1987). Even though Vroom’s (1964) original expectancy theory did not include any references to goals (Locke & Latham, 1990), expectancy theory enhances understanding of the goal striving process. Expectancy theory (Heckhausen & Kuhl, 1985; Vroom, 1964) addresses the importance of assessing an individual’s perceptions associated with goal attainment for each goal. Specifically, expectancy theory holds that an individual will select a level of effort to attain an outcome based on three dimensions: valence, instrumentality, and expectancy. These dimensions may be considered goal dimensions.

Expectancy refers to an individual’s perceived probability that goal-driven actions will result in goal attainment (Heckhausen & Kuhl, 1984) in which the higher the level of expectancy, the higher the level an individual believes that his or her effort will result in goal attainment. The level of expectancy has been found to be positively associated with performance (Roberson, 1989). Valence—in the context of goals—refers to the attractiveness of attaining the goal. In a majority of the literature, valence is defined as “the anticipated satisfaction (derived) from goal attainment” (Klein, 1991, 238). Instrumentality of a goal refers to the perceived probability that goal attainment will lead to attainment of other goals in the future (Roberson, 1989).

**Goal Striving Progress**

Progress toward goal attainment in situations with multiple goals is a complex phenomenon (Austin & Vancouver, 1996) based on interim thoughts and behaviors as predictors (Carver & Scheier, 1998). Process assessment is particularly important in situations in which multiple goals are pursued simultaneously and individuals have to make decisions regarding allocation of efforts (Naylor & Ilgen, 1984). In addition to determining where to allocate efforts, the individual is continuously required to make decisions regarding the extent to which he or she will direct his or her energy towards the goal progress (Austin & Vancouver, 1996). Mapping an individual’s perception of goal progress allows for identifying an individual’s decision regarding goal labeling, abandonment, and persistence. Goal labeling occurs when an individual temporarily disengages from goal-directed behavior (Ford, 1992). Goal abandonment takes place when an individual halts directing behavior towards goal attainment (Austin & Vancouver, 1996). Goal persistence occurs when an individual continues to direct behavior towards attainment of a goal (Brunstein, 1993).

**Goal Attainment**

Goal attainment is typically referred to as goal-directed performance (Klein & Kim, 1998; Sagie, 1996). In effect, goal attainment answers the question “to what degree has the goal been accomplished?” In the organizational literature, goal attainment has been assessed in several ways. More relevant to entrepreneurship, goal attainment could be assessed by considering whether the goals set forth in a business plan have been accomplished or not; or, whether the new venture is successful. In situations in which goal striving is continuous, goal attainment may be considered in
terms of an estimate of goal attainment (Austin & Vancouver, 1996). While for goals that are continuous in nature there is no objective performance assessment (Austin & Vancouver, 1996); for many goals, the degree of goal attainment is perceptual in nature.

**Self-Efficacy**

Self-efficacy—“beliefs in one’s capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments” (Bandura, 1997, 3)—is a key construct in a model of entrepreneurs’ goal setting, goal striving, and goal attainment (cf. Locke & Latham, 1990). Locke (1991) pointed out that an individual’s self-efficacy and goals constitute the individual’s “motivational hub,” where the “hub” serves to direct the individual’s behavior. This means, when self-efficacy is placed in the context of goal setting theory, the inherent argument in goal setting theory is that self-efficacy influences goal setting, goal striving, and goal attainment (Bandura, 1997; Locke & Latham, 1990). An individual’s perception of his or her self-efficacy is, thus, central to understanding the goal striving process (Phillips & Gully, 1997).

**Propositions**

Based on the model illustrated in figure 1, five propositions will be argued and presented in the following paragraphs. The first two propositions (P1 and P2) concern the goal progress. These two propositions specify the relationships between entrepreneurs’ initial perceptions of goal dimensions, entrepreneurs’ goal striving progress, and entrepreneurs’ perceived goal attainment. A second set of propositions (P3, P4, and P5) pertains to entrepreneurs’ goal-specific self-efficacy. These three propositions detail the influence of entrepreneurs’ goal-specific self-efficacy on entrepreneurs’ perception of goal dimensions, goal striving progress, and goal attainment.

An empirical study of goal dimensions (i.e., goal commitment) and goal attainment provided by Brunstein (1993) in which data were collected at four points over a three-and-a-half month period shows that goal striving progress fully mediated the relationship between goal setting and goal attainment. Based on Brunstein (1993) findings, proposition one states that entrepreneurs’ initial perceptions of goal dimensions are positively associated with entrepreneurs’ perceived goal striving progress where the goal dimensions are the seven goal dimensions outlined in goal setting theory and expectancy theory—goal difficulty, goal specificity, goal importance, goal commitment, goal valence, goal instrumentality, and goal expectancy—(Locke & Latham, 1990; Vroom, 1964).

Proposition 1: Entrepreneurs’ initial perceptions of goal dimensions will be positively associated with their goal striving progress.

Research shows support for the relationship between goal dimensions and goal striving progress. Locke and Latham (1990) found more than 170 studies providing evidence for the relationship between goal difficulty and performance. More specifically, regarding the goal difficulty-goal striving relationship, Earley, Northcraft, Lee, and Lituchy (1990) found goal difficulty was positively associated with individuals exerting more effort in attaining their goals. Goal specificity—the degree to which a goal is clearly defined—is shown to have a positive relationship with goal attainment (Mento, Steel, & Karren, 1987). Goal importance—prioritization among multiple goals—is a key issue for entrepreneurs who have multiple goals with different levels of importance when they launch and manage their new ventures. It is found to be positively related to goal striving (Edmister & Locke, 1987). Goal commitment—the persistence of efforts and resources an individual use in the pursuit of attaining a goal—is found be positively related to goal striving progress (Tubbs, 1993). Goal valence—the attractiveness or expected value of goal
attainment (Vroom, 1964)—is an internal form of goal commitment (Roberson, 1989); thus, expected to have a positive relationship with goal striving as goal valence differ depending on the importance of the individual goal among entrepreneurs’ multiple goals. Goal instrumentality refers to the probability that each goal result in the expected outcome (Vroom, 1964). This means when entrepreneurs achieve a sub-goal as part of the goal striving process, they are more likely to strive towards goal attainment (Roberson, 1989). Finally, goal expectancy—an individual’s assessment of the goal striving (goal-driven behaviors) will result in goal attainment (Heckhausen & Kuhl, 1985). These goal dimensions are, all, positively associated with the goal striving progress and, in turn, with goal attainment.

The research support for the positive influence of goal dimensions on goal striving also show they have a positive association with goal attainment. Considering the findings provided by Brunstein (1993) which indicate that the goal setting-goal attainment process in fully mediated by individuals’ perception of their goal striving progress, a second proposition states that goal striving progress is positively associated with goal attainment. This relationship is also evident in control theory (Carver & Scheier, 1998) and has empirical support from multiple studies (e.g., Affleck et al., 1998). The goal striving progress-goal attainment relationship is also supported by evidence in the entrepreneurship literature when findings show that the individuals who persist in trying to start a new venture are more often successful than those who are not persistent (Carter, Gartner, & Reynolds, 1996).

Proposition 2: Entrepreneurs’ perceived goal striving progress will be positively associated with their perceived goal attainment.

The mediated relationship of goal setting and goal attainment is argued in proposition one and two. As also illustrated in figure 1, self-efficacy—“beliefs in one’s capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments” (Bandura, 1997, 3)—positively and independently influence each of the key aspects in the goal striving process; namely perceived goal dimensions, goal striving progress, and goal attainment (Locke & Latham, 1990). Bandura (1997) points out that self-efficacy may be general, domain-specific or task-specific. Because goals tend to be specific—either domain or task related—domain- or task-specific self-efficacy appear relevant. For example, the goal of starting a new venture is related to the domain of entrepreneurship, thus the domain-specific self-efficacy—entrepreneurial self-efficacy—is more relevant than task specific self-efficacy pertaining to financial management, for example.

The positive influence of goal-specific self-efficacy has on goal dimensions is based on the following rationale. An individual with limited confidence in their abilities to accomplish a goal (low level of self-efficacy) will have a negative perception of the goal dimensions (e.g., lack specification, limited importance, limited commitment) and vice versa for a confident individual. Research findings support a positive relationship between goal-specific self-efficacy and goal dimensions (Taylor, Locke, Lee, & Gist, 1984). These considerations provide a rationale for proposition three.

Proposition 3: Entrepreneurs’ initial goal-specific self-efficacy will be positively associated with their perceptions of goal dimensions.

Proposition 4 states that individuals confident in their abilities pertaining to a goal will work (strive) and experience progress toward goal attainment. As part of the goal striving process, an individual will have to make decisions regarding persistence of efforts, revision of goal, temporary hold on goal, pursuit of goal, or abandonment of goal (Austin & Vancouver, 1996). These decisions depend on the positive relationship between feedback on the goal attainment progress and the individual’s self-efficacy. Research supports this positive relationship in findings that
show individuals are receptive of feedback when it reinforces their original self-efficacy (Nease, Mudgett, & Quinones, 1999). Stated differently, individuals with a high level of self-efficacy accepted only positive feedback; whereas individuals with a low level of self-efficacy accepted positive feedback to a lesser degree which, in effect, reinforces their initial level of self-efficacy.

Proposition 4: Entrepreneurs’ initial goal-specific self-efficacy will be positively associated with their perception of goal striving progress.

The relationship between confidence and goal attainment is posited in proposition five. Basically, it states that an individual’s belief in his or her abilities to attain a goal leads the individual to strive toward and achieve goal attainment; or, phrased differently, self-efficacy influence performance. Research evidence supports this relationship between self-efficacy and performance (Thomas & Mathieu, 1994).

Proposition 5: Entrepreneurs’ initial goal-specific self-efficacy will be positively associated with their goal attainment.

While the entrepreneurship literature is replete with evidence of the importance of self-efficacy in new venture creation (Bandura, 1997), one key finding stands out: Entrepreneurs appear to have a high level of self-efficacy (Chen, Greene, & Crick, 1998). Given these considerations, it appears plausible that entrepreneurs’ self-efficacy will be positively associated with goal dimensions, goal striving progress, and goal attainment. Phrased differently, entrepreneurs’ self-efficacy will influence their goal striving process positively.

**DISCUSSION**

Understanding entrepreneurs’ goal-based motivation and goal striving process is essential because it has an important effect on how entrepreneurs create and manage new ventures (Dunkelberg et al., 2013). Motivation has historically, especially in entrepreneurship research, been conceptually considered and empirically examined as a static phenomenon. In the 1990s, motivation scholars reviewed motivation literature (e.g., Mitchell, 1997) and identified its inadequacies. Recent calls for more complex motivation models (e.g., Steers et al., 2004) have resulted in a burgeoning body of motivation research focused on enhancing understanding of the motivation process (e.g., Vancouver, Weinhardt, & Schmidt, 2010). This process approach is however not evident in the entrepreneurship literature as models are still based on motivation as a static construct (e.g., Dunkelberg et al., 2013).

While entrepreneurship researchers have superimposed goals upon entrepreneurs in their research, they have overlooked the goal dimensions of entrepreneurs’ self-set goals and failed to consider how self-efficacy and goal striving progress influence goal attainment. Most entrepreneurship researchers have focused on single goals in their research, which is consistent with most goal setting research (Locke & Latham, 1990). However, entrepreneurs tend to pursue several goals simultaneously. But, no prior research in the entrepreneurship literature has focused on a motivation model in which the goal striving process includes multiple goals based on a theoretical foundation of established theory. What entrepreneurship research has done, thus far in addition to superimpose goals upon entrepreneurs, is to categorize entrepreneurs’ goal content—the what, not the how—and relate the goal content areas to performance (e.g., Buttner & Moore, 1997). Thus, one way the presented model of entrepreneurs’ motivation enrich understanding entrepreneurs’ goal striving is by considering the dimensions of entrepreneurs’ multiple self-set goals and how self-efficacy influence entrepreneurs’ perception of goal dimensions.
By including how self-efficacy influence, not just goal dimensions, and also entrepreneurs’ perception of their goal striving progress and goal attainment, the presented model furthers understanding of entrepreneurs’ goal striving while also illustrating the importance of self-efficacy in the goal striving process and on entrepreneurs’ behavior.

A practical implication of our process model relates to entrepreneurs’ career choice and as such may have both theoretical and practical implications. This literature has largely focused on the reasons why individuals desire to become entrepreneurs (e.g., Kolvereid, 1996). However, the literature does not illustrate how they pursue the goal of becoming entrepreneurs. For example, Kolvereid (1996) found, using a sample of 230 individuals who had graduated from a Norwegian business school with a master’s degree in business, that 39 percent preferred self-employment but 91 percent were organizationally employed. This study illustrates that many individuals are intent on an entrepreneurial career but few become entrepreneurs. A goal striving model such as the one presented in this paper holds potential to explain how and why a substantial number of individuals who prefer an entrepreneurial career do not become entrepreneurs if empirically examined. Thus, an empirical study based on the goal striving process model presented in this paper may answer a key question driving entrepreneurship research: why do some but not others engage in new venture creation? (Baron, 2002).

Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

The presented process model of entrepreneurs’ goal striving is focused on the individual entrepreneur and the process the individual goes through to attain self-set goals. Consequently, it has a number of limitations. One limitation is it does not include how external factors (i.e., industry conditions, resources available, social networks) influence choice of goals, goal dimensions, goal striving progress, and goal attainment. For example, according to control theory (Carver & Scheier, 1998), individuals have a hierarchy of goals and sub-goals but little is understood about how external factors influence the goal hierarchy and, in effect, the goal striving progress. Future research focusing on how external factors influence the goal striving process as a whole or its individual parts may advance understanding of entrepreneurs’ goal striving process.

Another limitation is in the inherent focus on self-set goals by individuals, not assigned goals or participatively-set goals. Thus, the presented process model of entrepreneurs’ goal striving is based on an individual’s self-set goals while many new ventures are created by groups of individuals. Thus, the presented model of entrepreneurs’ goal striving process is limited in scope to the individual. Conceptual developments and empirical research may shed light on differences in the goal striving process based on whether goals are set-self by an entrepreneur or participatively-set by an entrepreneurial team.

Lastly, of course, it would be beneficial if future research empirically examine the proposed motivation model of entrepreneurs’ goal striving process using a longitudinal research design with nascent entrepreneurs, entrepreneurs with new ventures, and a comparison sample with non-entrepreneurs. As mentioned earlier, such an empirical study holds potential to answer a key question in entrepreneurship research: why do some but not other individuals become entrepreneurs?

REFERENCES


Figure 1: Entrepreneurs’ Goal Getting, Striving, and Attainment Process

- Initial Perceptions of Goal Dimension
- Perceived Goal Progress
- Perceived Goal Attainment
- Goal-specific Self-efficacy
GOAL SETTING, GOAL STRIVING, AND GOAL ATTAINMENT: ENTREPRENEURS’ MOTIVATION

Leon Schjoedt, Ph.D.
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RATIONALE
• Why do some, but not others, launch new ventures? (Baron, 2002)
• Motivation
  • Inferred from direction, intensity, and persistence of efforts
  • Central construct
  • Inadequate theories (Mitchell, 1997)
  • Conceptual development plateaued
  • Call for more complex models (Steers et al., 2004)

PURPOSE
• Extend established motivation theories
• Combine seven theories into a more comprehensive motivation process model
• Better understanding of entrepreneurs’ motivation, its process, and their behavior

A GOAL STRIVING MODEL
• Motivation
  • Antecedent and facilitator of Es’ behavior
  • Goal setting theory (Locke & Latham, 1990)
    • “Human action is directed by conscious goals”
  • Seven theories ➔ four concepts

THE SEVEN THEORIES
• Goal setting theory (Locke & Latham, 1990)
• Expectancy theory (Vroom, 1964)
• Control theory (Carver & Scheier, 1990)
• Goal hierarchy theory (Powers, 1973)
• Resource allocation theory (Kanfer & Ackerman, 1989)
• Self-management theory (Thomas, 2000)
• Social learning theory (Bandura, 1997)

THE FOUR CONCEPTS
• Goal dimensions
  • Goal setting theory (Locke & Latham, 1990)
  • Expectancy theory (Vroom, 1964)
• Goal progress
  • Control theory (Carver & Scheier, 1999)
  • Goal hierarchy theory (Powers, 1973)
  • Resource allocation theory (Kanfer & Ackerman, 1989)
  • Self-management theory (Thomas, 2000)
THE FOUR CONCEPTS

• Goal Attainment
  • Goal setting theory (Locke & Latham, 1990)
  • Self-efficacy
    • Social learning theory (Bandura, 1997)

THE GOAL STRIVING PROCESS

• Goal dimensions are positively associated with goal attainment (Locke & Latham, 1990)
• Goal progress fully mediate the goal dimensions-goal attainment relationship (Brunstein, 1993)
• P1: Goal dimensions positively associated with goal striving (Brunstein, 1993; Locke & Latham, 1990)
• P2: Goal striving positively associated with goal attainment (Carver & Scheier, 1990; Locke & Latham, 1990)

THE GOAL STRIVING PROCESS

Initially
Perceived Goal Dimensions

Perceived Goal Progress

Perceived Goal Attainment

P1

P2

P3

P4

P5

THE GOAL STRIVING MODEL

Initially Perceived Goal Dimensions

Perceived Goal Progress

Perceived Goal Attainment

Goal-specific Self-efficacy

P1

P2

P3

P4

P5

SELF-EFFICACY

• P3: Positive association with goal dimensions of self-set goals (Bandura, 1997; Locke & Latham, 1990)
• P4: Positive association with goal striving (Bandura, 1997; Locke & Latham, 1990)
• P5: Positive association with goal attainment (Bandura, 1997; Locke & Latham, 1990)

DISCUSSION

• Entrepreneurs’ goal-based motivation process
• Contributions to the
  • motivation literature
  • management literature
  • entrepreneurship literature
DISCUSSION
• Move beyond
  • superimposed goals to self-set goals
  • considering a singular goal to multiple goals
  • goal contents to goal striving process
• Enhance understanding of Es’ motivation process
• Enhance understanding of the effects of self-efficacy
• Enhance understanding of Es’ behavior

MODEL LIMITATIONS
• Focus on the individual’s self-set goals
• No consideration of the entrepreneurial team
  • No consideration of assigned goals
  • No consideration of goal set by a group
• No consideration of external factors

FUTURE RESEARCH
• Examine the goal striving model empirically
• Examine the goal hierarchy empirically
• Assess external influence on the goal striving process
• Conceptual development of additional motivation process models

THANK YOU
Have a Great Weekend