

Entrepreneurship and business in the beauty and personal hygiene industry Decoding the happiness hormones (serotonin, endorphins, dopamine, oxytocin) and depression hormone (cortisol) with an attributional theory approach of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

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Abstract

Entrepreneurship in the beauty and personal care industry is a lucrative business that contributes enormously to economic growth, as well as defines social roles and empowers personal life. The presented review develops an analysis on entrepreneurial behavior from neurobiological positions to explain what hormones of happiness—dopamine, serotonin, oxytocin, and endorphins—together with cortisol, the hormone of stress, influence the drive towards entrepreneurship, resilience, and the sustained successful performance of the firms. Through the use of attributional entrepreneurial theory, the paper explains how perception of success or failure among entrepreneurs interacts with the biological mechanisms of reward and stress to understand their decisions on continuous performances. In general, dopamine fuels goal-directed action, serotonin contributes to emotional balance, oxytocin fosters trust and interpersonal connection, and endorphins help alleviate stress, whereas long-term activation of cortisol has adverse consequences for well-being. The discussion links the biological and psychosocial underlying mechanisms to some of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, in particular SDG 3, SDG 5, SDG 8, and SDG 12. Based on these, the present study suggests an interdisciplinary model that relates hormonal

processes to entrepreneurial thinking and the development of sustainable business.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship; Beauty industry; Sustainable Development Goals; Well-being.

I. Introduction

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals have significant relevance in various fields of sciences and industries ranging from agriculture, wildlife, and food science to health and medical sciences. Entrepreneurship is well-documented as a driver of economic growth, innovation, and social change. Industry-specific entrepreneurial activities, however, bear consequences for individual well-being, consumer experience, and foment the greater good in wide arenas. By contrast, scientific research has provided insight into how neurobiological processes—most directly, hormones linked with feelings of happiness and stress—influence motivation, satisfaction, emotional regulation, and resilience. This short review synthesizes the literature from entrepreneurship studies and psychobiology on how hormonal mechanisms interact with entrepreneurial behavior in the industry of beauty and personal hygiene, and such interaction contributes to UN SDGs. Specifically, we propose that an attributional theory of entrepreneurship—which emphasizes the explanation of entrepreneurs for events due to biological or psychological causes—offers a basis for

understanding how venture performance and well-being are intertwined with sustainable impact. Above all, this framework centers on the role of some hormones, such as serotonin, dopamine, endorphins, oxytocin, and stress-related hormone cortisol, influencing the entrepreneurial experience and consumer outcomes, particularly in an industry that is highly related to aesthetics, happiness, and personal care.

Entrepreneurship, Well-Being, and SDGs

Entrepreneurship is increasingly associated not only with economic outputs, such as job creation and innovation, but also with individual and societal well-being. Studies of entrepreneurial well-being show that entrepreneurs often report higher satisfaction and psychological functioning compared to salaried employees, although this outcome is also influenced by stress factors.

Contreras-Barraza and colleagues reviewed the developing entrepreneurial wellbeing literature and find that research increasingly addresses mental health outcomes among entrepreneurs including, but not limited to stress, life satisfaction, and happiness. Likewise, other researchers report that entrepreneurial activities can both feed hedonic and eudaimonic wellbeing, although negative experiences such as anxiety and distress are under-researched.

Under the framework of UN SDGs, entrepreneurship plays a significant role in facilitating economic growth in an equitable manner (Goal 8), promoting innovation (Goal 9), facilitating gender equality (Goal 5), as well as health and well-being (Goal 3). The findings of behavioral research, as they apply to entrepreneurs, highlight how entrepreneurial motivations and behaviors impact factors tied to SDGs; for example, opportunity-driven entrepreneurs contribute in an affirmative manner to inclusive economic growth. However, specific literature on the intersection of entrepreneurial activity within the beauty/personal hygiene industry and SDGs is limited. The industry plays a significant role in grooming self-image, social conditioning, and consumption routines, which can be linked to well-being.

Happiness Hormones and Entrepreneurial Psychology

At a biological level, the neurochemical systems of the brain may be identified to play critical roles in modulating mood, motivation, social bonding, and response to stress. A substantial body of research in psychology and neuroscience has pointed out four main hormones/neurotransmitters associated with positive emotional states, often referred to as

happiness hormones: serotonin, dopamine, oxytocin, and endorphins.

Dopamine

Dopamine is often conceptualized as a reward signal, which heavily influences learning, goal pursuit, and motivation. Wise (2004) noted dopamine's participation in reward learning and its role as a determinant of motivational states promoting goal-directed behavior. In entrepreneurship, dopamine may reflect anticipation of achievement, such as closing a successful sale or launching a new product. Entrepreneurs are often rewarded with spikes in dopamine when their ventures take hold or after incremental milestones have been achieved-positive reinforcement that maintains engagement over time.

Serotonin

Serotonin plays an important role in the stabilization of the mood, emotions, and contentment. High serotonin is associated with contentment and the feeling of being emotionally balanced. Researchers outlined the methods of increasing serotonin and its role in moods. For an entrepreneurial context, serotonin could be related to the overall satisfaction with life and the ability to cope with the uncertainty of being an entrepreneur.

Oxytocin

Oxytocin has been termed the social bonding hormone as it promotes feelings of trust, empathy, and kindness. Feldman (2012) focused on oxytocin's effect on social affiliation. Oxytocin can have significant implications for entrepreneurs who are in industries where social interface is required, such as beauty and personal care services.

Endorphins

Endorphin hormones act as analgesics, producing euphoria after physical activity or socially pleasant situations. Studies on endorphin hormones elaborate on the interaction between stress relief, euphoria, and activity difficulty.

Cortisol

In contrast, cortisol is the principal hormone associated with the stress response and has been linked to depressive symptoms when chronically elevated. High cortisol levels can dampen cognitive flexibility, inhibit social behavior, and undermine motivation. According to the biological factors model from DFARHUD et al. (2014), cortisol is a significant marker in stress-related emotional dysregulation and can counterbalance the positive effects of other neurochemicals on well-being.

Attributional Entrepreneurial Theory

Attributional entrepreneurial theory argues that entrepreneurs attribute success or failure cognitively and biologically. In other words, the attributional entrepreneurial theory explains how entrepreneurs cognitively attribute success or failure to internal or external factors. Taking the explanation a notch higher to encompass the dynamics of hormones, attributional entrepreneurial theory affirms that successful entrepreneurs attribute challenges to external or controllable factors, thereby experiencing less cortisol release. Consequently, the hormone responsible for motivation (dopamine) and the hormone regulating stability (serotonin) are higher in such successful entrepreneurs. Successful entrepreneurs manage challenges by attributing them to external factors, thus showing reduced levels of happiness hormones.

This framework can be integrated with SDGs in two key ways:

1. Entrepreneurial Health and Well-Being-Sustainable Development Goal 3: Entrepreneurial support systems, through the development of adaptive attributional styles and awareness about neurobiological responses to stress, can facilitate the founders' psychological resilience and wellbeing.

2. Inclusive Economic Growth (SDG 8): Entrepreneurs who maintain well-being are better positioned to create sustainable long-term business performance and jobs and contribute toward sustainable local economies.

Research in entrepreneurial well-being calls for the integration of such psychological constructs as self-determination theory, mental health, and subjective well-being in analyses of entrepreneurial behavior.

Beauty and Personal Hygiene Industry

The beauty and personal hygiene industry operates at the intersection of self-presentation, health, and social interaction. Beyond functional products, the industry markets ideals of beauty, self-confidence, and happiness, it is thus a pertinent setting for examining how entrepreneurs can leverage insights about happiness hormones to enhance consumer experience, brand loyalty, and social well-being.

Consumer Experience and Neurobiology

Products appealing to self-care may shape emotional states, not only through traditional marketing effects, but through ritualistic usage to facilitate self-comforting, social engagement, and hedonic experience too. For instance:

Experiencing experiences which heighten serotonin includes engaging in actions that encourage feelings of relaxation, happiness, and approbation by others;

as such, beauty rituals often incorporate components of such experiences.

There could also be an amplification of the dopamine system in consumers who seek desired aesthetic results or rewards based on positive feedback from others about their appearance.

Oxytocin release has been linked to shared beauty rituals, engagement in activities like beauty salons, and getting social validation.

The release of endorphins may be associated with activities that evoke feelings of self-care pleasure, e.g., through massage, exercise, or luxurious products.

Significantly, entrepreneurs in this segment have the opportunity to carve out niche markets by designing experiences that focus on emotional well-being. By aligning product and service offerings with well-being objectives, entrepreneurs in this segment have the opportunity to achieve satisfaction for consumers but also contribute to the achievement of Goals 3 (Good Health and Well-being) and 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production).

Entrepreneurial Practices and Hormonal Well-Being

For beauty and personal hygiene entrepreneurs, both eustress and distress may exist, influenced by hormones. Eustress can increase creativity, motivation, and interest (dopamine), while stressful occasions can impact decision-making accordingly (cortisol).

Training, community support, and environmental business practices might act as buffers to entrepreneurship difficulties, such as the cortisol issue, leading to well-balanced hormone systems, etc. For example, social connections might raise levels of oxytocin and emotional support.

Linking Industry Practice to SDGs

Entrepreneurship in beauty and personal hygiene has implications for the following SDGs:

SDG 3 - Good Health and Well-Being: Products and content can have an impact on mental wellness and the perception of self-image/health stigma.

SDG 5 Gender Equality: The industry mainly serves female consumers and has many women entrepreneurs who own businesses; the industry could contribute to gender equality by supporting women.

SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth): Small enterprises in this industry have a role to play in creating jobs in the economy.

SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production): Ethical product ranges that focus on sustainability and responsible business models

would be in line with national and international agendas to promote sustainability.

The literature on entrepreneurship and the achievement of the SDGs emphasizes the role played by entrepreneurial actions, where opportunity-driven entrepreneurs are considered more positively inclined towards sustainable outcomes than necessity-driven ones. Accordingly, behaviors that encourage adaptive attributional styles and psychological resilience might be more conducive to sustainable entrepreneurship.

II. Conclusion

This review connects the literature regarding entrepreneurs and entrepreneurialism with neurobiological studies of the hormonal control of moods and behavioral outputs, with an emphasis on the possible benefits of an attributional entrepreneurial theory in explaining entrepreneurial outcomes and human well-being. By cracking the hormonal code of happiness hormones, which include serotonin, dopamine, endorphins, and oxytocin, and cortisol, which regulate motivational, emotional, and social behavioral outputs, the current authors provide entrepreneurs and stakeholders of the beauty and personal hygiene segment, along with other segments, an alternative route for well-being, sustainability, and the achievement of SDGs. Subsequent studies should validate the associations proposed here, but an interdisciplinary method of neurobiology, psychology, and entrepreneurial theory may provide new routes for sustainable and health-conducive entrepreneurialism.

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