

The Link Between Emotional Exhaustion And Cynicism In Small Industrial Business Entrepreneurs

Pellejero-Silva, Mónica
Sánchez-Medina, Agustín J.
Gutiérrez-Padrón, Ángel S.

Department of Economics and Management, University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, The Canary Islands, Spain

IJERT

Abstract

The role of the entrepreneur in small business is critical for their success. Therefore, any issue that affects him negatively will impact the viability of the company with more or less importance. One of such issues is burnout. The main purpose of this study is analyzing the relationship between the two core components of burnout: emotional exhaustion and cynicism. With this objective 153 surveys were conducted to entrepreneurs of small industries on the island of Gran Canaria.

1. Introduction

There are countless papers studying intangible assets that make companies grow and succeed. However, there are not so many that study the intangible factors that cause, or have the potential to do so, a loss of value to the organization. In small companies the founder plays a key role [1] and usually is decisive in its success. Therefore, the present work intends to analyze a specific type of intangible liabilities, the entrepreneur's burnout. Specifically we study the relationship between the two core components of burnout, the emotional exhaustion and the cynicism in the entrepreneur.

In this work we have studied 153 entrepreneurs of small industries. These companies had an age between 3 and 42 months at the time of data collection. The said companies were all located on the island of Gran Canaria.

In addition to this introduction, the structure of this paper has the following sections: a. Theoretical framework and research hypothesis. b. Methodology. c. Results. d. Conclusions.

2. Theoretical framework and study hypotheses

Freudenberger's works [2,3] are those which gave rise to studies on burnout. Despite its relatively recent origin, in these years there have been many authors who have provided a definition of this concept. Without intending to be exhaustive, here are some of the most dedication to a cause, way of life or relationship that does not produce the expected reinforcement. Meanwhile, Maslach [4] asserts that it is a gradual loss of professional responsibility and cynical disinterest among coworkers. The same author, along with Jackson, consider it a syndrome of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and reduced personal accomplishment that occurs among individuals who work with people [5].

On the other hand, Cherniss [6] views it as a process in which the attitudes and behaviors of professionals change negatively in response to stress. For Brill [7], it is a dysfunctional state related to work in a person not suffering from any mental disorder in a job in which he previously succeeded in both objective performance level as well as personal satisfaction, and that he can not get later if not through external intervention, or changing jobs. This situation may be due, according to the author, because he considers his salary inadequate, because he lacks the physical skills or knowledge necessary to perform the job, etc. However, despite the diversity of definitions given in the literature on the concept, the Maslach Burnout Inventory - MBI [8] has been used in their research by many of the authors and for this reason we have decided to use in this paper the definition provided by these authors.

On the other hand, it should be noted that although burnout has been initially associated mostly with service professionals who work in direct contact with the customer, such as doctors or teachers, it is not restricted to this type of professions [9].

According to Moriana Herruzo [10] and Gil-Monte [11] there is consensus to accept the proposal of Maslach and Jackson [12], who considered burnout syndrome as a construct shaped by three basic dimensions:

- a. Emotional exhaustion, that refers to the loss of emotional resources with physical and emotional exhaustion, that occurs as a result of interactions that workers must maintain with customers.
- b. Depersonalization or cynicism. Employees develop a negative attitude of callousness and cynicism to colleagues and customers, with negative feelings and responses.
- c. Low realization. Refers to a loss of confidence in personal fulfillment and the presence of a negative self-concept and feelings of incompetence.

This three-factor structure is invariant regardless of the occupation being studied [13]. A variant of the Maslach Burnout Inventory is the Maslach Burnout Inventory-General Survey [14] used in this work. It maintains the three-dimensional structure of the MBI although these dimensions are slightly different and are named as follows: emotional exhaustion, cynicism, and professional efficacy.

The latter, according to Gil -Monte [15], is similar to MBI personal accomplishment but includes social and non-social aspects of work with emphasis on the success expectations of the subject [16] according to Bandura's model [17]. Moreover,

for Gil -Monte [18], emotional exhaustion is more generic referring to physical and emotional fatigue without mentioning the people who can cause the fatigue. Finally, for this author the scale of cynicism is the one with a greater difference as it reflects the attitudes of indifference or detachment to work without focusing on the persons to whom this is directed.

The negative consequences of burnout are often quite profound and can result in substantial costs due to increased absenteeism, job dissatisfaction, lower organizational commitment and job performance deterioration [19].

On the other hand, various studies consider emotional exhaustion as the initial dimension of burnout [20]. According to Toppinen -Tanner et al. [21] such emotional exhaustion is the first phase in the development of burnout, being cynicism its usual sequel [22]. Therefore, the following hypothesis is posed:

H1: The Entrepreneur's emotional exhaustion positively influences his cynicism.

3. Methodology and proposed model

Sample and procedure

In the present study, the survey was method used to obtain the necessary information to fulfil the proposed objectives, and its basic observation instrument was the questionnaire [23]. The target public consisted en emprendedores de pequeñas industrias residentes en la Isla de Gran Canaria. En total se obtuvieron 153 encuestas válidas

Measures

The questionnaire was divided into two parts. The first part included questions about the basic profile of the person surveyed, such as sex, age, educational level, etc. The second block contained a total of 10 questions designed to measure the two constructs included in the proposed model (Cynicism, EmotExhaus).

Moreover, we used a seven-point Likert type scale for all the items. Response categories ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).

Data analysis

After the field work had been done, the data obtained were codified and tabulated. The program

used for this purpose was version 19 of the SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) for Windows. To study the data, structural equations analysis was performed using the Partial Least Squares (PLS) technique. This methodology, which uses the Ordinary Least Squares (OSL) algorithm, was designed to reflect the theoretical and empirical aspects of social qualities and behavioural sciences, where there are generally situations with sufficient empirical support and little information available [24]. PLS was chosen because the present study focuses on predicting dependent variables [25], and this technique is effective with small samples [26,27]. This study specifically used the SmartPLS version of software 02.00 [28].

4. Results

Analysis of the measurement model

To evaluate the measurement model, first the individual reliability of each item is observed. This procedure is performed by examining the loadings or simple correlations of the measures or indicators with their respective constructs. According to Carmines and Zeller [29], to accept an indicator as part of a construct, it must have a load $\geq 0,707$, which implies that the shared variance between the construct and its indicators is greater than the variance of the error. However, other authors [30,31] consider this criterion too restrictive, arguing that indicators should not be eliminated that, although not reaching the value of 0.707, exceed the value of 0.65. As Table 1 and Figure 1 show, all of the indicators fulfil the condition of exceeding the value of 0.707.

Table 1. Outer model loadings and cross loadings

Source: Own elaboration

	Cynicism	EmotExhaus
Cyn1	0.863	0.496
Cyn2	0.865	0.550
Cyn3	0.836	0.493
Cyn4	0.772	0.425
Exh1	0.732	0.442
Exh2	0.351	0.754
Exh3	0.428	0.834
Exh4	0.490	0.825
Exh5	0.495	0.813
Exh6	0.548	0.750

A second condition to take into account is the internal consistency, which involves evaluating how rigorously the manifest variables are measuring the same latent variable. For this purpose, the composite reliability must be > 0.7. As Table 2 shows, in all cases the value of 0.896 is surpassed. This table also shows that the Cronbach's Alpha is above 0.856 in all cases, which indicates that the constructs are reliable. As the third step in evaluating the validity of the scales used, we studied the Average Variance Extracted (AVE). Fornell and Larcker [35] recommend a value superior to 0.5, in order to establish that more than 50% of the construct's variance is due to its indicators. As Table 2 shows, this requirement is also met.

Finally, the discriminant validity is analysed, which tells us to what degree a construct of the model is different from the model's other constructs. One way of testing this circumstance is to demonstrate that the correlations between the constructs are lower than the square root of the AVE. Table 2 also shows the matrix of correlations between the constructs, having substituted on the diagonal the value of the correlation with that of the square root of the AVE. As the values on the diagonal are the greatest values in each row and column, the existence of discriminant validity is confirmed.

Table 2. Construct reliability, convergent validity and discriminant validity

Source: Own elaboration

AVE	Composite Reliability	Cronbach's Alpha		Cynicism	EmotExhaus
0.665	0.908	0.873	Cynicism	0.815	
0.633	0.896	0.856	EmotExhaus	0.593	0.796
			The elements located on the diagonal, in bold are the square root of average variance extracted (AVE). The elements located outside the diagonal are the correlations between constructs. For there to exist discriminant validity, the diagonal elements should have a higher value than those that are outside of this.		

As all the tests performed previously were positive, it can be stated that the measurement model used is valid and reliable. Therefore, next we will evaluate

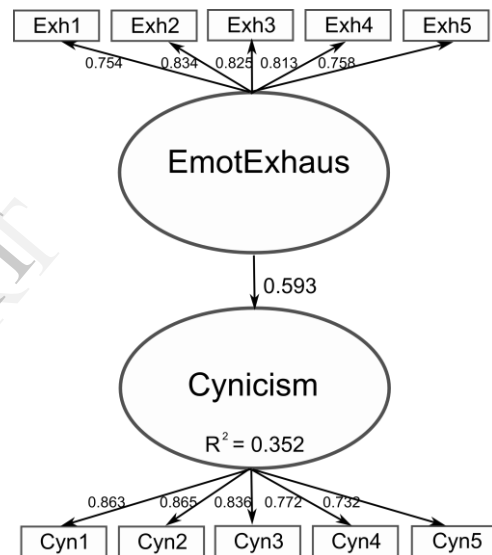
the proposed model, which is the object of the study.

Evaluation of the model

After studying the validity of the measurement model, next the causal relations proposed in the model will be evaluated. In this way, an attempt will be made to observe what amount of variance of the endogenous variables is explained by the constructs that predict them. One measure of the predictive power of a model is the value of R² for the latent dependent variables. Figure 1 shows that the value of the R² of Cynicism is 0.352, which means that the model explains approximately 35% of the variance of this construct (see Table 4).

Figure 1. Structural model results

Source: Own elaboration



To evaluate the validity of the different relations proposed in the model, the Bootstrap Technique was used, which offers the standard deviation and the T. Thus, the stability of the estimations is examined using a t-Student distribution with a tail obtained by means of the Bootstrap Test with 500 subsamples (Roldán & Sánchez-Franco, 2012). Table 3 shows that Hypothesis 1 is accepted with a significance level of 0.01.

Table 3. Structural model results

Source: Own elaboration

Hypothesis	Suggested effect	Path coefficients	t-value (bootstrap)	Support
H1: InfPos -> DecRSC	+	0.593***	10.462	Yes
*p < 0.05; **p < 0.01; ***p < 0.001; ns: not significant (based on t(499). one-tailed test) t(0.05; 499) = 1.64791345; t(0.01; 499) = 2.333843952; t(0.001; 499) = 3.106644601				

In addition, to test the model's validity, the Stone-Geisser - Crossvalidated Redundancy (Q^2) Test was performed. This test is used as a criterion to measure the predictive relevance of the dependent constructs. If $Q^2 > 0$, the model has predictive relevance; otherwise, it does not. As Table 4 shows, in all cases the values of Q^2 are positive, which certifies the predictive relevance of the model.

Table 4. Effects on endogenous variables

Source: Own elaboration

	R^2	Q^2	Direct effect	Correlation	Variance explained
Cynicism	0.352	0.233			
H1: EmotExahus			0.593	0.593	0.352

5. Conclusions

Discussion

The main conclusion of this study has to do with the implications of the support found for the proposed hypothesis. Así, la existencia de agotamiento emocional se encuentra altamente vinculado con el cinismo del emprendedor. De este modo, se puede observar que en el colectivo estudiado, se cumplen las afirmaciones teóricas realizadas a lo largo de este estudio.

Limitations and future research

Regarding the weak points of this study, it should be mentioned that a transversal methodology was used, thus increasing the probability of bias due to the use of only one method/source of data.

References

[1] Van de Ven, A.H., Hudson, R. y Schoroeder, D.M. (1984): "Designing new business start-ups: Entrepreneurial, organizational and ecological considerations", *Journal of Management*, 10, pp 87-107.
 [2] Freudenberger, H.J. (1974): "Staff burnout", *The Journal of Social Issues*, 30(1), pp 159-166.
 [3] Freudenberger, H.J. (1975): "The staff burn-out in alternative institutions", *Psychotherapy: theory, research and practice*, 12(1), pp 73-82.
 [4] Maslach, C. (1976): "Burn-out", *Human behavior*, 5, pp 16-22.
 [5] Maslach, C. y Jackson, S.E. (1986): *Maslach Burnout Inventory* (2ª ed.), Palo Alto, CA.
 [6] Cherniss, C. (1980): *Professional Burnout in the Human Service Organizations*, Praeger, New York.
 [7] Brill, P.L. (1984): "The need for an operational definition of burnout", *Family and Community Health*, 6, pp 12-24.

[8] Maslach, C. y Jackson, S.E. (1981): *MBI: Maslach Burnout Inventory*, Consulting Psychologists Press, University of California, Palo Alto.
 [9] Gil-Monte, P. (2005): *El Síndrome de quemarse por el trabajo*, Pirámide, Madrid.
 [10] Moriana, J.A. y Herruzo, J. (2004): "Estrés y burnout en profesores", *International Journal of Clinical and Health Psychology*, 4(3), pp 597-621.
 [11] Gil-Monte, P. (2005): *El Síndrome de quemarse por el trabajo*, Pirámide, Madrid.
 [12] Maslach, C. y Jackson, S.E. (1981): *MBI: Maslach Burnout Inventory*, Consulting Psychologists Press, University of California, Palo Alto.
 [13] Salanova, M., Schaufeli, W.B., Llorens, S., Peiró, J.M., y Grau, R. (2000): "Desde el "burnout" al "engagement": ¿Una nueva perspectiva?", *Revista de Psicología del Trabajo y de las Organizaciones*, 16, pp 117-134.
 [14] Schaufeli, W.B., Leiter, M.P., Maslach, C. y Jackson, S.E. (1996): *Maslach Burnout Inventory-General Survey*. En Maslach, C., Jackson, S.E. y Leiter, M.P. (Eds.), *The Maslach Burnout Inventory-Test Manual*, Consulting Psychologists Press, Palo Alto, CA.
 [15] Gil-Monte, P. (2002): "Validez factorial de la adaptación al español del Maslach Burnout Inventory-General Survey", *Salud Pública Mex*, 44, pp 33-40.
 [16] Moreno-Jiménez, B., Rodríguez-Carvajal, R. y Escobar-Redonda, E. (2001): "La evaluación del burnout profesional factorial del MBI-GS. Un análisis preliminar", *Ansiedad y Estrés*, 7(1), pp 69-78.
 [17] Bandura, A. (1977): "Self-efficacy: Toward a unifying theory of behavioral change", *Psychological Review*, 84, pp 191-215.
 [18] Gil-Monte, P. (2002): "Validez factorial de la adaptación al español del Maslach Burnout Inventory-General Survey", *Salud Pública Mex*, 44, pp 33-40.
 [19] Maslach, C., Schaufeli, W.B. y Leiter, M.P. (2001): "Job burnout". En Fiske, S.T., Schacter, D.L. y Zahn-Waxler, C. (Eds.), *Annual Review of Psychology*, pp 397-422.
 [20] Halbesleben, J.R., y Demerouti, E. (2005): "The construct validity of an alternative measure of burnout: investigating the English translation of the Oldenburg Burnout Inventory", *Work and Stress*, 19, pp 208-20.
 [21] Toppinen-Tanner, S., Kalimo, R., y Mutanen, P. (2002): "The process of burnout in white collar and blue collar jobs: Eight year prospective study of exhaustion", *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 23, pp 555-570.
 [22] Moreno-Jiménez, B., Rodríguez-Carvajal, R. y Escobar-Redonda, E. (2001): "La evaluación del burnout profesional factorial del MBI-GS. Un análisis preliminar", *Ansiedad y Estrés*, 7(1), pp 69-78.
 [23] Sierra Bravo, R. (1991): *Técnicas de investigación social. Teoría y ejercicios*. Paraninfo, Madrid.
 [24] Wold, H. (1979): *Model Construction and Evaluation When Theoretical Knowledge is Scarce: An Example of the Use of Partial Least squares* (Cahiers du Département D'Économétrie), Faculté des Sciences Économiques et Sociales, Université de Genève, Geneva, Switzerland.
 [25] Roldán, J.L. and Sánchez-Franco, M.J. (2012): *Variance based structural equation modeling: guidelines for using partial least squares in information systems research*. In M. Mora, O. Gelman, A. Steenkamp, & M.

Raisinghani (Eds.), *Research Methodologies, Innovations and Philosophies in Software Systems Engineering and Information Systems* (pp. 193-221). Hershey, PA: Information Science Reference.

[26] Chin, W.W. and Newsted, P.R. (1999): Structural equation modeling analysis with small samples using partial least squares. In R. Hoyle (Ed.), *Statistical Strategies for Small Samples Research* (pp. 307-341). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

[27] Reinartz, W., Haenlein, M. and Henseler, J. (2009): An empirical comparison of the efficacy of covariance-based and variancebased SEM. *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, 26, pp. 332-344.

[28] Ringle, C.M., Wende, S. and Will, A. (2005): Smartpls para Windows. 2005. Versión 2.0 (beta), University of Hamburg, Hamburg, Germany. <http://www.smartpls.de>

[28] Carmines, E.G. and Zeller, R.A. (1979): Reliability and validity assessment, SAGE University Papers, London.

[29] Barclay, D., Higgins, C. and Thompson, R. (1995): "The Partial Least Squares (PLS). Approach to causal modeling: personal computer adoption and use as an illustration", *Technology studies, special issue on research methodology*, vol. 2, n° 2, pp. 285-309.

[30] Chin, W.W. (1998): "Issues and opinion on structural equation modeling", *MIS Quarterly*, 22, pp. 7-15.

[31] Fornell, C. and Larcker, D.F. (1981): "Evaluating structural equation models with unobservable variables and measurement error: algebra and statistics", *Journal of Marketing Research*, XVIII(1), pp. 39-50.

IJERT