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RESEARCH ARTICLE 

Traits of the Entrepreneur's Personality: Where Does Ambition End and Obsession Begin?

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Keywords personality traits, entrepreneur, ambition, obsession.

Abstract
The article aims to explore the traits of the entrepreneur's personality, and to understand the difference between healthy ambition and obsession, and how that affect the professional and personal performance and the sustainability of the entrepreneurial project. The study confirms the need to distinguish between the ambition that pushes to achievement and the obsession that can harm the individual's stability. In this study, the analytical method was relied on to analyze the traits of entrepreneurs, with comparing the behaviors related to ambition and obsession and their influence on psychological and social health. The results show that the healthy ambition is marked by planning, continuous learning, innovation, keeping a balance between work and life, and building positive relations. While the ambition turn into an obsession when there is a neglect of health and relations, compulsive immersion in work, more stress and fatigue, and losing the personal and social balance, which threaten the success and stability of the entrepreneur in the long term.

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I.Introduction:

The personality of the entrepreneur is considered one of the most complex personalities in psychology. It combines distinctive and positive traits such as the desire for achievement and ambition, with psychological challenges resulting from the pressures that come from the entrepreneurial work environment. The desire for achievement is the basis and the key that drives the entrepreneur to transform his ideas from mere thoughts into realistic projects. However, this ambition and this desire for achievement, perseverance, and creativity may turn into a pathological obsession if it is not controlled within reasonable boundaries, including physical and psychological health. In this context, the question arises: where can we draw the line between ambition and creativity as a positive force that drives toward success and achievement, and obsession as a psychological disorder that may lead its owner to collapse?

II.Methods:

The study relied on the descriptive-analytical method because it fits the study of psychological traits and the analysis of correlational relationships between variables as they appear in reality.

1- Objectives of the study:

- To analyze the traits of the entrepreneur's personality from the perspective of psychology.
- To distinguish between healthy ambition and pathological obsession in the entrepreneurial context.
- To reveal the relationship between the level of ambition and obsession with work.
- To identify the role of balance between work and life in maintaining the psychological health of the entrepreneur.

2- Hypotheses of the study:

Hypothesis 1:

Excessive ambition leads to a higher level of obsession with work.

Hypothesis 2:

The balance between work and private life represents the main boundary that separates healthy ambition from pathological obsession (between health and illness).

3- Personality traits:

In psychology, personality traits represent the relatively stable psychological characteristics that distinguish one individual from another, and they affect the way he thinks, feels, and behaves across different situations and over time. For example, the trait of ambition and extroversion is considered among the personality traits as they appear in many situations repeatedly. (Alshebami, 2022)sd. The entrepreneur's personal traits play a role in creating and discovering opportunities to establish their own institutions, to embody their ideas, and to apply them in reality, where the entrepreneurial spirit forms the cornerstone of economic dynamics and the embodiment of the spirit of initiative and creativity.

4- The concept of the entrepreneur:

- a) The entrepreneur as a psychological personality is usually characterized by high ambition, a desire for innovation and creativity, self-confidence, and independence.
- b) In psychology of motivation: the entrepreneur is an example of an individual who seeks self-actualization. (Al-Issawi, 2002)

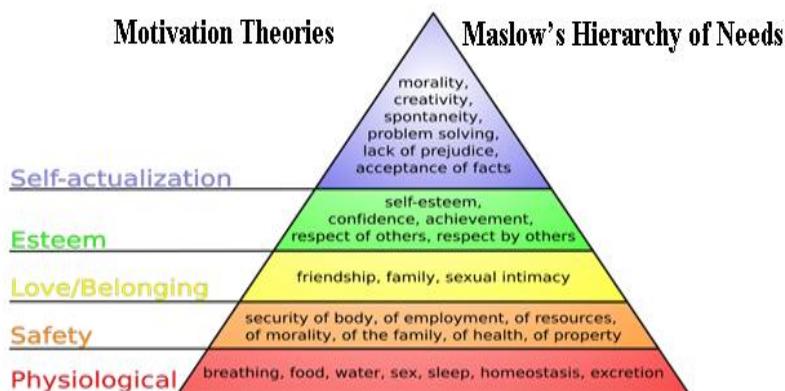


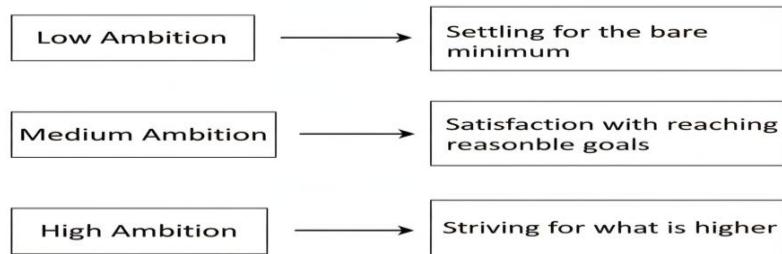
Figure No 1: Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs.

In work and organizational psychology: the entrepreneur's personality is studied within the framework of leadership, creativity, job creation, and risk management.

In pathological psychology: some approaches have linked the entrepreneur to the ambitious personality and the fine line between it and obsession as a disease, a compulsive behavior, or work addiction. The term "entrepreneur" was first used and mentioned in the 16th century in France, referring to an active person who accomplishes something. Then it evolved to mean a person who takes risks, and later became the person who is an innovator. (Boukssassa, 2016)

5- The concept of ambition:

In psychology, ambition is considered one of the central concepts related to achievement motivation, meaning that the ambitious person is the one who seeks to achieve relatively difficult goals, where he challenges himself. Abdel Rahman Al-Issawi differentiates between realistic ambition and excessive ambition, as the first refers to ambition with reasonable and achievable goals through effort, while the second, the excessive or unrealistic ambition, represents big goals that do not match the individual's abilities. The third and last one is weak ambition, which means being satisfied with the minimum and the absence of motivation. (Boukssassa, 2016)

**Figure No 2: Levels of Ambition**

It is also confirmed that ambition must be consistent with abilities and capabilities, and in addition, it has to be supported by realistic and balanced plans and maps.

According to Mohamed Hassan Ghanem in his book “Positive Psychology” (2007), he discussed the concept of ambition as an important part of the foundations of positive psychological health. He defined ambition as a driving force for personal growth, which makes the individual always strive to achieve higher accomplishments, and he considered it among the indicators of positive mental health because it makes the person more able to adapt, face pressures, and achieve self-satisfaction.

Thus, ambition is an internal continuous psychological desire that seeks to achieve and reach goals higher than the current level of the individual, in harmony with his abilities and capacities, through planning and structuring, and it is considered one of the most important positive motives for personal growth and self-actualization.

6- The concept of obsession:

Kamal Morsi defines it in his book *Dictionary of Psychology and Psychoanalysis* (2001) as a state of mental disorder that is characterized by hyperactivity, accelerated flow of ideas, and an unusually elevated mood that may range between excessive euphoria and rapid irritability. It is often accompanied by impulsive behavior without consideration of consequences. He adds that obsession is linked to mood disorders, especially bipolar disorder, where there appears an inflated sense of self-esteem and feelings of grandeur.

For Kamal Morsi, obsession is not only an excessive activity but a pathological condition that requires diagnosis and treatment.

In the *International Classification of Diseases* (ICD-10/ICD-11), obsession is defined as: a continuous state of abnormally elevated or irritable mood with increased activity and energy, lasting at least one week, and leading to a noticeable deterioration in social or professional performance.

Obsession is considered a pathological mood state characterized by a high and abnormal elevation of mood and energy accompanied by excessive impulsivity, rapid thoughts, lack of sleep, and behaviors that may be unrealistic, and it often appears as one of the main symptoms in bipolar disorder.

7- The difference between ambition and obsession:

The dividing line between ambition and obsession is:

Ambition: a positive motivation related to awareness and realism.

Obsession: loss of control and impulsiveness that can lead to negative results.

Table No 1: Table representing the difference between ambition and obsession

obsession	ambition	dimension
Excessive and unbalanced impulse toward success or achievement	Conscious and balanced desire to achieve	definition
Fear of failure and need to prove self. Internal anxiety	Self-confidence. development	Self-esteem. Desire for psychological source
Tension. Anxiety. Constant dissatisfaction	Enthusiasm. Satisfaction. Positive motivation	emotion

Psychological and physical fatigue. Strained relations. Loss of balance. Threat to stability Personal and professional growth. Balance between work and life. Sustainability of success

It can be said that the successful entrepreneur is the one who knows the limits of healthy ambition, meaning he strives, structures, plans, and balances between his work and his personal life. Naturally, if this limit increases and enters into obsession, it becomes a psychological disorder and a pathological impulsiveness that threatens his personal life and balance.

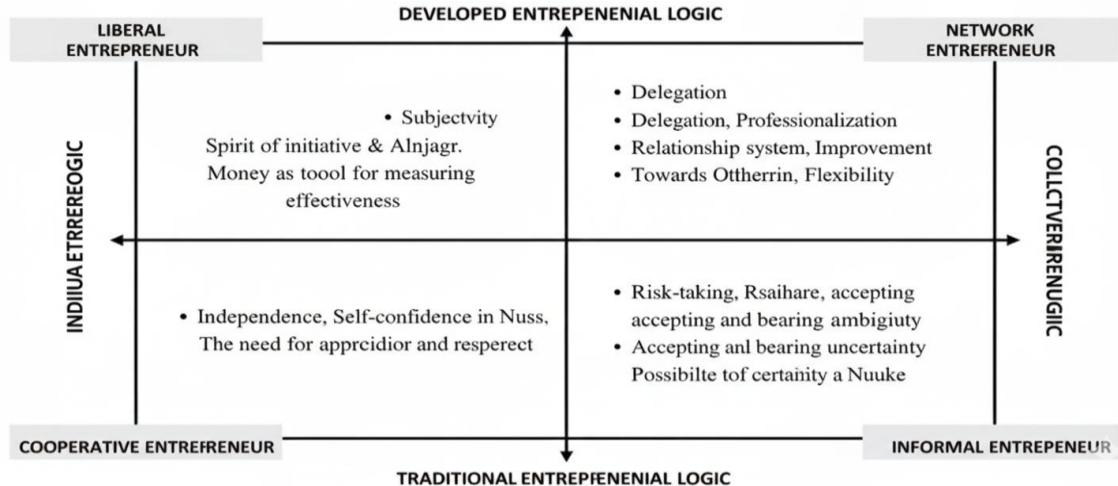


Figure No 3: The dividing boundary between ambition and obsession

8- Traits of the successful entrepreneur:

It is not possible to propose a recipe that allows saying whether someone has the traits of a successful entrepreneur or not, but there is a minimum of complementary traits to each other that should be available in the person who has the idea. (Obschoka, 2022)

Table No2: The main traits of the entrepreneur in the world



9- When does ambition turn into obsession:

- Excessive work without achieving balance.
- Neglect of mental health.
- Neglect of physical health.
- Anxiety.
- Professional burnout. Burnout
- Family conflicts. (Bouichicha, N., 2020)
- Ignoring social relations.
- Taking reckless decisions and thus projects because of poorly considered decisions.
- Inability to manage time.
- Loss of social support.

10- Field aspect:

- **Sample of the study:** 15 entrepreneurs in different fields / trade, startups, psychological projects /
- **Professional experience:** 15 entrepreneurs, the average years of experience ranged from 3 to 10 years.
- **Sample type:** Purposive sample.
- **Age group:** from 30 to 50 years.
- **Data collection tools:**
 - **a)-** Personality traits questionnaire / prepared by the researcher / including the following axes:
 - Ambition
 - Perfectionism
 - Perseverance
 - Work-related anxiety
 - Control and love of control
 - **b)-** Workaholism scale WORKAHOLISM
- **c)-** Semi-structured interview that included questions like:
 - What does success mean to you?
 - Can you stop working without feeling guilty?
 - How do your projects affect your family life?
 - Do you feel anxious when failing or delaying?
- **d)-** Statistical methods:
 - Arithmetic mean
 - Standard deviation
 - Pearson correlation coefficient to analyze the data

III. Results:

Table No 3: Raw data for the sample

Work obsession	Ambition	No.
14	18	1
16	20	2
18	22	3
21	25	4
15	19	5
20	23	6
17	21	7
22	24	8
23	26	9
13	17	10

16	20	11
19	22	12
21	24	13
24	27	14
15	19	15

Table No 4: Arithmetic mean and standard deviation:

Standard deviation	Arithmetic mean	Variable
3.05	22.47	Ambition
3.39	18.27	Work obsession

Interpretation:

The average of ambition 22.47 indicates a high level of ambition.

The average of obsession 18.27 shows the existence of indicators of professional obsession medium to high.

The standard deviations are close, meaning there is relative homogeneity in the sample.

- Calculation of Pearson correlation coefficient:

(x-x)(y-y)	y-y	x-x	Y	X
19.09	-4.27	-4.47	14	18
5.61	-2.27	-2.47	16	20
0.13	-0.27	-0.47	18	22
6.91	2.73	2.53	21	25

Total: 160.4

Pearson coefficient calculation: 0.64

Result	Indicator
High	Level of ambition
Medium-high	Level of obsession
Strong positive	Relationship between them
Significant	Statistical significance

IV.Discussion of results:

The results of the study showed that the average ambition among entrepreneurs reached 22.47 with a standard deviation of 3.05, and this indicates a high level of ambition among the sample individuals. The average work obsession also reached 18.27 with a standard deviation of 3.39, which points to the presence of manifestations of professional obsession among a considerable proportion of entrepreneurs. The results of the Pearson correlation coefficient revealed a strong positive correlational relationship between ambition and obsession estimated at 0.64 at a significance level of 1%, and this confirms that increasing ambition among entrepreneurs may be accompanied by an increase in the level of obsession, especially when psychological balance is absent.

These results support the hypothesis stating that excess ambition leads to entering obsession, where it becomes associated with anxiety, fear of failure, and difficulty in separating from work. These results are consistent with what contemporary psychological literature has reached, which indicates that positive traits such as ambition and perseverance may turn into psychological stress factors when coupled with fear of failure and compulsive striving to prove the self (Bin Issa, 2019). The entrepreneurial mindset, despite its association with the spirit of initiative, may lead to increasing psychological

pressures in the absence of psychological and social support mechanisms, which is consistent with the results of this study that highlighted that work obsession is linked to neglecting social relationships and a decline in the quality of life in general.

V.General conclusion:

Through the theoretical and applied study, ambition and the desire for innovation and creativity are considered the most important element in the entrepreneurial personality. However, this ambition, if not controlled and exceeds its limit, turns directly into a pathological obsession/turns from health to illness/, where balance is considered the basis for distinguishing between them: from healthy and constructive ambition that seeks to achieve self-actualization, to destructive pathological obsession that leads to psychological exhaustion.

- Recommendations:

In light of the results of the study on the traits of the entrepreneur's personality: Where does ambition end and obsession begin?

First: Recommendations at the psychological level:

- Developing awareness of psychological self among entrepreneurs.
- Encouraging entrepreneurs to monitor psychological indicators of obsession such as excessive anxiety.
- Integrating stress management techniques such as relaxation and emotional discharge.

Second: Recommendations at the professional level:

- Encouraging entrepreneurs to set clear time limits for work to avoid excessive immersion.
- Including mandatory rest periods within professional planning.
- Motivating entrepreneurs to delegate tasks.

Ethical Considerations

This study was conducted in accordance with recognized ethical standards in psychological and social science research. The research is based on theoretical analysis and secondary sources and does not involve human participants, personal data, or experimental interventions. Therefore, no ethical approval was required. The author adhered to principles of academic integrity, objectivity, and responsible scholarship throughout the research process.

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Conflict of Interest

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article.

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