

## **PERSONALITY TRAITS AND SHAME TO ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

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### **Abstract**

The failure of the parent company has psychological, social and economic repercussions for the children of these entrepreneurs. These results are part of the PhD thesis entitled "The Impact of Parent's Failure on Shame and Entrepreneurial Intent for Children". Research has identified that the personality traits of conscientiousness and neuroticism are the major influencers of the shame of parental failure among personality traits. The dimensions of openness, extraversion and agreeableness were not significant. The research is quantitative and cross-sectional. The sample is non-probabilistic and convenience, consisting of literate people from five continents and 33 countries, with a greater predominance of responses from Brazil and Portugal. Data collection on-line was carried out by average social workers, allied to 19 institutions of higher education or 1.2% of the 1606 Universities contacted. Children of failed parents constituted N of 258. The metric used is called the five dimensions of personality - short version. A multiple linear regression was performed to assess the intensity of the five dimensions of personality or SHM - Internal shame. The regression equation found was significant  $F(5,251) = 8.511, p < 0.05$ , with an  $R^2$  of 0.145. The shame is equal to  $3,643 - 0,124$  (extraversion) +  $0.060$  (agreeableness) -  $0.233$  (conscientiousness) +  $0.294$  (neuroticism) -  $0.024$  (openness), where shame and the five dimensions of personality (Big Five) are measured on a scale 1 to 5. For each unit of internal shame, the intensity of the personality trait decreases by 0.124 for extraversion, 0.233 for conscientiousness and 0.024 for openness, and increases the intensity for each unit of internal shame by 0.060 units for amability and 0.294 units for neuroticism. Conscientiousness and neuroticism were significant predictors of shame. The results are important to help characterize the children of entrepreneurs who have failed and fill a gap in the literature on entrepreneurship.

**Keywords:** Shame, Entrepreneurship, Failure, Personality, Big-Five

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

The failure of organizations representing 25% of output forms of business activity (McGrath, 2006) and can affect human behavior (Ucbasaran, Shepherd, Lockett, & Lyon, 2013). In the event of failure of the company, mental and social processes related to the shame of failure may be initiated. One understands failure as the inability of the company to pay off the financial commitments. This study deals with the shame of failure, occurring vicariously and traits of personality. The object of study are the children of entrepreneurs that permeated before the failure proceedings of companies created by their parents.

Shame is an instrument of defense or support for life and can shape the ways of proceeding and thinking (Gilbert, Price, & Allan, 1995; Leeming, 1998; Lewis, 1992; Lombardi, 2007; Nathanson, 1992).

The research aims to answer the following question: What are the personality types are more susceptible to shame the bankruptcy of the parent company? The study proposes to identify which personality dimensions are most statistically significant in mediating the shame of parental bankruptcy. Failure and bankruptcy in this paper will be understood as synonyms.

We used two metrics: Big Five Personality Dimensions (Rammstedt & John, 2007) and The TOSCA 3 Test of Self-Conscious Affect (SHM) created by Tangney, Dearing, Wagner and Granzow (2000). The approach is quantitative and the samples are non-probabilistic and convenience (Maroco, 2007).

## 1.1 Failure

Ending business activities is a common in entrepreneurship. It is illustrated by the Portuguese and Brazilian cases. In Portugal, according to the National Institute of Statistics (2013), 2,306 organizations were constituted and 1,348 or 58.5% were closed. In the Brazilian case, according to the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics - IBGE (2015) from 2009 to 2013, less than half (47.5%) of companies survived after four years of activity. A considerable part of the companies that close, failure is the main reason (Baron, 2004)

The closure of organizational activities can be considered adequate and rational (Headd, 2003). Examples include protecting the assets, extinguishing non-competitive products and services or selling them to other companies (Headd, 2003). Discontinue the activities of the company or other terms end or close the organization, contrary to the will of the entrepreneur. Among the actions related to the - non-voluntary - closure of the company, bankruptcy is inserted, understood here as "[...] the cessation of involvement in a venture because it has not met a minimum threshold for economic viability as stipulated by the entrepreneur." (Ucbasaran et al., 2013, 175)

## 1.2 Shame: the silent emotion

The word shame has its origins in the French Teutonic root *skam* and pre-Teutonic *skem*, meaning covering or covering oneself (Harper, 2011). Shame (SHM) is an emotion rarely debated in Western society. According to Scheff (1995) it is considered a taboo. For Leeming (1998) regardless of age, one can confess the most intimate secrets, humiliations, rages and embarrassments, but it is possible that the shame is kept silent. On the other hand, SHM helps to keep commitments and social order (Leeming & Boyle, 2004), motivates behaviors of union and cooperation (Hooge, 2011), conserves personal relationships and avoids situations that damage personal image or future goals (Eynde & Turner, 2006).

This secondary emotion arises from the disparity between honor and self-esteem, from right and wrong and socially unacceptable (Smith & McElwee, 2011). One feels SHM when personal values are put to the test (Bedford & Hwang, 2003), can be experienced or induced by those around us (Leeming & Boyle, 2004). Shame (SHM) is an overwhelming emotion, unpleasant and painful emotion and goes to the core of the self (Tangney et al., 2007). It is associated with feelings of worthlessness, inferiority and damaged self-image (Ausubel & Schiff, 1955), humiliation (Kaufman, 1989), anger, hostility, revenge (Combs, Campbell, Jackson, & Smith, 2010). SHM inhibits social contact (Hooge, 2011) and may imply self-condemnation (Eisenberg, 2000). SHM can be real or imaginative (Tracy & Robins, 2009). People who experience them often are prone to mental disorders such as anxiety, depression (Hooge et al., 2008; Rüsck et al., 2007) and may be related to feelings and fantasies fantasias (Matos & Pinto-Gouveia, 2010). Shame is the master emotion of human behavior (2005; Thomas Scheff, 1995) and can shape the ways of proceeding and thinking (Tangney et al., 2007).

## 1.3 Personality

People can behave in different ways on the same stimulus. One of the elements that compose this interpretive filter is the personality, understood by Martins (2004) as a set of characteristics that guide the way of thinking, acting and feeling, generally lasting but not unchanging. For Cloninger (2003, p. 3) personality can be perceived as: "*The internal causes underlying individual behavior and experience of the person.*"

The use of personality in the research on entrepreneurship received caveats. Gartner (1985, 1989) may have been the most outspoken critic, concluding that there were so many differences between entrepreneurs and non-entrepreneurs that behavior rather than personality could better aid entrepreneurship. Other authors have choir Gartner (1985, 1989) as Low and Macmillan (1998), Shave and Scott (1991), Robinson,

Stimpson, Huefner and Hunt (1991) and Aldrich and Wiedenmayer (1993).

Even in the face of criticism, other groups of scientists - to a greater or lesser extent - have imputed that personality influences the propensities to act (Brandstätter, 2011, Izard 1993, Krueger, Markon, & Bouchard, 2003, Leutner, Ahmetoglu, Akhtar, Chamorro-Premuzic, 2014; Rauch & Frese, 2007).

It was chosen in this research to identify personality types (PER) in the five dimensions of the personality or Big Five by the simplicity and small number of issues (Brandstätter, 2011; Goldberg, 1993; Rammstedt & John, 2007; Zhao & Seibert 2006) Which is briefly described: Openness - Personality receptive to events that permeate the new. It carries curiosity and imagination. It is the opposite of a mind that reacts negatively to the unexpected or uncertain. Conscientiousness - Personality directed to goals and usually translated with self-discipline. The following rules and procedures. Plans are planned, arranged, and postponed for future benefits. Extraversion - Behavior facing the social. Shows joy and search activity that take focus group. They are considered enthusiastic and have the image of people with enough energy. Agreeableness - A set of characteristics that favor simplicity of living, trust, concern for others. It has community action and aims for mutual benefits. Tend to believe in people more easily. Neuroticism - Denotes poor control of emotions, especially negative ones, and the individual may feel more easily, for example, with symptoms of anxiety, nervousness, and sadness.

On the studies it is possible that the scale emotional instability - neuroticism - is the most significant personality trait, as it relates to people with greater sensitivity to react to emotions, especially negative. SHM is considered an example of a reaction to emotional instability. Symptoms of anxiety, nervousness and sadness are the consequences. Neuroticism is the independent variable and the dependent SHM. In this way, neuroticism will be tested as the PER trait with greater significance for SHM. Thus, the following hypothesis is proposed:

*H1 Neuroticism is the greatest influencer of shame among the children of failed parents.*

It is likely that children of failed parents will be different from the group of children of parents who have not gone bankrupt. Faced with the researched literature, the dimension neuroticism is one that is associated with emotional disorders. Thus, the hypothesis is proposed:

*H2 Children of failed parents present greater intensity in the neuroticism dimension than children of non-failing parents.*

## **2. METHODS**

There is no known international database that provides the number of failed companies, location and identification of the children of the failed entrepreneurs. Thus, the snowball technique was used, in which social media were asked to respond to the questionnaire and indicate known acquaintances whose mother, father or guardian had failed. The other course was characterized by the online submission of the questionnaire to 1606 Higher Education Institutions (HEI) from 33 countries on five continents. Eleven HEI proposed to submit the questionnaires to the academic community. University students are the main group in the sample. These have less difficulty in contacting them, although, people with other schooling and located beyond the HEI gates have contributed. The unit of analysis is individual-level, the child of the failed entrepreneur (Low & MacMillan, 1998; Veciana, 2007)

### **2.1 Data collection**

Built up one of the HEI database. We obtained 257 valid answers and formed the group not entrepreneurs children of failed parents. The other group was formed by children of non-bankrupt parents obtaining 1115 answers. For data collection, a questionnaire was used with closed, yes, no and multiple choice questions.

The 5-point Likert scale was used, ranging from 1 (completely disagree) to 5 (completely agree). The reasons for the selection of the metrics obeyed the criteria of theoretical proximity of the central problem of research, simplicity, number of items and public availability without burden to the researcher.

### **2.2 Metrics**

Two metrics were used: one for shame and one for personality. Below it is described.

#### **2.2.1 Shame**

The TOSCA 3 Test of Self-Conscious Affect (Tangney et al., 2000) was tested by several authors and validated internationally as a measure of shame, guilt and other emotions (Tangney & Dearing, 2003). In the

short version of Tosca 3 the positive scenarios were extracted and the pride scale was eliminated (Tangney & Dearing, 2003). The initial questionnaire - Tosca 3 - consists of 16 positive and negative scenarios that people are likely to encounter on a day-to-day basis followed by common reactions. Asked to imagine yourself in that situation and indicate the most likely reaction, which in turn is related to by: Externalization, Shame, Detached, Guilt and Pride on a Likert scale ranging from 1 (not likely) to 5 (very likely) . The Alpha Cronbach ranged from 0.86, 0.77, 0.76 for the metric of shame.

### **2.2.2 Big Five**

Created by Rammstedt and Oliver (2007) the Big Five Inventory short version of the Big Five Inventory (BFI-10) is indicated for participants who have severely limited time. Psychometric characteristics are offered in two items for each personality trait. Big Five had adequate reliability, reliability, retest and validity indexes and was used as one of the metrics.

## **2.3 Sample and data collection**

The main group was students from higher education institutions. The students were considered relevant to the study, since they are in a phase of professional choices (Dias & Soares, 2012; Peñaloza, Diógenes, & Sousa, 2008). They were considered students (Araujo, Boaventura, Telles, & Siqueira, 2010), middle (Bardagi, Lassance, & Paradiso, 2003) and final University course (Teixeira & Gomes, 2005).

Recognizing the importance of randomness in statistical samples, when it is not possible to apply it, investigative tools provide an alternative to those that are interested in populations that are not usually available: non-probabilistic samples (Freitas, Oliveira, Saccol, & Moscarola, 2000). to represent the population, but cannot guarantee its reliability (Stevenson, 1981; Tavares, 2011). However, it is indicated in cases where the population is difficult to access (Field, 2009): the children of failed parents here can be fitted.

The data collection occurred between the period from March to April 2016 and was subdivided into four cycles. The four weeks 1498 nominal e-mails were sent to Rectors, Presidents, Directors or Chancellors, according to the denomination of each country, in English, Spanish, Portuguese of Brazil and Portuguese of Portugal. Inserted in body text as image. The response of 11 higher education institutions was obtained.

## **3. RESULTS**

### **3.1 Sample characterization**

The majority of the sample is female (59.4%). The male respondents are 40.1%. They indicated as 'other' gender that correspond to 0.5% of a total of 1372 questionnaires answered. Of individuals who participated in the research, 66.6% are single and 28.5% are married. Only 4.2% are divorced (3.9%) or widowed (0.3%). The remaining 0.6% of the sample did not respond to this question

Regarding the educational level, 69.9% indicated Higher Education and 27.8% referred to graduate. 2.3% of participants did not answer the question. The majority of the sample consists of individuals between 16 and 20 years of age (19.5%), 21 and 25 (28.9%) and 26 and 30 years (16.9%). Between 16 and 30 years of age constitute 65.3%. 8.6% of the sample is between 31 and 35 years of age, 7% between 36 and 40 years of age, 7.2% between 41 and 45, 5.1% between 46 and 50 years, 3.7% between 51 and 55 Years, 1.7% are between 56 and 60 and only 1.4% are over 60 years of age.

### **3.2 Personality and shame**

The following shows the statistically significant results and not significant for the five dimensions of personality: openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, neuroticism and agreeableness.

A multiple linear regression was performed to evaluate the intensity of the five dimensions of personality over shame (SHM). The regression equation found was significant  $F(5,251) = 8.511, p < 0.05$ , with an  $R^2$  of 0.145. The SHM is equal to  $3.643 - 0.124$  (extraversion) +  $0.060$  (agreeableness) -  $0.233$  (conscientiousness) +  $0.294$  (neuroticism) -  $0.024$  (openness) where SHM and five dimensions of personality (Big Five) are measured on a scale of 1-5 for each internal shame unit, the intensity of the personality trait extraversion decreases to 0.124, conscientiousness 0.233 and 0.024 for openness and increases the intensity for each internal shame unit 0,060 units to 0,294 units for agreeableness and neuroticism respectively, but only conscientiousness and neuroticism were significant predictors of shame.

For  $p < 0.05$  with respect to dimensions 'conscientiousness' and 'neuroticism', which means that both dimensions contribute to SHM. More specifically, and according to the non-standardized coefficients, the effect of 'conscientiousness' is negative ( $\beta = -0.233$ ) and the effect of 'neuroticism' is positive ( $\beta = 0.294$ ). These results corroborate the hypothesis H1.

Table 1 - R e  $R^2$  SHM and Personality

**Model Summary<sup>b</sup>**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	0.381 <sup>a</sup>	0.145	0.128	0.83650	2.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Mean\_Open, Mean\_Extrav, Mean\_Neur, Mean\_Consc, Mean\_Agreab

b. Dependent Variable: Mean\_SHM

**ANOVA<sup>a</sup>**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	29.779	5	5.956	8.511	0.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	175.635	251	0.700		
	Total	205.413	256			

a. Dependent Variable: Mean\_SHM

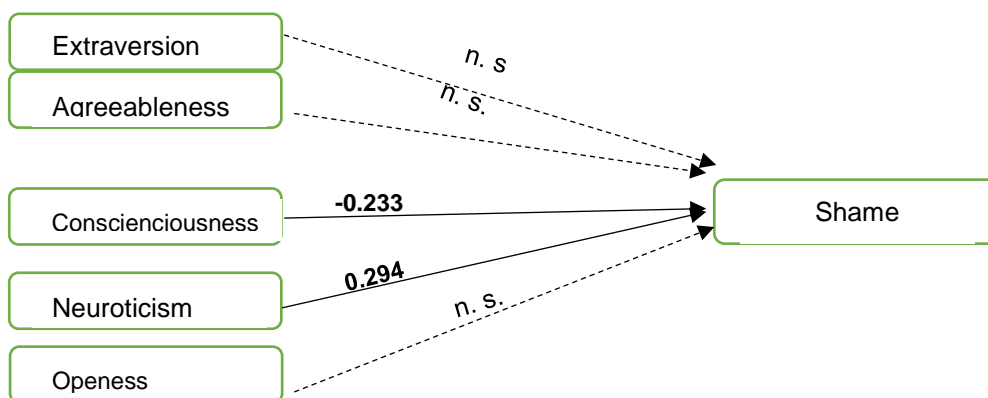
b. Predictors: (Constant), Mean\_Open, Mean\_Extrav, Mean\_Neur, Mean\_Consc, Mean\_Agreab

Table 3 - Unstandardized Coefficients and Standardized Coefficients

**Coefficients<sup>a</sup>**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	3,643	,468		7,789	,000
	Mean_Extrav	-,124	,064	-,116	-1,929	,055
	Mean_Agreab	,060	,082	,046	,725	,469
	Mean_Conscienci	-,233	,071	-,202	-3,288	,001
	Mean_Neuroticis	,294	,062	,284	4,732	,000
	Mean_Openess	-,024	,065	-,021	-,361	,719

Figura 1 Relações significativas e não significativas das dimensões da personalidade relacionadas a SHM



Note: n. s = Not statistically significant

#### 4. DISCUSSION

Personality can be posited as a proxy for the singularities of the human being, and was used as an interpretive lens. The model of the five dimensions of personality facilitates the elucidation of differences related to shame, absorbed by the psyche and translated into the intention to entrepreneur. The personality dimension of neuroticism was significant. People with little control of emotions - especially negative - may be more sensitive to symptoms of psychological disorders such as anxiety and feelings of sadness. SHM (Beta 0.294) explains 8.1% of the variation. The results corroborate the following hypotheses: *H1 - Neuroticism is the major influencer of internal shame among the children of failing parents* and *H2 - Children of failed parents present greater intensity in the dimension neuroticism than the children of non-failing parents.*

#### 5. CONCLUSION

Failure is a natural process. Success and failure are not two sides of the coin: the coin itself. Entrepreneurship is a risky activity. If the company goes bankrupt, who generates it fails in the eyes of society. The failure turns into the creator and the body defends itself. The moral emotion of shame accomplishes this role, most of the time, inhibiting actions in the face of the element of provocation. Shame can be felt by children and causes changes in human behavior.

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