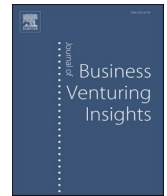




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Editorial

## Entrepreneurship as an auspicious context for mental health research

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### ABSTRACT

The intersection of entrepreneurship and mental health has spurred many novel lines of scholarly inquiry. In this editorial, we summarize 23 such studies that have been published in *Journal of Business Venturing Insights* over the last seven years. In doing so, we emphasize both the differences and similarities among studies in this emerging body of research. Our work illustrates a variety of silos emerging in this growing research domain, as well as potential opportunities for greater theoretical extensions and cumulative knowledge building. We offer several proposals that establish entrepreneurship as a bridging context for mental health inquiries, a context with the potential to unify previously siloed discoveries and shift the knowledge frontier upwards. We conclude with a note for practitioners on the potential virtuous cycle that awaits.

### 1. Introduction

Over the past few years, we have seen a surge in research on entrepreneurship and psychological well-being. This development is not surprising. It reflects increasing societal interest in these issues, where there are much more frequent discussions in the popular press about identifying and supporting entrepreneurs who are facing mental health issues, as well as high profile cases where entrepreneurs' mental health struggles became known in the public domain. Regrettably, some of the high-profile cases reflected extremely negative mental health circumstances, even suicides<sup>1</sup>. However, during the COVID-19 pandemic, there seemed to be broader consensus about being more open about mental health challenges and destigmatizing struggles among entrepreneurs. Hence, the increasing scholarly interest in entrepreneurial mental health is very timely, not only because an entrepreneur's negative mental health is problematic in and of itself, but also because we can expect the entrepreneurs' mental health to impact their ventures' performance and thus well-being for other stakeholders as well (Bort et al., 2020).

Mental health is defined broadly by the World Health Organization as "a state of mental well-being that enables people to cope with the stresses of life, realize their abilities, learn well and work well, and contribute to their community" (World Health Organization, 2022, p. 1). Mental health encompasses psychological, emotional, and social well-being and illness. Like physical health, mental health can be usefully viewed along a positive-negative continuum (Thorley, 2017), ranging from positive mental health (well-being), to mental distress, and eventually to mental illness. Within the entrepreneurship literature, and as illustrated by the collection of articles covered by this editorial, different concepts of mental health are often used interchangeably and discussed alongside each other. However, as entrepreneurship scholars grappled with understanding these issues, they soon discovered that these concepts are discussed in largely disconnected streams within the medical and psychology literatures. For example, organizational behavior scholars examine positive well-being in the workplace and its motivational effects (Judge et al., 2017). Ill-being, such as distress and health impairments, are studied by occupational health scholars (Ganster and Rosen, 2013), whereas mental disorders are the focus of clinical psychology and psychiatry (American Psychiatric Association, 2013).

<sup>1</sup> Examples of such cases include Kate Spade, Tony Hsieh, and John McAfee.

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Conducting research in independent silos leads to inconsistency and inefficiency, hampers conceptual development, and disturbs the accretion of knowledge. The argument can be made that entrepreneurship is particularly well suited to provide bridges between disparate literatures and move the understanding of human well-being forward—not only for entrepreneurs, but more generally as well. For example, entrepreneurship entails both richer well-being resources and more intense stressors than employment (Baron, 2010; Hahn et al., 2012; Rauch et al., 2018). This suggests that entrepreneurs may simultaneously experience great well-being and extensive distress, which may slip into mental illness. This makes entrepreneurship an ideal context for the study of mental health issues.

The fact that well-being may co-occur with distress and illness has not been sufficiently considered in the literature, which may lead to incomplete or even misleading findings. The potential for both high well-being and ill-being in entrepreneurship is reinforced by the autonomy and meaningfulness that entrepreneurs experience in their work (Shir et al., 2019; Stephan et al., 2020). This gives rise to many positive experiences, but also implies heightened feelings of disappointment, depression, and anxiety when setbacks occur. Such insights can lead to valuable new theorization. In this editorial, we briefly review 23 studies that have been published in *JBV* over the last seven years to see where we stand in this respect, and what further research opportunities lie ahead of us. The editorial concludes with a specific note for practitioners, who may not only benefit from research insights, but also help shape future inquiries through collaborations with the research community.

### 1.1. Papers included in this collection

Our review of the 23 papers certainly shows that entrepreneurship scholars are interested in a variety of dimensions of mental health, i.e., they have written about well-being as well as distress and or mental illness. While few empirical studies simultaneously study the positive and negative implications of entrepreneurship on individual mental health and well-being, collectively these studies paint the picture that entrepreneurship is associated with both – something echoed in a recent meta-analysis (Stephan et al., 2022) and editorials (e.g., Williamson et al., 2021). Furthermore, the papers included in this collection provide initial insights into the complex and nuanced relationship that entrepreneurship can have with mental health and well-being. Indeed, this collection includes various approaches to examining mental health and well-being, including a variety of theoretical perspectives (e.g., person-environment fit, occupational choice, and effort-reward imbalance), diverse sources of data (e.g., cross-sectional and longitudinal data from numerous countries, including the United States, United Kingdom, China, and Japan), differing analytical techniques (e.g., latent profile analysis, general linear modeling, and multi-wave structural equation modeling), and an assortment of variables associated with mental health and well-being (e.g., psychological distress, life satisfaction, and subjective well-being).

Table 1 lists key aspects of the 23 papers included in the collection. The considerable majority of these papers focus explicitly on well-being or recognized well-being variables, either as the dependent or a key independent variable. The handful that do not largely focus on the connection between clinical psychology constructs and entrepreneurship. Below, we provide a brief summary of the papers included in this collection to identify interesting differences and similarities across this rich set of 23 studies.

To emphasize the importance of distinguishing the role of mental health in the context of entrepreneurship from other occupations, the paper by Gish et al. (2022) presents evidence that entrepreneurs have uniquely different well-being profiles vis-à-vis wage employees. Furthermore, the study by Ardianti et al. (2022) notes that there are distinct variations in well-being patterns between hybrid and full-time entrepreneurs as well. The positive benefits that well-being can have in regard to entrepreneurial outcomes is highlighted in the paper by Patel and Wolfe (2019), which finds that individual well-being is positively related to financial well-being. Indeed, the relationship between entrepreneurship and well-being can be explained in part by an individual's wellness beliefs (Patel and Wolfe, 2020). However, although there exists the potential for entrepreneurship to prove beneficial in terms of individual mental health and well-being, these benefits are not universally recognized under all conditions.

The rise of the global COVID-19 pandemic created a unique setting that led to several investigations into the potentially detrimental effects that entrepreneurship could have on individual mental health and well-being. For example, Wolfe and Patel (2021) find evidence that financial concerns as a result of the pandemic led to greater levels of mental distress, but that this effect was not necessarily more salient for entrepreneurs than for individuals in other occupations. Additionally, Stephens et al. (2021) demonstrate how crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic can have detrimental effects on entrepreneurs' ability to cope with grief, and Patel and Rietveld (2020) provide evidence that the COVID-19 pandemic placed entrepreneurs in precarious financial positions, and that this heightened financial insecurity was a key mediator in the relationship between self-employment and psychological distress. Even outside of times of crisis, it is possible that entrepreneurship can have an undesirable relationship with mental health. For example, Wolfe and Patel (2019) provide evidence indicating that certain aspects commonly associated with entrepreneurship (such as autonomy) are positively related to work stress. Similarly, Reid et al. (2018) reveals that self-employment is positively associated with short-term psychological distress and depression.

In addition to the work that has focused on the link between entrepreneurship and well-being as an aspect of mental health, there has also been considerable interest in the association between entrepreneurship and mental health conditions. In one of the initial works to dive into how ADHD can relate to entrepreneurship, Wiklund et al. (2016) provide important motivation for the continuation of research in this area. Building upon this work, Shirokova et al. (2022) present evidence that ADHD can benefit entrepreneurial performance via a positive effect on a firm's entrepreneurial orientation. Conversely, Tucker et al. (2021) find that ADHD is not universally beneficial for entrepreneurial self-efficacy or opportunity recognition, and the study by Vörös and Lukovszki (2021) indicates that ADHD could impair subjective income and health perceptions for entrepreneurs. These findings highlight the complexity that is often associated with understanding how a large set of specific mental conditions relate to entrepreneurial outcomes, with many different aspects in play in the form of subtle mediation and moderation relationships.

Building upon the work concerning the relationship between ADHD and entrepreneurship, additional studies have examined how

**Table 1**  
JBVi Mental Health Collection Articles.

Article	Premise and findings	Theoretical Lens	Methods	Dependent Variables	Independent Variables	Sample
Gish et al. (2022)	Entrepreneurs have different hedonic and eudaimonic well-being profiles from wage employees, and these complex differences can predict important life outcomes	Atheoretical description and observation	Latent profile/class analysis with distal outcomes	Life satisfaction and general health	Latent classifications of eudaimonic well-being, hedonic well-being, and personality	(1) Portuguese ENTs and wage employees, and (2) MIDUS 3 ENTs and wage employees (U.S.)
Ardianti et al. (2022)	Well-being patterns of hybrid entrepreneurs differ from both full-time entrepreneurs and full-time wage employees	Procedural utility of a partial shift to self-employment	Entropy balanced matching to compare groups	Strain, job satisfaction, and life satisfaction	Hybrid ENT, full-time ENT, and full-time wage employment categories	United Kingdom Household Longitudinal Survey
Patel and Wolfe (2020)	Relationship between self-employment and well-being can be described by an individual's wellness beliefs	Positive affective well-being and individual wellness beliefs	Ordinary least squares regression; moderated mediation	Subjective well-being	Self-employment and wellness beliefs; second stage moderation by ethnicity and gender	2015 National Health Attitude Survey
Patel and Wolfe (2019)	Higher well-being should be associated with greater financial well-being for entrepreneurs, and more financial skill intensifies this effect	Assimilates theories on both subjective and financial well-being	Ordinary least squares regression	Financial well-being	Subjective well-being and financial skills	Consumer Financial Protection Bureau's National Financial Well-Being Survey
Wolfe and Patel (2021)	Financial concerns associated with COVID-19 lead to mental distress, and this effect is more salient for entrepreneurs than wage employees (ultimately not supported)	Atheoretical description and observation	Ordinary least squares regression	Subjective happiness	Self-employment and anticipated income loss	Six-country COVID-19 survey (China, South Korea, Japan, Italy, the U.K.), and the four largest states in the U.S. (California, Florida, New York, and Texas)
Vörös and Lukovszki (2021)	ADHD impairs subjective income and health perceptions for entrepreneurs, more so than for wage employees	Demands-abilities fit and person-work environment fit	Generalized linear modeling	Health, income, happiness, anxiety, and life satisfaction	Subclinical ADHD and self-employment	Hungarian sample of entrepreneurs and organizational employees
Leung et al. (2021)	A positive link exists between narcissism and entrepreneurship, and leadership and authority are the most consistent aspects of narcissism associated with entrepreneurship	Person-environment fit theory	Ordinary least squares regression	Entrepreneurial intention, orientation, choice, success, and well-being	Narcissism	Six independent entrepreneurship datasets (N = 4798) collected in France, Japan, and the Netherlands
Wolfe and Patel (2019)	Autonomy holds a positive relationship with work stress, and meaningfulness attenuates this relationship	Effort-reward imbalance model	Ordinary least squares regression	Job stress	Autonomy and meaningful work	Entrepreneurs from the American Working Conditions Survey
Stephens et al. (2021)	Crises such as COVID-19 have an undesirable effect on the various stages of grief, and individual ability to cope with grief	Stage-based model of grief	One-way-repeated-measures ANOVAs	Business grief (denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance)	Time spent in crisis (five timepoints over six months)	Small business owners based in Ireland
van Hugten et al. (2021)	Conceptual replication of Carree and Verheul's (2012) article on what makes entrepreneurs happy, developing a scale for psychological flexibility and measuring its contribution to ENT happiness and positive psychology	Replication	Ordinary least squares regression	Various satisfaction variables (income, work, work-life balance, and life satisfaction)	Psychological flexibility with a large host of control variables	Evidence-based consulting endeavor in Flanders, Belgium
Patel and Rietveld (2020)	COVID-19 places entrepreneurs in a precarious financial position, and their levels of financial insecurity and chances of losing their job mediate the main effect between self-employment and psychological distress	Occupational choice theory	Ordinary least squares regression	Psychological distress	Self-employment, financial insecurity, and chance of job loss	Understanding America Study and the COVID-19 Household Impact Survey
Shirokova et al. (2022)	Partial replication of Yu et al. (2021) measuring an entrepreneur's ADHD and its effects on a firm's entrepreneurial orientation and downstream performance	Atheoretical description and observation	Quasi-replication in alternate context	SME performance	ADHD and entrepreneurial orientation	Russian SMEs

(continued on next page)

Table 1 (continued)

Article	Premise and findings	Theoretical Lens	Methods	Dependent Variables	Independent Variables	Sample
Tucker et al. (2021)	ADHD is not necessarily beneficial for entrepreneurial self-efficacy nor opportunity recognition, and scholars should move beyond person-entrepreneurship fit perspectives	Entrepreneurial self-efficacy and ENT cognition perspectives	Multi-wave SEM with maximum likelihood estimation	Opportunity recognition	ADHD and entrepreneurial self-efficacy	MBA Alumni from a university in the Southeast United States
Wiklund et al. (2016)	Early work on ADHD and entrepreneurship discovering that ADHD has a direct influence on how entrepreneurs operate	Melding of occupational choice, coping, and neurological theories	Qualitative induction	Productivity	Impulsivity, action, passion, and persistence	Swedish case study of fourteen entrepreneurs previously diagnosed with ADHD
Leung et al. (2020)	Manuscript highlighting the links between psychiatric symptoms and entrepreneurship, and introducing behavioral activation as a mediating variable	Reinforcement sensitivity theory	Ordinary least squares regression	Entrepreneurial intentions	ADHD, hypomania, narcissism, and behavioral activation system	Students in a large Dutch university
Walker et al. (2020)	Disinhibition simultaneously predicts entrepreneurial intentions and the dysfunctional outcome of psychopathy	Response modulation model	Randomized experiment	Psychopathy and entrepreneurial intentions	Disinhibition	(1) Full-time employees in U.S., U.K., and elsewhere, and (2) Australian university staff and students
Reid et al. (2018)	Self-employment has a positive association with short-term psychological distress and depression frequency	Atheoretical description and observation	Hierarchical linear modeling	Psychological distress	Self-employment	National Health Interview Survey (U.S.)
Manchiraju (2020)	Evaluating the psychometric properties of psychological well-being (Ryff, 2019) with conditional support for existing scale items	Atheoretical description and observation	Scale evaluation	Eudaimonic well-being	Not applicable	Self-employed individuals from MIDUS 3 (U.S.)
Tihic et al. (2021)	Evaluation of programs designed for entrepreneurs with disabilities, to find if those programs can positively impact entrepreneurial self-efficacy	Critical disability theory	Ordinary least squares regression	Entrepreneurial self-efficacy	Support, quality of service, and barriers to entrepreneurship	Disabled entrepreneurs recruited from various inclusive entrepreneurship service providers in the U.S.
Wolfe and Patel (2017)	Individuals with obsessive-compulsive personality disorder (OCPD) are more likely to be self-employed	Atheoretical description and observation	Logistic regression	Self-employment	OCPD	National Epidemiologic Survey on Alcohol and Related Conditions (U.S.)
Spivack and McKelvie (2021)	Scale development paper on entrepreneurship addiction, consisting of obsessive thoughts, withdrawal/engagement, self-worth, tolerance, neglect, and negative outcomes	Atheoretical description and observation	Scale development	Entrepreneurship addiction	Not applicable	(1) Entrepreneurship trainees from a private university, (2) military veterans trained in entrepreneurship, and (3) Qualtrics ENTs (U.S.)
Lerner et al. (2018)	Two study paper that explores whether behavioral inhibition and activation are related to entrepreneurial action and performance	Reinforcement sensitivity theory	Ordinary least squares regression	Entrepreneurial action and venture performance	Behavioral inhibition and activation sensitivity	(1) Mid-level business students, and (2) random solicitation of operating business ventures
Wiklund (2019)	Commentary responding to a paper claiming that all entrepreneurial action is rational insofar as it is purposive. This commentary argues that impulsivity <i>could</i> be construed as rational, but that this construal does not help explain entrepreneur cognitions and behaviors, and represents an unhelpful departure from commonly understood research on impulsivity from various research fields	Personality psychology perspective	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable

<sup>1</sup> Examples of such cases include Kate Spade, Tony Hsieh, and John McAfee.

other mental conditions relate to entrepreneurial endeavors. Specifically, the [Leung et al. \(2021\)](#) paper examines the positive link between narcissism and entrepreneurship, noting that leadership and authority are the aspects of narcissism most commonly associated with entrepreneurship. Furthermore, [Leung et al. \(2021\)](#) highlight the link between psychiatric symptoms and entrepreneurship, via the behavioral activation system. In line with these findings, the paper by [Walker et al. \(2020\)](#) indicates that disinhibition is a significant predictor of both entrepreneurial intentions as well as psychopathy. [Lerner et al. \(2018\)](#) explore the role that psychophysiological systems such as behavioral inhibition and activation can play regarding entrepreneurial action and performance. Relatedly, [Lerner et al. \(2018\)](#) note the relevance of reinforcement sensitivity theory, as well as how differential BIS/BAS sensitivity is known in psychology to underpin behavior and to underlie various mental health conditions. Finally, [Wolfe and Patel \(2017\)](#) provide evidence that individuals with obsessive-compulsive personality disorder (OCPD) are more likely to engage in self-employment than those without this mental condition.

Entrepreneurship has also proven a fertile ground for the further development of our understanding of key aspects of mental health and well-being that have been previously examined in other fields. For example, [Manchiraju \(2020\)](#) evaluates the psychometric properties of the widely employed Ryff Scales of Psychological Well-Being (viz. [Ryff, 2019](#)) within a sample of entrepreneurs, providing evidence for their appropriateness for use in future entrepreneurship research. The paper by [van Hugten et al. \(2021\)](#) further develops our understanding of what makes entrepreneurs happy, and in so doing provides a novel scale for measuring psychological flexibility, based on clinical work in positive psychology. Indeed, this new measure adds explanatory power in a replication of earlier work without this scale. Additionally, the work by [Spivack and McKelvie \(2021\)](#) develops a novel scale related to entrepreneurial addiction. Their operationalization builds upon the body of work on behavioral addictions and encompasses factors that are relevant to entrepreneurs' mental health, such as obsessive thoughts, neglect, and negative outcomes.

From a practical perspective, the paper by [Thic et al. \(2021\)](#) expands the use of critical disability theory to the field of entrepreneurship, and examines how specific social support and service providers can assist entrepreneurs with disabilities in their new ventures. Finally, the commentary by [Wiklund \(2019\)](#) helps to clarify discordant perspectives of impulsivity within entrepreneurship research, emphasizing that "impulsivity is not rational judgment," in line with the vast majority of research from other fields, as well as commonly held popular perspectives.

## 2. Discussion

The set of 23 studies in this collection offers a broad set of insights into a wide array of topics under the umbrella of mental health and well-being (and their opposites, distress and illness). As highlighted earlier, these studies reflect a significant variety of theoretical and methodological approaches, focal variables, and distinct aspects of mental health and illness, taking the latter as either consequences or antecedents. They also reflect roots developed in different silos of the literature, taking inspiration from disparate (sub) disciplines. Although the diversity among these studies is not surprising given the relatively novel body of work in this area, it does show the excitement and enthusiasm that an increasing number of entrepreneurship scholars are exhibiting towards the topic. Further, it provides opportunities to think more broadly about what we know about entrepreneurs' mental health already, and where the field should go as it collectively matures and grows. This is a needed endeavor to provide additional structure and guidance while also allowing for many different flowers to bloom.

Below, we offer a series of reflections that help to bring together the seemingly disparate bodies of work. Although we are hesitant to offer a research agenda on this body of work, as that has been done elsewhere (see [Wiklund et al., 2018](#), for instance), we believe that these are promising opportunities for greater cumulative knowledge building that can lead to greater theorizing about the causes, manifestation, and implications of mental health among entrepreneurs.

**Theorizing about mental health variables.** The studies in this collection that took measures of mental health as the dependent variable adopted outcomes such as stress, grief, distress, life satisfaction, general health, and happiness. Each provides unique insights into one piece of the mental health puzzle. Yet, less understood is how these individual variables are interconnected in the context of entrepreneurship, as many of them are used interchangeably. Conceptualizing how they do or do not hang together in an entrepreneurial context would be helpful to, step by step, solidify our knowledge on the antecedents of entrepreneurial mental health. By bringing together seemingly diffuse aspects of mental health variables in a combined framework or theory, or conceptually disentangling these factors, scholars will have a better understanding of how the collective body of work can provide complementary and shared insights.

**Identifying triggers and causes.** The set of studies in the reviewed collection identifies a set of issues that can provide the root causes of both entrepreneurial well-being and ill-being. Some of the perceived causes for these include factors such as psychological conditions (ADHD, disinhibition, narcissism, obsessive-compulsive, and the like), employment status (full-time, part-time, self-employed, etc.), the nature of work at hand (such as autonomy), as well as external factors such as COVID-19. These reflect fundamentally different levels of analysis and conceptual lenses. As such, theorizing – or at least controlling for – multiple known factors at each of these levels can lead to greater theoretical understanding and isolation of the impact of now known sets of predictors or covariates. In so doing, we incrementally can develop a multi-level contingency framework of the key causes of entrepreneurs' mental health, distress, and illness.

**Characterizing individual differences.** The studies included in this collection reflect a variety of different types of entrepreneurs and their backgrounds. This includes small business owners, the self-employed, hybrid entrepreneurs, military veterans, individuals with disabilities, and business students, among others. Yet, there is little theorizing about the nature of the work each is facing and the potentially constraining/enabling factors they have to deal with. Do we expect them to all face similar health issues and challenges? What conceptual inroads can we provide to understand the role of personal demographics, lived experiences, and abilities to address

mental health challenges? We highlighted earlier that entrepreneurs face greater resources and stressors. Yet, not all entrepreneurial experiences or actions are comparable – some actions inherently involve more uncertainty, risk, resource usage, potential loss, and innovation. Stronger theorizing about the types of entrepreneurial action and their consequences for mental health may help to bridge together the large variety of samples used.

**Context matters.** It is clear throughout these studies that context matters, and that where the difference between benefits and burdens lies depends on where the entrepreneur is operating. This is reflected in the work that compares entrepreneurs and wage employees, as well as the studies that incorporate different types of tasks faced. It also encapsulates the multiple countries studied and where there may be institutional factors at play (stigma, support mechanisms, openness, etc.). Furthermore, the studies included here encompass a wide variety of methods to explore various perspectives, ranging from standard regressions of archival data to more novel forms of latent profile analysis and experimental designs. It is apparent that mental health is an important area of study, one where there appear to be unique sets of circumstances and conditions that suggest that examining entrepreneurs' mental health is particularly relevant. We can produce progress by systematically comparing samples from different national and institutional settings.

**Implications of entrepreneurial mental health, distress, and illness.** An entrepreneur's mental condition will affect entrepreneurial behavior and performance. We can close the conceptual circle by also deepening our understanding of what explains differences in behavioral and performance outcomes of different aspects of mental health, distress, and illness, and how these relationships are mediated and moderated by characteristics of the entrepreneur, the venture, and the context. With deep insight into the mental health-related drivers of entrepreneurial behavior and performance, we can start thinking about potentially beneficial interventions. What can we do, at the different level of analysis (entrepreneur, enterprise, and context) to reduce the harmful and increase the beneficial impact of entrepreneurs' mental health, distress, and illness?

### 3. Conclusions

To conclude, the 23 studies in this *JBVi* collection offer important insights into the nature of the research questions scholars are asking—and the methods they are adopting—to answer a wide variety of questions related to the antecedents and consequences of different aspects of entrepreneurs' mental health, distress, and illness. Combined, they provide interesting insights into highly applicable and distinct areas of mental health, distress, and illness. In this, entrepreneurship shows its strengths and weaknesses as a preparadigmatic science (cf. Kuhn, 1996). On the one hand, entrepreneurship scholars are boldly asking relevant and interesting questions, pursuing them with whatever theoretical and methodological tools they find suitable, integrating insights from different fields. On the other hand, studies often lack the theoretical and methodological rigor that signifies more established and less bold fields of research. Overall, entrepreneurship scholars have made insights that are valuable to future entrepreneurship scholarship, but also to the disciplines from which they draw. Moving forward, we would encourage scholars to: 1) take stock of what we know; 2) identify ways to bring together predominantly disjointed findings; 3) apply greater scientific rigor, using established benchmarks for what constitutes good science and accumulation of knowledge; and 4) work together with scholars within the disciplines.

#### 3.1. Notes for practitioners

In the interest of stimulating conversations that extend beyond conventional research communities, we wish to highlight the practical relevance of mental health research in the entrepreneurial context. In this, we complement a recent editorial in *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, which focused on identifying and implementing interventions in support of the mental health of entrepreneurs (Williamson et al., 2021). Mental health challenges affect the entrepreneurs facing them, their families, their teams and employees, as well as the multiple stakeholders with whom they collaborate. Addressing – or at least raising awareness of – issues of well-being and mental health therefore becomes a topic of benefit to many individuals. The research community would benefit from increased connection to and collaboration with: 1) practitioners broadly involved with mental health (e.g., counselors, psychologists, business and career coaches) to further understand and provide resources directed to supporting entrepreneurs; 2) policymakers who may design benchmarks that include mental health outcomes and designing policy that destigmatizes the difficulties and costs of mental health challenges; 3) strategic decision makers in organizations with the power to positively impact employee well-being and mental health; 4) entrepreneurial ecosystem leaders who could encourage and amplify sustainable entrepreneurial career paths and promote role models to influence how a community views the role of entrepreneurs' well-being; 5) entrepreneurs themselves who may contemplate their own mental health and associated proclivities in relation startup activity and success; and 6) journalists readily able to speak to the various aforementioned practitioners about this intriguing and relevant work. Greater connection between researchers and these individuals should yield wider sharing of findings, new researcher-practitioner collaborations, and thus more opportunities for thorough, generalizable, and practically meaningful research. Thus, a virtuous spiral awaits.

#### Declaration of competing interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

#### Data availability

No data was used for the research described in the article.

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