

## **Entrepreneurial DNA: Family as the Catalyst for Student Motivation in Mastering Business**

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### **Abstract**

This study investigates the relationship between family values, coping strategies, family support, and student motivation. By using a quantitative approach, this study examines the relationship among a sample of university students in the field of entrepreneurship. Our findings revealed significant positive correlations between all three family-related factors and student motivation, with family values showing the strongest influence. This research contributes to the growing body of literature on the role of families in educational outcomes and offers implications for educational policy and practice.

**Keywords:** family values, coping strategies, family support, motivation

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### **1.0 Introduction**

The landscape of entrepreneurship education has evolved significantly in recent years, with an increasing emphasis on cultivating an entrepreneurial mindset among students. However, the complex interplay between family influences, educational interventions, and individual motivation in shaping students' entrepreneurial intentions remains a critical area of investigation.

In the current economic and social environment, the real challenge for youth is the acquisition and development of relevant entrepreneurial skills to consider entrepreneurship as a viable career option (Georgescu & Herman, 2020). The role of the family in this process is very important, as it serves as the main source of socialization and influence on career choices. Recent research has highlighted the importance of family values which are very important in shaping students' entrepreneurial motivation, with studies showing that students from families with strong entrepreneurial values show a higher level of intrinsic motivation in their business endeavors (Islam et al., 2023). For instance, Edelman et al. (2020) found that 33% of entrepreneurs had a self-employed parent, compared to only 14% of non-entrepreneurs, highlighting the significant impact of family background on entrepreneurial pursuits. Furthermore, research by the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) revealed that individuals who personally knew an entrepreneur

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were 2.5 times more likely to start a business themselves, underscoring the importance of familial and social networks in fostering entrepreneurial intentions (GEM, 2021).

Empirical research consistently shows that children from families with an entrepreneurial background are more likely to start their own business or join the family business (Georgescu & Herman, 2020). However, the mechanism by which this influence operates is not fully understood. Several studies suggest that entrepreneurial parents provide better access to knowledge about entrepreneurial opportunities and transfer financial and social capital to their children (Edelman et al., 2020). Others emphasize the role of social learning theory, stating that individuals learn by observing their parents' actions, which can inspire, motivate, and increase self-efficacy in entrepreneurial endeavors (Maheshwari, 2022).

The effectiveness of entrepreneurship education is another critical factor in this equation. Although formal education programs aim to equip students with the skills and knowledge needed for entrepreneurship, their impact may be moderated by family background. Georgescu and Herman (2020) found that entrepreneurial family background negatively moderated the relationship between the effectiveness of entrepreneurial education and entrepreneurial intentions, suggesting a complex interaction between formal and informal learning environments. This finding is particularly significant given that entrepreneurship education programs have proliferated globally, with a OECD report indicating that over 50% of young people in Europe received some form of entrepreneurship education, yet the conversion rate to actual entrepreneurial activity remains relatively low at around 5% (OECD, 2018). Furthermore, the role of individual personality characteristics, along with the influence of family and education, cannot be ignored. Research has shown that entrepreneurial personality traits, when combined with a supportive family environment and effective education, can significantly increase entrepreneurial intentions among students (Liu et al., 2022).

This study aims to address these interrelated issues by examining the relationship between family values, coping strategies, and family support on the motivation of student entrepreneurs. The collective examination of these factors is crucial for several reasons. Firstly, family values provide the foundational context in which entrepreneurial aspirations are nurtured or hindered. Secondly, coping strategies developed within the family unit are essential for navigating the challenges inherent in entrepreneurial pursuits. Lastly, family support acts as a critical resource, both emotionally and practically, in sustaining entrepreneurial efforts. By considering these elements together, we can gain a more comprehensive understanding of the familial ecosystem that shapes entrepreneurial motivation. By considering these elements together, we can gain a more comprehensive understanding of the familial ecosystem that shapes entrepreneurial motivation. This holistic approach is particularly relevant in light of recent economic trends. For example, the COVID-19 pandemic has led to a surge in new business formations, with the U.S. Census Bureau reporting a 24% increase in new business applications in 2020 compared to 2019, many of which were started by young entrepreneurs seeking alternatives to traditional employment (U.S. Census Bureau, 2021). Understanding the family dynamics that contribute to this entrepreneurial resilience is crucial for fostering economic recovery and growth. In doing so, we aim to contribute to a more nuanced understanding of how these factors collectively shape entrepreneurial intentions and behavior among young people. The findings of this research will have important implications for entrepreneurship education policy and practice, potentially leading to more effective strategies for fostering an entrepreneurial mindset that takes into account the important role of family dynamics.

## 2.0 Literature Review

### 2.1 Family Values and Student Entrepreneur Motivation

Recent research has highlighted the significant impact of family values on student entrepreneur motivation. Sun et al. (2023) found that students from families with strong entrepreneurial values demonstrated higher levels of intrinsic motivation in their venture pursuits. This aligns with the theory of planned behavior, which posits that family-instilled values act as a crucial antecedent to entrepreneurial intentions and behaviors (Ajzen, 1991; Krueger et al., 2000). Moreover, Garcia-Rodriguez et al. (2021) observed that family values emphasizing innovation and risk-taking were positively associated with students' entrepreneurial self-efficacy, a key component of entrepreneurial motivation. This suggests that the transmission of entrepreneurial values from family to student plays a crucial role in shaping attitudes and behaviors toward entrepreneurship. However, it is important to note that cultural differences can significantly influence these family dynamics. For instance, in collectivist cultures, family values may emphasize group harmony and stability, potentially conflicting with the risk-taking nature of entrepreneurship. Conversely, in individualistic cultures, family values might more readily align with entrepreneurial pursuits, fostering greater motivation among student entrepreneurs. This cultural nuance highlights the need for a more comprehensive, cross-cultural examination of family values and their impact on student entrepreneurial motivation.

### 2.2 Coping Strategies and Student Entrepreneur Motivation

The relationship between coping strategies and student entrepreneur motivation has gained attention in recent years. Shepherd et al. (2022) found that student entrepreneurs who learned effective coping strategies from their families were better equipped to handle the stress and uncertainty of entrepreneurship, leading to sustained motivation even in challenging circumstances. This highlights the importance of family-taught resilience in maintaining entrepreneurial engagement. Furthermore, a meta-analysis by Bouchkioua (2021) revealed that problem-focused coping strategies, often learned within the family context, were positively correlated with entrepreneurial motivation across various cultural settings. This underscores the universal importance of adaptive coping mechanisms in fostering student entrepreneur motivation. While these studies provide valuable insights, there are notable gaps in the existing research. For instance, the long-term effects of different coping strategies on entrepreneurial success remain understudied.

Additionally, there is a lack of research examining how the effectiveness of coping strategies may vary across different stages of the entrepreneurial journey. Furthermore, the interplay between individual personality traits and family-taught coping strategies in shaping entrepreneurial motivation is an area that requires further investigation. These gaps underscore the need for longitudinal studies and more nuanced examinations of coping strategies in the context of student entrepreneurship.

### 2.3 Family Support and Student Entrepreneur Motivation

The role of family support in nurturing student entrepreneur motivation has been well-documented in recent literature. A longitudinal study by Edelman et al. (2020) demonstrated that consistent family support throughout a student's entrepreneurial journey was a strong predictor of sustained motivation and venture success. This support manifested in various forms, including emotional encouragement, resource provision, and active involvement in entrepreneurial activities. Additionally, Gao and Conway (2021) found that perceived family support was positively associated with autonomous motivation among student entrepreneurs, particularly in collectivist cultures. This suggests that the impact of family support on entrepreneurial motivation may have cultural nuances that warrant further exploration. Despite these findings, the current literature fails to adequately address several critical issues. Firstly, the mechanisms through which family support translates into entrepreneurial motivation are not clearly delineated. Secondly, the potential negative effects of excessive family support, such as increased pressure or reduced independence, are largely unexplored. Lastly, the literature lacks a comprehensive framework that integrates family values, coping strategies, and family support in explaining student entrepreneur motivation. These gaps in the literature highlight the need for a more holistic and integrated approach to studying the family's role in fostering student entrepreneurship, which forms the basis for the present study.

## 3.0 Methodology

This study employed a cross-sectional method to investigate family functionality and motivation within Malaysia's higher education sector. The research design integrated findings from literature reviews with primary data collected through a three-part questionnaire, addressing respondents' personal information, family functioning (based on Deal, Trivette, & Dunst, 1988), and motivation (adapted from Cassidy & Lynn, 1989). Out of 150 distributed questionnaires, 130 were deemed usable for analysis, with a simple sampling method necessitated by confidentiality constraints. The sample size of 130 was determined based on the "Raosoft Inc Calculator," which suggests a minimum sample size of 109, the largest number of structural paths directed at a particular construct in the structural model (Raosoft, 2004). Thus, our sample of 130 meets and slightly exceeds this criterion for PLS-SEM analysis. Data analysis was conducted using SmartPLS 3.0, chosen for its ability to simultaneously analyze reflective and formative measurement models through path analysis, its flexibility with non-normally distributed data, and its suitability for small sample sizes (Hair et al., 2017). This methodological approach enabled the collection of accurate data while minimizing bias, as noted by Sekaran and Bougie (2010), and provided a comprehensive snapshot of the variables under study within the constraints of organizational confidentiality and voluntary participation.

## 4.0 Findings

### 4.1 Reflective measurement model

The analysis of Table 1 reveals that all outer loading values surpassed the 0.708 threshold recommended by Hair et al. (2017), meeting the established criteria. The study's convergent validity was confirmed by the average variance extracted (AVE), which showed values exceeding the ideal 0.5 mark. In terms of internal consistency reliability, all Cronbach's alpha coefficients were found to be above 0.708, indicating satisfactory levels of consistency within the measures.

Indicator	Convergent Validity		Internal Consistency Reliability
	Outer Loadings	AVE (>0.50)	Composite Reliability
B01	0.927	0.938	0.938
B02	0.847		
B03	0.899		
B04	0.879		
B05	0.885	0.909	0.909
B06	0.853		
B07	0.787		
B08	0.854		
B09	0.822	0.902	0.902
B10	0.823		
B11	0.810		

B12	0.738		
B13	0.832		
C01	0.908	0.940	0.940
C02	0.952		
C03	0.925		
C04	0.773		

Source: Questionnaire

Table 2 presents the findings on construct validity and reliability. The Heterotrait-Monotrait Correlation Ratio (HTMT) for each construct was observed to be under 0.90, aligning with the guidelines set by Hair et al. (2017) and Henseler et al. (2009). This indicates that the constructs have met the criteria for discriminant validity as specified by these researchers. Additionally, the latent interval value (shown in brackets) for each construct was found to be below 1, which, according to Hair et al. (2017), further confirms that the concept has fulfilled the discriminant analysis requirement.

Table 2: Discriminant Analysis Results			
Construct	Family Value	Coping Strategies	Family Support
Coping strategies	0.899		
Family Support	0.845	0.868	
Motivation	0.599	0.371	0.580

Note. The values in the parenthesis are the values of confidential interval at 5% and 95%.

#### 4.2 Variance Inflation Factor

The analysis presented in Table 3 reveals that the variance inflation factor for the relationship between the independent variables (emotional intelligence and personality) and the dependent variable (environmental awareness) was found to be below 5.0. This finding suggests that the dataset does not suffer from significant collinearity issues, as per the guidelines established by Hair et al. (2017).

Table 3: Analysis of variance inflation factor	
Construct	Variance Inflation Factor
	Motivation
Family Values	3.446
Coping Strategies	3.750
Family Support	2.909

#### 4.3 Measurement of Structural Models

Table 4's findings reveal that Family Values, Coping Strategies, and Family Support collectively account for 41.8% of the variance in Motivation. This suggests that factors outside the scope of this study influence a considerable portion (58.2%) of Motivation's variance. The model demonstrates a substantial impact, as evidenced by a coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) greater than 0.26 (Cohen, 1988). The research hypothesis test yielded three significant outcomes: First, a strong positive relationship was found between family values and motivation ( $B = 0.678$ ;  $t = 3.298$ ), confirming hypothesis H1. Second, coping strategies showed a significant positive correlation with motivation ( $B = 0.507$ ;  $t = 2.371$ ), supporting Hypothesis 2. Lastly, a notable correlation was observed between family support and motivation ( $B = 0.410$ ;  $t = 2.029$ ), validating hypothesis H3. These findings provide valuable insights into the factors influencing motivation within the context of family dynamics. The strong positive relationship between family values and motivation underscores the crucial role that shared beliefs and principles play in shaping an individual's drive and determination. This aligns with the study's objective of understanding the impact of family-related factors on motivation. Interestingly, the results reveal an unexpected pattern in the relative influence of the studied variables. While family values emerged as the strongest predictor of motivation, family support showed a comparatively weaker influence. This finding challenges the common assumption that direct family support is the primary driver of motivation. Instead, it suggests that the internalized values and beliefs passed down through generations may have a more profound impact on an individual's motivational levels.

This study also analyzed the effect size ( $f^2$ ), model fit (SRMR value), and predictive relevance ( $Q^2$ ). The  $f^2$  value (0.229) for the relationship between family values and motivation exceeded the 0.15 threshold set by Hair et al. (2017), indicating a strong influence. The  $f^2$  statistic for the relationship between coping strategies and motivation (0.118) was below 0.15, suggesting a moderate impact. The  $f^2$  value for the association between family support and motivation (0.099) was also below 0.15, indicating a moderate effect. The standard root mean residual (SRMR) value of 0.099, falling below the 0.1 threshold, indicated a good model fit. All  $Q^2$  values were positive, demonstrating the model's predictive relevance.

Table 4: Results of structural model measurement analysis									
Hypothesis	Relationship	B	P	t	Result	$R^2$	$F^2$	$Q^2$	SRMR
H1	Family Value → Motivation	0.678	0.001	3.298	Accepted	0.229			0.099
H2	Coping Strategies → Motivation	0.507	0.009	2.371	Accepted	0.418	0.118	0.296	
H3	Family Support → Motivation	0.410	0.022	2.029	Accepted		0.099		

Note. Significant at \*  $t > 1.96$  (two-tail testing).

## 5.0 Discussion

### 5.1 The Primacy of Family Values in Entrepreneurial Motivation

Our findings highlight the paramount importance of family values in shaping student entrepreneur motivation. The strong positive relationship ( $\beta = 0.678$ ) between family values and motivation underscores the enduring influence of familial beliefs and attitudes on entrepreneurial engagement. This aligns with the work of Zhao et al. (2020) and Garcia-Rodriguez et al. (2021), who emphasized the role of family-instilled values in fostering intrinsic motivation and entrepreneurial self-efficacy. The strength of this relationship suggests that interventions aimed at enhancing student entrepreneur motivation might benefit from a family-centered approach. Entrepreneurship education programs that engage parents and guardians in discussions about the importance of entrepreneurship and the transmission of entrepreneurial values could yield significant benefits. As Krueger et al. (2000) noted, family values serve as a crucial antecedent to entrepreneurial intentions and behaviors. This finding can be contextualized within the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991), which posits that attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control influence intentions and subsequent behaviors. In this framework, family values significantly shape the attitudes and subjective norms that drive entrepreneurial intentions.

### 5.2 The Role of Coping Strategies in Entrepreneurial Motivation

The moderate positive relationship between coping strategies and motivation ( $\beta = 0.507$ ) highlights the importance of resilience and adaptive problem-solving skills in maintaining entrepreneurial engagement. This finding corroborates the research of Shepherd et al. (2022), who emphasized the role of family-taught coping mechanisms in sustaining motivation during entrepreneurial challenges. The implications of this relationship are twofold. First, it underscores the need for families to actively teach and model effective coping strategies for entrepreneurial stress. Second, it suggests that entrepreneurship education programs could benefit from incorporating coping skills training into their curricula, potentially in collaboration with families. As Bouchkioua (2021) noted in their meta-analysis, problem-focused coping strategies have a universal positive impact on entrepreneurial motivation across cultures. This finding aligns with the Conservation of Resources Theory (Hobfoll, 1989), which posits that individuals strive to obtain, retain, and protect resources. In the context of student entrepreneurship, coping strategies can be viewed as crucial psychological resources that help maintain motivation in the face of challenges.

### 5.3 The Supportive Family Environment in Entrepreneurial Motivation

The positive relationship between family support and motivation ( $\beta = 0.410$ ), while slightly weaker than the other factors, remains significant. This finding aligns with the longitudinal study by Edelman et al. (2020), which demonstrated the long-term impact of consistent family support on student entrepreneur motivation and venture success. The multifaceted nature of family support, encompassing emotional encouragement, resource provision, and active involvement, suggests that a holistic approach to family engagement in entrepreneurship education is crucial. Universities and entrepreneurship programs might consider developing comprehensive family support initiatives that address these various aspects of support for student entrepreneurs. Moreover, the cultural nuances in the impact of family support, as highlighted by Gao & Conway (2021), indicate the need for culturally sensitive approaches to fostering family-entrepreneur partnerships. Entrepreneurial interventions should be tailored to the specific cultural contexts in which they are implemented to maximize their effectiveness in enhancing student entrepreneur motivation.

### 5.4 Integrated Model of Family Influence on Entrepreneurial Motivation

The combined explanatory power of these family-related factors ( $R^2 = 0.418$ ) suggests that a significant portion of student entrepreneur motivation can be attributed to family dynamics. This integrated model of family influence provides a comprehensive framework for understanding the complex interplay between family environment and entrepreneurial motivation. However, the model also indicates that other factors beyond family influence contribute to student entrepreneur motivation. Future research could explore the interaction between family-related factors and other variables such as peer influence, university entrepreneurial ecosystem, and individual personality traits to develop a more comprehensive understanding of the determinants of student entrepreneur motivation.

The integrated model can be situated within the broader Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Framework (Isenberg, 2011), which recognizes the importance of various interconnected elements in fostering entrepreneurship. This study focuses on the family domain, it is crucial to consider how this interacts with other ecosystem components, particularly university incubators and accelerators. University entrepreneurial ecosystems may interact synergistically with family factors to enhance motivation. For instance, a supportive family environment might amplify the benefits of university incubator programs by providing complementary resources and emotional support. Conversely, strong university ecosystems might compensate for less supportive family environments, offering alternative sources of mentorship and resources. This interaction between family and institutional support aligns with the Person-Environment Fit Theory (Edwards et al., 1998), suggesting that optimal entrepreneurial motivation may result from a congruence between family-based resources and the broader entrepreneurial ecosystem. Future research could explore these interactions using multilevel modeling techniques to capture the nested nature of individual, family, and ecosystem-level factors influencing student entrepreneur motivation.

## 6.0 Conclusion & Recommendations

This study provides compelling evidence for the significant role of family dynamics in shaping student entrepreneur motivation. The strong influence of family values, coupled with the importance of coping strategies and family support, underscores the need for a holistic, family-centered approach to fostering entrepreneurial motivation among students. These findings have important implications

for entrepreneurship education policy and practice. They suggest that efforts to enhance student entrepreneur motivation should extend beyond the classroom to engage families actively in the entrepreneurial education process. Programs that strengthen family values related to entrepreneurship, teach effective coping strategies for entrepreneurial stress, and enhance family support mechanisms could yield significant benefits in terms of student entrepreneur motivation and, ultimately, venture success.

Future research could delve deeper into the specific mechanisms through which family factors influence entrepreneurial motivation, potentially using longitudinal designs to capture the dynamic nature of these relationships over time. Additionally, cross-cultural studies could further elucidate the universal and culture-specific aspects of family influence on student entrepreneur motivation. In conclusion, this research highlights the enduring importance of family in the entrepreneurial lives of students. By recognizing and leveraging the power of family dynamics, educators and policymakers can create more effective strategies to support student entrepreneur motivation and success in an increasingly complex and dynamic entrepreneurial landscape.

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## Paper Contribution to Related Field of Study

These contributions collectively advance our understanding of how family dynamics shape the entrepreneurial journey of students, offering valuable insights for researchers, educators, and policymakers in the field of entrepreneurship education.

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