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Entrepreneurial motivation

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Abstract

Recent research on entrepreneurship has focused largely on macrolevel environmental forces [Aldrich, H. (2000). *Organizations evolving*. Beverly Hills: Sage] and the characteristics of entrepreneurial opportunities [Christiansen, C. (1997). *The innovators dilemma*. Cambridge: Harvard Business School Press]. Although researchers adopting this focus have rightly criticized much of the existing empirical research on the role of human motivation in entrepreneurship [Aldrich, H., & Zimmer, C. (1986).

Entrepreneurship through social networks. In D. Sexton & R. Smilor (Eds.), *The art and science of entrepreneurship* (pp. 3–23). Cambridge, MA: Ballinger; Adm. Sci. Q. 32 (1987) 570], we believe that the development of entrepreneurship theory requires consideration of the motivations of people making entrepreneurial decisions. To provide a road map for researchers interested in this area, we discuss the major motivations that prior researchers have suggested should influence the entrepreneurial process, as well as suggest some motivations that are less commonly studied in this area. In addition to outlining the major reasons for exploring these motivations, we identify the major

weaknesses that have limited the predictive power of previous research on this topic. We offer explicit solutions for future research to adopt to overcome these problems.



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Keywords

Entrepreneurship; Human motivation; Need for achievement

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