

## Family Support And Psychological Empowerment: Women Entrepreneurs In The UAE

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### Abstract:

Being an entrepreneur can be challenging irrespective of gender and age. Women's entrepreneurial journey is ridden with many more complexities of time, circumstance and access. This research paper aims to examine the relation between family support and psychological empowerment among female entrepreneurs residing in the UAE. It also examines the impact of family support on psychological empowerment. The extent of psychological empowerment across different age groups has also been examined. The sample size consists of 80 respondents who were administered the Psychological Empowerment in the Workplace scale by Spreitzer & Gretchen (1995) to measure psychological empowerment and Perceived Social Support Family Scale by Procidano & Heller (1983) to measure family support. It has been hypothesized that there is a positive correlation between psychological empowerment and family support. Secondly, it has been assumed that female entrepreneurs have high levels of psychological empowerment irrespective of the age group. Lastly, it has been hypothesized that family support positively impacts family support residing in the United Arab Emirates. Purposive sampling was used to connect with subjects, thereafter a snowball sampling method was used to create the research cohort. Findings suggest that there is a strong positive correlation between psychological empowerment and family support among female entrepreneurs residing in the U.A.E. Secondly, family support also positively impacts psychological empowerment among female entrepreneurs in the U.A.E. Third, psychological empowerment increases with age. Future researchers could replicate similar studies for male entrepreneurs residing in the United Arab Emirates. A comparative study may be a good extension in future, conducted across different parts of the world to identify, analyze and explain similarities and differences across societies with regards to the family support received by entrepreneurs.

**Keywords:** Family Support, Psychological Empowerment, Women Entrepreneurs

### INTRODUCTION:

The United Arab Emirates is home to more than 200 nationalities as its expat population outnumbers the UAE nationals. It has accomplished many things over a short span of time. In the mid-1950s, the Emirates' economy was mostly driven by agriculture in oasis and date palm trading. In recent times, the United Arab Emirates has adopted diverse economic strategies to boost non-oil sectors' contribution to the country's GDP, such as tourism, banking and renewable energy (UAE Portal, 2020).

Subsequently, the Emirates' GDP increased at an annual growth rate of 9% in eighteen years from 2010-2018. As a result, economic growth led to more opportunities for foreigners and better living standards of citizens. To strive for an even better

position, UAE has an ever-evolving framework to meet the entrepreneurial community's requirements. As a result, the UAE has now become the leading investment hub in the Middle East. (Al Saiqal, et al., 2018),

Entrepreneurs are those who start new businesses, manage the risks of those businesses, and take advantage of their rewards. They can anticipate future customer needs and adapt their products accordingly which eventually leads to increased country's GDP (Ahmad, Hermayen, Bhavani, 2021).

In most of the countries, women entrepreneurs face gender-specific issues including access to finance and credit, opportunities for growth in markets, access to business education and management training, and opportunities to own land (Ahmad, Hermayen, Bhavani, 2021). Some studies claim the

performance of businesses owned by women is inferior to those owned by men, while other studies find gender has no bearing on an entrepreneur's success. Women tend to focus more on the aspects of the process whereas men tend to emphasize the results. This makes it very challenging to measure performance between the two genders (Poole, et al., 1993). Female entrepreneurs are more skilled and possess expertise in market research and strategic planning due to their intensive focus on teamwork. In addition, research indicates that they complement staff members' achievements more often compared to men (Morris, et al, 2006).

Increasing numbers of women are leaving organizations in favor of entrepreneurial pursuits due to unequal pay for women and limited upward mobility within corporations. A large number of new mothers are changing from corporate jobs to self-employment because it offers them a flexible yet structured framework that draws them together and empowers them both as entrepreneurs and mothers (Lewis, et al., 2015). It's not that they are taking leave to take care of children at home, but rather to pursue their own entrepreneurial goals.

Having a family support system has played a part in motivating entrepreneurs towards overcoming obstacles. Staying motivated throughout difficult times can be challenging and this is where the importance of family support in an entrepreneurial life can be understood. Family support includes at the degree to which the close relations of the women entrepreneurs provided them with psychological, physical and financial support. Family support is considered to be strong if few conditions are met. The first condition is the presence of a psychologically safe environment where entrepreneurs are encouraged to express one's ideas, opinions, raise questions or make mistakes without fearing criticism and ridicule. When such an environment is inculcated, psychological safety is attained. Secondly, a family support system will also include mutual emotional support, where the family members are empathetic towards each other and communicate, keeping in mind each other's feelings and wellbeing. When emotional support is fostered among the family, entrepreneurs can confide in them in times of difficulty to receive reassurance, comfort and acceptance.

Psychological empowerment can be referred to as "intrinsic task motivation reflecting a sense of self-control in relation to one's work and an active involvement with one's work role" (Siebert, et al, 2013). An entrepreneur's journey is riddled with uncertainties; to reach a point of success and to persist through difficulties and hardships, there are few attributes that should be attained, fulfillment of which can be said to satisfy the criteria of

psychological empowerment. Resilience, which can be defined as the ability to withstand difficult situations and continue to persist without losing sight of one's ambition, can be observed in individuals who are psychologically empowered. Psychologically empowered individuals also possess high autonomy in their work-life, as they have a sense of control over their actions to attain a certain organizational goal and are able to determine the effective course of action for their employees. Being high on self-efficacy, they are intrinsically motivated at all times and find the purpose of their work to be meaningful, which leads to a higher degree of perseverance.

Psychological empowerment, being a relatively new topic, has very little research conducted on it. Further, no research study has examined the relation between the two variables: psychological empowerment and family support, in great detail. In this paper we want to analyze the extent of correlation and determine if there is a relationship that could be obtained between family support and psychological empowerment of women entrepreneurs residing in the United Arab Emirates.

### **Review Of Literature:**

In the United Arab Emirates, the Female/Male entrepreneurial ratio is 0.70. The United Arab Emirates was rated among the countries receiving the highest score in the "Social and cultural norms" with a point of 7.3, which is the highest of all countries surveyed. Additionally, UAE was rated as second among all GEM economies by the experts on the government's proactive response to the pandemic with 7.4 points. Due to the pandemic, 46% of budding entrepreneurs and 51% of established business owners perceive business opportunities as an outcome of the pandemic situation. On a positive note, as a testament to entrepreneurial confidence, 10.6% of adult UAE residents plan to hire more than six employees over the subsequent years. (Bosma, et al., 2021).

In 2012, a study was conducted to look at the differences among nascent entrepreneurs within the UAE for five key nationality groups (UAE nationals, GCC nationals, Non-GCC Arab expatriates, Asian expatriates, and Western expatriates) within the aspects of entrepreneurial activity, connectedness, attitudes, aspirations and behavior. Findings suggested that expat workers' temporary residency status wasn't an obstacle to their starting businesses within the UAE. Asian expatriates within the UAE are less entrepreneurially engaged than Arabs within the GCC and non-GCC Arab expatriates (Tong, McCrohan & Erogul, 2012).

Many other recent studies are showing that multicultural experience could play a job in boosting creativity. Tan, et al (2019) examined whether learning about diverse cultures might increase creative performance, yet how multicultural experiences improved this performance through physiological changes in individuals. The findings revealed that people's physiological arousal levels and brain activity increased after interacting with people from different cultures, increasing their performance on the subsequent creative challenge. (Tan et al., 2019).

The foremost important determinant of those cross-cultural encounters is the institutional structure within which they occur. The movement of ideas and different world perspectives are stimulated by a society with diverse cultures or where cultures interact with each other. With the assistance of competent institutions, this fusion of ideas and perspectives can result in more entrepreneurial activities (Sobel, Dutta & Roy, 2010).

While it was found in a study conducted in 2013 that both male and female had strong inclinations towards entrepreneurship, Global Entrepreneurship Monitor analysis showed that almost all new enterprises are more likely to be owned by males rather than females (GEM, 2019). Although women actively take part in 66% of the world's work, they are reported to earn only 10% of the earnings and own 1-2 % of the resources (UNICEF 2009). Majumdar, et al. (2013) found that future entrepreneurship is independent of gender and dependent on factors like creativity, motivation, and awareness. In fact, women have higher risk-taking tendencies than males, contradicting the literature which predicted the wide gender gap.

There was a study conducted in 2012 that examined whether female entrepreneurs are treated equally and attain equal treatment as males, and analyzed the reason behind few female entrepreneurs in the UAE compared to male entrepreneurs. It was found that the majority of Emirati male entrepreneurs' own businesses and operate in a variety of industries, except for fashion. Emirati female entrepreneurs, on the other hand, own enterprises that are heavily concentrated in the trade and fashion industries- Socialization and cultural barriers could be accounted for the difference. This could also be attributed to gender concentration in certain domains of education specialties, where females prefer humanities and males prefer science and math due to social acceptability. As a result, women frequently lack the scientific background that would enable them to start firms that require technical abilities (Kargwell, 2012). Women entrepreneurs irrespective of nationality find it difficult to maintain work-life balance and

complain of having very little time for family which eventually leads to psychological stress and physical exhaustion. Other inhibiting factors are the access to capital, poor self-confidence, internalized stereotypes and fear of failure (Naguib, et al., 2015).

Female Emirati entrepreneurs stated that their primary motivation for starting a business is to earn more money as they have a lot of free time. Women who are expats suggested the interdependence of push factors such as financial security and lack of job opportunities motivated them to start their own venture. Emirati women suggested that pull factors such as self-esteem and social status recognition were their motivating factors at a micro-level (Kargwell, 2012). Similar study which wanted to analyze the motivating factors found that the desire for independence in their professional and personal life is the top motivator for Emirati women to start their own businesses. Desire to contribute to society and desire to expand their own talents through self-improvement and professional development were other key motivators for Emirati women to become entrepreneurs (Erogul & McCrohan, 2008). The findings demonstrate that the three most essential variables influencing the success of women entrepreneurs in the UAE, are education, skills, and training (Al Matroushi et al. 2020).

Comparably, most of the male entrepreneurs are driven by their intuition to improve their earnings and obtain independence. The study's findings also demonstrate that there is a difference in support from family and friends between male and female entrepreneurs (Kargwell, 2012). The majority of Emirati women who responded to the survey said their families helped them launch their enterprises. Women who had male family members' encouragement were less hesitant to establish their own business (Erogul & McCrohan, 2008). Nonetheless, a significant percentage of women entrepreneurs stated that in few circumstances, their male family members did not provide the required assistance because they were opposed to women's independence. (Kargwell, 2012). It has been indicated that female entrepreneurs possess very little financial capital while starting a business compared to men. As a result, they face more challenges and difficulties to upscale their business and eventually underperform. (Shaw, et al., 2009). Concerning business laws and regulations that are meant to be equally applicable to both genders in terms of entrepreneurship, 49.1% of male entrepreneurs claimed that there are discrepancies in how business policies are implemented between genders; in comparison to their male counterparts, female entrepreneurs are given preferential

treatment and more resources to remove barriers (Kargwell, 2012). Government institutions aided both male and female entrepreneurs equally and there was no substantial difference in the assistance provided by the United Arab Emirates government to Emirati entrepreneurs based on gender.

This analysis of data of female entrepreneurs who own a family business showed that education and skills were the key determinants for the growth of women entrepreneurs, whereas the most determining factor for the success of women entrepreneurship who didn't have a family business background was skills and training (Al Matroushi et al. 2020).

Findings of similar study (Gupta & Mirchandani, 2018) which analyzed important elements that influence the success rate of women entrepreneurs who own SMEs in the United Arab Emirates showed that personal, government and environmental factors have a positive and significant impact on the triumph of female-owned Short and Medium Enterprises in the United Arab Emirates. Among personal factors; work experience, formal training, and qualification were important influencers. Personality traits played a vital role in women's entrepreneurial success as well. In terms of environmental factors, women entrepreneurs were motivated by the accessibility of capital. For government support, women entrepreneurs valued support from NGOs and fewer bureaucratic impediments (Gupta & Mirchandani, 2018). For all the respondents it was found that Family support was selected as the most important component in terms of motivation sub-criteria. Government support was placed second and support from friends was ranked third (Al Matroushi et al. 2020). In order to completely comprehend entrepreneurial activity in a country, Cuero (2005) believes that it is important to examine psychological, non-psychological, and environmental factors. Psychological empowerment is one of the major psychological factors that influences entrepreneurial activities.

Experts investigated a multifaceted concept of empowerment, which defines empowerment as experienced psychological cognition and manners. This comprehensive concept of empowerment places an importance on personal experience. (Thomas & Velthous, 1990). According to this viewpoint, "psychological empowerment" refers to a person's significant psychological sentiments about his workplace that is inclusive of five factors: competency, meaning, impact, trust, and self-determination (Spreitzer, 1995). Meaning refers to a person's ideals and stance in regard to certain obligations based on personal expectations. Competency is defined as the self-efficacy that permits a person to effectively complete a task. The

degree to which a person feels successful in attaining a goal or believes that organizational achievements are effective is referred to as an impact. Self-determination pertains to having a sense of autonomy in making judgments regarding assigned responsibilities at work. The feeling of personal security is referred to as trust. People who trust place themselves in a vulnerable situation.

To examine the relationship between the five factors of psychological empowerment and entrepreneurship, 189 employees from Fars Payame Noor University were chosen through class sampling and completed entrepreneurship and psychological empowerment questionnaires (Safaria, Rastegara, & Jahrom, 2010). In general, the findings of the regression analysis revealed that psychological empowerment can predict entrepreneurship. Psychological Empowerment is shown to have an important function in fostering Innovative Work Behavior (Nhu Nguyen, Thien Nguyen, Lan Truong, Phuong Nguyen & Van Nguyen, 2021). Another study which analyzed production/operations managers of medium enterprises (MEs) found that Psychological empowerment (PE) was revealed to have a considerable clear link with both Intrapreneurial Behavior (IB) and Individual Performance (IP) (Mahmoud, Ahmad & Poespowidjojo, 2021).

Meaningfulness and competence were attributed as the most and least of the entrepreneurial variation respectively (Safaria, Rastegara, & Jahrom, 2010).. In 2021, a research was conducted with the objective to gain an understanding of the women's psychological empowerment dimensions, and by working on these dimensions; the authors believed that it would ultimately strengthen the empowerment of women entrepreneurs, assisting in the attainment of sustainable development goals (SDG) results such as gender parity, poverty reduction, and social disequilibrium (Chakraborty & Biswal, 2021). The data analysis reveals four psychological women empowerment dimensions: goal internationalization, perceived control, perceived competency, and self-esteem. (Chakraborty & Biswal, 2021).

### **Procedure & Methodology:**

#### **Problem Statement:**

The main concept is to examine the relationship between the two variables psychological empowerment and family support.

#### **Objectives:**

1. To examine the correlation between psychological empowerment and family support among female entrepreneurs.

2. To study the impact of family support on overall psychological empowerment.
3. To study the extent of psychological empowerment among different age groups.

### Hypothesis:

- H1:** There will be positive correlation between psychological empowerment and support system among female entrepreneurs residing in the United Arab Emirates.
- H2:** Family support will have a positive influence on overall psychological empowerment.
- H3:** Psychological empowerment will be the same across all age groups.

### Variables Of The Study:

The study comprises two variables: psychological empowerment and family support.

### SAMPLE OF THE STUDY:

Female entrepreneurs residing in the United Arab Emirates whose age was 18 and above were chosen to be a part of this sample. In total, 80 entrepreneurs were evaluated.

### Sampling Design Of The Study:

In support of current research, snowball sampling techniques have been applied to gather data.

### Tools:

#### Tool 1: Psychological Empowerment In The Workplace (Spreitzer & Gretchen M., 1995):

Spreitzer created the psychological empowerment scale (PES), which Li Chaoping modified for the Chinese setting. The internal consistency coefficient of the overall scale was 0.87. The scale was found to have a good validity.

### Scoring:

The Psychological Empowerment in the workplace scale consists of 4 dimensions (meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact) with 3 items each. Responses are recorded in the form of Totally Disagree, Disagree, Agree, Totally Agree and Average with scoring of 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. The scores on the negatively described items must be reversed before summing with the positively worded for the total scores.

**Table 1:** Depicting the scoring pattern of the Psychological Empowerment in the Workplace Scale

Totally Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Agree	Totally Agree
1	2	3	4	5

#### TOOL 2: Perceived Social Support Family Scale (Procidano & Heller K, 1988)

The PSS was introduced by Procidano & Heller K. in the year 1988 to measure the extent to which an individual perceives that his/her needs for support, information, and feedback are fulfilled by family. The scale was found to be highly reliable (0.90). There was some evidence of convergent and discriminant validity in the family subscale.

### Scoring:

The Perceived Social Support Family Scale (PSS-Fa) consists of 20 statements where 15 statements are in positive direction and 5 statements are in negative direction. Responses are recorded in the form of 'Yes', 'Don't Know' or 'No' with the score of 3, 2 and 1 respectively for positive items (Question 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17 and 18) and 1, 2 and 3 for negative items (Question 19, 20, 16, 4, and 3) respectively. A high score depicts a high support system.

**Table 2:** Table depicting the scoring pattern of Perceived Social Support Family Scale

Original Item Score	Reverse Item Score	
1	3	No
2	2	Don't Know
3	1	Yes

### Procedure:

Social media platforms such as LinkedIn and Instagram were utilized to get in contact with the target population. Prior to the test, an informed consent of the subject was taken. The subject was informed that participation is voluntary and they can withdraw if they wish to. All instructions were clearly interpreted to the subject before the test dispatch. The subject was given Psychological empowerment in the workplace scale (Spreitzer & Gretchen M., 1995) to complete the 12 statements by choosing the most appropriate answer from the 5 options given: Totally disagree, Disagree, Average, Agree or Totally Agree and Perceived

Social Support Family Scale (Procidano & Heller K., 1983) where she or he was required to answer the 20 items by choosing the ‘Yes’, ‘Don’t Know’ or ‘No’ option. All ethical considerations were taken care of. Confidentiality was maintained throughout. The scores of both scales were calculated and interpreted based on the scoring manual to proceed with correlation breakdowns and regression analysis.

**Result:**

The sample included asian expatriates (41.3%), western expatriates (25%), Non-GCC Arab Expatriates (12.5%), U.A.E. Nationals (8.8%), African Expatriates (7.5%) among others. Most of the participants considered their parents, life partner, close relatives, siblings, friends and advisory board as their support system, to mention a few

**Result 1:**

**Table 3:** Correlation table depicting the correlation between family support and psychological empowerment

Correlation coefficient	0.9725
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The correlation coefficient is 0.9725 which indicates that there is a strong positive correlation between family support and psychological empowerment. With this finding, H1 has been proved true.

**RESULT 2:**

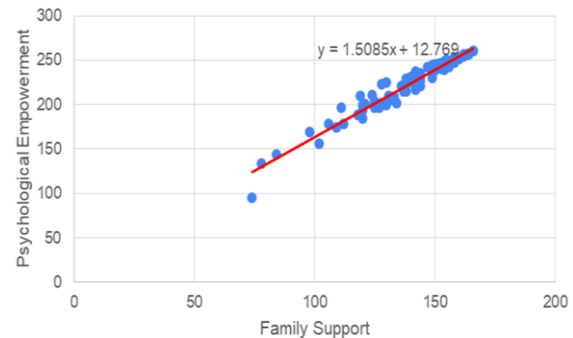
**Table 4:** Regression table depicting the influence of family support on psychological empowerment

R Square	0.9457
Adjusted R Square	0.9451
Standard Error	7.2894

Regression analysis has been implemented to find the impact of family support on psychological empowerment. The R<sup>2</sup> is 0.9457 which is considered to be a fairly good fit. In other words, 95 percent of the instances of psychological empowerment (dependent variable) are explained by the family support (independent variable) of women entrepreneurs. Thus, it can be said that family support positively impacts the extent of psychological empowerment among female

entrepreneurs residing in the United Arab Emirates. The Standard error was computed to be 7.29% which indicates the average distance of the data point falls from the regression line. The interpretation of this S is that the standard distance between the observations and the regression line is 7.29% psychological Empowerment. As per the above findings, H2 has been proved true.

**Figure 1:** Graph depicts the regression analysis of Family Support on Psychological Empowerment.



As depicted in the graph, family support has a positive influence on psychological empowerment among female entrepreneurs residing in the United Arab Emirates.

**RESULT 3:**

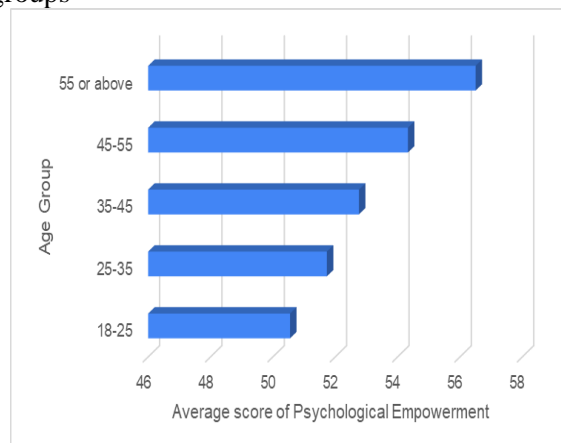
**Table 3:** Table depicts the average score of Psychological Empowerment in relation to each age group

Age group of subjects	Average score of Psychological Empowerment
18 - 25	50.55
25 - 35	51.73
35 - 45	52.76
45 - 55	54.33
55 or above	56.5

Entrepreneurs who were in the age range of 18 - 25 have scored a mean score of 50.55 in the psychological empowerment scale. The 25 - 35 age group scored an average score of 51.73; 35 - 45 age group scored an average score of 52.76; 45 - 55 age group scored an average score of 54.33 and 55 or above age group scored an average of 56.5. Thus, it can be concluded that entrepreneurs who belong to different age groups are not similarly psychologically empowered. Young entrepreneurs are less psychologically empowered compared to

entrepreneurs who belong to the older age groups. As an entrepreneur's age increases, their psychological empowerment also strengthens. As per the above findings of objective 3, H3 has been proved false.

**Figure 3:** Figure depicts the average score of psychological empowerment across different age groups



As depicted in the graph, psychological empowerment increases with age.

### Discussion:

The objective of the paper is to examine the relationship between family support and psychological empowerment among female entrepreneurs residing in the UAE.

It was hypothesized that there is a positive correlation between family support and psychological empowerment among female entrepreneurs residing in the UAE. It was also analyzed how the gender gap negatively impacts women and the national economy. It also looked into how the UAE is thriving as a national economy because it strives to reduce the gender gap especially in the domain of entrepreneurship.

### Discussion 1:

The first objective of our study was to examine the correlation between family support and Psychological Empowerment among female entrepreneurs.

Research evidence indicates that the support system influences the dimensions of Psychological Empowerment (**Competency and Impact**), which will in turn enhance the overall Psychological Empowerment of an individual.

A study was conducted to analyze the impact of social support on job-related behaviors (Giao, & Tushar, 2020). The major findings of this study indicated that social support and locus of control are essential factors in the overall effectiveness of

employees. Job-related behaviors (e.g., job satisfaction, job performance) were favorably influenced by social support. Another study that looked at the function of social support in training and transfer discovered that social support promotes training self-efficacy, mastery (learning) goal orientation, and desire to transfer (Chiaburu, Dam & Hutchins, 2010).

These research evidence indicate that there is a strong association between support system and **competency** of individuals in work-related behaviors.

A self-administered survey of 240 workers in a public hospital in the southern United States was used to investigate how social support at work influences depression and organizational productivity in a work-stress paradigm. Social support was found to have a direct and positive influence on employees' psychological well-being and organizational productivity (Park, Wilson & Lee, 2004). Another study showed that both perceived social supports contribute directly to subjective well-being and indirectly via self-efficacy. In terms of the mediating function of self-efficacy, workplace social support, which offers emotional support and encouragement, was shown to be strongly related to self-efficacy in this study (Chou, 2015).

The research evidence indicates that social support influences subjective well-being in individuals which will have an influence on an individual's productivity in the workplace; the extent to which they will be able to contribute to attaining organizational goals. There is also a direct link established between social support and organization productivity. Thus, it increases the **Impact** of an individual on an organization.

The findings of our study also indicated that the family support system of Women Entrepreneurs had a strong impact on the extent of their Psychological Empowerment.

### Discussion 2:

The second objective of our study was to study the impact of family support on psychological empowerment.

An individual who is psychologically empowered creates a dynamic of support system where there is mutual support obtained from all the members of the support system, and there is a great extent of trust placed on the psychologically empowered individual who exerts a significant influence. The psychologically empowered entrepreneur will also confidently rely on their support system for the support and encouragement when they need it. Therefore it can be said that there is an association

between Psychological empowerment and the support system.

The research finding can be used to spread awareness about the importance of family support among the families of female entrepreneurs. The journey of entrepreneurship isn't a straight line to success. There are several obstacles that must be overcome. It's important to remain calm and not lose sight of goals that one has set.

As discussed earlier, psychological empowerment comprises four cognitions: Meaning, self-determination, competence, and impact. Meaning refers to a person's ideals and stance in regard to certain obligations based on personal expectations. Competency is defined as the self-efficacy that permits a person to effectively complete a task. The degree to which a person feels successful in attaining a goal or believes that organizational achievements are effective is referred to as an impact. Self-determination pertains to having a sense of autonomy in making judgments regarding assigned responsibilities at work.

At the face of difficulties as an entrepreneur, it is of importance that one is reminded why they chose this path in the first place and what their goals were when they set on this journey. Women entrepreneurs have reported that when they have family members to constantly remind them about their goals, values, and beliefs, especially at the brink of hard times, it encourages them to keep on being resilient and continue fostering efforts. It strengthens their **meaning**; reminding them that the work that they are engaged in is strongly aligned with their beliefs, goals, standards, and values which is what initiated them in this journey in the first place and kept on pushing them through the challenges up till this point. By being reminded of all the other times that they overcame difficult times and how far they have come, it strengthens their belief in their ability to overcome challenges and reminds them that they are capable of successfully performing work activities, hence strengthening their **competence**. With the help of support system, they can realize that at the end, it is they themselves who are in charge and in control of regulating their actions, it is in their hands, and they are in greater control than some other external uncontrollable factors which will determine their success as an entrepreneur in a long run, thus strengthening their **self-determination**. It reinforces their belief that they indeed have an influence in operational outcomes as an entrepreneur and can contribute significantly to managerial process; a certain setback will not intervene with the power they have to influence positive operational outcomes in the future, and hence their **Impact** gets strengthened.

Hence, we gain a better understanding of how having supportive family members who are constantly willing to support through the ups and downs of an entrepreneur's journey can play an important role in strengthening the cognitions which influence psychological empowerment.

### Discussion 3:

The third objective of our study was to examine the extent of psychological empowerment among different age groups.

A research which investigated the impact of psychological empowerment in university faculty members' job engagement in China, (Meng & Sun, 2019) revealed that faculty members over the age of 50 had greater levels of psychological empowerment than those aged 20–30, 31–40, and 41–50 years, demonstrating a positive association between the two variables (Meng & Sun, 2019).

The findings of our study revealed as well that the relationship between psychological empowerment and age group was directly proportional, indicating that as there was an increase in age among women entrepreneurs, there was a greater instance of psychological empowerment.

As the age of an individual increases, the four cognitions associated with Psychological Empowerment also get strengthened as follows: (Meaning, self-determination, competence, and impact).

**Meaning-** With age, an individual sets up more realistic personal expectations and are therefore able to set up a more flexible stance and ideals in regard to certain obligations

**Competency-** An individual gains more experience with age and becomes more skilled; it enhances their self-efficacy, and they are able to effectively complete a task.

**Impact-** An older individual who has high self-efficacy will be able to deliver good quality work which shows strong alignment with organizational goals and hence will have a stronger Impact.

**Self-determination-** An older individual who has more experiences, greater confidence in their abilities, delivers good quality work, and has gained the trust of other employees will have a greater sense of autonomy in making judgements regarding assigned responsibilities at work.

Hence it can be better understood how with age, the four cognitions of psychological empowerment of an individual gets strengthened, which enhances the overall psychological empowerment of an individual.

### Limitations of study:



Firstly, the sample size of 80 women entrepreneurs residing in the United Arab Emirates is relatively small. Secondly, this research only emphasized on women residing in the United Arab Emirates, thus the research findings cannot be generalized. Third, as self-reported questionnaires were used, the results can be susceptible to social desirability bias.

### **Conclusion And Future Study:**

The United Arab Emirates strives towards gender equality and being the hub of investment and innovation, it has seen an increasing number of females pursuing the entrepreneurial path. Previous research states that women entrepreneurs irrespective of nationality find it difficult to maintain work life balance and complain of not being able to spend time and give attention to family and children which eventually leads to psychological stress and physical exhaustion. Past studies assert that psychological empowerment impacts individual performance, entrepreneurial behavior, and enhances levels of innovation & competence.

It is important to understand the correlation between psychological empowerment and family support of female entrepreneurs residing in the United Arab Emirates. By testing the effect of family support on psychological empowerment among female entrepreneurs, this study established that there is a high correlation between the two variables. Secondly, family support leads to psychological empowerment among female entrepreneurs residing in the United Arab Emirates. Most importantly, findings assert that psychological empowerment is directly proportional to the age group the female entrepreneur belongs to.

### **Implication & Future Study**

The current research findings can be used to spread awareness about the importance of family support among the families of female entrepreneurs through programs and workshops. The outcomes of research can be used as a tool to help budding entrepreneurs excel in their journey.

Future researchers could replicate similar studies for male entrepreneurs residing in the United Arab Emirates. A comparative study can also be conducted across different parts of the world to identify, analyze and explain similarities and differences across societies. Future researchers could include a larger sample size in regard to this area of study.

More studies can be conducted to analyze each of the four dimensions of Psychological Empowerment in Women Entrepreneurs, and what measures can be taken to improve each of these dimensions

which will result in the overall enhancement of Psychological Empowerment, which as a consequence will assist the attainment of sustainable development goals (SDG) results such as gender parity, economic development, and social disequilibrium

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