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Entrepreneurship, Innovation and Management Ethics in the Contemporary Economy: From Family and Socioeconomic Determinants to Sustainable Growth

By

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Abstract

This article develops an integrated interpretation of entrepreneurship, innovation and management ethics in the contemporary economy. Its main thesis is that entrepreneurship cannot be adequately understood as an isolated individual disposition, a purely economic mechanism of opportunity recognition, or a narrow managerial technique. Rather, entrepreneurship should be interpreted as a socially embedded, psychologically mediated, knowledge-based, ethically conditioned and institutionally governed form of human agency. In this sense, entrepreneurial activity is situated at the intersection of family communication, socioeconomic determinants, knowledge management, human resource management, innovation, digital value creation, governance and sustainable growth.

The article combines classical and contemporary theories of entrepreneurship, innovation, knowledge management and governance with selected empirical studies by Marcin W. Staniewski and his co-authors. Particular attention is given to the influence of socioeconomic factors on student entrepreneurship, the role of family communication in entrepreneurial success, the mediating function of entrepreneurial self-efficacy, self-esteem and achievement motivation, the relationship between human resource management and innovativeness, the transition from knowledge-management concepts to organisational practice, the ethical aspects of entrepreneurship, the economic effects of corruption, and consumer value creation through digital communication platforms.

The first part analyses entrepreneurship as a socially conditioned and institutionally embedded form of agency. The second part examines the family and psychological determinants of entrepreneurial success. The third part discusses knowledge management and human resource management as foundations of innovation. The fourth part reconstructs the ethical architecture of entrepreneurship. The fifth part situates entrepreneurship within governance, corruption and sustainable development. The sixth part examines digital communication and consumer value creation. The article concludes that sustainable growth requires an integrated model in which entrepreneurship, innovation and ethics are not separate domains but mutually dependent dimensions of responsible economic action.

Keywords: *entrepreneurship; innovation; management ethics; sustainable growth; family communication; entrepreneurial self-efficacy; knowledge management; human resource management; governance; corruption; digital value creation.*

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Introduction

Contemporary management and entrepreneurship studies are increasingly moving beyond narrowly economic models of business activity. The entrepreneur is no longer interpreted only as a profit-oriented individual who identifies opportunities and assumes risk. Rather, entrepreneurial activity is understood as a complex process shaped by knowledge, values, institutions, technologies, social expectations and patterns of communication. This shift corresponds to a broader transformation in management theory: organisations are no longer seen merely as mechanisms of control and coordination, but as social systems in which knowledge, innovation, responsibility and human agency intersect.

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Classical approaches remain indispensable. Schumpeter's theory of economic development understood entrepreneurship as a source of innovation and creative destruction, while Drucker later interpreted innovation and entrepreneurship as disciplined practices that can be learned and managed (Schumpeter, 1934; Drucker, 1985). Kirzner's theory of entrepreneurial alertness, Casson's economic theory of the entrepreneur and Knight's analysis of uncertainty also show that entrepreneurship concerns action under conditions of incomplete knowledge and risk (Knight, 1921; Casson, 1982; Kirzner, 1973). Yet contemporary economic life requires a more synthetic approach. Entrepreneurship is not only a matter of opportunity recognition; it is also a matter of knowledge, family background, human capital, institutional trust, ethical judgement and governance.

This article adopts such an integrated approach. It argues that entrepreneurship, innovation and management ethics should be analysed together because they constitute one field of contemporary economic practice. Innovation without ethics may become destructive. Entrepreneurship without governance may degenerate into opportunism. Knowledge management without human resource management may remain an abstract system. Sustainable growth without institutional integrity may become a rhetorical formula rather than a real development model. Conversely, when entrepreneurship is rooted in knowledge, family support, ethical responsibility and sound governance, it becomes a form of responsible value creation.

This perspective is strongly supported by the empirical and theoretical works of Marcin W. Staniewski and his co-authors. Staniewski and Szopiński's study on the influence of socioeconomic factors on the entrepreneurship of Polish students shows that entrepreneurial intentions and attitudes are shaped not only by individual traits but also by social and economic conditions (Staniewski and Szopiński, 2013). This confirms that entrepreneurship must be analysed in its educational, institutional and socioeconomic context. Student entrepreneurship, in particular, reveals how economic aspirations emerge at the intersection of personal ambition, family background, educational opportunity and labour-market expectations.

Family factors are equally important. Staniewski, Awruk, Leonardi and Słomski demonstrate that family communication influences entrepreneurial success through the mediating role of entrepreneurial self-efficacy (Staniewski et al., 2025). In a related study, they show that family determinants of entrepreneurial success are mediated by self-esteem and achievement motivation (Staniewski et al., 2024). These findings make it possible to interpret entrepreneurship as a biographical and relational process. The entrepreneur is not formed only by the market; he or she is also formed by patterns of communication, confidence, self-evaluation and motivation acquired in family life.

At the organisational level, entrepreneurship and innovation depend on knowledge and human resources. Staniewski's work on the management of human resources in the aspect of innovativeness emphasises that employees are central carriers of creative and innovative capacity (Staniewski, 2011). His earlier article on knowledge management, from concept to practice, shows that knowledge must be translated into organisational routines, practices and systems if it is to become a source of real action (Staniewski, 2002). These ideas correspond to the broader literature on knowledge creation, absorptive capacity and organisational learning, especially the works of Nonaka and Takeuchi, Cohen and Levinthal, Argote, McEvily and Reagans, Davenport and Prusak, and Senge (Nonaka and Takeuchi, 1995; Cohen and Levinthal, 1990; Argote, McEvily and Reagans, 2003; Davenport and Prusak, 1998; Senge, 1990).

Ethics is another indispensable dimension. Staniewski, Słomski and Awruk argue that entrepreneurship must be analysed in ethical terms because entrepreneurial decisions affect persons, communities and institutions (Staniewski, Słomski and Awruk, 2015). Entrepreneurship is therefore not merely an economic activity but a moral practice. This becomes particularly visible in contexts marked by corruption. Abu and Staniewski's empirical study of corruption and domestic savings in Nigeria demonstrates that corruption has measurable economic consequences and affects the institutional conditions of development (Abu and Staniewski, 2022). Corruption is not only a violation of moral norms; it distorts economic incentives, weakens trust and undermines sustainable growth.

Finally, the article situates entrepreneurship in the context of sustainable governance and digital transformation. Alonso Dos Santos, Huertas González-Serrano and Staniewski connect innovation, management and governance with the future of sustainable growth, showing that development requires coordination between economic creativity and institutional responsibility (Alonso Dos Santos, Huertas González-Serrano and Staniewski, 2022). Cruz-Cárdenas, Guadalupe-Lanas, Zabelina, Palacio-Fierro, Velín-Fárez and Staniewski show, in turn, that consumer value can be created through digital communication platforms such as WhatsApp (Cruz-Cárdenas et al., 2019). This indicates that value creation increasingly occurs in networked, relational and digitally mediated spaces.

The aim of this article is therefore to develop an integrated model of entrepreneurship, innovation and management ethics in the contemporary economy. The argument proceeds from the socioeconomic and family determinants of entrepreneurship, through knowledge management and innovativeness, toward ethics, governance, corruption, digital value creation and sustainable growth.

Entrepreneurship as Socially Embedded Agency

Entrepreneurship is often described as an individual act of initiative, risk-taking and opportunity recognition. Such an interpretation is partly correct, but insufficient. Entrepreneurial action always takes place within a social and institutional environment. Individuals do not become entrepreneurs in abstraction from their families, schools,

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universities, labour markets, financial institutions, cultural expectations or legal systems. Entrepreneurship is therefore a form of socially embedded agency.

This insight modifies classical theories of entrepreneurship. Schumpeter's entrepreneur introduces new combinations and becomes the agent of creative destruction (Schumpeter, 1934). Drucker presents entrepreneurship as a practice that can be organised and learned (Drucker, 1985). Kirzner focuses on alertness to opportunities, while Knight emphasises uncertainty and risk-bearing (Knight, 1921; Kirzner, 1973). However, these theories must be supplemented by social and institutional analysis. Opportunity recognition depends not only on personal alertness but also on access to education, social capital, institutional trust and economic expectations.

Staniewski and Szopiński's study on Polish students is particularly important in this regard. Their research shows that socioeconomic factors influence the entrepreneurship of Polish students, which means that entrepreneurial attitudes cannot be explained only by personality or motivation (Staniewski and Szopiński, 2013). Students' willingness to start a business depends on the perceived attractiveness of entrepreneurship, the stability of employment alternatives, access to resources, family experience and expectations concerning future income. In this sense, student entrepreneurship becomes a diagnostic field for understanding how young people interpret economic opportunity.

The importance of socioeconomic determinants also corresponds to Shapero and Sokol's theory of entrepreneurial events, in which entrepreneurial action depends on perceived desirability and perceived feasibility (Shapero and Sokol, 1982). If students perceive entrepreneurship as desirable but not feasible, their intentions may remain abstract. If they perceive it as feasible but socially undesirable or excessively risky, they may choose safer career paths. Staniewski and Szopiński's findings thus show that entrepreneurial readiness is not produced by education alone but by the interaction of education, socioeconomic background and institutional opportunity (Staniewski and Szopiński, 2013).

Baumol's distinction between productive, unproductive and destructive entrepreneurship is also relevant here. Entrepreneurial talent exists in different institutional environments, but the direction of entrepreneurial action depends on incentives (Baumol, 1990). Where institutions reward innovation and productive effort, entrepreneurship contributes to growth. Where institutions reward rent-seeking or corruption, entrepreneurial energy may become socially destructive. This is why entrepreneurship studies must be linked with governance and ethics.

The resource-based view of the firm further enriches this analysis. Barney argues that sustainable competitive advantage depends on resources that are valuable, rare, inimitable and non-substitutable (Barney, 1991). In entrepreneurship, such resources include not only capital, technology and market access but also tacit knowledge, relational trust, family support, ethical reputation and personal resilience. Penrose's theory of the growth of the firm similarly indicates that firms develop through the productive use of internal resources, including managerial knowledge and experience (Penrose, 1959). Entrepreneurial success is therefore grounded in both external opportunity and internal capability.

The socially embedded character of entrepreneurship also has educational implications. Universities should not treat entrepreneurship education merely as training in business-plan writing or market analysis. They should develop interpretive, ethical and practical competencies: opportunity recognition, financial literacy, communication, leadership, responsibility, innovation management and awareness of institutional conditions. Student entrepreneurship requires not only ambition but also a supportive environment in which initiative can become feasible.

Thus, entrepreneurship should be interpreted as a form of socially embedded agency. It begins in the individual but is shaped by family, education, institutions, culture and governance. It is creative, but its creativity requires resources. It is risky, but risk is interpreted through social experience. It is economic, but it always has ethical and institutional consequences.

Family Communication, Self-Efficacy and the Psychology of Entrepreneurial Success

The social embeddedness of entrepreneurship begins at the level of family life. Family is the first environment in which individuals learn trust, autonomy, responsibility, communication and attitudes toward success and failure. It is therefore not merely a private background to later business activity but one of the formative contexts of entrepreneurial agency.

Staniewski, Awruk, Leonardi and Słomski's study on family communication and entrepreneurial success shows that entrepreneurial self-efficacy mediates the relationship between family communication and entrepreneurial outcomes (Staniewski et al., 2025). This is a significant finding because it explains how relational patterns become economic capacities. Family communication does not automatically produce business success. Rather, it shapes the entrepreneur's belief in his or her capacity to act effectively in uncertain and demanding circumstances. Entrepreneurial self-efficacy becomes the psychological bridge between family experience and entrepreneurial performance.

This finding may be interpreted in relation to McClelland's theory of achievement motivation. McClelland argued that the need for achievement is an important factor in economic development (McClelland, 1961). However, contemporary research makes this thesis more relational. Achievement motivation is not simply an innate trait; it is cultivated through communication, expectations, encouragement and models of action. The family may strengthen initiative by supporting autonomy and responsibility, or weaken it by producing fear of failure and dependence.

The related study by Staniewski, Awruk, Leonardi and Słomski on family determinants of entrepreneurial success

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develops this point by showing the mediational role of self-esteem and achievement motivation (Staniewski et al., 2024). Self-esteem gives the future entrepreneur a basic sense of personal worth, while achievement motivation directs action toward goals, persistence and performance. Together, these variables indicate that entrepreneurial success is not only a market outcome but also a psychological and biographical process.

Family communication also influences how individuals interpret failure. In entrepreneurial life, failure is inevitable. It can be interpreted as humiliation, evidence of incompetence or, alternatively, as an opportunity to learn. Families that communicate in a supportive and dialogical way may help individuals develop resilience and openness to experimentation. This is crucial for innovation because innovation requires trial, error, learning and adaptation. In this sense, family communication is indirectly connected with innovative capacity.

The connection between family and entrepreneurship also helps explain why purely economic models of entrepreneurship are insufficient. The entrepreneur is not a disembodied decision-maker. He or she acts from a history of relationships, expectations and internalised values. Staniewski et al. show that family communication and family determinants shape entrepreneurial success through psychological mediators, which means that the entrepreneurial subject is formed before entering the marketplace (Staniewski et al., 2025; Staniewski et al., 2024).

This interpretation does not imply determinism. Family background does not mechanically determine entrepreneurial success. Rather, it provides patterns of interpretation and emotional resources that may support or inhibit action. Entrepreneurs can transform inherited patterns, but they always act from a biographical starting point. For this reason, entrepreneurship education and mentoring should include not only technical knowledge but also self-efficacy, self-reflection, resilience and communication.

The family dimension also links entrepreneurship with ethics. If family communication teaches responsibility, trust and respect, these values may later shape organisational culture. Conversely, if business activity is learned as manipulation, domination or opportunism, such patterns may be reproduced in firms. The moral architecture of entrepreneurship begins earlier than formal organisational ethics. It begins in the communicative practices through which individuals learn how to relate to others.

Thus, entrepreneurial success should be understood as a multidimensional phenomenon. It includes economic performance, but it also includes self-efficacy, self-esteem, achievement motivation, resilience and communicative competence. The studies by Staniewski and his co-authors demonstrate that the family is not peripheral to entrepreneurship. It is one of its anthropological foundations.

Knowledge Management and Human Resource Management as Foundations of Innovation

Innovation is often associated with new technologies, new products and market disruption. However, innovation is also an organisational process that depends on people, knowledge, learning and communication. Without human resources and knowledge management, innovation remains accidental or episodic. Sustainable innovativeness requires organisational structures that support learning, creativity and the transformation of knowledge into action.

Staniewski's article on human resource management in the aspect of innovativeness argues that human resources are central to innovative capacity (Staniewski, 2011). Employees are not merely operational inputs; they are carriers of knowledge, creativity, experience and tacit understanding. This corresponds to the broader human resource management literature. Pfeffer argues that competitive advantage can be built through people, while Huselid demonstrates that human resource management practices affect productivity, turnover and corporate financial performance (Pfeffer, 1994; Huselid, 1995). Becker, Huselid and Ulrich further develop this by linking HR systems with strategy and performance (Becker, Huselid and Ulrich, 2001).

From this perspective, innovation depends on the way organisations recruit, motivate, train and empower employees. Schuler and Jackson show that human resource practices should be linked with competitive strategies, while Appelbaum, Bailey, Berg and Kalleberg demonstrate that high-performance work systems can produce organisational advantage (Schuler and Jackson, 1987; Appelbaum et al., 2000). Staniewski's contribution lies in explicitly connecting human resource management with innovativeness, thereby showing that innovative organisations must build systems that activate employee creativity (Staniewski, 2011).

Knowledge management is the second foundation of innovation. Staniewski's article *Zarządzanie wiedzą: od koncepcji do praktyki działania* presents knowledge management as a transition from theoretical concept to practical organisational implementation (Staniewski, 2002). Knowledge cannot remain a slogan. It must be organised, shared, interpreted and applied. This corresponds to Davenport and Prusak's understanding of knowledge as a fluid mix of experience, values, contextual information and expert insight (Davenport and Prusak, 1998). It also corresponds to Alavi and Leidner's analysis of knowledge management systems, which shows that technology can support knowledge processes but cannot replace social and organisational interpretation (Alavi and Leidner, 2001).

Nonaka and Takeuchi's theory of the knowledge-creating company is especially relevant. They argue that organisational knowledge develops through the interaction between tacit and explicit knowledge (Nonaka and Takeuchi, 1995). Tacit knowledge is personal, experiential and difficult to formalise; explicit knowledge is codified and communicable. Innovative

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organisations are able to convert one form into the other. Staniewski's practical orientation toward knowledge management can be read in this context: knowledge must move from individual experience to organisational practice and from organisational structures back to individual action (Staniewski, 2002).

The concept of absorptive capacity developed by Cohen and Levinthal is also important. Organisations can recognise and use external knowledge only when they possess relevant prior knowledge (Cohen and Levinthal, 1990). This means that innovation depends not only on external information but also on internal learning capability. Argote, McEvily and Reagans similarly emphasise the importance of knowledge transfer, retention and integration in organisations (Argote, McEvily and Reagans, 2003). Senge's learning organisation model also shows that firms must develop systems thinking, shared vision and team learning if they are to adapt creatively (Senge, 1990).

Innovation theory confirms the same point. Abernathy and Clark map innovation as a process that can preserve or destroy existing competencies, while Henderson and Clark show that architectural innovation may disrupt firms even when core components remain familiar (Abernathy and Clark, 1985; Henderson and Clark, 1990). Christensen's theory of disruptive innovation further demonstrates that established firms may fail precisely because they are unable to interpret emerging knowledge and market change (Christensen, 1997). Therefore, innovation is not only technological; it is cognitive and organisational.

Human resource management and knowledge management must therefore be integrated. Employees generate knowledge, but organisations must create structures that allow knowledge to circulate. Knowledge systems are useful, but only if employees are motivated and trusted. Innovation appears where people, knowledge and organisational culture interact. This is why Staniewski's two lines of reflection — HRM and knowledge management — should be read together (Staniewski, 2002; Staniewski, 2011).

An organisation that treats knowledge as data and employees as costs will not be genuinely innovative. An organisation that treats knowledge as a strategic and human resource can create conditions for sustainable innovativeness. Such an organisation develops not only products and processes but also interpretive capacity: the ability to understand change, learn from experience and act responsibly.

Ethical Aspects of Entrepreneurship and Management

Entrepreneurship is not morally neutral. Every entrepreneurial decision affects employees, customers, suppliers, competitors, communities and institutions. Pricing, employment, marketing, taxation, innovation, environmental impact and governance all involve ethical questions. Therefore, entrepreneurship cannot be evaluated only by profitability or growth. It must also be evaluated by responsibility, fairness, transparency and contribution to the common good.

Staniewski, Słomski and Awruk's study on the ethical aspects of entrepreneurship makes this point explicitly. They argue that entrepreneurial activity must be understood in ethical terms because business decisions are always embedded in social relations and moral consequences (Staniewski, Słomski and Awruk, 2015). This approach rejects the reduction of entrepreneurship to technical efficiency. A profitable enterprise may still be ethically defective if it exploits employees, deceives consumers, evades responsibility or damages public trust.

This ethical understanding corresponds to the classical distinction between productive and destructive entrepreneurship. Baumol shows that entrepreneurial activity can be socially productive, unproductive or destructive depending on institutional incentives (Baumol, 1990). Ethics helps determine the direction of entrepreneurial energy. Without ethical norms, creativity can be used for manipulation, rent-seeking or exploitation. With ethical orientation, creativity can become a source of social value and sustainable development.

Management theory also supports this approach. Simon's theory of administrative behaviour shows that organisational decisions are bounded by limited rationality and institutional structures (Simon, 1947). Weick's theory of sensemaking indicates that organisations act through interpretations of ambiguous situations (Weick, 1995). If decision-making and sensemaking are value-laden, then management cannot be ethically neutral. Managers interpret reality, define priorities and shape consequences for others.

Ethical entrepreneurship is also connected with trust. Trust reduces transaction costs, supports cooperation and enables innovation. Williamson's theory of markets and hierarchies shows that economic exchange is shaped by transaction costs and governance structures (Williamson, 1975). When trust is low, contracts become more complex, monitoring increases and cooperation weakens. Ethical conduct is therefore not merely morally desirable; it is economically functional.

Staniewski, Słomski and Awruk's analysis should also be linked with sustainable development. Entrepreneurship that ignores social and environmental responsibility may generate short-term gain but long-term instability (Staniewski, Słomski and Awruk, 2015). Elkington's triple bottom line proposes that business performance should be measured in terms of people, planet and profit (Elkington, 1997). Porter and van der Linde argue that environmental responsibility can stimulate innovation and competitiveness rather than merely impose constraints (Porter and van der Linde, 1995). Hart's natural-resource-based view of the firm similarly indicates that ecological capability can become a strategic resource (Hart, 1995).

Thus, ethical entrepreneurship should not be viewed as external moral decoration. It is part of the architecture of sustainable management. It shapes legitimacy, reputation, trust, employee commitment, customer loyalty and institutional resilience. Ethical failure can destroy value, while ethical credibility can become a strategic asset.

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The ethical dimension also links entrepreneurship with family and education. If family communication shapes self-efficacy and responsibility, and if universities shape entrepreneurial intentions, then ethical entrepreneurship must be cultivated before individuals become business owners. Entrepreneurship education should therefore include not only opportunity recognition and business planning but also moral reasoning, stakeholder responsibility, governance, corruption awareness and sustainability.

In this sense, entrepreneurship is a moral practice of value creation. It creates economic value, but it also creates or destroys social value. It generates innovation, but innovation must be directed toward human and institutional goods. It requires freedom, but freedom must be linked with responsibility.

Governance, Corruption and Sustainable Growth

Sustainable growth requires governance. Innovation and entrepreneurship cannot produce long-term development unless they operate within institutions that support transparency, accountability, trust and responsible coordination. Governance is therefore not merely a public-sector concern. It is a condition of economic life.

Alonso Dos Santos, Huertas González-Serrano and Staniewski emphasise that the future of sustainable growth depends on innovation, management and governance (Alonso Dos Santos, Huertas González-Serrano and Staniewski, 2022). This triad is important because each element corrects the limitations of the others. Innovation creates new possibilities, but without management it may remain chaotic. Management organises resources, but without governance it may serve narrow interests. Governance creates institutional direction, but without innovation it may become rigid. Sustainable growth requires the integration of all three.

Governance theory provides a framework for this integration. Kooiman understands governance as interaction between public and private actors, while Rhodes describes the emergence of governance beyond hierarchical government (Kooiman, 1993; Rhodes, 1996). Stoker defines governance through networks, institutions and collective action, and Ostrom shows that common resources can be governed through rules, participation and trust (Stoker, 1998; Ostrom, 1990). These theories indicate that sustainable economic life cannot be built solely through market mechanisms or state control. It requires complex coordination among firms, public institutions, communities and citizens.

Corruption destroys this coordination. Abu and Staniewski's empirical investigation of the effect of corruption on domestic savings in Nigeria shows that corruption has measurable economic consequences (Abu and Staniewski, 2022). Domestic savings depend on institutional trust, expectations concerning the future and confidence in the economic system. When corruption weakens trust, individuals and firms may reduce formal saving and investment or redirect resources toward informal and defensive strategies.

This confirms that corruption is not merely a legal or moral problem. It is also a macroeconomic and developmental problem. Corruption changes incentives, rewards access rather than productivity, discourages long-term investment and weakens institutional legitimacy. In terms of Baumol's theory, corruption redirects entrepreneurial energy from productive innovation toward unproductive or destructive rent-seeking (Baumol, 1990). Abu and Staniewski's analysis is therefore relevant not only for Nigeria but for any economy in which institutional trust is fragile (Abu and Staniewski, 2022).

The relationship between governance and sustainable development is also visible in environmental management. The World Commission on Environment and Development defined sustainable development as development that meets present needs without compromising the needs of future generations (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987). Elkington later translated sustainability into the triple bottom line of people, planet and profit (Elkington, 1997). Hart and Milstein argue that firms can create sustainable value by integrating environmental and social concerns with strategy (Hart and Milstein, 2003). These perspectives show that sustainability is not an abstract moral ideal but a strategic and institutional challenge.

Alonso Dos Santos, Huertas González-Serrano and Staniewski's editorial can therefore be interpreted as a call for responsible coordination between innovation and governance (Alonso Dos Santos, Huertas González-Serrano and Staniewski, 2022). Contemporary economies need innovation, but innovation must be governed by social responsibility. They need management, but management must be oriented toward sustainable outcomes. They need entrepreneurship, but entrepreneurship must be protected from corruption and destructive incentives.

Governance also affects knowledge and innovation. Teece, Pisano and Shuen's dynamic capabilities theory shows that firms must integrate, build and reconfigure resources in changing environments (Teece, Pisano and Shuen, 1997). However, dynamic capabilities require stable institutional frameworks. Firms cannot invest confidently in innovation if legal systems are unpredictable or corrupt. Similarly, Porter's theory of competitive advantage shows that strategy depends on external conditions, industry structure and positioning (Porter, 1980; Porter, 1985). Governance shapes those conditions.

Sustainable growth is therefore an institutional achievement. It requires entrepreneurs, but also rules. It requires innovation, but also trust. It requires management, but also accountability. It requires markets, but also ethical and legal frameworks. Without governance, entrepreneurship may become opportunistic; without entrepreneurship, governance may become sterile; without ethics, both may become destructive.

Digital Communication, Consumer Value and Networked Innovation

The contemporary economy is increasingly digital, communicative and networked. Value is no longer created

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only inside firms and delivered to passive consumers. It is increasingly co-created through platforms, communities, interactions and digital communication. This transformation has significant implications for entrepreneurship, innovation and management ethics.

Cruz-Cárdenas, Guadalupe-Lanas, Zabelina, Palacio-Fierro, Velín-Fárez and Staniewski's study on consumer value creation through WhatsApp shows that digital communication platforms enable users to create relational, emotional, functional and social value (Cruz-Cárdenas et al., 2019). WhatsApp is not merely a technical tool for message transmission. It becomes a space in which users maintain relationships, coordinate activities, share information, provide emotional support and perform social roles. This means that digital value is embedded in everyday life.

This finding is highly relevant for entrepreneurship. Digital entrepreneurs do not create value only by selling products online. They create communicative ecosystems in which customers participate, interpret, recommend, evaluate and co-create meaning. In this sense, digital entrepreneurship depends on community, trust and interaction. The entrepreneur becomes not only a producer but also a designer of relational spaces.

The study by Cruz-Cárdenas et al. corresponds to broader theories of information technology and digital transformation. Davis's technology acceptance model emphasises perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use as determinants of technology adoption (Davis, 1989). Brynjolfsson and Hitt argue that information technology improves performance when combined with organisational transformation (Brynjolfsson and Hitt, 2000). Westerman, Bonnet and McAfee show that digital transformation requires leadership, capabilities and strategic alignment (Westerman, Bonnet and McAfee, 2014). These approaches indicate that technology alone does not produce value. Value arises when technology is embedded in organisational and social practices.

Digital communication also resonates with von Hippel's theory of user innovation. Users often adapt technologies in ways not fully anticipated by firms (von Hippel, 1988). Rogers's diffusion theory also shows that innovations spread through communication channels and social systems (Rogers, 1962). WhatsApp-based value creation is therefore an example of how users participate in innovation through everyday communicative practice (Cruz-Cárdenas et al., 2019).

However, digital value creation also raises ethical questions. Platforms can strengthen relationships, but they can also enable manipulation, misinformation, surveillance, privacy violations and emotional dependence. Digital entrepreneurship therefore requires ethical management. Transparency, consent, data protection and respect for users are not optional additions. They are conditions of sustainable digital trust.

The digital economy also intensifies the importance of knowledge management. Information circulates rapidly, but information is not the same as knowledge. Organisations must interpret digital signals, learn from user behaviour and transform data into meaningful action. Choo's concept of the knowing organization, Brown and Duguid's analysis of the social life of information, and Davenport and Prusak's theory of working knowledge all indicate that knowledge emerges through interpretation and practice rather than through data accumulation alone (Choo, 1998; Brown and Duguid, 2000; Davenport and Prusak, 1998).

Thus, digital entrepreneurship connects all the themes of this article. It requires innovation, but innovation is communicative. It requires management, but management is relational. It requires knowledge, but knowledge is interpretive. It requires ethics, because trust is fragile in digital environments. It contributes to sustainable growth only when digital value creation serves human relationships and responsible economic development.

Toward an Integrated Model of Ethical, Innovative and Sustainable Entrepreneurship

The analysis above allows the construction of an integrated model of entrepreneurship, innovation and management ethics. This model includes seven interdependent dimensions.

First, entrepreneurship is socioeconomically conditioned. Staniewski and Szopiński show that the entrepreneurship of Polish students is influenced by socioeconomic factors (Staniewski and Szopiński, 2013). This means that entrepreneurship policy must address education, opportunity, access to resources and institutional support.

Second, entrepreneurship is psychologically and relationally formed. Family communication influences entrepreneurial success through entrepreneurial self-efficacy, while family determinants operate through self-esteem and achievement motivation (Staniewski et al., 2025; Staniewski et al., 2024). Entrepreneurship therefore begins before the market, in the formation of agency, confidence and motivation.

Third, innovation is grounded in human resources. Staniewski's work on HRM and innovativeness shows that people are central to organisational creativity (Staniewski, 2011). This is consistent with Pfeffer, Huselid and Becker, Huselid and Ulrich, who connect people-management practices with performance and competitive advantage (Pfeffer, 1994; Huselid, 1995; Becker, Huselid and Ulrich, 2001).

Fourth, innovation is grounded in knowledge management. Staniewski's account of knowledge management from concept to practice indicates that knowledge becomes valuable only when translated into organisational action (Staniewski, 2002). Nonaka and Takeuchi, Davenport and Prusak, Cohen and Levinthal, and Argote, McEvily and Reagans provide the broader theoretical framework for this claim (Nonaka and Takeuchi, 1995; Davenport and Prusak, 1998; Cohen and Levinthal, 1990; Argote, McEvily and Reagans, 2003).

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Fifth, entrepreneurship requires ethics. Staniewski, Słomski and Awruk show that entrepreneurship must be understood in ethical terms because entrepreneurial decisions have social and moral consequences (Staniewski, Słomski and Awruk, 2015). Ethical entrepreneurship creates trust and legitimacy.

Sixth, sustainable growth requires governance and institutional integrity. Alonso Dos Santos, Huertas González-Serrano and Staniewski connect sustainable growth with innovation, management and governance (Alonso Dos Santos, Huertas González-Serrano and Staniewski, 2022). Abu and Staniewski show that corruption weakens economic development by affecting domestic savings and institutional trust (Abu and Staniewski, 2022).

Seventh, contemporary value creation is increasingly digital and relational. Cruz-Cárdenas et al. demonstrate that WhatsApp enables consumers to create value through everyday communication (Cruz-Cárdenas et al., 2019). This means that entrepreneurship must be understood not only as production but also as the design of communicative and relational value spaces.

Together, these dimensions show that entrepreneurship is not merely a business function. It is an integrated human, organisational and institutional practice. The entrepreneur is a person formed by family and society, acting within institutions, using knowledge, managing people, creating innovation, communicating digitally and bearing ethical responsibility. Sustainable entrepreneurship therefore requires an anthropology of agency, a theory of knowledge, a practice of innovation, an ethics of responsibility and a governance framework.

Conclusion

The contemporary economy requires a broad and integrated understanding of entrepreneurship. The reduction of entrepreneurship to profit-seeking, opportunity recognition or individual ambition is no longer sufficient. Entrepreneurship is shaped by socioeconomic factors, family communication, psychological resources, knowledge management, human resource management, ethical responsibility, governance, corruption, digital communication and sustainable development.

This article has argued that entrepreneurship, innovation and management ethics form one coherent field of analysis. Staniewski and Szopiński's study of Polish students shows that entrepreneurship is socioeconomically embedded. Staniewski, Awruk, Leonardi and Słomski's studies show that family communication, self-efficacy, self-esteem and achievement motivation shape entrepreneurial success. Staniewski's works on HRM and knowledge management show that innovation depends on people and knowledge. Staniewski, Słomski and Awruk's ethical analysis shows that entrepreneurship must be morally evaluated. Alonso Dos Santos, Huertas González-Serrano and Staniewski show that sustainable growth depends on innovation, management and governance. Abu and Staniewski show that corruption weakens the institutional conditions of development. Cruz-Cárdenas et al. show that digital communication enables new forms of consumer value creation.

The final conclusion is that sustainable entrepreneurship requires integration. It requires personal agency, but also family and education. It requires innovation, but also knowledge and human resources. It requires markets, but also governance. It requires growth, but also ethics. It requires digital tools, but also trust and responsibility. Such a model allows entrepreneurship to become not merely a mechanism of economic expansion but a practice of responsible value creation oriented toward sustainable growth.

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