

## **Family Motivation under COVID-19**

Who is worth our effort after the “hostile forces of nature”?

An evolutionary explanation of family motivation in facing COVID-19

### **AUTHOR INFORMATION**

Feifan Yang

Department of Human Resource Management

College of Business

Shanghai University of Finance and Economics

China

Email: feifan159@outlook.com

Zhijun Chen

Department of Human Resource Management

College of Business

Shanghai University of Finance and Economics

China

Email: chen.zhijun@mail.shufe.edu.cn

Rongwei Chu\*

Department of Marketing

School of Management

Fudan University

China

Email: rongweic@fudan.edu.cn

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Yahua Cai

Department of Human Resource Management

College of Business

Shanghai University of Finance and Economics

China

Email: [cai.yahua@mail.shufe.edu.cn](mailto:cai.yahua@mail.shufe.edu.cn)

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Correspondence about this paper should be addressed to Rongwei Chu, Department of Marketing, School of Management, Fudan University, China. Email: [rongweic@fudan.edu.cn](mailto:rongweic@fudan.edu.cn)

## **Abstract**

Based on an evolutionary perspective and more specifically the inclusive fitness theory, we predicted that the “hostile force of nature” (i.e., COVID-19) led people to care more about their families by increasing work efforts, as an extension to the understanding of employee work motivation in facing events threatening their basic needs and survival. We tested this prediction with a large-scale field survey (n=3869) based on Chinese employees during the recent outbreak of COVID-19. In line with our prediction, employees who perceived more threats from COVID-19 reported stronger family motivation, which further led to greater work effort. Moreover, this chain of relationship was moderated by their financial worry such that it was stronger when individuals’ financial worry was higher. We then discuss the implications of our study, accordingly.

**Keywords:** *COVID-19; family motivation; work effort; financial worry; evolutionary perspective*