

Motivations and Performance Conditions for Immigrant Entrepreneurship

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Abstract

The growing number and importance of immigrants, and particularly immigrant entrepreneurs (IEs), deserves more attention from international business practitioners and scholars. Their integration within western host countries is increasingly becoming an international issue. Immigrants can be a source of socioeconomic vitality. However, the positive potential of immigration can only be realized if inter alia entrepreneurial integration into host societies is successful. Our objective is to generate a theoretical framework for understanding the factors influencing immigrants' performance. We use qualitative research with IEs in Canada to argue that the performance of IEs depends in large part on their motivation to perform into their host country, which is largely explained by their motivation to create business. We derive from the qualitative data four different types of immigrant entrepreneur, and suggest that the type will determine the performance of the immigrant. The relationship between the motivation to create and the motivation to perform as well as the relationship between the motivation to perform and the performance is moderated by "strategy", "commitment" and "opportunity", such that the effects of these, in turn, vary with type. Recognition of the types of IE and the moderating factors will be valuable for practitioners, as well as opening up new investigation avenues for academics.

Keywords: immigrant entrepreneur, motivation to create, motivation to perform, performance, strategy, opportunity, commitment.

Introduction

With immigration projected to account for all population and labour force growth in Canada by 2031 [1], both small and large cities are facing pressure to attract immigrants to counter aging trends in the population and boost economic productivity. As we seek to understand the nature of motivation with its conditions to performance, momentum is also growing to study how immigrant entrepreneurs (IEs) develop. Therefore, integration of ethnic entrepreneurship initiatives in a formal urban economy is needed in order to ensure a sustainable development and to benefit from market expansion opportunities.

Empirical research on the seedbed factors for successful ethnic entrepreneurship has certainly not reached a stage of solid conceptual modelling. Although Chrysostome [2] clarified the success factors of necessity immigrant entrepreneurs, most of the research has been rather

fragmented and sometimes qualitative in nature, but not necessarily addressing in particular behavioural and motivational issues from a dynamic perspective.

There has been debate as to whether the changing role of immigrants' motivation is a new conducive phenomenon to performance. If so, what factors influence the performance of IEs? We question the role of motivation as an important resource for entrepreneurship [3] and how it intervenes in a performance process. While high levels of motivations foster entrepreneurial success, they are no guaranty of good business prospects. Hence, our objective is to generate a theoretical framework for understanding the factors influencing entrepreneurial performance of foreign born Canadians, a model that can serve as a theoretical foundation for research that will focus on explaining the performance as a dynamic process. Since this is an exploratory study, we start with the presentation of our methodology. We then scrutinize the IEs' own accounts of the link between their motivation to create business, their efforts to perform and their performance in the host country. A typology of IEs according to their motivation to create is offered, which will be valuable to researchers, international entrepreneurs and international businesses. Accordingly, we argue that the typology helps us to better understand the likely performance of their efforts to perform. Finally, we conclude with theoretical and practical contributions and implications.

Method

Sample and Context

This is an inductive theory development paper. Consistent with grounded theory [4], our sample was non-randomly selected. Our objective is to generate a theoretical framework [5] for understanding the factors influencing Canadian immigrants' performance within the entrepreneurial process. Since Canadian Immigration Citizenship is not allowed to give out contact information for registered immigrants, compiling our sample was a challenge. Therefore, we adopted a snowballing approach [6] in which some IEs led us to others (who fitted our criteria) through their personal contacts. This enabled us to have the greatest diversity possible, in terms, for instance, of nationality and profession. These IEs were the ideal source of information about the reasons influencing their performance, which is at the heart of our main research question. Our theoretical framework developed principally from interviews with 13 IEs.

Data collection

Following Shah and Corley [7], we conducted in-depth, semi-structured interviews so as to have a deeper understanding of the immigrant entrepreneurship phenomenon from the point of view of those experiencing it. We progressively built up the themes used in the interview guide, based on empirical work on motivations of migrant entrepreneurship in Greece [8].

Data analysis

Through an iterative process of analysis and review, we structured the data by recurrent patterns and organized them into analytical themes [4, 6]. Data were analyzed, using the QSR NVivo package.

So, we performed the coding based on the conceptual framework and the existing literature, the combination of similarities, the comparison subjects and the establishment of categories to make sense to the information collected. Results were verified by the research assistant and two supervisors and were then compared to the existing literature.

Table 1: IEs' sample characteristics

Interview number	Origin	Education	Industry	Employees (number)	Age	Gender	Marital Status	Date arrival in Canada	In business for
IE 1	Algeria	University	Convenience store	2	50	M	married	1985	10 years
IE 2	Lebanon	University	Garage	2 à 4	60	M	married	1984	20 years
IE 3	Palestine	College	Retail Sale Perfumery	1 (associate)	35	F	married	1986	10 years
IE 4	Ghana	University	Multi-service	4	40	F	married	1991	20 years
IE 5	Haiti	University	Convenience store	3	60	M	married	1972	25 years
IE 6	Ghana	High School	Grocery store	7	53	M	married	1986	18 years
IE 7*	Tunisia	College	Driving School	7	38	M	married	2002	13 years
IE 8*	Tunisia	College	Driving School	6	38	M	married	2002	13 years
IE 9	India	High School	Farm Contractor	>20	58	M	married	1990	15 years
IE 10	India	High School	Farm Contractor	>25	35	M	married	1995	12 years
IE 11	India	High School	Farm Contractor	>15	45	M	married	1990	12 years
IE 12	Lebanon	College	Clothing & footwear	2	50	M	married	1995	16 years
IE 13	Italy	College	Footwear	3	68	M	married	1976	48 years

M: male, F: female; (*) IE 7 and IE 8 represent an immigrant entrepreneur who created two successive driving schools, the one in the enclave market and the other in the mainstream market respectively.

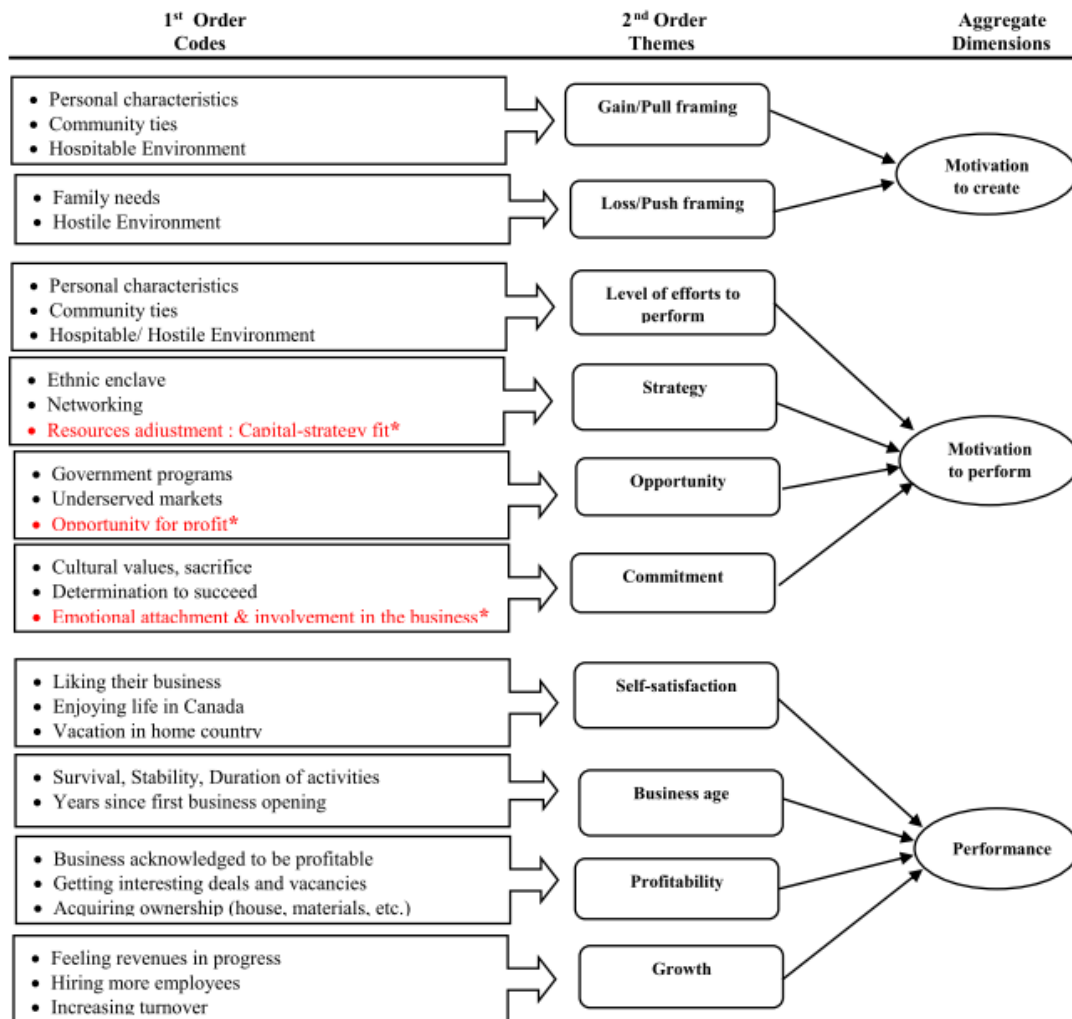
Figure 1 offers an overview of our data structure. Data analysis followed Gioia et al.'s [9] recommendations for qualitative rigor and adopted a three-step process. In the first-order analysis, we identified 28 codes using the IEs' own terms. In a second-order analysis, we identified ten theoretical themes. In a third step, we aggregated these categories into three theoretical dimensions: motivation to create, motivation to perform and performance. We begin our discussion of the results by focusing on motivation to create.

Results

Motivation to create.

We found that the creation decision was indeed at the core of the IEs' story. Business creation presents specific challenges for IEs [10, 11]. In relation to the envisioned profession (entrepreneur), they were motivated by [5 sets of factors] the cultural factors such as immigrants' community ties, the individual characteristics such as opportunity for being independent and family factors, usually survival needs alongside with market conditions of the host environment. In relation to their previous occupation, they left for human factors, which included among others experience and education (poor working conditions and undervalued diploma did not enable to face a hostile environment and economic problems). The reasons behind creation may of course be a combination of factors, and will be inserted in the personal true story of immigrants. These motives are similar to those commonly found in the literature on self-employed triggers and the creation of IEs small enterprises [8, 12].

Figure 1: Overview of data structure



Legend: (*) = acting as downstream specific component of moderator

Following Cerdin, Diné, and Brewster [13], we adapted their fourfold migration classification into a classification of the business creation decision, in which the motivation of IEs can be understood as a problem of positive (gain view) framing and negative (loss view) framing. Positive or gain framing refers to IEs’ hopes of gaining something from the envisioned profession [13], internal experiences (motives) that stimulate the trends of approach, as well as external events that attract the individual to engage in a sequence of actions [14]. Negative or loss framing refers to IEs fears of losing something [13] in their previous work because of the creation (such as social and professional status) and to internal experiences (motives) that stimulate the trends of avoidance, as well as external events that repel the individual to do not engage in a sequence of actions [14]. When IEs frame their gains and losses, they evaluate the level of risk involved in their decision to create. Gain framing refers to the perception that the risk of creating is worthwhile (an opportunity), whereas loss framing refers to the perception that

the risk of creating is not worth taking [13] (a threat) but intenders have no choice [15] (Figure 2, typology).

In the same vein, motivations to enter business ownership are often grouped into two categories; referred to as push versus pull factors [16]. Pull factors focus on the positive aspects of self-employment, which turn it into an attractive endeavor, entered into by choice [17] - what De Freitas [16] calls mobility motives. Push factors, in contrast, explain entry into self-employment as a last resort, caused by one's exclusion from the primary job market [18] - what De Freitas [16] calls escape motives. Individual characteristics and the geographic area in which one is located can also act as push or pull factors [15], or both of the two. This motivation perspectives can also lead to classify business creation.

Thus, the four types of business creation in our typology are felicitous creation, desperate creation, chance creation and dream creation. Given the space constraint, from the data analyzed we can unfortunately only show limited rather than full or genuine extracts.

Figure 2: Typology of IEs according to their motivation to create business. Adapted from [13]

GAIN or PULL FRAMING	Strong	Dream creation	Felicitous creation
	Weak	Chance creation	Desperate creation
		Weak	Strong
		LOSS or PUSH FRAMING	

Felicitous creation applies to IEs with strong gain and loss framing. These IEs (2, 15% of our sample) were pushed from their previous occupational activities, but at the same time were very attracted to creating business: they estimated that their gains and their losses would both be high as a result of the business creation. As there were for them strong reasons to leave their former occupations and to expect significant gains from creating small business in Canada, the risk of creating was perceived as worthwhile. Such is the case, for instance, of IE2 and IE 8.

At work ... I noticed I was taking more and more responsibilities and considering my qualifications, I felt I was underpaid and therefore could make a better living by working on my own account (IE8)

... my supervisor did not give me enough work corresponding to my abilities ...did not allow any autonomy ... I took the risk of leaving the job and starting my own company. My family wanted me to earn more money because I was able of doing so ... (IE2)

Desperate creation concerns IEs who perceive the gains from business creation as weak and the losses as strong (weak pull framing, strong push framing). Business creation came for these IEs (4, 31% of our sample) as a result of being pushed from their situation in the host country, meaning it was not entirely their decision to create. These individuals do not want to be entrepreneurs particularly, but had to do something. Even though they expected the risk to be too high, but these individuals felt they had little choice to create. That was for instance the case for IE4, IE5, IE6 and IE7.

After completing my studies, I found myself faced with the reality of life working in a factory... Leaving this job meant losing all the achievements of this job while I don't know what will happen tomorrow. It was

really risky but [I had] no choice. At least it gave me the opportunity to take care of my family in due course. (IE4)

I was working 2 jobs at the time and booked only weekends to step in self-employment (food deliveries to my compatriots)... although the increasing number of compatriots finally convinces me, I talked a lot with my wife and greatly hesitated in making decision to really start my business. (IE6)

Chance creation concerns situations where IEs perceive both their gains and their losses from business creation to be low (weak pull and push framing). For these IEs (3, 23% of our sample) the chance to start-up a business arose, and they took it. There were no significant factors stimulating them to enter, nor was there any strong reason attracting them into entrepreneurship. However, they thought that, although the issues involved in creating, the opportunity to undertake business should be seized, since there was at least some benefit to be gained from it (language skills, a job experience, etc.) and few losses. Thus the risk might be worth it. Such is the case, for instance, of IE9, IE10 and IE11.

My father is a great trader who travels across Asia and Africa. ...I didn't think I was losing a lot in attempting to work alone ... Even if unsuccessful, I still have the option of going back to work with him. (IE11)

Dream creation concerns IEs with weak push/loss framing and strong pull/gain framing. These IEs (4, 31% of our sample) had no particular reason to create a business in their host country, but they were highly attracted into entrepreneurship, framing their business creation mainly in terms of gain. They had "dreamed" of entering entrepreneurship, expecting that the risk would almost undoubtedly be worthwhile. So, they approached the business creation with confidence". They were looking forward to the experience, and genuinely happy to become businessman/woman. IE1, IE3, IE12 and IE13 are examples of this type.

I left a good job ... I have nothing to lose by trying, quite the opposite, by creating my small business I realize the childhood dream of doing as my father in Algeria ... proud to become a business man in Canada. (IE1)

Motivation to perform

The motivation to perform refers to the extent to which IEs are stimulated to make efforts to achieve desired outcomes according to their goals, such as intention to grow the new venture [19]. From our interviews, we discerned a relationship between the motivation to create a business in Canada and the motivation to perform after business entry. Thus the different categories of IEs showed different motivations through their level of efforts. That is depending on the intention to grow and the growth potential versus stagnating (opportunity), uncertainty and resources (strategy) as well.

The IEs who undertook a *dream creation* display the highest motivation to perform overall. Their pull/gain framing is very strong, while simultaneously they have very little to lose: They will do whatever they can to make their dream become reality, socializing with native Canadian people (suppliers, customers), learning the culture and the language and will stop at nothing to understand their business environment. The case of IE1 and IE13, as an Italian shoes sale manager noted:

When I opened one month after a shoe store, I used Giorgio Armani Trademark [introducing new fashion in Canada]...for 7-8 years before I received a formal notice claiming to change the Trademark. (IE13)

The interviews show that IEs who undertake a *felicitous or chance creation* also have a high motivation to perform in Canada, although not as high as dream IEs. For both these types of entrepreneurs, pull framing and push framing work together in the same direction. In felicitous creation both are strong, and in chance creation both are weak. Thus they are positioned at an intermediary level between dream creation and desperate creation in terms of their level of efforts to perform. Unlike dream migrants, felicitous and chance entrepreneurs focus their performance efforts in one particular area, which can be professional or personal. Entrepreneurs claimed to stand on learning marketing by networking (IE2) or strong ethnic ties (IE9, IE10) whereas others pretend experiment gaining trust from farmers for the purpose of gaining more contracts (IE8).

IEs who undertake a *desperate creation* have little motivation to perform in Canada. They feel that their losses are more than their gains. Being pushed from their last occupation into business brings substantial losses, for example, in terms of mentors, friends, and workmates, or a satisfactory professional situation that they leave behind (maybe also in home country). They have no other choice but to accept substantial losses through their business creation, which results in their making very little or no effort to perform. As a Ghanaian businesswoman noted:
[...] born to a well-to-do Ghana family. Here, I came face to face with life. If I don't do it, nobody will do it for me. (IE4)

Therefore, on the basis of these interviews with the IEs, we can advance the following proposition:

Proposition 1: IEs will be motivated to perform depending on the balance and extent of the perceived gains vs the perceived losses of being an entrepreneur. The more negative the balance between perceived gains and losses (weak perception of gain and strong perception of loss), the lower the motivation of IEs to perform. Therefore IEs who undertake a desperate creation are likely to be less motivated to perform than IEs who undertake a chance or felicitous creation, and very much less likely to be motivated to perform than those who undertake a dream creation.

Moderating role of Strategy, Opportunity and Commitment

Alain Fayolle reported new venture creation as a strategic and dynamic decision/action process triggered by a change in the IPISC, individual's perceived instantaneous strategic configuration [20]. An IPISC results from the combination of three sets of perceptions. The first one relates to the *goals and objectives* underpinning individual's aspirations, the second concerns the individual's *perceived resources and skills*, and the third relates to the *perceived opportunities and threats* of the environment. The IPISC model amounts to applying a traditional strategic analysis process to new venture creation, led by an individual with bounded rationality. These changes in perception are what makes individuals go through various stages in their perception of new venture creation: indifference-propensity-action [21].

Our interviews indicated that three variables moderate the relationship between motivation to create and motivation to perform: *strategy, opportunity* and *commitment*. These variables also moderate the relationship between motivation to perform and performance. These are included in our framework for understanding the performance of IEs (Figure 3), which we explore in more detail once we have examined these three variables.

Strategy

Balancing two cultures can offer opportunities as well as challenges. Nascent immigrant entrepreneurs, for example, immediately face a product/market strategic choice that may determine the success of their ventures, enclave strategy versus dominant strategy: either to pursue a strategy that focuses on the niche represented by their ethnic enclave, and thereby benefit from a distinct competitive advantage over nonimmigrants, or instead to address their new country's dominant marketplace [22].

What led to the decision to create has an impact on the efforts of IEs to perform. Their motivation to perform is likely to increase when relatively their goals they have resources whose can positively afford their strategic choice, and likely to decrease when they do not master the resources in line with their strategic choice. We found that this varies with business creation type. As we could not collect data on original strategies (as [23] and, [22] did), we relied instead on the extent of the IE's "resource" as a proxy.

Ethnic strategies emerge from the interaction of opportunities and group characteristics, as ethnic groups adapt to the resources made available in opportunity structures and attempt to carve out their own niches (as ethnic groups adapt to their environments) [23]. The creation and business management by immigrants are generally performed using mainly the resources raised in the reference group. Creation strategy aims to the first-level result of the entrepreneurial outcome, to which motivation to create leads. Performance strategy aims to achieve the second-level process outcome, to which motivation to perform is committed [19].

In the first-level stage, effective "enclave strategies" are premised on the entrepreneur's strong ties and social capital in the ethnic community, whereas effective "dominant market strategies" require human capital that can build weak tie networks and generate economic capital from the dominant local community [22]. It is argued that necessity immigrant entrepreneurs whom the ethnic resources are their prerogative [2] implement enclave strategy. As such, on the one hand, *felicitous* and *desperate* entrepreneurs may be more likely than the two other types to pursue enclave strategy. On the other hand, *dream* and *felicitous* entrepreneurs supposedly may be more likely to follow dominant strategy. Both weak levels of pull and push framing prevent *chance* entrepreneurs to perform well opportunity or necessity entrepreneurship.

For *felicitous* IEs, who reflect on their creation in terms of strong pull/gain and strong push/loss framing, resources increase the motivation/performance relationship slightly, as they are somewhat accessed to. A *Lebanon auto-mechanic*, who was prepared to make an effort to perform through numerous interactions with Haitian people, signed up for an advanced ongoing training in car mechanics course as a result of positive surprises encountered in the new profession in Canada:

After my professional qualification, I opted for a continuous learning at Parity committee of the automotive services industry in Montréal ... in order to update my expertise and to boost my career...Customer deserves good service, good respect, good price! (IE2)

Drawing from our interviews, we propose that:

Proposition 2a: The relationship between IEs' motivation to create and their motivation to perform is moderated by the degree to which their (pre-entrepreneurial) strategy converge the market reality. For IEs with high pull/gain framing (*felicitous* and *dream* entrepreneurs), inaccurate strategic choice (resource for a market access) will strongly diminish the efforts to

perform, while accurate choice will slightly increase them. For IEs with low pull/gain framing (*chance* and *desperate* entrepreneurs), the accurate strategic choice will strongly increase the efforts to perform, while inaccurate strategic choice will slightly diminish them.

Since the resources and opportunities available to a person must to some extent dictate the likelihood of behavioural achievement [24], the relationship between motivation and performance is predictable [25]. Accordingly, even if immigrants hold necessary resources for creation, in the second-level process only specific combinations of capital endowments and strategy are likely to result in venture success [21]. These authors address it in term of configurational “fit” between capital and strategy. Thus, they defined two configurations or “ideal types”: (1) high economic and high human capital, combined with weak ties outside the ethnic community and a dominant market strategy; (2) high social capital, combined with strong ties within the ethnic community and an enclave strategy. Consistent with our preceding data reasoning, *dream* and *chance* entrepreneurs may be more likely to correspond to ideal type 1 while *felicitous* and *desperate* entrepreneurs may be more likely to match the ideal type 2. For *felicitous* IEs, who reflect on their creation in terms of strong pull/gain and strong push/loss framing, doing for a better result, resources increase the motivation-performance relationship slightly, as they strategically adjust the process somewhat. *A Tunisian driving school entrepreneur*, who was prepared to make an effort to perform through license purchase and interactions with non-immigrant people, signed up for a new driving school as a result of brightly inspired capital-fit in Canada:

Since I run Technic business [franchise]...I hired non-immigrant instructors but the secretary is immigrant, I pay more now and the price is higher than in the first place...majority of customers are non-ethnic... (IE8).

Drawing from our interviews, therefore we propose that:

Proposition 2b: The relationship between IEs’ motivation to perform and their performance is moderated by the degree to which their *strategy fits the specific configuration*. For IEs with high loss framing (*felicitous* and *desperate* entrepreneurs), configuration fit will strongly increase the performance, while a misfit will considerably diminish it. For IEs with low loss framing (*chance* and *dream* entrepreneurs), configuration fit will strongly increase the performance, while a misfit will greatly (*dream*) or slightly (*chance*) diminish it.

Opportunity

Our interviews also shed light on the link between opportunity and IEs’ motivation to perform. IEs who discover and feel excited by entrepreneurial opportunities are likely to be more motivated to perform than those who feel they miss out on opportunity in dealing with the process of performance.

To explain the presence of entrepreneurial opportunities, Eckhardt and Shane [26] first define what they are and contrast them with other opportunities for profit. This dichotomy emerged through our interviews, IEs associated opportunity with creation and performance. Since an opportunity-based perspective on entrepreneurship may explain many parts of the entrepreneurial process [26], interviewees pointed two stages where opportunity intervened. Depending on when discovery, evaluation, and exploitation occur in the process, while entrepreneurial opportunities enable entrepreneurs to act (create business), opportunities for profit allow to obtain and use resources in the search for profit.

Entrepreneurial opportunities (*upstream opportunity*) were found reinforcing business project feasibility and hastening its creation. When IEs strongly frame their creation in terms of push/loss (*felicitous* and *desperate* IEs), entrepreneurial opportunities significantly strengthen the relationship between motivation to create and motivation to perform, as they allow them to compensate for the loss of their previous career. A felicitous IE, a Lebanese mechanical manager, increased his efforts to perform when he discovered opportunity to take up government-funded training that enabled him afterwards to buy an initial business:

I was advised by Canadian immigration service to complete a vocational training program geared to underserved jobs such as auto mechanic and catering sector... I chose auto mechanic sector. (IE2)

When IEs frame it in terms of weak loss (*dream* and *chance* IEs), entrepreneurial opportunities somewhat strengthen the relationship between motivation to create and motivation to perform, those actors need more tangible opportunity to act.

Therefore we propose:

Proposition 3a: The relationship between IEs' motivation to create and their motivation to perform is moderated by opportunity, such that positive conjecture about the opportunity increases the motivation to perform. When push/loss framing is high (*felicitous* and *desperate* entrepreneurs), entrepreneurial opportunities significantly strengthen the relationship between motivation to create and motivation to perform, whereas when push/loss framing is low (*dream* and *chance* entrepreneurs) such opportunity will have less impact.

Relatedly and on a further stage, opportunities for profit (downstream opportunity) can provide openings for success. If IEs align resources necessary for expansion, and the environment offer suitable growth opportunities, this can result in performance-related pay [25]. When IEs strongly frame their creation in terms of push/loss (*felicitous* and *desperate* IEs), opportunities for profit significantly strengthen the relationship between motivation to perform and performance, as it allows them to compensate for the loss of their preceding employment in the host country.

When profitable conjectures about an opportunity “prove correct, entrepreneurs earn entrepreneurial profit, but when they prove incorrect, entrepreneurs incur entrepreneurial loss” [26, p.339]. According to Eckhardt and Shane, “it is the possession of idiosyncratic information that leads to the existence and identification of entrepreneurial opportunities, - opportunities to obtain and use resources in the search for profit” [26, p.345].

Certainly, environmental circumstances can create an opportunity for entrepreneurial profit, as a felicitous IE, a Lebanese garage keeper, increased his efforts to perform during the major ice storm in Eastern Canada (1998), Quebec offered him a winter exceptional opportunity accompanied by many strong damaged cars to repair:

With the ice storm...Yes ... I won the lottery... car accidents and repairs (accidents with a repair cost of over \$500) from there that I earned money to do many things: I became a car dealer... I started out business as a small mechanic, from there it became mechanical garage, body repair, painting... I do all of this.

Therefore we propose:

Proposition 3b: The relationship between IEs' motivation to perform and their performance is moderated by opportunity (for profit), such that positive conjecture about the opportunity increases the performance. When push/loss framing is high (*felicitous* and *desperate* entrepreneurs), opportunities for profit significantly strengthen the relationship between

motivation to perform and performance, whereas when push/loss framing is low (*dream* and *chance* entrepreneurs) such opportunities will have less impact.

Commitment

From the iron cage perspective market disadvantages theory, Chrysostom's [2] theoretical explanations of necessity immigrant entrepreneurship propose determination and commitment to succeed as survival factors, since self-employment is the ultimate job alternative.

Proposing a dynamic model of new venture creation structured around the concept of commitment, Bruyat [28] argued commitment may be partial or total. Commitment is considered total when a stage has been reached in the process that makes going back impossible. Once fully committed to the process, the individual will go through with his or her project, as disengagement costs will appear too high [29]. This type of commitment examined in the Fayolle's et al. [29] work relates to *knowledge* and *resources* that are specific to the process whereas those depicted by Allen and Meyer [30] are *affective commitment*, which refers to the emotional attachment and involvement in the organization; *continuance commitment*, referring to the awareness of the costs associated with leaving the organization; and *normative commitment*, when referring to the feeling of moral obligation to stay with the organization [2].

Hence, on the one hand and in addition to strategy and opportunity our interviews shed light on the link between commitment and IEs' motivation to perform. IEs who are committed are likely to be more motivated to perform than those who feel less engaged in the performance process.

For *felicitous* IEs, - who reflect on their creation in terms of strong pull/gain and strong push/loss framing, they expect a lot from their new profession, even while feeling that they have lost a lot in their past work - commitment increases the motivation-performance relationship slightly, as they are somewhat accessed to knowledge and resources. Knowledge motivates the individual to make efforts [31], this happened to a Lebanese garage IE:

I have finished the training as the first-class student... why? For two reasons: I was in charge of a family [and] I wanted to learn a business. So, I took it upon myself to gain a good education and to turn my learning into a business. So I learnt thoroughly... in the class...at home. (IE2)

Therefore, we propose:

Proposition 4a: The relationship between IEs' motivation to create and their motivation to perform is moderated by upstream commitment, such that intense commitment increases the motivation to perform. When loss framing is high (*felicitous* and *desperate* migrants), commitment significantly strengthen the relationship between motivation to create and motivation to perform, whereas when loss framing is low (*dream* and *chance* migrants) such commitment will have less impact.

On the other hand, interviewees reported the link between commitment and IEs' performance in addition to strategy and opportunity.

From a business success perspective through necessity entrepreneurship, *felicitous* and *desperate* entrepreneurs may be more likely than the two other types to apply knowledge and

resources to opportunity for more performance. While through opportunity entrepreneurship, *dream* and *felicitous* entrepreneurs supposedly may be less likely to hunt more knowledge and resources. Both weak levels of pull and push framing prevent *chance* entrepreneurs to perform well neither opportunity nor necessity entrepreneurship. If they reach total commitment, entrepreneurship may follow more necessity than opportunity trend.

For *felicitous* IEs (strong pull/gain and strong push/loss framing), total commitment increases the motivation-performance relationship considerably, as they adjust their behaviour to support process at all costs. Resistance to change is overcome. A Lebanese mechanic boss said:

To date... 20 years, I have not stopped learning. Every six months I go to the parity committee, I do a course and continuous learning is an important part of our work. Commitment to continuous learning and professional development is like a commitment toward the entire family.

The stronger the commitment in a business, the more likely should be its performance. Therefore we propose: from our interviews, we propose that:

Proposition 4b: The relationship between IEs' motivation to perform and their performance is moderated by downstream commitment, such that positive conjecture about the opportunity increases the performance. When loss framing is high (*felicitous* and *desperate* migrants), commitment significantly strengthens the relationship between motivation to perform and performance, whereas when loss framing is low (*dream* and *chance* migrants) such commitment will have less impact.

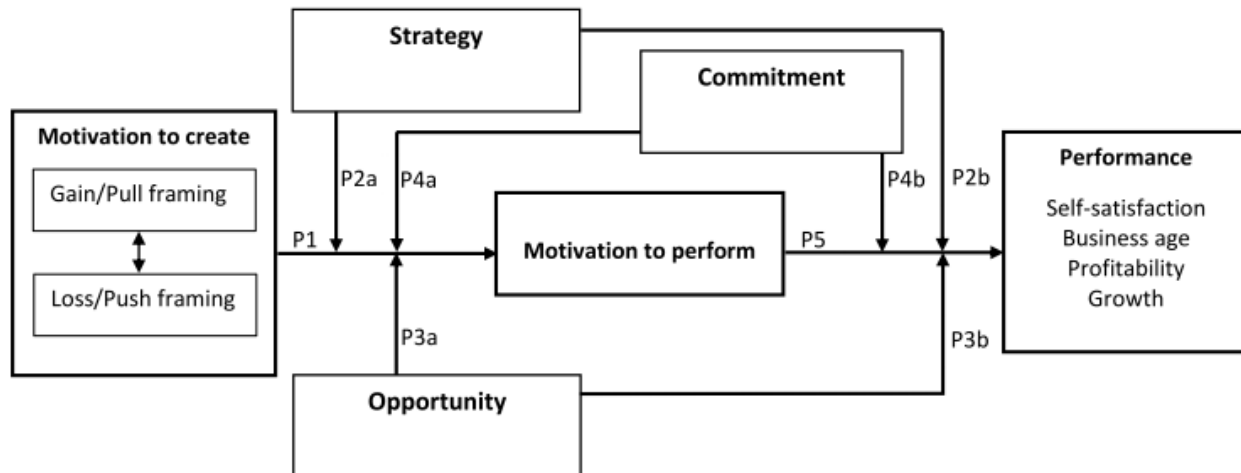
In sum, strategy, opportunity and commitment both moderate the relationship between motivation to create and motivation to perform. Together they moderate the relationship between motivation to perform and performance alike. However, these three variables do not moderate the relationship in the same way for each type of IE. Strategy and commitment intervene on the relationship through IEs' gain framing, whereas opportunity mitigates their loss framing (see Figure 3).

IE Performance

Perhaps unsurprisingly, we detected a relationship between IEs' motivation to perform and their performance in Canada. Not all immigrant entrepreneur performance criteria [32, 33] fit our IE context, and studies of immigrants use proxies for performance such as small business age and profitability [2] or objective indicators including sales, net profit, employees number [32], but similar practices can be witnessed. The IEs' accounts of their "success versus survival" in Canada used criteria (self-satisfaction, business age, profitability, number of employees) that reflect the literature on both "objective and subjective indicators", referring globally to the feeling of accomplishment and satisfaction that individuals feel toward their life in general, their incomes in terms of financial success and self-realization [19]. A Tunisian driving school boss said:

I had too much problems at the start ... I worked very hard and long hours coming to some results ... cannot say how proud I am. I moved out from apartment, bought a house in Montreal and built another in my country (IE8).

Figure 3: Theoretical framework of IEs' performance.



From the IEs' accounts, we speculate that our participants, with relatively well-paid activities and social climbing social within communities, reach a different position from immigrants at the other end of the social ladder. For them, even if they do not gain a lot, they experiment there are fewer intervening issues that may prevent their motivation to perform from translating into success in their social and their business lives. They become more experienced, self-confident and able to take on more complex issues for their ongoing businesses. Their efforts in many cases pay off. Therefore, the following proposition can be advanced:

Proposition 5: The more IEs are motivated to perform, the more successful their performance is in terms of self-satisfaction, business age, profitability and growth in terms of number of employees.

Discussion

Immigrants arriving with an intention to stay in their host country for a long time, make up the economic operators pool, among which are necessity-motivated and opportunity-initiated entrepreneurs. This makes their integration for performance an important issue, both for native entrepreneurs, the IEs themselves and the host country that receive them. This paper has attempted to contribute to the understanding of the performance of IEs by considering their motivation to create, their motivation to perform and three moderating factors: strategy, opportunity, and commitment. Through this theoretical framework, it disarms criticism against the ethnic model by which resources are not able to explain immigrant entrepreneurship as a dynamic process (see [3]). It acknowledges that motivation can evolve over time, which will affect entrepreneurial performance.

The IEs' life stories indicate that migrants' performance is the result of a complex process. How they perceive their business creation, in terms both of gains and of losses (pull/push framing) while in the prior occupation, impacts the level of efforts to perform once entered entrepreneurship in the host country. These statements are carried out under certain condition of IEs' resources and knowledge. Resources and knowledge were conceived /conceptualized in terms both of strategy, opportunity and commitment. Positive immigrant entrepreneurial experiences, as when strategy capacity (choice) prove correct, and when opportunity is providing support and involving commitment, reinforce their level of efforts to perform. Conversely, negative experiences discourage them. Particularly, the variation in efforts

made depends on who goes through these experiences: if an IE enters business hoping to gain a lot from the entrepreneurship in host country (dream/felicitous-*pull creation conceiver*), the negative surprises (inaccurate strategy, low commitment) will be especially significant in diminishing their level of efforts, whereas if someone enters with very low gain framing at the outset (chance/desperate), any positive surprise (accurate strategy, high commitment) will greatly increase their drive to perform. On the other hand, those who engage in business with the fear of losing a lot (desperate/felicitous-*push creation conceiver*) will benefit greatly from entrepreneurial opportunity, whereas an IE who did not lose much by going into entrepreneurship the host country (chance/dream) will respond weakly to such opportunities.

Moreover, if an IE entered business through strong pull framing hoping to gain a lot from the entrepreneurship in host country (dream/felicitous), the negative surprises (inaccurate strategy, low commitment) will be especially significant in diminishing their performance, whereas if someone enters with very weak pull framing at the outset (chance/desperate), any positive surprise (accurate strategy, high commitment) will greatly increase their performance drive. On the other hand, those who engage in business with the strong push framing fear of losing a lot (desperate/felicitous) will benefit greatly from opportunities for profit, whereas an IE who engages in business with weak push framing (chance/dream) will respond weakly to such opportunities.

From the analysis of the narratives that our participants offered, the importance of motivation to perform, measured by their level of efforts to perform, embodies an unexpected and interesting finding, in a context where research on international/immigrant entrepreneurship has tended to seek direct relationships between motivation to go into entrepreneurship and immigrant entrepreneurship outcomes [12, 34]. Given the importance of this mediator between motivation to create and performance, it is suitable to propose a *theory of motivation to perform* (TMP), summarized in Figures 2 and 3. This theory stipulates that the motivation to perform is a function of how immigrants frame their entrepreneurial experience in terms of gains/pull and losses/push, prior to venture creation. This offers in a matrix four types of entrepreneurs (felicitous, dream, chance and desperate), who put in a different level of effort to entrepreneurially perform in the host country. The relationship between motivation to create and motivation to perform is moderated by strategy (S) and commitment (C) related to pull/gain framing, and opportunity (O) related to push/loss framing. And so act these moderators for the performance. Given the mediation process integrates upstream and downstream SCO moderators, TMP suggests that motivation to perform leads to performance.

Theoretical implications

Our data analysis has led us to construct a theoretical framework that is linked to existing literature, yet improves it, and results in five propositions. Our approach takes into account both the moment of decision before leaving one's previous occupation and the entrepreneurial experiences lived once inside the business creation process. It also integrates Fayolle's [19] view of new venture creation as a strategic and dynamic decision/action process triggered by a change in the IPISC. Therefore this model satisfies the conditions for a rewarding theory on immigrant entrepreneurship [34, 35, 36].

This approach highlights the importance of the motivation to perform as a critical factor in IEs' performance. The influence of the motivation to enter business on the success of an entrepreneurial experience has already been presented in earlier work on motivation (e.g., [3, 34]. Previous studies on creation motivation did not necessarily adopt the push/pull theory

proposed by Lee [37]. Yet Kloosterman et al. [38] stress that high levels of unemployment push an increasing number of immigrants towards entrepreneurship. Push and pull characteristics of the host country, respectively, work supportively or act against each other in the decision-making process of individuals who create venture. TMP would apply to several types of immigrant entrepreneurship, as it shapes a relationship between an attitude toward an action (the decision to create itself) and the behavior that results as a consequence of the action (efforts to perform). This relationship is evocative of the reasoned action approach [39]. In inductive research, transferability is about concept and theory [9]. The concept of gain and loss framing borrowed from Cerdin's et al. [13] (in other words pull and push framing) as well as the IPISC notion [20] through the TMP theory are applicable to immigrant entrepreneurs and other types of entrepreneur to explain their performance. The TMP offers a better understanding of the antecedents and moderators of performance of entrepreneurs. This sheds new light on the activation mechanism of the IPISC as leading to successful outcomes. As such, TMP would apply to various types of immigrant entrepreneurship or any entrepreneurship at all.

Once entrepreneurially busy, IEs ascertain the gap between what they have gained and what they planned to gain (according to their strategic choice: opportunity cost). We found that opportunity (environment side) for IEs also have an impact on this experience. The effects of strategy and commitment (individual side) on the relationship between motivation to create and motivation to perform are explained by pull/gain framing, while the effects of opportunity are explained by push/loss framing (upstream effects). Alike such effects are perceptible on the relationship between motivation to perform and performance (downstream effects). Thus in this respect, for immigrant ventures, the degree of focus on the ethnic market and the extent of ethnic resources used are fundamental strategic choices. An immigrant venture can pursue either an enclave strategy or a dominant strategy [22]. Immigrant ventures are not constrained only to pure forms of either strategy. Thus, there are pure and mixed forms of immigrant venture strategies, based on the degree to which each venture serves and sources from the ethnic community.

Practical Implications

From a practical point of view, not only do IEs carry out business in a generally highly committed manner, but they also need additional understanding of other components to take into account to successfully progress: the impact of opportunity as a moderating factor and the value of fitted strategy in ensuring the commitment of IEs to their entrepreneurial endeavor. On the other hand, through appreciating better the importance of the stories behind IEs' venture creation, and the unique combination of risks, gains and losses that varies for each IE - as coupled to resources and knowledge while the process in terms of strategy, opportunity and commitment – it becomes essential for policy makers to ensure that they are selecting immigrants from the categories most likely to be successful at entrepreneurship, for accompanying agencies to develop correct guidelines which will include practical information to assist successful entrepreneurship in order to ensure Agency priorities are translated into action and resources are well allocated. Understanding these individual motivational backgrounds should allow governments to implement tailored support policies to immigrant entrepreneurship effectively.

Since motivation is not itself a static process, one may upgrade strategy and commitment from a lower to a higher level in front of promising opportunity. Alongside the value of fitted strategy and self-involvement, for IEs entrepreneurial opportunity might be a powerful tool for

moderating their feelings about their entrepreneurial experience, and enhance their motivation to perform while opportunity for profit might switch on process to get performance under way.

The determinants of IE performance proposed in this paper should allow researchers and business coaching organizations (BCO) to comprehend the phenomenon of the international enterprising world of immigrants. We hope that the model proposed and the results presented will help BCO professionals to bring an added value to their organizations in supervising these immigrants appropriately. By taking into account the different backgrounds of IEs, BCO professionals can better take charge, monitor and, if needed, take steps toward increasing the motivation of these IEs to perform. This should increase the likelihood of success for both IEs and such organizations.

Limitations and Directions for Future Research

Since the results of our study must of course be viewed in light of its limitations, caution is particularly needed in generalizing from our non-randomly selected sample. The IEs that constitute our sample are not fully representative of the diversity of IEs in Canada, or in other countries. Our sample is composed of IEs whose industries are not necessarily closely linked to their actual qualifications. Some sectors are functionally demanding, at the limit of capacity of certain foreigners. In our sample, the adaptability to change was a major stress factor for IEs during venture creation. Our model applies to this particular type of IE, and it remains to be tested and validated on other larger samples, including other types of IEs. Even though we have taken into account differences in terms of gender and demographics, future quantitative studies should control these variables. Since our study has an interpretative focus, we cannot judge our data analysis according to whether or not other researchers would reach the same results [7]

It is important to bear in mind that the time factor operates rather differently in the process. This gives rise to three concerns. First, the length of time that most of the IEs have been in Canada may affect the process. Though time is always a factor in planning and executing, however we are unable to specify *a time frame for motivation to perform* or for performance. Imposing an external time frame here would severely limit our findings and our understanding. We have therefore used all the stories.

Second, there is a concern about the momentum when immigrant raises the commitment on its own initiative; it is incurred or assumed by the entrepreneur at a time referred to as the "*commitment time*". We were unable to capture when strategically the immigrant becomes self-supportive. A shift in such "time commitment" is likely to postpone the motivation to perform and to delay entrepreneurial performance. The wise approach would be to match the first commitment with opportunity no sooner than by the end of strategy in the upstream stage and to be committed to performance no later than the beginning of strategy-opportunity matching in the downstream stage of the process (as indicated in fig.3).

Third, a concern might exist concerning the possible *impact of memory* on the data collected. Baumeister et al. report "that the brain responds more strongly to bad than good things and that it retains the memory of bad things, even when the behavioral response has undergone extinction" [40, p.337]. Therefore we have assumed that a longitudinal study monitoring IEs regularly from their first job day in Canada (host country) would be ideal, but difficult to realize in practice.

Lastly, the measures of performance should not be considered universal here. When our respondents referred to performance, they emphasized self-satisfaction, business age, profitability and growth obtained as a result of the efforts to perform. We have therefore grouped these elements under the “performance” variable. The motivation to perform, not the performance itself, lies at the heart of our theoretical framework. Performance itself deserves further examination, as work on survival (e.g., [2]) and productivity (e.g., [32]) indicates that all these constructs are not easy to define, particularly as they relate to the idea of success. In this sense, should we not be ensuring that entrepreneurial performance is distinguished from business performance?

Given the limitations of our sample and a theory generation approach [7], the thoughts developed in this paper remain speculative, and tests of the theoretical framework will depend on future quantitative studies. Nonetheless, we believe the presented frameworks and propositions could help to improve the field.

Conclusions

This qualitative research on business creation and performance contributes to the immigrant entrepreneurship literature by focusing on IEs’ motivation to create, motivation to perform into their host country and their individual entrepreneurial success. Research on the importance of effective ways and tools to entrepreneurial performance has developed since the original studies (e.g., [34]), and the link now seems clear but more complex. The TMP theory offers a better understanding of the antecedents and moderators of performance of IEs. Strategy, commitment and opportunity appear to magnify the effect that motivation have on performance.

This theory stipulates that the motivation to perform is a function of how migrants frame their entrepreneurial experience in terms of gains and losses, prior to venture creation. As such, this research challenges a necessity-based stereotype of immigrant entrepreneurs. As a pragmatic approach, it enables to understand motivation, integrated within the management process, in an entrepreneurial way. We inform diverse streams of research in transnational and immigrant entrepreneurship with broader strategic work on the creation and development of business. We have taken an important step, but there is considerably more to learn about immigrant entrepreneurs’ motivations and performance. Our hope is to enable BCO and ethnic businesses to obtain the best value from immigrant entrepreneurs in significant positions of their entrepreneurial process. Given the importance of immigrant businesses to most economies, such research has important practical implications.

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