

How does family across borders fuel the success of migrant entrepreneurs?

The Role of Family in Migrant Entrepreneurship: Resourcefulness Beyond Borders

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Family support is crucial for migrant entrepreneurs building new ventures in unfamiliar environments. This article delves into how family members, often spread across different countries, create networks that aid business creation, provide critical resources, and help entrepreneurs overcome the unique challenges of migration. This focus on “family resourcefulness across borders” offers insights for understanding the multi-layered role of family in supporting entrepreneurship amidst migration’s challenges and opportunities.

WHAT WE STUDIED

This study examines the ways in which families support business ventures in diverse geographic contexts, focusing on aspects like kinship resources, family social capital, and diaspora networks. By analyzing migrant entrepreneurs’ family configurations, the study highlights how various forms of support from families across borders are essential to entrepreneurial success.

KEY INSIGHTS

1. Family Resourcefulness and Kinship Support

The studies show that kinship resources alleviate structural disadvantages for migrant entrepreneurs, especially refugees. Kinship networks not only provide financial support but also emotional and logistical aid, which are crucial for entrepreneurs facing legal and economic barriers in their host countries. The example of Afghan refugee entrepreneurs in Pakistan underscores how social capital across generations within the family supports faster acculturation and business growth.

2. Diaspora Networks Fuel Entrepreneurial Preparedness

Family ties across borders prepare migrant entrepreneurs to navigate foreign business landscapes. Research on Cypriot diaspora businesses shows how family relationships foster preparedness and resilience, giving entrepreneurs the confidence to tackle challenges in new countries. This dynamic, driven by shared values and urgent kin obligations, is particularly relevant for diaspora businesses in regions like Australia and South Africa.

3. Family Configurations Affect Business Models

In some cultural contexts, like those of Javanese and Minang communities in Indonesia, family networks influence the business model directly. The Javanese networks emphasize identity and cultural ties, while Minang networks are more calculated, valuing operational efficiencies. This variation illustrates the flexibility of migrant businesses to adapt based on family network dynamics.

4. Crowdfunding and Transnational Family Networks

Crowdfunding success among migrant entrepreneurs is often linked to family networks that span both the country of origin and residence. The case of a Chinese migrant entrepreneur in the U.S. highlights how family resources from both countries enhance the chances of a successful crowdfunding campaign, allowing for the pooling of financial and institutional resources.

TAKEAWAYS

Leveraging Kinship Ties for Resilience

Migrant entrepreneurs should consider strengthening ties with family members who can provide financial, emotional, or logistical support, as these relationships can be instrumental in overcoming startup challenges.

Using Diaspora Networks for Market Expansion

Diaspora families can offer valuable connections, insights, and support, helping migrant entrepreneurs understand market nuances and build resilient business strategies that incorporate cultural context.

Flexibility in Family Involvement

Migrant entrepreneurs benefit from understanding and aligning their business models with the specific strengths of their family network—whether it's fostering a close-knit community identity or streamlining operations based on strategic family partnerships.

IMPACT

The findings underline the critical importance of family networks in migrant entrepreneurship,

encouraging a more nuanced understanding of how family resources enable transnational business endeavors. As the world becomes increasingly interconnected, these insights can inform policies that support migrant entrepreneurs, recognizing the multifaceted support systems that fuel their ventures.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Future research should further explore specific family roles and dynamics, examining factors like gender, socioeconomic class, and kin obligations. Such insights can help develop more tailored support for migrant entrepreneurs, enhancing their ability to navigate cross-border challenges and sustain their ventures.

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