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ABSTRACT

Despite being on top of geopolitical and economic agendas, migration has continued drastically increase especially in the 21ST century. This phenomenon has led to the rise on an inter-twined migrant activity referred to as Migrant entrepreneurship, with no exception of female migrant entrepreneurship as a result of the loopholes that exist in the economic and main stream labor integration policies. Migrant entrepreneurship not only contributes to the gross domestic product of the host countries but also that of the country of origin through remittances, hence making it a win-win situation.

However, most studies reveal the existence of a gender gap between the male and female migrant entrepreneurs as both groups are far from homogeneity as they come from different countries of origins, age groups, past experience and motivating factors. Nevertheless, recent studies have depicted migrants as more entrepreneurial then the host country natives. Whereas other literature credits migrant entrepreneurship as a way of integration with in the host society.

Based on the mixed embeddedness and effectual approaches, the research will investigate how female migrants develop entrepreneurial orientations and its influence on venture creation. In supportive of the effectual approach, an analysis of the impact of the host country's extant resources, opportunity recognition and decision making based on volatile and uncertain environments. We will as well highlight the role of the individual habitus, social capital and networks. This research is qualitative in nature based on female migrant case studies in the context of France.

Our key findings, are four-fold; First, the results reveal when it comes to migrant entrepreneurship ,there is a significant gap between male and female migrant entrepreneurs. Secondly, we un cover that female migrants develop entrepreneurial orientations through five main dimensions namely: (i) Innovativeness (ii) Proactiveness (iii) Risk taking (iv) Competitive aggressiveness and (v) Autonomy . Thirdly our research highlights the key role female migrant entrepreneurs play by including sustainability in their business models . Lastly, results show that female migrant entrepreneurial orientation development can be encouraged by policies designed to promote resources fit for migrants that in the end helps them leverage their capabilities and networks to open up ventures with in the host countries and further to international markets.

Keywords:

Migrant entrepreneurship, female migrant entrepreneurship, female entrepreneurship, migrant entrepreneurial orientation, migrant ventures, migrant internationalisation.

Following the abstract above, the paper is structured as follows; Section 1 discusses the purpose of the research and the state of the art including the research questions to be addressed. Section 2, the theoretical framework and integration models of female migrant entrepreneurship highlighting the gaps in the existing knowledge. Section 3 follows with the research methodology, epistemological stance, data collection and analysis. And finally, section 4 that presents the primary results, expected contributions and the remaining concerns pertaining the research.

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1. Purpose of the research

Global migration flows were estimated to be 272 million in 2020, nearly 3.5% of the world's population. 52% were male, 48% were female and 74% were of working age between 20 to 64 years (IOM, 2020).

In 2020, 6.8 million migrants were living in France signifying 10.2% of the total population. Among them, 84,864 thousand migrants acquired the French nationality. Proportionally, 48% of immigrants were born in Africa, 32% in Europe, 14% in Asia and 6% in America and Oceania (INSEE, 2020).

Today migration is a sensitive topic, both from a geopolitical and social point of view. Some consider migrants as a vector of richness and healthy while others consider it as a threat and a problem. Besides a difficult integration journey, migrants often face hardships to access the labour market among others in their reception (Rametse et al.,2018,.p.3). Women are not of exception, who are often suffering from discrimination that leads them to entrepreneurship out of necessity(Naudé,Siegel & Marchand, 2017; Villares et al., 2017).

According to the OECD, "migrants in OECD countries are on average slightly more entrepreneurial than natives" (OECD, 2020). This is in line with the extant research carried out by other scholars for example, (Guerrero et al.,2021,.p.537) showing a process by which home and host countries shape migrant entrepreneurial orientations in identifying both ethnic and non –ethnic business opportunities - thus forming relationships across diverse actors.

The same process illustrates how a migrants' social and entrepreneurial orientations related to their proactiveness, competitiveness and risk recognition in relation to their host countries' structure changes over time. This aspect symbiotically interprets the migrant entrepreneurs' actions to break socially constructed boundaries (Griffin & Olabisi, 2018).

The rising number of migrants does not only spark interest of international agendas, governments, and development partners. It also calls for international collaborative policies on migrants' social and economic integration notably through entrepreneurship. Migrant entrepreneurship is built on the premise that it contributes to economies of both the Host country and country of origin. Indeed global migration has been estimated to have a potential value of up to USD 95 trillion (BCG, 2021). This value is not only created by money transfer, but also through migrants' venture internationalisation. Besides the monetary value, migrant entrepreneurship is considered by supranational institutions as an effective approach to reach the millennium development goals (IOM, 2018), such as poverty alleviation and social exclusion.

This research focuses on "How female migrants develop entrepreneurial orientations and internationalize?

We aim to answer more precisely three corollary research questions:

- 1. Why do female migrants especially from ethnic minorities engage into entrepreneurship and the challenges they face?
- 2. How is individual entrepreneurial orientation developed among female migrants?
- 3. How is the migration trajectory influencing the internationalization of women entrepreneurs' ventures?

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2. Theoretical Framework

Female immigrant entrepreneurial framework and integration models

In its multidisciplinarity, entrepreneurship has been studied through different lenses, such as economics, sociology, psychology, international management etc. (Fayolle et al., 2016). Considering the topic of female migrant entrepreneurship, extant studies have sought to understand how, why and what draws migrants to venture into entrepreneurial activities (Chreim et al., 2018; Czinkota et al., 2021; Glinka, 2013). Academics highlighted the dynamic nature of the entrepreneurial process implemented by migrants. Indeed the entrepreneurial process seems to be resulting from the, permanent interaction of three variables: the migrant (resources and strategies), the country of origin and host country environments (Glinka, 2013).

Rametse et al. (2018) focused on the motivations driving migrants to engage into entrepreneurship. They showed that, beyond necessity factors, migrant entrepreneurs are concurrently pulled to start businesses by factors such as opportunity recognition, individual past experiences, network and risk recognition.

Two theories were found to be relevant to explain the phenomenon of female migrant entrepreneurial orientations: the mixed embeddedness theory of migrant entrepreneurship (Barberis & Solano, 2018; Kloosterman, 2010; Kloosterman & Rath, 2001; Ram et al., 2013) and the effectual theory (Sarasvathy, 2008).

The mixed embedded theory incorporates both formal and informal institutions (Dana et al., 2019; Kloosterman, 2010; Li, 2020; Ram et al., 2013; Schott, 2018; Sreevas & Sahasranamam, 2020; Stoyanor, 2018). This theory has been widely used to explain female migrant entrepreneurship since it explains how migrants use their entrepreneurial capabilities, diverse networks and capabilities within economic, social, spatial and regulatory host country contexts. It is highly instrumental in studying female migrant entrepreneurial orientations and how they internationalize. It explains international entrepreneurship connectedness to the formal and informal structures of the host country. Female migrant entrepreneurs are not only adapting to a new context that is uncertain, but they are also re-defining the context through their venture actions (Wang et al., 2021).

Whereas different models have been used to explain how firms create ventures through internationalization (e.g. the Uppsala model – Johanson & Vahlne, 1978, 2009; Vahlne & Johanson, 2017, 2020), the literature has not fully conceptualized, and empirically showed how female migrants develop their entrepreneurial orientation and internationalize in the different host countries. The mixed embeddedness theory has been used to study migrant entrepreneurs in advanced economies. Kloosterman et al. (2016) conceptualised trajectories of Ghanaian entrepreneurship in the Netherlands. They emphasized the dynamics of international opportunities underlying structural settings to be explored and exploited. According to them, seizing high value opportunities in mature economies require relatively high levels of human capital. However female migrants often do not necessarily have the level of such human capital required as they suffer a declining work and social status due to mismatches between qualifications and occupations (Dabic et al., 2020, p.29). However, "International opportunities are often depicted in rather abstract and unspecified ways and the research suffers from narrow theoretical discussion in relation to the concept of opportunity" (Zucchella, 2021, p.7).

The effectual theory (Sarasvathy, 2008) is yet another framework to be considered when analysing this phenomenon, a perspective where extant resources determine the opportunity space explored

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by migrant entrepreneurs. Decisions are made only after a considerable amount of time based on the experiential knowledge gained, following a logic of cost minimization and risk adjusted return on Investment (Sarasvathy et al., 2014). However, since we are exploring female migrant venture internationalization "when it comes to explaining firm internationalization for small medium - sized enterprises (SMEs), the research has been increasingly influenced by effectuation theory" that is born in the entrepreneurship field (Bai et al., 2021, p.96).

The effectual theory will be useful to explain the internationalization of female migrant ventures as they go international in relation to identification and seizing of opportunities, develop knowledge, networks with their available resources. Karami et al. (2020) supports this statement as they refer to effectual internationalization. Female migrant individual orientation is salient as each country has different perceptions, institutions, and entrepreneurial ecosystems (Basco et al., 2020).

Although becoming the most important foci in entrepreneurship research (Govin et al., 2020), entrepreneurial orientation emerged as a rigorous and robust scientific construct on the basis of which a stable body of cumulative knowledge has been developing both in academia and in management science (Anderson & Eshima, 2013; Basso et al., 2009). Individual Entrepreneurship orientation have been portrayed in the IB and IE literatures through three main scales, i.e. 1) perception of Innovativeness through knowledge spill overs (Kerr, 2008; Nathan, 2014), 2) proactiveness and 3) risk taking in turbulent and uncertain host country environments (Martin & Javalgi, 2016; Musura & Nieuwenhuizen, 2020). Thanks to these dimensions, female migrants aim at introducing new services and goods to their host markets, develop knowledge to exploit domestic resources hence creating their own niche markets (Elo et al., 2018; Wood, 2018).

Due to multiple challenges faced in adjusting to host country environment, such as underemployment, discrimination, etc., female migrants leverage diverse networks, resources, orientations and capabilities (Barney, 1991; Ibrahim, 2004; Reynolds, 1991) that allow them to gain competitive advantage in diverse international markets (Ghorbani, 2012).

2.1. Gaps in existing knowledge

"For Migrant women, setting up businesses combats their exclusion from and segregation with in the social/labour market. While so often forcing them to accept conditions of self-exploitation and precariousness with in their businesses. Despite, these challenges, however, entrepreneurship is often seen as a route to greater autonomy and professional independence heightened personal value, social prestige and consequently, increased gender parity." (Gonzàlez-Gonzàlez et al., 2011, p.17).

Entrepreneurial orientation has been originally conceived as a firm level construct, though it can apply also to the individual entrepreneurs especially female migrant entrepreneurs. However, the relation between individual and organisational entrepreneurial orientation is still relatively under explored (Zucchella, 2021).

Although migrant entrepreneurship literature has extensively highlighted the network and social capital effects on international market entry most of the empirical evidence has focused on cases of African migrants in China, Indian entrepreneurs in UK (Qiu & Gupta, 2015). Little is known about female migrant entrepreneurs from other emerging countries. There is also insufficient knowledge related to the costs (both financial and human) associated with the venturing process abroad. Several research shows that migrants are likely to commit more resources when doing business with their country of origin (Tang & Chung, 2010) as they tend to choose slightly riskier

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Models of entry and move into market much faster (Zhao & Hsu, 2007) in internationalizing their ventures.

Extant research shows that; women are less likely to engage in entrepreneurship than men (Brieger & Gienlnik, (2020, p. 1009) due to individual, socio-demographic, environmental conditions, past experience, family factors and the contextual factors. Moreover, women frequently underestimate their entrepreneurial skills especially if they have been influenced by the male entrepreneur stereotypes for example entrepreneurial perceptions, opportunities, entrepreneurial intentions and activities (Xie et al., 2021, p. 471; Zhao & Yang, 2020).

3. Research methodology, data collection and analysis:

Our methodology is essentially qualitative, as we believe this choice is the most judicious to grasp the essence and whole complexity of our field of research. Indeed, it presents the opportunity for a confrontation with multiple realities, exposing more directly the nature of the transaction between the investigator and the subject (Lincoln & Guba, 1990; Thietart et al., 2003). The selection of a descriptive process research is justified by the objective as well as the spatio-temporal dimension of our work, which aims to analyse the development of female migrants' entrepreneurial orientation and the internationalization of their ventures. Extant research reveals that, for entrepreneurship research, a robust understanding is reached by the epistemological, interpretative approach (Jones et al., 2014;McKeever et al., 2015).

The realization of ten exploratory interviews both in English and French allowed us to highlight some motivations driving female entrepreneurs to create ventures. It also pointed out the main difficulties faced and the role played by networks in the process. To confirm our preliminary findings and deepen our understanding of the phenomenon, we will conduct a multiple-case study with female migrant entrepreneurs and service providers (Incubators, accelerators, etc.). This methodology is an appropriate research design when attempting to explain events in real-life contexts as it strengthens the researchers' interpretations and findings creating more theory driven variance and divergence in the data (Yin, 1994). Multiple case-studies bring in qualitative and /or quantitative data and have mainly been used to provide description, test or generate new theories, allowing by this way researchers to go beyond the specific circumstances of the cases studied (Eisenhardt, 1989).

Due to the newness related to the topic and the relative literature scarcity, we choose to proceed by abduction, meaning connecting what is seen in the empirical world with theoretical ideas which are also out there and can be further developed. A system that requires systematically observing constructs and relations in each case and processually selecting themes to understand interlinked events, activities, temporality, and flow of events (Langley et al., 1999). A more intuitive and open approach to qualitative data through the grounded analysis(Glaser & Strauss 1967) will serve as a tool in analysing cases and cross cases. Indeed, it will be a key component to holistically guide us as we analyse volumes of qualitative data with the aim of singling out themes, patterns and categories that can build theory. Importantly, this kind of analysis leads to the conducting of other subsequent interviews to pursue subjects that are increasingly focused on concepts. Tentative relationships that do emerge from interviews are avital pillar in theoretical sampling. Secondly, the grounded method will guide us in exploring the theoretical realm, as we discover emergent themes and concepts that might be key in describing and explaining the phenomenon of female entrepreneurial orientation and their venture internationalization.

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Data collection

The preliminary interviews were conducted through two distinct rounds: one focusing on NGOs and incubators' support facilities for female migrant entrepreneurs and one with individual female migrant entrepreneurs. Each interview lasted between 45 minutes to 1 hour and was recorded and transcribed. The third stage followed through case building: in each case, private documents were obtained from NGOs, incubators and accelerators. Chose appropriate cases and created interview protocol. During the analysis several concepts, themes and relationships are paired on similarities and differences (Eisenhardt,1989, Yin, 2014). This process increases validity and generalizability of findings from cases thus building on and contributing to existing theory (Glaser, 1965; Yin, 2014). The data collected has been triangulated through different sources to ensure accuracy and reliability with secondary and archival data, websites, etc.

Data analysis

Exploratory data has been analysed using the Nvivo qualitative data analysis software. We developed 35codes with 53nodes. Empirical themes are coded around practices, strategies, narratives and discourses (Locke, 2001) entailing detailed textual materials from interview transcripts across cases. For data collected through multiple case-study, axial coding will be employed to search for patterns and relationships within and between different case study categories (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). This process is fundamental in obtaining knowledge in studying the interactions of cases. We will be adopting a process-oriented approach to building theory (Langley, 1999) and applying a temporal bracketing perspective to data, interpreting the events and actions according to the female entrepreneurs' narratives and perceptions (Griffin & Olabisi, 2018). We draw theoretical grounding from mixed embedded theory in the formal and informal institutions in the host country context (Kloosterman, 2010; Kloosterman & Rath, 2001) of migrant entrepreneurship and effectual theory (Sarasvathy. 2008, 2014) in migrant entrepreneurial orientations and the influence in venture creation.

4. Primary Results and Expected contributions

Our preliminary interviews confirmed that, although female migrant entrepreneurs from ethnic minority face several challenges that pull or push them into entrepreneurship. These challenges are linked to language barriers, the need to adjust to a new culture and navigate a new institutional environment, a lack of credit history, limited financial resources and limited access to bank loans, legal status and eligibility to work, and small professional networks. They are able to undertake risky ventures in exploring and exploiting new opportunities that eventually contribute to venture internationalization. This kind of orientation is seen as a set of unique resources that are mobilized. The migrants in developing new innovative products in response to the new host environments to achieve competitive advantage (Adams et al., 2017; Kosa et al., 2018). To international firms, entrepreneurial orientation has been used as a strategy making process capturing decision making styles, product innovations and market developments whereas to individual migrant entrepreneurs, it represents engaging in entrepreneurial activities and creating new ventures to reduce negative effects of liability of foreignness.

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4.1. Service providers

Their exists several services providers who are implicated in the development of migrant entrepreneurial activities. Who sometimes work in parallel with the national entrepreneurial ecosystem that involves; research and development, training and mentorship, entrepreneurial education, financial assistance services, etc.

4.2. Empirical findings from the Service Providers;

First, service providers contributing to the ecosystem of migrant entrepreneurship are increasingly asking that the projects bear an international economic and sustainable impact in order to be financed. For example, as two of the respondents from the interviews stated;

"They should have multi-national entrepreneurial projects." (Singa, France)

"Their ventures should be on a large scale and must be located in France, in other words should have both the socio and economic impact in the host country." (Kristina, FAIRE)

Secondly, most of the incubators confirmed that Migrants are entrepreneurial by nature.

"People always ask 'what makes a good entrepreneur?', they keep looking for personality traits that would describe them... but when it comes to migrants, they do not even consider the idea that they could be good entrepreneurs. The thing is that migrants are defacto entrepreneurs: they took risks in order to come here, they had to be creative to survive, etc. They had to flee far away from their country, they experienced hard things, etc. so, honestly, they are not afraid about taking risks because they do not have a lot to loose" (Kristina, FAIR)

Thirdly, others view entrepreneurship is a way of promoting integration and diversity.

"Some migrant entrepreneurs target local markets while others do target international markets though most of the projects are territorial"

4.2.1. For female migrant entrepreneurs;

Ventures are mostly created out of survival in host countries with three main objectives:

- 1) Providing goods and services of potentially limited markets (Elo et al.,2018;Kerr & Kerr,2016;Wood,2018).
- 2) Adjusting to the new entrepreneurial codes in their host country
- 3) Deal with liability of foreignness and outsiderness. Nevertheless most of them suffer from stereotypes and marginalization. One of the respondents highlighted that:

"I have been working for the UN, the World Bank and other supranational organisations in my country for years as a communication manager. When I came to France and obtained my status, my counsellor at pole emploi told me: 'you really want to develop a Maison de Couture melting

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African and European cultures? It will never work. Why don't you do what people coming from your country are good to do: kindergarten, cooking, cleaning services, etc.?' I wanted to punch this person, but it really increased my motivation to succeed" (Founder of Maison Baï)

There is risk recognition in exploring and exploiting opportunities. This is made possible thanks to the accessibility and use of unique resources and competences. By allowing female migrants to create innovative products, these resources and competences provides them a strong competitive advantage as highlighted below:

"I was a nurse in my country, but my experience and my diploma were not recognised in France: I had to take a one-year program to get the equivalence, but with three kids to feed, it was not possible. I have a special disease and I have to go to dialysis 3 times a week. I noticed that the risks of infection between dialyses for people like me were high and that nothing existed so I developed my owned concept. My protective prototype that can be customised and personalised as per the patients' preferences" (Founder of the FAV Protector)

For both international and local markets, female migrant entrepreneurs use their market competences to continuously adapt to the changing market environments as illustrated below:

"Yes, we draw and design different models adapted by men and women to carry out the production. We produce both in Holland and France and we are continuously improving and testing the new products on the market." (Founder Sibe Wax)

Most Female migrant entrepreneurs acknowledge the value the mentoring and trainings being offered by the service providers (Incubators and accelerators)in bid to sustain the performance of their ventures in the long term ,for example in the development of their business models and handling institutional red tape.

"Through the business training programs held by SINGA France, French Tech and Ora incubator, the business model for my company was developed, "I did not believe that it was possible to create an enterprise with all the bureaucratic requirements".(Founder FAV Protector)

"My Business model evolves as i get clients' feedback based on my values and social impact". (Founder Tchop Time)

Our empirical findings confirm that, most female migrant develop entrepreneurial orientation for example through, autonomy ,innovativeness ,develop strategic networks , are proactive in their ventures in discovering vacancy chains.

They take risks to exploit and explore host countries' opportunities, adopt strategic decision making skills to deal with uncertain business environments and seek mentoring and trainings etc. so as to create and internationalize their ventures sustainably.

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4.3. Expected contributions

Three main contributions will emerge from this research: first, it aims at extending the body of knowledge associated with female migrant entrepreneurial orientations and venture internationalisation (Anderson et al., 2015). It will notably enrich the mixed embedded and effectual theories through empirical evidence of the subject phenomenon. Secondly, female migrant entrepreneurs differentiate by the key role played by sustainability in their venture business models.

Finally, the study aims at acting as a tool for policy makers in host countries to design policies, promoting resources that fit to female migrant entrepreneurs to help them leverage their capabilities to venture in internationalization. "A highly friendly institutional environment makes migrant firms more innovative" (Estrin et al., 2013, p.478).

The preliminary findings lead us to formulate three propositions:

- Proposition 1; The Entrepreneurial orientation for female migrant entrepreneurs develops on the basis of five dimensions; Innovativeness, Proactiveness, Risk taking, competitive aggressiveness and autonomy.
- Proposition 2; Opportunity recognition by female migrant entrepreneurs positively impacts venture internalization.
- Proposition 3; Networks and personal attributes of female migrants are crucial in developing ventures in not only host countries but also at the international level.

4.4. Remaining concerns in carrying out the research

As this is work in progress, a few methodological aspects remain an answered. While grounded theory is inherently flexible, it is a complex methodology. The subject is also complex in nature and should be explored beyond the scope of the qualitative analysis. To go deeper on the non-observable factors that impact female migrant entrepreneurial orientations and venture internationalisation. As the entrepreneurial orientations differ by the context of the host country, a detailed analysis of female migrant entrepreneurial orientation scales in other contexts in bid to overcome liability of foreignness in venture internationalisation will add more nuance to this phenomenon.

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