

## Migrant Entrepreneurs and Their Spark for Entrepreneurial Exploration

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**Abstract :** The war and violence around the world today has brought a mass increase of forcibly displaced individuals to seek refuge in the European Union, where they have to leave their homes and restart a new life built on other cultural, social, economic and legal premises than they are used to. Since 2014, the EU has accepted to help with the crisis by providing protection and refuge, and countries like Germany, Hungary, Austria, and Sweden accepted around two-thirds of EU's asylum seekers. In 2015 for instance, Sweden harbored large numbers of refugees, which lead to a drastic rise in population. This drastic rise brought an overwhelming challenge to Sweden since they needed to find quick and suitable solutions to accommodate these thousands of refugees. Further, it posed a challenge for Sweden to immediately tackle the problem of integrating the new arrivals in the labor market. With an unstable societal integration and little or no skills to connect to the workforce, these immigrants faced a shaky beginning, as they had to struggle with not just integrating into a new society but also to get suitable jobs. These uncertainties brought pressure on the immigrants, which drove a number of them to move from city to city seeking for a place and alternatives for their well-being, safe haven, and self-provision. As a result, they brought in their own skills, experiences, and cultural orientation into exploring and exploiting new opportunities and filling the gaps in their new environment. In so doing, immigrants contributing with multidisciplinary collaborations, insights, international relations and national growth through the exploitation of entrepreneurial opportunities. The study, seek to understand how these uncertainties led migrant entrepreneurs towards entrepreneurial activities. Furthermore, it contributes to understanding their processes towards exploring and exploiting opportunities for entrepreneurship as well as their role in contributing to local and national growth. To reach these aims, an inductive qualitative study was conducted using semi-structured interviews of several migrant entrepreneurs - both female and male - that took part in two different entrepreneurial projects in mid-Sweden. The first project was a business program for African women; the other was an entrepreneurship hub for immigrants. Both were focused on inspiring and coaching immigrants during their entrepreneurial process. An integrated part was to work with the participants' entrepreneurial skills and abilities. In addition, archival documents were collected. The data was analyzed using content analysis for qualitative research. The study aims to contribute to the entrepreneurship literature by understanding the influences of cognitive and environmental factors towards entrepreneurial activities. This study also provides several suggestions for policymakers on how they can better integrate migrants into becoming contributors to the society.

**Keywords :** entrepreneurial intentions, entrepreneurial processes, migrant entrepreneurship, uncertainty

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