

Family influences on entrepreneurial orientation in immigrant entrepreneurship

Family
influences on
EO

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Abstract

Purpose – This study explores how the family influences the entrepreneurial orientation (EO) process in immigrant businesses.

Design/methodology/approach – The paper draws on inductive multiple-case studies using 34 in-depth interviews. This paper relies on three cases of immigrant entrepreneurs originating from Mexico and Colombia that established firms in Sweden.

Findings – The results suggest that EO development trajectories vary in the presence of family roles (i.e. inspirers, backers and partners), resulting in the immigrant family business configurations of family-role-influenced proactiveness, risk-taking and innovation.

Originality/value – The immigrant family configurations drive three EO-enabling scenarios: (1) home-country framing, (2) family backing and (3) transnational translating. Immigrant family dynamics facilitate the development of EO over time through reciprocal interaction processes across contexts. This study indicates that, through family dynamics, EO develops as mutually interactive processes between the immigrant entrepreneur's family in the home and host countries.

Keywords Immigrants, Entrepreneurial orientation, Start-ups

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

Entrepreneurial orientation (EO) is among the most-discussed topics in mainstream entrepreneurship literature due to its prominent impact on the entrepreneurial process. EO is mainly explained by the three concepts of proactiveness, risk-taking and innovation (Lumpkin and Dess, 1996). *Proactiveness* is the ability to introduce new products and technologies to the market, *risk-taking* describes the willingness to exploit opportunities by committing significant resources despite possible failure (Lumpkin and Dess, 1996), whereas *innovativeness* describes the ability to create solutions for problems and needs (Covin and



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Slevin, 1989; Ljungkvist and Andersén, 2021). However, many issues remain unclear. The complexity of various owner constellations and the temporal prevalence of the EO dimensions have been insufficiently explored (e.g. Ljungkvist *et al.*, 2019; Zellweger and Sieger, 2012). EO is also under-researched as concerns immigrant entrepreneurship despite its profound influences on many aspects of entrepreneurial ventures. This similarly concerns highly educated immigrant entrepreneurs (Randerson *et al.*, 2015) and is particularly important as these immigrants are vital to continued value creation in the Western world, including in the information technology (IT) sector (Boucher, 2020; Cerna and Czaika, 2016). To date, the few studies of immigrant entrepreneurship that have examined EO suggest that various sociocultural characteristics, such as previous knowledge and the particular ethnic community, of immigrant entrepreneurs' firms affect EO (e.g. Altinay and Okumus, 2008; Altinay and Wang, 2011; Chung *et al.*, 2020; Wang and Altinay, 2012). Although family influences on immigrant businesses feature prominently in the literature (e.g. Bagwell, 2015; Elo *et al.*, 2022; Evansluong *et al.*, 2023; Selcuk and Suwala, 2020; Sinkovics and Reuber, 2021), there is a need for further research into how the family affects the manifestation of EO (Naldi *et al.*, 2007; Wales, 2016; Wales *et al.*, 2021).

Several studies not specifically investigating EO among immigrant entrepreneurs suggest that family members influence immigrants' risk-taking through being entrepreneurial role models. Other studies indicate that family members encourage immigrants to be proactive through inspiring them to generate entrepreneurial ideas (Bagwell, 2008, 2015, 2017) or providing financial support in different phases of business development (e.g. Bates, 1997; Ram *et al.*, 2017; Sanders and Nee, 1996). So far, no study has directly addressed how the family affects aspects of EO among immigrant entrepreneurs. This paper accordingly explores how the family influences the EO process in immigrant businesses, leading to the following research question: How does the family influence the immigrant entrepreneur's EO and what EO configurations are manifested?

By means of three inductive case studies, we deepen our understanding of complex social processes affecting the manifestation of EO. Following theoretical sampling, we selected cases illustrating "common antecedents" (Eisenhardt, 2021) to replication logic leading to analytical generalization (Yin, 2009). Given the importance of IT and E-commerce businesses for the continued economic development of Western countries (Boucher, 2020; Cerna and Czaika, 2016), we selected three cases of highly skilled immigrant entrepreneurs running such businesses in Sweden. These businesses have connections to their proprietors' home countries. As studies suggest, home-country culture influences immigrants' intention to start businesses (Dabić *et al.*, 2020) as well as risk-tolerance and innovation levels (Duan *et al.*, 2021) among immigrant entrepreneurs, so these businesses offer a rich setting in which to analyze the complexity of EO. In addition, these businesses illustrate the notable and common influence of the immigrant's family in the countries of residence and origin on the immigrant's business (Bagwell, 2017), helping reveal the prominent impact of family on EO. We considered different family configurations in these businesses to theorize how the heterogeneity of family circumstances gives rise to different dimensions of EO, generating different business outcomes. The findings reveal three family-influenced EO configurations: home-country-framed proactiveness, family-backed risk-taking and transnational translation innovativeness.

To understand the family's impact on EO, this study first discusses the interaction between the home- and host-country families and how family roles drive the immigrant entrepreneur's entrepreneurial actions. Moreover, given the identified EO configurations, three EO-enabling mechanisms are proposed. This study contributes to the EO, family entrepreneurship and immigrant entrepreneurship literatures.

In "Frame of reference," the authors discuss the theoretical framework. Then, in "Method," the research methods are outlined and in "Findings," the results of the study are presented. In

“Discussion,” the identified configurations are considered and, finally, in “Conclusions,” the authors highlight the contributions and limitations of this study.

Frame of reference

Family in immigrant entrepreneurship. The mainstream entrepreneurship literature suggests that the family influences the entrepreneurial process (Aldrich and Cliff, 2003) and that family influences on entrepreneurship are complex due to the heterogeneity of the family between countries (Jaskiewicz and Dyer, 2017). Immigrants might have family members living inside and outside their country of origin (e.g. Bagwell, 2008), so family influences on their business activities might come from family members in different places (e.g. Evansluong *et al.*, 2023; Kloosterman, 2010).

Chang *et al.* (2009) and Harris (2009) have described and argued for differences between “ethnic” and “non-ethnic” family entrepreneurship. Although they emphasized the importance of the family as a resource for ethnic/immigrant entrepreneurs and highlighted the role of family social capital, neither study explicitly defined ethnic family entrepreneurship as a specific type of family involvement. The present authors therefore define family entrepreneurship research as “the research field that studies entrepreneurial behaviors of family, family members, and family businesses” (Bettinelli *et al.*, 2014, p. 4) and immigrant-family-involved entrepreneurship as businesses directly or indirectly involving one or several family members who are active in at least two countries, a home and host country.

Family influences are exerted at different points in the entrepreneurial process of immigrant businesses (e.g. Sander and Nee, 1996). Family members financially support immigrant entrepreneurs during the venture-creation process (e.g. Aldén and Hammarstedt, 2016; Dabić *et al.*, 2020; Malki *et al.*, 2022). For example, Kloosterman *et al.* (2016) found that entrepreneurs of Ghanaian background in the Netherlands often receive financial support when creating their ventures. Family members are often the initial point of access to financial resources for immigrant businesses (Portes and Sensenbrenner, 1993). Family members provide labor to immigrant businesses, especially during the venture-creation process (e.g. Ram *et al.*, 2008). When immigrant entrepreneurs need to explore entrepreneurial ideas, family members act as advisers (Adler and Kwon, 2002; Evansluong and Ramirez-Pasillas, 2019) as well as resource providers to develop the ideas (Bagwell, 2015).

Family involvement in immigrant businesses has mainly been discussed in the immigrant entrepreneurship literature (e.g. Bagwell, 2015; Ram *et al.*, 2008, 2017). However, immigrant startups with strong family involvement have not attracted sufficient attention in the entrepreneurship literature. Immigrant startups involving closely related family members are unique since immigrants live in a foreign country while maintaining connections with their country of origin, occupying at least two geographical locations (Drori *et al.*, 2009). This position allows immigrant startups to leverage resources from their countries of both residence and origin. Such circumstances among immigrant entrepreneurs extend the meaning of the family, as the nuclear family living in one place is no longer the norm (Stewart, 2003).

Family influences on EO in immigrant entrepreneurship

Despite the importance of EO for immigrant entrepreneurship, emphasized in several studies, as EO plays a significant role in firms’ competitive advantage and innovation (Altinay and Wang, 2011; Chung *et al.*, 2020; Dana *et al.*, 2020; Omisakin *et al.*, 2016), few studies systematically investigate EO in immigrant entrepreneurship, addressing all three dimensions of EO (e.g. Altinay and Wang, 2011; Omisakin *et al.*, 2016). These studies have not analyzed (a) what proactiveness, risk-taking and innovativeness entail in immigrant

entrepreneurs or (b) how these entrepreneurs nurture their EO, in terms of either empirical findings or theoretical contributions. Research suggests that immigrants' families might influence different dimensions of their EO (Bagwell, 2015; Chung *et al.*, 2020), considering the prominent influences of family on immigrant entrepreneurship (Chavan *et al.*, 2022; Evansluong *et al.*, 2023). However, little effort has been made to understand the relationships between immigrants' families and EO among immigrant entrepreneurs.

While entrepreneurship and family business studies highlight the importance of family dynamics in EO (e.g. Cruz and Nordqvist, 2012; Miller *et al.*, 2011; Naldi *et al.*, 2007; Zellweger and Sieger, 2012), family influences on firms' EO have been insufficiently addressed in the immigrant entrepreneurship literature. Prior research on EO has advocated more qualitative studies (e.g. Randerson, 2016; Wales, 2016) to compare EO between organizations and, more generally, to question the how and why of EO (Boers and Henschel, 2022; Wales *et al.*, 2021). This is particularly important for EO in family firms (Zellweger and Sieger, 2012), let alone immigrant startups with high family engagement. In such organizations, the immigrant entrepreneur's connection to the family can be considered decisive for the endeavor's success (Chang *et al.*, 2009; Evansluong *et al.*, 2023).

Proactiveness in immigrant entrepreneurship involves the ability to bring new products/services and technologies (Saxenian, 2002) to the country of residence and other transnational markets (Sequeira *et al.*, 2009; Sinkovics and Reuber, 2021). On one hand, recent studies show that ideas for creating such products or services can come from the country of origin, as immigrants might be inspired by similar opportunities in the host country (Evansluong and Ramirez-Pasillas, 2019), by their experience of family entrepreneurship (Bagwell, 2017), or by customers and migrants who need the services or products or who are pursuing the same entrepreneurial opportunities (Evansluong, 2016).

On the other hand, these studies have not fully explained how proactiveness is nurtured among these entrepreneurs. One possible explanation is that they are inspired and surrounded by other migrants who run the same type of businesses (Evansluong *et al.*, 2023), whereas some studies suggest that proactiveness arises from immigrant embeddedness in home-country family entrepreneurship. Evansluong (2016) and Evansluong and Ramirez-Pasillas (2021) suggested that immigrants' proactiveness can be nurtured by working in home-country family businesses before starting their own in the country of residence. Several studies of immigrant entrepreneurship posit that proactiveness among immigrant entrepreneurs is also influenced by ongoing support from family members in countries of both origin and residence (Dabić *et al.*, 2020; Light and Bonacich, 1988; Ram *et al.*, 2008). This financial and non-financial support can encourage immigrant entrepreneurs to pursue new business opportunities and markets (Evansluong and Ramirez-Pasillas, 2019). Specifically, when immigrant entrepreneurs need to consult someone for help with a new business idea that they feel hesitant to pursue, family member support, such as labor (Ramadani *et al.*, 2014; Sanders and Nee, 1996; Tienda and Rajman, 2004) and financing (Ram *et al.*, 2017), might encourage them to realize the idea (Bagwell, 2015). Although studies indicate that immigrants' families might affect immigrant entrepreneurs' proactiveness, little is known about the mechanisms by which the family exerts this impact.

Risk-taking among immigrant entrepreneurs involves the ability to expand market segments outside co-ethnic networks (Basu, 2011) to access mainstream (Griffin-EL and Olabisi, 2018) and transnational markets (Sinkovics and Reuber, 2021). This market expansion ability relies on resources such as the founders' past experience (e.g. Altinay and Wang, 2011), embeddedness in the local context (Lassalle *et al.*, 2020) and family connections (Bagwell, 2017), also relating to the risk propensity and family-based business community in the entrepreneur's home country (Dana *et al.*, 2020). When facing problematic situations or uncertainties in their businesses, immigrant entrepreneurs often relate to similar experiences of their family members in both private and business contexts, using them as reference points

for decision-making (Evansluong and Ramirez Pasillas, 2021). Resources from family members or ethnic peers (Chavan *et al.*, 2022; Khosa and Kalitanyi, 2015) bolster risk-taking among immigrant entrepreneurs. It is suggested that emotional and financial support from ethnic peers and family helps immigrant entrepreneurs face critical uncertainties (Chrysostome, 2010). Although contributions of financial and human capital from family members can encourage immigrants to pursue business ideas (Azmat and Fujimoto, 2016), little is known of how such support specifically influences levels of risk-taking and uncertainty. Additionally, studies have not discussed the relationships between immigrants' businesses and the level of risk-taking among their family members.

So far, research on innovativeness in immigrant entrepreneurship has focused on: (a) creative thinking ability to respond to customer needs (e.g. Altinay and Wang, 2011; Basu, 2011); (b) ability to adapt to new market opportunities (e.g. Basu, 2011; Griffin-EL and Olabisi, 2018); and (c) opportunities to create new markets by "doing ethnicity" (Lidola, 2014, p. 20) through maximizing resources from the countries of both residence and origin (Drori *et al.*, 2009; Elo *et al.*, 2022). Family member support might affect the level of innovativeness among immigrant entrepreneurs. Family members can connect immigrant entrepreneurs to relevant networks to develop a business idea or new market (Bagwell, 2008, 2015). In some circumstances, family members become legal business partners to provide services or products (e.g. Bagwell, 2017). Chung *et al.* (2020) and Bagwell (2015, 2017) have found that immigrant entrepreneurs' skills, educational background, professional qualifications and previous experience influence their level of innovativeness. Despite the significant contribution of family members to innovativeness among immigrant entrepreneurs (Bagwell, 2008; Li and Johansen, 2023), little effort has been made to understand the process and mechanisms of the specific ways that family members influence these entrepreneurs' innovativeness.

To sum up, studies of immigrant entrepreneurship treat EO as a one-time phenomenon (e.g. Omisakin *et al.*, 2016; Wang and Altinay, 2012), whereas EO as a process evolving over time and having multiple dimensions remains under-researched. Although the family significantly influences immigrants' various EO dimensions, it has not attracted as much attention as in the general entrepreneurship literature (Kreiser *et al.*, 2010; Lumpkin and Dess, 1996; Nordqvist and Zellweger, 2010; Randerson, 2016). So far, studies of immigrant entrepreneurship have not dismantled the concept of family, instead treating it as a unified unit regardless of its heterogeneity (Bagwell, 2008, 2015). By investigating the roles of the family in immigrant EO, this study advances our understanding of how family roles influence immigrants' EO process.

Method

To explore how the family influences the EO process in immigrant startups, the authors conducted inductive multiple qualitative case studies incorporating in-depth semi-structured interviews and archival data (Eisenhardt, 2021), recognized as a suitable approach to address immigrant businesses with strong family involvement (e.g. Evansluong *et al.*, 2023; Slevin and Terjesen, 2011; Zellweger and Sieger, 2012) as well as EO (e.g. Boers and Henschel, 2022). By applying a qualitative approach, it is possible to analyze how and why EO exists and develops over time, which is impossible with single, snapshot quantitative study designs (Randerson, 2016; Wales, 2016). The authors relied on cases of immigrant startups located in Sweden, where immigrants account for 20% of the population (SCB, 2022) and immigrant businesses have contributed significantly to the economy in recent decades (Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth, 2016). Previous studies have shown that the relatively large-scale immigration to Sweden in recent decades has positively affected gross domestic product (GDP) growth, population structure (i.e. the proportion of the population that is of

working age; [Malmberg et al., 2016](#)) and innovation and entrepreneurship ([Fassio and Ejermo, 2018](#); [Kazlou and Urban, 2023](#)). This in turn has generated good conditions for the ongoing positive development of economic growth, consumption, tax revenues and housing prices ([Malmberg et al., 2016](#)). However, due to integration problems, the Swedish government is seeking to limit immigration by tightening the citizenship requirements, including language skills, knowledge of Swedish society and self-sufficiency and increasing the income requirements for labor immigration ([Government Offices of Sweden, 2023](#)). Reduced immigration could pose a challenge for future economic growth and consumption.

The authors recruited the cases through gatekeepers from local business support organizations, interviewing immigrant startup owners and family members ([Fletcher et al., 2016](#)) in the Västra Götaland and Jönköping regions – among the regions with the most immigrant businesses ([Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth, 2016](#)). It should also be mentioned that Sweden's longstanding generous migration policy indirectly gave the authors the opportunity to study the selected cases for a relatively long time. For confidentiality reasons, all personal and company names have been changed and anonymized.

Guided by “careful case selection” ([Eisenhardt, 2021](#), p. 149) for theoretical sampling, we chose cases according to the “common antecedents” design ([Eisenhardt, 2021](#), p. 149) to permit high-quality analytical generalization ([Yin, 2009](#)). The authors chose cases based on the following criteria. First, the case companies were founded and run by highly educated immigrant entrepreneurs in the IT sector who had acquired most of their education in their home countries. Second, the founders of the Swedish businesses were born outside Sweden, qualifying them as immigrant entrepreneurs. Third, the immigrant's family in the countries of residence and origin exerted notable influence on the business, helping us better understand the significant impact of the family on the business. Since family members in the host and home countries are often involved in and influence the immigrant entrepreneur's business ([Bagwell, 2017](#)), it is important to investigate how family influences the immigrant entrepreneur's EO. Such dynamics of family settings provided rich context to reveal family influences at multiple levels (extended and nuclear) in multiple locations (home and host countries) on the business. By illuminating how the heterogeneity of family circumstances gives rise to different business outcomes, the complexity of family influences on EO could be analyzed.

To maintain good comparability between cases, our samples included founders with Mexican and Colombian origins operating in the IT and E-commerce sectors. Mexico and Colombia have relatively similar cultural traits ([Hofstede, 1980](#)), so we assumed that Mexican and Colombian families would share values and influences concerning family roles and relationships. The cultures in these countries are characterized by relatively high power distance, i.e. hierarchies of power are expected and seen as natural and collectivism, i.e. there is strong group loyalty, for example, between family members ([Basabe and Ros, 2005](#); [Rinne et al., 2012](#)). Moreover, in Latin American societies, the Catholic Church and the family constitute two central institutions, with the latter often serving as a map for transgenerational family entrepreneurship ([Gupta and Levenburg, 2010](#)). In these intergenerational interactions, values such as commitment and trust are essential, also strengthening family ties ([Cruz et al., 2012](#); [Gomez-Mejia et al., 2020](#)). Hence, this study provides an opportunity for deeper insight into the entrepreneurship of immigrants with a Latin American cultural background. However, these selection criteria facilitated similar patterns and results, supporting replication logic ([Yin, 2009](#)). An overview of the data collection for each case is presented in [Table 1](#).

The authors conducted 34 interviews, each lasting about an hour, with the immigrant entrepreneurs in these cases between 2013 and 2018 to acquire retrospective and real-time data capturing the dynamics of family influences at multiple entrepreneurial moments

Case	Type of business	Year established	Country of origin	Family	No. of Interviews and role in the business/ family	Archival data	Observations
1 Startup X	IT software development	2011	Mexico	Extended family in Mexico Nuclear family in Sweden Co-founders 1a and 1b are very close friends	9 interviews with co-founder 1a 9 interviews with co-founder 1b 2 interviews with an intern 2 interviews with 2 close friends of both co-founders 1a and 1b	Company Facebook page Email and text messages	Field visits Informal meetings
2 Startup Y	IT hardware maintenance and software development	2012	Mexico	Extended family in Mexico Nuclear family in Sweden Co-founders 2a, woman, and 2b, man, are a couple	3 interviews with co-founder 2a 2 interviews with co-founder 2b	Company Facebook page Email and text messages	Field visits Informal meetings
3 Startup Z	E-commerce business	2014	Colombia	Extended family in Colombia Nuclear family in Sweden Co-founders 3a, man, and 3b, woman, are a couple	5 interviews with co-founder 3a 2 interviews with co-founder 3b	Company Facebook page Email and text messages	Informal meetings

Source(s): Authors' own work

Table 1.
Data collection

connected to EO to allow for theory building (Eisenhardt and Graebner, 2007). This study employed open-ended questions asking the immigrant entrepreneurs about their migration journey to Sweden and how they embarked on the entrepreneurial process in Sweden. To understand the context (Baker and Welter, 2018) in which they operate, questions were asked about their perspectives and actions regarding proactiveness, risk and innovativeness. The first round of interviews revealed the notable involvement in the business of the immigrant's family in the home and host countries. In the second round of data collection, the authors conducted follow-up interviews to gain insights into the role of the immigrant's family in the business in general and, specifically, in the firm's EO. All interviews were audio recorded and transcribed.

Unit of analysis

Since immigrant entrepreneurs often conduct their entrepreneurship in close contact with their families (Evansluong, 2016), including the home-country family members, the immigrant entrepreneur's extended family constitutes the unit of analysis. However, as the investigated firms can be classified as founder-centered (Salvato, 2004) micro-firms (Sheikh et al., 2002), the authors focus on the immigrant entrepreneur's entrepreneurial interactions with the family and other essential actors.

Case descriptions

Startup X – This venture was established as a limited company in Sweden in 2012 by two friends, Jose and Ricardo, from Mexico. Before founding the company, these friends both worked for their family businesses in Mexico. They wanted to become entrepreneurs, following their parents' examples and started their own business with their girlfriends in Sweden. Throughout their entrepreneurial journey, they have interacted with family members in Sweden and with extended family (i.e. parents and siblings) in Mexico. This initially resulted in a software-development service for companies in Mexico through their network of businesses there. After several years, Jose and Ricardo decided to focus on the Swedish market. They offered software development to local Swedish companies, outsourcing most of the development work to Mexico through their business networks. They received substantial ongoing input from their home-country family members regarding business concept development for the Swedish market. Their parents' families' businesses also invested in Jose and Ricardo's company in Sweden. Throughout this process, they offered a computer repair service serving the needs of private consumers and businesses in their local area. Jose and Ricardo's Mexican spouses offered feedback that was employed in developing the business concept.

Startup Y – Antonio arrived in Sweden in 2009 to pursue graduate studies in engineering after working several years as an engineer in several companies in Mexico. A year later, his girlfriend Francisca joined him in Sweden. Francisca had grown up in a family business environment, as her grandfather had a pharmacy business and her father ran a company selling medical equipment. When she first came to Sweden, she took a web-design course. While responsible for designing websites for several customers in a small Swedish company, she came up with the business concept of offering web design to the Swedish market using highly skilled software developers in Mexico. Her husband supported the idea and developed it into other IT areas. This business idea was strongly supported by family members in Mexico. After several months, they created a business concept combining web design, embedded tools and augmented reality. The development work is done in Mexico by a team of freelance IT engineers and then delivered to the Swedish market.

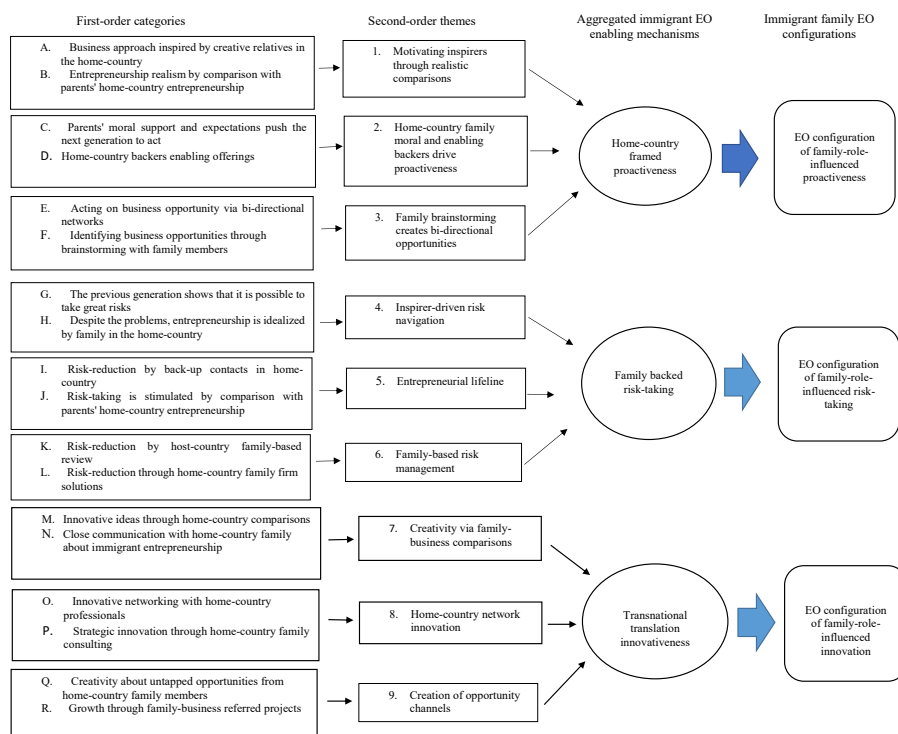
Startup Z – Eduardo arrived in Sweden to enroll in a master's program. In 2014, he started a company marketing Swedish university education to foreign students. When developing

the company, he consulted not only contacts in his professional network but also family in his home country of Colombia. Additionally, Eduardo often consulted his uncle in the USA to discuss his business ideas. At various times in the business development process, the founder discussed his business ideas with his parents and siblings in Colombia. Aware of the mistakes his father had made when running the family business in Colombia, the founder wanted to show his father and uncle that he could handle the challenge of running a company. His girlfriend joined the business as a co-founder and both of them have close contacts with their home-country families. His girlfriend has supported him in life and business and acted as a business developer.

Data analysis

To conceptualize how the family influences the EO process in immigrant startups, this study followed established iterative practices for inductive qualitative studies, meaning that the data were structured into first-order categories, second-order themes and aggregated theoretical dimensions (see Figure 1) (Corley and Gioia, 2004; Gioia *et al.*, 2013). A central reason for using the inductive approach is that it gave us the opportunity to use the EO construct unconditionally. In this way, we could develop new EO concepts better capturing “the level of meaning of the people living that experience” (Gioia *et al.*, 2013, p. 16), based on the immigrant entrepreneurs’ experience of family members’ influence on their EO, concepts therefore better for scientific theorizing (Gioia *et al.*, 2013).

The authors’ formal data analysis was performed in the following stages. First, the guiding principle was to identify all interview extracts related to the roles of family or other



Source(s): Authors' own creation

Figure 1.
Data structure

central actors in immigrant business and to any of the EO dimensions of *proactiveness*, *risk-taking* and *innovativeness* (Lumpkin and Dess, 1996). Each identified extract is connected in some way to the concepts of immigrant family and EO; for example, “My father went bankrupt several times, but always managed it” is linked to both risk-taking and a family role. Subsequently, when the collected quotations were iteratively compared, the authors identified three distinguishing empirical family-role features, which constituted a basis for classifying the collected material. These roles could be related to the literature and were labeled *inspirer*, *backer* and *partner*: in their *inspirer* role, the home-country family firm and central family members inspire the immigrant entrepreneur to take entrepreneurial actions; the *backer* supports the immigrant entrepreneur in various ways; and the *partner* is characterized by active participation in the immigrant company’s production of products and services. Second, based on the identified EO dimensions, axial NVivo coding was conducted (Corley and Gioia, 2004); in this way, similarities and differences were revealed and relationships between the collected quotations and respective EO dimensions were identified (Gioia et al., 2013). Then, these EO-relevant extracts were categorized based on the family role in the EO activity. Furthermore, through this categorization, it was also possible to clarify what family members or other essential actors (e.g. mother, father, or external professional) played what family roles, i.e. inspirer, backer, or partner, in the different contexts (Table A1). Thus, the first-order categories in the data structure could be grouped and labeled in a relevant manner.

In the third stage, distinctive features of the first-order categories were abstracted into second-order themes (Gioia et al., 2013). Common to these themes is that they all concern interaction between the immigrant entrepreneurs and their families or other significant home-country actors, interaction extending across the home and host countries. In the final stage, the authors aggregated the identified themes into three immigrant entrepreneur-family-based EO concepts, closely related to the EO dimensions of proactiveness, risk-taking and innovation. Following Grodal et al.’s (2021) and Gioia et al.’s (2013) frameworks for categorizing and analyzing qualitative data, the authors examined the data that the second-order themes represented and how these themes related to one another; the authors then merged these themes into aggregated EO concepts. For example, the concept *home-country-framed proactiveness* emerged from the fact that all themes based on proactiveness also included activities related to the home-country family. In this way, the home-country family inspired and motivated the immigrant entrepreneur to take proactive actions.

Findings

In this section, the authors clarify the empirical patterns that emerged and how they were used to identify the three family-influenced immigrant EO dimensions of home-country-framed proactiveness, family-backed risk-taking and transnational translation and resource-orchestrated innovativeness.

Home-country-framed proactiveness

By following the authors’ guiding principle of identifying relevant interview extracts and conducting EO-based axial coding, several empirical patterns emerged (Figure 1 and Table A1 in the Appendix). Regarding the EO dimension of proactiveness (Lumpkin and Dess, 1996), it became clear that the home-country family played an essential role. A driving force of proactiveness was “motivating inspirers” (Figure 1) in the home country. They were often parents as well as members of the extended family (e.g. uncles) characterized by their EO and ability to overcome obstacles: “I recalled that I grew up in a family in which we tried to do new business things” (Immigrant entrepreneur 1a, Startup X). These reflections also contributed to comparisons between the immigrant entrepreneurs’ startups and the

home-country family businesses, generating insights and entrepreneurship realism. Relating to [Evansluong and Ramírez Pasillas' \(2019\)](#) findings, the empirical material showed that proactiveness was generated by moral backing, i.e. their parents expected the immigrant entrepreneurs to undertake entrepreneurial initiatives: "When they [i.e. our parents] heard about the business idea, they were very happy for us" (Immigrant entrepreneur 2a, Startup Y). In this way, the parents induced confidence and encouraged the entrepreneurs to seek business opportunities. However, concrete support from the home-country family to arrange business solutions also played a significant role in the immigrant entrepreneurs' proactiveness. The immigrants' companies were connected with home-country business activities that became part of their business models in the host country. Proactive actions were also stimulated through "family brainstorming" and "bi-directional opportunities," in which family members contributed to the business as active partners ([Bagwell, 2017](#)). By constantly questioning and discussing various business opportunities within the family, the immigrants developed the business models of their companies: "I discussed my web-design ideas with my husband, and he supported me and came up with an even bigger idea: IT programming" (Immigrant entrepreneur 2a, Startup Y). A common feature of all three cases was the strong influence of the home-country family, mostly the mother and father, on the entrepreneur's EO ([Table A1](#)). Another common feature was the use of personal networks in the home country, meaning that home-country networks were used in developing the host-country market, in turn generating solutions used by the home-country family business. In this way, home-country professionals were employed in response to demand on the Swedish market; this competence in turn became an asset for the family company's home-country operations.

Family-backed risk-taking

The EO dimension of risk-taking ([Lumpkin and Dess, 1996](#)) turned out to be closely related to personal contacts in the home country and to family relationships in the home and host countries. Regarding the previous generation's experiences ([Altinay and Wang, 2011](#)), interaction with the parents and home-country extended family facilitated "inspirer-driven risk navigation" ([Figure 1](#)). By comparing how the previous generation handled risk-taking and by repeatedly comparing their own entrepreneurship with that of their parents, the risk-taking propensity of the immigrant entrepreneurs was stimulated – i.e. risks appeared manageable. Moreover, regarding the family business network ([Bagwell, 2017](#)), personal contacts in the home country included potential suppliers and customers. For the immigrant startups, these contacts represented an "entrepreneurial lifeline" fueled by the home-country family's idealization of entrepreneurship. However, the empirical material indicated that family-based daily contacts had a risk-reducing effect. Through ongoing contact with host-country family members, i.e. spouses and siblings ([Table A1](#)), the immigrant company's operations and the immigrant entrepreneur's ideas were subjected to continuous critical examination in which, for example, an immigrant entrepreneur's girlfriend played the role of critic: "When I know it works for Rebecka [i.e. the girlfriend], it will work for a lot of people" (Immigrant entrepreneur 3a, Startup Z). Comparing host-with home-country family contacts, the latter appeared more solution oriented. When concrete proposals came from people whom the immigrant entrepreneurs considered role models, they were likely perceived as lower in risk. Taken together, all these interactions constituted a form of "family-based risk management."

Transnational translation innovativeness

Relating to [Bagwell \(2008\)](#), the EO dimension of innovation was significantly influenced by the home-country family. By continuous comparison with the family business in the home country,

business concepts were imitated and adapted to the host-country market. This was enabled by almost daily communication with inspiring home-country family members; especially important was the father (Table A1), who conveyed news about the home-country market. The immigrants' business ideas were developed through "family business comparisons" (Figure 1). Creativity was also achieved by means of "home-country network innovation." Home-country networks could include engineers and marketers (see professionals, Table A1) who were cultivated during the immigrant entrepreneur's education and early professional experience in the home country. These network competences were used for product development: "In general, the network we have been using [for creating new products] involves engineers" (Immigrant entrepreneur 1b, Startup X). Another important aspect was that these networks lowered labor costs, which can be seen as an innovative aspect of their business models (Morris *et al.*, 2005). Still, the home-country family appeared critical for the immigrant firms' strategic innovative moves. For example, the father acted as a mentor, advising the immigrant entrepreneur about central investment ideas that he picked up in the home country. However, the home-country family (e.g. mother, father and uncle) also participated in the "creation of opportunity channels" (cf. Li and Johansen, 2023). Untapped opportunities to use skilled but uneducated home-country labor for services in the host country were suggested. Furthermore, work projects were conveyed to the immigrant entrepreneur by the home-country family, supporting the immigrant startup's growth. These projects were located in the home country but could, through digital technology, be conducted in Sweden.

Discussion

This case study illustrates the importance of family influence for the EO processes of immigrant startups. However, unlike previous research, which has emphasized the importance of sociocultural characteristics (Altinay and Wang, 2011), ethnic ties (Chung *et al.*, 2020) and networks (Omisakin *et al.*, 2016; Wang and Altinay, 2012) for immigrant EO, this study presents a framework for family influence on EO in immigrant startups (Figure 2,

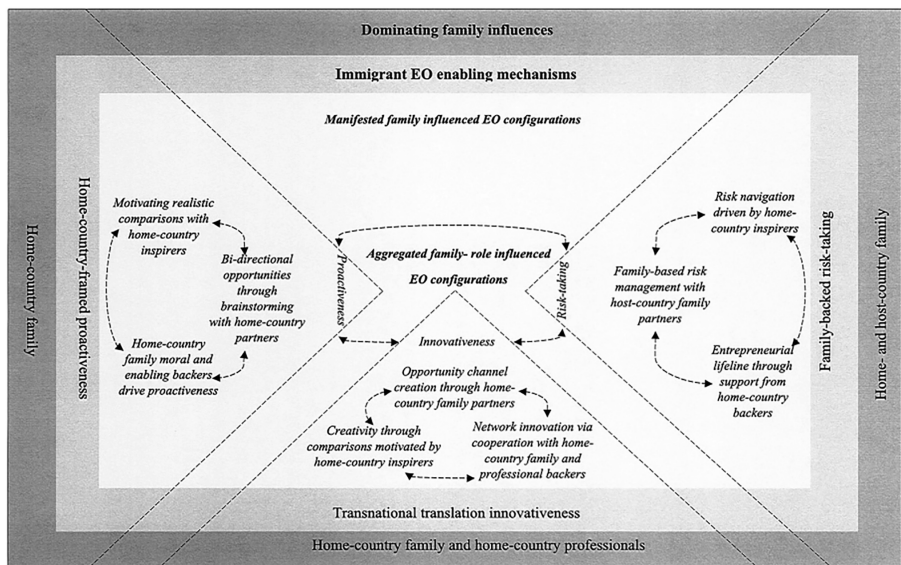


Figure 2.
EO configuration
framework for
immigrant start-ups.
The basic concepts of
the figure are in bold
and shown centrally
and in the upper part of
the figure

Source(s): Authors' own creation

read from the outside toward the inside). The core of this framework highlights three EO configurations of the influence of the immigrant family, mainly generated by the impact of the family-related roles of inspirer, backer and partner. Furthermore, these configurations are shaped by three proposed EO-enabling mechanisms explained by the following overarching family immigrant EO-enabling scenarios: home-country framing, family backing and transnational translating.

To understand how the family influences the EO dimensions in immigrant businesses, it is important to identify how each EO dimension is manifested (Randerson, 2016; Wales, 2016; Wales *et al.*, 2021) and driven through the impact of family roles.

Previous research (Bagwell, 2015, 2017; Chavan *et al.*, 2022) has highlighted the importance of transnational family ties and embeddedness for entrepreneurship. However, this study focuses on how different family roles influence immigrant entrepreneurship. Although the sample of the study entails a risk of bias, i.e. all the cases consist of immigrant startups in which the home and host country families exert a notable influence on the immigrant entrepreneur's EO, as such entrepreneurs are often embedded in and strongly influenced by their families (Bagwell, 2017; Chavan *et al.*, 2022), the sample can nevertheless be considered reasonably representative. As illustrated in Figure 2, the immigrant family-role-influenced EO configurations are based on three forms of dominant family influences, i.e. on home-country family, on home-country family and home-country professionals and on home- and host-country families. Each of these has a dominant influence on how the respective immigrant EO-enabling mechanism is formed, which in turn explains how different patterns give rise to different EO-enabling scenarios and thus to three types of the immigrant family-role-influenced EO configurations.

Regarding the *EO configuration of family-role-influenced proactiveness* (Figure 2), proactiveness is largely manifested through the interaction between the immigrant entrepreneur and home-country family members. The immigrant entrepreneur usually acts based on inspiration from, back-up from and collaboration with family members embedded in the home country (Evansluong and Ramirez-Pasilla, 2021). However, bi-directional opportunities also include home-country contacts outside the family. Also, the *EO configuration of family-role-influenced risk-taking* is mainly driven by and manifested through the immigrant entrepreneur's relationships with family roles embedded in the home country, i.e. home-country inspirer-driven risk navigation and family-based risk management. However, family-based risk management tends to be co-created with family members in the host country. Reasonably, this depends on the immediate impact of risk-taking on the host-country family, i.e. business failure will directly affect their lives. The *EO configuration of family-role-influenced innovation* is manifested through the interaction and dynamics between the immigrant entrepreneur and home-country-embedded inspirers and partners. However, this configuration also indicates that the backer role concerns both family and professionals located in the home country. The immigrant firm's backer-based innovation is thus achieved through collaboration with family members and non-family actors, implying that innovativeness tends to include actors outside the nuclear family.

The following describes how the family, in terms of inspirers, backers and partners, drives the configuration of each EO dimension. A driving factor of these family role-based configurations is the dynamism manifested between the home-country family and the immigrant entrepreneur (Bagwell, 2008, 2015). Based on the strong emotional impact of the home country on the immigrant entrepreneur (Evansluong and Ramírez Pasillas, 2019), the inspirer, despite being situated in a different geographical and cultural environment, exerts a strong influence on the immigrant entrepreneur's motivation. Likewise, emotional and cultural ties to home-country family members promote the family roles of backer (Bagwell, 2008) and partner (Li and Johansen, 2023). Furthermore, this dynamism is also fueled by continuous reframing (Morgan, 2011). By continuous comparison with the inspirers' businesses in the home country, and through the

transnational translations created by family members or other essential partners, the reframing-based interaction between the immigrant entrepreneur and the family members dynamically influences the immigrant startups. Also characterizing these configurations is that the inspirer role, generally played by the mother and father, mainly exerts influence by means of motivation and emotions; the backer role, in which parents together with professionals play a central role, exerts influence through a mixture of emotional and action support, and finally the partner role, played by parents together with host-country family (i.e. spouse and siblings) exerts influence by taking and facilitating action. The family roles' influences on the immigrant's EO are aggregated in the three EO configurations described in [Figure 2](#).

Furthermore, [Figure 2](#) also indicates that the three family-role-influenced configurations reciprocally influence one another. For example, if realistic home-country comparisons and family morals inspire and reinforce proactivity ([Evansluong and Ramirez Pasillas, 2019](#)), the sense of risk will likely decrease and feel manageable, which in turn further stimulates the proactive approach; likewise, if the proactivity is based on inspiring comparisons with the home country, creativity and innovation are stimulated, which in turn can lead to bi-directional proactivity in which business opportunities in the host country lead to new business activities in the home country ([Bagwell, 2017](#)).

The EO-enabling home-country-framing scenario

Previous research (e.g. [Bagwell, 2017](#); [Dabić et al., 2020](#); [Evansluong and Ramirez Pasillas, 2021](#)) has shown the importance of family roles for enabling immigrant family entrepreneurship. However, little is known, from a family perspective, about the processes enabling the immigrant entrepreneur to act. In this regard, the authors' inductive approach showed the importance of *home-country framing* ([Figure 2](#)). With home-country family members acting as inspirers, the immigrant entrepreneurs adopted a similar business attitude in the host country, for example, concerning the ability to overcome obstacles. The immigrant entrepreneur's actual business situation was compared with and framed by home-country family entrepreneurship, in turn stimulating and encouraging action. Furthermore, the EO dimension of proactiveness ([Lumpkin and Dess, 1996](#)) was also enabled by home-country-framed support (cf. [Dabić et al., 2020](#)) and by offerings of practical solutions. However, since the immigrant entrepreneur's EO is strongly influenced by the home-country family's business solutions, there is a risk of path dependency ([Schreyögg and Kliesch-Eberl, 2007](#)), meaning that the immigrant entrepreneur's business flexibility could decrease. Still, the solutions tend to emerge through brainstorming with home-country family members, often resulting in bi-directional solutions. Overall, home-country framing is created through the relationship with the home-country family, enabling proactiveness through reciprocal processes of comparisons, support and business proposals. This leads to the following proposition:

Proposition 1. Home-country-framed processes enable immigrant family entrepreneurial proactiveness.

The EO-enabling family backing scenario

Besides emotional support ([Chrysostome, 2010](#)), this study emphasizes the sense of risk reduction that family-linked role models conveyed. By seeing how these role models managed risks, the immigrant entrepreneurs increased their propensity for risk-taking. Regarding family support in the form of financial and human capital ([Azmat and Fujimoto, 2016](#); [Chavan et al., 2022](#)), home-country *family backing* ([Figure 2](#)) also concerned the mediation of potential customers and suppliers in the home country, i.e. channels for family firm survival and development, which were likely perceived as risk reducing. This is in line with earlier calls to

more carefully investigate the role of risk-taking in specific contexts (Naldi *et al.*, 2007). Finally, another risk-reducing aspect not clearly addressed by previous research (e.g. Dabić *et al.*, 2020; Omisakin *et al.*, 2016; Wang and Altinay, 2012) is the occurrence of family-based risk management, i.e. informal meetings with the immigrant entrepreneur's host-country family members, who review ideas and daily work. Certainly, there is a risk that these meetings could result in group polarization, reinforcing criticism (Ljungkvist, 2017; Moscovici and Zavalloni, 1969) and possibly reducing the willingness to act and take risks. However, if this criticism is balanced and constructive, it will likely be perceived as manageable and enabling. To sum up, by providing reciprocal processes of inspiration, concrete backing and partner collaboration, both the home- and host-country families help reduce risk perception, generating the following proposition:

Proposition 2. Family backing reduces the immigrant entrepreneur's sense of risk, which enables risk-taking.

The EO-enabling transnational translating scenario

For innovativeness, the immigrant entrepreneur's abilities to respond to customer needs (Altinay and Wang, 2011) and adapt to new market opportunities (Basu, 2011) are important. In addition, however, this study emphasizes the importance of *transnational translations* for innovativeness (Figure 2). By translating the home-country family's business solutions to the Swedish context, several business concepts could be realized. Moreover, analogous to interpretations of untapped opportunities identified by family members, ideas were translated from the home-to host-country contexts (cf. Li and Johansen, 2023). To handle business growth, the immigrant entrepreneur had to invent new work processes. However, since collaborations between the home-country family and the immigrant entrepreneur are associated with strong loyalty ties, innovativeness might be counteracted by escalating commitment (Schreyögg and Kliesch-Eberl, 2007), i.e. pride and loyalty could hamper the space for translations. Furthermore, innovativeness can also be enabled by transnational resource orchestration and by translated strategic consultation. By using their professional networks and exploiting the prevalence of digital services, immigrant entrepreneurs were enabled to translate and orchestrate home-country competences to a Swedish context; these translation processes also concerned strategic innovations enabled by consultations with home-country family members, who acted as mentors and partners. Taken together, transnational-based translations facilitate innovativeness through reciprocal processes of home-country inspirers' and backers' business consultation and by collaboration with home-country professionals, leading to the following proposition:

Proposition 3. Transnational translations facilitate immigrant entrepreneurs' innovativeness.

Conclusions

This study addresses EO in immigrant entrepreneurship at the individual level and in relation to the immigrant's family. By looking at EO in immigrant entrepreneurship, this study contextualizes the concept of EO as well as immigrant entrepreneurship. In line with research on non-immigrant businesses, this study highlights the importance of the family dimension and its related dynamics for the creation and continuity of EO-based business activities.

Theoretical contribution

This study contributes to the literature on EO and immigrant entrepreneurship by identifying three EO dimensions in the context of immigrant entrepreneurship. Compared

with previous research (Altinay and Wang, 2011; Chung *et al.*, 2020; Dana *et al.*, 2020; Omisakin *et al.*, 2016; Wang and Altinay, 2012), this study contributes by presenting three family-influenced immigrant EO configurations that advance our understanding of entrepreneurial proactiveness, risk-taking and innovativeness. Thus, in response to recent calls to investigate family influence on immigrant entrepreneurship (Bagwell, 2017; Evansluong *et al.*, 2023; Dabić *et al.*, 2020; Sinkovics and Reuber, 2021) and to acknowledge the need to recognize complex social and cross-cultural patterns in EO research (Wales, 2016; Wales *et al.*, 2021), our presented configurations highlight how complex interaction between the immigrant entrepreneur and identified family-based roles in the home and host countries influences EO. In particular, we provide a new understanding of the circumstances in which home- and host-country families or a combination of both dominate the influence of particular EO dimensions as well as the outcomes of such influence. The suggested configurations represent ways forward to conceptualize and understand family dynamics in immigrant entrepreneurship.

Practical implications

This study is practically relevant to immigrant entrepreneurs by helping them reflect on their EO; with this awareness, lopsided EO behaviors can be balanced and adjusted. For example, this study highlights the great dependence on the relationship with the home country in developing the EO process, which may reduce the propensity for constructive collaboration with host-country actors, i.e. the home-country relationship occupies too much time and attention. Moreover, this study also highlights the possibility of bidirectional networking with professional backers, here used to deliver IT services in the host country while increasing opportunities for the family business in the home country. By considering this type of business solution, immigrant entrepreneurs can be inspired to offer similar solutions in other industries where digital technology is used for transnational transactions of services and for networking between home and host countries. For example, immigrant entrepreneurs active in the real estate industry, with the support of IT specialists from the home country, can develop sustainability-oriented digital platforms (Vigren *et al.*, 2022) that integrate partners and services with building and location data for the host-country market; these platforms can also be applied in the home country, i.e. if the home-country family is active in the real estate industry. Furthermore, regarding the configuration of family-role-influenced innovation, as this study indicates that innovativeness tends to include professionals as *backers*, it is recommended that the immigrant startup, in view of reduced control and increased costs, should involve professionals as active *partners* to a greater extent, which would probably stimulate their innovation capability.

Finally, this study could have practical implications for policy makers in Western countries. By highlighting the importance of the relationship between immigrant entrepreneur and home-country family, authorities in Western countries could facilitate visa processing for family members from the home country, supporting physical visits and thus the transnational entrepreneurial dynamic.

Study limitations and outlook for future research

This study is limited by drawing on three cases, located in Sweden, so the reported experiences and findings cannot simply be transferred to other countries and contexts. Moreover, our sample of case companies includes only startups in which the family in the home and host countries exerts notable influence on the business, which likely affects the immigrant entrepreneur's EO, its magnitude and how it is manifested. However, since immigrant startups' entrepreneurship frequently is obviously influenced by the family

(Bagwell, 2017; Katila and Wahlbeck, 2012), the immigrant family EO configurations presented here should still be relevant.

Sweden is known for being the setting of many entrepreneurship studies, as it offers good data access (e.g. Evansluong, 2016; Evansluong and Ramirez-Passilas, 2019). Like any other country, Sweden has its own particular culture (Heinze *et al.*, 2022), which influences the present results and their applicability to other countries. Having said this, Sweden has received multiple migrant streams in recent decades (Backman *et al.*, 2021). Accordingly, the study focuses on highly skilled migrants from Latin America following an opportunity-driven approach to entrepreneurship, which is a type of migration generally preferred in the Western world (Boucher, 2020).

Another complicating factor is that immigrants to Sweden from countries other than those considered here may experience different opportunities based on different family cultures in their home countries. Immigrant entrepreneurs coming from home countries with values on EO dimensions different from those in the present examples will arguably manifest EO differently. For example, according to Basabe and Ros (2005), Latin American countries such as Mexico and Colombia are characterized by high power distance, which tends to negatively affect risk-taking (Kreiser *et al.*, 2010) and innovation (Rinne *et al.*, 2012). Furthermore, Latin American countries are characterized by relatively high collectivism, i.e. high group loyalty, which appears in strong transgenerational family ties characterized by family commitment and trust (Cruz *et al.*, 2012; Gomez-Mejia *et al.*, 2020; Gupta and Levenburg, 2010), which can limit comparability to immigrant entrepreneurs from other parts of the world. Thus, different cultural backgrounds could affect the interaction between home- and host-country families regarding EO influences. This study therefore argues that Hofstede's (1980) criteria for judging the traits of a culture offer a good framework for further research. However, even though Hofstede's work on culture is often applied, other cultural perspectives could also be drawn on. For example, Hall and Hall's (2001) conceptualization of high-versus low-context cultures, or the impact of transnational connections on social ties and culture (Moran-Taylor, 2004; Moran-Taylor and Taylor, 2010), could offer further interesting perspectives to guide investigations. Future research could productively address immigrant entrepreneurs coming from countries with values on EO dimensions other than those considered here; similarly, studies should be conducted in host countries other than Sweden.

To clarify what triggers and hinders immigrant startups' EO, future research should compare individuals with similar backgrounds, i.e. people from the same geographic region and with similar educations, some of whom choose to start a business while others do not. Likewise, research should compare startups that have close contact with the home country with startups that have no such contact. In this way, the family's influence on EO can be further clarified. Finally, future studies could consider immigrant entrepreneurial ventures in multiple industries, including high- and low-tech industries.

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Further reading

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(The Appendix follows overleaf)

Table A1.
EO modes in relation to
significant roles

Appendix

		Influencing family member: M = mother F = father P = professional	
EO mode	Representative quotations		First-order categories
Proactiveness	A1. I took the best of him [i.e. his uncle], his sense of business, smelling good ideas, taking care of the employees – the way he approaches sales and customers was surprising. (Startup Z, co-founder 3a)	Uncle as inspirer	A. Business approach inspired by creative relatives in the home country
	A2. Since I was a kid, I've spent a lot of my time in research centers, seeing my father, my mom, what they were doing. ... I think the inspiration from my parents is how I've overcome obstacles in life to run a business, to be competitive. (Startup X, co-founder 1b)	M + F as inspirers M + F as inspirers F as inspirer M as backer M + F as backers P as backer	B. Entrepreneurship realism by comparison with parents' home-country entrepreneurship C. Parents' moral support and expectations push the next generation to act
	B1. In my personal assessment, I would always try to compare [myself with] what they did. At that time when I was younger, I tried to be better than them. With time, I came to understand that it was not for me to be better or not. It is about working together, so everyone helps one another and gets a better position or life. (Startup X, co-founder 1b)	Home- and host-country families as backers P as partner M as partner Home- and host-country family as partner Spouse as partner Brother as partner	D. Home-country backers enabling offerings E. Acting on business opportunities via bi-directional networks F. Identifying business opportunities through brainstorming with family members
	B2. I think about the businessman that my dad is right now, compared with how I looked at him when I left. ... My dad's company, my family's company, has been running for many more years than mine, so it has been helpful to compare my business with my dad's, it has given me realism. (Startup X, co-founder 1a)		
	C1. Whatever idea I have, she [i.e. mother] is like "You're going to make it, you're capable." (Startup Z, co-founder 3a)		
	C2. My parents expected me to be successful, to find the path that suits me. Of course they pushed or told me to have my own companies, to do things by myself. (Startup X, co-founder 1b)		
	D1. Our legal entity to connect with business partners in Mexico is still my family company ... Their business partners are our friends who run companies in Mexico. We outsource software development there for the Swedish market. (Startup X, co-founder 2a)		
	D2. We [i.e. the families in Sweden and Mexico] look for opportunities together. When we start a project in Mexico, we identify the needs and the technologies that we need, then we also know what we want to do here [in Sweden]. (Startup Y, co-founder 2a)		
	E1. To pay some kind of fair salary to people, not just trying to lower the price just to have business here, it was a combination [of hiring IT engineers in Mexico and selling the products in Sweden]. (Startup Y, co-founder 2a)		
	E2. The one who I work the most with is my mom ... I talk about my challenges and we both try to give advice ... what I face here in some cases helps in Mexico now. (Startup X, co-founder 1a)		
	E3. When we have projects in Sweden, we try to see what benefits they can give for projects that we are running in Mexico. (Startup Y, co-founder 2b)		
	F1. When I showed it to her, she said "I think you're doing something you like." When we first created a business model – target, problems, and everything – she saw it, she said this is possible now. (Startup Z, co-founder 3a)		
	F2. He [i.e. my brother] just approached and said, "What do you think about this? Would you buy this? Would you – how much would you pay?" (Startup X, co-founder 3a)		

(continued)

EO mode	Representative quotations	Influencing family member: M = mother F = father P = professional	First-order categories
Risk-taking	G1. Our parents, they didn't finish university . . . to have the competition in Mexico, they have succeeded in their own industry and in having their own business. (Startup Y, co-founder 2a) G2. They [i.e. my father and uncle] made a lot of money. My father went bankrupt several times, but always managed. Nine years ago, my father was broke, had nothing. But he just started again from a low level. (Startup Z, co-founder 3a) H1. He [i.e. my father] always told me to work in the company, learn from the mistakes, and then start a company of my own. (Startup Z, co-founder 3a) H2. It's really difficult for them [i.e. parents] to understand that a permanent job here is a better opportunity, less risky than having a company. Having a company here means risky and expensive and complicated decisions . . . but for them that's not relevant. The perception is the opposite: you shouldn't be in a company or in a permanent job, better to have your own business. (Startup X, co-founder 2b) I1. In Mexico, I have all my contacts. When we go back to Mexico, we usually meet with all of them. I've met several potential suppliers because they are my friends. (Startup Y, co-founder 2b) I2. Due to my contacts, Mexico is a place that gives me projects – it's the place where I can get customers that are bigger than in Sweden. (Startup X, co-founder 1b) I3. Normally, we don't get a "no." It's more like analyzing what we are trying to do. What they [i.e. professionals] normally try to say is that "I can only give you advice but I cannot make a decision because you are the one who knows the context." What they try to do is to give the positive and negative sides, the risks, but we need to make the decision, assess the situation. . . . It pushes us to make the decision and take the responsibility. (Startup X, co-founder 1b) J1. And in Mexican culture you should be like your father – he's the businessman, he's running a company and doing different big projects. I just suppose you should do the same or even more. (Startup Y, co-founder 2a) J2. In my personal point of view, I always compare with my parents' business and try to be better than them. (Startup X, co-founder 1a) K1. She [i.e. the entrepreneur's wife] is the manager of things. For example, when we were working together, there were seven to eight people, she was the project manager and checked if it worked and asked about the results – she's really good at that. (Startup Z, co-founder 3a) K2. The objection [i.e. from a host-country family member] is always like "you have a lot of ideas but we don't have the time and budget to do everything, so prioritize this and continue, save the ideas for when you can." (Startup X, co-founder 1a) L1. I didn't know how to set a price for something. We've basically always been really connected to our family. I always call my dad when I need to know how to do something. I realized that even though we are in different countries, Mexico and Sweden, the problems are similar – the same tax you pay in Sweden, you pay in Mexico. (Startup X, co-founder 1a) L2. Our parents are the bosses. They are always like "Do this and do this" – they try to give directions because they have the experience. (Startup Z, co-founder 3a) L3. We have a lot of friends who have companies and opportunities to develop software in Mexico, and our legal entity to conduct those transactions to Mexico is still my parents' company. (Startup X, co-founder 1a)	M + F as inspirers F + Uncle as inspirers F as inspirer M + F as inspirers P as backer P as backer P as backer F as backer M + F as backers Spouse as partner Brother as partner F as partner M + F as partners M + F as partners	G. The previous generation shows that it is possible to take great risks H. Despite the problems, entrepreneurship is idealized by family in the home country I. Risk-reduction by back-up contacts in the home country J. Risk-taking is stimulated by comparison with parents' home-country entrepreneurship K. Risk-reduction by host-country family-based review L. Risk-reduction through home-country family firm solutions

(continued)

Table A1.

		Influencing family member: M = mother F = father P = professional	
EO mode	Representative quotations		First-order categories
Innovation	M1. In terms of the idea, I was always looking to my family business. To see the needs of dad's company, where is the main need for IT in this case, and try to offer the same here. To see what the person needs, my dad – he's the best example of someone around 50, 60 years old – what do they need? (Startup X, co-founder 1a) M2. My family has always been my connection to see what's going on in the market in Mexico. So I get ideas by seeing what the other IT companies are offering in Mexico. (Startup Y, co-founder 2a) N1. I and my dad talk about our companies, what I do and the things that we do together . . . Basically we talk about that every time, I don't know, about three or four times per week. (Startup X, co-founder 1a) N2. I talk to my dad . . . I have a lot of acquaintances who do the exactly same thing [i.e. talk business with home-country family]. (Startup Y, co-founder 2a) O1. I was a marketing coordinator in a company in Mexico, had contacts with different advertisement companies . . . Since I knew them before, they helped us to work with the creative design ideas. (Startup Y, co-founder 2a) O2. We are operating in Mexico and Sweden because that reduces costs, the labor cost, which is really expensive here in Sweden. Basically, that's the innovative part [of the business concept]. (Startup X, co-founder 1a) P1. I think that the input we've been getting has been different depending on our family back in Mexico. My father, especially, has expertise in management, so he's always been kind of a mentor to me. We've talked about how to handle money inside the company and how to invest it. (Startup X, co-founder 1a) P2. A few products that we are going to launch soon – actually, about how to implement them – the ideas came from Mexico, from related people in Mexico. . . . My dad basically told me, "You know what, in Mexico they are doing this for the IT and this – why don't you implement it?" (Startup X, co-founder 1a) Q1. [Uncle's observation:] Everybody has money, even the three billion people who only earn two dollars per day. They will need to buy something. Besides, they can also become providers. You just need to channel that into the bucket. (Startup Z, co-founder 3a) Q2. They [i.e. my parents] managed to have a company, we based ours on their ideas. I know people who don't have education but are quite smart . . . This led us to have our own development team where we develop promising people – we give them opportunities to create. (Startup Y, co-founder 2a) R1. In Mexico, they not only know me, they also know my family and my family company, which has been operating for a long time. They have already done mega projects in Mexico. (Startup X, co-founder 1b) R2. They [i.e. my parents] came with the projects. We communicate and, of course, as we are growing, we tell them, "Now we can do this, now we can do that." It's kind of collaboration in trying to grow the business. (Startup X, co-founder 1b)	F as inspirer Home-country family as inspirer F as inspirer F as inspirer P as backer P as backer F as backer F as backer Uncle as partner M + F as partners Home-country family as partner M + F as partners	M. Innovative ideas through home-country comparisons N. Close communication with home-country family about immigrant entrepreneurship O. Innovative networking with home-country professionals P. Strategic innovation through home-country family consulting Q. Creativity about untapped opportunities from home-country family members R. Growth through family-business-referred projects

Table A1. Source(s): Authors' own work

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