

# Advancing the views on migrant and diaspora entrepreneurs in international entrepreneurship

Maria Elo<sup>1,2,3</sup> · Susanne Sandberg<sup>4</sup> · Per Servais<sup>4</sup> ·  
Rodrigo Basco<sup>5</sup> · Allan Discua Cruz<sup>6</sup> ·  
Liesl Riddle<sup>7</sup> · Florian Täube<sup>8,9</sup>

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## Introduction

We start challenging the basis of what constitutes the *international* and the *entrepreneur* in international entrepreneurship (IE) by relating international entrepreneurship to migration, migrants and diasporas, and their transnational and international ventures as dimensions rarely studied. This discussion focusing on the individual, human level—beyond the entrepreneurship-firm level—brings the actor and agency dimensions in the forefront of business activity regarding international entrepreneurship. There is a myriad of theoretical and analytical challenges in the literature in studying migrants that start from ambiguous terms and definitions and continue to different national systems of assessing and reporting migrantness. Such complexity generates cases of entrepreneurs who are not within any mainstream categories, highlighting a lack of appropriate definitions and working criteria. There is no consensus on the inclusion of

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✉ Maria Elo  
maria.elo@utu.fi

- <sup>1</sup> School of Economics, Belt & Road Institute of International Business, Shanghai University, Shanghai, China
- <sup>2</sup> Turku School of Economics, University of Turku, Turku, Finland
- <sup>3</sup> Migration Institute of Finland, Turku, Finland
- <sup>4</sup> Linnaeus University, Kalmar, Sweden
- <sup>5</sup> American University of Sharjah, Sharjah, United Arab Emirates
- <sup>6</sup> Lancaster University, Bailrigg, UK
- <sup>7</sup> The George Washington University, Washington, DC, USA
- <sup>8</sup> European Management School, Mainz, Germany
- <sup>9</sup> Université libre de Bruxelles, Brussels, Belgium

migrant entrepreneurs and their position in international entrepreneurship, as views differ between partial inclusions; “*Diasporans who establish new ventures in their countries of origin comprise a special case of international ethnic entrepreneurship*” (Riddle and Brinkerhoff 2011, 670) and partial exclusion; “*we exclude studies on transnational, ethnic and immigrant entrepreneurship from this review. This follows Drori et al. (2009, 1003) who observe that ‘while in principle, transnational entrepreneurship is fundamentally compatible with IEs entrepreneurial initiative the approach and domain differ markedly from IE’*” (Jones et al. 2011, 644).

Conceptualizing the “international entrepreneur” in IE is a fundamental issue for theory development and provokes debates since the “who” question already contested early on in entrepreneurship research (cf. Gartner 1989) remains challenging regarding definitions, analysis, and theoretical foundations. The mobility turn, international migration, and globalization (Castles 2010; Faist 2013; Vertovec 2004) have challenged the border concepts and their meanings and the blurred perceived distinction between national and international contexts, which makes older rigid frameworks unsuitable for approaching the phenomenon. Consequently, the processes of entrepreneurial internationalization have evolved to address and accommodate new aspects. These real-life aspects require that context and the respective entrepreneur-participants need novel and deeper attention, for example, regarding respective preconditions, sequences, paths, and behaviors (cf. Drori et al. 2009; Elo 2016). Behavioral schemes are evolving and international opportunities are addressed, perceived, and generated differently than those in some decades ago, even on more aggregated levels influencing institutions and systems (Brinkerhoff 2016).

Therefore, while broadening the debates abovementioned, one aim of this special issue is to enlarge and enrich the debates and deepen our understanding on IE and inherent diverse actors operating in its field. For instance, contemporary challenges in addressing the entrepreneur-person level include the types of individuals and their respective contexts that have not been previously perceived within international entrepreneurship, for example, refugees who act in international business as entrepreneurs (cf. Sandberg et al. 2017). Further, the second aim is to contribute to the field of IE by exploring whether, how, and why the IE activities of migrant and diaspora entrepreneurs differ from other internationally oriented entrepreneurs, and how this international element in these entrepreneurs’ lives is particular and meaningful for their entrepreneurial development (Etemad 2016; Jones et al. 2011; Jones and Coviello 2005). In terms of paths and processes of internationalization and international business, migrant and diaspora entrepreneurs illustrate different, even unusual, pathways in their entrepreneurial internationalization (EI) as they possess particular capabilities for bridging international contexts (Riddle et al. 2010).

There is much potential for better understanding of the geography of entrepreneurial internationalization processes when a deeper analysis on the actors is applied. The capabilities and dynamics related to migrants and diasporans and their migratory paths may benefit from an explanation of respective EI, their market selection, entry modes, business operations and models, international diffusion of products and ideas, as well as service development. In the sense of classic international business, the internationality is often reflected with nation state division, through home and host country concepts, making the focal dyad and cross-border lens rather dominant (Chung et al. 2012; Jones et al. 2011; Mainela et al. 2014; Nkongolo-Bakenda and Chrysostome 2013), while the

transnational and multifocal approaches are emerging and providing views beyond the dyadic scheme (Solano 2016; Terjesen and Elam 2009). Markedly, these diverse international entrepreneurial activities may involve inward and outward internationalization, as well as cooperative arrangements, leaving more room for understanding directions (Welch and Luostarinen 1993).

Implicitly, we also contest the idea of the “mono-view,” the pre-labeled and too narrow lenses and research approaches commonly employed when studying migrant and diaspora entrepreneurs, as often these stem from copy-paste of approaches from other disciplinary fields, such as sociology or racial studies. Interestingly, migrants and diasporans are commonly seen as having a deficit-necessity position in a society and as entrepreneurs, but at the same time, they may mobilize diverse resources that foster business development and support internationalization processes, which may happen transnationally linking home and host contexts (Discua Cruz et al. 2013; Drori et al. 2009; Elo and Volovelsky 2017; Emontspool and Servais 2017; Jones and Coviello 2005; Terjesen and Elam 2009; Turunen and Nummela 2016). In the international human resources and expatriation literature, the resources of migrants and diasporans are addressed as even superior for international business, and seen as particular assets (e.g., Mahroum 2000; Vance et al. 2016; Tung 2008). Positive aspects, such as opportunities and international capabilities, can also be crucial in explaining their entrepreneurship (Discua Cruz et al. 2012; Elo et al. 2015; Mainela et al. 2014; Nijkamp et al. 2010). In short, migrant and diaspora entrepreneurs face additional complexities and richness that relate to their business environments and contexts, ethnicities, resources and business models, regimes, and borders, but also to their transnationalism and “*in-betweenness*,” but these complexities may generate advantages and development as a result (Brinkerhoff 2016; Etemad 2017a). Empirical research on such particular capabilities in coping with impediments and demanding settings, as well as on how these capabilities influence entrepreneurial internationalization emerge and illustrate the particular nature of these capabilities and advantages (Bai et al. 2016; Rana and Elo 2017). Moreover, diasporans are often particularly entrepreneurial and therefore, learning from their successful entrepreneurship can have instrumental value (Basu and Virick 2015; Brinkerhoff 2016).

Migrants and diaspora entrepreneurs are also subjects to plurality of social, cultural, religious, and organizational settings and have various roles and positions as entrepreneurs, intrapreneurs, family business owners and managers, business owners and managers, venture capitalists, and change makers (e.g., Elo and Riddle 2016). Social networks, social capital, and social embeddedness, together with family dynamics, long-term intentions, and even succession paths that foster IE provide fruitful angles of addressing migrant and diaspora businesses (e.g., Howorth et al. 2010). It is known that families, clans, ethnic communities, and global diasporas influence these types of entrepreneurs and their operations; moreover, there can be several generations of migrant families in business and transnational diaspora ecosystems that shape the economic development and business environment (e.g., Discua Cruz et al. 2013; Discua Cruz and Basc 2017; Minto-Coy and Elo 2017). Also in transnational entrepreneurship, networks and in particular their social networks have been considered crucial and the lens of glocalised networks—networks that have both local and global connections—have been seen most suitable in examining entrepreneurial activity across borders (Chen and Tan 2009).

This special issue addresses these differences, the “otherness” of migrants and diasporans as international entrepreneurs and conduits for internationalization from

multiple angles bringing new empirical insights into the research on entrepreneurship, reflecting both liabilities and assets as well as the positions in relation to minority-majority constellations (Johanson and Vahlne 2009; Rath and Kloosterman 2000). It contributes by discussing the concept of the “entrepreneur and embedded-self” in terms of the entrepreneur-individual and her/his process over time and place (Kloosterman and Rath 2001; Price and Chacko 2009), and by providing novel dimensions for theoretical and analytical discussions.

There are numerous ongoing debates regarding *contextualization* and the need for further contextualization to address international and transnational business in academia (Aggarwal and Goodell 2015; Ambrosini 2012; Welter 2011). Embeddedness in a particular context, and terms such as contextual, situational, and contingency stand as a diachronic concern for research (cf. Tung, 2018). In social and cultural studies, for example, the role of context and the respective embeddedness of the actor researched has been in the epicenter of research attention since Granovetter’s work in the early 1970s (Granovetter 1985a, 1985b; Granovetter 1973; Urbano et al. 2011). Embeddedness has been essential in understanding internationalization, business networks, and organizational studies (Coviello 2006; Ghoshal and Bartlett 1990; Johanson and Mattsson 2015). Particularly, in research on immigrants, migrants and diasporans, and their entrepreneurship, their complex contextual setting needs highlighting and relates to the arena of their focal activity (cf. Zahra et al. 2014). The role of embeddedness and mixed embeddedness of migrant origin entrepreneurs makes them different from native and local entrepreneurs who do not have these additional layers of contextual embeddedness (Elo 2016; Jones et al. 2014; Kloosterman 2010; Kloosterman and Rath 2001; Price and Chacko 2009; Ram et al. 2008; Rath and Kloosterman 2000; Terjesen and Elam 2009). In addition, international business and entrepreneurship literature and conferences, such as the McGill International Entrepreneurship (MIE) and the European International Business Academy (EIBA) conferences, are increasingly discussing and incorporating the meaning of the context when analyzing a particular activity of a firm or an entrepreneur (Marschan-Piekkari and Welch 2004; Zahra et al. 2014). In short, these research approach-related developments confirm the importance of deeper insights and more holistic lenses.

This special issue provides novel perspectives in the context of IE that contest the views on developed vs. developing or emerging economies. Therefore, it also underlines the meanings of geography, politics, and relations between populations that influence international entrepreneurship (Nijkamp et al. 2010; Sheffer 2003; Tölölyan 2007; Wright and Ellis 2016). The special issue brings insights from post-conflict economies and from social settings that are unusual and have not been in the radar of IE research previously. However, we believe that geographic, political, social, cultural, and religious contexts require more research attention, particularly in this contemporary setting. For example, there is an increasing level of ambiguity and uncertainty in the global entrepreneurial context, and at the same time, the growth potential is significant in less well-known areas or configurations (Hill and Mudambi 2010; Kotabe and Mudambi 2009; Powell and Steel 2011). An advancement of “glocal” and transnational understanding in IE may be helpful in addressing the increasing complexity, and for this, multiple perspectives and disciplinary lenses are required (Etemad 2017a).

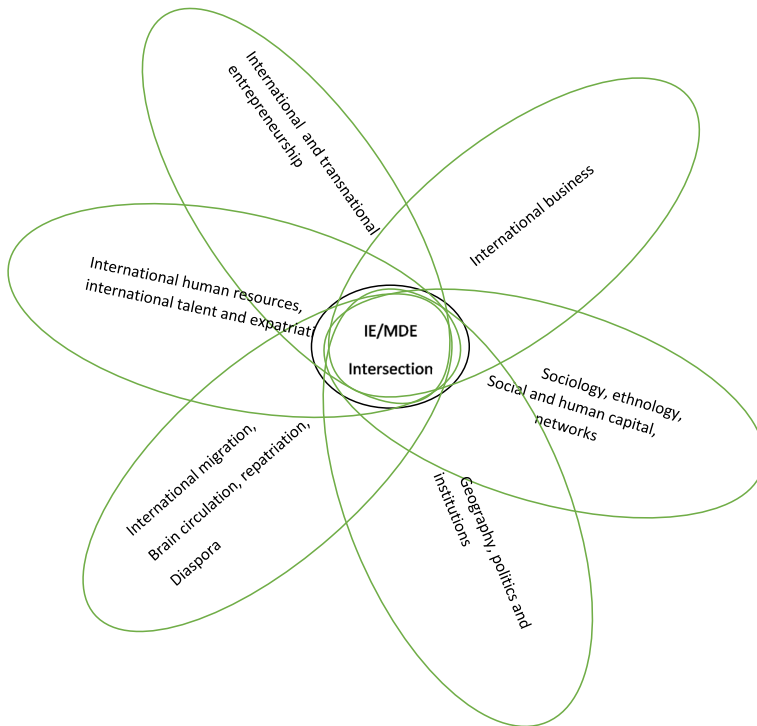
We wish to foster debates for future scholarly work and *co-develop a broader view of IE* with this special issue (Etemad 2017a).

## Framing migrant and diaspora entrepreneurs in international entrepreneurship

There are ongoing discussions regarding the ways how international entrepreneurship is conceptualized and contextualized and what kind of foundation these discussions employ, which refer to the framing of the respective research questions (Etemad 2017a, 2017b; Welter 2011; Zahra et al. 2014). International entrepreneurship has invested a lot of attention in the firm and its expansion and the respective entrepreneur while the individual as the entrepreneur-venture establisher has gained much more attention in sociology and related fields of inquiry. The early discussions addressing the entrepreneur as the *primus motor* need revival when framing migrant and diaspora entrepreneurs as active international entrepreneurs, due to their different resources, contexts, and embeddedness (Masurel et al. 2002; Oviatt and McDougall 2005). International social constellations, even marriages, prove relevant for entrepreneurial dynamics and opportunities. These form not just constraints, but also potential and systems for resources and networks. In addition to economic and political networks, especially, social networks can be highly influential and glocal connecting the entrepreneur both on local and global level (Chen and Tan 2009).

The stream of research adopting views from transnationalism, introducing transnational entrepreneurship has been a ground-breaking change in terms of adding to the view via a more positive lens (cf. positive organizational scholarship, POS) on migrants as entrepreneurs (Stahl and Tung 2015). Prior works, particularly in sociology, approach entrepreneurship and business venturing with a deficit lens, often with a necessity and economic adaptation focus. This suggests that the entrepreneurs have difficulties, even less capabilities and resources to cope with the business environment than the locals and that they are subjects to assimilation (cf. Chen and Tan 2009). Transnational entrepreneurship and transnational diaspora entrepreneurship literatures were the first approaches that started with a different ontological standpoint in which transnational migrants and diasporans would have additional and different competitive advantages and resources compared to the locals (Dai and Liu 2009; Gillespie et al. 1999; Rana and Elo 2017; Riddle and Brinkerhoff 2011; Riddle et al. 2010; Stahl and Tung 2015). The interplay of deficit vs. positive organization scholarship lens has long tended to shift on the negative while the opposite is advocated in international business studies (Stahl and Tung 2015). For a more balanced view, this special issue has framed both sides of the token, multiple layers, and through multiple disciplinary perspectives.

Building on the papers of this special issue and the ongoing discussions, we illustrate the disciplinary lenses that are incorporated in explaining migrant and diaspora entrepreneurship as a schematic representation in line with Etemad (2017a, 2017b) conceptual multi-layered framework of international entrepreneurship. Etemad's framework illustrates the international entrepreneurship domain at the common intersection of five selected influential disciplines; these are entrepreneurship, international business, networks, strategy, and operations management (Etemad 2017a). Diasporas and migrants operate on these and on additional layers of international entrepreneurship enriching the domain (Fig. 1).



**Fig. 1** Multiple and interdisciplinary lenses employed in understanding and explaining migrant and diaspora entrepreneurship (MDE)—a schematic representation on the overlaps adopted and modified from Etemad (2017a: 234)

### Introducing different perspectives—A contribution of the special issue

This special issue provides novel theoretical and empirical perspectives to the debate about migrant and diaspora in international entrepreneurship. Each article brings a unique viewpoint to frame the discussion on the phenomenon under study and come to unique empirical evidence through different contexts. The following section introduces the articles of this special issue. We start with the discussion on entrepreneurial types and expatriation and continue with transnational venturing in a distant host context; both articles provide a rather positive angle on talent and opportunity. The third article shifts the focus and builds on the “liability of ethnicity” and entrepreneur heterogeneity in the host context addressing the differences between native and immigrant entrepreneurs in exports. The fourth one examines influences of motivation and ethnic ties but focuses on entry of transnational ventures in the old home country, providing the opposite view to the “outward” logic. The fifth article continues the transnational focus and examines transnational post-conflict entrepreneurship in host-home context. The sixth article examines discrimination and subjective wellbeing of Latino migrant entrepreneurs in the USA and suggests that transnational entrepreneurs perceive host country differently and more critically. Finally, the last article ends the discussion with the most negative constellation, a critical case of entrepreneurship, where the entrepreneurship is a result of a conflict in home country and takes place in host country overcoming difficulties with host country-located social capital.

***Who is an expat-preneur? toward a better understanding of a key talent sector supporting international entrepreneurship* by Selmer, McNulty, Lauring, and Vance**

As this study of Selmer, McNulty, Lauring, and Vance indicates, modern mobility has many forms that require more attention. For example, expatriate status is traditionally seen as a corporate career phase that is a building block toward top management. However, in the era of globalization, self-initiated expatriates (SIE) have become more and increasingly important also as entrepreneurs (Habti and Elo in press). Selmer et al. reflect the discussion on expat-preneurs and the meaning of this category with the international entrepreneurship domain. They advance the views on the person, particularly on the personal migration background, demographic features, and entrepreneurial activity and provide an alternative angle to address entrepreneurs who act in international contexts. Their study surveys SIEs with entrepreneurial business operations and in employment and compares the two groups in three contexts: China, Hong Kong, and Singapore, all of which are places of intensive international business and strong inflows of global talent. They find that expat-preneurs and employed corporate expats differ mainly in their age, position, time spend in the place/context in the current job, their time, or “career,” as an expatriate in the host context, but did not find differences in gender, educational level, or in marital status.

***Transnational entrepreneurship: Opportunity identification and venture creation* by Lundberg and Rehnfors**

The paper co-authored by Lundberg and Rehnfors focuses on transnational entrepreneurship and on the specific phenomenon of immigrant entrepreneurship. The authors go beyond the traditional research, which investigates immigrants moving from less-developed countries to developed ones and being driven by necessity opportunities, in order to explore the contemporary process of opportunity identification among seven transnational entrepreneurs who moved from developed counties to Hong Kong. This study shows the importance of individual characteristics, type of firms created, and the institutional and cultural context as dimensions affecting the process of opportunity identification. Even though the authors found general evidence described in three levels of analysis (individual, firm, and context) to study immigrant entrepreneurship, this line of research has to be further developed in order to systematize these dimensions and their components and to explain how these dimensions collide in the entrepreneur who aims to discover and exploit new opportunities when moving between developed countries or developed regions. Additionally, future studies should disentangle the difference and similarities in the aforementioned level of analysis between immigrant entrepreneurship moving from developing to developed, from developed to developing countries, and between developed countries.

***Evaluations of export feasibility by immigrant and non-immigrant entrepreneurs in new technology-based firms* by Bolzani and Boari**

Bolzani and Boari explore the exciting phenomenon of immigrant-owned ventures’ “liability of ethnicity” by investigating whether and how one relevant source of

entrepreneur heterogeneity, i.e., migrant condition, impacts the perceived feasibility of exporting opportunities. Drawing on a sample of 71 immigrants and 69 native entrepreneurs active in non-internationalized new technology-based firms in Italy, they find that the migrant condition positively moderates the relationship between perceived public financial support and perceived feasibility of exporting, whereas it negatively moderates the relationship between international business skills and perceived export feasibility.

***Ethnic ties, motivations and home country entry strategy of transnational entrepreneurs by Pruthi, Basu, and Wright***

The paper co-authored by Pruthi, Basu, and Wright “Ethnic ties, motivations, and home country entry strategy of transnational entrepreneurs” nicely complements the other papers in this special issue through a matched-sample methodology of 30 interviews with Indian transnational entrepreneurs in the USA and their corresponding India heads of operation. It contributes with an extension of the theoretical and empirical literature on the motivations of transnational entrepreneurship by showing a heterogeneity of both TE’s motivations, in terms of economic and emotional motivations, and their home country entry strategy, in terms of proactive and reactive strategies. Furthermore, they find that TE’s entry strategy depends on (a) use of professional and personal ethnic ties and (b) prior experience of doing business with the home country. They also extend the migrant entrepreneurship literature by exploring the role of ethnic professional, and family and non-family ties in venture founding in the host and home countries, and demonstrating the heterogeneity in how TEs use these ties to simultaneously launch a new, rather than grow an existing, venture in the two countries.

***Fragmented networks and transnational entrepreneurship: Building strategies to succeed in challenging surroundings by Muñoz, Alvarez, Sarmiento, and Zapata***

Very often, network connection is seen as open and inviting. The article by Muñoz, Alvarez, Sarmiento, and Zapata takes another stand, as it focusses on the attributes of transnational entrepreneurs with small and fragmented networks, from post-conflict environments. These entrepreneurs can perform an important role in the socioeconomic development and internationalization level of their countries of origin due to the cross-border mobilization of resources they encourage. Muñoz et al. look at the specific case of Colombian transnational entrepreneurs who have been able to overcome those obstacles. Their transnational business is analyzed with the intention of understanding how they manage those shortcomings when engaging in transnational entrepreneurship. The article underlines the meaning of the entrepreneurs’ networks and entrepreneurial strategy in generating business success.

***Shaping the castle according to the rocks in the path? Perceived discrimination, social differences, and subjective wellbeing as determinants of firm type among immigrant entrepreneurs by Poblete***

Poblete contributes with a focus on the drivers of transnationalism while comparing domestic-based and transnational Latino immigrant entrepreneurs in the USA. The



Latino population, here represented by Colombians, Dominicans, and Salvadorans, has been a large immigrant group since the 1990s, and even though the current situation in the USA is changing, the findings remain potentially accurate across time. Taking a departure from institutional theory, the author argues that transnational entrepreneurs are characterized in terms of their differing perceptions of the host society in comparison to conventional immigrant entrepreneurs. Testing three aspects of individuals' perception of informal institutions, namely, (1) individuals' perception of discrimination based on first-person and third-person experience, (2) individuals' perception of social differences, and (3) subjective wellbeing, it is shown that transnational entrepreneurs are more likely to perceive social differences within the host society, to have been discriminated against, and to experience dissatisfaction regarding opportunities and income. Contributions cover identification of three informal institutions as drivers of transnationalism in comparison to domestic-based immigrant entrepreneurs.

### ***Coming out of conflict: How migrant entrepreneurs utilize human and social capital*** **by Williams and Krasniqi**

While conflict-related migration has occurred for centuries, it is only recently that scholars are paying close attention to how such phenomenon influences entrepreneurship (e.g., Nielsen and Riddle 2010). Conflictive areas are often flagged as contexts plagued by war, persecution, political instability, and socioeconomic crises. Under such conditions, migrants are often forced to leave their homeland with limited or no resources. Migrants may be constrained in the options for economic activity once they arrive into their new countries of residence. This article advances our understanding by examining how human and social capital influences the entrepreneurial activity of migrant entrepreneurs, with particular attention to forced migration due to conflict. Williams and Krasniqi study describes the major issues and considerations migrant entrepreneurs must address when engaging in entrepreneurial activities in their host countries. The study shows that migrant entrepreneurs leverage what they learn in their host societies in terms of education and skills as well as nurturing networks as critical to engage into entrepreneurship. Their findings reveal that mastery of the local language, marriage with local members of the community, and the subsequent buildup of networks in host societies have an impact on migrant entrepreneurship. A relational-based advantage can be expected in migrants married to a native of the country of residence based on information access, networks, and context embeddedness.

### **An open discussion and concluding remarks**

The theoretical discussions highlight not only the diversity of approaches, analytical foci, forces, and mechanisms, but also different country and business contexts and resource types. To foster the debate, we have also collected views from the authors who are very diverse in their background in terms of country origin, gender, age, and discipline. As a result, their unfiltered views and those of the guest editors complement each other. Authors' responses to the question, "what do you think are the key takeaways regarding your submitted paper for our IE audience," triggered various views for a further discussion (responses in italics). These are their responses:

- *Perceptions of environmental- and individual-level factors that influence the intentions to export are “in the eye of the beholder” and therefore influenced by entrepreneurs’ heterogeneous experiences. The migration condition is one of these experiences, and therefore we see that there are perceptual differences between migrant and non-migrant entrepreneurs with regard to the antecedents to the intentions to export.*
- *That IE is not just about companies, but about individuals.*
- *Need for opening-up the IE box.*
- *Introducing expatriation to the entrepreneurship field.*
- *Need to address the gap in empirical studies about expatpreneurs as an important, albeit under-researched, segment of the immigrant entrepreneur, and self-initiated expatriate diaspora.*
- *Host networking (foreign spouse and foreign migration experience has a positive impact on the probability of entrepreneurship and is influenced by human and social capital accumulation. Exposure to host country (both measured as years in migration and age) increases probability to start a business.*

These viewpoints are interesting especially given that only two authors identified themselves as “classic international entrepreneurship scholars,” while all others see themselves as having mixed or other disciplinary background.<sup>1</sup> The backgrounds vary from international human resources, international business and marketing to more sociological and political angles. This multi- and interdisciplinary challenge is interesting and vital for triggering theoretical progress and cross-dissemination. For example, the ongoing discussion on expatpreneurs is very relevant to IE facing multiple similarities despite different perspectives (Vance et al. 2017, 2016). Such overlaps suggests synergies and potential for novelty in inclusive approaches and illustrate implicit conceptual continuums.

Among the key impediments the authors consider for international entrepreneurship research regarding migrants and diasporans included theory- and domain-specific comments, such as “*I think that unfortunately this domain is characterized by a dearth of high-quality empirical materials; for example many low-quality qualitative research (in particular case studies). In addition, I see the risk of over-emphasizing the “ethnic” dimension, comparative studies should be more important*”, and “*What is needed is more common views of the research and literatures of expatriates, migrants and diasporas. From terminologies to methodologies*”, but also methodological and practical concerns such as “*Access to respondents*” and “*the founding team composition*”. We also investigated what aspects they perceive as crucial for the future discussions in international entrepreneurship and these provided stimuli for following issues: “*Cognition and decision-making, in particular how do heterogeneity in entrepreneurs and their different experiences drive their decisions in the international domain? How does experience impact world views in entrepreneurs? How do they narrate their experience? Social international entrepreneurship: how do social entrepreneurs navigate different institutional environments?*”, “*Commonalities and differences of distinct*

<sup>1</sup> Notice, not all authors responded our questionnaire and due to technicalities, one author did not receive the questionnaire.

*diasporas,*” “*How forced migration influences entrepreneurial activity, both during conflict and after,*” and “*The difference between an INV and IE.*”

In a migratory sense, this special issue brought to light the heterogeneity in the diasporic processes around the world. One is the temporary migration, i.e., more short-term movements of entrepreneurs. The other, more enduring movement is the conflict-influenced diaspora which is a phenomenon that deserves further attention from diverse theoretical perspectives. In light of current world events, where people are increasingly displaced due to conflict in their homelands, migrant entrepreneurship provides a distinctive lens to understand how displaced migrants contribute to the entrepreneurial dynamics not only in their countries of residence but also in their country of origin post conflict.

These viewpoints underline the need for further theory discussion. We asked authors which are the hot topics and they identified: “*Return migrant entrepreneurs, Social international entrepreneurs, International mobility of knowledge—also in form of entrepreneurship, cultural intelligence,*” “*Forced migration; return migration to post-conflict economies, Expat-preneurs,*” and “*Multi-Generational issues*”. We find that there is future potential in reflecting theoretical approaches and overlaps across traditional boundaries and disciplinary silos for more innovative and open-minded examination, cross-dissemination, and synergies (cf. Etemad 2004, 2017a; Wiklund et al. 2011).

Managerially, there are numerous implications addressing the resource base and differences of migrants and diasporans as entrepreneurs and business actors in comparison to natives and locals. More research on families, clans, networks, and contexts may provide fruitful dimensions for addressing the processes related to IE and EI and assist in generating supplementary but significant knowledge.

Implications regarding policy making contribute also to fields beyond entrepreneurship and refer to migration and integration policies as well as societal balances, development, and opportunities (Brinkerhoff 2016; Newland and Tanaka 2010). Notably, formal institutional aspects and other societal institutions, such as marriage, become novel attention as part of the forces influencing entrepreneurship (Etemad 2014; Urbano et al. 2011; Vertovec 2004).

Methodological issues have long been an inherent difficulty in this sensitive domain connecting various disciplines, and this links to problems noted by authors, such as “*Unit of analysis—the founder? The INV? The opportunities chased?*”, also “*undertaking surveys,*” but again the difficulties are seen in the overall level noting “*Terminology, definitions, boundary conditions of the constructs we say we are researching.*” One author suggests; “*As already pointed out in previous response, very often studies use weak research design and empirical methodologies. One of the difficulties that I have personally found relevant at the theoretical level is whether this should only be considered a context where we study particular nuances of a theory (e.g., treating migrant status as boundary/moderating condition) or whether this is a field of research “per se.*” The interdisciplinary and multi-layered nature of IE constitutes an inclusion challenge, but also an opportunity for development.

Regarding research approaches, this special issue attempts to break the traditional mind-set corset that already exists in the field of international entrepreneurship. This corset has been made by the natural evolution of the field, which not only creates new knowledge to interpret, understand, and predict the phenomenon of international entrepreneurship, but also the knowledge boundaries. The knowledge boundaries are often based on a particular influence group that decides who is in or who is out in terms

of science. Our intention is to expand the boundaries through a multidisciplinary approach to study the international entrepreneurship phenomenon by using different perspectives, new points of view, and alternative ways of framing article, adding new topics, and bringing new terms into the research arena.

Next-generation IE and EI research can benefit from its diversity and richness providing numerous lines of inquiry starting from context to theoretical angles. For example, further research can examine the diverse forms of post-conflict entrepreneurial engagement that is carried out and the associated repercussions such engagement have at different levels. Further research may elucidate the contributions by focusing on different units of analysis: individual, collective, or firm as well as the transformation of entrepreneurial capital that migrants experienced and that can be leveraged in their post-conflict home countries.

One alternative way to move the link between migrant/diaspora entrepreneurship and international entrepreneurship is to relate it to regional development from the home and host country perspectives. What the macro-impact of the migrant/diaspora may be in international entrepreneurship is a central question to explore. This will require an effort to shift the academic conversation from a micro perspective based on the immediate effect of migrant/diaspora entrepreneurship in topics such as, family economic and social effect to the local and regional economy and to a macro vision. In other words, there are two research questions: How are migrant and diasporic international entrepreneurs connected to economic and social development? and What are the regional productive mechanisms that international entrepreneurship of migrants/diasporas create, alter, or modify? One possible path to address this line of research inquiry is to use the “regional familiness model” (Basco 2015), which suggests the existence of two channels. The micro-channel in the relationship between family firms (international entrepreneurship migrants/diasporas) and regional development comes from the role family firms (international entrepreneurship migrants/diasporas) play in creating, transforming, and allocating resources (i.e., productive factors, human capital, social capital, and creative/entrepreneurial capital). Second, the macro-channel by considering the effects of proximity on regional processes (such as spillovers, information exchange, learning processes, social interactions, and competition and institutional dynamics) that can accelerate or slow the endogenous and exogenous factors that contribute to external agglomeration effects (i.e., those economies of scale that go beyond individual agents and depend on the collective action of agents).

Finally, we recognize the challenges that the complexity, multidisciplinary nature, and multi-layered analysis may generate, but consider these from the positive organizational scholarship lens as something that adds to the richness of the IE’s body of knowledge. We consider that shifting from rigid frames to broader and deeper understanding contributes to both theory advancement and domain development per se. Starting from the definitions, there is room for addressing conceptual commonalities, elements, and mechanisms, and providing advances for more and better contextualized studies. As a conclusion, we suggest that the movement, the mobility of people, firms, and business activities, and the plurality of these origins and origin constellations—in the context between borders and borderlessness—set the dynamics for the next research agenda for EI and IE.

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