

“NOW WE ARE FIGHTING TO STAND UP AGAIN”: SYRIAN REFUGEES’ PERSPECTIVES ON ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN RE-BUILDING THEIR PROFESSIONAL LIVES IN THE NETHERLANDS

MICHELLE UDER

Department of Human Geography and Planning, Utrecht University, PO Box 80115, 3508 TC,
Utrecht, The Netherlands. E-mail: m.a.uder@students.uu.nl.

ABSTRACT

This paper captures the motivations of Syrian refugees in accessing the Dutch labor market as entrepreneurs using qualitative research methods. In recent years, numbers of Syrian refugees coming to European countries were rising, among others to the Netherlands. Since labor market integration is a major step towards successfully integrating into society, it is crucial to gain a more in-depth understanding of the rise in entrepreneurial motivations among Syrians. Hence, Syrian refugees’ individual perspectives on entrepreneurship are explored using Ajzen’s theory of planned behavior. Results show a strong aim for financial independence. Findings further show the impact of a loss in material resources and social status as well as the social and cultural context of the country of origin and of the host country influencing Syrian refugees’ entrepreneurial motivations. Social support in the host-country, entrepreneurial experience and a mindset consisting of confidence and solution-finding towards encountered constraints are perceived as helpful assets in realizing entrepreneurial motivations.

KEY WORDS: Syrian refugees, the Netherlands, entrepreneurial motivations, Ajzen, the theory of planned behavior, immigrant entrepreneurship

1. INTRODUCTION

Following conflicts connected to the Syrian civil war from 2011 onwards, Syrians have become one of the three biggest groups of refugees with 5.5 million persons in 2018 (UNHCR, 2018). Syrians also represent one of the largest groups of recent refugees in the Netherlands (VluchtelingenWerk Nederland, 2018a). As numbers of refugees were increasing in Europe, debates on issues of refugee integration concurrently arose in the Dutch context (Dagevos, Huijnk, Maliepaard, & Miltenburg, 2018). Successful integration into society represents an important mission

and a major role is given to the structural inclusion of recent refugees accessing the labor market (Bakker, Dagevos, & Engbersen, 2017; Bevelander, 2016). For immigrants in the past, it has not been uncommon to enter the host country labor market by setting up their own businesses. Immigrants inspired research on entrepreneurship in the past decades and the phenomenon of immigrant entrepreneurship received increasing attention (Aldrich & Waldinger, 1990; Kloosterman, 2006). In comparison with the existing literature on immigrant entrepreneurship, refugees

differentiate from the commonly researched migrants starting businesses in several aspects: The legal status as refugees (Edwards, 2015) leads to initial restrictions and delays in the access to work in the host country (Muller & Beckers, 2018). The refugee background of leaving the country of origin due to armed conflict and persecution often results in lacking official documents such as transferable diplomas and qualifications constraining the access to higher qualified jobs (Colic-Peisker & Tilbury, 2006). Moreover, migration experiences can potentially affect refugees' mental health (Bogic, Njoku, & Priebe, 2015) and can result in the loss of material and social resources (Bakker, Dagevos, & Engbersen, 2014). Refugees may further lack social capital when arriving in the host-country (Stevens, 2016).

Despite these constraints, entrepreneurial activities among Syrians in the Netherlands are increasing (Chamber of Commerce Netherlands, 2016). This development represents an interesting case for further research on the individual motivations behind refugees' entrepreneurial activities and has only recently led to increased attention from research and supporting organizations (VluchtelingenWerk Nederland (2018b).

Immigrants' entrepreneurial activities have proven to benefit the host-countries' economies instead of representing an economic burden (Kloosterman & Rath, 2003). More insights into the initial motivations of Syrian refugees can thus result in improving conditions for entrepreneurial Syrian refugees to enhance this development. At the same time, employment rates among Syrian refugees in the Netherlands are still low (Engbersen et al., 2015), and some refugee entrepreneurs face serious challenges to succeed in the labor market (Engbersen, Dorenbos, & Lagunas, 2018). Knowledge on the individual perspectives of why Syrian refugees choose self-employment in the first place as a way into the Dutch labor market can thus also lead to insights into improving conditions in the access to the labor market in

general. Specifically focused on the refugees' perspectives behind entrepreneurial ambitions, this study aims to provide an in-depth picture of Syrian refugees' motivations on engaging in entrepreneurial activities after settling in the Netherlands.

Entrepreneurial intentions are part of the theoretical micro-level of the entrepreneurship literature (Krueger, 2009). This field is highlighting the individual processes and motivations of entrepreneurial activities and especially highlighting early phases of entrepreneurship in which Syrian refugees can be categorized in (Dheer, 2018).

Liñán & Fayolle (2015) argue for a better balance between positivist and comprehensive humanistic approaches to entrepreneurial motivations. Their review paper especially underlines the application of theoretical concepts which highlight psychological dynamics behind entrepreneurial intentions as insightful. Thus, a psychological angle is here used to deepen the knowledge on individual motivations behind the decision to pursue entrepreneurial activities for the group of Syrian refugees in the Netherlands. As a psychological theory central to the field of entrepreneurial intentions (Krueger & Carsrud, 1993), Ajzen's (1991) theory of planned behavior is chosen for this research.

The theoretical aspect of perceived control over constraints connected to the intended behavior is a factor incorporated in the model by Ajzen, compared to the previous version (Madden, Scholder Ellen, & Ajzen, 1992). This represents an important aspect concerning the study's focus on entrepreneurial Syrian refugees due to the possible constraints faced by refugees as highlighted before (Engbersen, Dorenbos, & Lagunas, 2018). Further, subjective norms as pressures either supporting or disapproving certain behaviors based on individual and societal expectations are included in the model compared to other seminal work in the field of entrepreneurial intentions, such as Sokol's theory of the entrepreneurial event (Shapero & Sokol, 1982). According to Ajzen, intentions

are also dependent on external conditions such as the economic, institutional and social context (Ajzen, 1991). In the light of knowledge on the impact of external influences on refugees' socio-economic situation from previous research (Bakker, Dagevos, & Engbersen, 2014), the theory of planned behavior is a suitable theoretical basis for this study. Hence, this research will be assessed following the research question:

Which motivations do Syrian refugees' have by pursuing entrepreneurship in the Netherlands?

- a. *How do individual attitudes towards entrepreneurship influence these motivations?*
- b. *How do subjective norms, from the social context as well as individual influences impact motivations to engage in entrepreneurship?*
- c. *How do constraints and their perceived assessment and control influence Syrian refugees' perspectives on entrepreneurship?*

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Due to the initially stated differences between immigrant entrepreneurs and refugees, refugee entrepreneurship is here defined as a specific type of immigrant entrepreneurship following the operational definition by Aldrich and Waldinger (1990). They define ethnic entrepreneurship as the formation of a business through the combination of resources and risk-taking to create or reproduce value or innovation by individuals of a group sharing the same culture and origin which is different from the host society. According to Volery (2007), the distinction between immigrant and ethnic entrepreneurs is of a timely nature meaning that only recently arrived immigrants are referred to as immigrant entrepreneurs. Hence, Syrian refugee entrepreneurship is here understood as a form of immigrant entrepreneurship by recent Syrian immigrants legally ascribed with a refugee status. As this research focuses on the entrepreneurial motivations of Syrian refugees, the focus lies on the antecedents to entrepreneurial activities. Entrepreneurship literature commonly

includes various stages of business creation (Levie & Lichtenstein, 2010). The time which participants have spent planning and pursuing entrepreneurial activities thus defines recently arrived Syrian refugees as aspiring entrepreneurs, nascent entrepreneurs, and business owners. These business stages are located in the beginning phase of acquiring knowledge and skills for business planning, in the phase of conceptualization prior to the business set-up or engaged in the first years of business activities after firm birth (Bosma, Jones, Autio, & Levie, 2007). For all included entrepreneurial stages, the focus of the analysis was set on the initial motivations to pursue entrepreneurship in the host country.

2.1. THE THEORY OF PLANNED BEHAVIOR

Entrepreneurial intentions can be categorized as focusing on the antecedents to engage in entrepreneurship. Largely aiming at individual attitudes and motivations towards the engagement in entrepreneurship on a micro level, this aligns with the focus of this research on initial entrepreneurial motivations for the choice to pursue entrepreneurship of recently arrived Syrian refugees in the host country of the Netherlands (Dheer, 2018).

As Liñán & Fayolle (2015) argue for a better balance between positivist and comprehensive humanistic approaches to entrepreneurial motivations, their review paper especially underlines the application of theoretical concepts highlighting psychological dynamics behind entrepreneurial intentions. Referred to the topic of this study, a psychological angle can also deepen the knowledge on individual motivations behind the decision to pursue entrepreneurial activities for the group of Syrian refugees in the access to the Dutch labor market. As a psychological theory central to the field of entrepreneurial intentions (Krueger & Carsrud, 1993), Ajzen's (1991) theory of planned behavior is therefore chosen for this research.

Past research has highlighted two seminal theoretical models in the field of entrepreneurial intentions: Shapero and Sokol's theory of the entrepreneurial event (Shapero & Sokol, 1982) and Ajzen's theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1991) from the field of social psychology. Both concepts entail the aspect of attitudes towards a certain behavior. Both models also include the impact of the feasibility and perceived control over difficulties concerning the intended behavior (Krueger, Reilly, & Carsrud, 2000). This feature was incorporated in the model by Ajzen compared to the previous version (Madden et al., 1992). It represents an important factor concerning this study's focus on entrepreneurial Syrian refugees due to the possible constraints faced by refugees compared to immigrant entrepreneurs as discussed before. A distinct advantage of the theory of planned behavior in comparison with the theory of the entrepreneurial event is the incorporated impact of subjective norms on the intentions. Subjective norms act as social but also individual pressures either supporting

or disapproving certain behaviors based on societal expectations or personal expectations. According to Ajzen, intentions are thus also influenced by external conditions such as the economic and institutional and social context (Ajzen, 1991). Previous research has found that the loss of resources through migration but also the new host-society context impact refugees in their socio-economic situation (Bakker et al., 2014). The focus on Syrian refugees' entrepreneurial motivations in this study thus confirms the importance of external factors on individual motivations in Ajzen's model.

In conclusion, the theory of planned behavior represents not only a valuable approach to entrepreneurship in general (Krueger & Carsrud, 1993) but especially to the case of refugee entrepreneurship as it was also adopted to very recent research on the topic of refugee entrepreneurs in the European context (Mawson & Kasem, 2019). Hence, this research on the entrepreneurial motivations of Syrian refugees adopts Ajzen's (1991) distinction into the three factors of attitudes,

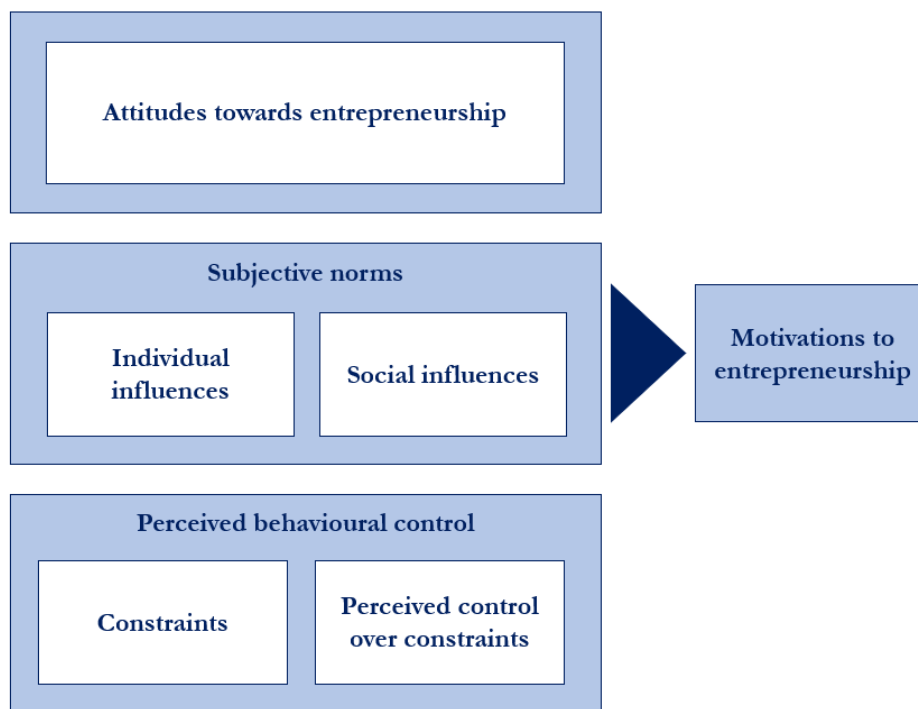


Figure 1: *Conceptual model*

subjective norms and perceived behavioral control to the conceptual model of this study (Fig. 1).

The first factor is defined as the extent to which a person maintains a rather positive or negative opinion of certain behavior. This attitude can thereby consist of both affective as well as evaluative attitudes towards the behavior. Subjective norms as the second influence act as social pressures to realize a certain behavior based on societal expectations. In some contexts, individual pressures such as emotional and moral expectations can also be included. Perceived behavioral control means the subjective ease with which the behavior is performed. This can either include the control over constraining factors to the behavior or reflections of past experiences (Ajzen, 1991).

2.2.SYRIANS IN THE NETHERLANDS

Syrians represent one of the largest groups of recent refugees in the Netherlands (VluchtelingenWerk Nederland, 2018a) of which the majority arrived in the year of 2015 (Eurostat, 2019). Most Syrian refugees are not yet participating in the Dutch labor market and thus receiving social welfare payments from the Dutch government. Like in many other European countries, a support structure is managing the reception and integration of refugees in the Netherlands. Besides the initial admission to reception centers and support in finding housing, refugees have rights to social welfare payments ('bijstandsuitkering') in case of unemployment in the Netherlands (Engbersen et al., 2015). Whereas the general employment rates of Syrian refugees are still low, 12 percent of Syrian refugees who are employed in the Netherlands are engaged in self-employment (Dagevos et al., 2018). Recent statistics by the Chamber of Commerce Netherlands (2016) show a growth of 23 percent among non-Dutch entrepreneurial activities for Syrians in 2015 compared to 2014. This shows that a considerable percentage of

recent Syrian refugees were drawn towards entrepreneurship upon arrival in the Netherlands. Further, the business sectors of retail, hospitality, logistics and business services were most often accessed by Syrian entrepreneurs in 2015 (Chamber of Commerce Netherlands, 2016). Simultaneously with the rise of Syrian entrepreneurial activity, a variety of support programs have been established aiming at providing guidance to refugees in the access to work and development of skills through entrepreneurship (VluchtelingenWerk Nederland, 2018b).

2.3.REFUGEE ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Factors determining the engagement in entrepreneurship are generally divided between push and pull factors (Dawson & Henley, 2012). The early immigrant entrepreneurship literature is mainly focused on disadvantages motivating individuals to engage in self-employment out of necessity and due to constraints, such as language difficulties (Bates & Dunham, 1991) or discrimination on the labor market (Bonacich, 1973; Light, 1979; Portes & Manning, 1986). In more recent studies on immigrant entrepreneurship, a shift towards opportunity-driven entrepreneurship is recognizable. This means seeing immigrant entrepreneurs are actively choosing for entrepreneurship (Dheer, 2018). Shinnar (2007) highlights the aspects of autonomy and flexibility as appealing characteristics of entrepreneurship for immigrants. Hunt (2010) also moves away from the disadvantaged picture of immigrant entrepreneurs. Instead, high education levels, transnational capital and work experience of immigrant entrepreneurs similar to native entrepreneurs are highlighted in contributing to the host-country economies.

Initial research on the specific case of refugee entrepreneurship was conducted by Gold (1988, 1992) in a U.S context underlining refugees' distinct social and demographic features differing from economic immigrants.

These differences can also impact their motives and business behaviors.

Recent studies detect more distinct characteristics which distinguish entrepreneurial refugees from immigrant entrepreneurs: Migrants are generally subject to national immigration policies when entering the country of arrival, whereas refugees are covered by international law (Edwards, 2015). Due to the legal status as refugees, individuals are affected by initial restrictions to work and thus delays in the access to work and entrepreneurship when arriving in the host country (Muller & Beckers, 2018). Immigrants' choices to leave the country of origin relate to reasons of economic prospect (Massey et al., 1993) or existing family networks (Boyd, 1989). Earlier studies on immigrant entrepreneurship suggest that the lack of employment led immigrants to access entrepreneurship out of necessity. More recent studies tend to also highlight opportunity structures by which immigrants purposely choose for entrepreneurship to create profit and upward social mobility (Dheer, 2018). Refugees, however, are characterized by leaving the country of origin due to armed conflict and persecution. This often leaves refugees lacking official documents such as transferable diplomas and qualifications possibly constraining the access to higher qualified jobs (Colic-Peisker & Tilbury, 2006). Potential effects on their mental health (Bogic et al., 2015) and the loss of social or material resources (Bakker et al., 2014) can also be consequences. In comparison with immigrant entrepreneurs, refugees also differ in the use and access to social capital: Whilst immigrant entrepreneurship is predominantly characterized by the use of co-ethnics contacts in the host country (Gomez, Perera, Weisinger, Tobey, & Zinsmeister-Teeters, 2015), refugees may lack social capital when arriving in the host-country (Stevens, 2016). These constraining factors for the access to the labor market generally led to what has been referred to as the 'refugee gap' (Bakker et al., 2017), meaning a delayed and disadvantaged entrance

into the host-country labor market compared to other migrants and natives.

These characteristics thus distinguish the initial context of refugees in a host country from assumptions on immigrant entrepreneurs. Consequently, these characteristics can thus also influence the business behavior and initial motivations to engage in entrepreneurial activities as indicated in the following:

The impact of migration experiences on entrepreneurial motivations can be found in several studies: Mawson and Kasem (2018) indirectly link characteristics of refugee entrepreneurs to a specific migration context. In a qualitative study on Syrians in the UK, they found strong determination to engage in entrepreneurship linked to fleeing the country of origin and searching for asylum in the UK. This resulted in strengthening the refugees' perceived abilities to achieve goals independently. The impact of migration experiences on motivations to pursue entrepreneurship is also raised in Williams and Krasniqi's (2018) research on Kosovo migrants. This study argues that migration experiences increase possibilities for entrepreneurship among forced migrants together with social connections to the host society and business training in the host country. Moreover, Bizri (2017) points at a very powerful motivation to build up an existence in the country of arrival due to the experienced loss in the disruptive state of being a refugee.

Another aspect which is found to potentially influence refugees' decisions to engage in entrepreneurial activities in the host-country is previous education and work experience. Ajzen (1991) theoretically assumes that past experiences can increase the perceived control over behaviors and thus increase intentions to realize this behavior. Engbersen, Dorenbos and Lagunas (2018) state in a report on entrepreneurial refugees in the Netherlands that parts of their study participants acquired entrepreneurial experiences in the past.

Concerning the influence of the social network in the host-country, Bizri (2017) further specifies the use of social capital in a single case study of a Syrian entrepreneur in Lebanon. With a strong reference to moral obligations and trust, the study results in a distinct picture of refugee entrepreneur's network structure of co-ethnic and host country contacts. Refugees tend to both obtain close ties with co-ethnics as well as building a network structure of local contacts in the host country for business activities (Bizri, 2017).

Norms, both social and cultural, can further impact motivations to become self-employed. In this regard, Light (1972) argues that some immigrant groups are more inclined to engage in entrepreneurship than others based on their sociocultural background. Vinogradov and Kolvereid (2007) confirm the impact of immigrants' national culture, especially linking education attained in the home country to self-employment rates in the host country. Wauters and Lambrecht (2006) further highlight the potential motive of integration into society through the engagement in entrepreneurship.

As the issue of refugee entrepreneurship has received a growing interest in recent time, several studies focus on entrepreneurial activities in the non-European context (Refai, Haloub & Lever 2018), portraying refugee entrepreneurial activities in a refugee camp context (de la Chaux, 2019; Kachkar, 2018). But research has also been conducted in the European host-country context (Baltaci, 2017; Sandberg, Immonen, & Kok, 2019).

Regarding the host country context of the Netherlands, attention on the topic of refugee entrepreneurship can be observed in several publications assessing the option of self-employment amongst recent refugees in the Dutch context (Berns, 2017; Engbersen et al., 2018; VluchtelingenWerk Nederland, 2018b). Engbersen, Dorenbos and Lagunas (2018) analyzed which barriers refugees encounter and highlight the challenging nature of entrepreneurial activities which can lead to only

selected individuals succeeding. Such barriers include bureaucratic efforts, language barriers and insufficient time spent on business planning. VluchtelingenWerk Nederland (2018b) underlines the central role of social networks in overcoming various barriers to entrepreneurship due to mismatches between refugees' demands and support systems offers. Besides proving the existence of entrepreneurial intent through quantitative measures in the Netherlands, Berns (2017) concludes that negative societal perceptions of refugees cause more entrepreneurial intent for persons moderately affected.

3. METHODS

Within the Dutch context, the term refugee ('statushouder') refers to a person who has been granted asylum and is admitted a stay in the Netherlands for five years including the permission to work as well as the access to entrepreneurship (VluchtelingenWerk Nederland, 2018b). As this research aims to analyze the initial motivations of recent Syrian refugees to engage in entrepreneurial activities in the Netherlands, data is gathered from Syrian refugees who are either already engaged in entrepreneurship or intend to do so in the near future. Following definitions by Bosma et al. (2007), aspiring entrepreneurs acquiring knowledge and skills prior to the set-up of the business, nascent entrepreneurs engaged in the conceptualization of setting up a business as well as early business owners who established a business in recent years were included in the study. Although a distinction between these three different categories is important, this research includes all three categories in the study sample. Due to initial constraints in the participant recruitment and in the access to the field, both actively pursuing and potential Syrian refugee entrepreneurs are included in the study. Potential differences in the initial entrepreneurial motivations of each group will be reported in the study results.

The access to the field is thus established by contacts to institutions and professional working in the field of supporting refugee entrepreneurs. Those act as gatekeepers in contacting eligible participants. Snowball sampling is also used to fruitfully recruit participants from the network of interviewed participants.

In summary, 16 eligible participants are recruited in 15 interview cases (Fig. 2). Three additional interviews are conducted with institutional actors engaged in the support of refugee entrepreneurs in the Netherlands to acquire a deeper contextual understanding of the topic. This study's results reveal a heterogeneous group of aspiring and nascent Syrian entrepreneurs as well as business owners similar to indications on the heterogeneous group of refugee entrepreneurs in the Netherlands by Engbersen et al. (2018). The recruited participants arrived in the Netherlands between 2012 and 2017 whereas the majority lives in the Netherlands since the

year of 2015 aligning with general statistics on Syrian refugee arrivals in the Netherlands (Eurostat, 2019). The average age of the participants is 36, with four participants in their twenties and six participants in their thirties and forties. Further, most entrepreneurs in this study are males, only two participants are female. Regarding the educational background, 10 of the interviewed refugees obtained higher education and university degrees whereas six participants had a lower educational background. Concerning the work experiences, half of the participants already acquired entrepreneurial experiences in the past. Referring to categories of early-stage entrepreneurial activity (Bosma et al., 2007), seven out of the 15 interview cases are defined as business owners having established their business for up to 3.5 years post firm birth. The remaining cases consist of three aspiring entrepreneurs, engaged in planning and gathering knowledge and skills for business set-up and five nascent entrepreneurs engaged in

#	Business sector	Education & work experience	Business phase	Age	Time of arrival
1	Wholesales	High education Work experience (same sector)	Aspiring entrepreneur	40s	2017
2	Culture & sports	High education	Nascent entrepreneur	20s	2015
3	Personal services & not-for-profit	High education Work experience (unrelated)	Nascent entrepreneur	20s	2015
4	Culture & sports	High education Work experience (unrelated)	Nascent entrepreneur	20s	2015
5	Hospitality	High education Work experience (unrelated)	Owner of new business	30s	2015
6	ICT, media & communication	High education Entrepreneur (unrelated sector)	Nascent entrepreneur	30s	2015
7	Hospitality	High education Work experience (related field)	Owner of new business	30s	2015
8	Hospitality	Basic/secondary education Entrepreneur (same sector)	Owner of new business	30s	2013
9	Hospitality	High education, entrepreneur (same sector) & High education	Owner of new business	40s & 20s	2014
10	Hospitality	Basic/secondary education Entrepreneur (same sector)	Owner of new business	40s	2012
11	Wholesales	Entrepreneur (unrelated sector) Work experience (unrelated)	Owner of new business	40s	2015
12	Personal services & not-for-profit	High education Entrepreneur (unrelated sector), Work experience (same sector)	Aspiring entrepreneur	30s	2015
13	Retail	Basic/secondary education, Entrepreneur (same sector)	Owner of new business	30s	2014
14	Construction, installation and infrastructure	Basic/secondary education, Entrepreneur (same sector)	Nascent entrepreneur	40s	2016
15	Retail	Basic/secondary education, Entrepreneur (same sector)	Aspiring entrepreneur	40s	2015

Figure 2: *Participants characteristics*

the process of setting up a business prior to firm birth. Following the terminology of business sectors from the Chamber of Commerce in the Netherlands (Chamber of Commerce Netherlands, 2016), the major business sector represented in this study's sample is the hospitality sector. Businesses such as retail, wholesale, cultural and non-profit businesses are also represented in the sample. Further, three institutional actors are engaged in the support organizations for refugee entrepreneurs and based in the cities of Amsterdam, Utrecht and Maastricht (Fig. 2).

Semi-structured interviews are chosen to collect data. This kind of interview suit the aim to collect data on a specific focus on the initial motivations to entrepreneurship whilst leaving flexibility to include Syrian refugees' individual perspective on the issue (Fedyuk & Zentai, 2018). Following ethical guidelines, the interview sessions include pre- and post-sessions to achieve informed consent with the interviewee about the purpose and confidentiality of the research. Further, the interviews are recorded with the participants' permission to facilitate the transcription afterward (Tracy, 2013).

Interviews are partially conducted in a research team, consisting of a Master student of Urban and Economic Geography, a Bachelor student of Human Geography as well as a Syrian researcher, assisting with the translation of interviews in Arabic. Regarding the language of the interviews, the research follows suggestions concerning cross-language research (Santos, Black, & Sandelowski, 2015) and it is assured that the participants feel confident to speak and express themselves in the chosen language during the interview. Interviews in English and Dutch are kept in original transcriptions while the analysis of data and production of codes proceed in English. Interviews with Arabic translation are translated into English prior to starting the

analysis (Santos et al., 2015). In summary, eight of the interviews with Syrian refugees are conducted in English whereof one interview is conducted interviewing a couple. Four interviews are carried out in Dutch and another three interviews were conducted in Arabic with the assistance of the translator.

The collected data is transcribed using the software NVivo to facilitate the transcription as well as the coding process. Subsequently, the data is analyzed following a phenomenological methodology used in qualitative research on entrepreneurship by Berglund (2005). Phenomenology assumes that the world is perceived through the meanings attached to it and that knowledge is rooted in individuals' experiences which aligns with the aim of this research to analyze refugees' individual motivations to entrepreneurship (Flick, 2018). Berglund and Hellström (2002) further propose the following procedure: The transcribed interview data is read by the researcher and divided into separate meaning units (MUs). During repeated readings of the material, similar MUs are summed-up to categories, others are split and re-organized and clustered within overarching factors. Increasingly, the pre-existing framework is therefore replaced by the inductive results derived from the data (Berglund, 2005).

4. RESULTS

4.1. ENTREPRENEURIAL ATTITUDES

Following the theoretical concept by Ajzen (1991), attitudes towards entrepreneurship represent the first aspect of Syrian refugees' motivations to engage in entrepreneurial activities. Concerning these attitudes impacting Syrian refugees' initial motivations to become entrepreneurs in the host country, no differences between the different stages of aspiring and nascent entrepreneurs and business owners are indicated in the interview

data. The study does, however, acknowledge the option that entrepreneurial attitudes evolve over time.

STRIVING FOR FINANCIAL INDEPENDENCE

The overarching tone in the interviews is seeking financial independence. Taking responsibility for their own financial situation mostly relates to not being dependent on social welfare services and governmental help. The legal status as refugees makes Syrians eligible for governmental support when unemployed (Engbersen et al., 2015). However, many participants highlighted the importance of leaving governmental support to sustain themselves without the need for welfare payments. Being financially independent and able to work for their own living expenses represents a central attitude towards entrepreneurship as this participant (aspiring entrepreneur, 30s, interview 12) states:

“I want to cancel my social welfare payments. Because I don't like to get money from anyone. This [is] my first goal.”

The striving to gain financial independence is also connected to moving upwards in their social and financial status. The loss of financial resources can be a consequence of fleeing to the host-country as a refugee (Bakker et al., 2014). Here, this aspect of being a refugee is impacting the motivation to work as an entrepreneur in order to regain a certain financial status. Instead of being dependent on help from the government, participants prefer to improve their financial situation through entrepreneurship. A participant (aspiring entrepreneur, 40s, interview 1) expresses his ambition as follows:

“I like to work by myself and get my money. Because you need [to] have a better life. If you stay in social welfare, that's level zero, or level one maybe. (...) I don't want to stay there. I always want to go up.”

The literature on immigrant entrepreneurship distinguishes the strands of necessity entrepreneurship and opportunity-driven

entrepreneurship (Dawson & Henley, 2012). The impact of the legal status of refugees making them eligible for social welfare support combined with the loss of financial resources can push refugees into entrepreneurship. Thus, the resulting strive for financial independence and the urge to move out of social welfare support tends to fit more into the strand of necessity-driven entrepreneurship (Muller, Beckers, & Pijpers, 2017).

AUTONOMY

Along with the findings on financial motivations, Syrian refugees refer to autonomy as an important characteristic of entrepreneurship as one participant (nascent entrepreneur, 20s, interview 2) explains his choice for entrepreneurship as follows:

“So, first, I am my own boss, this is my first thing. I cannot work with someone that could demand me to do this, do that, you know? (...) So, I can decide when I need to work, should I take this order, should I take this assignment, should I take it. So, yeah, I decide wherever I want to work, you know? My own benefits, my own, yeah.”

The mentioned notion of ‘being your own boss’ relates to an autonomous working style, decisions concerning work tasks, working hours as well as receiving financial benefits. Linking this to the existing literature on immigrant entrepreneurship, autonomy is also a central characteristic for immigrant entrepreneurs in choosing entrepreneurship (Shinnar, 2007). In this regard, Syrian refugees’ attitudes seem to not differ from attitudes of other immigrant entrepreneurs.

PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS IMPACTING ENTREPRENEURIAL ATTITUDES

The third sub-category of entrepreneurial attitudes accounts for personal characteristics which influence Syrian refugees’ entrepreneurial attitudes and therefore the initial motivations to pursue entrepreneurship. Here, the central aspects are proactiveness and solution-finding. Many participants described themselves as ambitious in achieving a good

career and willing to overcome difficulties on the way. The notion of solution-finding as relevant to refugees pursuing entrepreneurship is confirmed by institutional actors engaged in support organizations in the Netherlands. It is stated that most refugee entrepreneurs possessed a specific entrepreneurial mindset consisting of ambition and problem-solving (institutional actor 1). One participant (business owner, 30s, interview 7) describes the way in which his experiences of fleeing as a refugee shaped his outlook on tackling difficulties concerning entrepreneurial activities:

“So, I felt it's time, I needed to take my own responsibility, to be part of, (...) you know, not being part of the problem but thinking in a different way and being part of the solution.”

Compared to the existing literature on refugee entrepreneurship, Mawson & Kasem (2019) report similar results. Their study finds that the experience of fleeing as a refugee resulted in stronger determination to independently overcome challenges by refugee entrepreneurs in the UK. This aligns with the finding from this study in the Dutch context.

Further, sociality is a personal characteristic shaping Syrian refugees' attitudes to engage in entrepreneurial activities. Participants generally report to be social and enjoy the interaction with their social network. Especially for the part of the participants who have had entrepreneurial experiences before, this point is important. Syrian refugees who have been entrepreneurs before highlight the aspect of social skills as crucial in business activities and relevant for their positive attitudes towards pursuing entrepreneurship. Here, a participant (aspiring entrepreneur, 30s, interview 12) who has had a retail business in Syria expresses the relevance of social skills for entrepreneurial activities:

“Earlier in Syria, I was doing that all the time. With smiles, good morning. (...) If you can communicate well, communicating with guests, with clients, you can work well.”

Previous literature notes that refugees may lack a social network when arriving at a host-country (Stevens, 2016). Bizri (2017) states that Syrian refugees build up a social network consisting of both co-ethnic and local contacts when pursuing entrepreneurial activities in the host country. Although this study is not able to make assumptions on the success of building up a business network, sociality as personal characteristics does contribute to Syrians' positive attitudes and the motivation to pursue entrepreneurship in the Netherlands.

4.2. SUBJECTIVE NORMS

Following the structure of Ajzen's (1991) theory of planned behavior, subjective norms are split into individual and socio-cultural influences on entrepreneurial motivations. Just as for the previous aspect of entrepreneurial attitudes, no differences among the different entrepreneurial stages are found concerning the initial entrepreneurial motivations.

INDIVIDUAL INFLUENCES

The first part of subjective norms concerns individual influences such as personal obligations and individual desires to pursue a certain behavior. The central finding here is striving for personal achievements among Syrian refugees. Participants report a strong urge to achieve their goals and to build up a life with their entrepreneurial activities in the host country. An interviewed couple (business owners, 40s & 28s, interview 9) express their perspective on starting a business as Syrian refugees in the Netherlands as follows:

“I will try to build my business again, and stand up again, I have been in this situation before, (...) and now we are fighting to stand up again.”

The participants thereby especially stress the meaning of establishing their business due to the previous loss of resources while fleeing:

“Because this is for me [the] last gamble, we did lose and we have lost enough, (...) we had to run away to build us again and again.”

This urge for personal achievements again sheds a light on the impact of material loss and loss of former social statuses. Connected with the background of the current refugee status and the striving of regaining these assets in the host country, this study's findings are in line with findings by Bakker et al. (2014) on the importance of regaining resources in the host country. The participants' quote thus entails a sense of aiming to develop a perspective for work in the Netherlands as often encountered in the interviews. It also highlights the influence of migration experiences disrupting the participants' lives and thus possibly increasing motivations for entrepreneurship as a new start as encountered in past research (Bizri, 2017; Williams & Krasniqi, 2018).

SOCIO-CULTURAL INFLUENCES

The second part of subjective norms relates to both social and cultural influences on subjective norms contributing to motivations to entrepreneurship.

A major impact on the participants' perspective on entrepreneurship is found in the direct social network of Syrian refugees. Many participants report that they were guided and confirmed in their plans to realize a business in the Netherlands. Here, support from family, friends and business contacts form a crucial impact on a person's entrepreneurial motivations. One participant (business owner, 30s, interview 5) expresses her thankfulness towards a Dutch friend who supported and convinced her to start a business in the hospitality sector:

"She is like the person who really pushed me. She said, 'Yeab, you have to do it.' I said, 'I can't do it. How can I go to Dutch people and cook for them Syrian food? They will not like it.' She said, 'No they will like it. I am Dutch, I like it, I love it and you have to do it. All the Dutch people like me, they will like it.' (...) So, she is a really, really, very, very supportive person."

Especially the social support received from Dutch contacts prior to opening a business is influential. This includes social contacts familiar with the Dutch national context as

either long-time co-ethnic residents or Dutch residents supporting the business plans. Support initiatives focusing on entrepreneurial refugees can also be powerful in the refugees' motivation to realize their business plans (Engbersen et al., 2018). For an institutional actor (institutional actor 2) involved in entrepreneurial courses for aspiring refugee entrepreneurs, the affirmative meaning of receiving professional support is visible:

"The fact that they actually get a certificate, that is a serious institution (...). This is important for them. Indeed, feeling, feeling taken seriously again."

Also, through reactions of the host society on the participants' entrepreneurial activities, several participants feel invited to pursue their plans to open a business. A female participant (business owner, 30s, interview 5) states that she feels supported in entrepreneurial motivations due to the open and accepting attitudes experienced from the Dutch society:

"Yeab, there is more freedom here. And as a woman in Syria, it's not very possible."

The Dutch societal context facilitates the participant's business plans as she perceives it as more open compared to her country of origin in which she felt limited due to her gender. But through support received from her social network and the societal context of the host country, she feels enabled to achieve her entrepreneurial plans. Generally, this shows that the social and societal context of a Syrian refugee can have an important influence on the decision to realize entrepreneurial activities.

Another way in which the impact of the societal context is visible is through a notion of loyalty. It refers to a sense of giving something back to the host country for accepting the individual as a refugee. This becomes evident as some participants aim to contribute to society, either economically or through finding solutions for societal problems. It is also connected to helping co-ethnics and other refugees in similar situations. A participant (nascent entrepreneur, 20s,

interview 3) who aims to enhance intercultural understanding with his business idea expresses his perspective on this matter as follows:

“And that is in a way for me, what I am doing, I take it as a pay-back to the society that provided me the service.”

Relating these findings to the existing literature, Bizri (2017) concludes that Syrian refugees assist other co-ethnic refugees with their business activities. In comparison with Bizri's (2017) findings, this study finds that this attitude goes beyond the co-ethnic community and translates onto host society. The notion of giving back to the host society for being accepted as a refugee can be compared with findings by Wauters & Lambrecht (2006). They conclude that one motive for refugee entrepreneurs in the Belgian context to engage in entrepreneurship is wanting to integrate into society. Although the results of this study do not fully align with the results from Wauters & Lambrecht (2006), the aim to give something back to the host society represents a similar point.

At the same time, this is contrasted by the impact of negative societal reactions experienced by several participants. Negative associations with the refugee status such as the incapability to work and the creation of financial deficits for the hosting society affect Syrian refugees in their entrepreneurial plans. The following statement (nascent entrepreneur, 20's, interview 3) relates to such a negative framing of the refugee status:

“For some people, they still see me as only the refugee, so I all the time have to prove myself first and then they can take me seriously.”

For some participants, the aim to succeed as portrayed in the individual influences on subjective norms is therefore connected to a sense of liberation from negative societal reactions. The motivation to open a business and become an entrepreneur acts as personal empowerment outside of negative stereotypes as the participant (nascent entrepreneur, 20s, interview 3) states:

“I came here as a refugee but that doesn't mean that I cannot do anything.”

Berns (2017) also finds that negative societal perceptions of refugees lead to an increase in entrepreneurial intent in the Netherlands. This can be confirmed by the findings of this study. Compared with the previous insights that positive societal reactions can have an impact on some participants, negative reactions from the societal context can likewise support the decision to realize entrepreneurial plans for some Syrian refugees.

But not only the societal context in the host country impacts the motivations of Syrian refugees to pursue entrepreneurship in this study. Entrepreneurial motivations are also connected with the socio-cultural context of the country of origin. Two aspects of the Syrian cultural context become visible:

The first aspect relates to the importance of work and financial independence in the Syrian context. This is closely related to the finding of financial independence as an attitude towards entrepreneurship in this study. Being independent of social welfare services and instead of working to earn money are highly valued in the perspective of the interviewed Syrian refugees. Interestingly, this is mentioned frequently as a normative value in connection to a common cultural ground for Syrian refugees in the Netherlands. One entrepreneur (business owner, 30s, interview 5) expresses the importance of work and financial independence for Syrians as follows:

“But they want to work, they don't want to get, to ask the help from the government (...). Syrian people, they want work.”

The second aspect refers to the normality to pursue entrepreneurial activities in Syria. Participants relate to the fact that pursuing entrepreneurial activities is common in the Syrian context and that many participants reported having been influenced by the contact with other entrepreneurs in Syria or entrepreneurial family members. This aspect is

articulated in a participant's (nascent entrepreneur, 20s, interview 2) statement on his previous connection to the concept of entrepreneurship in the past:

"In Syria, everybody is [an] entrepreneur. Like for example, (...), my uncle gives my cousin, (...) let's say 5k Euros, just go open your store! You know, just go, if you succeed, you succeed. If not, just open another one. So especially in Aleppo, we are like an industrial city, so a lot of entrepreneurs are doing something there. So, it will start as a family business or you start by yourself. It is very common there."

From this participant's perspective, entrepreneurship is a common option to work in Syria. Also, some of his family members were involved in entrepreneurial activities before. Considering entrepreneurship as a frequent option to access the work market in the participants' country of origin might affect motivations to also engage in entrepreneurial activities in the host country. These findings can be linked to the literature on the impact of the socio-cultural context of immigrants: Early work by Light (1972) states that some immigrant groups are more inclined to engage in entrepreneurship than others based on their socio-cultural background. More recently, Vinogradov & Kolvereid (2007) analyze the connection of entrepreneurial activities of immigrants in Norway with the national culture of the country of origin. They find a positive but partially insignificant indication for this matter. Although the Syrian socio-cultural context represents only one aspect in motivations to engage in entrepreneurship in the Netherlands, the findings at least point in a similar direction.

4.3. PERCEIVED BEHAVIORAL CONTROL

The third factor contributing to the motivations of Syrian refugees to engage in entrepreneurship is the perceived behavioral control over constraints. Following Ajzen's (1991) theory of planned behavior, findings relate to experienced constraints in becoming

an entrepreneur as well as the assessment and solutions found for these difficulties by the participants of this study.

CONSTRAINTS

This study's participants indicate four main areas in which Syrian refugees are challenged with constraints in setting up a business in the Netherlands. Participants are confronted with insufficient financial assets or difficulties in acquiring funding for the business. Besides lacking knowledge about laws, regulations and the business context in the Netherlands, the results also highlight language constraints and issues related to bureaucracy as well as unsuitable support by institutions. One participant (business owner, 40s, interview 10) for example experienced initial drawbacks due to his insufficient Dutch language skills when approaching the municipality for support on his business plans:

"When I came here, I asked the municipality to help me, but they didn't accept because of the language. They were not convinced that without the language my project will succeed."

Language constraints especially affect lower educated participants as it is harder for these participants to acquire new language skills as well as they are not always able to balance out insufficient Dutch skills with English language skills.

Other constraints relate to lacking knowledge of rules and regulations in the business context of the Netherlands and difficulties due to bureaucracy. The following statement from one of the participants (nascent entrepreneur, 30s, interview 6) shows the constraints of getting accustomed to the host country rules and regulations combined with language constraints:

"In the Netherlands, you have so many rules. If somebody wants to start a business, you have to manage a lot of things. We find the language a little difficult (...). If somebody is going to start, then you have to manage a lot, with the municipality, with the tax administration, with the bank. That is why it is going to be a bit difficult."

The range of difficulties mentioned by the participants of this study aligns with previous knowledge on encountered constraints in the Dutch context. Engbersen et al. (2018) confirm many of the found difficulties in this study. For instance, their study also highlights bureaucratic efforts, insufficient time spent on business planning and language barriers as constraining factors. The notion of lacking resources to acquire funding can be related to the initial characteristics of refugees of lacking material resources in comparison with other immigrants (Bakker et al., 2014). Overall, the specific vulnerable situation of refugees pursuing plans to engage in entrepreneurship becomes visible. This accounts especially for the entrepreneurial stage of aspiring entrepreneurs in the sample. Syrian refugees who are still in the process of acquiring skills and knowledge prior to the business set-up perceive a wider range of difficulties concerning their plan to pursue entrepreneurship.

PERCEIVED CONTROL OVER CONSTRAINTS

Findings show several aspects beneficial to Syrian refugees' perceived control over constraints connected to their entrepreneurial plans.

The first aspect relates to the acquisition and use of language skills. Dutch language skills are used to communicate better with business contacts and in acquiring knowledge and information in the host country. Some participants rely on Arabic language skills in communication with co-ethnic clients. Participants with higher education state more often to be able to balance out language constraints in Dutch or substituting these constraints with English skills. Lower educated participants with distance to learning new languages reported more difficulties. Language difficulties are also mentioned by Engbersen et al. (2018) as a central constraint for refugees in the Netherlands. Differences in the perceived control over language constraints for higher

educated participants of this study align with findings by Vinogradov & Kolvereid (2007). Likewise, they find a positive relationship between education levels from immigrants' country of origin and entrepreneurship in the host country.

The role of social support is central to the participants' perceived control over constraints. In line with the existing literature, participants gain support from their social network to tackle difficulties related to setting up a business (Bizri, 2017). Social contacts familiar with the Dutch business context are regarded as beneficial in advice and knowledge on entrepreneurship in the Netherlands, in dealing with difficulties relating to the knowledge of laws, regulations and language constraints. This is in line with results by Williams & Krasniqi (2018) who state that host country contacts have a positive influence on Kosovo migrants' entrepreneurial activities. In this regard, one participant (business owner, 40s, interview 10) expresses the fact that he owes the successful set-up of his business to his friend who is familiar with the Dutch business context:

"The secret of my success is a person who understands the procedures here and knows everything."

Further, support organizations focusing on entrepreneurial refugees represent an important way for Syrian refugees to overcome challenges. Here, a major factor is the participation in entrepreneurship courses provided by support organizations as visible in this participant's (aspiring entrepreneur, 40's, interview 1) statement about his experiences with such courses:

"And I learned a lot about things, how it is going in the Netherlands. How to choose your business, how to choose your clients, how to start your business, what is the way to find funds or without funds, or by a small capital of money or by a big capital of money. Yeah, I learned a lot from this kind of courses."

This is especially relevant for highly educated participants in this study, entering the field of entrepreneurship from another professional

background. These results align with similar findings from Williams and Krasniqi (2018). In their study, business training in the host country is positively connected to the entrepreneurial activities of migrants.

Entrepreneurial experiences and transferable professional skills are other aspects of Syrian refugees' perceived control over constraints. The group of participants with entrepreneurial background perceive this as a significant advantage in business communication and handling risks and failures. This aligns with the study by Wauters and Lambrecht (2006). They conclude that previous entrepreneurial experience increases entrepreneurial motivations. The findings also confirm Ajzen's (1991) theoretical implications for the impact of previous experiences in the assessment and control of constraints.

Further, a specific mindset of entrepreneurial Syrian refugees' is witnessed in this study. Participants showed confidence in their business skills, a positive attitude towards encountering and overcoming difficulties as well as the determination in reaching their goals. This mindset is found to be influential in the participants' coping with drawbacks in the process of setting up a business. Moreover, many participants were taking proactive steps in approaching constraints by establishing business contacts, acquiring knowledge in self-study and generally trying to find solutions for problems themselves. For example, a participant (aspiring entrepreneur, 40s, interview 1) explained the way in which entrepreneurship courses were helpful. In order to succeed in the setting up of a business, one however needed to be taking actions beyond receiving help from others:

"This kind of courses, they give you channels, (...) but you need to move, they can't give you everything. They give you the way."

These findings are similar to the personal characteristics in the attitudes towards entrepreneurship in this study. Again, the results here can be compared with Mawson &

Kasem's (2019) findings on refugees entrepreneurs. Strong ambitions towards entrepreneurship and increased confidence in independently achieving goals are linked to migration experiences. The specific mindset found in this study could possibly be connected to that.

Important to note, however, is that not all constraints and difficulties mentioned by participants are linked to solutions or perspectives of controlling them. Especially aspiring and nascent entrepreneurs among the group of participants, who are still at the beginning of establishing their businesses, are struggling to perceive solutions for encountered constraints. Vulnerable characteristics of refugees such as a lack of social resources, impacts on refugees' mental health or formal restrictions to work (Bogic et al., 2015; Muller & Beckers, 2018; Stevens, 2016) might show here as the venture of entrepreneurship can be a particularly challenging one.

5. CONCLUSIONS

This study focused on Syrian refugees' initial motivations to access the Dutch labor market as entrepreneurs. As entrepreneurial activities have been rising for Syrians in the Netherlands in recent years, this study was specifically focused on refugees' perspectives behind entrepreneurial ambitions. The aim of the research was to contribute to more in-depth knowledge of Syrian refugees' initial motivations of pursuing entrepreneurial activities after settling in the Netherlands. By applying Ajzen's model of planned behavior, a psychological perspective to the study of Syrian refugee entrepreneurial motivations was included. Conceptualized along with three aspects of attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavioral control over constraints, Syrian refugees' entrepreneurial motivations were analyzed.

Relating to the first research question on how Syrians' attitudes towards entrepreneurship influence their

entrepreneurial motivations, three main aspects can be found. A central notion is a financial aim to gain independence from social welfare payments. Entrepreneurship represents a way to financial independence and to regain material and social losses related due to the refugee background. Further, autonomy in the work as an entrepreneur and personal characteristics of sociality and proactiveness connected to these attitudes shape Syrian refugees' entrepreneurial perspectives. The notion of being pushed towards entrepreneurship in order to move out of social welfare and autonomy as a characteristic of entrepreneurship align with existing knowledge on immigrant entrepreneurship. However, a connection with the distinct refugee background is visible as the aim to regain lost resources and proactive attitudes in solution finding can be linked to refugee experiences.

Further, the impact of subjective norms on motivations to entrepreneurship are divided into individual and socio-cultural influences. The individual urge to succeed can again be referred to the disruptive migration experiences and loss of resources of being a refugee. Social-cultural influences entail a central role of direct social contacts in the host country in guidance and reassurance in the motivations to entrepreneurship. But also, reactions from the host country society play a significant role in the way Syrian refugees aim to emancipate themselves from the formal refugee status. Hence, the individual context and individual support can be seen as a meaningful influence on Syrian refugees' initial decision for entrepreneurship.

Moreover, the influence of Syrian cultural values is visible. Referring to the importance of work and financial independence and the entrepreneurial context of the country of origin influence Syrian refugees to engage in entrepreneurship.

Various constraints are encountered by Syrian refugees of which language constraints and difficulties in finding funding are the most prevailing. Social support represents a major factor in the perceived control over

constraints. Especially contacts familiar with the Dutch business context result in higher perceived control over constraining factors. Besides entrepreneurial experience being seen as beneficial to encountered difficulties, a specific mindset consisting of confidence in business skills, positive attitudes towards encountering difficulties as well as determination in reaching goals is witnessed.

Overall, the conceptualization of this research is based on theoretical implications by the theory of planned behavior from the field of psychology and successfully used to display entrepreneurial motivations of Syrian refugees to engage in entrepreneurship. Throughout the findings, however, the impact of the legal status of Syrian refugees in the Netherlands becomes visible as well as personal, social and material implications resulting from this. Results show these aspects reflected in a strong aim to regain social and material resources and proactive control over constraints and to establish a life in the host country. These characteristics thus shape the initial motivations to entrepreneurship in a crucial way. Incorporating these aspects into the Ajzen's theoretical concept could, therefore, be beneficial to future analysis of Syrian refugees' specific entrepreneurial motivations.

The focus of this study was set on motivations to pursue entrepreneurship for Syrian refugees in the Netherlands. The findings, therefore, do not contain any conclusions on the actual success of the participants' businesses. Repeated analyses on the performance of this group of interviewed Syrian refugee entrepreneurs could bring valuable insights into the success of entrepreneurial Syrian refugees and how constraints to entrepreneurship are handled in the long-term.

Although this study acknowledges that Syrian refugees' perspectives on entrepreneurship as a profession are expected to change over time, initial entrepreneurial motivations of Syrian refugees are found to differ little among entrepreneurial stages but more in the participants' educational level and

previous entrepreneurial experience. Thereby does entrepreneurial experience and higher education levels benefit the perceived behavioral control of constraints whilst especially lower educated Syrian refugees struggle with difficulties such as language skills.

Improving conditions for refugees with entrepreneurial experience or high qualifications to realize their entrepreneurial plans could be beneficial. This could entail participation in the planning of entrepreneurial courses to specifically meet their needs. At the same time, especially lower educated refugees tend to have more difficulties controlling constraints and not all constraints are met with perceived solutions. Due to the fact that some Syrians are pushed towards entrepreneurship by seeking financial independence from social welfare payments, progress should be made in improving options to work and financial independence apart from the option of entrepreneurship.

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