

**International Business
and the Migrant-Owned Enterprise**

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Highlights

- Migrant international enterprises possess specific characteristics and are emerging in large numbers worldwide
- Specific resources, orientations and capabilities tend to support superior international performance in migrant-owned enterprises
- Resources comprise foreign location advantage, international market knowledge, international and industry experience, local and foreign social capital
- Orientations constitute entrepreneurial, international growth, learning, and international market orientations
- Capabilities refer to international business and technological competences, international marketing capability, and market matching competence

ABSTRACT

Migrants launch international ventures, targeting their home countries and other international markets. We investigate migrant-own businesses that undertake international business ventures. Leveraging extant literature and case studies, the study highlights international entrepreneurship in such firms by examining the roles of key organizational factors in internationalization and international performance. After identifying and conceptualizing key antecedents to international performance, we develop a model and associated propositions. Study results suggest that migrant entrepreneurs leverage a distinctive mix of resources, orientations, and capabilities that allow them to succeed in diverse international markets. Findings provide valuable knowledge that can enhance the sustainability and international performance of this important and rapidly emerging category of firm. We provide scholarly and managerial implications to advance theory and practice in migrant-owned international enterprises.

Keywords: migrant-owned enterprise, international business, international venture, resources, orientations, capabilities, international performance

International Business and the Migrant-Owned Enterprise

1. Introduction

Globalization is associated with widespread migration of people moving from less developed to developed economies for political, economic, or social reasons (OECD, 2011; United Nations 2016; USAID 2009). The number of international migrants has increased substantially in recent years, outpacing world population growth (United Nations, 2019). Migrants typically face challenges in adjusting to the cultural and institutional environments of host nations (Chrysostome, 2010; Elo et al, 2018; Kerr & Kerr, 2016). In many countries, compared to native inhabitants, migrants are more likely to function as entrepreneurs, launching and operating private businesses. In the United States, for example, migrants constituted about 30 percent of new entrepreneurs in 2016, up from only 13 percent in 1996 (Wood, 2018). Many migrants start their businesses either to mitigate underemployment or unemployment or to serve the needs of fellow migrants by providing ethnic goods and services (Chand & Ghorbani, 2011; OECD, 2011; Shukla & Cantwell, 2018). Business survival and performance are major factors that predict the success of migrant entrepreneurs and of migrants generally. Against this backdrop, interest has increased in understanding if and how migrants support the interests of host nations, including how they contribute to economic development. In this paper, we examine migrant-owned international ventures, a topic that has been investigated very little in international business (Chand & Ghorbani, 2011; Elo et al., 2018; Shukla & Cantwell, 2018).

Worldwide, migrants operate as investors, entrepreneurs, employees, and advocates. They bring to host nations social networks, experience, entrepreneurial knowledge, bridges to foreign investors, and other assets and resources (Saxenian, 2002; United Nations 2016; Zhou, 2004). The presence of businesses launched by migrant entrepreneurs helps support local economies (Jones, 2010; Kerr & Kerr, 2016; Light 2010; Saxenian, 2002; OECD, 2011; United Nations 2016; USAID 2009). Such businesses provide goods and services of potentially limited supply. In their adopted countries, many migrants effectively create their own jobs. They also create jobs for those who may not find work in mainstream labor markets, and provide ways to

increase living standards (Kerr & Kerr, 2016; Light 2010; Saxenian, 2002; OECD, 2011; United Nations, 2016; USAID, 2009; Zhou, 2004). Migrant enterprises in ethnic enclaves usually contribute to community cohesiveness and well-being. Wealth-creating migrant businesses support rising economic mobility of subsequent generations (Kerr & Kerr, 2016; Nkongolo-Bakenda & Chrysostome, 2013; United Nations 2016).

However, new migrant ventures are typically small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and, consequently, they are characterized by sparse financial and tangible resources, leading to a reduced set of competitive options (Chand & Ghorbani, 2011; OECD, 2011; United Nations 2016). Extant research suggests that migrant entrepreneurial firms often fail to meet performance goals, and many do not survive (Chand & Ghorbani, 2011; United Nations 2016; USAID 2009). Thus, it is useful to investigate the factors that support sustainability and international performance in migrant-launched businesses.

Many migrant-owned ventures have an international character and a significant proportion succeed in international business. Entrepreneurs that launch transnational businesses typically emphasize trade and investment between their adopted and home countries (Nkongolo-Bakenda & Chrysostome, 2013; Kerr and Kerr 2016; Saxenian, 2002; Zhou, 2004). Migrants possess knowledge and capabilities that can bring competitive advantages to internationalizing firms (Hajro, 2017). In this paper, we address business and international entrepreneurship in migrant-launched ventures. We focus on the factors that support superior international performance in migrant-founded businesses that operate internationally.

In the course of this investigation, we address calls for more research on migrants and entrepreneurship in the context of international business (Chreim, Spence, Crick, & Liao, 2018; Dheer, 2018; Elo et al, 2018; Etemad, 2018; Ram, Jones, & Villares-Varela, 2017), for better understanding on the performance antecedents of internationalizing migrant entrepreneurial firms (e.g., Dheer, 2018; Etemad, 2018; Ram et al, 2017), and generally for more diverse and substantive research in international entrepreneurship (Cavusgil & Knight, 2015; Keupp & Gassmann, 2009; McDougal & Oviatt, 2000; Rauch et al, 2009).

Literature on the international activities and performance antecedents of migrant

entrepreneurs is sparse (Chrysostome & Lin 2010; Elo et al 2018). Accordingly, this study focuses on a specific category of firms – migrant international enterprises, and the most salient factors that support international performance. The constructs and relationships identified in our findings are distinctive as they apply specifically to this category of firm, and appear to constitute the most relevant international performance antecedents. The study is needed because, while such firms are novel and emerging in large numbers worldwide, there has been very little research to date to explain them.

Our research questions are (i) what is the nature of international entrepreneurship in migrant-owned businesses, and (ii) what are the antecedents to superior international performance in such firms? Our findings suggest that a distinctive base of resources, orientations, and capabilities drives the firms' international performance. We define *international performance* as the extent to which financial and other desirable outcomes are attained, including expectations about the achievement of profitability, sales growth, market share, and general success, in international business.

We aim to make several contributions. First, we describe and highlight international entrepreneurship in migrant-owned businesses, which represent an important organizational form promoting trade with their host and home countries, as well as with other countries, and generating benefits associated with international trade (Cavusgil, Knight & Riesenberger, 2016; Czinkota & Ronkainen, 2012).

Second, after extensively reviewing the literature and numerous case studies on migrant-owned internationally entrepreneurial firms, we identify and conceptualize key antecedents that are especially notable in the international performance of such firms. We highlight a collection of resources, orientations, and capabilities that support international performance. We examine the conceptual and theoretical characteristics of, and the anticipated relationships among, these constructs. While such factors have been investigated in other studies, there has been almost no research that examines their role in migrant-owned entrepreneurial firms. Therefore, a substantive investigation in this area is overdue.

Third, we develop a model and associated propositions to represent the antecedents to

superior international performance, and the expected relationships among them. The resultant findings should hold important implications to support the sustainability and competitive advantages in migrant-owned enterprises.

Finally, we report on our model and the related propositions, and examine the theoretical and managerial implications of, the key resources, orientations and capabilities investigated here. Such findings have the potential to advance the scholarly domain in terms of theory development and future research, and to inform migrant practitioners on the operations and key factors in successful internationalization. We clarify how developing and leveraging the right mix of factors can engender superior performance in international migrant enterprises. To our knowledge, similar studies have not appeared in the extant literature and thus, the present study represents an original contribution.

Our investigation has the potential to illuminate an important yet little researched area. Work is needed to better understand the factors that give rise to successful outcomes in migrant-created international ventures. This paper will progress as follows. First, we provide theoretical background, especially on resources, orientations, and capabilities relevant to the study. We then describe the methodology of this research, comprising an extensive literature review and a collection of original case studies. We then develop propositions on international entrepreneurship and antecedents to international performance among internationalizing migrant enterprises. Finally, we discuss our findings in terms of their theoretical and managerial implications, and offer guidelines for future research.

2. Theoretical background

We leverage perspectives on internationalization, resources, and capabilities because, as will be argued, the international dimension is often critical among migrant-owned business, and because such firms leverage specific resources and capabilities to achieve their performance goals. Accordingly, we position this research in the literature on internationalization, resources, and capabilities.

Internationalization refers to company efforts to enter and gradually intensify business

activities in foreign markets (e.g., Hymer, 1976; Johanson & Wiedersheim-Paul, 1975). Foreign environments are fraught with uncertainty and risk, and the firm can overcome such challenges through possession of appropriate knowledge, capabilities, and strategies (e.g., Knight & Cavusgil, 2004; Hymer, 1976). Internationalizing migrant enterprises confront risk and uncertainty in foreign markets, but typically hold fewer coping resources than larger firms or indigenous competitors. Based on the empirical findings of this study, we have argued the international performance of migrant-owned businesses will depend largely on a collection of antecedent factors that can be classified in terms of resources, orientations, and capabilities that the owner(s) brings to the enterprise.

The resource-based view (RBV) describes how possession of appropriate resources is an important determinant of organizational capabilities and performance (e.g., Barney, 1991; Collis, 1991; Grant, 1996; Rumelt, 1984; Teece & Pisano, 1994; Wernerfelt, 1984). Foundational resources are especially valuable in uncertain business environments because they provide a relatively stable basis for strategy formulation (Grant, 1996; Prahalad & Hamel, 1990). The most important resources are valuable, rare, inimitable and non-substitutable (Barney, 1991; Dierickx & Cool, 1989; Prahalad & Hamel, 1990). Valuable resources bring value to the firm, typically providing the ability to enhance competitive advantages. Rarity implies that the resource is relatively unique and not readily available to competitors (Barney, 1991). Rarity may arise as entrepreneurs develop unique, firm-specific core knowledge or competencies that allow them to outperform rivals by offering distinctive goods or services, or by conducting business activities using relatively unique approaches (Barney, 1991; Teece & Pisano, 1994; Nelson & Winter, 1982). Inimitability refers to the difficulty with which competitors can replicate the entrepreneur's products, services, and business methods. Rival firms will be largely unable to obtain or reproduce inimitable resources (Dierickx & Cool, 1989; Grant, 1996). Non-substitutability implies that a given resource cannot be easily developed or copied by competitors.

Knowledge is the most important resource, and the integration of specialized knowledge in a firm is the essence of organizational capabilities (Conner & Prahalad, 1996; Dierickx &

Cool, 1989; Grant, 1996; Leonard-Barton, 1992; Nelson & Winter, 1982). Here, knowledge refers to the capacity to apprehend and use relationships among informational factors to achieve intended objectives (Autio, Sapienza, & Almeida, 2000; Liesch & Knight, 1999). Knowledge is thought to provide advantages that facilitate new market entry and operations (e.g., Kogut & Zander, 1993; Nelson & Winter, 1982). The integration of managers' specialized knowledge gives rise to organizational capabilities (Dosi, et al, 2008; Grant, 1996).

Organizational capabilities consist of key competences and embedded routines, and arise from the firm's ability to innovate and create new knowledge (Dosi et al, 2008; Grant, 1996; Nelson & Winter, 1982). Firms develop unique knowledge and resultant capabilities that engender superior performance, particularly in challenging environments (Dosi et al, 2008; Nelson & Winter, 1982). Replication of organizational capabilities implies transferring or re-deploying competences and routines from one environment to another, to extend the firm's performance into new domains and new ways of doing business (Dosi et al., 2008; Nelson & Winter, 1982; Teece et al., 1997).

Alongside resources, capabilities support the development or improvement of methods for entering new markets and doing business, such as business strategies (Dosi, 1988; Nelson & Winter, 1982). We argue that capabilities are vital to internationalizing migrant entrepreneurs, who typically lack substantial tangible resources to deal with diverse environments in foreign markets. Capabilities help such firms attenuate the liability of foreignness – the unfamiliarity and uncertainty inherent in international ventures (Czinkota, 2017; Oviatt & McDougall, 1994; Zaheer, 1995), and thus support the ability to internationalize and succeed in business (Autio et al., 2000; Zahra & Garvis, 2000).

A critical basis for developing capabilities are the orientations held by management and typically embedded in the firm. Organizational orientations are founded on a firm's philosophy of how to conduct business through a deeply rooted set of values and beliefs. They provide the basis for where management seeks to lead the firm (Hunt, 2000; Noble et al, 2002; Slater, Olson, & Hult, 2006). In this way, organizational orientations represent deeply-held proclivities and ways of thinking that firms leverage to create appropriate behaviors that support firm

performance (Hunt, 2000; Noble et al, 2002; Slater, Olson, & Hult, 2006). Strategic orientations are the guiding principles that influence a firm's strategy-making activities (Noble et al, 2002).

Among various orientations that support entrepreneurship is entrepreneurial orientation (e.g., Covin & Miller, 2014). It reflects proactivity, innovativeness, and a proclivity for risk-taking in the pursuit of opportunities, including entering new markets (Covin & Slevin, 1986; Covin & Miller, 2014; Lumpkin & Dess, 1996; Wiklund & Shepherd, 2005). International entrepreneurial orientation is related to international growth orientation, the desire to expand the firm's activities into and within foreign markets. Learning orientation supports the creation, retention, and transfer of information and knowledge within an organization. Learning may occur at the individual or firm levels. Knowledge that results from individual- or organization-level learning has the potential to influence strategy and organizational behaviors (Baker & Sinkula, 1999; Huber, 1991; Sinkula, Baker, & Noordewier, 1997). Market orientation involves conducting market research, dissemination of resulting knowledge throughout the firm, and the creation or adaptation of products and marketing to suit the needs of the target market (e.g., Kohli & Jaworski 1990; Narver & Slater, 1990). Market orientation leads to the continuous pursuit of superior value for customers (e.g., Kohli & Jaworski 1990; Slater & Narver 1992; Ozkaya et al., 2015; Filatotchev, Su, & Bruton, 2017).

3. Methodology

Because relatively little is known about the issues investigated here, we undertook an exploratory research protocol. Initially, we did a comprehensive review of various literatures – especially the literatures on migrant entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship generally, as well as on SME internationalization, internationalization, and international business performance. Such literatures were considered because the literature on migrant international entrepreneurship is sparse. Specifically, we reviewed existing literature on approximately 180 studies. Our search of articles within specific categories is typical of exploratory research. We sought explanation that best represented and illuminated the phenomenon of interest.

Once the literature review was concluded, we next conducted a total of 13 case interviews with migrant entrepreneurs who were undertaking international ventures, based in the United Kingdom (U.K.) and the United States (U.S.). Recent statistics indicate that about 14 and 12 percent respectively of residents in the U.K. and the U.S. are immigrants (Office for National Statistics, 2017; United Nations 2016). Investigating migrant international entrepreneurship in both countries helps support external validity of findings.

The case study approach is a systematic process for building theory by observing and collecting information on real instances of actual phenomena. Conducting cases is part of exploratory research and serves as a prelude to confirmatory research, which involves larger-scale quantitative research (Eisenhardt, 1989; Goulding, 2002). Case studies provide grounded, qualitative evidence on the existence, importance, and relationships among key variables. Given the paucity of published research on migrant international entrepreneurship, we felt that developing case studies with actual immigrant entrepreneurs was the appropriate method because of the ability to generate rich and detailed accounts of individual entrepreneur's experiences (Eisenhardt, 1989; Goulding, 2002).

3.1 Case Studies Procedure

Consistent with established practice (e.g., Eisenhardt, 1989; Goulding, 2002; Yin, 2014), we chose appropriate cases, created an interview protocol, obtained the data, analyzed the data, and developed propositions. In the analysis phase, we enfolded findings from relevant literature obtained earlier to enrich our results (Eisenhardt, 1989). Doing a detailed literature review helped identify and specify some constructs *a priori*, to help shape early explanation and theory-building. Cases were chosen to be as representative as possible of typical migrant international enterprises (Eisenhardt, 1989; Yin, 2014).

Consistent with established procedure (e.g., Eisenhardt, 1989; Goulding, 2002), we devised an interview protocol that was used for questioning all the interviewees. Our analysis followed a grounded theory approach, wherein resulting information and data were gathered and analyzed methodically, relying on inductive reasoning (Eden et al, 1992; Goulding, 2002). As

we reviewed findings from individual cases, repeated concepts and concept relationships emerged, forming a consistent pattern of information that could be generalized across all the cases (Eisenhardt, 1989; Yin, 2014).

In analyzing the data, care was given to objectivity, balance among the various accounts, and giving due attention to any disconfirming evidence (Eisenhardt, 1989; Glaser, 1965; Yin, 2014). We examined the data in diverse ways, including systematic tallying of instances of expected concepts, themes and relationships, choosing pairs of cases and listing the similarities and differences between each pair, and following a systematic, structured approach to viewing the data. Throughout this process, we constantly compared insights and emergent explanations with actual information and data received from the interviewees (Eden et al, 1992; Glaser, 1965; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). These tactics helped improve the validity and reliability of resultant explanations.

The cases gave rise to the identification and definition of key concepts and plausible relationships among the constructs, which we then compared with the literature from our earlier review. This involved questioning findings similar to, and divergent from, existing literature (Glaser, 1965; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Yin, 2014), which helped us enhance the validity and generalizability of findings from the cases. The approach also helped us understand how case findings could fit, build on and contribute to existing theory (Glaser, 1965; Yin, 2014).

In terms of our on-the-ground procedure, initially, we interviewed four entrepreneurs based in the U.K. and four based in the U.S.. The U.K. entrepreneurs were from Pakistan (two entrepreneurs), Egypt, and El Salvador, and involved in international business in the categories of processed food and mobile telephones. The U.S. entrepreneurs were from Cameroon, El Salvador, Mexico, and India, and involved in international business in the categories of processed food, textiles, apparel, and handicrafts. Next, we conducted follow-up research that involved interviewing five additional migrant international entrepreneurs based in the U.K. These entrepreneurs were from Nigeria (two entrepreneurs), Ghana, Jamaica, and Kenya. They had undertaken international business in the categories of apparel, accessories, and textiles.

In selecting entrepreneurs, we used a theoretical sampling approach in which

international migrant businesses were identified from local Chambers of Commerce or our personal networks, in which the founder was still present and had undertaken international ventures within ten years of founding. Face-to-face interviews allowed informants to share their experiences and attitudes (Perakyla & Ruusuvuori, 2011). Prior to the meetings, the informants were told about the general topic of the study – international business.

The interviews typically lasted 30-45 minutes and covered topics centered on revealing key postures and strategies that give rise to superior international performance in international ventures among internationally active migrant-owned enterprises. In conducting the interviews, we followed guidelines on qualitative research methods (Glaser, 1965; Lee, 1999; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Shah & Corley, 2006) and supplemented our interview data with information from e-mails, participant observation, telephone conversations, and follow-up inquiries to better understand the ventures' internationalization and performance characteristics.

Believing that subjects might hesitate to discuss issues related to their immigration or business, we took steps to convey interviewer credibility and trustworthiness, and to ensure the validity of information provided by interviewees (Corbin & Morse, 2003; Dempsey et al, 2016; Lee, 1999). The interview protocol was prepared to ensure the questions were appropriate, non-threatening, and carefully phrased. In approaching interview subjects, the interviewers took steps to establish rapport and trust. The interviewers explained to subjects about the essential nature and purpose of the study and that it was being conducted by a professor from a nearby university. The interviewers assured the respondents of complete confidentiality and anonymity (Corbin & Morse, 2003; Dempsey et al, 2016; Lee, 1999). We advised the informants that the information they provided would not be divulged, with the goal of encouraging candor and further reducing the potential for biased responses. Where appropriate and practical, the interviews were conducted in the respondents' native language.

During the interviews, we prompted the informants to answer open-ended questions about their international ventures. We used the language of 'what, who, where, why, when, and how' to guide the interview protocol (Coviello, 2006; Pettigrew, Woodman, & Cameron, 2001) and limited our interventions to the maximum extent possible. This approach also helped ensure

the validity of the data collected (Shah & Corley, 2006). For two interviews conducted in the U.S., the interview protocol was translated and the interviews were conducted in Spanish. For one interview conducted in the U.K., the interview protocol was translated and the interview was conducted in Urdu. These interviews then were transcribed and translated into English. The translations followed standard back-translation procedures. Taken together, these techniques helped ensure the validity of information obtained (Bingham & Davis, 2012; Calori et al., 1994; Eden et al., 1992).

Based on our literature review and consistent with extant views on organizational culture, resources, capabilities, and strategy (e.g., Deshpande & Webster, 1989; Hunt, 2000; Montresor, 2004; Noble, Sinha, & Kumar, 2002; Teece, Pisano, & Shuen, 1997; Webster, 1992; Wernerfelt, 1984), we were primarily interested in uncovering key resources, orientations, and capabilities in the international activities of migrant-owned international ventures. For all constructs, the unit of analysis was the migrant-owned firm and the foreign market targeted by the firm's international venture. Exporting was emphasized because our queries found it is the most common internationalization mode of migrant entrepreneurs.

4. Findings

The specific constructs and linkages uncovered in the literature review and the case studies are summarized in the conceptual model in Figure 1. Ultimately, the interviewed migrant entrepreneurs were seeking superior performance in international markets. In total, our findings coalesce around a collection of constructs that we categorize as resources, orientations, and capabilities. In terms of resources, the great majority of interviewed migrant entrepreneurs spoke about the advantages they anticipated from undertaking an international venture. Most interviewees cited the role that their knowledge of the foreign markets, especially their home countries, played in influencing their decision to establish the venture. To varying degrees, most pointed to the role their experiences in the international context, and in their industry or occupation, played in enhancing their prospects for success. Finally, most of the entrepreneurs counted on a network of contacts in the foreign country and in their adopted country, to enhance

their international performance. A majority of the migrant entrepreneurs highlighted the role of the social networks acting as what might be termed ‘bridging’ and ‘bonding’ social capital (Gittell & Vidal, 1998; Lancee, 2010) that played an important role in business performance.

INSERT FIGURE 1 ABOUT HERE

In terms of useful orientations, nearly all of the interviewed entrepreneurs seemed to possess a distinctive entrepreneurial orientation. They appeared to apply this orientation to launch their businesses, and to develop the international dimension of the venture. The entrepreneurs also seemed to possess a strong desire to grow their ventures and succeed. This growth orientation seemed to be especially important in propelling the migrants’ international ventures. We also deduced that most of the entrepreneurs possessed a desire to learn, or increase their base of knowledge, in order to improve their businesses and help them perform more effectively. Upon further probing, we also discovered the migrants proactively sought to identify and exploit opportunities in foreign markets, and to develop the knowledge necessary to do so. In this way, we felt they appeared to possess what we would describe as an ‘international market orientation’ (e.g., Baker & Sinkula, 1999; Selnes, Jaworski, & Kohli, 1997). In this way, most migrants were oriented to the foreign markets they were targeting, and sought to develop and leverage knowledge about those markets to ensure their success.

Regarding capabilities, the great majority of interviewed entrepreneurs discussed the role of possessing some minimum skills related to international business. We refer to this as international business competence. Much of this was expressed in what we would term an ‘international marketing capability’, the capacity to develop and apply a strong marketing prowess abroad. The interviews suggested that nearly all the case-study entrepreneurs were leveraging key communications technologies, and to some extent, information technologies, to realize their internationalization activities. Finally, the interviewees generally described the role of developing or adapting products that suit specific needs of buyers in target markets, a capability that we term ‘market matching competence’. The antecedent constructs that emerged

in the interviews are summarized in the model in Figure 1. Building on findings from our literature review, the case studies provided the basis for developing a collection of research propositions, which are presented next.

5. Research Propositions

In many countries, migrants found a significant proportion of new businesses (Fairlie, 2008; Kerr & Kerr, 2016; Nkongolo-Bakenda & Chrysostome, 2013). The great majority of migrant-founded internationalizing firms are SMEs. Compared to larger firms, SMEs face significant constraints in internationalization (e.g., Knight & Kim, 2009; OECD, 1997). However, international SMEs contribute substantially to global commerce and account for more than one-third of world manufactured exports (OECD 1997; WTO, 2016). SMEs internationalize to obtain performance advantages (e.g., Cavusgil et al., 2016; Czinkota & Ronkainen, 2012). Operating internationally offers countless opportunities for firms to earn additional profits and reduce business costs (e.g., Cavusgil et al., 2016; Czinkota & Ronkainen, 2012; Czinkota, 1982; OECD, 1997).

In pages that follow, as highlighted in Figure 1, we organize our propositions in terms of organizational resources, orientations, and capabilities, which study findings suggest are vital for migrant enterprises, especially for developing competitive advantages in their international ventures. Such resources, orientations and capabilities typically support the performance of firms generally, but our findings imply that migrant entrepreneurs especially deploy the specific resources, orientations and capabilities explained below.

5.1 Resources

Migrants bring knowledge and other assets to organizational settings in their adopted countries (Zikic, 2015). Many launch cross-national ventures with the expectation of gaining “foreign location advantage” – benefits that arise from transferring intermediate products or finished goods across a national border to target an international market (Dunning, 1988; Oviatt &

McDougall, 1994). It arises when the firm is able to access resources at a given location – for example customers and partners – that may be relatively less available to others (Murray, 2009; Sharma & Erramilli, 2004). Foreign location advantage may take the form of sales opportunities, better access to key customers, potentially higher profit margins, economies of scale in production and marketing, or the potential to profit from relationships with foreign partners (e.g., Cavusgil et al., 2016; Czinkota & Ronkainen, 2012). Firms perform production and/or marketing activities at locations where they enjoy competitive advantages in such activities (Sharma & Erramilli, 2004). In this case, we argue the advantaged firm or entrepreneur are in a relatively unique position to exploit specific opportunities because of their current or historic location, or because of distinctive knowledge about specific locations, in an international context. Superior access to internationally-located markets has a positive effect on the firm's capacity to generate profits. Similarly, we argue that migrant entrepreneur businesses may possess distinctive knowledge related to sales opportunities, as well as unique relationships with partners, in the host or home countries. They may enjoy superior access to buyers within specific ethnic or national categories. Thus, initially, we propose:

Proposition 1. *Among internationalizing migrant-owned businesses, foreign location advantage is positively associated with international performance.*

One of the accepted prerequisites for success in foreign markets is the possession of appropriate market knowledge (Czinkota & Ronkainen, 2012; Cavusgil et al., Yaprak, 2009). International market knowledge refers to an embedded understanding held by the firm regarding customers, competitors, cultural dimensions, institutional factors, business methods, and other relevant conditions in foreign markets. Compared to domestic markets or those the entrepreneur knows well, foreign markets may be characterized by higher degrees of uncertainty and risk (Calantone, Cavusgil, & Zhao, 2002; Liesch & Knight, 1999). The migrant entrepreneur can overcome such disadvantages through possession of specific, private knowledge about conditions and appropriate business methods in the target foreign market (Buckley & Casson, 1976; Rugman, 1982). Migrants likely possess or need to acquire international market knowledge that can enable

them to improve the performance of their ventures. Such knowledge can be leveraged to create strategic advantages that help ensure a given venture can be implemented skillfully, with relatively high prospects for success (Czinkota, 2017; Oviatt & McDougall, 1994; Zaheer, 1995). The most appropriate market knowledge helps the entrepreneur develop a roadmap of where the firm is now and where it wants, or needs to go in the future, in order to achieve desired performance goals (Calantone, Cavusgil, & Zhao, 2002; Liesch & Knight, 1999; Sinkula et al., 1997). Accordingly, we suggest:

Proposition 2. *Among internationalizing migrant-owned businesses, international market knowledge is positively associated with international performance.*

Compared to citizens of both the home and host countries, immigrants tend to possess higher levels of international knowledge and experience (McDougall, Oviatt, & Shrader, 2003; Elo et al., 2018). Foreign nationals are known to leverage a cultural posture and other characteristics that reflect their national background (Caprar, 2011). Managers with pre-existing experience bring potentially much knowledge to ventures about the business environment and how to organize ventures for optimal operations in target markets (Huber, 1991). Prior international experience should support new international venture firms in developing knowledge appropriate for facilitating internationalization and organizational performance (Carpenter, Sanders, & Gregersen, 2000; Huber, 1991; Weerawardena, Mort, Liesch, & Knight, 2007). The presence of significant international experience in venture founders is associated with superior performance in international business (e.g., Carpenter, Sanders, & Gregersen, 2017; McDougall et al., 2003; Rialp, Rialp, & Knight, 2005). Prior experience with a specific industry also tends to support subsequent success among entrepreneurs who launch ventures in the same industry (Huber, 1991). Previous management, industrial, and start-up experience are positively associated with subsequent business performance (Dyke, Fischer, & Reuber, 1992; Li & Zhang, 2007). Prior business experience should support the business activities of immigrant entrepreneurs (Chrysostome, 2010). Therefore, we suggest:

Proposition 3. *Among internationalizing migrant-owned businesses, international experience is positively associated with international performance;*

Proposition 4. *Among internationalizing migrant-owned businesses, prior industry experience is positively associated with international performance.*

Firms leverage networks of helpful actors and other social capital to achieve business goals and obtain competitive advantages (e.g., Anderson et al., 1994; Sharma and Blomstermo, 2003; Sepulveda & Gabrielsson, 2013; Chetty & Agndal, 2007). Social networks can be especially critical during founding of the firm, when entrepreneurs are assembling their resources (Granovetter, 1985; Lechner, Dowling, & Welpé 2006). Forming alliances and partnerships with beneficial actors, as well as actively engaging a community of potential customers, are thought to support firms' international performance (Coviello and Munro, 1995; Fisher, 2012; Sarasvathy, 2001). Network relationships can be particularly supportive in the internationalization of new venture firms (Coviello and Munro, 1995; Khan & Lew, 2018).

Migrant entrepreneurs are thought to possess the ability to access social capital and develop distinctive network relationships (Chrysostome, 2010; Chrysostome & Lin, 2010; Chand & Ghorbani, 2011) that often include family relationships and connections within the entrepreneur's own community (Jones & Coviello, 2005; Mustafa & Chen, 2010). Findings suggest that migrant entrepreneurs utilize both bonding and bridging social capital (Gittell & Vidal, 1998; Lancee, 2010) that should provide various advantages. Substantial connectedness to communities of nationals in both the home and host countries enhances the ability to create more attractive products and services with superior market appeal. Such social networks help migrants become more aware of international opportunities, facilitate the ability to capitalize on them, and generally support international performance (Chrysostome, 2010; Chrysostome & Lin, 2010; Chand & Ghorbani, 2011; Gittell & Vidal, 1998; Kerr & Kerr, 2016). In various ways, migrants can build competitive advantage for internationalization by accessing and leveraging networks in their adopted and original countries. Thus, we propose:

Proposition 5. *Among internationalizing migrant-owned businesses, developing and leveraging local community social capital in the resident country is positively associated with international performance.*

Proposition 6. *Among internationalizing migrant-owned businesses, developing and leveraging social capital in the home or target country is positively associated with international performance.*

5.2 Orientations

Entrepreneurial orientation is a fundamental posture, typically instrumental to strategic innovation (Covin & Slevin, 1991; Khan & Lew, 2018; Lumpkin & Dess, 1996; McDougall & Oviatt, 2000). Having an entrepreneurial orientation implies entering markets with new or established goods through risk-taking and being proactive in finding appropriate markets (Lumpkin & Dess, 1996). Start-up firms that undertake international ventures typically exhibit a strong entrepreneurial orientation (Karra, Phillips, & Tracey, 2008; Knight & Cavusgil, 2004; McDougall & Oviatt, 2000). Such firms tend to have an organizational culture that supports active exploration and pursuit of international opportunities, with management adopting a relatively aggressive posture abroad (Cavusgil & Knight, 2009; Karra et al., 2008; Knight & Cavusgil, 2004; McDougall & Oviatt, 2000; Gerschewski, Lew, Khan, & Park, 2018). Company founders with an international entrepreneurial orientation exhibit higher levels of proactiveness and aggressiveness in the pursuit of international opportunities (Covin & Slevin, 1991; Covin & Miller, 2014; Knight & Cavusgil, 2004; Lumpkin & Dess 1996). They are relatively comfortable with risk and undertake projects that entail significant chances of failure (Davis, Morris, & Allen, 1991; Lumpkin & Dess, 1996).

Given the complexities of starting a new business and of operating in foreign markets, taking risks likely is an inherent characteristic of immigrant entrepreneurs. An entrepreneurial posture helps migrant firms better formulate and realize strategic initiatives that augment their performance abroad (e.g., Lumpkin & Dess, 1996; McDougall & Oviatt, 2000). Entrepreneurial

orientation is associated with the development of specific types of marketing and other strategies that enhance international performance (Karra et al., 2008; Knight, 2000; McDougall & Oviatt, 2000). In this way, migrant start-ups that possess a strong entrepreneurial orientation are likely to enjoy superior performance than local enterprises that lack such an orientation (Cavusgil & Knight, 2009; Chrysostome, 2010). Accordingly:

Proposition 7. *Among internationalizing migrant-owned businesses, the presence of firm-level entrepreneurial orientation is positively associated with international performance.*

Related to entrepreneurial orientation is international growth orientation. It is characterized by a strong desire among managers to grow and expand into international markets. It is associated with a proactive organizational culture for developing resources aimed at achieving venture goals in foreign markets (e.g., Knight & Cavusgil, 2004; Nummela, Puumalainen & Saarenketo, 2005). International growth orientation may be especially important in smaller or start-up firms with limited resources, as such companies may need a strong growth orientation to proactively pursue opportunities in international markets. (Baum, Schwens & Kabst, 2011; Madsen & Servais, 1997; Nummela et al., 2005). The orientation should support a proactive posture that drives managers to devise strategies and orientations appropriate for entering and succeeding in foreign markets. Indeed, complex business environments are best addressed by skillful strategy-making supported by a growth-oriented posture (e.g., Knight & Cavusgil, 2004; Mort & Weerawardena, 2006; Nummela et al., 2005). We conjecture that management at growth-oriented, migrant-owned internationalizing firms will be relatively inclined to advance strategies and other approaches that maintain or enhance organizational performance (e.g., Lumpkin & Dess, 1996; Madsen & Servais, 1997; Nummela et al., 2005). A drive to grow the firm can provide the means to extend the frontiers of company capabilities and obtain competitive advantages. Growth-oriented entrepreneurs search for new opportunities and problems, and initiate improvement projects to manage these (Knight & Cavusgil, 2004; Madsen & Servais, 1997; Nummela et al., 2005). Internationalizing SMEs tend to have a strong orientation to growing the firm, and that such an orientation can support pioneering efforts in potentially costly

or risky environments. Accordingly, we conjecture that internationalizing migrant firms with an international growth orientation will tend to have an organizational culture that supports the pursuit of international opportunities. Thus, we argue:

Proposition 8. *Among internationalizing migrant-owned businesses, firm-level international growth orientation is positively associated with international performance.*

Learning orientation represents the firm's proclivity to gather, interpret, and integrate intelligence about the organization's business activities. Organizational learning supports the development of competitive advantages (Baker & Sinkula, 1999; Bingham & Davis, 2012; Calantone et al., 2002; Sinkula et al., 1997). Learning arises while interacting with value-chain members, customers, and competitors, and through proactive acquisition of information and data from inside and outside the firm (Calantone et al., 2002; Huber, 1991; Sinkula et al., 1997). Entrepreneurs with a learning orientation are inquisitive about their value-chain activities, and acquire new knowledge in the course of doing business, which is employed to achieve organizational goals (Calantone et al., 2002; Huber, 1991; Sinkula et al., 1997; Weerawardena et al., 2007).

Learning orientation may be especially important in internationalizing migrant enterprises because they face market conditions about which the owner-entrepreneur may lack knowledge but for which appropriate strategies must be developed (Bingham & Davis, 2012; Liesch & Knight, 1999; Weerawardena, Mort, Knight, & Liesch, 2015). An international learning orientation helps engender innovation and the ability to respond to evolving conditions in target markets (Autio et al., 2000; Calantone et al., 2002; Hurley & Hult 1998; Liesch & Knight, 1999; McEvily & Chakravarthy, 2002; Baker & Sinkula, 1999). Migrant entrepreneurs with an international learning orientation likely will leverage network relationships to discover opportunities and generate information needed for internationalization (Chrysostome, 2010; Chand & Ghorbani, 2011; Madsen & Servais, 1997). Given the uncertainty, dynamism and complexity that characterize international markets, migrant entrepreneurs may leverage a learning orientation to support the development of appropriate capabilities and strategies. The

presence of a strong learning orientation should nurture an organizational environment that supports international business performance. Accordingly:

Proposition 9. *Among internationalizing migrant-owned businesses, learning orientation is positively associated with international performance.*

Market orientation is thought to support firm performance (e.g., Baker & Sinkula 1999; Deshpande, Farley & Webster, 1993; Jaworski & Kohli, 1993; Kumar et al., 2011; Hurley & Hult 1998; Selnes, Jaworski & Kohli 1997). Market oriented firms generate market intelligence on customer needs and respond to this intelligence to create desirable offerings (Jaworski & Kohli, 1993; Narver & Slater, 1990; Hurley & Hult 1998). Market oriented migrant enterprises and other types of firms are better positioned to satisfy international market needs effectively and efficiently (e.g., Blankson & Omar 2002; Selnes et al. 1997). The logic underlying any linkage between market orientation and firm performance is the notion that market oriented firms tend to hold relatively more information on target markets, which can engender competitive advantages (e.g., Baker & Sinkula 1999; Deshpande et al., 1993; Diamantopoulos et al 2003; Jaworski & Kohli 1993; Kumar et al., 2011). Accordingly, we argue that market-oriented internationalizing migrant enterprises should be relatively proficient at generating market intelligence. Such firms likely are more effective in satisfying international market needs. Therefore, we argue that:

Proposition 10. *Among internationalizing migrant-owned businesses, international market orientation is positively associated with international performance.*

5.3 Capabilities

Internationalizing smaller firms succeed best by embracing specific abilities and skills that are instrumental to the conception and implementation of activities in international markets (e.g., Covin & Slevin, 1989; Karra et al., 2008; Knight, 2000; Knight & Kim, 2009; Khan & Lew, 2018). High-performing firms leverage know-how and skills that reside in founders and managers who work at these firms. The most important capabilities are those that are valuable,

unique, and hard-to-imitate (Dev et al., 2002; Peng, 2001). They allow smaller firms to differentiate themselves and attain organizational efficiency and/or effectiveness in international activities. The best capabilities become embedded in the firm's culture and routines, and to the extent they result in the development of core competences, they tend to provide substantial competitive advantages (Kogut & Zander, 1993; Johnson, Lenartowicz, & Apud, 2006.) Competitors might well imitate the visible, tangible resources owned by the smaller firm (e.g., raw materials, plant, equipment), but imitating idiosyncratic knowledge-intensive processes, skills, and other abilities is more difficult (Dev et al., 2002).

Superior company-level competences give rise to marketplace positions of competitive advantage and superior performance (Collis, 1991; Hunt, 2000). Various types of skills and capabilities are needed to succeed with international market ventures. Important capabilities include the ability to identify viable international opportunities, skills related to understanding and focusing on customers, the capacity to create and market offerings that buyers perceive as valuable (Knight & Kim, 2009; Rialp et al., 2005; Weerawardena et al., 2007). Collectively, we terms such capabilities as 'international business competence'. Such skills are associated with an enhanced ability for international success (Karra et al., 2008; Knight & Kim, 2009). It is likely that company-level competences support the performance of internationalizing migrant enterprises. We highlight particularly the ability to identify international opportunities, the ability to understand and focus on target customers, and the capacity to create and market offerings that buyers desire. Thus:

Proposition 11. *Among internationalizing migrant-owned businesses, international business competence is positively associated with international performance.*

Technologies in information, communications (ICTs) and other areas have strongly influenced the rise and performance of international SMEs (De la Torre & Moxon, 2001; Knight, 2000; Loane, 2006). Digital technologies represent new generation applied methods that facilitate full-time availability, personalized interaction, and instant delivery of standardized offerings to local and distant markets, at lower cost and less risk (e.g., Melville, Kraemer, & Gurbaxani, 2004;

Rao, 2001). Digital technologies help make smaller firms appear large and extraordinary (Klein & Quelch, 1996; Loane, 2006). In addition, firm level international entrepreneurial orientation and organizational learning are organizational cultures that tend to support the development of ICT capability, and collectively, these orientations and the use of information technologies tend to support international performance (Loane, 2006; Zhang & Tansuhaj, 2007). Start-ups that emphasize the acquisition of useful technologies are characterized by the development of processes and approaches that support performance in foreign markets (De la Torre & Moxon, 2001; Knight, 2000; Rao, 2001).

Most start-up firms use the Internet and other communications technologies for communicating with value-chain members, for marketing communications, and to for managing customer relationships as well as sales transactions and fulfillment activities. Many leverage such technologies to support distribution channels and intermediaries (Loane, 2006; Rao, 2001). The Internet and related technologies are a useful tool for acquiring knowledge, such as market and competitive intelligence, which then become part of the collective wisdom of the firm (Klein & Quelch, 1996; Loane, 2006). In all these ways, we expect that acquiring and leveraging the Internet, communications technologies, and information technologies to support international business efforts should translate into superior performance outcomes among migrant entrepreneurs. Accordingly:

Proposition 12. *Among internationalizing migrant-owned businesses, technological competence is positively associated with international business performance.*

Marketing-related strategies are associated with successful performance of new venture firms. The international performance of SMEs and start-ups generally tends to be enhanced by foreign customer focus and marketing competence (e.g., Knight, Madsen, & Servais 2004; Weerawardena et al., 2007; Rao-Nicholson & Khan, 2017). Marketing strategy guides managers in performing needed tactics and other activities that promote international marketing goals (e.g., Cavusgil & Zou, 1994; Zou & Stan, 1998). Marketing competence implies skillful handling of product adaptation and the marketing planning process, control of marketing activities, prowess

in differentiating the product, as well as being highly effective in pricing, advertising, and distribution (Knight, Madsen, & Servais, 2004; Khan & Lew, 2018). Marketing skills are important for supporting the development of suitable products, targeting customers effectively, and devising appropriate strategies (Czinkota & Ronkainen, 2012; Weerawardena et al., 2007). Customers respond better to products of superior quality (Knight et al., 2004). Migrant start-up firms usually are characterized by limited resources, and marketing skills help them find and communicate more efficiently and effectively with current and potential customers. Possession of marketing skills should lead migrant enterprises to acquire appropriate knowledge about target markets and develop appropriate marketing strategies for venture success. Therefore:

Proposition 13. *Among internationalizing migrant-owned businesses, international marketing capability is positively associated with international performance.*

Because foreign markets are complex, migrant-owned firms need to develop internal advantages to overcome the liability of foreignness (Zaheer, 1996) and the disadvantages of competing against indigenous rival firms in international markets (Buckley & Casson, 1976; Czinkota, 2017; Oviatt & McDougall, 1994). Possession of a strong market orientation supports firms in acquiring a relatively advanced understanding of their target markets (e.g., Kohli & Jaworski 1990; Narver & Slater, 1990; Baker & Sinkula, 1999; Selnes, Jaworski, & Kohli, 1997). Successful foreign market entrants typically leverage market knowledge to match the features and marketing of their product or service with foreign customer characteristics (e.g., Hollender, Zapkau, & Schwens, 2017). For example, the entering firm may seek to accommodate differences in distribution channels, respond to local competition, adjust to cultural differences, and meet host country institutional requirements (Cavusgil et al., 2016; Czinkota & Ronkainen, 2012; Luo, 2001). Smaller firms entering foreign markets obtain competitive advantages by developing or adapting products to suit specific needs of target market buyers (e.g., Hollender, Zapkau, & Schwens, 2017). Product adaptation tends to improve the performance of new entrants and smaller firms by helping them compete more effectively against rival native firms

(Cavusgil & Zou, 1994; Hollender et al., 2017). Strategic fitting of a product or service to suit a market's sociocultural and technological environments, as well as product and marketing characteristics, tends to enhance organizational performance abroad (Hollender et al., 2017; Hultman, Robson, & Katsikeas, 2009; Luo, 2001; Ozkaya et al., 2015). We refer to such an approach as 'market matching competence'. Accordingly:

Proposition 14. *Among internationalizing migrant-owned businesses, market matching competence is positively associated with international performance.*

6. Discussion

Interest has increased recently in examining the nature and contributions of migrant-owned enterprise. Migrant entrepreneurship holds enormous potential for economic development and building bridges between host and home countries. Migrant entrepreneurs provide direct investment, create jobs, and develop intellectual capital needed to foster further entrepreneurship and grow living standards.

This article sought to examine international entrepreneurship in migrant-owned enterprises and the nature of resources, orientations and capabilities deployed to achieve sustainability and superior performance in international business. Simultaneously, we addressed calls for more substantive research on migrants and entrepreneurship in the context of international business (e.g., Elo et al, 2018; Etemad, 2018), for better understanding on the performance antecedents of internationalizing migrant firms (e.g., Dheer, 2018; Ram et al, 2017), and generally for more research in international entrepreneurship (Cavusgil & Knight, 2015; Keupp & Gassmann, 2009). The constructs and relationships identified in our findings are distinctive as they apply particularly to, and appear to constitute the most relevant international performance antecedents in, migrant international enterprises. While such firms are novel and emerging in large numbers worldwide, there has been very little research to explain them.

In summary, we extensively reviewed relevant literature and examined a collection of case studies, which led to better understanding of migrant international enterprises, as well as the

identification of a collection of especially salient constructs, and the development of a model and related propositions, on the antecedents to international performance in such firms. Findings holding implications for scholars and practitioners alike. Our investigation suggested that migrant entrepreneurs appear to leverage a distinct collection of factors to undertake international entrepreneurship and to attain superior performance in international markets. The relatively consistent presence and pattern of the resources, orientations, and capabilities uncovered in the study imply that these particular factors possess significant reliability and validity in explaining the international performance of migrant enterprises. Thus, it is likely that the specific composition and pattern of these factors exists and operates across a general population of migrant international enterprises, and that these factors, and their role in performance, likely correspond accurately to conditions in the real world in which migrant entrepreneurs operate.

The resource-based view notes that the firm's foundational resources are especially important in diverse business environments because they provide a stable basis for developing strategy (e.g., Grant, 1996; Prahalad & Hamel, 1990). Among internationalizing migrant-owned businesses, key resources appear to include foreign location advantage resulting from internationalization. Migrant entrepreneurs mobilize cross-border knowledge of their home and host markets. Such knowledge is likely to be relatively distinctive and inimitable, and should be associated with the development of capabilities and strategies appropriate for undertaking successful international ventures (e.g., Knight & Cavusgil, 2004).

Findings also suggest that migrant entrepreneurs' prior industry and international experience should support international performance. We can infer that, among operators of SMEs and other businesses, migrants are in a relatively unique position because they inherently possess knowledge and experience about the business environments and characteristics of two or more countries. If they are similarly knowledgeable about commerce and specific industries, they will be better positioned to undertake international business, particularly business between their host and home countries. Entrepreneurial migrants may be able to extend such experience and knowledge to pursue opportunities in multiple foreign markets. For example, a migrant

entrepreneur originally from Mexico likely possesses knowledge and other advantages for doing business in multiple countries in Latin America. A migrant entrepreneur originally from Poland likely holds advantages for doing business in various Baltic states, and so forth.

Migrants leverage local and foreign social capital, leading to performance advantages. It is likely that network relationships support the development of social capital which supports migrants to enhance organizational performance in international markets. Findings suggest that leveraging supportive social capital is a key strategy for internationalizing migrant firms. Network contacts in target foreign markets can provide local advantages related not only to downstream international business activities, but also to better understanding foreign market conditions, forging links with additional key contacts, deepening relations within extant markets, and cultivating new buyers. Maintaining social capital in host, home, and other countries should give rise to performance advantages in international business. In total, the possession of specific knowledge about foreign markets, significant international experience, and social capital are resources that should confer a ‘monopolistic advantage’ (Hymer, 1976) in migrant ventures, and enhance international performance.

Among key orientations, our findings also imply that entrepreneurial orientation should positively influence international performance among the firms investigated here. International entrepreneurial orientation reflects an innovation-focused mindset that may support the development of strategies and other approaches aimed at maximizing international performance. Findings also suggest that growth and learning orientations, as well as international market orientation, are salient factors that likely support international performance. Together, international market orientation and international marketing capability can facilitate developing knowledge of customers, product development and adaptation, as well as skillful manipulation of marketing tactical elements to target customers with goods that match market needs. Given the risk, uncertainty, and general complexity of operating internationally, possession of entrepreneurial and growth orientations are likely important in the successful pursuit of international opportunities. Findings also suggest that having strong learning and market orientations are especially relevant to expanding the frontiers of opportunity pursuit and

exploitation in the host, home, and other countries where the migrant enterprise does business. The capacity to learn and understand the requisites for market success should support the migrant enterprise to deepen its presence, acquire new customers, and enhance business performance.

In terms of capabilities, our findings also suggest that international business competence and technological competence support international performance in migrant-owned firms. Advances in information, communication, and logistics technologies, as well as the emergence of useful institutions and infrastructures associated with globalization, enhance the ability of migrant enterprises to participate in international markets. As the enterprise extends its activities abroad, it likely will develop and expand competencies in international business. Such competencies include the capacity to identify viable opportunities, to better understand and focus appropriately on customers, and to create and market offerings that buyers perceive as valuable. Successful migrant enterprises will leverage information, communication, and digital technologies to learn about, interact with, and conduct business in, multiple national markets. Findings also suggest that international marketing capability and market matching competence are positively associated with international performance. Market matching competence is the capacity to match product characteristics with customer needs in target countries.

Migrant enterprises are typically SMEs that endure a scarcity of financial, human, and tangible resources, resulting in a reduced set of competitive options. The resources, orientations, and capabilities highlighted here constitute largely intangible assets that can be adopted and leveraged by any firm, even young or small companies. Such factors can provide the means to boost competitive advantages and other performance enhancers, improving prospects to target and profit from international opportunities. Indeed, such factors, and other advantages that migrant entrepreneurs possess relatively more than other SMEs, can facilitate early and rapid internationalization. In this way, such businesses may have a greater propensity to arise as ‘born globals’ – firms that undertake international business at or near their founding (e.g., Knight & Cavusgil, 2004).

While globalization and emergent technologies pave the way for internationalization by many types of firms, for migrant enterprises, such trends on their own are insufficient to ensure

business success. Internationalizing migrant-owned firms would be well advised to develop and emphasize the resources, orientations, and capabilities highlighted here, which appear to support internationalization and international success. Such factors likely are especially important in young or smaller businesses because they tend to lack the substantial financial and tangible resources that characterize large, well-established firms.

6.1 Guidance on Future Research

Given the embryonic stage of inquiry on migrant international entrepreneurship, this study has emphasized exploratory research. As the nature of key constructs and construct relationships becomes known, future studies increasingly will want to collect and leverage larger-scale quantitative data and confirmatory research. While we have identified numerous key propositions that describe performance antecedents among internationalizing migrant firms, future research should focus on developing and testing hypotheses rooted in more highly refined models. Confirmatory research should aim to validate the extent to which propositions identified here, as well as hypotheses developed in future studies, are supported by large-scale data.

Collecting data on migrant entrepreneurship can pose significant challenges. In areas where the legal status of migrants is unclear or where immigration is controversial, subjects may prove difficult to contact or they may hesitate to fully or transparently disclose the nature of their activities. Problems related to finding suitable subjects, or to underreporting or misreporting circumstances and outcomes, can lead to selection bias, social desirability bias, or other types of bias. Given the potential for such results, the researcher must take adequate steps to ensure the validity and reliability of study findings. In our study, as explained earlier, we sought to convey interviewer credibility and trustworthiness, and took other steps to ensure the validity of information provided by interviewees.

We have framed our research within internationalization theory, the resource-based view, and the capabilities perspective. With a view to future research, additional perspectives are potentially instructive. Among these is the ‘international entrepreneurship view’, which conceptualizes entrepreneurship in terms of risk attitude, innovativeness, and proactiveness, and

examines how these factors influence the behavior of firms that cross national borders in pursuit of value creation and superior performance (e.g., Knight & Cavusgil, 2004; McDougall & Oviatt, 2000; Zahra & George, 2002). The international entrepreneurship view has been most applied to born global firms and international new ventures, but can hold potential to support research on migrant international entrepreneurship too. A related perspective is the ‘effectuation view’ (E.g., Chandler et al, 2011; Read, Song, & Smit, 2009; Sarasvathy, 2001, 2008; Wiltbank, Dew, Read, and Sarasvathy, 2006). It helps explain tangible, on-the-ground activities of entrepreneurs, especially in young or smaller start-up firms. Effectuation argues that start-up businesses confront various contingencies that limit the utility of formal planning. Thus, managers should adopt a flexible and adaptive posture – emphasizing improvisation, exploitation of contingencies, and market creation -- that allow the firm to improvise appropriate strategies as needed. Effectuation highlights the role of being entrepreneurial, flexible, and adaptive to maximize performance outcomes (E.g., Chandler et al, 2011; Read, Song, & Smit, 2009; Sarasvathy, 2001, 2008; Wiltbank, Dew, Read, and Sarasvathy, 2006).

Another useful perspective is ‘network theory’, which refers to the firm’s system of relationships – especially in terms of actors, resource ties, and activity links – that enhance organizational performance (e.g., Coviello, 2006; Granovetter 1973; Håkansson 1989). The actors, resources, and activities identified in network theory can be framed within ‘social capital theory’, which describes the role of people in organizations and markets, and how their relationships and interpersonal assets (for example, trust and cooperation) shape the activities and performance outcomes of the firm. Network perspectives and social capital theory can provide a foundation to explain collaboration and competition (e.g., Lin, 2002; Nahapiet and Ghosal, 1998; Homburg, Wieseke, and Kuehnl 2010; Gundlach and Cannon 2010).

A final, potentially useful framework is the ‘legitimacy perspective’ (e.g., Berger and Luckmann 1966; Cattani et al., 2008; Johnson et al, 2006). Legitimacy refers to the generalized perception that actions of the firm are desirable, proper, or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs, and definitions. This is especially relevant given that migrant international entrepreneurship typically arises at the intersection of two or more

cultural systems. Past research has examined how internationalizing firms establish and maintain legitimacy in the markets where they intend to do business (Kostova & Zaheer, 1999).

6.2 Conclusion

Among start-ups and smaller firms generally, limited financial and tangible resources tend to reduce competitive options. Such conditions imply that internationalizing migrant-owned enterprises must succeed in foreign markets relatively early, with superior efficiency and effectiveness. Study findings suggest that international performance in such firms hinges on possessing a well-developed collection of specific resources, orientations, and capabilities. Such factors likely are especially salient to resource-constrained migrant ventures because they cannot afford to make missteps or commit the blunders that often afflict internationalizing firms.

Although migrant enterprises have existed for millennia, we are witnessing the widespread emergence of countless such businesses in many countries worldwide. Future research should empirically assess the propositions presented here, using large samples of migrant enterprises in the U.K., the U.S., and beyond. Research is important because of the enormous value that such firms provide. The literature on the international performance antecedents of migrant enterprises is underdeveloped and more work is needed. Resultant knowledge will contribute to improving performance in not only the affected organizations, but also to living standards as well as successful immigration and integration of migrant entrepreneurs. Widespread emergence of internationalizing migrant enterprises is heartening because it suggests how immigrants can create jobs, support economic development, and generally add value to local and foreign communities. Such ventures herald a more diverse business ecosystem and highlight the positive aspects of international migration.

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Figure 1

A Model of the Antecedents to International Performance in the International Migrant-Owned Enterprise

