



Running Case Study 2

To start with: Write a proposal

Rebecca and Mehmet alike decided to contact their research project supervisors for a first appointment by sending them an email.

From: **Mehmet Celik** <mehmet.celik@dolphin-travel.co.uk>
Date: Fri, Jul 05, 2013 at 00:38 AM
Subject: Appointment
To: "Flowermountain" <b.flowermountain@maastrichtuniversity.nl>

Dear Mr. Flowermountain,

As you might recall, I approached you a couple of weeks back asking you whether you would be willing to supervise my final master thesis on success determinants of migrant entrepreneurs. In your response you asked me to become a bit more specific on the topic. Although I have thought a lot about the topic and I know that a thesis research needs to be well focused, I find it hard to come up with a well-defined project. Nevertheless, I attached a small proposal and would like to ask you for an appointment to discuss the proposal and the steps to be taken.

Kind regards,

Mehmet Celik

RESEARCH PROPOSAL

MEHMET CELIK (ID: 096009)

MIGRANT ENTREPRENEURSHIP, INTEGRATION AND SUCCESS

Introduction

Immigrant businesses illustrate the ever more visible footprint migrants are leaving in Western societies over the last years. Over the past decades most Western countries including the Netherlands have seen a notable increase of immigrant business ownership, especially for migrants originating from non-Western countries (ITS 2007, CBS Statline 2009). While immigrant entrepreneurship can be a promising alley enabling individuals to gain economic mobility and social recognition (Van den Tillaart 2001, Choenni 1997), it is commonly discredited on the grounds of being low value-added, little innovative, and marginally profitable (Light & Rosenstein 1995, Waldinger 1996, Kloosterman, Rath & Van der Leun 1997).

Explorative studies by Van den Tillaart (2001), EIM (2004) and Rusinovic (2006), however, suggest that the traditionally gloomy image of migrant entrepreneurship needs to be reassessed as a "new" group of migrant entrepreneurs – namely the children of migrants or the so-called second generation – has started businesses in more promising sectors of the economy.

From a theoretical perspective the thesis contributes to the field by broadening our understanding of migrant entrepreneurship. Most of the current literature on migrant entrepreneurship has emphasized human and social capital as important drivers for becoming an entrepreneur (see, e.g., Fairlie 1999, Clark

& Drinkwater 2000, Ram et al. 2000, Levent et al. 2003, Arenius & De Clercq 2005, Wilson et al. 2007, Andersson & Hammarstedt 2010), while I attempt to address the outcomes of migrant ventures and want to focus more on firm and firms' strategy characteristics.

Research Problem

Exploring migrant entrepreneurship has become an interesting and import research field covering many issues (Kloosterman & Rath, 2003). Therefore, this thesis takes a broad approach that allows to take the whole context of migrant entrepreneurship into account. More specifically, migrant entrepreneurship in Dutch cities encompasses many important issues, for example:

- To what extent does entrepreneurship contribute to happiness, success and upward social mobility?
- What is their contribution to the local economies?
- How does migrant entrepreneurship affects integration?

Theoretical Background

One cannot research migrants in Western European societies without discussing integration. And not surprisingly migrant entrepreneurship is closely related to migrant integration trajectories in their host societies. Integration trajectories have been intensively studied to date (Portes and Zhou 1993, Alba and Nee 2004, Portes, Fernandez-Kelly & Haller 2008, Pels 1991, Vermeulen and Penninx 1994, 2000, Lindo 1996, Crul 2000, Dagevos 2001), but surprisingly, the literature turns a blind eye at self-employment, although labour market positions are portrayed as an important outcome of integration. Alike in the labour market, it is expected that integration into the host society increases the chance to enter self-employment and raises the developmental prospects of the founded firms, because integration enhances migrants' abilities to access vital business information and to mobilise necessary resources (see also Constant & Zimmermann 2006, Evans 1989, Le 2000).

I employ the integration definition of Vermeulen and Penninx (1994, 2000) who distinguish between two dimensions of integration: the socio-cultural and the structural dimension. The socio-cultural dimension reflects interpersonal relations with the native Dutch population and the extent of cultural, attitudinal, and behavioural changes towards the host society (i.e. Dagevos, Gijsberts and Van Praag, 2003; Dagevos, 2001; Vermeulen and Penninx, 2000; Veenman, 1995; Rusinovic, 2006). Structural integration refers to the participation of immigrants in core institutions of society and is usually measured by educational attainment, position in the labour market, and residential integration (Dagevos, 2001; Rusinovic, 2006). Using Vermeulen & Penninx (1994, 2000) integration terminology, the socio-cultural and structural integration of the five major migrant groups in the Netherlands will be assessed.

The mixed embeddedness framework developed by Kloosterman, van der Leun and Rath (1999) offers a useful theoretical approach. The framework builds upon interaction theory (Aldrich & Waldinger 1990; Light & Rosenstein 1995) and considerations regarding social embeddedness (Granovetter 1985). It departs from the notion that immigrant entrepreneurship depends on a multitude of contingencies determining the interplay of individual characteristics of the entrepreneur on the one side and characteristics of the wider social, economic and politico-institutional environment on the other side. The latter context, which Kloosterman et al. (1999) coined opportunity structures, describes the setting creating business opportunities for prospective and established entrepreneurs. Opportunity structures are shaped by economic factors both on the supply side, such as entrepreneurs' individual and cultural characteristics, as well as on the demand side, e.g. the presence of an accessible customer base. At the same time politico-institutional factors, namely existing national rules and legislations, institutions and laws enable or hamper businesses start-ups and development.

Socio-cultural and structural integration affect opportunity structures of prospective and established migrant entrepreneurs as they foster the main-stream market match between the supply side (products/services offerings) and the demand side (products/services demanded by customers). In other words, integration determines to what extent migrant entrepreneurs are able to identify and seize business opportunities in

main-stream markets. In terms of the mixed embeddedness framework, the integration differences observed for first and second generation migrant entrepreneurs result in a divergence of opportunity structures relating to the socio-cultural and economic (and possible also politico-institutional) dimensions. Generally, we expect that integration in society fosters entrepreneurial prospects of migrants, because they have better opportunities to address a broader range of potential markets.

Research Design

I propose a two stage research design. In the first stage I want to sketch the situation of migrants and especially migrant entrepreneurs in the Netherlands using secondary public data. In the second stage I want to address the research questions above by conducting in depth interviews with migrant entrepreneurs using an interview guide to be developed. As I know many migrant entrepreneurs personally, I will start to approach potential participants in the study through these contacts and later will extend my sample through snowball sampling.

Time Schedule

January 2010	Fine tuning of research problem and draft of theory chapters.
February 2010	Secondary data analysis for chapter "Sketch of migrant entrepreneurs in the Netherlands", Developing interview guideline.
March 2010	Fieldwork (interviews with migrant entrepreneurs)
April 2010	Analysis of qualitative data
May 2010	Writing it up and finished by end of May.

From: **Rebecca Nash** <r.m.nash@gmail.com>
Date: Tue, Jul 2, 2011 at 10:10 AM
Subject: Final Thesis
To: "Monica Yardman" <m.yardman@maastrichtuniversity.nl>

Dear Professor Yardman,

In our short talk a couple of weeks ago, you advised me to concentrate my research project proposal on one question. After reading some more literature, I decided to focus my project on the issue of unethical behaviour and institutions. Please, find attached a more detailed proposal, which I would like to discuss with you next week. I would be available any day except Wednesday and Friday afternoon.

Best wishes,

Rebecca

RESEARCH PROPOSAL

Rebecca Nash

Version: May 2011

Introduction

Over the last decades ethics has become a major issue in the business community. Numerous scandals about the behavior of managers in companies such as AIG, Tyco, Enron or BP have sensitized the public

and started discussion on the ethical responsibilities of decision makers. It is of public interest whether Ralph Cioffi and Matthew Tannin, prior hedge fund managers at Bear Stearns, are held responsible for criminal charges. Likewise, the behavior of bank executives that lead to the financial crisis starting in the autumn 2008, is considered as highly unethical (Cohan, 2009). Despite the continuously refreshed interest in this topic, there still exists no clarity about the reasons for ethical misconduct.

Although lessons have been learnt from the recent financial crisis, it is crucial to avoid unethical behaviour and not only to limit its consequences. In particular business students will become the managers of tomorrow and previous research shows that business students are more open to unethical practices than students from other disciplines (Nill et al. 2004). For example 88% of business students have admitted to having engaged in serious cheating incidents in the past year (Davis et al., 1992). Recently, there has been a huge debate on the appropriateness of expelling 17 students from Teeside University, which have been caught plagiarizing coursework. These examples demonstrate that already business students engage in unethical behavior.

Discussions on ethical behavior are, however, rather difficult, as there is often no general consensus what is ethically acceptable and what not (Evening Gazette, 2010). In this line of argumentation Lowery & Beadles (2009) state that there seems to be a difference between work-related behaviour and non-work-related behaviour; unethical behaviour is apparently more acceptable in work surrounding than in private life. Thus, perceptions of ethics do not only differ between persons, but also within a person depending on the context it is in. Therefore, it is necessary to consider person and context when analyzing ethics.

Problem statement

From the discussion above it becomes evident that unethical behaviour in universities is a topic that needs to be paid attention to not at least because business students will be future business managers. There exists a lot of ambiguity regarding a clear and sound definition of what unethical behaviour among business student means. While some students might regard copying another student's words as acceptable, other students or professors judge this behaviour as unethical. Furthermore, prior research failed to specifically address context factors, although we know that context matters.

This leads to the following problem statement:

How do student-specific situational and individual factors impact the degree of unethical behaviour of business students in university?

To answer this research question, the following sub-questions are addressed:

- How to differentiate between ethical and unethical behaviour?
- How to define unethical behaviour in business faculties?
- Which situational and individual factors exist that are unique in university and are likely to influence business students' ethicality?

The contribution of the research is threefold.

1. This research is meant to define the concept of unethical behaviour and causes for why business students behave unethically. The research at hand aims to provide further insights in business students' ethicality.
2. Developing a better understanding of what business students define as unethical behaviour as well as which factors are most likely to increase students' openness to unethical actions. This understanding is a premise for counteracting this behaviour. It is of great importance to understand which situational and individual factors exist in business schools and how these factors impact students' likelihood to behave unethically.
3. As the research approach is quantitative it will be possible to draw inferences about what students perceive as unethical and which factors are most likely to induce unethical behaviour.

Research design

In this study the interrelation between context, personal characteristics and ethical behavior forms the core. To capture different contexts, I want to study students from different universities in the Netherlands, but want to focus on universities that have a business program, as I want to restrict my sample to business students.

To survey the students, I will make use of an online survey. Another point of concern is certainly, how to measure ethical behaviour. I suggest to use a couple of different questions, some asking about whether students behaved unethical in the past and others will ask them how they would react in a hypothetical situation.

Timeline

June 10	July 10	August 10	September 10	October 10	November 10
Introduction and first draft literature review	Polishing literature review and designing questionnaires	Vacation and finalizing questionnaires	Set-out questionnaires at the beginning of the academic year September 1 st .	Analysis	Write-up

- 1 Taking the information provided in the case try to fill in the question hierarchy.
- 2 Discuss Mehmet's and Rebecca's short proposals.
- 3 How realistic would Mehmet's and Rebecca's time lines be at your university?