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What is the Relationship between Immigrant and Lone Parent Entrepreneurship?

Osa-Godwin Osaghae[1]
School of Management, Coventry University, United Kingdom

Tammy Mudd
Nottingham Business School, Nottingham Trent University, United Kingdom

Abstract. Immigrant entrepreneurship typically involves individuals who relocate from their country of birth to another country and establish businesses that cater to the needs of fellow immigrants. Lone parent entrepreneurship, on the other hand, refers to individuals (both female and male) who raise children without a partner while engaging in entrepreneurial activities. Both groups are often driven by societal exclusion and stigmatization. Despite the similarity in their drive towards entrepreneurial opportunity formation, the relationship between immigrant and lone parent entrepreneurial drives remains underexplored. This study employs a comparative narrative analysis of literature and a primary dataset of semi-structured interviews with Nigerian immigrant entrepreneurs in Dublin 15, Blanchardstown, Republic of Ireland, and UK-based lone parents involved in entrepreneurship. The study's in-depth micro approach enables the collection of rich, detailed data about these specific communities, focusing on a smaller dataset to explore the nuances and complexities of their entrepreneurial drives. By utilizing 24 primary data sources and relevant literature, this research contributes to the field of minority entrepreneurship by establishing the relationship between immigrants' and lone parents' entrepreneurial drive and suggests that this relationship lies in their shared patterns of behaviour. In particular, the desire to overcome stigmatization, enhance self-worth, and benefit from supportive government policies motivates both these groups to pursue entrepreneurship.

Keywords: entrepreneurial opportunity formation, immigrant, lone parent, stigma, self-worth.

1. Introduction

The primary objective of this study is to elucidate the relationship between immigrants and lone parents, particularly in the context of their entrepreneurial endeavours. Such insights can address the specific challenges faced by these entrepreneurs and foster inclusive policies that enhance their business success and community integration. The entrepreneurial activities of immigrants and lone parents are typically characterized by a bottom-up approach, which serves as the

1. Corresponding author: Osa-Godwin Osaghae, School of Management, Coventry University, Gosford Street, Coventry CV1 5DL, United Kingdom. Email: ad8767@coventry.ac.uk

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focal point of this research. Bøllingtoft (2012) defines the bottom-up approach as the utilization of networking and cooperative practices within a self-generated, entrepreneurially conducive environment. Bøllingtoft's definition indicates that entrepreneurial activity of both immigrants and lone parents relies on ethnic and interpersonal networking for the growth and survival of their ventures.

Prior research, such as the works of Esnard (2016), Osaghae (2020) and Mudd (2022), has contended that both immigrants and lone parents are driven to engage in entrepreneurship primarily as a response to the motivation to mitigate adversity, combat stigmatization, and counteract discrimination. Zarakol (2014, p. 314) defines stigma as the condition of possessing an attribute that deviates from what is expected and implicitly demanded by society. Thus, a stigma is an attribute that renders an individual different from others in the category of persons they could otherwise belong to, and of a less desirable kind. In line with the studies by Pidduck and Clark (2021) and Mudd (2022), the present study defines stigma as a "mark of disgrace" and a negative societal attitude towards a group or individual, which can often lead to feelings of shame. In the present study, stigma is defined as a phenomenon experienced equally by both male and female respondents. Among immigrants and lone parents, Mudd (2022) found no significant difference in societal attitudes towards male and female individuals caring for their child or children without a partner. Similarly, there was no notable disparity in the way male and female immigrants encounter societal stigma. This indicates that societal bias and stigmatization are pervasive and affect individuals regardless of gender within these groups.

In their respective studies, Midtbøen (2014), and Gorodzeisky and Semyonov (2017) have underscored the significant challenges faced by immigrants upon their arrival in host countries. These challenges include linguistic barriers, labour market discrimination, and the non-recognition of qualifications obtained in their countries of origin. Similarly, lone parents, raising their children without a partner, are subject to societal exclusion and stigmatization by their communities (Chadwick and Raver, 2019; Wiklund et al., 2019). In the context of the present study, social exclusion refers to a phenomenon typically characterized by an individual or group's lack of widespread acceptance, social disintegration, oppression, victimization, defensiveness, hostility, or extreme partisanship (Killen et al., 2013; Howe, 2018; Van Wart et al., 2023). Despite the similarities in the stigma and discrimination faced by both groups, their pursuit of self-determination has become their motivation for achieving personal fulfillment, a topic that remains underexplored in entrepreneurship literature.

Deci and Ryan's work (2002; 2008) provides a comprehensive approach to understanding the mind-set and actions of individuals striving for a sense of self-determination. Their framework suggests that the process of individual self-determination consists of three main components: (a) fulfilling basic psychological needs, (b) motivation, and (c) causal action. In the context of basic psychological needs, fulfilling needs such as autonomy, competence, and

relatedness often prompts individuals to engage in activities and identify opportunities that foster a sense of self-determination. This process is influenced by their contingencies of self-worth or areas of significant personal importance (Crocker and Park, 2004, p. 393; Van den Broeck et al., 2016). Moving on to motivation (b), achieving these basic psychological needs becomes a driving force towards autonomous motivation. At this stage, having autonomous motivation empowers individuals to act purposefully. Lastly, in terms of causal action (c), how individuals utilise feedback received from satisfying their basic psychological needs and developing autonomous motivation becomes crucial in opportunity formation.

When examining the entrepreneurial trajectories of lone parents, the studies by Gammon et al. (2019) and Mudd (2022) illuminate their path to self-determination. This demographic is often perceived as disadvantaged due to characteristics deemed deficient, leading to societal stigmatization both in terms of family structure and perceived reliance on state welfare benefits (Neuman, 2016; Gammon et al., 2019). By integrating the components and actions necessary for self-determination with testimonies from this group, Mudd's (2022) findings demonstrate the presence of autonomous motivation among lone parents, even in the absence of the three components of self-determination autonomy, competence, and relatedness as proposed by Deci and Ryan's Self-Determination Theory (2002, 2008). Therefore, it is evident that lone parents operate under different conditions compared to other populations (Deci and Ryan, 2008).

In the studies by Ojo (2012), Neuman (2016) and Osaghae (2020), it was found that immigrants often decide to become entrepreneurs driven by their desire for autonomy, catering to the ethnic niche of fellow immigrants with similar cultural backgrounds and common immigration experiences. Furthermore, stable economic conditions and supportive entrepreneurial policies (e.g. immigration settlement policy, employment and entrepreneurial policy, government support) in the country of origin (COO) significantly motivate entrepreneurial activities (Sternberg, 2012; Fairlie and Lofstrom, 2015; Dvouletý and Lukeš, 2016). Conversely, the studies by Esnard (2016) and Mudd (2022) demonstrate that the discrimination faced by lone parents often results in their entrepreneurial activities being categorized within the broader context of disadvantaged entrepreneurship.

This study investigates the relationship and motivations of immigrant and lone parent entrepreneurs. Utilizing a primary dataset comprising 12 immigrant and 12 lone parent entrepreneurs, the research employs thematic analysis and comparative analysis of existing literature on both groups to explore the connections between these two categories of entrepreneurs. The study concentrated on a small enclave community, specifically a community of single parents. It employed an objective, in-depth micro approach, utilizing a small data sample. Cunliffe (2011) asserts that an objective, in-depth micro approach

enables researchers to conduct studies on small communities effectively, even when using limited data samples for analysis. The understanding from the dataset is that immigrant and lone parents are willing to attain a desired situation when a certain high is reached, that immigrants and lone parents are vulnerable to further exclusion if the situation around them withholds validation, triggering their need for restoration and prompting continued efforts to repair their self-worth.

The present study contributes to the field of minority entrepreneurship by establishing the relationship between immigrants' and lone parents' entrepreneurial drive and suggests that their relationship lies in their shared patterns of behaviour, particularly in the context of the motivation to entrepreneurial opportunity formation. It posits that while adversity can lead to societal segregation, the attainment of self-worth through entrepreneurship can also pave the way for societal inclusion and the eradication of stigma. Findings indicate that despite the challenges lone parents face in balancing family responsibilities and the rejection immigrants encounter upon arrival, their pursuit and maintenance of entrepreneurial ventures provide a sense of achievement, improve self-worth, and positively influence the perceptions of those around them.

The remainder of this paper is structured as follows. Section 2 presents a review of the literature on scholarly perspectives regarding immigrants and lone parents, with the aim of understanding their entrepreneurial motivations. This section also clarifies key concepts relevant to both groups. It is followed by a brief contextual analysis of Ireland and the United Kingdom, the two countries that form the focus of this study. The paper then outlines the methodological approach adopted, before concluding with a discussion of the data analysis and the study's findings.

2. Literature Review

The demographic category of Lone Parents often experiences a lack of autonomy and a lacked sense of relatedness to others who are in similar circumstances. This absence of fulfilment in both their roles as parents and entrepreneurs often drives lone parent individuals to extreme measures (Esnard, 2016; Mudd, 2022). Mudd (2022) then suggest that for many lone parents, their competence is not readily apparent as their self-confidence has been undermined by societal stigmatisation. Thus, instead of seeking reassurance and validation of their competence through a sense of relatedness with others, they use their feelings of insecurity, the need to avoid poverty, and a fear of negative judgment regarding their life choices to pursue entrepreneurial activities. Furthermore, Portes and Manning (2019) and Osaghae (2020) suggest that the presence of certain cultural demographics in specific geographical areas of their country of residence (COR) serves as a motivating factor for immigrants to engage in entrepreneurship.

2.1 Understanding Immigrant Entrepreneurs

The concept of immigrant entrepreneurship traditionally refers to individuals who were born in one country and subsequently moved to another country, starting a business upon their arrival in the country of residence to cater to fellow immigrants' needs (Aliaga-Isla and Rialp, 2013; Dheer, 2018). In the present context, this concept has evolved to encompass entrepreneurship that goes beyond serving the cultural niches of immigrants in enclave environments and extends to meeting the market needs of both immigrants and the native-born population (Dheer, 2018). Scholars such as Neuman (2016) and Osaghae (2020) have sought to distinguish between enclave and immigrant entrepreneurship. They argue that enclave entrepreneurship consists of start-ups that emerge from the challenges immigrants encounter upon arrival in a host country. In contrast, immigrant entrepreneurship arises from the capacity of individual entrepreneurs to exploit opportunities beyond their enclaves (Kerr and Kerr, 2016). This suggests that when immigrants initially start a venture, their focus is on catering to the ethnic or cultural needs of fellow immigrants within a specific geographic area in the host country. However, as immigrants of different ethnicities and similar cultural needs begin to move into that area, changes in demographics create new opportunities that allow entrepreneurial individuals to engage in entrepreneurship (Ojo, 2012; Kerr and Kerr, 2016).

Studies on immigrant entrepreneurs, such as those examining Cuban Americans in Miami and African Americans in Harlem, New York, suggest that immigrants often embark on ventures due to their country-of-origin environment, demographic characteristics, and cultural predispositions in specific geographic areas in their country of residency that create start-up opportunities (Kerr and Kerr, 2016). The allure of entrepreneurship for immigrant entrepreneurs lies in the availability of the home country culture and the sense of community and support it provides. Concentrations of immigrants in specific geographic areas offer familiar environments where immigrants can leverage their cultural capital, establish social connections, avoid legal issue and overcome challenges faced in the host country (Ojo, 2012; Leighton, 2015; Neuman, 2016). Residing in areas with a significant country of origin cultural predisposition allows immigrants to maintain their cultural identity and find support networks that facilitate their entrepreneurial activities (Portes and Manning, 2019).

2.2 Immigrants' Drive to Entrepreneurship

The inclination of immigrants to involve themselves in entrepreneurship often stems from reactive or situational factors (Fairlie and Lofstrom, 2015; Osaghae, 2020). In many instances, this propensity is prompted by one or a combination of the aforementioned factors. Kloosterman and Rath (2010) and Fairlie and Lofstrom (2015), assert that immigrants frequently enter the realm of business as a means of livelihood when limited alternatives present themselves. Portes and Manning (2019), as well as Osaghae and Cooney (2021), contend that immigrants

may find solace and familiarity in embracing entrepreneurship when confronted with challenges like unrecognized qualifications, difficulties in accessing viable employment, and cultural disparities. Ojo (2012), posit that under circumstances involving rejection, discrimination, and an inability to secure adequate employment, embarking on entrepreneurial endeavours becomes the sole avenue for acquiring sustenance for individuals possessing entrepreneurial knowledge.

As found in the studies by Ojo (2012) and Osaghae (2020), within the context of discrimination faced by immigrants, particularly restricted access to the labour market and limited prospects for career advancement, self-employment emerges as a viable alternative to traditional salaried positions. Scholars such as Leighton (2015) and Neuman (2016) characterize immigrant entrepreneurship as a response to adversity and the exclusion of immigrants from the mainstream societal fabric. This viewpoint suggests that the disadvantages encountered by immigrants compel them toward entrepreneurship. Additionally, the allure of becoming one's own boss and attaining a position of influence within the community often becomes a driving force behind the pursuit of entrepreneurial endeavours (Leighton, 2015; Neuman, 2016). For immigrants, the pull towards entrepreneurship emanates from community support, cultural capital, and social connections that empower them to surmount the adversities prevalent in the host country.

More so, government policies that facilitate market entry, foster an entrepreneurial culture, support small businesses, and provide resources and infrastructure can contribute to the formation of entrepreneurial opportunities for immigrant entrepreneurs (OECD/European Union, 2014, Osaghae and Cooney, 2023). Dvouletý and Lukeš (2016) demonstrated how policies aimed at creating a supportive environment for small businesses could stimulate market growth and meet the demands of the local economy. However, the formation of entrepreneurial opportunities is not solely dependent on government policies and the economic development level of the host country.

The availability of the home country culture in the host country and individual decisions to identify and exploit entrepreneurial opportunities also play crucial roles. Portes and Manning (2019) and Osaghae and Cooney (2023) emphasise the significance of networks, market niches, previous entrepreneurial knowledge, and the immigrant's human, financial, and social capital within the enclave in engaging with enclave economy formation. Studies by Neuman (2016) and Osaghae (2020) indicate that successful integration into the host country, in addition to policies and economic factors, enables immigrant entrepreneurs to participate in social and commercial activities.

2.3 Understanding Lone Parent Entrepreneurs

The evolving usage of the Lone Parent concept presents challenges in defining and comprehending what it truly represents (Mudd, 2022). Dowd (1997, p. 25, cited in Mudd, 2022) aimed to provide a definition of lone parents, stating that

they are individuals who have children without marrying or have divorced after having children; the definition also includes widows/widowers. The concept of "completeness" is frequently linked to two-parent marital families, suggesting that families headed by lone parents are viewed as "incomplete." This perception often results in social stigma and the marginalization of lone parents within the broader society (Ibrahim, 2016; Mudd, 2022). From this perspective, defining lone parents is complex due to their diverse nature. Scholars such as Dowd (1997), Dunn and Ly-Donovan (2021) and Mudd (2022) argue that the terms "single" or "lone" parent imply parenting without a partner. As found in studies by scholars such as Dowd (1997) and Dunn and Ly-Donovan (2021), lone parents are represented across a wide range of professions and possess varying levels of educational attainment. They may also cohabit with new partners or live with their partners and their partners' families, often forming what are referred to as "blended families."

The demographics of lone parent entrepreneurs often experience a lack of autonomy and a diminished sense of relatedness to others in similar circumstances. This can lead to an absence of fulfilment in their roles as both parents and providers within their family units. The challenges lone parents face in caring for their families in a manner deemed acceptable by wider society and prevailing cultural ideologies of parenthood often present paradoxical proxies of success (Mudd, 2022). For many, their competence is obscured and internalized due to societal stigmatization, stemming from their failure to conform to societal norms and expectations, which culminates in their lone parent status (Esnard, 2016). Consequently, rather than seeking reassurance and validation of their competence through a sense of relatedness with others, they channel their feelings of insecurity, the need to avoid poverty, and the fear of negative judgment regarding their life choices into entrepreneurial activities (Folbre and Nelson, 2000; Kang'ethe and Mafa, 2014; Mudd, 2022).

2.4 Lone Parents' Drive to Entrepreneurship

Motivated by the drive to attain economic activity, the reasons behind the decision to become an entrepreneur for lone parents are as varied as the different family configurations and structures they embody (Mudd, 2022). For lone parents, as well as for other individuals facing social stigmatization and criticism due to their reliance on means-tested benefits, an avenue to counter this situation could involve initiating entrepreneurial endeavours to establish an income stream that accommodates their individual constraints and circumstances, thereby liberating them from dependency on external assistance (Esnard, 2016; Mudd, 2022). The impetus that propels lone parents toward entrepreneurship may hinge on the financial context of their familial unit, their distinct experiences, and their perceptions of self-worth, where they consciously reject an implicit stereotype of poverty (Kang'ethe and Mafa, 2014; Hirsch et al., 2019). The marginalized status endured by certain lone parents, compounded by their caregiving obligations for

their children and a dearth of flexible employment prospects, has driven their aspirations toward attaining financial self-sufficiency (Avnimelech et al., 2014; Sörensson and Dalborg, 2017).

Thus, their definition of success is tailored to their personal criteria. As posited by Crocker and Park (2004) and Mudd (2022), a lone parent's assessment of success in the realm of parenting becomes intertwined with their own sense of value as perceived within their social milieu. Through the capability to provide for their offspring in a self-sustaining manner, devoid of added expenses or external assistance, lone parents can maintain their pivotal role as caregivers while concurrently generating income (Mudd, 2022). Scholars like Chadwick and Raver (2019), Wiklund et al. (2019), and Kleine and Schmitt (2021), delving into the notion of "stigma entrepreneurship," have recognized that entrepreneurship can serve as a means to attain validation and rejuvenate an individual's sense of worth, thereby addressing their yearnings for autonomy, control, and financial prospects. Having encountered instances of societal exclusion, individuals marked by stigmatization adopt value systems and beliefs that distinguish them from those who have stigmatized them (Chadwick and Raver, 2019; Wiklund et al., 2019).

The purpose of reshaping, reorienting, and redirecting their self-perception, seeking to achieve social affirmation while fostering a sense of self-esteem, often becomes the driving force for individuals to engage in entrepreneurship (Ashforth and Kreiner, 1999, p. 415). In this study, the lone parents engaged in activities aimed at restoring their eroded relational value (Cuomo et al., 2017) and adopted behaviours intended to enhance their acceptability, with the aim of reclaiming their intrinsic worth (Wiklund et al., 2019). This was pursued by initiating entrepreneurial endeavours to support their families. Furthermore, within the context of popular culture's portrayal of entrepreneurship, entrepreneurs distinguish themselves from "others" by demonstrating their competence in converting opportunities into profitable outcomes through the entrepreneurial process (Davey et al., 2015; Korsgaard et al., 2015; Cuomo et al., 2017). Therefore, the present study proposes that the motivation of lone parents towards entrepreneurship encompasses the stigma associated with being "single" and the pursuit of self-worth.

3. Immigrant and Lone Parent Entrepreneurship

A substantial body of research has underscored the psychological impetus driving immigrants and lone parents toward embarking on entrepreneurial pursuits. Alba et al. (2014), Portes and Manning (2019), and Osaghae and Cooney (2021) posit that the experience of disadvantage, discrimination, and marginalization frequently propels individuals to engage in such endeavours. This perspective aligns with insights gleaned from the literature on entrepreneurship drive among

immigrants and lone parents. In the context of immigrants, scholarly investigations have indicated that several factors contribute to their inclination for entrepreneurship. These include (a) challenges in securing gainful employment due to unrecognized foreign degrees/certificates, (b) linguistic barriers leading to detachment from mainstream society, (c) marginalization resulting in discrimination and subsequent segregation from the larger societal framework and, (d) the decision to reside in areas characterized by cultural and demographic affinities with their home countries (Alba et al., 2014; Portes and Manning, 2019).

Regarding lone parents, the aspiration to attain independence through self-sustained external support mechanisms underscores their engagement in entrepreneurial activities. Notably, there might not be a proclivity for long-term venture sustainability. Parenthood, in this context, is but a transient phase. Instead, the emphasis lies in the swift monetization of existing skills to reduce reliance on various forms of assistance (Esnard, 2016; Mudd, 2022). For this demographic, entrepreneurship presents an avenue to mitigate the adverse consequences of disadvantage and marginalization. It serves as a platform for affirmative action through which they can establish a more positive perception of their identities and competencies within their social milieu (Esnard, 2016). Therefore, the current study posits that the entrepreneurial pursuits of both immigrants and lone parents are driven by aspirations to elevate their social standing and augment their sense of self-value. To guide this enquiry, the study asked the following research questions:

RQ1: What is the relationship between immigrants' and lone parents' entrepreneurial opportunity formation?

RQ2: What factors drive immigrants and lone parents towards entrepreneurship?

To answer these questions, a qualitative, thematic and comparative narrative analysis was conducted, focusing on immigrant entrepreneurs in Blanchardstown, Dublin 15 Ireland, and lone parent entrepreneurs based in the UK.

4. Participants for the Present Study

According to Bryman and Bell (2011), qualitative research necessitates a comprehensive description of the geographical location, including any pertinent information that may contribute to data analysis. This study focuses on immigrants and lone parents, specifically examining an immigrant enclave in Blanchardstown, Dublin 15, Ireland, and UK-based lone parents engaged in entrepreneurial activities while raising children. Utilizing the 2016 Census data from the Irish Central Statistics Office (CSO), Blanchardstown was identified as a promising location for this study. Historically an economically disadvantaged area, Blanchardstown underwent redevelopment between 1996 and 2004, which

increased housing availability and potentially attracted newly arrived immigrants during the Celtic Tiger economic boom (Ní Chonaill, 2009; CSO, 2016).

Participants for the lone parent entrepreneur segment were selected from a sample of England UK-based lone parents who had completed a participant authorization form, indicating their willingness to participate. Except for the first participant, who was approached through her network by the second researcher, recruitment followed a referral-based approach. In this process, previous participants either offered to share the contact details of individuals they considered suitable for the research, or potential participants approached the researcher after being encouraged to do so by an earlier participant.

Following this initial contact for both the immigrant and the lone parent's groups, each prospective participant was invited to a brief, informal conversation either by telephone or online to introduce the study and discuss its purpose. Those who agreed to take part were then asked to select their preferred interview format, either face-to-face or via the Zoom platform. This approach enabled greater flexibility in the data collection process. The second researcher, who previously owned a hairdressing salon that catered to lone parents and the wider community, and the first researcher with an immigrant background, utilized their networks to recruit interviewees.

The engagement process for all participants, both immigrants and lone parents, involved either previous participants sharing the contact details of suitable individuals or potential participants approaching the researcher at the behest of a previous participant. Following this initial engagement, each participant was contacted by telephone or online for a brief, informal introduction to the study and an opportunity to discuss the research informally. This preliminary interaction aimed to address any potential concerns and allowed participants to decide whether to participate, as they might have reservations about the nature of the research. This approach is similar to the one used by McAlearney et al. (2016), where interviews were preceded and concluded by informal discussions with each participant. During this process, each participant was asked to decide whether they wished to proceed with the research. Participants (immigrants and lone parents) who consented to proceed with the research were subsequently selected for interviews. The interviews were conducted in the year 2022.

Given that the present study focuses on two small communities' immigrants and lone parents, the decision to concentrate on 12 immigrants and 12 lone parents was informed by the logic that, when new data cease to offer additional insights or themes, further data collection is unlikely to produce novel information, and Cunliffe's (2011) in-depth micro approach, which advocates for the use of small datasets for detailed analysis. According to Cunliffe (2011), an in-depth micro approach enables researchers to thoroughly explore the nuances and complexities of the subject matter. This approach provides a comprehensive understanding of the context in which the data is collected, including the social,

cultural, and environmental factors influencing the community under study. It allows researchers to concentrate on specific areas as new insights emerge during the data collection process. Moreover, it permits a more focused allocation of time and budget, minimizes the risk of overlooking important details that might be missed in larger-scale studies, and can lead to more candid and insightful responses, thereby enhancing the quality of the data collected. When the newly collected data began to exhibit patterns consistent with those of the previously gathered data, both researchers decided to cease further data collection.

5. Methodology

The participants for the present study are immigrant and lone parents. In the context of the present study, immigrant entrepreneurship defines a type of entrepreneurial activity that more closely resembles that of the native population as it aims to serve both immigrant residents and mainstream society (Osaghae and Cooney, 2021; 2023). Kerr and Kerr (2016) and Golob and Giles (2017), defined immigrant entrepreneurship as an activity (set-up by an immigrant) that is dependent on both immigrant and native-born populations for the undertaking of entrepreneurial activity. According to Mudd (2022), lone parents are defined as individuals who have children without marrying or have divorced after having children; this definition also includes widows/widowers bringing up their children after their spouse passing. Hence, "lone parents," as used in the present study, encompasses both males and females who are raising their children in the absence of one of the parents.

The research question posed by this paper explores the relationship between immigrant and lone parent entrepreneurship. The research is thus exploratory, with a focus on developing new concepts and explanations from observed patterns and data (theory building), rather than theory testing, with the resultant undertaking of qualitative methodology to answer the research question. The researchers selected the exponential discriminative snowball sampling technique for sampling the participants. This approach involved requesting each initial interviewee to nominate two additional immigrant or lone-parent entrepreneurs from the pool of participants who had previously consented to participate in the study. This referral process significantly eased the challenge of establishing trust with participants in both cohorts. Zhang and Chun (2018) claimed that using a qualitative approach for a study like this allows the researcher to start with a research question, note the relevant theories to apply to the study, as well as the limitations of the study. Using a qualitative research design, the present study aims to build theory within the field of immigrant and lone-parent entrepreneurship. Specifically, it examines the interplay between stigmatisation, poverty, and individual self-determination as drivers of entrepreneurial activity, thereby contributing novel theoretical insights to an area that has yet to be

adequately conceptualised and theorised. In line with Zhang and Chun (2018), using a qualitative approach helped the researchers to capture thick descriptions of the experiences of immigrant and lone parent's entrepreneurship and to understand the true meanings attached to their entrepreneurial opportunity formation and to explore issues that may have been overlooked.

At the completion of the semi-structured interviews and data organising using NVivo, a query of the collected data revealed that all 24 participants (12 immigrants and 12 lone parents) have been driven to entrepreneurship either as a result of adversity, discrimination, marginalisation and the need to eradicate poverty or be the go-to person in their community. The sample in this work consists of female and male immigrants and lone parents, all of whom are driven to entrepreneurship by the desire to elevate their present status and provide for their immediate family members. This sample profile facilitates cross-comparison, which will contribute to the depth and richness of the analysis. Miles and Huberman (1994) recommended that a qualitative researcher should go to the most study-relevant sources, and the sample selection for the present study followed this advice. For reasons related to privacy and research ethics, the participants' names and business addresses are anonymised in the present study.

At the initial stage of data collection for this study, analyzing theoretical findings from the literature facilitated an understanding of the research question and the formulation of questions for semi-structured interviews. As Corbin and Strauss (2008, p. 36) noted, "*It is impossible to know prior to the investigation what salient problems or what relevant concepts will be derived from this set of data*." The construction of semi-structured interviews based on theoretical concepts from the literature provided researchers with insights into structuring the interviews. Following initial familiarization with the participants (immigrants and lone parents), contact was established with the cohort through telephone and email details obtained from their business websites and Facebook pages.

The interviews were conducted over a two-month period in 2022. The interview questions for the present study were designed to reassure participants who are sensitive about their culture and somewhat reluctant to talk about their business activities as a result of the societal perception placed on them. For example, in the case of lone parents, having had an unsuccessful marriage or relationship, the society see them as failure, an experience that often limits interaction between them and those that does not have similar marriage/ relationship experience (Esnard, 2016; Mudd, 2022). In the context of this study, both researchers' experiences as immigrants and lone parents fostered open dialogue during interviews and helped mitigate potential biases or discrimination from both researchers and participants. Adopting this intimate style of questioning opened conversation between the principal researcher and the interviewees. To gain a better insight into their activities, the interviews were conducted on the participants' own business premises. The interviews lasted one hour or more, depending on the experience and knowledge of each participant.

Answers were audio recorded, notes were taken, and consent forms were signed by the participants. We refer to Table 1 below for a sample of the interview questions.

Table 1. Sample of interview questions

• How old were you when you got into your relationship with the other parent? Or when you left your country (the idea here is that they both left one place to another). Why did you become an entrepreneur/make the decision to becoming an entrepreneur?
• What were the driving factors for you becoming an entrepreneur/ what changed and why/ What support networks – such as friends, family, community do you have around you, if any?
• How long were you together before the kid(s) arrived? How old were you then? (did having children impact on your business activity?)
• What was your experience of the people when you arrived/How were you received by your friends, family, and community after your separation from your child mother/father?
• Can you describe any experiences where you felt you were treated differently because of your immigrant status/ or because of your single status?
• How has societal bias or stigma impacted your ability to find employment or housing?
• How has been an immigrant or lone parents influenced your societal status?
• What strategies or resources have you found helpful in overcoming challenges related to bias and stigma?
• Can you share an instance where you felt supported or accepted by the community, and how that affected your sense of belonging?
• In what ways has your cultural background influenced your experiences with societal bias and adversity?
• How do you think your experiences with bias and stigma compare to those of other immigrants/ lone parents you know?
• How has becoming an entrepreneur changed the way people perceive you compared to before you started your business?

Source: Authors' own creation.

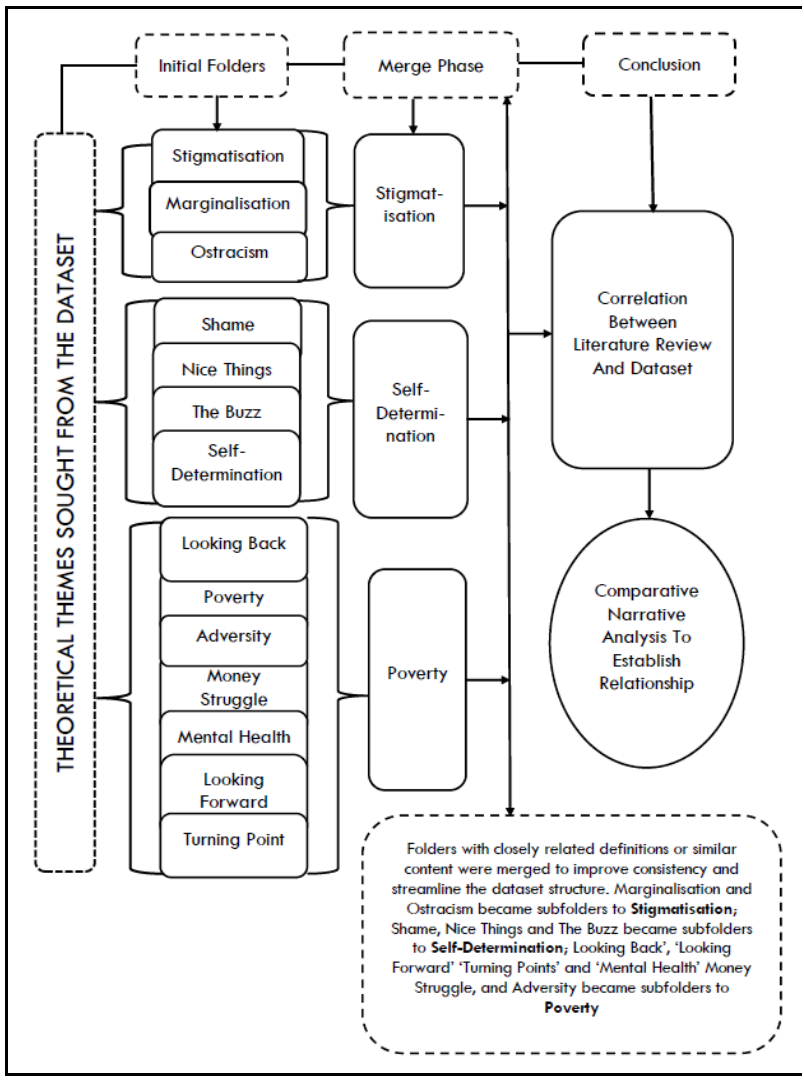
The interview questions were designed to help participants to recreate their entrepreneurial experiences during start-up and determine their drives to entrepreneurship, before moving on the questions on stigmatisation, discrimination, marginalisation and the role of poverty in their push to entrepreneurship, questions that helped the researchers to determine the relationship between these entrepreneurs. According to Deterding and Waters

(2021), the use of an interview guide provided both structure and flexibility for the study; plus, it allowed the researchers to ask probing questions, and then transcribe the audio recorded interview immediately after the interview. The first author was the primary data collector and organiser using NVivo software. The understanding from the data collection and transcribing processes provided both researchers with the opportunity to contextualise the entrepreneurs' interviews and to get a better sense of the data and the link to the literature. A deep analysis of the data by the first researcher allowed the data to be compared and checked and emerging theoretical themes were sought from the dataset. Meanwhile the second researcher checked the initial themes identified for the data organising process.

Afterwards, both researchers discussed and refined the themes and categories until a consensus was reached, and this helped to ensure validity for the study. NVivo software was then used to assist the organisation and management of the text into folders. Folders were created and labelled as "Stigmatisation", "Self-Determination", "Marginalisation", "Money Struggles", "Shame", "Ostracism", "The Buzz", "Nice Things", "Poverty", and "Adversity". This phase was pivotal in the process of data organisation as it provided the researchers with further insight into the data corpus, comparing elements from both the literature review and the data set. To check that the right comments were extracted into the right folders, transcripts of the participant's interview were reviewed and, by clicking "Memo Link" in NVivo, links were created between the folders and the transcribed interviews. Switching between the transcribed interviews and the folders facilitated identifying which material belonged in which data node. This process allowed for extracts that were not in the right folders to be eradicated, before moving on to data analysis.

The analysis was composed of three steps as follows: (1) reading and rereading of the transcripts for extraction and identifications of participants' comments with the right themes; (2) working through the organised dataset: data entries were counted in their folders to know the number of comments in each set-up folder in NVivo. Subsequently, folders with closely related definitions or similar content were merged to improve consistency and streamline the dataset structure. This way, Marginalisation and Ostracism became subfolders to **Stigmatisation**; Shame, Nice Things, and The Buzz became subfolders to **Self-Determination**; and Money Struggle and Adversity became subfolders to **Poverty**; and (3) the extracted dataset was compared with the findings from the literature reviewed. Some of the other elements that came out of the interviews were 'Looking Back', 'Looking Forward' 'Turning Points' and 'Mental Health' which were merged as subfolders to Poverty. See Figure 1 for the initial folder set-up and the merging phase.

Figure 1. Initial folder set-up and merging phase



Source: Authors' own creation

Merging these elements as subfolders under stigmatisation, self-determination, and poverty improved the consistency of the dataset structure and better aligned the coding (data organising) framework with the collected data. This reorganisation reflected participants' suggestions that the desire for achievement was one of the key drivers motivating individuals to engage in entrepreneurship. At the conclusion of the process, patterns emerged showing a correlation between the literature review and the dataset. The study then employed a comparative narrative analysis of the literature relating to immigrants' and lone parents' drive to entrepreneurship in conjunction with the

primary dataset to explore how the framework applies to immigrants' and lone parents' entrepreneurial opportunity formation.

The present study employed comparative narrative analysis for data collection and interpretation. This methodological approach involves examining multiple narratives to identify and elucidate similarities, differences, and recurring patterns (McAlearney et al., 2016). According to Madill (2011) and Ellinas (2023), semi-structured interviews provide in-depth qualitative insights directly from participants, facilitating an exploration of complex behaviours, motivations, and experiences and allowed for the collection of rich, detailed data that may not have been accessible through other methods. Comparative narrative analysis, as described by McAlearney et al. (2016) and Ellinas (2023), systematically compares datasets or case studies to reveal patterns and divergences. According to Pagliarin et al. (2023), employing this approach enhances researchers' understanding of phenomena and enables the contextualization of findings within broader frameworks, thereby ensuring methodological robustness and validity. Integrating these methods allowed the study to benefit from the detailed personal perspectives offered by interviews and the analytical rigor of comparative analysis, enriching the overall research findings.

6. Findings

The study set out to examine the relationship between immigrants' and lone parents' drive to entrepreneurial opportunity formation, and so this paper reviewed the relevant literature and primary dataset to answer the following questions:

RQ1: What is the relationship between immigrants' and lone parents' entrepreneurial opportunity formation?

RQ2: What factors drive immigrants and lone parents towards entrepreneurship?

Using a comparative narrative analysis of both the dataset and themes from the literature review, this paper describes the relationship between immigrants' and lone parents' entrepreneurship. Table 2 below shows the characteristics of the participants and their businesses.

Table 2. Characteristics of the participants and their businesses

Names	Immigrant	Lone Parent	Gender	Years in Business	Business Type	Participants ID
Immigrant Entrepreneurs (IE)						
Benson	IE	No	M	6+	Transportation	IE-1
Adolor	IE	No	M	9+	Hairdressing Salon	IE-2
Julie	IE	No	F	8+	Cargo/Remittance	IE-3
Osaro	IE	No	M	7+	African Food Shop	IE-4
Ifeyinwe	IE	No	F	8+	African Food Shop	IE-5
Jen	IE	No	F	11+	Pedicure and Manicure	IE-6
Matthew	IE	No	M	8+	Barbering Salon	IE-7
Aasku	IE	No	F	11+	Ethnic Consultancy Firm	IE-8
Juliet	IE	No	F	10+	African Food shop	IE-9
Ritah	IE	No	F	9+	Hair Products and Food shop	IE-10
Bola	IE	No	M	11+	African Restaurant	IE-11
Stella	IE	No	F	10+	Beauty and Hair Salon	IE-12
Lone Parent Entrepreneurs (LPE)						
Ed	LPE	Yes	M	15	Retailer	LPE-1
Donna	LPE	Yes	F	7	Performing Artist	LPE-2
Mark	LPE	Yes	M	23	Catering - Fast Food Takeaway	LPE-3
Sally	LPE	Yes	F	3	Cleaner	LPE-4
Fau	LPE	Yes	F	3	Dog Groomer	LPE-5
Ray	LPE	Yes	M	11	Driver	LPE-6
Taylor	LPE	Yes	F	9	Utilities Sales	LPE-7
Stacey	LPE	Yes	F	26	Beauty Retailer	LPE-8
Luan	LPE	Yes	F	17	Artist	LPE-9
Leslie	LPE	Yes	F	1	Life Coach	LPE-10
Norm	LPE	Yes	M	25	Hairdresser	LPE-11
Alison	LPE	Yes	F	5	Children's Educator	LPE-12

Source: Authors' own creation

Table 2 shows that 5 males and 7 females (who were immigrant entrepreneurs) and 4 males and 8 females (who were lone parent entrepreneurs) were identified for the study. In this study, using semi-structured interviews, participants had the opportunity to tell their stories. In doing so, the study was able to articulate whether their experiences and self-identities are similar or different. Madill (2011) and Suddick et al. (2020) argued that the basis on which to construct understanding entails the interpretation of consciousness. Fineman and Gabriel (1996, p. 4), believed that an individual's social life is interpretive,

and as such, it depends on how they have experienced and perceived it, and Neuman (2016) asserted that the understanding of social behaviour must 'get inside' the individual to see the world as they perceive it. As per the participants for the present study, reflecting and verbalising on their experiences, brought them to their own awareness that their entrepreneurial drive was motivated by the following three main concepts 'Stigmatisation', 'Determination' and Poverty which eventually pushes them to the attainment of self-worth.

As per RQ1 (What is the relationship between immigrants' and lone parents' entrepreneurial opportunity formation?), the literature and dataset used for the present study suggest that immigrants' and lone parents' drive to entrepreneurship results from stigmatization, an abundant country of origin culture in the host country, marginalisation, the need to move up in social class and avoid poverty (Portes and Manning, 2019; Avnimelech et al., 2014; Neuman, 2016; Sörensson and Dalborg, 2017; Mudd, 2022). To facilitate comprehension of the discussion and interpretations of the dataset, the lone parent and immigrant datasets have been assigned the following acronyms:

- "LPE" stands for Lone Parent Entrepreneurs. The numbers, such as "4," indicate the identifier assigned to the participants.
- "IE" refers to Immigrant Entrepreneurs. Similarly, the numbers, such as "5," represent the identifier assigned to the participants.

As found in the dataset extracts an immigrant and lone parent motivation to entrepreneurship result from the societal adversity they are faced with. According to the dataset extracts from participants: LPE-8**:** "there was a big stigma with me being a lone parent, which lead me to the belief that having a child alone that I'd failed". While the dataset extract from the participant IE-1 aligned with LPE-8 claiming segregation from the mainstream population as the main driver to entrepreneurship.

As found in the dataset extract from participant IE-2: "Social exclusion for me created the difficulties to integrate into the host society, it led to isolation, limited access to social support networks and a lack of participation in community activities." In the dataset from IE-4, it was suggested that "being isolated from the ingenious people created the opportunity for me for entrepreneurship." Avnimelech et al. (2014), Sörensson and Dalborg (2017) and Pidduck and Clark (2021) appreciated that the marginalized status endured by certain lone parents drives their aspirations toward attaining financial self-sufficiency. The dataset extract from LPE-4 reveals, "it is the stigma associated with being a lone parent that propelled me toward entrepreneurship." She further expressed her sentiment by saying; "it is unfortunate that one is classified into a lower class simply for being a lone parent." Drawing from these discussions, it could be argued that stigmatisation, social exclusion, isolation and limited access to support drive immigrants and lone parents to entrepreneurship.

For an understanding of the relationship between immigrants' and lone parents' drive to entrepreneurial opportunity formation, the linkage is explored

within the context of how the adversity that they faced drove them to entrepreneurship. According to Portes and Manning (2019) and Bartlett (2020), adversity encompasses a range of challenges, including abuse, neglect, mental illness, as well as social and structural inequities like discrimination, poverty, and exposure to community violence, all of which both immigrants and lone parents may experience. The dataset extract from participant LPE-2 claimed that being out of wedlock became a stigma that drove her to entrepreneurship. In her own words, "as being out of work and wedlock, I was all upset about it and about the way our society class us." As per the findings from IE-5 dataset extract, she mentioned, "I couldn't secure a job in my area of study because my degree wasn't acknowledged. I was instructed to undergo courses and training that were below the level of my prior education in my home country. Over time, given my prior entrepreneurial experience, I made the decision to venture into entrepreneurship." In the dataset extract from IE-5: "The lack in economic opportunities and access to the job market lead to financial instability which leads to self-employment". According Portes and Manning (2019) and Mudd (2022), in the face of adversity, challenges, and sometimes discrimination, the act of entrepreneurship becomes an assertion of agency, an avenue to chart their own course and determine their fate becomes an avenue to pursue an activity.

Following the dataset extracts from IE-1 "An environment of isolation, low self-esteem, and a feeling of not belonging, drove me to entrepreneurship". In line with Osaghae's research in 2020, facing adversity can often lead individuals toward a domain where they can find comfort and create a fertile environment for the application of their skills and knowledge. Hence, the present study asserts that the connection between immigrants and lone parents is rooted in the shared challenges faced by both groups. These challenges serve as a motivating factor propelling them towards entrepreneurship, allowing them to operate independently and overcome the adversity and stigma associated with being an immigrant or a lone parent.

And what is the answer to RQ2: What factors drive immigrants and lone parents towards entrepreneurship? Self-determination creates a broadly flexible and accommodating framework that sets-up success, rather than failure, as the default outcome (López and Williams, 2024). According to Ryan and Deci (2008), Zhang and Chun (2018) and López and Williams (2024), self-determination facilitates all individuals' natural, innate, and constructive tendencies to develop an ever more elaborated and unified sense of self. In this regard, self-determination and self-efficacy can positively become elements that can influence individuals to produce meaningful and long-lasting improvements. According to the dataset extracted from LPE-7: "I suppose I am quite a determined person any way, and I do not like to be beaten. I do not let anything to get the better of me. I do not like feeling like the one I have failed at something." The dataset extract from IE-7 reveals that "the ability to make choices and decisions for myself, to have a significant influence on my fellow

immigrants, decide on what I do and to become an important member of my community drive me to entrepreneurship." As per participants LPE-10, IE-6, LPE-12, and IE-8, societal stigma (being either a lone parent or an immigrant) became their drive to the undertaking of entrepreneurship.

Pidduck and Clark (2021) describe stigma as a social process, experienced or anticipated, characterised by exclusion, rejection, blame or devaluation that result from experience, perception or reasonable anticipation of an adverse social judgement about a person or a group. While studies by scholars such as Gammon et al. (2019) and Pidduck and Clark (2021) proposed that stigma is a characteristic of persons that is contrary to a shared belief that a person ought to behave in a certain way at a certain time. In the dataset extract from LPE-8, she reveals that "the stigma with me being a lone parent, having a child alone I thought I had failed and ask the question of how would I overcome this failure?" From this perspective, it could be suggested that stigma is greatly influenced by situation and context that provide the stigmatised individuals with some attribute, or characteristic, that conveys a social identity. As found in LPE-10: "being looked down upon as a lone parent or a failure and having the desire to prevent and get out of poverty, I engage in community, civic activities, advocated for social entrepreneurial venture to raise my social standards." According to the dataset extract from IE-11: "Being looked at as less privileged in the society limits my access to social networks and connections that are often essential for job referrals and career advancement." An extract from the IE-4 dataset aligned with the above extract, claiming that "starting my own business put me in the position that people now take me as an important member of the society."

In accordance with the above findings, it could be argued that challenges such as degradation (stigmatization, segregation, co-occurrence labelling, discrimination, stereotyping and poverty) serve as factors propelling both immigrants and lone parents towards the formation of entrepreneurial opportunities. As found in the dataset extract from LPE-12: "I was like 'I'll show you, just wait and see', it was a case of I've got to do this and went on to say for me, it was almost like 'I'll show you' because they had no confidence in me." According to the dataset extract from IE-3: "My inability to access the labour market, the result of the unrecognised degree from my home country, led to financial instability and a state of financial difficulties." Hence, the present study argues that the motivations of immigrants and lone parents towards entrepreneurship stem from their self-determination to attain self-worth and becoming an important member of their community.

7. Discussion

Entrepreneurship is a complex phenomenon influenced by a multitude of factors, such as personality traits, skills, opportunities, institutional support, cultural

dynamics, and the broader context. Within this complex landscape, immigrants and lone parents are motivated to pursue entrepreneurship for a variety of reasons (Osaghae, 2020; Mudd, 2022). Studies conducted by researchers such as Ojo (2012), Neuman (2016), Osaghae (2020) and Mudd (2022) have identified common motivations driving immigrants and lone parents toward entrepreneurship. These motivations include experiences of marginalization, the desire to become valued members of their communities, responses to segregation and stigmatization, efforts to overcome shame, the pursuit of a better quality of life, the quest for financial stability, the need to confront societal challenges, and the struggle against poverty.

To determine the relationship between immigrants and lone parent's entrepreneurs, the present study conducted a comprehensive review of pertinent literature, and conducted 24 semi-structured interviews, comprising 12 immigrant entrepreneurs and 12 lone parent entrepreneurs. The findings from this investigation suggest that the desire to improve their position in the society and to attain self-worth motivate immigrants and lone parents to pursue entrepreneurship. As found in the dataset and the literature review, entrepreneurship serves as a platform for both immigrant and lone parent entrepreneurs to express themselves, find purpose, and achieve personal fulfilment. Studies such as Ojo (2012) and López and Williams (2024) proposed that the pursuit of internal interests and desires stands as a significant motivator for successful entrepreneurs.

In the case of lone parents pursuing entrepreneurship, the primary driving force often revolves around the need to balance work and family responsibilities. Lone parents frequently encounter difficulties in finding employment that is both flexible and suitable, allowing them to meet their child-rearing obligations. In such situations, the desire for greater control over their work schedule, location, the option to involve their children in their business, and the potential for family support and a manageable pace become the motivating factors behind their decision to embark on an entrepreneurial journey. On the contrary, the impetus for immigrants to pursue entrepreneurship may be influenced by various factors within the host country. Nevertheless, a notable determinant in the entrepreneurial drive of immigrants is the strong desire for autonomy. From this perspective, it can be argued that the pursuit of self-control, the elimination of poverty, and the mitigation of stigma and discrimination are common elements for both immigrants and lone parents that serve as motivations for engaging in entrepreneurship.

It is crucial to recognize that these motivations listed are not an exhaustive catalogue of the reasons why immigrants and lone parents pursue entrepreneurship. Each individual may have unique and specific motivations and objectives guiding their decision to embark on an entrepreneurial journey. For immigrants, factors like discrimination and disadvantages in the labour market of their host country, including language barriers, devaluation of qualifications, prejudice, and exclusion, can significantly limit their employment opportunities

and earning potential. Thus, when an immigrant with entrepreneurial knowledge is confronted with these challenges, the next step is to seek alternative sources of income and social status by engaging in entrepreneurial activity. On the other hand, lone parents often pursue entrepreneurship as a means to achieve financial independence; counter the challenges associated with single parenthood and ensure their financial security. This allows them to have greater control over their finances and move away from dependence on social welfare benefits.

It is important to note that "lone parents" refer to individuals who raise their children without a partner, whether by personal choice or due to circumstances (Mudd, 2022). In contrast, "immigrant entrepreneurship" describes a process in which an immigrant establishes a business in their country of residence, often catering to the specific needs of their ethnic community or enclave (Osaghae and Cooney, 2023). In conclusion, the correlation between immigrants and lone parents in entrepreneurship is attributed to the capacity of these entrepreneurs to transform societal disadvantages into advantages. For instance, when confronted with adversity such as discrimination, segregation, and stigmatisation, their motivation to enhance self-worth and counter societal challenges leads them to embrace entrepreneurship as a means of improving their standing and eliminating societal stigma.

Therefore, it can be posited that addressing societal bias and stigma through entrepreneurial activity offers immigrants and lone parents' opportunities to improve their societal standing, cultivate a sense of belonging, and achieve self-worth within their communities. Studies by Crocker and Park (2004) and Van den Broeck et al. (2016) demonstrates that the attainment of self-worth and a sense of belonging significantly mitigates bias and stigma while enhancing individual self-esteem. For immigrant and lone parent entrepreneurs, participation in more inclusive activities and living in an equitable environment facilitate the development of robust networks, which in turn enhances access to societal resources, strengthens resilience, and promotes societal acceptance. This process ultimately helps reduce the societal biases faced by immigrants and lone parents in their respective communities.

Although Self-Determination Theory (Deci and Ryan, 2002; 2008) posits that autonomy, competence, and relatedness are the three fundamental psychological needs required to foster self-determination, the findings of the current study suggest a more nuanced perspective. Specifically, even in the absence of these three key elements, autonomous motivation defined as a self-driven desire to pursue personally meaningful goals emerged as a critical factor motivating immigrants and lone parents to engage in entrepreneurship. This finding indicates that autonomous motivation may serve as a powerful driver of entrepreneurial action, that allow immigrants and lone parents to pursue business ownership despite limited experiences of autonomy, competence, or relatedness.

Thus, this study contributes to the academic literature by establishing a relationship between immigrants' and lone parents' entrepreneurial drive,

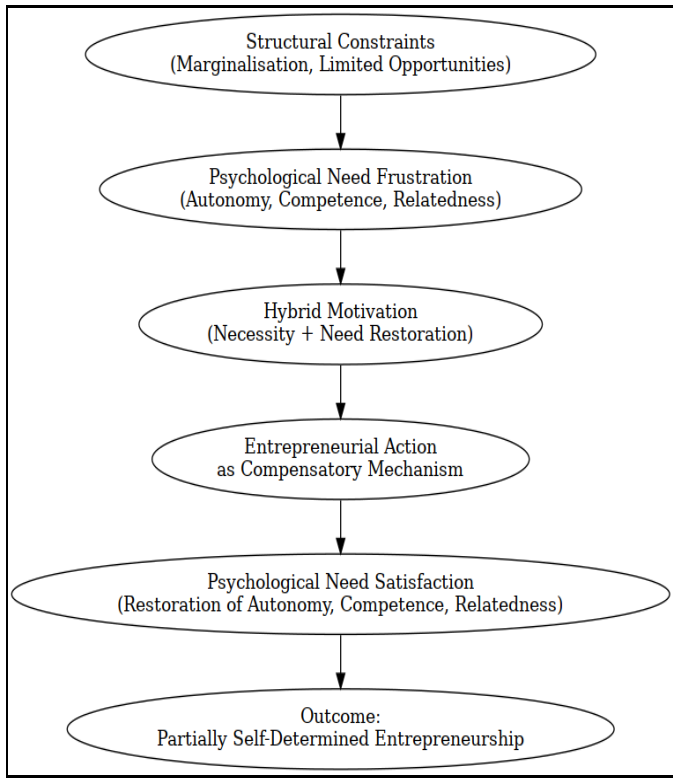
suggesting that this connection is rooted in shared patterns of behaviour. Specifically, their desire to overcome stigmatization, enhance self-worth, and benefit from supportive government policies motivates both groups to pursue entrepreneurship. Furthermore, the study demonstrates that, for immigrants and lone parents alike, entrepreneurship serves as a pathway for restoring autonomy, competence, and relatedness under conditions of constraint, thereby transforming necessity-driven action into a partially self-determined process of psychological recovery and agency rebuilding.

8. Conclusion

The study set out to answer two research questions: (a) what is the relationship between immigrants' and lone parents' entrepreneurial opportunity formation? and (b) what factors drive immigrants and lone parents towards entrepreneurship? As per RQ1, both our qualitative data analysis and the literature review indicate that the relationship between immigrant entrepreneurship and lone parent entrepreneurship stems from the challenges resulting from societal exclusion (e.g. social disintegration, oppression, victimization) faced by both groups. Such challenges often become an assertion of agency, an avenue to change course and to determine one's own fate to pursue an activity (Mudd, 2022).

Figure 2 illustrates how structural constraints, such as marginalisation and limited opportunities, lead to frustration of the basic psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness.

Figure 2. Entrepreneurship as a Need-Restoration Mechanism under Structural Constraint



Source: Authors' own creation

As shown in Figure 2, individuals respond to structural constraints by developing a form of hybrid autonomous motivation that integrates economic necessity with a desire to restore unmet psychological needs. Within this context, entrepreneurship serves as a compensatory mechanism through which individuals reclaim agency, rebuild self-worth, and cultivate supportive social connections. Through engagement in entrepreneurial activity, immigrant and lone parents' entrepreneurs progressively satisfy the psychological needs that had been constrained by their circumstances. Consequently, necessity-driven entrepreneurship can be reframed not merely as a reaction to economic pressures, but as a partially self-determined and internally motivated form of action. The entrepreneurial process thus functions as a need-restoration mechanism, enabling individuals to counteract structural constraints while pursuing greater psychological well-being and personal fulfilment.

As indicated by the findings in both the dataset and the literature review, immigrant entrepreneurship arises from experiences of rejection, segregation, and insufficient recognition of academic qualifications acquired in their home country, which immigrants often encounter upon arrival in a host country. Additionally, regarding lone parents, a representative quotation from LPE-8

asserts, "being a lone parent led me to believe that having a child alone meant I had failed." Therefore, the current study suggests that the relationship between immigrants and lone parents may stem from societal stigmatization, which often becomes a catalyst for them to strive for self-worth. Hence, the essence of the relationship between immigrant and lone parent entrepreneurship lies in their determination to transform societal stigma into a realization of self-worth. Therefore, it could be argued that the relationship between immigrant and lone parent's entrepreneurial processes lies in their shared patterns of behaviour, particularly in the context of the motivation to entrepreneurial opportunity formation.

The concept of relationships, as elucidated by Reis et al. (2000), represents common patterns of behaviour within distinct systems. This study identifies shared behavioural patterns between immigrants and lone parents in the context of entrepreneurial opportunities, establishing a connection between these two entrepreneurial processes. A key theoretical implication of this study is that it extends Self-Determination Theory by demonstrating how entrepreneurship among immigrants and lone parents can function as a pathway to satisfy basic psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness under conditions of structural constraint. Specifically, the pursuit of entrepreneurship in these groups appears to be motivated not only by economic necessity but also by a desire to regain agency (autonomy), rebuild a sense of capability and self-worth (competence), and engage with supportive institutional structures (relatedness).

This suggests that, in marginalised contexts, entrepreneurial activity may serve as a compensatory mechanism through which individuals actively restore psychological need satisfaction, thereby reframing necessity-driven entrepreneurship as partially self-determined rather than purely reactive. Data collected for this study, analyzed within the framework of Deci and Ryan's work (2002), indicates that the entrepreneurial motivations of both immigrants and lone parents are driven by the achievement of basic psychological needs and the desire for autonomy. This demonstrates a significant relationship between the entrepreneurial endeavours of immigrants and lone parents.

The limitation to the present study is that data sources were drawn from just two geographical contexts (England, UK, and Dublin, Republic of Ireland), so future research on this topic should replicate the study in different contexts to validate the literature review. In conclusion, this study aimed to understand the relationship between two minority groups. The findings indicate that adversity, including social disintegration, oppression, and victimization, drives immigrants and lone parents towards entrepreneurship. Therefore, this study suggests that implementing policies that promote societal inclusion, reduce segregation, and support entrepreneurial activities among immigrants, lone parents, and ethnic minority groups in both their countries of origin and residence will significantly encourage entrepreneurial endeavours and help bridge the social divide between these groups and the broader society.

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