

The family's business background : what role in the entrepreneurial attitudes and capabilities of entrepreneurs? An empirical study.

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ABSTRACT

Despite an abundant literature on the subject of entrepreneurship, the determinants of entrepreneurship are not yet fully understood. A number of factors have been put forward, including the individual characteristics of the entrepreneur, as well as his social environment, in particular the family environment.

This article is part of the research on the influence of the family environment on the perceptions and behaviours of individuals. It aims to know if and to what extent the family's business background (the family's experience in the field of entrepreneurship) plays a role in the entrepreneurial attitudes and capabilities of entrepreneurs in the Algerian context. To do this, we carried out a field survey (using the questionnaire technique) on a sample of entrepreneurs active in the Bejaia region (Algeria). The data obtained from the survey are analyzed using descriptive statistics including the Chi-square statistic (Chi-2). The results obtained show the existence of significant differences between entrepreneurs from families with an business background and those from families without an business background. These results lead us to conclude that the family's business background has an influence on the attitudes and capabilities of entrepreneurs.

1. Introduction

For several decades now, entrepreneurship has been a subject of interest for researchers, particularly in the fields of economics and management, and a major issue for almost every country in the world. The many benefits that entrepreneurship generates justify the interest it arouses. Indeed, entrepreneurship is considered to be a key instrument in the process of economic growth and development, due to its importance in innovation, job creation, income, wealth, etc.

Despite an abundant literature on entrepreneurship issues, the determinants of entrepreneurial behaviour are not yet fully understood [1]. Personality traits, individual capabilities, education and financial resources are all potential determinants of entrepreneurship.

What is widely accepted is that entrepreneurship is a process that does not begin with the creation of a business, but well before, when an individual makes the choice to engage (or not) in a process aimed at creating a business. In other words, it begins with a person's desire to set up their own business (entrepreneurial intention), which can be explained by the individual characteristics of the potential entrepreneur, but also by their social environment, in particular their family environment. A great deal of research supports the idea that "entrepreneurship is a family affair", in that the family is the cornerstone of the entrepreneurial process, particularly through the entrepreneurial socialisation of individuals [2, 3]. Individuals from entrepreneurial families often have the advantage of experiencing entrepreneurial socialisation at an earlier age, which helps them to develop a more favourable attitude towards entrepreneurship.

The role of the family environment can go further than entrepreneurial intention. The family environment can also

exert an influence on an individual's entrepreneurial attitudes and capabilities, etc. Growing up in a family of entrepreneurs provides more favourable ground for developing perceptions of desirability, feasibility, self-efficacy towards entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial spirit, responsibility, awareness of opportunities, financial sense, etc. [4, 5].

This article is a continuation of work on the role of the family environment in the entrepreneurial process of individuals. The aim is to examine the influence of the family's entrepreneurial background (entrepreneurial experience) on the entrepreneurial attitudes and capabilities of entrepreneurs in the Algerian context. To our knowledge, this subject has not been the subject of any research work in the Algerian context, hence the interest and relevance of devoting the present work to it. The question that expresses our objective in this work is the following: To what extent does family entrepreneurial background influence the entrepreneurial attitudes and capabilities of Algerian entrepreneurs? To answer this question, we rely on the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: Entrepreneurs are more likely to come from families with an entrepreneurial background.

Hypothesis 2: entrepreneurs from families with an entrepreneurial background have more favourable attitudes to entrepreneurship. Attitude is defined as a psychological tendency where an individual evaluates a particular object with a certain degree of favour or disfavour [6].

Hypothesis 3: Entrepreneurs from families with an entrepreneurial background have capabilities that are more favourable to entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurial capabilities is defined as an individual's ability to organise and execute the action plans needed to achieve specific types of performance [7].

In order to verify these hypotheses, we have adopted an empirical approach based on active private entrepreneurs. The study is based on a questionnaire administered to a sample of entrepreneurs active in the Bejaia region (Algeria).

2. Review of the literature

A vast body of entrepreneurship literature recognises the importance of the family, particularly the family with an entrepreneurial background (the family with entrepreneurial experience) in the entrepreneurial process of its members. This literature tends to convince us that "entrepreneurship is family".

In theoretical models of entrepreneurship, the role of the family's entrepreneurial background is analysed through "the perceived desirability of entrepreneurship" (acquired through the presence of credible examples such as someone from the future entrepreneur's family) [8] "the relational pole" (where the family environment is an essential determinant of the entrepreneurial process) [9], "the individual dimension (including the presence of entrepreneurial parents) [10], the entrepreneur's antecedents (including the family, where the presence of an entrepreneurial member constitutes a "role model") [11], the entrepreneur's specific environment (including the family environment, which can provide role models, necessary resources, future collaborators, suppliers and clients, advice and information) [12].

A large body of empirical research confirms that individuals from families with entrepreneurial experience are more likely to embark on entrepreneurial careers, either by setting up their own businesses or by taking over family businesses [13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 5, 18, 19]. This research shows that the presence of an entrepreneur in the family increases the likelihood that other family members will also become entrepreneurs or self-employed. This is because the entrepreneur often influences and motivates family members to become involved in entrepreneurial activity, which increases the likelihood of them setting up their own businesses in the future [20]. For example, the study by Sørensen [13], cited above, shows that children whose parents were self-employed are twice as likely to become self-employed. In the study of Hsueh Josh & Zellweger [19], it is estimated that people whose parents own and/or manage a business are 10% more likely to start their own business than those whose parents do not own and/or manage a business. Lindquist & al [16] estimate that parental entrepreneurship increases the probability of children's entrepreneurship by around 60%. This probability may increase further the more successful the family business. Hsueh Josh & Zellweger [19] estimate that children whose parents run a successful business have a 2.22% higher probability of becoming an entrepreneur compared to those whose parents' businesses are perceived as less successful.

Indeed, families involved in business (particularly parents) serve as a strong source of inspiration for the entrepreneurship of their descendants [2], an incubator of entrepreneurial culture [21], a source of oxygen that feeds the entrepreneurial flame [22], and an arena for acculturation and entrepreneurial learning [23], a place of entrepreneurial culture and experience as well as support for the entrepreneurial dynamic [4], a source of motivation [20], role models and an opportunity for early entrepreneurial socialisation [2, 3], enabling offspring to develop a pro-entrepreneurial attitude through the learning and integration of the family's socio-cultural elements.

This type of family provides an inspiring and favourable environment for the offspring's entrepreneurship, and provides them with an opportunity to learn and experience the challenges of business [24]. It transmits the entrepreneurial spirit, which encourages and facilitates the initiatives and innovative behaviour of family members, and results in the creation or takeover of businesses [4]. It helps to reduce the barriers to entry into entrepreneurship by enabling its members to take advantage of the social ties and social capital built up by their families [25].

Also, this type of family allows for early exposure to entrepreneurship and tacit knowledge of entrepreneurship from an early age, which affects attitudes and perceptions of self-efficacy towards entrepreneurship [26]. Early exposure to entrepreneurship plays an important role in the formation of entrepreneurial intention in individuals, due to the reinforcement of the perception of feasibility and desirability and especially the perception of "self-efficacy" related to the act of entrepreneurship [27]. Early exposure to entrepreneurship facilitates understanding of ideas and business at an early age and instils values of responsibility, motivation, work ethic, network development, awareness of opportunities, financial acumen, etc. [5]. The research of Bruyat [12], cited above, found that individuals' prior exposure to entrepreneurship in practice, both directly and indirectly through their family business background was significantly related to their attitudes, norms and perceived behavioural control regarding entrepreneurship. For his part, Benata [17], quoted above, in a study of students, found that more of those who had entrepreneurs in their family had entrepreneurial intentions (46.51% compared with 27.61%); they were more likely to see themselves as born entrepreneurs, as enterprising people and to take on more difficult and ambitious tasks.

3. Data and research methodology

The data used in this study comes from a field survey conducted by means of a questionnaire. The questionnaire was sent to a sample of entrepreneurs active in the Bejaia region (Algeria). A total of 100 questionnaires were distributed, of which 94 were returned, giving a response rate of 86%. Sampling was based on the "convenience" technique, which consisted of interviewing available or easily accessible entrepreneurs. The reason for using this technique was to make it easier to gather the information we needed.

The questionnaire comprises twenty-two (22) questions grouped into four (4) parts. Each of these parts develops a particular aspect of the problematic of the present study. The first part comprises eight (8) questions. Its purpose is to identify the socio-demographic characteristics of the entrepreneur (age, gender, level of education and professional experience) and the characteristics of his business (year of creation, form, number of employees and sector of activity). As a result, a large proportion of the entrepreneurs surveyed were male (89.4%), aged between 25 and 35 (66%), had higher education (40.4%) and were employees before setting up their own businesses (38.3%); the businesses they set up were, for the most part, very small businesses (86.2%), less than 10 years old (47%), created from scratch (85%) and active in the trade sector (50%).

The second part consists of five (5) questions and looks at the entrepreneur's family background in relation to entrepreneurship. The aim is to find out whether and to what extent the entrepreneurial background of the family plays a role in the orientation (choice) of the entrepreneurial career of entrepreneurs. To identify entrepreneurs from families with an entrepreneurial background, we asked the following question: Before you started your own business, was there an entrepreneur or entrepreneurs in your family? The respondent was asked to choose between the following options: None, Father, Mother, Brother, Sister, Uncle.

The third part comprises four (4) questions designed to measure the entrepreneurial attitudes of entrepreneurs. Four attitudes were selected: Failure, Risk, Chance and Business Development. All these attitudes are measured on a scale of 3: Failure (being afraid, at the time of the decision to set up a business, of failing in one's project): Very much so, Somewhat so, Not at all; Risk (being prepared to take the risks involved in making new investments): When the expected profit is great, When there is only the hope of a profit, I'm not ready even if there is hope of a profit; Chance (believing in luck, at the time of the decision to set up a business, in the success of one's project): Not at all, Partially, Totally; Business development (having the objective of developing your business): Yes, No, I don't know.

Finally, the fourth part consists of five (5) questions designed to measure the entrepreneurial skills of entrepreneurs. Five skills were selected for this study: self-confidence, ability to succeed, endurance, perseverance and investment. Self-confidence, perseverance and investment are measured on a scale of 3: Self-confidence (having confidence in one's abilities at the time of the decision to set up a business): Completely confident, Moderately confident, Weakly confident; Perseverance (thinking of leaving the entrepreneurial field): Yes, No, I don't know; Investment (having made or not made new investments): No investment, Some investment, A lot of investment. As for the other two skills, they are measured on a scale of 4: Ability to succeed (being sure of the success of one's project at the time of the decision to set up one's own business): Very much so, Somewhat so, Not at all; Ability to endure (having been disturbed and stressed in the early years of one's business): A great deal, Somewhat, A little, Not at all.

The aim of the last two parts (3 and 4) is to examine the relationship between the entrepreneurial background of the family and the entrepreneurial attitudes and capabilities of entrepreneurs.

The data are analysed using statistical tests, including Pearson's Chi-square statistic (Chi-2). The latter is used to test the hypothesis of independence of two categorical variables. The variables in the present study are categorical (nominal and ordinal) and the objective is to test the hypothesis that the entrepreneurial background of the family influences the attitudes and capabilities of entrepreneurs.

4. Results and analysis

The results of our survey show that entrepreneurs from families with an entrepreneurial background are the most numerous in the sample (57.4%). Although the sample is not representative and the difference is not that great, this result does suggest the existence of an influence of the family's entrepreneurial background on individuals' choice of entrepreneurial career. As we saw in the literature review, growing up in a family where one or more members are entrepreneurs provides a source of inspiration and a role model that positively influences an individual's entrepreneurial intention and encourages them to take the entrepreneurial plunge (emulation effect). The survey results show that "Father" is the main role model for the entrepreneurs surveyed (35.2%), but "Brothers" and "Uncles" are also fairly frequent sources of inspiration (table 1).

Table 1: Role Model

Family entrepreneur	Number	%
Father	19	35,2
Brothers	15	27,7
Oncles	13	24,2
Sisters	5	9,2
Mothers	2	3,7
Totale	54	100

Source : Survey, May 2022

Entrepreneurs, most often, perceive these role models as "good entrepreneurial success" (67% of entrepreneurs from families with an business background). This perception is an additional motivating factor in choosing an entrepreneurial career. This is because the success of an entrepreneur (role model) provokes an "imitation effect" [11], i.e. it is likely to motivate individuals to become involved in entrepreneurship themselves, encouraged by the hope of doing the same as their role model's.

Most of the entrepreneurs from families with an entrepreneurial background (59.4%) are involved in the same field of activity as their role model. This finding may be a manifestation of the influence of the family's entrepreneurial background on the individual, and may be explained by the knowledge acquired by the individual about the details of the activity carried out by the entrepreneur in their family, or by the individual taking over a family business [4]. It should be noted here that the takeover of a family business is the main reason why entrepreneurs from families with an entrepreneurial background embark on their entrepreneurial career (24.3%). It should also be noted that industry is the main area of activity invested in by these entrepreneurs (30%).

The importance of the family is also reflected in the support and assistance that the new entrepreneur needs. Almost all the entrepreneurs surveyed (from families with business background) confirm that they had received at least one type of support from their family during the start-up phase of their businesses (89%). Advice and guidance" was the main type of support (38%), but financial support was also important (32%) (Table 2). These types of support are generally available to families who already have entrepreneurial experience. This experience enables them to build up a capital of knowledge, finance and a network of contacts that they can provide to their members during the start-up phase of their entrepreneurial projects [25].

Table 2: Family Support in the start-up phase

Types of support	Number	%
Financial support	12	32
Advice and guidance	14	38
Network of contacts	7	19
None	4	11
Total	37	100

Source Survey, May 2022

But family support can extend beyond the start-up phase, particularly during the early years of business creation by family members. More than 85% of the entrepreneurs surveyed said they had benefited from various types of support during the first few years of setting up their businesses, in particular financial support (38%) and advice and guidance (32%) (Table 3). Support during the operational phase of the entrepreneurial project constitutes accompaniment from the family and demonstrates the family's willingness to help its member's entrepreneurial project succeed.

Table 3: Family Support in the early years of the business

Types of support	Number	%
Financial support	14	38
Advice and guidance	12	32
Clients and suppliers network	6	16
None	5	14
Total	37	100

Source : Survey, May 2022

The business background of the family and the support it provides seem to play a role in the success of entrepreneurs. Over 88% of entrepreneurs from families with business background believe that their businesses are doing at least "well" (compared with 62.5% of entrepreneurs from families without business background) (table 4). What is more striking, is the gap between entrepreneurs in the two groups with regard to the "very good" state. More than 72.0% of the businesses in a "very good" situation belong to the first group, compared with 27.3% for the second.

Table 4: Business performance state

The situation of the company	Entrepreneur with family entrepreneur		Entrepreneur with family no entrepreneur	
	Number	%	Number	%
	16	29.6	6	15
Very good	32	59.3	19	47,5
Good	5	9.3	14	35
Not bad	1	1.9	1	2.5
Total	54	100	40	100

Source : Survey, May 2022

In the following, we will examine whether and to what extent the family's business background affects the entrepreneurial attitudes and capabilities of entrepreneurs. To do this, we will carry out frequency (or occurrence) comparisons using Pearson's Chi-square test (Chi-2). We will compare entrepreneurs who indicated that at least one of their parents is or was an entrepreneur with those who indicated that none of their parents is or was an entrepreneur.

Table 5 shows the results of the test for the four entrepreneurial attitude variables used in this study.

Table 5: Chi-square test for "Entrepreneurial attitudes "

Variable	Value	dof	Sig.
Failure	4,87	2	,110
Chance	9,88	2	,007
Risk	9,47	2	,009
Development	7,24	2	,027

The Chi-square test shows a statistically significant relationship between the entrepreneur's 'family business background' variable and three entrepreneurial attitude variables: Chance ($p = 0.007 < 0.05$), Risk ($0.009 < 0.05$) and Development ($0.027 < 0.05$). This means that entrepreneurs from families with business background believed significantly less in luck to succeed when they set up their businesses, are significantly less sensitive to entrepreneurial risks and have a significantly higher objective of developing their businesses than entrepreneurs from families without business background. In other words, the attitudes of believing that "success depends on one's own efforts and abilities", of being "prepared to take investment risks", and of wanting "to go further in one's business" (setting the development of one's business as an objective to be achieved) are more developed among entrepreneurs who grew up in business families.

The 'Failure' variable is not significant ($p = 0.110$), which leads us to conclude that the family's business background has no influence on the attitude of fear of business failure. However, it should be pointed out that, in relation to the 'not at all afraid of failure' modality, entrepreneurs from families with business background had a significantly higher proportion (53.7%) than entrepreneurs in the other group (Table 6).

Table 6: Fear of failure

			Fear of failure			Total
			Not at all	A little	A lot	
Family with business background	No	Number	13	22	5	40
		% in Fami_background	32,5%	55%	12,5%	100%
	Yes	Number	29	19	6	54
		% in Fami_background	53,7%	35,2%	11,1%	100%

Source : Survey, May 2022

Table 7 shows the test results for the five entrepreneurial capabilities variables selected for this study.

Table 7 :KHi-Square Test For "Entrepreneurial Capabilities"

Variable	Value	dof	Sig.
Self-confidence	,004	1	,821
Capacity to succeed	11,02	3	,034
Endurance capacity	12,61	3	,009
Perseverance	6,647	2	,036
Investissement	,407	2	,816

These results indicate a statistically significant relationship between the entrepreneur's 'family business background' variable and three entrepreneurial capabilities variables: Capacity to succeed ($p = 0.034 < 0.05$), Endurance capacity ($p = 0.009$) and Perseverance ($p = 0.036$). This means that entrepreneurs from families with business background were, when they decided to set up their businesses, significantly 'more certain of succeeding' in their projects, 'more enduring' (less disturbed or stressed during the first few years of setting up their businesses) and 'more persevering' (less inclined to leave the entrepreneurial field) than entrepreneurs from families without business background. Regarding the 'Self-confidence' and 'Investment' variables, the Chi-square test is not significant, which means that these variables do not necessarily depend on the family's business background. Thus, although the relationship was not significant for all the variables studied, the results confirm the existence of an influence of the family's business background on the entrepreneurial capabilities of entrepreneurs.

5. Conclusion

This article examined the influence of the family's business background on attitudes and capabilities of entrepreneurs. The results reveal the existence of significant differences between entrepreneurs from families with business background and those from families without an business background with regard to certain attitudes and capabilities. The differences concern the attitudes of "belief in the chance to succeed" and "business development objective", and the capabilities of "ability to succeed", "endurance capacity" and "perseverance". These results therefore (partially) support hypotheses 2 and 3, but they confirm the existence of an influence of the family's business

background on the entrepreneurial attitudes and capabilities of its members. These results therefore confirm the existence of an influence of family business background on the entrepreneurial orientation of individuals but also on the success of their entrepreneurial projects, which supports hypothesis 1. Overall, the results of this study support the conclusions of the research reviewed in this article.

Like any research work, this study has certain limitations. The main one is the non-representativeness of the sample in the present study, insofar as it represents a tiny proportion of the population and was constituted using the convenience technique, which favours ease of access to information to the detriment of the representativeness of the sample. Another limitation is the limited number of variables used to capture the entrepreneurial attitudes and capabilities of entrepreneurs, in addition to the use of reduced measurement scales (containing no more than 4 levels). Taking these limitations into account would improve the relevance of the results for future research. In addition, this study opens up a number of avenues of research, such as the role of family's business background in the entrepreneurial success of individuals, its role in entrepreneurial culture, the type of family contribution that has the greatest influence on the entrepreneurial behaviour of individuals, etc.

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