

Research Article

Entrepreneurial Intention of Brazilian Immigrants in Canada

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ABSTRACT

This study provides evidence of possible sociodemographic characteristics that would influence the intention of Brazilian immigrants to engage in ventures in Canada. Data were collected through surveys released on Brazilian Facebook groups. A total of 675 Brazilian respondents living in Canada were triangulated with data from seven semi-structured interviews conducted in Canada and with two consulate officials. Survey data analysis was performed with logit equations to check relationships between entrepreneurial intention (EI) and variables – namely, gender, age upon arrival, level of education, length of stay in the country, student/work/tourist visa status upon arrival, and citizenship application status/permanent migration. The key results point to factors with a positive influence on the intention to venture: gender (being female) and all visa status and other variables were either non-significant or had a negative influence. Of the entrepreneurs, age upon arrival was a significant predictor. Variables such as level of education, time in the country, and tourist visa had a negative influence. This paper contributes theoretically by evidencing recent immigration patterns and variables related to entrepreneurial venturing in the Brazilian immigrant community in Canada, which may support mechanisms for attracting and fostering future entrepreneurs. Further comparative studies between other Brazilian and ethnic communities are proposed, including other variables.

Keywords: immigration; entrepreneurial intent; influencing factors; Brazilians; Canada

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INTRODUCTION

Brazilian emigration has flowed overseas and increased since the 1980s (Castro & Castro Lima, 2018), with over three million Brazilians living abroad according to latest data released by the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Ministério das Relações Exteriores, 2016). However, the numbers do not reflect the actual figure because the data are quite outdated and only include official immigration status while ignoring ‘illegal’ or irregular individuals.

Young immigrants who enter Canada tend to use tourist or student visas as an entry strategy. Indeed, the annual survey commissioned by the Brazilian Association Specialized in International Education (Belta, 2018) ranks Canada as the preferred exchange destination for Brazilians, and the country has led this ranking for 14 years in a row. The cities most sought after by Brazilians for English exchange are Toronto and Vancouver, while Montréal is the most sought for French exchange. Student immigration and skilled contingents of immigrants are welcome to Canada as a strategy to foster ethnic diversity and immigrant venturing (Boudreaux, 2020; Rächle & Schmitz, 2019). Brazilian immigration studies date back to the 1990s, conducted by authors such as Sales and Loureiro (2004), Margolis (2013), and Cruz, Falcão, and Barreto (2017), who assessed immigrant trajectories, their businesses, and entrepreneurial strategies for local or co-ethnic clients.

Several factors explain the performance of entrepreneurs according to Lerner, Brush, & Hisrich (1997) and other authors: motivations and individual goals, social learning, affiliation networks, human capital, and environmental influences (Brockhaus & Horwitz, 1986; Hisrich & Brush, 1984). Regarding individual motivations and goals, there are psychological variables (Brockhaus & Horwitz, 1986), opportunities (Hisrich & Brush, 1984), or issues of self-esteem (Miskin & Rose, 1990). Recent research points to attitudinal and psychological traits as strong predictors of EI (Bell, 2019; Schoon & Duckworth, 2012; Taormina & Lao, 2007; Yukongdi & Lopa, 2017; for a literature review see Liñán & Fayolle, 2015). Our research question is based on determining which sociodemographic and situational conditions are relevant to predict whether a Brazilian immigrant living permanently in Canada would possibly become an entrepreneur. Such variables are generally available in the census and/or regular immigrant panels, so our study aims to contribute both theoretically and managerially by using such variables as predictors of immigrants’ entrepreneurial intention (EI; as opposed to attitudinal and psychological traits; see Li, 2001).

To answer our research question, a set of hypotheses was proposed based on previous evidence and the extant literature. These hypotheses were tested through the analysis of statistical data derived from surveys, specifically logit equations including variables such as gender, age at arrival, level of education, and time spent abroad until the time of the survey; visa status upon arrival (student, work, or tourist); and citizenship claim status or permanent migration. The results point to several factors with a positive influence on the intention to undertake entrepreneurial activities in Canada: age upon arrival, time spent in the country, intention to venture, and gender (female). Factors such as level of education, work visa or tourist visa, and permanent migrant status, in turn, had a negative influence. The contributions of the paper include the use of common

sociodemographic and situational variables as predictors, which might be useful as input for public managers to design immigrant venturing policies.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Brazilian immigration and assimilation in the Canadian society

In general, the desire of most immigrants is to build a better life (Borjas, 2017). Indeed, certain elements are crucial to understanding immigration: first, motivation, related push and pull factors, and repulsive and attractive causes; second, the duration of migration, either temporary or permanent; third, the space, internal (within a country) or external (abroad); fourth, the form, whether voluntary or forced; fifth, the control, either through legal or clandestine entry (Menezes, 2012); and finally, the assimilation of these newcomers (Alba & Nee, 2012).

Cultural assimilation of immigrants in host societies has been a controversial theme of research since the 1960s (Gordon, 1961) and has remained a central issue of debate involving sociological aspects. Alba and Nee (2012), for instance, present the melting pot theory based on previous seminal authors; this is the idea of a complete assimilation of cultures melting natives and immigrants, generating a nation made up of a completely new people, eventually affecting posterity (Gloor, 2006). Several other theories and concepts are proposed, particularly the salad bowl or salad pot, or the theory of cultural mosaic (Mahfouz, 2013). Unlike the melting pot, the salad bowl proposes that several ethnicities (or cultures) remain distinct and do not merge into one homogeneous society. Immigrants are partially assimilated into the host societies' culture, but at the same time maintain certain practices from their old world (Mahfouz, 2013). Some of them, however, choose to live a marginal life in ethnic enclaves where they can keep their culture almost entirely intact (Mata, 2007).

In this sense, Portes and Zhou (1992) have posited that traditional theories about ethnic poverty and economic mobility do not respond satisfactorily to the current situation of many migrants. This means that issues surrounding the legality of work, permission to stay in the country, and access to social assistance services are the elements that make up the polemics of this legal reality. This reinforces the necessity of a multilayered analysis, including theories and analytical lenses from different perspectives such as anthropology, sociology, geography, urban studies, and entrepreneurship, as well as the use of different methods of data collection and analysis (Etemad, 2018).

Historically, immigration from Brazil to Canada is not a new phenomenon. Brazil was the passage route to Canada for several European settlers, such as Irish, Polish, Portuguese, and Gypsies, who immigrated to the Americas (Barbosa, 2016) in the 19th and 20th centuries. During the Brazilian military regime in Brazil, installed after the 1964 military coup, another migratory wave of Brazilians contained those who went into exile overseas. Canada was also the destination for some of these Brazilians, including three prominent intellectuals, Paulo Freire, Florestan Fernandes, and Herbert de Sousa, who remained there for a short period (Barbosa, 2016).

In the late 1980s, a considerable number of Brazilians immigrated to Canada, with the main reasons for this diaspora spread being the economic and political distress of the so-called 'lost decade' (Goza, 1999). This phenomenon was similar to the diaspora that occurred in the United States made up of those originating from Governador Valadares, in the state of Minas Gerais (Sega, 2018). During the 1990s, the migratory wave continued to swell, but was still influenced by push-pull factors, such as the Brazilian economic and political crises and the search for job opportunities and welfare in Canada (Goza, 1999). Recently, in the 2000s, despite Brazil experiencing a period of steady economic growth, documented migration increased among individuals with a stronger educational background and professional qualifications, mostly from the São Paulo metropolitan area, with Toronto being their destination of choice (Sega, 2018). This is part of a trend that continued to grow from the 1990s and after (Sega, 2018) helped by globalization. Schervier (2005) also mentions that Canada has been an important destination for Brazilian migration, particularly due to its broader state of security, compared to Brazilian insecurity. Considering official statistics of the Brazilian Foreign Affairs Department, the number of Brazilians in Canada at the time was already estimated at 39,300 (Ministério das Relações Exteriores, 2016), including members of the Brazilian upper middle class residing in Canada for decades and with strong ties to the Canadian elite, middle-class individuals with secondary education, and informal sector workers (Margolis, 2013). Brazilian immigration to Canada has thus grown especially since the 1990s, not only due to economic insecurity in Brazil, but due to a wider state of social insecurity (Sega, 2018).

Thus, it is recognized that Canada has used immigration as an instrument to promote demographic diversity and economic growth, but it is noteworthy that the country's current immigration policy has focused on attracting highly qualified immigrants, especially in sectors lacking manpower, due to Canada's greater insertion in international trade and minor focus on developing a large domestic market (Fraga, 2018). However, within the context of small and medium-sized Canadian companies, there is a relevant social and cultural diversity (Gulati, 2012). Compared to the non-skilled immigration, which has occurred in certain areas of the US (e.g., in Massachusetts and Florida; Margolis, 2013; Sales & Loureiro, 2004), Canada is especially recognized for adopting multiculturalism as a state policy (Cameron, 2004). Despite that, the migratory phenomenon is still permeated with social tensions caused partially by barriers to entry into the labor market (Fraga, 2018). Language is an issue, because the country has adopted two official languages (English and French), which makes it even more difficult for non-skilled immigrants to enter the labor market (Fraga, 2018). Another barrier to the settlement of immigrants is the need for 'Canadian work experience,' which affects the acquisition of bank loans and the chances of getting a job in Canada (Li, 2001). These barriers sometimes promote the entry of immigrants with a student or tourist visa, in an initial stage, to obtain one of the prerequisites for permanent immigrant status – the Canadian experience (Li, 2001; Machado, Hossein, Cruz, & Falcão, 2020).

Immigrant entrepreneurship theories

Rath (2000) has provided a general overview of the seminal theories within immigrant entrepreneurship, in which the economic, political-institutional, and social environment is considered crucial for immigrant business studies. Several streams of studies have historically

contemplated this field, namely ethnic minorities and enclaves (Bonacich, 1973), disadvantage in the labor market and self-employment (Light, 1979; Portes & Zhou, 1992), ethnic entrepreneurship (Bonacich, 1993; Waldinger, Aldrich, & Ward, 1990), the interactive model or integrative approach (economic/institutional) (Waldinger et al., 1990), the political economy of immigrant businesses (Sassen, 1991), and immigrant business and the role of government, also called the political-institutional framework (Bonacich, 1993).

Numerous scholars, including Portes and Zhou (1992), Howell (2019), and Cruz, Falcão, and Barreto (2017), have researched the general characteristics of ethnic entrepreneurship, including its social environment. Seminal authors have emphasized the sociological aspects of the phenomenon, encompassing the impact of immigrant support networks during business inception (Elo & Volovelsky, 2017). Social networks are based on consumer connections and inter-organizational alliances that influence the co-creation of opportunities through the articulation of business disputes (Brinkerhoff, 2016). Assimilation (Alba & Nee, 2012), which is associated with social networks, also plays a big role in the choice of business target audience. Immigrant entrepreneurs who are socially identified with their ethnic communities are more likely to become entrepreneurs in ethnic enclaves (Achidi-Ndofor & Priem, 2011), due to links to their communities, tradition, prestige, or even mere destiny. It is thus not uncommon for them to engage in activities that enhance the status of their communities, such as raising funds to build community facilities or helping future competitors establish themselves in the enclave. This has also been corroborated by Cruz, Falcão, and Mancebo (2020), who provide evidence of how market orientation and strategic decisions are conducted by immigrant and small ethnic firms, based on their affiliation to their co-ethnics versus host societies.

Immigrant entrepreneurs, while serving their ethnic communities, use their relationships to gain access to key resources such as suppliers and workers (Portes & Zhou, 1992). On the other hand, there are entrepreneurs who hardly identify themselves with their own ethnic groups, or even despise them (Spears, Doosje, & Ellemers, 1997). According to Midtbøen and Nadim (2019), second-generation ethnic entrepreneurs are more active in local markets (native audience). These entrepreneurs therefore move from one market to another using their ethnicity strategically. Cruz, Falcão, and Mancebo (2020) have identified three business opportunities for immigrant ethnic niche markets: (a) the ethnic niche market itself, as a typical opportunity for undocumented or illegal entrepreneurs, including bakeries, ethnic stores, self-service restaurants, and fast food; (b) companies without an ethnically appealing product or service, but that use their 'national' origin to be considered as companies that serve the immigrant community with a 'special touch'; and (c) ethnic media companies such as newspapers and magazines. While immigrant entrepreneurship is a catalyst for maintaining cultural traditions and practices among immigrants, it also promotes meaningful encounters between immigrants and locals (Lilius & Hewidy, 2019).

The extant literature on immigrant entrepreneurship is concentrated on specific conditions arising from the exploitation of immigrant support networks (Portes & Zhou, 1992), where many of these companies are not limited to promoting self-employment and establishment in the host country, but are also driven by sources of competitive advantage in their entrepreneurial

capabilities (Zolin & Schlosser, 2013). These competitive advantages can encompass both the internal characteristics of entrepreneurs and their social relationships.

Some business opportunities profit by immigrants functioning as middleman minorities, as has historically been done by the Jews in Central and Mediterranean Europe (Lederhändler, 2019) and the Chinese in Southeast Asia (Le, 2019). When immigrants supply exotic products for the local consumers, they make adaptations to their services or products to suit the taste of the host society. It may be a suitable strategy for pursuing a larger consumer market, especially when the ethnic community is not large enough to justify a niche business. Finally, the local generic market is a strategy used among immigrants who wish to be fully assimilated by the host community (Cruz, Falcão, & Mancebo, 2020).

Factors related to entrepreneurial intention

There are several studies using entrepreneurial characteristics such as proactiveness, attitude to risk, innovativeness, and self-efficacy as relevant predictors of EI. A comprehensive literature review on EI was conducted by Liñán and Fayolle (2015), according to which the concept of EI has rapidly evolved since the seminal works by Shapero (1984) and Shapero and Sokol (1982). Social psychology has played an important role toward increasing its theoretical robustness and scientific rigor, incorporating the concepts of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1982) and planned behavior (Ajzen, 1991). Nevertheless, there is evidence that points to the compatibility of these two intention-based models (Boyd & Vozikis, 1994; Krueger, 2017). With the growth of academic studies on entrepreneurship, particularly aiming at EI concepts, new applications in different contexts have risen (Bell, 2019; Krueger, 2007; Schoon & Duckworth, 2012; Taormina & Lao, 2007; Yukongdi & Lopa, 2017). Based on empirical evidence, Krueger, Reilly, & Carsrud, (2000) see situational variables (e.g., employment status or informational cues) or individual variables (e.g., demographic characteristics or personality traits) as poor predictors of EI, with small explanatory power and even smaller predictive validity. Therefore, intention models have proven to be the best predictors of certain types of planned behavior (e.g., rare, hard to observe, involving unpredictable time lags). New ventures are especially suitable for the use of this theory, because they emerge over time and involve a great deal of planning (Katz & Gartner, 1988). Intention models also offer a comprehensive, although parsimonious, highly-generalizable, and vigorous theoretical framework for prediction. However, situational and/or sociodemographic variables are generally collected within survey questionnaires, census, or panels (see Li, 2001), as appears in the extant literature using such variables (Li, 2001; Shaver & Scott, 1992; Yukongdi & Lopa, 2017).

Although studies like Shaver and Scott's (1992) have enabled the convergence of both strands of EI literature (psychology and entrepreneurship), Krueger and Carsrud (1993) have made the theory of planned behavior (TPB) dominant in EI research. Krueger and Brazeal (1994) have further linked TPB with Shapero's (1984) theory of the entrepreneurial event (EEM). Boyd and Vozikis (1994) then built on Bird's (1988) original model using self-efficacy. Kolvereid (1996) contributed to establishing the applicability and usefulness of the TPB model in entrepreneurship studies regarding intentions and applied it in a global scale (12 countries and 10 global regional clusters) in the GLOBE project (Engle et al., 2010). Although, as foreseen by Ajzen, the significant

contributing model elements differ by country, as does the percent of the variance explained by the model, social norms was a significant predictor of EI in every country. Research in EI has expanded widely, focusing also on entrepreneurial orientation (EO) (Rigtering, Kraus, Eggers, Jensen, 2014).

Expanding the types of variables used as predictors, group comparisons among Chinese subjects have revealed that psychological characteristics and business environment were both significant predictors (Taormina & Lao, 2007), as opposed to the findings of Krueger et al. (2000) regarding psychological characteristics as a strong predictor for potential entrepreneurs, along with variables related to business environment as a strong predictor for successful entrepreneurs. Perceptual variables (e.g., alertness to opportunities, fear of failure, and confidence about one's own skills) were also tested by Arenius and Minniti (2005) to investigate their correlation to EI. The study was conducted over a large sample in 28 countries and showed that perceptual variables are significantly correlated with EI across all countries and genders; their findings propose that, when making decisions, inceptive entrepreneurs rely significantly on subjective and often biased perceptions rather than on objective expectations of accomplishment. Following person/context interactions (Shaver & Scott 1992), the personal characteristics of participants were found to be significant, specifically for subsamples such as immigrant or ethnic entrepreneurs or comparisons between different cultural backgrounds. This is supported by, for example, the study conducted by Yukongdi and Lopa (2017) regarding personality traits (e.g., need for achievement, risk-taking tendency, and job security), gender, or situational factors influencing EI. Personality factors had a greater effect on EI than situational factors. Nevertheless, gender differences (e.g., women seeking job autonomy and job security versus men seeking achievement and showing risk-taking tendency) were found to be important predictors of EI.

Bell (2019) has also quantified the relative importance of four key entrepreneurial individual characteristics – proactiveness, attitude to risk, innovativeness, and self-efficacy – in a study across a range of faculties offering different subjects at a UK higher education institution (HEI) and showed that attitude to risk was the strongest predictor in five of the six faculties and the second strongest predictor in the sixth. Early life experiences could also be predictors of entrepreneurship, including socioeconomic background, parental role models, academic ability, social skills, and self-concepts as well as EI expressed during adolescence (Schoon & Duckworth, 2012). In this regard, for both genders (male and female), becoming an entrepreneur was associated with social skills and EI expressed at age 16. For men, becoming an entrepreneur was predicted by having a self-employed father; for women, it was predicted by their parents' socioeconomic resources. These interesting findings point to the combined influences of both individual agency and social structure in building career choices.

Although the extant literature points to attitudinal and psychological traits as stronger predictors of EI (Bell, 2019; Schoon & Duckworth, 2012; Taormina & Lao, 2007; Yukongdi & Lopa, 2017), our research investigates which sociodemographic and situational variables could be relevant to predicting EI of Brazilian immigrants living permanently in Canada. The literature diverges on the importance of such variables, which are generally available in census and/or regular panels or immigrant surveys. We therefore follow other authors who propose testing them statistically to contribute to extant research (Li, 2001; Shaver & Scott, 1992; Yukongdi & Lopa,

2017). Such variables have also previously been used for predicting self-employment patterns of immigrants in Canada (Li, 2001). In the following section, we propose some hypotheses to be investigated based on previous evidence and the extant literature.

Hypotheses to be investigated

When facing an immigrant trying to understand his or her propensity to become an entrepreneur, there are three situations: (a) those who are not yet entrepreneurs and intend to become one, (b) those who are not yet entrepreneurs and do not intend to become one, and (c) those who are already entrepreneurs. By comparing the last group with the first two, we can analyze differences in entrepreneurial behavior (Moore, 1986), while comparing the two situations in the first group allows us to analyze EI (Krueger & Carsrud, 1993). As EI is a strong predictor of entrepreneurial behavior (Katz & Gartner, 1988; Krueger & Carsrud, 1993) and it is not possible to measure both the final behavior of the non-entrepreneurs and their previous intention, all of the hypotheses relate to both variables (entrepreneurial behavior and EI).

Regarding work conditions upon arrival in Canada, from a gender perspective, it is worth highlighting the situation is comparatively more unfavorable for women than men, which may suggest a factor influencing women to be more 'inclined' to venture than men, either formally or informally (Chreim, Spence, Crick, & Liao, 2018). This occurs due to several reasons, including difficulty in following their career in the same area developed in their country of origin, time flexibility (juggling between taking care of family and work), and immigration due to the spouse's expatriation. Female immigrant entrepreneurship is therefore embedded both in the host country context and in the co-ethnic environment (Abbasian & Yazdanfar, 2013; Azmat, 2013; Halkias & Anast, 2009).

Developed nations known for their economic development, ease of doing business (The World Bank, 2016), well-developed institutions, and expanding service sector (Global Entrepreneurship Monitor [GEM], 2020) promote an enticing context for female immigrant entrepreneurs. In addition, multicultural societies (like Canada) are favored by immigrant women because of their several immigrant entrepreneurship incentive mechanisms (Billore, 2011; Lidola, 2014). Host country institutional and regulatory conditions may also address gender inequalities and favor foreign entrepreneurs (Chreim et al., 2018). However, it is known that in countries such as Canada (or Australia) subtle barriers to the development of female immigrant firms are also present, which may originate from prejudices held by the host country population toward visible signs of difference (Collins & Low, 2010) and barriers related to lack of access to financial resources (Verduijn & Essers, 2013). Unlike female entrepreneurs from the ethnic majority of the host country, immigrant women entrepreneurs from ethnic minorities may face their own set of challenges, such as discrimination based on their accent, cultural background, or skin color (Chreim et al., 2018). Moreover, there is a risk that unemployed female immigrants may be forced to create their own firms with low capital, low technology, or insufficient family support. Nevertheless, this does lead to venturing, even if it causes an excessive work load (Abbasian & Yazdanfar, 2013). We therefore propose the following hypothesis:

H1: Being an immigrant woman positively influences a person (a) becoming an entrepreneur and (b) her intention to venture.

Brazilian entrepreneurs generally settle in the city of Toronto due to job opportunities and the fact that they have acquaintances living there. Although empirical evidence has shown that younger individuals are more likely to venture than older ones – and the age distribution of a population may be important for the rate of new firm creation (Levesque & Minniti, 2006) –, more experienced and older immigrants are more likely to be discriminated against in the formal labor market. The so-called block mobility phenomenon (e.g., Beaujot, Maxim, & Zhao, 1994; Laganà, 2011) is explained by immigrants being more likely to be penalized than the native population in terms of both unemployment risk and their position in the employment structure, which leads to the following hypothesis:

H2: The older the immigrant is upon arrival, the more probable the person (a) will become an entrepreneur and (b) the higher is his/her intention to venture.

Another contextual element centers on the immigrant policies of the host country related to pre-migration resources of immigrants, such as education, level of language proficiency, and skill set. Canada, like Australia, promotes an affirmative skilled immigration program (Kaushik & Drolet, 2018). On the one hand, skilled immigration might be suitable for formal occupations or to startup high-tech venturing (Chand & Tung, 2019), while on the other hand, low-tech venturing might be pushed by discrimination and/or institutional barriers. For instance, Collins and Low (2010) have found evidence that females who have migrated to Australia under the family reunion status are generally less educated and less fluent in English, as opposed to those who have immigrated under the skilled independent path. We therefore propose that a lower level of human capital may lead to an entrepreneurial route due to exclusion from the mainstream labor market, leading to the following hypothesis:

H3: The less educated the immigrant is, the more probable it will be for the person (a) to become an entrepreneur and (b) the higher his/her intention to venture will be.

One of the most common entry strategies for young adult Brazilian immigrants encompasses getting a student visa while they develop their social networks (or social ties) and the Canadian work experience that is crucial for getting better paid jobs (Trilokekar & El Masri, 2019). However, Brazilian newcomers frequently find work, first in the informal sector, in activities related to construction, cleaning services, or restaurants, for example (Sega, 2018). In Toronto, Goza (1999) has found evidence that immigrants who arrived after 1987, when a visa requirement was initiated for Brazilians, entered the country claiming to be ‘refugees,’ which permitted them to work, study, and collect social benefits until all of their court appeals were exhausted.

Immigrants who have more time to acquire their Canadian work experience are more prone toward self-employment, possibly because they have greater access to capital and other resources, as well as more exposure to business experiences. The data on various cohorts over time therefore show their likelihood of engaging in self-employment. From the opportunity point of view, companies that evolve and expand their businesses face barriers to obtaining bank credit (bank

loans), which are only overcome by social networking, 'warm introductions,' or previous Canadian (work) experience (Li, 2001). Initial difficulties experienced by entrepreneurs relate to their cultural adaptation in the broadest sense (Sayegh & Lasry, 1993), which leads to the following hypothesis:

H4: The longer the immigrant has been in the country, the more probable it is for the person (a) to become an entrepreneur and (b) the higher his/her intention to venture will be.

Brazilian immigrants undertake different strategies to enter Canada (Machado et al., 2020). There are several possible paths and visa statuses. First, there are the immigrants who decide to study (e.g., English or a post-graduate course). Students are allowed to work part-time and therefore to improve their language proficiency and acquaintance with the institutional and/or cultural environment of the host country – the so-called Canadian experience (Khoury, Smith, & MacKay, 1999; She & Wotherspoon, 2013). This will enable these immigrants to score high enough on the Canadian immigrant point scale, therefore becoming legal citizens in the future with the possibility to venture or work legally, which leads to the following hypothesis:

H5: An immigrant who holds a student visa is more likely to (a) become an entrepreneur and (b) have a higher intention to venture.

Other types of visa are also possible entry strategies for Brazilians in the country, including tourist visas, work visas, and the possibility to claim citizenship (or investor visa) or permanent migrant status (see also Cruz, Falcão, Barbosa, & Paula, 2020). These other types of visa may have a negative influence on the intention to venture, so they will be used as control variables (DeMaris, 1992).

METHODOLOGY

Sample and data collection

According to official data from the Brazilian MRE (Ministério das Relações Exteriores, 2020), at last count there were about 121,950 Brazilians living in Canada; however, official embassy data do not include irregular immigrants. In the case of Brazilians in Canada, researchers have arbitrated to double the population (243,900) including an update based on official estimates, including illegal immigrants and the inflow of new immigrants (after 2020). Thus, for the sample calculation, a confidence level of 95% and a margin of error of 5% were arbitrated, reaching a minimum sample size of 246 for Brazilians in Canada (Bartlett, Kotrlik & Higgins, 2001).

The sample was obtained by convenience (not probabilistic), defined by its accessibility. The researchers, based on the work of Baltar and Icart (2013), used Facebook groups to send the survey questionnaire to the respondents. Some strategies were used to minimize bias in responses: researchers enrolled in 81 Facebook Brazilian groups in Canada, totaling 518,195 members. It is noteworthy that not all members of these groups were Brazilians residing in Canada, because

some postings revealed many members interested in immigrating or simply sympathetic to the idea of immigration. Table 1 presents the five largest groups.

Table 1

Main Facebook groups

Name of Group	Link	Members
Brazilians in Canada 2	https://www.facebook.com/groups/62876647561/	77,900
Toronto for Brazilians	https://www.facebook.com/groups/599004936784307/	71,552
Brazilians in Canada 3	https://www.facebook.com/groups/133318400020921/	35,437
Cool Brazilians in Toronto	https://www.facebook.com/groups/brasileirosmaneiros/	24,136
Exchange for Brazilians in Canada	https://www.facebook.com/groups/silaintercambio/	21,504

Note. Author's own analysis, based on Facebook.

In some groups, the researchers had to wait for administrators' approval. Posts were also subject to administrator validation, requiring inbox (exclusive text message) communication to explain the purpose of the research project and request the dissemination of the survey link. Most group managers were solicitous, but the researchers received many requests for financial compensation to support postings. Thus, the researchers decided to register in as many groups as possible, to reach the minimum stipulated sample of 246. The final sample reached 675 respondents. Following Kozinets' (2010) netnography recommendations, most active members were monitored and sent exclusive messages requesting support both to respond and to disclose questionnaire links. The questionnaires were available for six months in the Brazilian groups in Canada, aiming to reach the answer targets determined by the sample calculation. The total number of respondents in Canada was 675 Brazilians, of which 75 are entrepreneurs (11.1%). Of the 600 non-entrepreneurs, 197 declared they were thinking of venturing in Canada in the future (32.8%).



Figure 1. Example of invitation to answer the survey — Facebook post.

Source: Own development. Translation: “Hey guys, we need some help! Who knows any Brazilians living in Canada? Please send message via inbox”

Additionally, with a view to deepening the understanding of Brazilian immigration to Canada and the EI of subjects, seven face-to-face, semi-structured interviews were conducted, entirely recorded and later fully transcribed. Interviewees were named E1 to E7. Excerpts from selected interviews are included in the results section. In addition, a face-to-face interview was also conducted with an officer from the Brazilian consulate in Toronto, here called MCB, and an officer of the Canadian consulate, here called RCC. The interviews took about one hour each and were held according to the schedule and location convenience of the subjects. The main use of these eight additional interviews was to illustrate and/or deepen knowledge regarding the EI and/or their venturing background in Canada.

Variable description

To operationalize our research question, which aims to determine which sociodemographic and situational variables are statistically relevant to predict if a Brazilian immigrant living permanently in Canada would possibly become an entrepreneur, the researchers describe the possible variables included in the survey questionnaires. The data collected were framed as two dependent variables. The first, 'entrepreneur', was defined as one if the person acts as an entrepreneur in the country to which he/she emigrated and zero if not; and the second, 'intention to venture', was defined as one if the non-entrepreneur wishes to become one in the future and zero if not. The independent variables, which represent respondent characteristics upon arrival in Canada or now and which may affect the decision to undertake, in the case of the present study are:

- (1) Gender: zero if the interviewee is male and one if female;
- (2) Age upon arrival: age of the respondent when he (or she) arrived in the country;
- (3) Level of education: zero if the respondent had only completed elementary school or less upon arrival in the country, one if he/she had completed high school, two if he/she had an undergraduate degree, and three if he/she had completed any postgraduate degree;
- (4) Time in the country: how many years the respondent has lived in the country;
- (5) Student visa upon arrival: one if the interviewee entered the country with a student visa and zero otherwise;
- (6) Work visa upon arrival (control variable): one if the interviewee entered the country with a work visa and zero otherwise;
- (7) Tourist visa upon arrival (control variable): one if the interviewee entered the country with a tourist visa and zero otherwise;
- (8) Citizenship claim (control variable): one if the respondent is claiming citizenship in the country and zero otherwise; and
- (9) Permanent migrant (control variable): zero if the interviewed stated intention to return at any time and one otherwise.

It is worth noting that the visa-related variables refer to entry mode and not current visa status. Brazilian immigrants commonly utilize tourist visas as a typical entry strategy. In fact, in the present survey, 72.6% of respondents who declared having entered Canada on a tourist visa have been in the country for more than one year, the maximum term of validity for this type of visa in Canada (2019).

Statistical method

All data used in the models came from the same data source, increasing the possibility of common method bias (CMB). Therefore, the risk of CMB in each sample was tested by performing exploratory factor analysis (EFA) with all variables used in the study (Podsakoff, 2003). A total explained variance of 0.5 or more in a single factor would indicate the possible presence of this type of bias. A descriptive analysis of the study's variables by group was made (entrepreneurs, non-entrepreneurs who wish to undertake, and those who do not), and ANOVA (F test) was performed to analyze the mean differences of continuous variables among the three groups, and, for the dummy ones, a χ^2 test (Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, & Tatham, 2006). The results indicated that the factors describe the profile of each of the groups. Finally, after transforming all continuous variables into Z-scores, we used logit regression, with 'entrepreneur' and 'intention to venture' as dependent variables. The final aim of this analysis was testing the hypotheses and determining which variables were statistically relevant to predict a Brazilian immigrant in Canada having the intention to become (or actually becoming) an entrepreneur. All independent variables described in the previous section were used in each proposed logit, which are described by equations (a) and (b). Finally, the analysis of the confidence intervals allowed us to understand the differences in importance between the dependent variables of each of the equations in the Canadian context.

- (a) $Ln(\text{Entrepreneur} / 1\text{-Entrepreneur}) = \beta_{a0} + \beta_{a1} * \text{Gender} + \beta_{a2} * \text{Age at arrival} + \beta_{a3} * \text{Education level} + \beta_{a4} * \text{Time in foreign country} + \beta_{a5} * \text{Student visa} + \beta_{a6} * \text{Work visa} + \beta_{a7} * \text{Visa tourist} + \beta_{a8} * \text{Claims citizenship} + \beta_{a9} * \text{Definitive migrant}$
- (b) $Ln(\text{Intention to venture} / 1\text{-Intention to venture}) = \beta_{a0} + \beta_{a1} * \text{Gender} + \beta_{a2} * \text{Age at arrival} + \beta_{a3} * \text{Education level} + \beta_{a4} * \text{Time in foreign country} + \beta_{a5} * \text{Student visa} + \beta_{a6} * \text{Work visa} + \beta_{a7} * \text{Tourist visa} + \beta_{a8} * \text{Claims citizenship} + \beta_{a9} * \text{Permanent migrant}$

In-depth interviews for additional conclusions

To guarantee a better understanding of the hypothesis testing results, seven semi-structured in-depth interviews with Brazilian entrepreneurs living in Canada were conducted and complemented with additional interviews with an officer of the Brazilian consulate in Toronto and with an officer from the Canadian consulate. Table 2 presents a description of interviewees including a 'coded' ID (to preserve their identity), their age (years), time spent in Canada (years), their occupation or type of business, gender (M/F), and level of education. The interviews were important as a source of data triangulation to deepen certain aspects of the research that were not captured by the quantitative data.

Table 2.

Description of interviewees

Interviewee ID	Age (years)	Occupation or type of business	Time in Canada (years)	Gender (M/F)	Level of education
E1	36	IT (services/lawtech)	3	M	Undergraduate
E2	62	Graphic and editorial (services)	25	F	Postgraduate
E3	42	IT (services/edutech)	1	M	Postgraduate
E4	57	Beauty (services)	19	F	High school
E5	55	Food (comml. & indl.)	25	F	High school
E6	37	Health and wellness (services)	10	F	Undergraduate
E7	43	Graphic and editorial (services)	6	M	Postgraduate
MCB	n.i.	Brazilian Consulate officer	n.i.	M	Postgraduate
RCC	n.i.	Canadian Consulate officer	n.i.	F	Postgraduate

Note. Source: Own elaboration.

RESULTS

The sample shows a balance between the number of men and women who are entrepreneurs (52%); however, there is a higher prevalence of non-entrepreneurial women (64%). The average age is higher for entrepreneurs, as is time in the country. Among non-entrepreneurs, only in Canada, it is observed that those with EI usually have less time in the country (2.69 years). Among respondents who are not entrepreneurs yet, those who intend to do so in the future far outnumber those who do not intend to do it. Table 3 presents the descriptive statistics of the samples, including sociodemographic and other situational variables' averages and standard deviation.

Table 3.

Averages and standard deviations of the respondent's characteristics

Variable	Entrepreneur (n = 75)		Non-entrepreneur (n = 600)		FTest/ χ^2
	Average	SD	Average	SD	
Gender (% of women)	0.52	0.50	0.62	0.48	n.s.
Age upon arrival	33.28	7.94	30.84	6.3	***
Level of education	2.21	0.72	2.42	0.64	**
Time in the country	5.84	5.91	3.06	3.86	***
Student visa	0.25	0.44	0.43	0.50	***
Work visa	0.21	0.41	0.24	0.42	n.s.
Tourist visa	0.19	0.39	0.10	0.30	**
Claim citizenship	0.04	0.20	0.02	0.13	n.s.
Permanent migrant	0.88	0.33	0.88	0.32	n.s.

Continues

Table 3 (continued)

Variable	Intention to venture (n = 197)		Do not want to venture (n = 403)		FTest/ χ^2
	Average	SD	Average	SD	
Gender (% of women)	0.56	0.50	0.64	0.48	**
Age upon arrival	30.42	6.76	31.04	6.07	n.s.
Level of education	2.36	0.69	2.45	0.61	n.s.
Time in the country	2.69	3.48	3.25	4.02	*
Student visa	0.45	0.50	0.42	0.49	n.s.
Work visa	0.20	0.40	0.25	0.43	n.s.
Tourist visa	0.18	0.38	0.06	0.24	***
Claim citizenship	0.01	0.10	0.02	0.14	n.s.
Permanent migrant	0.92	0.27	0.86	0.35	**

Note. * $p < 0.1$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$

Two EFAs were performed, one for each dependent variable together with the independent variables, to identify the possible existence of CMB. Two tests were necessary because the answer of the second independent variable assumes that the person is not a businessperson, which means this variable has no variance, preventing the two dependent variables from being part of the same EFA. The EFA with the variable 'entrepreneur' presented a total explained variance of 0.1492, and that with the variable 'intention to venture', 0.1433. Both are lower than 0.5. For this reason, CMB was not considered a problem. Table 4 shows the results of the logit that estimated the influence of independent variables on 'entrepreneur' and 'intention to venture' for Canada. In all cases, the overall logit adjustment was significant, with $p < 0.01$. The Cox and Snell R^2 and the Nagelkerke R^2 indices in each case are also presented in Table 4. Analyzing the results for the dependent variable 'entrepreneur', it can be observed that, in Canada, 'age upon arrival' and 'time in the country' have a positive influence on being entrepreneurial. On the other hand, 'level of education' and 'tourist visa' have a negative influence. In the case of 'intention to venture', 'gender' (female) has a positive influence while 'permanent migrant', 'tourist visa', and 'student visa' have a negative influence.

Table 4.

Logit regressions

<i>Entrepreneur</i>			
Variable	B	S.E.	Sig.
Gender (% of women)	0.311	0.262	n.s.
Age upon arrival	0.072	0.019	***
Level of education	-0.534	0.197	***
Time in the country	0.112	0.027	***
Student visa	0.198	0.374	n.s.
Work visa	-0.196	0.39	n.s.
Tourist visa	-0.868	0.421	**
Claim citizenship	-0.249	0.775	n.s.
Permanent migrant	0.309	0.402	n.s.
Constant	-2.764	1.265	*
Cox & Snell R2	0.073		
Nagelkerke R2	0.145		
<i>Non entrepreneur — intention to venture</i>			
Variable	B	S.E.	Sig.
Gender (% of women)	0.422	0.185	**
Age upon arrival	-0.002	0.016	n.s.
Level of education	-0.118	0.153	n.s.
Time in the country	-0.033	0.028	n.s.
Student visa	-0.456	0.262	*
Work visa	-0.241	0.295	n.s.
Tourist visa	-1.521	0.353	***
Claim citizenship	0.255	0.827	n.s.
Permanent migrant	-0.78	0.318	**
Constant	1.173	1.147	n.s.
Cox & Snell R2	0.062		
Nagelkerke R2	0.086		

Note. * $p < 0.1$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$.

DISCUSSION

In this section, evidence from both the quantitative (surveys) and qualitative (triangulation interviews) data is considered. An overview of immigration to Canada is also depicted according to respondent's opinions, which enriches the discussion of the quantitative data. Canadian immigration policy, which traditionally aimed at attracting a diverse and qualified workforce, has also attracted highly educated Brazilian immigrants fluent in English and proficient in technology. Brazilian immigrant entrepreneurs related to startup businesses are generally attracted to Toronto and surroundings (Machado et al., 2020), having entered the country

holding a specific type of visa linked to the Start-up Visa Program (Canada, 2020). However, evidence from the survey data also points to immigrants that came previously, in the 1980s and 1990s.

According to Krueger et al. (2000), intentions are the best predictor of any planned behavior (Ajzen, 1991), such as venturing. Thus, understanding the antecedents of intentions increases the general understanding of the intended behavior (in this case, immigrant's EI). In addition, attitudes have a positive influence over behavior due to their impact on intentions. However, intentions and attitudes depend on both the situation and personal characteristics. Intention models thus tend to be good predictors of behaviors (Krueger, Reilly, & Carsrud, 2000), or at least better than either individual variables (e.g., personality traits) or situational or sociodemographic variables (e.g., employment status, visa status, gender, ethnicity). Immigrants who are already established entrepreneurs in Canada were at some point non-entrepreneurs with EI.

Of the hypotheses proposed, the results effectively point to some variables having a positive influence on EI; these include gender (being a female) and all visa statuses. Of the entrepreneurs, age upon arrival was a significant predictor, while variables such as the level of education, time in the country, and tourist visa had a negative influence.

Time spent in the country

'Canadian work experience' affects the ability to acquire bank loans and get a formal job in Canada (Li, 2001; Machado et al., 2020). It is evident that immigrant entrepreneurs face initial difficulties when arriving in the country. Adaptation is related to cultural factors, institutional environment, and the barriers they face. Networking has been suggested as crucial for getting access to potential customers and organizational resources, and information is seen as fundamental in guiding decision-making at any stage of their businesses. In addition, the 'warm introduction' is pointed out as a 'strategy' for accessing prospect customers, business partners, or other stakeholders, as seen in some quotes from the interviews:

"Unlike my husband, he (another Brazilian entrepreneur) got a much bigger loan for his company after six months. It is not because he is Canadian. He lived in Brazil for seven years. When he came back, zero credit score! He had to start from scratch ... I'm going to let that go ... Today, unfortunately, women still encounter many barriers. Small details even of opening a bank account ... to open an account and pass through the loan analysis is more difficult for women" (E2).

When trying to find out the main initial difficulties experienced by respondents as immigrant entrepreneurs in Canada, the most relevant indications have to do with cultural adaptation. In addition, issues such as how to do business and lack of a Canadian experience are evidenced in the excerpts of the interviews, below:

"First, if the immigrant has no history in Canada ... informality or lack of portfolio etc. ... 70% of the difficulties to get the first customers were not related to product ... but to cultural issues as a barrier" (E1).

Cultural adaptation in the broadest sense of the term therefore plays a big role in business settlement.

“The main difficult involving being an entrepreneur [here] was reconciling the ‘turmoil’ of my personal life and the change of country [from Brazil to Canada]. To immigrate is to be born again ... and apart from the language, the cultural context ... difficulty on coping with this adaptation” (E6).

Canadian experience, which also applies to getting a first job in Canada, can lead to situations like those described in the following quotation:

“Have you worked here in Canada?” If no, “so I can’t hire you.” It is very difficult to get that first opportunity ... They call it a “Canadian experience” ... kind of standard there ... (RCC).

For a considerable part of this population of Brazilian immigrants, the difficulty with bilingualism may have negative implications for internal mobility in the country, especially with regard to French. It also appears that adaptation to language and culture are important elements in the adjustment of Brazilian newcomers in Canada, as can be seen in the following statement:

“... And then you add the fact that you don’t have the cultural knowledge of the country, you are here but you don’t know how things work, how people interact, the first fear I had was of the language ...” (E1).

Another factor that seems to influence some of the Brazilian immigrant entrepreneurs to migrate to Canada, especially those engaged in startups (aiming at Toronto or the Greater Toronto Area), has to do with their intentions regarding faster internationalization of business. The following statements show signs of this movement:

“... when I decided to move to Canada, it was a 70% individual decision, 60% for my family to be in a better place, but the other 30% ... I needed to work, that’s why Toronto. Then Canada, because it is close to the United States, there is a trade agreement with the European Union ... The mobility that the Canadian business has is much greater than anywhere else, even than the United States ... In 16 years, 13 years, only from Brazil, I have two international clients. In Canada, in three years, today 60% are ... Hawaii, in the United States, Australia, Spain, and the United Kingdom, but this only happened because of Canada ...” (E1).

“... very recently, 2016, 2017 ... there was an important change in this profile of ... this motivation of Brazilian immigration, in which some people already arrive here ... “joining the useful to the pleasant,” from the perspective of those who want to leave Brazil, looking for placement opportunities in Canada ... this has been happening a lot with nascent technology-based companies, startups, essentially ... today, in which this flow of ideas (happens), the question of the market is no longer (an issue) ... a good idea can be accepted anywhere in the world ... there is a large space for Brazilian innovative entrepreneurs, who have already tested their ideas there and want to reach different markets. So, this gradual change ... let’s say, a certain appetite for these small, technology-based companies in Brazil to go international ...” (MCB).

Age upon arrival

Although Levesque and Minniti (2006) state that there is a negative effect of aging on entrepreneurial behavior, it was found that the older the Brazilian immigrants are when they arrive in the country and the longer they stay in Canada, the more likely they are to establish

their own business. In the case of the time spent in the country, the reason is evident: people who immigrated with EI need some time to plan and execute their business plans, so the likelihood increases over the years. Regarding age upon arrival in the country, this may be because the average age of student immigrants is lower than that of other immigrants. To try to resolve this doubt, the average age of the various groups was calculated. Based on the survey data, it appeared that the average age of those arriving in Canada as students was 32 years and for the remaining migrants, 36 years of age. Another explanation could be that older people have greater urgency to settle down in a profession that ensures their livelihood and that of their family, while younger people may not yet have a family and may still be supported by their parents, thus having no great urgency to get a job or to decide how and where to settle down. However, in analyzing the answers to the open questions “What is your purpose in Canada?” and “What are the main difficulties you faced when you arrived?” none of those who claimed to be entrepreneurs cited urgency to undertake. The main reasons cited concerned the need for a better life or the difficulties in dealing with bilingualism (English and French).

In addition, many migrants left Brazil due to security issues, which in some cases refer to a lack of security, a feeling of insecurity, or violence, but also instability for life planning in the long term, with a better quality of life, especially for those over 30 who aim to start a family. That is corroborated by some statements from interviewees:

“I think that social deterioration in general, politically and socially, especially in relation to security, I think it reached a terrible level... Well, there was always this, but I think it got more serious from the moment my daughter was born...” (E7).

“... difficulties such as daily urban violence are important factors in attracting Brazilians to Canada and expelling Brazilians from Brazil ...” (MCB).

Intention to venture

Cruz, Falcão, and Barreto (2018) have already detected that Brazilian entrepreneurs in South Florida (United States) usually arrive financially prepared, with a reserve to face future financial constraints in the coming months. In contrast, it is surprising that respondents who mention they want to stay forever or have no deadline in the country are more likely not to become entrepreneurs in Canada. Most of them are engaged in formal jobs, while entrepreneurs may consider their permanent stay conditional on the venture succeeding. The survey targeting Brazilians in Canada indicates that 50.4% of those who declared they want to stay forever are just working and another 23% are working and studying.

Considering the sample of respondents who are not yet entrepreneurs, we can identify factors correlated to the willingness to undertake in the future. Female respondents tend to be more willing to undertake, possibly due to the convenience of deciding their working hours and to having flexibility to take care of their families (see Abbasian & Yazdanfar, 2013; Chreim et al., 2018). However, if they were engaged in formal ‘9-to-5’ jobs, they would not have the same flexibility. A negative relationship was also found between the fact that the respondent is a permanent immigrant and the intention to open a business. As mentioned earlier, the people

who intend to stay permanently in the country are those who are most stabilized in a steady job, who would not be as interested in starting an entrepreneurial venture.

Gender (female)

Several of the factors researched influence whether the interviewee is an entrepreneur. Although women face several barriers to entrepreneurship (Abbasian & Yazdanfar, 2013; Chreim et al., 2018), the Canadian government promotes policies to encourage learning and employment (Billore, 2011; Lidola, 2014) that focus on female immigrants, such as those found in British Columbia (WorkBC, 2019). There are regional agencies that sponsor programs targeted specifically at women entrepreneurs, including the Western Diversification's and Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, the Women's Enterprise Initiative (WEI), and the Women in Business Initiative (Orser, 2007). Such policies and incentives focusing on women are likely to be related to gender and work problems, among other issues, as suggested in the following excerpt:

“What still exists, shown in all Canadian newspapers, is the same discussion taking place in the government, which still has difficulty with gender issues. Yes, women have difficulties here in Canada, men face fewer difficulties, or do not face any” (MCB).

Visa status

Respondents with student and tourist visas upon arrival, according to data, are less likely to become entrepreneurs. In Canada, Brazilians are less inclined to set up illegal or informal businesses, perhaps due to stricter laws (as compared to other countries) or due to the diversity of more entrepreneurship and startup programs (Canada, 2019). Another interesting factor negatively correlated to venturing in Canada is the level of education. This supports the tendency for more skilled immigrants to look for skilled jobs within their areas of education (or maybe related to barriers to get a job linked to discrimination or other barriers; see Li, 2001). This fact is linked to the Canadian government selective immigration policies to attract a qualified foreign labor force. Canada specifically attracts immigrants to fill labor market vacancies in areas of shortage, such as information technology, marketing, business, education, and health. The Canadian Government also promotes the attraction of innovative startups that can generate jobs locally and are able to compete on a global scale (Canada, 2019); it also encourages immigrants willing to settle in less populated areas of the country, such as the cities of London, Edmonton, and Winnipeg (BBC News, 2017). The following statement gives an idea of the Brazilian immigrant entrepreneurs linked to startups:

“... people arrive here already undertaking ... there have been many entrepreneur missions, but always technology-based companies, application development, biotechnology sector, digital economy sector, artificial intelligence sector, all part of advanced manufacturing, more knowledge intensive ... the phenomenon is related to the installation of some specialized consultants, Brazilians or Canadians, helping the Brazilians to undertake here, right away” (MCB).

In addition, regarding the entry visa status, individuals who enter the country as students still have not yet decided whether they want to work in a formal job or engage in entrepreneurship. At first, they normally start working to acquire their Canadian experience, and in the long run, they could become entrepreneurs due to opportunities or to barriers to venture (Abbasian & Yazdanfar, 2013; Collins & Low, 2010; Verduijn & Essers, 2013).

Although Krueger et al. (2000) have attributed low predicting power for EI to situational variables and individual variables, others studies, also supported by empirical evidence and aligned with ours, contradict them (Li, 2001). We posit that certain personal characteristics and person/context interactions, based on Shaver and Scott (1992), could be easy to implement for predicting EI, using survey and census data. These variables are also particularly significant for immigrant or ethnic entrepreneurs' contexts (or contexts that compare different cultural backgrounds). Life experiences could also shape the personal characteristics of entrepreneurs, or even forge future entrepreneurs, developing proactiveness, attitude to risk, innovativeness, and self-efficacy – the four key entrepreneurial individual characteristics evidenced as good predictors of EI by Bell (2019). Moreover, the immigrants' life is full of situations that affect their socioeconomic background (e.g., earning more money overseas), parental role models (to be followed by young entrepreneurs), academic abilities (also enhanced overseas when immigrants decide to study), and social skills (expressed in immigrant networks and ethnic enclave relationships). All of these variables might influence EI, as posited by Schoon and Duckworth (2012).

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Recalling that the initial objectives of this study were to determine which sociodemographic and situational variables are statistically relevant to predict if a Brazilian immigrant in Canada would possibly become an entrepreneur, the study revealed important findings that provide theoretical implications for immigrant entrepreneurship. Depicting possible paths and trajectories of successful immigrants might help others who wish to immigrate to follow the same strategies in the future. For immigrants who are already entrepreneurs, age upon arrival was a significant predictor. However, the level of education, time in the country, and tourist visa had a negative influence. There was also a positive influence on the intention to venture due to being a female. All visa statuses and other variables were either non-significant or had a negative influence.

Given what was evidenced in the research, in general, the level of education of the participants was high, in addition to the predominant age range, suggesting a period of immigrant life that represents a potential for high productivity at work. In relation to the main difficulties in adjusting to the Canadian experience, adaptation to language and culture were identified, and these are elements that can delay entry into the local labor market, or even the speed to close a deal, taking the business point of view. The language barrier is deeper regarding the French language, predominant in the province of Québec.

There are signs of a more international mindset among certain entrepreneurial segments, notably those linked to startups, in addition to adopting a strategic vision of business internationalization.

Some Canadian provinces promote an active stance of attraction and development of technology-based companies, especially in some strategic areas for the country. With regard to the productive positioning of Brazilian women in the workforce in Canada, it is thought that entrepreneurial activity can be an important career choice, whether driven by opportunity or necessity, linked to their economic and social insertion, as well as to barriers faced in the market.

This paper contributes theoretically by providing evidence for recent immigration patterns and variables related to venturing in the Brazilian immigrant community of Canada, which may support mechanisms for attracting and fostering future entrepreneurs. Further comparative studies between other Brazilian and ethnic communities are proposed, including other variables. Currently, a study is underway to define the standards of Brazilian immigrant entrepreneurship in Toronto, as well as other related research on Brazilian immigrant entrepreneurship linked to technology-based companies (startups) in Canada. In terms of managerial implications, the findings revealed in the Brazilian community point to possible paths to direct public policies related to the personal characteristics of immigrants (see Li, 2001). In the case of future studies, comparisons between different ethnic communities or immigrant nationalities regarding EI are recommended. However, we suggest future studies focus on a specific group of immigrant entrepreneurs in Canada (i.e., Brazilian women), given that gender issues have been raising concerns in various social segments in the country.

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