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CRITICAL FACTORS INFLUENCING BRAZILIAN WOMEN'S ENTREPRENEURIAL PROCESS IN GERMANY AND SWEDEN

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Fatores determinantes para o processo empreendedor de brasileiras imigrantes na Alemanha e na Suécia

Thesis presented to the Graduate Program in Business Administration at the Federal University of Technology – Paraná as a partial requirement to obtain the title of Master in Business Administration (M.Sc.).
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Co-supervisor: Prof. Roberto Pessoa de Queiroz Falcão, D.Sc.

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To the Goddess of wisdom and my mother,
without whom it’d be impossible to even exist in this
crazy wide world.

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“Through others we become ourselves.”
— Lev S. Vygotsky (1896 - 1934)

ABSTRACT

Female entrepreneurship (FENT) has sparked the interest of academics and policymakers due to its economic and social significance. Although researchers have examined various factors that influence the female entrepreneurial process, little is known about immigrant women entrepreneurship, so as to promote an interconnection between individual actions stemming from informal institutions and the regulatory and normative pressures of formal institutions. This gap is even more significant when we consider the scarcity in the literature on the results of businesses led by Brazilian women abroad, where they are believed to suffer the so-called "triple disadvantage" for being women, immigrants, and natives of a developing country. Therefore, this work presents an integrated framework between Neo-institutional theory (Neo-IT) and Mixed Embeddedness (ME) to investigate the outcomes of Brazilian women's entrepreneurial processes in two Western Europe countries. In order to achieve this primary objective, data regarding the entrepreneurial trajectories, organizational practices, and institutional structures of sixty migrant businesswomen living in Germany and Sweden have been collected online, through hybrid semi-structured interviews. Interviewees have been invited in an earlier step of the research through online questionnaires carried out in Facebook Brazilian expat communities. In terms of methodological design, the present study fits into the embedded type of dual case study (YIN, 2018). The analysis followed Gioia's et al. (2013) inductive qualitative analysis protocol. The results delineate the steps towards Brazilian migrant women entrepreneurs' creation of a unique institutional field in these targeted countries, based on regulatory, normative, and cognitive mechanisms that shape the selection criteria of their networking formation and the very institutionalization of these distinctive fields overseas through the dissemination of their entrepreneurial processes' outcomes. One of its limitations, though, is that it has focused on any kind of entrepreneurial activity owned by Brazilian women in Germany and Sweden, regardless of their business sector or formality/informality status. This implies that the outcomes identified herein may not yet be totally consolidated in the showcased businesses, as many might be classified in the early or maturing stage of migrant women entrepreneurs' (MWEs) entrepreneurial processes. Additionally, we did not distinguish between businesses created exclusively by migrant women to those created in partnership with their spouses or other family members. Consequently, the great incidence of copreneurship brings into question whether MWE's businesses classification would fall under traditional definitions of minority family business or female entrepreneurship. Sometimes, in the migratory context, such definitions seemed to be blurred by gender intersections and contextual factors. Findings from this study could be used as an instrument to support public policies for fostering more equative participation of immigrant women in business venturing as well as to the Brazilian government to prevent the evasion of potential entrepreneurs. In terms of theoretical contribution, this research expands the current body of knowledge of immigrant entrepreneurship in Europe and of Brazilian entrepreneurship overseas by proposing an integrative review of both Institutional theory and Mixed embeddedness, in order to provide a consistent possible solution to both Neo-IT's top-down perspective's prevalence and Granovetter's (1973, 1985) embeddedness problem found in the extant literature.

Keywords: immigrant entrepreneurship; Brazilian women entrepreneurs; Europe; Germany; Sweden.

RESUMO

O empreendedorismo feminino despertou o interesse de acadêmicos e formuladores de políticas devido à sua importância econômica e social. Embora os pesquisadores tenham examinado vários fatores que influenciam o processo empreendedor feminino, pouco ainda se sabe a respeito do empreendedorismo de mulheres imigrantes, de modo tal que se promova uma interconexão entre as ações individuais oriundas de instituições informais e as pressões regulatórias e normativas das instituições formais. Tal lacuna se acha ainda mais expressiva ao se considerar a escassez na literatura sobre os resultados de negócios liderados por brasileiras no exterior, onde se acredita que sofram a chamada “desvantagem tripla” por serem mulheres, imigrantes e originárias de um país em desenvolvimento. Assim sendo, este trabalho apresenta um modelo integrativo entre a teoria neoinstitucional e a incorporação mista, a fim de investigar os resultados dos processos empreendedores das mulheres brasileiras que emigraram para dois países da Europa Ocidental. Para atingir esse objetivo principal, foram coletados dados on-line sobre as trajetórias empresariais, as práticas organizacionais e as estruturas institucionais de sessenta empresárias migrantes que vivem na Alemanha e na Suécia, por meio de entrevistas híbridas semiestruturadas. As entrevistadas foram convidadas em uma etapa anterior da pesquisa por meio de questionários on-line realizados em comunidades de expatriados brasileiros no Facebook. Em termos de desenho metodológico, o presente estudo se enquadra no tipo incorporado de estudo de dois casos (YIN, 2018). A análise seguiu o protocolo de análise qualitativa indutiva de Gioia et al. (2013). Os resultados delineiam as etapas para a criação de um campo institucional único pelas empreendedoras brasileiras migrantes nesses países-alvo, com base em mecanismos regulatórios, normativos e cognitivos que moldam os critérios de seleção da formação de sua rede empreendedora e da própria institucionalização desse campo distintivo no exterior por meio da disseminação dos resultados de seus processos empresariais. Uma de suas limitações, porém, é que esta pesquisa se concentrou em qualquer tipo de atividade empresarial desempenhada por mulheres brasileiras na Alemanha e na Suécia, independentemente de seu setor de negócios ou status de formalidade/informalidade. Isso implica que os resultados aqui identificados podem ainda não estar totalmente consolidados nas empresas apresentadas, pois muitas acham-se ainda no estágio inicial ou de amadurecimento dos processos empreendedores das mulheres empresárias migrantes (MEMs). Além disso, não fizemos distinção entre as empresas criadas exclusivamente por mulheres migrantes daquelas criadas em parceria com seus cônjuges ou outros membros da família. Consequentemente, a grande incidência do coempreendedorismo coloca em xeque se a classificação das empresas das MEMs se enquadraria nas definições tradicionais de empresa familiar minoritária ou empreendedorismo feminino. Por vezes, no contexto migratório, essas definições pareciam ser obscurecidas por interseções de gênero e fatores contextuais. Os resultados deste estudo podem ser usados como instrumento de apoio a políticas públicas para promover uma participação mais equitativa de mulheres imigrantes em empreendimentos comerciais, bem como para o governo brasileiro evitar a evasão de potenciais empreendedores. Em termos de contribuição teórica, esta pesquisa amplia o conhecimento atual sobre o empreendedorismo de imigrantes na Europa e sobre o empreendedorismo brasileiro no exterior ao propor uma revisão integrativa da teoria neoinstitucional e da integração mista, com o intuito de fornecer uma possível solução consistente para a prevalência da perspectiva top-down no neoinstitucionalismo e para o problema de imersão de Granovetter (1973, 1985), ambos encontrados na literatura existente.

Palavras-chave: empreendedorismo imigrante; mulheres brasileiras empreendedoras; Europa; Alemanha; Suécia.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AVF	Analytical Vision Factor
DE&I	Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
ERP	Entrepreneurial Regions Program
FENT	Female Entrepreneurship
GST	General Systems Theory
IE	Immigrant Entrepreneurship
IEI	International Entrepreneurial Intention
LVA	Low Value Added
ME	Mixed Embeddedness
MWE(s)	Migrant Women Entrepreneur(s)
Neo-IT	Neo-Institutional Theory
NIE	New Institutional Economics
PHL	Portuguese as a Heritage Language
PFL	Portuguese as a Foreign Language
SMEs	Small and Medium-sized Enterprises
TE	Transnational Entrepreneur

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Problem

Despite the fact that the world is confronting a grave humanitarian crisis in terms of refugee replacement, immigration flows are becoming more frequent, altering migratory spaces, and the global labor market, especially in politically stable democracies with a wide variety of long-term attitudes toward immigration (De Hass, 2010; Trenz ; Triandafyllidou, 2017; Tiffen et al., 2020). For illustrative purposes, it is estimated that there are 272 million international migrants worldwide, which represents 3.5% of the global population (International Organization for Migration – IOM, 2019). This has been a tendency since the 1970s, when the figures showed there were 200 million international migrants in total already, i.e., 2.3% of the world population (UNHCR, 2020). In 2022 it is expected that the world will reach the unprecedented mark of 100 million more migrants thanks to the current refugee crisis (UNHCR, 2020). Among these, 130 million are believed to be women, for they are frequently depicted as tied movers to their close ties, meaning that roughly 48% of all international migrants are females (World Migration Report, 2020) that push the migration literature into a trend of migration feminization (Apatinga, Kyeremeh, ; Arku, 2020).

Wang and Hii (2019, p. 15) highlight that immigrants tend to choose "competing nations such as the United States, Australia, and the United Kingdom, which have more affordable pricing and less severe investment laws". Yet, there is no consensus on the various reasons that lead women to migrate, as these can be as vast as work opportunities, family and marriage, educational studies, entrepreneurship, to escape crises and war (Aman et al., 2022). All in all, there is growing evidence that female immigrant-owned companies produce more jobs than local companies (Yrittajat, 2019), which is why more politicians have been arguing immigrant entrepreneurs may significantly contribute to the recovery of developed nations' economies after long periods of recession through an increase in employment opportunities promoted by the latter (Kerr ; Kerr, 2016).

Along with such a promising scenario to attract immigrants, there are push factors in one's country of origin that prompt them to emigrate. On that, Sayad (1998) asserted an individual would only accept to live in a foreign land under the condition of being convinced that such moving would entail transitory mobility, a vision that has been questioned by some authors, e.g., Bomtempo and Sposito (2010), who comment that today’s migration must be seen as the reproduction of a significant global phenomenon in which individuals suffering from precarious labor conditions in one place (often their motherland) accept the risk of pursuing economic activities that might provide more excellent remuneration in a purely utilitarian decision-making process, which leads them to a very specific kind of entrepreneurial activity — one that emerges solely from necessity (Cardella et al., 2020). In this sense, immigrant entrepreneurship is often described as a separate process through which an individual who comes to re-settle in a new country finds, develops, and utilizes economic possibilities to launch new enterprises that generate value in their host societies (Dheer, 2018).

Curiously, female entrepreneurship scholarly has also been commonly presented as one primarily driven by necessity (Garg ; Agarwal, 2017; Chreim et al., 2018; Cardella et al., 2020), outlining the fragilities and gendered social processes that push women into entrepreneurial pursuits as mainly a means to find independence (Morokvasic, 1991; Korzenevica et al., 2022), self-assurance (Kirkwood, 2009; Isidore et al., 2012), financial relief (Amatucci ; Crawley, 2011; Kumbhar, 2013; Ghosh et al., 2018), or even a more balanced lifestyle to keep looking after the family (Kumbhar, 2013; Foley et al., 2018; Kaciak ; Welsh, 2020). Existing research in the field has also identified some differences between the motivations and barriers to female self-employment in both developing and developed countries (Hisrich ; Ayse Öztürk, 1999; De Vita et al., 2014; Panda, 2018).

Such difference among advanced and less advanced economies is aggravated when acknowledging there are very few studies to date poring over the phenomenon of women from developing countries immigrating and starting their businesses overseas, as the majority of research on immigrant entrepreneurship has been overlooking the phenomenon’s gendered character, which ends up producing a one-sided perception of the socio-economic processes at play in the lifecycle of small businesses started by female immigrants and their economic impact on host societies, despite the evidence for a growing population of female immigrant entrepreneurs across all continents (Halkias ; Caracatsanis, 2011; Chreim et al., 2018).

Therefore, given that female immigrant entrepreneurship may be defined as “the entrepreneurial activity undertaken by females with an ethnic minority background based on immigration to a new host country" (Chreim et al., 2018, p. 1), there is an urgent need for the extant literature to identify key social and business demographics contributing to the scope of these subjects' entrepreneurial processes (More, 1986; Bygrave, 2004; Nassif et al., 2010), especially in terms of industry sector, use of technology, firm employment, growth potential, and work/family balance issues (Halkias ; Caracatsanis, 2011; Chreim et al., 2018). This gap becomes wider considering recent studies concerning Brazilian women immigrants come from correlated areas such as Sociology and Anthropology, and tend to focus primarily on this group's forays into the foreign labor market as an alternative to unemployment (Piscitelli, 2008; Piscitelli, 2009; van Meeteren ; Pereira, 2013; Schuler ; Dias, 2014 Rezaei ; Marques, 2016; França, 2021; Johnson ; Alloatti, 2021), and not specifically on their entrepreneurial processes nor their businesses peculiarities, with a few rare exceptions (see e.g. Lidola, 2014; Yousafzai et al., 2022).

A significant migration movement of Brazilians to the world began subtly in the 1980s and acquired vast proportions due to the economic recession and hyperinflation experienced in the country until the early 1990s (Oliveira,1997; Margolis, 2013). To date, it is estimated there are 4,2 million Brazilians residing internationally, mainly in the U.S. (1,775,000), Portugal (276,000), Paraguay (240,000), United Kingdom (220,000), Japan (206,365), Spain (156,000), and Germany (144,000) (MRE, 2021), which allowed scholars to name this massive emigration process as a modern "Brazilian diaspora" (Bachmann, 2011; Padilla, 2011; Margolis, 2013).

Jones et al. (2010, p. 565) elucidate diasporas are "embedded in actively interconnected co-ethnic networks extending far beyond the boundaries of their adopted country, bonded by the constant exchange of money, goods, people, and information." In this scenario, immigrant entrepreneurship represents an opportunity to provide a win-win relationship for both home and host cultures by creating revenue for immigrant entrepreneurs while also contributing to knowledge transfer, innovation, and economic growth in the expatriating economy through transnationalism (Brieger ; Gielnik, 2021). In the particular case of Brazilian women nationals, in spite of the literature gap on this ethnic group's diasporic businesses, they have been standing out for their entrepreneurial drive, being ranked 10th, with a rate of 12.71% (approximately 8 million women), among the most entrepreneurial in the Global

Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) report exclusive to track female entrepreneurship around the world, issued in 2015 (FEI, 2015).

Nevertheless, so far, the focus of most studies has been to draw on the psychological or behavioral profiles of women entrepreneurs, based on an analysis of their motivations and achievements as being divergent from those of men (Machado, 1999; Yadav ; Unni, 2016). One relevant issue raised by such studies has been the great difference existing in the way men and women make use of opportunities to achieve entrepreneurial success (Buttner, 1993), which proves to be of great interest to this investigation to the extent such findings had later repercussions on the way scholars interpreted the gendered processes by which men and women use their networks of relationships to the establishment of their ventures.

Hence, considering that female entrepreneurs are embedded in personal and social networks with different characteristics from those possessed by the networks in which male entrepreneurs are embedded, and that these networks directly influence the institutionalization of their entrepreneurial processes abroad, i.e., the way they plan, organize and develop the birth, survival, and growth of enterprises in a foreign country (Aldrich, 1989; Nassif et al., 2010), two critical questions arise from this research: how do the outcomes of Brazilian migrant women's entrepreneurial processes in Germany and Sweden unveil reciprocity (i.e. isomorphism) and redistribution (i.e., legitimacy) mechanisms in this group's mixed embeddedness?

These two nations have been elected to compose the context of the present investigation for five prime reasons. Firstly, Europe represents a case for research on its own as it stands as the Western society hub for pulling immigrants from "underdeveloped" European regions to others deemed as "more developed". Such a common practice reflects how socio-economic fragilities within this economic bloc come to be aggravated due to the proximity between regions, the facilitated public transportation system, and the specific legislation allowing the free movement of people, capital, and goods between Eurozone members and the Schengen Area (Schewel, 2020). These peculiar characteristics are likely to attract Brazilians with dual nationality or European ancestry (Cruz, Pessoa, et al., 2020; Cruz et al., 2021).

Secondly, out of the ten countries in the world Brazilians most flee to, seven are located in the Old Continent (MRE, 2021)—and among them are Germany and Sweden. Coincidently, these seven have been ranked among the top ten countries for female entrepreneurs in 2015 (FEI, 2015). For many authors, this scenario is favored by a series of regulatory initiatives to support female entrepreneurship that have been taking place in these countries, namely: (1) the creation of the European Network to Promote Women's Entrepreneurship (WES) since earlier 2007; (2) the inauguration of the European Network of Female Entrepreneurship Ambassadors in 2009; (3) the creation of the European Network of Mentors for Women Entrepreneurs in 2011; (4) the release of the WEgate online platform for providing training, mentoring, advice, and business networking opportunities for women entrepreneurs since 2016; (5) the foundation and funding by the European Parliament of The European Community of Women Business Angels in 2017 (Foss et al., 2019; ECWT, 2021).

In line with this tendency, policies targeted at migrants' integration are increasingly common in Eurozone countries (Rath ; Swagerman, 2016; Solano ; Huddleston, 2020), with some central Europe countries like France, Italy, and Germany being particularly active in providing measures to encourage ethnic minorities to enter independent employment (Ram ; Jones, 2008).

Lastly, it is important to note that we have focused on the sociological aspects of female migrant entrepreneurship in order to make a sound contribution to the theories used herein, which are richly ingrained in sociological scholarship. We tried not to overlook the interdisciplinary nature of this thesis topic, though. Therefore, our conclusions may illuminate as many elements as the economic, managerial, and migratory aspects of the phenomenon under investigation, through a gendered lens.

1.2 Research Objectives

To attain this thesis' main objective, which was to understand how the outcomes of Brazilian migrant women's entrepreneurial processes unveil reciprocity (i.e. isomorphism) and redistribution (legitimacy) mechanisms in this group's mixed embeddedness in Germany and Sweden, the following specific or intermediary objectives became necessary:

a) to identify the individual outcomes of Brazilian migrant businesswomen entrepreneurial outcomes in Germany and Sweden;

b) to map the firm-oriented outcomes of Brazilian migrant businesswomen entrepreneurial outcomes in Germany and Sweden;

c) to pinpoint the societal outcomes of Brazilian migrant businesswomen entrepreneurial outcomes in Germany and Sweden.

1.3 Research Justification

By attaining these objectives, the present research may contribute to the advance of immigrant entrepreneurship literature in many aspects. Firstly, it could generate valuable data for the Brazilian government and research centers that focus mainly on offering immigrant entrepreneurship support services for Brazilians abroad. Furthermore, it could better inform aspiring Brazilian immigrant women who want to become entrepreneurs in these specific European nations.

This work is also an opportunity to contribute to the state-of-the-art of sociological-economic studies related to migratory movements analyzed from the perspective of mixed embeddedness, noting that the gender bias to be addressed within the category of female immigrant entrepreneurship is yet little explored in the literature (Dheer, 2018; Chreim et al., 2018; Dabić et al., 2020). For illustrative purposes, a brief consultation in the international scientific databases *Scopus*® and *Web of Science*® using the Boolean operators “migrant” AND “women” OR “female” “entrepreneur”, and filtering only reviews, editorials, and articles document types, yielded 102 valid results in the former and 1,099 valid results in the latter after a restriction concerning only the fields of Entrepreneurship and Immigration. Alternative operators that emerged from the search were “women ethnic entrepreneurs” and “women minority entrepreneurs” in *Web of Science*.

Meanwhile, a search in the national databases *Spell*® and *Scielo*®, using the Boolean operators “empreendedorismo” AND “feminino” AND “imigrante” OR “empreendedorismo” AND “mulher” AND “migrante” yielded 1 result in the former (see Mott Machado et al., 2023) against 34 general papers on female entrepreneurship in general (i.e., excluding the migratory context), but no results in the latter platform. Searching only with the operators “woman” AND “migrant” (i.e., excluding the entrepreneurial background) yielded 3 valid results in *Scielo*, though. Consultation on each platform has been made in May 2023.

Additionally, because many case studies can be neither generalized nor interpreted in terms of specific immigrant groups, the extant scientific literature is relatively fragmented and contextual (Barrett ; Vershinina, 2017). In this respect, Sundarajan ; Sundarajan (2015) argue that a lack of synthesizing and integrated models has led to a fragmented understanding of the actual determinants of immigrant entrepreneurship. Consequently, models that aim to offer a systematic overview fail to describe entrepreneurial trajectories (Brzozowski, 2017), while others ignore the uniqueness of immigrant business (Bailetti, 2018).

With this constructive criticism of past studies in mind, this study provides a significant theoretical contribution by proposing an integrative framework between ME and Neo-IT—without neglecting the epistemological differences between them—in order to bridge the gap between previous studies that have concentrated on the structures embedding immigrant entrepreneurial pursuits to the repercussions of these into the isomorphic practices that shape the outcomes of one country's native population's entrepreneurial processes abroad.

Likewise, as have been previously highlighted, recent studies about Brazilian women entrepreneurs living in Europe are scant, with most of the research on the topic focusing on other ethnic groups' entrepreneurial efforts (Chreim et al., 2018; Colakoglu et al., 2018; Murzacheva et al., 2020; Kalu ; Okafor, 2021; Johnson ; Alloatti, 2021; Vershinina ; Cruz, 2021). Despite women's importance to the economic and social development of Europe as a whole, in accordance with European standard policies to fostering these group's insertion and maintenance into business venturing, there is little research on Brazilian women diasporic entrepreneurship in Germany, Greece, Switzerland, and Scandinavian countries, if compared to other destinations dominating the immigrant entrepreneurship research in Europe, such as the Netherlands, Portugal, Italy, and Spain (Baycan-Levent ; Nijkamp, 2009).

1.4 Overview of the Chapters

This thesis is divided into the following structure. Firstly, there is an overview of the phenomenon of immigrant entrepreneurship, with its specific terminology, to serve as an introduction to the topic and its relevance to the development of the scholarly in the field of entrepreneurship.

Secondly, an integrative literature review of the theories on immigrant entrepreneurship, namely, neo-institutional theory and the mixed embeddedness approach is provided, in an attempt to develop a multi-theoretical framework to understanding the research problem highlighted in this section, as recommended by authors such as Dana and Morris (2010).

Thirdly, the methodological section presents the foundations of this study's design, its epistemological roots, and ethical issues surrounding data collection, and discuss about the inductive qualitative principles (Gioia et al., 2013; Gioia, 2021; Magnani ; Gioia, 2022) underpinning our dual case study analysis.

Next, in the fourth section, sixty case studies are described and analyzed in separate subsections, following Yin's (2018) literal replication (i.e., comparing of similar patterns within cases) and theoretical replication (i.e., comparing contrasting patterns across cases) logics.

After the presentation of the findings, this thesis closes in the fifth chapter with the major contributions arising from our discussion, the general limitations of the study, and recommendations for future research.

2 THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

As very limited research and theoretical background exist on explaining how Brazilian women develop their businesses in developed countries, especially in the European continent, this section first examines the evolution of immigrant entrepreneurship scholarship, and then is complemented by a literature review on the two existing theories commonly used to explain immigrant entrepreneurship phenomenon, i.e., Neoinstitutionalism and the Mixed Embeddedness approach (Dabić et al., 2020).

Since “no single theoretical framework provides a comprehensive view of female entrepreneurs’ businesses endeavors” (Chreim et al., 2018, p. 2), this section ends by proposing an integrative review between these two foundational theories. Such an integrative account builds on one of this thesis’ greatest contributions, which is to combine elements from them both, in order to fill one deficient aspect in the existing empirical literature, primarily comprised of descriptive studies (Aliaga-Isla ; Rialp, 2013).

2.1 Migration Studies and Entrepreneurship Theory

Although the advance of migration studies in both Brazil and abroad has enabled a deeper investigation of the phenomenon of immigrant entrepreneurship from a multidisciplinary perspective that encompasses anthropology, economics, management science, psychology, sociology, and public policy (Dana, 2007), it can still be deemed as a relatively new field of study, which has emerged mainly in the 1970s from the pioneering work of Ivan Light and Edna Bonacich (Landström ; Lohrke, 2010). By then, these two scholars were interested in the social problems—such as unemployment, violence and race riots—triggered by the higher concentration of immigrants in large cities of the U.S. (Godley, 2009).

Haas, Castles and Miller (2020) define the word ‘migrant’ as someone who spends at least 12 months in a nation other than their customary residence. This term should not be mistaken for a person merely born abroad, which is referred to as an ‘immigrant’, neither for an immigrant's offspring, which is called a ‘second generation immigrant’ (Dabić et. al., 2020).

Other terminology relevant to the discussion lies on some 'classical immigration countries', such as the United States, Canada, Australia, and New

Zealand, distinguishing an immigrant from a foreign-born (or overseas-born), which stands for persons who have become naturalized, i.e., who have taken on the citizenship of the receiving country, and on some European immigration countries using the expressions ‘foreign national’, ‘foreign resident’, ‘foreign citizen’, or simply ‘foreigner’ or ‘alien’ to describe the same citizenship status of a foreign-born (Haas et al., 2020).

Similarly, children born to immigrants in the receiving nation (the second generation) are not included in this group if they are citizens of that country, whilst children born to immigrants who keep their parents' nationality are considered foreign nationals (Haas et al., 2020).

Furthermore, Fairlie (1996) has identified another type of entrepreneur in a foreign context: the ‘sojourner’. This consists of a migrant who travels to another country in order to rapidly accumulate wealth without the intention to seek permanent residency. Their primary aim after making fortune is to return to their native land, which means this kind of entrepreneur would be motivated by an opportunity in the international market and not by necessity itself, as it is commonly assumed.

Not coincidently, migration has gained political prominence over the last few decades, especially due to the debate over protecting the rights of migrants who move out of necessity and that of refugees, i.e., forcibly displaced communities affected by the fear of persecution on account of their race, religion, nationality, or political viewpoint (UNHCR, 1967). This is not to say that migration is a new phenomenon, though. Humans have always relocated in quest of new possibilities, as well as to flee poverty, violence, and environmental damage, hence many authors highlight there are different migration waves that have marked the beginning of studies in immigrant entrepreneurship (Haas et al., 2020).

In a retrospective account, Godley (2009) argues that immigrant entrepreneurship has been greatly influenced by the internationalization drive inlaid in export processes and in the building of trading networks among different regions from the Ancient period onwards. Phoenicians, for instance, created trading networks from Spain to Babylon to explore the raw silk production in the Caspian Sea, while the Assyrians led huge movements of international trade of wine. Banking dynasties in Italy and South Germany also created large trading networks during the Middle Ages, benefitting from monopolies of many kinds.

With the beginning of European expansion in the 16th century and the Industrial Revolution in the 19th century, though, migration took on a new meaning, resulting in a massive population movement from rural to urban areas both inside and outside national boundaries (Haas et al., 2020). A shifting point were the huge migrations from Europe to the Western world's colonies between 1846 and 1939, when around 59 million people left Europe to populate North and South America, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa (Stalker, 2000). Hatton and Williamson (1998) referred to this period as the 'age of mass migration', claiming that worldwide migrations were much larger from the mid-nineteenth century to World War I than they are today.

From 1850 to 1914 has then been seen essentially as a period of transatlantic migration, whereas long-distance migrations began after the end of the Second World War, when immigration has taken on a new shape and scale, shifting away from Europe as the dominant source of migratory flows and toward other nations, mostly developing countries, which have now become the primary source of migratory flows (Massey, 1990). In this sense, after the late 1945s, Europe transitioned from exporting migrants to receiving massive influxes of them. As a result, the majority of wealthy economies have evolved into multi-ethnic communities (Massey et. al., 1993).

Jones and Ram (2007) reinforce this argument by positing that migration movements and entrepreneurial activity have taken place as an integral part of a distinguished historical process after the post-World War Two rise of migrant business in Britain, whereby overseas migrants themselves and their changing economic role have been called forth by an evolving economic history presented here in the form of a timeline: a) from 1945 to 1973 there can be found Fordist Industrialism and a massive migration of labor power shifting from former colonies; b) from 1974 to 2000 Post-industrialization and ethnic minority self-employment are experienced; c) and from 2000 onwards the world faces the impact of globalization and super-diversity, a term coined by Vertovec (2007) to denote the increasing proliferation of identities and cultural pluralism associated with the entrance of new migrants of different ethnic origins that come from varied regions of the globe for so many different purposes that prompt social scientists to seek new approaches to comprehend the complexity of such a dynamic interplay of variables affecting new, scattered, multiple-origin, transnationally connected, socio-economically differentiated and legally stratified immigrants (Meer, 2014). In other words, superdiversity is ingrained in the notion of interculturality, in that nowadays media communications have exacerbated the intersection among hybrid and co-existing cultures in an unprecedented scale if compared to previous physical migratory movements (Canclini, 2013).

With this in mind, all of these phenomena could not be fully explored by the classical and neoclassical economist theories of entrepreneurship, mainly because little role was allocated to the entrepreneurial behavior of moving away in times of political, economic or public health instabilities in the entrepreneurs' home country (Evans, 1989). Nineteenth-century economists such as Smith, Ricardo, Mill, Marx and Marshall preferred to focus on the events unfolding the industrializing process of specific regions of Britain and the United States, and not on the role individuals had to play to foster or suppress such process (Godley, 2009).

Even Schumpeter and Knight were more prone to investigating the newly emerging corporate structures and entrepreneurial functions of business ventures than the evidence of entrepreneurs clustering in areas of rapid economic change from before the Industrial Revolution (Cassis ; Minoglou, 2005). In this sense, applying Knight's emphasis on uncertainty, Kirzner's concern for entrepreneurial alertness, Casson's characterization of the entrepreneur as a judgmental decision-maker, or even Schumpeter's concept of creative destruction would simply prove to be unhelpful for providing a deeper understanding of the larger tendency of entrepreneurs to migrate and its effects in the many strands of public and private life in a foreign environment (Hébert ; Link, 2012).

Moreover, the multiplicity of local, regional and international migratory movements that occur in the liquid modernity (Bauman, 2001) modify geographical spaces in such a way that recodes the complexity of the phenomenon, making it impossible to explain it only through the economic bias, since the asymmetries of socio-spatial relations happen to occur in at different territorial scales (Vertovec, 2007; Baeninger, 2012).

Consequently, in heralding the modern theory of entrepreneurship, sociologists and scholars of various fields have been trying to expand the simplistic and strict correlation between business profits, economic development and immigrant entrepreneurship (Guzmán, 2022) by unravelling the motivations for opening new ventures abroad either before or after emigrating (Raijman, 2001; Dana, 2009; Khaw et al., 2021; Cruz et al., 2020; Cruz et al., 2021; Falcão et al., 2022), the impact of the competencies developed by the acquisition of some resources and the management of human capital for the survival of immigrant enterprises (Sanders ; Nee, 1996; Kloosterman, 2010; Achidi Ndofor ; Priem, 2011; Sun ; Fong, 2021), identity building of entrepreneurs in the context of becoming foreigners and having to adapt to new cultural patterns and consumer habits (Chrysostome, 2010; Pijpers ; Maas, 2014; Malheiros ; Padilla, 2015; Das et al., 2017; Zhang ; Chun, 2018; Abd Hamid et al., 2021), the role ethnic networks have to play in both competing relations with local ventures, with migrants from the same nationality and linkage maintenance with the homeland (Serrie, 1998; Yoo, 2000; Raijman ; Tienda, 2003; Turkina ; Thi Thanh Thai, 2013; Light ; Bhachu, 2017; Tavassoli ; Trippl, 2019; Duan et al., 2021), as well as the adoption of new languages and managerial strategies targeted at internationalization objectives (Hagen et al., 2014; Smans et al., 2014; Vissak ; Zhang, 2014; Sui et al., 2015; Vinogradov ; Jørgensen, 2017; Bolzani ; Boari, 2018; Bolzani, 2019; Middermann, 2020).

Another focus of study in this major area, however, has centred on ethnic entrepreneurship based on the works of Waldinger et al. (1990), Aldrich and Waldinger (1990), Light and Rosenstein (1995), and Portes and Sensenbrenner (1993) during the 1990s (Landström ; Lohrke, 2010). Like what happens today, much of the trading and human flow of these previous historical periods came out of adverse conditions in the home country along with the existence of family connections in the host country and a promising economic exploitation of a specific market niche, which led to the first identification of immigrant entrepreneurship with ethnic minority Diasporas (Ibrahim ; Galt, 2011). Bonacich (1973) has taken this into account when she proposed that only migrants seeking to overcome a certain degree of adversity through their entrepreneurial efforts should be included in her ‘model of middlemen minorities’. In this regard, she also associated ethnic entrepreneurship with some kind of hostility from the host country’s native citizens.

Ethnic entrepreneurship entails the process of starting and managing businesses, whose “group membership is tied to a common cultural heritage and is known to out-group members as having such traits” (Zhou, 2004, p. 1040). It is largely concerned with meeting the demands, tastes, and preferences of ethnic customers in the host country (Evans, 1989). Therefore, ethnic businesses are frequently developed in areas with a dense ethnic population (Fong ; Ooka, 2002) and benefit from access to co-ethnic employees, better reception from the ethnic community, and a pool of ethnic suppliers and customers (Cobas et al., 1991). In sum, the term has been used interchangeably to denote businesses that are owned and staffed by ethnic minorities; firms that serve an ethnic minority clientele; or simply the ethnic origin of the owner (Ram ; Jones, 2008).

Despite the near-absence of a consensual international definition of what an ethnic minority might be (Kloosterman ; Rath, 2003), it can be stated the fundamental characteristics of ethnic enterprises include ethnicity, ethnic identity, and ethnic solidarity (Keefe, 1992), meaning that a relevant distinction between immigrant and ethnic entrepreneurship would be the opportunity structures of the first being driven by demand circumstances in the host economy whereas the latter would be driven by ethnic marketplaces (Changanti ; Greene, 2002).

Light (1972) recommended using the term “immigrant entrepreneur” to differentiate between “first-generation immigrant entrepreneur” and “second-generation ethnic entrepreneur”. Chaganti and Greene (2002), on the other hand, defined “ethnic entrepreneur” as the degree of an individual's self-identification with an ethnic enclave, independent of generation.

A third category would fall into the term ‘minority entrepreneur’, which tries to encompass entrepreneurs that may even come from the same nationality than that of locals or have acquired the same citizenship status of a native-born, but who have been suffering many kinds of discrimination for belonging to under-represented social groups (Dana ; Morris, 2011). In this scenario, an interplay between gender and race studies within immigrant entrepreneurship can often be found, with emphasis on the works of Pio and Essers (2014) on the identity construction of migrant Indian women in New Zealand, of Cheng (2015) on the unequal access to funding by women and minority entrepreneurs in comparison with white business owners, of Barrett and Vershinina (2017) on the identity of post-war Polish entrepreneurs located in Leicester, of Hopp and Martin (2017) on the socio-economic impact of the entrepreneurial activity to females and migrants in Germany, and of Croce (2020) on indigenous women entrepreneurs.

Another issue concerning the field of immigrant entrepreneurship is based on how new transportation and communication technologies have made mobility across continents simpler, allowing migrants to stay in regular contact with relatives and friends in their home countries and to go back and forth more often. These technological facilities have made international migration become a key dynamic in a globalized, hyper-connected world, which opened space for the study of transnationalism within this area of study (Portes, 1995; Saxenian et al., 2002; Drori et al., 2009; Mustafa ; Chen, 2010; Light, 2021).

Whilst conventional immigrant entrepreneurship theory focuses on the causes, strategies, and economic impacts of entrepreneurial activities on the host society, Chen and Tan (2009) describe transnational entrepreneurship as a way to challenge these traditional ethno-economic studies by understanding the entrepreneurial impact of migrant-owned businesses in their homeland. Transnational businesses thus facilitate linkages between an individual’s knowledge of culture, language and market in both the host and their country of origin, resulting in competitive advantage across nations through increased investments in and transfer of technology from developed to emerging economies (Baltar ; Icart, 2013).

Notable findings on transnationalism in regard to immigrant insertion, networking and businesses survival in a host country are included in the works of Portes, Guarnizo and Haller (2002), who have attested its utility for both immigrants integration in receiving countries and the economic development of their country of origin through a massive survey involving Latin persons in America, and Riddle, Hrivnak, Nielsen (2010), who have conducted a qualitative fieldwork in Netherlands during 2007 to discover how business incubators contribute to the economic development of emerging markets by bridging the institutional divides that transnational diaspora entrepreneurs face when establishing their multi-territorial ventures in these markets.

Other findings relevant to be mentioned are included in the works of Katila and Wahlbeck (2012), who have evidenced how relevant social capital from the homeland can be accumulated in different ways depending on the migration pattern of the groups aiming to open a startup in Finland. Additionally, Nkrumah (2018) have found that networking among a community of immigrants from Ghana in Canada allowed local businesses to survive by maintaining identity ties with their country of origin, which also demarcated the geographical aspects of business expansion between the two countries. Lastly, Stoyanov (2018) interviewed 12 Bulgarian MEs and realized the circulation of identity signals facilitate inter-group comparison and result in complementarity and brokerage among in-group social members and out-group candidates’ of a migrant network in the UK, by using embeddedness theory.

Concerning the theories most used within the field of immigrant entrepreneurship, different authors have mapped out a wide range of conceptual frameworks for analyzing the research themes mentioned above. Dabić et al. (2020), for instance, identified the six most recurrent deployed theories in the area: capital theory, embeddedness theory, intersectionality theory, institutional theory, culture frameworks, and immigration theories. As it can be observed, these theories have been extensively used in the broad entrepreneurship literature as well, except for the latter. Migration theoretical perspectives have emerged in this scenario as an adequate framework for exploring the geographical mobility of individuals seeking to start new ventures, as well as to investigate the ways immigrants build links and bridges through spaces and places in transnational flows or, more recently, in virtual environments (Webster ; Zhang, 2020; Zani 2020).

For Webster and Kontkanen (2021), whose literature review has focused on a historical account of the scholarly of immigrant entrepreneurship published in Nordic nations, however, the most commonly used framework were Bonacich's (1973) theory of middleman minorities, where not only the social solidarity and trust created among minority group members are emphasized, but also the hostile climate faced by foreign traders and middleman-host disputes; in the second position was the enclave economy hypothesis, although not differing to a large extent to Bonacich's ethnic debate, since the enclave economy hypothesis presents group solidarity and reciprocity of obligations within enclave labor force as being vital for both the creation and sustaining of ethnic communities (Wilson ; Portes, 1980).

Another framework highlighted by their review was the disadvantage theory, which tries to contest the classification of all ethnic groups into a single category of "minority" pushed into self-employment due to necessity (Wong, 1985). In this sense, this theory intends to counteract the self-help paradigm that posits entrepreneurship as an alternative route to sidestep socioeconomic disadvantages by recognizing the role societies play in immigrants' labor market choices and immigrant's collective agency to gain access to markets and proposing the ethnicity paradigm instead (Nestorowicz, 2012).

The interactive model developed by Waldinger et al. (1990), on the other hand, would be grounded on Kloosterman's et al. (1999) and Kloosterman ; Rath's (2001) mixed embeddedness approach to immigrant entrepreneurs' actions towards multiple structures, such as social networks, political and institutional environments, and socioeconomic structures, in order to question both individual (e.g. cultural or ethnic resources of immigrants), and local conditions (e.g. opportunity structures of host societies and their accessibility for immigrants). According to Webster and Kontkanen (2021, p. 222), this approach is the most ‘understanding of spatial relations within contemporary immigrant entrepreneurship studies’.

Specifically in terms of female immigrant entrepreneurship, Chreim et al. (2018) has conducted an exhaustive literature review and commented that a number of articles adopting a qualitative approach tend to report on generalized experiences of female immigrant entrepreneurs from different ethnicities in a given host country, whereas quantitative articles tend to study different groups in a certain host country and focus on differences in self-employment, demographic or perceptual variables to compare female immigrant entrepreneurs with male immigrant entrepreneurs of the same origin and/or with the majority of the local population.

The authors argued that, because no one theoretical framework gives a full picture of female immigrant entrepreneurs' commercial endeavors, they have focused on Kloosterman's work on mixed embeddedness and supplemented it with theories proposed by other writers. Kloosterman (2010) contends that comprehending immigrant entrepreneurship demands acknowledging the micro level of the individual entrepreneur and their resources, as well as the entrepreneur's embeddedness in the context of co-ethnicity and the host nation. In this sense, Gonzalez-Gonzalez et al. (2011) classified their findings on female immigrant entrepreneurship into six thematic groups, which include motives for participating in entrepreneurship, characteristics and tactics of female immigrant entrepreneurs, and the repercussions of entrepreneurship. Therefore, there can be stated both Kloosterman (2010) and Gonzalez-Gonzalez et al. (2011) pay attention, to varying degrees, to the interaction of the person (or group) with the larger social, political, economic, and cultural setting in their entrepreneurial activity, i.e., with the human, social, and institutional spheres or levels of an institutional field.

Considering Chreim et al.’s (2018) suggestion to adopt a multi-theoretical lens to deepen the understanding of women’s entrepreneurial practices abroad, the role Institutional Theory has to play in gender studies within the field of immigrant entrepreneurship is subsequently reviewed, putting the spotlight on how this theory has evolved and how it can shed new light to the mixed embeddedness in approaching women female immigrant entrepreneurship phenomenon.

2.2 Institutional Theory

In the transition from the 1950s to the 1960s, organizations, previously seen in an isolated way, started to be analyzed as a connected structure, interdependent on the environment where they were inserted, mainly due to the growing popularization of the General Systems Theory (GST) proposed by Bertalanffy in 1968 (see Bertalanffy, 2009) (Holanda, 2003).

Institutional Theory then emerged amidst the 19th-20th centuries from the understanding that organizations were more than mere production systems. Economists, political scientists and sociologists, such as Menger, Willoughby and Spencer sought a theoretical apparatus capable of tackling some of the biggest issues of the time: a) similar characteristics shared among companies geographically distant from each other; b) the linkage between organizational behavior and the satisfaction of rational interests, the exercise of free choice or to a set of habits, conventions and routines; c) how formal rules and organizational goals affect organizational members' behavior d) how laws, rules, and other types of regulatory and normative systems come into being; e) how different cultural beliefs shape the organizational environment and its operations (Scott, 2014).

Due to this diversity of concerns and the different theoretical approaches that it inherited from its founders, Institutional Theory ended up splitting into three main strands: 1) The Economic Strand or Historical School, founded by Gustav Schmoller, but whose main representative was Carl Menger, followed by several institutional economists (e.g. Thorstein Veblen, John Commons and Westley Mitchell); 2) The Political Science Strand, whose reference authors were J. W. Burgess (1902), Woodrow Wilson (1889), and W. W. Willoughby (1896, 1904); 3) The Sociological Stand, the most recent among the three, since it appeared in the mid-1970s, from the diffusion of four different lines headed by: (a) Spencer and Sumner, Davis, Friedland and Alford, (b) Cooley and Park, Hughes, Freidson and Abbott; (c) Marx, Durkheim and Weber, Parsons, DiMaggio and Powell; (d) Mead and Schutz, Berger and Luckmann, Meyer and Rowan (Scott, 2014).

The third approach, based on a functionalist epistemology (Faria, 2022), is the one adopted in this thesis, as it incorporates individuals and their social action (Weber, 2004) at the core of the interactions that constitute institutional arrangements. Its characteristics and assumptions are discussed throughout this subsection, with emphasis on the authors of the last two lines (c and d) of this strand (Scott, 2014).

Despite the differences and variations in focus, the Institutional Theory distinguishes itself from other organizational theories by admitting the organization-environment interaction from the perspective of cultural elements (e.g., values, symbols, myths, belief systems, and professional programs), instead of taking the environment as the only determinant of organizational structure (Holanda, 2003). Thus, the institutional perspective is not limited to the analysis of technical and financial pressures present in economic systems, since it also seeks to understand the influence of social and cultural aspects on the institutional context in which organizations are embedded (Machado-Da-Silva ; Fonseca, 1996). Such positioning finds support in the thought of the European sociologists Émile Durkheim and Max Weber, who rescue the role of social action, i.e. any human conduct whose motivation occurs from an external event (Weber, 2004), within a social system composed of both the individual as well as the environment and society, which represents an integrated whole whose ultimate goal is to maintain a state of balance between the parts, so that the harmony of the total system is preserved (Faria, 2022).

In this sense, Berger and Luckmann (2004) state that the social order exists solely as a product of human activity, where there can be found the sharing of common meanings necessary for the institutionalization process to happen within the three systems of action predicted by Parsons (1951)—personality, society, and culture.

Institutionalization can be thus defined as a formal or informal rule created by individuals to regulate their interaction in a society, i.e., a coercive structure (Holanda, 2003). Scott (2014) also understands an institution as a social process that tends to be permanent but not immutable, guided by regulatory, normative, and cultural-cognitive elements relative to symbols, behaviors, activities, and resources. Consequently, an institution can sometimes restrict actions and acts by enabling activities and actors. In Table 1 there is a summary of the main definitions ascribed to the term institution.

Table 1 - Concepts of Institution

Authors	Definition of Institution	Keywords
Selznick (1957)	The result of interaction and adaptation processes is the product naturally constituted by social needs and pressures, thus characterizing a social system.	Social system.
Powell and DiMaggio (1991)	Models of taken-for-granted expectations that constrain and constitute the pathways in which solutions are sought. Therefore, individuals' possible choices and preferences are altered by being understood within cultural and historical frameworks in which individuals are immersed.	Models of unrationalized expectations.
Jepperson (1991)	It represents a standard that has achieved accepted status.	Pattern
Giddens (2003)	More durable features of social life that are solidified across time and space.	Durability. Solidification.
Berger and Luckmann (2005).	Any typification that achieves status that something can be taken-for-granted.	*Taken-for-granted*
Peci, Vieira and Clegg (2006)	A type of convention that assumes the status of a rule, e.g., reference models. Institutions regulate the image of reality for the subjects who act and participate in a certain society. These interpretations typify actors and actions and circulate as the common knowledge of all the subjects who participate in that society.	Rules. Reference models. Common knowledge.
Greenwood *et al.* (2008)	Repetitive social behavior taken for granted, which is supported by normative systems and cognitive understandings that give meaning to social exchange that enable the automatic reproduction of the social order.	Repetition taken for granted. Automatic reproduction.
Scott (2014)	Multi-faceted and durable social structures comprised of symbolic elements, social activities, and material resources. Social structures that have achieved a high degree of resilience and social acceptance, providing collective meaning for actions. [...]. Institutions impose constraints by defining legal, moral, and cultural limits that separate legitimate from illegitimate activities and sustain and authorize activities and actors. Institutions provide guides and resources for action as well as prohibitions and pressures on action.	Resilient and accepted social structure (rules, resources, and symbolic elements). Guides. Collective meaning.

Source: adapted from Chaerki et al. (2020, p. 67)

Among the definitions pointed out, this thesis adopts the definition of Greenwood et al. (2008), which refers to the understanding of institution as a perennial social practice in a given organizational field. To this concept is also associated the definition of institutional elements brought by Scott (2014), in which institutions are composed of regulatory, normative and cultural-cognitive pillars that provide stability and meaning to social life together with activities and resources. Scott (2014) makes no distinction regarding the importance of each pillar for studying the institutionalization phenomenon. For him, the regulatory pillar establishes actions to restrict or enable behaviors in a given context through processes governed by rules, monitored actions, or punitive or compensatory sanctions. The operationalization of this pillar may occur through both informal and formal mechanisms.

The normative pillar, in turn, is related to the idea of prescription, evaluation, and obligation to which the members of a social context are submitted, establishing guidelines for collective actions regarding social rights and obligations (Scott, 2014).

Finally, the cultural-cognitive pillar is strongly connected to the conception of socially constructed reality since there is the alignment of cultural knowledge based on a process of subjective interpretation that is simultaneously shaped by external aspects. In this sense, there is an interaction between the actors and the actions that are shared because they are considered right (Scott, 2014). In Table 2 there can be found a summary of the three institutional pillars and their main features.

Table 2 - Three Pillars of Institutional Theory

	Regulative Pillar	**Normative Pillar**	**Cultural-Cognitive Pillar**
Bases of submission	Utility (usefulness)	Social obligation	Guaranteed practices
Mechanisms	Coercive	Normative	Mimetic
Logic Indicators	Rules; Laws; Sanctions.	Certification; Accreditation.	Common beliefs; Logic of shared action; Isomorphism.
Affect	Fear Guilt/Innocence	Shame/Honor	Certainty/Confusion
Basis of legitimacy	Legally sanctioned	Morally governed	Culturally sustained

Source: Scott (2014, p. 51)

Because of the three institutional pillars, the institutional environment analysis involves a multilevel perspective that considers both its general and immediate aspects (Scott, 2014) and its local, regional, national, or even international interrelations (Machado-da-Silva ; Fonseca, 1996). Hence organizational fields may be defined as a group of organizations constituting a recognized area of institutional life (e.g., key suppliers, consumers of resources and products, regulatory agencies, and other organizations that produce similar services or products). In other words, when acting together, there is a greater tendency for the interaction between these agents, since they share common meanings when compared to agents that are external to the field (DiMaggio ; Powell, 2005). Therefore, the organizational field initially emerges from an environment with institutions working in isolation, but as new arrangements are formed and the connections between its agents become stronger, a higher level of institutionalization is achieved (Scott, 2014).

Machado-da-Silva et al. (2006) discuss the organizational field from six theoretical perspectives, which are all summarized in Table 3.

Table 3 - Theoretical Perspectives Relative to Organizational Fields

Theoretical Perspective	**Authors**	**Key Elements**	**Description**
Field as the totality of relevant actors	Dimaggio; Powell	Signification and Relationship	Set of organizations sharing systems of common meanings and interacting more frequently among themselves then with actors from outside the field thus constituting a recognized area of institutional life
Field as a functionally specific arena	Scott; Meyer	Social function	Set of similar and different interdependent organizations there are operating in a functionally specific area technically an institutionally defined in association with their exchange partners sources of funding and regulatory bodies
Field as center of dialogue and discussion	Hoffman; Zietsma; Winn	Debate for thematic interest	Set of organizations often with different purposes there are recognized as participants in the same debate surrounding specific issues plus those concerned with the reproduction of institutional practices or arrangements related to the matter
Field as an arena of power and conflict	Vieira; Carvalho; Misoczky	Domination and power of position	Fields as a result of dispute for its domination and a dynamic marked by reallocation of resources of power of the actors and by their position in relation to other actors
Field as an institutional sphere of disputed interests	Fligstein; Swedberg; Jepperson	Power and cognitive structures	Constructions produced by power-holding organizations that influenced the rules of interaction and dependence in the field owing to their interest which in turn are reflections of their position in the social structure
Field as a structured network of relationships	Powell; White; Owen-Smith	Structural articulation	Set formed by relational networks they are commonly integrated and intertwined emerging as structured and structuring environments for organizations and individuals reveals from topological and structural cohesion studies

Source: Machado-da-Silva et al. (2006, p. 34)

The process of homogenization that leads organizations to establish patterns of similarity among one another may be classified into competitive isomorphism and institutional isomorphism (Meyer, 1979; Dimaggio ; Powell, 2005). While the first is linked to market competition, the second deals with the different pressures that permeate organizations in response to political, normative, legitimation, social, and economic order issues. The social ordering aspect, in turn, is divided into three subtypes: coercive, mimetic, and normative (Dimaggio ; Powell, 2005). It is worth noting that companies establish homogeneous behavior patterns does not imply they have limited capacity to act within their field, as the influence of isomorphic mechanisms is present in all organizational fields along with a competitive drive (Machado-da-Silva ; Fonseca, 1996).

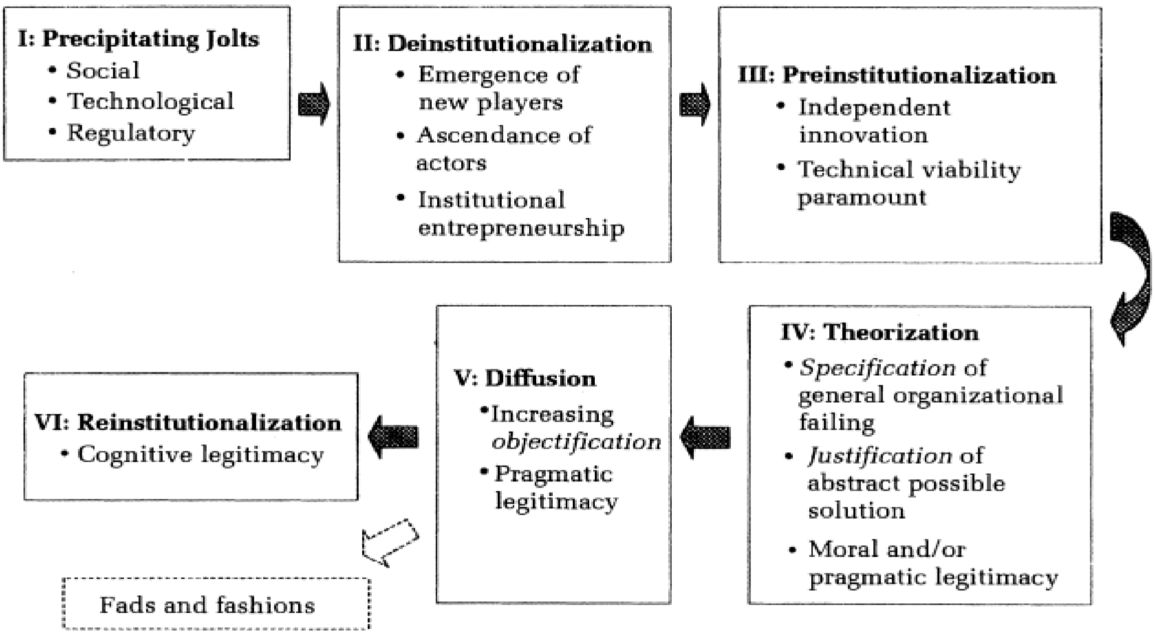
Whereas Coercive Isomorphism consists of coercively, persuasively, or as a form of belonging being willing to follow a sort of “protocol”, mostly through legal and fiscal adjustments and affirmative policies (Dimaggio ; Powell, 2005), Mimetic Isomorphism occurs when organizations try to emulate “models of good practice” or “examples of success” in response to environmental uncertainties. Normative Isomorphism, on the other hand, relies on the formalization of professionalization standards to retain talents and build on professional networks, fostering communication between organizations along with their competition for status.

Within the discussion of isomorphism, another point of convergence between the coercive, normative, and mimetic mechanisms refers to the search for the legitimacy of organizations. From an institutional perspective, legitimacy plays an essential role in organizations’ survival and perpetuation (Scott, 2014). Whilst Meyer and Scott (1983) base the said concept on cognitive aspects, Scott (2014) defends the idea of legitimacy as a condition that reflects cultural alignment, normative support, or consonance with relevant rules or laws. Suchman (1995), in turn, understands legitimacy as a generalized perception or assumption that an entity’s actions are desirable, adequate, or appropriate within a system of socially constructed norms, values, beliefs, and definitions.

On the other hand, institutional change represents a legitimized practice rupture or discontinuity due to social, technological, or legislative-regulatory changes (Greenwood et al., 2002; Tolbert ; Zucker, 2014). Just as Greenwood et al. (2002) defend changes to happen in stages, so too do Mahoney and Kathleen (2010) when they postulate changes tend to occur steadily over time—never abruptly—since these are the result of standardized behaviors of both institutions and the social context.

After the precursors of change, the institutionalization process proceeds to a deinstitutionalization phase, marked by the presence of new actors—especially entrepreneurs—who start a new pre-institutionalization process by introducing new ideas, innovations or refashioning a practice considered to have failed in the past. The theorization phase, in turn, uses this failure to support change, given there is a specific need to implement new practices. Subsequently, the diffusion is marked by social consensus until it culminates with a reinstitutionalization, when the new ideas are widely adopted, thus legitimizing the change. The whole process is depicted in Figure 1.

Figure 1 - Stages of Institutional Change


I: Precipitating Jolts
• Social
• Technological
• Regulatory
II: Deinstitutionalization
• Emergence of new players
• Ascendance of actors
• Institutional entrepreneurship
III: Preinstitutionalization
• Independent innovation
• Technical viability paramount
IV: Theorization
• Specification of general organizational failing
• Justification of abstract possible solution
• Moral and/or pragmatic legitimacy
V: Diffusion
• Increasing objectification
• Pragmatic legitimacy
VI: Reinstitutionalization
• Cognitive legitimacy
Fads and fashions

Source: Greenwood et al. (2002, p. 60)

Admitting organizations are mainly studied through a deterministic perspective within traditional Institutionalism, one that dictates how individuals should behave, a renewal of the theory has emerged—Neoinstitutional Theory—, initiating discussions on the ability of the subject to promote changes in the organizational field from the concept of the institutional entrepreneur (Arruda, 2016).

The term institutional entrepreneurship originated in the works of Eisenstadt (1980) and gained prominence in Organizational Theory through the studies of DiMaggio in 1988 (Avrichir ; Chueke, 2011). Nevertheless, the concept it entails traces its roots back to the 19th century, when economic historians made a counterpoint to classical and neoclassical economic approaches by showing how economic structures change over time and how the capitalist institutions and the process of industrialization evolve through the actions of individuals embedded in a permanent involvement with their social and cultural background (Jones ; Wadhwani, 2006).

By then, sociologists like Sombart (2002), Weber (1957), and Simmel (2006) were trying to postulate an ideal type of individual social actor that would deviate from the homo economicus present in the economic strand of entrepreneurship theory (Vale, 2014). For Weber (1957), this type of man would begin to change trading methods due to cultural stimuli and would be gifted with an ethical quality (e.g., resilience, asceticism, discipline, self-control, and commitment to success) different from what existed in their peers. In his account, this process began to occur everywhere, at a certain period, because of a process of rationalization, which is why he depicts the entrepreneur as someone who may transform the archaic structures of society to introduce a modern condition.

Sombart (2002) also identifies the capitalist spirit found in Weber (1957) with the entrepreneur; nonetheless, unlike the latter, who saw Puritan religious asceticism as the driver of transformations, Sombart (2002) considered that the impetus for capitalism derived from marginalized social groups, which becomes relevant to the discussion of ethnic entrepreneurship.

Simmel (2006) goes even further when he approaches the entrepreneur as an actor excluded from society. Such author seeks to understand the dynamics of macrosocial reality (i.e., an established intricate interweaving of multiple relationships between individuals) by analyzing the interactions between individuals—deemed as atoms of society—in constant exchange and association with one another. This vision is still not only highly ingrained in the GST principles, but also resonates with the other concepts of Institutional Theory covered in this subsection (e.g., legitimacy, isomorphism, institutional change and organizational field).

Li et al. (2006) stress other characteristics pertaining to the institutional entrepreneur arising from or used to operating in emerging markets, which proves to be of great value to the vast majority of works covering immigrants moving from developing countries to start their businesses in developed nations. For the authors, institutional entrepreneurs from this original context play a similar role to the disruptive entrepreneur in the Schumpeterian sense (1997), for they help to establish new market institutions that drive institutional change, which makes them different from traditional entrepreneurs.

In this regard, several studies placing immigrants as institutional entrepreneurs started to appear in the entrepreneurship scholarship (Dabić et al., 2020). North's (1990) New Institutional Economics (NIE) have been prevalent in the empirical research, although mainly through a top-down logic, investigating how institutions shape ethnic marginalized groups' interactions in a given society as well as immigrant venture-creation and growth (Dabić et al., 2020). Urbano et al. (2011), for instance, have uncovered the role of socio-cultural factors in the survival of transnational enterprises by using dual case studies from Spain. Similarly, Baltar and Icart (2013) concluded formal and informal institutional rules have greatly influenced the location decisions of firms and immigrant entrepreneurs' motivations for starting transnational businesses because these provide the frame for developing profitable opportunities.

By and large, Aliaga-Isla ; Rialp (2013) also highlighted how Institutional Theory might shed new light on the institutional context affecting immigrant enterprises by comparing specific policies and formal institutions present in the regulatory pillar within developed nations that promote and/or constrain immigrant business venturing. Brzozowski et al. (2014), for example, have identified immigrants' citizenship status is closely related to a home country's institutional support for foreigners creating new businesses.

Regarding Female Entrepreneurship (FENT) scholarly in particular, a similar pattern in the topics covered with Institutional Theory has been identified. For instance, Xie et al. (2021) explored how combinations of multiple institutional conditions hold sway on female businesses' creation and growth and discovered the cognitive pillar is decisive for prompting FENT in times of scarce financial resources, confirming previous studies that showed women were more likely to keep their entrepreneurial intentions in the presence of a supportive and welcoming external culture (Croson ; Gneezy, 2009; Estrin ; Mickiewicz, 2010).

In addition, female entrepreneurs' expectations of growth are susceptible to socio-cultural forces in that these can influence women's recognition of the legitimacy of entrepreneurship as a way to improve their financial status and social prestige (Delmar ; Shane, 2004; Milanov et al., 2015), even though their businesses' growth could not be effectively achieved without strong external regulatory and normative environments as well, which was not the case concerning their entrepreneurial willingness solely (Xie et al., 2021).

Regarding the cognitive pillar as well, emotional aspects surrounding female entrepreneurial activity are also neglected to the detriment of financial achievement, not infrequently taken as the only type of outcome one might attain from running a business, which ignores the more personal and psychological outcomes highly valued by the great majority of female entrepreneurs (Selvarajah et al., 2012; Xu et al., 2019). Interestingly, immigrant women's financial prosperity has proved to be dependent on the social and cognitive attributes of their owners, in particular on their ability to speak both their mother tongue and that of the country of settlement's, pursue an independent drive—an attribute of great importance to women refugees (Huq ; Venugopal, 2021)—, build rapport and become trusted among local communities, possess emotional intelligence to foster positive working relationships, and learn out of their migrant entrepreneurial experiences in a constant commitment to their self-development (Cabrera ; Mauricio, 2017; Vershinina et al., 2019; Acevedo-Duque et al., 2021; Patrickson ; Hallo, 2021).

Interestingly, Minniti (2010) compared female entrepreneurship in developing and developed nations in order to analyze countries' differences concerning the survival of women-owned businesses in their three institutional pillars: macroeconomic or regulatory (e.g., regulations, GDP, maternity leave coverage); mesoeconomic or normative (e.g., technological and demographic characteristics); microeconomic or cultural (e.g., personal and cultural variables). The author found out that a significant portion of the gender gap in start-up activity is associated with differences in self-perception (i.e., having the necessary skills and knowledge to be firm founders) and with the GDP per capita of the country.

Minniti's (2010) findings add to Lee's (2009) previous cross-country study, discussing how women-owned business performance in the service industry was more influenced by product/service competency and managerial factors than social structures (e.g., family support and succession and communication ability), especially in developed countries (e.g., the U.S.) providing regulatory support in comparison to developing nations (e.g., Korea).

Prior to that, Boden and Nucci (2000) had already alerted issues concerning women's business formation and survival ought to be considered within prevailing macroeconomic conditions. The authors undertook a retrospective, cross-sectional analysis of both male and female business-owners' characteristics between 1980–1982 and 1985–1987 cohorts and brought to light the amount and quality of human capital acquired during wage employment as a major factor affecting the performance of new entrepreneurs. Since the 1982 cohort was better educated, more likely to have had prior, paid managerial experience, and had more years of prior, paid employment experience, the authors posit that what has been largely overlooked by policymakers has not been female entrepreneurs' access to debt and equity capital, rather, it has been the changes in both product and labor markets over a given period (e.g., tightening and loosening of labor markets and the changes in wage earnings between employed men and women) which have influenced the opportunity cost perception of being self-employed, has imposed more binding financial constraints on the initial scale of women's businesses relative to men's (i.e., considering women's lower average wage earnings, they have less accumulated capital to support the openness of their business independently), and have determined women's fewer years of general work experience and lesser exposure to managerial occupations, which suggest a higher demand for entrepreneurial education and training (or mentoring) targeted at the would-be female entrepreneurs.

Following this mentality, some academics argue in favor of entrepreneurs with an immigration background having superior capabilities and resources (e.g., enhanced levels of international knowledge, language skills and cross-country relationships) that allow them to easily expand to foreign markets (Zolin ; Schlosser, 2013; Neville et al., 2014; Sun ; Fong, 2021; Vinogradov ; Jørgensen, 2017; Morgan et al., 2018). Consequently, Middermann (2020) recognized immigrant entrepreneurs as an important determinant for entrepreneurial growth and economic development, for they possess natural cognitive advantages and higher levels of proactive behavior, which lead to a more favorable evaluation of international business opportunities.

In contrast to this logic of female entrepreneurship by necessity, De Luca and Ambrosini (2019) explored immigrant mixed networks' (with other foreigners and/or locals) role not only in business management, but also in the development of transnational social activities. Policies that encourage associations, provide opportunities for gathering and exchanging with native residents, and improve the presence of immigrant women in local institutions may have the unexpected consequence of increasing immigrant women's participation in self-employment, not out of a lack of alternatives, but as a path to self-fulfillment and empowerment.

In this regard, Poggesi et al. (2016) commented that although women face more difficulties than men (e.g., in access to credit, developing strong networks, balancing work and life), female business owners across different countries (both developed and developing ones) play an important role in the societies in which they operate, by contributing to employment and wealth creation, meaning that women are more interested than men in the non-economic results of their firms and that there still need to understand how local traditions and norms, the power of religion, social segregation, and societal legitimation enable them to act as institutional entrepreneurs and affect their behaviors towards entrepreneurship.

Ten years earlier, Jones and Wadhwani (2006) had stated it would be necessary to observe the concomitant influence of religion, nationality and affiliation on minority groups' status so as to fully comprehend how these might exert some impact on business venturing. Their viewpoint was shaped by the defense of a macroeconomic analysis associated with embeddedness and social networks to advance the studies in entrepreneurship theory, an idea disseminated since the 1990s through the development of modern economic sociology (Vale, 2014).

2.3 Mixed Embeddedness

The original concept of embeddedness was created by Polanyi (1957) to understand how social interactions impact behavior and institutions (Vale, 2014; Kaup, 2015; Corrêa et al., 2020). Out of the need to create an "economic theory capable of providing criteria for evaluating the relative significance of economic and non-economic variables to social theory" (Macdonald, 1971, p. 8), Granovetter (1985) gave birth to modern economic sociology by introducing Polanyi’s (1957) concept to entrepreneurship study.

Deriving from the contributions of industrial sociology (Jones ; Ram, 2007) and economic geography (Nathan ; Lee, 2013) and invoking the classic question of sociological theory about how social relations can influence behavior and institutions, Granovetter (1973, 1985) postulated that an entrepreneur’s economic behavior would be preponderantly conditioned to the consequences of their embeddedness in their social network. Following his challenging proposition to the neoclassical idea that economic activity would be atomized, autonomous, or under-socialized (i.e., little influenced by the relational context), this author defended the peculiarity of economic activity to be widely embedded in over-socialized structures within modern industrial society.

In retrospect, Granovetter (1973, 2005) resumes the propositions of Simmel (1955, 1971) when he sees the entrepreneur as an individual who connects and interacts with different groups or social networks. The author thus conceives two types of ties capable of uniting individuals: (a) strong ties, found in closer, cohesive, and united social groups, capable of generating solidarity and promoting trust; and (b) weak ties, found in more fragmented and porous social structures, capable of connecting an individual to different realities, allowing access to differentiated information. "Individuals with few weak ties would be deprived of information from distant parts of the social system and, as such, confined to news and provincial views of their close friends" (Granovetter, 1973, p. 1368).

The concept of embeddedness is consequently based on two distinctive dimensions: relational and structural. Whilst the first concerns the personal relations of a given social actor, the second, more comprehensive and subtle, concerns the broader social structure in which a given actor is embedded. So, it would then be necessary to acknowledge an entrepreneur's personal relationship structures and how these fit into a broader structure of social relationships to understand network behavior thoroughly.

Albeit Granovetter's efforts not to associate his relational structures with the notion of "market", by insisting "on the intrinsically relational nature of all social action" (Krippner ; Alvarez, 2007, p. 231) grounded on Methodological Individualism (Raud-Mattedi, 2005), the 'problem of embeddedness' persisted through a utilitarian logic inherited from economic studies (Carvalho, 2002), ending up "resurrecting a distinction between the anonymous market and the social economy, suggesting that the former is embedded in the latter" (Krippner ; Alvarez, 2007, p. 231), as clearly evidenced in Corrêa et al.'s (2020) theoretical essay. In this sense, Granovetter (1992) would not have escaped the predominant economic view that posits "economy as inert to the influence of other social structures" to the detriment of those driven by the market, which places social relations in modern society as almost an epiphenomenon of it, i.e., arising from it (Corrêa et al., 2020).

The aforementioned 'problem of embeddedness' is not new to entrepreneurship field, though. In the same vein, Sexton and Smilor (1997) criticized the negligence of some current approaches that deem entrepreneurs exclusively as autonomous decision-makers, thus disregarding a whole line of reasoning that incorporates the entrepreneur in a given context or social conjuncture.

Other critics of the embeddedness approach included the lack of a unified theoretical body (Graça, 2012; Krippner ; Alvarez, 2007); theoretical vagueness in defining and applying the embeddedness concept" (Krippner ; Alvarez, 2007, p. 220); and complete disregard for state influence, since "Granovetter does not develop an analysis of the role of the state in the economy" (Raud, 2007, p. 214), a deficiency unfortunately too found in literature reviews of mixed embeddedness' empirical studies (Ram et al., 2017).

Acknowledging that and reacting against the widespread previous belief that the rise of migrant-origin entrepreneurs could be explained almost solely by their solidary co-ethnic social capital networks — a logic largely defended in Light's (1972) pioneering work on immigrant entrepreneurship —, Kloosterman et al. (1999) sustained the socio-economic position of the entrepreneurial immigrant (and consequently, their propensity for upward social mobility) could only be properly understood if considering not only their embeddedness in social networks of immigrants—which find themselves circumscribed almost exclusively to fellow countrymen or coethnics—but also by a 'mix' comprised of social relations, socio-economic factors, as well as the political and institutional context of the host country.

The 'mixed' found in the 'mixed embeddedness' approach then consists of integrating the embeddedness of predominantly economic opportunity structures in a broader societal context, i.e., in entrepreneurs' social networks, in an overarching interactionist dynamic model that takes into account both the variation in the composition of the migrant population (e.g., with respect to human, social and financial capital being treated as strategic resources) and the shifts in the opportunity structure which impact on where openings for businesses occur and how they develop over time.

By and large, Kloosterman and his associates (2003) insisted on a more balanced overview of immigrant entrepreneurship, one that would not simply recognize ethnic entrepreneurs as social actors embedded solely in an external business context. Such context would still be comprised firstly of markets and the analysis of a particular configuration creating a supply of immigrant entrepreneurs to compete with established indigenous firms, including large-scale corporates; but would also admit it suffers a significant influence of the state, with its regulatory regime simultaneously creating a demand for them with which all businesses ought to comply (Kloosterman ; Rath, 2003).

Perhaps it is the very analysis of social capital what differs most in the application of mixed embeddedness from embeddedness alone, and therein lies the main adaptation in its application if compared to its original cases of application in Europe, where analysis of the impacts of relationships between co-ethnics in relation to social mobility and performance of these entrepreneurs were prioritized (Kloosterman, 2010).

It is argued that Waldinger (1990) has been the precursor of such an interactionist model whereby minority businesses are seen as resulting from the interplay of ethnic resources (e.g., community social capital) and opportunity structure (e.g., market environment), with them both being subject to the entrepreneur's management strategy (Ram et al., 2017). However, Waldinger's (1990) seminal works on ethnic entrepreneurs and immigrant businesses were too simplistic in describing opportunity structures, hence Mixed Embeddedness deviates from it in three central elements, registered in Table 4. An illustrative model of Waldinger's (1990) framework is depicted in Figure 2.

Table 4 - Kloosterman's (2010) interactionist model's differences from Waldinger's (1990)

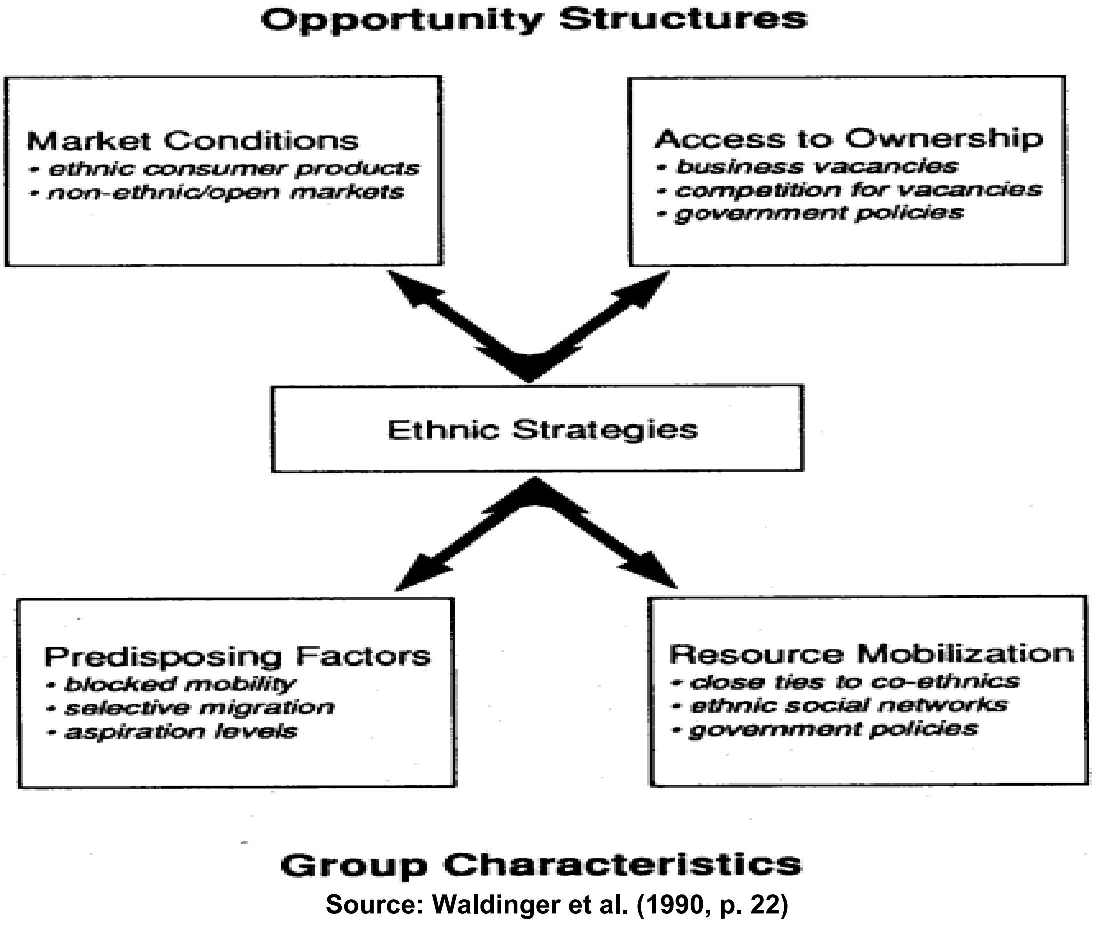
Elements of Distinction	**Definitions**
1)Foreign market disadvantages to migrant firms	Limitations of ethnic social capital, such as unfamiliarity with the local market, racist discrimination, and poor access to resources generally make migrants enter market sectors where there are few demands on capital and expertise, granting them a livelihood sustainable only by brutally hard work and breaking regulatory measures to reduce costs
2) European tradition *versus* an American free-market outlook	Following Andersen's (1990) comparative analysis of international variations in welfare capitalism, Kloosterman and his colleagues introduce the state regulatory regime in his 'mix' and thus emphasize decisive contrasts between the deregulated states of the Anglo-American context and the relatively highly regulated European business scenario in an attempt to protect the position of indigenous entrepreneurs from several advanced economies in the EU.
3) More dynamic opportunity structures	Whereas Waldinger et al. (1990) admitted migrant firms would be more prone to enter stagnant sectors, Kloosterman assumed a whole new set of more promising opportunities had opened up with the progress of industrialization in the Western world and the concomitant manufacturing employment structural decline after the 1990s, which prompted an employment growth in service activities and required the input of highly-skilled workers in conjunction of a wide range of cognitive-cultural in-person services. Opportunities then emerged both for migrant entrepreneurs with high and low levels of human capital in global cities, causing shifts not only in

	opportunity structures driven by technological developments and changes in global trade, but also by adjustments in regulatory framework (e.g., neoliberal policies shifting provision from state to market) or in socio-cultural practices (e.g., outsourcing of household tasks becoming more accepted).

Source: own elaboration, based on Kloosterman (2010), Ram et al., (2007), and Jones et al. (2014)

With these three distinctions in mind, Kloosterman (2010) has expanded the concept of opportunity structures within such an interactionist approach by including several other determinants in the analysis of immigrants' entrepreneurial activities, namely: technological innovations, socio-cultural practices, networking with the indigenous population and not just with co-nationals and shifts in global trade. The popularity of ME is thus grounded in European scholars' avid interest in going beyond US-dominated models exclusively reliant on the so-called 'ethnic resources' of migrant entrepreneurs (Jones et al., 2014). In Kloosterman's (2010) interactionist model, the resources variable is split between a low (secondary schooling or less) and high level (vocational or academic schooling) combined with low and high levels of financial capital, and homogenous and heterogeneous social networks.

Figure 2 - An Interactionist Model for Researching the Ethnic Business Development


Opportunity Structures
Market Conditions
• ethnic consumer products
• non-ethnic/open markets
Access to Ownership
• business vacancies
• competition for vacancies
• government policies
Ethnic Strategies
Predisposing Factors
• blocked mobility
• selective migration
• aspiration levels
Resource Mobilization
• close ties to co-ethnics
• ethnic social networks
• government policies
Group Characteristics

Source: Waldinger et al. (1990, p. 22)

Social aspects, institutional factors, gender and ethnic-racial gaps, and supportive environment are also revisited within ME, since the approach has evolved to encompass the micro level of individual entrepreneurs (with their resources); the meso level of local opportunity structure, and the macro-institutional level of embeddedness (Kloosterman ; Rath, 2018). The interplay between these three levels builds a larger, dynamic framework, encompassing organizations in the neighborhood, city, and national sphere (Kloosterman ; Rath, 2018).

At the individual level, different factors of the mixed embeddedness would signal potential barriers or promoters of distinct opportunity structures. Thus, such analysis calls for a deepening of the understanding of the relationships between individual agency, structural and institutional inequalities, and collective social boundaries (Romero ; Valdez, 2016). These are exemplified by the fact immigrants are commonly pushed toward self-employment due to their socio-economic conditions upon arrival in the new country and barriers such as xenophobia, poor labor legislation and overall working conditions, lack of language or even technical skills (Cruz et al., 2020).

Social capital, by implication, is deemed as part of the human capital construct, often included in the personal resources available to the immigrant entrepreneur. The same occurs with economic capital; to a certain extent, they reinforce each other. For instance, economic capital facilitates the acquisition of technical and intellectual skills, thus favoring the accumulation of human capital, which, in turn, may facilitate the establishment of new social ties, thus reinforcing social capital (Kloosterman ; Rath, 2018). These relationships are consequently always approached in a multilevel perspective, i.e., considering interpersonal and inter-organization relationships, whether locally or transnationally, seeking to delineate the specific configuration of the integration process of these entrepreneurs, how they prioritize the relationships established and the networks constituted between co-ethnics or co-nationals (Rath ; Kloosterman, 2000).

Additional to this three-dimensional analysis, other factors contribute to make ME so attractive to researchers of immigrant entrepreneurship to this date. As the ‘mixed’ in the name suggests, it is far from being a static approach and, not surprisingly, it has evolved since its inception in the late 1990s (Jones et al., 2018) as much as the traditional Institutional Theory has originated Neoinstitutionalism. Efforts have been made to refine some original elements, e.g., more attention has been paid to the time dimension, extending it to the various stages of the entrepreneurial trajectory and/or to longitudinal studies that enable scholars to unfold the upward economic movement of ethnic entrepreneurs as they accumulate more strategic resources in spite of hostile market conditions (Schutjens, 2014).

Alternatively, the variable time may also refer to political and economic changes: rules and regulations may offer either new or more market openings as well as reduce them over time (Kloosterman ; Rath, 2018). In this regard, some scholars have attempted to insert transnational social capital into the ME approach by investigating how the deregulation programs of the past few decades impacted entrepreneurial opportunities, in the same way as reregulation or law enforcement (Gertner et al., 2015; Solano, 2016; Bagwell, 2018). This advancement proves to be particularly relevant considering the profile of the modern migrant entrepreneur, who is increasingly embedded in social networks straddling different countries and often different continents.

In addition, after the prolonged recession in the wake of the credit crisis, the shifts in the opportunity structures have come to be seen in a new light (Kloosterman ; Rath, 2018). Markets have not responded uniformly to these shocks, hence investigating how migrant entrepreneurs have fared after 2008 in different cities in different countries, requiring, again, a longitudinal approach, also opened new insights into the resilience of migrant-run businesses (Riva ; Lucchini, 2015). In fact, ME's update of critical variables enables research on a wide array of new questions regarding the entrepreneurship of migrants, the entrepreneurship phenomenon in general, and gender-related entrepreneurship practices (Ram et al., 2017; Kloosterman, 2018; Jones et al., 2018; Rath ; Schutjens, 2015).

With respect to the latter, Ram et al. (2017) have proposed a reframe of ME regarding issues of (1) the role of regulation, (2) the incorporation of racist exclusion, (3) gendered structures of migration and labor market processes, (4) market ghettoization, and (5) greater sensitivity to its historical context. Its elements and grounding definitions are further detailed in Table 5.

Ram et al. (2017, p. 7) justify this renewal of ME original model given that "the intersection of ethnicity, gender and other core axes of difference (class, religion, disability) tends to be overlooked" due to the dominant ethnic entrepreneurship paradigm, i.e., a tendency to analyze entrepreneurship mainly at the meso level, implying the effect of entrepreneurial portrayal is largely an outcome of ethnic group-based attributes and features (Romero ; Valdez, 2016). This results in entrepreneurship research investigating ethnic minority entrepreneurs and women as two groups that deviate from the idealization of the mainstream entrepreneur (white, male, middle-class), almost as if in isolation from each other (Carter et al., 2015). Intersectional approaches then prove to be essential in taking a broader view of an entrepreneur's social representation, acknowledging distinct yet interdependent identities, such as gender race and social class (Valdez, 2011).

Table 5 – Constitutive Elements of the Mixed Embeddedness Approach

Mixed Embeddedness' Component	Definition
(1) Regulation	Migration policy regulations on both the drivers and outcomes of migrant entrepreneurship.
(2) Racist Exclusion	Acquisition of host country credentials (e.g., educational background, language proficiency, past entrepreneurial or employment experiences), knowledge of the host country entrepreneurial environment and culture, xenophobia and racist discrimination consequences.
(3) Gendered Migration and Labor Processes	Unveiling gendered social structures, including migration flows, productive labor organization and reproductive roles in the access to the job market
(4) Market Ghettoization	Market segregation compelling immigrants to operate in specific sectors usually unwanted by native firms
(5) Historical Context	Counteracting long-lasting immigrant structural disadvantage by analyzing inter-connections between the evolving political-economy and shifts in immigrant livelihoods from the post-World War II period onwards
(6) Institutional environment and wider policy context	Major state activities concerning state legislation to fostering entrepreneurship and the provision of financial incentives

Source: own elaboration, based on Ram et al. (2017)

Now moving on to how ME has been used to investigate female immigrant entrepreneurship before the aforementioned update of the model, Chreim et al. (2018) have observed in their literature review that most studies on the topic still focus on host countries from Western Europe and North America, given their perceived economic development, ease of doing business, well-developed and trustable institutions, and expanding service sector represents an enticing environment where women immigrants can pursue their entrepreneurial endeavors.

Although countries like Germany, Sweden, and the Netherlands have been seen as major enablers of favored institutional and regulatory conditions within

Europe (Lidola, 2014; Ohlsson et al., 2012; Verduijn ; Essers, 2013), the lack of knowledge of governmental resources available for women immigrant entrepreneurs persists as one of the greater barriers to immigration (Pio, 2007), denouncing efforts need still to be made into advocating and effectively promoting institutional infrastructure in the host country (Wang ; Li, 2007).

Another aspect considered by immigrant women is an open-minded and multicultural environment (Lidola, 2014), albeit these are influenced by the gender role ideologies and value systems pertaining to the host country, which results in the degree of acceptance and general support for female immigrant entrepreneurs in a given institutional context (De Vita et al., 2014). Higher levels of xenophobia emanating against skin color and Muslim religion in New Zealand (Pio, 2007) and the Netherlands (Essers ; Benschop, 2007), for example, have been listed among the interfering conditions to foreign women's acceptance into another country's environment. Such bias may contribute to a "feeling of inferiority" (González-González et al., 2011), for many women from developing countries are deemed as illiterates and male dependents (De Vita et al., 2014), which eventually prevents female immigrant entrepreneurs from networking with local business owners, further constraining them from individual development and venture growth (Verduijn ; Essers, 2013).

Worse still, the "double disadvantage" of ethnicity and gender intensifies financial institutions' skepticism about immigrant women's entrepreneurial capabilities (Ghosh et al., 2018; Murzacheva et al., 2020), and it is not unfrequent that male or local guarantors are required in bank loan applications made by female immigrants (González-González et al., 2011; Garg ; Agarwal, 2017). Host country policies related to women's entrance into business venturing after immigration thus play a vital role in determining what human and financial capital they are likely to possess, influencing their entrepreneurial progress as well (Chreim et al., 2018).

Female immigrant entrepreneurs may not be able to get co-ethnic community support and hence experience restrictions to their venture's growth if they do not conform to the indigenous community's views of gender roles (González-González et al., 2011). Alternatively, they tend to locate in geographical proximity to other ethnic minorities with similar backgrounds, forming enclaves that provide clustered and unique resources not available to native female entrepreneurs (Pio, 2007).

Women immigrants' human capital also plays a significant role in their aptitude for entrepreneurship. Undoubtedly their individual characteristics (e.g., education, language proficiency, citizenship status) have a say in one's propensity to become self-employed. Language, in this case, is frequently associated with issues of fluency and accent, since lack of fluency and/or a different accent from the majority population are seen as devaluing in an immigrant trying to enter the mainstream labor market (Mwila, 2013), as well as a hindrance to the growth of the enterprise or to seeking funds from financial markets (Cheng, 2015). On the other hand, language and education challenges may be minimized for the second generation of immigrants, given the fact they tend to have been living in the host country for a longer period than those from the first generation (Ohlsson et al., 2012).

The capacity to communicate in both home and host country languages and cultures is seen as a significant source of human capital and a competitive advantage in business because it enables relationships with varied supply sources (e.g., labor) and market segments (Hedberg ; Pettersson, 2012). Likewise, a longer stay in the host community may allow immigrants to get more business experience and build a greater capacity to access financial and social resources (Chreim et al., 2018).

One last element of human capital would be to have a business family background, as this offers women entrepreneurs role models, mentors, a close network in the management domain, and a specific set of business experiences that adds to their entrepreneurial competencies (Aygören ; Nordqvist, 2015).

Conversely, the family context has been pointed out as a hindrance to female entrepreneurship in numerous ways, despite motherhood being indicated as a contributing factor to stimulating women's entrepreneurial endeavors in an attempt to provide better material conditions to their offspring. Firstly, women must spend a great portion of their revenues on home expenses, leaving them with less money to reinvest in their own firms (Chreim et al., 2018). In addition, whereas males are increasingly free to defy the status quo ingrained in gender conventions by entering commonly assumed "female sectors", women remain concentrated in a few saturated activities, mostly low-skilled and home-centric (Langevang et al., 2015).

Turning our attention now to the factors impacting the entrepreneurial intention of female immigrants, Munkejord (2017) identified some motivations for women starting their businesses in Norwegian rural areas: a way out of unemployment; a means to avoid underemployment; a means to live in a region of perceived attraction; and a preferred choice for women with dissatisfactory wage labor. Other than these, the said paper revealed the importance of family support and spatial embeddedness among female immigrant entrepreneurs living in that geographical area, along with a prior feeling of belonging to the new region of settlement (Munkejord, 2017).

In a similar vein, Brieger and Gielnik (2021) argued immigrant entrepreneurship is primarily male-dominated and thus tried to uncover the drivers and contextual factors that could explain the gender gap in it through a multi-country study using ME. Their findings revealed that such a gap is primarily caused by the lack of a supportive institutional entrepreneurial environment through policymaking that does not take into account the social reality female expatriates face when they try to find formal employment in a host country, which highlights not only gender-related discrimination when female immigrants are compared with their male counterparts but also the economic, social, cultural and ethnic differentiation outlined between female natives of the country of settlement’s having facilitated access to the labor market in relation to immigrants of the same gender (Brieger ; Gielnik, 2021).

Raijman and Semyonov (1997) had already noticed this when they proposed women from developing countries suffered a dual disadvantage that might only be uncovered by examining the phenomenon of immigrant entrepreneurship from a gendered perspective because of the structural factors that position this type of entrepreneurial activity as one relying more on necessity than on discovering an opportunity. The dual disadvantage would then refer to being a woman and being an immigrant from a less advanced country trying to access a foreign labor market while competing with equally immigrant men. Other authors believe that it would be more accurate to say that there is threefold discrimination in this case: as a woman, an immigrant, and a worker (Parella, 2003; Portes et al., 2010).

Albeit several authors still reinforce this idea that what makes them self-employed is the job insecurity found in host countries along with limited opportunities for social and labor mobility (Solé et al., 2009; Heilbrunn ; Abu-Asbah, 2011; Pio ; Essers, 2014; Osorio-García-de-Oteyza et al., 2020). Schrover et al. (2007) represent another group of scholars who emphasize that, for many immigrant women, however, self-employment is a way of reconciling their family, personal, professional, and working lives, which prompts them to start their business activities out of personal interests and aspirations.

2.4 The Need for an Integrative Framework to Study Immigrant Female Entrepreneurship

Based on Moore's (1986) seminal work on entrepreneurial behavior being shaped by both individual traits and the environment, Bygrave (2004) expanded the former's analysis to approach entrepreneurial processes as a set of stages and events that follow one another, starting with the business idea and triggering events that facilitate business operationalization, implementation, and growth. By and large, Bygrave's approach continued to reckon entrepreneurial processes as social phenomena intertwined with individual capabilities of running a business, thus, the entrepreneur as an individual remained the focus of the analysis, and later reinterpretations of his model perpetuated such emphasis (e.g., Nassif, Ghobril, ; da Silva, 2010).

Gradually, scholarship advanced to look at firm-level behavior in order to unveil the gendered side of organizational dynamics; yet, to this date, literature on the results of female entrepreneurial processes is still scarce, partially because even when integrative models have been proposed (see e.g. Langevang et al., 2015; Yousafzai et al., 2015), these could not avoid a predominantly dualist perspective that could only capture women's entrepreneurial processes through their enablers and deterrents (Chreim et al., 2018). According to Corrêa et al. (2020), this is not an issue exclusive to women's entrepreneurship studies, since it is grounded in the fact that reciprocity and redistribution mechanisms within social relations have been poorly explored in the broad entrepreneurship literature, one thing an integration between ME and Neo-IT is meant to address.

Corrêa et al. (2020) have commented that a detailed look at these repercussions of social embeddedness is essential to solving Granovetter's (1985) famous 'problem of embeddedness', which tried to avoid a deterministic view of individual behavior but kept on overlooking social dimensions present in an individual's relationship with their strong and weak ties, because Granovetter (1985) ended up privileging economic structures as much as his contemporary economic scholars did (Corrêa et al., 2020)—a trend that has perpetuated in ME approach in spite of the inclusion of spatial and relational embeddedness in the model.

In our theoretical triangulation between ME and Neo-IT, we argue reciprocity refers to how close ties establish similar patterns of behavior among one another (Corrêa et al., 2020), i.e., the entrepreneur tries to mimic some business strategies seen elsewhere in the organizational field s/he operates, also recurring to their personal relations to shape their behavior in the enterprise setting. Therefore, in our model, we align ME's concept of reciprocity to Neo-IT's isomorphism.

In turn, ME's redistribution recalls Neo-It's legitimacy principle to the extent that it refers to how the entrepreneur is able to disseminate new or old entrepreneurial behavioral patterns among their weak and strong ties (Corrêa et al., 2020), meaning their entrepreneurial behavior may affect the organizational field to the same degree as it is affected by their close networking connections. Such a refreshed perspective on the 'good-old' entrepreneurial process may provide new understandings of how women's agency—or, in fact, any type of entrepreneur—can change their environment by using it as a source of change through the people around them, the people whom they reach either because of their business or their personal relations. This becomes even more complex and problematic in migratory contexts due to their transnational nature (Solano, 2020), which expands migrant entrepreneurs' networks through cross-bordering and international cooperation, let alone the specific intersectional cultural norms that regulate female insertion in entrepreneurial ecosystems in both the home and host country.

Such a networking process happens because relational embeddedness is dependent on the legitimation granted by the existing actors within a given network (aka incumbents) upon the evaluation of a candidate's (outsiders of a given institutional field) suitability to enter that network (Stoyanov, 2018). This implies embeddedness is a contingent phenomenon related to an individual's gradual tendency to adopt a socially expected behavior, i.e., a candidate's ability to operate in an established system of social norms and expectations (Scott, 2014).

Then, our integrative approach extends such construct in that it does not stop at an analysis of how capital assets are deployed against a hostile structural environment. By contrast, it recognizes that forms of capital are not purely inherent in the social agents but are rather "properties ... in many respects conditioned by the structure itself" (Ram et al., 2017, p. 432). This dialogical relationship between the functionalist epistemology found in Neo-IT and the structuralist epistemology found in ME is what most enriches an integrative framework among these two theories.

Arguably, although the inventors of ME have tried to evolve their framework to incorporate actors' agency upon the mobilization of established economic, social, cultural, and regulatory structures (Stoyanov, 2018), they still have failed to reproduce or map the process by which individuals function differently when they carry out such mobilization. In other words, the outcomes of their intervention in institutional fields, and consequently individuals' change capacity in foreign environments is still lost, as agency in ME relates merely to "a battery of resources under the agents' ownership to be brought to bear on the structure" (Stoyanov, 2018, p. 3-4).

Neo-IT then adds to the theoretical model of ME by providing a clearer understanding of how institutionalized social practices, the institutions themselves, and the phenomenon of isomorphism and legitimacy, both in the country of origin (e.g., in the case of transnational enterprises) and in the country of destination, influence the three dimensions of ME, namely economic embeddedness (resource-dependency issues), social embeddedness (relations and networking among close-knit and distant ties) and institutional embeddedness (creation, development, and consolidation of 'migrant entrepreneurship institutional fields' overseas, which are admittedly formed in relation to the entrepreneurial ecosystems present in the country of settlement).

In fact, it cannot be stated that institutional embeddedness has been covered so far in the extant literature using ME as a framework, provided that only regulatory elements have been investigated under a top-down view, i.e., regulatory structures impinging barriers or advantages on migrant entrepreneurs. Arguably, these subjects may navigate through such structures to rearrange the regulations, norms, and cultural values they will disseminate through their entrepreneurial processes abroad, i.e., they undertake critical decision-making while performing their institutionalization processes overseas.

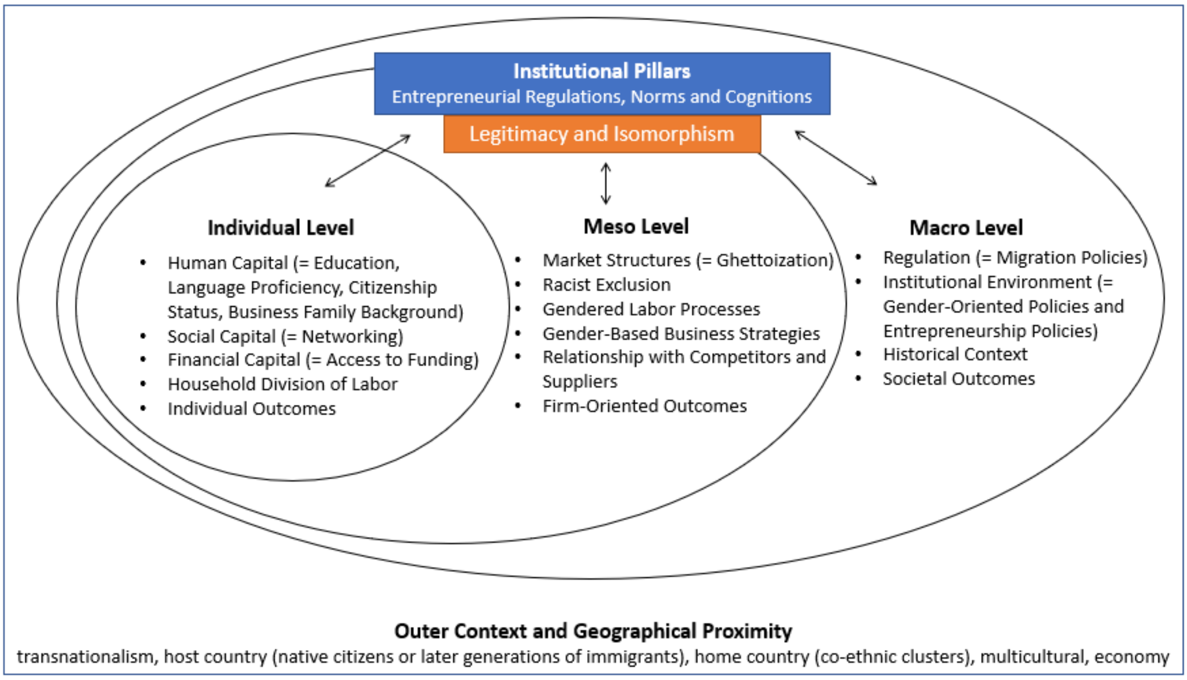
More importantly, studying institutional embeddedness through these lenses allows unraveling how the female genre engages in categorization and comparison of social codes for constructing candidates' legitimacy in the female immigrant entrepreneurship institutional fields in terms of in-groups (i.e. incumbents) and out-groups (i.e. candidates) networking selection and negotiation of self-representation, reactiveness, relatedness, reflexivity, integration, and proactiveness (Stoyanov, 2018). In other words, by engaging in these processes, it is possible to understand how migrant women entrepreneurs form perceptions and define others and themselves within the social context to which they learn to belong, meaning the outcomes of their entrepreneurial processes serve as a medium to operate within institutional fields through isomorphism/reciprocity and legitimacy/redistribution.

Next, we head to the framework that has been devised based on the institutional and mixed embeddedness factors of relevance to the institutionalization of female migrant entrepreneurial processes. It is important to stress that the analytical categories included in it result from this literature review and are yet to be validated by the empirical analysis that follows the methodological section.

2.5 An Integrative Framework to Study Immigrant Female Entrepreneurship

Considering these limitations, our integrative framework intertwines the original seminal works of Institutional Theory (Scott, 2014; Meyer ; Scott, 1983; Jepperson, 1991; Suchman, 1995; Meyer, 1979; Dimaggio ; Powell; 2005; Brush et al., 2009) and the revised Mixed Embeddedness approach (Ram et al., 2017; Chreim et al., 2018) presented in the previous sections. The conceptual model designed for the purpose of this work is depicted in Figure 3. Its analytical categories and respective Constitutive Definitions (CD) are presented below. A summary of them all can be found in Table 6, along with their respective elements of analysis.

Figure 3 – Conceptual Model for Investigating Immigrant Women Entrepreneurship


Institutional Pillars
Entrepreneurial Regulations, Norms and Cognitions
Legitimacy and Isomorphism
Individual Level
Human Capital (= Education, Language Proficiency, Citizenship Status, Business Family Background)
Social Capital (= Networking)
Financial Capital (= Access to Funding)
Household Division of Labor
Individual Outcomes
Meso Level
Market Structures (= Ghettoization)
Racist Exclusion
Gendered Labor Processes
Gender-Based Business Strategies
Relationship with Competitors and Suppliers
Firm-Oriented Outcomes
Macro Level
Regulation (= Migration Policies)
Institutional Environment (= Gender-Oriented Policies and Entrepreneurship Policies)
Historical Context
Societal Outcomes
Outer Context and Geographical Proximity
transnationalism, host country (native citizens or later generations of immigrants), home country (co-ethnic clusters), multicultural, economy

Source: own elaboration, based on Brush et al. (2009), Saunders et al. (2015), Yousafzai et al. (2015), Ram et al. (2017) and Chreim et al. (2018)

In 1973, Fred Kerlinger launched the book *Foundations of Behavioral Research*, which offers a vast protocol for conducting research in the field of Psychology. His work has subsequently been adopted worldwide as a reference for terminology in scientific research in general, especially in Social Sciences and Humanities. From him, the term “constitutive definition” was inherited, which entails the practice of defining a construct by using other concepts, i.e., an abstraction being explicitly adopted for scientific purposes. Considering this is a qualitative study, the analytical categories listed here do not require an accompanying “operational definition”, which is applied to measure variables in quantitative research.

Laville and Dionne (1999) present three ways of defining analytical categories: i) the open model; ii) the closed model; and iii) the mixed model.

In the open model, the approach is inductive. This is a model often used in studies of exploratory nature, when the researcher knows little of the area under study and feels the need to improve their knowledge of a situation or phenomenon in order to enunciate hypotheses (Laville ; Dionne, 1999). In this model, the categories of analysis are not fixed at the beginning of the research but become evident only in the course of the analysis itself.

As for the closed model, analytical categories cannot be modified after the collection of empirical data. The researcher decides a priori which will be the categories, relying on a theoretical point of view in an attempt to test the current knowledge of a given phenomenon, in a deductive research effort (Laville ; Dionne, 1999).

The mixed model, in turn, lies between the two models previously described. In it, analytical categories do not have the immutable nature of the previous model, hence the researcher does not wish to verify the presence of predetermined elements (Laville ; Dionne, 1999). Consequently, the various construct units are initially grouped as best as possible into the previously established categories, and then the critical reviews follow, often taking as a starting point the elements not classified the first time, which may lead to the creation of new categories or the expansion or the subdivision of existing ones and the definition of new criteria of relevance (Laville ; Dionne, 1999). This has been the model adopted in this research.

The Constitutive Definitions (CD) are presented below, and a summary of them all, along with their respective elements of analysis, is depicted in Table 5.

a) Individual or Micro Level Categories

Human capital

CD. Sociodemographic characteristics that come from immigrants' intrinsic capabilities, often obtained in the home country, such as educational background, previous family entrepreneurial background, employment history, level of proficiency in the country of settlement's official language(s), and personal capabilities developed in the face of their transition to a foreign country (Chreim et al., 2018).

Social capital

CD. Resources obtained through networks are based on strong and weak ties in the creation of social and cultural infrastructure among family and close ethnic networks from the home country (close co-ethnic relations); among other members of the same nationality but out of the immediate circle in the host country (general co-ethnic relations); among native citizens in the host country; among other nationals from other immigrant ethnic minorities, in case of later generations of immigrants in the host country, accounting for their multicultural environment (Iyer ; Shapiro, 1999; Yetim, 2008).

Financial Capital

CD. Means by which female immigrant entrepreneurs can obtain and learn how to effectively use financial resources to either start or run their businesses, relying on extensive family financial support or formal access to credit from institutions in the country of origin or during their stay in the country of settlement (Baycan-Levent et al., 2003; De Vita et al., 2014; Dhaliwal ; Kangis, 2006; Piperopoulos, 2012).

Household Division of Labor

CD. Unequal household power relations that are conditioned by women's socio-culturally defined roles (Sen, 1990; Anna et al., 2000; Brush et al., 2009).

Individual Outcomes

CD. Direct consequences of entrepreneurial activity in businesswomen's personal relationships and lifestyle, including (but are not limited to) their professional independence, their self-esteem, perception of self-worth among family members, male partners, and relatives, improved social relations and social status (Dhaliwal, 1998; González-González et al., 2011; Lidola, 2014; Raghuram ; Hardill, 1998).

b) Meso Level Categories

Market structures

CD. “Opportunity structures or market conditions which may favor products or services oriented to the co-ethnics specific niche or situations in which a wider, non-ethnic market is served. Opportunity structures also include the ease with which access to business opportunities is obtained” (Aldrich ; Waldinger, 1990, p. 114).

Racist Exclusion

CD. “the role of the market in conditioning the potential of migrant entrepreneurs and compelling them to operate in the under-rewarded sectors unwanted by native firms” (Ram et al., 2017, p. 9), in other words, racist exclusion encompasses blockages or barriers to enter particular markets due to xenophobic practices, racial and gender bias, educational and labor market discrimination (Beckers ; Blumberg, 2013).

Gendered Labor Processes

CD. Industries can not only be gendered in terms of image (Barrett, 1998), but also be ingrained in the wider gendering phenomenon of “social structures that either facilitate or constrain entrepreneurial activity, (…) how migration flows are gendered, (…) the way in which productive and reproductive work is organized and affects the access to the labor market” (Ram et al., 2017, p. 11). For some authors, labor processes become gendered in the cognitive formation of assumptions about work, power, and the like (Acker, 1990), in the early learning experiences within patriarchal societies (Apple, 2018), or in social closure processes, i.e., more powerful actors (often men, with the support of employers) excluding status inferiors (usually women) in order to monopolize desired jobs (Tomaskovic-Devey ; Skaggs, 2002).

Gender-Based Business Strategies

CD. Features concerning leadership, managerial and organizational communication style of female immigrant entrepreneurs’, relative to their preference for the status quo, instead of risky, more disruptive and aggressive business strategies (González-González et al., 2011).

Relationship with Competitors and Suppliers

CD. Networking with competitors and suppliers involve an important dimension of immigrant female entrepreneurship insofar as there is a link between these and the kind of resources available in the ethnic-native social network, especially in the access to strategic informal information, coethnic or native financial sources, coethnic or native customers, and also coethnic or native suppliers and/or providers of specialized managerial services. The same applies to the process of establishing trust and emotional support among ethnic or native labor connections in a foreign market (Chrysostome, 2010).

Firm-Oriented Outcomes

CD. Results originated from the survival capacity and long-term competitive advantage resilience of immigrant women-owned businesses in the foreign market (Chrysostome, 2010; Chreim et al., 2018).

c) Macro Level

Regulation

CD. “country of operation’s migration policy regulations on both the drivers and outcomes of migrant entrepreneurship”, reflecting the country of settlement’s state entrepreneurial support (Ram et al., 2017, p. 9).

Institutional Environment

CD. Conscious design of state legislation ranging from the provision of financial incentives towards entrepreneurship to the specific targeting of ethnic minorities for enterprise aid, although this is not exclusive to the knock-on effects of immigration laws, which may have no intended bearing on entrepreneurship but which in practice may limit occupational choice (Ram et al., 2017).

Historical Context

CD. Inter-connections between the evolving cultural, social, political, and economic conditions of the country of settlement and shifts in immigrant livelihoods (Ram et al., 2017).

Societal Outcomes

CD. Indirect effects of the entrepreneurial activity of female immigrants to the wider society of the country of settlement, in the form of newcomers' assistance with their integration into the host society (Lidola, 2014; Pio, 2007) and direct financial benefits to suppliers, landlords, financial institutions (interest on loans), and governments (taxes) (Mwila, 2013). Such outcomes can be extended to the home country in the case of transnational entrepreneurs, who exert some influence both at the level of the close ethnic community and/or at the level of the entire homeland society (Aliaga-Isla ; Rialp, 2013; Chreim et al., 2018).

Table 6 – Analytical Categories, their Respective Elements and Authors of Reference

<table>
<tr><th colspan="3">Individual or Micro Level</th></tr>
<tr><th>Analytical Categories</th><th>Elements of Analysis</th><th>Author(s) of Reference</th></tr>
<tr><td>Individual Outcomes</td><td>Awareness of individual value
Financial independence
Skill development
Work-life balance
Cultural integration
Social status
Family status</td><td>Dhaliwal (1998)
González-González et al. (2011)
Lidola (2014)
Raghuram and Hardill (1998)</td></tr>
<tr><th colspan="3">Meso Level</th></tr>
<tr><th>Analytical Categories</th><th>Elements of Analysis</th><th>Author(s) of Reference</th></tr>
<tr><td>Firm-Oriented Outcomes</td><td>Income/Revenue
Speed of business growth
Brand value
Risk propensity
Internalization process
Market share
Business performance
Employment of co-ethnic women
Employment of native women
Employment of other minority groups</td><td>Constant (2009)
González-González et al. (2011)
Chreim et al. (2018)</td></tr>
<tr><th colspan="3">Macro Level</th></tr>
<tr><th>Analytical Categories</th><th>Elements of Analysis</th><th>Author(s) of Reference</th></tr>
<tr><td>Societal Outcomes</td><td>Dissemination of businesswomen role models
Dissemination of a gender-equal business culture
Rise of overall employability
Development of occupational skills among minority groups
Tax compliance</td><td>Abbasian and Bildt (2009)
Dhaliwal (2000)
Hillmann (1999)
Mwila (2013)
Chreim et al. (2018)</td></tr>
</table>

Source: own elaboration (2022)

2.5.1 Definition of Other Relevant Terminology

Business establishment – integration and cultural assimilation in the foreign market/context (Stoyanov, 2018).

Incumbents in the social embeddedness – the existing actors within a given network, which can decide the criteria for outsiders to become new members in the group and thus have the power of exclusion or inclusiveness of the foreigner (Pólos et al., 2002; Zuckerman, 1999; Denzin, 2008; Hechter ; Opp, 2005; Stoyanov, 2018).

Candidates in the social embeddedness – outsiders of a given institutional field who are submitted to many levels of symbolic power relationship negotiations in order to become suitable to enter that network (Pólos et al., 2002; Zuckerman, 1999; Denzin, 2008; Hechter ; Opp, 2005; Stoyanov, 2018).

Indigenous populations – native citizens of the country of settlement, usually native-born (Stoyanov, 2018).

Outer Context – Immigrant entrepreneurship is embedded in the host country's economic, cultural, social, and regulatory environment (Azmat, 2013; Baycan-Levent, Masurel, Nijkamp, 2006; Halkias ; Anast, 2009; Wang Li, 2007).

Geographical Proximity – ethnic minorities with similar backgrounds tend to locate in geographical proximity (Pio, 2007), forming enclaves (Wilson ; Portes, 1980; Zhou, 2004) that provide clustered and unique resources not available to native entrepreneurs, either female or masculine, adding some competitive advantage to immigrant female enterprises other competitors find it challenging to imitate.

Institutional Pillars (used in the Conceptual Model) – Entrepreneurial Regulations, Norms, and Cognitions (Yousafzai et al., 2015).

Entrepreneurial Regulations – The rational behavior underpinned by regulatory institutions either at the organizational level (e.g., workplace rules, monitoring scripts, and incentives) or at the country level (e.g., rules created by law enforcement agencies to monitor and sanction entrepreneurial activities) can influence the legitimacy and acceptance of entrepreneurship in each country (Webb et al., 2009).

Entrepreneurial Norms – While regulatory institutions are related to the formal compliance with rules and laws, the underlying assumptions of entrepreneurial norms are the informal and invisible rules of the game, the uncodified values (what is preferred or considered proper) and norms (how things are to be done, consistent with those values), held by individuals and organizations that influence the relative social desirability of entrepreneurial activity and entrepreneurship as a career option (Busenitz et al., 2000).

Entrepreneurial Cognitions – Entrepreneurial cognitions reflect the nature of reality and the cognitive frameworks related to individuals' perceptions of their ability (level of expected performance) and their self-efficacy (i.e., the level of confidence in their own skills to start a business) to get successfully involved in entrepreneurial activity (Bandura 1982; Krueger et al., 2000).

Legitimacy – a generalized perception or assumption that the actions of an entity are desirable, adequate, or appropriate within some system of socially constructed norms, values, beliefs and definitions (Suchman, 1995).

Isomorphism – the process of "homogenization among organizations", which leads them to establish patterns of similarity among themselves, which can be divided into competitive isomorphism (e.g., market competition) and institutional isomorphism (e.g., pressures that permeate organizations in response to political, normative, legitimation and social and economic order issues) (Meyer, 1979; Dimaggio ; Powell, 2005).

3 METHODOLOGY

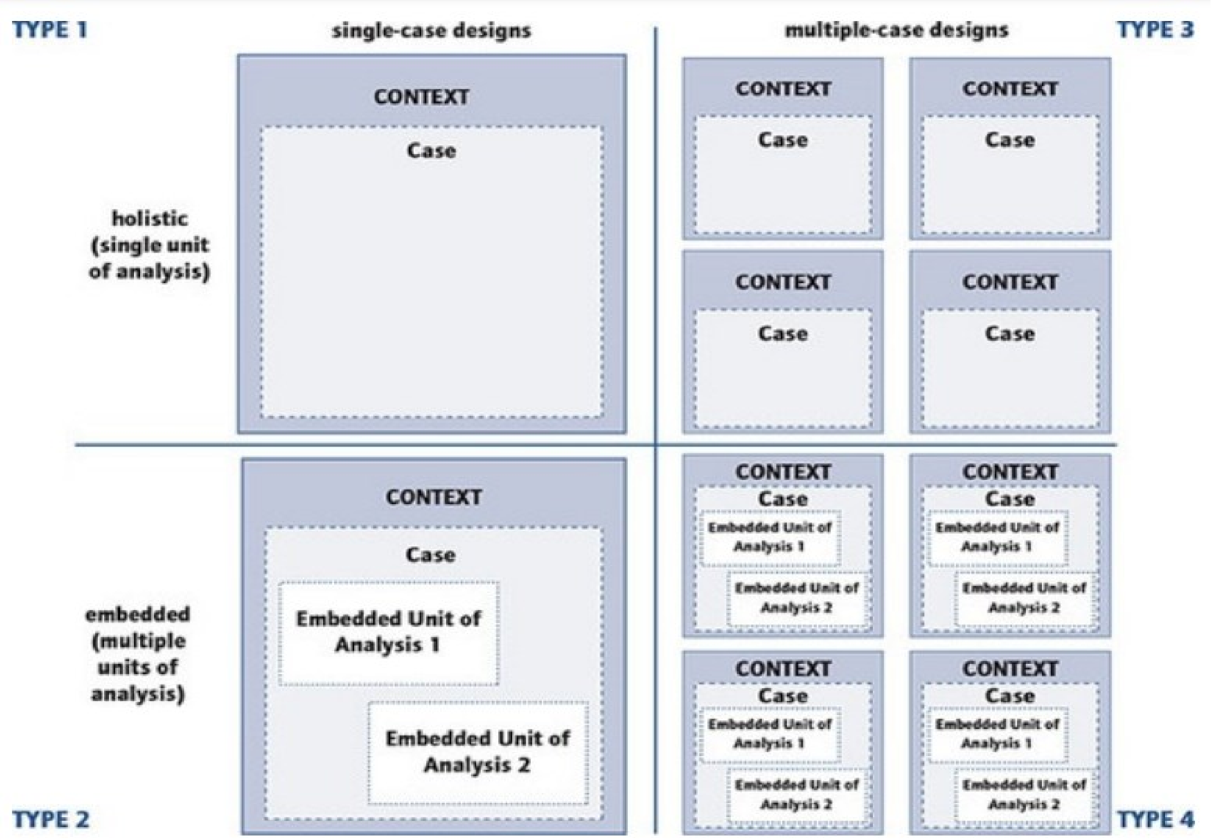
3.1 Study Design

The present investigation is grounded in a qualitative, comparative case study design (Yin, 2018; Eisenhardt, 1989; Leppäaho et al., 2015; Lincoln et al., 2018) with a cross-sectional time perspective, but with a longitudinal orientation (Kumar, 2005; Saunders et al., 2015). We employ a hybrid deductive/inductive, mono-method approach (Creswell, 2014) to undertake a multilevel analysis (Denzin ; Lincoln, 2018) that uses primary and secondary data (Bryman; Bell, 2015), by combining the assessment of Brazilian immigrant women's entrepreneurial processes' outcomes with document analysis of gender-oriented, entrepreneurial or migration policies that may affect the former in the targeted European countries, which counts for the regulative institutional pillar and the institutional element of ME approach. By and large, we had female migrants' entrepreneurial processes' micro, meso and macro outcomes as our units of analysis.

According to Godoy et al. (2006), the use of the case study denotes the researcher's interest is more focused on understanding the social processes that occur in a given context than on the relationships established between a group of variables. Such study design eliminates the idea that the theory is a pre-determined and fixed model of reality, assuming its preliminary and relative character in the development of an in-depth comprehension of the research topic by serving as a possible version of the world, subject to continuous review, evaluation, construction, and reworking. That is the reason we adopted a hybrid deductive/inductive approach.

For Yin (2018), this case study may be classified as explanatory, i.e., an empirical investigation explores a contemporary phenomenon when the boundaries between the phenomenon and the context are not clearly defined, thus requiring explanations for it. According to the same author, this study would fit into the embedded-incorporated type of dual case study, because we have more than one unit of analysis around various cases (Yin, 2018). For illustrative purposes, we find the author's classification of case studies depending on their unit of analysis and the number of analytical categories in Figure 4.

Figure 4 - Types of Designs for Case Studies in a 2 x 2 Matrix


TYPE 1
single-case designs
multiple-case designs
TYPE 3
holistic (single unit of analysis)
CONTEXT
Case
embedded (multiple units of analysis)
Embedded Unit of Analysis 1
Embedded Unit of Analysis 2
TYPE 2
TYPE 4

Source: COSMOS Corporation *apud* Yin (2018, p. 84)

The choice for such case study design is also aligned with both the analytical perspective of Neo-IT and ME, as these theories have been grounded primarily in cases conducted in cities in the Netherlands and the United States (Kloosterman et al., 1999, 2001, 2006, 2010, 2018). In the same way, they are largely applied in Sociology and Economics, e.g., in cases dealing with the structure of a particular industry sector or the economy of a particular city or region (Yin, 2018).

Dual case studies are also an ideal method for research problems that use questions starting with "why” and “how", figuring as a suitable approach for studies seeking to understand social phenomena within a given real-life context (Godoy, 1995; Yin, 1981). As Eisenhardt (1989, p. 534) puts it, "the case study is a research strategy that focuses on understanding the dynamics present within unique settings", which justifies the potential of such methodology to capture the dynamics of entrepreneurial processes outcomes.

Domingues Filho (2006) informs that theoretical development in social studies must be understood as a pendulum movement, sometimes emphasizing the "macro", sometimes privileging the "micro" levels of a given phenomenon, depending on the chosen object of study. In this sense, the explanation for social action is sometimes determined by structure, sometimes contingent, which becomes explicit in case studies using both Institutional Theory and ME as their theoretical background. Hence, for the social theory, the micro and macro level of analysis relate to the attempts to build a "strong" theory on social phenomena, which is why we analyze our research object in a multilevel analysis.

3.1.1 Phases of Research Design

Eisenhardt (1989) emphasizes the greatest contribution of the case study design is the elaboration of a theory that may assist in the clarification of a social phenomenon by proposing a series of steps that should guide the investigative process. Like her, Yin (2018) establishes a protocol that must be designed by any researcher undertaking a case study, especially if it is a dual case study. Through it, the procedures and general rules that should be followed when using the research instrument should be clear to both the researcher and the readers of the report (Yin, 2018). Although the author provided an illustrative template for the drafting of this important document, we decided to adapt it in the form of a less extensive version, since much of the information contained in it is already part of both this methodology section and this thesis in general.

According to Martins (2002), the main part of the protocol consists of a set of questions that reflect the research needs. The questions are formulated for the researcher and not for the respondents. Each question should be accompanied by a list of likely sources of evidence (e.g., individual interviews, documents or observations). The following protocol (Table 7) was then used in this study, in which the phases of the research are clearly depicted:

Table 7 – Study Protocol

Phase I - Research Overview and Main Features	
Research Problem	How do the outcomes of Brazilian migrant women’s entrepreneurial processes in Germany and Sweden unveil reciprocity (i.e., isomorphism) and redistribution (i.e., legitimacy) mechanisms in this group’s mixed embeddedness?
Research Questions	• What are the individual outcomes of Brazilian migrant women’s entrepreneurial processes in Germany? And in Sweden? How

	are they different/similar? • What are the firm-oriented outcomes of Brazilian migrant women's entrepreneurial processes in Germany? And in Sweden? How are they different/similar? • What are the societal outcomes of Brazilian migrant women's entrepreneurial processes in Germany? And in Sweden? How are they different/similar? • How do these subjects' entrepreneurial processes' outcomes showcase the mechanisms of reciprocity/isomorphism and redistribution/legitimacy? • More importantly, what do these mechanisms tell about their businesses' institutionalization process in a foreign environment and the extent to which they are relationally (networking) and structurally (market and environmental configurations) embedded in the host society?
Units of Analysis	Micro entrepreneurial processes' outcomes, Meso entrepreneurial processes' outcomes, Macro entrepreneurial processes' outcomes
Phase II - Data Collection Procedures	
Data Collection Procedures undertaken by the PEIM Research Group prior to this research planning	• Elaboration of survey questions; • Surveys carried out on Facebook groups from 2019 to 2022; • Elaboration of interview questions; • Contacting survey respondents to take part in the interviews; • Conducting on-site and online interviews.
Data Collection Procedures undertaken by this thesis' author	• Scheduling and conducting additional interviews; • Accessing German and Swedish public policies databases (e.g., governmental agencies websites, OECD e-library, the Migrant Integration Policy Index [Mipex] Report 2020, the European Website on Integration [EWSI], the Migration Policy Institute [MPI], Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, and the European Institute for Gender Equality [EIGE], International Organization for Migration's (IOM) World Migration Report [2022], Menon Economics Report on Female Entrepreneurship in the Nordics [2020], Statistics Sweden [2022], German Federal Statistical Office [Statistisches Bundesamt, 2022]).
Collection of Empirical Evidence	Semi-structured interviews, Online policy documents, Field Observations from the PEIM researchers
Phase III – Summary of Data Collection Numbers and Treatment	
Data Security	Storage of research interview records in a separate database for later consultation
Total of Online Interviews Conducted by the PEIM with Brazilian MWEs	Country: Germany Timeframe: from January 2021 to January 2022 Number of Interviews: 27 Valid interviews for this thesis' purposes: 26
Total of on-site Interviews Conducted by the PEIM with Brazilian MWEs	Country: Sweden Timeframe: June 2022 Number of Interviews: 12 Valid interviews for this thesis' purposes: 12

Total of Online Interviews Conducted by this thesis' author with Brazilian MWEs	Country: Germany Timeframe: from January 2023 to April 2023 Number of Interviews: 22 Valid interviews for this thesis' purposes: 22 Country: Sweden Timeframe: August 2022 Number of Interviews: 1 Valid interviews for this thesis' purposes: 1
Total of Interviews with Brazilian MWEs analyzed in this thesis	60

Source: own elaboration (2023)

Due to the several studies that have already been undertaken by the PEIM Research Group (http://mpeinternacional.uff.br/) (see e.g., Falcão et al., 2022; Falcão et al., 2021; Cruz et al., 2021; Cruz et al., 2020; Cruz et al., 2018), there was no application of a pilot case study to allow the review and improvement of this study's protocol.

3.1.2 Research Participants

In a dual case study design, theory development is essential for its purpose is to determine or test a pre-existing theory (Yin, 2018). For this author, the development of theory facilitates data collection and results in the analytical generalization of the results, provided it is understood that analytical generalization is distinct from statistical generalization. The former uses a previously developed theory as a model against which the empirical results of the case study should be compared (Yin, 2018). In statistical generalization, however, an inference is made about a population based on empirical data collected from a sample (Yin, 2018).

That said, dual case studies do not apply statistical sampling criteria to promote generalizations of populations or universes afterwards. By contrast, it envisages "analytical generalizations" (or generalizations to theoretical propositions), in which the main objective is to use theory as a model with which to compare the empirical results found (Yin, 2018). In other words, it seeks to generalize a particular set of results to some more comprehensive theory (Yin, 2018). Thus, the selection of the female entrepreneurs participating in the research was based on theoretical and non-statistical sampling criteria.

Yin (2018) further highlights that each individual case should be selected in a way that allows the prediction of similar results (i.e., literal replication), or the generation of contrasting results (i.e., theoretical replication), depending on what was expected at the outset of the research. Yet, the author considers that one must be careful not to confuse the dual case study with the logic of sampling, which uses multiple respondents to conduct a survey. Unlike the latter, the case study does not aim to evaluate the incidence of phenomena, although it encompasses a large number of relevant analytical categories, since it deals with both the phenomenon of interest and its context, which would make statistical evaluation unfeasible and could even prevent some “variables” from being empirically investigated if used in a quantitative study design (Yin, 2018).

Pettigrew (1988) comments that, given the limited number of cases that may be studied, it is advisable to choose from extreme situations and polar types in which the process of interest becomes more easily observable, hence the goal of theoretical sampling is to choose cases which are likely to replicate or extend the emergent theory. This is distinct from relying on statistical sampling in which researchers randomly select the sample from the population to undertake traditional, within-experiment hypothesis-testing studies. In this latter type of study, the goal of the sampling process is to obtain accurate statistical evidence on the distributions of variables within the population, which, as also argued by Yin (2018) afterward, is not the objective of the case study design.

The cases selected by the study then followed the criteria of:

a) data accessibility: European country should have a consistent history of public policies targeted at the attraction of either immigrant women or immigrant entrepreneurs and have a great number of Brazilian MWEs in comparison to other popular destinations for such ethnic group;

b) interviewees’ profile: being self-identified with the female genre, being Brazilian nationals, having emigrated to either Germany or Sweden, and having started their own business while living there.

It is important to note that the population assessed through the online questionnaires was comprised of both Brazilian men and women who have immigrated to German and Sweden and earned their income through self-employment, irrespective of the time of migration and business creation, while the universe was comprised of both Brazilian men and women who have immigrated to such locations, irrespective of their employment status and time of migration.

That said, we clarify we made use of a purposive sample (Patton, 2002), whose participants were selected according to such predetermined criteria relevant to our particular research objective and that we made use of the snowball technique to increase the number of interviewees that might possibly accept taking part in this research. Such a technique becomes appropriate when individuals are comprised of hard-to-reach, stigmatized, or hidden populations (Guest et al., 2006).

3.2 Data Collection Procedures

This research used three sources of evidence (online/on-site interviews, field observations and policy documents) through data triangulation, which is one of the tactics to increase credibility in qualitative research (Yin, 2018). According to Yin (2018), the most important advantage of using data triangulation is the development of converging lines of inquiry. Document analysis was thus employed to corroborate and enhance the evidence obtained with the data collected through semi-structured interviews. One of the essential advantages of this source type is that it is an accurate non-reactive resource, since the information contained in it remains unchanged after long periods (Godoy, 2006; Yin, 2010).

There are four types of triangulation: data source, methods, theory, researchers, and environmental (Santos et al., 2020). The effectiveness of triangulation in qualitative research rests on the premise that the weakness of one of these aspects will be compensated by balancing the strengths of another of the same type, increasing its credibility and reliability (Jick, 1979).

Apart from data triangulation, theoretical triangulation has also been adopted by combining elements from Neoinstitutionalism into Mixed Embeddedness. Theoretical triangulation refers to the possibility of the researcher resorting to multiple theories to interpret the same set of data (Feuerschütte ; Zappellini, 2015). Whereas for Guion (2002) this type of triangulation aims to combine different theoretical frameworks from distinct knowledge fields to analyze the same research problem, for Denzin (1978), it consists of bringing not only distinct theories, but also theorists; this latter definition fitting better to what has been done in this study.

It is worth noting that although Institutional Theory has been used in a complementary way to the Mixed Embeddedness theory, as had already been done by Langevang et al. (2015) and Yousafzai et al. (2015) in previous empirical studies involving the social reality of immigrant or female entrepreneurs, the integrative framework adopted in the present work has observed the epistemological differences between them both, so as not to compromise the theoretical triangulation proposed hereby.

After the preliminary phase of socio-demographic data collection through online questionnaires with both open and closed questions (Annex A), massively submitted in Facebook groups from May 2019 to October 2022 by the PEIM Research Group members, some respondents that were aligned with the purpose of this research (i.e., Brazilian women who have immigrated to Germany and Sweden and started their own business there) were selected and invited to a semi-structured interview, in order to allow interviewees to talk about their entrepreneurial trajectories in the European country.

According to Bauer and Gaskell (2000), this type of interview should be conducted almost like an informal conversation. However, the interviewer should be vigilant to direct it at the appropriate time so that the interviewee does not divert the focus of the subject of interest and clarify missing or unclear points. At this time, some questions are added or reformulated.

Alternatively, Yin (2018) classifies these as pertaining to the focal type, in which the interviews are still spontaneous and assume the character of an informal conversation, although the researcher will probably be following a certain set of questions that originate from the case study protocol. Hence, this author emphasizes this data collection methodology is an essential source of evidence for case studies, as it allows data to be compared among cases due to the similarity of interview questions applied to each case.

The interviews were thus carried out virtually, through the video conferencing platform *Google Meet*, given the distance between them and this author’s thesis. The interview guide has been developed by the PEIM Research Group beforehand (Annex A). Firstly, it aims to collect data relative to the profile and life stories of the interviewees and then focuses on gauging aspects related to their human capital (e.g., education, professional experience, language proficiency), social capital (e.g., the interaction with other Brazilians nationals in the region, whether individually or inter-organizationally, accounting there are multilevel relationships, see Brailly et al. [2016]), and, finally, questions related to the market and the structure of opportunities in which the entrepreneurs are embedded, along with the entrepreneurs' perceptions of the difficulties and advantages in complying with legislation and dealing with municipal public administration entities and private bodies (i.e., political-institutional aspects).

3.2.1 Big Concerns in Data Collection and Treatment

Dual case studies offer the advantage of being more robust in their evidence than single cases, giving room for comparisons to be drawn among different contexts (Eisenhardt, 1989). Nevertheless, the significant volume of data emerging from them may represent a risk for ensuring quality criteria in qualitative studies, namely credibility (or internal validity), transferability (or external validity or generalization), confirmability (objectivity), reliability (Godoy, 2005; Flick, 2009; Patias ; Von Hohendorff, 2019).

Internal validity refers to construct validation, which in turn depends on the establishment of correct operational definitions to measure the concepts under study. To ensure this type of validity, apart from an extensive literature review prior to data collection in the field, Yin (2018) suggests there needs to be done a pilot study. Although this type of study was not conducted in the present work, multiple sources of evidence (document analysis, semi-structured interviews, and insights from the PEIM researchers' field observations) proved to be feasible and adequate for the achievement of this study's main objective. Additionally, the data collection instrument applied hereby has been used in several prior studies similar to this one by the members of the aforementioned research group on immigrant entrepreneurship from the Federal Fluminense University (UFF) and Unigranrio University (UNIGRANRIO) (e.g., Falcão et al., 2022; Falcão et al., 2021; Cruz et al., 2021; Cruz et al., 2020; Cruz et al., 2018), which counts for the construct validation proposed by Yin (2018).

In regard to external validity, our main concern was to make explicit how the selection of cases has been made so that other researchers may conduct similar studies by applying a similar or the same methodology. Hence, justifications and limitations for selecting and classifying each case, as well as a thorough description of the context of each one, will be provided in the first subsection of the data analysis.

Confirmability is comparable to the quantitative researcher's concern with objectivity (Flick, 2009; Patias ; Von Hohendorff, 2019). Here steps should be taken to help ensure, as far as possible, that the findings of the work are the result of the experiences and ideas of the informants, rather than the characteristics and preferences of the researcher (Gioia et al., 2013). The role of triangulation in promoting confirmability is hence thoroughly emphasized, in order to reduce the effect of the researcher's own influence.

Miles and Huberman (1994) consider that a key criterion for confirmability is the researcher's admission of their own predispositions or beliefs. To this end, the beliefs that underpin the decisions made and the methods adopted should be made explicit in the research report, as well as the reasons for favoring one approach to the detriment of another. In terms of results, the assumptions the researcher had *a priori* that were ultimately not confirmed by the data should also be discussed.

In terms of ensuring the reliability of this dual case study, besides the preparation of a research protocol recommended by Yin (2018), a separate database has been employed to store the information collected through interviews and the data resulting from our document analysis. This practice has enabled the researcher to return to the information during and after the completion of the analysis, in order to review and compare the data collected in each case.

Additionally, the criterion of theoretical or conceptual saturation a qualitative study should reach has been employed to define the number of cases (Glaser ; Strauss, 1967; Eisenhardt, 1989; Bryman ; Bell, 2015). This means that, through constant comparison between theory and data, saturation is reached when a strong correspondence is obtained between the data, the literature, and the theory (McDonald ; Eisenhardt, 2017). In the dual case study, this translates into the moment when, having explored a certain number of cases, the analysis of more cases (e.g., by conducting new interviews) does not add any new information to the study.

As Bowen (2008) clarifies, a common mistake in qualitative research is that theoretical saturation is merely announced by the researcher, without the proper evidence and explanations to ratify the achievement of this stage, which compromises the quality of research due to the fact that the richness of the data in a qualitative study depends intrinsically on the researcher's impressions and ability to be in contact with the field (Godoy, 2005; O'Reilly ; Parker, 2012).

In other words, Rego et al. (2017) point out that it is up to the researcher to show the evidence of saturation rather than simply stating it, justifying the sample size (N) based on the informational power of the participants, since the number of individuals should be sufficient and diverse to meet the study objectives. The informational power implies that the greater the amount of relevant information held by informants, the fewer the number of participants needed in a qualitative study. Hence, the authors argue that N can be even equal to one if the informational power of one single respondent is strong enough (Rego et al., 2017).

One last concern involved Fielding and Schreier's (2001) warning of the risks incurred by data triangulation in that the researcher cannot predict whether the information contained in each source of data will not lead them to a conflicting interpretation. To lessen such risks, the validity criteria for undertaking documental research will be followed very carefully (Cellard, 2008).

First of all, the researcher should assess the difficulties in accessing the archives (Cellard, 2008), which has been done by selecting only databases from credible international organizations or each country's governmental bodies. In addition to that, all documents ought to be available online and up to date to reflect the current policy environment of each country. In this sense, the selection criteria for the corpus or corpora in the face of a universe of documents susceptible to analysis has been made explicit, observing the requirements of authenticity; representativeness; credibility; and significance (Cellard, 2008).

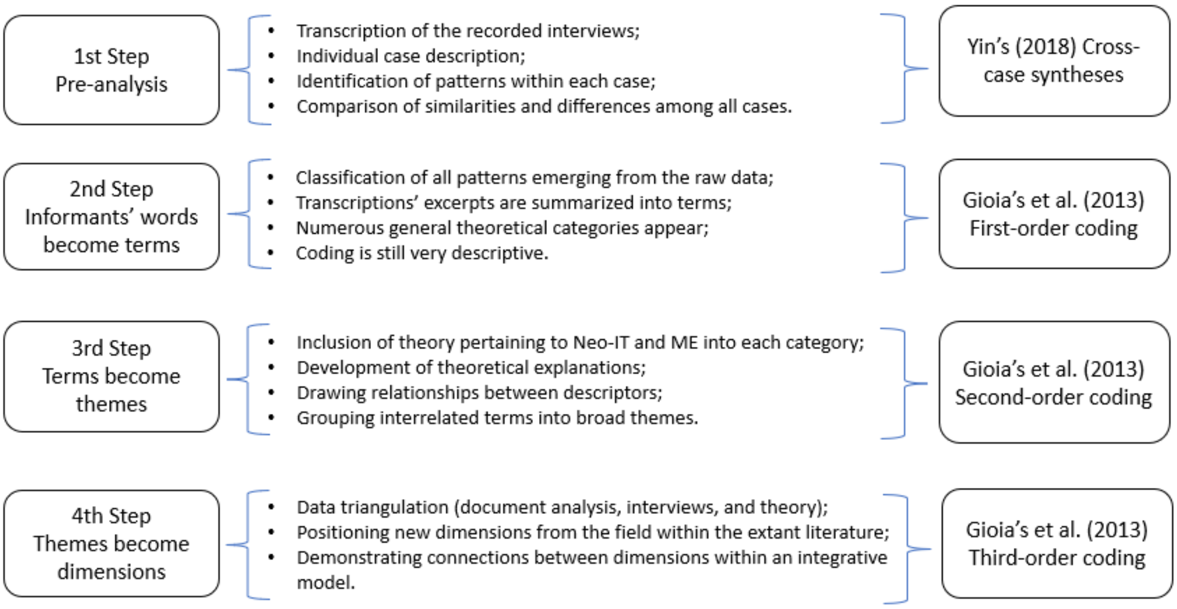
3.3 Data Analysis Procedures

Yin (2018) defines five types of analytical techniques available to researchers conducting case studies: pattern matching, explanation building, time-series analysis, logic models, and cross-case syntheses. According to the author, all of them are effective in laying the groundwork for high-quality case studies and a replication logic should be applied to them all whenever dealing with multiple cases. Acknowledging rival propositions and threats to internal validity also should be made within each individual case, in order to substantiate the inferences that emerge from the data analysis (Yin, 2018).

Therefore, cases in this thesis have been organized according to Yin's (2018) cross-case syntheses analytical technique, which is made up of within-case (i.e., to become familiar with the pieces of evidence of each case as if they were a stand-alone entity) and cross-case comparisons (i.e., to generalize patterns across cases) (Eisenhardt, 1989). The latter is of particular interest to dual case studies because it divides the data into types across all cases investigated (Soy, 1997), which represents an advantage in dealing with large volumes of information (Eisenhardt, 1989).

Lastly, the recorded interviews were transcribed and then analyzed through Gioia's et al. (2013) inductive analysis protocol, given this consists of a robust method of analysis in qualitative research that is aligned with the epistemological paradigm adopted herein. Besides, it is adequate to investigate data within the entrepreneurship field in a processual mindset (Magnani ; Gioia, 2022), one aim that is pursued in our final conclusions on the institutionalization of entrepreneurial processes' outcomes. In sum, Figure 5 outlines the analysis procedures step-by-step that were adopted in the present work.

Figure 5 – Data Analysis Steps



1st Step
Pre-analysis

- Transcription of the recorded interviews;
- Individual case description;
- Identification of patterns within each case;
- Comparison of similarities and differences among all cases.

Yin's (2018) Cross-case syntheses

2nd Step
Informants' words become terms

- Classification of all patterns emerging from the raw data;
- Transcriptions' excerpts are summarized into terms;
- Numerous general theoretical categories appear;
- Coding is still very descriptive.

Gioia's et al. (2013) First-order coding

3rd Step
Terms become themes

- Inclusion of theory pertaining to Neo-IT and ME into each category;
- Development of theoretical explanations;
- Drawing relationships between descriptors;
- Grouping interrelated terms into broad themes.

Gioia's et al. (2013) Second-order coding

4th Step
Themes become dimensions

- Data triangulation (document analysis, interviews, and theory);
- Positioning new dimensions from the field within the extant literature;
- Demonstrating connections between dimensions within an integrative model.

Gioia's et al. (2013) Third-order coding

Source: own elaboration (2023)

3.4 Ethical Issues Concerning Data Collection

One of the significant ethical issues involving the case study methodology relies on the researcher seeking to use the method "to substantiate a preconceived position wrongly." Such research bias "may undesirably sway the researcher toward supportive evidence and away from contrary evidence" (Yin, 2018, p. 132).

Additionally, specific ethical considerations arise for all research involving human participants, i.e., those people who will participate in a Social Sciences study or about whom one might collect previously recorded data, as in the case of document analysis. So as not to incur in ethical issues, Yin (2018) prescribed some very important guidelines for researchers to follow, based on the National Research Council (2003). Each guideline (and how we conformed to them) is explored in detail in Table 8.

Similarly, it is important to highlight this study is part of a major research project that aims to track the Brazilian diaspora's entrepreneurial processes in several countries. Hence, it has been registered in the PEIM's research group coordinator's university ethics committee under the code number CAAE - 64516622.5.0000.5283.

Table 8 – Procedures to Conform to Ethical Issues in the Case Study Research

Ethical Issues	Procedures
Gaining informed consent from all persons who may be part of the research, by alerting them to the nature of the study and formally soliciting their volunteerism in participating in the study	The document of informed consent has been made available on the homepage of the electronic questionnaire, as well as on our research group's official webpage, so that respondents might be aware of it and authorize the research protocol following data protection standards in both Brazil and foreign countries where they might be settled. It has been stressed that participation in the research was optional and that those who did not feel comfortable should not answer the socio-demographic questionnaire. It was also informed that answering the questionnaire implied that the respondent would consent to their data being stored and processed by the group scholars and research assistants, in accordance with the legislation of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR - EU 2016/679) and the *Lei Geral de Proteção de Dados* (LGPD - Brazil 13.709 of 2018). An optional field was left empty for respondents to the electronic questionnaire who wished to participate in interviews related to the research, and only then would their identity be revealed to the researchers through their email or telephone contact. The same piece of information, including the research objectives and consent for recording participants' images and transcribing their audios were ratified before conducting each interview.
Protecting those who participate in the study from any harm, including avoiding the use of any deception	While in contact with the participants, we were always ready to clarify any doubts, both in relation to the questions in the questionnaires and the questions in the interview scripts, in order to adopt transparent conduct and avoid any dubious or distorted interpretations in view of the objectives of the study.
Protecting the privacy and confidentiality of every subject so that, as a result of their participation, they will not be unwittingly put in any undesirable position, even such as being on a roster to receive requests to participate in some future study, whether	It has been informed in the online questionnaires and during the interviews that our research group followed the LGPD's guidelines for collecting and storing their personal data by using the anonymity resource of Google Forms (https://support.google.com/docs/thread/15373617?hl=pt-br), which prevents anyone, including the researchers themselves, from tracking those who have submitted their answers to the form. It was also informed that the data would be stored in the Google cloud of the group's coordinator for the duration of the research and that they would be deleted from the cloud afterward, when they would be transferred to an external drive, in order to prevent any event of data leakage. It was also made clear to them that their data would only be shared among

conducted by you or anyone else	the group members and would only be used to support academic-scientific activities. We stressed that their real names would not appear in the research; rather, we will use interview pseudonyms to preserve their identities.
Taking special precautions that might be needed to protect especially vulnerable groups (e.g., minority or excluded individuals, children or even persons suffering from economic vulnerability)	We ascertained that if there were any uncomfortable questions, participants would not be required to answer them. We were aware of aspects in the interview script that might be sensitive for female entrepreneurs, in order to soften approaches to potentially delicate topics, such as citizenship status in the foreign country, visa acquisition and legal work permit, compliance with local sanitary standards to open ventures in the food industry, tax payment, migrant motherhood and its family concerns (e.g, distance from relatives, homesickness), difficulty in cultural assimilation, prejudice, racial and ethnic discrimination, financial difficulties, domestic violence, abusive relationships, etc., in an attempt to welcome the speech of these subjects, respecting their individuality and worldview, instead of interfering or stigmatizing them.
Selecting participants equitably, so that no groups of people are unfairly included or excluded from the research	Based on the predefined criteria for the selection of female participants, we have tried to privilege access to Brazilian women in a less elitist social media, which proved to be Facebook; more precisely, Facebook groups of Brazilians living abroad. Unlike LinkedIn, for example, Facebook is not targeted at individuals with higher schooling levels. However, despite having used Facebook as the main source for reaching respondents in the first phase of data collection, we did not refrain from resorting to the snowball sampling technique and even to convenience sampling when personal connections in each country would indicate other potential research participants.

Source: adapted from Yin (2018, p. 135)

4. FINDINGS

4.1 Female Entrepreneurs’ Profile Description: Sociodemographic And Business Characteristics

By and large, participants have emigrated because of either family reunion, marriage to a native citizen or husband-expatriate companionship, confirming migratory patterns of Brazilian nationals found in Portugal and the Netherlands (Meeteren ; Pereira, 2013) and the idea of women immigrating because of mobility issues involving their close ties (Aman *et al.*, 2022). Sweden has proved to be a second-option destination after a previous unsuccessful immigration attempt, with primary options generally being Germany, Italy, Estonia and Portugal, respectively. Also, Brazilian migration to Sweden has proved to be a more recent phenomenon than Brazilian migration to Germany, as reflected in the number of years each entrepreneur spent in the country after migration. Likewise, another pattern identified in this preliminary descriptive analysis was that, whereas Sweden’s capital and Malmö have been the most sought-after location for such ethnic community, Germany’s Bavaria capital has been their preferred site even in face of later internal mobility within the country.

Field observations carried out by the research group’s coordinators in Germany have shown there is a consolidated female association movement that spans the country’s macroregions, such as Berlin, Frankfurt, Düsseldorf and Hamburg area. Such a movement was created with a strong transnational purpose of uniting Brazilian women still living in Brazil (who would like to migrate or have plans of migrating) and Brazilian women living in Germany and in other parts of the globe to establish networks for mutual support. Talking to MWEs in these German cities revealed that they perceive they still have a long way to go to achieve a satisfactory representation of women's rights in the insertion of their migrant businesses in Germany, although male entrepreneurs generally comment that most German public policies to encourage entrepreneurship are geared towards this audience. The male entrepreneurs also reported they feel excluded from this Brazilian female movement growing strong in the country, since they believe Brazilian female entrepreneurs should join forces with them for sharing the same ethnic identity, rather than segregating the scope of the movement to a gender issue. Overall, local Brazilian female entrepreneurship happens because these women seek a more active role in the migrant ethnic community by promoting social actions that either help other Brazilian women in their cultural integration or help to bring about a new business culture among the Brazilian entrepreneurial community in face of cases of lack of professionalism, sabotage and accusations among co-ethnic competitors in the country.

Regarding Sweden, we observed a higher concentration of Brazilians in large urban centers. In Malmö, for example, we talked to a female Brazilian leader of a cultural association that promotes Brazilian sports and events for the local community. As for female entrepreneurship, the most significant movement is hosted in Stockholm—the second largest congregation of Brazilians in the country—where a key group of female entrepreneurs decided to get together and partner with the Brazilian Embassy to stimulate a culture of help and support among the immigrant female community, mainly because there is a mutual identification with the active role they long to play within their co-ethnic community, i.e., they do not want to be only "companions of male partners who were invited to migrate to Sweden", as most of them immigrate through the Sweden *Sambo* (Spouse) Visa.

In addition, we noticed Sweden is the country with the largest Brazilian ethnic community in Scandinavia—field observations also took place in Denmark, Finland, and Norway—, and that a third group of Brazilians, in smaller numbers, congregates student groups in a context of immigration for educational purposes. However, this last group proved to be more frequent in Denmark. In Finland and Norway, the Brazilian community is highly scattered, with little or no association movement toward female entrepreneurship similar to what was seen in Germany and Sweden.

In terms of access to the formal Brazilian education system before moving to Europe, most participants have had access to at least the 6th level (see the International Standard Classification of Education [ISCED] for clarification, UNESCO [2011]). When this was not the case, they had to pursue formal education in the target foreign country (mainly Germany) before opening their business, so to enhance their occupational opportunities. Additionally, the majority of them came either from Brazil's Southeastern or Northeastern region, the latter coming from more vulnerable economic conditions and lower educational levels.

In terms of business industry, most of them focused on the food industry, started out with a market strategy targeted at their ethnic niche market and eventually expanded their businesses activities to serve the mainstream local customer with 'exotic' ethnic products (see Cruz *et al.* [2020] for specific terminology on migrant businesses' market orientation). In Appendix C, we provide a synthesis of interviewees' personal and business profiles.

Classification of MWE's entrepreneurial activities proved to be as difficult as classifying female entrepreneurship in general, since the existing classifications are broad and most likely to be adequate to any type of business, regardless of gendered inter-related phenomena. What we did then was to label MWE's enterprises according to themes that seemed relevant to these women's entrepreneurial processes, e.g., ability to work from home or not, degree of participation of partner/family in the business creation and daily operations, business operations dependent on their continued relationship with Brazil or with other countries (i.e., the existence or not of international partners), or business operations coming entirely from the digital medium.

Afterwards, we adjusted these themes into the current entrepreneurship literature, i.e., terms related to business types were matched to the particularities observed in each interview. It is worth mentioning that sometimes a business would fall into more than one type, and thus we have included more than one classification. A summary of all the 'business labels' used in the synthesis of interviewees' personal and business profiles (Appendix C) is depicted in Table 9.

Table 9 – Classification of MWE's Business Types

Major Categories	Business Types	Literature Definition	Author(s)	Field Characteristics
Space	Home-based business	Any enterprise for which the core activities take place within an individual's personal residence, be it technology-oriented or not	(Wilson ; Mitchell, 2004; Thompson et al., 2009; Anwar ; Daniel, 2017)	Women that worked alone and solely from home, i.e., their business headquarter is inside their household
	Self-employed	Either freelance workers, independent contractors or informal business owners who work independently, from home or not	(Portes ; Zhou, 1996; Marlow, 1997; Hammarstedt ; Miao, 2020)	Women who didn't need to have a business headquarter to work alone, but had some business operations developed outside the household
	Digital nomadism	A rapidly emerging class of highly mobile professionals who achieve location independence by conducting their	(Reichenberger, 2018; Hannonen, 2020)	Women whose business operations could be developed anywhere because of the digital world and had the habit of

		work in an online environment		moving from time to time to grow their business connections
Space & Size	Small business	Enterprise must be independently owned and managed, must not exceed 10 employees and must have a small market share	(Filion, 1990; Berisha ; Pula, 2015)	Women that needed a business headquarter outside their household to work, but kept it in a small scale in terms of number of customers or employees
	Small-to-Medium-Sized Business (SME)	Enterprise must be independently owned and managed, must have a labor workforce from 11 to 50 employees and have some dominance in their market	(Berisha ; Pula, 2015; Olusegun, 2012)	Women who needed a business headquarter outside their household to work and had made the business grow in terms of number of customers or employees
Family Participation	Copreneurship	A branch of family business in which husband and wife invest in or manage the same company	(Greenhaus ; Callanan, 2006; Aladejebi, 2020; Chávez Rivera et al., 2021)	Women who had their husband investing in their business or had them helping in the business activities every now and then
	Family business	A commercial organization, subdivided in branches or not, in which decision-making is influenced by multiple generations of a family, related by blood, marriage or adoption	(Chua et al., 1999; Litz, 1995; Martos, 2007)	Women who had more than one relative working at the same business or helping them out every now and then
Networks & Geographical Expansion	Transnational entrepreneurship	"…features individuals who migrate to another country while maintaining business linkages with both the country of origin and the country of destination"	Santamaria-Alvarez et al. (2018, p.246)	Women whose core business activities depended on keeping in contact with Brazil (may include other countries or not)
	International entrepreneurship	The process by which companies expand their business activity to become global enterprises, by cross-bordering their original brand, their core business operations or establishing networks with foreign actors	(Oviatt ; McDougall, 2005; Zahra ; George, 2017)	Women whose core business activities depended on keeping in contact with countries other than Brazil or who, after emigrating, could expand their businesses to other countries, excluding Brazil
Medium & Purpose	Digital entrepreneurship	Involves the application of web-	(Kraus et al., 2019; Elia et al.,	Women whose core business activities

		based tools and information to build and grow online businesses that generally provide digital services and impose new sources of opportunity, risk, and competitive advantage	2020; Sahut et al., 2021)	were totally dependent on the digital medium
	Social entrepreneurship	Aggregates both for-profits and non-profits companies attempting to develop, fund and implement solutions to social, cultural, or environmental issues	(Tan et al., 2005; Bacq ; Janssen, 2011; Huybrechts ; Nicholls, 2012)	Women whose core business activities were not/not exclusively related with financial gain

Source: own elaboration (2023)

4.2 The German And Swedish Context In Perspective

4.2.1 Migration and Integration Policies

4.2.1.1 Germany

> In the 1950s and 1960s, following the industrial boom, Germany signed bilateral agreements with countries such as Italy and Turkey to recruit foreign workforce. Large-scale migration due to family reunification began in the late 1960s and early 1970s. In 1978, the federal government appointed a commissioner for the integration of foreign workers and their family members, which led to a consensus among all major parties that Germany had become a country of immigration. (EWSI, 2023, *online*)

Germany is positioned 14th in the Migrant Integration Policy Index (MIPEX, 2020), primarily due to its “temporary integration approach”. Such an approach refers to the fact that Germany offers greater rights and support for migrants than neighboring Austria, Denmark, or Switzerland, but fails to extend equal opportunities to non-EU immigrants, who face greater delays, uncertainty, and obstacles to securing their future in the country (MIPEX, 2020). Additionally, compared to most Western European/OECD countries, immigrants face greater obstacles to reunite their families or access justice as victims of discrimination in Germany (MIPEX, 2020).

One of the reasons for that is Germany being one of the few Western European countries to still restrict dual nationality (MIPEX, 2020). In order to overcome such a barrier, the German government has recently agreed on the naturalization process simplification by undertaking a comprehensive reform of the naturalization law (The European Website on Integration – EWSI, 2023). The goal is to enable migrants to acquire German citizenship more quickly by reducing the period of residence before naturalization from eight to five years and making it possible after just three years in the case of "special integration achievements" such as good language skills, voluntary commitment, or very good performance in a job (EWSI, 2023).

In line with that, and following the Immigration Act for Skilled Workers from March 2020 (EWSI, 2023), the green card visa option (aka *Chancenkarte*) has been implemented since October 2022 (Knight, 2022). Aimed to attract highly qualified non-EU nationals to tackle a critical shortage of skilled labor, the “opportunity card” (in literal translation) presented by Labor Minister Hubertus Heil will offer foreign nationals the chance to settle in Germany even without a job offer, as long as they fulfill at least three of the following four criteria: 1) hold a university degree or professional qualification; 2) prove professional experience of at least three years; 3) demonstrate proficiency in the German language or previous residence in Germany; 4) be aged under 35 (Knight, 2022).

The criteria are said to be similar to Canada's legal migration points system, though the latter uses a more complex weight system and is not so limited in number of cards granted per year, which are dependent on labor market’s demand (Knight, 2022). Green card scheme intends to turn qualified immigration into a less bureaucratic process and, complementary to that, address another pressing issue affecting German society— its depleting young population (Knight, 2022). Notwithstanding, the visa flexibility does not account for other bureaucratic hurdles involved in the recruitment of non-European nationals, which may deepen the gap between Germans’ and EU nationals’ and other migrant groups’ living and working conditions in the long run, reinforcing the nations’ temporary integration approach once again.

Inequality scenarios such as these provide the bigger picture for the manpower shortfall that has been slowing the country’s economic growth (Knight, 2022). Although the number of qualified workers emigrating to Germany from non-EU countries has been rising over the last few years, skilled migration to Germany is still as low as 12% of all migration from non-EU countries, which roughly represents over 60,000 human capital flight input (Mediendienst Integration, 2019).

One of the reasons for this is that Germany has a few cultural disadvantages compared to other Western nations hoping to attract skilled workers (Knight, 2022). Firstly, skilled workers are most likely to look for job vacancies in countries where

English is universally spoken (Knight, 2022). Secondly, German employers traditionally set a higher number of certificates and qualifications, which often take months to be approved by the federal system, not to mention the risk of these not being recognized at all, though the Recognition Act entered into force in April 2012. Such Act is supposed to regulate the fast recognition of qualifications and skills of the so-called “third country nationals” (EWSI, 2023).

On that matter, the fact that Germany's local authorities lack a unified and centralized employability entity such as the Swedish Public Employment Service makes it hard for it to recognize different types of qualifications (Knight, 2022). Besides that, Germany still relies on paper bureaucracy, with employees needing to provide sworn translations of their certificates (Knight, 2022). Notably, such an issue might only be handled with the creation of a central agency that might approve qualifications quickly and support overworked consulates abroad (Knight, 2022).

Although Germany counts with the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF), which consists of a public authority linked to the Federal Ministry of the Interior and Community (BMI) that is in charge of the asylum procedure, the promotion and coordination of integration measures, and data collection and research, local actors are responsible for implementing BAMF's measures (EWSI, 2023). Moreover, although the Federal Employment Agency consists of a self-administered public body in charge of integrating persons into the labor market, migrants’ labor conditions are dealt with separately by the commissioner for migration and refugees, who only assists the federal government in developing its integration policy but does not coordinate its implementation (EWSI, 2023).

That said, under the new scheme proposed in May 2023, regulations for delivering safer conditions for later migrant generations are to be implemented. To cite a few, older migrants over the age of 67 now only have to prove oral language skills (EWSI, 2023). Similarly, now only one immigrant parent must have lived in Germany for five years (instead of eight) for the child to acquire German citizenship (EWSI, 2023).

Another key point of the reform is the abolition of the requirement to give up one's previous citizenship to be naturalized in Germany (EWSI, 2023). Criminal offenses and economic integration will become key motives to prevent naturalization in the future, though (EWSI, 2023). Such measures might have an impact on the livelihood of around 10.7 million people with foreign citizenship who would be living in

Germany, of whom 5.7 million had already been resident there for at least ten years (Federal Ministry of the Interior and Community – BMI, 2021).

All things considered, German integration policies are relatively average for Western European/OECD countries because non-EU migrants are still seen as a threat to social wellbeing, which reflects skeptical views on recent policy changes regarding family reunification, permanent residence, access to nationality, anti-discrimination actions, and skilled workforce attraction programs (MIPEX, 2020). For more conservative politicians, amendments in the existing law increases the risk that people who are not sufficiently integrated will be naturalized hastily, for three to five years is too short a time for a dependable examination (EWSI, 2023).

Initially, the Integration Act of 2016 demanded migrants and refugees to be directed to an "Integration Course" instituted by the federal level upon arrival. Such Act detailed the implementation of an integration system based on a "support and demand" (*Fördern und Fordern*) approach (EWSI, 2023). After this first integration legislation, the National Action Plan on Integration of 2012 started to delineate the migrant profile the country was interested to attract, which are reflected in integration policies to date: a) optimizing individual support provided to *young migrants*; b) improving the recognition of *foreign degrees*; c) increasing the share of migrants in the *civil service of federal and state governments*; d) providing *health care* and care to migrants (EWSI, 2023). In other words, being young, highly qualified, willing to work in the third sector (especially in migrant-led NGOs targeted at advancing migrants' integration) or being health professionals (Pieper, 2023).

In line with that, the Meseberg Declaration on Integration adopted by the federal cabinet in May 2016 reinforced the *Fördern und Fordern* approach by outlining German integration policies were based on two milestones: offering support, training, and job opportunities to foreigners in return for their working efforts and fulfilment of civic duties (EWSI, 2023). In this sense, a modular five-phase migration and integration plan ought to be carried out by all federal ministries for employment, education, and social integration, which would enable migrant's societal participation to the same extent as it would demand and promote performance (EWSI, 2023).

Under the National Action Plan's (2018) mindset, integration came to be seen as a process involving society as a whole, i.e., depending on the joint action of the federal government, the states, local authorities and non-governmental actors, especially migrant organizations. In sum, more than 300 different parties ought to be mobilized to advocate integration as a social benefit and work together to better shape the “immigration society” (EWSI, 2023).

Overall, although Germany introduced its nation-wide Integration Program in 2010, integration courses provided by the federal government, which included language courses, civic education and vocational training, have proved to be inefficient in face of the large number of co-existing integration measures taken by the federal, state and local governments (EWSI, 2023). Such lack of standardization leaves non-EU immigrants unfavorably insecure about their future in the country and only go halfway to provide them with equal basic rights even in the present day (MIPEX, 2020).

4.2.1.2 Sweden

> By the 1930s, 1.3 million Swedes had emigrated to the Americas, but it took two more decades before the first large arrivals of migrants into the country took place as Sweden started to attract workers. Most of those who arrived in the 1950s and the 1960s were Finnish, Italian, Greek and Yugoslavian workers, as well as their families. In the 1970s, labour migration was more limited. The number of refugees from South America, and, later, Iran, Iraq and the Horn of Africa, however increased. (EWSI, 2023, *online*)

Ranked first in the Migrant Integration Policy Index (MIPEX, 2020), Sweden’s approach to integration is most like those of Canada, Finland, and Portugal, and is more inclusive than those of the other Nordic countries. Compared to Finland, Sweden’s policies are slightly more advanced on health and access to nationality but slightly less developed on political participation and permanent residence (MIPEX, 2020). All in all, immigrants in Sweden are treated as equals and their integration is invested in as an opportunity for national growth, for the national government is concerned that integration policies have the secondary effect of encouraging the public to see immigrants as potential citizens (MIPEX, 2020).

In this way, Sweden’s integration policies are especially targeted at immigrant residents in need, who might consequently be seen as a burden to the nation’s public system. For this purpose, the country invests in providing access to education for different migrant generations, so these may develop skills required by the local labor market in the long-term, improving employment rates and education outcomes to a higher extent if compared to other European countries falling under the MIPEX’s (2020) Top Ten (i.e., Finland, Portugal, Canada, New Zealand, USA, Belgium, Norway, Australia, and Ireland, respectively).

In this sense, non-EU immigrants are also guaranteed in law and in practice the same rights as Swedish citizens in economic, social, family, and democratic life, which stimulates human capital flight from emerging countries like Brazil. Once these migrants are granted a permanent residence permit in Sweden, they may bring their relatives into the country (reunion migration visa) and vote as though they were native citizens (Migrationsverket, 2023). Naturalization rates are also highly accessible to migrants from all nationalities provided they have lived there for five years and secured a permanent job (Migrationsverket, 2023). Likewise, temporary residents who meet basic economic and housing requirements can become permanent residents after four years (Migrationsverket, 2023).

One downside of these policies, though, is that they all imply that such a restrictive requirement may function as a deterrent for migrants facing economic needs, or even for asylum seekers, to settle down in the country. This is due to the fact that all but refugee sponsors must have secured a job with a sufficient income and benefits to cover their and their family's needs since the Temporary Act's (2016: 752) institution in June 2016 (EWSI, 2023).

Such a temporary law brought changes to the more flexible Aliens Act adopted from 2005 until then. This has ultimately been changed again in June 2021, when permanent amendments to the Aliens Act (i.e., *Migrationskommittén*, SOU 2020:54) perpetuated the Temporary's Act self-subsistence requirements and demanded all new residence permits to be temporary (excluding those for resettled refugees). Likewise, any extension residence permit would be limited to two years regardless of the type of permit (EWSI, 2023).

Regarding the latter, the country's current Minister for Migration, Maria Malmer Stenergard, stressed their migration policy is undergoing a paradigm shift to reduce irregular migration to Sweden (The Government Offices of Sweden, 2023). Despites its "dignified reception standards", the country has been suffering from labor immigration frauds and abuses that have posed integration challenges on the matters of housing segregation, unemployment, and welfare dependency (The Government Offices of Sweden, 2023). This has caused a negative impact regarding a growing "parallel or shadow society" which, in the governments' view, will be combated through stricter integration and migration policies (The Government Offices of Sweden, 2023).

Practical implications of such a new paradigm mean the government will no longer support asylum seekers to acquire permanent residency visas and will find means to expel those having no grounds for protection or other legal right to stay in the country. Besides that, general conditions for labor/economic migration will become stricter through higher income requirements (The Government Offices of Sweden, 2023). On the other hand, Sweden aims to strengthen its “competitiveness as a research nation by making it easier for highly skilled foreign workers to come here”, which translates into improving existing rules applied to foreign researchers and doctoral students (The Government Offices of Sweden, 2023). All things considered, the aforementioned measures are thought to have negative consequences for the problem of mobility inequality (i.e., under the dichotomy brain drain x gain) (Hidayati et al., 2021; McAuliffe et al., 2022) and deepen the Brazilian academic diaspora to European countries.

Nevertheless, the Swedish government is still perceived to have sustainable integration policies, thanks to its anti-discrimination policies. Briefly explaining, the government invests in information actions to orient migrants’ rights and access to justice in case of them being victims of ethnic, racial, religious, or nationality-based discrimination (MIPEX, 2020). Victims are to benefit from relatively strong law-enforcement mechanisms, due to the fact the country has a single, strong equality body and active state measures that reinforce the general population’s attitudes towards and trust in public institutions, as well as society and democracy more generally (EU-MIDIS, 2016).

Another crucial point is its strong labor market mobility. Just as it happens in Finland, non-EU citizens in Sweden enjoy equal rights to access the labor market and to the country’s social safety net (MIPEX, 2020). The centerpiece of this employability scheme is the Establishment Program (aka *EtableringsProgramt*), which is open to newly arrived immigrants between the ages of 20 and 65 and who have been granted residence permits as refugees, resettled refugees, persons in need of protection, or as close relatives of someone in one of these categories. The aim of the program is that migrants to “learn Swedish, find a job, and become self-sufficient as quickly as possible” (EWSI, 2023).

The Establishment Program is run by the Swedish Public Employment Service (aka *Arbetsförmedlingen*). Activities under such program include Swedish for Immigrants (SFI) courses, job coaching (e.g., access to internships or the validation of previous educational and occupational experience), as well as a civic orientation course (EWSI, 2023). The program is due to last 24 months and is equivalent to a full-time job with 40 hours a week (EWSI, 2023). Participants in the Establishment Program have the Swedish Social Insurance Agency covering their living costs, and chances are that some may also be eligible for housing benefits, as well as for additional support for children (EWSI, 2023). The good thing about the Establishment Program is that it has become mandatory since 2018. However, during a labor migrant's first two years in the country, the work permit is only valid in connection with a specific employer and occupation, which limits labor market mobility options to long-term migrants with past work experience in the country (MIPEX, 2020).

In 2021, an Intensive Year Program (aka *Intensivår*) was added to the Establishment Program. This new version of the program, also run by the Public Employment Service, is to enable participants of the Establishment Program to study Swedish at a faster pace or complete an intensive full-time internship to find work more quickly (Migration Policy Institute – MPI, 2021). For initiatives such as these, non-EU citizens are more likely to have access to education and work-related training in Sweden than in any other European country, especially because labor market mobility policies are planned to help working immigrants improve their language, professional skills, career prospects and public acceptance in foreign lands (MIPEX, 2020).

4.2.2 Gender Equality Policies

4.2.2.1 Germany

Women in Germany obtained the right to vote in November 1918. Only a short time later, women lost almost all of their rights and were reduced to their role as mothers under the Nazi regime (Binder, 2023). After World War II, women in Germany were needed as laborers, but for decades they were still required by law to prioritize managing the marital household over paid work (Binder, 2023).

It was only in 1977 that legislation changed, giving married women in West Germany more rights. Until then, they were not allowed to work outside the household without their husband's permission (Binder, 2023). Notwithstanding, the German Basic Law (aka *Grundgesetz*), i.e., the 1949 Federal Republic of Germany constitution, officially granted equal rights to women and men and stated the government was responsible for "promoting substantive, de facto gender equality" (article 3, paragraph 2), one argument that was further substantiated in the Equal Rights Act and the Federal Equality Law. To this date, such an ambitious goal has been pursued in accordance with European law as well as international human rights law through the country's active presence in international forums and meetings on the topic of gender equality (BMFSFJ, 2023), the pursuit of a feminist foreign policy (Brechenmacher, 2023), and the ratification of the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and its Optional Protocol (BMFSFJ, 2023).

Briefly, the Feminist Foreign Policy launched by the German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock and the Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development Svenja Schulze in March 2023 seeks to make gender equality and women's rights central objectives of Germany's external relations based on a new strategy on feminist development assistance (Brechenmacher, 2023). Germany thereby joins a growing group of liberal democracies that have adopted feminist foreign policies in recent years, including Canada, France, Luxembourg, Mexico, the Netherlands, Spain, and, until recently, Sweden (Brechenmacher, 2023).

The new guidelines lay out a broad framework for anchoring women's rights and gender equality in different areas of German foreign policy, from peace negotiations and humanitarian aid delivery to climate policy (Brechenmacher, 2023). But they also raise hard questions about what it means to put these principles into practice—how to assess progress on implementation, how to navigate political resistance, and, most importantly, how to reconcile the feminist foreign policy framework with the German governments' shift toward a much more security-oriented foreign policy in light of the war in Ukraine (Brechenmacher, 2023).

According to Brechenmacher (2023), Germany's new feminist foreign policy builds on the framework pioneered by Sweden under Margot Wallström's leadership in 2014. Mirroring Sweden's approach, Germany's guidelines focus on three overarching objectives: equal rights for women and girls, the equitable representation of women in all areas of society, and equal access to resources for women and girls. In short, rights, representation, and resources. (Brechenmacher, 2023).

To advance these objectives, the guidelines highlight three main areas of action: gender mainstreaming, gender budgeting, and internal diversity (BMZ, 2022). First, in terms of mainstreaming, the guidelines note that Germany will integrate a focus on gender equality and women's rights across different areas of external engagement, including peace and security, humanitarian response, human rights policy, climate diplomacy and external energy policy, foreign trade and investment, and cultural and public diplomacy (Brechenmacher, 2023). They also announce the appointment of a woman ambassador for feminist foreign policy to help spearhead the implementation process (Brechenmacher, 2023).

Beyond these policy objectives, the document spells out funding targets for the Federal Foreign Office (BMZ, 2022). Specifically, the office commits to allocating 85% of aid funding to projects that include gender equality as a secondary goal, and at least 8% to projects that count gender equality as their primary goal by 2025 (BMZ, 2022). This is a significant increase in commitments: as of 2019–2020, less than half of German assistance went to projects that counted gender equality as either a primary or secondary goal (Brechenmacher, 2023).

Finally, several of the guidelines propose internal changes within the German foreign policy apparatus, with a focus on increasing the share of women in senior positions, promoting non-discrimination, and cultivating internal expertise on gender and diversity issues (BMZ, 2022). This is an area where the Scholz government has already achieved some changes: between 2020 and 2022, the share of women among directors general in the Federal Foreign Office increased from 21.9% to 36.4%, and among heads of missions abroad from 19.4% to 27.1% (Brechenmacher, 2023).

Yet, working hours, income and the lack of promotions are still the three big issues today’s working women face in Germany (Federal Statistical Office, 2022; Federal Employment Agency, 2022). Indeed, gender inequality persists across nearly all sectors of the country's economy, albeit in different ways (Federal Statistical Office, 2022; Federal Employment Agency, 2022). In terms of gender pay gap, for instance, women in Germany earned 18% less on average compared with their male counterparts in 2021 (Federal Statistical Office, 2022; Federal Employment Agency, 2022).

Likewise, though the female employment rate has risen in recent decades, many economic sectors are still male-dominated, especially mechanical engineering, construction, civil engineering and freight transport (Federal Employment Agency, 2022). On the other hand, the service industry has a much higher portion of female employees. These include jobs in areas like health care, social services and teaching.

Of the 46 sectors in the Federal Employment Agency Report (2022), women earned less than men in 45 of them.

This means that, as much as it happens in other EU countries, the gender pay gap is higher in specific industries, ranging from 4% to 5% in male-dominated industries (e.g., passenger and freight transport and social services) where the number of females is too low for establishing safe comparisons, and up to 30-32% in health care and legal and tax advice industry (Federal Employment Agency, 2022). The only exception is the postal service, where the gross hourly wage for women is 2% more than for men, though the base pay is quite low (Federal Employment Agency, 2022).

More than receiving unequal payment, though, women are disproportionately responsible for childcare and the household, meaning that working hours are to have a great influence on the pay gap (Federal Employment Agency, 2022). Across all business sectors, men worked more often in a full-time capacity, which can lead to promotions and more experience (Federal Employment Agency, 2022). Additionally, more men were in leadership positions than women, e.g., in 26 out of 34 sectors, women were less likely to hold managerial positions than men (Federal Employment Agency, 2022). More importantly, in general, men are likely to make more management decisions than women, which perpetuates gendered differences in the labor market (BMZ, 2022).

The European Commission Statistical Body calculated that women in Germany are paid 20% (against 13% in the EU) less than men on average for an equal job position (EUROSTAT, 2022), with former Eastern states representing 7% and the former Western states and Berlin, 22%. The gap is closing but has only changed by 2.8% in Europe over the past decade, with sound differences between EU and non-EU countries (EUROSTAT, 2022). The gap also proved to be different among the public sector (9%) and the private economy (23%) (European Institute of Gender Equality – EIGE, 2022).

In relation to the former, the German Framework Act for Higher Education from 2007 (aka *Hochschulrahmengesetz*) and the Federal Equality Law (aka *Bundesgleichstellungsgesetz*) are often pointed out as a promoter of gender equality in state-funded universities, especially in terms of access to decision-making, by making it compulsory for institutions to develop a Gender Equality Plan (GEP) in order to receive public funds (World Economic Forum, 2020).

Furthermore, state higher education institutions are subject to the State Higher Educations Acts and the State Equality Acts of the federal state they operate in, which means they are obliged to have a Women's or Equal Opportunity Commissioner (EIGE, 2022). Consequently, central actions to attain equality of opportunity at higher education institutions are the Program for Women Professors (aka *Professorinnenprogramm*) and the Contact Point Women into EU Research (FiF). Both were initiated in 2001 by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF). The *Professorinnenprogramm* funds female professorships at German universities, while the FiF supports women scientists in Germany with information and service relating to the EU's research framework programs, e.g., Horizon 2020 (2014-2020) (EIGE, 2022). Yet, despite such improvements, the extant gender equality policies have not been able to counterbalance the strong tendency for women to concentrate in fields of study traditionally seen as more feminine, such as education, health, humanities, and the arts (EIGE, 2020).

Other general directives across all sectors concern the fact that females may count on the new version of the Mother Protection Act (2017) (aka *Mutterschutzgesetz*), which protects women against potentially harmful work and retention periods before and after childbirth, or during lactation, by providing financial compensation during these periods (EIGE, 2022). Likewise, the Federal Parental Allowance and Parental Leave Act (aka *Bundeselterngeld- und Elternzeitgesetz*) from 2007 regulates the possibilities of parents to take parental leave and the respective compensation (EIGE, 2022).

In turn, the Part-Time and Limitation Act (aka *Teilzeit- und Befristungsgesetz*) secures the right to temporary and permanent part-time work and equal treatment of part-time workers if mothers intend to go back to the labor market without comprising the family. This legislation also forbids unfounded limited contracts and the prolongation of limited contracts over a certain number of years (EIGE, 2022). In regard to academic working conditions, the compatibility of work with family is also secured by Germany's Federal Ministry of Education and Research through laws regulating limited contracts, education advancement grants, and research projects' funds for improving gender equality (EIGE, 2022).

Laws in Germany have also been developed to prevent or to stop discrimination on the grounds of race or ethnic origin, gender, religion or belief, disability, age, or sexual orientation. The General Act on Equal Treatment from 2006 aims to prevent employees and job candidates from unequal treatment, mobbing, and discrimination by gender by establishing the rights and obligations of employers and individuals (EIGE, 2022). One specific law in this direction is the Salary Transparency Act (aka *Entgelttransparenzgesetz*), a legal measure that came into force in 2017 to give employees the right to inquire about how their salary compares to the mean salary of other-sex colleagues with the same or equivalent work. It further mandates employers with more than 500 employees to report on their measures for salary equality and equality in general (EIGE, 2020).

Other current measures are set to prevent violence against women. One of these consists of the “Stronger than violence” initiative (aka *Stärker als Gewalt*), a public-monitored website that provides information and guidance to access help and support to women affected by violence (EIGE, 2020). A similar initiative offers around-the-clock support on 365 days per year and can be reached via phone, chat or email. The national Violence Against Women helpline (aka *Hilfetelefon Gewalt gegen Frauen*) offers a free-of-charge, anonymous, confidential online service available in 18 languages (EIGE, 2020). In order to make protection services accessible to female migrants as well, the government also helps with the establishment of women refugees’ support organizations with the funding program Together against Violence towards Women (aka *Gemeinsam gegen Gewalt an Frauen*) (EIGE, 2020).

In another direction, to tackle sexual trafficking, human trafficking and protect prostitutes against exploitation (i.e., forced prostitution), the Prostitution Act of 2002 has instituted independent prostitution as a legal professional activity (EIGE, 2020). It is debatable whether the Prostitution Act winds up being responsible for the increase of trafficking of women for sexual exploitation in the country, though (BMSFJF, 2023). To make rules stricter and create a nationwide legal basis to regulate the prostitution trade and protect sex workers then, the German Parliament agreed on a law that entered into force in July 2017 guaranteeing contractual working conditions, protecting the health of prostitutes, and combatting crime in prostitution. The law is to be implemented by the Federal States (aka *Bundesländer*) under the supervision of the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women an Youth (aka *Das Bundesministerium für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend*) (BMSFJF, 2023).

Lastly, there are four main programs to contest gender-specific roles in German society. The first is the "Girls' Day" and "Boys' Day", two annual events aimed at young girls and boys discovering their working and academic interests, regardless of ingrained social stereotypes (BMSFJF, 2023). Secondly, the federal initiative "No clichés" (aka *die bundesweite Initiative Klischeefrei*) complements the former by offering wide-ranging support to all involved in the free gender-restrictive vocational choice process (e.g., early childhood educators, schools, universities, companies, institutions, vocational guidance centers, parents, etc.) (BMSFJF, 2023).

Thirdly, the online magazine *My testing ground* (aka *meinTestgelände - Das Gendermagazin*) is the only website within the German-speaking world to publish authentic and unedited posts on gender and equality by youths, so triggering discussions not only among young people but also with professionals (BMSFJF, 2023). The portal is operated by teenage editorial teams, meaning the program creates a safe place where youngsters address gender roles and inequalities based on sex, color, religion, disabilities, culture or beauty and body concepts. The posts are about topics such as what it means to be a girl, a boy or LGBTQIA2S+ (BMSFJF, 2023).

The fourth and last one is the Project "Men and Change", which aims to include boys, men, and fathers in every gender equality policy under a life-course perspective under the realization that "caring for masculinities" is just as important to social work redistribution, and gender pay gap reduction (BMSFJF, 2023). Central issues to the project are self-care, life planning, career choice, dealing with men as perpetrators and victims of violence, and work-life balance (BMSFJF, 2023). In order to offer specific counseling, training of male counselors as disseminators began in 2019. The two-year project should finally turn into a growing training system by 2025 (BMSFJF, 2023).

4.2.2.2 Sweden

Sweden has long been a strong promoter of gender equality by devising laws against gender discrimination and ensuring that the knowledge and experience of both men and women are used to support the right to work, to balance career and family life, and to live without the fear of abuse or violence (Sweden/Swerige.se, 2022). Yet, board rooms remain male-dominated, the gender pay gap is yet to be overcome and gendered roles within households still affect women’s insertion in labor market. Therefore, in order to tackle these issues, the Swedish government has set a

Foreign Service action plan to implement a feminist foreign policy in the country from 2019 to 2022, especially directed to international gender mainstreaming patterns (The Government Offices of Sweden, 2020). In this plan, the country's Policy for Global Development, the 2030 Agenda and other national commitments are met through an approach encompassing the following three Rs.

Firstly, "Rights", i.e., promoting the full enjoyment of human rights by all women and girls, by combating all forms of violence and discrimination that restrict their freedom of action. Secondly, "Representation", i.e., promoting women's participation and influence in decision-making at all levels and in all areas through dialogue with women representatives from civil society. Thirdly, "Resources", i.e., allocating resources to promote gender-equal opportunities. A gender mainstreaming approach to policymaking means that a gender perspective is to be incorporated into all levels and stages of decision-making (The Government Offices of Sweden, 2020).

Indeed, the Gender Mainstreaming in Government Agencies (GMGA) program has been in charge of the Swedish Gender Equality Agency since 2018. Since then, the business sector remains male-dominated in Sweden, with some politicians suggesting female quotas to accelerate the achievement of gender-equal board rooms and inequality eradication among tech startups in Sweden (Allbright Foundation, 2020). For illustrative purposes, there are only 10% women chairpersons, 13% female CEOs and 36% female board members in companies listed on the Stockholm Stock Exchange (Statistics Sweden, 2022).

Despite that, gender discrimination in the workplace has been illegal since 1980 (The Government Offices of Sweden, 2020). Moreover, the Swedish Discrimination Act (2009) demands employers not only to actively promote men and women equality, but also take measures against harassment. Following a 2017 law expansion, harassment has been associated with all grounds of discrimination: an employer's sex, transgender identity or expression, ethnicity, religion or other belief, disability, sexual orientation and age. The act also states that employees and job applicants who are, have been or will be taking parental leave may not be treated unfairly (The Government Offices of Sweden, 2020). Likewise, cases of discrimination can be reported to the Swedish Equality Ombudsman (aka *Diskrimineringsombudsmannen*), a government agency that includes under harassment denounces cases of unfair treatment by an employer in connection with an employee's parental leave (The Government Offices of Sweden, 2020).

Alternatively, the pay gap between men and women can partly be explained by differences in profession, sector, position, work experience and age (Sweden/Swerige.se, 2022). In 2021, women’s average monthly salaries in Sweden were 90.1% of men’s (Statistics Sweden, 2022). In this sense, the Swedish Women’s Lobby (aka *Sveriges Kvinnolobby*) aims to ensure that everyone receives a pay rise, regardless of sex. To accelerate such a process, in 2012 a particular 'pay all day' movement was started in cooperation with political women’s unions, trade union organizations and women’s movement societies (Sweden/Swerige.se, 2022).

What partly explains the gender pay gap in Sweden is the lack of relevant full-time employment for the overall population (i.e., 3 out of 10 women and 1 out of 10 men work part-time in the country). Nevertheless, childcare is women’s second most common reason, followed by caring for an elderly relative (Sweden/Swerige.se, 2022). The downside of this is a less positive career and wage development for them, as well as a poor pension. For illustrative purposes, a woman working 50% full-time for 10 years after taking parental leave and 75% for another ten years will have a 29% decrease in her pension when compared to a person working 100% full-time throughout life (Sweden/Swerige.se, 2022).

Despite that, Sweden presents a higher birth rate (1.67 children per woman) than other EU countries’ average (1.5 children per woman) (Statistics Sweden, 2022). At the same time, the rate of working women (i.e., aged between 15 and 74) is relatively high too, revolving around 66.0% (Statistics Sweden, 2022). That is facilitated by a strong family policy that supports working parents with the same rights and obligations for both women and men, making it easier for parents in Sweden to find a decent work–life balance.

For instance, in the 1970s public childcare was reformed and expanded to better serve families with two working parents (Sweden/Swerige.se, 2022). In 1974, Sweden was the first country in the world to replace gender-specific maternity leave with parental leave (Sweden/Swerige.se, 2022). The so-called parental insurance enabled couples to take six months off per child, with each parent entitled to half of the days. However, a father could sign his days over to the mother – and as a result, two decades later, 90% of paternity leave in Sweden was being used by mothers only (Sweden/Swerige.se, 2022).

In 1995, the first daddy month (aka *pappamånad*) was introduced, with 30 days of leave reserved for the father on a use-it-or-lose-it basis (Sweden/Swerige.se, 2022). If the father decided not to use that month off work, the couple would lose one month’s paid leave (Sweden/Swerige.se, 2022). In 2002, this was extended to two ‘daddy months’, or 60 days. And in 2016, to three ‘daddy months’, with 90 days of paid leave reserved for fathers. Today, fathers take around 30% of the total number of days available to the couple (Sweden/Swerige.se, 2022).

Such a regulative norm had also an impact on established gender roles within the daycare industry, making it more commonplace for men to become nannies in Sweden. These are often called *latte dads* (Sweden/Swerige.se, 2022). Initiatives such as the “Global Guy Talk” (aka *killmiddag*), run by the Swedish non-profit foundation *Make Equal*, are another example of how normative incentives have been shaping a more gender-equal society, as men get encouraged to get together and start talking about things that are supposedly female-related, such as emotional vulnerability, love, friendship, etc. (Sweden/Swerige.se, 2022).

Lastly, Sweden works actively to defend and strengthen the rights of women and girls against physical and/or sexual violence. In this regard, the Swedish Act from 1999 was the first law to make the purchase of sexual services illegal without punishing the prostitute. The offense was to be incorporated into the Swedish Penal Code only in 2005, though (Sweden/Swerige.se, 2022).

Besides that, Sweden adopted a new sexual consent law in 2018, which states that sex without explicit consent is rape, even when there has been no violence or threats. In fact, unlike other countries, every reported rape is registered as a separate crime in Sweden to inflict stricter legal punishments on perpetrators (Sweden/Swerige.se, 2022). To assist in that, Sweden’s Act on Violence Against Women came into force in 1998, meaning each physical blow and/or instance of sexual and psychological degradation against a woman is deemed a crime and therefore needs to be taken into consideration.

Over the years, however, the number of reported cases of violence against women in Sweden has risen significantly. This is partly due to changing attitudes that encourage more women to speak out (Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention, 2022). In 2021, around 28,900 cases of violence against women over the age of 18 were recorded in Sweden. In 81% of the cases the reported perpetrator was someone the woman knew (Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention, 2022).

4.2.3 Female Entrepreneurship Policies

4.2.3.1 Germany

Between 2007 and 2018, the number of women entrepreneurs in Germany increased by 6.1% (from 1.25 million to 1.33 million) while the number of male entrepreneurs decreased by 1.8% to 2.6 million (IfM Bonn, 2020). In 2018, women entrepreneurs comprised 6.8% of the total female labor force, compared to 12.0% for men (IfM Bonn, 2020). In the German context, women are thought to pursue different forms of labor market participation and entrepreneurship than men (OECD, 2021). Predominantly in West Germany, women prefer either waged or self-sufficient part-time employment (OECD, 2021). Likewise, women in this country are more likely to be hybrid entrepreneurs than men (i.e., move between self-employment and waged employment or periods of non-employment, or be simultaneously self-employed and wage-employed) (Suprinovic, Schneck ; Kay, 2016).

Moreover, women-led firms are less likely to carry out technology-based innovations, although the share of women entrepreneurs in knowledge-intensive professions and innovative sectors is growing (Kay ; Günterberg, 2019). This is likely partially due to tax regulations and family policies that reinforce implicit traditional cultural norms on the occupational role of women (OECD, 2021).

Germany has established a welcoming regulative environment for entrepreneurship, yet some economic policies implicitly favor a traditional gender role model and promote entrepreneurship as a less desirable career choice for women (Welter, 2006), thus reinforcing conservative family norms (OECD, 2016, 2021). For example, the spousal splitting system favors married couples with one primary high-income breadwinner (traditionally the man in heterosexual couples) and one part-time employed person with a lower income who becomes primarily responsible for household and family duties. In most cases, due to work time, industry preferences, and the gender pay gap, these are females (OECD, 2021).

The tax model, therefore, reinforces traditional gender patterns of men working and women staying at home (OECD, 2021). It is estimated that if Germany tax married couples' individual incomes, female labor market participation would increase by 2.4 percentage points, and their average working hours by 7.4 percentage points thanks to self-employment (Bach et al., 2011). Family policies compound normative institutions, as they impact women's ability to reconcile family obligations with employment, as employees or entrepreneurs (Welter, 2021). That is why Sweden changed its tax laws in 1971, favoring a dual income-earning household model by taxing individual incomes (Bourne, 2010).

Another example of family policy to affect female participation in entrepreneurship would be the disparities in public daycare for children (OECD, 2021). Since 2013, the state has committed to providing daycare for every child aged one to three years (BMFSFJ, 2019). Despite this, in 2018, only 33% of children under 3 years old were in daycare in Western Germany, while nearly 60% made use of the benefit in the East German states (BMFSFJ, 2019). This demonstrates there are substantial regional variations in the access and use of public services related to genderized roles in society, which has an impact on female entrepreneurship rates by region (BMFSFJ, 2019).

Despite this, women self-employment quotas in Germany have been converging (IfM, 2020). Whereas former socialist gender norms fostered women's labor market participation, especially thanks to a comprehensive state benefit system (Welter, 2021), social benefits oftentimes continue to favor men as breadwinners, which pushes women into entrepreneurship as a form of part-time work (OECD, 2021). One example is the initial schemes offering benefits for families and childcare, such as the German parental leave.

The basic "parental allowance" (*Elterngeld*) favors women staying at home: it allocates 12 months of parental leave financial support to one partner (mostly women) and an additional 2 to the other (mostly men). More recent family policies, such as "parental allowance plus" (*ElterngeldPlus),* offer higher financial support if coupled with part-time work during parental leave time. Likewise, the "partnership bonus" offers an additional two months financial support if both partners equally split their parental leave months, both also applicable to (women) entrepreneurs. Such a policy aims at fostering a more equal distribution of parental leave between men and women (OECD, 2021).

Although women's employment and entrepreneurship are accepted widely, German society implicitly continues to perceive entrepreneurship as predominantly male, with women entrepreneurs being an exception to this norm (Welter, 2006b). Women are still predominately responsible for combining work and family responsibilities rather than sharing them with men (BMFSFJ, 2019). Indeed, women may refrain from entering the labor market or setting up their own businesses when they “feel employment is incompatible with being a good mother”, one thing that causes them “considerable role conflict and strain” (Sjöberg, 2004, p. 111). Consequently, it is not only the lack of daycare facilities that hinders women’s entrepreneurship but also the implicit understanding that women are still the main carers in the family (Welter, 2021). In this sense, there is still a marked gender difference in the distribution of paid and unpaid work at home and in the family, in that the former is mostly pursued by men and latter is mainly incurred by women in terms of hours dedicated (Samtleben, 2019).

Representations of women entrepreneurs in the German public media, e.g., newspapers, also show how traditional role models are reinforced by positioning the work-family balance as a “women-only” topic (Ettl, Welter, ; Achtenhagen, 2016). Similarly, by showing female entrepreneurs as mothers first, and secondly as entrepreneurs, career success comes to be subordinated to the image of a good family person (Achtenhagen ; Welter, 2011). In fact, up until the late 1990s, German policymakers treated entrepreneurship as a gender-neutral phenomenon. Over the past decades, though, women have come to spend less time on household tasks with the introduction of novice gender-equal policies towards entrepreneurship (OECD, 2021).

Much of the current support is guided by the National Agency for Women Start-up Activities and Services (*Bundesweite Gründerinnenagentur* - BGA) (OECD, 2021). Established in 2004, it acts as the central network for promoting and directing women entrepreneurs to national and state-level support programs (OECD, 2021). For example, in the “Women Entrepreneurs” (*FRAUEN.unternehmen*) initiative, women entrepreneurs mentor young girls by delivering a series of workshops and meetings around the theme (OECD, 2020). For programs such as this to be successful, social media campaigns (e.g., *StarkeFrauen – Starke Wirtschaft* or “strong women - strong economy”) have been broadly employed by the national office, which brings a great promise in creating more female role models in Germany in the long run (OECD, 2021).

BGA’s head office is sited in Stuttgart and its main national responsibilities include information bundling, agency, and advisory services (OECD, 2020). There are regional offices in all federal states within different institutions, which are selected within a public tender procedure (OECD, 2020). The responsibilities of regional offices include linking regional activities with national actions as well as developing and coordinating programs (OECD, 2020). In addition, BGA connects more than 2000 local partners (e.g., professional business consultants, entrepreneurship networking organizations, business centers, and public and private business development agencies) to support partnerships among women entrepreneurs (OECD, 2020).

In terms of entrepreneurship education, this is not included in the mandatory schooling curricula and is more established in post-secondary vocational training and in higher education (OECD, 2020). Where entrepreneurship is featured in learning material, the stereotypical male entrepreneur is depicted. Thus, entrepreneurship is implicitly reinforced as a male activity (Grindel ; Lässig, 2007). Formal learning programs are also predominantly oriented towards “mainstream” full-time self-employment, with certain attitudes like assertiveness and risk-taking propensity to grow a significant company size implicitly reinforcing a male image of entrepreneurship (Samtleben, 2019).

Furthermore, the majority of public start-up promotion programs focus on “innovative” business foundations, which are still associated with technology innovations, mostly within STEM fields (i.e., science, technology, engineering and mathematics) (Brink et al., 2014). Due to the occupational segregation and an under-representation of women in these occupational and academic fields, it seems likely that they are also under-represented as entrepreneurs, although several adult and further education programs for female entrepreneurship by public and private providers exist (OECD, 2020).

One example is the BGA’s e-training developed, which puts female business start-ups into the wider context of their life circumstances and also uses examples of female entrepreneurs from different industries to stimulate diversity in entrepreneurship (OECD, 2020). The Federal government is supporting the expansion of entrepreneurship activities in higher education through the EXIST program. This is a national competition for higher education institutions where their entrepreneurship strategies can be assessed, and winners receive funding to implement them (OECD, 2021).

In turn, when it comes to female-specific counseling and consulting services, BGA again centralizes a number of initiatives aiming to accommodate entrepreneurs’ broader life perspective to deliver personalized support (OECD, 2021). One example is the *Perspektive Wiedereinstieg* and the *Bundesagentur für Arbeit*, which provide advisory and personal coaching for women (and men) who seek to re-enter the labor market after family-related career breaks (BMFSFJ, 2019). This support is provided through 23 centers across Germany and a substantial number of services are also available online, including virtual networks, employment matching, technical papers and an online calculator that helps to compute the economic benefits of returning to the labor market (BMFSFJ, 2019).

Besides that, under the initiative *Gründerinnenhotlinei,* BGA provides experts in different fields, legal advice, counseling for different target groups, including migrant entrepreneurs, industry-specific programs, and the "nexxt" initiative (BGA's next in partnership with BMWi), which provides information on planning and preparing a business succession. The latter is focused on offering networking options for business owners who are looking for a career shift from self-employment (BMFSFJ, 2019).

In Germany, there are also a variety of public mentoring programs and role model initiatives for women entrepreneurs, including the “Push-up” in Berlin by *Weiberwirtschaft eG* and one of the best-known initiatives, Two Women Win (TWIN) (OECD, 2020). While the former is performed by a female co-operative that can be used by all women with a business idea or plan, or with a business less than two years old, the latter was set up by the *Käte Ahlmann Stiftung* (KAS) foundation in 2001 to match experienced women entrepreneur volunteers and mentees in the first years of their business activity throughout a one-year mentorship (OECD, 2020).

In addition to these public policy initiatives, some financial institutions are increasingly supporting mentoring for women entrepreneurs. For example, the Hypo Vereinsbank (HV) has a business contest for women entrepreneur winners to work with a mentor for 6 months. Mentors are successful business owners and CEOs from several business fields. In addition to providing individual support, the aim of this mentoring relationship is to help grow the winners' business network (OECD, 2015).

As businesswomen tend to have smaller and more informal networks than their male counterparts (Welter ; Trettin, 2006) and are also less inclined to join business associations, special interest groups and other formal large networks (Klyver, 2011; Carter et al., 2006), several female business associations seek to complement the aforementioned networking opportunities for this group in Germany. VdU, the national association for German women entrepreneurs, is one of the oldest and largest. It has 22 regional offices in all 16 federal states. Its goals include promoting a positive image of women entrepreneurs to women and society; creating equal opportunities for women entrepreneurs in local, state and federal politics, economy and society; and, lobbying for women's entrepreneurship in the media and to policy makers (OECD, 2020).

Other examples of networking initiatives for women entrepreneurs briefly consist of the *Netzwerke* (i.e., a sort of online catalog of female networking associations in the country) and *Regionalverantwortliche* (i.e., BGA's regional centers fostering local networking opportunities). These are specifically concerned with preventing more subtler forms of glass ceiling, which not only applies for access to promotions in the workplace but also access to social networks (Allmendinger ; Hinz, 2000). Since women face barriers entering informal networks, including a lack of self-confidence and anxiety about others' discrimination in the network, they tend to choose these selectively, which is also aggravated by the little time they have to engage in networking due to the responsibilities within the household (OECD, 2015).

All in all, the benefits available for the German self-employed are still less comprehensive than those enjoyed by German employees, and for the former group, it is much more difficult to access them (OECD, 2021). This is especially the case for state regulated benefits, e.g., coverage for parents with sick children. In this regard, from 2014 onwards, both BMWi and BMFSJ ministries have undertaken a joint initiative named *FRAUEN gründen: Gründerinnen und Unternehmerinnen in Deutschland stärken*, which comprises several actions related with female entrepreneurship, including migrant women entrepreneurs, women role models and mentoring, these subjects' re-entry in the labor market after periods of family care and enhancing social security for inclusive entrepreneurship (OECD, 2021).

4.2.3.2 Sweden

Policies to increase women's entrepreneurship are included in several policy fields in Sweden (Henry et al., 2023). Sundin (2016) comments these are scattered among enterprise and innovation policy, regional development policy, gender equality policy, policy for reorganizing the public sector and labor market policy. By and large, these have aimed to increase women's self-employment and small business ownership in sectors previously organized and managed by the public sector (Henry et al., 2023).

Lately, much attention has been given to this issue by the Swedish government because policies to increase women's entrepreneurship are claimed to result in many societal benefits, including: a) more chances for women to start businesses in their areas of expertise; b) women and immigrants having better working conditions and higher wages; c) making the black cleaning market white; d) increasing opportunities for women to buy household services they would otherwise do themselves, thus making it easier to balance family life and career (Henry et al., 2023).

According to Ahl (2021), general entrepreneurship policy support in Sweden started in the late 1970s through the establishment of the *Regional Development Funds*. This initial policy's objective was to stimulate business development in locations where industrial restructuring caused job losses. In 1994, the Regional Development Funds were replaced by *ALMI Företagspartner AB*, a fully state-owned corporation with a mandate to provide business counseling and start-up loans. Along with the latter local enterprise agencies began to appear in 1985 to stimulate business creation (Ahl ; Nelson, 2015). Up until 2009, most of these direct and indirect business development initiatives revolved around tax relief and loan concession to entrepreneurs, with no attention to gender-oriented rules and regulations (Growth Analysis, 2011). Hence, differences in terms of industry, size, and markets between businesses owned by women and men became more predominant, reflecting today's national scenario in which Swedish women are more likely to have a small business with a local market in a service-based industry (Tillväxtverket, 2012). In fact, up until 2010s, many forms of support were still tailored to manufacturing firms or the export industry, revealing that a disproportionate share of support monies would go to male business owners (Nutek, 2010).

Contrastingly, the first program solely dedicated to supporting women's entrepreneurship was established in 1992 and discontinued in 2002, when it was largely integrated into ALMI's mainstream advisory system (Ahl, 2021). Such a program aimed at placing women business advisors in economically disadvantaged areas (Nilsson, 1997). A second attempt was the creation of the Regional Resource Centers for women, established in 1994. Then again, these were discontinued in 1999, though many centers continued as local or regional independent non-profit organizations to be finally closed by 2019 (Ahl, 2021).

In 2007, the liberal/conservative government coalition initiated a new initiative named *Promoting Women's Entrepreneurship*, which continued until 2015. The program was well-funded and focused solely on generating more new jobs through more women-owned businesses, i.e., gender equality was a means to reach economic growth and not an end in itself (Ahl et al., 2016). The program envisaged to provide specialized business training services and development projects for women; trained support staff in gender awareness; enterprise activities for prospective women entrepreneurs at universities; communication about networks for women business owners, and an unpaid ambassador initiative whereby women entrepreneurs were asked to volunteer as role models inspiring schoolgirls to pursue entrepreneurship as a career (Ahl et al., 2016). An annual "Beautiful Business Award" competition was even launched to incentivize the program, however, since only short-term employment resulted from it, all programs for women entrepreneurs were again discontinued by 2015 (Tillväxtverket, 2018; Berglund et al., 2018).

The *National Strategy for Business Promotion on Equal Terms* that came up afterwards restated Sweden needed more women, ethnic minorities, young and senior entrepreneurs to secure economic growth, so diversity once more became associated with equal access to business ownership (SAERG, 2015). Nevertheless, targeted funds had been kept from any of these groups, meaning any female-oriented entrepreneurship policy would merely perpetuate a gender mainstreaming strategy (Ahl, 2021).

In parallel to these developments, Sweden has undergone the marketization and privatization of its public sector (Ahl ; Marlow, 2019). Many public sector operations have been opened for private sector competition through the use of public procurement and voucher systems (Ahl ; Marlow, 2019). While the services are still funded by public funds, they are free or almost free to the consumer (Ahl ; Marlow, 2019). This has created quasi-markets in the school and healthcare sectors, with privately-owned but publicly funded businesses, which are the sectors dominated by women to the present day (Ahl ; Marlow, 2019; Ahl, 2021).

The government propositions preceding many of the women's entrepreneurship programs that operated over the period 1992-2015 included arguments that women who used to be employed by the public sector should avail themselves of these new business opportunities and thus create jobs for themselves and others (Ahl et al., 2016). The marketization of the public sector and support for women’s entrepreneurship thus worked as if a compensation scheme for female unemployment in the latter (Ahl et al., 2016).

The outcomes of the preceding policies are that increase in women-owned businesses did not change gendered segregation by industry, nor did it improve women’s financial situation (Berglund et al., 2018; Ahl, 2021). The share of women-owned businesses increased from 32% in 2009 to 38% in 2016, but the gendered employment and business landscape remained concentrated with women occupations in areas such as social work, personal and cultural services, and education (SCB, 2018).

Alternatively, privatization efforts resulted equally in even more men-owned firms, especially in sectors such as hospital care, secondary schools and nursing homes (SCB, 2018) where a small number of large new businesses would succeed by leveraging their economies of scale (Sköld, 2015). In this sense, the median disposable income of women entrepreneurs in Sweden remains lower than that of women employees, who in turn make less money than men, deconstructing the discourse around the reduction of the gender pay gap in the country either through female formal employment or entrepreneurship (Sköld et al., 2018).

Likewise, remunerations from the welfare system (e.g., labor benefits such as sick leave pay, parental leave pay, or unemployment insurance) are tied to taxable employment income, resulting that replacing a welfare system delivered by the public sector with private business ownership did not improve women’s financial situation (Ahl et al., 2014; Ahl, 2021). Regarding the former, when it comes to labor benefits for self-employed people in Sweden, entrepreneurs of newly started companies are granted the same benefit schemes as formal employees with similar tasks, education, and experience, emulating policies found in Finland (Menon Economics Report, 2020).

For instance, entrepreneurs are covered by Swedish social insurance, which means that they are entitled to compensation provided they are unable to work due to illness (Grünfeld, Hernes ; Karttinen, 2020). The sickness benefit is around 80% of the entrepreneur’s income during the first year of illness, however, income is calculated depending on the type of business owned (Grünfeld, Hernes ; Karttinen, 2020). Sick leave may range from at least one paid day to 90 paid days if the entrepreneur so chooses (Grünfeld, Hernes ; Karttinen, 2020). To date, the Swedish and Finnish benefit schemes are the most generous in Scandinavia (Pettersson et al., 2017), since the other Nordic countries provide fewer benefits to entrepreneurs when compared to employees, including sickness benefits (Menon Economics Report, 2020).

In terms of parental leave, male and female parents in Sweden are entitled to 480 days of paid parental leave (Sweden/Sverige.se, 2023). Of those, 90 days are reserved for each parent and all entrepreneurs residing in Nordic countries are entitled to such a benefit. In Norway, for example, women have a right to prenatal leave, maternity leave, and parental leave, i.e., before, during and after childbirth, respectively (Menon Economics Report, 2020). In Sweden, in turn, entrepreneurs are entitled the parental leave up to the same amount as employees, and both entrepreneurs and employees are entitled the right to leave to take care of a sick child between the age of 8 months to 12 years (Menon Economics Report, 2020).

All in all, the parental benefit is around 80% of the entrepreneur’s income for the first 390 days and, after that, entrepreneurs receive 180 Swedish krona for 90 days (Grünfeld, Hernes ; Karttinen, 2020). The benefit for taking care of a sick child is also 80% of income but, then again, the level of income is calculated depending on the business type (Grünfeld, Hernes ; Karttinen, 2020).

According to Tillmar et al. (2021), female entrepreneurs often receive lower maternity and parental leave payments than employees in the Nordics. Therefore, women in their childbearing years would be less inclined to become entrepreneurs. This is due to the costs of taking out parental leave being higher for entrepreneurs than for employees, which affects women more than men as they take out most of the parental leave (Naldi et al., 2021). Ultimately, this discourages mothers from becoming or continuing to be entrepreneurs in Scandinavia (Pettersson et al., 2017; Naldi et al., 2021). Statistics Sweden (2022) corroborates that by positing 24% of female entrepreneurs do not take out any parental leave, while the share among men is even higher (52%), implying only 6 out of 10 parent entrepreneurs are able to take leave after childbirth for as long as they wish.

Access to childcare and kindergarten is another factor to significantly affects women's ability to participate in the labor market or business venturing (Ahl ; Nelson, 2015; European Commission, 2021). Although public childcare is available in all Nordic countries regardless of parents’ employment status, the costs of public childcare and the ages at which children are accepted vary among them (European Commission, 2021). In Sweden, public childcare is subsidized with tax revenues, with parents paying a fixed amount for it regardless of the number of children in the household or their own income (Menon Economics Report, 2020).

Despite such unfavorable conditions, there can be found state programs and initiatives aimed at supporting entrepreneurs in general—and female entrepreneurs in particular—around all Nordic countries nowadays (Menon Economics Report, 2020). To cite a few, the Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth (aka *Tillväxtverket*) is a government agency under the Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation focused on creating mentor programs such as the *Ambassadörer for kvinnors företagande*. Such an initiative is targeted at female business development and innovation measures among universities and colleges (Menon Economics Report, 2020). The said agency is also one of the sponsors of the "The Yes Way" program since 2015. Run by eight Swedish incubators, the program aspires to create an equal and inclusive environment for women to enter innovation systems by providing access to financing and business support (Menon Economics Report, 2020).

In line with that, the Femtech Bootcamp initiative is carried out by Startup Sweden so as to enable early-stage startups with at least one female founder to meet leading investors and large tech media houses in Sweden (Menon Economics Report, 2020). In this sense, FemTech Bootcamp consists of an intensive one-week competition where 10 selected startup companies are given the opportunity to travel to Stockholm to connect with important decision-makers and participate in workshops on business development, digital strategy, funding law, branding, design, and pitch training (Menon Economics Report, 2020).

Another national initiative named *Female Founders* celebrates female leaders and investors, helping female tech professionals reach their full potential by creating a culture towards female insertion in highly competitive technological markets (Menon Economics Report, 2020). Besides that, the country counts on politically independent agencies that reinforce such a positive view towards female entrepreneurship. One example is *Ownershift*, a think tank whose purpose is to bridge societal power structures by offering equal company ownership grants to women who may add a socially driven mindset to an existing company, thus diversifying gender ownership distribution along with commitment to society (Grünfeld, Hernes ; Karttinen, 2020).

Another example of a Swedish independent innovation agency is *Vinnova*, which funds different types of entrepreneurial activities related to gender diversity in innovation and aims to promote a greater insertion of women in research/innovation project teams (Grünfeld, Hernes ; Karttinen, 2020).

Lastly, it is impossible not to reckon the crescent interest in policies driving immigrant women's entrepreneurship conditions in rural Sweden (Webster, 2017; Webster ; Kontkanen, 2021; Tillmar et al., 2022). While women's rural entrepreneurship is important for rural economic viability, as female enterprises provide a wide range of services necessary for life in rural areas, women's income is lower and more sensitive to industry instabilities than men's in the same geographical area (Webster ; Haandrikman, 2017).

In the same way, although women's rural businesses cannot be deemed smaller in scale than men's, marriage proved to have negative effects on the earnings of women while positive effects on the earnings of men, reflecting the existence of local rural gender contracts reminiscent of previous contingent and gender mainstreaming policies on entrepreneurship in the country (Webster ; Caretta, 2016; Haandrikman et al., 2021). Consequently, even in rural areas, the Nordic welfare model might render entrepreneurship less rewarding for women, by favoring employed workers over entrepreneurs and possibly discouraging them from recognizing the importance of their business for rural viability (Webster, 2020), due to the fact societal outcomes are not conducive to their own incomes, nor to economic gender equality (Tillmar et al., 2022).

4.3 Individual Outcomes

This subsection debates how MWEs transition their many different sources of meaning, i.e., institutions, within Scott's (2014) three institutional pillars to showcase female agency and empowerment in the acquisition of their individual entrepreneurial outcomes in both Germany and Sweden. Pillars, embeddedness structures and new layers of meaning are therefore associated with each individual outcome we identified in this micro-analysis of MWEs' entrepreneurial outcomes.

Self-valuation. The first individual outcome of MWEs' business institutionalization process was an increasing awareness of personal value as an opposition to a colonial mentality present in these women's home country, stating that anyone marrying a foreigner might become financially supported and hence ascend to a privileged social condition. In this sense, we acknowledge that in both Germany and Sweden women see, through the cultural-cognitive pillar, that entrepreneurship represents a way for them to break this stigma, providing an opportunity to show themselves productive and competent to assist their husbands in the more technical activities of the business, rather than just accommodating themselves as wives and perpetuating this colonial view regarding marriage between men from the Global North and women from the Global South, a characteristic identified in Robins' (2019) study. As MARICLEA states:

> There is a mentality that a Brazilian woman who marries a German becomes wealthy. This is normal, we always hear this, "oh, she married a foreigner to be well off". Brazilians stereotype women who marry foreigners. But I have always been very productive; even when I wasn't working, I always did odd jobs for my husband. His business website, for example, I made the pages in Portuguese and Spanish.

Another dimension related to the perception of their own potential within the cultural-cognitive pillar, referred to the continuity and exploration of an entrepreneurial drive/competencies acquired prior to migration. That contributed to the strengthening of the human capital of these women, derived from their professional experiences acquired in their home country, even in the face of the difficulty in being absorbed by the local labor market due to the lack of recognition of a practical knowledge obtained in a developing nation. As pointed out by Chreim *et al.* (2018), these previous experiences related to family business tend to facilitate the insertion of women in the immigrant business environment despite the barriers therein. BELINDA’s speech clearly illustrates this dimension:

> I always came from an entrepreneurial family in Brazil. My brother owns a meat packing plant. Another one has a butcher shop. My sister has lingerie stores. I have had a beauty salon all my life, 20 years in Brazil. So, I have been an entrepreneur all my life. After a while, I started to work with handcrafts. When I arrived in Estonia, I was working with this. There were many fairs and such, but our [Brazilian] children’s culture of rag dolls and stuffed animals doesn't fit in their culture, you know? We grew up with plush toys and dolls. Here [in Europe], no, it's another generation, it's something else. Then I thought, "gee, I have so much potential. I can't stand still, you know? My husband is working and I can't stay like this" (BELINDA).

In parallel to that, our findings revealed that this human capital acquired prior to migration might come not only from the entrepreneurial skills acquired in family businesses in the country of origin, but also from access to a higher level of education in the destination country. Thus, MWEs' insertion in academic environments is perceived to be an opportunity to greater openness of integration to natives. In the case of HANNAH, for example, even though she managed her own coffee shop with her sister in *Belo Horizonte – MG*, before immigrating with her husband to Munich, it was her graduation in a prestigious university in Brazil that helped her first integration with natives, even with a low-proficiency in the local language. Although such experience did not impact on the creation and day-to-day management of her business in the host country, for it was in a different area from her core business, it allowed her to glimpse possibilities of contact with networks outside her first connection options, acting on what Scott (2014) called relational institutions. In the words of the entrepreneur:

> Thanks to the Bachelor's in Physical Education that I brought from the Federal University of Minas Gerais when I came to accompany my husband, who won a scholarship to do a master's degree at a university here, I managed, even without speaking German, to get involved in projects of labor gymnastics at the university where he studied and this ended up inserting me into society instead of leaving me behind as some Brazilians live. I managed to insert myself not as the 'wife' of the husband who had come to study in the country, but by myself, by what I knew (HANNAH).

The last element to also influence this aspect of the cultural-cognitive pillar encompassed the concept of cultural capital, seen in the work of Yeröz (2019). In this aspect, we observed that the Brazilian women in general who presented the highest cultural capital were those who were able to enjoy international experiences before the definitive migratory process. This was probably because they were able to remedy a structural deficiency of formal Brazilian education in learning foreign languages, especially English. In addition, they perceived their own ethnic identity as not something inferior, perpetuating the colonial mentality, but as an advantage for leveraging them from the natives, in terms of social interaction and business opportunities to be exploited in the post-migration scenario. This became evident in SOPHIA, who was always invited to make *caipirinhas* at all the parties and dinners she attended, during her master's degree studies in Germany, just because she was Brazilian. For BETINA, in turn, since she sought a qualification in England to work as a personal branding consultant, she was able to have a more accurate perception of the new market demands that emerged from the cultural differences observed between Sweden and Brazil. As the latter MWE explains:

> In Brazil, my client profile is the one who wants to ascend in the corporate world. They come to me because they want to improve their image as a whole to grow in their career, because Brazilians have ambition. So, in Brazil, if we don't study, if we don't move, we lose opportunities, so we always must rush to take on the opportunities that come up. But here I realize that the people who come to me don't have as much ambition as we do in Brazil. Here in Sweden there is a lot more demand from women who want to hire my services for a matter of self-esteem, of self-knowledge, rather than for social ascension or to show value in order to really grow. [...] Here they have this *Lagom* issue. They have to be enough, they can't appear more than anyone else. That comes from the protestant culture of not showing off. It is different from our Latin culture, which is much more visual, much more sensual, even for the sex appeal of men and everything, right? Here the use of colors is always associated with the ethnic thing. When you see something colorful it is from Latin, African peoples, I don't know, from other countries. They are not from here. (BETINA).

Skills Development. One more dimension that emerged from the cultural-cognitive pillar was the possibility of acquiring a new competence or improving an existing skillset by virtue of engaging in entrepreneurship, something seen in Chreim *et al.* (2018) and Vershinina *et al.* (2019). In this dimension, we observed a concurrent influence of the regulatory pillar in the creation of training courses to facilitate access to information for starting a business by minority groups in Germany. At the same time, we noticed there was a barrier to the recognition of qualifications below the university level in the consumer services sector, as was the case of GERTRUDE. GERTRUDE was a hairdresser with more than ten years of career who owned a salon in Brazil but had been prevented from operating in this segment in Germany for not having local qualification, even though she had all the technical knowledge and the sworn translation of her diplomas to work legally in the country.

Faced with this barrier, the entrepreneur ended up having to overcome the lack of proficiency in the native language to continue with the pursuit of her formal qualification in the host country. This made her become a reference in the treatment of Afro-descendant hair, an exclusive service aimed at ethnic groups.

In contrast, Brazilian women with an entrepreneurial background from their home country also reported the need to develop more managerial and intercultural skills in the destination country, to be able to deal with the cognitive pressures of cross-culturalism in global cities like Berlin, as in the case of SOPHIA, and in the case of BETINA's digital business. SOPHIA, for example, reported the necessity to learn from scratch the entire process of manufacturing, importing, formalization, and business accounting in Germany to be able to bring sustainable artisanal *caipirinha* to the host country.

On the other hand, we observed that, in the case of MARICLEA, which operates in the sustainable technology industry, there was no support from the external environment for her to acquire the necessary knowledge to enter this environment, which highlights the female protagonism and initiative, as determining factors for entering highly masculinized markets in both home and host countries. Thanks to her coding skills acquired while doing business in Germany, the entrepreneur perceives having managed to enter the Brazilian market with a differentiation that without immigration would not have been possible, given the fact that she has learned to speak German fluently and is located in the reference German city for her segment, i.e. Munich. Thanks to that, she acquired a strategic point of contact between large Brazilian companies and German manufacturers of sustainability-oriented technology interested in exporting to Latin America. In her words:

> So, from 2014 to 2016, I had to run the business idea by myself. I went to many fairs, I've prepared myself for 2 years to enter this market and understand the technical vocabulary of the environmental area, what the clients needed, how they behaved, how they categorized types of equipment, how they defined the classes of services to offer in the sector... […] I always studied on my own, so I learned programming by myself. I am not 'the Programr', but I know how it is done (MARICLEA).

Financial Independence. This dimension, on the other hand, is strongly influenced by the normative pillar in the sense that immigrant women seek entrepreneurship as a way to reject the position of being subject to their husbands and to a condition of isolation and exclusion in the host society, considering that they often cannot overcome the normative barrier of language proficiency to practice their profession abroad.

While similar findings have been pointed out by Crane (2021), we noticed that women see their entrepreneurial activity as a way out of the gender roles inherited and propagated socially and historically by the division of household work, using entrepreneurial work as a formal way of getting around the dependent stigma they are attributed to by migrating in the condition of accompanying their husbands. This secondary role present in the so-called 'triple disadvantage' (Azmat, 2013) can be contested when they mobilize for themselves new possibilities of insertion in the productive value chain of the foreign business environment, mainly because they aspire to perpetuate the independence previously conquered and expected by them in the Brazilian society. BETINA's testimony reinforces these arguments:

> When I came here, I already had a house, I already had everything. My business works in Brazil and here, because if I want to live there too, I need my business to prosper there. I want to continue being independent because I see this happening with some of my Brazilian friends, the husband is transferred, and then they leave their lives, leave their jobs, come here and, well, I don't want to go through this. I always said, "I want to go and I want my independence". I fought so hard to be independent in Brazil, so I didn't want to lose what I had achieved. This was my process. I was planning, researching, so that when I arrived here, I would feel at least a little more secure to continue my work.

However, we should also account for a paradox found in this supposed independence, since it is masked by a dependence on the spouse to initially invest in their businesses and bring security for the risks arising from their entrepreneurial efforts. Additionally, they are also dependent on their partners providing support and material conditions in the household structure so that women become able to occupy themselves with the business and not with other tasks that would compromise their dedication to work, as seen in Cabrera and Mauricio (2017), Martinez Jimenez (2009), Eddleston and Sabil (2019), and Langevang *et al.* (2015).

It is noteworthy that, although Sweden has a leave of absence for entrepreneurship (*Tjänstledighet)*—a governmental program instituted since 1998 that allows immigrants to take six months of unpaid leave to work on their own business without losing their previous job security if their business idea does not prosper (OECD, 2020)—, this type of incentive from the regulatory pillar has not had a positive influence on the entrepreneurship of Brazilian women settled in the country. As SAMANTHA informed us, without getting a fixed-term job, women remain oblivious to any credit opportunity other than their own partner to open and expand their businesses. Consequently, MWEs aspire to achieve financial independence but, at the same time, end up becoming doubly dependent in face of copreneurship as their only alternative to the creation of their business abroad, due to the normative barriers of non-absorption by the local labor market. They end up establishing a preference for native workers not out of xenophobia, but again because of the lack of fluency in the native language and recognition of diplomas acquired in other developed nations.

Motherhood and Fatherhood. Another influence of the regulatory pillar, which this time culminated in a favorable result regarding the experience of motherhood and a more active participation of fathers in child-rearing was the Child Allowance, or *Försäkringskassan*, a Swedish public policy of granting an allowance of SEK 625 to each parent from the first month after childbirth until the child is 16 years old.

In ROSÂNGELA's speech, we observed that this policy, as well as the 18-month parental leave offered by the government, helps to change the way society attributes the responsibility for raising children only to the woman, inserting the man in an active role in the distribution of domestic chores mainly after the birth of the children. In the case of ROSÂNGELA, for example, she reported that even though she is an immigrant owning a small business in the country, she also has the same rights of a Swedish national to receive parental leave so that she can enjoy maternity leave for at least three months. Even though she would receive a minimum wage because her income is still not very high, she stresses the fact she can share the leave for an equal period with her husband, a policy that does not exist in Brazil, and has access to the benefit fully funded by the Swedish government, makes her feel as if she is in the best place in the world to have children.

In the German case, the absence of such an influence in the regulatory pillar led most Brazilian female entrepreneurs to choose to open their businesses only after their kids were grown-ups, because the possibility of being full-time mothers has also been valuable for them, since they realize having a more tranquil environment to raise their children would have been impossible in Brazil. In this sense, we observe a trend contrary to extant literature that point to a balance between female entrepreneurship and motherhood (Martinez Jimenez, 2009; Campopiano et al, 2017; De Luca and Ambrosini, 2019).

In the German migratory context, women either take advantage of motherhood to take on the expected gendered responsibility for their nuclear family—a role established in their Brazilian origins and perpetuated in the host society—, or they need to bear the burden of tasks when trying to be entrepreneurs and mothers at the same time, one thing that their husband's improved employability status abroad granted them the choice of not to bear. In general, entrepreneurship after maternity in the German context proved to be of great influence on the cognitive institutional pillar regarding the way women valued themselves after overcoming maternity and returning to an economically active life in the eyes of their children's recognition of their ethnic identity. As HANNAH’s testimonial exemplifies:

> When my youngest daughter turned 6, I decided to go back to work. It was a delight for me to be a full-time mom until then, for it was something that in Brazil I’d never have been able to do because I worked full-time in my own coffee shop. It was a privilege to have this time for my daughters, but when the youngest was 6 already, I decided I wanted to go back to work. My husband agreed to join me and formalize it so that we could become partners and open a food business here in Bavaria. [...] The German children, my daughters' classmates, liked our product very much and always asked for more when I took it to school parties. This made me feel more valued as a mother, because my daughters liked to have a Brazilian product being represented in their school, and they liked to see our company at the head of this representation (HANNAH).

Work-life balance. Another aspect closely attached to parenthood referred to work-life balance in how MWEs experience motherhood in the context of family business, mainly because of leaving Brazil. In their reasoning, an improved lifestyle condition came into being because they had immigrated to a developed nation and because owning a business there granted them a flexible agenda to support childbearing in parallel to their professional duties, confirming previous findings from Martinez Jimenez (2009), Campopiano *et al.* (2017) and De Luca and Ambrosini (2019) in the Swedish case. According to ÍSIS:

> My husband and I entered into the family business because we agreed we could do it our way to raise our children. Each of us works part-time in our business branch and pick the kids up 1 or 2 pm to go home. We will educate them. We will set an example (ÍSIS).

In the German case, work-life balance is negatively comprised by the financial vulnerability MWEs undergo if compared to the stability of a fixed job, one issue only surpassed by the freedom to have control over their own business, i.e. by the possibility to build something new for themselves that does not have to do with the dictates of corporate life and may bring in return not only profit, but a lifestyle that favors personal fulfillment, confirming what was discussed by Anggadwita *et al.* (2021), Halkias *et al.* (2016), and Jeong and Yoo (2022).

Family status. Regarding enterprise creation in the context of family business, we reckoned there was a family status emancipation due to the shortage of low-skilled manpower in developed countries like Sweden, and such a market opportunity could become a venue for overall social status emancipation in comparison to the professional stigmatization and lack of financial stability experienced in Brazil.

Such findings coincide with Falcão's *et al.* (2021) mixed embeddedness analysis of Brazilian entrepreneurs in Toronto. Their findings stress how migrant entrepreneurship positions less qualified migrant workers in a competitive foreign market because of the differences between developing and developed countries' market structures, which poses migrant entrepreneurship itself as a route for social upheaval. In this aspect, regulative and normative institutional pillars come together to evidence there is an expectation of Brazilians to choose the country where they will live based on this potential for social ascension demarcated by developed countries' market structure. This ultimately favors their entrepreneurial intention in the host country when they realize they cannot enter as formal workers so easily (Cruz *et al.*, 2020). This happens because even when there are policies geared at visa concession for highly demanded low-skilled workforce, the normative factor of language and diploma validation still undermines the regulatory incentive of visa facilitation for certain professional categories and pushes migrants into business venturing. As ÍSIS accounts:

> Brazil is far behind Sweden in some aspects of technology and everything, but you see: everyone here is an engineer, and you pay a fortune for a bricklayer to do something simple, because there is no one to do it. That is why my husband feels so valued here. He feels that his work here is more profitable than in Brazil, because the money he makes in one day here in Sweden is not even what he earned in Brazil almost the entire month. So it really is a big difference for him, isn't it? This was the main factor for him, who is from the Brazilian countryside (ÍSIS).

Cultural integration. Likewise, cultural integration has been interpreted as a cultural-cognitive pillar in the extant literature of Neo-IT. However, in the migrant firm, we understand it is solely dependent on native language learning, which comes to be affected by either regulatory and normative pressures when there are specific policies enabling women to learn the native language for free (as in the case of the Swedish SFI), or when there are local associations that provide migrants in Germany with access to inclusive language learning opportunities. In our field observations, we found one of these associations led by Brazilian MWEs in the Rhein-Neckar-Kreis macroregion that offers German-free courses and book clubs to other Portuguese-speaking women who have immigrated to the country. In the case of SAMANTHA, she comments she noticed a shift in how her native partner's family perceived her as a migrant entrepreneur after she became relatively fluent in Swedish.

> With my sambo's family, I am no longer that exotic girl from Brazil with whom they have to speak English. They already speak to me in Swedish, they ask me directly how it is at the stores, if I got the materials for the kitchen... I feel that these are more normal conversations now, like, if they talk to my Brazilian partner who doesn't speak Swedish, they will treat her like a foreigner. They will ask where she is from in Brazil, why she likes it here, what she came to do... You can see that there is a difference. It is not even prejudice, because they are not xenophobic, they are very open. But you see that this is an issue for them (SAMANTHA).

Social status. Only MWEs in Germany pointed out an elevation of their social status as a result of their entrepreneurial process, and this happened because: (i) they had their business activities recognized both in the local entrepreneurial setting, as in the case of MARICLEA, who entered the sustainability business anonymously and in 5 years managed to be respected in the field; (ii) as well as in other European countries, as in the case of DINORÁ, who has been invited for three consecutive years by the state of Bavaria to have her own exhibition stand at the Frankfurt Book Fair (*Frankfurter Buchmesse*) and the Bologna Children's Book Fair, where she could promote her publishing house with her Brazilian ethnic books for foreign children. Alternatively, (iii) they had their businesses activities recognized either in the host country or in their country of origin, as in the case of GERTRUDE, whose business success made her a reference for Afro-descendent hair treatment in the German hairdressing industry. This also made her travel to many cosmetic fairs all over Europe and made her be invited by leading Brazilian TV channels to give interviews about her challenging business trajectory abroad.

In this cultural-cognitive pillar, we acknowledged Brazilian MWEs' social status is highly associated with the internationalization and growth of their businesses and with the fact that they become role models for other Brazilian women who come to Germany to start a business. Paradoxically, it is also associated with their financial stability to the extent they do not have to work so hard in their businesses in the long run, suggesting that these women are not very likely to go through senior entrepreneurship unless out of necessity. Such reasoning recalls a mainstream Brazilian ideology towards the successful entrepreneurial path that MWEs should follow to achieve social status as a result of their entrepreneurial activities, as this depends on how foreigners come to know and value their businesses or how their businesses reach out to transnational migrant communities and Brazilian citizens still residing in their homeland. Overall, these findings expand Campopiano's *et al.* (2017) and Bauweraerts' *et al.* (2022) discussion of how women spearhead entrepreneurial success in family businesses to how the outcomes arising in their work in female-owned enterprises contribute to their perceived personal success.

Entrepreneurial Passion. This was another individual outcome to emerge only in the German context. Brazilian MWEs expressed their willingness to make a change for the better in the host society, for they realized they wanted to leave their mark in the world and give themselves the chance to invest in something they enjoyed doing, and not had to do just to make a living. In the case of DINORÁ, this was due to a very drastic health condition that prompted her to seek a new meaning in her life after working for 11 years as a teaching assistant in German primary schools. In her words, "since I had always written and had a dream of releasing a printed book, and I didn't think I would have long to live until that surgery I've been through, which was very severe; well, I didn't look for a publisher, I launched a publishing house." (DINORÁ). In this case, we acknowledge her entrepreneurial passion made her turn a hobby and a skill into a market opportunity by writing Portuguese books to help Brazilian parents living overseas to sustain their mother tongue as a heritage language.

For MARICLEA, by contrast, a disadvantaged financial background in Brazil led her to look for new ways to put herself to the test in the same industry she used to work in before moving to Germany. As she explains:

> My business idea came after I had my children and they were all grown-up. Then I realized that I still had an ideal of creating something of my own that went beyond what I had already done in life. [...] Also, since I was born poor, I have always had the challenge of not seeing myself in a difficult situation at the end of my life. [...] So I have this intention of leaving something beyond my existence, something that will become greater than me. That is why I got into this sustainability business, because it is a good market; it is a market geared to help repair what the human being has done wrong with excessive pollution, garbage, contamination of the soil and water... I feel good in knowing that what I am doing can reverse processes that have harmed the environment (MARICLEA).

Meanwhile, HANNAH pointed out that her passion for opening a business in Germany stems from the need to have a purpose that allows her to cope with the rigorous weather, which somewhat resonates with other research cases to the extent that entrepreneurial passion in the female migratory context finds itself associated to:

(i) women’s feeling compelled to enter the entrepreneurial field due to a typically adverse condition derived from the difficulties experienced in home country or in the destination country as well; (ii) women’s exploring potential skills in the same business industry where they used to work in the home country or the destination country; (iii) women’s overcoming the risk aversion and lack of confidence that greatly affects female entrepreneurship in the cultural-cognitive pillar, as reported in the works of Langevang *et al.* (2015, 2018).

In Table 10, we present a summary of the findings in this subsection, starting with the dimensions discussed herein, the institutional pillars that legitimate them and the mixed embeddedness structures they ultimately affect.

Table 10 – Data Structure of Entrepreneurial Individual Outcomes

Dimensions	Institutional Pillars	Mixed Embeddedness Structures
Self-valuation	Cognitive	Historical context Labor processes
Skills Development	Regulative Cognitive	Labor processes Market ghettoization Regulation/Entrepreneurship policy
Financial Independence	Normative	Gendered migration process Labor process
Motherhood and Fatherhood	Regulative	Regulation/gender policy Regulation/migration policy Regulation/entrepreneurship policy
Work-life balance	Normative Regulative	Gendered migration process Labor process
Family status	Normative Cognitive	Market ghettoization Labor processes Regulation/Migration policy Historical context
Cultural Integration	Cognitive Normative	Racist exclusion Regulation/Migration Policy Historical context
Social Status	Normative Cognitive	Historical context Racist exclusion Labor processes
Entrepreneurial passion	Cognitive	Gendered migration processes Labor processes Wider context

Source: own elaboration (2023).

4.4 Firm-Oriented Outcomes

In this subsection, we present the meso level dimensions of the entrepreneurial process outcomes, which are (i) dissemination of gender-equal business culture; (ii) compliance behavior; (iii) job security; (iv) transnational networking; (v) internationalization process; and (vi) entrepreneurial amateurism.

Dissemination of gender-equal business culture. In the first dimension, we observed that Brazilian women residing in Germany and Sweden tend to support each other's entrepreneurship by forming networks for female entrepreneurship within their ethnic group and by hiring other Brazilians as a reaction to the barriers for immigrant women from developing countries to enter the foreign labor market. This evidence has already been discussed in Chreim (2018), Lidola (2014) and Mott Machado et al. (2023). However, these barriers are not necessarily linked to gender prejudice or xenophobia towards Brazilian women in the Swedish and German markets.

According to the interviewees, what occurs is a negative perception on the part of locals regarding the professional qualifications obtained in Brazil, since the lack of fluency in the native language and the difficulty in validating diplomas compromise local employers' evaluation of their human capital, based mainly on the Brazilian service sector. Interestingly, the lack of knowledge of the German language proved to be a regulative barrier on Brazilian MWEs that came to be originated even in the migration policies to attract qualified manpower, as evidenced in the creation of the green card imigration option discussed in the section. On the other hand, this very element proved to be a normative barrier in Sweden, to the extent female entrepreneurs could find translations to documentations and manage to open a business solely with their English proficiency, for learning Swedish is more related to their cultural integration and business development throughout the time than presented as an entrance barrier itself.

In order to navigate through these barriers, they try to support the hiring of equally under-represented ethnic groups, often turning to other Latin or Portuguese-speaking women residing in these countries. In the German case, there is an institutional incentive for the creation of companies aimed at the adaptation of immigrants, one fact that explains the concentration of a large number of companies started by Brazilian women in the third sector, as well as the repercussion of social initiatives organized by them for the benefit of their own entrepreneurial network. In the Swedish case, since social initiatives for the integration of immigrants remain centralized by the state, there was no opening for this same sector in the country, so that the associations led by Brazilians aim only at promoting events to bring together the dispersed ethnic community in the country and preserve the cultural roots of the country of origin. As ROSÂNGELA highlights:

> When we started, we invited other small entrepreneurs to join us in the store to display their products. So, we were four entrepreneurs at that time. Six, actually. We were two Colombians and the rest were Brazilians. The Colombians sold lingerie, and the other two Brazilians sold women's clothes in general. One also sold *brigadeiros*, and I sold cosmetics. The store started like this. Then another Brazilian joined us as a communication advisor, and this contributed a lot to our initial success. But we still have a long journey to grow the store, you know? Actually, we want it to become a space for small entrepreneurs. We want it to be like a collaborative store […]. Besides offering products here we also offer services, which is a way to show our work to the Brazilian public and to the Swedish as well. And we also do events here in the store, so we have workshops... For example, last month we had a workshop about employability. So we partnered with a Brazilian influencer here in Sweden and then we brought a recruitment specialist and a personal branding specialist. We try to welcome the community in this way, by making events. (ROSÂNGELA)

Now, although Brazilian MWEs show an inclination to hire or partner with other females within the coethnic network, hence increasing the employability of minorities among other immigrants, as evidenced by Katila and Wahlbeck (2012) and Daunfeldt et al. (2018), GERTRUDE points to the fact that there are perks and drawbacks in hiring Brazilians. Among them, she stresses Brazilians are more curious, more open to learning in the working environment and more open to find innovative solutions.

Besides that, in her words, “they understand my language and they really get their hands dirty. If they must stay late, they stay without complaining.” (GERTRUDE). Conversely, they also are more prone to higher turnover rates, since they keep the pervasive Brazilian habit of switching jobs, which is one thing the German working culture often deems suspicious. In the MWE’s saying, “the Brazilian worker escapes like okra (…). If a German gets a job and that job is good, he will stay in that job until he dies, and the Brazilian, no.” (GERTRUDE).

Compliance behavior. As suggested by the second category, female entrepreneurs showed high tax morale and tax compliance, even if amidst difficulties in the early stages of the business, which often lead women to informality. Such a dimension resonates with findings among the Brazilian population investigated by Martinez and Coelho (2019), as women entrepreneurs themselves establish selection mechanisms for entry into their networking depending on individual conduct around business registration and tax payment. The said authors make room for contesting the “Brazilian way” (Amado ; Vinagre Brasil, 1991) when it comes to the practice of tax evasion among migrant entrepreneurs (see e.g. Collins, 2003; He, 2005; Ley, 2006; Baycan-Levent ; Nijkamp, 2009; Hiah, 2019). As Martinez and Coelho (2019) stressed, Brazilian women living in the country presented higher tax morals than men, and we noticed this element was perpetuated in the country of settlement through all institutional pillars.

Firstly, interviews in Germany showed that Brazilian women consider it acceptable to start an informal entrepreneurial activity in order to test the financial viability of the business and learn about the market. However, if they continue their entrepreneurial activity, tax compliance becomes a normative pressure among them, since there are reports of complaints against informality and a perception that they should repay the public services they enjoy in the host society by paying taxes. Thus, the tax compliance behavior of the majority contributes to creating an environment that curbs both informality and tax privilege in the long run.

This means that, whenever subject to a regulative institutional pressure stemming from the lack of recognition of professions obtained in Brazil when these were too technical and below the 6th level ISCED, or from the demand for learning the native language to exercise their professions, Brazilian women were less likely to commit illicit practices in order to maintain their subsistence condition, as described by DINORÁ: “I came to Germany in June 1995 with a work visa. I have never been illegal, even though I started working in a hostel with young people from the United States, Canada, Japan, China… from several countries.”, and GERTRUDE in the following excerpt.

> **I have been working legally and paid taxes ever since I came to Germany**. Even when I worked with that Brazilian guy who has gone back to Brazil and left me with nothing, **I was registered to work legally in the country**. When he left, I again got registered here to work in the commerce as an independent service provider, doing freelance services for curly hair, like braiding. As I didn't have a professional course from Germany, I couldn't work as a hairdresser. I had to use another name. So I registered myself to become a hair products seller and do braiding and hair lengthening, since these activities were not under the hairdressing function. […] I had many years of experience in Brazil and had sent all my diplomas; I had to translate all this documentation into German so that I had a chance to work with this in the country, but they made it very clear that I couldn't cut hair, perm it, brush it, or anything related to hairdressing, because I didn't own my hairdresser certificate from Germany. [...] But I ended up forgetting the promises I made when I signed the registration paper and worked with everything I knew in Brazil. So, after 4 years, I was caught, fined, and summoned to a meeting with the body that regulates the hairdressing profession in Germany. They said they wanted to help me not to close my business. They said they didn't want to punish me because they knew I was a serious person; **I had arrived in the country and did everything correctly**, **paid my taxes on time** and, because of this, they wanted to help me. They gave me 6 months to take a test that would qualify me to work as a hairdresser in the country, but I didn't know how to speak any German at all (GERTRUDE, our emphasis).

In line with such argument, we identified a lower tendency among the interviewed women to intentionally remain illegally in the country even in the face of precarious working conditions linked to the impossibility of diploma validation in the destination country or a lower qualification acquired in the home country. Such a finding presupposes that this negative pressure on the regulative institutional level of the foreign country has no influence on the intrinsic compliant profile this migrant group brings through the cultural-cognitive pillar, i.e., through shared high tax morale they bring from their country of origin, as evidenced by Martinez and Coelho (2019).

Nevertheless, such pressure does impose barriers to entrepreneurship in the first years of arrival in Germany and to the very integration of these women in that country, which is why some of them deem it acceptable to start their businesses informally until they start making a profit. In this context, the cognitive compliance behavior shared among them can be partly taken for granted in light of another cultural-cognitive shared sense of the hardships that need to be overcome in order to succeed as a migrant entrepreneur in Germany. As ENEIDA exemplifies:

> [...] and I reckon that there are many people who start this way, without a sales slip, without any regularization, you know? Like, they start selling this way, just selling, and I think it is right in the beginning, in the [first] two, three months... I think you have to start like this to evaluate your business, to evaluate yourself. And then you say, "It's time to register my business, isn't it?" So there is a lot of this (ENEIDA).

Yet, the same entrepreneur also reckons the institutional regulative pressure for business registration and tax compliance is one element Brazilian MWEs often use against one another when they deem it unfair that their business operations need to conform to German regulative norms and others do not, especially with the help of Brazilians that place the cultural-cognitive relativization of the compliance behavior above to the compliance with the destination country's regulatory system. In these cases, Brazilian entrepreneurs make use of the regulatory system itself to punish the deviant behavior of their country fellows, meaning they transform a regulative sanction into a normative obligation by denouncing whichever practice into the dark economy they witness. In this sense, similar findings on the so-called "bounded mistrust" that pervades Brazilian expat entrepreneurial communities abroad have also been discussed by Casado et al. (2021), Casado et al. (2022), and Falcão et al. (2021). Nevertheless, the underlying tensions between the normative pillar and the regulative pillar in this firm-oriented outcome among Brazilian MWEs is a new element we bring to this discussion, because we were able to learn there is a selection among this group of individuals as to which entrepreneurs should be denounced and which should not. As ENEIDA further clarifies:

> [...] But many times I know that you don't have a regularized company, and I shouldn't even be calling you to partner with me, nor should I be recommending your work, but sometimes I want to help, because if you're within our bubble..., right? [...] Then the [other] Brazilian woman entrepreneur said, "Oh, because there're many Brazilians here that don't have companies like mine, I've registered my business, everything's in order". And [these Brazilians] want to know who is doing things in the dark market, so they can denounce them.

In Sweden, on the other hand, the rigidity of the tax system, excessive state control, and the ease of digital bureaucratic services make Brazilians seek to start businesses formally from the beginning so that the high tax morale in this country becomes constant in all phases of the entrepreneurial process due to these environmental factors regulated by the institutional regulatory pillar. ÍSIS comments on how the easiness of entering the country through a family reunion visa also contributes to a "visa compliance" in Sweden in comparison to other European countries: "So the first time I came [to Sweden] I was legal, right? Because I was illegal there in Portugal. But I worked, paid taxes. The situation was different. Here I did some extra work, stayed with my family, which is around 50 or so people."

Job Security. Another normative element that emerged at this level of analysis was the view of Germany as a safe country in which to do business or work, mainly in opposition to the precarious labor relations existing in Brazil (Faria ; Kremer, 2013; Fusioka ; Platt, 2018; Nogueira et al., 2016; Vasconcellos ; Delboni, 2015), which permeate the regulatory pillar of the home country. Meanwhile, we observed that even if the working conditions in the destination country are adverse, women have the feeling that even precarious jobs in Germany are safer than trying to make a living in their own country, especially when it comes to women who came from a vulnerable economic situation prior to the immigration process, as is the case of DINORÁ. In her narrative, she tells how she managed to legally immigrate through underemployment and how she had to endure an exploitative and abusive working condition to finally get a qualification in the destination country that would allow her to seek a new occupation.

> I didn't know that with these 400 Marks, I would still have to pay for my German course. I thought they would give it to me for free. So, I mean, I only had food and a place to sleep and whatever else I needed I had to get out of the 400 marks. I worked for a year like this and wanted to go back to Brazil. I thought I would save money, but I had to spend too, on transportation and everything else. So **I ended up staying like this for 8 years because I had health insurance and it was my job, my income, my first real job with a fixed contract**. But I didn't want to continue working there, because I was working in the kitchen and doing housekeeping, cleaning rooms... I didn't want that, that was not the idea I had, so I set out to discover how I could change that situation. (DINORÁ, our emphasis)

We interpreted the normative vision of stability and economic security in the European country or, in general, in developed countries, motivates migration in the Global South-North direction (Castles ; Wise, 2008; Castles, 2010; Baeckert et al., 2023), even if this stability and security is not legitimized in the experience and normative vision of the European citizens themselves (van Riet, 2021). Thus, such a view serves as a catalyst for the migratory process of Brazilians to the global North only due to the reinforcement of the colonial mentality affecting the cultural-cognitive pillar and the precariousness of work in Brazil pertaining to the regulatory system.

This demonstrates once again the dynamics between the three institutional pillars in the interplay of push and pull factors that legitimize the immigration movement in this direction. But, above all, that normative view on the host country corroborates the perception of women on their financial emancipation in spite of financial risks involved in their entrepreneurial activity abroad (Batista ; Umblijs, 2014; Hormiga ; Bolívar-Cruz, 2014; Homel, 2022). Now, it is importante to highlight that, beyond such a normative view, there is often the cultural-cognitive shared view their native spouses may support them in case of bankruptcy. As a result, this cognitive belief sort of legitimatizes their families and close connections as their primary access to credit, known in the entrepreneurship literature as the 3F's-Family, Friends and Fools (Kotha ; George, 2012).

Thus, in a sense, the normative view around the economic security that the developed country of immigration provides, coupled with the cultural-cognitive characteristic perceived in the destination country that husbands can bear the risk of bankruptcy and non-acquisition of credit through official channels, diminishes the perception of risk, uncertainty, and asymmetry of information that often prevents women and other underrepresented groups from doing business in their own developing countries (Gunewardena ; Seck, 2020). This stems from the fact that business consolidation on foreign soil itself becomes an outcome that is disseminated in the institutional field as a replicable success factor among other MWEs by the cultural-cognitive pillar, i.e., when simply opening one's own business in a developed country becomes synonymous with job security and upward mobility.

This finding specifically illuminates current debates on the topic of transitional entrepreneurship (Pidduck ; Clark, 2021; Raimi et al., 2023), since migration is bounded by institutional norms that may shape marginalized groups’ venturing in the face of social, economic, and cultural adversities found in the transition from the Global South to North or vice-versa. As REBECCA resumes:

> […] That's why women are entrepreneurs, right? Because if the prejudice didn't exist, they would be employed here in Germany. Germany denies it, but it is a colonialist country. You do have a difference. They look at you from top to bottom, right? Like, ah, you come from the third world, your résumé is ugly, your résumé is no good, your résumé is this... You have to prove that you are good... You have to submit your diploma to an equalization process in order to have value in some professions...That’s why for me success is about entrepreneurship itself; because of this wall that exists for entrepreneurship in Germany.

Transnational networking. With regard to the fourth dimension, it was observed that this was favored by the expansion of contact networks at the transnational level, mainly due to the need to acquire inputs that are difficult to access in the foreign country (e.g., in the case of selling Brazilian products abroad). Likewise, many hire freelance labor from Brazil because they recognize the superior quality of the services provided in the home country in comparison with services offered in markets that are not as consolidated in the destination country, such as digital marketing, in the case of LINDALVA, or because Brazilian labor is cheaper to hire than foreign labor in the country of residence. We also identified a strong tendency to strengthen the employment of co-ethnics through networking among Brazilian or Latin women, which resulted in accelerated business growth and the strengthening of the Brazilian ethnic entrepreneurial institutional field in the foreign country within the service sector or in markets whose target audience is typically female. Such a finding confirms the reflections of Vershinina et al. (2019) about how building networks among transnational networks favors female entrepreneurship.

In addition to their social capital improvement through networking, MWEs in both countries strategically benefitted from the Brazilian colonial mentality that values everything coming from the Global North. In this sense, we noticed some women were able to enter highly technical or technological markets, which are predominantly male, both in Brazil and in the destination country, due to their professional background in similar industries in Brazil. However, in terms of market orientation, they were not able to capture native clients in these highly specialized segments because they were both women and immigrants (Azmat, 2013), which contributed to their having to explore the Brazilian market again; this time, taking advantage of the resources provided by international supplier networks and the resources available in the foreign country. As MARICLEA points out:

> I have a supplier in Holland, but most of the companies that come to me are still located in Brazil. I could not enter this market in Germany. The feeling I have is that I entered this market in Brazil because I am a Brazilian living in Germany, because I live in Munich, i.e., the main city with fairs for environmental services and products in Germany, and because I speak German. I found it very easy to access the Brazilian market. (MARICLEA)

In a nutshell, highly masculinized markets in the destination country even allow immigrant women to enter them, but not as real competitors within the domestic market, which perpetuates the ethnic barrier by maintaining North-South colonialism. Nevertheless, with transnational entrepreneurship, MWEs are able to transform this colonial relationship into a competitive advantage by turning to Brazil and other emerging markets in Latin America as potential consumer markets, because they know that the perception of superiority of what comes from abroad in countries with a colonialist culture will put them in an advantageous position in markets where they could hardly operate in the destination country, due to the saturation of big players and because of the existing gender barrier in the country of origin. In this sense, immigrating to the Global North partly represents a gender barrier break in this type of technology sector in Brazil, as MWEs are able to enter it from abroad, although, in fact, they cannot operate there due to the ethnic barrier not ever being crossed.

Czaika (2018), Kofman (2000) and Colakoglu et al. (2018) had already discussed the implications of high-skilled female migration to Europe, nevertheless, their works have not advanced on the consequences for the country of origin when these very migrant women start business ventures focusing on their homeland as their clientele. We add to this discussion by unveiling how the normative view present in the host society as to how female entrepreneurs must be empowered to access technological and excessively masculine segments helps migrant women who had professional experience in Brazil in these segments to enter these markets. This normative view is supported by regulative incentives that try to foster this kind of entrepreneurship in countries like Germany and Sweden, which are committed to gender-oriented policies within the scope of female entrepreneurship, as we have discussed in section 4.2.

Nevertheless, although these normative and regulative incentives are there, cultural-cognitive barriers and also other regulative barriers that affect migrant entrepreneurship, e.g., the role migrants can effectively play within the host society and language proficiency-related barriers to the registration of migrant firms, also come to play a part in MWEs decision to turn to their homeland market when these barriers cannot be overcome. At this point, they start to make institutional changes in the country-of-origin entrepreneurial ecosystem, for they function as carriers or representatives of these “pro-gender views” towards women’s insertion in highly technological markets and add to these, as a competitive advantage, the normative and cultural-cognitive positive view Brazilians possess towards highly-skilled women who have succeeded abroad by opening a business overseas.

The ultimate effect of this in the country of origin is that Brazilians’ mongrel complex is reinforced to the same extent that social values regulating gender roles are renegotiated through MWEs’ transnational entrepreneurship. Meanwhile, in the host society, normative and regulative incentives are reinvigorated whenever a woman is able to enter a previously inaccessible market niche, be it a native or a migrant. However, considering the regulative influence of a wide range of social benefits that induce women into formal employment to the detriment of business venturing, as well as the lack of an entrepreneurial culture among natives out of these benefits, a negative view towards migrant entrepreneurship stemming from necessity—rather than skillset and opportunity—is reinforced as well.

Internationalization process. Alternatively, there is the construction of support networks for women who experience motherhood abroad or who suffer some type of gender or racial violence. The cases of three entrepreneurs from Germany — BEATRICE, LUCY, YARA, respectively — who discovered a business idea when they tried to donate children's books that their children no longer wanted on social networks and realized that there was a high demand from other mothers who wanted to teach their children Portuguese as a heritage language in different parts of the world wound up contributing to the internationalization of their business through the network of Brazilian expatriates. Contrastingly, no evidence of maternity-related entrepreneurship was found in Sweden, so networks continued to be formed to increase access to products, strengthen Brazilian culture abroad, and learn about the potential of the local market, rather than serving as means to internationalization.

Regarding the internationalization of the fight against gender or racial violence, social entrepreneurship geared at protecting migrant women's rights in Germany has been favored by regulative incentives that ultimately contributed to the internationalization movement of MWEs' businesses. REBECCA, for instance, informed us how straightforward is for Brazilians to open an NGO and other types of social enterprises thanks to the bureaucratic similarities with Brazil, in spite of Germany being more rigorous and complex, especially due to all the documentation that needs to be filled out in German. On her account, "the process of forming an NGO in Germany is identical to that of Brazil, you just have to have the statute of creation and seven people. After that you can start applying for funds in government notices."

In parallel to that, NAYARA complemented the country offers a good infrastructure and resources for women to connect with other expats and strengthen networks that may lead to internationalization. She opened a branch of a social enterprise launched in Brazil in 2013. Her German branch was opened in 2018, after she went through a series of training and meet-ups with other business partners in Europe. Despite hers in Düsseldorf, there are other 13 branches scattered in different parts of Germany, such as Berlin, Frankfurt, Wolfsburg, Stuttgart, and Munich. On her account, the strategic geographical location of Germany within the European setting and the digital medium helps women to create and foster organizations targeted at the protection of other migrant women in vulnerability.

However, even though they rely on the participation of more than 115,000 Brazilian women overseas working on 115 different branches scattered around the globe, NAYARA still feels that women abroad often do not live up to the wide array of available resources in the host societies, so as to support each other and truly integrate into the foreign culture by seeking local qualifications that might help them better understand locals' consumer mindset. In this sense, the market ghettoization some MWEs face could be deemed as dependent on a normative perception that women themselves should seek opportunities to expand their businesses' operations by getting to know the local market profile in depth or should seek and provide support for each other once in the migratory context.

Entrepreneurial amateurism. In the last dimension of this level of analysis, entrepreneurial amateurism was pointed out as a negative outcome of the immigrant female entrepreneurial process in Germany, in light of the lack of business knowledge that some Brazilian women testify against others. In these situations, immigrant female entrepreneurship is equated to the informal entrepreneurship seen in Brazil, in which women do not present a professional attitude, market knowledge, nor financial planning, and often prioritize family demands to the detriment of business survival and growth. In the context of the privilege that immigration provides for them, it was not rare to see amateur entrepreneurship being equated to a hobby or pastime among women who did not necessarily want to be entrepreneurs, but rather, just wanted to find an occupation. In this sense, we verify this is another normative pressure MWEs themselves impinge on one another to the extent they reject the “Brazilian way” (Amado ; Vinagre Brasil, 1991) or even more informal practices in business doing that are often found in female necessity entrepreneurship back in Brazil.

When confronting these findings with the literature for entrepreneurship in Germany, we found out this is not one element exclusive to migrant entrepreneurship in the country. Gebhardt and Pohlmann (2013, p. 153) inform us the “Amateur-Entrepreneurs” category is very recurrent within the Entrepreneurial Regions Program (ERP) cluster, which consists of “a landscape of strategy driven clusters, characterized by networking relationships along the value chain between SME, university and research laboratories”. Such a cluster has been under direct influence of the regulative pillar, since it has been initiated by the Federal Government in 1989, in order to address the rebooting need in Eastern Germany (BMBF, 2020). As seen in section 4.2, the Eastern side of the country faces a declined industrial basis and weaker entrepreneurial ecossystem when compared to its Western portion (BMBF, 2020). Therefore, the German Program “Family Entrepreneurial Regions”, and later “Entrepreneurial Regions Program” (ERP), was designed to integrate small technology-oriented firms and remnants from GDR research labs that abound in the region into the global economy, fitting the country’s innovation policy through the High Tech Strategy for Germany 2020, which lists objectives such as excellence in science and technology, job creation, revitalization of regions and industrial base modernization (Gebhardt, 2012). However, despite innovation and technology-driven, ERP clusters have been historically dominated by amateur entrepreneurs and not truly technological SMEs (Gebhardt ; Pohlmann, 2013).

According to these authors, this type of entrepreneur has been legitimated in these clusters through community support, and not essentially out of the economic outcomes their entrepreneurial activities could bring to the region. Also, as our interviewees' description of the Brazilian migrant women amateur entrepreneurs suggests, “societal recognition, upward mobility or financial benefit do not necessarily motivate these subjects to start a business” (Gebhardt ; Pohlmann, 2013, p. 155). Just as Demetry (2017) has indicated, entrepreneurs who do not self-identify with mature stages in the entrepreneurial process do not perceive societal recognition and material wealth as justification for endeavor, performance, and risk-taking.

In parallel to that, this lack of managerial knowledge also opens up new possibilities of market insertion through the offering of management courses aimed at the female immigrant public. This was evidenced by the number of self-employed business consultants we interviewed in the country. Other than these, we also observed the creation of social enterprises that aimed to meet this demand in Germany (e.g., MARIBEL), though the offer is still deemed insufficient by the female entrepreneurs I interviewed, since the focus of the existing training revolves around business creation, with no focus on business development over time. As a consequence, many use this lack of managerial knowledge as a selection mechanism to restrict existing networks, since there is a belief that, as with tax compliance, the network should only support "serious, real" entrepreneurship. Amateur ventures would then be wiped out due to lack of support and thus female clientele, much like a "reverse word of mouth". According to interviewees YOLANDA and MARIBEL, if this selection movement is not made, Brazilian female entrepreneurship in the country would only serve to denigrate the image of Brazil abroad, being contrary to the movement of immigrant women valorization and emancipation they intend to promote with their businesses.

It is worth mentioning the role of this “reverse word of mouth” in the selection process of amateur professionals had already been discussed by Demetry (2017). In her paper, Demetry (2017) stresses hobbyists are more inclined to develop a professional entrepreneurial identity only if they receive supportive feedback from clients and outsiders. Consequently, a negative evaluation might be decisive in hindering the unconscious transition amateur entrepreneurs go through to truly self-identify with the status of an entrepreneur.

Alternatively, Gebhardt and Pohlmann (2013) posit amateurs also wind up being excluded from entrepreneurial clusters thanks to resource constraints. On the whole, they tend to be less attractive to private investments, rely on federal funding for too long, or fall prey to venture capitals that develop disruptive technological know-hows (Gebhardt ; Pohlmann, 2013). Moreover, they help foster cultural-cognitive views towards entrepreneurial activities being less valued than formal employment in the German context. Bridging this scenario to the migrant debate, minority groups' recurrent entrance into entrepreneurship in this country might also cause a reinforcement of foreign bias provided they do not get hired by German employers, meaning entrepreneurship and migrants' capacity would become associated with a suspicious and questionable professional qualification. As a result, rather than creating long-term employment opportunities (Aliaga-Isla ; Rialp, 2013), migrant clusters would then be condemned to erosion due to poor economic development achievements.

In Table 11, we present a summary of the findings in this subsection, starting with the dimensions discussed herein, followed by the institutional pillars that legitimate them and then the mixed embeddedness structures they affect.

Table 11 – Data Structure of Firm-Oriented Outcomes

Dimensions	Institutional Pillars	Mixed Embeddedness Structures
Dissemination of a gender-equal business culture	Regulative Normative	Regulation/Entrepreneurship Policy Market Ghettoization Historical context Labor processes
Compliance behavior	Regulative Normative Cognitive	Regulation/Entrepreneurship policy Labor processes Market ghettoization
Job security	Regulative Normative Cognitive	Regulation/Labor policy Labor process Gendered migration process
Transnational networking	Regulative Normative Cognitive	Regulation/Labor policy Labor processes Market ghettoization Gendered migration processes
Internationalization process	Regulative Normative	Regulation/Gender policy Regulation/Entrepreneurship Policy Market ghettoization Gendered migration processes Wider context
Entrepreneurial amateurism	Regulative Normative Cognitive	Regulation/Entrepreneurship Policy Labor processes Market ghettoization

		Historical context Wider context

Source: own elaboration (2023).

4.5 Societal Outcomes

When it came to the macro-level analysis, four dimensions stood out: (i) businesswomen role models; (ii) Portuguese as a heritage language (PLH); (iii) positive Brazilian culture overseas; (iv) deconstruction of the purely sexualized Brazilian female body image. These are debated in this subsection in light of the three institutional pillars and mixed embeddedness elements.

Businesswomen role models. Regarding the first dimension, we observed Brazilian women are unlikely to develop close connections with native women entrepreneurs, which restricts their cognitive influence over the same ethnic niche, with no extending to the host society environment as a whole. Such a barrier reinforced the North-South colonial duality in the form of how success cases from expatriate women influence other Brazilian women still residing in Brazil to migrate and how other Brazilian women living overseas will perpetuate such a common pattern. On the other hand, it also reinforced the importance of co-ethnic relationships to the advance of Brazilian diasporic entrepreneurship, as evidenced by Piscitelli (2008), Lidola (2014) and Falcão et al. (2021). As GERTRUDE explains:

> Today I have a name here. I’ve recently been to Brazil, and I was invited by Band TV, for I got to be noticed for my job here. I am a reference today for people. Today I am married, my husband is an engineer, I have a reasonable financial situation, I don't need to work so much anymore, but I have reached a point where I can't just stop and close the doors... It is as if I were going to disappoint other Brazilians living here or dreaming of living here. I see my job today as one that gives hope to Brazilians, so they won’t give up. I am a very strong reference here. Sometimes I talk to people... and they tell me that, after hearing my story, they get the strength to start a business, bounce back, and this ends up with my work not being only for financial purposes. My work ends up being giving support to Brazilians. (GERTRUDE)

Portuguese as a heritage language. Another entrepreneurial outcome that had a positive impact on society involved spreading Portuguese as a Heritage Language (PHL) among later generations of Brazilian migrants. Apart from having great venues for internationalization among the ethnic enclave scattered overseas, working with languages and literature proved to offer Brazilian MWEs the opportunity to contribute to a greater understanding of the Brazilian culture abroad and even reshape the colonial relationship between North-South that still persists to this date. For example, DINORÁ's work with Portuguese and bilingual books for children not only did help second-generation migrants not to lose their heritage language, but also helped their parents to learn German and adapt to the local culture.

As argued by Souza (2015), such a linguistic approach to dealing with first-generation migrants may assist females in their experience with motherhood overseas. In addition to that, DINORÁ noticed her business had an impact on the German people as well, since by getting to know Brazilian culture through children's books, later generations of Germans have become more open to foreign traditions.

> By the time I arrived here, Germans demanded that foreign families spoke German with their children in the house and today they already see that this is not the reality of the thing. To perfectly learn a [second] language, you have to learn your own language first. The work then is to bring Portuguese to these children so that they really learn it from their parents and have literature in Portuguese here in Germany, so that German is easier for the families. (DINORÁ)

Such an outcome is favored in Germany thanks to a strong regulative support in the form of several programs that have been fostering Portuguese as a Foreign Language (PFL) teaching among Germans since 1996. In this regard, Werner (2018) stresses the role of bilateral agreements among German and Brazilian, African and Portuguese universities, aiming to introduce Latin languages in the optional curriculum of Higher Education and Management courses in the country. Many of these agreements have been made under the financial sponsorship of the German federal government, given its interest in training business students with a focus on intercultural communication in order to promote economic and social partnerships with member countries of the EU, especially the Iberian countries.

Indeed, Becker (2015) reckons the initiatives to include Portuguese in German higher education took place only after Portugal joined the European community in 1985. Since then, the country has seen an institutional movement to integrate language with business administration courses through an interdisciplinary approach, encompassing the three pillars of economic development, intercultural communication and language expertise, which all have been established with the Bologna Reform, aka Bologna Process. Such a process envisaged using Higher Education as a platform to foster international alliances through the creation of Sinophone, Francophone and Hispanophone cultural spaces (Becker, 2015).

However, since changes have been made to the Germany's Higher Education Pact 2020 (HEP, 2007-20) for the years 2021-2022, particularly as to how programs of this kind would be sponsored by the federal government, policy analysts expect that all this regulative support may suffer from precarious damage in years to come (OECD, 2020), reframing the existing historical context configuration and market opportunities for MWEs working in this segment.

On the other hand, in the Swedish context, given its weak historical ties with Brazil and the inexistence of programs specifically geared at teaching PHL, the only entrepreneur who tried to open a project similar to LUCY's in the Öresund region (i.e., Malmö and Copenhagen), had to discontinue her project and redesign her social business idea with the creation of a Brazilian cultural association instead. In her words:

> […] And I organized a Portuguese language library for children here. A friend of mine, a Montessori teacher, who is no longer here; we... in this library we created a school, a literacy school. Because many Brazilian parents complain a lot that here in Sweden children learn to read and write at 8-9 years old, but the children don't know how to read and write in Portuguese. So I and this friend created a little school inside the Portuguese language library. We worked for many years and many children were literate inside the library that I created. Nowadays there is only a project with cultural activities for the children every Saturday, but this library doesn't exist anymore. There are the books, we just don't have the place anymore. But I somehow continue with this cultural project with the children through the cultural association. To reaffirm their identity, I always talk to the children that they need to know that they live here, but they are Brazilian. They cannot forget (ANITA).

Positive Brazilian culture overseas. All in all, we observed there was a positive influence on the host society stemming from Brazilian culture popularization around Europe, especially through female businesses with a co-ethnic market orientation strategy. Many Brazilian MWEs have opened businesses that are dependent on suppliers of Brazilian goods (e.g., ENEIDA works as an *açaí* and Brazilian nuts distributor from an importer in Portugal, and so does SUSANA), while others have been promoting Brazilian events abroad as a marketing strategy to attract local consumers' attention to exotic products or services (e.g., the Brazilian Day ELISA organizes in Stockholm and the biggest *Forró* Festival ALDA organizes in Germany). All these initiatives reveal that Brazilian MWEs are likely to use their ethnicity as a business asset in how they will explore a market opportunity by refashioning some cultural elements disseminated through a normatively instituted image of Brazil, geared at attracting tourists to visit the country. Here, such a normative image is remodeled by MWEs' cultural-cognitive views on their homeland, combined with the cultural capital they acquired in the host society as to how natives are to better receive—and perceive—their country's culture in a way that benefits both their community enclave overseas and their businesses' marketing strategies. Such analysis sheds new light on previous debates on other ethnic minority entrepreneurs' cultural capital development or cross-cultural capabilities development in Sweden (Yëroz, 2019) and Australia (Xu et al., 2019).

Interviewees in Germany also reflected that the popularization of a positive Brazilian culture overseas has also been favored by a shift in the educational level of a new wave of immigrants, one thing Fernandes et al. (2020) had already recognized in Portugal. For MARICLEA and REBECCA, this is partly due to the regulative incentive of bilateral Higher Education agreements between Brazil and developed countries, such as Science Without Borders, which helped elevate the number of females immigrating for education purposes, rather than for family reunion or marriage. Although these regulative incentives may be timely, they have not changed the predominant pattern of female migration being motivated by relationship with their close ties (Meeteren ; Pereira, 2013; Aman et al., 2022; Ruyssen ; Salomone, 2018).

This shift has led to a closer bond among the Brazilian ethnic enclave overseas, but to the female entrepreneur, it has also resulted in a rediscovery of their origins under the immigrant gaze. This means that, due to the geographical distance and cultural mix, migrant women are able to look back to their homeland through the eyes of an outsider, critically reflecting on the gender roles that are disseminated in Brazil through a cultural-cognitive pillar and legitimated in Germany as a normative pillar. This proved to be one element that could partly explain why marriages with natives outnumbered in Germany than in Sweden beyond the historical context of past migration flows between the two countries, since there are gender roles and expectations, as well as economic factors, regulating ethnic preferences within international migration stemming from cross-border marriage, as suggested by Wang and Chang (2002), Lee et al. (2016), Anukriti and Dasgupta (2017), and Ahn (2022). The following statement exemplifies how such a process takes place in the German context.

> It was here in Germany that I realized how big Brazil is and how many realities there are out there. I met many women from *Ceará* state, who had to look for a husband on the beach because there was no perspective, there was no work there. The only thing they could do to improve their lives was to

> look for a [foreign] husband on the beach. So, I notice that many Germans look for these women because they want to have a quieter life here in Germany, because they know that these women will stay at home taking care of the children and they will have nothing to worry about (MARICLEA).

Deconstruction of the purely sexualized Brazilian female body image. In line with that, the last outcome we identified in Brazilian MWEs trajectories was the (re)signification of their Brazilian female identity through new relationships established among different migratory flows comprised firstly of Brazilian women who reinforced the stigmatization of Latin females as typically sexualized bodies (Lidola, 2014; Malheiros ; Padilla, 2015) and lately new waves of Brazilians who have come to live abroad with a higher qualification to either work, continue studying or raise their children. Such an outcome significantly impacted the cultural-cognitive institutional pillar within the relational institutionalization carrier (Scott, 2014), as this outsider's view on their own ethnic female identity implied some relational arrangements against co-ethnic connections, so as to privilege structural isomorphism with native citizens. In fact, this was the only outcome where we identified women completely repelled their ethnic identity in order to emulate and incorporate natives' negative perception toward Brazilians' deviant character. Again, this element has been changing in Germany thanks to the said "new waves of migration" in traditional European destinations for Brazilians, such as Portugal (Fernandes *et al.*, 2020) and apparently Germany, where we identified an older migratory female flow in comparison to Sweden. As DINORÁ highlights:

> When I came here to learn German, I distanced myself a lot from Brazil, because when I arrived, the Brazilians that were here 'sold' Brazil in a way I didn't want to be a part of. There were mainly female dancers, and I came from a very conservative family in Salvador. So, when I arrived here, I saw Brazil differently. Here you see all of Brazil. Rio, Recife... Until then, I lived in Salvador; everything was tiny, so these were people with customs very different from mine. I distanced myself because I didn't like that and, as I said, I came here alone, right? From that moment that this [Brazilian] woman invited me to work with her, publishing my books in Portuguese and not solely in German, that's when I got to know other Brazilians who came here to work in recent years. They come with their families, they have a different kind of culture (DINORÁ).

Likewise, as interviewee NAYARA pointed out, Brazilian female entrepreneurship abroad is another essential one way out of the stigma revolving around the Latin American sexualized creole body, confirming the previous findings of França and Oliveira (2021), França (2021) and Lidola (2014). Even though recognizing the generalized sensual image that foreigners have of Brazilian women has been changing since she moved to Germany in the late 1980s, NAYARA also gives evidence that this sensualized image only keeps being disseminated among foreigners because Brazil itself perpetuates that on a normative account of the female body being used to "sell" the image of Brazil ethnic products to interested foreign companies in the tourism sector. At the same time, there is also an aggravating factor as to how males treat females in Brazil (i.e, a negative influence conveyed through the cultural-cognitive pillar), as if their bodies would be a commodity of male ownership, as discussed by Barbosa et al. (2020), Barbosa, Romani-Dias, and Veludo-de-Oliveira (2021) and Barbosa et al. (2022). In NAYARA’s words:

> We [in our social international enterprise] also want to show the value of the entrepreneurial Brazilian woman to the world. Because whether we like it or not, our fame here is we are to be 'dancers'. Brazilian women are good in bed and are natural dancers. That's all, isn't it? It is a struggle when you try to do business. I have accompanied some Brazilian enterprises coming up in fairs and, generally, the marketing personnel is always comprised of women. Now when those beautiful entrepreneurial women would show up, the people would say, 'What?! Totally different from what we knew!’ It is like I always say, 'That's right... you can't generalize it'. Samba is beautiful, I love our Creole women, I love our Carnival, but we have other things, too.

Indeed, for REBECCA, social entrepreneurship in Germany has a special role in this process, thanks to regulative incentives that enable the creation of this type of migrant enterprise. Birkhölzer (2015) explains there are at least nine novel types of social enterprise that have been widespread in the country from the 1970s onwards. Among them, we find integration-oriented enterprises (*Integrationsbetriebe*), volunteer agencies (*Freiwilligendienste und –agenturen*), self-managed enterprises of alternative-, women- and eco-movements (*Selbstverwaltete Alternativ-, Frauen- und Umweltbetriebe*), self-help initiatives (*Selbsthilfeunternehmen*), socio-cultural centers (*Sozio-kulturelle Zentren*), German work integration enterprises (*Beschäftigungs- und Qualifizierungsgesellschaften*), local exchange and trading systems (*Tauschsysteme auf Gegenseitigkeit*), neighbourhood and community enterprises (*Nachbarschafts- und Gemeinwesenbetriebe*), and mutual insurance systems (*Versicherungsvereine auf Gegenseitigkeit*) (Birkhölzer, 2015). Given the specific needs and interests each one of them aims to address, each type is subject to different federal financial grants, legal advantages and limitations, as well as different benefits to its employees/collaborators (Birkhölzer, 2015). However, the existence of all these regulative incentives showcases how the country is committed to building a robust legal framework to safeguard the rights and promote the participation of all individuals, including migrants, in German society (Birkhölzer, 2015).

In REBECCA’s viewpoint, this could be seen as an advantage that partly explains the great amount of migrant social enterprises in the country, especially in Berlin, where industries are not so prevalent. For YOLANDA, these initiatives are aligned with the “social corporatism” state model that governs the German politics, as opposed to the welfare state system seen in the Nordic countries. In the former, migrants are “invited” to take part in the political system through social entrepreneurship as a means to release the state from direct intervention in favor of minority groups’ rights, particularly in the form of public policies.

Once the state claims that these groups are co-responsible for their integration in the country, it also attributes to them the mission to fight and promote actions that best serve the interests of their own community, hence, in this context, immigrant social entrepreneurship comes to be seen as a form of resistance against patriarchal values stemming either from the host society or the country of origin.

According to BEATRICE, these values are aggravated by Germany’s Nazi historical past and Neo-Nazi modern environment, which also come to play a part in racist exclusion against Brazilian black migrant women. On her account, depending on how she does her hair (e.g., long curly hair with blonde streaks), Germans tend to assume she comes from the USA, and then she is unlikely to suffer from any kind of racist prejudice. On the other hand, if locals assume she comes from Latin America (especially Guyana), which is often the case when she does her hair in a black-power style, she is certain to hear any prejudiced or racist remarks.

Interestingly, for Boyd (1996), Bell (2008), and Roth and Kim (2013), black power hair has become a symbol of black identity and resistance against structural racism aesthetics, which resonates with the current discussion on how many layers of resistance in favor of a respectful and female conscious society MWEs are trying to put up, so as to tension colonialist normative and cultural-cognitive shared beliefs towards women inherited from their country of origin and perpetuated in their new country of settlement. According to REBECCA, “You notice all this work of the Brazilian NGOs overseas is a form of creating their own structures, strengthening themselves as a community, because we wouldn't make it otherwise”. On that, HANNAH agrees that having an isolated co-ethnic community is bad for Brazilian entrepreneurs in general, “because we don't get many things that other ethnic groups get from the City Hall. They get together, form associations, and the Brazilian community that comes here just want to blend in, to be assimilated by the German culture and pretend they are not Brazilian.” This, apart from representing a setback to the migrant enterprise growth and geographical expansion, as entrepreneurs may not encounter the same receptivity for ethnic products without a strong ethnic community, also means a setback in this fight for a fair female representation, “since gathering together as a collectivity, as an ethnic enclave, is the only way to truly reach the German society with new matrifocal values and renegotiated gender roles” (REBECCA). At this point, we noticed female entrepreneurship in Germany was dramatically committed to changing normative values towards racism and prejudice against females (e.g., in the form of the gender pay gap, etc.) through new matrifocal cultural-cognitive norms that could be disseminated once there were regulative norms to favor migrant social enterprises in this setting.

In turn, the regulative pillar has also proved to exert some influence on this outcome in the Swedish context, since there seems to be a facilitated way that Brazilian women might legally require a visa to move to the country: through temporary relationships with native citizens. According to ÍSIS:

> I initially avoided asking for a *sambo* visa; in fact, that was never my idea. You know, because of what women usually do here, right? Brazilian women do it quite often, they trick the man to get citizenship through him and then they dump him. I didn't want this. I wanted to get it because it was my right. I already had my Italian citizenship (ÍSIS).

We realized such a regulative influence was not verified in Germany because even though Brazilian women may be a spouse or relative of an EU or German national, they must additionally be holders of either: (i) an EU or Schengen passport; (ii) an EU or Schengen residence permit; (iii) a passport from of one of the countries with visa-free agreement within the Schengen states; or (iv) a valid Schengen visa (OECD, 2020). Since Brazil has not established a visa-free agreement with the Schengen states, Brazilian women who marry a German partner or other EU citizen may not be legally allowed to live in the country.

Consequently, female entrepreneurship in Sweden also involved a new understanding of their homeland in a way they could use their businesses to change the stigmatized image Brazilians still have around Europe. Such stigmatization comes either in the form of the Brazilian creole female sexualized body image, which pushes them to a market ghettoization centered on the beauty or skincare industry in Sweden (see e.g., Lidola, 2014), or in the form of Brazilians being seen as corrupt and deceitful peoples by European employers and citizens.

To our interviewees in Sweden, this normative negative social image towards Brazilians also stems from a first migratory wave with a very low educational level and unskilled professional profile, which can only be tackled by advancing business partnerships among the ethnic enclave. Such an integration would be able to connect Brazilians from later migratory flows and help distinguish them from earlier generations that kept on tarnishing the nation’s image. On CLAUDINE’s account, “[...] We bring Brazil for the Germans, for our neighbors, to know that there are many 'Brazils'. For them to see that there are not only those horrible things they hear about our country. There are Brazilians just like us.”

In turn, in the Swedish case, the ease of granting visas for stable unions, the so-called *sambo visa*, as well as the offer of a free Swedish language course for immigrants, namely FSI Swedish Basic Course, helps women to achieve integration in the country more than in Germany, as reflected in the Mipex Report (MIPEX, 2020). On the other hand, this also reinforces a recurring stigmatization of Brazilian women abroad (Piscitelli, 2008, 2009; Malheiros and Padilla, 2015; Lidola, 2014; França, 2021), given that among the ethnic community itself there is the culturally-shared view that Brazilian women will hook up with a native just to get the visa and then dump him within the allotted time to stay in the country on their own. In this sense, female entrepreneurship among Brazilian women helps to counteract this stigma in both countries.

In Table 12, we present a summary of the findings in this subsection, starting with the dimensions discussed herein, fllowed by the institutional pillars that legitimate them, and ending with the mixed embeddedness structures they affect.

Table 12 – Data Structure of Entrepreneurial Societal Outcomes

Dimensions	Institutional Pillars	Mixed Embeddedness Structures
Businesswomen role models	Cognitive	Historical context Labor processes
Portuguese as a heritage language (PLH)	Regulative Normative Cognitive	Regulation/Education policy Gendered migration process Historical context
Positive Brazilian culture overseas	Regulative Normative	Regulation/Education policy Regulation/Migration policy

	Cognitive	Historical context Gendered migration processes
Deconstruction of the purely sexualized Brazilian female body image	Regulative Normative Cognitive	Regulation/Migration policy Regulation/Labor policy Regulation/Entrepreneurship policy Labor processes Market ghettoization Gendered migration processes Historical context

Source: own elaboration (2023).

5. DISCUSSION

In this section, we discuss the previous findings regarding the entrepreneurial outcomes in each level of analysis in light of the theoretical triangulation of Neo-IT and ME, particularly concerning isomorphism/reciprocity and legitimacy/redistribution principles within the investigated context.

With Granovetter's (1985) and Polanyi's (1957) embeddedness, sociological analysis remained centered on economic structures (Corrêa et al., 2020). For this reason, Kloosterman et al. (1999) proposed a revival of this authors' original concept through the Mixed Embeddedness approach, where structural embeddedness is associated with relational embeddedness. The latter would help researchers understand how migrants navigate through market, macroeconomic, and institutional structures present in the destination country. However, Kloosterman's et al. (1999) new framework also conceives relational embeddedness as a structure, to the extent it tries to map out and reframe migrant entrepreneurs' close and loose ties within the outer context. The following citation exemplifies this interpretation:

> To understand the social position of migrant entrepreneurs and their chances of upward social mobility, one has to look beyond co-ethnic networks and focus on their insertion in the wider society in terms of customers, suppliers and various kinds of business organizations. To deal with this latter type of insertion, we propose the use of a more comprehensive concept of mixed embeddedness that aims at incorporating both the co-ethnic social networks as well as the linkages (or lack of linkages) between migrant entrepreneurs and the economic and institutional context of the host society (Kloosterman et al., 1999, p. 252).

Consequently, despite Kloosterman and his associates' comprehensive approach, their analysis so far implies that migrants can use a subtler type of embeddedness to navigate through these structures. Notwithstanding, navigating through pre-existing structures in the host society does not necessarily mean retaining agency to change them. In fact, rare are the papers using the ME approach that ever discuss migrant entrepreneurship as a means to retain agency in a foreign country, and when they do so, they often try to combine elements of institutional analysis with ME (see Langevang et al., 2015; Yousafzai et al., 2015; Langevang et al., 2018). This is because the latter frames migrant entrepreneurs' networking activities and strategies as another way to conform to or even align with structures existing prior to their imigration to the host country, for that presupposes embeddedness (Apitzsch, 2003; Brieger ; Gielnik, 2021).

However, after combining neo-institutionalist pillars and analytically looking at isomorphism and legitimacy through the revival of reciprocity and redistribution principles found in Granovetter’s original concept of embeddedness, we were able to realize MWEs—in fact, any type of migrant entrepreneur acting within an ethnic enclave—do not lose their agency when navigating through these structures. In reality, they may even change them. Such an interpretation is supported by growing evidence that tries to draw upon new institutional perspectives on ME. For instance, Szkudlarek and Wu (2018, p. 585) discovered “co-ethnic structures can successfully substitute institutional arrangements traditionally provided by the host-country environment by reflecting upon the practice of entrepreneuring and entrepreneurial sensemaking”.

We add to this reflection by realizing entrepreneurial sensemaking is related to the establishment of migrant organizational fields abroad, and that these fields’ structuration levels are determined by the ethnic enclave’s maturity stage and migration waves to one specific country. In other words, whenever an ethnic enclave in a foreign country grows, a nascent organizational field grows with it, for migrant’s co-ethnic niche is most likely their first—and sometimes sole—market entry option (Cruz, Falcão, et al., 2020). And within ethnic clusters, migrants are able to negotiate and set new “rules of the game”, and thus constitute a novel organizational field.

According to DiMaggio and Powell (1983), a field consists of a recognized area of social or economic activity in which the actors establish relationships among themselves, by reconfiguring both their action models and the social structures in which they are embedded. For Neoinstitutionalism, organizations and social actors are not involved solely in exchange relationships, but are rather positioned in a relational structure or network that configures their actions and delimits their possibilities (DiMaggio, 1991; Scott, 1991). Likewise, ME posits networking processes happen due to social embeddedness’ dependence on the legitimation granted by existing actors within a given network (aka incumbents) upon the evaluation of a candidate’s (outsiders of a given organizational field) suitability to enter that very network (Pólos et al., 2002). This implies embeddedness is a contingent phenomenon related to an individual’s gradual tendency to adopt a socially expected behavior, i.e., a candidate’s ability to operate in an established system of social norms and expectations (Zuckerman, 1999; Denzin, 2008).

Now, the migrant organizational field is not structured out of the blue. It is created through an inter-organizational relationship with other established structures in the foreign country, be they regulatory entities taken individually, pre-existing native entrepreneurial clusters taken collectively, or even entrepreneurial ecosystems taken more broadly. Machado-da-Silva et al. (2006) had already debated this inter-organizational nature of institutional fields through the notion of social networks. Under this concept, network dynamics condition the evolving structure of fields through either the behavior of actors or organizations that may influence the actions of organizations of another kind (Powell, White, Koput, ; Owen-Smith, 2005). This brings a topological and spatial character to organizational fields, since the context where the interaction occurs also interferes with structural cohesion among inter-organizational networks, and hence with the representative nature of the field among individual members of the network (DiMaggio ; Powell, 1983; Mohr, 2000; Machado-da-Silva et al., 2006). That is to say the identification and definition of a field come from the combination of the empirical mapping of certain structural conditions with their underlying institutional arguments (White, Owen-Smith, Moody, ; Powell, 2004).

As a result, organizational fields can only be fully understood through a multilevel analysis that encompasses institutional theory's macro-sociological views on "the levels of formal authority and organizational capacity within the environment of local elites to higher levels" (Machado-da-Silva et al., 2006, p. 48) with the neo-institutional cognitive theory of micro-sociology. For instance, in the case of migrant entrepreneurship, the former would mean natives' established organizations and institutional norms setting the rules in their country of birth. On the other hand, the latter would entail the way migrants "see the world, reconsidering structures, mechanisms and relationships condition and, at the same time, are a product of human agency and provide a causal influence to the structuration process of organizational fields." (Machado-da-Silva et al., 2006, p. 48).

In such a multilevel analysis, the outcomes of migrant entrepreneurial processes come to the fore for they are what entrepreneurs truly use to emulate incumbents (e.g., their peers or competitors) and disseminate/reproduce the new rules they establish within their own organizational field. As Nassif et al. (2009) clarify, the outcomes of entrepreneurial processes might refer to taking on leadership roles within their community, making apparently impossible things happen, creating alliances, generating jobs, contributing to the growth of the country, and generating profit. Hence, they the are most tangible and noticeable elements within the entrepreneurial process, meaning through them entrepreneurs may reckon competitors' best practices deserving to be copied, and self-evaluate their own outcomes in light of their competitors', so as to disseminate them and encourage their repercussion by other agents' and social actors' participating in the same organizational field.

In this sense, the outcomes of migrant entrepreneurial processes are synthesized in the way these subjects learn to act in the foreign society, often as a result of preceding steps in the migration and entrepreneurial process in which MWEs learn how to be and how to do business (Nassif et al., 2009). In the first case, there is an affectional element in their entrepreneurial outcomes that stem from their individual sensemaking towards being females, migrants, and entrepreneurs, often with intersectional conflicts (e.g. being mothers, of black origin, married, coming from vulnerable economic backgrounds, etc.). In the second case, there is a cognitive and technical element in their entrepreneurial outcomes that suggest they needed to undergo underlying subprocesses to effectively learn how to run a business in a new environment (e.g., by developing entrepreneurial skills and capacity, building on their human, social and cultural capitals, learning market characteristics and local customers' behavior, etc.).

Indeed, the outcomes of MWEs' entrepreneurial processes epitomize symbolic systems, such as rules and concepts, or rather, "ideas or values in the heads of organizational actors" (Scott, 2001, p. 79), that represent the routine ways by which MWEs reach the point of typifying their ties' behavior through culturally sustained and conceptually correct norms. In sum, this implies that each MWE possesses an intrinsic agency to carry out new institutionalization processes in spite of adverse foreign environments. This happens through the positioning of their entrepreneurial outcomes within their networks, for they help them institutionalize norms contrasting with their host country's norms within their gendered ethnic organizational field.

From our dual case study, we learnt, for example, how the negative outcomes of amateur entrepreneurship may serve as a selection mechanism among incumbents and candidates through which MWEs regulate which businesses are deserving of partnerships and long-term survival in the female entrepreneurship organizational field in Germany. The same applies to those who are to be ratted on out of dark entrepreneurship practices and those who do not. Hence, from the meso-level analysis, we learnt MWEs establish their own institutional mechanisms of entry and exit from their organizational field, using the regulatory (i.e., regulation on entrepreneurship), economic (e.g., labor processes), and market structures (e.g., market ghettoization) present in their country of immigration as a means to operate their own norms.

Alternatively, in the individual level, pre-migration conditions as to how gender roles are established within the household labor division in Brazil affect which females are to be praised and admired after migration. For instance, being responsible for their own migration or family migration and opening a business overseas put women in a more advantageous position in terms of the degree of influence within MWEs organizational field than those women who remain “only” as tied movers or Brazilian housewives married to natives. The same applies to Brazilians who migrate and take on an active role in their ethnic community *versus* those who just want to be assimilated by the dominant native culture, meaning the latter would have little influence on this organizational field.

This occurs because migration itself does not necessarily extinguish pre-existing economic, social and gender inequalities, though it impinges on MWEs the need to renegotiate and sometimes confront institutional norms inherited from their country of origin with those existing in their country of settlement thanks to the current outcomes relating to female self-valuation, emancipation, and financial independence shared among incumbents of the field. Complying to individual entrepreneurial outcomes standards would then mean MWEs would be more likely to exert some influence on other agents in this field, making changes to gendered migration processes and labor processes as a whole.

Furthermore, from the macro level analysis, we learnt societal outcomes are governed by transnational relationships that shape or renew Global South-North partnerships towards (or backwards) modern colonialism. At this level, those who show even a slight commitment to using their gender or national identity as a business asset are more prone to contribute to remodeling Brazilian cultural-cognitive and normative beliefs regarding patriarchal societies back home as well as German/Swedish bias against Latin American women’s stigmatization, making changes in market opportunities and labor processes that have been influencing market ghettoization and female migrants’ integration or social and cultural embeddedness in the host society.

Now, the more mature an ethnic enclave gets—and this inference was made be possible only because we compared a country with older migration flows and connections with Brazil (i.e., Germany) with another in which the organizational field is yet at an incipient stage, for Sweden hosts nearly 17,000 Brazilian expats against 140,000 in Germany—isomorphism/reciprocity and legitimacy/redistribution as categories of analysis help unveil how common patterns within systems of beliefs gradually evolve in order to eventually set up the background for the creation of structures of privilege and exclusion within the same ethnic niche. And often, as our multilevel analysis informed us, this occurs when migrants, either consciously or unconsciously, shape and then reproduce beliefs in the host environment that to some extant relate to those found in their country of origin. At this stage of development, migrants' organizational fields could be then understood as "an arena of power and conflict", where Machado-da-Silva et al. (2006) hold sway over the Bourdieusian concept of power (Bourdieu, 1989, 2003) to explain that power is a central element in the conflicts of interest within a field.

When fields turn to be conceived as a structure of relationships between socially attributed positions that are objectively defined through social determinations imposed upon their occupants (Machado-da-Silva et al., 2006), agents or migrant institutions themselves start to negotiate how they will structure the distribution of different forms of capital within a field depending on time and space, and this will then configure the objective relation of their position with others' positions in the network (Machado-da-Silva et al., 2006). In other words, migrant entepreneurs' organizational field can become also structured to the point of subordinating their own participants to relations of domination, subordination, homology, etc. (Bourdieu ; Wacquant, 1992).

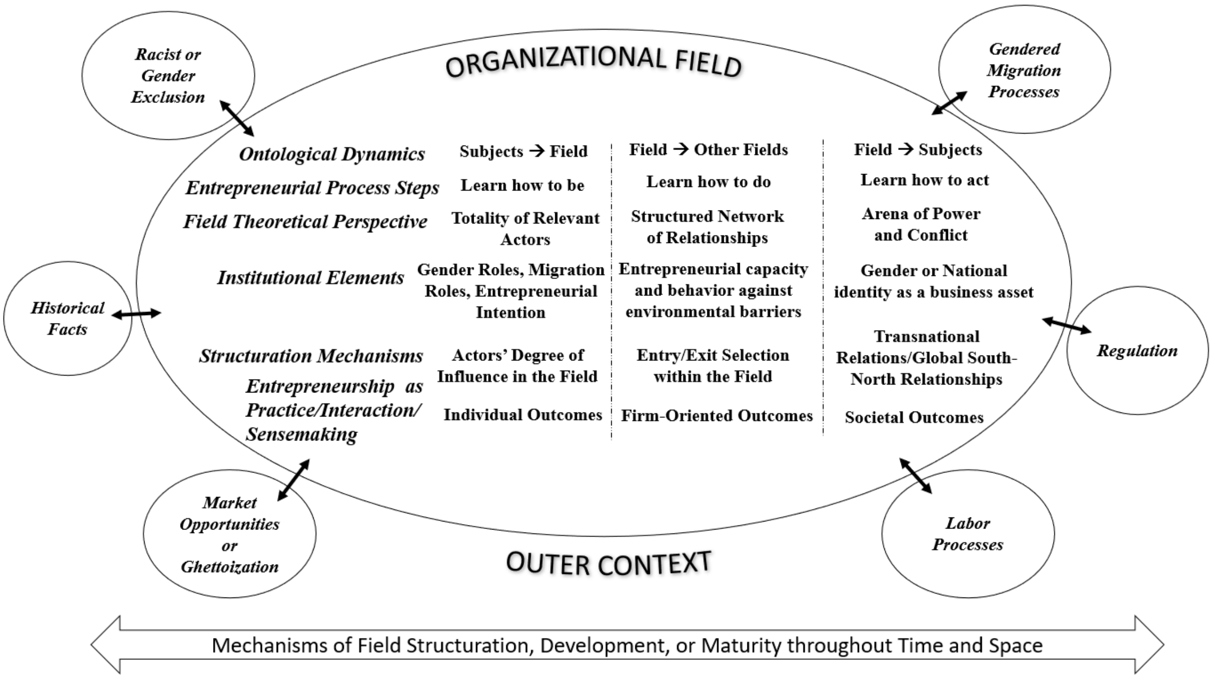
Interestingly, this was found to be the case through the reinforcement of migrant female market ghettoization through entrepreneurship itself. For instance, migrant women "may not be qualified enough" to be hired by a large foreign company as their husbands were, but can become entrepreneurs at the expense of their husbands' taking on the risk of bankruptcy. That would position married female entrepreneurs in a more advantageous position than single migrant female entrepreneurs. Alternatively, when they need to turn to Brazil as a transnational consumer market because they could not reach the native consumer market, they expropriate resources form the host country to change gendered and economic market opportunity structures in Brazil, even though they still reinforce their own country's dependency on developed nations, reproducing once again the mongrel complex as a cultural norm.

Therefore, at a later stage, a migrant field may be turned into a structured space of position, i.e., "an arena of dispute for legitimacy where agents struggle for the redefinition or appropriation of specific capital that is unequally distributed (Machado-da-Silva et al., 2006, p. 40). Such inequality begins to define the structure of the field, where the dominant and the dominated reflect the relationship of forces historically engendered by a system of incorporated dispositions (Machado-da-Silva et al., 2006). The field then takes on a new level of importance to its members, for it not only does help them act in this game, but also helps them to strategically recognize the objective position they occupy in it, which legitimates the very existence of the field as a means to bridge the unequal distribution of capitals (Lahire, 2002).

That is to say power relationships within networks structure society and are in the essence of the dispute for capital by actors who wish to sustain or transform their position within a social structure in a certain field by influencing the meaning of relationships that assure them legitimacy not only through entrepreneurship practice (e.g., outcomes of a given organizational field), but also through entrepreneurship interaction (e.g., relational embeddedness or networking). Hence, structures are solely a medium through which novel institutionalization processes are carried out within organizational fields, and combining Neo-IT's functionalist epistemology and ME's structuralist epistemology helps researchers understand how strategic entrepreneurial positions are negotiated within "mixed embedding" structures found in the migrant entrepreneurship setting. This negotiation then leads to the structuration of a unique organizational field that once again will showcase either the reproduction or reconstruction of the macro social structure with which it relates as an institution itself (i.e., inter-organizational relations between the field and the outer context), provided migrants' ethnic enclave abroad is mature enough to shelter actors that conform and adhere to or change specific social rules "in contexts of typifying practices" (Machado-da-Silva et al., 2006, p. 39).

That said, our dual case study enabled us to trace the development of Brazilian female migrant entrepreneurs' organizational fields abroad, in such a way as to integrate existing knowledge on the outcomes of these subjects' entrepreneurial processes overseas, pre-existing structures and environmental forces as well as their agency to transform them. Their agency is proportional to their ethnic enclave maturity stage in the foreign country, for this influences the institutionalization process of the unique organizational field these subjects are able to structure when they negotiate entrepreneurial practices, interactions and sensemaking within their networks. Figure 6 summarizes the conceptual inter-relations discussed in this section to the benefit of defining the outlines of a theoretical and empirical articulation that better establishes an analytical frame for the study of female migrant entrepreneurs' organizational fields.

Figure 6 – Final Conceptual Model for Investigating Immigrant Women Entrepreneurship


Racist or Gender Exclusion
ORGANIZATIONAL FIELD
Gendered Migration Processes
Ontological Dynamics
Subjects → Field
Field → Other Fields
Field → Subjects
Entrepreneurial Process Steps
Learn how to be
Learn how to do
Learn how to act
Field Theoretical Perspective
Totality of Relevant Actors
Structured Network of Relationships
Arena of Power and Conflict
Institutional Elements
Gender Roles, Migration Roles, Entrepreneurial Intention
Entrepreneurial capacity and behavior against environmental barriers
Gender or National identity as a business asset
Historical Facts
Regulation
Structuration Mechanisms
Actors' Degree of Influence in the Field
Entry/Exit Selection within the Field
Transnational Relations/Global South-North Relationships
Entrepreneurship as Practice/Interaction/ Sensemaking
Individual Outcomes
Firm-Oriented Outcomes
Societal Outcomes
Market Opportunities or Ghettoization
Labor Processes
OUTER CONTEXT
Mechanisms of Field Structuration, Development, or Maturity throughout Time and Space

Source: own elaboration (2023).

Finally, we conclude by highlighting how each theory illuminates one another. Firstly, ME focuses on the entrepreneur as an individual actor working on scattered structures, including the networking structures they are able to create. It has provided invaluable insight into how researchers may identify supportive/adverse structures and how these interact with one another and/or with the outer environment so that migrant entrepreneurs become embedded in a foreign environment through a multitude of structural forces.

Nevertheless, Neo-IT adds to that through the understanding of these networks as a collective entity that is capable of doing more than individual actors can do themselves, for they are able to impose in the foreign environment substructures that do not passively receive inputs from the outer context or macrostructure in a unidirectional movement. Instead, they are able to mediate relational and symbolic in a bidirectional movement, shedding new light on Machado-da-Silva's et al. (2006) theory of structuration of organizational fields.

This is based on a recursiveness logics between agency and structure, i.e., one that is to deal with the dynamic relationships between organizations and social actors. In this line of reasoning, structures do not only define and condition one's possibilities for action through historical constraints and enablers, but rather result and represent one's activities in a more interactive and reciprocal perspective of the institutionalization process of migrant entrepreneurs' organizational fields abroad. Furthermore, since organizational fields are circumscribed in spatial and time-bounded contexts, they open room for embedding relational dimensions and institutional symbolic dimensions to be recursively and dialogically negotiated in a provisional and contingent character that reflects how migrant entrepreneurs' organizational fields are structured upon the development of their coethnic enclave overseas.

6. CONCLUSIONS

This research set out to investigate how the micro, meso, and macro outcomes of Brazilian migrant women's entrepreneurial processes unveiled reciprocity (i.e. isomorphism) and redistribution (i.e., legitimacy) mechanisms in this group's mixed embeddedness in Germany and Sweden. In so doing, empirical data collected through sixty interviews were compared with information from public policies and open access reports in order to better frame the institutional regulative context of this dual case study. Allegedly, Germany and Sweden are unusual settlement destinations for Brazilians due to their extreme weather conditions, weak historical ties with Brazil (in comparison to other popular European destinations), and women's lack of native language proficiency.

Our analysis clarifies that the Brazilian women in Germany and Sweden were able to transform their apparent Latin origin disadvantage into a business asset, either through a new presentation of their 'Brazilianness' in a product geared to Brazilians living abroad (business oriented to their co-ethnic niche), or through an adaptation of their business model and management style, which ended up differentiating their business even in the eyes of the native consumer, a foreigner to them. Consequently, their entrepreneurial process brought advantages at the individual level.

Initially, there was a (re)signification of their migrant ethnicity's value in face of a predominant colonial mentality, which might have placed them in an excluding social position or led to poor integration because they would not feel as professionally competent as local workers until starting their business abroad. This mentality brought from the country of origin was confirmed in the country of destination due to the immediate exclusion from the European labor market. This was mainly justified by three reasons. First, the difficulty in learning the natives' language, a normative-cognitive pressure present in both host countries, demanded language proficiency for hiring in the service sector, i.e., the most sought-after sector by this audience given their human capital developed in Brazil. Second, there was an ethnic-racial prejudice belonging to the institutional cognitive pillar that added to the migrant an image of stigmatization in face of their "lower qualification" when compared to native citizens. Third, the existing pro-migration legislation was conditioned to an exclusive share of highly-qualified manpower for sectors of high economic demand rarely accessible to Brazilian women in a scenario prior to immigration. This was the case both because their professional qualifications obtained in the country of origin are not easily recognized by local authorities and because these occupation areas suffer gender segregation in their country of origin, a barrier of the institutional regulatory pillar that could only be overcome with new specializations and certifications obtained in the country of destination, as demonstrated in cases DINORÁ and GERTRUDE. It is noteworthy that, although these qualifications are easier to obtain in Germany when compared to Sweden, the long process for acquiring such accreditations also delays businesses' opening and maturing by Brazilian women immigrants in these countries.

One of this research's limitations was that we did not utilize the criterion of business maturity in the selection process of the interviewed participants. This implies the phenomenon observed and reported herein cannot be theoretically generalized to phases of the entrepreneurial process other than the early or maturing stage, either if we consider the same ethnic niche or other minority migrant entrepreneurs. In addition, we did not distinguish between businesses created exclusively by migrant women to those created in partnership with their spouses, which configure the phenomenon of copreneuring, quite peculiar within the context in debate. Although this limitation does not discard our reflections to the benefit of the specific field of female entrepreneurship, since the interviewed women effectively managed their businesses and actively participated in its creation, it also broadens the discussion to the sub-area of Family Business, confirming what has been pointed out by Bauweraerts *et al.* (2022), De Luca and Ambrosini, (2019), Vershinina *et al.* (2019), regarding the fact that female entrepreneurship often depends on other family members or closer networks, especially in migratory contexts where they may be subject to a racial-ethnic disadvantage, manifested in the form of the so-called 'triple disadvantage' (Azmat, 2013).

Future directions of this study might include exploring intersectional themes that have been only tangentially covered in our findings, e.g. outcomes deriving from home-based business models compared to other business types; outcomes deriving from unique personal branding strategies employed by migrant female entrepreneurs; outcomes deriving from Brazilian Black women *versus* white women; and outcomes deriving from the digital as a medium for women's insertion in highly competitive technological markets, as seen in MARICLEA, or in digital entrepreneurship, as seen in BETINA. Similarly, it might be useful to address the reasons underlying Sweden being a second-option destination for Brazilians in the context of female migration.

Despite the said limitations, this paper arguably provides a significant theoretical contribution to advancing the extant knowledge of female entrepreneurship through a sociological institutional view, by putting into practice some of Alvesson and Spicer's (2018) recommendations to avoid what they labeled a 'Neo-Institutional mid-life crisis'. More than simply tackling the narrow literature gap concerning the entrepreneurial outcomes of Brazilian migrant businesswomen, our dual case study design allowed us to problematize how they dealt with pressures for conformity and brought about legitimacy in an institutionalized field to promote changes that added to their female individual, organizational and societal embeddedness in the form of the entrepreneurial results they obtained in the developed country. These new empirical discoveries also involved pre-migration patterns and post-migration outcomes in an overarching and dynamic framework encompassing all three institutional pillars, and one thing that aided our theoretical generalization was following the said authors' suggestion for transcending the boundaries of institutionalists' terminology to related areas of research, such as Bourdieu's cultural capital concept found in Yeröz (2019).

In practical terms, our contribution lies in the understanding of how the policies implemented so far with the intention of facilitating the insertion of women entrepreneurs in Germany and Sweden (see Foss *et al.*, 2019) have made little progress in favor of immigrant ethnic groups, given that Brazilian women did not report receiving government support to start or run their businesses. Our findings on how the institutional environment shape and is simultaneously shaped by MWEs may thus inform European nations envisaging to attract higher levels of immigrant entrepreneurs to attain their major economic and social objectives for the future, e.g., by conforming to UN's 2030 agenda for social justice and gender equality.

Such nations would need to foster an innovation culture through incentives that support the entrance of minority ethnic women in predominantly technological and masculinized markets pertaining to the area of STEM, empowering targeted social actors involved within these foreign groups of entrepreneurs to work towards achieving the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DE&I) goals in the migrant access of local labor markets. Likewise, another practical implication is that this study may come to serve as a reference for the implementation of public policies in Brazil as a means to prevent the emigration of qualified women and brain drain.

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APPENDIX A – Interview Guide

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Where were you born?

2. How old are you?

3. Did you work in Brazil? If yes, with what?

4. What was your highest level of education in Brazil?

5. Have you ever taken any formal course in the country where you live now? If yes, why?

6. Why did you decide to leave Brazil?

7. How did you start your plans to immigrate to Germany/Sweden?

8. Had you lived in another European country(ies) before you came to Germany/Sweden? If yes, why?

9. Please, tell us about your arrival in Germany/Sweden.

10. Did your family come with you?

11. When you arrived, did you expect to get a formal or informal job, or were you already an entrepreneur?

12. Are you married? If yes, what is the nationality of your spouse? Did you get married before or after immigrating?

13. Do you have children? If yes, what is their citizenship status?

14. Do you currently interact more with locals, native Brazilians or foreigners of other nationalities?

15. In which year did you open your business?

16. Since then have you noticed any changes in the community of Brazilians living in Germany/Sweden?

17. What led you to open your own business after immigrating?

18. What was your previous experience in your business industry prior to open your own enterprise?

19. How many Brazilians do you know today who work in the same field as your business operates?

20. How many employees do you have at the moment? Where are they from?

21. How do you perceive the relationship between Brazilians in Germany/Sweden?

22. How do you perceive the relationship between Brazilians from the entrepreneurial community in Germany/Sweden?

23. To what extent do you believe that the opening of your business depended on your relationship with Brazilians or locals?

24. Are German/Swedish local consumers interested in the services/products marketed by your company?

25. Are there other ethnic communities, i.e. other nationalities that you serve with your business?

26. Does your network/family help your business? In what way(s)?

27. Do you think that the fact of being Brazilian gives you any differentiation in relation to local businesses?

28. How do you deal with the bureaucracy of your company: formalization, taxation...?

29. How had you had access to information about laws and taxes when you started your business?

30. If you were hired by a company to earn the same salary that you take from your company's revenues, would you abandon your own business to become an employee?

31. What were the main difficulties you encountered while undertaking business abroad that made you think of quitting?

32. Would you move back to Brazil? Why or why not?

APPENDIX B – Survey Script

SURVEY QUESTIONS

1. How old are you?
2. Gender: F/M
3. In what city were you born?
4. What is your academic background IN BRAZIL?
5. Do you have an undergraduate or graduate degree? IN WHICH AREA?
6. Where did you graduate?
7. What new courses have you taken IN GERMANY/SWEDEN?
8. Why did you leave Brazil?
9. Why did Germany/Sweden attract you?
10. What is your purpose in Germany/Sweden?
11. How long have you been in Germany/Sweden?
12. In which city do you currently live?
13. How are you living?
14. How did you leave Brazil?
15. What is your current citizenship status?
16. IF YOU WORK: In what field?
17. IF ENTREPRENEUR: In what kind of business?
18. IF ENTREPRENEUR: In what market niche?
20. If you are not an entrepreneur: Are you thinking of opening a business in Germany/Sweden?
21. IF YES: Based on what?
22. How long do you intend to stay in Germany/Sweden?
23. What were the main difficulties you faced when you arrived?
24. What are the main difficulties you face nowadays?
25. If you want to leave your name and e-mail for a follow-up interview, please type it below:
26. How did you hear about the survey?

APPENDIX C – Interviewees’ Profiles

INTERVIEWEES’ PERSONAL AND ENTREPRENEURIAL PROFILE

Interviewee Identification Code	**Age**	**Birthplace**	**Marital Status**	**Years Spent in the Country**	**City Destination in the Host Country**	**Education Level in Brazil (ISCED)**	**Market Orientation**	**Business Type**	**Year of Business Creation**	**Core Business Industry**
INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED BY THE PEIM’S MEMBERS IN GERMANY										
GERTRUDE	50	Itabuna (BA)	Married to a German	26	Munich	3 Upper Secondary Education	Brazilian ethnic niche/ Exotic Brazilian products for the mainstream customer	Home-based	1999	Photography
BIANCA	70	Firmino Alvez (BA)	Married to a German	44	Düsseldorf	6 Bachelor’s degree	Brazilian ethnic niche	SME	1989	Hospitality and Tourism Industry
JOSEFA	46	Porto Alegre (RS)	Married to a German	8	Nuremberg/ Munich	6 Bachelor’s degree	Brazilian ethnic niche/ Exotic Brazilian products for the mainstream customer	Home-based	2017	Marketing videos creator/Wedding videos creator
ELIANA	36	São João de Meriti (RJ)	Married to a German	16	Munich/ Maisach	4 Post-secondary non-Tertiary Education	Brazilian ethnic niche/ Exotic Brazilian products for the mainstream customer	Home-based	2011	Photography
CRISTAL	59	Santa Rosa (RS)	Married to a Brazilian	17	Munich	6 Bachelor’s degree	Brazilian ethnic niche (who want to open a business abroad)	Self-employed	2010	Business Consultancy
AMÉLIA	55	Restauração-Manaus (AM)	Married to a German	22	Munich	3 Upper Secondary Education	Specific interests	Small Business	2007	Beauty and Skin Care
DINORÁ	53	Salvador (BA)	Married to a German	26	Munich	3 Upper Secondary Education	Brazilian ethnic niche	Home-based	2013	Independent Publishing House
GERTRUDE	57	Feira de Santana (BA)	Married to a German	17	Munich	4 Post-secondary non-Tertiary Education	Brazilian ethnic niche	Small Business	2010	Hairdresser and Beauty Parlor Owner
ELLEN	47	Pará de Minas (MG)	Married to a German	22	Munich/Grünwald/Markt Schwaben	6 Bachelor’s degree	Specific interests	Self-employed	2010	Psychopedagogy
SOPHIA	32	São Paulo (SP)	Married to a German	8	Berlin	6 Bachelor’s degree	Exotic Brazilian products for the mainstream customer	Home-based	2019	Craft Beverage Import (Artisanal *Cachaça*)
LARA	42	São Paulo (SP)	Married to a German	19	Böblingen	6 Bachelor’s degree	Specific interests	Copreneurship/ Small Business	2020	Hospitality Consultancy
MAFALDA	41	São Paulo (SP)	Married to a Brazilian/German	9	Freising (Grand Munich area)	6 Bachelor’s degree	Brazilian ethnic niche/Exotic Brazilian products for the mainstream customer	Self-employed/ Digital entrepreneurship	N/A	Sportswear (*capoeira*)/English teacher/ *capoeira* classes
CLOTILDE	50	Rio de Janeiro (RJ)	Married to a Brazilian	16	Erden	3 Upper Secondary Education	Specific interests	Self-employed	2019	Party Decoration
MARISSOL	53	São Paulo (SP)	N/A	3,5	Munich	6 Bachelor’s degree	Specific interests	Self-employed	2006	International Career Coach

ESMERALDA	39	Camaçari (BA)	Married to a German	13	Oettingen	3 Upper Secondary Education	Exotic Brazilian products for the mainstream customer/Specific interests	Self-employed	2010/ 2012	Zumba dance teacher/Food industry (Ayurvedic cook)
AGNES	62	Recife (PE)	Married to a German	28	Cologne	7 Master's degree (Germany)	Brazilian ethnic niche	Home-based	2009	Career Coach
JOANA	44	Salvador (BA)	Married to a German	28	Hamburg/ Munich	4 Post-secondary non-Tertiary Education	Exotic Brazilian products for the mainstream customer	SME	2008/2009/2014	Food industry (restaurants)
RUBI	31	São José dos Campos (SP)	Married to a Brazilian	5	Munich	7 MBA degree (Germany)	Specific interests	Home-based/Informal entrepreneurship	2020	Social networking platform for start-ups
RÚBIA	53	Salvador (BA)	German Boyfriend	31	Munich	6 Bachelor's degree	Exotic Brazilian products for the mainstream customer/ Specific interests	Self-employed	1998	Montessori teacher/ Creative dance teacher
HANNAH	50	Santo André (SP)	Married to a Brazilian	16	Erden	6 Bachelor's degree	Brazilian ethnic niche/ Exotic Brazilian products for the mainstream customer	Copreneurship	2016	Food Industry (Brazilian *pão de queijo*)
DOROTY	44	Betim (MG)	Married to a German	22	Talheim, Heilbronn	6 Bachelor's degree	Specific interests	Self-employed/Copreneurship	2009	Insurance independent broker
MARICLEA	53	São Paulo (SP)	Married to a German	23	Munich	6 Bachelor's degree	Highly competitive technological market	Home-based	2014	Technology to clean the environment
INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED BY THIS THESIS'S AUTHOR IN GERMANY										
MARCELE	48	Porto Alegre (RS)	Married to a Brazilian	10	Eschborn, Hesse (Frankfurt Rhein-Main area)	6 Bachelor's degree	Brazilian ethnic niche/ Exotic Brazilian or Latin products for the mainstream customer	Home-based/Copreneurship/Transnational entrepreneurship	2018-2020	Marketplace platform owner (Brazilian or Latin products distributor)
BÁRBARA	N/A	Ribeirão Preto (SP)	Married to a Brazilian	10	Stuttgart	6 Bachelor's degree	Specific interests	Self-employed/Transnational/Social entrepreneurship	2015	Independent lawyer/Community Leader
YOLANDA	60	Vitória (ES)	Married to a German	7	Cottbus (Grand Berlin area)	7 Master's degree (BTU Germany)	Specific interests/ Brazilian ethnic niche - Brazilians living in Brazil or elsewhere	Small business/Transnational entrepreneurship	2021	Student exchange programs agency (undergraduate or graduate degrees)
MARIBEL	N/A	Londrina (PR)	Married to a Portuguese	3	Bad Homburg, Hesse	7 Master's degree (Portugal)	Specific interests – Brazilian entrepreneurs abroad and companies with social responsibility	Social entrepreneurship/ International entrepreneurship	2011/ 2017/ 2021	In-company training and business consultancy
LINDALVA	>40 <50	Curitiba (PR)	Married to a Brazilian	9	Berlin	7 Master's degree	Specific interests	Home-based/Transnational entrepreneurship/Digital entrepreneurship	2017	Marketing ; Design studio
LUDIMILA	41	São Gonçalo (RJ)	Married to a Brazilian	4	Munich	7 Master's degree (São Paulo)	Specific interests	Home-based/ Digital entrepreneurship	2021	Employed Accountant/Business consultant and mentor

ENEIDA	N/A	Salvador (BA)	Married to a German	5-6	Schifferstad	7 Master's degree (MBA)	Brazilian ethnic niche	Self-employed/Copreneurship	2020	Food industry (Brazilian foods importer and distributor)
CLÓRIS	>50 <60	Gilbués (PI)	Married to a German	4	Milan (Italy), Berlin	4 Post-secondary non-Tertiary Education	Specific interests	Small Business/Copreneurship	2020	Hairdresser and Beauty salon owner
ALÍCIA	36	Belém (PA)	Single	4	London, Lisbon, and Düsseldorf	6 Bachelor's degree	Brazilian ethnic niche – Brazilian female entrepreneurs abroad	Home-based/Digital nomadism	2019	Digital marketing
CAROLINA	45	João Pessoa (PB)	Married to a German	7	Stuttgart	6 Bachelor's degree	Brazilian ethnic niche – Brazilians moving abroad	Self-employed/Transnational entrepreneurship	2016/ 2019	Relocation, Intercultural Training and Citizenship Advisory
BEATRICE	45	Rio de Janeiro (RJ)	Married to a German	14	Mannheim	6 Bachelor's degree	Brazilian ethnic niche	Small Business/ International/ Transnational entrepreneurship	2013	Importer and distributor of Brazilian books for kids
REBECCA	40	Salvador (BA)	Married to a Brazilian	13	Berlin	6 Bachelor's degree	Brazilian ethnic niche/Specific interests (entrepreneurship mentor for migrant women)	Self-employed/ Social entrepreneurship	2018/ 2021	Migration integration (reception of migrant women and cultural events targeted exclusively at women)
LUCY	62	Brasília (DF)	Married to a German	21	Munich	7 Specialist degree (Universität Bielefeld)	Brazilian ethnic niche	Social entrepreneurship (informal)	2012	Cultural events and book clubs (initiative to foster Portuguese as a Heritage Language)
ALDA	>30 <40	Vitória (ES)	Married to a German	>20	Leonberg/ Stuttgart	6 Bachelor's degree	Brazilian ethnic niche/ Exotic Brazilian products for the mainstream customer	Small Business	2017	Food and Beauty Care industry (restaurant and beauty care/waxing studio owner)
ADÉLIA	N/A	Rio de Janeiro (RJ)	Single	25	Brühl-> Leverkusen > Cologne	6 Bachelor's degree (Germany)	Brazilian ethnic niche/ Exotic Brazilian products for the mainstream customer	Self-employed	2017	Events promoter
MEL	>50 <60	São Caetano do Sul (SP)	Married to a Brazilian	11	Wiesbaden	6 Bachelor's degree (Germany)	Specific interests	Small business	2016	Illustrator and visual arts professional
MELISSA	59	Uberlândia (MG)	Married to a German	3	Dannstadt-Schauernheim	4 Post-secondary non-Tertiary Education	Brazilian ethnic niche/ Exotic Brazilian products for the mainstream customer	Home-based/Small business	2021	Body spa owner, massage therapist and waxing professional
CLARA	N/A	Arraias (GO)	Married to a German	25	Düsseldorf	4 Post-secondary non-Tertiary Education	Specific interests	Small business	N/A	Body spa owner and massage therapist
NAYARA	70	Firmino Alvez (BA)	Married to a German	44	Düsseldorf	6 Bachelor's degree	Brazilian ethnic niche	Social entrepreneurship/Transnational entrepreneurship	2018	Female association targeted at fostering female entrepreneurship and combating women's vulnerable

										conditions abroad
YARA	N/A	Belo Horizonte (MG)	Married to a German	9	Tilburg-> Duisburg	7 Master's degree (Tilburg University)	Brazilian ethnic niche/Specific interests	Self-employed/ Small Business/ International entrepreneurship	2018	Independent lawyer/ Bookstore owner (Kids' books in English)
LOHANNE	N/A	Rio de Janeiro (RJ)	Married to a Hungarian	14	Einbeck	6 Bachelor's degree	Specific interests	Small Business	2021	Handmade soaps and organic cosmetics (artisanal manufacturer)
VIVIAN	37	São Paulo (SP)	Married to a Russian	6	Stuttgart	6 Bachelor's degree	Specific interests (B2B)	Self-employed/Digital nomadism	2018	Independent photographer
MABEL	43	São Paulo (SP)	Married to a German	19	Böblingen	6 Bachelor's degree	Brazilian ethnic niche/ Exotic Brazilian products for the mainstream customer	Small Business	2020	Food industry (Handmade Brazilian Confiserie)
INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED BY THE PEIM'S MEMBERS IN SWEDEN										
ANITA	N/A	Rio de Janeiro (RJ)	Married to a Swedish	10	Mälmo	7 Master's degree (Barcelona, Spain)	Brazilian ethnic niche/ Exotic Brazilian products for the mainstream customer	Social entrepreneurship	2022	Librarian/ Cultural association founder/ Portuguese books for Brazilian kids
ROSÂNGELA	N/A	Rio de Janeiro (RJ)	Married to a Brazilian	4	Stockholm	6 Bachelor's degree	Brazilian ethnic niche/Specific interests	Small Business	2020	Hair and Skincare Products Importer and Distributor (Brazilian Vegan and Cruelty-Free Brands focused on curled black hair)
SAMANTHA	N/A	São Paulo (SP)	Married to a Swedish	4	Stockholm	6 Bachelor's degree	Brazilian ethnic niche/Exotic Brazilian products for the mainstream customer	Home-based	2019	Food Industry (Brazilian *brigadeiro*)
JANE	N/A	Unknown city (MG)	Married to a Swedish	12	Stockholm	6 Bachelor's degree	Specific interests	Home-based	2019	Food industry (bakery)
CLAUDINE	N/A	São Paulo (SP)	Married to a Brazilian	3	Stockholm	6 Bachelor's degree	Specific interests (Green fashion)	Home-based/ Family business/ Transnational entrepreneurship	2021	Sportswear (kimono manufacturer and distributor)/ Slow fashion designer
ROBERTA	N/A	Porto Alegre (RS)	N/A	7	Stockholm	7 Master's degree (University of Uppsala)	Specific interests	Home-based	2021	(Sustainability) Natural and organic cosmetics (artisanal manufacturer)
SAMIRA	N/A	Rio de Janeiro (RJ)	Married to a Swedish	6	Stockholm	7 Master's degree (KTH)	Specific interests (business mentorship targeted at females)	Self-employed/ International entrepreneurship	2001	Open data analyst/ Digital service design/ Business mentorship

SUSANA	N/A	Porto Alegre (RS)	Married to a Swedish	>20	Gothenburg -> Stockholm	6 Bachelor's degree	Exotic Brazilian products for the mainstream customer	Family business/SME	2015	Food Industry (Brazilian *açaí* importer and distributor)
ROSANA	N/A	Curitiba (PR)	Married to a Brazilian	4	Stockholm	6 Bachelor's degree	Brazilian ethnic niche/Specific interests (B2B)	Home-based/Copreneurship	2021	Personalized mugs and bottles manufacturer and distributor
BETINA	N/A	São Paulo (SP)	Married to a Swedish	4	Stockholm	7 Master's degree (MBA)	Specific interests	Transnational Business/Digital Entrepreneurship	2015	Consultancy Services of Personal Branding and Body Image
BELINDA	>50	Salvador (BA)	Married to a Brazilian	5	Stockholm	N/A	Exotic Brazilian products for the mainstream customer	Home-based	N/A	Food Industry (Brazilian frozen homemade food and gourmet popcorn)
ÍSIS	34	Vitória (ES)	Married to a Brazilian	13	Stockholm	N/A	Specific interests	Family Business	N/A	Refurbishing and Decoration (Interior Design)
MONALISA	>40	N/A	Married to a Swedish	30	Stockholm	N/A	Specific interests	Self-employed	10	Career Counselor
INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED BY THIS THESIS'S AUTHOR IN SWEDEN										
ELISA	53	São Paulo (SP)	Married to a Brazilian	5	Stockholm	7 Master's degree (MA)	Brazilian ethnic niche – Brazilian entrepreneurs in Sweden	Home-based	2019	Digital marketing

Source: own elaboration, based on research data (2023)