

Entrepreneurs' Motives Shaped by Socioeconomic and Country Effects: China and Denmark

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Abstract

The starting point is the proposition that entrepreneurs are different at engaging in entrepreneurial activities. Necessity entrepreneurs engage in entrepreneurship to avoid unemployment, whereas opportunity entrepreneurs pursue a recognized opportunity for profit. This proposition is refined by investigating inequalities within entrepreneurs in terms of age, gender and education. These propositions are hypothesized to differ from one country to another, here China and Denmark. We hypothesized that gender, age, education and country effects motives. A further refinement is to consider that country moderates the impacts of gender, age and education on motives. Drawing on country level data from the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor and based on a sample of 13,670 entrepreneurs covering the period 2001-2015 illustrates that gender, age, education and country effects motives in China and Denmark, in that women are less frequently opportunity motivated than men; older entrepreneurs are less frequently opportunity motivated than younger entrepreneurs; educated entrepreneurs are more frequently motivated by opportunity than less educated entrepreneurs; and Chinese entrepreneurs are less frequently motivated by opportunity than their Danish counterparts.

Furthermore, educated Chinese entrepreneurs are especially often motivated by opportunity.

Key words: Entrepreneurship, motives, opportunity, necessity, age, education, gender, China, Denmark, Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM)

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