Immigrant Entrepreneurship: Why Immigrants choose to become self-employed?

A Qualitative study of South and Southeast Asian Immigrant Entrepreneurs in Umea City

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Abstract

After going through the literature on entrepreneurship we found that very little studies have been done whether culture and family business traditions influence the decisions of entrepreneurship. Most people from the South and Southeast Asia had cultural and family business backgrounds. The purpose of our study is to investigate if culture and family business traditions of South and Southeast Asian immigrants affect their decision to become self-employed and if so how. This will enhance the understanding of whether this factor is also important to motivate the entrepreneurs to be self-employed.

Most of the studies have pointed out the motivational factors such as pull factors and push factors as being the main influencing factors for immigrant entrepreneurs to choose self-employment. Although, there are various literatures on entrepreneurship and its motivating factors, cultural and family based business traditions, limited study has focused on showing how the cultural and family business background affect the decision making abilities of the entrepreneurs. We have focused on the immigrant entrepreneurs born in South and Southeast Asian region operating their businesses in Umea city.

For conducting this study we have used semi-structured interviews from our six respondents to collect the data. Based on our findings we found that the entrepreneurs are influenced by culture and family business traditions. Their social identity plays an important role in motivating them to become entrepreneurs. These immigrants are exposed to business environment from a very early age which helps shape up their business minds. The experience gained from their parents and the cultural and family business traditions act as business opportunity for them in the host country.

We believe that this study would be helpful in the future for other scholars who are willing to conduct further research on this particular topic of interest. Our findings have increased the understanding of how the cultural and family business traditions of South and Southeast Asian region do affect the entrepreneurs’ decision to become self-employed in Umea.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship, Immigrant Entrepreneurs, Self-Employment, Determinants of Self-Employment, Cultural Identity, Family Business Groups
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1. Introduction

In this chapter, we will introduce the reader to the choice of our topic with a brief introduction of the background and purpose of our study. The chapter will also further discuss the limitations and disposition of the study at the end of this chapter.

1.1 Background and Purpose

In recent times, the subject of immigrant entrepreneurship has gained a lot of momentum. Many studies have been done to better understand the phenomenon of immigrant enterprises and its effect on the economy of the host country. The last couple of decades have shown a rapid increase in the immigration inflow in many industrial and developed countries including Sweden. Immigrant entrepreneurship has become an important socioeconomic phenomenon as it not only helps to create new jobs but also contributes to the wealth creation of the host country as a whole (Chrysochome & Lin, 2010, p.78). Nevertheless, the effects of immigrant entrepreneurship are not limited only to the economic aspects. This might also help develop vibrant ethnic communities and act as a motivation for new immigrant entrepreneurs through social integration and recognition of immigrants (Chrysochome & Lin, 2010, p.78). Moreover, the strong social democratic welfare state like Sweden has contributed to the creation of liberal policies of integration (Hjerm, 2004, p.740) which has enabled immigrants to integrate into the civil society.

According to Dalhammar (2004), immigrants are those people who come from another country to a certain host country. An immigrant entrepreneur is a person who opens up a business in the host country and such businesses are called immigrant businesses (Dalhammar, 2004, p.8). According to the data from 2008, there are 101,171 immigrants living in Sweden (www.thelocal.se). Among these immigrants, a lot of them have chosen to open up their own business rather than getting a regular job. There are different reasons for immigrants opting for self-employment which we shall also discuss later in this study. But the main reason for the majority of the immigrant entrepreneurs for starting up their own businesses is independency and fulfillment of one’s ambition. For some, it might also be a means of avoiding or escaping unemployment (Dalhammar, 2004, p.8).

According to the Swedish statistics 2006, there are about 70,000 immigrant owned companies in Sweden. One out of every five businesses started are run by immigrants. In some industries the figure is even higher – 25% of the new restaurants and nearly 40% of transport firms were founded by immigrants according to the data in 2006 (Handbook for Entreprenor, 2011). A report by the integration board, 2006, shows that especially young immigrants are inclined to pursue their own businesses. According to the report, it is twice as common for immigrants aged between 18-24 years old to start up their business than people aged the same from the native country. Even for the age group 25-44 more immigrants are seen to choose starting up their own business than the native Swedes and this applies to both men and women (Handbook for Entreprenor, 2011).
Previous studies (Williams, 2008) have suggested that motives of an entrepreneur are driven either by ‘necessity’ factors or by ‘opportunity’ factors. ‘Necessity’ entrepreneurs are driven by push factors into entrepreneurship because other options for work are absent or unsatisfactory whereas ‘opportunity’ entrepreneurs are driven by pull factors into entrepreneurship more out of choice (Harding et al. 2006; Maritz 2004; Minniti et al. 2006; Perunović 2005; Smallbone and Welter 2004 cited in Williams C, 2008, p.203). A lot of previous researchers like Kirkwood (2009); Clark & Drinkwater (2000) have developed and investigated a lot of reasons and factors that affect the entrepreneurial decisions of an entrepreneur. Moreover, studies have also been carried out in finding the possible factors that leads an immigrant to start up his/her own business. It is never easy for a person to move into a foreign country and set up a business there. There are a lot of challenges he/she has to face when entering into a new society like the lack of sufficient language skills, discrimination, incompatible education and training etc. So, the process of acculturation in a new society is always difficult for a new immigrant. Because of these factors, it becomes really difficult for immigrants to get a job in the host country. This is also one of the reasons why immigrants opt for self-employment as they are left with no other choices. Rates of self-employed are considered to be higher among foreign born than among natives (Sanders and Nee, 1996 cited in Omar H, 2011, p.35). Some previous studies have shown that immigrants are forced to become entrepreneurs in order to avoid the risk of being unemployed (Najib, 1994) or at least because of the problem of finding qualified employment (NUTEK, 2001), is a contributing factor for immigrants’ entrepreneurship (Hjerm, 2004, p.743).

In countries where few labor market regulations are present, there exists the problem of integration which is related to the risks of economic deprivation where newcomers will end up in low paid jobs. Whereas, in countries with extensive labor market regulations with comprehensive welfare state as in Sweden, the risks for newcomers to end up in the economic deprivation will be lesser, but the risk of not being able to access the labor market will be apparent (Hjerm 2004, p.740). Another characteristic of the Swedish labor market is that non western immigrants, in particular, immigrants born in Asia, are self-employed to a higher extent than natives (Joona P.A, 2009, p.119). Although immigrant entrepreneurs face various racial, linguistic, religious and cultural differences when entering into the mainstream labor markets, these entrepreneurs must first be able to breach this artificial wall to become successfully established in the market (Ensign & Robinson, 2011 p. 37).

However, not all entrepreneurs are only pushed into the self-employment because of necessity factors. Some of them start their own businesses just to seek more freedom and independence which provides them with a higher chance of improving their income and maintain their dignity in the society (Slavnic, 2004, p.6). These kinds of entrepreneurs are usually driven by ‘opportunity’ factors. Different groups can be identified among the opportunity immigrants. There are immigrants who move to the host country with the purpose of undertaking entrepreneurial activities, there are also those who come for academic and training purpose and decided to stay after their training, and there are immigrants who come to seek job opportunities and later decided to start their own company to take advantage of a business opportunity (Li, 1993; Salaff, Greve & Wong, 2006 as cited in Chrysostome, 2010, p.139).

Although previous researches have been done on why immigrants prefer to open their own businesses, studies focusing on the South and Southeast Asian region, emphasizing on the role of
culture and family traditions in influencing the entrepreneurial behavior of these particular group of people, have not been studied in depth before. Countries that are included in the South Asian region are Nepal, India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, and Maldives (www.saarctourism.org). Southeast Asian countries include Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Philippines, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam, and East Timor (www.aseansec.org). The Southeast Asian region has suffered a long history of war and conflict and internal divisiveness which has resulted in a large number of people going to foreign countries as immigrants (Pempel, 2005, p.1). The people from this region are extremely diverse in cultures, linguistically, and religiously. It consists of all religions such as Islamic, Buddhist, Hindu, Christianity etc. (Pempel, 2005, p.1). But despite being so varied, we believe that these groups have one thing in common and that is all these groups have a strong family traditions in business. We believe that some cultural values and beliefs may be common to all immigrant entrepreneurs regardless of ethnicity as suggested in previous studies (Jones et al., 1992). By focusing on the family business traditions of these particular immigrant groups we can have a better understanding of the interaction between the family, culture and entrepreneurship concepts. Although some studies (Andersson, 2007) have suggested that self-employment abilities can be inherited from the parent to off-springs, a detailed and more precise study is still lacking.

Our thesis will be focused particularly on immigrants from South and Southeast Asian countries that are living in the northern part of Sweden in Umea city.

The purpose of this study is to increase the understanding of whether and how the cultural and family business traditions of South and Southeast Asian immigrants influence their decision to become self-employed.

We have developed a research question for our study purpose which we shall try to answer. Our research question is:
Does the cultural and family business traditions of South and Southeast Asian immigrants affect their decision to become self-employed and if so how?

1.2 Delimitations

We are delimiting our study by conducting a research on a particular group of immigrants: those from South and Southeast Asian countries choosing to start their business in Umea, a city in the northern part of Sweden. This study is limited to Umea city because as the authors are studying in the Umea University it is easier to collect data and information from the respondents. Due to the limited availability of time constraints for this 15 credit master thesis, it is only practical to get the research done within this city. Umea is a growing city and it has a lot of potential for aspiring immigrant entrepreneurs. For our study, we have selected our respondents who have been staying in Umea city for more than two years. Although entrepreneurship and self-employment are two different terms, they are very much related to each other. In this thesis, we will use these terms interchangeably as entrepreneurs are those who engage in self-employment activities. Another delimitation we have used in our thesis is the applicability of the Family Business Groups (FBGs) in East Asia in our literature chapter. Although these FBGs focus mainly on large industries and businesses only, nevertheless it gives us a profound understanding of the history of family run businesses, thus supporting our study.
2. Theoretical Frame of Reference

In this chapter, we will present theories and literatures on different concepts like entrepreneurship, immigrant entrepreneurship, and self-employment and its determinants, cultural identity and family business groups in order to relate to the purpose of our study.

2.1 Entrepreneurship

The word ‘entrepreneur’ is derived from the French verb “entreprendre” which means to undertake, to attempt, to try in hand, to contract for; or, to adventure, to try (Girard, 1962). Different scholars have defined entrepreneurship in different ways. Some of the early scholars such as Richard Cantillon (circa 1730) defined entrepreneurship as self-employment of any and every sort. According to Cantillon, as long as a person wasn't hired or working for wages then he was an entrepreneur—"the Beggars and even the Robbers are Undertakers" (Cantillon R, 1755 cited in Long, 1983).

The concept of entrepreneurship has evolved with time. Scholars from the twentieth century like Schumpeter and Drucker have focused more on the innovative and creative aspects of entrepreneurship. According to Schumpeter, ‘entrepreneurship is the creation of wealth in society and in the single firm is seen as a process in which new goods and services are introduced and replaced the old ones, and this process equals innovation’ (Schumpeter, 1989). According to Peter Drucker, entrepreneurship is ‘the work which is directed towards economic performance of an enterprise through risk taking decisions’ (Drucker, 1985).

Venkataraman has defined entrepreneurship as “fundamentally concerned with understanding how, in the absence of current market for future goods and services, these goods and services manage to come into existence” (Venkataram, 1997). Bird characterizes entrepreneurship as being focused on “either creating new ventures or creating new values in existing ventures” (Bird, 1988).

According to Hatten (1997), “becoming a successful entrepreneur requires a high tolerance for ambiguity, a strong need to achieve, and the willingness to accept risks” (cited in Omar H, 2011, p.36). According to Hébert and Link (1989), “the entrepreneur is someone who specializes in taking responsibility for and making judgmental decisions that affect the location, form, and the use of goods, resources, or institutions” (Hebert and Link, 1989, p.47).

From the above definitions, we can say that entrepreneurship is a process of economic development which creates awareness among people and generates self-employment and additional employment opportunities. An entrepreneur is anyone who is innovative and creative and who is willing to take risk to start up a new venture or add values to an existing venture. Entrepreneurship is important because it can help to improve the economic and social status of the ethnic and minority group of people as it provides employment opportunities and creates awareness among the people about the economic activity. The importance of entrepreneurial firms to society is evident in the creation of new jobs (Barringer and Ireland, 2008, p.19-21).
Schumpeter (1934) has described the entrepreneurial process as a creative discovery whereas Kirzner (1973) has described alertness, opportunities and exploitation as a process of entrepreneurship. The entrepreneurial process as proposed by Timmons (1996) shown in figure 1 is explained briefly below:

![Timmons model of the entrepreneurial process (Timmons, 1996).](image)

According to Timmons (1996), the entrepreneurial process consists of three important components namely opportunity, resources and teams as shown in Figure 1. Entrepreneurs must be able to identify the opportunities that exist in the market and they must be willing to capitalize in that opportunity by providing the goods and services required for that market. According to Timmons and Spinelli (2009), opportunity consists of attributes like durability, attractiveness, timing which are all anchored in a product or service. Once the opportunity has been identified, the availability of resources to be mobilized to capitalize on the opportunity should be worked out. Many entrepreneurs think capital is the most important tool to start up any business venture but Timmons and Spinelli argues that for a business to succeed in the long run it has to have a good opportunity along with very dedicated and highly qualified team members (Timmons and Spinelli, 2009). The success of a business venture is dependent on the team members and leadership of the entrepreneur. A good team should comprise of members with qualities like relevant experiences, creativity, motivation, adaptability, communication, leadership and courage etc. (Timmons and Spinelli, 2009). This model of entrepreneurial process can also be used to define the immigrant entrepreneurship where immigrants recognize an opportunity in the market which they can capitalize on. After that, they gather up their resources such as capital and required manpower which are usually their own family members which later are formed into dedicated teams. These teams are then focused on achieving their goals in business. Thus, immigrant entrepreneurship can also be seen as applicable in the case of immigrant entrepreneurship.

Entrepreneurship has been seen as a solution to market integration at both micro and macro levels’. On macro level, entrepreneurship among immigrants contributes to the decreasing levels of unemployment as well as in creating and sustaining the economic growth of the society and country. On a more individual level, entrepreneurship enhances the integration process of
immigrants to labor markets than they do as employees of other firms (Hjerm, 2004, p.741-742). So we can say that entrepreneurship is a good way for the immigrants to gain the recognition in the established community. There are several advantages that make the decision of self-employment more attractive to recent arrivals who wish to establish the secure life without any threaten and enhance the chance for increasing mobility (Ensign & Robinson, 2011 p.40). So for a new immigrant, it is easier to move into the entrepreneurial path because this might only be the way he/she can move up the social hierarchy and establish themselves in the primary labor market.

2.2 Who are Immigrant entrepreneurs?

Entrepreneurs are given different names and terms to make it precise for what they are and what they do. But to speak in general what all the entrepreneurs do is the same thing; doing something new and something different (Drucker, 1985). But, the author’s main concern is about the immigrant entrepreneur which is one of the rising topics for many researchers in present context. Oxford dictionary has defined immigrant as “a person who comes to live permanently in a foreign country” (www.oxforddictionary.com). In immigrant and ethnic entrepreneurship literature (Najib, 1999; NUTEK 2001a) it is concluded that if an immigrant founds a business in that host country then per definition, he/she becomes an immigrant entrepreneur and the business an immigrant business (Dalhammar, 2004, p.8). Some Scholars have also used the term ‘ethnic entrepreneurship’ to explain the immigrant entrepreneurs. Although both these terms have a similar meaning there is a slight difference between the two terms. In general, “ethnic entrepreneurship” means entrepreneurship referring to certain ethnic groups, whereas “immigrant entrepreneurship” refers to entrepreneurship performed by all groups of immigrants in a country (Waldinger et al 1990; 2000 cited in Dalhammar, 2004, p.9).

If we look at the history of Sweden, the number of immigrant’s has been increasing rapidly in last 50 years (Hammarstedt, 2001, p.147). This increase in the number of immigrants coming to Sweden was largely due to the Swedish political policy and its liberal human rights concern. The other reason could be that of Sweden’s different agreements with different international organizations and European Union (Statistics Sweden 2010a).

Sweden has become one of the favorable destinations for immigrants from all around the globe to immigrate. In mid-1970s, Sweden witnessed a huge number of labor immigration in their country from Europe and the Nordic countries. But after 1975, there was a change in the immigrant inflow in Sweden. Most of the immigrants were refugees seeking asylum rather than labor immigrants. As a result of this the immigrant population in Sweden increased drastically. As stated by Hammarstedt, about 60% of foreign-born persons living in Sweden were born in other Nordic countries and more than 90% were born in Europe according to 1970 census (Hammarstedt, 2001, p.147). But, by the year 2000, these figures were reduced dramatically. About 30% and 35% were born in other European countries other Nordic countries respectively and we have about 35% were from outside Europe (Hammarstedt, 2001, p.147). This shows that majority of the immigrants were refugees who got the permission to reside in Sweden as asylum
seekers and the rest were immigrants who came to work or study in Sweden. As per the press release from statistics Sweden 2010, immigrants in Sweden are 98,801 (Statistics Sweden 2010c) and among them 12,130 (Statistics of Sweden 2010b) were the refugees (www.migrationsverket.se).

Immigrant entrepreneurs play an important role for promoting the western economies. But immigrants are still considered as newcomer groups, operate in low-profit segments of the business which shows that immigrant entrepreneurs are ‘less integrated’ into the labor market (Ensign & Robinson, 2011 p.34). In Sweden, immigrants are generally viewed as pizzeria owners and restaurant owners and it was found that only males were doing most of these businesses (Slavnic, 2004, p.4). Most of these immigrant entrepreneurs had the idea of such businesses because of their family background. But these entrepreneurs were younger with less professional skills and in average they were better educated than their native Swedish counterpart (Slavnic, 2004, p.4).

Immigrants have a much higher rate of self-employment as entrepreneurs than the general population (Light and Bonacich, 1988). It is seen that most of the immigrants are entrepreneurs than the natives because of the key fact that they are illuminated from the mainstream labor market (Ensign & Robinson, 2011 p. 36). This can be explained by two principle phenomenon: First, the business and labor markets in general fails to recognize the value that immigrants bring to the firm and that immigrants also feel they lack the credentials, language skills and cultural understanding to get the job done. This makes them unsecure about their employment in waged jobs. Second, bank loan refusals and the familiarity factor push immigrants into entrepreneurial lines of work (Irwin & Scott, 2010; Jones, 2004: 1273 cited in Ensign & Robinson, 2011, p.36).

2.3 Self-Employment

Even though entrepreneurship and self-employment are used as interchangeable terms in our thesis, it is important to know that these are two different terms. We have looked into the definitions of entrepreneur in the above literatures. Now we shall try to understand what self-employment is and also discuss the determinants of self-employment in this section. Every immigrant comes into a new home country with the feeling that things will be better and that they can be able to live freely and independently. They want to earn a living by which they can support themselves and their family’s needs. But in order to earn money they have to find a job first which is difficult to get in the host country because of various reasons which are also discussed as we proceed further in this chapter.

Studies from previous researchers like Chrysostome & Lin (2010) have highlighted some problems that immigrants could face when looking for jobs in the host country. Some of these problems are language barriers, lack of recognition of academic credentials and professional experience, limited knowledge of the local culture and lack of mobility due to poverty (Chrysostome, 2010, p.141). So, for example immigrants who are not fluent in the native language of the host country and is not so much educated in English doesn't have any other choices than to follow the entrepreneurial path (Portes & Zhou, 1996). Thus, language difficulties push immigrant entrepreneurs to become self-employed. The other critical problem
where most of the researchers found is the discrimination faced by immigrant entrepreneurs in the host country’s job market. Many European Scholars stated that in Europe there is a higher rate of discrimination for immigrants than in United States (Chrysostome, 2010, p.141).

This could also be an important factor for immigrants to choose self-employment as their job in the host country rather than other job alternatives. It is not sure that all immigrants’ businesses will be successful. Those immigrants who are educated and possess the necessary managerial skills to run the business smoothly have a better chance of being successful than their less educated and inexperienced counterparts. The other factor for immigrant entrepreneurs to be self-employed could be because of a trend in family or ethnic traditions from their home country. Social networks play an important role for immigrant community in the decision for going for the own business although there are vital factors such as potential opportunities and niche market which should be identified before making the decision (Ensign & Robinson, 2011 p. 40). But what the research has shown us is that the immigrants who are less educated face lots of problem in the job market and get engage in illegal and informal activities (Chrysostome, 2010, 142). Another reason could be that they are able to identify the needs, taste and the preferences of particular community they belong too, which helps them to build a strong relationship to that community and could be a turning point for creating a niche business (Ensign & Robinson, 2011 p. 41).

According to Borjas (1986), active participation in the labor market is necessary to acquire necessary skills for immigrants to be integrated in the employment sector. Opportunities for immigrants exist mainly in the labor market in the early stage of integration but the upward mobility to the primary sector becomes more and more difficult the longer the period of residence (Bevelander & Nielsen, 2000, p.457). This is mainly due to the fact that immigrants are faced with discrimination and are regarded as a new comer to the business. Self-employment is considered as a tool for avoiding the discrimination in the labor market for immigrants. So, the decision to start an entrepreneurial activity is a logical one for immigrants when we look at the opportunity presented by the labor market (Ensign & Robinson, 2011 p. 39-40).

2.3.1 Determinants of Self-Employment

It is important to understand why entrepreneurs in general choose to become self-employed. It has been suggested that the majority of the workers choose self-employment because of the limited opportunities presented in the wage sector (Rissman, 2006, p.17). People may opt for self-employment because they might not acquire the necessary skills to be successful in the wage sector or because of the weak labor demand in the wage market. Therefore, the opportunities self employment creates to them are far better than being in a waged market. Some people choose self-employment to make ends meet until a better wage offer is obtained (Rissman, 2006, p.17). Another reason for which an individual might choose being self-employed is because he/she values being his/her own boss (ibid, p.18). It has also been suggested that the economic conditions of the state actually plays an important role in both entering into and exiting out of self-employment. According to Rissman (2003) and Paulson and Townsend (2005), people should enter self-employment when the economy is doing relatively poor. This is because when the economy is poor, self-employment becomes more attractive but then such workers are also likely to exit self-employment as the economy improves. Therefore the very existence of self-
employment depends on the state of the economy at the time of entry and how the economy changes during the time the worker is self-employed (Rissman, 2006, p.22).

In recent years, it has become increasingly common to understand why entrepreneurs are driven to become self-employed. Since our research is intended towards the immigrant entrepreneurs we will concentrate on why the immigrants choose to become self-employed. Many researchers have shown that the main reason for the immigrants to go for the self-employment is because of ‘push’ or ‘pull’ factors. But the way they define and interpret these factors are based on their own findings. Nevertheless, the overall logic is the same. Studies have highlighted two types of factors for this phenomenon. One is ‘necessity’ driven and the other ‘opportunity’ driven factors. ‘Necessity’ entrepreneurs are those who are pushed into entrepreneurship because no other options for work exist whereas ‘opportunity’ entrepreneurs are those who seek to exploit the business opportunities available to them in the business market (Williams, 2008, p.205).

Conventionally, it has been assumed that entrepreneurs are pushed by the necessity-driven factors into entrepreneurship because of their inability to find employment in the formal economy and do such work as a survival strategy or last resort (Castells and Portes 1989; Gallin 2001; Portes and Walton 1981; Rajman 2001; Sassen 1997 cited in Williams C, 2008, p.206). Looking specifically at immigrant entrepreneurs, it is also argued that immigrants opt for self-employment in order to avoid racial discrimination in the host country’s labor market, which forces them to accept low paid jobs and blocks upward mobility (Jones et al., 1992; Ram, 1994 as cited in Basu & Altinay, 2002, p.373). According to Portes and Rumbaut (1996), push factors are those factors that hamper in the entry or block opportunities to follow the normal way of employment in the job market which makes new immigrants to choose the self-employment. Light (1979) describes it in his disadvantage theory as those, where immigrants in labor markets are faced with low wages, rampant unemployment and underemployment, scarcity of the basic necessities of life, and repressive political climates problems which force them into entrepreneurship or self-employment. Immigrants are pushed into self-employment because of discrimination, language barriers, and incompatible education or training which blocked the promotional paths (Bates, 1997). There are number of views associated with ethnic entrepreneurship, where we find the “push” as disadvantage or discrimination which lead to the selection of self-employment for immigrants entrepreneurs (Portes, 1995). ‘Push’ is viewed as necessity to choose self-employment in the labor market for immigrants (Williams, 2007). Light (1979), mentioned that most of immigrants are entering into self-employment due to negative push factors which is a reason for leaving their previous job and starting the new one. Kirkwood (2009) indicates that push factors were more common than pull factors for men and women that motivates for the immigrant entrepreneurs to start their own businesses. In his study he found mainly four types of push factors such as dissatisfaction with a job, being helped by an employer, the changing world of work and motivations regarding children (Kirkwood, 2009, p.354).

‘Pull’ factors that motivate entrepreneurs to become self-employed are generated by the ‘choice’. Generally, ‘pull’ factors motivate people to start their own business because they see an opportunity which they can cash on. ‘Pull’ factors are those factors which focuses on the positive attributes of self-employment making it an attractive enterprise which are totally influenced by the choice alone (de Freitas, 1991). There are mainly four pull factors which are considered for immigrants choosing self-employment as suggested by Clark and Drinkwater (2000). They are:
**Enclaves:** According to Clark and Drinkwater ‘enclave’ is defined as a concentration of individuals from the same ethnic background within a specific geographical location (Clark, Drinkwater, 2000, p.606). Enclaves’ helps to find the protected market of their ethnic group which makes them to trade with one another using their own language. This kind of ethnic minority entrepreneurs will know their taste and preferences of their own ethnic group in the ethnic market which would be a good reason to enter into the market but it’s even harder to move into the broader community market. Within an ethnic group there are ideas about a common origin, which often is a pragmatic argument for creating boundaries as well as coherence (Dalhammar, 2004, p.9). On the other hand, there are many difficulties to this particular type of entrepreneurs. First, the competition among the same ethnic group will be high and it limits the entrepreneurial opportunities, which makes the lower income for the business (Clark, Drinkwater, 2000, p.606).

**Language:** Lack of fluency in the native language of the host country is the other factor for the ethnic group to choose to go for the self-employment because they are unable to find the regular jobs of paid employment opportunities. So, language matters a lot for any immigrants when they arrive to any host country. So, some ethnic groups start to have their own business and trade with their own group in their own language. It is supposed that people with less fluent in English language would face more problems than others which helps to increase the rate of self employment to higher level (Clark, Drinkwater, 2000, p.606).

**Religion:** In some religion self-employment is considered as a relevant way to move forward in life. In Muslim and Sikh communities, people they generally start a business and this rate is high in comparison to the people from other religion. So, religion also plays an important role for any people to go through the entrepreneurial activity. In Hinduism, it is believed that there are certain special castes that specialized in business activity this makes certain people to have a strong first choice for entrepreneurship (Clark, Drinkwater, 2000, p. 607).

**Immigrants Status:** Self-employment rates among immigrants increase with the duration that he/she lives in the host country. This is because the cost of entry into self-employment is likely to deter more recent cohorts of immigrants (Clark, Drinkwater, 2000, p. 606).

### 2.4 Cultural Identity and Entrepreneurship

Although Clark & Drinkwater (2000) have highlighted the major ‘push’ and ‘pull’ factors that influence the entrepreneurial behavior, their study however fails to address how cultural identity affects the entrepreneurs’ decision to become self-employed. To get a clear understanding of how the cultural identity is related to entrepreneurship, we must first understand the concepts of culture, cultural identity and its relationship with entrepreneurship.

Culture maybe defined as a set of shared values, beliefs and norms of a group or community. It is culture that binds a group together along a certain set of rules, norms and behavior. According to Berry (1980), culture provides a frame of reference for self-definition and for ordering social relationships (Sussman, 2000, p.356). Cultural differences are the result of national, regional,
ethnic, social class, religious, gender, and language variations (Basu and Altinay, 2002, p.373). Several scholars like Bonacich (1973); Ward (1983); and Werbner (1990) have emphasized the importance of values like thrift, close family ties and religious ties, trust to be the factors which enable some immigrant groups to compete successfully in the business (as cited in Basu and Altinay, 2002, p.373). Similarly, Ward (1983) has emphasized the interaction between the ethnic resources like finance and labor from the extended family members to opportunities presented by the abandoned ethnic markets in stimulating entrepreneurship. It has been argued that many Asian communities have a cultural tradition in business which enables these particular ethnic groups to access ethnic resources easily and provides them with a powerful sense of identity (Barrett et al., 1996; Jones et al., 1994 as cited in Basu & Altinay, 2002, p.374).

Cultural identities are formed around personal attributes of the self and the thoughts about their membership in the social groups which are usually formed around gender, ethnicity, social class, religion and culture (Sussman, 2000, p.358). Lewin (1948) suggested that in-order to develop a sense of well being, individuals needed to have a firm sense of group identification. For some groups, particularly the minority groups, the cultural identity becomes more salient and explicitly important. A study conducted by McGuire, McGuire, Child, and Fujioka (1978) of gender and racial identities suggested that the social distinctiveness increased the saliency of one’s social identity particularly of the minority status groups that allowed its people to become more salient and central to their working self-concept (as cited in Sussman, 2000, p.363). Similarly, other researcher like Erickson (1950, 1968) have placed the ‘identity concept’ at the core of the individual and of his/her “common culture” viewing the process of identity development as a combination of two identities-“individual” and the “group” which are merged and integrated into one. A person’s basic identity is usually formed during the early periods of socialization and that strengthens the individual’s self esteem (Yinger, 1986). Researchers such as Tajfel (1982) have elaborated the concept of identity in the ‘social identity theory’. The social identity theory describes the relationship between the emotional significance of individuals attached to the group identity with the self identity, self esteem and the out-group behavior of those individuals (Turner & Giles, 1981). Therefore, it is fair to argue that the content of our self-perceptions reflect not only our personal traits and characteristics, but also the meaningful social groups to which we belong (Sussman, 2000, p.358).

Cultural entrepreneurship is a term that came into existence from the operations of the entrepreneur and its impact on the perception and interpretation of that culture in the society (Johnson, 2007 as cited in Dacin P.A., Dacin M.T. & Matear M, 2010, p.47). Dimaggio (1982) defined cultural entrepreneurs as one who first identifies an opportunities in the cultural domain, then assume the risk of developing and disseminating the vision in order to produce something of cultural value (Dacin P.A., Dacin M.T. & Matear M, 2010, p.47). The nature of a business an entrepreneur chooses to start may be influenced by the historical, regional or family traditions (Basu and Altinay, 2002, p.373). Most immigrant ethnic entrepreneurs seek to strengthen the bonds within their own community by relying mostly on family and co-ethnic labor and co-ethnic markets. But this heavy reliance on co-ethnic resources and opportunities may suggest that these entrepreneurs have a strong cultural identity which they want to preserve or perhaps continue it with future generations (Basu and Altinay, 2002, p.374).
The country, culture and background of an individual make a difference in what he or she does. Although territoriality at birth is considered by many countries as the critical determinant of citizenship, cultural identity is much more important when it comes to the country to which an individual is attached (Chrysoptome, 2010, p.139). The actions and behaviors of an individual are always guided by his/her culture. Country, culture, and regional differences continue to matter more than is commonly recognized (Hofstede, 2007 as cited in Steier, 2009, p.515). Cultural entrepreneurs must be able to accumulate and manipulate the cultural capital, knowledge, practices, skills, tastes that are distinctive, and socially honored values (Bourdieu, 1984). It seems fair to argue that a family background in business offers aspiring entrepreneurs an initial advantage in the form of exposure to business practices and a tacit knowledge of business, by inculcating a business culture prior to business entry (Basu and Altinay, 2002, p.379). A report by the OECD (2003), titled “Corporate Governance in Asia” has characterized the Asian business landscape as being predominantly run by families with informal nature of stakeholder relations and within the legal and economic diversity of the region.

2.5 Family Business Groups in East Asian Countries

There are many economies mostly in the East Asian and Southeast Asian regions which are characterized by systems of familial capitalism where highly concentrated large business groups are typically controlled by families (La Porta et al., 1999). Several studies have concluded that over two-thirds of all the businesses in many western developed economies are family owned firms (Donckels & Frohlich, 1991; IFERA, 2003; Kirchoff & Kirchhoff, 1987 as cited in Steier, 2009, p.517). Such kind of familial capitalism society is based on strong horizontal, segmented societies which are constituted by strong personal ties among individuals related to each other through kinship (Steier, 2009, p.518). From previous studies, it has been claimed that family does play an important role for all businesses, whether big or small and formal or informal (Allen, 2005; Kara, Tracey, & Phillips, 2006).

Family Business Groups (FBGs) are organizational structures that are controlled by either a single individual, family or coalitions of families (Claessens, Djkov and Lang, 2000 as cited in Carney and Gedajlovic, 2003, p.6). In many of the East Asian countries we find it common to see entrepreneurs involved in the family heritage of business inheritance. This might be because many East Asian businesses tend to stick to the same array of industries and employ many of the same organizing principles that characterized the initial stages of the East Asian industrialization (Boyer and Hollingsworth, 1997; Whitley, 1999; Wong, 2000). The east and Southeast Asian FBGs emerged during a period of extreme political turbulence (McVey, 1992). It was after the WWII that FBGs became a dominant corporate form of large scale enterprise in the East and Southeast Asia (Claessens, Djkov and Lang, 2000).

After the Chinese cultural revolution of 1966-1976, the Chinese state’s restrictions for commercial activity did little to encourage the domestic entrepreneurs who were then forced to emigrate (Redding, 1990). Mainly emigrants from mainland China formed a very large percentage of East and Southeast Asia’s FBGs because these Chinese entrepreneurs founded a variety of diversified business groups which became a central feature of the East and Southeast Asia’s organizational mosaic (Carney and Gedajlovic, 2003, p.9). Many studies indicate that a
large proportion of the East and South East Asia’s leading businesses groups are controlled by ethnic Chinese families (East Asia Analytical Unit, 1995; Lim, 1996; Weidenbaum and Hughes, 1996 as cited in Carney and Gedajlovic, 2003, p.9). Although the Chinese migration was widespread across the region, the Chinese entrepreneurs maintained personal contacts among the entrepreneurs from the same family or language groups in many of the East Asian countries (Carney and Gedajlovic, 2003, p.10). This helped the Chinese entrepreneurs to form better networks and communicate information between them. This closely knit network offered them channels to mobilize assets and information sharing about the business opportunities (Koa, 1993; Hodder, 1996).

Most of the FBGs were owned by ethnic minorities in many countries and thus they were not protected by the state. Entrepreneurs only cooperated with the state when it was in their vested interest but not otherwise (Chu, 1994). In these types of economies family ties become more important because of the high degree of informality, weak markets, developing legal and judicial infrastructures of the state (Steier, 2009, p.520). In economies where the business groups are backed by the state and political connections it becomes easy for the FBGs to grow. For example, in India, Tata and Birla families have controlled the largest business groups of automobiles and construction for decades (Khanna & Palepu, 1997; Khanna & Rivkin, 2001, as cited in Steier, 2009, p.520). For a family firm to remain successful it should continue to remain entrepreneurial (Ward, 1987).

Since all family run businesses are motivated to create wealth and capital from their businesses to support the family members, it becomes difficult for the family entrepreneurs to grow their business in a large scale. This motivation of the entrepreneurs to gather wealth and capital for the family hinders the growth of the enterprise in a large scale. Goals which are related to the capital accumulation and large scale enterprise growth give way to the concern for near term profitability and family wealth preservation (Carney and Gedajlovic, 2002, p.12). Most of the organizational and management practices in Asian firms follow a ‘paternalistic headship’ which includes high centralization, low or selective formalization, and non-complex structural processes as described by Westwood (1997). These entrepreneurs create very simple organizational hierarchical structures which are focused to be cost effective and efficient in implementing their strategies. It is because of this that the FBGs in the East and Southeast Asian regions have enjoyed great success as an organizational firm (Carney and Gedajlovic, 2003, p.17).

Recent studies have shown that business groups in East Asian countries excluding Japan add value to older and large businesses whereas they appear to reduce the value in small and young businesses (Claessens, Fan and Lang, 2002). It is also important to understand the changes in the social and educational paradigms of the modern era. Many of the present day managers today have been exposed to educational and different organizational influences with the modern developments in education. These influences were lacking with the parents of prior generation. Thus it should be noted that the present day FBGs managers’ should not necessarily embody the parental values (Carney and Gedajlovic, 2003, p.19). The role of FBGs in contributing to the GDP of an economy is staggering if we look at some of the world’s most developed economies. It is estimated that around 40-60% of the US GDP is represented by the incomes generated from family firms (Ward & Aronoff, 2002). Similarly in Europe, about 65% of the GDP is accounted
for to the family firms (Gallo, 1994) while Faccio and Lang (2002) have stated that 44.29% of the Western European firms are family controlled. These facts and figures clearly indicate the importance of family controlled firms in the economic development of nations.

Previous studies do suggest that families often play an important role in the process of development and creation of a venture. Families provide both moral and financial support for the entrepreneurs who want to start up their own businesses. The entrepreneurs take help from their families to gain access to networks, resources and capital, leveraging family reputation, getting financial and emotional support (Steier, 2009, p.526). In countries and states where there is a weak legal and regulatory policy for starting business, it is even more logical for entrepreneurs to take help from their family members. In such environments, families and familial ties represent a particularly logical means for starting and growing companies (Karra et al., 2006 as cited in Steier, 2009, p.530).
3. Methodology

In this chapter, we will explain what type of philosophy, approach, and strategies are used for conducting this study. After that the practical aspects of methodologies such as literature search, data collection method, interview types, respondent selection are clearly discussed in order to make the readers clear about the progress of the study.

3.1 Choice of topic and preconceptions

Since both the authors are from South-East Asian region (Nepal), we wanted to do a research that included our regional background because there wasn’t much research done with this particular group. Being immigrant ourselves, we wanted to know what it really takes to start up your own business in Sweden, particularly in Umea. In our country, the trend of entrepreneurship is rooted deep in our family history. Most of the businesses are family run and inherited. In fact, one of the authors did have his own family business in Nepal which was started by his father and which is still operating. The author plans to go back to his country and look after his father’s business. This is also the reason why he chose to study business development program here in Sweden. Both the authors are studying the same business program in Umea University that is Masters in Business Development and Internationalization. It is also possible that the reasons for an individual to open up his/her own business in Asia and doing the same in Sweden might be different. Since the authors believe that family business traditions have an influence on starting one’s own business or continuing the family business, we decided to do a study to find out whether cultural and family traditions influence entrepreneurial decisions and if so how. We believe that this study would enhance our entrepreneurial understanding from a family and cultural perspective.

3.2 Research Philosophy

Research philosophy is simply the way of thinking about the development of the knowledge of particular research. The way we think about the development of knowledge is affected unknowingly as we proceed in doing the research (Saunders et al., 2003, p. 83). In order to get reliable and acceptable results from the research, research philosophy must be described properly. This gives the readers more understanding about how the world is viewed by the authors. When we conduct any kind of research, we need to be able to answer the research question. To obtain the answers to those questions, we need to follow the appropriate research process. On the basis of research philosophy only, we can make the right choices of research approaches and research strategies. Bryman & Bell (2011) have classified the research philosophy into ontological and epistemological considerations.

Ontological considerations are based on the social entities or simply on reality. Under ontological considerations there are two major positions: objectivism and constructionism. “Objectivism is an ontological position which asserts that social phenomena and their meanings have an existence that is independent of social actors” (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p.21). It means that social phenomena and categories performed by the actors have a meaning but they are not affected by social actors. “Constructivism is an ontological position which asserts that social
phenomena and their meanings are continually being accomplished by social actors” (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p.22). It implies that everything performed by social actor have meaning in the social world and is influenced by social actors. It further mentions that the categories people use to understand natural and social world are in fact social products. This entails that the categories are not built-in where as their meanings are constructed or generated from in and through the social interaction (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p.22).

In this study, we see that when an immigrant entrepreneur decides to start up a new business, it could be a result out of necessity or out of choice. Their decisions are affected by the surroundings they are in and their actions are based on it. This is based on the constructionism position where social actors gain the knowledge from the social world through interaction with different people. Entrepreneurs, being one of the social actors, acquire meaning of their activities through interaction. Therefore, South-East Asian immigrants must be studied in depth from social world in order to increase the knowledge of what influences them to become self-employed. To understand the reality we need to understand the detailed situation behind it. This means that the reason for immigrants to go for self-employment varies depending on the situations and their work surroundings. Due to this reason, constructionism position is suitable for our study. Entrepreneurs interact with different people in the social world which helps them to understand themselves. This leads them to acquire relevant knowledge where social actors are able to generate meaning from the social world. Entrepreneurs perform various activities in the social world to gain knowledge and meaning of their actions. Under social constructionism reality is viewed as socially constructed (Saunders et al, 2003, p. 84).

Epistemological consideration is concerned with the question of what is considered as acceptable knowledge (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p.15). The main concern in this consideration is whether the social world can be studied as natural science with the same principles, procedures, and ethos or not (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p.15). Therefore, epistemology deals with knowledge and how that knowledge can be acquired. Under epistemology there are two main philosophy positions: positivism and interpretivism. “Positivism is an epistemological position that advocates the application of methods of the natural sciences to the study of social reality and beyond” (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p.15). Positivism is the philosophical position of the natural scientist (Saunders et al, 2003, p. 83). On the other side, interpretivism is viewed as an alternative to the positivism belief. “Interpretivism is predicated upon the view that a strategy is required that respects the differences between people and the objects of the natural science and therefore requires the social scientist to grasp the subjective meaning of social action” (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p.17). It is all about how the individual make sense of the social world. Interpretivism is based on the truth that social reality has a meaning for human beings where human action is meaningful (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p.18).

Taking above explanation under consideration, interpretivism position is appropriate for our study. Human behaviors are uncertain and their actions are changeable according to time and situation which must be taken into consideration for further study. It is hard to generalize on earlier theory of why immigrants want to be an entrepreneur and self-employed because the time and circumstances of today may not be applicable after five months or five years. Interpretivism position helps to obtain the subjective reality of the actions performed by the social actors in order to make sense or acquire the meaning of it. The way one thinks of being an entrepreneur
may differ from one another over a period of time and situations (Saunders et al., 2003, p. 84). So, there is a need to make an in-depth study of immigrant’s entrepreneurial background from their own point of view. For these reasons interpretivism perspectives is suitable for our study.

3.3 Research Approach

In social science we have two research approaches: deductive and inductive, which helps to decide the appropriate research strategies for a particular research. Ultimately, it helps to present the finding and conclusion of research (Saunders et al., 2003, p.85).

Deductive approach is based on methods from natural science where existing theory is used for hypothesis development. In deductive approach, observations and findings is the outcome of research (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p.13). This approach is objective in nature and fall under the positivism position (Saunders et al., 2003, p.85-86). Research approach shows the relationship between theory and research. Whereas deductive approach explains what is happening, inductive approach is focused on why it is happening (Saunders et al., 2003, p.85-86). The induction approach helps us to gain understanding of the meanings humans attach to events (Saunders et al., 2003, p.89). Data are collected through interviews, observations, diary methods, etc and are analyzed to develop a theory. So, theory is the outcome of the research in the inductive approach (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p.13).

By looking at the features of both approaches mentioned above, we believe that an inductive approach is suitable for our study. However, our research approach is not purely inductive as we have used some theory at the beginning to develop our research question. The purpose of our thesis is not to develop a new theory entirely, but to provide a better understanding of how cultural and family business backgrounds motivate immigrant entrepreneurs. Therefore, this approach is very much inductive in nature however not purely inductive. We think that this research approach would be best suitable for our study.

3.4 Research Strategy

Research strategy is a general plan for obtaining the answer to the research questions that we have developed for our study. In a more simple way we can say that research strategy is a general orientation for accomplishing a business research. Generally, there are two types of research strategy: quantitative and qualitative (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p.26). Quantitative research deals with the quantification or numeric figures for collecting and analyzing the data. In contrast qualitative strategy emphasizes words rather than numbers in collecting and analyzing the data. This strategy helps to generate the theory rather than testing the hypothesis. This strategy primarily follows the inductive approach to see the relationship between theory and research. It rejects the norms of natural scientific model and relies on interpretivism position where an individual interprets their social world by themselves. This strategy represents a view of social reality as a constantly shifting emergent property of individuals’ creation (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 28).

We know that qualitative strategy follows socially constructive view where a characteristic of social science is associated with qualitative method in order to look for the meaning through
interpretivism (Bryman & Bell, 2007, p.28). Our focus is to understand the immigrant’s perceptions and experiences about what influence them for becoming self-employed. Qualitative research is concerned with the study of human behavior and the social world inhabited by human beings (Hancock, 1998, p. 1). By conducting interviews with potential respondents in order to know their views, experiences, opinions, feelings and facts we can explain the social phenomena in depth and understand the human behaviors of those respondents. The willingness of respondents to express their own views freely in qualitative study increases the value of data which differentiate it from the natural science. So, to answer our research question, qualitative strategy is suitable for our study. It generally answers the question which begins with: why, how, and in what way, in order to understand the respondents how they perceive themselves or view their world (Hancock, 1998, p. 2).

3.5 An Exploratory study

Generally the studies are classified in terms of their purpose and by research strategy used by the researcher. The most often used studies are of three types: descriptive study, explanatory study and exploratory study (Saunders et al, 2003, p. 96). According to Robson (2002), descriptive study is ‘to portray an accurate profile of persons, events or situations’. It is said that descriptive study is an extension of any kind of exploratory research. Explanatory studies generally establish casual relationships between variables. This implies that the understanding of a situation or a problem helps to explain the relationships between variables (Saunders et al, 2003, p. 97). The exploratory study helps to understand the situation and facts in depth. It normally explains the reasons to build a clear view of the relationship in order to have accurate findings. Robson (2002) define exploratory studies as a valuable means of finding out ‘what is happening; to seek new insights; to ask questions and to assess phenomena in a new light’. The main advantage of exploratory studies is the flexibility and adaptable to change (Saunders et al, 2003, p. 97).

We mentioned earlier that our approach will be mostly inductive and follow the qualitative strategy. In general, if the research follows both inductive and qualitative approaches then exploratory studies will be appropriate. Our purpose is not only to find the reasons but also to understand their views, thoughts, opinions and their personal experiences of how culture and family business tradition influence the decision of immigrants to become self-employed. So, an exploratory study is appropriate for our study. We need to find out what is differentiating the entrepreneurs in the market place and what is motivating them towards the self-employment. The purpose of exploratory studies is to identify what is happening behind the scene and get into new insight. All this kind of question is answered and obtained through conducting an exploratory research. Since we don’t know whether if the South and Southeast Asian entrepreneurs in Umea have been influenced by their family and cultural business backgrounds leading them to start their own business, we want to explore more about this topic. This is why exploratory study is suited for our research.

3.6 Literature Search and Criticism

As our research is based on exploratory study, we have gathered the information in order to make clear understanding of the study. Most of the information was collected from books, journals, articles and Internet. The internet search engines used to collect secondary data are
Google, Google Scholar and journal database such as Emerald, Sage etc. Beyond this Umea University library is one of the main source for secondary data. The keywords used for gathering secondary data from the above mentioned search engines are listed below:

- immigrant entrepreneurs
- Entrepreneurship
- Entrepreneurial process
- Self-employment and its determinants
- motivational factors such as ‘pull’ and ‘push’ factors
- Family business groups in East Asia
- Cultural identity

The information and theories that we gathered helped us to understand the context and support our area of study. Various journals, articles, books and paper reviews on entrepreneurship, self-employment, culture and cultural identity, family business traditions and history in South-East Asia, push and pull factors etc. really helped us to increase our understanding of the relationship between these factors and how it affected the overall decision of the entrepreneur to become self-employed.

Most of the articles which are published in reputed journals have been used in the form of information to support our research. This helps to increase the trustworthiness of the study. Thus, to increase the trustworthiness of the study we must be careful on source while collecting data. Most of the articles and journals used are academic journals and peer-reviews collected from the Umea University Library database. Academic articles are normally published and considered a genuine source to acquire the current information of a particular study. The search process is very fast for articles in comparison to books. We have generally selected the literature which provides related information to answer our research question. In our study, we have referred to some of the old literatures which were published many years ago but still provide meaning to support our study. For example, when defining the term ‘entrepreneurship’, we have referred to the definitions given by Drucker (1985) and Schumpeter (1989). To relate our study to the present scenario we have also looked into the recent literatures which were published within 15 years of time from now like when explaining about the cultural identities and family business groups in East Asia and their relation to entrepreneurship. This also suggests that we have tried to relate our study with the recent trends and practices in the business and entrepreneurship theories.

3.7 Semi-Structured Interview

We have decided on taking interviews with appropriate respondents following qualitative method for collecting and analyzing the data. It normally helps us to collect valid and reliable information that are appropriate for research question and objectives. There are three types of interviews: structured interviews, semi-structured interviews and unstructured interviews. Structured interview used standardized questions where the other two types of interview used non-standardized questions (Saunders et al, 2003, p. 245).
Structured interview have standardized set of questions which are used in questionnaires while unstructured interviews are informal and mostly used for having a depth interview. On the other side non-structured interviews generally have a list of subject matters and questions to be covered. Normally, semi-structured and in depth interview provide the opportunity to explore the answers from the respondents where they explain their responses. This is one of the important aspects of interpretivism position where the focus is to understand the responses of the interviewees related to different activities where each immigrant entrepreneurs are involved in the social world. Interviewees/respondents use words or thoughts in a special way to express themselves and create an opportunity to explore the meanings which add more importance to gather relevant information (Saunders et al, 2003, p. 250). In our study, we have used the semi-structured interviews for our research.

Before the interview is conducted we make the purpose of the interview clear to the interviewee. As interview proceeds, the order of the question may change or some additional follow up questions may be put forward in order to explore the objectives of the research. It is not necessary to follow the exact pattern of the interview guide developed for conducting the interview. Our interview guide questions are easy to understand and straightforward to interviewees in order to make them talk freely on questions. We have carried out face-to-face interviews to collect the primary data from the respondents. In face-to-face interviews, we meet the respondents face to face and conduct the interviews. In this study, we have conducted the interviews on one-to-one basis which means that the interaction was between the researchers and a single participant. In some cases, we have given the interview guide to the respondent before actually conducting the interview because one respondent was not comfortable in directly giving us the interview. He said he needed some time to prepare for the interview. Although, both authors were present in the interviewing of the respondents, it was a two party interview. Thus, we can say that it was a one-to-one basis interview. This is important for our study in order to explore more information from the participant. Here we can ask follow up questions as needed if the question does not give the sufficient information so that we get a clear understanding of their views, opinions and feelings for choosing to become self-employed. Thus, face-to-face interview is a suitable method for our study. We have carried out six interviews in our study all of which were face-to-face interviews.

The interview guide is made as to meet the objective of the research. As we know that immigrant entrepreneurs are a social actor living in the social world, they perform different activities and these activities may influence the immigrant entrepreneurs to become self-employed in the workplace. The reasons why these immigrant entrepreneurs choose to become self-employed may vary with different conditions and change of time. Thus, the basic purpose of conducting an interview is to talk with the respondents and acquire the facts, description of behavior, statements, feelings, and thoughts about how they view the social world from their own perspectives. This information are then identified and coded. Later this information are reported in the empirical findings and used as the relevant information that accomplishes the objectives of research. This indeed is the primary source of information for the research.

In our interview guide we have five topics with certain questions which start with personal background, business background, family background, culture background and at last motivational factors (See appendix 1 for the interview guide questions). First set of questions
aims to get basic information about the immigrant entrepreneurs. Second set of questions goes deeper to their businesses background. Third and fourth set of questions is more important for the authors and study purpose focusing mainly on the cultural and family business background of the respondents. The last set of questions deals with motivational factors influencing the decision of immigrants’ entrepreneurs to start their own business. In this way interview was conducted with the respondents before coming up with empirical findings of the research.

### 3.7.1 Selection of Respondents

Our study is focused on South and Southeast Asian immigrant entrepreneurs who are residing for more than two years in Umea city. We decided to focus on the immigrants who were residing here permanently for more than two years so that our study consists of stable actors. Thus, our target respondent group will be people from the South and Southeast Asian region having their own businesses and are so called respondents in the paper. We have seen many immigrant entrepreneurs from South and Southeast Asia in Umea who has been operating different businesses here. In our study we want to have a variety of entrepreneurs from different parts of South-East Asia in order to get different views from different respondents. For selecting the respondents for our research, we decided to use the snowball sampling method. Snowball sampling is suitable for qualitative research especially when we have a small sample sized population for research (Bryan & Bell, 2007). This helps to make our study versatile, accurate and more acceptable. In snowball sampling, first, the initial contact is made with a small group of relevant people who are related to research subject and these contacts are used to establish more contacts with (Bryan & Bell, 2007, p. 200). We got the contact of one of the immigrant entrepreneur through our personal contact, a cook who was from our country Nepal and working for this entrepreneur who was from Bangladesh. He provided us with information about other South and Southeast Asian immigrants around Umea city. He also had a friend who was from Philippines and was running her own business here in Umea. So we made a list of immigrant entrepreneurs from South and Southeast Asia in and around Umea city from the information received from this contact.

Snowball sampling is appropriate for those studies where population size is not known to the precise extent from which it would have to be drawn and the difficulty of such a sample is that there is no accessible sampling frame for the population from which the sample is to be taken. In such cases, snowball sampling approach is the only feasible one (Bryman & Bell, 2007, p. 200). We chose this sampling approach because our focus was on people from one particular region (South-East Asia). We also tried to acquire the information of South-East Asian immigrant entrepreneurs from Statistics of Sweden and sent emails to the businesses that fitted our study purpose. But we did not get any reply from any of these entrepreneurs. Because of this reason we decided to go forward with snowball sampling approach for our study as it seemed to be the most feasible one. The problem with this kind of sampling is that it becomes very unlikely that the sample would be a representation of the large population. But nevertheless, since our research is guided by a preference for a theoretical sampling, there seems to be a better ‘fit’ between snowball sampling and the theoretical sampling strategy of qualitative research (Bryan & Bell, 2007, p. 200).

Finally, we collected nine possible candidates for conducting the interviews. In some cases, we used phone calls to fix an appointment in most cases we contacted the owners at their workplace.
to fix the time and date for conducting our interviews. Out of nine possible immigrant entrepreneurs we listed, we were able to have interviews with six of the respondents. However, among the six interviews conducted, three of them were conducted in English and three in Hindi because these three entrepreneurs did not speak or understand English so well. Although they spoke Swedish, we could not conduct the interviews in Swedish because both the authors could not understand or speak Swedish. Our aim was to conduct every interview in English in order to eliminate the misunderstanding and misinterpretation in the communication process but three of them were unable to express their opinion so we needed to interview them in Hindi. Hindi is a language developed from ‘Urdu’ which is spoken and understood in most of the South Asian countries. Since both the authors could speak and understand Hindi, it was easy for us to take the interviews in Hindi. Among the six interviewed respondents, two of them directly rejected that their interviews be recorded but they were ready to have oral interviews with the authors and provide the needed information required for us as long as we were happy to write notes. While interviewing the respondents, we tried to explain the purpose of our study and why we wanted to record the interview but still they were not comfortable in getting the interview recorded. They explained the reasons for rejecting the recorded interview because they said they were bounded by their own company or business rules and regulation which did not allow them to record the interview. The two candidates were Chinese entrepreneurs who did not know English. It was a sad situation for us because they could only speak Chinese or Swedish but we did not speak both these languages. So because of not understanding the language we had to cancel the interviews. The third possible entrepreneur was simply not interested in giving the interview. We tried to convince her by saying that it was just for our college Masters’ thesis but she said ignored our request and said she did not want to participate in our research.

Out of the six interviews conducted, five of the interviews were conducted at the workplace of the respondents and one was conducted in a fast food restaurant. The maximum time spent in an interview was 27 minutes while minimum was 18 minutes. Some interviews were finished in a short time as it was conducted in the workplace of the respondents and they were busy in their work. So we had to make the interviews short. Nevertheless, we were able to get the answers to our entire interview questionnaire guide. For more information about the selection of respondents in detail see Table-3. Some of the interviews had to be postponed because of the busy schedule of the respondents. On the other side, due to the limited time and resource constraints the authors were unable to trace more participants for the interview. The main problems identified during the interviews were, interviewees felt uncomfortable to talk freely about their family and cultural background. In those circumstances, many follow up questions were asked to the respondents so that they would be comfortable in answering our questions. We also assured them that the data and information provided by them would be kept anonymous and they would be asked for permission if the data is actually to be used in the future. This made the respondents feel more comfortable to speak on the questions and looked more relaxed.

The details of the respondents used for our study are shown in the table below in Table 3:
Table 1: Overview of Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Entrepreneur</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Country of Origin</strong></td>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>India</td>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Business Type</strong></td>
<td>Asian Food Store</td>
<td>Pizzeria and Grill House</td>
<td>Indian Restaurant</td>
<td>Clothing Store</td>
<td>Indian Restaurant</td>
<td>Sushi Bar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interviewed Place</strong></td>
<td>Max Burger</td>
<td>Workplace</td>
<td>Workplace</td>
<td>Workplace</td>
<td>Workplace</td>
<td>Workplace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interview Language</strong></td>
<td>English</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Hindi (Urdu)</td>
<td>Hindi (Urdu)</td>
<td>Hindi (Urdu)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interview Type</strong></td>
<td>Face-to-face</td>
<td>Face-to-face</td>
<td>Face-to-face</td>
<td>Face-to-face</td>
<td>Face-to-face</td>
<td>Face-to-face</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interview Date</strong></td>
<td>2010-01-04</td>
<td>2012-01-04</td>
<td>2012-01-04</td>
<td>2012-01-17</td>
<td>2012-01-04</td>
<td>2012-01-22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Duration of Interview in minutes</strong></td>
<td>18</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.7.2 Compiling the Interview Material

All of the six interviews we conducted were by face to face approach. While undertaking this kind of interviews it is important to establish personal contacts with the respondents to explore the participant’s responses. This is only possible if a position of trust can be established between the interviewee and the participant especially when asking some sensitive questions. Both the authors were equally engaged in establishing personal contacts and trusts with the participants. But however, two of the respondents did not allow recorded interview to be taken. Because of this, we had to take down written notes while the interview was taken and since some of the interviewee did not understand English we took the interviews in Hindi (Urdu) because the authors and the respondents both could communicate in that language. We had to translate these interviews in English and this was a difficult task. As both the authors were from same country (NEPAL) so it was even harder to communicate with different respondents. However, we have managed to include all of the things that were said in the interviews as best as we could. Five out of the six interviews conducted were taken at the workplace of the entrepreneurs. All these five interviews went smoothly. One interview was taken at a fast food restaurant. Since this was
taken in a public place, during the interview there were disturbances at sometimes and a lot of
noise could also be heard. Nevertheless, we took the interview well and the information we
received from the interview was good in overall.

We have summarized the information according to our related topics of study by taking notes of
what the participants said and from the ‘quotes’ they have actually used in the interview. We
think that the information we have received have been helpful in our analyzing and interpretation
of our study. The four interviews that we recorded were helpful too. When transcribing these
interviews, the English language spoken by some of the respondents were difficult to understand.
We had to roll the interview tape again and again and listen to it several times in order to
understand what the respondents were saying. After listening to the same recorded material
several times the authors however were able to understand and interpret the information received
through the interview. Some facts and statements spoken by respondents have been cited exactly
in the empirical chapter which helps us to make a clear understanding of our research. In order to
make effective interpretation, the authors sat down together and listened to the recorded material
together for interpretation and analyzing the information. Ultimately, it has helped us to come up
with better understanding in the research. The detailed presentations of our interview of six
respondents are presented in chapter 4. The presentations of the interviews are based on themes
that have been used to interpret the findings from our research.

3.8 Analyzing Qualitative data

Analyzing of data in a research involves summarizing the mass of data collected and presenting
the findings in a way that communicates the most important features (Handcock, 1998, p.16). In
qualitative research there are different techniques to analyze the data. Among those techniques
we have selected the content analysis for analyzing our data. Analysis is done to find ‘the big
pictures’ called the major findings from the mass of data that has been collected (Handcock,
1998, p.16). Hancock (1998) defines content analysis as a procedure for the categorization of
verbal or behavioral data, for the purposes of classification, summarization and tabulation.
Content analysis idea is to identify and categorize the hidden information’s that are informative
which are presented in the form of messages in the mass of each interview (Hancock, 1998, p.
17). This implies that based on the subject and themes, researcher will categorize the phenomena
or phenomena of interest to code the text or documents (Bryman and Bell, 2007, p.310). The
information that is presented in the interviews is interpreted according to the literature reviews in
order to come to a conclusion.

Based on the data collected from interview, the author’s have classified informative information
into major themes. These themes are further grouped into categories which are then analyzed and
compared according to our literature review. This comparison of the empirical findings and
literature review is presented in chapter 5. The last three section of interview guide are major
concern for identifying and listing the themes. In the study, major categories are sorted and listed
from the interview guide topic: motivation factors such as pull and push, family tradition, and
culture. While analyzing the data, we have sorted the major categories obtained from one
interviewee and compared the data gathered from other interviewee. Our sample size is small
which makes the interpretation process easier with recognizing the importance of each category
and provides a clear understanding of meaning in the context in which an item is being analyzed (Bryman and Bell, 2007, p. 304). This provides us to find out the hidden information which helps us to draw the ‘the big pictures’ called major findings for our study. Thus, we have used content analysis techniques for analyzing our data and consider as an appropriate approach for our study.

### 3.9 Ethical Considerations

Ethical issues are very important in the research work. In research, ethics refers to the appropriateness of behavior to get the right to use to the information provided by the respondents which must be confidential and make sure it will not affect them (Saunders et al., 2003, p. 129). As mentioned above our research is based on qualitative method where interview is the mode for collecting the data. If we apply this method, ethical issues must be taken into consideration with greater importance because researcher will be able to use an upper level of control for the information that is obtained from a face to face conversation from the respondent by asking non-standardized questions (Saunders et al., 2003, p. 137). Thus, the researcher should be careful while using such kind of data for the research. Diener and Crandall (1978) have mentioned four major principles to be followed for ethical consideration: harm to participants, lack of informed consent, invasion of privacy and deception.

Harm to participants’ means it will not affect the participants in future by being a part of the subject. Harm can be of different types as physical harm, stress, development or self-esteem, harm to career prospects for future employment and inducing subjects to perform reprehensible acts (Diener and Crandall, 1978). Thus, we have tried to eliminate every such kind of harm that may affect our participant’s personal life and their businesses. This means that we have maintained the confidentiality of records and anonymity of accounts for the information that they have provided (Bryan and Bells, 2007, p. 133). We have also kept the individual and organizational data confidential. We have not used any names or any information that might be dangerous or threatening to the organization. All the interviews and data collected are used as per the permission granted by the interviewees.

Informed consent means the researcher must provide full needed information to the participants. Thus, they can decide freely to make their decision with rights to use their information in the study. If detailed information is not provided to the respondents by explaining the objectives of conducting an interview, there is a chance of them being a victim of it (Saunders et al., 2003, p. 133). For that reason, we made a mutual oral agreement with the participants to make sure that their information are handled with care and kept secret. This kind of agreement is more based on trust and belief that the information is cared with high degree of confidentiality. Thus, we have provided all the information clearly to the participants and considered that they made the right decision to be a part of our study.

The third issue is concerned with the invasion of privacy. Privacy is considered as one of the major ethical issues in the research. MRS (Market Research Society) guidance states “the objectives of any study do not give researchers a special right to intrude on a respondent’s privacy nor to abandon normal respect for an individual’s values” (Bryan and Bells, 2007, p. 139). There are certain things the researcher must think of the participants where they are not
forced to answer the set of questions they feel discomfort to explain. In privacy, it is the participant’s right to provide information they feel safe. They want to maintain privacy to some sensitive questions because they are bounded by the norms of the organization or individual rights knowing the interview is conducted in private (Bryan and Bells, 2007, p. 140). In our research we have maintained the privacy of the participant and not compelled to get into the answer to meet the objective of the study. Some of our respondents were not comfortable to speak freely about their personal and family backgrounds. However, since our research was particularly focused on the family and cultural backgrounds these areas needed to be discussed in order to know if and how it affected the entrepreneur’s decision. In order to do so, we asked them a few follow up questions related to the personal and family backgrounds which they were comfortable to answer. Deception occurs when researchers represent the information in other purpose than for what it should be. Deception should always be minimized so as to get the accurate findings in the research (Bryan and Bells, 2007, p. 141). Thus, we have selected the right participants for the interview and used it for the purpose it was assumed in order to get the study more reliable and acceptable.

In our research we have carefully handled all the above mentioned ethical issues in order to make sure that the participants’ are not affected by our study for the information that they have provided to us. The findings are based on the interview conducted with participants and provided information will be handled with care and kept confidential because it is considered as valuable source for the study.
4. Empirical Findings

In this chapter, the empirical material collected as primary resources by conducting interviews with South and South-East Asian immigrant entrepreneurs known as respondents who are running their businesses in Umea city, Sweden are explained. We have divided the interview guide into five sections: personal background, company background, family background, cultural background, and motivational factors to achieve the objective of our study.

4.1 Entrepreneur A

4.1.1 Personal Background

Entrepreneur A’s country of origin is the Philippines. She first came to Sweden in the year 2000 because she was working for a musical theatre here in Sweden. She had finished her four year gymnasium and five year college course from Philippines. She was working as a professional teacher of languages for grade school students before she came here. She also worked for the social welfare society. Her main hobby was to cook and mix food for different Asian delicacies. The reason she decided to start up her own business here in Umea was because she wanted to combine her hobbies with her work so that she loved what she did.

4.1.2 Company Background

The reason why entrepreneur A chose Umea city for the start of her business was because she had been working in Umea before so she wanted to do something of her own here. She stills works at different restaurants in the city as a cook. She says she didn’t choose this city but in fact the city chose her. She wanted to try out her luck in business. She started her own business in early 2011 so it’s just been about a year since she started it. Her main business is selling food ingredients for Asian foods. She mixes spices used in Asian foods for Japanese, Philippines, Thailand, Indonesian and Indian cuisines. She also does her own catering and wants to build her business even more in the future. The basic idea of her business was to give the people of Umea and to make them aware of the different tastes of the Asian food. Her main customers are from Thailand. When starting up her business she did not take any help from any of her family members back home. She saved the money she earned and came up with the idea of doing this business all by herself. She imports most of her spicy ingredients from Malmo, Gotenberg and even Germany.

4.1.3 Family Background

When asked about her family background, she was really proud of her family history. She said she came from a family where business was the way of life although her family business back
home was not related to the business she was doing here. Her father had a plantation business that included mangoes, orchids, coffee etc. back in Philippines. This was a family business and it was transferred from generations to generations. All her brothers and sisters were proud of their family history because they didn’t have to take government loans to study in the colleges. They were all able to sustain themselves from the family business.

4.1.4 Cultural Background

Entrepreneur A thinks that the entrepreneurial culture is present in her society. Mainly her generations of people are business minded. She says, “No wonder I have business is in my blood”, relating herself with her people back in Philippines especially her family. Entrepreneur A thinks she has business in her blood because of her strong family connections with business. She has seen a lot of businesses developing in her country in recent times. Most people in the Philippines are mixed blood between Spanish and Chinese both of which are very good in doing businesses. But by doing business here in Sweden, she not only wants to represent Philippines but the whole Asians. She wants other Asian people and entrepreneurs to be encouraged too to do something of their own. She says that she wants to give power to the Asian community here in Umea to think positive and be courageous to do what you think is good. She also wants to promote such kind of businesses in Philippines.

According to entrepreneur A, about 80% of the Philippine people are educated and 20% are illiterate. But it is this 20% of people who are mostly engaged in entrepreneurship. Entrepreneur A thinks that this is because these people do not have other choices. Although these people don’t go to school, the experience they get from family businesses help them start and build up their own businesses. The main businesses that are common in Philippines are restaurant, investment in houses, hotels, beach resorts because of the beautiful weather etc.

4.1.5 Motivational factors

Entrepreneur A wanted to become independent and she wanted more from her life. This she said was her main motivation to start her own business rather than working for someone else. But she didn’t just start it right away. She first studied about the business in Umea, did some research on how the market and demand for such products were. She studied for about 6 months before she actually decided to start up the business. She believes there are both positive and negative aspects of business. The main difficulties that she faced when starting up the business was in finding the ingredients for Asian foods because such type of spices are not found in Umea and have to be imported from cities like Malmo and Gothenberg and even from Germany sometimes. Also because there weren’t many Asians living here in Sweden it was very difficult for her to penetrate into the market. It is also very hard to find a good and suitable place to start and build up your business.

Entrepreneur A thinks she was lucky because the business background of her family and her passion to become self-independent women influenced her to become an entrepreneur. Because her parents and her family were always positive when doing the business and that she had seen the hardships of running a business back home in Philippines, she had learnt a great deal about businesses. Since Philippine is a multicultural country consisting of American, Chinese, Japanese, and Italian cultures, people in Philippines appreciates different culture. She thinks that
she is a part of a family history of business entrepreneurs and would also like her children to continue this legacy of her family.

4.2 Entrepreneur B

4.2.1 Personal background

Entrepreneur B’s country of origin is Pakistan. He first moved to Sweden in 2007. He came to Sweden with his wife who was studying here in Sweden. Entrepreneur B is a business graduate from a university in Pakistan and he has had about fifteen years of business experience in his home country. After he came to Sweden, he learned how to make pizzas before finally taking over a pizzeria restaurant in 2009. He did not work here in Sweden soon after he came here but he spent his time gaining skills in baking pizzas. He was engaged in his own business back in Pakistan. He used to run a hotel and a restaurant there. He also owned a car rental service in Pakistan.

4.2.2 Company background

The reason why entrepreneur B chose Umea for his business was because he thinks Umea is a big city and has more opportunity for him as it is a developing city. Also because of the university there are people from various countries living here. He observed that this city would develop even more. He also mentioned that in bigger cities it is expensive to run a business. It is relatively less expensive to run a business in Umea. This pizzeria grill was established in 1996 but the present owner took over the restaurant on October 2009. The owner has plans to introduce other dishes from around the world too. Soon it is also starting the home delivery service of pizzas so that the restaurant can serve other cities too outside Umea.

When taking over the business the owner said he did not take any help from any of his family members or friends. He also mentioned that most of the big industries and businesses today all started from scratch and maybe later were inherited by their offspring’s. He started this business with his own money and now supports his family back home in Pakistan and his family here. He has a wife and a three year old daughter living with him here.

4.2.3 Family Background

His father was a government employee in Pakistan who now is retired and living in pensions received from the government. He did not have any entrepreneurial background. His family was never involved in any sort of business activities. He is the first in his family who is in the business line. He started this trend of doing business in his family but now he is encouraging his other members of his family to take up business ventures. Now his brothers are also involved in businesses of their own. His bigger brother is engaged in the business of trading electronic products and his smaller brother is running a restaurant business in Pakistan. Entrepreneur B thinks that entrepreneurs are full time workers and they have to give full time efforts into their job to become successful.
4.2.4 Cultural background

Speaking about the business culture background in Pakistan, entrepreneur B mentioned that people in Pakistan appreciate entrepreneurs and encourages small businesses in Pakistan. The encouragement for small businesses in Pakistan is much higher than that in Sweden. There are many small businesses in Pakistan. The most common business in Pakistan is trading of daily commodities, goods and products. He thinks that the Swedish business law and employment laws are discouraging small businesses in Sweden because of the heavy business and employment tax rates. Still he decided to start his own business here because he is a risk taker. He also believes that small businesses contribute a lot in the developed economies. According to entrepreneur B, during the 1970s about 65% of the US economy was contributed by small businesses. He believes that small businesses can play an important role to improve the economic condition of Pakistan.

4.2.5 Motivational factors

The main motivating factor for entrepreneur B to start up his own business was his ambition to become a big business man. The main difficulty he faced when starting up his business was the Swedish business policy for small business entrepreneurs. He thinks that the Swedish business policy treats the big industries and the small business with the same policy. Big businesses have more money through more sales while small industries have less sales and less money. But both the businesses have to pay the same amount of income tax and employment taxes which he thinks is unfair to the small business groups. He also found it difficult to hire additional staffs because of this reason because it is expensive to hire additional staff for a small business running on limited profits. He added that this is also the reason why many people are engaged in illegal black jobs because it is simply not possible for small business to run on such high cost. He did not know this law before he actually took over the business. The owner doesn’t want to do any other jobs because he doesn’t want to work for others. He wants to do something of his own and become a big business man. And he is willing to take the risks even if it means he might go in losses.

Although, entrepreneur B did not come from an entrepreneurial family background, it was interesting to know that he would want his wife and kids to take over his business after he retired if they were willing to. But for now he is really focused on his business.

4.3 Entrepreneurs C

4.3.1 Personal background

Entrepreneur C originally came from Bangladesh. He came to Sweden in July 1992 as a political refugee because of the political unrest in that country at that time. He had finished his education until high-school when he left Bangladesh. He received his permanent residency permit in Sweden in November 1994. After he became a Swedish citizen he didn’t have the required qualification to get a good job here. So he wanted to do something of his own. He wanted to start up his own business. He studies Swedish language from SFI (Swedish For Immigrants) from
1992 to 1995. Although he did not have any previous experience in the restaurant business, he decided to open up an Indian restaurant in Umea because at that time there was none in Umea.

4.3.2 Company background

Entrepreneur C chose Umea for his business because he liked this city when he first came here. He had a friend who had been living here in Umea since 1989. He first opened up the first Indian restaurant in Umea in 1998. He came up with this idea of opening an Indian restaurant because he noticed that Indian cuisines were really popular in England and other European countries. So he thought why not try it in Umea. So he started asking his friends in Sweden and in Umea about the idea. He received positive feedbacks from all of them. So then he decided he would start his own Indian restaurant. When starting up the business, he took help from his sister who was living in England and also from his friends who were in Stockholm. His sister from England provided financial assistance while his friends from Stockholm gave him business advices and knowledge about Swedish business policies.

The restaurant serves delicious and well cooked Indian food with reasonable prices in a very warm and pleasant atmosphere. Delicious Indian meals like meat, fish, fresh vegetables, with spices like cardamom, ginger, cumin, saffron and coriander are served to produce best flavor and fragrances. Also freshly baked Indian breads called ‘nans’ baked on traditional Indian clay oven are also served with delicious desserts. There are a total of four permanent employees and about 4-5 part time employees. 5-6 people work at the restaurant every day. The owner does not have any plans to move his business out of Umea to other big cities because he thinks there he would meet more competition from other Indian restaurants.

4.3.3 Family background

Entrepreneur C also had an entrepreneurial family history. His father had his own saw mill factory. The family also owned a plantation farm which produced tobacco, ‘supari’ (walnuts) which was exported to other countries. His brothers still work in their father’s mill and look after the plantation business. When entrepreneur C was small his father used to ask him for help in the factory after he came back from school. So that was how he and his brothers were engaged in business in early ages. The main businesses carried out in his city were the export of rice and ‘supari’ (walnuts) as the city was famous for these products.

4.3.4 Cultural background

Entrepreneur C mentioned that the concept of entrepreneurship was not a new concept in Bangladesh. It was common for the people to be engaged in their own businesses. That was how the people were surviving for generations. Everyone was free to start their own business whenever they wanted. There were no strict rules and procedures to start up a small business like here in Sweden. And everyone had a positive attitude towards entrepreneurship. So there was this business culture embedded in the society from where entrepreneur C came from. He also said, “Yes, I think I have it in my blood, the business traditions of my family and my culture.”
4.3.5 Motivational factors

The main reason why entrepreneur C wanted to start up his own business was because he always fantasized to have his own business. Also because he did not have enough education required to do other jobs, he wanted to try to do something of his own to make a living. It’s not easy to find a good job in Sweden, not without good education. So if he wanted to work he had to study and that means it needed more time. He thought starting up a business would be a better idea. Since the Indian restaurants were doing so well in England and in other European countries he thought why not try something like that in Umea as well. That is how he came up with the idea of opening an Indian restaurant in Umea. But there was a risk in doing that. People in Umea were not aware of the Indian food and he did not know whether his idea of opening up an Indian restaurant would work or not. But that risk he was willing to take. He wanted to try something new and was always positive about his decisions.

The difficulties he faced when establishing this restaurant was finding the ingredients for making the Indian foods. Also money was a major problem. A lot of capital was required to start a restaurant. He eventually had to take some financial assistance from his sister who was working in London. The language barrier was over once he joined the SFI. Another difficulty he mentioned was finding the chef for Indian cuisines. He himself was also a chef but then he had hard time finding other chefs. He mentioned that there were few restaurant businesses in Bangladesh. So he was starting a business that was new to him. He had to change the tastes of the Indian food according to the Swedish preference like serving spicy food but with more gravy and sweeteners because Swedish people liked such food. He certainly feels that being exposed to his father’s business in a very early age certainly helped him know more about how to do business even when the business that he and his father did were entirely different. He believes that he too come from a business family background as even his grandfather was in business. And he also wanted his children to look after his business after he retired if the children wanted to continue with it.

4.4 Entrepreneur D

4.4.1 Personal Background

Entrepreneur D was from India. He had come to Sweden as a student in 1980. He came here to do his masters in Economics in Umea University. He did his graduation in economics from his home country. He also had worked in a garment factory before in his home country which was run by his family. When asked why he wanted to start his own business, he replied that getting involved in business and doing a service job are two different things. There are positives and negatives of both sides. When he first came to Umea as a student, he was also working here in a garment store as a salesman for 3 years. But he wanted to start his own business because being an owner he believes is more exciting and challenging because he can make his own decisions and be his own boss. But he emphasized that before opening up his own business he first worked as a salesman in the same field to gain experience about the tastes and market opportunities present in this field.
4.4.2 Company Background

The reason why entrepreneur D chose to open up his business in Umea city was because he was a student of Umea university at first and he had worked here as a salesman for a garment store for three years. Therefore he eventually settled here and which is why he decided to start his business here. Umea is also targeted to become a ‘cultural city’ of Sweden by the year 2014. So obviously a lot of people are going to come to this place. Entrepreneur D currently has two stores both dealing with garments. The first store was opened 28 years ago while the second one was just recently opened this year. He basically came up with the idea of opening up a garment boutique because he wanted a change in his work lifestyle. Also because two decades ago, there were very less such stores, probably only 5-6 whereas now there are around 60 garment stores according to him. When opening up his business, he took the help of his family members mostly financially and business advices. Most of his garments are imported from Denmark, China, India and some also are made in Sweden.

4.4.3 Family background

Entrepreneur D had a family business background too. His family had a garment factory in India. The factory is still running now but is not operating in as quite a large scale as it used to be before. His father is retired now but his brothers still look after his father’s businesses back home. His brothers have also started their own businesses. This is also one of the reasons they have not been involved actively in their fathers business. However it was interesting to know that his brothers started their own businesses in the same line of garment and textile business. Before entrepreneur D came to Sweden, he and his brothers used to work in his father’s garment factory since they were very young. So they were exposed to the art of business entrepreneurship from a very early age.

4.4.4 Cultural Background

According to entrepreneur D, the concept of entrepreneurship is viewed in a positive way. It is very common for the people to be involved in entrepreneurial activities. The status of family business is considered as good or bad according to the success achieved in the business. He also mentions that factors like education, wealth, etc. are not important factors that define one’s involvement in entrepreneurial behavior. As long as an individual is fully motivated and has a brilliant idea which he/she thinks could be implemented successfully, and a willpower to achieve success in the business, everyone should be allowed to start his/her own venture. The main businesses that are popular in India are garment industries, computer industries, restaurants etc.

4.4.5 Motivational Factors

The main motivational factor for entrepreneur D to start up his own business was to become independent. He did not want to work for others. He wanted to be his own boss and make his own decisions. He says that when starting up his business, the main difficulty was not in starting up the business but to run it. Creating goodwill is the main difficult thing to achieve in a business. Bank loan was not much of a big problem once he met the criteria for the loan. Language barrier wasn’t a problem too as he could speak fluent Swedish. But he mentioned he was not happy with the tax system of the Swedish business law which provided barriers for
aspiring entrepreneurs to start up a small business since the employment tax rates are very high. He also said that this is the reason why many small business people prefer to work themselves in their own business because they cannot afford to hire additional staffs. Entrepreneur D believes that he comes from an entrepreneurial family background. He admits he was encouraged by his brother to start up his own business and his brother provided him with moral support and guidance. The fact that his brother and father were involved in businesses themselves provided him encouragement and he could look up to them for guidance. They also provided him with new ideas about the new trends in fashion and garment products. When asked whether he would like to see his business being taken over by his children after he retires, he answered that it is entirely up to his children to make that decision. Of course in India, one can expect his business being handed down to his children and then to his children’s children, but in Sweden that is unusual. But he said that it would be nice if his children wanted to take over the business if he retires.

4.5 Entrepreneur E

4.5.1 Personal Background

Entrepreneur E originally came from Bangladesh. He came here as a political refugee in 1996 because of the ongoing political turmoil in his country. He has done his high schooling from Bangladesh in management faculty. He was also working in a restaurant back in Bangladesh. When asked why he decided to start his own business, he said that because he had experience working in the similar restaurant business in his home country and he also worked here in some restaurant before he finally opened up his own business.

4.5.2 Company Background

The reason why entrepreneur E chose Umea city to start his business was because he had been living here ever since he arrived to Sweden in 1996. He also worked in Umea in some restaurant so he had experience in the restaurant business. He was familiar with the Umea city and the people in Umea. Therefore he decided to start up his own business here. He opened up his restaurant in 2005. When asked about if he received any help from his family members when opening up his business, he replied he didn’t have any help from any of his families and friends. He had to do it all by himself. He had to manage the capital, chose the place, hire staffs and do all the formal procedures by him. His restaurant serves traditional and modern Indian cuisines and provides a pleasant and elegant environment to dine in. All kinds of foods like mild, medium and strong dishes and varieties of meats, salmon, prawns and vegetarian dishes are also served at the restaurant. Their menu consists of more than 100 different dishes and several drinks are also available. Buffet lunch is also served daily. They also offer take away menus, reservations and dinner orders for private and corporate parties. They provide 20-25 % discounts on takeaway menus.
4.5.3 Family Background

When we asked entrepreneur E about his family background, he said he did not have any family business history. No one in his family was ever involved in doing their own business. But he was the first member in his family to start up his own business. He got this idea of starting his own business because of his previous work experiences. He wanted to start something of his own to support himself. His parents are still in Bangladesh and his father is a retired government employee. Entrepreneur E now has been supporting them with his business profits from the current business. His only brother also lives in Bangladesh and is working in some private institution as an accountant. When we asked if his brother also wanted to start any new business he replied that his brother was not interested in doing business and considered a fixed job as a more secure option.

4.5.4 Cultural Background

According to entrepreneur E, it is very common for people to be involved in entrepreneurial activities in Bangladesh. Many people are involved in their own business and support their family members from those businesses. People who start up their own businesses are viewed as independent and self supportive. He also mentioned that because of the high unemployment rate in Bangladesh, people usually choose to do their own business which is more profitable. Most of the people are engaged in farming in his village. The most common businesses that are seen in Bangladesh are export of rice, garment textiles, fisheries, and handicrafts. Anyone can start his/her own business as long as they are determined and willing to do it. No formal rules and procedures are required to start a small business in Bangladesh unlike here in Sweden. Therefore, the business system in Bangladesh is much more encouraging to the small business entrepreneurs. So he agrees that there is a cultural push to people being entrepreneurial in Bangladesh.

4.5.5 Motivational Factors

The main reason that motivated entrepreneur E to start up his own business was because he wanted to do something of his own. Also because he was not well educated enough to get a good regular job, it was very difficult for him to work for others. So he decided that he wanted to make a living by doing something of his own. When we asked him about what difficulties he faced when he started his business, he gave us a very modest answer saying that there were no such difficulties. Everything was smooth and systematic. He mentioned that the business policy and laws in Sweden is very much different to that in Bangladesh where there are no rules in doing a business. In Sweden everything is very systematic and as long as one adheres to the system rules no problem come up. Since entrepreneur E didn’t have a family business background, he was not influenced by any cultural and family background to start his business. Also when asked if he wanted his children to take over his business, he said that this was not his decision. It was up to his children to decide if they wanted to continue with their father’s business or not.
4.6 Entrepreneur F

4.6.1 Personal Background

Entrepreneur F is originally from Bangladesh. He moved to Sweden in 1993 as a political asylum. The reason he moved to Sweden was because of the political turmoil in Bangladesh at that time. Talking about his educational background, he has passed high school from Bangladesh. He also had some work experience back home. He used to work in a trade license company. After he came to Sweden he worked in different types of restaurants like Japanese, Indian, Malaysian and Italian restaurants from 1995 to 2004. After having so much experience in the restaurant business he finally decided to open his own restaurant.

4.6.2 Company Background

He owns a sushi restaurant in the heart of the Umea city. He opened this restaurant in Umea in 2008. He first opened his restaurant in Sundsvall in 2004 before opening his branch in Umea. From the success he achieved in Sundsvall with his business, he decided to come to Umea and open up a sushi restaurant here because Umea is a big city and there are a lot of international students living here. Although he had worked in different types of restaurants before like Indian, Italian, Japanese etc, he decided to open up a Japanese sushi restaurant because he observed that there was a trend in Umea for Japanese food. People in Umea really loved the sushi because it was a healthy diet and a popular meal among the Swedes. Most of the young people liked sushi and it was popular among the Umea youths. When opening up this business, he did not get any help from his family members but one of his friends helped him instead. His friend had invited him to Sundsvall and asked him if he would like to start a business there. He liked the place and thought he could start up a business there. He also received helped from his friend financially who also became his partner in his business venture.

4.6.3 Family background

Entrepreneur F agrees that he has a family business background and that it has influenced him in his business venture. He said that his grandfather had a saw-mill business which was a family business although the business is closed now. His father was a government worker working as a policeman. He has five brothers and all of them have businesses of their own. Three of his brothers are still living in Bangladesh while two of them are here in Sweden. One of the brothers in Bangladesh was working in a regular job before but now he quit his job and has started his own business of medicine. His other two brothers are also doing businesses in Bangladesh now. One of them is in the stock trading business while the other one has his own clothing business. Two of his brothers who are in Sweden are working here in Sweden and they have been helping him in his own business. At present entrepreneur F has three restaurants and all of them are franchises established in three different cities namely Sundsvall, Umea and Hudiksvall. His other two brothers are here in Sweden helping him in his business.

4.6.4 Cultural background

The culture in Bangladesh in entrepreneurship is generally viewed in a positive note. It is often a common thing to start a business in Bangladesh. There are a lot of people who are engaged in
entrepreneurship in Bangladesh. This according to entrepreneur F is because of the family business background of the business owners. Because a lot of businesses are run by family it can be seen as a common thing for the generations after that to give continuity to the business because it is a safe way to become self-employed and financially sound. Entrepreneur F thinks the most important thing in order to start up a successful business is having enough experience in that field. He says that money can also be a factor but if you only have money and no experience then your business cannot be successful. And he thinks education is also a definitely important factor. He believes that an educated entrepreneur can run his business more properly and in a managed way. Because he had a lot of experience in his line of business he felt confident to start up his own business. He thinks that it is common in Bangladesh that if a father is in the business line then his son is also most likely to be doing the business although it is not necessary to be in the same business line. It is much safer for the family to carry on the business so that they can support themselves. The most common businesses in Bangladesh are stock market, clothes and textiles, medicine etc.

4.6.5 Motivational Factors

Before starting his business, entrepreneur F had worked almost in all necessary departments related in running a business like in departments’ like reception, cashier, kitchen etc. He insists that his experience played a bigger role and acted as a motivating factor for him to start up his own business. Also, his friend motivated him a lot to start up his own business as his friend was more experienced and financially sound. They were also partners in the business. Another reason to start up his own business was the importance of freedom and the liberty of being one’s own boss. He could enjoy the advantage of being a boss. If he didn’t want to work he could close his restaurant for a week but if he had a regular job then this was not possible. He also was driven by the money factor as he came to know that doing a business could yield more profit than he by engaging in a regular job as a waged worker if he could do well in the business.

One of the difficulties he faced in his business venture was actually after he had started it. He faced real difficulties in managing the business in the early phase like in managing the personnel and ordering goods etc. He also thinks the tax system in Sweden was a big problem because of its heavy taxes. Nevertheless he thinks that in Sweden it is encouraging to start your own business. He believes that his family business background has influenced him in starting up his own business. Because his grandfather had his own business, he also always wanted to do his own business. He also had started a business in Bangladesh before he came here. He had a saw mill business which he ran for a year. He did not like the saw mill business so he decided to start a jute business. He did that for 2-3 years. This was an international company. He was only 20 years old when he started this jute business. Therefore, he was exposed to business in a very young age. He started his first business when he was 17. He was the first among his brothers to take up business. He even controls the business now run by his brothers in Bangladesh as he helped them to establish that business. He says that, “the business came to my blood from my grandfather”. He encouraged and involved all his brothers in business. When asked about what he thinks about his children inheriting his business he replied that he would like to see his children complete their studies first. He doesn’t want his children to work for his business but however he would like them to see them manage his business paper works and legal formalities. He does not want them to work physically for the business but definitely would want them to play a passive role in his business after he retired.
5. Analysis & Discussion

In this chapter, we aim to answer our research question by analyzing our findings from the empirical chapter. Our research question was: Does the cultural and family business traditions of South and Southeast Asian immigrants affect their decision to become self-employed and if so how?

5.1. Personal and Company Background

Among the six respondents interviewed, three were from Bangladesh (entrepreneurs C, E, F), one from Philippines (A), one from India (D) and one from Pakistan (B). All of them had various educational backgrounds ranging from higher secondary degrees to Master degrees before coming to Sweden. Entrepreneur A had finished her Master’s degree while Entrepreneurs C, E, F had finished high schooling from their respective countries. Entrepreneur B and D had finished their bachelors in their home country. Entrepreneurs C, E, F came to Sweden as political refugees. This can also be explained by the study from Hammarstedt (2001), where he states that most of the immigrants were refugees seeking asylum rather than labor immigrants in Sweden after 1975 (Hammarstedt, 2001, p.147). This may be because of the long history of war and conflicts in the South-East Asian region which resulted in a large number of people moving to foreign countries as immigrants (Pempel, 2005, p.1). Entrepreneur D came for the purpose of further studies while Entrepreneur A came for the training purpose as she was working in a musical theatre and Entrepreneur B came here with his wife who was studying here. Before coming to Sweden, all respondents except respondent A were engaged in some kind of businesses in their home country. Respondent A worked as a professional teacher for school students. She also worked for social welfare society. Opportunity immigrants may move into the host country with different purposes such as some may move for academic and training purposes and later decide to stay after their training (Chrysostome, 2010, p.139) like in the case of Entrepreneur A and Entrepreneur D.

Depending on the opinion of each respondent the reason behind choosing Umea city varies for their businesses. Entrepreneur B and F thinks that Umea is a big and fast growing city. Also, because there is an international University here, students from different countries comes with different taste and choices, it sure is a lucrative place for business. Entrepreneur C said he likes Umea city as it has impressed him more than any other things and the other reason for choosing Umea as his place for business was because his friend was living here since a long time. Entrepreneur D has a different view as he was a student in Umea University and believes that Umea will become a ‘cultural city’ of Sweden where the number of people coming to Umea will increase. Looking at their business backgrounds, we can see that each entrepreneur have gathered some basic experience of working in Umea before starting their own businesses. Thus, by engaging in the active participation in the labor market, immigrants were able to acquire the necessary skills to be integrated into the employment sector (Borjas, 1986). This had helped them to identify what sort of business they should start as it makes them easy to recognize who the potential customers are. Out of 6 respondents, entrepreneurs A, B, E, and F had managed themselves to start their own business which means that they have not received any help from their family members but in the case of entrepreneur F he was helped by one of his friends. This
was found to be in opposition with the findings from the study of Steier (2009), where he suggests that families provide both moral and financial support for entrepreneurs who want to start up their own business (Steier, 2009, p.526). However, these findings were true in the case of entrepreneurs C and D who had received help from their family members for starting their business. Entrepreneur C got help from his sister who was living in England which includes financial as well as some business advice while entrepreneur D got only the financial help from his family. Therefore, it can be argued that, the experience gained by all the entrepreneurs before starting up their business in Umea helped them to see a business opportunity in the city where they could capitalize on. Even though, most of them did not take any help from their family members in starting up, the concept of business could be because of the business and cultural family background of the people from South and Southeast Asian regions which is embedded in the cultural domain of that region.

5.2. Family Background

In chapter 2, we have discussed about the importance of family in all kinds of businesses regardless of its size. Section 2.5 particularly sheds light upon the nature of family businesses groups in South and Southeast Asian Countries and their role in the economies of those countries. From previous studies (Allen, 2005; Kara, Tracey & Phillips, 2006), it has been seen that family does play an important role in businesses whether big or small and formal or informal. Moreover, it was found that immigrants born in Asia are self-employed to a higher extent than the natives of the host country (Joona P.A., 2009, p.119). In an in-depth analysis of the six interviews we conducted, it was seen that four of the respondents had very strong family business history and influences while two of the respondents (B & E) were found not to have any family business background.

The report by the OECD (2003) supports that Asian business landscape are seen to be predominantly run by families. This can be seen as evident as in case of Entrepreneurs A, C, D and F where it was seen that they all came from a background where business was the way of life. One of the reasons why Asian business scenario is so much family based could be because of the fact that most of these Asian countries have a weak legal and regulatory policy for starting a business, thus making it a logical decision for entrepreneurs from this region to take help from their family members for starting and growing their business (Steier, 2009, p.530). In the case of entrepreneur F, we can see that although he did not take any help from his family members when starting up his business, he later employed his own brothers to grow his business. Thus, by organizing a team of family members he was able to grow his business. As Andersson (2007) has suggested, that self-employment abilities can be inherited from the parents to off springs, this was seen evident in case of entrepreneurs A, C, D and F although, the line of business they were involved in were different from their fathers line of business except in the case of Entrepreneur D, who was in the same line of business as his father. This contradicts the studies made by Boyer and Hollingsworth (1997); Whitley (1999) and Wong (2000) where it is suggested that many of the East Asian businesses tend to stick to the same array of business and employ many of the same organizing principles which are characterized by the initial stages of East Asian industrialization. In our opinion, this could be because of the differences in the business environment and culture between the host country and the home country of the immigrants. But it cannot be denied that most of these entrepreneurs had the idea of opening up their own
businesses because of their family background as is suggested by Slavnic (2004). For example, entrepreneurs A, C, D and F all believed that their family business background helped shape their entrepreneurial attitude to start up their own businesses. The trend in family and ethnic traditions from their home country has indeed motivated them to take up the entrepreneurial path. It can also be asserted that the nature of a business an entrepreneur chooses to start maybe influenced by the historical, regional or family traditions (Basu & Altinay, 2002, p. 373) as in the case of entrepreneur D whom we can argue that he is involved in the inheritance of family business.

5.3. Cultural Background

From our interviews we can see that the countries from where our respondents come from, all have an entrepreneurial cultural background. Entrepreneur A from Philippines said that her society was open to entrepreneurial culture, and that, her generation of people have become more business minded than ever. She believes she was motivated to start up her own business because of the strong business culture rooted in her family tradition. She was really proud of being an Asian women entrepreneur in Sweden from Philippines because of her family business history which was transferred from generations to generations. This gave her a sense of identity that she was born into a line of business entrepreneurs. This powerful sense of identity could be because of the strong cultural tradition in business which enables these ethnic and regional groups of people to access ethnic resources more easily (Barrett et al., 1996; Jones et al., 1994 as cited in Basu and Altinay, 2002, p.374). Entrepreneur A can also be seen as a cultural entrepreneur as she recognized her cultural identity as a business opportunity as is discussed by Dimaggio (1982) where he has identified cultural entrepreneurs as those who first identifies an opportunity in the cultural domain, then assumes the risk of developing and disseminating the vision in order to produce something of cultural value (Dacin P.A., Dacin M.T. & Mataer M., 2010, p.47). This can also be seen in the case of Entrepreneurs C & E who recognized that providing exotic Indian meals in Umea was a business opportunity for them.

Three of our respondents, entrepreneurs C, E and F were all from Bangladesh. According to them, it was common for the people in Bangladesh to start up their own business or to be engaged in entrepreneurial activity. The society in Bangladesh and the people in general had a positive attitude towards entrepreneurship as the concept of business culture was embedded in the society according to entrepreneur C. Entrepreneur B from Pakistan also said that the business culture in his country was encouraging. People are encouraged to start their own business as the people there are appreciative towards business entrepreneurship. All of these entrepreneurs have a firm sense of cultural identity. Thus, the content of our self-perceptions reflect not only our personal traits and characteristics, but also meaningful social groups to which we belong (Sussman, 2000, p.358). These cultural identities are formed around the personal attributes of their self and the thoughts about their membership in the social groups formed around gender, ethnicity, social class, religion and culture (Sussman, 2000, p.358). Entrepreneurs C and E from Bangladesh were found to be operating Indian restaurants. This could be because of the similar culture between the two countries. It can also be explained by the ‘social identity concept’ which describes the relationship between the emotional significance of individuals attached to the group identity, self esteem and the out-group behavior of those individuals ( Brewer Miller, 1984;
Turner & Giles, 1981). By looking at the social identity concept, we can argue that the people from South and Southeast Asia identify themselves with that region rather than their particular country because of the similar cultures that exist between countries from that region. Moreover, the cultural similarities between Bangladesh and India are very much similar to each other. This is made evident by the fact that the two Bangladeshi entrepreneurs operating Indian restaurants here in Umea.

Entrepreneur C was exposed to the business of his father in a very early age thus, being exposed to the business field in a very early stage. This supports the arguments made by Yinger (1986) that a person’s basic identity is usually formed during the early periods of socialization and that strengthens the individual’s self esteem. Those who are engaged in business are seen to be independent and self supportive. Entrepreneur E added that this might be because of the high unemployment rate in Bangladesh that people choose to start their own business. Therefore in order to support themselves and their family members, they need to engage themselves in some kind of entrepreneurial activities. In this way, they are open to entrepreneurship and that this concept is rooted in their culture which the immigrants take with them to their host countries. Thus there is a cultural push to people in becoming entrepreneurial from this region. According to Entrepreneur F, most people in Bangladesh are engaged in business because of the family business background of the business owners. It is also a common thing for the later generations to give continuity to the family business in order to become self-employed and financially sound particularly for the entrepreneurs from South East Asian regions. This may suggest that these entrepreneurs have a strong cultural identity which they want to preserve or perhaps continue with future generations (Basu and Altinay, 2002, p.374). Entrepreneur D from India also had similar views. In India, people have a positive attitude towards business and many generations have been surviving by giving continuity to their family businesses.

### 5.4. Motivational Factors

Besides being influenced by the family and cultural business traditions in their country, our respondents were also found to be motivated by other factors as suggested by various other researchers like Rissman (2006), Williams (2008), Clark & Drinkwater (2000) etc. who all suggest that the reasons for immigrants to go for self-employment is because of either ‘push’ or ‘pull’ factors. As Rissman suggests that people choose to become entrepreneurs because they value being their own bosses and they want to be independent (Rissman, 2006, p.18), all of the six respondents interviewed were motivated to start their own business because of this reason. Entrepreneur A was driven by her passion to do business while Entrepreneur B was more driven by his ambition to become a successful businessman. Thus, the main reason for them choosing to start up their own business was independency and the fulfillment of one’s ambition (Dalhammar, 2004, p.8). These characteristics of entrepreneurs from this region can be argued to have been formed by the cultural and family business backgrounds in this region. For example, the passion for business and the ambition to become a successful businessperson can be because of the strong business culture present in that society where members of family see them to be much better alternative. Entrepreneur A also mentioned that in her country most entrepreneurs are illiterate and have no formal education. Thus in her country and society, entrepreneurship can be seen as an option to escape unemployment and a means to make a sound living. They also tend to become entrepreneurs from the experience they get from family business and that they have
no other choice because they cannot get good jobs. Therefore, these entrepreneurs engage in entrepreneurship in order to avoid and escape unemployment (Dalhammar, 2004, p.8). When these entrepreneurs move to other countries, they carry with them this culture of entrepreneurship with them. This is in line with the findings from the studies from Williams (2008) which suggests that entrepreneurs are pushed into entrepreneurship because of their inability to find employment in the formal economy and do such work only as a survival strategy (William, 2008, p.206). However, among our respondents, it was found that they were motivated more by ‘pull’ factors than by ‘push’ factors except entrepreneurs C and E who mentioned that because they lacked enough education they couldn’t find other jobs. This contradicts the findings of Kirkwood (2009) where he suggests that push factors were more common than pull factors for men and women that motivate immigrant entrepreneurs to start their own business. Also, the arguments made by Jones et al. (1992) were found to be not significant in our study as none of the respondents mentioned discrimination as a factor to choose self-employment.

According to Rissman (2006, p. 17), opportunities provided by self-employment were far better than being in the waged market. Although, the study conducted by Rissman was in the context of US labor market, this study was also applicable to some of our respondents here in Umea. We believe that due to the similar wage market between the two countries this can also be applicable here in Umea. This was also the reason why entrepreneurs D and F choose to be self-employed. When entrepreneur D first opened his garment shop in Umea there were very few such shops, thus, he recognized the opportunity for his business to grow and decided it would be better than working at a regular job. Similarly, entrepreneur F opened the first Sushi Bar in Umea following its huge success in Sundsvall after recognizing that the dish was popular with the Swedish tastes. Thus, as stated by Timmons (1996), entrepreneurs need to be able to identify the opportunities that exist in the market and be willing to capitalize in that opportunity by providing the goods and services required for that market.
6. Conclusions

In this chapter, we conclude our thesis by providing the major findings from our research to the readers by answering our research question before finally suggesting recommendations for further research. The purpose of our study was to increase the understanding of whether and how cultural and family business traditions of South and Southeast Asian immigrants influence their decision to become self-employed.

6.1 Concluding Remarks

Our respondents were more driven by the ‘pull’ factors rather than the ‘push’ factors i.e. their decisions were generated out of choice rather than necessity as opposed to the idea suggested by Kirkwood (2009). The discrimination factor pushing immigrant entrepreneurs to self-employment as suggested by previous researchers (Jones et al., 1992) were found to be insignificant in our study of immigrants in the northern part of Sweden in Umea city. Among the different ‘pull’ factors, independency, fulfillment of one’s ambition, passion and being their own bosses were valued the most from our findings. But, the main findings from our study suggest that besides these factors, immigrants from South and Southeast Asian regions were highly influenced by the cultural and family business traditions when taking the entrepreneurial path. The decision of an individual is influenced by the culture and background from where that individual comes from. Moreover, the family history of business entrepreneurs provides a powerful sense of identity to the individual providing him or her with the moral and financial support if necessary boosting up the immigrant entrepreneurs confidence to start up a business. The experiences these individuals gain from their family business have helped them to start up their business in Sweden although the business culture and environment in Sweden is very much different from their respective home countries. Some of the respondents were also inspired to start up their own business because they had been exposed to the family business world at a very early age in their life.

Summing up the findings from our research, we can say that although entrepreneurs particularly immigrant entrepreneurs are driven into self-employment by either ‘push’ or ‘pull’ factors as suggested by previous researches (Rissman, 2006; Williams, 2008; Clark & Drinkwater, 2000; Jones et al., 1992), we also found that these entrepreneurs from South and Southeast Asia are highly motivated by the cultural and family business traditions. Based on our findings, we found that majority of the entrepreneurs were motivated from their family business history and believed that their self-employment abilities were inherited from their parents. These entrepreneurs were found to be actively engaged in the labor market to acquire the necessary skills before starting their own businesses here in Umea. The South and Southeast Asian region has a very strong family business culture which provides the entrepreneurs from this region with a strong and powerful sense of identity. The strong sense of cultural identity also acts as an opportunity for starting up new businesses. For example, in the case of entrepreneur A, she had pride in herself to be an Asian and that she saw her cultural identity to be an opportunity for business here in Umea. She wanted to start up her Asian Food spices shop because she realized it was a good business opportunity that represented herself and Asia as a whole. From a social identity perspective, the immigrant entrepreneurs are strongly bound by entrepreneurial identity within their culture which is formed in the early stages of their socialization in their community which
also strengthens the individual’s self esteem. For example, it was seen that entrepreneurs from Bangladesh were opening up Indian restaurants which suggested that they were more inclined towards a regional identity rather than focusing on their own individual country. Some entrepreneurs were also found to be highly motivated by the drive for their ambition and passion for business which can also be seen as being motivated by their cultural and family business backgrounds. This makes us believe that entrepreneurs from South and Southeast Asian regions are also culturally pushed towards entrepreneurship. Another way that cultural background and family business history influences the immigrant entrepreneurs from South and Southeast Asia is the fact that most of our respondents would like to see their business being given continuity by their children as long as their children wants to do business. Therefore, it seems fair to say that a culture and family background in business offers aspiring entrepreneurs an initial advantage in the form of exposure to business practices and a tacit knowledge of business, by inculcating a business culture prior to the business entry (Basu and Altinay, 2002, p.379).

6.2 Theoretical Contributions

While doing this research, we have gone through various literatures on entrepreneurship particularly focusing on the factors influencing the immigrant entrepreneurs to becoming self-employed. We found that most of the literatures were focused on the ‘push’ and ‘pull’ factors as the main reasons for immigrant entrepreneurs to become self-employed. Few studies were carried out focusing on the influences of cultural and family business tradition for immigrants to become selfemployed. With this study, we have tried to focus on the family and cultural aspects of immigrant entrepreneurship within the South and Southeast Asian community. The results of this study provide additional contribution in the entrepreneurial literature focusing on how cultural and family business traditions affect the entrepreneur’s decision. Also it sheds light upon the cultural and family understanding of immigrants from the South and Southeast Asian region.

6.3 Practical Implications

Findings of this research would provide a firm base for other interested scholars who wish to further continue this research on this particular topic. This study could also be beneficial to the Swedish government in general to understand the immigrants from South and Southeast Asian region and work for the betterment of these immigrants. The results and findings of this study could also provide vital information to the Swedish regional development authorities in allocating proper resources and support to encourage South and Southeast Asian immigrants in starting up their own businesses. Furthermore, this result could improve the understanding of the immigrants themselves thus, helping them to build even more strong sense of their cultural identity.

6.4 Further Research

When selecting our respondents, we have used snowball sampling. Because of this, most of our respondents have been from the same country. Therefore, areas for further research in this field could include using other kind of sampling methods and including participants from diverse countries and communities. Another area of future research could be that we have only interviewed six respondents. Thus it is a small sample size and the results cannot be generalized
to all immigrants from this region. Therefore, further research could be done by taking a larger sample which could produce more relevant results that can be more generalizable. Also, due to the busy schedule of the owners and the limited time for our thesis, we had to conduct short interviews. In the future, research could be done by taking more time and detailed longer interviews which may increase the quality of the study. Despite these limitations of our study, our findings have been strong. We have found that the identity created by culture and family business backgrounds act as an opportunity for business ventures among the immigrants from South and Southeast Asian regions. This finding could be examined more closely in the future researches so that even more detailed understanding can be found.
7. Quality Criteria

According to Guba and Lincoln (1985), the way of evaluating for qualitative research is different than that of quantitative research. The two primary way of evaluating qualitative research is mainly based on: trustworthiness and authenticity (Cited in Bryman & Bell, 2007, p. 411). Based on it we have tried to evaluate our study.

7.1 Trustworthiness

Under trustworthiness we have four major criteria for evaluating the qualitative study and are: credibility, transferability, dependability, confirmability (Bryman & Bell, 2007, p. 411). Considering as one of the best way of evaluating the qualitative research based on it we have evaluated the quality of our study.

7.1.1. Credibility

When it comes to an account of an aspect of social reality, it is credibility which is counted more than anything else. So, credibility must be maintained by the researcher in order to make it acceptable to others. For establishing credibility, the researcher must use proper scientific methods of good practice and present the information that is obtained as findings in order to confirm that the researcher have studied and understood the social world correctly. Although, we have short interviews and a small sample size, we have come up with important findings which describe how cultural and family business traditions influence the entrepreneurs' decisions.

In our study we have selected the respondents as based on our general requirements and conducted the interview to those who had fulfilled our criteria. By conducting semi structured interviews, we have had better and detailed understanding of the respondents views. We have also cited the phrases used by the different respondents and interpreted them and tried to understand their opinions. Therefore, although we have a limited number of respondents and short interviews, our study is done in a scientific manner and makes a contribution in understanding the existing literatures about entrepreneurship.

7.1.2. Transferability

The second criteria of trustworthiness are transferability and it is parallel to the external validity. Guba and Lincoln (1985) explain ‘transferability’ means whether or not findings of the study ‘hold in some other context, or even in the same context at some other time, is an empirical issue’ (cited in Bryman &Bell, 2007, p. 413). Generally in qualitative, depth study is carried rather than the breadth as in quantitative. Since our study only comprises of a small number of sample sizes and is done in Umea city only, it is difficult to say that the results of this study are applicable to other cities of Sweden or other countries. Therefore, our research findings do not have a high degree of transferability in another context but our findings does lead us to a new understanding of immigrant’s entrepreneurs from cultural and family background perspectives.

7.1.3. Dependability

The third criterion for ensuring the trustworthiness is dependability and is parallel to reliability in quantitative study. Dependability means ensuring that entire records of all chapters are kept safe and confidential and are easily accessible when needed (Bryman & Bell, 2007, p. 414). Dependability is a way to find whether researcher have followed the appropriate method and techniques in a reliable way and how much they have cared for the information and other related
documents that is needed in the whole process of research (Riege, 2003, p. 81). For instance, we have semi structured interviews for our data collection process and used exploratory study to interpret them. We have explained much deeper in the earlier part of this thesis about how we have taken care of our data in order to maintain confidentiality of the respondents’ information and have followed relevant procedures and techniques for data collection for confirming the trustworthiness of our study.

7.1.4. Confirmability
Confirmability is the last criteria for ensuring trustworthiness of qualitative study. It is parallel to objectivity. Confirmability refers that researchers should be open and interpretive and the findings should be based on the data which is obtained from the respondents rather than applying researcher’s personal views (Bryman & Bell, 2007, p.414). To increase confirmability is to avoid the personal values in the research and bring out the accurate results from the empirical findings. In our study while analyzing the primary data our major task was to avoid the personal view knowing as it affects the results and analyze the data based on the empirical findings. At the same time we have also equally focused on keeping the material of study in safe such as recorded interview, interview notes and other relevant documents. This is maintained as it may need in the future for monitoring and analyzing the findings of the study. In some cases we have send the interview guide to some of the respondents in order to make them prepare for interview which helps us to acquire the accurate information and avoid biases. We have tried to select the respondents from different countries which help us to enhance the knowledge of understanding of the immigrant entrepreneurs to become self-employed. This shows that we have maintained high level of confirmability for ensuring the trustworthiness of our study.

7.2. Authenticity

Authenticity is the second criterion for evaluating the quality of the qualitative research. Authenticity refers to the context of how fairly the research has represented the different viewpoints of different members of the social settings (Bryman & Bell, 2007, p. 414). Based on the purpose of study we have selected to interview the owner of the business as he/she becoming the entrepreneurs and why and how he/she chooses to become self-employ. Because the view and opinion presented by the owners are more realistic than to interview other’s in our case. So, for immigrant entrepreneur’s of Umea city to become self-employed is presented with a better understanding whether culture or family business tradition have influenced this region people to become entrepreneurs. Thus, we rely on the respondent’s views and opinions to make our findings more authentic and more acceptable.
References


<http://www.aseansec.org/18619.htm> [Retreived: 15/04/2012]

<http://www.saarctourism.org/> [Retrieved: 15/04/2012]
Appendix 1: Interview Guide

Personal Background

1. Where are you originally from?
2. When did you move to Sweden and why?
3. What is your educational background?
4. Why have you chosen to start your own business instead of looking for some other jobs?

Company Background

5. Why did you choose Umea for your business?
6. How did you come up with this business idea?
7. How long have you been doing this business?
8. Did you get help from your family and friends to run your business? If yes then what kind of help?

Family Background

9. Does your family history have any entrepreneurial background?
10. What do your family members do?
11. Are any of your family members involved in any other entrepreneurial activities?
12. What kind of business were they involved in?

Cultural Background

13. How common is entrepreneurship in your culture?
14. How is entrepreneurship viewed in your culture?

Motivational Factors

15. What factors motivated you to start this business? What difficulties did you face when starting up your business?
16. In what ways and how do you think your culture or family background influenced you to become an entrepreneur?
17. Do you feel that you are a part of a family entrepreneurial background? Why?
18. Would you like to see your children takeover your business after you retire?