

“Exploring Entrepreneurship Opportunities among Immigrant Women in Brandon, Manitoba”

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About the study

The study “Exploring Entrepreneurship Opportunities among Immigrant Women in Brandon, Manitoba” examines the challenges immigrant women face, their interest in entrepreneurship, their needs, and the opportunities for entrepreneurship.

Background to study

- Immigrant challenges – underemployment, unemployment, access to resources, accrediting foreign qualifications, language and cultural differences.
- Brandon has an 18% immigrant population, with 68% of immigrants under the economic category (Statistics Canada, 2021)
- There are specific challenges immigrant women face in Brandon that often encourage them towards entrepreneurship
- Immigrant women come with entrepreneurial skills from their home country

Research questions

- a. What are the key challenges immigrant women face in Brandon that encourage entrepreneurship?
- b. What are the specific needs of immigrant women entrepreneurs in Brandon?
- c. What collective entrepreneurship opportunities are available in Brandon for immigrant women who are interested in collaborating with others?
- d. What sustainable economic models could best meet the needs of the immigrant women entrepreneurs in Brandon?

Research method and participants

- The study involved Focus Group Discussions and interviews
- 5 Focus Group Discussions with 6 immigrant communities
- 5 interviews with other immigrant community women others than those who participated in FGD
- 5 interviews with service organizations that support immigrant women in Brandon

1. Immigrant women turn to entrepreneurship out of necessity driven by their capacity

Necessity

- Unable to find suitable jobs
- Language barrier
- Childcare
- Lack of work-life balance
- Accreditation difficulty
- Getting Canadian work experience
- The low-paid jobs
- Un/Underutilization of women's skills
- Discrimination at work due to gender
- Multiple jobs or long hours and earning less

Immigrant entrepreneurship

- Skills and Talents
- Determined and Ambition
- Resourceful and innovative
- Independence and flexibility
- Earn more in short time
- Resilience and adaptability to new environment

Capacity

2. There is a disconnection between the needs of immigrant women entrepreneurs and the services available in Brandon

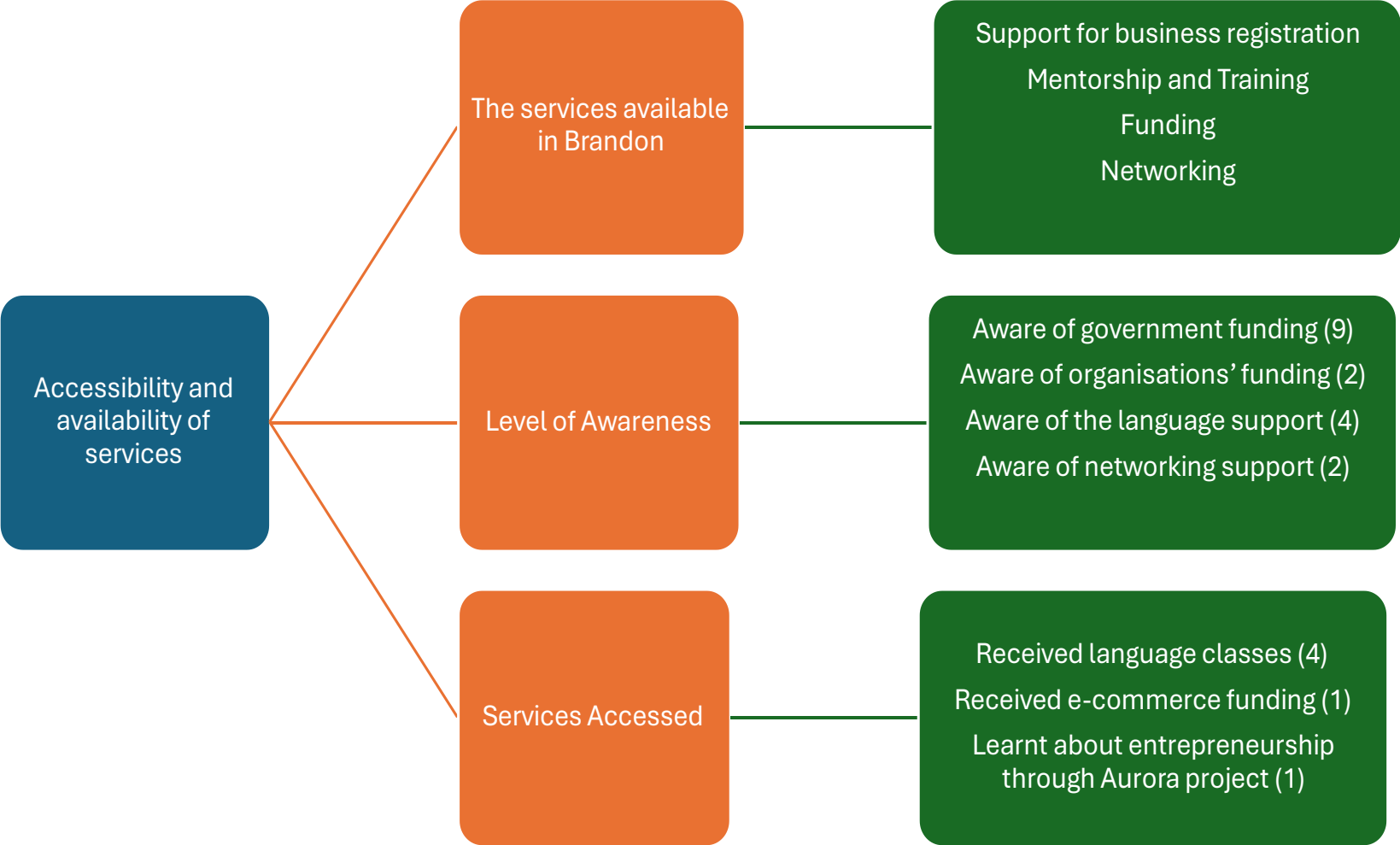


The needs of immigrant women entrepreneurs in Brandon

	Total answers	Immigrant women	Organizations
Lack of funding support	27	23	4
Lack of information related to business start ups	25	21	4
Difficulty in drafting business plan	22	21	1
Navigating registration process	17	13	4
Lack of resources -equipment, raw materials, machines, skills development, short courses or stand-alone courses	17	15	2
No mentorship or trainings	14	13	1
Space to start business for small business	12	11	1
Business networking	11	9	2
No start-up incubator	2	2	
Need for good credit score	2	1	1



The support services available in Brandon



Note: The number denotes the number of participants who answered

3. There is a lack of knowledge on the benefits and importance of collective entrepreneurship

Immigrant expectations on collective action

- Own fundings
- Support new businesses
- Own resources
- Training and mentorship
- Like minded entrepreneurs
- Auditing and tax support
- Sense of belonging



The fear factor of collective action

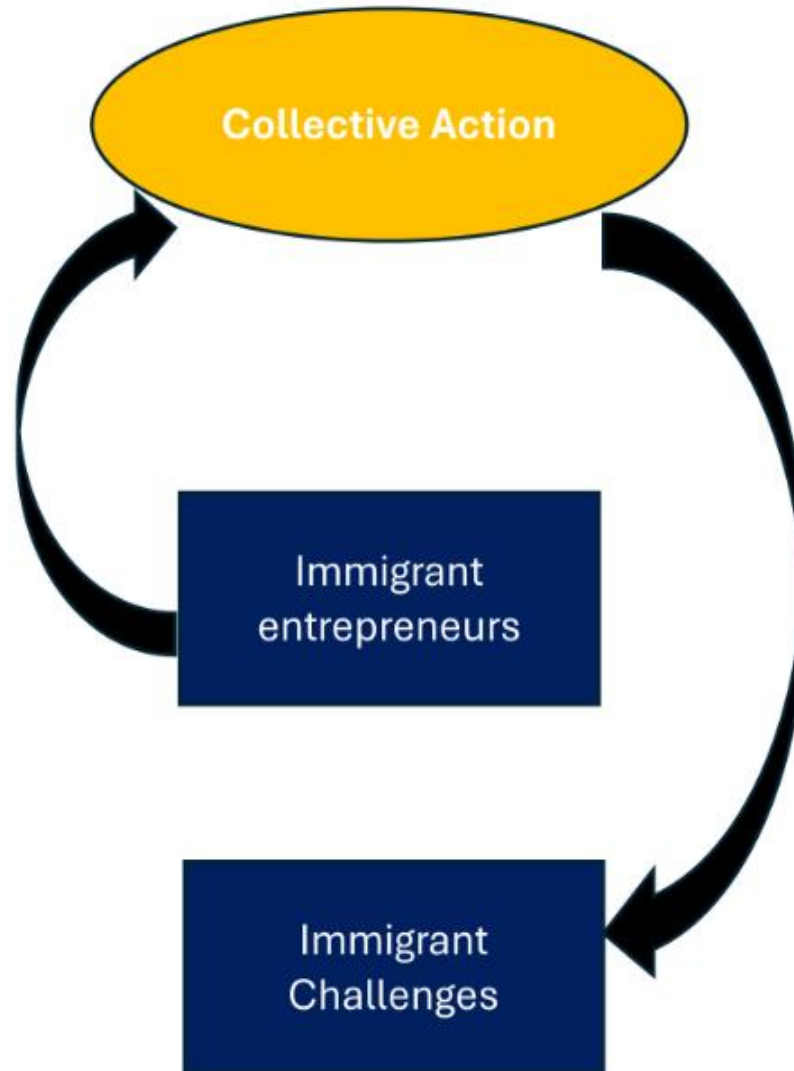
- No models available in Brandon to learn from
- Lack of trust when money is involved
- Need for clear rules and regulations



The benefit of the Economic Model

- Registered entity
- Clear rules and regulations
- Secured fundings
- Share decision making
- Can access external funding
- Shared ownership

4. How an economic model supports immigrants to overcome some of the challenges



- Lack of funding
- Space to start up business
- Access to information
- Resources
- Mentorship
- Business Networking
- Business Development plan

- Self-employment
- Work –Life balance
- More time with children
- Earn more
- Overcome the language barrier
- Skills utilization
- Reduction of doing multiple jobs

Tentative conclusion

1. Importance of secondary data to strategize the projects to support the entrepreneurs
2. Immigrant women are good at identifying the need gaps and turning them into businesses. But they mainly cater to their cultural communities
3. The immigrant service organizations work in silos.
4. Promote collective action as a strategy to overcome immigrant challenges



Thank you