COMMUNICATION MEDIA USE, SOCIAL NETWORKS, AND IDENTITY
MANAGEMENT BY IMMIGRANT WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS
IN AN URBAN ECONOMY

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

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Immigrant women entrepreneurs are one of the disadvantaged communities in developed nations. Social change can be promoted in marginalized communities by analyzing how communication can transform the lives of people who are socially, politically and economically disadvantaged. In an attempt to promote social change, this study explored the communication strategies adopted in the situated experiences of immigrant women entrepreneurs as influenced by their gender, ethnic, religious and immigrant identities. Utilizing a mixed-method, 60 in-depth interviews and 100 survey questionnaires were conducted with immigrant women entrepreneurs from various ethnic and cultural backgrounds in an urban environment of New York City. This study revealed how various organizing practices including identity negotiation, place making, communication media use, (in)visibility and social networking help immigrant women entrepreneurs construct a desired entrepreneurial identity and thereby contribute to their empowerment and business sustainability and growth.
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DEDICATION

To my parents

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For getting me out of this mess

with their continuous and unconditional support

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To my two adorable nieces Defne and Duru

For bringing me so much joy during this process
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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This project focuses on the communicative practices of immigrant women entrepreneurs as they negotiate their multiple identities (gender, ethnic, religious, immigrant) through place, information and communication media use, and networking as well as the impact of these practices on their social and economic development. In this chapter, I outline the core inquiries of my investigation. First, I set out my objectives in studying immigrant women entrepreneurs and adopting a communicative perspective in exploring the experiences of this community. I then provide context for this project, situating my analysis largely within scholarships on organizational communication, media use, sociology, entrepreneurship, and gender studies. By drawing together these areas of inquiry, I set out the interdisciplinary boundaries of my project and identify key research goals.

Why Study Immigrant Women Entrepreneurs?

Early 21st century has been witnessing some major international migration either due to economic crisis (e.g., Greece), political turbulence (e.g., Arab Spring), or national insecurity (e.g., Syria). Castles (2014) states that “the forces generating international migration are more powerful than ever, and human mobility has become a key facet of global integration” (p. 190). Within this global context, immigrant women entrepreneurs were chosen as subjects of this research for several reasons. First, despite the ongoing debates over whether immigrants are contributors or burden for the welfare state, there is evidence driven from all OECD countries that on average the fiscal impact of immigration is neutral with respect to certain assumptions and that employment, particularly that of immigrant women, seems to increase migrants’ net fiscal impact.
In addition, there are intangible benefits of immigrant women entrepreneurship as they contribute to local economies, create new jobs and mobilize or revitalize communities and neighborhoods (Hisrich & Lerner, 1997; Pearce, 2005). The OECD report suggests that with better integration policies, the fiscal contributions of immigrants are likely to increase. Therefore, we need to understand the employment conditions of immigrant women entrepreneurs to develop policies that would facilitate their contribution to the economy.

Second, related to that, immigrant entrepreneurs are considered to be one of the disadvantaged groups with poor employment conditions. Along the lines of Scase and Goffee (1980) entrepreneurs are likely to emerge from marginal groups such as “groups which are discriminated against, persecuted, ‘looked down upon’ or exceptionally exploited” (p.29). For instance, the Center for Women’s Business research (2001) stated that employed foreign-born make less money than native-born women or immigrant men, and therefore they are more likely to be poor than other groups. For immigrants and minority groups who are “displaced” (Sapero, 1975) and face various challenges in a new social, cultural and business environment, entrepreneurship can be an attempt to avoid some of these challenges. Given these challenges, it is not surprising that immigrant women comprise one of the fastest growing groups of business owners in the U.S. and in other urban economies (Pearce, 2005). In the U.S., Canada and the United Kingdom, nearly half percent of immigrant women are business owners (Parsons et al., 2005). In the U.S. in particular, there are an estimated 1.4 million private businesses most of which are owned by women of color (including African Americans, Asian American/Pacific Islanders, Hispanics, and Native American/Alaska Natives) based on a 2001 report by the
Center for Women’s Business Research. And they grew 156%, from 1997 to 2013 according to a 2013 report by American Express on the State of Women-Owned Businesses Minority. This disadvantaged group needs a further examination while it is growing across the globe.

Third, entrepreneurship comes with its own challenges though, in particular for immigrant women. Existing research and reports have showed over and over again that starting and sustaining a business have been more challenging for immigrant women business owners than it has been for other groups. In fact, a greater proportion of immigrant women business owners shut down their business within a year compared to their non-immigrant peers (Brush, Bruin, Gatewood, & Henry, 2010). The existing literature points out various reasons that play a role in shaping these entrepreneurial outcomes (see Carter, Anderson & Shaw, 2000; Kupferberg, 2003). First, it takes time and effort for immigrant women to adjust the new social and cultural norms as well as to build business relationships in this new environment. Second, they are also exposed to gender stereotyping and discrimination, resulting in limited capital to start or grow their business. Finally, they are also disadvantaged compared to men due to multiple roles they have at home and at work, which may create tensions to maintain work and family responsibilities. According to the 2015 Millenium Development Goals Report by the United Nations, one of the millennial goals is to “to promote gender equality and empower women.” In order to achieve this goal and to promote social change in society, we need to identify and better understand the structures that create those inequalities by listening to the voices and experiences of immigrant women entrepreneurs. A communication perspective would be a useful tool for such in-depth understanding.
Why Adopt a Communication View?

With exceptions in feminist and sociology studies, research on immigrant women entrepreneurs in organizational communication scholarship has not kept up pace with the increasing number of immigrant women entrepreneurs. Only recently, there is a growing attention to this community in organization studies (e.g., Gill & Ganesh, 2007; Gill & Larson, 2014). In response to the call to “extend women’s entrepreneurship research in new directions” (Hughes et al., 2012), this study adopts a communication perspective for the examination of this phenomenon. Organizational communication perspective, in particular, can help us identify the structures that create barriers for immigrant women entrepreneurs and change these organizational discourses. Revealing the communication dynamics and their underlying structures may help us transform the lives of communities who are socially, politically and economically disadvantaged (Agunga, 2012; Dutta, 2015). In an attempt to promote social change, one of the goals of this study is to explore the communication strategies adopted in situated experiences of immigrant women entrepreneurs to deal with social inequalities created by identity structures, namely gender, ethnic, religious and immigrant identities.

In addition to these identities, place has been shown to be an important factor in the identity construction of organizational members (Rooney et al., 2010). Research has showed how physical and symbolic aspects of place are constructed communicatively to make sense of a particular location. In an attempt to explore how immigrant women entrepreneurs make sense of their place in an urban environment, the second goal of this study is to analyze physical and symbolic aspects of place that shape and are shaped by entrepreneurial identity.
In addition to place, social networks of immigrant women entrepreneurs are constructed in communicative practices influenced by their gender, ethnic, immigrant and religious identities, and provide a framework for processes aimed at organizing resources according to opportunities (Johanisson & Mønsted, 1997). Analyzing the networking practices of immigrant women entrepreneurs in their social and professional relationships can shed light into how opportunities are perceived and organized in this community. Therefore, the third goal of this study aims to explore networking practices of immigrant women entrepreneurs with respect to the opportunities and barriers embedded in their social, cultural and political contexts.

As much as interactions, research in organizational communication shows how the channels of communication inform us about the construction of professional identity (Cheney & Ashcraft, 2007). To contribute to the growing body of research in the intersection of technology use and identity construction in organizational contexts, the fourth goal of the study is to map out the strategic use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) of immigrant women entrepreneurs as they negotiate their gender, ethnic, immigrant and religious identities in the workplace. Doing that would inform us on how social identities impact ICT adoption and use and provides additional insight into the interplay of identity and information and communication technologies.

Finally, this study goes beyond the physical or material access to ICTs and also aims to unpack the impact of ICT use of immigrant women entrepreneurs on their social and economic development. Consistent with Mehra and Merkel (2004), in order to utilize ICTs for the empowerment of disadvantaged communities; we need to understand their larger context, needs and goals. This study aims to examine the extent to which ICT use
affects the social and economic development. Mehra and Merkel report that ICTs might also reinforce or exacerbate the existing disadvantaged position of immigrant women entrepreneurs. In this regard, this research also provides some insights in terms of the extent to which ICTs help to create structural (in)equality and/or bridge digital divides.

**Research Questions**

This study will help to develop an understanding of the following aspects in the field of communication: (1) the material and discursive construction of entrepreneurial identity of immigrant women entrepreneurs; and (2) how to apply communication theory and methodology to promote social change. The following research questions guide this project and shape the methodology.

**RQ 1a**: What communication strategies do immigrant women entrepreneurs use to negotiate the opportunities and challenges of their multiple identities?

**RQ 1b**: What communication strategies do immigrant women entrepreneurs use to negotiate the intersectionality of their multiple identities?

**RQ 2**: What is the role of place in identity construction of immigrant women entrepreneurs?

**RQ 3**: How do immigrant women entrepreneurs organize their information networks with respect to the opportunities and challenges of their multiple identities?

**RQ 4a**: How do immigrant women entrepreneurs use ICTs to seek information for the entrepreneurial process?

**RQ 4b**: How do immigrant women entrepreneurs use communication media to communicate with their stakeholders?
RQ 5a: What is the role of information and communication technologies on the economic development of immigrant women entrepreneurs?

RQ 5b: What is the role of information and communication technologies in the empowerment of immigrant women entrepreneurs?

RQ 6a: What factors affect the business sustainability and growth of immigrant women entrepreneurs?

RQ 6b: What factors affect the empowerment of immigrant women entrepreneurs?

The following chapters develop this project in detail. Chapter 2 will review the literature on identity, place, social networks, communication media use and social and economic development of immigrant women entrepreneurs. In Chapter 3, the methodology for this mixed-methods study is presented. Chapter 4 provides detailed results addressing the various research questions in detail. Finally, the closing chapter offers a discussion of the conclusions, implications, and directions for further research.
CHAPTER 2: A REVIEW OF EXISTING LITERATURE

This chapter reviews a few separate literatures on identity, place, social networks and communication media use of immigrant women entrepreneurs by utilizing an interdisciplinary research framework that includes organizational communication, mediated communication, entrepreneurship, sociology, feminist studies, library and information science, and information and communication technology for development (ICTD). Based on that, several hypotheses and research questions will be presented.

Identity Construction of Immigrant Women Entrepreneurs

Organizational communication scholars have acknowledged multiple targets of identification for the organization including social identities, occupation, or place (Kuhn & Nelson, 2000; Pratt, 2000; Pratt & Foreman, 2000; Scott, Corman, & Cheney, 1998). Organizational members draw on various discourses to construct their identities (Kuhn & Nelson, 2006) and may shift from one identity to another across contexts and time (Alvesson, Ashcraft, & Thomas, 2008; Tracy, Myers, & Scott, 2006; Tracy & Trethewey, 2005). A dialectical approach has often been adopted to unpack how discourses are utilized to manage this process (e.g., Mumby, 2004; Papa et al., 2000). As this process often involves tensions, organizational communication research approaches those tensions “as normal, routine features of organizational life and looks for ways in which they can be productive for organizations” (Trethewey & Ashcraft, 2004, p.84). Within this framework, dialectical tension approach can be a useful tool to understand the tensions of immigrant women entrepreneurs as they shift around various identities. In order to understand the sources for tension and how they are managed, the following section would summarize the various discourses of difference of immigrant women
entrepreneurs. Key concepts and theories are introduced from the literature on organizational identity and organizational identification.

**Gender Identity.** Various scholarships have acknowledged gender as an important social identity category for understanding challenges of women (e.g., Friday, Friday, & Moss, 2004). The challenges of women in business are global and change at varying levels across contexts (Heilbrunn, 2004). One of the reasons is that the discourse of professionalism tends to be associated with masculinity and so are its characteristics such as self-control, autonomy and expertise (Clarke, Brown, & Hailey, 2009). In the discourse of entrepreneurship in particular, entrepreneur and male were used to refer one another (Ahl, 2006; Bruni, Gherardi, & Poggio, 2004; Lewis, 2006). That necessitates women to prove themselves as entrepreneurs to other professionals.

Another challenge of women in business sources from the social and cultural expectations in society. Bruni, Gherardi and Poggio (2006) posit that women have multiple roles as mother, caretaker, and wife, which are not easy to change in society. Those multiple responsibilities may restrict them from maintaining and building professional networks (Shelton, 2006), or limit their abilities and skills for business maintenance and development (Fielden & Davidson, 2010).

There is also evidence that gender roles may facilitate certain business processes. For instance, a study of South Asian women entrepreneurs in the United Kingdom (U.K.) showed how family identity helped women get financial support and facilitated the maintenance and growth of their businesses (Dhaliwal, 2010). Based on two cases of working mothers in Japan, Leung (2011) showed that mother identity helped women
entrepreneurs gain recognition. In another study, family identity of women helped them gain high levels of trust (Warren, 2004).

Women’s way of doing business, which is often not as competitive and aggressive like men’s, may also facilitate some of the entrepreneurial practices (Metcalf & Linstead, 2003). For instance, women business owners tend to put their professional relationships ahead of money, competition and growth (Simpson, Ross-Smith, & Lewis, 2010). In one study based on interviews with women entrepreneurs in the U.K., women indicated that building rapport is more effective for their business success (Lewis, 2013). According to women business owners in this study, such female difference differentiates them from their male counterparts and provides them unique opportunities.

The needs of different contexts may require women entrepreneurs switch between feminine and masculine identities. Drawing from interviews with women entrepreneurs, Gill and Ganesh found that discrimination may sometimes empower women by allowing them to gain control of their situations and create opportunities for their business while putting them at disadvantage at other times. Two ethnographic cases on women entrepreneurs conducted by Bruni, Gherardi and Poggio (2004) showed that entrepreneurship is accomplished through constantly changing between feminine and masculine identities. As Lewis (2013) concluded, masculine entrepreneurial identity is not always the most desired identity in entrepreneurial process.

**Ethnic Identity.** In addition to their gender identity, immigrant women entrepreneurs are also defined by their ethnic identities. Ethnic groups enact their ethnic identity through engaging in relationships with their own ethnic communities (Buitelaar, 2002). Doing business with ethnic communities brings both opportunities and challenges
for immigrant entrepreneurs. Baycan-Levent, Masurel and Nijkamp (2003) listed ethnic opportunities as ethnic niche markets, solidarity and support, and access to financial support from ethnic community; and ethnic challenges as language and cultural barriers, limited social networks, and human capital.

Several studies have investigated the identity construction of ethnic minorities in business and organizational contexts (e.g., Friday, Friday, & Moss, 2004; Siebers, 2009). For instance, Friday and colleagues showed that when ethnic groups are discriminated in the workplace, they construct their identities by adopting ethnic actions. Based on field research among Turkish immigrants in Berlin, Pécoud (2004) suggested that the decisions about where to locate their business and who to target for their business speak to the identity construction of immigrant entrepreneurs. The author found that while the majority of the entrepreneurs preferred Turkish neighborhoods to run their business, others avoided those neighborhoods either due to lack of salience with Turkish identity or for competitive advantage outside of ethnic market. For instance, a young female cafeteria owner in this study avoided communicating with her elderly Turkish clients in order not to get exposed to stereotypes against single Turkish woman. When those business owners targeted non-Turkish customers, they also avoided creating a strong Turkish image in their business. Pécoud concluded that immigrant entrepreneurs construct their identities in line with their business strategy.

**Religious Identity.** In addition to gender and ethnic identities, religion is also regarded as another important identity category to understand identity construction of immigrant women entrepreneurs. Religious identity is related to one’s religious beliefs and practices. In religions that are male-dominated, women are expected to be
submissive. For instance, in both Muslim communities around the world and Hindu societies in South Asia, women are discouraged from working (Kantor, 2002; Rehman & Roomi, 2012). As a result, women have restricted mobility, limiting their business opportunities and success (Ahmad, 2011; Mahmud, 2011). In Pécoud’s (2004) study mentioned earlier, a Turkish bar owner in Berlin with mostly homosexual customers, disassociated herself from her Muslim identity by targeting and advertising her business in unconventional ways such as gay newspapers.

Religious identity may also create entrepreneurial opportunities for immigrant women (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000). For instance, based on 19 interviews with Saudi Arabian women, Ahmad (2011) stated that Muslim women receive less competition than men in certain business types, which allows them to create untapped business opportunities within their community. Related to that, based on four narratives with Moroccan and Turkish female entrepreneurs, Essers and Benschop (2009) found that a driving school owner identified with her Muslim identity to target Muslim women who would feel more comfortable with taking classes from another woman. Based on interviews with immigrant tax administrators, another study showed that immigrant workers draw on certain aspects of their religious identity in the construction of a professional identity (Siebers, 2009). For instance, a Moroccan tax administrator indicated that her faith encourages her to be honest and fair, which are necessary to build a good reputation as a tax administrator. Once again, these studies demonstrate the need to shift between religious identities with respect to the needs of the business.

**Entrepreneurial Identity.** Prior research on entrepreneurial identity has often focused on the psychological characteristics of entrepreneurs to understand
entrepreneurial tendencies, processes and outcomes (Clarke & Holt, 2010). Clark and Holt posit that in these studies, an entrepreneur was described as someone innovative, high tech and growth oriented. The authors also draw attention to the heavy reliance on economic outcomes while characterizing the qualities of entrepreneurs (Clarke & Holt, 2010). Within this entrepreneurial discourse, it is not surprising that businesses owned by women, which are small, non high-tech, and locally oriented have not received enough attention in the entrepreneurship literature (Blake & Hanson, 2005; Wang 2012).

More recently, however, the focus of entrepreneurship research has shifted towards the situated experiences and the meaning-making processes of entrepreneurs (Hjorth, Jones, & Gartner, 2008). From this perspective, entrepreneurial identity is “not an individualized psychological trait, but is developed in conjunction with external, societal influences, continually constructed from within already existing environmental conditions” (Clarke & Holt, 2010, p.81). Related research demonstrated the agency of women entrepreneurs, as they resist and change existing discourses of various identities (e.g. Anderson & Warren, 2011; Bruni, Gherardi, & Poggio, 2004; Essers & Benschop, 2007; Gill & Ganesh, 2007). For instance, Anderson and Warren (2011) demonstrated how one entrepreneur plays around existing entrepreneurial discourse and shapes it by utilizing emotional strategies to build his entrepreneurial identity. That examination allows us to capture the variation across women entrepreneurs as they resist and change these discourses in unique ways. Gill and Larson built up on the existing work by exploring entrepreneurship as an identity affected by place-based discourse.

However, relatively little research has addressed how multiple identities intersect with the entrepreneurial identities of immigrant women entrepreneurs and how these
structures influence the construction of their entrepreneurial identities. Along these lines, this study seeks to explore the communicative practices of immigrant women entrepreneurs as they negotiate their gender, ethnic, religious and immigrant identities to construct an entrepreneurial identity in consideration of place in an urban context.

**Theoretical Framework.** The literature above illustrates both the conflicting and compatible aspects of different identities of immigrant women entrepreneurs, which can be examined within the framework of a structurational model of identification (see Scott, Corman & Cheney, 1998). This structurational model (Giddens, 1984) of identification allows us to better understand how social identities serve to structure one’s professional experience (Scott, Corman & Cheney, 1998). Those authors address three aspects of the structurational model: duality of structure, regionalization of multiple identities, and situated activity. First, the duality of structure involves the process in which an action affects and is affected by structure. It recognizes the bidirectional influences between agency and external structures. The authors propose a both constraining and enabling identifying process of human agents. Second, Giddens’s (1984) notion of regionalization refers to the temporal changes from structure to structure to manage the compatible and conflicting aspects of identities. Third, situated activities explain when certain identities may become more or less salient for an organizational member, revealing the changing level of identification with different targets across situations. Within this framework, the current study would address both the constraining and the enabling aspects of multiple identities of immigrant women entrepreneurs, and how they regionalize and enact multiple identities through communicative practices. Therefore, the following question is developed:
RQ 1a: What communication strategies do immigrant women entrepreneurs use to negotiate the opportunities and challenges of their multiple identities?

Intersectionality. Intersectionality is a theoretical and methodological perspective in larger feminist scholarship (Crenshaw, 1991). Within feminist scholarship, it refers to the simultaneous effects of multiple social identities such as gender, ethnicity, and religion. According to this perspective, identifying categories are not separate from one another but individuals go through unique experiences as they are exposed to multiple effects of their multiple identities (Collinson, 1992; Gherardi, 1995). Feminist scholars posited that this perspective allows for a more complete understanding of identity in organizational contexts, which would not be possible to capture merely through examination of a single identity category, given that identity is performed in connection with other social categories, not separately (Adib & Guerrier, 2003).

There is a growing body of research that focuses on the intersectionality of gendered identities in organizations. For example, based on a comparison of the upper middle-class and working-class Chinese immigrant women in New York, Zhou (2000) found that gender identity combined with social class created different identity dynamics. More specifically, while working-class Chinese immigrant women gained some autonomous in decision-making, middle-class Chinese immigrant women lost some. On another account, based on the narratives of four women working in a hotel in the U.K., Adib and Guerrier demonstrated that ethnic female workers differentiated themselves from other ethnic workers by enacting some of their gender, race, nationality, ethnicity and class identities at the same time.

Intersectionality research on women entrepreneurship has showed various power processes emerge at the intersection of gender, ethnicity and entrepreneurship (Ahl, 2006;
Essers & Benschop, 2007). Being female, ethnic and entrepreneur at the same time create unique challenges and tensions, which necessitates immigrant women entrepreneurs to develop communication strategies in order to be acknowledged as an entrepreneur (Essers & Benschop, 2007). Essers and Benschop revealed that immigrant women entrepreneurs may create an entrepreneurial identity by embracing or rejecting one or some of their identities through adoption or violation of social norms.

Scholars have acknowledged that the effects of doing gender identity work vary across race, class, and ethnicity identities (Ahmed, 2004; Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2006). There is a call to explore both the positive and negative experience of identity tensions in various contexts (Pepper & Larson, 2006). Pepper and Larson suggest that tensions serve as an opportunity to better understand and change the existing organizational communication discourses. In this regard, this study takes further the existing intersectionality studies by exploring the positive and negative experiences of immigrant women entrepreneurs as they draw on their gender, ethnic, religious and immigrant identities and identifying the communicative strategies to negotiate their entrepreneurial identities to various groups.

**RQ 1b:** What communication strategies do immigrant women entrepreneurs use to negotiate the intersectionality of their multiple identities?

Identities are also created through physical and material resources. Cheney and Ashcraft (2007) argued that communication scholars have overlooked those aspects in the construction of professional identity. The authors posited that the interaction and channels of communication enabled by material conditions speak to the professional identity. Cloud (2001) has demonstrated that while material resources make certain kinds of actions possible, they may also prevent the execution of others. In that sense, in
Giddens’ terms there is a duality of structure between materiality and discourse (Cheney & Ashcraft, 2007). In order to fully capture the identity construction process of immigrant women entrepreneurs in an urban environment, the following section will focus on material arrangements, particularly place, followed by communication media use and social and professional interactions of immigrant women entrepreneurs. Examination of both discursive and material resources would allow us to better identify the opportunities and challenges of this community and how they use communication to change their disadvantaged conditions.

**Place and Identity**

As communication technologies have weakened the relationship between place and work by allowing people to live and work from anywhere (Giddens, 1991) and shift from contemporary workplace structures to “boundaryless” structures (Roper et al., 2010), place has started to gain attention in professional identity construction of organizational members (Rooney et al., 2010). In this regard, people make choices about where to work or start a business, which communicates about their personal and professional preferences and identity (Larson & Pearson, 2012). Therefore, place is closely associated with identity, and provides a key understanding for immigrant communities in their host country.

Place is a socially constructed discursive resource that draws from social and cultural meanings and interpretations (Gieryn, 2000; Larson & Pearson, 2012). Similar to Gidden’s “duality of structure” where structures can both enable and disable certain activities, physical aspects of a place can also facilitate and limit particular practices (Larson & Pearson, 2012). Examination of place within immigrant entrepreneur
community can help us identify the extent to which entrepreneurial practices are facilitated or limited by their choice of place.

Research that explores the relationship between place and identity has been growing in organizational communication literature (Elsbach, 2003; Elsbach & Pratt, 2007; Rooney et al., 2010). In most of these studies, place has been conceptualized at the level of the work but recently also at the level of the city or region (e.g., Florida, 2007; Gill & Larson, 2014; Larson & Pearson, 2012). For instance, Florida (2007) draws attention to how certain industries and jobs are concentrated in particular cities and regions such as the tech industry in Silicon Valley or film production in Los Angeles. In another study, Rooney et al (2010) showed how the way employees identify with their work place influence their perceptions of and willingness for organizational change. Furthermore, based on two studies of high-tech entrepreneurs in two regions in the western part of the U.S., Gill and Larson (2014) demonstrated how regions provide resources that shape ideal occupational identities. The authors conclude that moving our attention from the physical organization allows us to examine how occupational identity is constructed through the symbolic and material aspects of place.

In an attempt to contribute to this body of the literature in identity and place, this study explores how immigrant women entrepreneurs make sense of their place in an urban environment of New York City. That would inform us about how immigrant women entrepreneurs identify their resources in an urban context and perform their entrepreneurial identity. Therefore, the following question is developed:

**RQ 2:** What is the role of place in identity construction of immigrant women entrepreneurs?
Place is closely related to the social networks such that it links people to one another. Scholars recognized that norms and expectations specific to a place affect the way the networks are built and developed (Hanson & Blake, 2009). Understanding the relationship between identity and place would allow us to better analyze the networking practices of immigrant women entrepreneurs. In addition, network form of organizing would reveal about identity construction. Along these lines, the next section reviews the literature on social networks of immigrant women entrepreneurs in an attempt to explore the relationship between entrepreneurial identity, place and social networks.

**Social Networks of Immigrant Women Entrepreneurs**

This section presents a literature review on social networks of immigrant entrepreneurs and women entrepreneurs from the social network theory perspective. As part of this, it focuses on the communicative aspects of social networking and how the identity of immigrant women entrepreneurs are embedded in their social and professional relationships.

**Social Capital.** The entrepreneurship literature suggests that social capital is valuable for establishing and sustaining a business. Despite different definitions in the literature, social capital has been used interchangeably with social networks and referred to the tangible or intangible benefits gained from relationships (Lin & Erickson, 2008). In this study, social capital refers to the actual and potential intangible resources such as information, social support, and advice, which are embedded in social and professional relationships of immigrant women entrepreneurs.

Social capital takes the forms of bonding and bridging. While bonding social capital comes from benefits obtained from one’s close relationships, bridging social
capital is driven from benefits obtained from casual connections (Putnam, 2000). Bonding social capital includes benefits such as trust and support, and bridging social capital includes unique information and advice. Bridging and bonding social capital can play an important role in entrepreneurial contexts where there is high need for information, advice, and support in the decision and execution of entrepreneurial processes (Aldrich & Waldinger, 1990).

Two views have dominated the research on the relationship between network structure and social capital. The initial perspective sources from the seminal work of Granovetter on the strength of weak ties (1973, 1982) and Burt on structural holes (1992, 2005). Strong ties refer to the close and tied relationships driven from long term and frequent interactions. Weak ties refer to loose relationships that emerged through casual encounters. Granovetter proposed that weak ties are often more crucial than strong ties in relationships due to their potential for diverse and unique resources (Lin & Erickson, 2008). There is also a counterargument that suggests high levels of trust and mutual support in strong relationships are more beneficial for individuals by allowing them to build a “community” (Kavanaugh et al., 2005; Wellman, Haase, Witte, & Hampton, 2001; Wellman et al., 2003), and exchange higher quality resources quickly (Coleman, 1988), reducing transaction costs and saving time and effort (Kwon, Heflin & Ruef, 2013). Kwon, Heflin and Ruef showed that individuals in communities with high levels of social trust largely benefit from their social relationships. Another study that focused on an informal African urban community showed that strong ties promote interactions, generating significant impact on economic outcomes (Berrou & Combarainius, 2012).
Building on Granovetter, Burt (1992, 2005) drew attention to cohesion and diversity in social networks. Cohesive networks comprise members with strong ties whereas diverse networks comprise members from different backgrounds and characteristics such as sex, age, occupation, and ethnicity (Lin, 2001). While cohesion brings solidarity and loyalty to relationships, networks high in diversity facilitate access to diverse resources of information (Burt, 2005; Granovetter, 1973). The existing literature has showed that cohesiveness and diversity are often in conflict given that time is limited to both sustain strong relationships and invest in diverse relationships. Therefore, it becomes an important area to study how immigrant women entrepreneurs make that decision and organize their social and professional networks given their need for support and solidarity on one hand, and need to access to information about local culture and markets on the other.

**Information Practices of Immigrants through Social Networks.** Information practices can have a significant impact on the success and failure of small businesses (Marcella & Illingworth, 2012). Savolainen (2008) defines information practices as “a set of socially and culturally established ways to identify, seek, use, and share the information” (p.2). Research indicates that when seeking information immigrants rely on both their close ties such as family and friends (Fisher, Durrance, & Hinton, 2004; Jeong, 2004) as well as weak ties such as government authorities (Courtright, 2005). For instance, Latino immigrants in the U.S. (Courtright, 2005), most Sudanese youth in Canada (Silvio, 2006), low-income Hispanic farm migrants (Fisher et al., 2004), and female newcomers (Crooks et al., 2011) go to their family, friends and community members for information. They gain advice, social support, and reciprocity from these
interactions (Nee & Sanders, 2001; Salaff & Greve, 2004; Waters, 2003). There is also
evidence that those community-based networks can play an important role in the social
and economic inclusion of immigrants.

In ethnic or immigrant communities, gatekeepers can also be important source of
information (Agada, 1999; Chatman, 1987; Chu, 1999; Liu 1995; Metoyer-Duran, 1991)
due to their ability to speak multiple languages and to access information in multiple
language platforms (Chu, 1999). One group of gatekeepers is immigrant children (Katz,
2010). Katz’ work with Latino families showed that immigrant children can act as
information mediators for their families and help them access to health information.
Similarly, based on a study with immigrant youth from different backgrounds in the U.S.,
Lam and Rosario-Ramos (2009) showed the potential of youth in creating knowledge
across cultural and geographical borders.

Immigrants also utilize from their transnational networks for their information
needs. Based on a study with immigrant entrepreneurs in Malaysia, Mustafa and Chen
(2010) suggested that transnational networks are valuable for entrepreneurs due to their
long-lasting charachteristics despite minimum effort for activation and maintenance. In
addition, Drori, Honig and Wright (2009) draw attention the unique advantage gained
through transnational networks by allowing access to information and opportunities from
another geographic context. For example, Bagwell (2008) showed how Vietnamese nail
salon owners in U.K. utilized from knowledge gained from their transnational networks
in the U.S. By creating the term “diasporic information environments,” Srinivasan and
Pyati (2007) draw attention to the complexity of information needs of immigrants, which
are addressed both in local and transnational contexts.
In addition to these informal sources, formal organizations are also important sources of information for immigrants (George & Tsang, 2000). The library and information science literature showed that public libraries serve as sites for both formal and informal information exchange for immigrants (Caidi & Allard, 2005; Chu, 1999; Liu, 1995). Fisher and colleagues (2004) revealed how free language and literacy programs offered at public libraries can help Hispanic migrant workers fulfill their social and practical needs. In addition libraries, church has been found an important formal source for information and support needs of Korea immigrants in the U.S. (Jo, Maxwell, Yang, & Bastani, 2010). Given the complex information needs of immigrants, Caidi and colleagues (2010) call for research about the key information sites for different immigrant communities. Identifying those information sites for immigrant women entrepreneurs in an urban environment could help us develop better government policies and serve to their unique information needs. Therefore, the following question is developed:

**RQ 3:** How do immigrant women entrepreneurs organize their information networks with respect to the opportunities and challenges of their multiple identities?

**Social Networks of Immigrant Entrepreneurs.** The literature on immigrant entrepreneurship has argued that immigrant entrepreneurs are disadvantaged compared to native business owners due to their limited networks in the host country. Combined with exclusion in a host country (Deakins et al., 2007), the majority of immigrant entrepreneurs rely heavily on their community networks for their business (Raijman & Tienda, 2003). There is a strong body of literature that demonstrates both the positive and the negative impacts of co-ethnic networks on immigrant entrepreneurship. In terms of the positive aspects, several studies showed that strong ties can be beneficial during early
stage entrepreneurial development to recruit employees, find customers (Baycan-Levent, Masurel, & Nijkamp, 2003; Evald, Klyver, & Svendsen, 2006), get immediate advice (Deakins et al., 2007), and emotional support (Menzies, Brenner, & Filion, 2003). Based on a study of ethnic entrepreneurs in Scotland, Deakins et al (2007) found that ethnic business owners go to their close networks for advice instead of formal sources, strengthening their group solidarity.

Yet, studies have also showed that over-reliance on co-ethnic networks can be constraining due to redundant information available within co-ethnic network (Min, 1990). A later study found that both Koreans and Mexicans rely on ethnic ties for information about general management, and as a result they often miss out key information about how to maintain a business (Raijman & Tienda, 2003). Second, reliance on ethnic ties may lead to competition among ethnic entrepreneurs who serve for the same ethnic market. This situation is worsened if the market size is relatively small (Lyer & Shapiro, 1999). Menzies and colleagues (2003) conclude that reliance on co-ethnic group is mainly a short-term benefit to immigrant entrepreneurs. Finally, reliance on ethnic ties limits market and opportunity awareness outside of the community (Edelman et al., 2004; Jack, 2005), increasing business failure (Bates, 1994). Another study supports this finding in that Turkish entrepreneurs who came to the Netherlands and started a business on their own performed better than those entrepreneurs who moved and started their business around their community (Essers & Benschop, 2007). Overall, the literature on social networks of immigrant entrepreneurs reiterates the literature on that of local entrepreneurs and concludes that most successful immigrant firms have
access to a mix of strong (co-ethnic) and weak (non-ethnic) ties (Saxenian, Motoyama, & Quan, 2002).

**Social Networks of Immigrant Women Entrepreneurs.** Various studies in the scholarship of sociology have identified unique barriers in social networking processes of immigrant women entrepreneurs. For instance, in a study with South Asian women entrepreneurs and a group of white women in the U.K., Asian women perceived their gender, cultural differences and lack of confidence as barriers to engage in formal networking activities (Blisson & Rana, 2001). In addition, these South Asian women entrepreneurs had a conflict between family and business responsibilities, limiting their formal networking efforts. Similarly, Arab women business owners in Israel are expected to serve the needs of their local and ethnic communities, decreasing their motivation for formal networking (Heilbrunn & Abu-Asbah, 2011). The authors also found variations in business orientations among Arab women business owners due to factors such as the number of children, business type, and location of business.

These barriers lead immigrant women entrepreneurs to engage in informal networking for their business. Based on fieldwork with Asian female immigrant entrepreneurs in Australia, Collins and Low (2010) found that family members followed by friends were sources of advice, support and business related issues for the Asian women entrepreneurs. Similarly, another study showed that women entrepreneurs tend to rely on their family and friends for money for their business rather than reaching out for external funding (Cohoon, Wadhwa, & Mitchell, 2010). In addition to advice, support and funding, Turkish women entrepreneurs in Netherlands also network with their ethnic community to recruit new employees (Baycan-Levent, Masurel, & Nijkamp, 2003).
Baycan-Levent, Masurel and Nijkamp (2003) suggested that ethnic women entrepreneurs have both advantages and disadvantages associated with their ethnic and gender identities. The authors listed the ethnic opportunities as ethnic market niche, loyalty and solidarity, information, financial and psychological support; and barriers as family responsibilities and social and cultural values and expectations. Azmat (2013) concluded that such barriers of immigrant women entrepreneurs can also act as enablers. Recent studies support this argument in that building and using social networks in creative ways has the potential to facilitate women’s entrepreneurial activity (Ensign & Robinson, 2011; Rehman & Roomi, 2012), which brings us to the network form of organizing.

**Networks Form of Organizing.** While the structure and functional aspects of entrepreneurial networks has received decent attention (Hoang & Antoncic 2003), less is known about the dynamic aspects of networking process (O’Donnell et al., 2001). Johanisson and Mønsted (1997) have suggested that entrepreneurial networking is about organizing resources according to opportunities. Entrepreneurship as an organizing process allows for the exploration of the dynamic processes of networking (Anderson & Jack, 2002; Chell & Baines, 2000) such as how entrepreneurial networks are formed over time (O’Donnell et al. 2001, Parkhe, Wasserman, & Ralston, 2006) and how this process is influenced by social context (Anderson & Miller, 2003; Jack et al., 2010).

The network approach suggests that entrepreneurial actions are interdependent with their context, and therefore entrepreneurial processes can only be understood in relation to the context. Their contexts constitute of both social and business networks. As the literature above suggests, entrepreneurs may combine their personal and professional
networks to maximize their opportunities, and thereby enact their environments more effectively (Johannisson et al., 1994).

It is through communication that social networks are built and developed. Monge and Contractor (2003) posit that communication networks can be viewed as self-organizing systems in which organizational members communicate with others to increase “the network’s fitness” (e.g., resource flows, information flows, and flows of mutual expectations). Communication patterns can play a key role in facilitating organizational survival since organizations build their social capital through the communicative actions (Doerfel, Lai, & Chewning, 2010). As those authors state “the overlap between micro-level and macro-level networks speak to the human nature of organizing” (p. 156) and therefore research should focus on both micro and macro-level aspects to understand the organizing processes of immigrant women entrepreneurs.

The literature above suggests the appropriate mix of strong and weak ties for business success (see Bhagavatula et al., 2010; Martinez & Aldrich, 2011). These studies suggest that the tie structure should change with respect to the business cycle, in which strong ties are necessary during the initial phase and weak ties gain importance during the later stages. While such generalization could be an efficient and practical way of looking at the networks, this might also be limiting to identify the situated needs and practices of entrepreneurs. In other words, the “right” mixture of strong and weak ties may vary according to the macro context that entrepreneurial processes are embedded in. We can now explore in detail the organizing process with formal and informal ties and how they help or constrain the organizational inertia. Therefore, the following hypotheses are developed:
**H1a:** Immigrant women entrepreneurs will be more likely to form their communication networks with their gender, ethnic, religious, and immigrant ties when they perceive opportunities associated with these identities.

**H1b:** Immigrant women entrepreneurs will be less likely to form their communication networks with their gender, ethnic, religious, and immigrant ties when they perceive challenges associated with these identities.

**Communication Media Use of Immigrant Women Entrepreneurs**

There are various theoretical and practical reasons to explore the communication media use of immigrant women entrepreneurs. First, in addition to place and social networks, the channels of communication could inform us about the construction of professional identity (Cheney & Ashcraft, 2007). That is, examining how communication media is used as an organizing mechanism could contribute to theory building in the scholarships of organizational communication and mediated communication. In addition, how immigrant women entrepreneurs seek information through communication technologies could contribute the existing scholarship in library and information science. Therefore, the following section reviews the literatures and empirical evidence from organizational communication, mediated communication, and library and information science to shed light on the communication media use practices of immigrant women entrepreneurs.

**Information Practices of Immigrants through Communication Media.**

Organizational scholars have revealed that organizational members seek information both from interpersonal and digital sources (Su & Contractor, 2011). However, most existing research tends to focus on either interpersonal or digital information sources, failing to mix these two complementary practices (Haas & Hansen, 2007). To fully capture the information practices of immigrant women entrepreneurs, this study also explores their information and communication technology use for their entrepreneurial activities. In
addition, there is also a call for research in library and information science scholarship on how immigrant communities identify, access and use information and their barriers in this process (Caidi, Allard, & Quirke, 2010).

Research has shown that immigrant communities utilize wide range of sources for their information needs including computers and the Internet (Aizlewood & Doody, 2002; Mehra & Papajohn, 2007; Srinivasan & Pyati, 2007), mobile phones (Caidi & MacDonald, 2008; Shoham & Strauss, 2007) as well as ethnic media such as newspapers, television, and radio (Matsaganis & Katz, forthcoming).

Research has identified different use of Internet for various information needs of immigrants. Immigrants mostly use the Internet to reach out to their ethnic or religious ties in their host country (Wenjing, 2005). That allowed immigrant groups to gain social and psychological benefits, and therefore facilitated their adaptation to the U.S. culture (Mehra & Papajohn, 2007). These studies on the Internet use of immigrants concluded that information practices are often related to the maintenance of the salient identity (Caidi & MacDonald, 2008).

Besides Internet-based technologies, ethnic media is found to be a significant source for information needs of immigrants. In fact, immigrants with no Internet access rely largely on ethnic media to seek health information (Wilkin, Ball-Rokeach, Matsaganis, & Cheong, 2007), to “access local resources related to civic engagement, health information, and community news” (Katz, Matsaganis, & Ball-Rokeach, 2012, p.87), or to obtain country news (Lin & Song, 2006). In addition, satellite TV is used to stay connected with their transnational ties (Karanfil, 2007; Lee, 2004). Lee’s (2004) research with Korean immigrants showed that watching satellite TV strengthens
immigrants’ ethnic identity. With respect to the wide range of ethnic and Internet-based media use of immigrants, Matsaganis and Katz (forthcoming) concluded that “variations in language and media literacy capabilities within families contribute to shared sense-making activities” (p.5).

Research that examines the information practices of immigrants tends to focus on a particular ethnic group such as Hispanics or Asians. As a result, distinctions within a particular ethnic group are not often made, resulting in the conclusion of homogenization within a particular ethnic group (Caidi, Allard, & Quirke, 2010). Caidi and colleagues suggest comparisons across various factors such as age, gender, socio-economic status, and generation. In addition, they also call for research to identify how ICTs can act as both a barrier and an opportunity for immigrant communities.

**RQ 4a:** How do immigrant women entrepreneurs use ICTs to seek information for the entrepreneurial process?

In order to completely understand the impact of ICTs, a full communication media repertoire of immigrant women entrepreneurs will be examined, including traditional forms of media such as face-to-face, landline phone, email; ethnic media such as ethnic newspapers and ethnic TV; and Internet-based technologies such as mobile phones, organizational websites, social networking sites, search engines, blogging, microblogging sites, photo sharing sites, and daily deal sites. Complete examination of this community’s communication media use would allow us to reveal the specific communication needs of this immigrant community and how and why they choose particular technologies to address their needs.

Both the library and information science and communication literatures above have documented the significance of ethnic media in the various information practices of
immigrant communities. Ethnic media can also be an important source for immigrant women entrepreneurs and help them with the functioning of their business in the U.S. In particular, those who perceive business opportunities in ethnic networks may benefit from these information sources for their business, compared to those who perceive opportunities in non-ethnic networks. Therefore, the following hypotheses are developed:

**H2a:** Immigrant women entrepreneurs will be more likely to use ethnic and traditional media as their information sources when they perceive their ethnic, gender, religious or immigrant identity as an opportunity for their business.

**H2b:** Immigrant women entrepreneurs will be more likely to use new forms of media as their information sources when they perceive their ethnic, gender, religious or immigrant identity as a challenge for their business.

**Communication Media Use and Organizational Relationships.** The literature on social networks above portrays the key role of social networks in entrepreneurial outcomes. Related to that, research in computer-mediated communication has shown how different forms of communication media use affects the diversity of the social and professional networks. Traditional face-to-face contexts lead to varying levels of network diversity. For instance, interest groups (McPherson, Smith-Lovin L & Brashears, 2006) and religious institutions (Ellison & George, 1994) promote network diversity (Glanville, 2004) by bringing people from different backgrounds together (Putnam, 2000). In addition, public spaces allow people to both maintain their existing relationships and also promote new interactions (Hampton, Lee, & Her, 2011). Compared to those spaces, neighborhoods has limited potential for diversity given the stability of people in the same neighborhood (Glanville, 2004).

Different than face-to-face communication, mobile phone communication has been found to have a negative relationship to network size and diversity (Hampton, Lee,
There are technical and practical factors behind this association. Technically, mobile phone allows for communication with only a few contacts all at the same time (Gergen, 2008). Practically, most people use mobile phone communication and texting to communicate with their close friends (Ling, 2008). Although mixed evidence exists in the literature (Castells, Fernandez-Ardevol, Qui & Sey, 2009), mobile communication seems to reduce the potential for larger and diverse networks.

Internet use, on the other hand, enables individuals to form diverse set of relationships (Wellman et al., 2003). In order to characterize potential connections on the Internet, Haythornthwaite (2005) coined the term “latent ties” for connections that are “technically possible but not yet activated socially” (p. 137). Scholars suggested examining the affordances of various Internet-based communication technologies (e.g., email, social media) to better identify their potential on network structures (Hampton, Lee, & Her, 2011). A study by Chen and Wellman (2009) showed that Internet use is positively associated with the diversity of entrepreneurs’ networks. In another study, people who are in the email list of a neighborhood had a larger network (Hampton & Wellman, 2003), compared to those who are not in those lists (Boase, Horrigan, Wellman, & Rainie, 2006; Wang & Wellman, 2010; Zhao, 2006).

Internet use was also found to overcome the communication barriers in disadvantaged neighborhoods when opportunities for local networking are limited (Hampton, 2010). In particular, in times of uncertainty, people use Internet to connect with their close ties to get information (Butler, 2001; Procopio & Procopio, 2007). A recent study also showed that the Internet use speeds up organizations’ network building efforts when face-to-face interaction is limited (Doerfel & Haseki, 2013).
Social media (e.g., social networking sites, microblogging, blogging, and photo sharing sites) affords organizations to search, access and utilize content (Reinhold & Alt, 2011), to follow the content created by other organizations (Waters, Tindall, & Morton, 2010) and to engage in instant communication with customers (Bortree & Seltzer, 2009). Recent studies have shown that business pages on Facebook, organizational blogging (Steinfield, Ellison, & Lampe, 2008), online photo sharing sites (e.g., Instagram, Flickr) and daily deal sites such as Groupon and Living Social (Hughes & Beukes, 2012) may help organizations reach out to diverse and larger clients by increasing the visibility of their services and products.

Despite the growing body of research in the ICT use in organizations, we still do not know enough about these practices of immigrant women entrepreneurs in their entrepreneurial process. Exploring this area could allow us to better understand the professional identity construction of immigrant women entrepreneurs as well as their capabilities and context that can hinder or enable them to make effective connections with their stakeholders (Kvasny, Kranich, & Schement, 2006). This all suggests an additional area to explore:

**RQ 4b:** How do immigrant women entrepreneurs use communication media to communicate with their stakeholders?

Based on the literature above, while new Internet based technologies afford their users to connect with large and diverse group of people (e.g., Internet use, email, Facebook, Twitter, blogging, daily deal sites), traditional forms of media (e.g., landline, email, face-to-face communication) afford interaction with a small number of close ties. We can expect from individuals to obtain different benefits from ICT use with respect to the ways they integrate them into their practices (Gurstein, 2003). Within the context of
immigrant women entrepreneurs, ICT adoption and use may depend on the opportunities associated with their gender, ethnic, religious and immigrant identities. More specifically, they may perceive more benefits of adopting and using Internet based technologies and diversifying their business networks when they see their own community as a challenge and outside of their community as an opportunity for their business. Therefore, the following hypotheses are developed:

**H3a:** Immigrant women entrepreneurs will be more likely to use ethnic and traditional media for communicating with stakeholders when they perceive their gender, ethnic, religious or immigrant identity as an opportunity.

**H3b:** Immigrant women entrepreneurs will be more likely to use new media for communicating with stakeholders when they perceive their gender, ethnic, religious or immigrant identity as a challenge.

**Communication Media Use and Social and Economic Development**

**Communication Media Use and Economic Growth.** Besides social networks, communication media use has also been associated with entrepreneurial development (Hafkin & Taggart, 2001). Research on media use of microenterprises has drawn some key conclusions. Traditional forms of communication such as landline (Duncombe & Heeks, 2002) as well as new forms such as mobile phone (Donner, 2006; Donner & Escobari, 2010) allow entrepreneurs to exchange ideas about everyday business practices and decisions (Reveley, Down, & Taylor, 2004). Microentrepreneurs tend to use their mobile phones more for personal than professional matters (Chew, Ilavarasan, Levy, 2010; Donner & Escobari, 2010). Finally, microentrepreneurs perceive face-to-face communication to be more important than mobile phone communication in building customer relationships (Chew, Ilavarasan, Levy, 2010; Donner & Escobari, 2010).
Different than these media forms, Internet-based technologies helps entrepreneurs identify opportunities, build networks, mobilize resources (Chen, 2006), and connect with potential partners across regions and nations (Albort-Morant & Marti, 2015). More specifically, organizational website helps entrepreneurs increase visibility, awareness, and credibility (Pollock & Gulati, 2007). A more recent study suggested that engaging in social interactions with clients through Twitter can also help entrepreneurs identify opportunities (Fischer & Reuber, 2011). However, this study also found that continuously seeking opportunities on Twitter may take away the time needed to figure out how to utilize from those interactions for business outcomes.

Although those studies present evidence on how entrepreneurs use ICTs for their business, there is limited evidence on the impact of communication technologies on business outcomes. Therefore, scholarly attention has shifted from an ICT access-centered approach to a more impact-oriented approach (Kang, 2010). One kind of impact is economic. ICTs can contribute to the economic growth by improving the coordination and quality of interactions with customers and suppliers and building trust (Donner & Escobari, 2010). A more recent study showed that the most prominent impact of mobiles is gained through reduced transactional costs (Vincent & Cull, 2013). In a recent review of the literature on ICT for development (ICTD), Heeks (2010) summarized the ICTs’ impact to development. ICTs promote development by enabling diverse clients; facilitating access to information, reducing travel costs; and increasing profits (Heeks, 2010).

Those studies above have examined the indirect economic impact of ICTs on business outcomes with a focus on a particular communication technology such as either
mobile phones or the Internet. However, the literature above presents that immigrant communities use various forms of media for their information needs so reducing the impact of ICTs to one specific media would not project the reality. In an attempt to contribute to the economic impact-oriented research in the area of ICTs and women owned businesses, this study would examine the impact of full ICT use of immigrant women entrepreneurs for seeking information and for communicating stakeholders. Therefore, the following question is developed:

**RQ 5a:** What is the role of information and communication technologies on the economic development of immigrant women entrepreneurs?

**ICT Use and Women Empowerment.** Another kind of impact is empowerment. Empowerment could play an important role especially for disadvantaged groups by “enhancing an individual’s or group’s capacity to make effective choices and translate these choices into desired actions and outcomes” (Alsop & Heinsohn, 2005, p.5). Recent studies draw attention how women can control or influence their circumstances by making strategic choices (Asiedu, 2012; Kleine, 2010), especially through the ICT use (Wang, 2012).

ICTs can also empower women entrepreneurs by helping them overcome their networking challenges (Knouse & Webb, 2001). For instance, women can share their experiences and concerns through online communities (Drentea & Moren-Cross, 2005) and therefore provide social and professional support to one another (Knouse & Webb, 2001). The authors conclude that such Internet use allows women entrepreneurs to identify and reach out to role models who are not often available in their immediate network. Other than the Internet, Chib, Aricat, and Ling (2012) found from their in-depth interviews with migrant workers in South Asia that they can also acquire new skills and
get support by networking with their co-ethnic ties through mobile communication. A recent study on the perceptions of women entrepreneurs in Belgium about Facebook found Facebook to be a useful tool for managing the work and family life balance (Constantinidis, 2011). Those women who used Facebook to share advice, to meet with other women entrepreneurs, and to promote their business, gained new clients and business partners.

Based on their study with marginalized groups such as low-income families and sexual minorities and African-American women, Mehra, Merkel and Bishop (2004) demonstrated that each community benefited from the Internet in different ways. Mehra and colleagues suggest that we need to consider the context of communities to better understand the potential of communication media to empower them. In order to reveal how various forms of ICTs can empower immigrant women entrepreneurs, the following question is advanced:

**RQ 5b:** What is the role of information and communication technologies in the empowerment of immigrant women entrepreneurs?

So far, this study presented the different organizing practices of immigrant women entrepreneurs including identity construction, social networks and communication media use. To understand the impact of these factors on the social and economic development of immigrant women entrepreneurs, these final questions are developed:

**RQ 6a:** What factors affect the business sustainability and growth of immigrant women entrepreneurs?

**RQ 6b:** What factors affect the empowerment of immigrant women entrepreneurs?

Table 1 summarizes the research question and hypotheses for the current study.
As it is summarized in this table, H1a and H1b examine the relationship between perceived opportunities and challenges associated with multiple identities of immigrant women entrepreneurs and their social network. H2a and H2b examine the different forms of communication media use of immigrant women entrepreneurs, namely ethnic, traditional and new media, for their information practices. H3a and H3b examine the different forms of communication media use of immigrant women entrepreneurs, namely ethnic, traditional and new media, for communicating stakeholders.

Table 1: Research Questions and Hypotheses

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Questions (RQ)</th>
<th>Hypotheses (H)</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>RQ 1a</strong>: What communication strategies do immigrant women entrepreneurs use to negotiate the opportunities and challenges of their multiple identities?</td>
<td><strong>H1a</strong>: Immigrant women entrepreneurs will be more likely to form their communication networks with their gender, ethnic, religious, and immigrant ties when they perceive opportunities associated with these identities.</td>
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<td><strong>RQ 1b</strong>: What communication strategies do immigrant women entrepreneurs use to negotiate the intersectionality of their multiple identities?</td>
<td><strong>H1b</strong>: Immigrant women entrepreneurs will be less likely to form their communication networks with their gender, ethnic, religious, and immigrant ties when they perceive challenges associated with these identities.</td>
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<td><strong>RQ 2</strong>: What is the role of place in identity construction of immigrant women entrepreneurs?</td>
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<td><strong>RQ 3</strong>: Who do immigrant women entrepreneurs go to seek information for their entrepreneurial process?</td>
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<td>RQ 4a: How do immigrant women entrepreneurs use ICTs to seek information for the entrepreneurial process?</td>
<td>H2a: Immigrant women entrepreneurs will be more likely to use ethnic and traditional media as their information sources when they perceive their ethnic, gender, religious or immigrant identity as an opportunity for their business.</td>
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<td>RQ 4b: How do immigrant women entrepreneurs use communication media to communicate with their stakeholders?</td>
<td>H2b: Immigrant women entrepreneurs will be more likely to use new forms of media as their information sources when they perceive their ethnic, gender, religious or immigrant identity as a challenge for their business.</td>
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<td><strong>H2a:</strong> Immigrant women entrepreneurs will be more likely to use ethnic and traditional media as their information sources when they perceive their ethnic, gender, religious or immigrant identity as an opportunity for their business.</td>
<td><strong>H2b:</strong> Immigrant women entrepreneurs will be more likely to use new forms of media as their information sources when they perceive their ethnic, gender, religious or immigrant identity as a challenge for their business.</td>
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<td>RQ 5a: What is the role of information and communication technologies on the economic development of immigrant women entrepreneurs?</td>
<td>RQ 5b: What is the role of information and communication technologies in the empowerment of immigrant women entrepreneurs?</td>
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<td>RQ 5b: What is the role of information and communication technologies on the economic development of immigrant women entrepreneurs?</td>
<td>RQ 6a: What factors affect the business sustainability and growth of immigrant women entrepreneurs?</td>
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<td>RQ 6b: What factors affect the empowerment of immigrant women entrepreneurs?</td>
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CHAPTER 3: MIXED METHODS

Research Methodology: Instrument Design, Data Collection & Analysis

In order to answer the research questions and hypotheses, this study utilized a multi-method approach including semi-structured interviews, survey questionnaires, and ego-network analysis. The chapter includes a methodological overview of the qualitative and quantitative analysis, including sampling strategies, interview protocol, questionnaire design, data collection, and data analysis.

Sample: Immigrant Women Entrepreneurs in New York City

According to an analysis of U.S. Census data by the Fiscal Policy Institute, there are 70,000 foreign-born entrepreneurs in New York City and they account for almost half of city's small business owners. Immigrant business owners are almost equally distributed across race (34% white, 31% Asian, 28% Latino, 5% Black) and in terms of the source of country, Mexicans make up 12% of immigrant small business owners, followed by Indians, Koreans, Cuban, Chinese, and Vietnamese.

The top industries of these business owners are service industries. According to the Fiscal Policy Institute’s Immigration Research report (2012), major business categories include food and restaurant (34%), beauty sector (28%), clothing and apparel (16%), and childcare/eldercare (14%). The report also states that immigrants who have been in the U.S. for more than 10 years are more likely to be business owners than those who have been in the U.S. for 10 years or less. Finally, according to the same report, slightly more than half of immigrant business owners (58%) do not have a college degree.

Sampling. In this study, an entrepreneur refers to those who own and operate a
business that they founded, and immigrant entrepreneurs are those who were born in another country and moved to and started a business in the U.S. This study does not separate legal and illegal immigrants; but according to Fiscal Policy Institute’s Immigration Research the number of illegal immigrants business owners is likely to be small. All kinds of businesses, small or large scale were included in the study as long as they have a physical space given that one of the motivations of the study is to explore the relationship between place and entrepreneurship.

First-generation immigrants were chosen as the sample of this study for several reasons. According to a Global Entrepreneurship Monitor United States report (2012), immigrant entrepreneurship in the U.S. is dominated by the first generation. They are twice as likely to start their business (16.4%) than second-generation immigrants (8.9%). But at the same time, they are less likely to sustain their business (5%) compared to non-immigrants (9%) and second-generation immigrants (7%). These statistics demonstrate the need to research the first generation immigrant entrepreneurs and their conditions that make it difficult to sustain their business.

Different than previous research that often focuses on a single ethnic group, this study examines immigrant women entrepreneurs from all ethnic and cultural backgrounds in order to understand their unique opportunities and challenges during the entrepreneurial process. In addition, additional efforts were given to recruit participants from different neighborhoods in the city to capture the similarities and differences in entrepreneurial practices with respect to place. Figure 1 displays the ethnic neighborhoods in New York City. As a result, stratified sampling is used, where immigrant women entrepreneurs are divided into subgroups with respect to their ethnic
background (e.g., Hispanic, South-Asian, Middle-Eastern, Far-Eastern, European, etc.) and then they were randomly picked from that list. Eventually, those who agreed to participate were included in this study, which was closer to convenience sampling.

Scholars who have done research on immigrant communities posited that due to difficulties in recruiting immigrants and translation and interpretation costs, there is a significant gap in the literature on immigrant communities (see Reitmanova & Gustafson, 2008). Similarly, contacting and recruiting participants was quite challenging in this study. This was due to the difficulty of each step in the recruitment process including identifying, reaching out, and securing potential participants. First of all, it was quiet difficult to identify these entrepreneurs due to lack of accurate database of immigrant women business owners in the city. There is a large database of U.S. business owners at the New York Public Library (NYPL) research database, namely Reference USA, which has business information of over 11 million businesses in the U.S. This data provides various parameters of executives in the U.S. including their ethnicity, gender, location and contact information. Within the parameters of female, ethnic, privately-owned executives in New York, approximately 3,000 entries were downloaded from this database. The participants were classified with respect to their ethnic background and then randomly selected. However, the information on the database was almost more than fifty percent inaccurate. When these people were contacted, sometimes the business owner was immigrant but not a woman; and sometimes she was a woman but not an immigrant. In some other cases, the business was no longer in operation or had changed hands. This led to significant amounts of time lost in identifying potential participants. Second, even when the immigrant women entrepreneurs were correctly identified, they
were hard to find at their businesses as they had sporadic attendance at their business site. Cold calling the business prior to a visit was not effective since it was hard to build trust over the phone. With an exception of one or two cases, none of the business owners contacted via phone agreed to participate in this research. Offering gift cards was not an effective strategy to recruit participants either because time was probably more valuable for these entrepreneurs than a small gift card. Instead, walking randomly into their businesses, meeting them in person and building trust through small talk proved a more effective means to recruit participants. In fact, when met in person, 90% of the time they were willing to participate in the study.

Overall, various face-to-face recruitment efforts were utilized. First, despite its high percentage of inaccuracy, some immigrant women entrepreneurs were initially identified through the NYPL’s small business research database and contacted through random business visits. Second, a snowball-sampling strategy was adopted with recommendations from each ethnic community’s groups and leaders as well as from the entrepreneurs who were already recruited for the study. Third, various New York-based meetup events organized for women entrepreneurs, immigrant women, or immigrant entrepreneurs were attended. Fourth, immigrant business owners were identified through random walks around the neighborhoods concentrated with immigrant groups. Finally, various ethnic business events were attended to meet with potential participants (e.g., Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Southasian Chamber of Commerce, American Muslim Women Association). Eventually, these efforts led to the recruitment of 100 immigrant women entrepreneurs from 31 different countries (see Table 1) and 49 different types of businesses (see Table 2) over a 15-month period in 2014 and 2015. Table 1 presents the
profile of all the participants. The diversity in ethnicity/culture, business type, and location of immigrant women entrepreneurs improves the representativeness of the sample.

Table 2: The Nationalities of Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country of Origin</th>
<th>Number of Participants</th>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Albania</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>White</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Azerbaijan</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>White</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>White</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>White</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Asian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colombia</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Hispanic/Latino</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costa Rica</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Hispanic/Latino</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominican Republic</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Hispanic/Latino</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>White</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>White</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>White</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guinea</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Black</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guyana</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Asian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Asian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iran</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>White</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kazakhstan</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>White</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lebanon</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>White</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Hispanic/Latino</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Black</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>White</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Asian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palestine</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>White</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Asian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>White</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>White</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senegal</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Black</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Korea</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Asian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trinidad and Tobago</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Black</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>White</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venezuela</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Hispanic/Latino</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of Business</td>
<td>Number of Businesses</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Accounting tax services</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Architecture</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Bakery</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Beauty supplies</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Book binding</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Business consulting</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Butcher</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Catering services</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Childcare</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Clothing store</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Cultural center</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Custom neck tie</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Designer</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Dry cleaner</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 Educational kit developer</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 Event organizer</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 Furniture</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 Graphic designer</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 Grocery store</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 Hair dresser</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 Hand knitting</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 Handmade accessories</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 Industrial designer</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 Interior designer</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 IT consulting</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 Jewelry design</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 Language school</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28 Market research</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 Medical supplies</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 Metal fabricator</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 Music production</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Interview Protocol and Questionnaire

Interview. There is a general agreement that qualitative studies provide the richest information in the exploration of the social phenomena such as identity construction or networking (Coviello, 2005; Hoang & Antoncic, 2003; Jack, Dodd, Anderson, 2008). Interviews are especially useful for three reasons in this study. First, interviews can reveal how structural inequalities are embedded in intersections of gender, ethnicity, immigration, and religion identities (e.g., Alvesson, Ashcraft, & Thomas, 2008; Cheney & Ashcraft, 2007; Downing, 2005; Larson & Pearson, 2012). Second, interviews are also useful for examining the tensions experienced by immigrant women entrepreneurs as they construct their professional identities, and identifying the communicative practices through which they negotiate these tensions (Gibbs, 2009).
Third, interviews also inform us about the process, content and dynamics of networks that are embedded in larger socio-cultural structures (Benschop, 2009; Hanson & Blake, 2009; Johannisson & Mønsted, 1997; Lechner & Dowling, 2003; O’Donnell et al., 2001). Overall, interviews would reveal the organizing process of immigrant women entrepreneurs. However, most of the existing knowledge on gender and entrepreneurship has been gained through cross-sectional surveys (Foss, 2010). Ahl (2006) criticizes this approach in that the findings of these surveys often “reinforce(s) the idea that explanations are to be found in the individual rather than on a social or institutional level” (p. 608) and lead to the conclusion that women need to improve their management and networking skills to be successful.

The emphasis on agency and identity of entrepreneurs necessitates a different perspective that focuses on entrepreneurial processes and relations (Benschop, 2009). In this regard, Foss (2010) suggested scholars to pay more attention to the voice of the entrepreneurs. Those voices can uncover the situated practices of entrepreneurs that define the social construction of their entrepreneurial identity (Smith & Anderson, 2004). While explaining their actions and sensemaking process, participants also reveal insights about their identity resources (Larson & Pearson, 2012; Tompkins & Cheney, 1983). Through recruiting a diverse set of participants, this study also demonstrates the different “voices” embedded in different power structures.

**Interview Protocol.** Of the 100 participants, 60 of them were interviewed. Interviews lasted 30 to 120 minutes. With a couple of exceptions, all interviews were conducted face-to-face. Two interviews were conducted on the phone. All interviews
were audio-recorded and transcribed. Relevant questions from the interview protocol included the following—with follow-up questions and prompts used as needed:

1) When did you come to the U.S. and how/why did you decide to start a business?

2) Why did you choose to work in that particular business?

3) What opportunities and challenges have your gender, ethnic, religious and immigrant identities created for your business?

4) Who do you go to get information and advice for your business?

5) Who are your main clients and suppliers?

6) Which communication technologies do you use to seek information for your business?

7) Which forms of technology do you find the least and the most useful for this process? Why?

8) Which communication technologies do you use to communicate with clients and suppliers and why?

9) Which forms of technology do you find the least and the most useful for this process? Why?

10) Why did you chose to start your business in a given neighborhood?

**Questionnaire.** The survey questionnaires were available in English, Spanish, Chinese and Korean. Of the 100 questionnaires, 14 of them were administered in a language other than English upon the preference of the participants. In those cases, the surveys were dropped off to the participants and then picked up from their business after a week. Other than those cases, all the questionnaires were administered face-to-face by
the researcher. That helped the participants get clarification from the researcher on questions that were not clear to them, which minimized the missing data.

The survey questionnaire included open-ended questions asking to name the people who participants contact to ask for information (information/advice network of participants), their regular clients and suppliers and multiple-item scales for identity, media use, business status, and demographics. The questionnaires measured five sets of variables including (1) identity salience (gender, ethnic, immigrant, religious), (2) media use (types of media and frequency of use), (3) ego networks (social role, gender, ethnicity, immigrant status, religion, entrepreneurship status, occupation, strength of ties, and exchanged resources), (4) business status (declining, stable, growing), and (5) socio-demographics (for individuals and their business).

Measures

**Identity.** To measure multiple identities of immigrant women entrepreneurs, an *ethnic salience* measure was adopted from a previous study by Robert, Phinney, Masse, Chen, Roberts, and Romero (1999) with a reported reliability of .81. That measure included a single item that assessed how important the participants’ ethnic background was to them. This single item was used to measure other identities of immigrant women entrepreneurs, where “ethnicity” was replaced with woman, immigrant, religion, and entrepreneur. These items included (a) Being a woman is an important part of who I am, (b) Being an immigrant is an important part of who I am, (c) Being an entrepreneur is an important part of who I am, (d) My ethnicity is an important part of who I am, (e) My religion is an important part of who I am. Given the duality of a structure, the same single item was also adopted to assess the extent to which a social identity is advantageous or
disadvantageous for a business. In that item, “important” is replaced with “advantage” and “me” is replaced with “my business.” These items include (f) Being a woman is advantageous for my business, (g) Being a woman is disadvantageous for my business, (h) Being an immigrant is advantageous for my business, (i) Being an immigrant is disadvantageous for my business, (j) Being an entrepreneur is advantageous for my business, (k) Being an entrepreneur is disadvantageous for my business, (l) My ethnic background is advantageous for my business, (m) My ethnic background is disadvantageous for my business, (n) My religious background is advantageous for my business, (o) My religious background is disadvantageous for my business. These items were measured through a Likert-type scale (1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3= neutral, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree).

**Media Use.** One of the goals of this research is to investigate how identity salience affects different forms of communication media use. Participants were asked to indicate the extent to which communication media are used for three separate entrepreneurial activities: (1) communicating with clients, (2) communicating with suppliers, and (3) seeking information. The set of communication media explored to communicate with clients and suppliers include: face-to-face communication, email, landline phone, mobile phone, organizational website, social networking sites (e.g., Facebook), LinkedIn, Twitter, daily deal sites (Groupon, LivingSocial), and photo sharing sites (e.g., Instagram, Flickr). In addition to those media, the question that asked about media use for information seeking also included search engines, online chat rooms, local newspapers, ethnic newspapers, home country Internet sites, Meetup groups, Small Business Administration offices, and New York Public Library. All media use questions
measured usage frequency of these communication media through a Likert-type scale (1=never, 2=once a month, 3=once a week, 4=several times a week, 5=at least once a day).

**Forms of Media.** To test hypotheses (H2a, H2b), this study inquires about the use of 3 different kinds of media, namely (1) Ethnic media, (2) Traditional media, (3) New media. Along with the discussions in the existing literature discussed in the previous chapter, these 3 new media variables were created based on the average use of all media in each category. “Ethnic media use” included the use of ethnic local newspaper and home country Internet sites. “Traditional media use” included the use of face-to-face communication, email and landline phone (see Doerfel & Haseki, 2013). “New media use” included the use of Internet-based technologies such as mobile phone, organizational website, social networking sites, LinkedIn, Twitter, daily deal sites and photo sharing sites.

**Mixed Media Use.** In addition to those, two separate new variables were created to test the final research question (RQ5a) that explores the factors that affect business sustainability and growth. The existing literature showed that use mixed forms of communication media helps to contribute to the access to diverse social networks (Hampton, Lee, & Her, 2011), increasing business capacity (Doerfel & Haseki, 2013). Therefore, two new variables for communication media used were created based on each participant’s average frequency use of all forms of media. The first variable was created based on the use of all forms of media to seek information in this category, named as “mixed media use for information seeking” and the second variable was created based on
the all forms of media use to communicate with clients and suppliers in this category, named as “mixed media use for communicating clients/suppliers.”

**Business Status.** In order to test the factors that predict business status, both objective and subjective measures were used in the questionnaire (Kariv, Menzies, & Brenner, 2010). In terms of the objective measures, the following three questions were included: (1) monthly business net profit (Nijkamp, Stough, & Sahin, 2011), (2) the number of clients on a daily basis, and (3) the number of part time and full time employees. In terms of subjective measure, the following question was included: perceived status of the business (stable, declining, growing) (Kallberg & Leicht, 1991). However, due to the variety of business types included in the study and the differences in their business practices, objective/quantitative measures did not seem to provide a meaningful parameter to compare the business status (e.g., monthly net profit, the number of clients, and part/full time employees vary tremendously between a restaurant business and a seasonal wedding planning business). As a result, the one and only available subjective measure was used to predict business status, in which the participants are asked to indicate the perceived status of their business: declining, stable, or declining. Based on this question, a categorical variable is created, where 1=declining business, 2=stable business, and 3=growing business.

**Empowerment.** In the existing literature, empowerment is linked to social and psychological well-being, which is often tested with general life satisfaction. In order to test factors that contribute to the social well-being of immigrant women entrepreneurs, the following subjective statement was used: “I am personally satisfied with the business
I have created” through a Likert-type scale 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3= neutral, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree.

**Human Capital.** The entrepreneurship literature suggests that human capital facilitates entrepreneurship and economic success (Haber & Reichel, 2007; Hatch & Dyer, 2004). Human capital constitutes skills, education and work experience (Valdez, 2008). Among these variables, (a) education, (b) experience and (c) the number of years lived in the U.S. (Kariv, Menzies, Brenner, 2010) were included in this study. Immigrant entrepreneurs with higher levels of education, experience, and a greater number of years in the U.S. tend to have more relevant skills for entrepreneurship (Valdez, 2006).

Education was measured through the following scaled measures: 1 =no high school or equivalent degree, 2=high school degree or equivalent, 3=some college but no college degree, 4=college degree, 5=at least some graduate education, 6=post-graduate.

Experience was measured by the number of years in the current business: 1=less than 1 year, 2= 1-3 years, 3=4-9 years, 4=10+ years. The number of years lived in the U.S. through the following 4 measures: 1=less than 1 year, 2=1-2 years, 3=3-5 years, 4=6-9 years, 4=more than 10 years.

**Demographics.** The demographics questions included age (1=18-24, 2=25-34, 3=35-44, 4=45-54, 5=55+) and the country of origin for which the participants picked their country of origin from a drop down menu.

**Control Variables.** The immigrant entrepreneurship literature has identified various factors that moderate the relationship between entrepreneurial activities and business performance. The following three control variables were included in this study:
(a) the total number of years in the current business, (b) the total number of different businesses started and (c) the goal of the business (growth vs. stability).

**Ego Network.** There are different instruments to collect personal network data. The names generator method is the most frequently used method in network research (Greve & Salaff, 2003; Hoang & Antoncic, 2003). Name generators are defined based on the regular interaction of people and inquire participants (ego) to recall people (alters) they are in regular contact. They are usually followed by questions about alters’ attributes. This method has been shown to be reliable in capturing ego networks (Marin & Hampton, 2007). Name generators range from one set of advice generator (Hoang & Antocic, 2003; Greeve & Salaff, 2003) to multiple names generator methods (Berrou & Combarrous, 2012). The current instrument is adapted from the eight names generator method used by Berrou and Combarrous, but out of eight, only three name generators were adopted: (a) advice (information and ideas concerning customers, markets, management, investment, partners, administrative or bureaucratic relationships such as tax payments, and legal requirements), (b) customers, and (c) suppliers (access to goods and materials). These three sets of alters capture the main exchange relationships of an entrepreneur (business-to-business, business-to-customer, information/advice network) that make up one’s professional identity. The participants were asked to name as many alters as they could.

In order to understand how the identity of immigrant women entrepreneurs affects the structure of their network, this study tested the (a) information/advice network size and (b) information/advice network diversity and (c) customer diversity of the
participants. The network size was measured by simply counting the number of alters in information and advice networks of the participants.

To analyze the diversity of information and stakeholder networks, participants were asked to characterize each relation from a social role standpoint (e.g., family member, relative, friend, customer, or business acquaintance) as well as the alters’ attributes (e.g., gender, ethnicity, religion, immigrant status, entrepreneur or not, and occupation). Each alter in the information network was categorized based on their gender, ethnicity, religion, immigrant status, entrepreneur status, and occupation. However, the participants did not know about the attributes of their clients and suppliers. Therefore, they only provided information about the ethnic distribution of their clients and suppliers (e.g., 50% co-ethnic, 30% American, 20% other ethnic groups). That information was used for the diversity of clients and suppliers.

For the diversity of information and advice network, a different measurement was used. Diversity is often measured based on the number of actors with a different gender, ethnicity, religion, age group, and/or professional background (Hampton, 2010).

Diversity was measured through five measures: gender, ethnicity, religion, immigrant status and occupation of the alters. In order to measure diversity with respect to gender identity, the diversity was calculated based on the percentage of female alters to all alters. The same calculation was repeated for ethnic alters. Due to missing data on the religion, immigrant status and occupations of the alters, these categories were excluded from the analyses. Information obtained regarding ethnicity and gender status were sufficient to capture the diversity of networks with respect to the opportunities and challenges associated with identity categories.
Analysis

**Qualitative Data Analysis.** In order to answer the first research question that explored how immigrant women entrepreneurs negotiate their identities and the intersectionality of their identities, grounded theory procedures and techniques were used for data analysis. Constant comparison method was used to analyze data (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). First, the transcripts were read a few times to identify emergent themes such as perceptions of the opportunities and challenges associated with each identity (ethnic, gender, immigrant, religious). In the second round of coding, the connections between those opportunities and challenges and communicative practices were made. In the third round of coding, the data was also examined in relation to intersectionality. That is, the experiences of immigrant women entrepreneurs, where they refer to more than one of their identity categories were coded. Next, communicative responses of entrepreneurs were coded during these interactions (e.g., smiling, avoiding, engaging). Finally, those responses were grouped into conceptual categories. This approach allowed us to utilize from prior theoretical knowledge while revealing new insights at the same time (Finch, 2002).

The second research question asked about the relationship between identity and place, a separate grounded theory analysis was conducted through generating themes from the transcripts (Charmaz, 2003; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Any reference to immigrant women’s entrepreneurial motivations, intentions and goals was coded. Then these comments were separated into themes. In the second round of coding, any remarks specifically about place were identified to map out how entrepreneurial identity is constructed by location.
To answer the third research question that asked how immigrant women entrepreneurs organize their information and social networks with respect to the opportunities and challenges of their multiple identities, during the first round of coding, immigrant women entrepreneurs’ interactions with clients and suppliers as well as their communicative responses in these situations were coded.

To answer the fourth research question about how immigrant women entrepreneurs organize their communication media use to seek information and to communicate with clients and suppliers, another round of the constant comparative method was used to analyze the data. All the instances where the participants mentioned their communication media use were coded. Then these comments were separated into conceptual themes.

To answer the fifth research question that asked about the role of information and communication technologies in the economic development and empowerment of immigrant women entrepreneurs, during the initial coding to identify media use for the previous research question, the connections were made between media use and the social and economic outcomes. These outcomes, then, were distinguished into conceptual themes.

**Quantitative Data Analysis.** To test the first set of hypotheses (H1a and H1b) that predicted a relationship between network diversity and perceived opportunities and challenges of gender and ethnic identity, partial correlations were run, where the number of years in the current business, the number of years in the U.S. and business goals were controlled.
To test the second set of hypothesis (H2a, H2b) on how the perceived opportunities and challenges linked to identities are related to the communication media use for seeking information as well as for communicating clients and suppliers (H3a, H3b), partial correlations were tested between newly created 3 variables, ethnic media, traditional media and new media, and the identity salience items.

To address the initial part of the fourth research (RQ4a) questions that explored which forms of communication media immigrant women entrepreneurs use to seek information and to communicate with clients and suppliers, descriptive statistics were run.

The final research asked to explore the factors that affect the business sustainability and growth of immigrant women entrepreneurs and their empowerment. To answer the initial part (RQ6a), multinomial logistic regression analyses were conducted to predict if a business is growing compared to declining and stable businesses. The analysis was conducted in the following order. First, mixed media use to seek information, mixed media use to communicate with clients, perceptions of identity as an opportunity, network size and network diversity with respect to gender, ethnic, religious and immigrant identities, place and human capital variables.

To test the latter part of the research question (RQ6b) to explore the factors that affect the empowerment of immigrant women entrepreneurs, Spearman correlation was used to test the relationship between personal satisfaction with the existing business and business status, opportunities and challenges linked to each identity, network size, human capital and control variables. The next chapter documents the qualitative and quantitative findings of these research questions and hypotheses.
CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

Qualitative Findings

The research questions asked (a) What communication strategies do immigrant women entrepreneurs use to manage the opportunities and challenges of their multiple identities? (b) How do immigrant women entrepreneurs negotiate intersectionality? (c) What is the role of place in their identity construction? (d) What is the role of ICTs in the social and economic development of immigrant women entrepreneurs? and (e) How do immigrant women entrepreneurs organize their social and professional networks with respect to their opportunities and challenges? Analysis of the interview data revealed that gender, ethnic, religious and immigrant identities emerged as important contextual factors in the entrepreneurial identity construction of immigrant women entrepreneurs. The following section will report results for each question, with illustrations from the interview data. The real names of the participants were used in reporting.

Identification of Immigrant Women Entrepreneurs

In order to answer the first research question identification processes of immigrant women entrepreneurs are examined. Identification occurs when an organizational member “desires to choose the alternative that best promotes the perceived interests of that organization” (Tompkins & Cheney, 1985, p. 194) in a given situation. In other words, identity and communication are linked to identification process. To that end, I utilize the structurational model (see Giddens, 1984) of identification (Scott, Corman, & Cheney, 1998) to guide the situated identity practices of immigrant women entrepreneurs. The analysis illustrates how identity is enacted as a resource during interactions with stakeholders in a socio-cultural context. More specifically, the findings reveal that
immigrant women entrepreneurs draw on multiple structural identity resources in the construction of professional identifications and that identities of immigrant women entrepreneurs both shape and are shaped by the social interactions.

(Dis)Identifying with gender identity. According to Marta, a yarn business owner from Russia, being woman is advantageous for her business. She identifies with her gender identity by making herself visible to clients. She is basically showing up to the fairs and exhibitions to show the potential clients that the business owner is a woman.

Well, I would say that it's mostly women’s business because it's yarn business. There are some quite growing number of men who are knitting but still it's mostly women’s business. So they expect a woman to own a business like that. I attend to shows and exhibitions rather than sending a worker and when they see me people are more interested in the business.

The second communication strategy used to identify with gender identity is employing sensitive and emotional talk. Ebony, market research company owner, illustrated how she is drawing on her gender identity in this field:

I think that diversity of women in the marketplace today, it really lends into a greater, creativity and greater ability to reach the market in a very special way, whatever market that is, you are reaching it in a very special way. I think women rule from the heart more so, quite often more so than men. We are more heart-oriented so when we come into an industry with all the knowledge and all the capabilities that brings it a fresh kind of a view of the marketplace.

The third communication strategy used to identify with gender identity is employing baby talk. Kira, pet service business owner from Kazakhstan, whose clients are mostly women identifies with her gender identity through employing baby talk to build rapport with her clients. She says:

One thing that’s an advantage is most of the clients are women or even if it’s a couple, the woman would be the one who will be looking for a dog walker and communicating to the dog walker because women seem like a mother to their baby dog. In that case, maybe they will be more open to talk women-to-women. For all the new dog walkers I say, “You need to learn how to do the baby talk for
the dog.” It’s very important, you always hear sweetie, sweet puppy, that’s adorable, baby munchkins, this is very natural for women. It’s not for guys.

These examples illustrate women who adopt a feminized entrepreneurial identity, as a means of bringing advantage to their business. For some others, gender identity may bring disadvantages. Turkish hairdresser Ayten finds it difficult to deal with male workers as a woman. To manage this challenge, she draws on a masculine discourse. One communication strategy she adopts to disidentify from gender identity is yelling. Here she explains:

I had a hard time with men taking direction from me. But I’m a good yeller. What you really have to learn as a woman or what I had to learn as a woman is to fight with men. I was like, ‘I don’t care what you think. I don’t care if you think I’m a bitch or whatever.’ That’s what I am and you’re going to have to yell at a man to get the job done.

These examples show that immigrant women entrepreneurs appropriate discourses or aspects of discourses with respect to the perceived advantages and disadvantages of their gender. These examples echo the existing research in that immigrant women entrepreneurs draw on feminine or masculine discourses to enact an identity relevant to their context (Bruni, Gherardi, & Poggio, 2004).

(Dis)Identifying with ethnic identity. Some of the communication strategies that are used to identify with one’s ethnic identity were shared language use and humor. Maria, an interior designer from Colombia noticed that the construction side of the business is really important to get the job done on time, and yet make it impeccable. However, construction workers can be hard to deal with especially when clients change their minds on their specific demands and yet have expectations of quick turnaround. Maria, who targets American clients for her business, works with ethnic suppliers because working with them brings advantages to her business. She identifies with her co-
ethnic suppliers by creating ethnic bonding with them through shared language and humor. She explains:

When I go to the site the entire construction crew is Mexican or Columbian or Peruvian or something, and when I go there and I am the designer and I have like my awesome outfit, but I start talking to them in Spanish, they are just so much more willing to help and make exceptions or like redo something. I remember when I would go with my [American] bosses and they say like, ‘this needs to be changed,’ the crew was like ‘no, it can’t be changed, blah, blah, blah,’ but when I would go, I just joke a little bit with them in Spanish, and they are like high-fiving and willing to do anything for me.

The language shift of Maria across contexts illustrates that language use can change the structural resources and allows for new opportunities for professional interactions (Cheney, 1991). Another communication strategy Maria uses is humor, which allows her to enact an in-group identity (Terrion & Ashforth, 2002) by reinforcing the existing bonds with her ethnic community (Archakis & Tsakona, 2005).

In addition, Ana strategically uses communication channels when she would make a request. She indicated that she prefers face-to-face communication over a phone call when she would make a last minute changes in her order, because “[Hispanic construction crew] cannot really say no” to her especially when in face-to-face, highlighting the affordance of face-to-face communication for persuasion.

Disidentification occurs when an individual intentionally rejects a connection with a particular social identity (Scott, Corman, & Cheney, 1998). One of the communication strategies immigrant women entrepreneurs use to disassociate from their ethnic identity is rejecting doing business with co-ethnic clients. For instance, Maral, a Persian architect from Iran, tends to disidentify with her co-ethnic clients because as she explains, they usually have expectations of free service and/or some sort of favor because they share the same ethnic background. In order to disassociate from her co-ethnic
community, she turned down co-ethnic clients several times when they started bargaining over her business service. She states:

I don’t have many Persian clients because they don’t want to pay. They’re expecting the service for free because we belong to the same family tree and you have to do it for free.

In this particular case, working with co-ethnic clients brings disadvantages to Maral’s business and therefore she disidentifies from her co-ethnic community by distancing herself from disadvantageous situations by turning co-ethnics down and limiting her connection with them.

Another strategy immigrant women entrepreneurs use to (dis)identify with their ethnic identity is revealing or not revealing their real names. Ethnic names can be difficult to pronounce by Americans and can bring some challenges for immigrant entrepreneurs. For instance, Evgeniya, a tour operator from Russia, heard from her friends many times that clients would not book her when they see her name on the website and cannot pronounce it. She reflected on this issue in the following way:

I met one guy. He has a tour company too and he was like, ‘Oh you need to change your name on your website. Americans cannot pronounce it. They will not book you.’ But my name is Evgeniya. I don’t want to use an American name. I’m Russian and this is who I am.

Evgeniya experienced the tension of revealing and not revealing her real name for her business and managed this tension by sharing both her real name and nickname, Evi, on her website. Similarly, Duygu, tech startup owner from Turkey encountered the same tension about revealing her ethnic name on her website. Duygu presented herself through the use of humor to manage the tension of keeping her real name and yet engaging potential clients.
Hi! I'm Duygu. I throw a loud embarrassing high-five to whoever pronounces it right.

On the other hand, Stella, who is of Indian descent but has an American name, expressed the advantage of having an Indian name in the tech industry. She said,

I wish I had an Indian name. It’d help me a lot in this industry. There are many Indians in tech. And they are successful. Indians have a good reputation in tech. People think Indians are smart. I am still considering changing my name.

These stories demonstrate the social, cultural and historical context that affects the identification processes of different ethnic communities.

(Dis)Identifying with immigrant identity. Almost all the immigrant women entrepreneurs interviewed agreed that immigrant identity is associated with “being hardworking” while “asking for less” than their nonimmigrant counterparts for the same amount of work. Along these lines, one of the communication strategies adopted by the women entrepreneurs interviewed to identify with their immigrant identity was being available all the time. For instance, Denise, a custom furniture business owner from Mexico, said that her clients prefer her service over a local business because they often believe that she would be willing to work under unconventional circumstances for less money. She said:

I remember once when I was sleeping, a customer called me 7 in the morning on Sunday, and asked me to redo something and return it the same day. I jumped off the bed and worked all day and finished it.

Having the same mindset, Kira, the pet business owner from Kazakhstan, identifies with the immigrant identity by recruiting immigrant staff for her business. She explains her reasoning for that:

You have this mindset that you can live through for some kind of a problem. I see a lot of immigrants who are looking the same way. They don’t want to go back. You see they work harder. They would say, “Rain or shine, it doesn’t matter,
7am, 11pm, I will be there. So a lot of my dog walkers are from different countries.

In addition to their mindset, immigrant entrepreneurs may also prefer working with immigrant staff because they bring a different skill set to the table. Elena, a photo editing business owner from Russia recruits immigrant staff due to their mentality and skills. She posited:

I work with immigrants because of their mentality and skills. I work with Indians and Bangladeshi for the business market because they are good at volume. I work with Russians and Ukrainians for the consumer market because of their work quality and creativity.

In these cases, working with immigrants brings advantages for immigrant businesses in certain ways and therefore they identify with immigrant communities. One of the communication strategies of identifying with them was through building professional networks with immigrants.

(Dis)Identifying with religious identity Immigrant women entrepreneurs identified with their religious identities through making connections with their co-religious communities. For instance, Sneha from India practices Bahá’í teachings, which have a strong emphasis on “social and ethical issues” as well as “spiritual education.” For her business, Sneha created a social-emotional development kit for kids, which aims to develop their social and ethical values. This kit is designed for parent and kids, along with the teachings of Bahá’í that emphasize the role of parents in the education of their kids. During the product development phase, she built a communication network with mothers in the Bahá’í community, to get their advice in the product development stage. According to Sneha, her religious practices and her community helped her develop a unique product, which is not available in the market.
On the other hand, for Fatma from Turkey, her Muslim identity was not something she wanted to identify with due to “possible stereotypes against Muslim women with a hijab in science.” Fatma owns a science company that supplies amino acids to industrial clients and research laboratories. Fatma, who has a very generic Muslim female name, stated that she does not want her Muslim identity to get ahead of her business, and therefore is using technology in a strategic way to disguise her name and her Muslim identity. There is no directory information on her company website and she does not reveal her name in her email. She states:

I don’t use my name in my email; I use info@companyname.com when exchanging emails with customers. I never see my customers so they don’t know whether I am a man or a woman or I am wearing a hijab. In this particular case, religion identity is perceived as a disadvantage for an immigrant business. One communication strategy used to disidentify with the religion identity was through being anonymous. Anonymous communication allows individuals to express themselves in a less judgmental atmosphere.

Overall, various identities of immigrant women entrepreneurs can be both a resource and constraint in the enactment of an occupational identity. Along with the situated activity of Scott, Corman, and Cheney, those identities are more or less salient based on the opportunities and challenges they serve for immigrant businesses, and thus explain the strength and nature of their identification with varied targets in different situations.

**Dialectical Tensions and Intersectionality**

The second research question asked how immigrant women entrepreneurs negotiate intersectionality. A dialectical approach is particularly useful for examining the intersection of multiple identities (Trethewey & Ashcraft, 2004), in this case gender,
ethnicity, religion, and immigrant identities. As differences mingle with multiple power
dynamics (Adib & Guerrier, 2003), multiple power dynamics emerge in the intersection
of identities, bringing both advantages and disadvantages to organizational members at
the same time (Steinbugler & Dias, 2006) instead of a mere “double jeopardy” (Ward,
2004). A dialectical tension approach “situates tensions as normal, routine features of
organizational life and looks for ways in which they can be productive for organizations
as they find ways to ‘hold together necessary incompatibles” (Trethewey & Ashcraft,
2004, p. 84). Analysis of these tensions may help us understand the efforts of immigrant
women entrepreneurs in actively engaging and managing them (Gibbs, 2009).

Three major themes emerged in response to the question about how immigrant
women entrepreneurs negotiate intersectionality. These themes also illustrate several
tensions as immigrant women entrepreneurs negotiate the effects of their multiple
identities. These themes and tensions will be discussed and unpacked as they played out
in the communicative practices of immigrant women entrepreneurs to illustrate how
difference emerges from the interplay of dialectical tensions.

Abiding with norms. This category is concerned with immigrant women
entrepreneurs who abide with the norms and expectations of the interested parties to cope
with the challenges of the interacting effects of their multiple identities. The first example
in this category explores the intersection of gender, religion and entrepreneurial
identities. Ayten, the hairdresser from Turkey, faces stereotypes from her Muslim male
clients because working Muslim women are not perceived positively in the Muslim
community. Muslim women are expected to sit at home and take care of the children and
fulfill the domestic responsibilities. She manages this challenge by employing silence
while dealing with Muslim male clients in her salon. Being quiet with her male clients helps her enact an identity that aligns with the norms and expectations of the Muslim community towards women.

I’m very loud with my girls [clients]. I’m very empowering, I am like, “You need me? Call me. You need a place to stay? You’re running away from home? I’ll help you.” But when men come here, I am all quiet.

Her account shows how she negotiates difference by aligning the dialectical tensions of silent versus expressive with cultural and religious norms and behaviors. The main arena in which the silence strategy played out for her is in her choice to create an appropriate Muslim women impression towards Muslim male clients, but not necessarily with others.

The second example in this category explores the intersection of gender, immigrant and entrepreneurial identities. Most of the immigrant women entrepreneurs posited that because they are “immigrant” and “woman,” they are expected to provide the same service at a lower rate than their local female or male counterparts. Along with the expectations of Americans, most of the immigrant women entrepreneurs said that they charge less than local entrepreneurs for the same service in order to survive in their business. However, some others indicated that if they charge less, others might perceive that their service is not as high quality as that of local entrepreneurs. Therefore, these women reject this expectation of immigrant entrepreneurs. They negotiate difference by aligning the dialectical tensions of accepting versus rejecting the existing norms and expectations of American clients and working harder at a lower rate for the sake of survival of their business.

Credibility. This category illustrates how the interaction of multiple identities
creates perceptions about the competence of immigrant women as professionals. The first example in this category explores the intersection of gender and ethnicity. Ebony, a market research company owner from Costa Rica, faces a challenge of credibility as a Hispanic Black woman in the professional world. She manages this challenge by outperforming in all aspects of her business.

You are not just a woman, but now you are Black, and you are Hispanic, it's like what is that? So that was the glass ceiling that you had to break. You cannot afford like men to flounder when you are in a business. You have to be on time, on target, and on budget.

Her account shows how she manages the credibility challenge by being perfect in all business processes. The second example in this category explores the intersection of gender, immigrant and ethnic identities. Elena, a photo improvement and design business owner from Russia, had some difficulties in financing her business when she first started her business. She says:

Men in the financing don’t want to deal with women. When you are woman and Russian, there is even a bigger stigma. They think you might be associated with mafia. I keep smiling to look nice and friendly around investors.

This example demonstrates the credibility challenge of a Russian woman entrepreneur due to unique effects of multiple identities and how she is managing that challenge by enacting a positive impression through smiling. Similarly, Meme from Guinea had similar challenges when attempting to secure a loan for her business, but the kind of challenges she faced was unique to her gender and racial identities. She said:

I was turned down twice from the bank to get loan. Because I am a black woman. Then I gave up. I saved all the money over the years. I think I would get funding if I were European.

Despite facing similar challenges, the accounts of Elena and Meme illustrate how the same intersectionalities may lead to unique social inequalities and coping strategies
by immigrant women. They negotiate difference by aligning the dialectical tensions of fight versus flight. Whereas Elena attempted to counter the stereotype by enacting a positive impression through smiling, Meme gave up on trying. Along with the premises of intersectionality, those examples demonstrate that immigrant women entrepreneurs are not a homogenous community and that there are simultaneous effects of identifying with multiple identities (Hancock, 2007).

**Opportunity.** The responses in this category mentioned the positive benefits associated with the interaction of multiple identities of immigrant women entrepreneurs. The first example explores the intersection of gender, ethnicity, and immigrant identities. As a female Hispanic designer, Ana benefited from the interaction of her multiple identities for her business.

As her earlier example helps to illustrate, Ana uses her ethnic resource such as language as well as her gender, immigrant and entrepreneurial resources in constructing a positive professional impression and getting things done with her co-ethnic suppliers. Similar to Ana, immigrant women entrepreneurs from Vietnam, India and China posited having opportunities in the tech industry because, as they say, belonging to these ethnic groups and their immigrant identities have a positive image in the tech industry due to success stories in Silicon Valley. Therefore, they have been expressive about their ethnic and immigrant identities rather than silent while around angel investors or funders.

Those experiences of immigrant women entrepreneurs illustrate that gender, ethnic, religious or immigrant identities may not be empowering for all groups of immigrant women. Broader social inequalities shape and constrain their professional experiences. Thus, an intersectionality analysis of immigrant women entrepreneurs
reveals the contextual factors that lead them to enact different identities in different times (Pessar, 1999). In addition, this perspective also allows us to acknowledge the unique experiences of ethnic and immigrant communities instead of homogenizing them (Mahalingam, Balan, & Haritatos, 2008).

**Place and Identity**

The third research question asked how place shapes and is shaped by occupational identity. For the immigrant women entrepreneurs in New York City, place mattered in the construction of their occupational identities. The analysis revealed three locale-specific discursive resources, namely place as community, place as opportunity, and place as networking. In the following section, I first illustrate how participants drew on the discourse of enterprise and place to construct occupational identity and created localized notions of entrepreneurship. After summarizing each of these locale-specific discursive resources, I show how that resource influenced the identity work of the participants.

**Place as community.** One of the ways the entrepreneurs articulated place for their business was through the discourse of “place as community.” This discourse refers to a place where one can connect with their ethnic community and practice their cultural and religious traditions in another country. When asked why they started their business in a given neighborhood, immigrant women entrepreneurs who adopted this discourse indicated that they have a community there. They started businesses in places where they can be around their community.

Place as community shaped and is shaped by their entrepreneurial identity. Kosovo burek place owner Helda, who is in her 50s, is located in the Bronx where most
of the immigrants from the Balkans reside, including Kosovar, Albanians and Bosnians.

Burek is a traditional and popular pastry among Balkan communities. She said,

I bake for this community. They miss burek that their mothers bake for them back at home. I’m their mother here. I bake exactly the same way I bake for my kids at home. I don't avoid using more fillings to make more money.

These words of Helda illustrates how she gives priority to the needs of the community over making money and the role of place in constructing this locale-specific identity. Minavvar, restaurant owner from Azerbaijan, who is located in an Azerbaijani-concentrated neighborhood in Brooklyn said:

My main goal to have this business was mainly to gather Azerbaijani community in one place. We are far from home. We cannot go there when we want, and our relatives cannot come here either. You know we have many traditions; we have Novruz, Ramadan, remembrance for victims... We needed a place like this to continue our traditions. Yes, I do this for business as well, but the main idea was to gather Azerbaijani community to live our traditions together.

In a similar vein, Ulgen, a Lebanese social club owner said she opened this place to serve the needs of her community, especially for the elderly. She said,

These people are old and alone. Just like me. Their kids left home. They lost their husbands or wives. They come here to connect and socialize with their people.

More broadly speaking, in these examples, articulations of place linked profession with ethnic identity. Lola from Nigeria opened a Yoruba cultural institution in Brooklyn where most of the Nigerians reside. She said:

I came to the States when I was 7 so forgot the language. I always wanted to learn but there were no Yoruba classes in New York. Finally, I decided to open this school to offer language courses. There are around 30,000 Nigerians in New York, most of them are in Brooklyn, I knew that there are young adults like me who came here at a young age, forgot the language, and wanted to learn again. I wanted to open this business for this community.

Lola, like others, became an entrepreneur by ethnic and cultural necessity. She invented her entrepreneurial career in order to fulfill an ethnic gap in the market.
Place as opportunity. The second way that place influenced the construction of entrepreneurial identity of the immigrant women in this study was through the discourse “place as opportunity.” According to this discourse, certain neighborhoods in the city provide more opportunities to start and run a certain type of business. For instance, most of the laundry businesses were located in Manhattan because along the lines of participants “young working professionals in Manhattan often use such services.” In addition to that, the Upper East Side was another neighborhood where certain immigrant businesses were concentrated. According to city-data.com, with its household income of $117,903 in 2011, the Upper East Side consists of the wealthiest individuals in Manhattan. Kira, the pet service business owner from Kazakhstan, is located here “because the rich pet owners live here.” Similarly, Bibi, a book binding business owner from Guyana, is located here because of the concentration of “art galleries and antique stores” and the “people who spend money for their houses” in this neighborhood. She said:

There are not a lot of Indians in New York who collect [books]. In India, things that are old, they don’t like them; they want new. You see more collectors here American in their late 50s, 60s, 70s. So I decided on Madison Avenue* to open a gallery.

Clymena, a pet grooming business owner from the Philippines, strategically chose her place in a particular neighborhood in Manhattan, where the vets are concentrated.

There are about eight vets in the neighborhood. I know all of them. I visit them every three months. I bring them cookies to say hello. I keep my face in front of them, just to let them know that “We are still around. We are still doing the business. Thank you for sending customers.”

Those entrepreneurs drew from the discourse of place as an opportunity in constructing their opportunity-driven entrepreneurial identities. By identifying the
opportunities related to place, the entrepreneurs framed their decision as more strategic for the maintenance and success of their business. Place as opportunity thus serves as a resource for framing entrepreneurial decisions while making strategic decisions to start and run a business in the city.

**Place as networking.** The third way that place influenced the construction of entrepreneurial identity of the immigrant women in this study was through the discourse “place as networking.” The entrepreneurs in this category include industrial and interior designers, the social-emotional toolkit developer for kids, and tech-based entrepreneurs such as tech startups. The narrative of this discourse emphasizes certain neighborhoods with co-working spaces that allow for networking. The neighborhoods such as Lower Manhattan such as SOHO, Chelsea, and Tribeca are perceived as the hub for networking. The shared offices or co-working spaces in these neighborhoods are often for creative professionals such as developers, animators, digital artists, designers, writers, and editors. These offices allow these professionals for training, mentoring and networking.

Almost all tech startup owners and those in the creative industry prefer those neighborhoods concentrated with shared offices or working spaces. All tech startup business owners from Bulgaria, France, Turkey, China and India as well as the interior designer from Colombia, and the industrial designer from Iran are using these offices for their business. These entrepreneurs indicated that they want to “stay on top,” “access to different skills,” and “be around other entrepreneurs” who can provide them ideas, skills, and support when they need. Naz, industrial designer from Iran, who is using a working space in the Chelsea neighborhood, described the ways networking helps for her business:
I don’t really need to look anywhere else for networking. There is an animator in the office, who did the animations on my website. There is also an editor who does the content of my website. I talk to them everyday.

It has been a year since the tech startup owner Anna from France moved to the US and started her business, and she has been using a shared office in SOHO ever since then. She said she preferred such office space as she thought that would help her get familiar with the cultural norms and professional relationships and make better decisions as a newcomer.

There are 20 to 30 entrepreneurs here. Very smart people. When I need to figure out something or make a decision, I ask them for their opinion. They helped me a lot with my adjustment to the business world here in New York and gave me some really good tips that I did not know about.

**ICT Use and Social and Economic Development**

The fourth research question explored the role of ICTs in the social and economic development of immigrant women entrepreneurs. The interview data was analyzed with respect to instances of ICT’s impact on economic development and empowerment. The data revealed that immigrant women entrepreneurs are utilizing various information and communication media—including newspapers, TV, mobile communication, texting, mobile phone applications, and social networking sites—considered useful in their economic development and empowerment. These options offer various functionalities in development outcomes and presents a range of alternatives to the ICTs to address information and communication needs of immigrant entrepreneurs. The following sections illustrate how communication media may make it easier, cheaper, and more efficient for immigrant women entrepreneurs to achieve their goals and attain social and economic development, while excluding them from certain opportunities at the same time.
Communication with clients/supplier. Research has shown that mobile phones allow small and micro-entrepreneurs to keep in contact with customers (Esselaar et al., 2007), improve the quality and depth of existing relationships and build trust (Donner & Escobari, 2010), and reduce their transaction costs (Jensen, 2007). The data revealed similar practices among immigrant women entrepreneurs. The following excerpt shows how texting with clients helped Kira improve the quality and depth of her relationships:

Over time, they write about what kind of disease they’re going through or when they are going through a break-up, sometimes they break up with their boyfriend and then decide where the dog is going to stay and share that with me. So I know a lot about their lives. I have clients now that we go for lunch together. We became friends. I have a client who gave me the key of her house at Upstate New York. One of my client’s dog passed away and now they want to get a new dog. They want my approval of their new dog.

Kira also explains how she uses GroupMe application as an efficient way to coordinate the interaction between clients and dog walkers. Here she details how GroupMe is working for her business:

This really works for us. It's really helping us. In the past, we used post-it notes. But then the dog walker did not know he wasn’t supposed to come until he gets home and sees the post-it or the clients were informed about some logistics only after they got home at 6 or 7pm. Even with the email, the client would email me asking “Can we ask for a walk on Saturday?” Before I answer that, I ask the dog walker first. “Hey, can you this walk on Saturday?” They’ll say “Okay,” then I email back the client and say “Okay.” Now all conversations take place in this platform between the dog walkers and the clients. Clients love it, but other companies don’t know about it. And I don’t want to tell anyone about it.

This practice of an immigrant woman entrepreneur illustrates how the use of GroupMe application can improve the coordination of interactions with customers, which is consistent with recent studies that linked technology use to coordination and economic growth (Donner & Escobari, 2010).
Mobile phone use helped Hanefe, the first halal meat butcher in her Muslim neighborhood in New York, build trust with her meat suppliers and reduce travel costs. Because lamb is not as popular a product among American consumers as it is among Muslim communities, she became the most regular and popular client of lamb suppliers in the east coast. Lamb is sold through auctions in farms mostly in New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Virginia. Over time suppliers did not want to start auctions without Hanefe, since she was increasing the bid. As the New York magazine once put it, “she became an institution” in the sector. Therefore, all meat suppliers have been calling Hanefe to inform her about the fresh products as soon as they became available. That helped Hanefe make a decision on where and when to get lamb, reducing her transaction costs. Maintaining the fresh products also helped Hanefe build a good reputation and become the most popular butcher among the Muslim community including Turkish, Egyptians, Bangladesh, Palestinians, and Sudanese.

Texting helped Carmen, a childcare service provider from Mexico, communicate with her clients more effectively. Carmen, who is not fluent in English, explained that families contact her through text messaging to coordinate the time and place and to make last minute changes on their schedule. She said, “It’s easy to talk this way. I don’t understand them on the phone. They don’t understand me.” Text messaging is an efficient way for Carmen of overcoming the language barrier with local clients.

(In)Visibility. In the following sections, I discuss how immigrant women entrepreneurs managed the visibility of their business for various audiences by sharing or not sharing certain information via ICTs.
One of the (in)visible tensions that immigrant women entrepreneurs needed to manage was about portraying a desired image of a particular industry without enacting the practices of that particular image. Fatma, who is Muslim and wearing hijab, is using technology to disguise her identity to avoid “possible stereotypes against Muslim women with a hijab,” especially in a pro-science research industry. There is no directory information on her company website and she uses info@[companyname].com as her business email address. She never meets with her clients so she is basically not identifiable.

Another (in)visible tension that needed to be managed by immigrant women entrepreneurs revolved around being recognized as a credible organization despite the lack of necessary resources sourcing from immigrant identity. Marta, the yarn business owner from Russia, bought an existing yarn store in Manhattan when she first came to New York. She promotes her business as “the oldest yarn store in Manhattan” on her website, while concealing her own identity. She says:

On my website the biggest thing that we advertise is the oldest yarn store in Manhattan, that works beautifully. So people like old things, people like the establishment they believe long, they trust those establishments much better than the new establishments and it works very well.

Marta explained that the decision to identify the business this way was to build trust in the sector, which would be harder if identified as an immigrant. Organizing the image of her business as “the oldest yarn store” while remaining relatively anonymous demonstrates Marta’s agency is managing the opportunities and challenges for her business.

Another (in)visible tension that immigrant women entrepreneurs needed to manage was about being available while hiding the “undesired” characteristics. Ayten,
the hair salon owner from Turkey, said that her accent was a barrier when she started the business and communicated with potential clients on the phone. She indicated that many times potential clients would hang up on her when they did not understand her accent. In order to deal with this problem, she created a website, where clients could make reservations online and therefore she can minimize her conversation with them. In addition, she adopted new communication tools such as Facebook and Instagram to promote her business among “Black, Hispanic, and African clients.”

Denise, custom furniture design business owner from Mexico, experienced a similar challenge. She has faced credibility problems in the business because she was “too short” and “most of women from Mexico are cleaners.” These were some of the comments she has been repeatedly hearing from clients and suppliers when she first started the business. When she created a website, she preferred not to reveal too much information about herself. Although her name is revealed on the website, the “About” section of the business website focuses on “Over 25 Years of Experience” rather than any specifics about her. She also utilizes various social media tools such as 1stdibs to advertise her business to shops and galleries. Currently, she is working with well-known designers, contractors, and architects in the city.

The bookbinding business owner Bibi from Guyana adopted both old and new forms of media to advertise her custom bookbinding business to the targeted audiences. While the old form of media helped her gain recognition with the local community, new media (e.g., Ravelry and Etsy) allowed “[her] work become visible to all types of clients and businesses.” These strategies helped her gain recognition among both local and ethnic clients:
I had a wonderful article that came out on me in New York Magazine, and that set everything. That helped me, I would say, a lot with local clients. Similarly, I was written up in a magazine in India, which is called the Hindu Magazine, and that was nice because I don’t think I would have been there. The only reason is because I’m of Indian background that made it in the rare book field. So this writer, he found that very interesting and that was helpful to find Indian clients.

Sneha from India, who produced the social-emotional development kit for kids, utilizes “mom bloggers” to promote her kit because she wants that kit to be “universal.” She targets families with high socio-economic status and hands-on moms who follow trends in child education and upbringing so she believes “mom bloggers are ideal to reach out to them.”

One communication channel that helped entrepreneurs increase their visibility among visitors was New York City guidebooks for tourists. One immigrant women entrepreneur who benefited from being available in this guidebook is the bagel storeowner from Palestine. Ms. Hinnawi said:

We’re in tourist guidebooks because we get a lot of tourists that come to our store. They showed me the name of our store in their little pamphlets. I don’t know who put us in this guidebook but I really appreciate. Being available on this guidebook also opened up new opportunities for this bagel store. Ms. Hinnawi continued:

One of the countries we shipped in the past was Japan. I didn’t forget because I couldn’t believe it. Japan shocked me because it was very expensive to ship there and they didn’t care about the cost. I think they were tourists. They came to New York. We were on their guidebook. After they went back, they just found us on the Internet. Once you grow on the Internet, our name pops up. They just called the store. It’s still an old-fashioned business.

Being an established business that has been running for so many years helped the business come up through search results on the Internet. In that sense, data-centric technologies such as Google helped the business become more visible even to
international clients by affording an easy and instantaneous way of exchanging resources across geographical boundaries.

The following example illustrates how word-of-mouth could be an efficient way of making certain type of businesses visible in an urban environment, diminishing the need for technology use for such businesses. The visibility of dogs walking around the city helped a pet grooming business get the word out about its services. Clymena, a pet grooming salon owner from the Philippines says:

People can see our dogs, they’re walking all over the city. That’s really the strongest media for the business because dogs are walking around the city; they see it. They come up and say, “Who did the dog?” They are all over there. They’re from Downtown. You see dogs that come here from Queens and Brooklyn and all over Uptown and all that. So the publicity is the dog.

**Information seeking.** Information practices through the use of technology are often linked to positive changes on decisions due to access to more and diverse information (Heeks & Molla, 2009). Analyzing information practices also allow us to identify the possible barriers that disadvantaged communities face while seeking information as well as their strategies to go around these challenges. The interview data revealed that both the traditional and the new forms of technologies including newspapers, satellite TV, and Internet helped immigrant women entrepreneurs with their information practices, and helped them with the effectiveness and efficiency of their business.

Seniha, the furniture business owner from Turkey, said that she did not promote her business as much as the Turkish soap operas did. Especially the one soap opera called “Magnificent Century” which is based on the life of Ottoman Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent and his wife Hurrem Sultan, a slave girl who became Sultana, was
broadcasted over 40 countries including Albania, China, Chile, Pakistan and Russia. The show has been breaking television records since its première. Besides the popularity of the show itself, the show has also attracted attention to the Turkish carpets and home decorations. Seniha, who has been watching the show, came up with a marketing strategy and created a whole new line of sitting and corner sets and named them with the main characters such as Sultan Suleiman sitting set or Hurrem Sultan bedroom set. When asked who the main customers of these products are, she said, “Everyone. Spanish, Iranian, Pakistani, Russians. People are coming from everywhere and asking if we have the Hurrem’s duvet covers or the Sultan’s carpet.” She added that the show brought an international recognition to their furniture and helped tremendously for her business.

Before she started her business, Kira did some paper survey to dog owners at the dog park. To get information about dog owners’ needs, priorities and preferences, she asked a set of questions on a one-page paper survey such as “What would you need a dog walker to do,” “What is more important for you in a dog walker: friendliness or timeliness,” “How much would you pay for a dog walker.” Based on 30 surveys she conducted to dog owners in Central Park, she set her initial goals and made decisions about her business. Next, she prepared flyers to distribute to the same dog owners at the dog park. “It was very cheap to start,” she said.

In addition to these traditional sources of information, many immigrant women entrepreneurs mentioned using the Internet to seek information for their business. For instance, Kira used other dog walking websites to get information about how to structure walks, picking ups, and company policies. Name, the photo improvement and design company owner from Russia, mainly utilizes the case studies available on Kodak’s
website. She said, “It’s a consumer-oriented company and they gave the cameras to the consumers. I learn customers’ preferences and what colors are trendy all from these case studies.” Name, a Pakistani wedding planner, explained how surfing on the Internet gave her an idea to start her own business.

Like three years ago, I was doing this all decorations for my passion, for my hobby, as a hobby to my friends, no charge. I spent lots of time for that, even I used my pocket to buy stuff. I said, ‘Okay, I will spend this much money, no problem, don’t give me any money, I will do it.’ I did many things in that time. So finally I saw those websites on wedding designs and said ‘Okay, I could do these things. I know how to do this.’

**Information Storage.** The interview data revealed that immigrant women entrepreneurs are using various forms of media including paper, computer, and mobile phone to store information, which helped them with the effectiveness and efficiency of their business regardless of the type of medium used. One type of medium used to store information by women entrepreneurs with a discourse of place as community was the notebook. Those businesses included grocery stores, butchers, and hair salons. Some of those business owners allowed their customers to use their services and to pay at another time. Business owner simply writes down the names and phone numbers of her customers and the amount they owe and checks their names off once they make the payment.

According to Tina, a grocery store owner from Albania, this business practice helps her strengthen her ties and build customer loyalty within her ethnic community.

Besides notebooks, the computer was another medium used for information storage. Clymena, a pet grooming business owner from the Philippines, explained how she is using the computer to keep a record of her services unique for each customer.

People call me and say, ‘You know, I was just walking in the park and I saw a Bichon that you did.’ And they would give me the name of the Bichon. We have procedures that we leave an inch on the body, we leave an inch and a half or two
inches on the legs, we do a nice round-head on the head just slightly longer than the body, open around the eyes, clean up the mouth. All that stuff is all detailed description on the computer. I just pull out the record from my computer and we do it the same way that the dog they saw in the park.

Clymena found an efficient way to store information, which works for her. On a different account, Kira uses Google Drive on her mobile phone for creating invoices instead of buying automatic invoice systems.

There are companies that develop applications for dog walkers, kind of like a QuickBooks for accounting, but now there’s a company that [develop applications] only for the dog walkers, so they call me all the time trying to get me to use them. But I discovered Google Drive, and I create spreadsheets there just like how I need, why would I pay every month. And I don’t like the automatic invoice system in this app, all the invoices are sent out before you make changes. I do invoices manually because sometimes there are little changes. It is more efficient that way and I keep the money in my pocket.

Those accounts demonstrate the affordances of different media in addressing the different information storage needs of immigrant women entrepreneurs. Although the easiness of paper affords the storage of basic information, the connectivity of mobile phone affords the creation and access of information at any time.

**Surveillance/monitoring.** The prevalence of technology in organizations allows organizations for employee monitoring and surveillance (D’Urso, 2006). Organizations may engage in those practices for business information, security and safety (Daugherty, 1999). Based on a study by American Management Association (2007), businesses monitor their employees through information obtained from phone calls, email, computer files, or Internet connections. D’Urso (2006) draws attention to the tensions between employees’ right to privacy and organizations’ need to protect their business.

Among various communication technologies available to coordinate the interaction between clients and dog walkers, Kira (the pet service business owner) prefers
using the GroupMe application. She noted using this particular mobile-based application in an attempt to monitor every step of the employee-client interaction, protect the client contact database, and maintain her clients and business. She explains the affordances of this application for surveillance and why most of the similar businesses do not even allow dog walkers to communicate with clients:

> In many companies they say “No, it’s not possible.” Why? Because if we allow all the dog walkers to talk behind our backs through text messages, the clients may ask them “Why don't you work for us? We’ll pay you something more than you what get right now.” That’s how a lot of dog walkers became independent, by stealing clients from the company. So I need to make sure I prevent that from happening. On GroupMe, when I add you to a chat, you cannot access the contact information of others, but only the text messages.

That example illustrates how ICTs may directly work for the sustainability of a business. Client-employee interaction is not the only aspect of the business that Kira is monitoring. She also uses Facebook to keep track of her competitors in the neighborhood and to monitor how her business is doing with respect to her clients. She says:

> I have Facebook page with all the dogs’ pictures. I put pretty much every day pictures of the dogs we walk. Then, I go to Facebook page of the competitors and I see whose pictures they put. I kind of know all the dogs in the neighborhood even they were walked by other companies. Then I can tell when a client leaves us and joins them or when they leave them and join us. I can go and ask them what they did not like about the business.

Among the main affordances of social media, Kira utilizes visibility and persistance of content (see Treem & Leonardi, 2012), which allows her to monitor dog pictures shared by the competitors on Facebook. That piece of information allows her to assess her business performance with respect to competitors in the neighborhood and seek out feedback from new and old clients about her services. In this regard, ICTs help businesses improve their business effectiveness. These accounts illustrate that ICT use may help small businesses sustain and improve their business effectiveness and at the
same time draws attention to the potential role of lack of monitoring /surveillance on small business outcomes.

**Data-Centric Technology and Structural Inequalities**

The interview data revealed that ICTs create opportunities for immigrant women entrepreneurs for seeking information, communicating locally and transnationally, visibility and efficiency. Recent studies in the area of ICT use for development as well as digital divide suggest that the Internet may not necessarily be beneficial to all communities. Along these lines, the interview data also revealed how data-centric technologies may reinforce structural inequalities for immigrant entrepreneurs. Data-centric technologies such as Google, Yelp, and Twitter are concerned with how information on the Internet is dispersed.

One of the data-centric technologies is Yelp, which provides customer reviews of local businesses to public. However, Yelp can manage how much and what kind of content would be visible to the public through certain technical affordances. The company charges businesses for a service to manage their visibility and content in an attempt to maintain or enhance their image in public. This site could be an important information source for businesses regarding their performance and reputation. A recent survey shows that consumers trust online reviews as much as personal recommendations (Askay, 2015).

Kira, the pet-service business owner from Kazakhstan, expressed her disappointment with Yelp as the service put her business at a disadvantage. She noted:

I asked my current clients to write a Yelp review for us because we had zero reviews. [Customers] find us through Yelp, 90% of them. Let’s say 80% of the time. We need to be a consistent Yelper. Then all five of my clients wrote a review so I have like five reviews and rate, but then I see only two reviews
because Yelp was hiding three of them. I got so upset with Yelp. I heard that when you pay they will all show but I decided not to pay.

She thinks that online reputation of her business can compensate with some of the disadvantages her ethnic identity may create. She continues:

When I talk to [clients] over the phone, sometimes they go like, “Where are you from?” I say “Kazakhstan.” They are like “What?” “Where?” I feel like they don’t take me seriously. Now I have a good reputation on Yelp, so it’s easier. But before, I had to prove like I’m not a criminal from a Muslim country.

Ketevan, a hand-knitting business owner from Georgia working in the fashion industry, also had some credibility issues in the fashion sector due to her lack of visibility online. She said, “most of the fashion people, stars do Twitter and if you don’t have a presence you cannot have any business.” She continued saying that designers often look at your connections and decide about the quality of your work based on your connections and popularity among the fashion crowd on Twitter. Ketevan struggled in the business for a long time until she coincidentally met a very famous Ukrainian fashion designer Henry, who became her first client. Henry wanted to help Ketevan due to shared culture and language.

Henry took me to the fashion shows with him, introduced me with people in the industry, and those people gradually started following me on Twitter. That helped me a lot in the business.

Ketevan’s experience shows that businesses with limited and unpopular social networks can be excluded from business opportunities, which could put especially first generation immigrant entrepreneurs in a disadvantage.

Fatma, the pro-science research company owner from Turkey, was concerned about personal data available on her through a Google search. Fatma wears hijab and is an active member of a Muslim women’s association. Her name and picture appears on
the website of that association, which she thinks might create biases for her business. Although she does not conceal any identifying information about herself on her business website to prevent such biases, she puts her personal data here or there for some business purposes so she does not know how much information about her is accessible online. On a similar account, Meme from Guinea indicated that her credit history available through Google search could play a negative role in her efforts to build professional relationships with financial institutions and investors.

Network Form of Organizing

The last research question asked how immigrant women entrepreneurs organize their social and professional networks with respect to their opportunities and challenges. This section shows examples from the interviews on how they organize their social and business relationships to maximize their business opportunities. The interviews reveal that networks are organized with respect to gender, ethnic, religious and immigrant identity opportunities and challenges as well as place of the business. Related to place, they use various forms of communication media in this process including face-to-face communication, mobile communication, blogging and organizational websites.

Formal associations can act as both instrumental and social support for immigrant women entrepreneurs. All of the tech-start up entrepreneurs complained about the limited number of women in the tech industry. Duygu, a tech company owner from Turkey, said that there are very few women entrepreneurs in the tech industry, which creates “psychological barriers” for her. She became an active member of women-led associations such as WomeninTech meetup group and Women International Network in New York, where she can “get support from other women like [her].” Similarly, Muslim
women entrepreneurs rely heavily on religion-based associations like American Muslim Women Association for networking and promoting their business. For instance, Ola, an education center owner from Egypt, relied on the National Arab American Professional Society to promote her business. These associations organize monthly brunch and dinners, where small business owners can promote their businesses to the local community. That helped Ola connect with potential clients.

New York based formal institutions can be used as an intermediary for building trust. For instance, Carmen, the childcare business owner from Mexico, faced with the challenge of building credibility for American families, and managed this challenge by building a professional connection with a local Business Development Center. Networking with a trusted local business helped Carmen build trust with local customers. Formal networking with local businesses seems to mediate the relationship between immigrant businesses and their environment.

The literature above shows that transnational networks may work both as a source of support and information. Many immigrant women entrepreneurs indicated using mobile phones and the Internet to talk to their transnational ties to ask for business information, advice and to recruit employees. When Lora decided to open a Yoruba Cultural Center to offer Yoruba classes, she did not have any knowledge about the education sector. She did some Google search to see if there are any institutions in other parts of the U.S. or the world that offer similar services. She identified a language institution in Brazil, owned and operated also by a Nigerian, and contacted him to get some information and advice for her center. She said, “He shared everything with me. The curricula, brochures, everything. That pretty much helped me with the basics of the
operation.” Similarly, Amelie, an online service business owner from France, connects with her transnational contacts that operate same business in France for information and ideas. Sania, jewelry designer from Pakistan, talks to her designer friend in Pakistan to get advice on the design aspects of her business. Elena, the photo improvement and design company owner from Russia, uses home country Internet sites to recruit photo-editing freelancers. She prefers Russian freelancers mostly because she believes “they are creative and have original solutions in the consumer market and offer something unique in this sector.”

On a different account, Evgeniya, a tour operator from Russia, illustrates how she had to change her networking practices through the use of communication technologies to sustain her business after the Russia-Ukraine conflict in 2014:

I made the big mistake that I was only doing Russians and I was not advertising anything for Americans. My website was in Russian and advertised only on Russian websites and tourist agencies. When the war with Ukraine started, then [Russians] just stopped traveling, they just stopped. There was no work coming that summer. I was expecting a lot of work in September, October, and November because this is a season for business travelers and they have a lot of groups, big groups coming and big businessmen coming. I was making a lot of money. In September, October, and November, nothing; it was like no people. You know they’re saving money. I’m like, “Okay, maybe in the New Year” because New Year is the biggest. On the New Year, I could make money that I don’t have to work for three months. I was making a lot of money. But nothing, zero. I was like cut-off. Like that’s it, I’m finished. There was a lot of people, and then nothing. I was like, “Oh my God!” Then I realized I made a mistake, I was only working for Russians. Then I started really urgently changing my website. I made it in English. And then I sent emails to all of my clients with the hotels or destination management and transportation companies. They usually would send me only Russian and told I them, “Give me other groups. I can do others too.” And they started giving me others, and they were super happy. I give very good tours. I gave tours to French people, to Indian people, to British, and to Americans.

Although homogeneous networks are shown as a disadvantage for women entrepreneurs in the literature, the following examples show how doing gender
networking helps those entrepreneurs with their business. Elena, the photo editing business owner from Russia, prefers female freelancers for her business. Here she explains:

Mothers are the main memory keepers in the family. Women understand women better. They know what they want. I prefer women freelancers because they have the eye for detail, for beauty. A female customer says ‘Fix my make up;’ there is no way to explain this to a male.

Similarly, Archana prefers networking with women to promote her business. She targets “hands-on moms, who are Whole Foods customers, vegan, tech-savvy and a part of Montessori community” for her social-emotional development kit for kids. As noted previously, she identified local mother bloggers in New York and then contacted them to introduce her kit.

Strong family ties can provide support and advice for the immigrant women entrepreneurs. The main information source of the wedding planner from Pakistan for her business was her three daughters. Although social ties are often linked to benefits such as trust and support, in her case, her daughters were her both formal and informal sources.

Actually my daughters are really smart, one of them is accountant, the other is website designer and the third one is a CIA (Culinary Institute of America) graduate. The website designer daughter showed me how to design my website. My accountant daughter said she can walk me through the tax process. They were like, ‘Mama, open a company. You could do it.’ So I started my work because my daughters encouraged me to do it.

Summary. The qualitative findings revealed several organizing processes of immigrant women entrepreneurs including negotiating identity tensions, place making, network form of organizing and communication media use in their entrepreneurial processes. While this section focused on “how” various structures are organized, the quantitative findings in the next section attempt to show the economic outcomes of these
organizing processes. In this regard, this section, at a great extent, informs the quantitative data analyses that are presented in the next section.

**Quantitative Results**

This section presents the descriptive findings and tests each of the hypotheses in this study. In addition, questionnaire data addressing several research questions is presented. There were 100 respondents who answered at least part of the survey questionnaire—but a handful did not complete all of the survey and several variables had 92 respondents. Most of the time the participants were willing to do the survey due to the fact that potential participants were contacted face-to-face to invite for this survey. Partial correlations were used for most of the tests, which allowed for the control of several variables (business goal, number of years in the U.S.) and to test directional relationships. The results below do report a handful of statistical significance tests. We generally report findings where $p < .05$, but also note those tests where $p < .10$ as approaching statistical significance.

**Sample Demographics**

**Ethnicity.** For this study, 100 immigrant women entrepreneurs from 31 different countries (see Table 1) were recruited. The distribution of ethnicity of participants is as follows: White (35%), Asian (31%), Hispanic (25%), Black (9%).

**Table 4: Ethnicity of Participants**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
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<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>35</td>
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<td>35.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic/Latino</td>
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<td>25.0</td>
<td>60.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>69.0</td>
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Age. Of the 100 surveyed, 31% of the participants were 25 to 35 years old, 27% of the participants were 47 to 56 years old, 22% of them were 36 to 46 years old, 14% of them were 56 or older, and 2% of them were 18 to 24 years.

Table 5: Age Distribution of Participants

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<thead>
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<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-24</td>
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<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-34</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>31.0</td>
<td>34.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>35-44</td>
<td>22</td>
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<td>57.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>45-54</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>27.0</td>
<td>85.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>55+</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
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<td>4</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

Education. 49% of the participants had college degree, 15% of them had graduate degree, 11% of them had high school degree, 11% of them had some college with no college degree, 6% of them had at least some graduate education and 2% of them had no high school or equivalent degree.

Table 6: Education Level of Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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</table>
Years in the U.S. 82% of the participants have been in the U.S. for more than 10 years, 7% for 1 to 3 years, 6% of them 4 to 9 years, and 3% of them for less than a year.

Table 7: Number of Years in the U.S.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td>Less than a year</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1-3 years</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4-9 years</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10+ years</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>82.0</td>
<td>83.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>98.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>9.00</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Representativeness of the Study. According to the Fiscal Policy Institute’s Immigration Research Initiative’s 2012 report, the distribution of ethnicity among the immigrant business owners in the U.S. is as follows: White (34%), Asian (31%), Latino (28%), Black (5%), Other (2%). The distribution in the current study is almost the same: White (35%), Asian (31%), Latino (25%), Black (9%). Second, the report states that 54% of all immigrant business owners are 25 to 44 years old, which corresponds to 53% in this study. Third, according to the same report 42% of immigrant business owners in the U.S. have a college degree compared to 49% of immigrant business owners in this study. That is, the percentage of college degree owners in this study is slightly more than those in the U.S. Finally, the report also states that immigrants who have been here for over 10 years are more than twice as likely to be small business owners as those who have been here for 10 years or less. This also explains the high percent of immigrant entrepreneurs in this study (82%), who have been in the U.S. for more than 10 years. All together, the current sample is a good representative of the national demographics.

Business Demographics

Total number of businesses. 60% of the participants had only one business, 21% of them had a total of two businesses, 8% of them had total of 3 businesses, and 8% of them had more than 3 businesses.

Table 8: Total Number of Businesses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
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<td>60</td>
<td>60.0</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>21.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Number of years in current business. 29% of the participants had their current business for 4 to 9 years, 28% of them had their business for more than 10 years, 21% of them had their business for 1 to 3 years, and 19% of them had their business for less than a year.

Table 9: Total Number of Years in Current Business

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than a year</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>19.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-3 years</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>21.0</td>
<td>41.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-9 years</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>29.0</td>
<td>71.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10+ years</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>28.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>97.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Business status. 48% of the participants reported that their current business has growing profits, 39% of the businesses have stable profits, 13% of the businesses have declining profits (3% of these businesses are no longer in operation).

Table 10: Business Status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


**Business goals.** Although 82% of the participants reported that they want to grow their business (growth) (N=82), 18% of the participants reported that they want to maintain the existing status of their business (stability) (N=18).

**Table 11: Business Goals**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td>Growth</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>82.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stability</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Business satisfaction.** Participants reported that personal satisfaction is more important than making lots of money (M=4.03, SD=.89).

**Table 12: Business Satisfaction**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal Satisfaction Over Money</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>4.0306</td>
<td>.89043</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid N (listwise)</td>
<td>98</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Identity Salience.** Among four different identity categories, immigrant women entrepreneurs reported their following identities as an important part of who they are based on a Likert scale where 1=strongly disagree and 5=strongly agree: gender identity (M=4.72, SD=.60), immigrant identity (M=4.21, SD=.99), ethnic identity (M=4.20,
SD= .97), and religious identity (M=3.16, SD=1.62).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 13: Comparison of Identity Salience Means</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pair 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Identity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigrant Identity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pair 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Identity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic Identity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pair 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Identity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious Identity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pair 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigrant Identity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic Identity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pair 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigrant Identity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious Identity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The paired t-test was run to look at the differences between different identity pairs. The test was statistically significant between gender and immigrant $t(98) = 4.90, p < .05$, gender and ethnic $t(97) = 4.82, p < .05$, gender and religious $t(99) = 9.54, p < .05$, immigrant and religious $t(98) = 5.79, p < .05$, and ethnic and religious identities $t(97) = 6.08, p < .05$. That is, on average they feel significantly more identified with their gender identities than their ethnic, immigrant or religious identities. In addition, on average they feel significantly more identified with their ethnic or immigrant identities than their religious identities. Finally, there is no significant difference between their ethnic and immigrant identities.
In addition, paired t-tests were run to look at the differences between the perceived opportunities and challenges each identity brings for the business. The test was statistically significant between gender identity advantages and disadvantages $t(99) =$

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 14: Paired Samples Test for Identity Categories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paired Differences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P air 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P air 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P air 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P air 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P air 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P air 6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.15, $p < .05$, immigrant identity advantages and disadvantages $t (98) = 3.03, p < .05$, and religious identity advantages and disadvantages $t (97) = -9.86, p < .05$. That is, there were statistically significant differences between the perceived advantages and disadvantages gender, immigrant and religious identities bring for the businesses of immigrant women entrepreneurs. That is, on average they perceive that their gender identities bring significantly more opportunities than challenges for their business. Similarly, on average they perceive that their immigrant identities bring significantly more opportunities than challenges for their business. On the other hand, on average they perceive that their religious identities bring significantly more challenges than opportunities for their business.

| Table 15: Paired Samples Test for Identity Opportunities and Challenges |
|-------------------------------------------------|----------------|--------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
|                                  | Paired Differences |                        |
|                                  | Paired Differences |                        |
|                                  | Mean | Std. Deviation | Mean | Std. Error | Mean | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference | Sig. (2-tailed) |
|                                  | Lower | Upper | t   | Df  |
| Pair 1                          | Gender Opportunities | Gender Challenges | .330 | 1.53119 | .15312 | .02618 | .63382 | 2.155* | .034 |
| Pair 2                          | Immigrant Opportunities | Immigrant Challenges | .727 | 2.38113 | .23931 | .25237 | 1.20218 | 3.039* | .003 |
| Pair 3                          | Ethnic Opportunities | Ethnic Challenges | -.242 | 1.56551 | .15734 | -.55466 | .06981 | -1.541 | .127 |
Social Network Structure

The initial part of the first hypothesis (H1a) predicted that there will be a relationship between perceived opportunities of immigrant women entrepreneurs’ gender, ethnic, religious, and immigrant identities and their social networks. Partial correlations show two statistically significant relationships between perceived opportunities of identities and social networks.

First, Table 16 shows there is a statistically significant relationship between perceived opportunities of immigrant identity and customer diversity, $r = .207, p < .05$. That is, when immigrant women entrepreneurs perceive their immigrant identity as an opportunity for their business, they tend to target more diverse customers for their business. The qualitative data revealed that immigrant women entrepreneurs perceive their immigrant identity as an opportunity for their business because they are perceived as “hardworking” and they provide services “cheaper” than their local counterparts, which attracts both other immigrant and local American customers making up a diverse customer base. Therefore, the quantitative findings support the qualitative findings. In addition, there is a statistically significant relationship between perceived opportunities of immigrant identity and supplier diversity, $r = .222, p < .05$. The qualitative data revealed that immigrant entrepreneurs may prefer working with other immigrants for their business because they also believe that immigrants are hardworking, they have different set of skills and can support each other due to shared circumstances. Therefore, it can be
expected that they tend to have diverse supplier network.

Second, there is a statistically significant relationship between perceived opportunities of ethnic identity and information network diversity with respect to ethnicity, $r = -0.247, p < 0.05$ and information network diversity with respect to religion $r = -0.219, p < 0.05$. The qualitative data showed that when immigrant women entrepreneurs perceive their ethnic identity as an opportunity for their business, they tend to choose businesses that serve to their co-ethnic market and locate their businesses around their co-ethnic communities. These practices then influence their interactions, leading to a more ethnic oriented information network. Because ethnic and religious networks generally overlap, those information networks can be expected to constitute both co-ethnic and co-religious ties. In addition, there is also a statistically significant relationship between perceived opportunities of ethnic identity and network size, $r = 0.257, p < 0.05$.

Third, there is a statistically significant relationship between perceived opportunities of religious identity and information network diversity with respect to ethnicity, $r = 0.170, p < 0.05$ and network diversity with respect to religion $r = -0.291, p < 0.05$. Those relationships can be explained with the same rationale as the previous case.

Table 16: Partial Correlations Between Perceived Identity Opportunities and Social Network

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Control Variables</th>
<th>InfoNet Gender</th>
<th>InfoNet Ethnicity</th>
<th>InfoNet Religion</th>
<th>InfoNet Immig</th>
<th>Client Diversity</th>
<th>Supplier Diversity</th>
<th>Network Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Years</td>
<td>Gender Opport</td>
<td>Correlation</td>
<td>0.110</td>
<td>-0.033</td>
<td>0.230</td>
<td>0.038</td>
<td>0.116</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The second part of the first hypothesis (H1b) predicted that there will be a relationship between perceived challenges of immigrant women entrepreneurs’ gender, ethnic, religious, or immigrant identities and their social networks. Partial correlations
showed two statistically significant identity categories and information network diversity. More specifically, when ethnic identity is perceived as a challenge, the information network is less likely to have ethnic, \( r = -0.288, p < .05 \) or religious ties, \( r = -0.220, p < .10 \). This finding supports the qualitative findings in that when immigrant woman entrepreneurs disidentify with their ethnic identities (e.g., when a co-ethnic customer expects favor from an entrepreneur due to shared ethnicity and religion and the entrepreneur rejects such ethnic or religious norms), they limit their interaction with their communities.

**Table 17: Partial Correlations Between Perceived Identity Challenges and Social Network**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Control Variables</th>
<th>InfoNet Gender</th>
<th>InfoNet Ethnic</th>
<th>InfoNet Religious</th>
<th>InfoNet Immigrant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Years In the U.S.</td>
<td>Gender Challenge</td>
<td>Correlation</td>
<td>.129</td>
<td>.283</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Significance (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.307</td>
<td>.122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Df</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Years In the Current Business</td>
<td>Immigrant Challenge</td>
<td>Correlation</td>
<td>-.144</td>
<td>.041</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Significance (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.252</td>
<td>.745</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Df</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Goal</td>
<td>Ethnic Challenge</td>
<td>Correlation</td>
<td>-.035</td>
<td>-.288*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Significance (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.784</td>
<td>.020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Df</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The initial part of the fourth research question asked which forms of communication media immigrant women entrepreneurs use to seek information and to communicate with clients and suppliers. Descriptive statistics were run to answer these two questions. In terms of media use to seek information, immigrant women entrepreneurs reported using Google the most, followed by face-to-face communication, email, organizational websites, social media, mobile phones, landline phone, Meetup groups, local news, source country websites, Small Business Administration offices, online chat, ethnic news, and New York Public Library.

**Table 18: Descriptive Statistics for Communication Media Use to Seek Information**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Media Type</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Google</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>3.8469</td>
<td>1.59479</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Face-to-Face</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>3.4400</td>
<td>1.38038</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>3.2900</td>
<td>1.53935</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Websites</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>3.1237</td>
<td>1.59594</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Media</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>3.0000</td>
<td>1.71429</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile Phone</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>2.7400</td>
<td>1.45380</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landline</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>2.1212</td>
<td>1.44471</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meetup Groups</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>1.8283</td>
<td>1.07893</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local News</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>1.6800</td>
<td>1.00383</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In terms of media use to communicate with clients, immigrant women entrepreneurs reported using face-to-face communication the most, followed by email, Facebook, organizational websites, mobiles phones, landline, LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram, and Daily Deal Sites.

**Table 19: Descriptive Statistics for Communication Media Use to Communicate Clients**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Media</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Face-to-Face</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>3.6364</td>
<td>1.42467</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>3.5455</td>
<td>1.56017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>2.8687</td>
<td>1.71218</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Websites</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>2.8485</td>
<td>1.58026</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile Phone</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>2.8265</td>
<td>1.47854</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landline</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>2.5354</td>
<td>1.67401</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LinkedIn</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>2.3030</td>
<td>1.48774</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twitter</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>2.1616</td>
<td>1.57601</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instagram</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>2.0808</td>
<td>1.50967</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DDS</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>1.2727</td>
<td>0.79306</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid N (listwise)</td>
<td>98</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In terms of media use to communicate with clients, immigrant women entrepreneurs reported using email the most to communicate with suppliers followed by mobile phones, face-to-face communication, organizational websites, landline, Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram, and Daily Deal Sites.

Table 20: Descriptive Statistics for Communication Media Use to Communicate Suppliers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Media Type</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Email</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>3.1183</td>
<td>1.50975</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile Phone</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>2.4468</td>
<td>1.46366</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Face-to-Face</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>2.3830</td>
<td>1.36079</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Websites</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>2.3441</td>
<td>1.43326</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landline</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>2.2198</td>
<td>1.44378</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>1.9149</td>
<td>1.48584</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LinkedIn</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>1.6129</td>
<td>1.07372</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twitter</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>1.5213</td>
<td>1.17984</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instagram</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>1.4894</td>
<td>1.11437</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily Deal Sites</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>1.0860</td>
<td>.38039</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid N (listwise)</td>
<td>91</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The initial part of the second hypothesis (H2a) predicted that immigrant women entrepreneurs will be more likely to use traditional forms of media (face-to-face communication, email, landline) when they perceive their ethnic, gender, religious or immigrant identity as an opportunity. Partial correlation showed a statistically significant positive relationship between perceived opportunities of gender identity and traditional forms of media, $r = .176, p < .05$. This finding can be explained both by the qualitative
data and the existing literature, in which immigrant women entrepreneurs who perceive their gender identity as an opportunity for their business may prefer traditional ways of communication to build and nurture their relationships with their community and clients.

In addition to gender identity, partial correlation also revealed a statistically significant positive relationship between perceived opportunities of religious identity and traditional forms of media, $r = .233, p < .05$. The opportunities linked to other identities and media use were not related in statistically significant ways.

The second part of the second hypothesis (H2b) predicted that immigrant women entrepreneurs will be more likely to use ethnic media when they perceive their ethnic, gender or religious identity as an opportunity. The opportunities linked to identities and ethnic media use were not related in statistically significant ways.

**Table 21: Partial Correlation Between Perceived Identity Opportunity and Media Use**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Control Variables</th>
<th>Traditional Media</th>
<th>Ethnic Media</th>
<th>New Media</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Years In the U.S. Opportunities</td>
<td>Correlation</td>
<td>.176*</td>
<td>.033</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Significance (1-tailed)</td>
<td>.048</td>
<td>.378</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Df</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Years In the Current Business Opportunities</td>
<td>Correlation</td>
<td>-.083</td>
<td>.026</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Significance (1-tailed)</td>
<td>.219</td>
<td>.404</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Df</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic</td>
<td>Correlation</td>
<td>-.019</td>
<td>.052</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The third part of the second hypothesis (H2b) predicted that immigrant women entrepreneurs will be more likely to use new media when they perceive their ethnic, gender, religious or immigrant identity as a challenge. The partial correlation test showed a statistically significant but negative relationship between the challenges linked to religious identity and new media use, \( r = -0.248, p < .05 \). The challenges linked to other identities and new media use were not related in statistically significant ways.

Table 22: Partial Correlation Between Perceived Identity Challenges & Media Use

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Control Variables</th>
<th>Traditional Media</th>
<th>Ethnic Media</th>
<th>New Media</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Years In the U.S.</td>
<td>Gender Challenges</td>
<td>Correlation</td>
<td>-.123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Significance (1-tailed)</td>
<td>.123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Df</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Years In the Current Business</td>
<td>Immigrant Challenges</td>
<td>Correlation</td>
<td>-.070</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Significance (1-tailed)</td>
<td>.254</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Df</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic</td>
<td>Correlation</td>
<td>-.083</td>
<td>-.078</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Empowerment and Business Success

The sixth research question asked what factors affect the business success (declining, sustainable, and growth) and empowerment of immigrant women entrepreneurs (RQ6a). To test this, opportunities and challenges linked to multiple identities, mixed media use to seek information, mixed media use to communicate clients and suppliers, social network size and diversity, and human capital variables (education, the number of years in the U.S., the number of years in the current business) were entered into the analyses.

In addition to those, a new categorical variable was created based on the findings of the qualitative study. The qualitative data revealed three locale discourses of immigrant women entrepreneurs, namely community, opportunity, and networking. These illustrated the possible affordances and constraints of these discourses for the businesses of immigrant women entrepreneurs. Based on this finding, a categorical variable is created as follows: place as community=1, place as opportunity=2, and place as networking=3.

Multinomial logistic regression was run to predict if a business is growing with respect to declining and stable businesses. The variables are entered in the following

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Challenges</th>
<th>Significance (1-tailed)</th>
<th>Significance (1-tailed)</th>
<th>Significance (1-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.217</td>
<td>.231</td>
<td>.365</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Df</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious</td>
<td>Correlation</td>
<td>-.032</td>
<td>-.108</td>
<td>-.209*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenges</td>
<td>Significance (1-tailed)</td>
<td>.380</td>
<td>.154</td>
<td>.023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Df</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
order, which predicted a better fit of the data: continuous variables as opportunities linked
to multiple identities, mixed media use to seek information, mixed media use to
communicate clients and suppliers, social network size and information network diversity
with respect to gender, ethnicity, immigrant and religion status and categorical variables
as place, number of years in the U.S., and the number of years in the current business,
education. This explains a significant amount of variance ($\chi^2 = 131.842, p <= .001$) and it
is a good fit of the data ($p = .000$).

**Table 23: Model Fitting Information**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Model Fitting Criteria</th>
<th>Likelihood Ratio Tests</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>AIC</td>
<td>BIC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercept Only</td>
<td>184.919</td>
<td>189.940</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final</td>
<td>141.076</td>
<td>256.576</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 24: Goodness-of-Fit**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Chi-Square</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pearson</td>
<td><strong>55.026</strong>*</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deviance</td>
<td>49.076</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>0.483</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The likelihood ratio table below shows that place ($\chi^2 = 31.05, p < .05$), year in the
U.S. ($\chi^2 = 16.94, p < .05$), year in the business ($\chi^2 = 28.04, p < .05$), education ($\chi^2 = 45.97,
p < .05$), mixed ICT use for information seeking ($\chi^2 = 5.12, p < .1$), network size ($\chi^2
= 11.31, p < .05$), information network diversity with respect to immigrant identity ($\chi^2
= 14.97, p < .05$), information network diversity with respect to ethnic identity ($\chi^2 = 5.23,
p < .1$), and information network diversity with respect to religious identity ($\chi^2 = 5.46, p <
had a statistically significant main effect on business success. No interaction effects were statistically significant.

**Table 25: Likelihood Ratio Tests**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effect</th>
<th>Model Fitting Criteria</th>
<th>Likelihood Ratio Tests</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-2 Log Likelihood of Reduced Model</td>
<td>Chi-Square</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>49.620ª</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Place</td>
<td>80.678</td>
<td>31.058*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Goal</td>
<td>50.693ª</td>
<td>1.074</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Years In the U.S.</td>
<td>66.566ª</td>
<td>16.947*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Years In the Current Business</td>
<td>77.667</td>
<td>28.047*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>95.594</td>
<td>45.974*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed Media Use for Information Seeking</td>
<td>54.744ª</td>
<td>5.124*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed Media Use for Communicating with Clients and Suppliers</td>
<td>50.012ª</td>
<td>.392</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Network Size</td>
<td>60.929ª</td>
<td>11.310*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Identity Advantages</td>
<td>49.657ª</td>
<td>.038</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigrant Identity Advantages</td>
<td>64.596ª</td>
<td>14.976*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic Identity Advantages</td>
<td>54.855ª</td>
<td>5.236*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious Identity Advantages</td>
<td>55.084ª</td>
<td>5.465*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
To test what factors affect the empowerment of immigrant women entrepreneurs, Spearman correlations were used to test the relationship between personal satisfaction and other variables. These tests showed a positive statistically significant relationship between the business satisfaction and business status \((r = .357, p < .05)\), perceived opportunity of gender identity \((r = .308, p < .05)\) and network size \((r = .253, p < .05)\), and a negative statistically significant relationship between the personal satisfaction and perceived challenges of gender identity \((r = -.262, p < .05)\), perceived challenges of ethnic identity \((r = -.166, p < .10)\). First, it is not surprising that as business status improves from declining to growing, personal satisfaction level increases as well. Second, personal satisfaction seems to increase as the perceived level of opportunities linked to gender identity increase. This is along the lines of qualitative findings in that immigrant women reported their unique contribution as a woman to their businesses and how they are making a difference in a male-dominated world. Third, as their network size increases, so does their personal satisfaction level. This finding is along the lines of the social network literature in that network size help to increase one’s chances to locate and acquire tangible and intangible resources, allowing their increased well-being. On the other hand, high levels of perceived challenges associated with gender and ethnic identities negatively influence the personal satisfaction of immigrant women entrepreneurs. While the qualitative data illustrates how immigrant women entrepreneurs are addressing these challenges through communication, the quantitative data shows the negative impact of these challenges on their personal satisfaction and well-being.
CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

This study revealed how various identities of immigrant women entrepreneurs (gender, ethnic, religious, and immigrant) bring opportunities and challenges for their business and therefore affects their entrepreneurial identities. It also examined how their various organizing practices related to identity negotiation, place making, media use, visibility and social networking help to construct a desired entrepreneurial identity. In addition, this study also presented empirical evidence on how these organizing practices contribute to the empowerment and business sustainability and growth of immigrant women entrepreneurs.

This chapter summarizes the findings of this research and discusses its theoretical and practical contribution to the relevant literatures. The discussion is structured around the following overarching themes: identity and intersectionality, place, communication media use, social networks, social and economic growth, entrepreneurship, and policy implications. The chapter concludes with limitations and suggestions for future research.

Identity and Intersectionality

Identity. This study echoes the existing organizational identity literature by showing that different identity categories such as gender, ethnic, religious, or immigrant identities may also be sources for identification (Scott et al., 1998). Along with the premises in the structurational model of identification, this study shows how immigrant women entrepreneurs manage the constraining and facilitating aspects of their multiple identity structures within their organizational contexts. In addition, utilizing dialectical tension approach, the findings also present communicative strategies of immigrant women entrepreneurs for negotiating their multiple identities, resisting and changing
those interaction contexts to construct a desired professional identity. Therefore, this study addresses the call for practical information to better understand “the concrete ways in which entrepreneurs locate and exploit opportunities” (Swedberg, 2000, p. 10). Those opportunities come in many different ways. Along with the structurational model of identification, businesses were chosen and avoided by entrepreneurs based on the extent to which they create tensions and/or support for the desired entrepreneurial identity. For instance, the immigrant women entrepreneur from Senegal who opened a beauty supplier store replaced this business with an African fashion store when she was faced with some challenges with Asian suppliers. Revealing such interactive identity negotiation process between immigrant women entrepreneurs and their stakeholders demonstrates their agency and meaning making for entrepreneurial initiatives.

This study contributes to the existing literature by showing how immigrant women change inequality structures through communicative strategies such as language use, humor or (in)visibility. Besides gender, this study also demonstrates how ethnic, religion, and immigrant status can exacerbate these inequalities. For instance, immigrant women entrepreneurs often charge less than their native male and female counterparts for the same services due to their immigrant and/or gender status. In addition, they are discriminated in financial institutions due to lack of credibility sourcing from their gender, ethnic and immigrant identities. In order to deal with such inequalities, they employ a variety of communicative strategies. Unlike the conclusions in the existing literature, immigrant women entrepreneurs do not lack communication or negotiation skills. In fact, those skills are used in interactions that the cross-sectional or survey-based studies have often overlooked.
In addition, this study demonstrates the sense-making process of the immigrant women entrepreneurs’ experiences as they manage tensions. Immigrant women entrepreneurs analyze the opportunities and challenges in a given situation and make choices about which discourses to use while communicating with stakeholders. The in-depth qualitative research was especially useful in revealing the perceived social and material resources, which affect the meaning-making processes.

From a practical perspective, understanding how immigrant women entrepreneurs negotiate identities to construct a desired professional image can benefit to both this community and organizational and policy practitioners. This study suggests that construction of an entrepreneurial identity is a dynamic process and therefore necessitates immigrant women to be constantly mindful about limiting structures so that they could shift among them and create a desired professional identity.

Furthermore, the existing literature tends to generalize the experiences of immigrant communities based on their generational status or a particular ethnicity. However, the diversity of the subjects and contexts within first generation immigrants in this study supports the idea that generalizing the experiences of first generation immigrant women entrepreneurs would be limiting to understand their unique structural challenges and to suggest effective interventions and policy implications.

From a critical perspective, revealing the social and structural inequalities in the context of immigrant women entrepreneurs can help professionals take an action in fighting with these inequalities in this global economy. By revealing the hidden experiences and sharing the voices of immigrant women entrepreneurs, this study
attempts to change dominant organizational discourses in global and multinational organizational contexts (Calás & Smircich, 1992; Ely & Meyerson, 2000).

**Intersectionality.** This study contributes to the intersectionality research in organizational contexts by providing examples of the process by which gender, ethnic, religious and immigrant categories interact with one another. In addition, this study also shows how intersectionality necessitates immigrant women to create strategic ways to deal with tensions and create them a space to negotiate their relationships in multiple contexts. For instance, the intersection of gender and religious (Muslim) identities creates a new identity that is looked down in the Muslim community, which is dealt by employing silence. Similarly, the intersection of gender and immigrant identities generates a “not good enough” perception, which is managed by accepting work at a lower pay rate than non-immigrant female and male counterparts. In addition to those, the intersection of gender, race (Black) and ethnicity (Hispanic) generates credibility issues that are addressed by outperforming. Another example is the intersection of gender, immigrant and ethnic (e.g., Russian) identities, which leads to credibility issues by financial authorities and was managed by smiling and creating a positive image. The intersection of gender, racial (e.g., Black) and immigrant identities also created more disadvantages with financial institutions, which is managed by avoiding. These experiences reveal the larger social inequalities that shape and constrain the experiences of immigrant women entrepreneurs and require a close examination to develop alternative solutions (Mahalingam, Balan, & Haritatos, 2008).

Dominant organizational discourses tend to explain entrepreneurial success by communication, management or networking skills (Downing, 2005). This study questions
these underlying assumptions for organizational success and contributes to the social network theory by showing how different identity structures and the ways those structures are managed contribute to the organizational inertia and resistance.

**Identity and Place**

This study also revealed how entrepreneurial identities were shaped by place. Place seems to be another discourse for understanding the identity construction of immigrant women entrepreneurs. In an urban environment of New York City, place offers tangible and tangible benefits and shape the entrepreneurial identities of immigrant women. The analysis revealed three locale-specific discursive resources: namely place as community, place as opportunity, and place as networking.

There are several implications of these discourses for women entrepreneurs. Their ethnic identities influenced their decisions in terms of where to start and operate their business in the city. The kind of businesses in this category are those that allow community members to eat, drink and spend time together such as restaurants, ethnic food stores, social clubs, hair salons and beauty stores. The literature concludes that women entrepreneurs often choose gendered businesses that only allow for limited growth capacity (Munyua, 2009). However, this argument would be insufficient without considering entrepreneurial motivations and values of immigrant women. They basically value place for their business as it facilitates their social interactions with their community. In that sense, this discourse sheds a different light on entrepreneurial identity, with its priority on co-ethnic community than business interests (Pitt-Catsouphes et al., 2006). For these women entrepreneurs, serving the needs of their community is more important than making lots of money (Heilbrunn & Abu-Asbah, 2011).
Unlike those immigrant women entrepreneurs whose motivations were centered in their communities, a second set of immigrant women entrepreneurs in this study were opportunistic in their motivations. These entrepreneurs tend to locate their business in places that would bring more business opportunities. Such decision necessitates information about local customers, their preferences, as well as the other local businesses operating in similar sector in the neighborhood. The entrepreneurial decision made based on that information acquisition could be consequential for the survival and growth of a business.

Finally, those entrepreneurs with the discourse of place as networking represent another entrepreneurial category that puts information access ahead of other factors to survive in a continuously changing creative industry. Such level of information is acquired from diverse group of professionals in shared offices. Therefore, as much as the business cycle, place as a discourse also speaks to the information needs of entrepreneurs.

These distinctions based on discourses of place enable the creation of a typology among women entrepreneurs, characterized by different business goals, information needs and sources, and communication media use. The quantitative results support the qualitative findings in terms of business goals, information needs and communication technology use of community-oriented, opportunity-oriented and networking-oriented entrepreneurs. Those immigrant women entrepreneurs with a discourse of place as community tend to sustain their businesses, those with a discourse of place as opportunity and networking tend to grow their business. Those goals necessitate different levels of information. The need for information is reported to be highest for those entrepreneurs who adopt a discourse of place as networking followed by those with a discourse of place
as opportunity and place as community.

This typology of immigrant women entrepreneurs allows us to group their businesses based on geographic context and addresses the call for research to understand the entrepreneurial processes between entrepreneurs in high and low innovative industries (Foss, 2010; Hanson & Blake, 2009). Although businesses that promote interaction of community such as restaurants, social clubs, and ethnic food markets fit into the “place as community” discourse, those businesses that operate in creative and tech-oriented sectors such as designers and application developers fit into the “place as networking” discourse. Therefore, this study also addresses a call to understand the spatial and economic dimensions of immigrant entrepreneurship (Wang, 2012).

Despite the growing body of research on place and identity (see Foss, 2010; Gill & Larson, 2014; Larson & Pearson, 2012; Rooney et al., 2010), Rooney et al. (2010) suggest that there is room “to capture fully this interplay between place identities and social identities” (p. 67). The current research contributes to this literature by showing how salient identity categories such as ethnic identity shape the place identities. This study also contributes to the literature by conceptualizing place at the neighborhood level in an urban environment, besides the office (Florida, 2007), the city or regional levels (Larson & Pearson, 2012). More specifically, it shows how particular neighborhoods in an urban area (such as New York City) provided discursive resources that immigrant women used to construct their entrepreneurial identities.

**Place, Communication Media Use and Social Networks.** Another unique contribution of this study is showing the dynamic relationship between place, media use and social networks by combining qualitative and quantitative research methods. For
instance, this study revealed how three places afford different communication networks (Hampton, 2010). More specifically, immigrant women entrepreneurs with different discourses of place seem to use different types of communication channels to reach out to clients or to promote their business. Those with a discourse of “place as networking” reported the importance of social media tools in reaching out to their “universal” clients and making their business more visible. On the other hand, those with a discourse of “place as community” seem to rely on “word-of-mouth” in their community to get the word out about their business.

Another contribution of this study is showing how the personal contacts in entrepreneurial networks are embedded in places and shape entrepreneurial identities. For instance, those entrepreneurs with a discourse of community preferred neighborhoods where they can connect with their co-ethnic or co-religious community. In turn, being in this particular space recursively shaped these identities. Along the lines of Hanson and Blake (2009), networks are linked to places, which in turn, influence the development and outcomes of networks. This is consistent with Haraway’s (1991) “gendered social place” metaphor that emphasizes the interrelationship between physical factors and the social networking processes.

In addition, place also affects the extent to which social capital is acquired. The quantitative analyses showed that information network diversity is influenced by the place of immigrant women entrepreneurs. While the community-oriented entrepreneurs’ networks mostly consist of strong ties, networking-oriented entrepreneurs’ networks mostly consist of weak ties. In this regard, this study addresses the call for research on the role of place and networking (Hampton, 2010).
Theoretically speaking, this analysis presents new evidence on how place, identity, communication media use, and networking recursively shape each other. Organizational communication literature has often focused on one or two of these contexts, not paying enough attention to show the interrelated dynamics among them. Along the lines of Gill and Larson (2014), we can conclude that place is an organizing discourse, which enables entrepreneurs to change structures of opportunity (Hanson, 2009). This dynamic relationship can also provide significant implications for entrepreneurship, sustainable development, and urban planning.

**Media Use and Social and Economic Development**

This study contributes to the existing literature in several ways. This study presented a more complete communication media repertoire of immigrant women entrepreneurs than existing studies. Those media ranged from traditional media such as paper and satellite TV to more recent communication technologies such as social networking sites and mobile phone applications. In addition, this study contributed to the existing literature by investigating the communication media use across diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds. While investigating the different communication media use practices of diverse ethno-cultural groups, this study was also able to demonstrate the similarities across these groups by showing the relationship between identity salience of immigrant women entrepreneurs and their communication media use.

**Media Use to Communicate with Clients/Suppliers.** While the quantitative data revealed that immigrant women entrepreneurs rely on face-to-face communication and email to communicate with their clients, the qualitative data analyses also presented the strategic use of mobile phone texting and communicating. Consistent with existing
studies, mobile communication with business suppliers helped immigrant women entrepreneurs reduce their travel costs (Jensen, 2007; Kamga, 2006). This was particularly noteworthy for the case of the butcher, who cut most of her travel costs to participate in auctions along the East Coast through the use of mobile communication with meat suppliers. She received calls from several suppliers regarding the availability of fresh products and prices, then she could compare the prices simultaneously, deciding which supplier to use. Before mobile phone use, she would travel to all potential sellers to make such a decision. In this regard, adoption of new media can facilitate some of the business practices, empowering women entrepreneurs.

In addition, texting allows immigrant women entrepreneurs to keep in contact with customers and therefore improve the quality of their relations. A good number of immigrant women entrepreneurs mentioned how texting with clients at the professional level has evolved over time at the personal level. They benefited from these in-depth relationships professionally by increasing their reputation and customer loyalty, and also personally by increasing their psycho-social wellbeing through informal interactions. It is important to note here that along with the findings of existing research, in most of the cases mobile communication helped strengthen relationships when there was already an established face-to-face relationship (Doerfel & Haseki, 2010).

Text communication also helped to increase communication effectiveness with clients by allowing immigrant women to overcome the barriers of their accent while communicating with their clients. Several immigrant entrepreneurs reported losing clients when the clients did not understand them, negatively affecting their self-esteem and confidence. Empowerment may emerge from self-esteem and confidence (Vincent &
Cull, 2013). Texting allows immigrant women entrepreneurs to effectively communicate with their clients, enhancing their self-esteem, confidence and empowerment.

**Media Use and (In)visibility.** This study also demonstrated that in certain situations immigrant women entrepreneurs may need a level of anonymity as much as recognition, and that they manage this tension through various communicative strategies. More specifically, they prefer to be relatively anonymous when they perceive challenges pertaining to their particular identity or identities (e.g., ethnic, religious, immigrant, physical stereotypes, accent). They manage their (in)visibility by utilizing the affordances of mediated communication. Practically speaking, the findings reveal the varying challenges due to ethnic, gender, immigrant or religious identities when considering visibility issues among immigrant women entrepreneurs and how ICTs are used to help to manage that. Being aware of these invisibility tensions may give us a direction for change. Theoretically speaking, these invisibility tensions can be seen as an alternative organizing practice in the construction of an entrepreneurial identity (Gill & Larson, 2014). In this context, alternative organizing takes place by strategically using communication technologies to deal with inequalities embedded in social and cultural contexts (Cheney, 2014).

**Media Use and Information Seeking.** This study also addresses the call for research on the investigation of the main information sources for immigrant communities (Caidi, Allard, & Quirke, 2010). Immigrant women entrepreneurs in this study reported using various communication media to seek information. The survey questionnaire revealed Google as the most used form of media for seeking information; but the
interview data also revealed paper, television (TV), and subway ads to be useful for the information practices and decision-making processes of immigrant women entrepreneurs.

This study contributes to the growing literature on ICT use and economic development by presenting the full media repertoire in addressing the information needs of immigrant women entrepreneurs. This study also captured the use of subway ads as an alternative information source in an urban context. That is, subway ads can be used as a way to reach out to some immigrant communities for their information needs. Other than that, both paper and ICTs come with unique material constraints and opportunities.

Although it was indirect, the case of the furniture business owner demonstrates the role of satellite TV on the economic growth of a business. However, the traditional mass media has not been considered as an important media for development (Ogan et al., 2009). This example suggests that media channels used for personal matters may serve for business processes over time. In this regard, everyday communication media use practices may feed into the information needs of entrepreneurs (Mitra, 2006; Wenjing, 2005). Other than that, the existing literature suggests that traditional forms of media are mostly used by uneducated and low socio-economic rural women. The current research, however, presents counter-evidence by illustrating their potential for educated urban woman entrepreneurs.

In addition, paper is found to be an important tool for information collection during the start of a business. Existing literature highlights various affordances of paper in delivering information. Among these affordances, “low cost” affordance of paper (Kaplan & Jermann, 2010) enhanced its perceived value for collecting and saving information. In addition, low cost affordance affected the perception towards starting a
business as one entrepreneur said, “it was easy to start [a business],” diminishing
cognitive barriers associated with business creation.

In addition to these traditional sources of information, Google was the most
widely used media to seek information by immigrant women entrepreneurs. Immigrant
women used Google to get information about business practices, procedures, and policies
of other companies operating in similar sectors. Scholars also drew attention to the
potential of the Internet for unanticipated benefits (Heeks, 2010). This study contributed
to the literature on ICT use and empowerment by presenting how information obtained
through Google may empower women to start their own business by helping them realize
their potential.

These examples illustrate that immigrant women entrepreneurs utilize different
sources to obtain information based on their needs, resources and digital literacy. Unlike
the stereotypes towards the role of traditional media on development, this study shows
the potential of paper and television in the process of information seeking and decision-
making. In this regard, this research has contributed to the ICTD scholarship in the
discussion of traditional media and development. This finding also questions the top
down approaches that often dominate the practical initiatives in the area of ICTD.

Finally, despite the availability of variety of programs and assistance organized by
the New York Public Library, Small Business Administration offices or Chamber of
Commerce for small business owners, the majority of participants reported not using
them as a source for information. This study draws attention to the under-utilized
potential of these services and invites practitioners to re-examine their agenda along with
the needs and expectations of this heterogeneous community.
Media Use and Information Storage. This study presented various forms of media use for information storage, including notebooks, computer and mobile phone. A few immigrant entrepreneurs reported the use of notebook to keep track of their customers’ debt. Use of notebooks was especially common among entrepreneurs with a discourse of place as community (e.g., grocery store owner, butcher). While notebook’s ease of use might have facilitated the information storage for business owners, its “visual transparency” might have helped to build trust in the community (Ghosh, Chen, Ming, & Abouzied, 2013).

Besides the notebook, computers are also used to keep a detailed record of their services for clients. Storing information on computers allowed them to quickly pull specific information to provide the same service for clients, increasing efficiency of business processes. In addition, this study presents some evidence for the potential use of computers in the business processes despite the limited support in the literature (see Donner, 2006; Esselaar et al., 2007; Molony, 2006).

This study also revealed the use of mobile phones for information storage. A couple of immigrant entrepreneurs use Google drive applications on their mobile phone to create files, expense reports or bookkeeping due to its low cost and accessibility. This study, therefore, brings some support in the area of mobile phones use and information storage for small business owners (Donner & Escobari, 2010). In fact, Esselaar et al.’s (2007) assertion that mobiles “cannot be used to track inventory” can be re-examined (p.99).

Surveillance/Monitoring. Immigrant women entrepreneurs also reported using mobile phone and social networking sites for surveillance and monitoring. The mobile
phone application GroupMe was strategically used for the surveillance of a business. In fact, the affordances of that mobile technology helped an entrepreneur to sustain her business by allowing her to monitor the correspondence between her employees and clients and preventing employees from stealing their clients. This case illustrates how surveillance can be consequential for the sustainability of a small business. The existing literature identifies two discursive formations of organizational surveillance, the coercive and the caring (Sewell & Barker, 2006). A coercive formation is exercised for the sake of business interests; a caring formation is exercised for everyone’s interests. Sewell and Barker posit that such a distinction may limit the scope of empirical research. Along these lines, the current study draws attention to the need to reexamine these discursive formations within the context of small business ownership, considering that the motivation of small business owners is neither coercive nor caring but to sustain their business.

In addition, Facebook was used to monitor competitors, which allowed entrepreneurs to evaluate their business performance and solicit feedback about their services. It seems like the affordance of visibility of the content of competitors on Facebook could play a role in the sustainability of small businesses given that losing customers to competitors could be detrimental for businesses with limited numbers of clients. These instances illustrate how making strategic choices in terms of technology adoption and use might be consequential for small businesses. As immigrant women entrepreneurs identify various uses of technology for their business, they in turn increase their sense of empowerment (Donner & Escobari, 2010).

These examples illustrate how immigrant women entrepreneurs use the
affordances of various forms of media in an effort to survive or grow their businesses. It is also important to note here that immigrant women entrepreneurs were able to use those affordances to achieve their business goals only if they were or have become aware of them. While some immigrant women entrepreneurs used them, most others did not. In other words, their incapabilities can hinder them from utilizing ICTs in strategic ways (Kvasny, Kranich, & Schement, 2006).

**Data Centric Technologies and Structural Inequalities.** This research makes a contribution to the literature also by presenting the potential negative impact of new communication technologies for immigrant women entrepreneurs. More specifically, interviews revealed that data centric technologies such as Yelp, Google, and Twitter could put certain communities at a disadvantage when they face tensions of being visible or invisible. This study suggests that although data centric technologies may present opportunities for inclusion, information available to the public require careful consideration. It can especially be a threat for the sustainability of first generation immigrant businesses if they had undesired scoring, ranking or image on the Internet while they are trying to build credibility and trust as newcomers.

**Media Use and Business Outcomes.** The mixed method approach allowed to better identify the distinct impacts linked to the use of various communication media. The interviews revealed how different forms of media such as traditional, ethnic and new media can facilitate some of the businesses processes. Similarly, the quantitative analyses revealed how mixed media use can affect the business outcomes. More specifically, the quantitative findings revealed that mixed media use to seek information for business processes (but not to communicate clients) is positively related to business growth.
This study builds up on the existing research on the access or use of one particular technology by exploring both the social and economic impact. Although the existing literature stresses the economic success and growth in entrepreneurship, both qualitative and quantitative data shows that empowerment and business satisfaction are more important determinants for immigrant women entrepreneurs to sustain their business than economic growth. This finding highlights why scholars should not compare male and female way of doing business and/or their skills for business management.

**Network Form of Organizing**

This study contributes to the social network literature on entrepreneurship by demonstrating the changing importance of gender, ethnic, religious and immigrant ties in the entrepreneurial activity, which affect entrepreneurial outcomes like stability, efficiency and growth. The existing social network literature on entrepreneurship has heavily focused on the impact of strong and weak ties, overlooking the variations and their relative impact on the social capital of immigrant women entrepreneurs.

Methodologically, this study contributes to the existing literature by revealing the dynamic relationships of immigrant women entrepreneurs through interviews and the direct impact of these relationships on business sustainability and growth. Through in-depth interviews, this study addressed “how” these networks are created, maintained, or avoided. Immigrant women entrepreneurs often shift their networks to maximize their opportunities (Jack et al, 2010). In this regard, this study also reveals the sensemaking process of immigrant entrepreneurs and the ways in which they reflect on their networks. The Russian tour operator changing her professional connections from co-ethnic clients and businesses to more diverse stakeholders after the Russia-Ukraine conflict illustrates
one such sensemaking processes. Such a dynamic networking practice would be difficult
to capture through survey analysis.

When immigrant women focus on ethnic opportunities for their business, they
tend to build professional connections with their co-ethnic ties and co-ethnic business
organizations. That allows them to promote their business to their co-ethnic communities.
In other cases, when they target diverse populations, they often build connections with
diverse business organizations, local institutions to obtain information, advice and
support. Building a professional connection with a trusted local Business Development
Center illustrates how such a networking strategy may help build trust with the local
community, as was the case for the Mexican childcare business owner.

Immigrant women entrepreneurs also benefit from gendered networking for
seeking information and/or building relationships with stakeholder—especially when
their businesses focus on products or services often used by women (e.g., wedding
planning, photo editing, kit for children, pet services). Women customers often feel more
comfortable getting services from other women, which then leads women entrepreneurs
to build a professional identity targeting women clients. However, existing studies often
argued that women would not benefit from networking with other women (Forret &
Dougherty, 2004; Ibarra, 1997) and concluded that women should diversify their network
capacity in order to be successful (Burt, 1992). This analysis, however, suggests that
gendered networking practices of immigrant women entrepreneurs does not necessarily
put them at a disadvantage and opens up the venue for examining identity salience in the
networking process.
Early studies showed that immigrants often connect with transnational ties to maintain their relationships over geographical borders (Sampredo, 1998). In this study, though, a good number of immigrant entrepreneurs built information and advice networks with their transnational ties who are operating similar businesses in their home country or in another country (e.g., Pakistani jewelry designer, French tech startup, Nigerian cultural center). These examples show that besides social and psychological/emotional benefits, transnational ties facilitate some of the entrepreneurial processes by providing information and advice and increasing their ability to operate their business (Mehra & Papajohn, 2007).

This finding also echoes the recent findings in that family ties were important sources of information, advice, and support for immigrant women entrepreneurs (Collins & Low, 2010). Most of the women entrepreneurs in this current research reported relying on their children for legal or technology related aspects of their business. These examples illustrate how children of immigrant business owners can work as gatekeepers for the legal and technological needs of their parents’ business (Katz, 2010). While these gatekeepers can be professionals or formal sources, in this study they were mostly informal sources such as children.

This current study also presents counter evidence to the existing network studies which argue that networks concentrated with friends, kin and other women as less effective or that “entrepreneurs should recruit more resource-rich, weak ties into their personal social networks” (Batjargal, 2003, p. 551). This study, however, argues that what constitutes a “good” network depends on the situated practices of entrepreneurs. Given more variations within groups than between groups, this study also suggests that
motivations for networking formally or informally are not necessarily determined by the gender of the entrepreneur but more by their identity salience.

Along with the findings of the interview data, the quantitative data analyses revealed that ethnic, religious and immigrant ties have a direct impact on business outcomes. More specifically, ethnic, religious and immigrant ties in an individual’s information network contributed towards the business growth of immigrant women entrepreneurs. Among these separate social ties, immigrant ties played a more positive role in their business growth. Therefore, this study revealed the varying impact of different kinds of social ties on business growth of immigrant entrepreneurs.

A post-structuralist feminist perspective draws attention to possibly more complex intersections of gender and other social categories and suggests developing network research on entrepreneurial networks. In addition to ethnic, religious and immigrant social categories, this study also demonstrated how the intersection of ethnic identity and place affect the networking practices of immigrant women entrepreneurs.

This study also revealed that immigrant entrepreneurs can increase their social capital through their extended ethnic ties, which I named “quasi-ethnic” ties. For instance, the main customers of the Turkish butcher were those from other Muslim countries including Sudan, Pakistan, Iran, and Palestine; that of the Albanian grocery store were from Kosovo, Serbia, and Italy; that of the Azeri restaurant owner were from Russia, Uzbekistan, and Kazakhstan; that of the Dominican hair salon owner were from Mexico and Puerto Rico. The quasi-ethnic ties especially mattered for those entrepreneurs with discourse with “place as community” as their services were also addressing the needs of those quasi-ethnic ties. The findings indicate that the quasi-ethnic
ties can act like strong ties for their associated communities and can play a similar role like co-ethnic ties by creating social capital for those businesses.

**Social and Economic Development**

The current study addressed the existing gap in the immigrant women entrepreneurship literature by showing the direct impact of their organizing practices as well as how those organizing practices relate to their empowerment and the economic sustainability/growth of their businesses.

In today’s global economies, it is necessary to identify the factors that support economic development (Valdez, 2013) so that we can promote social and economic change. In terms of place, the current study addresses the calls for expanding the analysis of economic activity by exploring the impact of place in the business sustainability and growth of immigrant entrepreneurship. The findings suggest that by looking at the neighborhoods in which immigrant women entrepreneurs are located, we can predict whether a business is stable or growing. More specifically, immigrant women entrepreneurs who are located around their communities tend to have stable businesses compared to those who share working space with other professionals. Therefore, this study offers new evidence to conceptualize the relationship between place and economic activity.

In addition to place, this study revealed a direct impact of communication media use on the business sustainability and growth. More specifically, the analyses showed a respondent’s mixed media use for seeking information predicts business growth, which may demonstrate that media use can have a positive impact. The qualitative analyses support this finding in that when entrepreneurs use various forms of communication
media—such as Google, other organizations’ websites, and ethnic media—they may come to realize about opportunities for their business. There is also evidence that immigrant entrepreneurs who already use media for personal matters (e.g., mobile phones, computer, satellite TV) may over time identify new ways to integrate them for their business (Gitau et al., 2009). In this study, information obtained from satellite TV was used to promote business.

On the other hand, using communication media to communicate with clients and suppliers was not associated with business outcomes. In this regard, this study shows the distinction in media use for seeking information versus communicating with clients/suppliers in terms of their impact on business outcomes. The existing literature does not separate these two practices; yet this study confirms the prediction of Donner and Escobari (2010) that these distinctions may have significant implications for entrepreneurship. Overall, this study provides empirical evidence for the extent to which media use for seeking information and communicating with clients/suppliers translates into the business sustainability and growth.

Another contribution of this study is revealing the relationship between perceived opportunities that come from multiple identities of immigrant women entrepreneurs and key business outcomes. More specifically, this research provides data about the extent to which ethnic, religious, and especially immigrant identities bring opportunities that influence business stability and growth. While existing studies heavily examined the role of strong and weak ties on business outcomes, this is the first study that demonstrates the impact of social capital gained from different identity categories on business outcomes.

Finally, this study also points to the importance of human capital variables.
Among several human capital factors tested in this study, only education translated into business growth. Education level can help to identify available choices in terms of organizing resources, increasing empowerment and business outcomes. However, it is important to provide training along with the needs and goals of their business.

**Entrepreneurship as Organizing and Social Change**

The interview data showed immigrant women entrepreneurs engage in various organizing practices based on their social, economic and cultural resources. These organizing practices include identity construction, place making, media use, visibility and networking and mirror the social inequalities embedded in the social, cultural and political structures. In order to manage those social inequalities, “successful entrepreneurs can join these conversational processes and move them in particular directions” (Lindh de Montoya, 2000, p. 343). In other words, immigrant women entrepreneurs are the drivers of social change. Along the lines of Steyaert & Hjorth (2008) and Calas, Smircich, and Bourne (2009), we can refer to “entrepreneurship as social change.”

There is a considerable debate in the literature over entrepreneurial characteristics. One of these characteristics is innovation (Wang & Morrell, 2015). However, innovation can be difficult to conceptualize given the range of innovative practices of immigrant women in this study. For instance, an Albanian international grocery store owner makes home made ethnic food such as yogurt spread or pickles, which can be considered innovative. Similarly, generating a business opportunity from an internationally popular soap opera for her furniture store makes that Turkish woman entrepreneur innovative. Another innovative act is the use of Google Drive by the Kazakh
woman entrepreneur for creating her own invoices rather than buying software for this task. These instances demonstrate how immigrant women entrepreneurs can be innovative, which could both empower them and economically benefit them. Such generalizations about the entrepreneurial characteristics can mask the unique characteristics and skills of entrepreneurs.

The current study showed that immigrant women entrepreneurs are not necessarily growth-oriented. In fact, most of them have the intention of sustaining their business and are satisfied with the standing of their business. Operating their business in a way that supports their values and lifestyle seems to be more important. Therefore, they achieve personal empowerment and define personal success in different ways than entrepreneurship literature has traditionally defined. In this regard, the efforts to compare women entrepreneurs with their male counterparts in terms of innovation or business growth seems to be misleading.

**Policy Implications**

Government policies are key for entrepreneurial activity (Reynolds, Camp, Bygrave, Autio, & Hay, 2002). This study has several policy implications for immigrant entrepreneurship. First of all, this study questions if a categorization and understanding across generation status or ethnicity (e.g., intentions and motivations to start a business and to discontinue a business, perceived opportunities) is meaningful to explain the differences in immigrant entrepreneurship given the substantial variations within first generation and same ethnic membership of immigrant women entrepreneurs in this study. Both academic studies and government surveys (e.g., Fiscal Policy Institute, Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, U.S. Census Bureau) attempt to identify differences between
generational groups (e.g., first generation, 1.5 generation, second generation) and ethnicity (e.g., Black, Hispanic/Latino, Asian, White). Although this is an easy and efficient way of comparing immigrant entrepreneurship over time, the implications of these categorizations may not necessarily be accurate or useful for everyone within the same ethnic or generational group. This study suggests that categorization with respect to identity salience may generate more meaningful comparisons across immigrant women entrepreneurs than generation status or ethnicity. Both the qualitative and quantitative data revealed that the informational and networking needs of immigrant women entrepreneurs are complex and diverse, and as a result, their information and media use practices vary substantially. However, these differences can be explained to a great extent by identity salience of immigrant women entrepreneurs including what kind of business they choose, intentions to sustain or grow, or in which neighborhood they are located.

Second, policy practitioners should also pay attention to the barriers created by the intersectionality of multiple structures and the ways to address those barriers. The existing literature and national surveys mostly point at gender barriers in getting funding. This study revealed how multiple structures might create new barriers for immigrant women entrepreneurs to obtain funding. For example, because being a woman and Russian is associated with mafia, or being woman and black created additional credibility issues, these women had a harder time with financial institutions. Therefore, policy makers need to take into account the unique experiences of immigrant women entrepreneurs in the intersection of multiple identity categories if they want to create equal financial opportunities.

Third, this study documented a variety among immigrant women entrepreneurs
with respect to their locale-specific discourses. The existing surveys group immigrant owned businesses under three categories in terms of their business locations: storefront, street truck/cart and home-based. However, given the three locale-specific discourses in an urban space found in this study, “storefront” could be limiting to understand the opportunities and barriers of a business location. In this regard, policy makers may also need to reconsider the categorization of business location. This involves identifying the affordances and constraints of place including information needs, technology use and networking. Given that quantitative data revealed place as the significant factor for the growth of a business, then the local governments and urban planners should give more attention to the role of place for entrepreneurial initiatives. For instance, based on the type of business an immigrant woman wants to start, government agencies could make recommendations regarding the possible location of that business in consideration with the existence of target clientele, supportive community, competitors, or relevant businesses in a given location.

Fourth, this study also calls for reconsideration of policies regarding new media use by immigrant communities such as immigrant women entrepreneurs. The findings suggest that different information needs are addressed with different forms of media, and that ethnic and traditional forms of media such as satellite TV or paper could be as beneficial as the new media to address the information needs of immigrant women entrepreneurs. This study also suggests an urban specific media, subway ads, to serve the information needs of immigrant entrepreneurs. Therefore, new media adoption and use can be encouraged with respect to the immigrant women’s entrepreneurial orientations, where new media adoption and use could benefit them with their information needs and
visibility to diverse clients, facilitating their business goals. Along with these lines, the technology training that speak to the specific needs of immigrant entrepreneurs needs to be developed. In addition, there is also evidence in this study that data centric technologies may disadvantage some immigrant entrepreneurs by increasing or limiting their desired level of visibility (e.g., pictures, online credit score, online reviews, popularity in online networks). This might have some implications for immigrant women entrepreneurs especially given that companies like Facebook are implementing new strategies for assessing credit value of individuals by looking at their connections on social networking sites such as Facebook. This might put first generation immigrant entrepreneurs at a disadvantage with financial institutions.

Along with the different entrepreneurial discourses with different information and media use needs, the existing training agenda of government agencies need to be reconsidered. The survey data revealed that free training services of New York Public Library or Small Business Administration offices received almost no attention from immigrant women entrepreneurs. The low demand for these services may speak to the possibility that these services do not address the unique needs of immigrant women entrepreneurs, which are very much also dependent on their entrepreneurial identity. In this regard, the policy on training and education of immigrant entrepreneurs needs to be restructured to better meet their distinct needs. In addition, given that immigrant women entrepreneurship is a continuous organizing process, this community can benefit greatly from learning about the organizing practices of other women entrepreneurs. Learning about the how others organize their opportunities and challenges could be empowering for those entrepreneurs, especially given the unique challenges created by the
intersectionality of multiple structures. Chant (1997) suggested that “power over resources may be more important than levels of resources in influencing people’s capabilities to cope with hardship” (p.138). Therefore, government agencies can create space for immigrant women entrepreneurs where they share their unique stories and experiences and help empower one another.

Finally, given the different entrepreneurial discourses of immigrant women, policy makers need to take a more holistic conceptualization of entrepreneurial outcomes. Future attempts to measure business success could possibly go beyond sustainability and economic growth. The current study supports the existing assumptions that growth centered approach may overshadow other important entrepreneurial gains such as empowerment and social well-being (Hanson, 2009).

**Limitations and Further Research**

This study has also several limitations. First, interviews were conducted with those who are fluent in English, or those who were fluent in English shared more about their entrepreneurial practices than those who were not as fluent. That is, there might be even more challenges of immigrant women entrepreneurs that are not captured in this study due to language barriers. Second, according to the survey data most of the businesses that participated in this study are either sustainable or growing. In that sense, this study mostly documented the best organizing practices of immigrant women entrepreneurs rather than the kind of practices that failed. Finally, despite the diversity of participants in terms of their ethnicity, nationality and business types, this study is somewhat limited with only one hundred participants in one urban context. Stronger predictive models can be reached through greater numbers of participants.
This study reflects the experiences of the immigrant women entrepreneurs in an urban environment of New York City. Although some of their experiences specific to the urban environment can have some implications in other urban environments in the U.S., the experiences of immigrant women entrepreneurs are not highly generalizable. For instance, the experiences of Asian immigrants may be different in Canada (Ali, 2006) or the experiences of Muslim immigrants can be different in Europe (Bredström, 2003) due to different political and historical structures in those countries.

This study also suggests some directions for future research. First, along with the optimal distinctiveness theory (Brewer, 1991), future research can investigate if there is any optimal distinctiveness for the gender, ethnic, immigrant and religious identities of immigrant women entrepreneurs and the extent to which they meet group members’ needs for inclusion and differentiation affect their empowerment and business sustainability and growth. Second, research can examine additional social categories such as age and height, which also emerged from this study. Third, research can reveal additional situational communication practices that help to enact an “ideal entrepreneur.” Fourth, future research can further examine the affordances and constraint of different locale-specific discursive resources in other urban and rural environments. Finally, longitudinal studies can better capture the outcomes of relevance by looking at their impact on the business outcomes at different points of time.

This study has developed our current understanding of the (1) the material and discursive construction of entrepreneurial identity of immigrant women entrepreneurs; and (2) how to apply communication theory and methodology to promote social change. The narratives of immigrant women entrepreneurs in this study demonstrate how
dominant social, cultural and political discourses may create structural barriers for their business and also illustrate how immigrant women entrepreneurs communicatively create spaces for social change. Their voices suggest that engaged dialogue between them and the policy makers and practitioners are necessary to set the agenda for the social and economic development of immigrant women entrepreneurs.
APPENDICES

Survey Questions – English

Think about the most recent business you have started (could be one currently operating or one that is no longer in business). This section asks you to provide information about the success of that current or recent business.

1. What is the current status of the business you are describing?
   • Current business with no longer/declining profits
   • Current business with stable profits
   • Current business with growing profits

2. Please estimate your typical monthly net business profit or loss for your current business (in U.S. dollars).
   $____________

3. Please indicate the number of your clients you typically serve on a daily basis.
   ____________

Please indicate the number of your part time and full time employees.

4. Part time: ____________

5. Full time: ____________

6. Please select the response that best describes your goal for this business:
   • Growth - I want to increase the profits/sales/market share of my business
   • Stability - I want to maintain the current condition of the business
   • NA (out of business)
7. For each of the following, select the response that best describes how you feel about yourself. 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree

Being a woman is an important part of who I am

Being an immigrant (having migrated from another country to the U.S. on a permanent basis) is an important part of who I am

Being an entrepreneur (a business creator) is an important part of who I am

My ethnicity is an important part of who I am

My religion is an important part of who I am

Being a woman brings advantages for my business (e.g., building business relationships, finding clients, getting social/financial support, etc)

Being an immigrant brings advantages for my business

Being an entrepreneur (business creator) brings advantages for my business

My ethnic background brings advantages for my business

My religious background brings advantages for my business

Being a woman creates disadvantages for my business (e.g., building business relationships, finding clients, getting social/financial support, etc.)

Being an immigrant creates disadvantages for my business

Being an entrepreneur creates disadvantages for my business

My ethnic background creates disadvantages for my business

My religious background creates disadvantages for my business

Personal satisfaction is more important than making lots of money in my business

I am personally satisfied with the business I have created
We communicate with others using various channels as part of business. Answer each of the following questions about extent to which you use these channels for different aspects of your business. (1=never, 2=once a month, 3=once a week, 4=several times a week, 5=at least once a day)

8. On average, how often do you use the following communication channels to seek information and advice for your business (e.g., ideas concerning customers, markets, management, investment, partners, administrative or bureaucratic relationships such as tax payments, legal requirements).

- face-to-face conversation
- email
- landline phone
- mobile phone
- organizational website
- social media
- search engines (e.g., Google, Bing, Yahoo)
- online chat rooms
- local newspaper
- ethnic local newspaper
- home country Internet sites
- New York Public Library
- Meetup groups
- Small Business Administration Offices

9. On average, how often do you use the following communication channels for communicating with your clients?

- face-to-face communication
- email
- landline phone
- mobile phone
- organizational website
- Twitter
- social networking sites (e.g., Facebook)
- professional networking sites (e.g., LinkedIn)
- daily deal sites (Groupon, LivingSocial)
- photo sharing sites (e.g., Instagram, Flickr)
10. On average, how often do you use the following channels for communicating with your business suppliers (or other businesses generally)?

- face-to-face communication
- email
- landline phone
- mobile phone
- organizational website
- Twitter
- social networking sites (e.g., Facebook)
- professional networking sites (e.g., LinkedIn)
- daily deal sites (Groupon, LivingSocial)
- photo sharing sites (e.g., Instagram, Flickr)
This section asks you to provide information about whom you talk to for information and advice and with whom you do business. Although we are asking you to provide the name of each person and/or the institution, all information provided here will be treated as confidential by the researchers. We will not be contacting anyone you have listed them here.

11. Who do you talk to when you are seeking **information and advice about your business**? (e.g., ideas concerning customers, markets, management, investment, partners, administrative or bureaucratic relationships such as tax payments, legal requirements. **List at least three people or businesses.** You can name as many as you need. Then answer each question about this other person or the leader of the business.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the person or Business</th>
<th>Relationship to you? family, relative, business-acquaintance, customer, other</th>
<th>Male or Female? (M or F)</th>
<th>Same ethnicity as you? (same or different or don’t know)</th>
<th>Same religion as you? (same or different or don’t know)</th>
<th>Is he/she an Immigrant? (yes or no or don’t know)</th>
<th>How often do you communicate? 1=once a year 2=once a month 3=once a week 4=several times a week 5=at least once a day</th>
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12. Who are your regular **suppliers**? **List at least three suppliers and/or businesses.** You can name as many as you need. Then answer each question about this other person or the leader of the business.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the person or Business</th>
<th>Relationship to you? family, relative, business-acquaintance, customer, other</th>
<th>Male or Female? (M or F)</th>
<th>Same ethnicity as you? (same or different or don’t know)</th>
<th>Same religion as you? (same or different or don’t know)</th>
<th>Is he/she an Immigrant? (yes or no or don’t know)</th>
<th>How often do you communicate? 1=once a year 2=once a month 3=once a week 4=several times a week 5=at least once a day</th>
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13. Who are your regular customers? List at least three clients and/or businesses. You can name as many as you need. Then answer each question about this other person or the leader of the business.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the person or Business</th>
<th>Relationship to you?</th>
<th>Male or Female?</th>
<th>Same ethnicity as you?</th>
<th>Same religion as you?</th>
<th>Is he/she an Immigrant?</th>
<th>How often do you communicate?</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>family, relative, business-acquaintance customer, other</td>
<td>(M or F)</td>
<td>(same or different or don’t know)</td>
<td>(same or different or don’t know)</td>
<td>(yes or no or don’t know)</td>
<td>1=once a year 2=once a month 3=once a week 4=several times a week 5=at least once a day</td>
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The following questions ask you to provide some background information about your business and about yourself. All personal information will be kept confidential and will be retained in a secure location.

14. The country of your ethnic origin ______________________

15. Age
   • 18-24
   • 25-35
   • 36-46
   • 47-56
   • 56+

16. Please write down the type of your business: ______________________

17. The number of years you have lived in the United States
   • Less than 1 year
   • 1-3 years
   • 4-9 years
   • 10+ years

18. How many different businesses have you started in total?
   • 1
   • 2
   • 3
   • more than 3

19. The number of years in the current business (or number of years in former business)
   • Less than 1 year
   • 1-3 years
   • 4-9 years
   • 10+ years

20. Highest education level earned
   • No high school or equivalent degree
   • High school degree or equivalent
   • Some college but no college degree
   • College degree
   • At least some graduate education
   • Graduate degree

21. Location of your business in New York City _________________
Encuesta

Piense en el negocio más reciente que haya comenzado (podría ser uno operando actualmente o uno que ya no está en el negocio). En esta sección se le pide que proporcione información sobre el éxito de ese negocio actual o reciente.

1. ¿Cuál es el estado actual de la empresa que usted está describiendo?
   • Negocio anterior que ya no está en funcionamiento
   • Negocio actual de disminución de las ganancias
   • Negocio actual con ganancias estables
   • Negocio actual con ganancias crecientes

2. Por favor estime la ganancia o pérdida típica, neta mensual para su negocio actual (en dólares estadounidenses).
   $ _____________

3. Indique el número de clientes que usted atiende normalmente sobre una base diaria.
   _____________

Indique el número de trabajadores de medio tiempo y tiempo completo.
4. Medio tiempo: ____________
5. Tiempo Completo: ____________

6. Por favor, seleccione la respuesta que mejor describe su objetivo para este negocio:
   • Crecimiento
   • Estabilidad
   • NA (fuera de los negocios)
7. Para cada uno de los siguientes enunciados, seleccione la respuesta que mejor describa cómo se siente sobre usted mismo. 1 = totalmente en desacuerdo, 2 = en desacuerdo, 3 = neutral, 4 = de acuerdo, 5 = totalmente de acuerdo

Ser mujer es una parte importante de lo que soy

Ser inmigrante (habiéndome emigrado de otro país a los EE.UU. de manera permanente) es una parte importante de lo que soy

Ser emprendedor (un creador de negocios) es una parte importante de lo que soy

Mi etnia constituye una parte importante de lo que soy

Mi religión es una parte importante de lo que soy

Ser mujer trae ventajas para mi negocio (por ejemplo, la construcción de relaciones de negocios, búsqueda de clientes, conseguir el apoyo social / financiero, etc)

Ser inmigrante trae ventajas para mi negocio

Ser emprendedor (un creador de negocios) aporta ventajas para mi negocio

Mi origen étnico trae ventajas para mi negocio

Mi formación religiosa trae ventajas para mi negocio

Ser mujer trae desventajas para mi negocio (por ejemplo, la construcción de relaciones de negocios, búsqueda de clientes, conseguir el apoyo social / financiero, etc)

Ser inmigrante trae desventajas para mi negocio

Ser emprendedor trae desventajas para mi negocio

Mi origen étnico trae desventajas para mi negocio

Mi formación religiosa trae desventajas para mi negocio

La satisfacción personal es más importante que hacer un montón de dinero en mi negocio

Personalmente, estoy satisfecho con el negocio que he creado
Nos comunicamos con otras personas que utilizan distintos canales como parte del negocio. Conteste cada una de las siguientes preguntas acerca de hasta qué punto se utilizan estos canales para diferentes aspectos de su negocio. (1 = nunca, 2 = menos de una vez a la semana, 3 = varias veces a la semana, 4 = una vez al día, 5 = varias veces al día)

8. En promedio, ¿con qué frecuencia utiliza los siguientes canales de comunicación para recabar información y asesoramiento para su negocio (por ejemplo, las ideas relativas a los clientes, los mercados, la gestión, la inversión, los socios, las relaciones administrativas o burocráticas, tales como el pago de impuestos, los requisitos legales).

• conversación cara a cara
• correo electrónico
• teléfono fijo
• teléfono móvil (celular)
• página web de la organización
• medios de comunicación social
• motores de búsqueda (por ejemplo, Google, Bing, Yahoo)
• salas de chat en línea
• periódico local
• periódico local étnico
• sitios de Internet del país de origen
• Biblioteca Pública de Nueva York

9. En promedio, ¿Con qué frecuencia utiliza los siguientes canales de comunicación para comunicarse con sus clientes?

• comunicación cara a cara
• correo electrónico
• teléfono fijo
• teléfono móvil (celular)
• página web de la organización
• Twitter
• sitios de redes sociales (por ejemplo, Facebook)
• sitios de redes profesionales (por ejemplo, LinkedIn)
• sitios de descuentos diarios (Groupon, LivingSocial)
• sitios para compartir fotos (por ejemplo, Instagram, Flickr)
10. En promedio, ¿Con qué frecuencia utiliza los siguientes canales de comunicación con sus proveedores comerciales (u otros negocios en general)?

- comunicación cara a cara
- correo electrónico
- teléfono fijo
- teléfono móvil (celular)
- página web de la organización
- Twitter
- sitios de redes sociales (por ejemplo, Facebook)
- sitios de redes profesionales (por ejemplo, LinkedIn)
- sitios de descuentos diarios (Groupon, LivingSocial)
- sitios para compartir fotos (por ejemplo, Instagram, Flickr)
En esta sección se le pide que comparta datos acerca de con quién habla sobre información y asesoramiento, y con quién hace negocios. Aunque le pedimos que brinde el nombre de cada persona o institución, toda la información que nos dé será tratada de manera confidencial por los investigadores. No contactaremos a ninguna persona de las que usted haya mencionado aquí.

11. ¿Con quién habla cuando usted está buscando información y asesoramiento acerca de su negocio? (Por ejemplo, sobre ideas relativas a los clientes, los mercados, la gestión, la inversión, los socios, las relaciones administrativas o burocráticas, tales como el pago de impuestos, requisitos legales. Mencione al menos tres personas o empresas. Puede mencionar tantos nombres como los necesite. Luego responda a cada pregunta sobre esa otra persona o líder de la empresa.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nombre de la persona o del negocio</th>
<th>¿Relación con usted?</th>
<th>¿Es hombre o mujer?</th>
<th>¿Tiene su misma etnia?</th>
<th>¿Profesa su misma religión?</th>
<th>¿Es él/ella inmigrante?</th>
<th>¿Con qué frecuencia se comunican?</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>familia directa,</td>
<td>(H o M)</td>
<td>(iguales o diferentes o no sabe)</td>
<td>(iguales o diferentes o no sabe)</td>
<td>(sí o no o no sabe)</td>
<td>1 = nunca, 2 = menos de una vez a la semana, 3 = varias veces a la semana, 4 = como una vez al día, 5 = varias veces al día</td>
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<tr>
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<td>familiar, negocio-cliente adquirido de un negocio, otro</td>
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12. ¿Quiénes son sus proveedores habituales? Mencione al menos tres proveedores o empresas. Usted puede nombrar a todos los que usted necesite. Luego conteste cada pregunta acerca de esa persona o líder de la empresa.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>¿Relación con usted?</th>
<th>¿Es hombre o mujer?</th>
<th>¿Tiene su misma etnia?</th>
<th>¿Profesa su misma religión?</th>
<th>¿Es él/ella inmigrante?</th>
<th>¿Con qué frecuencia se comunican?</th>
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</table>
13. ¿Quiénes son sus clientes habituales? **Mencione al menos tres clientes o empresas.** Usted puede nombrar a todos los que usted necesite. Luego conteste cada pregunta acerca de esa persona o líder de la empresa.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Nombre de la persona o del negocio</th>
<th>¿Relación con usted?</th>
<th>¿Es hombre o mujer?</th>
<th>¿Tiene su misma etnia?</th>
<th>¿Profesa su misma religión?</th>
<th>¿Es él/ella inmigrante?</th>
<th>¿Con qué frecuencia se comunican?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>familia directa, familiar, negocio-cliente adquirido de un negocio, otro</td>
<td>(H o M)</td>
<td>(iguales o diferentes o no sabe)</td>
<td>(iguales o diferentes o no sabe)</td>
<td>(si o no o no sabe)</td>
<td>1 = nunca, 2 = menos de una vez a la semana, 3 = varias veces a la semana, 4 = como una vez al día, 5 = varias veces al día</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Las siguientes preguntas le piden que proporcionar alguna información sobre su negocio y sobre usted mismo. Toda la información personal se mantendrá confidencial y se mantendrá en un lugar seguro.

14. The country of your ethnic origin _____________________

15. Edad
   • 18-24
   • 25-35
   • 36-46
   • 47-56
   • mayor de 56

16. El tipo de negocio: ________________________________

17. Número de años que ha vivido en los Estados Unidos
   • Menos de 1 año
   • 1-3 años
   • 4-9 años
   • Más de 10 años

18. En total, ¿cuántas negocios diferentes ha comenzado?
   • 1
   • 2
   • 3
   • más de 3

19. Número de años en el negocio actual, el número de años que duró el negocio anterior
   • Menos de 1 año
   • 1-3 años
   • 4-9 años
   • Más de 10 años

20. Mayor nivel de educación obtenido
   • No terminó la escuela secundaria o grado equivalente
   • Secundaria o equivalente
   • Algunos cursos universitarios pero sin título universitario
   • Título universitario
   • Por lo menos algo de educación de postgrado
   • Licenciatura

21. Ubicación de su negocio en Nueva York: _______________
调查问卷

请回想您近期启动的公司（这可以是正在运营的或者已经停止运营的），并回答以下一组问题。这些问题主要关于您近期所启动的公司的成功经验。

1. 您所描述的公司目前的状况是怎样的？
   • 以前运营的，已经停止运营的公司
   • 现在运营的，利润有所下降的公司
   • 现在运营的，有稳定利润的公司
   • 现在运营的，利润攀升的公司

2. 请估计您现在运营公司在一般情况下的月净利润或净亏损额是多少（以美元计算）。

$______________

3. 请填写您每天接待客户的大致人数。

______________

请填写您所雇佣的兼职工和全职员工的数量。

4. 兼职工： ____________

5. 全职员工： ____________

6. 请从以下选项中选取最合适的选项来描述您为上述公司制定的目标：
   • 成长
   • 稳定
   • 无（不在营业）
7. 请为以下各个问题选取最合适的选项来描述您对自己的认识。

1=完全不同意, 2=不同意, 3=中立, 4=同意, 5=完全同意

身为一名女性是我的个性的重要组成部分

身为一名侨民（即永久性地从其他国家移民到美国）是我的个性的重要组成部分

身为一名企业家（即企业创始人）是我的个性的重要组成部分

我的种族渊源是我的个性的重要组成部分

我的宗教信仰是我的个性的重要组成部分

我作为一名女性能为我的企业带来优势（例如：建立商业伙伴关系，找寻顾客，获取社交或者财政相关的帮助等）

我作为一名侨民我能为我的企业带来优势

我作为一名企业家（即企业创始人）能为我的企业带来优势

我的种族渊源能为我的企业带来优势

我的宗教信仰能为我的企业带来优势

我身为女性使我的企业处于劣势（例如：建立商业伙伴关系，找寻顾客，获取社交或者财政相关的帮助等）

我身为侨民使我的企业处于劣势

我身为企业家使我的企业处于劣势

我的种族渊源使我的企业处于劣势

我的宗教信仰使我的企业处于劣势

个人的满足比我的企业赚很多钱更重要

我个人对我所创造的企业感到满意
我们在从事商务的时候使用各种不同的渠道与他人交流。请回答以下一组问题。这组问题主要关于您在从事不同业务的时候使用各种渠道的频率（1=从不，2=少于每周一次，3=每周数次，4=约每天一次，5=每天数次）

8. 平均来说，您使用以下各种交流渠道为您的企业获取信息和建议（例如：有关客户、市场、管理、投资、商业伙伴、行政关系，如缴税和法律法规相关要求）的频率是怎样的？
   - 面对面的交谈
   - 电子邮件
   - 固定电话
   - 移动电话
   - 企业网站
   - 社群媒体
   - 搜索引擎（例如：Google【谷歌】，Bing【必应】，Yahoo【雅虎】）
   - 网上聊天室
   - 地方□□
   - 民族地方□□
   - 原籍国网站
   - New York Public Library【□□公共□□□】

9. 平均来说，您使用以下各种交流渠道和客户联系的频率是怎样的？
   - 面对面的交谈
   - 电子邮件
   - 固定电话
   - 移动电话
   - 企业网站
   - Twitter【推特】
   - 社交网站（例如：Facebook【脸书】）
   - 职业社交网站（例如：LinkedIn【领英】）
   - 每日交易网站（Groupon【□宝网】，LivingSocial）
   - 照片共享网站（例如：Instagram, Flickr）
10. 平均来说，您使用以下各种交流渠道和供应商（或者其他相关人员）联系的频率是怎样的？

- 面对面的交谈
- 电子邮件
- 固定电话
- 移动电话
- 企业网站
- Twitter【推特】
- 社交网站（例如：Facebook【脸书】）
- 职业社交网站（例如：LinkedIn【领英】）
- 每日交易网站（Groupon【团宝网】，LivingSocial）
- 照片共享网站（例如：Instagram, Flickr）
请您填写以下表格中的空格。这一表格是关于您进行商务交流以获取信息、建议和进行合作的对象。尽管我们要求您提供每个您提到的人的名字和/或者他们所在的机构，研究人员保证将所有您在此提供的信息作为机密信息对待。我们不会联系您在此列举的任何人。

11. 当您收集有关您的企业的信息和建议（例如：有关客户、市场、管理、投资、商业伙伴、行政关系，如缴税和法律法规相关要求）的时候，您和谁联系？请列举至少三名人员或者三个企业。如果需要的话，您可以列举更多的人员或者企业。接着，请回答关于这一人员或者企业领导的相关问题。

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>人口或者企业的名字</th>
<th>与您的关系</th>
<th>性别？</th>
<th>与您有同一种族渊源？</th>
<th>与您有同一宗教信仰？</th>
<th>他/她是侨民吗？</th>
<th>你们多久通信一次？</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>家庭成员，亲属，商务联系，客户，其他</td>
<td>（男或女）</td>
<td>（相同，不同，或不知道）</td>
<td>（相同，不同，或不知道）</td>
<td>（是，不是，或不知道）</td>
<td>1=从不，2=少于每周一次，3=每周数次，4=每日一次，5=每日数次</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
12. 您的常规供应商有哪些？请列举至少三名供应人员和/或者企业。如果需要的话，您可以列举更多的人员或者企业。接着，请回答关于这一人员或者企业领导的相关问题。

| 人口或者企业的名字 | 与您的关系 | 性别？（男或女） | 与您有同一种族渊源？（相同，不同，或不知道） | 与您有同一宗教信仰？（相同，不同，或不知道） | 他/她是侨民吗？（是，不是，或不知道） | 你们多久通信一次？
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1=从不， 2=少于每周一次， 3=每周数次， 4=每日一次， 5=每日数次</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


13. 您的常规客户有哪些？请列举至少三名供应人员和/或者企业。如果需要的话，您可以列举更多的人员或者企业。接着，请回答关于这一人员或者企业领导的相关问题。

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>人口或者企口的名字</th>
<th>与您的关系</th>
<th>性别？</th>
<th>与您有同一种族渊源？</th>
<th>与您有同一宗教信仰？</th>
<th>他/她是侨民吗？</th>
<th>你们多久通信一次？</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>家庭成员，亲属，商务联系，客户，其他</td>
<td>男或女</td>
<td>（相同、不同，或不知道）</td>
<td>（相同、不同，或不知道）</td>
<td>（是、不是，或不知道）</td>
<td>1=从不，2=少于每周一次，3=每周数次，4=每日一次，5=每日数次</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
请您回答接下来的一组关于您企业和您自己的背景信息的问题。所有您在此填写的信息都会被作为机密信息对待，并保存在保险的地方。

14. 您父母的种族渊源 ____________________

15. 年龄
   - 18-24
   - 25-35
   - 36-46
   - 47-56
   - 56+

16. 行□ ____________________

17. 您在美国居住的年数
   - 少于1年
   - 1-3年
   - 4-9年
   - 多于10年

18. 您所启动的企业一共有几家?
   - 1
   - 2
   - 3
   - 3家以上

19. 您在从事现在所在行业的年数（或者您之前的企业营业的总年数）
   - 少于1年
   - 1-3年
   - 4-9年
   - 多于10年

20. 持有的最高学历
   - 无高中或同等学□
   - 高中或同等学□
   - 中专、大专等，无本科学历
   - 本科学历
   - 接收□研究生教育
   - 研究生学位

21. ____________________
Survey Instrument 서베이

귀하의 현재 (혹은 가장 최근에 했던) 사업에 대한 질문입니다.

1. What is the current status of the business you are describing?
   귀하의 사업이 현재 어떤 단계에 있습니까?
   - Former business no longer in operation
     사업을 그만 둔
   - Current business with declining profits
     현재 사업 진행 중이지만, 수익이 줄고 있음
   - Current business with stable profits
     현재 사업이 일정한 수익을 주며 진행 중
   - Current business with growing profits
     현재 사업의 수익이 점점 증가하고 있음

2. Please estimate your typical monthly net business profit or loss for your current business (in U.S. dollars).
   귀하의 월 평균 순수익 (혹은 순손해)가 미국달러로 얼마 정도 입니까?

   $____________

3. Please indicate the number of your clients you typically serve on a daily basis.
   귀하가 상대하는 고객이 하루 평균 몇 명이나 됨니까?

   ______________

Please indicate the number of your part time and full time employees.

귀하의 사업장에 풀타임 직원과 파트타임 직원이 몇 명이나 됨니까?

4. Part time: ____________ 파트타임: ____________

5. Full time: ____________ 풀타임: ____________

6. Please select the response that best describes your goal for this business:
   귀하의 사업의 목표는 무엇입니까?
   - Growth
     성장
   - Stability
     안정
   - NA (out of business)
     해당 없음 (사업종료)
7. 다음 중, 귀하께서 본인의 정체성을 생각할 때, 느끼시는 대로 선택해주십시오. 1= 매우 반대, 2= 반대, 3= 보통, 4= 찬성, 5= 매우 찬성

내 성별 (여성)은 나에게 있어서 중요한 부분이다.

이민자는 것은 나에게 중요한 부분이다.

사업가라는 것은 나에게 중요한 부분이다.

내 인종은 나에게 중요한 부분이다.

내 종교는 나에게 중요한 부분이다.

여성이라는 점은 내 사업에 장점이 된다 (사업 관계 형성, 고객 모으기, 사회적/금전적 도움 받기 등)

이민자는 점은 내 사업에 장점이 된다.

사업을 스스로 연 것은 내 사업에 장점이 된다.

내 인종적 배경은 내 사업에 장점이 된다.

내 종교적인 배경은 내 사업에 장점이 된다.

여성이라는 점은 내 사업에 단점이 된다

이민자이라는 점은 내 사업에 단점이 된다

사업을 스스로 연 것은 내 사업에 단점이 된다

내 인종적 배경은 내 사업에 단점이 된다.

내 종교적 배경은 내 사업에 단점이 된다.

내 사업에 있어서, 내 개인적인 만족감은 내가 돈을 많이 버는 것보다 더 중요하다.

나는 내가 시작한 사업에 개인적으로 만족한다.
(3) 사업에 있어서, 많은 커뮤니케이션 수단이 사용됩니다. 귀하의 사업을 위해 아래의 커뮤니케이션 방법들을 어느 정도나 사용하시는지 응답해주십시오. (1= 아예 안 함, 2= 일주일에 한 번 이하, 3= 일주일에 여러 번, 4= 적어도 매일, 5= 하루에도 자주 여러 번)

8. 귀하의 사업에 대한 정보나 조언을 구하기 위해, 아래 커뮤니케이션 방법들을 얼마나 자주 사용하십니까?
   - face-to-face conversation 얼굴보고 대화 (면대면 소통)
   - email 이메일
   - landline phone 유선전화
   - mobile phone 무선전화
   - organizational website 회사 웹사이트
   - social media 소셜미디어
   - search engines (e.g., Google, Bing, Yahoo) 검색엔진 (예: 구글, 야후 등)
   - online chat rooms 온라인 채팅방
   - local newspaper 지역 신문
   - ethnic local newspaper 한인 신문
   - home country Internet sites 한국기반 웹사이트
   - New York Public Library 뉴욕 도서관

9. 귀하의 사업 고객들과 소통하기 위해, 아래 커뮤니케이션 방법들을 얼마나 자주 사용하십니까?
   - face-to-face conversation 얼굴보고 대화 (면대면 소통)
   - email 이메일
   - landline phone 유선전화
   - mobile phone 무선전화
   - organizational website 회사 웹사이트
   - Twitter 트위터
   - social networking sites (e.g., Facebook) 소셜 네트워킹 사이트 (예: 페이스북)
   - professional networking sites (e.g., LinkedIn) 프로페셔널 네트워킹 사이트 (예: 링크드인)
   - daily deal sites (Groupon, LivingSocial) 쿠폰/딜 사이트 (예: 그루폰, 리빙소셜 등)
   - photo sharing sites (e.g., Instagram, Flickr) 사진 공유 사이트 (예: 인스타그램, 플리커 등)
10. 귀하의 사업 관계자들과 (다른 사업가, 재료 공급원 등) 소통하기 위해, 아래 커뮤니케이션 방법들을 얼마나 자주 사용하십니까?

- face-to-face conversation 얼굴보고 대화 (면대면 소통)
- email 이메일
- landline phone 유선전화
- mobile phone 무선전화
- organizational website 회사 웹사이트
- Twitter 트위터
- social networking sites (e.g., Facebook) 소셜 네트워킹 사이트 (예: 페이스북)
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- daily deal sites (Groupon, LivingSocial) 쿠폰 사이트 (예: 그룹폰, 리빙소셜 등)
- photo sharing sites (e.g., Instagram, Flickr) 사진 공유 사이트 (예: 인스타그램, 플리커 등)
아래 섹션은 귀하께서 정보나 조언을 구하실 때 누구와 상의하시는지, 누구와 사업을 하시는지에 대해서 여쭤볼 것입니다. 여기에서 비록 귀하의 성함을 여쭤버더라도, 귀하의 응답은 기밀로 처리되어 외부에 유출되지 않으며, 오직 연구자만 볼 수 있습니다. 아래 응답은 오직 연구의 목적으로만 쓰이기 때문에, 여기에 적으신 사람에게 절대 연락하지 않으니 안심시키고 답해주시면 감사하겠습니다.

11. 귀하의 사업에 대한 정보나 조언을 구하실 때, 누구와 이야기하십니까? (예: 고객, 시장, 관리, 투자, 파트너, 세금이나 법적 요건에 대한 행정적인 관계 등에 대한 의견을 나눌 때) 최소 세 개 이상의 사업체나 사람의 이름을 적어주십시오. 그 후에 그 사람이나 사업체의 대표에 대한 각 질문에 답해주시면 감사하겠습니다.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the person or Business</th>
<th>Relationship to you?</th>
<th>Male or Female?</th>
<th>Same ethnicity as you?</th>
<th>Same religion as you?</th>
<th>Is he/she an Immigrant?</th>
<th>How often do you communicate?</th>
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<tr>
<td>사망이나 사업의 이름</td>
<td>귀하와의 관계는 어떻게 됩니까? (가족, 친척, 지인, 고객 등)</td>
<td>성별 (남/녀)</td>
<td>귀하와 같은 종교입니까? (같다, 다르다, 모르겠다)</td>
<td>귀하와 같은 종교입니까? (같다, 다르다, 모르겠다)</td>
<td>그 사람도 이민자입니까? (예 아니면 모른다)</td>
<td>그 사람과 얼마나 자주 연락하십니까? (1= 아예 안 함, 2= 일주일에 한번 이하, 3= 일주일에 여러 번, 4= 매일, 5= 하루에도 자주 여러 번)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
12. Who are your regular suppliers? List at least three suppliers and/or businesses. You can name as many as you need. Then answer each question about this other person or the leader of the business.

귀하의 정기적인 공급책은 누구입니까? 최소한 세 명의 공급자나 사업체의 이름을 적어주십시오. 그 후에 그 사람이나 사업체의 대표에 대한 각 질문에 답해주시면 감사하겠습니다.

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<td>성별 (남/녀)</td>
<td>귀하와 같은 인종입니까? (같다, 다르다, 모른다)</td>
<td>귀하와 같은 종교입니까? (같다, 다르다, 모른다)</td>
<td>그 사또도 이민자입니까? (그렇다, 아니다, 모른다)</td>
<td>1=once a year 2=once a month 3=once a week 4=several times a week 5=at least once a day</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


13. 귀하의 단골 손님은 누구입니까? 최소한 세 명의 고객이나 사업체의 이름을 적어주십시오. 그 후에 그 사람이나 사업체의 대표에 대한 각 질문에 답해주시면 감사하겠습니다.

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<tr>
<th>Name of the person or Business</th>
<th>Relationship to you?</th>
<th>Male or Female? (M or F)</th>
<th>Same ethnicity as you? (same or different or don’t know)</th>
<th>Same religion as you? (same or different or don’t know)</th>
<th>Is he/she an Immigrant? (yes or no or don’t know)</th>
<th>How often do you communicate?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>사람이나 사업의 이름</td>
<td>귀하와의 관계는 어떻게 됩니까? (가족, 친척, 지인, 고객 등)</td>
<td>성별 (남/여)</td>
<td>귀하와 같은 인종입니까? (같다, 다르다, 모른다)</td>
<td>귀하와 같은 종교입니까? (같다, 다르다, 모른다)</td>
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<td>1=once a year, 2=once a month, 3=once a week, 4=several times a week, 5=at least once a day</td>
</tr>
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</table>
The following questions ask you to provide some background information about your business and about yourself. All personal information will be kept confidential and will be retained in a secure location.

마지막으로 귀하의 사업과 귀하에 대한 기본정보들을 여쭤보겠습니다. 귀하의 사적인 정보는 기밀정보로 간주되어 연구자만 접근할 수 있게끔 안전하게 보관되니 걱정 마십시오.

14. The country of your ethnic origin ________________

15. Age 귀하의 연령이 어떻게 되십니까?
   • 18-24
   • 25-35
   • 36-46
   • 47-56
   • 56+

16. Please write down the type of your business ____________________

17. 미국에서 거주하신지 얼마나 되셨습니까?
   • Less than 1 year 1년 미만
   • 1-3 years 1-3년
   • 4-9 years 4-9년
   • 10+ years 10년이상

18. 총 몇 개의 사업체를 시작하셨습니까?
   • 1
   • 2
   • 3
   • 3+

19. 귀하의 현재(혹은 가장 최근에 하신) 사업은 총 몇 년간 유지되었습니까?
   • Less than 1 year 1년 미만
   • 1-3 years 1-3년
   • 4-9 years 4-9년
   • 10+ years 10년이상

20. 귀하의 최종 학력이 어떻게 되십니까?
   • No high school or equivalent degree고졸이하
   • High school degree or equivalent 고졸
   • Some college but no college degree 대학교 중퇴
   • College degree 대학교 졸업
   • At least some graduate education대학과 유사한 교육기관 수료
   • Graduate degree 대학원 학위 소지 (MBA, JD, M.A., Ph.D, M.S., MD..)

21. ______________________
INFORMED CONSENT FORM

You are invited to participate in a research study “The Use of New Communication Technologies and Social Networks by Immigrant Women Entrepreneurs” that is being conducted by Muge Haseki, who is a doctoral student and Dr. Craig Scott who is a professor in the School of Communication and Information at Rutgers University. The purpose of this research is to understand the communication technology use and social networks of immigrant women entrepreneurs.

100 subjects will be invited to participate in the study. The subjects must be 18 years of age or older to participate in the study. The study procedures will include (1) interviews and (2) questionnaires. Each interview will last approximately 30 minutes. The questionnaire will last approximately 20 minutes. You are free to discontinue your participation at any point. This research is confidential. The research records will include some information about you and this information will be stored in such a manner that some linkage between your identity and the response in the research exists. Some of the information collected about you includes your responses in the questionnaire and what you will share during the interview. Please note that we will keep this information confidential by limiting individual's access to the research data and keeping it in a secure location. The principal investigator and the co-investigator are the only parties that will be allowed to see the data. If a report of this study is published, or the results are presented at a professional conference, only group results will be stated. All study data will be kept for at least three years and will be destroyed as soon as possible. There are no greater than minimal risk to participation in this study. There are no benefits of taking part in this study, although you may enjoy the opportunity to talk about your experiences. Participation in this study is voluntary. You may choose not to participate, and you may withdraw at any time during the study procedures without any penalty to you. In addition, you may choose not to answer any questions with which you are not comfortable.

If you have any questions about the study or study procedures, you may contact myself at muge.haseki@rutgers.edu or you can contact my advisor Dr. Craig Scott at crscott@rutgers.edu. We are both available at the following address: 4 Huntington St., New Brunswick, NJ 08901, 848-932-7500. If you have any questions about your rights as a research subject, you may contact the IRB Administrator at Rutgers University at:

Rutgers University Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects
Office of Research and Regulatory Affairs
ASB III, 3 Rutgers Plaza
New Brunswick, NJ 08901-8559
Tel: 848-932-0150
Email: humansubjects@orsp.rutgers.edu

You will be given a copy of this consent form for your records. Sign below if you agree to participate in this research study:

Subject (Print) __________________________________________
Subject Signature ____________________________ Date ____________________

Principal Investigator Signature ____________________ Date ________________
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