

A Qualitative Study of Bangladeshi Diaspora in Malaysia: The Role of Social Networking

ABSTRACT

The theoretical exploration of diaspora entrepreneurship is still in its infancy stage, and hence the underlying mechanisms underpinning strategic behaviours such as resource attrition and networking in this context remain limited. We thus explore the social networking behaviours of diaspora entrepreneurs, and the effect of these networks on entrepreneurial determinants. In doing so, we investigate Bangladeshi diaspora communities and their social interactions and network ecosystem in the Malaysian context. Noting the nuanced and contextual underpinnings of such a study, we examine diaspora entrepreneurship qualitatively, by employing a series of interviews with Bangladeshi diaspora entrepreneurs in Malaysia. Our study demonstrates that the Bangladeshi diaspora entrepreneurs in Malaysia benefit from two types social networking: (i) ethnic-tie, and (ii) non-co-ethnic tie. Our findings additionally establish that these social ties are built on specific network motivators: (i) friendship and personal/familial tie, and (ii) economic interest and mutual benefits. Our study highlights a number of conditions which can help to support entrepreneurship in the diaspora community.