

The influence of religion on the perseverance of the Muslim entrepreneur: A comparison between two Islamic Countries

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Abstract

Purpose:

Entrepreneurship stands as one of the most significant factors in the development of an economy, which explains the big number of contributions given on the topic. However, the entrepreneurial spirit embodies a world of adversity distinguished by ever-present challenges and obstacles. Faced with this continuous struggle, the entrepreneur might relinquish and abandon his idea, his dream, his goal, or, might face it, resist it, fight it. One of the concerns of current researches in the field of entrepreneurship is identifying resources from which the entrepreneur can draw the capacity to persevere. This paper addresses this new concern, and, by taking a random sample of Saudi entrepreneurs living in Saudi Arabia, and of Algerian entrepreneurs living in Algeria, it highlights how religion influences the perseverance of the entrepreneur.

Design:

Our research is of a confirmatory nature; a questionnaire was prepared as a method to collect data. Therefore, we have developed a 27-question form that was subsequently distributed casually thorough one Saudi and one Algerian Chamber of Commerce. We considered two different Islamic Countries in order to verify the existence of similarities among the entrepreneurs of these countries, and consequently identify some common factors, which can be related to religion. We made a statistical analysis in order to verify if Islam impacts on Muslim entrepreneurs' perseverance. Our analysis consist in a multiple regression made with SPSS® software.

Findings:

We analysed in-depth the meaning of perseverance. Given that perseverance is a process, we study the phases of this process and find out three main dimensions of perseverance: resolution, patience, and resistance. We found that in Saudi Arabia, religion exerts a tangible and significant influence on the perseverance of the entrepreneur. This result appears consistent with the reality of Muslims in general, for which religion plays an important role in their behaviour, and represents an integral part of their culture, both in the case of individuals, and society.

Research limitations/implications:

The limited literature on perseverance does not comprise research on the dimensions of perseverance. In our opinion, determining these dimensions represents a very interesting research topic as it allows better understanding the meaning of perseverance, and helps the entrepreneur to be rather more persistent when encountering adversity.

What is original/ what is the value of the paper?

The research in the field of entrepreneurship has far demonstrated that religion has a significant influence on the behaviour of the entrepreneur. In addition, scholars have analysed the impression of perseverance on entrepreneurs' success. But, until now, no research has addressed the relationship that might exist between religion and perseverance. This is the goal of the present study. Our objective is to determine the influence of religion on the perseverance of the Muslim entrepreneur;

Keywords: perseverance, religion, Islam, entrepreneurship, Saudi Arabia