

TRANSGENERATIONAL TOURISM ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN
LANGKAWI ISLAND, MALAYSIA

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to Ayah, Ibu, arwah Ayah, Mak, Ayang, Aneesa Sofea and Adeera Zahra.

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ABSTRACT

Transgenerational entrepreneurship is an evolution of the family business theory, but unfortunately, the theory has not been fully explored within the context of tourism planning. In traditional family business research, transgenerational entrepreneurship focuses on the family as the unit of analysis rather than the business entity. Furthermore, this shift in perspective has opened a new frontier for family business research within the context of tourism development. Interestingly, the family business is considered a nepotism-based economic model, but the model has managed to succeed and survive from the feudal economy to the modern economy of today. Entrepreneurship can be passed down through family generations, although the business could change in terms of ownership or product. Moreover, although the family is involved in an idiosyncratic tourism business, surprisingly, it can sustain and even emerge as a local tourism brand. Hence, from the perspective of tourism development, this research examined the role and characteristics on the success factors of transgenerational entrepreneurship. It also looks into the influence of these factors on the development of tourism and the economy in particular through sustaining family entrepreneurship and new venture creations. Thus, the research objective is to identify transgenerational entrepreneurship characteristics, family entrepreneurial behaviour and influence on the new venture creation activity in tourism business. The research adopted a qualitative approach, in which the snowball technique was used to identify 18 family businesses with at least two generations of entrepreneurs in Langkawi Island. An in-depth interview was conducted and thematic analysis was performed. The result discovered nine themes which are namely, survivability mindset, smallness, family business capital, family new ventures, family decision-making management, family cumulative entrepreneurship experience, entrepreneurship moulding, family values and culture, and goal achievement. It was found that the business is the main family entrepreneurship resource rather than an entity. Besides, new venture creation is the primary family entrepreneurship activity for the new generation and alternatively as an exit policy. Slightly different from conventional family business management, which is based on dictatorship, the families in this case study practised democratic monarchy where the owner would act as the final stamp of approval for any decisions. Another finding was that altruism influences of the family, thus proving that family businesses indeed have a nepotistic culture. Moreover, the repeated succession process eventually becomes a family entrepreneurship legacy because the successor has a sense of responsibility and is tacit in all knowledge transfers. Besides that, trust goes beyond the family sphere to involve suppliers, customers, and financial institutions. Therefore, the transgenerational tourism entrepreneurship model proposed in this study fills in the gap in transgenerational entrepreneurship and planning development models that have yet to be developed.

ABSTRAK

Keusahawanan trans-generasi adalah evolusi teori perniagaan keluarga, namun, teori itu belum sepenuhnya diterokai dalam konteks perancangan pelancongan. Dalam kajian perniagaan keluarga tradisional, keusahawanan trans-generasi berfokus pada keluarga sebagai unit analisis dan bukannya entiti perniagaan. Tambahan lagi, perspektif ini telah membuka ruang baru bagi kajian perniagaan keluarga dalam konteks pembangunan pelancongan. Menariknya, perniagaan keluarga dianggap sebagai model ekonomi berasaskan nepotisme, tetapi berjaya bertahan dari ekonomi feodal hingga ekonomi moden hari ini. Keusahawanan boleh diwarisi melalui generasi keluarga, walaupun perniagaan boleh berubah dari segi pemilikan atau produk. Selain itu, walaupun keluarga terlibat dalam perniagaan pelancongan yang unik, ia dapat bertahan dan berjaya menjadi jenama tempatan dalam perniagaan pelancongan. Oleh itu, dari perspektif pembangunan pelancongan, kajian ini mengkaji peranan dan ciri-ciri pada faktor kejayaan keusahawanan trans-generasi. Ia juga memandangkan pengaruh faktor-faktor ini terhadap pembangunan pelancongan dan ekonomi khususnya melalui pengekaln keusahawanan keluarga dan ciptaan usaha baru. Oleh itu, matlamat kajian ini adalah untuk mengenal pasti ciri-ciri keusahawanan trans-generasi, tingkah laku keusahawanan dan pengaruh keluarga terhadap aktiviti penciptaan usaha baru dalam perniagaan pelancongan. Kajian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif di mana teknik snowball digunakan untuk mengenal pasti 18 perniagaan keluarga dengan sekurang-kurangnya dua generasi usahawan di Pulau Langkawi. Satu wawancara yang mendalam dilakukan dan analisis tematik digunakan. Hasilnya menemui sembilan tema iaitu pemikiran kelangsungan hidup, smallness, modal perniagaan keluarga, pembukaan perniagaan keluarga, pengurusan membuat keputusan, kumulatif pengalaman keusahawanan, pembentukan keusahawanan, nilai keluarga dan kebudayaan, dan pencapaian matlamat. Didapati bahawa perniagaan itu merupakan sumber utama keusahawanan keluarga. Selain itu, pembukaan perniagaan baru adalah aktiviti utama keusahawanan keluarga untuk generasi baru dan sebagai polisi keluar. Sedikit berbeza daripada pengurusan perniagaan keluarga konvensional, yang berdasarkan pemerintahan diktator, keluarga dalam kajian kes ini mengamalkan sistem raja demokrasi di mana pemiliknya akan bertindak sebagai penentu keputusan akhir untuk sebarang keputusan. Penemuan lain adalah pengaruh simpati dalam keluarga membuktikan bahawa perniagaan keluarga memiliki budaya nepotisme. Selain itu, proses perwarisan berulang kali akhirnya menghasilkan legasi keusahawanan keluarga kerana penggantinya mempunyai rasa tanggungjawab dan tidak tersirat dalam semua pemindahan pengetahuan. Selain itu, kepercayaan juga keluar dari lingkungan keluarga sehingga mempengaruhi pembekal, pelanggan, dan institusi kewangan. Oleh itu, model keusahawanan pelancongan trans-generasi yang dicadangkan dalam kajian ini menambah jurang kajian dalam model pembangunan keusahawanan dan perancangan trans-generasi yang masih belum dibangunkan.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

STEP	-	Successful Transgenerational Entrepreneurship Project
GDP		Gross Domestic Product
SSM		Suruhanjaya Syarikat Malaysia
UNESCO		United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organizations
LIMA		Langkawi International Maritime and Aerospace
PUNB	-	Perbadanan Usahawan Nasional Berhad
LADA		Langkawi Development Authority
MARA	-	Majlis Amanah Rakyat
CASE		Culturally-Sensitive Assessment Systems and Education
GLOBE		Global Leadership and Organizational Behaviour Effectiveness

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Transgenerational entrepreneurship has deep roots in family business research. The earliest research on family business transgenerational entrepreneurship was Handler's (1994) identification of succession activity. Succession is the most outstanding characteristic of a family business that distinguishes it from a nonfamily business. The repeating succession activities through generations create a life cycle for the family business (Gersick *et al.*, 1997). Interestingly, once an individual (founder) creates a family business, the family will retain control of the business until it shuts down. Consequently, there are two perspectives that have emerged from the same model, namely the nepotism culture (negative perspective) posited by Vinton (1998); and the sustainable mindset (positive perspective) posited by Stafford *et al.* (1999). The negative perspective states that nepotism impedes business performance while the positive perspective emphasises the family's capability to remain as entrepreneurs throughout the times.

Moreover, Schumpeter (2012), who was a pioneer of entrepreneurship research, argued that the entrepreneur is a different dimension than the business, since an innovative entrepreneur never loses, even if the business is shut down, as he or she can recreate a new venture. In addition, Lumpkin and Dess (1996) introduced entrepreneurship measurements such as autonomy, innovativeness, risk-taking, proactiveness, and competitive aggressiveness. Their prominent research measured entrepreneurship in future research. The entrepreneurship perspective enables family business research to explore new frontiers and idiosyncratic features.

Habbershon and Pistrui (2002) argued that family entrepreneurship has the capability to increase wealth. This argument is likewise supported by Aldrich and Cliff

(2003), who mentioned that family characteristics influence individual entrepreneurship to engage in new venture creation. Moreover, family values or familiness become the image of the family business because every business decision is affected by family (Haugh and Mckee, 2003; Chrisman, *et al.*, 2005). Family characteristics shape the business that the family controls and determines the business direction. Therefore, the family business becomes the incubator for entrepreneurship and new venture creations.

Consequently, a combination of two dimensions—entrepreneurship and familiness—breeds transgenerational entrepreneurship. Initiated by the Successful Transgenerational Entrepreneurship Practice (STEP) research (Nason, 2008), the focus of the current research is on family entrepreneurial activities throughout generations. Habbershon *et al.* (2010) stressed that family business research should concentrate on the family as the level of analysis and not the business entity. A family business cannot explain the entrepreneurship situation based on the family business definition by Chua *et al.* (1999) because of its rigidity regarding the business entity. This new dimension can widen the horizon of this study and help the researcher better understand innovation in entrepreneurship, as explained by Schumpeter (2012). The focal point of entrepreneurship orientation is the ability to transmit entrepreneurship passion and knowledge through the generations (Zellweger *et al.*, 2011; Zellweger and Sieger, 2012). Therefore, family business research is now increasingly exploring the relationship between family entrepreneurship and new generations.

Furthermore, this new dimension of the transgenerational entrepreneurship theory is based on a resource-based view (Habbershon *et al.*, 2010). The resource-based view enables the current research to determine the family's capability to engage in entrepreneurial actions by evaluating its entrepreneurship orientation (Poza and Dauherty, 2014). As the family serves as the unit of analysis, familiness becomes the idiosyncratic characteristic that connects the business resources such as financial, human, physical, social, knowledge, culture, and other intangible resources (Nason, 2008). Familiness influences business resilience because the intangible resources are transmitted from the predecessor to the successor (Cisneros *et al.*, 2014; Nason *et al.*, 2014; Rodriguez *et al.*, 2014). Nevertheless, there is a need to connect the familiness

attributes with entrepreneurship in the family business and broaden the current understanding of transgenerational entrepreneurship.

Recently, several attempts to explain the transgenerational entrepreneurship in order to fill the knowledge gap. The most prominent research is by Barbera *et al.*, 2018 which contribute to the entrepreneurship interpretation by different generations. Reason of this behaviour is the family's resources has been utilised in order for the new generation to become an entrepreneur (Blumberg and Pfann, 2016; Carr *et al.*, 2016). The younger generation will have easy access to the resources capable to engage in entrepreneurship and also able to create new venture despite the huge percentage of business failure during the early stage. Nevertheless, the family business relies on the incumbent generation or the founder generation to lead the family to the transgenerational entrepreneurship mindset and eventually influence the younger generation to follow the predecessor steps (Hoffmann *et al.*, 2019). On the contrary, the hospitality and tourism industry just embraced the entrepreneurial orientation, even though the business research already done ample research in entrepreneurship and business performance (Peters and Kallmuenzer, 2018). Hence, the collaboration between transgenerational entrepreneurship and tourism research need to be prioritized as to answer the knowledge gap and increase the pace of the tourism business research.

1.2 Transgenerational Entrepreneurship Definition

Accordingly, transgenerational entrepreneurship should look beyond the succession process because a family member could exit the main business to open up a new venture or the family could be forced to sell its main business or change its business model due to unpredictable circumstances. Although much research has been done on transgenerational entrepreneurship, there is still no clear model that can explain transgenerational behaviour (Jaskiewicz *et al.*, 2015). Furthermore, the tourism field still lags in this respect and not many researchers have explored the theory in depth. Tourism offers an easy-entry business opportunity for the local community and the founder grabs this opportunity to set up an individual business that morphs into a family business over time (Getz *et al.*, 2004). Alas, there is no concrete

definition for transgenerational tourism entrepreneurship because the business is seen as a secondary priority compared to tourists in tourism research.

Hence, transgenerational entrepreneurship still needs some clarification to avoid confusing it with the term ‘family business’. Chua *et al.* (1999: 25) defined family business as “*a business governed and/or managed with the intention to shape and pursue the vision of the business held by a dominant coalition controlled by members of the same family or a small number of families in a manner that is potentially sustainable across generations of the family or families*”. Recently, Le Breton-Miller and Miller (2018: 528) contributed a new definition of family business i.e. ‘*family founded and continue to control at least one established and successful family business, plan to continue to have family members involved in business venturing*’. Clearly, the family business definition involves a business entity. Nevertheless, a family scope is needed to explain family entrepreneurship through generations instead of merely a business that is controlled by family (Habbershon and Pistrui, 2002; Zellweger *et al.*, 2011) Hence, Habbershon *et al.* (2010: 1) defined transgenerational entrepreneurship as “*a process through which a family uses and develops entrepreneurial mind-sets and family-influenced capabilities to create new streams of entrepreneurial, financial, and social value across generations*”. This definition explains the family capability to nurture, expand, and retain/sustain entrepreneurship for generations. Consequently, transgenerational entrepreneurship is derived from the family business and not the other way round. Nevertheless, a family needs to be an entrepreneur for at least two generations to have any claim on transgenerational entrepreneurship.

1.3 Background of Research

The earliest research on family business contributed a better understanding of the subject based on three dimensions—family, business, and ownership. These dimensions were introduced by Gersick *et al.* (1997). At the end of the 90s, research in this area attempted to define the family business. The most complete family business definition was given by Chua *et al.* (1999) to clear the misconceptions surrounding the family business. In this era, studies are concentrating more on exploring family

business characteristics and behaviour. An understandable issue is a differentiation between family-owned businesses to that of other businesses. Researchers are considered to have a love and hate relationship with the subject of family business because family is infamously known to enhance and cause detriment to a business at the same time.

Afterwards, in the early 2000s, most researchers started concentrating on families engaging in entrepreneurship activities. The pioneers in the field, Aldrich and Cliff (2003), found that the family is capable of influencing individuals to become an entrepreneur. Furthermore, family behaviour is essential for developing an individual entrepreneurship mindset. As a result, the Successful Transgenerational Entrepreneurship Practice (STEP) model was introduced (Nason, 2008) with the argument that entrepreneurship could be inherited although the family may have sold the existing business and could have recreated a new business throughout the generations.

Besides, Getz and Carlsen (2000) promoted the family business as a tourism research interest to enhance understanding of tourism businesses based on the supply perspective. Vanhove (2005) mentioned that tourism research could not simply dismiss the supply perspective because tourism development is based on the development of natural resources such as beaches. Getz *et al.* (2004) stated that the majority owners of tourism businesses are families. However, tourism research has been lagging behind business research and there has been no follow up on this subject until recently.

Next, from 2010 until 2014, new insight into family business research started to develop, also known as transgenerational entrepreneurship. However, several researchers still maintain the family business scope. During this period, an argument arose insisting that family business research must return to the source, which is the family itself and not the business entity (Habbershon *et al.*, 2010). Furthermore, a clear definition of transgenerational entrepreneurship could help the researchers to investigate unknown territory in more depth. Most research in this area then leaned towards taking the family as the unit of analysis.

Moreover, intangible resources such as socioemotional wealth and familiness were also introduced in the same period. The concept of socioemotional wealth by Berrone *et al.* (2012) helped future research to include emotional perception, as a family is always exposed to conflict due to the sentiment between family members. The family business is not only focused on business profit but also harmony between family members, to develop a business. Yet, familiness is determined by identifying non-emotional resources that could affect individual or family entrepreneurship.

Currently, transgenerational entrepreneurship research has shifted focus to entrepreneurial legacy, which explains the entrepreneurship transfer process. The new focus can better describe transgenerational entrepreneurship because the family's past experience is imprinted onto future generations (Jaskiewicz *et al.*, 2015). Interestingly, each individual entrepreneurship interpretation is totally different although it comes from one source, which is the predecessor (Barbera *et al.*, 2018). As the new generation gains control of the business, the style of entrepreneurship evolves into a new style to suit the current situation. Therefore, transgenerational entrepreneurship becomes an important element for the family to survive in a harsh business world.

On the other hand, Williams *et al.* (1989) introduced entrepreneurship in tourism to shift the focus from the tourist to the supply sector, i.e. the tourism entrepreneur. The change in focal point was almost insignificant until Getz *et al.*'s (2004) study on the family business in the tourism sector. The application of the family business theory in tourism proved to be a breakthrough for tourism entrepreneurship. Vanhove (2005) urged further research to concentrate on the supply perspective but few have taken up the challenge so far. The lack of family businesses in the tourism sector has remained a big question even till today although the uniqueness surrounding the conflict between tourism business and familiness could introduce a new horizon for future research (Kallmuenzer and Peters, 2018). Additionally, Getz *et al.* (2004) identified that tourism provided a low entry barrier for an entrepreneur or a family business founder to create new ventures. As a result, an individual could have a tendency to become an entrepreneur in the tourism sector.

Also, new venture creations could be associated with entrepreneurship capability due to innovativeness. Following this, Szivas (2001) introduced tourism entrepreneurship as a new research topic in tourism. Tourism entrepreneurship mainly deals with small and medium enterprises, which dominate tourism businesses (Getz *et al.*, 2004). Solvoll *et al.* (2015) stated that there is a convergent theory between entrepreneurship and tourism, but a lack of coherence from researchers. Consequently, the research trend has involved five perspectives, namely family business, family as the unit of analysis, transgenerational entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial legacy, and tourism entrepreneurship. Understandably, there is potential for a new frontier for research, which is transgenerational tourism entrepreneurship.

1.4 Research Gap

The urgency to better understand transgenerational tourism entrepreneurship stems from three perspectives, namely the family, entrepreneurship, and the tourism business, as shown in Figure 1.1, which, combined, could give rise to potential research on transgenerational tourism entrepreneurship. Starting with the family perspective, several works have been adamant in changing the unit of analysis from the business entity to focus more on the family (Chrisman *et al.*, 2005; Habbershon *et al.*, 2010; Nordqvist and Melin, 2010; Zellweger *et al.*, 2011; Nason *et al.*, 2014; Evert *et al.*, 2016). The transition of focus enables the researcher to return to the foundation of the family business, which is the family itself. This is important because a family business has always been perceived as an individual (Goel and Jones III, 2016) but is a group of people who collaborate together (Neubaum, 2018). Despite the above argument, recent research has still failed to clearly address the entrepreneurship attitude of groups of people tied by blood.

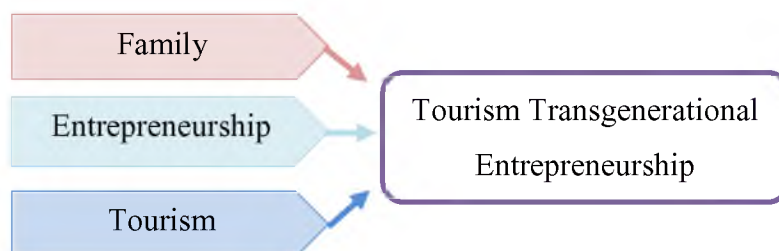


Figure 1.1 Tourism Transgenerational Entrepreneurship Framework

Furthermore, the family may abandon a business by selling it because it has failed or because they want to create other new ventures (Kenyon-Rouvinez, 2001; Habbershon *et al.*, 2010). New research should concentrate on the family entrepreneurial trait embeddedness (Aldrich and Cliff, 2003; Pittino *et al.*, 2018). The family structure is always changing over time and the environment also influences family entrepreneurship (Aldrich and Cliff, 2003). Hence, the family business theory should be dynamic so that family entrepreneurship can be explicitly defined (Blumberg and Pfann, 2016). Future research is urged to explore the relationship between family and entrepreneurship (Randerson *et al.*, 2015). The involvement of the new generation acts as the starting point of transgenerational entrepreneurship research, as a family needs to nurture and reinforce entrepreneurship characteristics in younger family members.

However, the entrepreneurial orientation between generations has not been explained thoroughly (Cruz and Nordqvist, 2012; Jaskiewicz *et al.*, 2015; Hernández-Linares and López-Fernández, 2018) because of the low explanatory power of the transgenerational entrepreneurship theory in clarifying entrepreneurial activities through the generations. Interestingly, the family business can become an entrepreneurship incubator for the new generations to take up entrepreneurial decisions (Hallak, *et al.*, 2015; Blumberg and Pfann, 2016). During incubation, each family member from different generations has his or her entrepreneurship interpretation, although social capital (knowledge and experience) comes from the same predecessor. The family's social capital influences the family member to become an entrepreneur to join in on start-up activities. Hence, this advantage needs to be highlighted in family business research (Goel and Jones III, 2016; Barbera *et al.*, 2018). Besides, a family business has been the focus of much debate among researchers because it has multi-coloured and multi-patterned variables that become more complex over time (Neubaum, 2018) since family business characteristics are interconnected with other topics of business research.

From another perspective, tourism research lacks the family business theory implication even if it has been amply expanded in entrepreneurship and business research (Andersson *et al.*, 2002). Furthermore, the family business is well known for

its survivability, but there is a lack of evidence of the phenomenon occurring in tourism and hospitality businesses (Kallmuenzer and Peters, 2018). It is crucial to investigate this field of research because the research trend shows that transgenerational entrepreneurship has still not been discussed in tourism research. A few attempts have been done to create a new research horizon but there is still a huge gap between pioneering (Getz and Carlsen, 2000) and current research (Peters and Kallmuenzer, 2018). Surprisingly, the famous keywords in tourism research are economic development impacts, enterprises, education, and training (Park *et al.*, 2015) because of low interest in tourism entrepreneurship, highlighting the need for further research in this area (Solvoll *et al.*, 2015). As a consequence, the current understanding of family businesses in tourism research is not sufficient and clearly lacks the perspective of transgenerational entrepreneurship.

1.5 The Need for Research

Starting from one hundred years ago, during the feudal age, families have controlled all businesses (Aldrich and Cliff, 2003). Consequently, the family business is synonymous with the traditional economic model. Nowadays, the family business is still a major player in businesses around the world, as seen from families that control more than half of the private companies in the world (Nason *et al.*, 2014; Poza and Dauherty, 2014). Despite this fact, previous studies have stated that 85 per cent of new businesses fail within 5 years, and only 30 per cent of the survivors can pass on the business to the second generation. Moreover, family businesses become more difficult to be passed on to the third generation, forming only 13 per cent of total new ventures (McKinsey and Company, 2014). In this case, the old adage “from shirtsleeves to shirtsleeves in three generations” seems true. Hence, the family business has been considered to have a negative impact on businesses in the modern free world despite families being one of the major players.

However, a third of the companies listed in the Fortune 500 are controlled by family (McKinsey and Company, 2014). Astonishingly, famous world brands such as Rolex, Prada, Ikea, Gucci, and Louis Vuitton are controlled by family (Poza and Dauherty, 2014). In contrast to the old adage, the family business can achieve high

entrepreneurial performance. Victoria Mars, one of the directors of Mars corporation, stated that the business principals are quality, responsibility, mutuality, efficiency, and freedom; and then to repeat them as much as one can to nurture entrepreneurship in the young generation (PricewaterhouseCoopers International Limited, 2018). In addition, 66 per cent of business owners agreed that innovation is the most important criteria in a business (PricewaterhouseCoopers International Limited, 2018). Therefore, high-performing family businesses still exist despite being negatively perceived as deteriorating, with familiness and innovation the main contributors to its survival.

Furthermore, Confucianism strongly influences the Asian community with values centring on the Collectivism culture. As a result, Chinese entrepreneurs have become major business players, especially in South East Asia, for example, the Robert Kuok family in Malaysia (Rutten, 2001; Tan and Siew, 2001; Carney and Gedajlovic, 2002; Chang, 2011; Hing *et al.*, 2013). Regrettably, past research has heavily focused on the Chinese community rather than other ethnicities in Asia. Therefore, it is paramount that other cultures, which are different than Confucianism such as Malay and Indian cultures, be investigated. Interestingly, the family business is expected to become leading companies in the following decade, as the family business could become conglomerates due to rapid new venture creations, especially in the Asian region (McKinsey and Company, 2014; Le Breton-Miller and Miller, 2018). However, the lack of research focusing on local people or other races in Asia has been evident for a long time.

Furthermore, from the Malaysian context, Malaysians have a strong collectivist behaviour that is suitable for family business growth (Rutten, 2001; Gelfand *et al.*, 2004; Pricewaterhouse Coopers Malaysia, 2016). Moreover, Malaysia's family businesses are also experiencing higher growth than the global average (Pricewaterhouse Coopers International Limited, 2018). The reasons being that they have management that is quick at decision-making and that have the intention to become more entrepreneurial. However, unfortunately, only 15 per cent have a good succession plan and even then, only 69 per cent of these have a next-generation family member working in the business (Pricewaterhouse Coopers Malaysia, 2016).

Furthermore, it is urgent to investigate the Malaysian context because it is a multicultural country and each culture influences each other to produce distinctive Malaysian family entrepreneurship attitudes.

Besides, tourism businesses in Malaysia have contributed huge profits to the country. Statistics from the Companies Commission of Malaysia (2016) stated that there are 4680 Sendirian Berhad (private limited) accommodations in Malaysia and 251 Sendirian Berhad accommodations in Kedah, which have contributed to 5 per cent of the entire country's GDP. Tourism Malaysia (2018) noted that Malaysia had 4,750 hotels with 308,200 rooms while Kedah state had 339 hotels with 19,100 rooms, contributing to 7 per cent of all the hotels in Malaysia. Furthermore, the total tourist expenditure in 2018 in Malaysia was RM84.14 billion, with major contributions coming from shopping (RM28.10 billion; 33.4%) and accommodation (RM21.62 billion; 25.7%). These statistics show that tourism in Malaysia is a lucrative business.

Moreover, since Langkawi was awarded duty-free island status in 1987, the tourism business on the Island has been thriving. Fast-forward 20 years later, Langkawi has received recognition as a UNESCO Global Geopark in 2007 because of its geological heritage. This collection of 99 islands has become a famous tourist attraction and one of the most promoted islands in Malaysia. There are 20 events in the Tourism Malaysia calendar in 2019 dedicated to Langkawi alone with famous events being Le Tour de Langkawi, Langkawi International Maritime & Aerospace Exhibition (LIMA), and Ironman Malaysia. Hence, the tourism business in Langkawi is thriving due to the government catalyst, foreign investment, and successful local entrepreneurship.

1.6 Problem Statement

The conflict between the negative and positive perspectives of the family business can be bewildering because many researchers agree that family entrepreneurship affords capability and is detrimental at the same time. The well-known negative element of the family business is nepotism, which is always associated with inefficiency and cronyism (Gupta and Levenburg, 2010; Zellweger and Sieger,

2012; Le Breton-Miller and Miller, 2018). Meanwhile, the positive element of the family business is its ability to remain successful throughout several generations (Habbershon *et al.*, 2010). This issue baffles researchers and makes it difficult to classify the family business as a catalyst for entrepreneurship development or an impediment. The conflict arises because of the familiness resources in the family business. Family attachment in the business will have a negative impact on business profits (Craig and Lindsay, 2002; Poza and Dauherty, 2014). Hence, the family business has been receiving negative impressions because of nepotism culture practised in the family.

However, the family business can still survive because of marriage, a long-term mindset, the family knowledge pool, an opportunistic mindset, and social capital (Chrisman *et al.*, 2011), all of which is influenced by familiness. This element also influences inheritance plans, moral beliefs, entrepreneurial endeavours, start-up business resources, and business connections (Morrison, 2001). Consequently, the family business becomes more resilient and negatively entrenched at the same time depending on the research perspective. These intangible resource lists are constantly changing due to the focus of the research, but Berrone *et al.* (2012) provided a socioemotional wealth dimension that clearly classified these intangible resources. Yet, familiness affects all these resources to support young family members to pursue entrepreneurship and new venture creations (Rodriguez *et al.*, 2009; Miller, *et al.*, 2016). Consequently, the positive perspective of familiness may overcome its bad impression surrounding nepotism in the family.

As a result, the long-term orientation of a family's entrepreneurial characteristics could create financial and socioemotional wealth (Lumpkin and Brigham, 2011). In this case, the theory of entrepreneurship by Schumpeter (2012) comes to mind, which stated that entrepreneurship is a culmination of nonstop innovation activities in the business that soon emerge as the philosophy of entrepreneurship research. Interestingly, Schumpeter (2012) also mentioned that the entrepreneur never loses, as the business can be sold but his or her entrepreneurial skills still remain. This statement has become the main argument in transgenerational entrepreneurship research (Habbershon *et al.*, 2010; Kenyon-Rouvinez, 2001). Since

then, the entrepreneurship and business perspectives have slightly differed, as entrepreneurs, in this case, the family, need to survive, grow, and evolve, for as long as they can (Goel and Jones III, 2016). Unfortunately, the first generation normally outperforms successors in terms of profit (Pricewaterhouse Coopers International Limited, 2018). Nevertheless, the family business must balance the benefits from family and business profits.

Moreover, the above situation is no different in the tourism business, as the majority business owners are family (Getz *et al.*, 2004). The first tourism business was not started by international chain hotels, but rather the local community, because of the low entry barrier (Szivas, 2001; Getz *et al.*, 2004). This fact is significant in entrepreneurship research (Chang, 2011). Yet, the innovation involved in tourism businesses has been more service-oriented rather than technology-based (Kallmuenzer and Peters, 2018). Besides, a tourism business offers the most interesting goal for the family, which is the desired lifestyle that is preferred for the family business rather than a financial goal (Williams *et al.*, 1989; Getz and Carlsen, 2000; Szivas, 2001; Andersson *et al.*, 2002; Getz *et al.*, 2004; Getz and Carlsen, 2005; Kallmuenzer and Peters, 2018). Hence, tourism entrepreneurs have developed strong bonds with their place (Hallak *et al.*, 2015) and this is true for the family business that has mostly settled down in one place, and have been shown to perform best entrepreneurial-wise.

Therefore, transgenerational entrepreneurship still remains unclear and further investigation on family entrepreneurship through generations is needed. Meanwhile, the tourism business needs to evolve from merely a family business to transgenerational entrepreneurship. There is a void in the knowledge of both fields that demand to be researched thoroughly. Hence, transgenerational tourism entrepreneurship can be used to better understand the transgenerational entrepreneurship and tourism business research.

In this case, Langkawi was selected as a geographical boundary because of the government's heavy investment in its tourism development. Since 1987, when Langkawi received its duty-free title, tourism became the primary engine of the local economy. There are several cases of families that have been entrepreneurs even before

the duty-free title, but the number of entrepreneurs significantly increased after 1987, even surviving for more 30 years. The population lives only in two of the 99 islands in Langkawi, i.e. the main island and Tuba island. However, business activities dominate the main island while Tuba Island's economy centres on fishery. There are two business centre areas on the main island, Kuah and Pantai Cenang. Kuah is the administrative city while Pantai Cenang is famous for its beach and stunning sunset views. Thus, it will be interesting to explore transgenerational tourism businesses in Langkawi to gain a better understanding of family tourism entrepreneurship over generations in this location.

Furthermore, Langkawi is considered the primary island destination in Malaysia; its rapid development mainly due to political will. During Langkawi's early phase of development, government agencies such as Majlis Amanah Rakyat (MARA) had persuaded the locals to get involved in business. The agency provided a starting capital through soft loans and a few chalets. At first, Langkawi Island and Tioman Island were selected as experiments. Surprisingly, after 30 years, Langkawi has developed into a strong contender for the best island tourism experience in South East Asia. Nevertheless, the island's success is dependent on the survival of local businesses and key entrepreneurs in Langkawi. The locals started small and then evolved into a family business, becoming brands that now represent Langkawi tourism businesses. Nowadays, these businesses are mostly handled by the second generation, as the founders have retired. Once the new generation takes over the business, conflict often arises regarding property ownership and the distribution of the business between family members. Accordingly, some prefer to exit the business, some aim to become the business leader, while others prefer to create a new venture as a family.

Interestingly, family businesses that have sustained themselves for more 30 years in Langkawi provide real-life case studies for transgenerational tourism entrepreneurship research. Besides, the literature has not clearly designated the characteristics of transgenerational entrepreneurship. Existing research still concentrates on the business entity although the perspective has shifted. The involvement of a few generations in the business could provide more detail on family

entrepreneurship activities. Consequently, families could exert their influence and affect a family member from the young generation to create new ventures.

1.7 Research Question

The research question covers the family entrepreneurial capability through the generations, namely the family behaviour in encouraging young family members to create new ventures. Therefore, four research questions were developed:

1. What are the transgenerational entrepreneurship characteristics that affect tourism businesses?
2. How is the family able to nurture and retain entrepreneurship through the generations?
3. How does familiness influence individual entrepreneurship to create new ventures?
4. What are the implications of transgenerational entrepreneurship on tourism business development?

1.8 Research Objective

In line with the research questions, four research objectives were derived:

1. To examine the transgenerational entrepreneurship characteristics that affect tourism businesses.
2. To investigate the family capability to nurture and retain entrepreneurship.
3. To identify the influence of familiness on individual entrepreneurship in creating a new venture.
4. To investigate transgenerational entrepreneurship implications on tourism business development.

1.9 Scope of Study

The foundation of transgenerational entrepreneurship is the entrepreneurial orientation theory posited by Lumpkin and Dess (1996). The features of this theory include autonomy, innovativeness, risk-taking, proactiveness, and competitive aggressiveness, all of which are considered entrepreneurial resources. Another resource includes familiness, which affects financial resources, human, physical, social, and knowledge resources, culture, and other intangible resources. The combination of both resources enables a family business to achieve good performance in financial, entrepreneurial, and social aspects. As a result, the family will have transgenerational business potential. Hence, the family needs to serve as the unit of analysis for transgenerational entrepreneurship, as mentioned by Habbershon *et al.* (2010). Furthermore, the framework boundary follows the Successful Transgenerational Entrepreneurship Practice (STEP) research by Nason (2008). These transgenerational entrepreneurship resources are part of the family business capabilities to sustain or even enhance their entrepreneurship over generations even when the business fails.

Nevertheless, the above framework focuses on the whole family in general, but not entrepreneurship between generations specifically. Therefore, this research concentrates on familiness and entrepreneurship through the family generations. A family business is defined as a business run by at least two generations and has the reputation of a business leader in Langkawi. The family entrepreneurship experience of the founder up to the younger generation must explain the transgenerational entrepreneurship activities in the family.

Besides, the tourism business is another parameter considered in this study because of its capability to raise local people's entrepreneurship, as stated by Getz *et al.* (2004). Tourism businesses mainly focus on the accommodation sector, but other businesses such as travel agencies, duty-free shops, and traditional sea cucumber medicine businesses should also be included to create a good tourism image of Langkawi. The selected business brand should be able to represent Langkawi as a major tourist attraction, as created by the local people. However, the local people

helped the researcher identify family business and also know the business owners because family relationships are not listed in the company profile.

1.10 Significance of Study

This research expands upon the foundation of the family business, in which the family entity should be focused on, as asserted by several past researches (Chrisman *et al.*, 2005; Habbershon *et al.*, 2010; Nordqvist and Melin, 2010; Zellweger *et al.*, 2011; Nason *et al.*, 2014; Evert *et al.*, 2016). Concentrating on the family provides more authentic characteristics of entrepreneurship in the family. The family is not a formal organisation (Neubaum, 2018) nor is it an individual (Goel and Jones III, 2016) because there are emotional attachments in the family's entrepreneurial actions. Moreover, the family even does unreasonable acts that are not characteristic of a formal business such as corporations that prioritise profit.

Furthermore, this research aims to justify the work of Habbershon *et al.* (2010) and Kenyon-Rouvinez (2001) on the family's action to sell the business and create another new business. The failure that leads to a changing of business makes transgenerational entrepreneurship different than other normal family business research. In other words, the business is less paramount than the family entity. Interestingly, this research can expand the body of knowledge in this field by explaining the failure of entrepreneurship and identifying the strength of the individual to decide to become an entrepreneur (Aldrich and Cliff, 2003; Pittino *et al.*, 2018). Consequently, concentrating on the family as the unit of analysis enhances understanding of transgenerational entrepreneurship.

Besides, this research determined the entrepreneurship activities in the family between generations to answer the call from past researchers (Cruz and Nordqvist, 2012; Hernández-Linares and López-Fernández, 2018). In addition, the current transgenerational entrepreneurship theory cannot clearly explain entrepreneurship between generations (Jaskiewicz *et al.*, 2015). The successful new generation of entrepreneurs in the family serves as the entrepreneurship legacy of the family. Additionally, the inheritance of entrepreneurship is carried out when the predecessor

transfers ownership, knowledge, reputation, and business connections to the successor. This is the key to transgenerational entrepreneurship and is therefore different than family businesses, corporations, and individuals.

Nevertheless, this research can explain the tourism business based on transgenerational entrepreneurship from a new perspective. This view could increase the pace of tourism research—from focusing on the family business in the tourism sector into transgenerational tourism entrepreneurship, as urged by Andersson *et al.* (2002). Furthermore, tourism entrepreneurship introduced by Szivas (2001) provides new insight for tourism research, especially the supply perspective. Hence, transgenerational entrepreneurship integrated with tourism businesses could create a better understanding of this matter and satisfy the gap in knowledge in both fields.

Therefore, this research provides detailed characteristics of transgenerational entrepreneurship throughout different generations to upgrade the existing theory. Each generation will have different behaviours and interactions are not necessarily a one-way process because the new generation may become the new venture founder and could also create new attitudes in his own nucleus family. Furthermore, any new venture creation in the family is not merely due to an exit plan of an unsatisfied family member, but could also be a strategy to diversify resources to survive. Interestingly, the intertwining of the family business and entrepreneurship perspectives create an interesting new theory that could update or even contradict with the existing theory.

1.11 Structure of Thesis

Chapter 1 explains the background of the transgenerational tourism entrepreneurship theory developed through the lens of transgenerational and tourism entrepreneurship. Moreover, the research gap was identified to explain the need for this research. The problem statement in transgenerational entrepreneurship research is clarified from theoretical and Langkawi-specific contexts. Next, the chapter reveals the research questions that arise and the objectives developed. Hence, the significance of the study is explained, and the structure of each chapter presented.

Chapter 2 provides a discussion of the current literature review by defining transgenerational entrepreneurship and its difference from the family business. The literature goes back to the foundation of the family business such as succession activity, nepotism culture, and family business life-cycle. After that, the literature review discusses the family business and the capability of the family to create new ventures through idiosyncratic resources. Following that, the family business from the tourism perspective and its relationship with transgenerational entrepreneurship are discussed. The literature review provides a transgenerational tourism entrepreneurship framework that is outlined at the end of the chapter.

Chapter 3 discusses the research methodology, which is qualitative in nature. The Constructivism paradigm emerges due to the explorative characteristics of this research. The research framework guides the researcher to create a suitable data collection method. Hence, the case study was chosen, not only according to the geography but also the group of families. An informer served as the guide for the researcher to identify businesses owned by a family whereas the snowballing technique helped the researcher identify more respondents and clarify the informer list. The research instrument, namely in-depth interviews and thematic analysis, are explained. In the end, operationalisation of the methodology is identified and research limitations are uncovered.

Chapter 4 provides data analysis for each theme. The themes are based on the families' perception of transgenerational tourism entrepreneurship, namely a survivability mindset, smallness, family business capital, family new ventures, family decision-making management, family cumulative entrepreneurship experience, entrepreneurship moulding, family values and cultures, and goal achievement. These nine themes were created based on the researcher's interpretation of the respondent interviews. As a result, these themes helped the researcher better understand the situation of family entrepreneurship.

The findings are revealed in Chapter 5. These findings include the business concept, new venture creation, democratic monarchy, business succession, trust, entrepreneurial responsibility, and entrepreneurship succession. These findings are

discussed to provide insightful views on the current literature. Firstly, the business concept is not an entity, but rather a resource for the family. After that, the family becomes involved in new venture creation to diversify resources or as an exit policy is taken up by dissatisfied family members. Additionally, the family enforces a democratic monarchy in business management in which business succession and trust traits are the main influencing factors. This situation will likewise create the responsibility and entrepreneurial inheritance from the perspective of entrepreneurship.

Lastly, Chapter 6 presents the creation of a new transgenerational tourism theory, which concludes this work. This theory describes in detail the entrepreneurial orientation between generations and the identified resources that only family relationships can access. The capability of a family business to retain transgenerational entrepreneurship is not limited by succession, but also new venture creations. Dissatisfied family members become new founders and new ventures in transgenerational tourism entrepreneurship are constructed. This theory explicitly explains the new venture activities of either the individual or the family itself based on three perspectives: new venture creation, capital increment, and family new venture.

1.12 Summary

This chapter introduced the background of transgenerational tourism entrepreneurship research. The foundation of transgenerational tourism entrepreneurship is based on transgenerational entrepreneurship and tourism entrepreneurship. The primary objectives of the research were stated, namely to examine transgenerational entrepreneurship characteristics. Besides, the shift in the unit of analysis and the tourism field lagging behind family business research were highlighted to justify this research. Nevertheless, this research focuses on transgenerational entrepreneurship resources such as entrepreneurial orientation and familiness.

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