

Research Paper - REVISED

Deciphering Food Hawkerpreneurship: Challenges in Franchising Street Food Businesses in Malaysia

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the challenges and identifies the critical success factors in transforming traditional hawker food into a franchisable business, principally within the context of Malaysia. This study aims to provide guidelines that could support the process of enterprising traditional street food businesses, especially to assist the mobilization and promotion of hawkerpreneurship for existing traditional food hawkers and future adopters. A total of five hawkerpreneurs and four traditional hawkers were qualitatively assessed through semi-structured interviews. As a result, four critical challenges that both hawkerpreneurs and traditional hawkers encountered were identified, namely: (1) exploring the unknown (2) high capital investment for total “make-over” (3) lack of knowledge in brand repositioning, and (4) resistance to automation and standardization, particularly as a way to retain authenticity. By considering these concerns, young entrepreneurs and financial investors can assess the potentiality and feasibility of hawker food, and identify areas to focus on in running a successful traditional street food business. The results of this study could further assist in developing the support mechanisms and start-up strategies that encourage the adoption of hawker food entrepreneurship among Malaysians.

Keywords: Hawker food, Street food, Food business, Hawkerpreneur, Food entrepreneur.

1. Introduction

Hawker food generally represents inexpensive local traditional foods that are normally sold in open-air complexes and often located in urban centres, near public housing estates and transport hubs. Accordingly, the open-air food markets are commonly known as “hawker stalls”, which are arguably a distinctive element of Malaysian culinary tradition (Jalis et al., 2009). Hawkers, or street vendors, carry their own equipment and use movable platforms such as carts and stalls to conduct their businesses. They are usually located centrally in designated market areas or semi-permanent sites in less developed regions (Henderson et al., 2012). Hassan (2003) has defined the term “hawker” in the context of the Malaysia’s Local Government Act 1976, which refers to someone who goes around offering people goods for sale and can be categorised as a “temporary hawker”, “static hawker” and/or a “nomad”. Toh and Birchenough (2000) also defined the term “hawker food” as synonymous to some other common terms such as “street food”, “ready-to-eat food” or “prepared-on-demand food”, made by lower-income small entrepreneurs from the stalls they had established for the purpose of their customers' on-site consumption or takeaways. Hawker food is also regarded as an informal business activity compared to a formal business activity, especially as it can lack certain formalities such as business permits and tax reports, as well as often lacking compliance to labour regulations governing employment contracts and work conditions (Cross, 2000).

Apart from being a significant tourism resource (Pang & See, 2008), hawker food is an interesting and unique business sector that has substantial contribution to society despite being small-scale (Omar & Ishak, 2016). Hawker food has always fulfilled the role of providing affordable sustenance for society, particularly among the urban poor (Hassan, 2003). It is also a valuable representation of local and regional specialties in the era of internationalisation and transnational migration, acquiring heritage recognition in many places as it depicts history and tradition as well as exemplifying to tourists a cultural way of life (Henderson, 2009). These inimitable qualities ensure that hawker food is a relatively strong informal business sector within society, instilled with a degree of social status and cultural capital. Subsequently, hawker food as a product has longevity and thus not likely to face disappearance, or complete removal from society and the economy as it is likely to be in constant market demand (Omar & Ishak, 2016). However, many local governments and policy makers are progressively recognising the importance of hygiene and sanitation pertaining to hawker activities (Henderson *et al.*, 2012; Sadi, 2002; Son *et al.*, 2015). This has given extra impetus to encourage a more formal and organized business model for such casual businesses. Cohen and Avieli (2004) suggested that many tourists are afraid to try hawker food

even though it may look inviting, simply because of concerns regarding the hygiene standard practiced by hawkers. Such concerns have called for more regulated spaces for hawker activities and centralization of hawker centres in a modern setting, gradually noticeable in such countries as Taiwan and Singapore, and also parts of Malaysia (Henderson et al., 2012).

In Malaysia, the Kuala Lumpur City Hall has classified hawkers' businesses according to the type of building that they occupy and the venue of their operation, thus consisting of five categories which include: "stalls", "hawker centres", "kiosks", "night markets", and "food courts" (Hassan, 2003). Recently, there is a new movement concerned with revitalising traditional hawker food in Malaysia and transforming it into a more entrepreneurial and franchisable entity. Since 2016, the Malaysia government has widely promoted franchising as a tool to stimulate economic development. Many local foodservices and investment institutions were encouraged to revitalize the existing traditional food businesses, especially hawker / street foods. Several street food operations were successfully transformed into franchise businesses and have since gained significant recognition both nationally and internationally (for example, Papparich, OldTown White Coffee, Assam House, and The Chicken Rice Shop). An annual event, "KL Fabulous Food Hunt", was launched by the Ministry of Tourism Malaysia in 2017 to celebrate and promote the uniqueness and diversity of Malaysian food, including hawker food, and also to raise publicity among the hospitality sectors to attract more tourists (Tourism Malaysia, 2017).

The term "Hawkerpreneur" is operationally defined as an entrepreneur who enterprises traditional street food / hawker food in a modernized and innovated manner. Although there is no clear definition of the term "Hawkerpreneur", Tarulevicz (2018) indicated in his study concerning the process of enterprising a street food business in Singapore that there are five main characteristics of this trend: 1) retention of traditional street food flavours 2) possession of greater financial and capital requirements 3) advancement of an operation driven by technology and innovation 4) expansion of marketing activities driven by a modernized image and an upgraded mid-scale status, and 5) maintenance of the original rustic elements of the food stalls but with an element of modern elegance. Hawkerpreneurs are thus both artisans and innovators. This study stipulates that there are three distinctive players in Malaysia's hawker food industry: (1) traditional food hawkers (2) modernized independent food hawkers, and (3) enterprise and franchised food hawkers. The surge in modernized or franchised hawker food businesses in Malaysia represents an increasing demand for higher-quality hawker food and more hospitable and convenient settings in which these businesses operate. Combining such businesses with the longstanding traditional food hawkers, which are mushrooming in the local community of growing hawker food court and franchises (Omar & Ishak 2016), Malaysia can be popularly perceived as a strong destination for hawker food culture and diversity.

Whilst much has been studied in the literature regarding hawkers, especially in relation to cultural representation, food safety issues and food consumption behaviour (Khongtong et al., 2014; Henderson et al., 2012; Hassan, 2003; and Pang & See, 2008), there are still inadequate studies concerned with examining the factors affecting local hawkers; particularly in terms of converting their traditional business model into a business which is conducive to a more formalised, modernized and enterprising setting. Hassan (2003) and Omar and Ishak (2016) acknowledged that future studies ought to focus on strategic ways to transform hawker food stalls away from a business setting that is oriented towards a decentralised, informal set of street entrepreneurial activities towards more formalised businesses. This pertinent observation has prompted the current study to further examine this phenomenon.

The lack of understanding the critical success factors crucial in transforming the traditional business model suggests that future hawkerpreneurs could face significant barriers in enterprising their street food businesses. Subsequently, two key research questions were addressed: (1) What are the challenges faced by hawkerpreneurs during the process of enterprising traditional hawker food? (2) What critical factors can motivate and demotivate traditional food hawkers towards enterprising their business? The significance of this study aims to deliver two important contributions: 1) To provide a set of guidelines and preventive measures pertaining to transformational challenges in the area of enterprising traditional street food businesses to future and existing early adopters; 2) To provide guidelines to local city councils, trade associations and venture capital companies to better mobilize and promote the concept of

hawkerpreneurship to existing traditional food hawkers and future adopters. The general research approach aims to discover both the trials and critical success factors faced by successful hawkerpreneurs, though at the same time understand the predicaments of those individuals yet to contemplate enterprising their traditional food stalls.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Street Food and Tourism

This study considered street food as an important instrument that could orientate tourists towards appreciating destination culture. A recent report on tourism spending indicated that 25% of a tourist's budget was spent on food (World Food Travel Association, 2018). This statistic reflects a strong relationship between food consumption and the tourism industry. Bellia *et al.*, (2016) suggested that food plays an equally important role within the travel experience as transportation and accommodation. Street food is widely perceived as a unique destination attribute, bearing symbolic meaning and acting as a significant determinant of overall travel satisfaction (Henderson, 2019). Crucially, however, street food is recognized as an effective positioning and promotional strategy for tourism destinations (Bellia *et al.*, 2016), particularly for such Asian countries as Malaysia, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam. Street food night markets are among the top attractions for tourists to savour and explore the local delicacies of a destination (Chang, Kivela, & Mak, 2010). Therefore, the current study suggests that food and street food in particular can be a driver for tourism, and it could be more effective if the traditional street food enterprise was to operate in a franchised setting. The tourist's dining preference is predominantly based on the desire for clean, modernized and accessible local food (Alvarez & Campo, 2014). An aggressive marketing and promotional strategy of street food is perceived as being insufficient, especially as it is observed that such non-promotional communication elements such as the physical environment and dining space ambience can be more powerful strategies (Stepchenkova, 2013).

2.2 General Studies on Hawker Food

a. Street Food Vendors

Recent studies have examined the repositioning of hawker food in the modern era (Alfiero *et al.*, 2017; Henderson, 2017; Matzembacher *et al.*, 2019). Alfiero *et al.*'s (2017) study compared the economic performance of the "Traditional Food Truck" (TFT) with the "Gourmet Food Truck" (GFT), and the results demonstrated that the gourmet food truck was more financially efficient than the traditional food truck, directly acknowledging the importance of innovation as a key competitive advantage indicator in the food business. Such efficiency was partly attributed to a pioneering menu and food production setup, which are more appealing to consumers. Similarly, another study on food truck businesses in Brazil concluded that a high success rate among innovative food hawkers is usually found in market places where "mature consumers" are more appreciative of innovation (Matzembacher *et al.*, 2019). In this context, "mature consumers" refer to well-educated or "seasoned" consumers.

Knox *et al.*'s (2019) study on micro- and informal enterprises in the street food sector in South Africa indicated that the vast majority do aspire to grow their enterprise, despite constraints on investing or developing their business. It can be difficult to encourage people to take up entrepreneurship in places where higher paid jobs are widely available, which is often perceived as more stable income compared to high risk entrepreneurship. Instead of being a marginalized branch of the economy in some societies and cultures, that may face being phased out in the advance of modernity, the street food sector can be a source of economic growth and a way for development policies to reach the women who dominate it (Knox *et al.*, 2019). These authors also argue that the self-employed in this informal sector should be valued for the social safety net that they provide for poor communities and the opportunity for the few to pursue successful entrepreneurship ventures. Despite the continuous effort in repositioning the business model of hawker food ventures, food hawkers still face challenges in getting food guide recognition. Henderson's (2017) research in examining the relevance of the Michelin Guide in acknowledging the importance of street food and food hawkers concluded that the Guide confronts difficulties in retaining its authority and establishing itself in new Asian markets. Accordingly, questions are raised concerning whether the Guide's existing criteria is suitable for rating street food.

b. Street Food Consumers

Studies concerning the reaction of consumers towards food hygiene practices confirm that food handling practices significantly impact repurchase intentions (Gupta et al., 2019; Hiamey and Hiamey, 2018; Henderson, 2010). These studies generally indicate that customer evaluation of risk and benefit are not only interrelated but also responsible for people's changes in attitude towards the hawker foods. The findings from Hiamey and Hiamey's (2018) study also suggests that positive change in consumers' attitude towards hawker food can be achieved by reducing risk perception and increasing benefit perception towards hawker food preparation. Interestingly, the study discovered that both consumers and non-consumers did not differ in their concerns over street food, also suggesting that socio-demographic variables were not good predictors of hawker food consumption, mainly because street food is already an important source of food for most urban communities. Although non-consumers were being deterred from consumption because of their concerns over food safety and healthy lifestyles, food hawkers were concerned if their existing consumers would stop purchasing their food products. Nonetheless, it can be asserted that street food is an important source of habitual eating and that consumers will continue to eat such food regardless of consciousness over food safety.

c. Street Food Regulators

Although empirical enquiry concerning hawker food entrepreneurship has been marginal, Hill *et al's* (2019) study on the street-food vendor's knowledge of nutritional value, menu development and food preparation practices suggested that most food hawkers do not have proper cleaning facilities, cleaning chemicals and related cleaning equipment. Their findings also suggested that their businesses may be a public health risk as food can be high in saturated fat, salt, trans fat, and sugar. Similarly, findings from food truck studies indicate similar concerns relating to public food safety due to poor safety regulations and acts of non-compliance (Okumus & Sommex, 2019). Okumus and Sommex (2019) study highlighted that, regardless of the level of strict inspection imposed on the food hawkers, it is still the case that vendor's personal hygiene, mobility of trucks, temperature violations, undocumented illnesses and unlicensed trucks are still prevalent concerns.

It is surprising why participation rates among food hawkers in most freely offered management training courses remains low considering that such instruction potentially improves the performance of micro and small enterprises (Osei et al., 2018). Osei et al's study also found that vendors with higher formal education better appreciate the benefits of education and training than those vendors who have fewer years of schooling. The perceived knowledge deficiencies of such counterparts appear to explain the difference in participation rates. Also, staff availability does not necessarily increase the probability of training course participation, especially when there are no trusted workers in the business who will take over such critical activities as the handling of finances in the absence of the vendor/owner. The study also found that physical distance between vending premises and training centres had significant negative effects on vendors' participation in training programmes.

2.3 Enterprising Hawker Food

Henderson et al. (2012) argued that hawker food may not actually be completely viable in the long-term, especially due to prevailing health concerns raised by the public. Hawker food, deemed as an informal business in which the entry requirement to this business does not entail a formal education, only requiring at the very least semi-skilled or unskilled individuals (Henderson, 2011). Studies on typical street food vendors have shown that hawkers who do not possess proper education, tend to lack awareness about commercialisation and product innovation (Khongtong et al., 2014; Pang & See, 2008; Sadi, 2002). Henderson *et al's* (2012) Singapore study on enterprising street food concluded that the lack of know-how in developing a business model for a food franchise can work against future development, thereby slowing down the drive for the modernization and revitalization of these businesses.

There are other noticeable challenges to the future of the hawker food enterprises. The local authorities in Malaysia, for instance, realised that the significant growth of the hawker food businesses within urban areas has not been regulated. Thus, more regulated spaces and facilities are needed to cater for the increasing number of existing hawkers in the cities (Alamo-Tonelada et al, 2018). However, Hassan (2003)

and Chong (2018) argued that many food hawkers are not happy with the relocation of businesses to new hawker centres. Hassan (2003) added that resistance to formal relocation is mainly due to the potential loss of regular consumers. In fact, Tarulevicz's (2018) Singaporean study found that some hawkers would rather be fined for operating illegally than being relocated to regulated areas. Despite the importance of urbanization plans for hawkers, city planners tussle with the idea to designate new spaces for hawkers in prime areas; which can be problematic as the rental price of prime areas is generally more expensive and thus not attractive to street food hawkers (Hassan, 2003; Leung, 2005). Furthermore, the effect of urbanisation can threaten the survivability of the hawker food business (Henderson et al., 2012).

Even if food hawkers were to be successfully formalized, the quality and authenticity of hawker food may be at risk due to alteration of ingredients and cooking techniques to suit the requirements of product simplification and standardization in making outlet expansion and franchising possible (Brooks, 2010). Besides, many young members of the community do not consider working in a hawker food business as a desirable career option. For instance, many culinary students are fonder of Western style cooking and aspire to work in a fine dining restaurant, as compared to a hawker stall (Tan & Yong, 2010, August 1). Furthermore, the transfer of knowledge and skills to future successors is found to be difficult as there are no definitive versions of every recipe. Food hawkers can be reluctant to share their secret recipes to protect their trade, which eventually could cause the original recipe to be forgotten or diluted (Henderson, 2011). According to Leong *et al.*, (2012), the Ministry of Tourism Malaysia cautioned food industry players, indicating that too many twisted versions of Malaysian local food caused confusion and ambiguity among tourists. Hence, the government raised the importance of food as a source of the tourism economy. The authorities also stressed that there is a substantial need to improve our understanding of the image of Malaysian food and to strategize ways to enhance its importance as a tourism source.

Although food hawkers are commonly associated with aging and perceived as old-fashioned and unambitious, there is however an emerging group of young entrepreneurs who intend to inject a paradigm shift to transform the hawker food business into a serious venture (Quek, 2014). These young 'hawkerpreneurs' wish not only to alter traditional perceptions and attitudes towards this profession, but also seek to apply their ability to evolve and adjust themselves to fit into the ever changing needs of the 21st century consumer (Lee & David, 2014). Amidst scepticism and setback, some hawkers continuously remain positive about their trade and are highly driven with ambition to expand their businesses (Aw et al. 2013). Generations that are more educated than their predecessors are more prepared to embrace modernization as they see the food hawker business as producing viable and rewarding opportunities (Mendoza, 2016). Hence, a person's personality and educational background play an important part in shaping one's readiness to modernize the hawker business. On the contrary, there are some who believe in tradition and that the nature of the business is to have a sustainable income altogether, disregarding the prospect of modernization, particularly common among hawkers who are older (Omar & Ishak, 2016). These are people who build their business at a young age from the ground up and believe that sustainability in familiarity is better than taking unchartered risk, which may cause mental and physical exhaustion as a consequence of adapting to new knowledge and skills, plus facing the uncertainty of receiving higher profits if modernization was to take place (Chong, 2018; Omar & Ishak, 2016).

Studies have confirmed that product innovation and a transformational business mindset are two crucial drivers of successful hawker food businesses (Liu & Fang, 2016; Seraphin et al, 2017; Stevenson et al. 2019). These studies generally indicate that competitive aggressiveness and being proactive are positively related to risk-taking among street food vendors, having a constructive effect on innovativeness. Further, risk-taking has a mediating role to play in innovativeness, which can produce competitive advantages (Liu & Fang, 2016). Seraphin *et al's* (2017) study on the identification of typical successful attributes of food tourism enterprises, confirms that transformational entrepreneurs and enterprises with constant collaboration with key stakeholders could effectively provide high quality products and services, particularly through the implementation of unique product differentiation strategies that are different than other competitors.

A summary of past studies pertaining to hawker food is presented in Table 1 below, which highlights the researchers and the issues that they addressed, particularly within the context of four different focuses of study: 1) Street Food Vendors, 2) Street Food Consumers, 3) Street Food Regulators, and 4) Hawkerpreneurs.

Table 1: List of Past Studies on Enterprising Hawker Food Business

Areas of study	Street Food Vendors	Street Food Consumers	Street Food Regulators	Hawkerpreneurs
Researchers	Alfiero et al, 2017, Henderson, 2017, Khongtong et al., 2014, Knox et al., 2019, Matzembacher et al., 2019, Omar & Ishak, 2016, Pang & See, 2008	Gupta et al., 2019, Hiamey and Hiamey, 2018, Henderson, 2010	Hassan, 2003, Hill <i>et al.</i> , 2019, Leung, 2005, Okumus and Sommex, 2019, Osei et al., 2018	Henderson et al., 2012, Liu and Fang, 2016, Seraphin et al., 2017, Stevenson et al., 2019, Tarulevicz, 2018,
Issues addressed	1. Characteristics of street food hawkers (Alfiero et al., 2017; Henderson, 2017; Knox et al., 2019; Matzembacher et al., 2019)	1. Motivations behind street food consumption (Gupta et al., 2019)	1. Environmental evaluation of street food businesses (Hassan, 2003; Leung, 2005)	1. The rise of street food entrepreneurs (Henderson et al., 2012; Tarulevicz, 2018)
	2. Attitude of food hawkers towards hygiene and sanitations (Khongtong et al., 2014; Pang & See, 2008)	2. Consumers' response to poor hygiene and sanitations (Hiamey & Hiamey, 2018)	2. The effectiveness of hygiene and sanitations enforcement towards food hawkers (Hassan, 2003; Hill et al., 2019; Okumus & Sommex, 2019)	2. Hawkerpreneur traits (Liu & Fang, 2018; Seraphin et al., 2017)
	3. Knowledge gaps among traditional food hawkers (Henderson, 2017; Omar & Ishak, 2016)	3. Consumers' perception of risk and attitude towards street foods (Henderson, 2010)	3. Success factors of training adoptions among food hawkers (Osei et al., 2018)	3. The financial and new business venture potential of enterprising street food (Stevenson et al., 2019)

3. Methodology

3.1. Research Design

A qualitative approach was selected as the research design of this study because the study's objective was primarily exploratory in nature. Given that the transformation of hawker food into a franchisable business is a unique process in all cases and that the theoretical underpinnings of this process are rather vague, it was assumed that an inductive approach would be appropriate because it enables in-depth investigations and interpretations of the transformation process. The inductive approach is considered a robust research mechanism to gain an aspirational understanding of the underlying reasons, opinions and motivations that contribute to the development stages of a typical entrepreneurial process (Levie & Lichtenstein, 2010). Inductive reasoning could provide genuine insights into the problems of revitalizing food hawking businesses. The qualitative approach is valuable in uncovering trends in thoughts and opinions, enabling the researcher to dive deeper into comprehending adoption behavior among food hawkerpreneurs in terms of enterprising hawker food. This approach is concerned primarily with understanding the process of transforming the traditional hawker food business model into the franchise business model (Baskarada, 2014). Typically, the current study is concerned with realising how food hawkers make sense of their business journey and experience, as well as how their business model is structured. Furthermore, the qualitative approach often involves fieldwork where the researcher physically visits the people and the setting or site, especially to observe and interview respondents in their natural environment. It is considered that human behavior is significantly influenced by the setting in which it occurs, where one should arguably study that behavior in given situations and contexts (Gubrium & Holstein, 2009). Elements of the physical setting are deemed to be crucial contextual variables, such as workplace environment, types of consumers/visitors, street food location and business operating hours.

Consequently, research that is conducted in the setting where all the contextual variables are operating is arguably functional and beneficial. Therefore, a multiple case study technique was implemented to achieve a detailed understanding of the enterprising process of hawker food in its natural setting. This entails reviewing several cases of successful hawkerpreneurs sequentially to develop a better understanding of the phenomenon at hand (Crowe et al., 2011). A case study approach is considered appropriate in this context as the approach allows in-depth exploration of the hawkerpreneurship journey from multiple perspectives in better uncovering its complex and unique development (Simon, 2009). Furthermore, the case study approach is commonly used to assess the progress of project development over time (Sturman, 1997), where the process of transforming traditional hawker food into a franchise restaurant is indeed an intentional “project” rather than a natural phenomenon. Accordingly, the hawkerpreneurship journey can be perceived as a transformation project which requires the completion of various stages of development, including: initiation, planning, execution, adaptation and control. Hence, each journey varies in its approach to the development stages and should thus be treated as a unique case. This method was applied to five successful hawkerpreneurs and was concerned with unearthing the challenges they faced in the process of getting their businesses franchisable. By doing so, the research started from a broad sample of different hawker food products and then there was a concerted attempt to classify the similar and contrasting challenges that hawkers experienced.

3.2. Research Participants

The main food hawkers of this study are focused within four city centres in Malaysia: (1) George Town (2) Petaling Jaya (3) Shah Alam (4) Kuala Lumpur. This study was conducted in two stages: Firstly, the research involves a sample of five successful ‘hawkerpreneurs’ who successfully modernized their business model, where in-depth semi-structured interviews are conducted to assemble evidence to understand the challenges faced and ways to overcome those challenges; as well as comprehend how traditional hawker food is transformed into a successful franchising business. Secondly, the research also involves four separate in-depth semi-structured interviews with ‘hawkers’ who are the owners of long-established traditional hawker food businesses, who have yet to consider enterprising their current businesses. They were employed to identify and understand the resistance factors towards enterprising the business, as well as to comprehend the root causes of such resistance. The below tables indicate a brief description of those interviewed: five hawkerpreneurs (Table 2) and four traditional hawkers (Table 3).

Table 2: List and Description of the Interviewed Hawkerpreneurs and their Brief Description.

Respondents	Brief description
Hawkerpreneur A	Started the hawker business in 1956 in Penang with just a tricycle and then developed into a hawker stall in the 1970s by producing and selling a local dessert. The process of enterprising the business began in 2007. Today, this establishment has turned into a franchising company with hopes to expand their 10-year franchise goal within peninsular Malaysia.
Hawkerpreneur B	A family business set up in 1936 selling coffee in the city of Ipoh, operating inside an alley. Commercialization began in 1989 and currently it is a well-known nationwide hawker food franchise company, which will soon expand into overseas markets.
Hawkerpreneur C	Began as a hawker selling local snacks in Penang and located inside a market hall since 2001. Today, the business is one the most remarkable hawker food franchises in Malaysia. The business is very popular and widely available in many high-end shopping complexes.
Hawkerpreneur D	Business started by a Chinese immigrant in 1927 in the city of Kuala Lumpur selling traditional Chinese noodles. Relatives started remodeling their business by opening up outlets in shopping complexes in Kuala Lumpur from 1991. Today they have a chain of outlets throughout the state and even overseas in China.
Hawkerpreneur E	Started off as a hawker stall operating at a roadside location in Kuala Lumpur in 1985 by selling nyonya style noodles, nasi lemak and curries. They started innovating and expanding the business in 1999, successfully expanding in Singapore whilst currently maintaining several local outlets in Malaysia.

Table 3: List of exemplar traditional hawkers and brief description.

Respondents	Brief description
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Traditional Hawker A	Male hawker in his 60s, selling fried flat rice noodles for more than 40 years at his hawker stall - located in a traditional kopitiam (coffee shop), which only operates at night.
Traditional Hawker B	Male hawker in his 50s, selling seafood noodles inside a food court for more than 5 years and operating only in the evenings.
Traditional Hawker C	Male hawker in his 60s, selling prawn noodles at a wet market for more than 40 years and operating for breakfast and dinner rather than lunch.
Traditional Hawker D	Male hawker in his 50s selling fried noodles inside a small alley for more than 30 years, operating only in the evenings.

3.3. Research Techniques and Sampling

The purposive sampling method was used and guided by a set of stringent criteria to ensure its validity. Purposive sampling is best applied under the condition where only a limited number of primary data sources can contribute to the study (Saunders et al., 2012). There were three main conditions for the selection of the Hawkerpreneurs: (1) individuals must be Malaysian (2) individuals must possess a certain degree of popularity, as determined by the degree of publicity they received from media coverage, and (3) individuals must have at least three years of business operation experience after franchising their business. The three-year criterion was essential following the recommendation by Parsa (2005) to ensure adequate involvement and in-depth familiarity would be gained by individuals who have been closely connected to their workplace for a significant period of time. Subsequently, any food hawkerpreneurs that failed to fulfil such criteria were not sampled. Similar criteria were implemented in sampling food hawkers who did not go through any enterprising process. Thus to clarify, there was a sample of five interviews conducted with hawkerpreneurs (those who successfully adopted a franchise model) and four with traditional food hawkers (those who have been long-established but not yet adopted a franchise model).

It should be noted that there was additional sampling of respondents on top of the total nine interviews, but the information retrieved was not required for this paper. Accordingly, the nine interviewees were determined based on the occurrence of data saturation, which is an indication of data extensiveness, whereby other respondents failed to provide feedback on any new data and their responses simply resembled repetitions from previous interviews (Miles, Huberman & Saldana, 2014). Miles *et al.*, (2014) thus indicated that the cut-off number of interviews can be possible when patterns in the data emerge as opposed to being obsessed with a huge sampling size. This proposition underlies the epistemological feature of qualitative research, which evokes the importance of the quality of knowledge rather than the quantity of information sought. Subsequently, large sampling does not essentially decree the overall quality of the study (Marshall et al., 2013) and, indeed, it was Creswell (2013) who suggested that even as low as 3-5 cases for qualitative studies could be viewed as suffice.

3.4. Research Instruments

A total of seven interview questions for each category of respondents were developed based on Levie and Litchenstein's (2010) model concerning the 'dynamic stages in entrepreneurship'. This model suggested that there are multiple stages concerning the process of entrepreneurship development and each stage has its unique challenges. Their study indicated that a normal and resourceful food business is likely to follow a series of states as it develops more in terms of entrepreneurship advancement, each of which essentially reflects a configuration of age, size, structure and business model. The Levie and Litchenstein's model suggested that entrepreneurs evolve by altering their resource sets, redefining their niche, or redefining themselves in order to operate within an evolving niche. This model was chosen not just because of its relevance to understanding entrepreneurship challenges but also given the closest theoretical direction on how interview questions can be developed, following possible areas of concerns suggested by the stages in entrepreneurship of a typical small and medium size establishment. Therefore, this model guided the discussion concerning transformational challenges and then to the identification of critical success factors, leading to an outline of the business restructuring process and enabling the franchising model. Each interview session was around one hour in length and all interviews took place within the interviewees' familiar setting, mostly at their place of trade. This was deliberately done, not only to allow the researcher to have close discussions with the respondents but to enable the researcher to witness the overall working circumstances, encouraging respondents to easily express themselves in the confines of their own working environment.

3.5. Data Collection and Analysis

Data from both the traditional food hawkers and the hawkerpreneurs were collected from August to December 2018 and included two instruments: (1) demographic survey, and (2) in-depth interviews. The demographic survey gathered basic information of the respective respondents, including age, gender, ethnicity and education level, as well as the number of years working as food hawkers. The second instrument utilized a total of 9 face-to-face, semi-structured interviews. Crucial topics covered by a set of predetermined questions were used in the interview, whilst still allowing the researcher to flexibility probe additional questions that further clarify participants' responses. Informed consent was sought before the interview sessions to satisfy research ethics requirements and the conversations were recorded through a smartphone application and supplemented by handwritten notes, thereby employing two different approaches to record the data to ensure data reliability in case the smartphone recording encountered problems during the interview session. Lastly, follow-up interviews were scheduled in January 2019 to permit all interpreted data to be reviewed by the participants. These follow-up interviews proved to be important as they corrected misinterpreted data, while receiving new and insightful information thus ensuring data validity (Creswell, 2013).

Creswell (2013) suggested that data analysis should be an ongoing process during data collection, carried out simultaneously. All data recorded were analysed manually not via computer software, enabling the researcher to have direct control over the thematic coding of the findings; and especially as the sample of interviewees was manageable. Similar verbatim(s) were collated together and coded manually according to the framework of this study and were then subjected to a process of thematic content analysis. As suggested by Boyatzis (1998), the applicable data were first registered in bullet-points and subsequently coded using the following four steps: (1) identifying and categorizing that a theme is being established (2) recognising that the codes are consistent and reliable to the applicable data (3) acting on the coding process, and (4) construing the coded data. The findings suggested that data saturation had occurred at a very early stage, where of the thirty codes developed throughout the initial coding stage twenty-four codes were developed from the first three interviews (with both hawkerpreneurs and traditional food hawkers) and the remaining new six codes were developed after a total of nine interviews. Since there is a high level of homogeneity among the sample population (Creswell, 2013; Marshall *et al.* 2013), a sample of nine interviews is considered sufficient to enable the development of meaningful themes and useful interpretations. Table 4 shows the results of thematic analysis.

Table 4: Thematic Analysis of the Interview Findings.

Initial Codes	Category Codes	Thematic Codes
1. Troublesome to think of a new business		
2. I am not capable		
3. Cautious about the new working framework		
4. Made a lot of mistakes	1. Hard to imagine	1. Exploring the Unknown
5. Never heard of that model	2. Incapable	
6. Not sure how to begin	3. Something novel	
7. It worries me to even think of it		
8. Only the younger ones will know		
9. Build everything from scratch		
10. Buying a lot of things		
11. Big price tag	4. Total make over	2. Financial Risk
12. Don't have extra money	5. Huge investments	
13. Bank won't consider our applications	6. Limited money	
14. Too risky for me		
15. So much of money needed		
16. Still working on our branding		
17. Tried many ways to convince		
18. Shouldn't be positioned as high-end	7. Unclear brand identity	3. Brand Repositioning Difficulties
19. Struggled to remain original brand	8. Poor acceptance of change	
20. Thought of letting go the name	9. Brand change dilemma	
21. I don't know about branding	10. Knowledge gaps	

- | | | |
|---|----------------------------|------------------------|
| 22. My brand is too old-fashioned | | |
| 23. Can't afford the change in branding | | |
| 24. Practical but not effective | | |
| 25. Disagreed with new ideas | | |
| 26. Automation threatening human importance | 11. Fear of technology | |
| 27. Machine can't replace human skills | 12. Technology limitations | 4. Resistant to Change |
| 28. New process is not authentic | 13. Issue of authenticity | |
| 29. Skills can't be transferred | | |
| 30. Experience does matter | | |

4. Findings and Discussion

4.1. "Exploring the Unknown"

Three out of five hawkerpreneurs experienced challenging beginnings due to unfamiliarity with the new business model. They evoked that enormous effort and dedication were needed to fine tune the process, which was predominantly employed through trial and error practices. Hawkerpreneurs also mentioned that training and enculturating existing staff to adopt the new business direction were never easy. Whilst these challenges were mentioned, two of the five hawkerpreneurs emphasized that their entrepreneurial mindset and sincere dedication were key ingredients to a successful transformative process. These challenges were articulated in the following description:

"I have to convince my parents that the new business model would work. It wasn't easy to tell people that there is a better way to expand their business through franchising. I can sense that many staffs, including my parents, were extremely cautious about the new working framework. We made a lot of mistakes too at the very beginning of the process of change, due to lack of experience...but I never give up because that's my dream and I knew I need to make it happen" (Hawkerpreneur B).

With regards to the traditional hawkers, however, three out of the four felt rather complacent and also lacked determination to expand their existing business. These sentiments were evoked in the following narrative:

"I am happy with the number of customers per day. I have enough manpower to deal with daily demand. It is too troublesome to think of a new business venture. Furthermore, I am not capable of making it happen since I am not highly educated" (Traditional Hawker A).

The findings suggest that the drive for modernizing one's hawker business could be subjected to a personality trait, commonly known as 'entrepreneurial spirit' (Rauch & Frese, 2000). Most hawkerpreneurs' narratives indicated that the process of enterprising the traditional hawker food business would require idiosyncratic behavior based on a high level of self-efficacy, characterized by confidence in one's own ability to be successful. They must be ready to handle various and sometimes unexpected challenges in uncertain situations (Baum & Locke, 2004). Besides self-efficacy, such important individual attributes as a proactive personality, innovativeness and achievement motives are also contributive to strong entrepreneurial behavior (Rauch & Frese, 2007). For the complacent food hawkers, however, who are comfortable in their current state of affairs and possess little entrepreneurial characteristics, it would be difficult to encourage them to embrace the challenges of modernization.

4.2. The Financial Risk in Funding a Total "Make-Over"

Most traditional hawkers from our study believe that the enterprising process will cost them a significant amount of financial investment. Unlike the street food stalls, significant re-investment is required in creating an improved version of the dining atmosphere supported by more functional facilities. The financial need for physical infrastructure was evoked significantly by traditional Hawkers C and D, and all Hawkerpreneurs in this study were reported to have higher liabilities compared to traditional hawkers.

Nonetheless, the restructuring of dining space requires extra capital investment in many other aspects other than just building proper facilities, notably in relation to staffing, facility and equipment maintenance, and outlet rental. Such a high amount of startup capital investment required for the reconfiguration process is a huge deterrent to many traditional hawkers. Omar and Ishak (2016) support the fact that hawking is affordable because the business has a low entry barrier to the market, which needs minimal capital to purchase cooking ingredients and simple equipment. The finding is consistent with the studies by McAfee, Mialon & Williams (2004) and Chong (2018), indicating that capital cost is an ancillary barrier to market entry, because it reinforces other entry barriers by magnifying the risks. It can be deduced that modernization may only be feasible for hawkers with abundant financial resources, while lack of such resources could affect entrepreneurial success. These feelings were expressed in the following descriptions:

“Basically, we need to build everything from scratch and buying a lot of things that we hardly needed in the past. The total make-over of our existing streets food concept comes with big price tag” (Hawkerpreneurs D).

“We don’t have extra money to move to better and nicer space. The rental surely is not cheap. I am old and most banks won’t consider our applications. It is too risky for me to put in so much of money for street food that only costs few ringgits” (Traditional Hawkers C).

4.3. Challenges with the Brand Repositioning Process

It was interesting to note that brand building was an important theme of the transformational challenges faced by some of the respondents. Hawkerpreneur A reported that they were facing difficulties in establishing a brand name in English as their original brand had always been in Chinese. Due to the nature of the image of hawker food, Hawkerpreneur A mentioned that putting the name of their food product onto their brand name might degrade their brand, and thus acknowledged that they found it challenging to ensure that the brand name remained relevant to the symbolic meaning of the food itself. A similar issue was reflected by Hawkerpreneur C, where he struggled to attain market acceptance compared to cheaply associated hawker brands retailed in high-end locations. Similarly, Traditional Hawker B shared a similar thought, questioning his own ability to reposition his old-fashioned brand to wider consumers, especially as he believed he had little knowledge of branding. According to Cheng (2017: 39), hawker food is widely perceived as “cheap, artisanal, low-cost tasty meals and snacks”. Kouuba (2008) confirms that brand perception is directly affected by the origin of the product. This implies that even if a traditional hawker establishment relocated into a modernized setting, it would still be perceived as one which sold “cheap food”. Other than that, an overly diverse menu during the time of transformation would change the original brand identity of the hawker food and thus confuse existing customers. All of the hawkerpreneurs in this study had diversified their menus to create greater options as part of their marketing and revenue strategies. However, their diversification motives were said to be potentially risky, indirectly affecting their brand identity. This finding supports the empirical point made by Park, McCarthy and Milberg (1993) concerning the negative impact of product diversification on consumers’ response to original brand identity. Aaker (2009) also argued that the risk of brand extension might weaken a long-established image that has been strongly associated with the brand, thus affecting the brand’s credibility. Therefore, ultimately the results indicate that food hawkers have to deal with brand identity issues during the transformation process. These frustrations were uttered in the following descriptions:

“...we have tried many ways to convince the public that we are better than traditional street food, that’s why our pricing is more expensive. But they still think that we are just selling cheap food. Many complain that our pricing is too expensive and shouldn’t be located in such a high-end shopping mall” (Hawkerpreneur C).

“Today we are still working on our branding. Should we replace our original Chinese worded brand or to keep it? We keep struggling to decide whether to remain with “*Koay Teow* in our original brand” because today we don’t just sell *Koay Teow*. We have expanded our menu to Ramen and many other foods, that’s why we have thought of letting go the name...” (Hawkerpreneur A).

“...I don’t know about branding, maybe my son knows better than me. Even if my son could help me to brand my hawker stall, I don’t think people will appreciate it. My brand is too old-fashioned and looks so

outdated, not like the XXX (a well-known local chain restaurant). They are rich and can afford change and advertise their brand...” (Traditional Hawker B).

The above responses seem to propose that lack of branding knowledge among traditional food hawkers and customers’ stereotyping concerning the typical “cheap and low-end” brand image of hawker food, are two major concerns in the brand repositioning process of franchising hawker food. Berg (2014) suggested that the character of a place does not only affect the experience of food and gastronomy in that place, but also that food and gastronomy are directly and indirectly affecting the character of the place and its brand-image.

4.4. Resistance to Automation and Standardization as a Mechanism to Retain Authenticity

The operational concerns that were gathered from the interviews can be categorized into two main areas: (1) lack of competency in adapting to changes, and (2) difficulty in maintaining food quality and authenticity. All hawkerpreneurs in this study adopted a systematic organizational structure in their modernized food service operation with several differentiated departments that handle specific tasks respectively. Hawkerpreneur A, took a step further by attending managerial courses to upskill his leadership capabilities. He mentioned that even with a systematic working approach and planning, he still experienced numerous unexpected problems. The process was very stressful due to limited resources and know-how. During the transformation process, Hawkerpreneur B encountered disagreements from family members on the idea of automation in their food preparation process. Similarly, 3 out of 4 traditional hawkers showed little confidence that standardization could help to retain the originality and authenticity of their existing recipes. Traditional Hawker C acknowledged that although ingredients can be standardized, he could not reason how techniques and long-established cooking experiences could be replaced by automation. Therefore, given that technology adoption requires certain “how-to knowledge”, as Rogers (2003) mentioned, the transformation of the hawker business can be challenging; especially due to lack of education and resourcefulness (see Bhowmik, 2005; Williams and Gurtoo, 2011). Such dilemmas were described in the following two narratives:

“...everyone, including my brother disagreed with my idea. They said that it was impossible. Some of them accused me for using automation to replace existing family members who were involved in the operation. Some of them really had the wrong idea of my intention” (Hawkerpreneur B).

“...I still don’t get it. How is that possible for machine to replace human skills? I developed this way of cooking over 30 years now. Are you going to tell me that technology can do the same thing?” (Traditional Hawker C)

Hawkers take pride in their products, guarding their product’s original taste ferociously. Accordingly, they generally expressed doubts about the practicality of franchising, especially Hawkers A and D who actually conveyed deep concerns of the threat of standardization of their dishes. They concurred that their recipes require a great deal of experience to master, which can only be accumulated through countless trial and error practices. The most valuable aspect of their products is the outcome of the “classical authentic taste”, which was indicated as the main reason for repeated patronage. In short, the most crucial aspect of the hawker food is not the recipe itself, but the knowledge and experience of the hawker in manipulating the small nuances in the application of the food ingredients to obtain the perfect finished taste. These findings were consistent with Cheng’s (2017) argument, implying that the production of hawker food requires certain skills, expertise and care which are accompanied with the lifelong experience of understanding the nuances of the dish, especially in producing the ideal taste. This indicates that the knowledge in preparing hawker food is considered as a ‘practical consciousness’, which is non-transferable, non-reflective but based on a form of cognitive knowledge that can only be gained through the experience of growing up in a unique environment under the influence of the localized, socio-cultural and idiosyncratic surroundings. As a result, hawkers may know exactly how dishes should taste and feel, especially in the cooking process. However, they might not be able to explain why this is the case. This finding seems to be consistent with Cheng’s (2017) and Giddens’s (1986) proposition suggesting that social action can be naturally related to memory recall rather than reasoned actions (Cheng, 2017; Giddens, 1986). However, franchising requires a significant degree of standardization, especially

in the food preparation process, coupled with establishing standard operating procedure training. This is deemed necessary to ensure that the cooks will be able to recreate dishes consistent with the original taste. Therefore, the challenge will arise in the knowledge transfer between traditional hawkers and their franchisees, should franchising take place. The following accounts illustrate this concern:

“... that’s not going to be authentic, my loyal customers can easily tell that’s not the original taste if it was not cooked by me. Sometimes, I was away, and my wife replaced me for a day and the next day my customers came to complain about the taste. I can sell the recipe but I don’t think other people can cook the same, unless the person learns and follows me for many years...” (Traditional Hawker A).

“... the most important thing in hawker food is about experience, it is not like you will know how to produce it after I gave you the recipe. There are a lot of things that need to be considered when preparing the dish, experience does matter... You need to understand everything by heart. Take the charcoal, for example, some charcoal gives out more heat, some less, some noodles will be tougher, and some noodles will be softer, how much water you need to put in. There is a lot of small little things that you will need to attend and understand...” (Traditional Hawker D).

5. Conclusion and Research Implications

5.1. Conclusion

In Conclusion, four critical challenges that both hawkerpreneurs and traditional hawkers encountered were identified, namely: (1) exploring the unknown (2) high capital investment of total “make-over” (3) lack of knowledge in brand repositioning, and (4) resistance to automation and standardization, particularly to retain authenticity. The results of this study have extended the present existing literature on the issues and challenges that hawker operators face in their business. The study also discussed and explored the opinions of food hawkers regarding the idea of enterprising streets food businesses. It can be concluded that the process of transforming hawker food into a franchisable business is equivalent to an entrepreneurial act which requires a great deal of capital resources, knowledge in planning and operating, and risk-taking ability. By exploring in-depth the demotivators that discourage traditional food hawkers in considering enterprising their businesses, the study concluded that personality traits, education levels and stages of the life cycle of a food hawker business are crucial determinants. These unique challenges were considered as factors which will influence traditional food hawkers to either accept or reject the idea of enterprising and franchising their traditional business.

5.2 Theoretical Implications Emerging from the Findings

From an academic standpoint, this research offers some contributions to existing literature. Primarily, this study extends prior work concerning challenges in realizing hawker business as part of country’s economic development (Hassan, 2003; Henderson, 2010; Henderson et al., 2012; Omar & Ishak, 2016). Factors influencing the feasibility of enterprising food hawker businesses, as summarised in the above subsection, are unique to Malaysia. Such factors are also unique to particular individuals who operate businesses where ways of enterprising a hawker food business may be different according to the business life-cycle, and the personalities and the cultural and educational backgrounds of the individuals themselves. The study findings specify that diverse hawker genres have different genre-specific encounters and accomplishment factors, which is consistent with the Farrish's (2010) findings that show how a business owner’s background might influence the success of managing a restaurant.

This study has also protracted Levie and Lichtenstein’s (2010) model of Dynamic Stages in Entrepreneurship, which explained the stages in entrepreneurial businesses with conceivable challenges in every stage of the cycle. By adopting his concept of “awareness knowledge” it was possible for this study to highlight the “how-to knowledge” variable and ways in which it has a crucial role to play in the decision process of the business transformation, especially through hawkerpreneurs possessing and applying the technical knowledge of the business; which can shorten individuals’ time spent in the learning process and help to reduce the risk of failure in the start-up stage. This ‘how-to knowledge’ is

argued to be a significant success factor in enterprising the hawker food business. In addition, the argument regarding the hawker's supportive environment, whether through family members, peers and/or experts, was also proven to be significant in determining the hawker's willingness to embark on a modernization process. Evidence from this study thus showed that hawkers will tend to refer to their trusted friends or colleagues for business ideas, customers and for possible market acceptance, finding their opinions on enterprising hawker food the most convincing. The study nonetheless attempts to expand Levie and Lichtenstein's approach to entrepreneurship in that it indicates the importance of remodelling of the traditional food business as opposed to their significant emphasis on the regular application of innovative products.

5.3 Managerial Implications Emerging from the Findings

From a practical standpoint, this study delivers an updated guideline for young entrepreneurs or existing traditional food hawkers who are considering enterprising or franchising their business. The study proposes that food hawkers should evaluate themselves on the basis of their willingness to venture (and capabilities of venturing) into franchise businesses, prior to considering the adoption process. Failure to recognize their capabilities and openness towards franchising hawker food can result in unnecessary pressure, negatively influencing the transformational effectiveness of the business. A mismatch in personality and the new business model fit is inevitable. Hence, food hawkers need to accept this reality and allow newly developed concepts and technological applications to flourish through continual trial and error practices, prior to any serious expansion. Besides, food hawkers must be eager to pursue assistance from consultants or experts of the new business model. It is uncommon for any new franchising food hawker business to not experience possible errors during the beginning stage of the process, while some individuals may demonstrate impractical or loss-making goals. This study recommends that traditional food hawkers should have confidence towards those who can lead the innovation and reconfiguration process, such as capable family members who have knowledge and experience in implementing innovative changes to the existing business. Also, they should be ready to eliminate or reformulate old cooking techniques to ease the development of standard operating procedures that places an emphasis on economic of scale and audit compliances.

In terms of policy making, this study offers explicit evidence for government agencies, city councils, and trade associations concerning the development and improvement of the hawker trade scene in Malaysia. The outcome of the study suggests that the likelihood of a food hawker considering franchising his/her business is mainly based on self-motivation and entrepreneurial spirit. However, the cultivation of entrepreneurial spirit should be supported by multiple parties involving government and non-government agencies, such as the National Federation of Hawkers and Petty Traders Association to work hand-in-hand with the National Finance Council, especially as financial support is one of the major concerns in the process of cultivating entrepreneurial opportunity. Therefore, individuals can be encouraged to instil innovation into their businesses and sprout creativity among the traditional hawker trade, particularly to achieve financial support from government and/or financial agencies. Additionally, these traditional street foods could be honoured through the building of a street food museum in a key tourist location, notable for localised food production and consumption. Furthermore, educational institutes that focus on culinary management and culinary arts programmes in food destination areas and the urban environment, could engage in action-based research to help in developing a capacity building framework for food hawkers.

Tourism marketers could aim to promote hawker foods to emphasize the uniqueness of Malaysia's food culture, as they implicitly fit into the criteria of cultural food. As the number of franchised hawker foods in Malaysia continues to grow, this food destination has significant potential, where the hawker food concept could become a more centralized, coherent and systemic component of the tourist experience. Even though hawker foods can be commonly found in various parts of Asia, however, tourists and food travellers may find hawker foods in Malaysia to be a unique due to multi-cultural influence in cooking techniques, ingredients used, appearance and taste. Importantly, as food tourism continues to gain its importance in the global tourism industry, the upsurge in franchised hawker food in Malaysia may help to spur tourism revenues through a destination food tourism focus like never before.

6.0 Limitations and Future Studies

The limitations of this study primarily concern a moderately small sample size of respondents interviewed, although the state of saturation was fulfilled. In addition, the results from this study are not generalizable across the entire street food industry in Malaysia, especially as there are diverse cultural and demographic characteristics which may offer dissimilar discernments. Nevertheless, the research could still effectually illustrate the challenges and problems that traditional food hawkers could potentially face if the transformational process is conducted in an improper manner. Future investigation could compare challenges faced by food hawkers representing different geographical locations, business settings, types of consumer market and food preparation complexity, especially as this current study only serves as an exploratory study to identify thematic challenges of transforming traditional hawker food businesses into enterprise and franchise businesses. Moreover, it is also recommended that the study's research design could be replicated in different areas in developing countries to capture variances between culture and geographical locations, particularly to provide better coverage and representation of the findings. Finally, future studies should continue to evaluate the negative versus positive impacts in 'formalizing the informal' businesses, thereby exploring the possible consequences of the differentiation between the two business entities.

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