

# Entrepreneurial Behaviour as Learning Processes in a Transgenerational Entrepreneurial Family

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## **Abstract**

*Within the extant body of literature little is known as to how transgenerational entrepreneurial families develop entrepreneurial mind-sets in order to create value across generations. We contend that the family ownership group and resultant transgenerational entrepreneurial learning are critical in the development of entrepreneurial behaviour. Accordingly, this chapter aims to explore the role of the family ownership group in entrepreneurial behaviour by examining the entrepreneurial learning process in a transgenerational entrepreneurial family. In achieving this aim, we adopt Crossan, Lane and White's (1999) 4I organizational learning framework as our theoretical lens. Furthermore, we shed light on this contextual and complex process in drawing upon evidence from a detailed longitudinal case study. Our empirical evidence illustrates the interjectory influence of the family ownership group within this process, and suggests that entrepreneurial learning in a transgenerational family firm is embedded at the family group level and reproduced and co-created as a result of resilient entrepreneurial behaviour.*

**Key words:** Entrepreneurial behaviour; learning process; transgenerational entrepreneurship; family business; entrepreneurial learning

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## **Introduction**

Family firms play a fundamental role in the global economy (Muñoz-Bullón and Sánchez-ueno, 2011). They signify the oldest and most common form of organization (Nordqvist and Melin, 2010), with approximately 90% of all companies worldwide considered family businesses (Aldrich and Cliff, 2003). It is widely acknowledged in the management literature that family firms exhibit not only a sizeable impact on national economic growth rates (Ibrahim, Soufani and Lam, 2001), but also in terms of economic development within localized communities (Zahra and Sharma, 2004). They are perceived as significant sources of technological innovation, employment and new business development (Zahra, 2005). In defining a family business, for the purposes of this chapter we adhere to the well-accepted

conceptualization of a family firm as having three simultaneously interactive systems: the business, the family and the owners (Gersick et al., 1999).

Within this chapter, we are looking at one specific type of family business, i.e. an entrepreneurial family business that has transcended multiple generations. Our rationale is that the transmission of entrepreneurial behaviours has facilitated the longevity and sustainability of such family businesses. We consider the transgenerational entrepreneurial family (henceforth: TEF) as a ‘participation space’ where learning is perpetuated and transformed (Cope and Down 2010). We contend that the TEF is distinctive from the traditional family business, with this distinction based on the premise of their entrepreneurial legacy, which motivates engagement with strategic activities that nurture the next generation of entrepreneurial leaders (Jaskiewicz et al. 2015). Hence, what makes the TEF an interesting context in relation to entrepreneurial learning, is not only multigenerational involvement but also the adoption of an entrepreneurial mind-set focused on pursuing opportunistic growth (Eisenhardt et al. 2000; McCann III et al. 2001). Accordingly, we propose that innovation and corporate entrepreneurship in the TEF firm is facilitated by the family ownership group’s engagement in learning; namely “new streams of value across generations” (Habbershon et al. 2010, p.5).

Entrepreneurial learning is a co-participative process of reflection, theorization, experience and action (Taylor and Thorpe 2004), in which the learning process is context-specific and socially oriented (Gibb 1997; Pittaway and Cope 2007). However, current entrepreneurial learning theories rarely acknowledge the context within which people learn (Pittaway and Rose 2006) and the “participation spaces” where learning is perpetuated and transformed (Cope and Down 2010). Within this chapter, we consider the TEF to be one such participation space.

Entrepreneurship is contextually significant for family firms as it arguably contributes to improvements in organizational performance (Rauch et al. 2009). We view transgenerational entrepreneurship, in which entrepreneurship transcends different generations within the family firm, as the “processes through which a family uses and develops entrepreneurial mind-sets and family influenced capabilities to create new streams of entrepreneurial, financial, and social value onto generations” (Habbershon et al. 2010, p.1). Scholarly evidence suggests that entrepreneurial family firms benefit from enhanced performance outcomes compared to their non-family counterparts (Zellweger et al. 2011). The family business literature reveals ongoing debate concerning the extent to which the idiosyncrasies of family firms cultivate or hinder entrepreneurial behaviour (Chirico et al. 2011), with some scholars arguing that the family

ownership group offers an environment that is conducive to entrepreneurial endeavors (e.g., Aldrich and Cliff 2003; Rogoff and Heck 2003). Surprisingly, we know little about the learning which occurs as a result of the family ownership group despite the emerging body of research acknowledging the role of family influence in transgenerational entrepreneurship (Chrisman et al. 2005; Habbershon et al. 2003; Jaskiewicz et al. 2015; Sirmon et al. 2008; Zellweger et al. 2012). It is this body of work to which we make a contribution by exploring the role of the family ownership group on the entrepreneurial learning process in a TEF. Such a context warrants investigation as it focuses on a distinct firm performance type, namely, the creation of “economic and social value, repeatedly and for generations not yet born” (Nason et al. 2014, p.4). We support the family business domain in conducting a longitudinal study with multiple respondents (Zahra and Sharma 2004) as such an approach sheds light on how entrepreneurial behaviours are transmitted across time.

In order to organize the various arguments and reflections in relation to our theoretical framework of transgenerational entrepreneurial learning, we adopt Crossan, Lane and White’s (1999) 4I organizational learning framework as our theoretical lens. This model of organizational learning refers to the intuiting, interpreting, integrating, and institutionalizing processes through which learning occurs across three levels (individual, group, organization) (Randerson et al. 2015). By applying this theoretical framework of organizational learning from the context of transgenerational entrepreneurial family firms, we add to current debates regarding the extent to which the idiosyncrasies of family firms enable (or in some cases hinder) entrepreneurial behaviour (Chirico et al., 2011). Furthermore, in taking this theoretical approach, we facilitate a more nuanced understanding of how entrepreneurial behaviours are transmitted across time. We achieve this by adding to current debates about how firms are entrepreneurial because they exhibit temporal consistency in their entrepreneurial behaviours (Anderson et al., 2015).

## **Theoretical Framework**

Organizational learning is the process by which new knowledge is converted by codification and communication into organizational knowledge (Kuemmerle 2002), thus enabling entrepreneurial activities including innovation and renewal (Zahra et al. 2004). However, individual learning is regarded as both part of and a prerequisite of organizational learning (Franco and Haase 2009), in that organizations ultimately learn via their individual members (Campbell and Cairns 1994; Franco and Haase 2009). Indeed, the key differentiation

factor between individual and organizational learning, is the social nature of collective learning (Wang and Chugh 2014), which is cumulative, interactive, and acts as a mechanism for knowledge transfer/transmission (Capello 1999). Accordingly, we draw upon Crossan, Lane and White's (1999) 4I organizational learning framework, (see Figure 1) which identifies four main processes (intuiting, interpreting, integrating, and institutionalizing) through which learning occurs across three levels (individual, group, organization). As noted, organizational learning has progressed beyond the idea of learning as cognitive and the sum of individuals' learning, towards the belief that learning is situated and multi-level, encompassing individual, group, and organization (Chaston et al. 2001; Easterby-Smith et al. 2000).

According to Crossan, Lane, and White (1999, p.528) "individual interpretive processes come together around shared understanding of what is possible, and individuals interact and attempt to enact that possibility [...] whereas the focus on interpreting is change in the individual's understanding and actions, the focus of integrating is coherent, collective action." When new behaviours and actions are recurrent and have a sufficiently significant impact on organizational action, the changes become institutionalized. Accordingly, institutionalization is the process that distinguishes organizational learning from individual and group learning as it is through this process that ideas are transformed into organizational institutions, which are available to all employees (Lawrence et al. 2005). To date, entrepreneurial learning research has focused primarily on the individual (Cope and Watts 2000; Zhang et al. 2006), with individual learning as the process by which a person acquires data, skills, or information (Capello 1999). While there are counter arguments for entrepreneurial learning, such as Storey's (2011) perspective on the tenuous link between learning and firm performance, we assume a positive stance regarding entrepreneurial learning for the purposes of this study. Accordingly, this framework, a multilevel and dynamic conceptualization which reflects the entrepreneurial mind-set of learning from intuition to institutionalization, enables a nuanced understanding of the role of the family ownership group in influencing the learning dynamics to be gleaned. By incorporating both family and firm in our unit of analysis, we establish a more holistic view of the economic and social value generated (Sieger 2011).

[Insert Figure 1 here]

## **Methodology**

In line with social constructionism, we accept that people's understanding of the world is shaped by their ongoing participation in "social processes and interactions" (Burr 2003, p.5).

In framing our study through this ontological lens, we view entrepreneurial learning in the TEF as a socially embedded process involving individual, family, and organization. In order to capture this contextual and complex process, a longitudinal single case study was deemed appropriate (Jaskiewicz et al. 2015). Our sampling was purposive (Seawright and Gerring 2008; Gartner and Birley 2002; Pratt 2009) and theoretical in having the characteristics that fitted our investigation (McKeever et al. 2015). For this chapter's purpose, our unit of analysis is the TEF firm which is run by a dominant cohort of family members whose intention it is to direct company vision in a way that can persist across generations (Chua et al. 1999); thus, facilitating a longitudinal perspective and transmission of transgenerational entrepreneurial learning.

### **Illustrative case study**

The following case study was compiled based on interviews conducted in 2015 and 2016 with members and associates of a TEF business that we will call Carrick Hospitality (the names of employees have also been changed for confidentiality purposes). The Carrick Hofford Company was founded in 1983 and is one of the largest locally owned development family firms in Charleston, SC. The company is a multi-faceted full service real estate and development company, as well as a hospitality and asset management company. Projects are developed, constructed and managed in this framework and range from award winning resort developments to the redesign and redevelopment of two city blocks, including three restaurants, a music hall and two hotels in downtown Charleston, to hotels all over the Charleston area, as well as Montana, Georgia & Florida. Carrick Hospitality current owns and operates several hotels around Charleston, South Carolina, Savannah, Georgia and Bozeman, Montana. In addition to great hotels, Carrick Hospitality owns and operates some of the best Charleston, SC restaurants in one of the best regions of American cuisine.

Carrick Hospitality bears all the hallmarks of a bona fide family business that counts its age in centuries rather than years. This is, perhaps, because the roots of the business pre-date its 1983 incorporation by quite some time, or perhaps it is because the business's home town of Charleston, SC, is characterized, in its relationships as in its architecture, by a pervasive sense of timelessness. Either way, Carrick Hospitality belongs to the story of a unique city, a story that it has helped to shape and one that is still unfolding. Far removed from the manicured parks and waterfront mansions of contemporary downtown Charleston,

its story – and the journey of its owner and founder – began in a junkyard and just across the Ashley River.

The founder, Martin, was born in January 1956, and grew up in Northbridge Terrace, West Ashley, a then-rural part of Charleston just across the Ashley River from the Downtown peninsula. Martin’s father was a serial entrepreneur and his mother, now a long-time employee, was a school secretary. Martin also founded Free Wheelin’, an independent bicycle and moped rental business, along with his older brother Rusty and childhood friend, Hank. In 1983 came Carrick Hofford, which sewed the seed for the foundation in 2007 of Carrick Hospitality, and the ever-growing property portfolio under its ownership. Martin is married and is father (and baseball coach) to two sons.

For thirty years, Maureen (Martin’s mother) has worked for Carrick Hofford (latterly Carrick Hospitality), and in that time, has been able to bring her own secretarial experience to bear on the fledgling enterprise. In fact, apart from the founders themselves, only one employee has been in the business longer than Maureen; Kathryn, Martin’s younger sister, was Carrick Hofford’s first employee, joining immediately after its foundation in 1983. Today, Maureen and Kathryn account for almost half of what remains an extremely tight-knit staff, one that has been, and is, wholly integral to the business’s progress. At Carrick Hospitality, individual employee roles transcend conventional job titles, and how this adds up to an organization that is dynamic and which elicits an outstanding level of commitment from a staff that is disproportionately small, relative to the scale of the firm’s developments.

At 23, James is the eldest of Martin’s two sons. James graduated in spring 2016 with a history major/hospitality minor at the College of Charleston, where his studies had, in recent years, been appropriately complemented by an introduction to the Carrick family business.

A qualified and experienced lawyer, Tonya’s term at Bennett Hospitality has recently ticked beyond ten years. Like Kathryn, Tonya’s contribution to the business transcends any formal job title, but the countless legal duties that go along with real-estate portfolio-building generally fall within her professional remit.

A breakdown of the case study firm for this study is provided in Table 1 below.

[Insert Table 1 here]

## **Data collection and analysis**

A total of 12 interviews (average length 38 minutes of audio and 9 pages of transcript per interview) were conducted with multiple family and non-family stakeholders (see Table 2).

[Insert Table 2 here]

The case study allowed for within-case analysis, a key process for formulating research insights (Eisenhardt 1989). Following Zietsma, Winn, Branzei and Vertinsky (2002), we categorized the data into individual, family ownership group, and organizational levels of analysis. We drew upon the 4I organizational learning framework (Crossan et al. 1999) and conducted our analysis in conjunction with the four learning phases (namely intuiting, interpreting, integrating, and institutionalizing). Throughout the analysis, we cross-referenced the data with theory.

## **Findings and discussion**

We now examine the discrete learning levels and develop our argument for why the family ownership group is an active participant in the transfer of learning and entrepreneurial behaviours from the individual to the organization and in the fostering of the firm's innovation and corporate entrepreneurship capabilities.

### ***Individual Learning and the Transgenerational Family***

Individual learning, a necessary component and prerequisite to organizational learning (Franco and Haase 2009), is evident throughout as the idea of self-reliance that Martin aspires to is an extremely important one. The structure of governance that currently exists can continue only if everyone is highly proficient in their own respective roles – the attainment of which is facilitated through autonomous responsibility, decision-making and individual learning:

“Since I’ve worked in the business for so long Martin gives me free rein to make decisions on certain things. Even when I’m doing hotel projects or the renovations of hotels he doesn’t get that involved anymore in the nitty gritty. Even though he likes to see the overall color palette and the fabrics and that kind of stuff, he lets me make [the day-to-day] decisions.”— Kathryn.

Based on logic from Crossan, Lane and White (1999, p.526), Martin reflects his “future possibility oriented” approach by openly discussing his aspirations that the company will one day be guided by one or both of his sons. In another case of intuitive learning, this confidence in succession draws from his past experiences with them from an organizational context, a key indicator of entrepreneurial learning (Cope 2005; Politis 2005).

While examining entrepreneurial learning in a TEF firm, it is vital that the family component is recognized and not “omitted from a consideration of entrepreneurial development” (Rae 2005, p.327). As their business has grown, individual learning in relation to competing pressures in decision-making has led to the institutionalization of family corporate governance. In this instance, Tonya generated a subconscious insight from her “personal stream of experience” (Crossan et al. 1999, p.525), namely her dual roles within the company:

“It’s not a corporate structure where you have to call HR and they’ve got to call [another department]. People will call here and say ‘can I talk to your human resource manager’, well that’s me! ‘Can I talk to your legal [person],’ well that’s me! It comes with the territory of having such a small company, you get a lot of autonomy.”— Tonya.

As the interpretive phase moves from individual to group level learning, ambiguous interpretations can emerge (Crossan et al. 1999) as seen in the second-generation James’s interpretation of how his father’s multiplicity of responsibilities has played a part in the business becoming a multi-generational success. In this instance, the next generation member (and potential future leader) is witnessing and also trying to emulate entrepreneurial behaviours. He does this by demonstrating an awareness of the versatility that is demanded of the entrepreneur, and of the intrigue that had been conjured when he saw such a range of proficiencies on show at his father’s workplace:

“He’s got a million plates spinning at one time, and [yet] he can stay focused. The more and more that I’m seeing, the more I realize that it’s not just on the surface. It’s much deeper, and much more challenging, but something that I want to do.”— James.

From the first learning phase, intuiting, it transpires that, for TEF firms, the insight must move beyond cognition for it to be utilized by all organizational members. Given that “entrepreneurs are often motivated by individualistic drive and energy” (Wang and Chugh 2015, p.19), a collective is needed to interpret and integrate the individual insights and provide



the wider firm with digestible learnings ready for institutionalization. Hence, we must look to the next learning level to understand how individual intuition becomes interpreted and integrated by a group within a TEF firm.

### **Group Learning and the Transgenerational Family**

Our findings show that entrepreneurial learning in a TEF firm context is a cyclical process that extends beyond a single generation (Hamilton 2011). In this case, the two generations of the Carrick family group distil the learnings of individual family managers, which has led to “a shared language or mental model ultimately making the individual idea a group process” (Berson et al. 2006, p.583). Importantly, this viewpoint is expressed not only by family members but also non-family executives:

“I really do feel like the Carricks are second family to me. You can imagine if you have generations of people that grow up together, we have tons of similarities. [...] You know the person’s value system and yours is the same” — Tonya

Transgenerational learning is essential as “the incoming generation still needs to learn how to cope with changes effectively” (Cheng et al. 2014). The entrepreneurial learnings and behaviours of the first and second generations have transferred to the latest generation who embrace a unified perspective regarding long-term thinking, family corporate governance and group-level cohesion. This, in turn, has caused structures and policies to be supported and enacted at both group and firm levels, according to non-family executives:

“[We] have worked together for ten years. We’ve really developed our own little family unit... For me it’s a perfect fit... It just gives you a backbone and a comforting feeling to know that what you do is important” — Tonya

Once the group/family firm integrates a learning reflection, it moves beyond the individuals’ understanding and becomes “preserved in language, embedded in shared cognitive maps and enacted in a coordinated fashion” (Zietsma et al. 2002, p.62). Group conformity is illustrated repeatedly in the findings, for example the family’s acceptance and support of risk-taking endeavors from individual staff:

The biggest thing that I appreciate about Martin is that he really gives you the chance to roll up your sleeves and either succeed or fail and make a mistake. I think the first thing he told me was, 'I'd rather you make a mistake than not do anything', so that's kind of what I've done."- Tonya

In order for the family group to fully integrate these learnings, the individual members' interpretation must be supported and reaffirmed, especially when hesitation exists (Lawrence et al. 2005). Thus, within a TEF firm, the family's patience for long range innovative work practices, combined with their informal approach to group decision-making, indicates that, essentially, the founder's long-term business approach is an entrepreneurial mind-set that is cross-generational:

"I don't have meetings, there are no committees. Usually Tonya's there, my mom is there, my assistant's there and Kathryn's there. It's an incredible system. Literally we can discuss these projects and never leave our chair... In most companies you'd probably have a committee or a meeting or 'let's reach out to the lawyer' ... it just happens seamlessly. Everybody's self-managed."— Martin

The family group's engagement in transgenerational entrepreneurial learning enabled the group interpretive and integrative processes. As a motivation for Carrick's employees, the value of this singular focus on learning and growth is almost impossible to quantify. Certainly, though, it cultivates an environment where entrepreneurial behaviour is self-perpetuating, as staff are continuously challenged to face fresh obstacles and to find new solutions. The "shared understanding and taking of coordinated action" by the group facilitates the transfer of individual's ideas to the organization in a process of feed forward learning (Crossan et al. 1999). Our findings provide novel evidence of the family ownership group as a distinct "participation space" (Cope and Down 2010), which facilitates learning transfer and the transmission of entrepreneurial behaviours within TEF firms. As a result of this insight, we have refined the 4I organizational learning framework from a TEF firm context to demonstrate that entrepreneurial learning goes beyond a generation (n=3) and in fact is co-created in a cyclical, collective participation by overlapping generations as depicted in Figure 2 below.

[Insert Figure 2 here]

## ***Organizational Learning and the Transgenerational Family—a positive influence on innovation and corporate entrepreneurship***

Just as organizational learning is positively connected with firm innovation and strategic renewal (Zahra et al. 2004), so too is transgenerational entrepreneurial learning. We argue that the TEF ownership group's learning engagement positively influences the firm's innovation and corporate entrepreneurship, as well as the transmission of entrepreneurial behaviours.

Characteristic of a TEF, the Carrick group engage in new venture creation, innovation, or reform their strategic direction to achieve transgenerational entrepreneurship (Alegre and Chiva 2013; Habbershon and Pistrui 2002; McCann III et al. 2001). The Carrick family ensure institutionalized learnings exist independent of the individual and group (Lawrence et al. 2005) and become embedded in the organization's culture. The family's learned acceptance of high risk venturing became institutionalized where it manifested in very specific and visible ways. This has made it a useful tool to explain why particular strategies, strengths, and priorities have been so crucial for this business. At the center of this organizational approach to entrepreneurship and learning is the emotional attachment from individual family (and non-family) members, which we now understand can infiltrate the TEF firm's values at the group and organizational level:

“That's the hard thing for me about expanding my [business]... I've hired two or three people in my lifetime. It's not a right or a wrong thing, it would be the only work environment that I would want. Most people go to work, work 8-5 and they leave, and they're not as vested in the company. They don't have an emotional attachment like the people here. I think that the people here have an emotional attachment.”— Martin

Additionally, the family group has integrated the learning of long-term investment acceptance, which has led to strategies of market development, networking, financial growth, and other aspects that make an entrepreneurial venture commercially sustainable. The family group advocates for projects with future growth potential rather than immediate wealth creation (Donckels and Fröhlich 1991):

“I don't ever worry about [competition]. That doesn't mean you build a hotel where there's nobody coming, but as far as I'm concerned, we'll build a better hotel, it'll look better, it'll be prettier, it'll have a better brand, we'll run it better, and the rest of the people that run hotels better worry!” — Martin

As majority shareholder, the family ownership group is motivated to engage in extensive learning across various areas (Zahra 2010). In this respect, James's integration into the business is merely an extension of the boundaries of their family relationship, and what stands to be learned in the sphere of values is in fact being learned as a matter of course:

"In 2008, 2009, when everything went flop, nobody got laid off here, and during that period when all of those companies were going bust, Martin didn't... One of the reasons also that [this business is] so resilient is that we're really careful to choose locations that are relatively immune to radical peaks and troughs in the market."— Philip.

In turn, the family group of Carrick is committed to perpetuating the core values of the entrepreneur and the family enterprise, where the values of one are mirrored in the other and behaviours are transmitted, and where effort and progress are mutually reinforcing. In this way, we now understand how, within a TEF firm context, passion is not only a driver of commitment; the inverse is also true – with greater commitment comes new levels of passion. Often, TEF firms are particularly attentive towards innovative approaches and strategies (Craig and Moores 2005) and this, here, becomes apparent from the family's focus on institutionalizing strategies that spur the growth and development of the business.

Our findings reveal that family corporate governance, while not connected to new venture creation or strategic renewal, can aid positive family relations within a TEF firm. In turn, family harmony can enhance company performance and develop a firm's competitive advantage as suggested by Eddleston, Kellermanns, and Sarathy (2008). The Carrick company were fully engaged in integrating and institutionalizing the learning regarding family corporate governance.

Our study findings show that when a dedicated learning approach is adopted within a TEF firm, the family ownership group facilitates the institutionalization of learnings and the transmission of entrepreneurial behaviours that create new streams of cross-generational value. In turn, these valuable learning outcomes positively impact the TEF firm's ability to be innovative and engage in corporate entrepreneurship.

## **Conclusion**

Within this chapter, we aimed to investigate the role of the family ownership group on the entrepreneurial learning process in a TEF. In order to facilitate this, we adopted Crossan,

Lane and White's (1999) 4I organizational framework, which enabled a more nuanced understanding of the family ownership group's role in and influence on the learning dynamics within a TEF. In concluding our arguments, we identify contributions to debate and theory development, outline suggestions for future research, and note the limitations of our arguments.

Based on this evidence, we make four considerable contributions. First, our case study of a second-generation firm 'next steps' (Gephart 1986) the entrepreneurial behavioural literature by demonstrating that the TEF is a legitimate 'participation space' (Cope and Down 2010) and that, while the organization grows larger, the family ownership group ensures the transgenerational learnings both flourish and persist across time. Hence, we now understand how the construct of the family ownership group within a TEF represents an idiosyncrasy of the family business that facilitates entrepreneurial behaviours, thus advancing contemporary discussion in the entrepreneurial behaviour literature (Chirico et al., 2011). By this contribution to entrepreneurial learning theory, we overcome the limitation of case study research, which is generalizing to population, by establishing analytical generalization instead (Yin 2009).

Second, we introduce the concept of transgenerational entrepreneurial learning which, within the specific context of the TEF firm, can facilitate new streams of cross-generational value through the transmission of learning-based behaviours. Thus, our contribution to the family enterprising domain was established through our new understandings of entrepreneurial learnings and behaviours.

Third, while many studies have empirically tested the 4I organizational learning framework (Crossan et al. 1999), we extend the group level by inclusion of the family ownership group and provide a more nuanced framework for transgenerational entrepreneurial learning (see Figure 2) within a TEF. Accordingly, by aligning the literature streams relating to organizational learning, entrepreneurial behaviours and transgenerational entrepreneurship, our second and third contributions are exemplars of synthesis coherence (Locke and Golden-Biddle 1997).

In practical terms, we inform both policy makers and practitioners as to the importance of learning engagement in firm performance, namely innovation and corporate entrepreneurship. Our longitudinal study highlights how transgenerational entrepreneurial learning aids firm survival—a significant insight for TEF businesses as differentiated from those that are not transgenerational and less entrepreneurial. In doing so, we establish a more grounded understanding of the temporal transmission of entrepreneurial behaviours within TEF firms by advancing current debates about how the consistency of entrepreneurial behaviours over time facilitates corporate entrepreneurship (Anderson et al., 2015).

Our discussion provides future research opportunities in addressing this study's limitations and advancing debate within the transgenerational entrepreneurship field. Further research could operationalize the conceptual model to statistically test the relationship between the family group learning and the firm's innovation and corporate entrepreneurship functions. Furthermore, our refined conceptual framework was based on a second-generation family group; therefore, future research could explore transgenerational entrepreneurial learning in firms with even longer family involvement (generation  $n > 3$ ). Accordingly, further research could enrich the contemporary transgenerational entrepreneurship debates by investigating the role of learning-based behaviours in fostering entrepreneurship across generations. Moreover, our research identifies the TEF as a participation space where entrepreneurial behaviours are transmitted and transferred. However, it is noted that the context to this participation space was confined to one transgenerational family, thus providing the possibility for future related studies to adopt a multiple case study approach. Taking this approach, future family business research could explore the extent to which processes within TEF firms are bi-directional and multi-generational, involving multiple forms of co-participative behaviours from members of the family. Notwithstanding these limitations, our study provides a significant contribution both to family business and entrepreneurial behaviour domains, in addition to the family business practitioner community.

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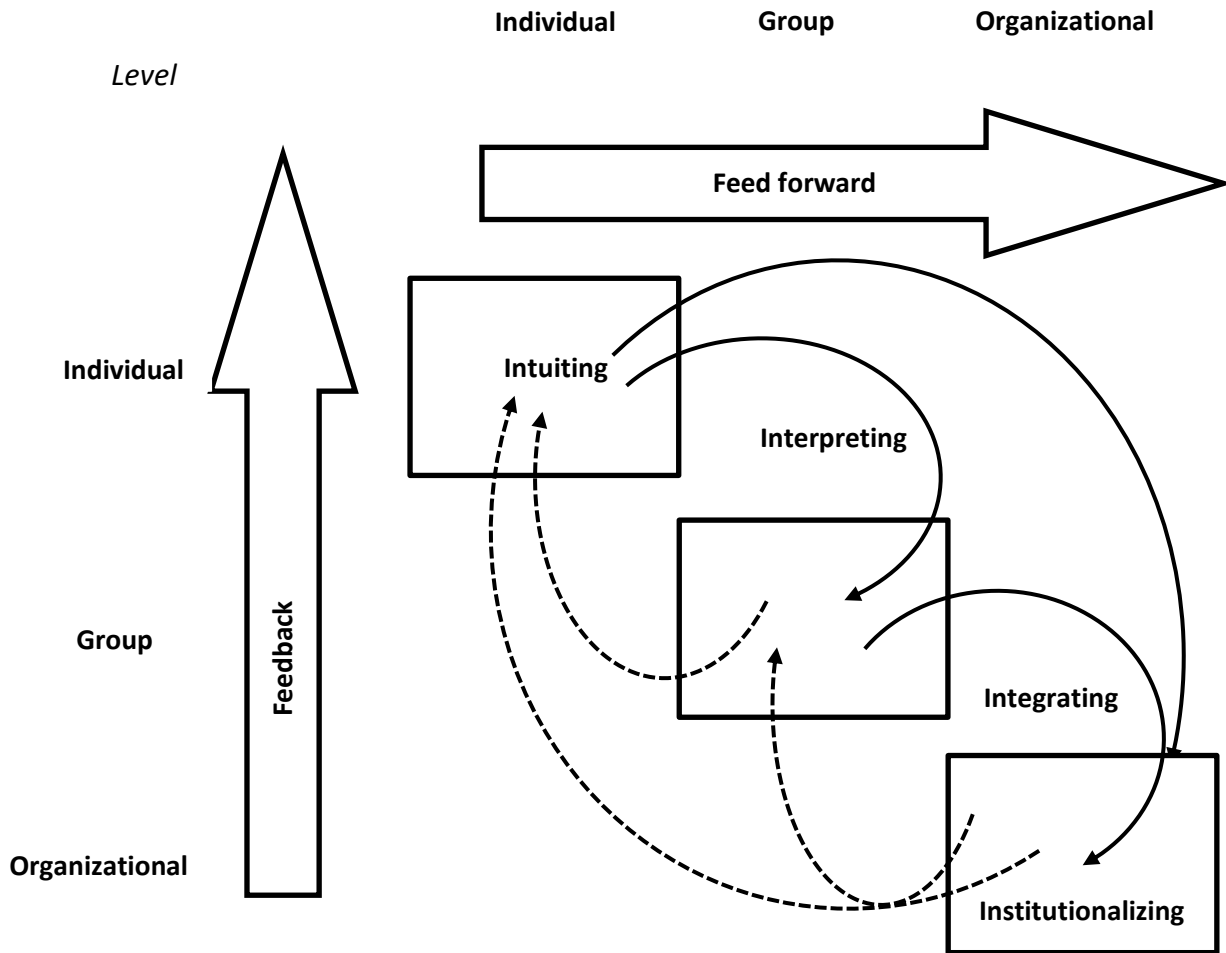
**Table 1**  
**Description of Carrick Hospitality**

<b>Family Name</b>	Carrick
<b>Business Name</b>	Carrick Hospitality
<b>Core Industries</b>	Hospitality and Asset Management; Hotels; Restaurants.
<b>No. of employees</b>	94
<b>Turnover (US\$)</b>	44 million
<b>Age (in 2018)</b>	35
<b>Year founded</b>	1983
<b>No. of generations</b>	2
<b>Family CEO</b>	Yes
<b>Family percent ownership</b>	100%

**Table 2**  
**Interviews conducted between September 2007 and May 2015**

Interviewee	Company position	# of interviews	Family member	Length (min)	# of transcript pages	Year of interview	
						2015	2016
<b>Benedict</b>	Associate	1	Yes	9	2		X
<b>Frances</b>	Senior Legal Advisor	1	No	27	6	X	
<b>Harvey</b>	President of Carrick Construction	1	No	48	8		X
<b>James</b>	Associate	1	Yes	31	7		X
<b>Kathryn</b>	Senior manager	1	Yes	16	21	X	
<b>Martin</b>	Founder, CEO	3	Yes	79, 72, 20	21, 10, 4	X	XX
<b>Maureen</b>	Senior manager	1	Yes	60	13	X	
<b>Philip</b>	Senior Developer	1	No	36	6		X
<b>Tonya</b>	Senior Legal Advisor	1	No	34	8	X	
<b>Trevor</b>	Director of Development	1	No	27	5		X

**Figure 1**  
**4I Organizational Learning Framework**  
 (Crossan et al. 1999, p. 532)



**Figure 2**

**Transgenerational Entrepreneurial Learning Framework (n=2 Gens)**  
Adapted from 4I Organizational Learning Framework (Crossan et al. 1999, p. 532)

