

EXPLORING THE ROLE OF AGILE OPERANT RESOURCES IN FACILITATION OF BUSINESS MODEL INNOVATION: CASE OF FAMILY-OWNED BUSINESSES IN PAKISTAN

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
<p><i>Article History:</i> Received: 19 Jun 2020 Revised: 13 Aug 2021 Accepted: 21 Sep 2021 Available Online: 08 Oct 2021</p> <hr/> <p><i>Keywords:</i> Business model innovation, Abduction, Family-Owned Businesses (FOBs), Pakistan, Gioia Methodology</p> <hr/> <p><i>JEL Classification:</i> M5, M10</p>	<p>Resources act as the armaments for innovation in today's volatile business world where catering competitiveness has become the biggest challenge. To the best of the author's knowledge, no study has been done specifically in the context of Family-Owned Businesses (FOBs) in Pakistan regarding the owner's possessed agile operant resources. This paper explores how agile operant resources possessed by owner of family firms facilitate business model innovation. An abductive research approach using the Gioia methodology has been used to develop broader themes for discussion. Purposive sampling is used for data collection; while conducting interviews through open-ended questionnaires of family owners. Finding depicts that agile entrepreneurial phronesis and agile structure approach are two operant resources possessed by family owners that facilitate in business model innovation. The authors have proposed a conceptual model that highlights on the pertinence of agile operant resource which drives the Family firm's competitive performance. This study proposes a framework for FOBs operating in Pakistan by providing novel insights for establishing competitive firm performance. Each FOB may adapt these resources to ensure business model innovation. It also opens new avenues of innovation and growth for FOBs by determining the primitive significant role of FOB Owners Operant Resources. This study can be applied to all FOBs.</p>

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1. INTRODUCTION

How does a Family-Owned Business (FOBs) in Pakistan can gain competitive firm performance in today's volatile & challenging global world? To answer this question, numerous research scholars have applied different organizational lenses. To address this multi-dimensional question, this study provides some pertinent insights about Family owned business performance through business model innovation in Pakistan. Family Owned Business (FOBs) dominate the business world in transition economics. According to the latest survey, family firms represents two-thirds of businesses around the globe, generating 70-90 % GDP and providing 50-80 % employment opportunities all around world (Family Firm Institute, 2017). Family firms significantly contribute to the growth of economies in Latin, Africa and Asian countries (Tharawat Magazine, 2014). Family firms are considered as the remarkable driver for entrepreneurial activities, corporate growth, introducing and implementing new business models for economic development (Kay & Heck, 2013). Recent studies illustrates that family firms are complex, dynamic and rich in intangible resources and family members active involvement in the managerial responsibilities often makes them viable to family firms (Anderson et al., 2018). Family firms possess some other viable distinguishing attributes which set them apart from other non-family firms (Ward, 2014). These distinguishing attributes of family firms are governance mechanisms, strategic succession planning and effective leadership styles (Chrisman et al., 2018) Chua et al., (2018) posited that all these attributes make family-owned enterprises viable and unique. Beyond all these unique attributes, there is some hidden intangible resources possessed by family firm owners. These unique attributes of family owners are an unexplored area of research.

Previous research establishes significant contribution of resources and their changing role (Forecadell et al., 2018). Over time, the nature and shape may change but their role always embarked in all firms. Traditional firms consider land, labour and capital as resources or the significant source of firm production. Due to the rapidly changing business world, the role of resources has evolved. Barney (1991) proposed a Resource-Based View (RBV) that considered a firm as a bundle of resources, categorized as tangible and intangible resources. Those resources which possess VRIN based characteristics are more supportive for firms in creating competitive strategic positions in the business world (Barney, 1996). RBV emphasized resource heterogeneity. KBV proposes knowledge as the strategically most pertinent asset of the firm (Grant, 1996 & Carolis, 2002). Although, KBV emphasis intangible resources as the source of firm competitive performance. Barney (1996) categorized resources into physical, human and organizational resources. Resource Advantage theory (R-A theory) extended the work of RBV by further classifying resources in terms of physical, financial, organizational, informational, legal and relational. R-A theory proposed the hierarchy in form of basic and higher-order resources (Hunt, 2000). These higher-order resources drive firm competitive performance (Teece, 2012). In 2004, Vargo & Lusch classified resources in terms of operant & operand. They emphasized on the supremacy of operant resources over operand resources (Vargo & Lusch, 2008). Operant resources are intangible, dynamic and evolve with time. The dynamism of operant resources supports firms in developing competitive positions. However, the classification of intangible/operant resources is the least focused area of research in previous theories (Hau, 2019). Some recent researchers suggested the list of employees & customers operant resources (Waheed & Kausar, 2020). This research highlighted the gap of other actors operant resources is an unexplored area of research. Our study picks the notion of operant resources and proposed family firm owners operant resources which facilitate business model innovation.

The theme of business model has recently evolved and quickly attracted a substantial amount of research in various research fields i.e. including strategy (Teece, 2018), entrepreneurship (George & Bock, 2011). Organizational design (Zott and Amit, 2007) and innovation management (Chesbrough, 2010). Innovation becomes the need and backbone of each firm. Representing a new subject of innovation, business model innovation expedites firm renewal that improves overall firm performance (Zott & Amit, 2020). In today's volatile business world, scholars argue that business model innovation supports firms to create more value as a product, process and technological innovation effective to drive firm competitive advantage (Amit & Zott, 2020). Some common themes proposed by emerging researchers about business model innovation. First, BMI creates and capture value (Zott et al., 2011). Secondly, BMI describes the process of generating firm values by identifying key resources, capabilities and processes (Shafer et al., 2005).

As compared to other types of innovation such as product, process and technological innovation, BMI signifies "the conceptualized and adoption of new ways of conducting economic exchanges" (Zott & Amit, 2020). Rapid emerging changes in the business world drive firms to reshape their boundary spanning networks by catering for niches in other diversified sectors. Thus, an effective business model design becomes a significant source of innovation and a better business model beat the competitive market (Chesbrough, 2007, P.12). Existing literature evidence that BMI act as an effective vehicle for firm transformational and renewal that improves firm competitive performance (Demil & Lecuq, 2010). BMI is particularly valuable and supportive for those firms that operate in uncertain environmental contexts specifically in emerging economies like Pakistan. In Pakistan, many firms are small and medium (SME) in nature, most of them are family firms. Family firms are facing a dynamic and increasingly competitive complex business environment (Nieto et al., 2015). To overcome the challenge of competitiveness, family firms focus on business model innovation in which FOBs use their existing capabilities and higher-order resources to capture novel business opportunities in diversified sectors (Massis et al., 2018). The role of the family firm owner is foremost and important in capturing novel opportunities that drive firm innovation (Duran et al., 2016). RBV logic states that top (owners) ability to effectively allocate and manage resources is closely linked with the firm capacity to innovate (Ireland et al., 2003). Family firms are considered rich in terms of resources, particularly intangible / operant resources because they possess mostly the ownership structure of firms. The family owner decides by deploying possessed operant resources. These operant resources are dynamic and possessed by each family owner to support the firm innovation. Family owner's sense opportunities, seize suitable ones based on their possessed agile operant resources. These agile operant resources are hidden and sparse research is available on these resources.

1.1 Research objectives

The research is based on the following objectives:

- TO surface the hidden agile operant resources possess by family firm owners.
- TO identify those collective agile operant resources that support business model innovation.

1.2 Research questions

The research is based on the following research questions:

- How do agile operant resources of FOB Owners facilitate Competitive firm's Performance?
 - How do FOB Owners' agile operant resources support Business model Innovation?

1.3 Significance of the study

Our research findings depict the emerging dimensions of operant resources. These operant resources are the novel contribution of this study toward theory development in the domain of business model innovation. Our research provides the conceptual framework to academicians for examining business model innovation. This study provides new categories of agile operant resources that supports competitiveness. This research may encourage academicians to further explore the role of other actor's operant resources working in FOBs and other firms. Our study opens new avenues for practitioners by suggesting the road to competitiveness through possessed operant resources in today's volatile business world. Family owners can use this framework to compete in diversified sectors. The study opens new doors of innovation for family owners by nurturing these possessed agile operant resources. Owners can polish these agile operant resources to enhance business model innovation that leads toward firm viable competitiveness. Policymakers should work on the enhancement of agile operant resources and capabilities that supports firm entrepreneurial orientation. This research will act as a catalyst for further exploration of agile operant resources in the context of other business-related domains.

1.4 Structure of the Study

The study follows the sequence of introduction includes the research aim, gap spotted and research questions, theoretical and managerial contributions. Guiding review of literature based on empirical & conceptual research contributions of researchers. In-detail description of research methodology, findings resides on data structure significant discussion along with the conclusion, with future directions.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Family Owned Business

In the development of national economics, family firms have been recognized as an important governance structure of business organizations (Chrisman et al, 2018). Family firms refer to a specific type of ownership and employment structure for firms (Indermun, 2013). Many researchers have defined family business through different perspectives. For example, Fleming (2000) defines a family business as "an entity in which two or more people from the same family work together in a firm that at least one of them owns" (P.11). Chua et al., (1999) consider firms as family firms when the business is owned and managed by a nuclear family. Hence, many authors summarize it in three dimensions, ownership (family must possess more than 50% ownership), governance (full control on business), and management (pertinent proportion of the senior management is drawn from the same family (Chrisman et al, 2018).

2.2 Family Owned Business and Resources

Unique family firm resources are considered those resources which are hard to imitate and duplicate, having capabilities known as Familiness (Cabrera-Suarez et al., 2001). Familiness is explained as the bundle of unique resources generated through the interaction of family and business (Habbershon & Williams, 1999). These unique resources are operant and dynamic having VRIN characteristics (valuable, rare, non-imitable & non-sustainable). Familiness act as a powerful resource to cater firm competitiveness and it remains sustainable in long run at the base of non-duplicates-able operant resources of family firms (Forecadell et al., 2018). Family firms are often considered as rich in resources as compared to non-family firms because they possess the power of ownership (Indermun, 2013). In previous researchers, land, labour and capital are considered as resources. Over time, the concept of resources evolves and categorize into three dimensions i.e. physical (technological, plant and raw material etc), human (training, judgement, experience etc) and organizational resources (firm structure, formal and informal planning etc). Barney (1991) proposed the tangible and intangible notion of resources in the Resource-Based View (RBV). RBV emphasized tangible resource heterogeneity and the VRIN nature of resources for catering competitive advantage (Barney, 1994). Knowledge-Based View (KBV) focuses on the intangible resources that drive superior firm performance. Moreover,

resources advantage (R.A) theory classify resources into basic and higher-order resources (Hunt, 2000). These resources are also named competencies and capabilities (Hunt, 2000). R.A theory further categorizes resources with the lens of service-dominant logic (S.D) by providing the hierarchy of resources in terms of operant and operand resources. Operand resources are static e.g. land, labour etc (Wilson, 1960). Whereas Operant resources having the characteristics to evolve, transform, or multiply. These are knowledge, skills and competencies (Lusch & Vargo, 2004). This study will pick the notion of S-D logic operant resources by surfacing the role of the family firm's owner's operant resources that supports the facilitation of business model innovation.

2.3 Business Model Innovation

The term of business model innovation was coined in the 1990s by the researchers and gradually adopted by the researchers (Morris et al., 2006). The emergence of electronic commerce enhanced its popularity then theories and frameworks enrich ways of doing business (Cherbrough & Rosenbloom, 2002). In previous decades, industry research revolves around resources (Barney, 1990; Wright & Ketchen, 2001). In this race, business model innovation provides as the shift or complement to the traditional unit of the analysis result of altered economic conditions (Amit & Zott, 2001). The business model is not static, rather it is dynamic which is developed and managed with the passage of time (Hedman & Kalling, 2003). Due to fierce competition shifts in the market and technological rapid changes firms must need to pay active attention toward business model adjustment to make it viable (Linder & Cantrell, 2000). It remains in flux adopted dynamic systems therefore, the series of the constant process of changes can be referred to as business model innovation (Venkatraman & Henderson, 2008). It can be defined as a deliberate process of changes based on core elements of a firm and its business logic. Business model innovation is too much wider innovation in which a company identify and adopt new opportunity portfolios in many ways (Teece, 2018).

In recent years, business model innovation has becomes the focus of corporate strategy in management, practitioners and scholars alike (Teece, 2018). Business models have emerged as means for commercializing new ideas and technologies” (Chesbrough, 2010, P.354). They provide a clear, consistent and integrated picture of a company and the ways to generate revenues and profit for firms (Yunus et al., 2010, P. 312). Previous business models have limited concerns with firm-level value capture and creation. However, new business model innovation not only enhances novelty in customer value proportions but emphasize the structural re-configuration of firms (Spieth et al., 2014). Now academicians pay rapid attention to business model innovations (Schneider & Spieth, 2013). Business model innovation can be defined as “the discovery of a novel different models in an existing business or as they search for new business logics for the firms and ways to capture and cater value for its stakeholders” (Casadesus – Masanell and Zhu, 2013, P.64). Recent journals show an exceptional increase in literature within this domain (Zoh et al., 2011). Despite increase in research, the business model phenomenon still shows fuzziness and a slippery construct to study (Casadesus-Masanell and Zhu, 2013). Therefore, this study spotted this gap and explore these underlying operant resources helpful to drives business model innovation (Amit & Zott, 2020).

2.4 Family-Owned Businesses and Business Model Innovation

In the management and economic works of literature, the difference between the innovation process of family and non-family firms have become an important agenda of research (De Massis et al., 2013). The endeavors of innovation are generally cause to increased economic long-term performance. But it is always based on substantial elements of risk, due to the bulk of irreversible expenses and uncertain future payoffs (Shi, 2003). Similarly, when firms adopt business model innovation, chances of risks and uncertainties also increased because the whole logic of business is going to change. The level of irreversible expenses rapidly increase. The organization takes irreversible financial decisions which creates long term significant impacts on firm performance. Although family business owners are known for their long term orientation (Zellweger, 2007), they tend to take calculated risks to ensure their survival through serving in diversified sectors with novel business models (Miller, et al., 2011). Scholarly research literature shows a clear lack of work in the domain of family firms and business model innovation (Leenen, 2005). According to Gudmundson et al., (2003,), research based on the relationship between business model innovation and ownership structure appears to be less.’ (P.3) and there is significant potential for further research in the family firms domain (Robl et al., 2010). Family firms have unique characteristics implementation of business model innovation (Calabro et al., 2018).

These characteristics are initiative innovative projects, management style, incremental innovation rather than radical, and family possessed ownership structure etc. Family firms have a great amount of innovation for catering novel opportunities with less formal management and a more decentralized approach (Calabro et al., 2018). Moreover, well-established family firms give a high level of importance to innovation. Adoption of business model innovation is a process through which a family firm initially makes the decision to adopt new opportunities, design a business

model accordingly and then starts using and integrating into its business processes and activities. Several models of sociologists suggest that a family firm's decision to adopt business model innovation is characterized by a high level of uncertainty and risk (Calabro et al., 2018). Even firms know about the specifications and customer reports with the prepaid and postpaid incurred expenses. Still, firms remain unsure about how business model innovation will perform in practical whether the business can easily cater to existing opportunities or not. Under these uncertain conditions, the adoption of innovation can put the family owners at risk as it causes reduction of the firm's control over the way in which activities of the business are organized and aligned. On one side adoption of business model innovation bring many new horizons of opportunities along with several new threats. Family owner operant resources play a significant effective role in managing and catering these novel sets of opportunities for business model innovation. These operant resources are dynamic and possessed by each family owner. It supports effectively to consider and captures pertinent opportunities to ensure family firm sustainable growth. Therefore, this study aims to explore those operant resources which supports cater business model innovation in family firms.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Our research questions are based on exploratory nature of research, which investigated how family businesses owner's agile resources support business modal innovation. This study subscribed to an epistemological position that is inherently interpretative and encourages multiple interpretations of reality (Meriam & Tisdell, 2015). In adherence with this positioning, study adopted the qualitative methodology (Eisenhardt, 1989) and pursued abduction driven research which starts from the set of certain observations and seeks the most likely explanations from the observations (Mantere & & Ketokivi 2011). This study used theoretical sampling along with grounded theory (Thomas, 2006). The saturation of answers determined the number of participants selected for the study (Charmoz, 2006). Based on 30 informant responses study show the saturation level. In the grounded theory, theoretical sampling supports to development of the properties of theoretical categories as evident in our case. While embarking on theoretical sampling, authors gathered information based on certain questions designed by the researcher (Charmoz, 2015). Theoretical sampling encourages researchers with the freedom to determine the range of variations in emerging properties or categories.

3.1 Data Collection & Demographic Profile of Informants (n=30)

The researcher collected data through multi-sources (Pettigrew, 1990) & Van de Ven, 1992), interviews are the primary data source and secondary sources are observations, company websites, brochures and formal & informal telephonic follow-ups. During interviews, informants were asked several semi-structured questions. For example, what are the pertinent operant resources essential to possess by FOB owners? How FOB owner used operant resources for business model innovation? And what are the essential resources required to innovate business models? All interview questions are designed after an extensive review of literature related to the phenomenon. Unit of observations are the FOBs of Pakistan. Those family firms are selected which are listed in the Karachi stock exchange. Initially, those firms are selected as samples for interviews who have a rich history of being family firms in the last 10-30 years working in diversified sectors. A total of 30 informants were interviewed in which 28 are males and 2 are females. All are active participants. Most interviews are taken from the 2nd and 3rd generations. Informant's designation is at the level of Director, Head of the business and CEO level. Their identities are hidden due to privacy and anonymity issues. Most informants working experience somehow revolves around 10-30 years of handling family business in many diversified sectors. Their education level was graduation and master level. The interview mode is finalized based on informant convenience. Some of the interviews were conducted through personal visits but mostly conducted through telephonic mode due to the Covid-19 crisis by following Government restrictions of lockdown. Some interviews were audio-recorded after taking informants permission. Most informants were not comfortable in recordings so field notes are formed preferably to capture and note the information. The beauty of our research is to cover many industry perspectives about the role of agile operant resources. The rationale for handling this diversification is the collective commonality of operant resources in every sector. However, this study shows the cumulative perspective on the pertinence of operant resources in a family-owned business and their effective resources related to business model innovation.

4. DATA ANALYSIS

The analysis of the archival and interview data was conducted by researchers, research questions contribute naturally toward abductive qualitative approaches. Wherein the findings that emerge from the analysis of raw data is not restrained through the prior theoretical lenses (Thomas, 2006). There is spare research available on highlighting those agile operant resources of family business owners which supports business model innovations, especially in the

Pakistan context. Therefore, a variant of grounded theory (Corbin & Strauss, 1990) popularly known as the Gioia method has been used to surface the magical role of FOB owners agile operant resources which supports business model innovations. This research used Gioia methodology as complete for analysis. Gioia method is a well-developed and accepted method that balances the needs for new concepts development through an abductive research approach with rigorous standards (Gioia et al., 2013). This research method has been extensively used in strategic management, marketing and organizational behaviours literature (Bettis et al., 2015 Arimo et al., 2016). Hence, the use of the Gioia method in business research is relatively new. The method considers researcher and informants as knowledge agents, both are competent enough to analyze socially constructed realities (Gioia et. al., 2013). Within the domain of management, the Gioia method is famous for new concept development techniques. This research applied coding proposed by Gioia (2013) to bring more rigour and novelty. Grounded assumptions of Gioia methodology is also relies on the organizational world as socially constructed. Gioia methodology as a complete research design is adopted with a complete data analysis technique for qualitative rigour. Till now, the least qualitative inquiry is observed where Gioia (2012) methodology has applied in 1st-order, 2nd-order and aggregate dimensions to reach the essence of phenomenon thus it offers methodological novelty for naïve researchers. Corley and Gioia (2004) proposed that this research uses three orders of analysis. The first-order concepts, second-order and aggregate dimensions. First-order concepts are based on the actual voice of informants. The second-order themes are grounded on theory, first-order voices of informants are catered during interviews of informants while asking multiple open-ended questions about the studied phenomenon. The second-order concept represents researcher voices grounded in theory. Whereas third-order or aggregate dimensions themes present higher-order concepts and refer as the new addition in theory. This study conducts in the specific context of the family-owned business. It also nurtures the waves of new knowledge and synergies in future directions. The rationale for selecting Pakistan is the significant presence of family-owned firms in emerging economies (Khanna & Yafeh, 2007). Mostly, 80 per cent of firms listed in the Karachi stock exchange are family-owned or indirectly linked with large business families (Zaidi & Aslam, 2006). Another logic relates to the practitioners' aspects because this study conduct in Pakistan therefore, it provides significant insights to FOB Owners or equivalent in practical implementation.

5. FINDINGS/RESULTS

The findings of this research show the role of two pertinent operant resources essential for family owners to cater business model innovation i.e. agile entrepreneurial phronesis & agile structure approach. Agile entrepreneurial phronesis is one of the operant resources possess by family firm owners to sense opportunities. It is based on the following operant resources i.e. initiator, foresightedness, vision and values, risk-taker, openness to experience, personal interest and challenger. The combination of all these operant resources supports family owners in sensing & capturing long term opportunities by minimizing threats which further strengthen the entrepreneurial orientation of family firms. The agile structure approach is another dimension based on analytical skills and systematic thinking patterns of family owners. Hence, aggregate dimensions of agile entrepreneurial phronesis & agile Structure Approach both are based on the combination of variant agile operant resources which drives business model innovation in family firms. Below **Figure No. 1** indicated the family owner's agile operant resources which leads to business model innovation.

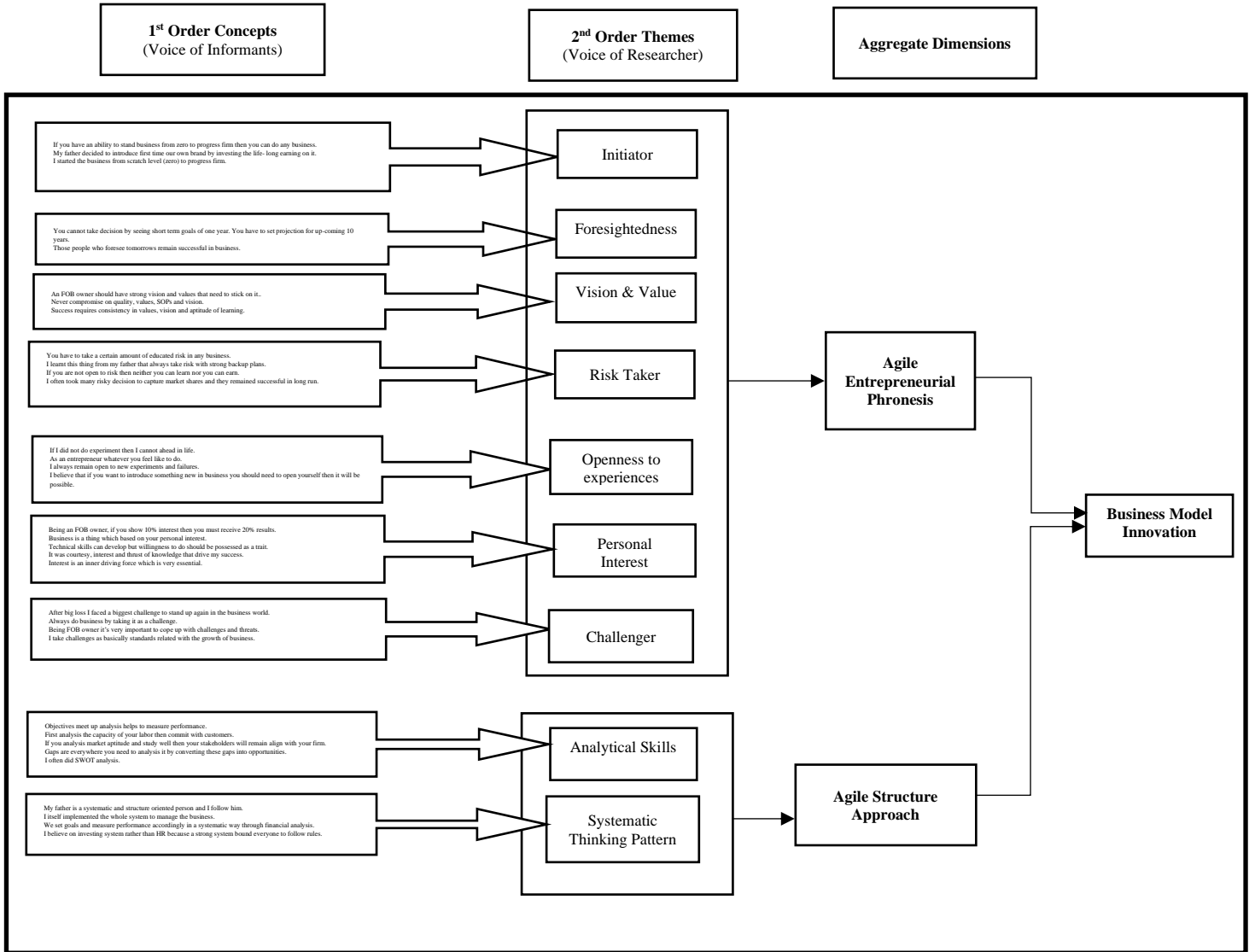


Figure No.1 Family owner’s agile operant resources for business model innovation
Source: Authors’ findings based on informant’s responses

5.1 Agile Entrepreneurial Phronesis

Entrepreneurial phronesis can be defined as “The propensity of an individual to behave creatively, act with foresight, use initiation, take initiative and open for new opportunities. It’s the combination of intangible and tangible assets. Assets firms use to cater to a firm’s sustainable performance (Alvarez & Barney, 2014). It is based on the entrepreneur own abilities and skillsets (WU, 2007). The entrepreneur can be defined as taking financial risks in the hope of profit. Entrepreneur possesses a combination of unique resources. An entrepreneur always emphasis to cater new resources produce goods or services at low costs or higher quality than competitors (Nelson & Winter, 1982). It refers to a combination of unique resources that have non-imitable properties. Because the uniqueness of resources impacts firm performance and sustainability. Each entrepreneurial firm must save and accumulate those resources which cannot be directly

or indirectly imitate by their rivals and must possess the capability of resourcefulness (Zhang, 2010; Zhang et al., 2010). Being an entrepreneur, the shortage of resources might low the success of an entrepreneur. Somehow it is impossible to have complete and sufficient resources. In general, some resources have a pre-requisite role or are essential to enter into any industry which is important for firm growth and long term survival and sustainability (Zhang et al., 2011). Although some resources are operant (intangible) and unique possess by every entrepreneur i.e. initiator, foresightedness, vision and values, creativity, risk-taker, personal interest, challenger and openness to experience etc. In each industry, resourcefulness matters in actual which determine business survival and sustainability (Zhang et al., 2012). By utilizing effectively and efficiently, an entrepreneur manages all these resources by engaging the environment in a favourable situation.

5.1.1 Initiator

Each operant (intangible) resource impacts differently on the entrepreneur. Initiation is the force of courage and determination. It supports taking steps and move ahead in life which is very essential to being an entrepreneurial family firm owner. It determines an ability to take steps by handling all challenges. For example, Informant 11 reported that “If you have an ability to stand business from zero to progress firm then you can do any business”. Initiator enhances your stemma and confidence in yourself. As Informant 3 stated that “My father burn all boats into the fire and decided to introduce his brand first time by investing the life-long earning on it”. Up and down are the parts of the business world being a FOB owner, “you should know to start the business from scratch level (zero) to progress firm.” Informant 22 reported.

5.1.2 Foresightedness

Foresightedness is to analyze future projections. Foresightedness and alertness will affect future scenarios in individual envision and consider profitable opportunities in future. It’s a way to estimate future success (Zhang et al., 2011). It creates a unique variation in the thinking patterns of the firm owner. It helps in taking decisions and drive business success. As informant 30 reported that “You cannot take decisions by seeing short term goals for one year. You have to set projections for upcoming 10 years”. Informant 29 reported that “These people who foresee tomorrows remain successful in business”.

5.1.3 Vision & Values

Another important resource of an entrepreneur is vision and values. Each family owner possesses some set of values toward their ancestors that act as foundational premises to compete in today’s volatile business world. As informant 9 stated that “As FOB owner should have strong vision and values that needs to stick on it”. They set some standards for doing business. For example, informant 12 stated that never compromise on quality, values, SOPs and vision”. Sticking on vision and values is considered as the gimmick of success in the family business (Lisboa et al., 2011). For example, Informant 7 stated that “success requires consistency in values, vision and aptitude of learning”.

5.1.4 Risk Taker

It’s the pre-requisite characteristic of every entrepreneurial business firm. Each business should take a certain amount of calculated risks to move in an uncertain environment (Choi & Shepherd, 2004). As all informants’ emphasis on this resource. For example, informant 3 stated that “You have to take a certain amount of educated risks in any business”. In family firms, risk-taker consider as an ability and source of learning. As informant 27 reported that “If you are not open to risk then neither you can learn nor you can earn”. New avenues/horizons cannot explore without knocking at the door of risks. For example, informant 13 claimed that “I often took many risky decisions to capture market shares and it remained successful in the long run”. It’s a way of learning exploring success horizons in the business world. As informant 5 stated that “I learnt risk-taking from my father that always take the risk with strong backup plans”.

5.1.5 Openness to Experiences

Openness to experience is the most pertinent resource of entrepreneurial resources in which family owners are open to experience change by taking steps ahead. An entrepreneur explores and exploits

opportunities by sensing the environment (Zahra, 2011). New experiences open new doors of opportunities. For example, informant 7 reported that “If I did not experiment then I cannot move ahead in life”. Same as Informant 9 stated, “I always open for new experiments and failures”. For innovation, you always need to try new things which ensure business survival and growth. As Informant 29 reported that “I believe that if you want to introduce something new in business you should need to open yourself then innovation will be possible”.

5.1.6 Personal Interest

The main hidden driving force of doing business is the intrinsic willingness and personal interest to do it. A person cannot excel in any business if you do not have an interest in it. Therefore, personal interest is the most central factor (intrinsic) in a human which motivate to do any business activity. Most of the informant's emphasise this factor during the interview. For example, informant 11 reported that if you show 10% interest then you must receive 20% results”. Informant 15 claimed that “Business is a thing which based on your interests”. Other skills can be developed over time but inner willingness is the internal factor possessed as a trait. As informant 8 said that “Technical skills can be developed but the willingness to do should be possessed as a trait”. Personal interest is the main determinant behind success. As informant 19 reported that “It was courtesy, interest and thrust of knowledge that drive my success in business”.

5.1.7 Challenger

Being a family firm owner, you need to handle multiple challenges in the business world. Challenge to handle market conditions, the aptitude of change by sensing opportunities. In short, the business world is full of challenges. You need to address all these challenges for attaining business success. For example, informant 22 reported that “Always do business by taking it as a challenge”. As informant 11 stated that “Being FOB owner, it’s very important to cope up with challenges and threats”. Challenges are the tools of growth as informant 7 said that “I take challenges as basically standards related to the growth of the business”.

5.2 Agile Structure Approach

A structured approach is an approach of thinking in which FOB owners, align their thoughts systematically in a way to capture opportunities or converting threats into opportunities. For this, they use their analytical skills which supports analyzing potential market niches and how these niches can be filled smartly through bringing innovation patterns. They analyze resources and how resourcefulness enhances through effective & efficient utilization/deployment of operant resources within an organization. In sum, the structured approach nurtures systematic thinking patterns by enhancing analytical skills. Being a FOB Owner, both resources are essential to develop business model innovation because analytical skills support in capturing new roads of innovation whereas systematic thinking aligns thoughts in a way to arrange firm mechanisms of resources.

5.2.1 Analytical Skills

Analytical skills are the operant and significant resource of a FOB owner. FOB owners use these skill sets to analyses opportunities and threats in the market. It’s a source of measuring performance. It helps in aligning stakeholder’s interests and sense opportunities in the market. As informant 3 stated that “If you analysis market aptitude and study well then your stakeholders will remain to align with your firm”. Analytical skills help in analyzing market niches by sensing opportunities that support business model innovation. As informant 14 depicted that “Gaps are everywhere you need to analyze it by converting gaps into opportunities”.

5.2.2 Systematic Thinking Pattern

Systematic Thinking Patterns link with cognition. It’s a way of thinking systematically implementing an efficient system to manage business mechanisms. The reason for many successful businesses is the structural and systematic way to arrange and manage business operations and also develop business model innovation. As informant 7 stated that “My father is a systematic and structure-oriented person and I follow him” some informants believe that a strong system supports

to align everyone. As informant 27 reported that “I believe in investing system rather than HR because a strong system bound everyone to follow the rules”. As informant 13 said, “I itself implement the whole system to manage business operations”. Thus, systematic thinking patterns enhance performance efficiency and excellence. Figure 1 is proposed based on the above aggregate dimensions rooted in the responses of informants.

6. DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

Previous researches are evident that intangible, dynamic, operant resources remain at the heart of increasing firm performance. The history of resources started from the land, labour, and capital (Wilson, 1960). Then, Resource-Based View (RBV) proposed a significant role in the categorization of resources in terms of tangible and intangible entities (Barney, 1996). Knowledge-Based View (KBV) highlighted the pertinent impact of intangible resources (Curado & Bontis, 2006) (Drawing from the notion of intangible resources, competencies, resource advantage theory, dynamic capabilities and absorptive capabilities literature, this research extends and elaborate service-dominant logic’s notion of operant resources (Vargo & Lusch, 2016) by proposing the set of those agile operant resources that supports family firms in business model innovation. This research aims to surface the hidden agile operant resources possess by family firm owners. Another aim is to highlight those collective agile operant resources that support business model innovation. Each organization is perceived as a set of the bundle of resources. Resources are basic inputs within the production process and are used to bake other valuable resources (Forecadell et al., 2018). These valuable resources are developed through interactions among other resources. Some resources are homogenous and others are heterogeneous (Wernerfelt, 1984). Resources heterogeneity is rooted in the VRIN (valuable, rare, non-imitation and non-substitutability) characteristics of resources. These characteristics possess by intangible/operant resources. Operant resources produce above-normal returns by enhancing firm competitiveness in today’s volatile dynamic business world (Ulrich, 2018).

Fortunately, family firms are considered rich in resources because they have a sound control ownership structure (Massis et al., 2018). Family involvement in ownership structure matters a lot in firm productivity and performance (Miller et al., 2007). Family owners utilize their possessed operant resources for enhancing the family firm’s performance and competitiveness. These possessed operant resources are agile and hidden but play a magical role in catering firm competitive position. Family firms are popular in competing for multiple sectors. Family owners possess certain sets of intangible/operant resources supports in competing among various sectors. A wide range of intangible/operant resources ensures the viability of firms. Each family owner possesses certain sets of operant resources, having dynamic attributes supports to cater novel opportunities. The firm owner seeks opportunities by utilizing these agile operant resources. In previous eras, the organization emphasizes the pertinent role of resources in catering to a firm’s sustainable performance (Ulrich, 2018). Although the nature & categories of resources vary over time. Some organizations broke this sequence by bringing business model innovation as a new way of doing business (Pigneur & Tucci, 2005).

Firms are competing in diversified sectors by using their existing resources efficiently & effectively. To ensure firm viability in a hyper-competitive world, it’s essential to maintain & strengthen the position in the market through serving in different sectors while introducing new business models. Business model innovation is dynamic and evolves with time (Hedman & Kalling, 2003). It’s a broader set of innovations in which the firm adopts multiple opportunities portfolios in different ways (Teece, 2018). Organizations are adopted new business models for innovation (Hedman & Kalling, 2003). It’s the broader range of innovation that require multiple types of resources. But the role of intangible/operant resources can never be neglected. Sparse literature is available about the role of operant resources in driving business model innovation. Therefore, the findings of this study shed light on those agile operant resources of FOB owners which facilitate business model innovation through operant resources. In the rapidly emerging markets, business models play a pivotal role because they provide a mechanism for integrating an individual firm’s value chain (Porter, 1985) or value network (Shafer et al., 2005). Successful implementation of business models requires the integration of all operant and operand resources, with stakeholders for establishing cooperative networks that evolve within appropriate market conditions (Leibold et al., 2002; Voelpel et al., 2004). The theme of business model innovation revolves around “as the logic of the firm (Linder & Cantrell, 2000) or a way of doing business (Pigneur & Tucci, 2005). The business model is not static, it’s dynamic which is managed and developed over time (Hedman & Kalling, 2003). Therefore, business models need dynamic resources to develop and managed (Geissdoerfer et al., 2018). Agile operant resources are dynamic which evolve over-time. These resources support all types of firms to cater novel business opportunities in diversified business sectors. In emerging economics, family firms are growing rapidly in diversified sectors. Family owners sharply using their operant resources in sensing long

term opportunities among diversified business sectors. Firms can cater business model innovation through a firm’s sound entrepreneurial orientation (Amit & Zott, 2020). In which family owners capturing new niches in the same or sometimes diversified business sectors (Hult & Ketchen, 2001). Those firms which remain successful in scanning new niches among diversified sectors can better strengthen the firm sustainable competitive advantage. Behind scanning new niches among various sectors. Family owner’s agile operant resources play an integral role. These agile resources drive the mindset of family owners to enhance firm entrepreneurial orientation.

The findings of this study show that family owners must possess two pertinent operant resources i.e. Agile entrepreneurial phronesis and structure approach to scan novel opportunities from the environment. Agile entrepreneurial phronesis is based on some other combination of operant resources i.e. are initiator, foresightedness, vision and values, risk-taker, openness to experience, personal interest and challenger. The second operant resource is the agile structure approach of the family owner which is based on analytical skills and systematic thinking patterns. Family owners analyses the environmental hidden niches through analytical skills and develop systematic thinking patterns. These two agile operant resources are possessed by family firm owners which supports business model innovation. Based on the above discussion following propositions are proposed to conceptualize business model innovation:-

Proposition - 1 For family-owned firms, the more their agile operant resources enhance the greater their business model innovation.

Proposition: 2 In Family-Owned Businesses, the stronger their agile entrepreneurial phronesis their business model innovation become more strengthen.

Proposition: 3 In Family-Owned Businesses, the stronger their agile structure approach their business model innovation become more strengthen.

6.1 Merits of the proposed guiding framework

Competing in diversified sectors has become the foremost priority of many family firms in today’s dynamic business world. For this, the organization needs new business models which refers to the novel “ways of doing business” (Amit & Zott, 2020). Business model innovation is wider in which firms consistently adopt novel opportunities through sensing environments (Teece, 2018). Business models are dynamic and evolve. Due to handling dynamism, firm owners must use dynamic resources. A large number of family firms are operating in different sectors. For this, owners need diversified operant resources to scan environmental opportunities. Based on Informant’s responses, FOB owners use agile entrepreneurial phronesis and agile structure approach to scan environmental opportunities which helps in competing for diversified sectors. These operant resources of FOB owners drive business model innovation that leads to firm competitiveness. In the light of the above-detailed analysis and discussion, this study proposed a conceptual framework in below **Figure 2** depicting the significant role of agile operant resources in business model innovation. It is inferred, that the family firm’s competitiveness resides on FOB owners agile operant resources, which evolve over time having dynamic attributes like entrepreneurial phronesis and structure approach. The proposed guiding framework shows the theoretical contribution of this study that emerged from our investigation. Further, emerging categories can be investigated empirically in future.

Agile Operant Resources

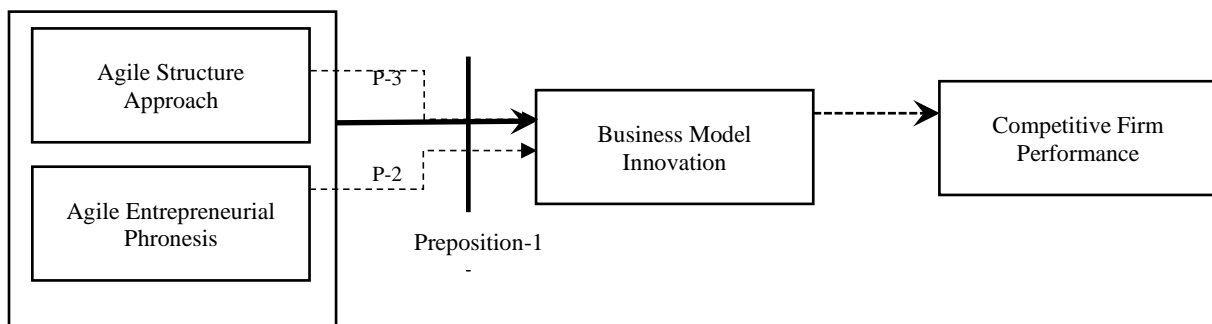


Figure: 2 Proposed conceptual framework for FOBs competitive firm performance through Business model innovation
Source: Author’s findings

LIMITATIONS & FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Several limitations of this study warrant attention. First, this research is limited in data collection through interviews and observational sources. In future studies, data can be collected through triangulation or multiple other sources like questionnaires etc. Second, emerging themes can be examined through the empirical survey. Third, this study is limited to family firms. Future studies should conduct on non-family firms. We studied family firm's competitiveness through business model innovation. Future research should consider other themes for a family firm's competitiveness. Fourth, another qualitative research can be conduct specifically in one sector. Cultural & sub-cultural themes can be considered for further investigation. Future research may be conduct in Asian countries & their ways of developing competitiveness in family-owned businesses.

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