

Exploring the Successful Digital Transformation Execution Among Family-Owned Business in Kuala Lumpur

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the challenges that family-owned businesses on Jalan Tuanku Abdul Rahman (Jalan TAR) in Kuala Lumpur encounter as they navigate a changing retail environment characterized by declining traditional sales and an increase in online shopping. Digital transformation is crucial for current business strategies; however, many local entrepreneurs continue to adhere to outdated family business models, which impedes their ability to adapt to digital practices. Using qualitative methods—such as in-depth interviews, observations, and focus groups—the research assesses sixteen targeted businesses based on their readiness for digital transformation execution, identifying significant barriers including a lack of digital expertise, financial constraints, and cultural resistance. The study also explores strategies employed by entrepreneurs to address these challenges, including leveraging government support, forming collaborative partnerships, and participating in targeted digital skills training. The findings develop a strategic framework to guide family-owned businesses through the digital transition, offering insights to help them thrive in the evolving retail landscape of Jalan TAR.

Keywords: Family-owned businesses, digital transformation, traditional sales, challenges, Jalan TAR

INTRODUCTION

Digitalization has intensified in real-world applications in recent years, driven by industries and businesses striving to enhance productivity, efficiency, and competitiveness (Caliskan et al., 2021). A shift in consumer behavior towards e-commerce and online shopping experiences, characterized by speed and durability, fuels this trend (Broccardo et al., 2023). These developments have disrupted traditional business practices, previously reliant on physical storefronts or “brick and mortar” operations (Sheth, 2021). In today’s dynamic business landscape, the integration of digital tools and strategies is indispensable for organizational success, underscoring the inseparable relationship between business operations and digital transformation (Hanelt et al., 2021).

Numerous businesses, particularly those of a traditional nature that do not fully adapt to contemporary changes, confront tough challenges and, in severe instances, risk becoming profitably unsustainable (Mattila et al., 2021). This case analysis examines family-owned businesses in Jalan Tuanku Abdul Rahman (Jalan TAR), Kuala Lumpur, known as one of the busiest metropolises in Malaysia, as a representative example to clarify the impact of e-commerce on their traditional business models (BMs). In this area, numerous entrepreneurs persist in maintaining their established identities grounded in traditional practices (Abd. Malek and Mahat, 2021). They predominantly adhere to “brick and mortar” methods, despite their diminishing relevance in contemporary market dynamics (Sheth, 2021). Notably, these entrepreneurs are increasingly overseen by younger generations dedicated to preserving their family’s ownership legacy (Esbeih et al., 2021). These younger generations continue their parents’ businesses because they aim to succeed and develop the existing businesses to gain greater awareness from the public.

Recent systematic reviews underscore that family-owned businesses, historically the oldest form of commercial organization, are now pivotal drivers of wealth creation in both emerging and developed economies (Ramadani et al., 2020; Baltazar et al., 2023). To sustain ownership and control across multiple generations, effective leadership by capable family members is essential for operational success (Aladejebi, 2021). However, previous research indicates that family-owned businesses adhering strictly to traditional

practices may face significant challenges, potentially leaving them behind and struggling to sustain their operations (Mattila et al., 2021). These challenges can be addressed by embracing technical innovation to transform longstanding manual tasks and processes that were previously constrained by human physical limitations (Dwivedi et al., 2021). It is noteworthy that embracing innovation and adapting to digital transformation can significantly enhance the long-term survival of family businesses, enabling them to compete effectively in the global market. Utilizing advanced technologies available through e-commerce platforms is crucial to achieving this goal and increasing scalability in the current business environment (Wu, F.S. et al., 2024).

This research aims to systematically analyze and classify the preparedness of local entrepreneurs to adopt digital transformation and implement the latest digital practices within family businesses. Through a comprehensive systematic literature review, this study aims to synthesize existing knowledge, identify new research avenues, and address gaps in the current literature. Specifically, the research focuses on the landscape of business around Jalan TAR as one of Malaysia's busiest metropolises (Yasin et al., 2022), where many of them who have long operated their businesses, particularly elderly entrepreneurs, face challenges in adapting to digital transformation and succession processes (Lanzolla et al., 2021). The study also investigates the impacts of digital transformation on these businesses. These experiences provide valuable insights for business owners in ensuring continuity and long-term success (Fabeil et al., 2020). Addressing the challenges these businesses face in adapting to digital transformation requires strategic efforts from family members, business owners, management teams, and external stakeholders, including government agencies and business communities (Carvalho et al., 2021; Lee, 2021). This review aims to investigate the factors influencing the adoption of digital transformation and consequences for succession processes among family-owned businesses and other entrepreneurs. Through this research, the researcher used a cross-case methodology to analyze the data and final result by analyzing similarities and differences in innovation and succession practices within these businesses, which provides valuable insights for future research. The research primarily focuses on family-owned businesses and other entrepreneurs, including micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs), located in the neighborhoods surrounding Jalan TAR, Kuala Lumpur.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Business is characterized as the conduct of commercial activities or transactions by individuals to produce and exchange goods and services, with the primary goal of achieving profitability for the organization (Annisa et al., 2021; Fernando et al., 2023). Based on observations conducted in the Jalan TAR area, numerous businesses have adhered to traditional operational approaches (Abd. Malek and Mahat, 2021), maintaining business-to-business (B2B) models with outdated business practices (Mattila et al., 2021). A notable proportion of these businesses are family-owned businesses that have transferred operational control across generations, impeding their capacity to swiftly adopt advancements in digital transformation (Lanzolla et al., 2021). Effective succession planning is critical to securing the longevity and sustainability of family-owned businesses (Ison, 2021). Previous research conducted by Sari et al. (2021) and Heim and Hopper (2022) indicates that various factors, including the alignment of values, attitudes, and interests in digital transformation within family-owned businesses and other business owners, influence successful succession in these businesses. Nevertheless, the majority of business owners in this area are predominantly elderly entrepreneurs and lack digital proficiency (Abdul Halim et al., 2023; Yawised et al., 2022). This deficiency in succession planning awareness could potentially impact the long-term viability of these businesses. Research indicates that effective succession planning is crucial for enhancing the performance of family-owned businesses (Athia et al., 2021). Succession planning aimed at transitioning traditional business practices to current digital practices can significantly enhance impacts and foster inventiveness, thereby enabling entrepreneurs with a cohesive strategic vision to gain a competitive edge (Winarsih et al., 2021). This research aims to bridge the gap in readiness levels among elderly and younger generation of entrepreneurs to adopt current digital transformations. It explores the responses of leaders among the younger and elderly entrepreneurs within these businesses as they implement digital transformation initiatives in their practices and business models (BMs). Observations conducted around Jalan TAR indicate the presence of approximately 1000 businesses operating in the area. Given the focus on qualitative research, this study aims to investigate the perspectives of 16 respondents, including both generations with having different levels of expertise in implementing current digital practices.

The significance of succession planning within the framework of digitalization is crucial, especially for family-owned businesses and other business owners. Effective succession planning in digitalization can guarantee the long-term sustainability and success of businesses in today's competitive environment (Noris et al., 2021; Ranta et al., 2021). In Malaysia, enhancing awareness and implementing effective succession planning strategies in digitalization are crucial to ensuring the potential growth and survival of these businesses (Tham and Atan, 2021). This study focuses on local entrepreneurs within family-owned businesses and other business owners, specifically at the micro, small, and medium levels, examining their readiness to adopt digital transformation. The research will explore how this readiness influences the effective transition of their business practices and assess the resulting impact on their business performance.

Recently, due to the increasing reliance on e-commerce and online platforms in shopping habits, there has been a noticeable decline in foot traffic (Astro Awani, April 2023; eMarketer, 2021). This shift has compelled family-owned businesses in Jalan TAR, which previously relied on traditional business models (BMs), to adapt their practices swiftly to mitigate the impact. Failure to adopt current digital practices (Mattila et al., 2021) may lead to family-owned businesses in this area facing the worst-case scenario of accumulating unsold stock (Harian Metro, March 2024). By emphasizing the importance of digitalization, family-owned businesses can facilitate a seamless transition toward adopting digital practices, ensuring business continuity and resilience. This approach encourages them to embrace innovation, thereby mitigating the risk of business failure. Furthermore, governmental agencies should actively support local entrepreneurs by initiating programs that assist them in adapting to transformative changes necessary to align with evolving business practices and procedures to bring more sustainability to business performance in the long term (Chen et al., 2021).

Successful digital transformation in family-owned businesses relies significantly on collaborative interaction among members and their support chains to allocate resources appropriately (Lee, 2021), connect expertise effectively, foster strong trust, and proficiently deploy digital tools and strategies. This approach ensures inclusivity and support for all team members, mitigating the risk of anyone being marginalized or left behind (Salih, 2024). The creation of a "family constitution" serves as a fundamental document that defines the company's core values, vision, and all-embracing objectives (Alradhi et al., 2021). The significance of digital tools such as artificial intelligence (AI), the Internet of Things (IoT), cyber-physical systems (CPS), machine learning (ML), and other technological features has been emphasized (Friha et al., 2022). It is suggested that dynamic relationships between buyers and these businesses could be fostered (Lestari et al., 2022), potentially enhancing the sustainability of business growth (Lee, 2021).

In recent times, there has been a noticeable shift among the majority of Malaysians towards greater reliance on digital tools, driven by a growing inclination towards technological proficiency. This transformation in daily habits has become particularly pronounced in response to the recent epidemic. They use multiple social networks and online platforms every day, which has reduced their daily routine of going to physical locations to purchase items that they want (eCommerce Trends and Opportunities in Malaysia Uncovered!, 2020). Significantly, there has been a marked rise in consumer engagement with e-commerce platforms in Malaysia, reflecting a growing trend of digital reliance. Presently, more than 62.1% of the population utilizes the internet and other digital tools, a figure projected to increase to 63.5% by 2023 and continue growing thereafter (eCommerce Trends and Opportunities in Malaysia Uncovered!, 2020).

Exploring the factors that contribute to increased readiness among family-owned businesses to adopt current digital practices and transform their business models towards digitalization necessitates a qualitative approach. This study will employ a descriptive and explanatory methodology to explore in-depth case scenarios, as advocated by Upright and Forsythe (2021) and Priya (2021). To foster the adaptation of family-owned businesses to latest transformations, leveraging support chains encompassing family members, manpower, and expert guidance is crucial for effectively implementing innovative practices (McCoy and Chi, 2022; Madhura et al., 2022). Consequently, family-owned businesses must strategically determine how to access such endorsements through either pre-existing support chains or by establishing their own (Awan and Sroufe, 2022; Arribas-Ibar et al., 2022). According to Türk (2022), effective organizational leadership entails integrating with employees to adapt to new digital systems through remote or automated processes and leveraging social media channels. This fosters cooperation and facilitates the cost-effective utilization of assets at both corporate and individual levels, thereby advancing digital business objectives. Central to this

approach is mutual engagement through two-way communication, enhancing attention and enthusiasm, promoting mutual understanding of colleagues' technical and interpersonal skills, and cultivating trust. These efforts strengthen communication, analysis, and creativity, facilitating adaptation to digital practices and transforming outdated traditional business models (BMs). The failure of leaders to implement this theoretical framework among their peers may intensify the detrimental effects identified by the quantum factor (Barolli and Terzo, 2020). Therefore, this study uses an explanatory case research strategy to clarify the root causes of a phenomenon, enabling adjustments to improve or mitigate influential variables (Priya, 2021). Furthermore, it incorporates the descriptive case study method as a direct and contemporary approach to comprehensively understand the specific case (Upright and Forsythe, 2021).

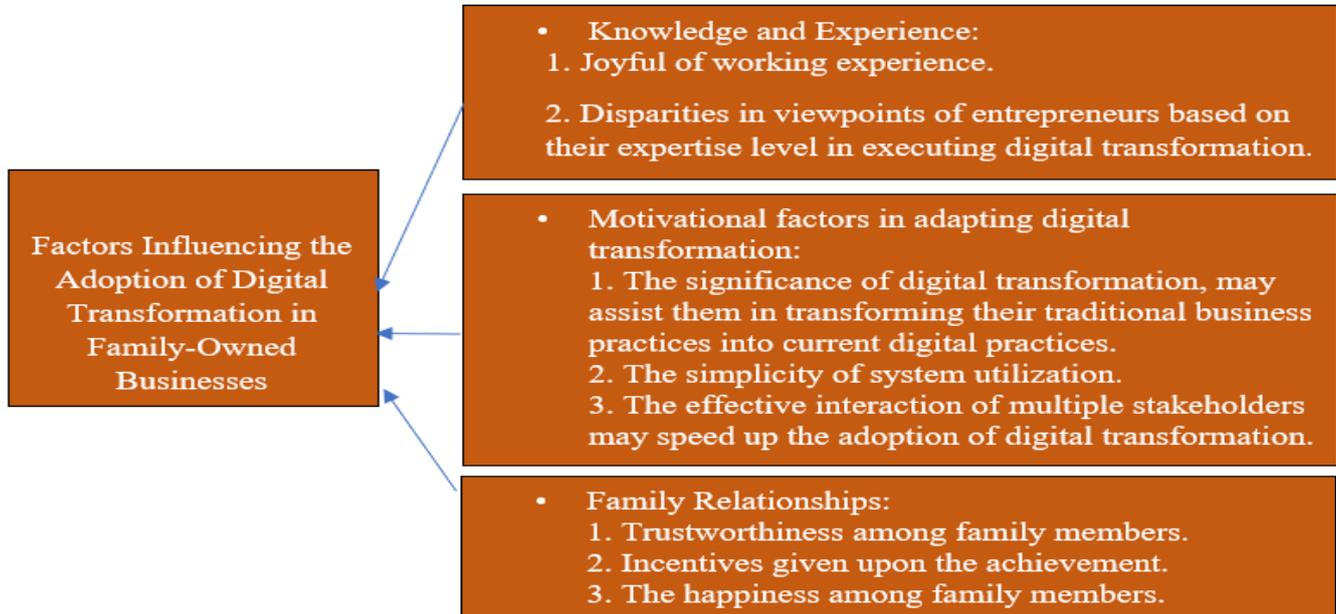
Family-owned businesses appear to acknowledge societal realities by addressing recent challenges such as declining customer bases and reduced foot traffic to their physical "brick and mortar" locations (Astro Awani, 2023; Sheth, 2021). They also recognize the necessity of implementing new business models to effectively tackle these issues (Pervin and Mokhtar, 2022; Mattila et al., 2021). Therefore, local entrepreneurs in this area should consider preparing alternatives to address these issues by embracing the latest innovations to enhance awareness and brand recognition among buyers and customers (Mela Devita and Zuhri M. Nawawi, 2022). Interdisciplinary research involving students, teachers, and researchers employs both relativist-subjectivist and realist-objectivist frameworks to articulate insider perspectives (Boon et al., 2022). This approach is crucial for advancing the study of family-owned businesses and solidifying its position as an academic discipline that spans leadership styles and management perspectives (Kim and Park, 2021; Imran et al., 2020). Incorporating sustainability into business practices necessitates entrepreneurs' acquisition of security systems and appropriate tools. These resources are essential for enhancing programs or implementing alternatives that support a collaborative system aimed at sustaining business agendas (Morgan-Thomas et al., 2020; Zhang and

Watson IV, 2020). Nevertheless, concerns have been raised about the potential misuse of digital tools, leading to the exploitation of user data. Consequently, many established entrepreneurs are hesitant to fully embrace digitalization, despite its significant benefits in enhancing day-to-day operations (Lis and Fischer, 2020). Addressing this issue requires fostering open communication between entrepreneurs and information technology experts. This collaboration aims to achieve mutual understanding and prevent any potential losses for both parties (Permana and Darma, 2020). Furthermore, the economic performance of family-owned businesses is crucial for long-term survival and profitability. Therefore, establishing effective relational arrangements among supply chains is essential, enabling entrepreneurs to access and analyze supporting evidence (Esbeih et al., 2021). This process facilitates the gathering, integration, and adaptation of information among entities directly involved in the transformational progress (Zahra et al., 2022). To explore how family-owned businesses influence leadership decisionmaking, it is essential to have a thorough understanding of the latest advancements in digital transformation. This understanding allows for engagement with various stakeholders and supports comprehensive data collection, particularly concerning current digital practices (Matarazzo et al., 2021).

Achieving successful integration of new business practices through digitalization into the succession process of family businesses requires a thorough understanding of their distinct context. This entails evaluating their preparedness to embrace technological advancements, streamline processes, and capitalize on digital talent equipped with expertise in digitalization (Carvalho et al., 2021; Hu et al., 2022). Therefore, strategic planning for implementing digital transformation can strengthen long-term business sustainability (Clayton and Kral, 2021). Furthermore, fostering collaboration among team members under the guidance of capable leadership rather than adopting an autocratic or hierarchical style can inspire commitment to achieving long-term business goals and mitigate issues that may negatively impact both the family and the business (Kim and Park, 2021; Imran et al., 2020). The diversity of expertise and soft skills among team members contributes significantly to achieving successful outcomes (Barolli and Terzo, 2020). Key themes such as change management attitudes, emotional intelligence, entrepreneurial legacy, personalized involvement, and employee selfresponsibility are crucial factors in preparing for the digital transformation process within family businesses (Esbeih et al., 2021). Additionally, joyful working experiences within the family business represent valuable assets for entrepreneurs when implementing digital transformation (Frankiewicz and Chamorro-Premuzic, 2020). Therefore, the subsequent generation of leaders' preparation, training, and development play a crucial role in family businesses' long-term sustainability and success.

Based on the aforementioned factors, it is evident that implementing digital transformation within family-owned businesses is crucial for enhancing sustainability and fostering business growth. A specific subset of these factors has been identified, leading to the development of a conceptual framework aimed at assessing the readiness of family businesses to embrace the digital transformation process.

Figure 1: Framework



Research Method

This study utilizes a qualitative research approach to explore the readiness factors that influence the adoption of digital practices among family-owned businesses situated in Jalan TAR, Kuala Lumpur. The research focuses on understanding how these businesses transition from traditional business models to incorporate current digital practices. Specifically, the study examines the challenges encountered during the execution of digital transformation, the prevailing business environment, alternative strategies to enhance readiness among elderly entrepreneurs, and the success factors associated with digital transformation processes from the perspective of local entrepreneurs.

Research Sampling

Since this research employs a qualitative approach, it faces constraints in achieving numerical generalization due to its reliance on smaller sample sizes. Conversely, the design of quantitative research facilitates numerical standardization. However, it is crucial to recognize that this does not suggest an inherent superiority of quantitative methods over qualitative ones. Both approaches offer distinct advantages and are valuable depending on the specific research objectives they are designed to address (Kumatongo and Muzata, 2021). The qualitative approach employs methods such as snowball sampling and purposive sampling, which may constrain the ability to achieve standardization (Hennink and Kaiser, 2022). Moreover, these sampling patterns facilitate the selection of participants who are well-suited to address the research issue. They enable researchers to assess and evaluate potential participants based on specific criteria and individual characteristics (Mekie, 2021). Additionally, this approach facilitated the collection of a representative sample of participants' views and experiences, guided by pre-established criteria deemed significant according to the literature. This research examined how family-owned businesses operating as small and medium enterprises in Jalan TAR, Kuala Lumpur, are preparing for digital transformation in response to declining sales performance. The study focused on their efforts to transition from outdated business practices to digitalization. To address these issues within the apparel and textile industries, 16 entrepreneurs from this specific area, were selected for the study based on their expertise and readiness to adapt to digitalization. Based on Table 1 below, it illustrates the targeted respondents in Jalan TAR, Kuala Lumpur.

Table 1: Total number of local entrepreneurs in Jalan TAR, Kuala Lumpur.

Location	Sub-Area	Total Entrepreneurs	Percentage
Jalan Melayu, Arked TAR	C	12	1.536
Arked Ibu Kota, Jalan TAR	C	28	3.585
Lot 101, Jalan TAR	B	8	1.024
Lot 107, Jalan TAR	B	14	1.793
Lorong Bonus, Jalan TAR, Lot 159	B	12	1.536
Pusat Penjaja Jalan Melayu / Masjid India	C	143	18.310
Pusat Perdagangan, Lorong Bonus (PT80)	B	49	6.274
Wisma Yakin, Jalan Masjid India	C	30	3.841
Selangor and Malayan Mansions	C	365	46.735
City One Plaza	C	40 Retail Lots / 20 Kiosk (60)	7.683
Semua House	B	60	7.683
Total		781	100

The busiest areas hosting the largest number of family-owned businesses and other types of businesses at Selangor and Malayan Mansions in sub-area C of Jalan TAR, totaling 365 businesses currently operating there. To effectively achieve the research objectives, selecting the largest market ensures systematic findings, especially in identifying suitable respondents among entrepreneurs. Based on this data, the sampling distribution will consist of 16 selected respondents actively running their businesses using both traditional business practices and current digital practices in this specific area. This approach ensures that qualitative research methods are employed and that participants are willing to participate in observational studies.

Data Collection and Data Analysis

This study conducted in-depth interviews with selected participants using an interview guide consisting of four main topics:

1. Knowledge and Experience: Joyful of working experience; Disparities in viewpoints of entrepreneurs based on their expertise level in executing digital transformation.

2. Motivational factors in adapting digital transformation: The significance of digital transformation, may assist them in transforming their traditional business practices into current digital practices; The simplicity of system utilization; The effective interaction of multiple stakeholders may speed up the adoption of digital transformation.
3. Family Relationships: Trustworthiness among family members; Incentives given upon the achievement; The happiness among family members.
4. Challenges in adapting to Digital Transformation: Key challenges include a lack of expertise in digitalization, financial constraints, and cultural resistance to change. With the participants' consent, the in-depth interviews were recorded and transcribed.

Subsequently, the researcher will analyze the data by identifying similarities and differences in the transcribed content and coding it with representative words or phrases. The researcher will then identify meaningful patterns and analyze them in relation to the existing literature.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Based on the qualitative research, all factors within the conceptual framework (see Figure 1) positively influence the readiness and challenges of the respondents among family-owned businesses and other business owners to adapt to digital transformation in their business models (BMs).

Knowledge And Experience

Joyful Of Working Experience

According to the research, positive work experiences with family members offer opportunities to encourage the younger generation in family businesses to adopt new standard business practices, undertake tasks assigned by top management, and leverage technological advancements (Frankiewicz and Chamorro-Premuzic, 2020). Such experiences help them understand their responsibilities within the company. Furthermore, gaining this experience is crucial for enhancing their readiness for succession, particularly if they are appointed to lead the business expansion process in the future.

Disparities In Viewpoints of Entrepreneurs Based on Their Expertise Level in Executing Digital Transformation

The findings suggest that variations in skills, knowledge, and expertise regarding adopting new technologies can result in disparities in digital transformation and the readiness of businesses to transition their models into the digital era. To mitigate this issue, it is essential to ensure equitable access to high-quality manpower who can support family-owned businesses in adapting to digitalization, thereby fostering a healthy competitive environment (Carvalho et al., 2021).

Motivational Factors in Adapting Digital Transformation

The Significance of Digital Transformation, May Assist Them In Transforming Their Traditional Business Practices Into Current Digital Practices

According to the research, to sustain business growth, adapting to digital transformation is crucial for transitioning from outdated business practices to more competitive approaches. Given the shift in consumer purchasing behavior towards e-commerce (Astro Awani, April 2023; eMarketer, 2021), local entrepreneurs and family-owned businesses must embrace these digital transformations.

Furthermore, due to the decline in foot traffic to physical locations, these businesses may find that leveraging alternative digital channels, such as social media applications (Susanto et al., 2023), could attract customers to their premises by promoting their offerings through these modern platforms.

The Simplicity of System Utilization

The findings indicate that the simplicity of system utilization can facilitate the handling of digital business model design decisions, information technology usage and comprehension, assessment, digital value network creation, and customer feedback. This ease of use is likely to enhance competitiveness in the current era (Winarsih et al., 2021).

The Effective Interaction of Multiple Stakeholders May Speed Up the Adoption of Digital Transformation

The findings indicate that effective interaction among multiple stakeholders can accelerate the adoption of digital transformation. Therefore, this process might emphasize the importance of value creation and innovation. However, if there are insufficient resources, they will be unable to resolve the current issues of implementing current digital practices in collaboration with diverse stakeholders (Eisenreich et al., 2021).

Family Relationships

Trustworthiness Among Family Members

It was observed that expressing trust in the abilities of family members is crucial for preparing them to adapt to recent transformations. Demonstrating this trust can be achieved through various methods, such as assigning special projects and allowing family members to embrace and develop new transformations, which helps prepare them for the adoption of new cultural principles. Additionally, factors contributing to the development of trustworthiness among family members are closely related to overcoming challenges and reducing barriers in the digital transformation process.

Incentives Given Upon the Achievement

To motivate optimal performance, it is advisable to implement incentives or reimbursements as a standard practice. The appropriateness of these incentives varies according to each member's attitude towards financial compensation. For members who do not prioritize financial gain, alternative incentives should be considered. Conversely, for those who place significant value on financial rewards, it is crucial to ensure that the incentives offered are competitive or at least comparable to the returns generated for the company.

The Happiness Among Family Members

It was observed that the expression of satisfaction among family members can be assessed based on the strength of familial relationships in building the family business legacy. Indicators of this relationship strength include the frequency of interactions, involvement in group activities, the consistency of collaborative efforts, and both formal and informal engagements, such as social activities. These factors collectively illustrate the degree of engagement among family members.

Challenges in Adapting to Digital Transformation

Lack of Expertise in Digitalization

Family-owned businesses encounter significant challenges when attempting to adapt to digital transformation. The findings suggest that these businesses need to develop substantial expertise and acquire relevant skills to effectively manage this transition. This includes staying updated with the latest information and knowledge regarding current digital practices.

In the context of digital transformation, many elderly entrepreneurs lack the necessary digitalization skills (Drydakis, 2022). Consequently, this deficiency makes them particularly vulnerable to disruptions in business networks and supply chains, especially in emerging countries where digital skills and expertise are limited (Reim et al., 2022; Sancak, 2023). Moreover, elderly entrepreneurs often exhibit a lack of confidence in embracing technological advancements (Vicente, 2022). This reluctance is compounded by their insufficient resources for implementing digital transformation and a lack of accountability for ensuring the quality of the

latest innovation. However, it has been suggested that family-owned businesses can enhance their readiness for digital transformation by focusing on six key scalability variables. These variables include the analysis of modifications, actions required for implementing digital practices, objectives to be achieved through digital transformation, prevailing beliefs, strategic guidance, and leadership support. Addressing these factors may significantly improve their capacity to adapt to digital transformations.

financial constraints

The issue of financial constraints has emerged as a significant challenge for businesses in the study area, with a decline in sales attributed to a shift in consumer purchasing habits toward e-commerce platforms. The research findings suggest that family-owned businesses should clearly define and integrate digital tools and advanced technologies. By doing so, they may be able to attract customers back to their physical locations, encouraging them to engage with and purchase from local entrepreneurs as they did previously.

When a family-owned business experiences declining sale, it may be necessary to enhance engagement with potential customers by increasing brand awareness and developing loyalty programs. These strategies can help rekindle interest in local entrepreneurs. To support these initiatives, businesses should consider hiring skilled digital professionals to promote their offerings through online platforms. Additionally, leveraging satisfied customers as advocates can aid in building dynamic relationships and spreading positive word-of-mouth.

By implementing these measures, family-owned businesses can create a more structured and positive business environment, thereby enhancing overall management and organizational success.

Cultural Resistance to Change

The phenomenon of cultural resistance to change is occurring among many local entrepreneurs who are hesitant to shift from outdated business practices to more sustainable models. This observation indicates that family businesses may mitigate these challenges by cultivating a greater openness to digitalization. Increasing awareness of the benefits provided by digital tools may facilitate the revitalization and enhancement of organizational profitability for these businesses.

Furthermore, it is advantageous for family businesses to develop a sustainable plan for the future, as the current business landscape has increasingly shifted towards digitalization. Adapting to current user behavior, which is more reliant on digital technologies, is crucial. Crafting a digitalization strategy can offer valuable guidance and support for cultural improvements, enhance the management of employees in response to digital adaptation challenges, and facilitate future expansion.

Factors of Success in Adapting to Digital Transformation

The Connection Between Traditional Business Practices and Current Digital Practices.

Adopting appropriate business practices can substantially influence a business's growth path. Implementing effective practices can create valuable opportunities for family-owned companies by enhancing brand recognition and establishing connections with potential buyers and loyal customers. Unlike traditional business practices, which rely heavily on physical premises, current business practices increasingly utilize digital tools such as the Internet of Things (IoT) and other digital technologies to engage with users and drive growth.

The Extent of Readiness Among Family-Owned Businesses to Embrace Digital Transformation

As previously discussed, family-owned businesses must assess their readiness for digital transformation by developing strategies that align with both the emerging digital framework and potential growth opportunities. This assessment facilitates the enhancement of their capabilities and skills, enabling them to address shortcomings in outdated practices that are insufficient for ensuring long-term sustainability. Consequently, their readiness for digital transformation is essential for achieving digital objectives and ensuring successful adaptation to the digital era.

Being Open to Implementing Digital Transformation

Embracing openness to digital transformation is crucial for family-owned businesses as they navigate the shift to new technological paradigms. By adopting a receptive attitude towards digitalization, these businesses can potentially gain significant advantages, such as enhanced competitiveness. This openness can help them establish a competitive edge over rivals in the current marketplace, thereby improving their overall market position and operational efficiency.

DISCUSSION

This study investigates the readiness of local entrepreneurs who actively operating their businesses in Jalan TAR, Kuala Lumpur, particularly among family-owned businesses and other business owners to integrate digital transformation into their business practices. It explores the common challenges encountered during the implementation of digital transformation and identifies factors that contribute to successful execution. The analysis considers perspectives from both young and elderly generations of entrepreneurs. The study employs a qualitative research approach, focusing on sixteen (16) family-owned businesses and other business owners within the small and medium-sized sectors that have undertaken preparations to enhance their readiness for digital transformation. The findings reveal eight key factors that influence the adoption of digital transformation in these entrepreneurs.

Recent research highlights that knowledge and experience in executing digital transformation are crucial for family-owned businesses and other business owners, particularly in the context of succession planning and the transformation of business practices. Specifically, joyful working experiences within the organizations and differences in entrepreneurial perspectives, shaped by their expertise in digital transformation, are significant factors influencing organizational preparedness for succession planning (Frankiewicz and Chamorro-Premuzic, 2020; Dąbrowska et al., 2022). Additionally, it is essential to enhance the understanding of e-commerce functionality to facilitate digital transformation. This improvement supports the adoption of a more efficient, data-driven management model across various business functions, including design, manufacturing, marketing, sales, and presentation, in the current business environment (Li et al., 2022). Consequently, many studies have suggested that developing strategic digital plans are important to advance business transformation and continue to progress with new technologies (Carvalho et al., 2021). Therefore, hiring a digital technology expert can further enhance existing digital practices within the organization (Abdul Halim et al., 2023). Additionally, evaluating the criteria employed in the digital transformation process can significantly improve the success of the business goals (Clayton and Kral, 2021). Overall, these studies underscore the importance of considering multiple factors in the execution of digital transformation to ensure the sustainability and potential growth of these businesses.

Moreover, to foster motivation among these businesses to embrace digitalization, it is important to provide both intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors. According to earlier research from Vesal et al. (2024), these can include financial incentives such as bonuses, retirement benefits, and allowances, as well as non-financial rewards like promotion opportunities, flexible breaks, additional vacation time, workplace support and recognition, personal interests, and a sense of company commitment. Such measures are crucial in enhancing their willingness to adapt to digitalization and succession planning (Vesal et al., 2024). However, research indicates that some entrepreneurs continue to exhibit limited competence in adapting to digitalization (Yawised et al., 2022). This is partly because they believe that successful digital transformation requires advanced digital skills to enhance creativity and innovation, as well as significant changes in knowledge and professional domains (Winarsih et al., 2021). Therefore, it is essential to address various factors to enhance the interest and motivation of family businesses, thereby ensuring their commitment and readiness for the latest advancements in succession planning and the progress of digital transformation.

Several factors influence how ready these businesses are to adopt the latest innovations in monitoring strategic planning. These factors include capabilities to engage with the transformation, the level of commitment to the business, and the readiness to integrate current digital practices that align with the latest technological advancements (Methot et al., 2022; Sajjad and Zaman, 2020; Wu, F.S. et al., 2024). Additionally, research identifies that a harmonious engagement between the business leader and the workforce is crucial to driving operational success (Aladejebi, 2021). Moreover, the values of trust, engagement, and effective communication within the organization can establish significant relationships that enable individuals to

collaborate productively (Mikiewicz and Cunha de Araújo, 2021). However, it is important to note that executing digital transformation requires diligent preparation, implementation, and management (Ranta et al., 2021). While this process presents challenges, it remains essential for achieving long-term success.

Previous studies have identified a lack of expertise in digitalization, financial constraints, and cultural resistance to change as the three primary challenges encountered during the execution of digital transformation in most of businesses including family-owned businesses (Wu., F.S. et al., 2024). At the same time, factors for success include the connection between traditional business practices and current digital practices, the extent of readiness among these businesses to embrace digital transformation, and being open to implementing digital transformation (Baig et al., 2022; Kitsios et al., 2021; Nasution et al., 2021). Moreover, leadership competencies play a critical role in successfully adapting family businesses to digital transformation and ensuring long-term business growth (Peñarroya-Farell et al., 2023; Bresciani et al., 2021). Emotional intelligence is also fundamental for family-owned businesses, which rely on a support chain known as the family apparel business' chain of innovators to drive digitalization and ensure succession (Li and Leonas, 2022; McCoy and Chi, 2022). These findings underscore the importance of addressing various aspects of digital transformation succession within family-owned businesses and other business owners, particularly in Kuala Lumpur. This includes both internal factors related to the business environment and external factors influencing the success of digital transformation efforts. By tackling these challenges and leveraging success factors, family-owned businesses can effectively navigate the complexities of digital transformation planning and ensure sustainable business growth in a competitive landscape.

CONCLUSION, LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This research employed in-depth interview and focus group discussions (FGDs) as the primary data collection method, focusing on family-owned businesses and other business owners who actively located their businesses in Jalan TAR, Kuala Lumpur. Future studies should consider incorporating prototypes to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the topic and enhance the credibility of the findings. Additionally, this study focused primarily on the apparel and textile industries, reflecting the predominant concentration of entrepreneurs in these industries. Future research could benefit from examining specific sector samples to provide more industry-specific insights. This study also included both younger and older entrepreneurs to capture diverse perspectives. Future studies might focus on a particular generation of entrepreneurs to provide more targeted and practical outcomes.

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