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ABSTRACT

Family businesses form the biggest type of business globally and contribute greatly to the social and economic development at micro and macro-levels; yet majority of them fail to transition from generation to generation. This study aimed at identifying the strategic role played by enterprising families in ensuring transgenerational growth and continuity of family businesses in Uganda. Using a multi-case qualitative study approach from a social constructivism worldview, the study involved seven large size family businesses from the Greater Kampala Metropolitan Area. The study applied the resource-based view approach. Participants were purposively selected. Data was collected by means of in-depth interviews, observations and documents review and analyzed using NVivo version 12. Findings revealed that families whose businesses are able to transition from one generation to another use various resources and capabilities at their disposal to play a strategic role of establishing and consolidating a strong foundation on which both the family and the business depend to survive, grow and continue thriving. More specifically is the role played by the founder that sets a firm foundation for the family and business on which subsequent generations have to build. Individual and collective roles played by family members from different generations were also identified. Building on previous studies, this study conceptualizes a modified family succession and transition model necessary for transgenerational family business continuity. The study was limited to successful family businesses and never involved failed family businesses. Another study involving failed family businesses that initially seemed to perform well may give another perspective thereby enriching the findings and conclusions of this study.

Le imprese familiari costituiscono il più grande tipo di impresa a livello globale e contribuiscono notevolmente allo sviluppo sociale ed economico a livello micro e macro; eppure, la maggior parte di esse non riesce a proseguire di generazione in generazione. Questo studio mira a identificare il ruolo strategico svolto dalle famiglie imprenditrici nel garantire la crescita transgenerazionale e la continuità delle imprese familiari in Uganda. Utilizzando un approccio di studio qualitativo multi caso da una visione del mondo del costruttivismo sociale, lo studio ha coinvolto sette aziende familiari di grandi dimensioni della Greater Kampala Metropolitan Area. Lo studio ha applicato l'approccio resource-based view. I partecipanti sono stati volutamente selezionati. I dati sono stati raccolti mediante interviste approfondite, osservazioni e revisione di documenti e analizzati utilizzando NVivo versione 12. I risultati hanno rivelato che le famiglie le cui attività sono in grado di passare da una generazione all'altra utilizzano varie risorse e capacità a loro disposizione per svolgere un ruolo strategico di stabilire e consolidare una solida base su cui sia la famiglia che l'azienda dipendono per sopravvivere, crescere e continuare a prosperare. Più in particolare, è il ruolo svolto dal fondatore che pone solide basi per la famiglia e l'impresa su cui le generazioni successive dovranno costruire. Sono stati, inoltre, individuati i ruoli individuali e collettivi svolti dai membri della famiglia di diverse generazioni. Basandosi su studi precedenti, questo studio concettualizza una successione familiare modificata e un modello di transizione necessario per la continuità aziendale transgenerazionale della famiglia. Lo studio è stato limitato alle imprese familiari di successo e non ha mai preso in considerazione imprese familiari fallite. Un altro studio che coinvolgesse imprese familiari fallite che inizialmente sembravano funzionare bene potrebbe fornire un'altra prospettiva, arricchendo così i risultati e le conclusioni di questo studio.

Keywords: Family Business, Enterprising Family, Family Governance, Family Business Growth and Continuity, Resource-Based View Approach

1 – Introduction

Family businesses have been and remain a model of business due to their strengths and behaviors that give them a competitive edge over non-family firms (Aronoff & Ward, 1995). However, continuity across different generations, more so beyond founders, remains one of the biggest challenges faced by family businesses globally and in developing countries, in particular. Research has revealed that transition of family businesses from the first to the second generation is at 30%, 15% from second to third generation. On average the lifespan of most family businesses coincides with the first generational change at 24 years (Alayo, Jainaga, Maseda, & Arzubiaga, 2016). That notwithstanding, family businesses form the biggest type of business everywhere in the world. Poza in Acquaah (2016) estimates family owned and or controlled businesses at 80% of all global businesses. This is corroborated by Alderson's (2018) findings that puts them between 80-95% in United States of America, 70-80% in Europe, 75-90% in Middle East, 70% in Latin America, 67% in Australia. However, this study does not give exact statistics regarding family businesses in Africa but rather an anecdotal estimate of 90% for Sub-Saharan Africa while a blanket statement is given about Asia by indicating that they are the majority. On the other hand, Venter, Boshoff, and Maas (2003) estimate family businesses in South Africa to be approximately 80% of all businesses. But South Africa is not an average African country hence the need for more research about the rest of Africa. That notwithstanding, family businesses are involved in almost all sectors of the economy (Howorth, Rose, Hamilton, & Westhead, 2010) offer approximately 80% of employment opportunities in most countries (De Massis, Frattini, Majocchi, & Piscitello, 2018), and contribute 70 to 90% of the annual global product (Firfiray & Gomez-Mejia, 2021). The implication of these statistics is that family businesses play a critical role in national and international development.

High mortality notwithstanding, it is important to note that there are a number of family businesses, especially in developed countries, that have existed across a number of generations. Notable among these include Merck KGaA founded in 1668, Tata in 1868, Ford Motor Co. in

1903, Bajaj Auto Ltd in 1926, Volkswagen AG in 1937, LG Electronics Inc. in 1958, Marriot International Inc., (Family Capital, 2022). The fact that the above and many other family businesses have been in existence and are still doing well confirms the fact that family businesses can outlive their founders and transition from generation to generation. This then calls for understanding why some family businesses manage to outlive their founders and transition beyond generations while others fail to make it. Unfortunately, there is insufficient research on family businesses in emerging economies (Bruton, Ahlstrom, & Obloj, 2008; Khavul, Bruton, & Wood, 2009), and more so those in Africa (Acquaah & Eshun, 2016). It is against this backdrop that this study, from a developing economy's context, was initiated. Consequently, the study aimed at identifying the strategic role played by enterprising families in facilitating growth and continuity of family businesses across different generations in Uganda. Specifically, the study focused on answering the following questions:

QUESTION 1: *What is the role of enterprising families in the growth and continuity of family businesses in Uganda?*

QUESTION 2: *What are the family-specific resources that are used by enterprising families to facilitate growth and continuity of family businesses in Uganda?*

QUESTION 3: *What are the external factors that can hinder growth and continuity of family businesses across different generations despite the efforts taken by an enterprising family?*

2 – Research Background

2.1 – *Contextual Background*

Uganda has been ranked as one of the most enterprising countries in the world (Singer, Amoros, & Arreola, 2015) yet most of the businesses close shop before completing one year (Nangoli, Turinawe, Kituyi, Kusemererwa, & Jaaza, 2013). Family businesses are no exception to this. The following section discusses the socio-economic and political context from which families and family businesses have operated and therefore having a direct and or indirect bearing on them.

Uganda is an East African landlocked developing country that has had a volatile political environment for the most part of her independence from the British colonial rule in 1962. The country has also had socio-economic challenges followed by an introduction of a number of economic reforms, all of which have had an impact on business and management. During the sixty years of independence, the country has had a total of nine heads of state with no peaceful handover of government. It is during the current president's thirty-six years of leadership that the country has generally experienced political stability.

Politics have had a big impact on the social and economic aspects of the country, businesses and the people therein. Generally, the country's economy grew at an average of 6.7% per annum between 1962-66 under President Obote, declined during 1970s under President Amin and in the early 1980s (Uganda Bureau of Statistics, 2016). The decline in the economic performance had to do with the policy shifts and the investment climate that was created by the new government such as the economic war by Amin. The abrupt expulsion of Asians from Uganda in 1972, which initially targeted Asians with British passports but later changed to all Asians from India, Pakistan and Bangladesh (Neumann, 2006) resulted into reduction in foreign capital inflow, a decline in the gross domestic product by 5% between 1972-1975 as Asian businesses which composed of 90% of all businesses and contributing 90% of the national taxes, were passed on to ill-prepared Ugandans (Lopez, 2022). Idi Amin operated a 'command economy whereby abrupt directives were issued mainly through state controlled national radio and newspaper and whose compliance was expected in a few days without questioning (Peterson and Taylor, 2013). In addition to the expulsion of Asians, other directives included change of currency from old to new notes bearing the president's image within fifteen days. Such and other directives as well as uncertain political climate had a socio-economic impact on both the citizens and the foreigners. Generally, the period between 1971 to 1986 were marked with political instability and economic decline. The takeover of government by the National Resistance Movement in 1986 marked the beginning of a long period of uninterrupted political stability which has created a relatively good environment for economic recovery. For example, the first years of NRM regime saw a number of economic reforms supported by International Monetary Fund, and an emphasis on a number of economic diversification programs aimed at increased industrialization, manufacturing and services in addition to agriculture (Logan, 2017). The investment climate is generally conducive, something that may partly explain why Uganda has been ranked as one of the most enterprising countries in the world (Singer *et al*., 2015). Unfortunately, most of the businesses close shop before completing one year (Nangoli *et al*., 2013) even when there is political stability and a relatively good conducive investment climate. In a bid to nurture and support the private sectors, the government has initiated a number of policies such as Buy Uganda Build Uganda (Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives, 2014) in order to encourage consumption of locally made goods and services. However, what is unknown is impact of such policies and programs on family businesses and or whether the current and future investment decisions by family business owners are informed by an uncertain future after the current government since the country has never had a peaceful handover of government.

Relatedly, the country has had a number of other challenges such as the outbreak of HIV/AIDS in the 1980s, Ebola, COVID-19 and malaria that have had a toll on the social and economic aspects at macro and micro levels. The impact of such and other endemic diseases have had disastrous effects on the family and economy. The impact of HIV/AIDS at its peak in 1980s and early 1990s was especially evident in the disruption of the traditional family structure, function and size (Ntozi and Zirimenya, 1999) since majority of the people that died were mainly the economically productive. Family dynamics were disrupted in most instances as children and widows had to head their families after the demise of the breadwinners and business owners. This affected family wealth creation and management. Another notable disruption in the family and business life was created by COVID-19 especially in developing economies since even governments were equally constrained and could not easily bail out businesses and families. For example, during COVID-19 there was a 7% decrease in household enterprises in Uganda, that is about 200,000 household enterprises closed, while the remaining businesses struggled with access to raw materials and market (Ssewanyana, 2021). It is worth noting that the definition of household enterprises, according to the study, was nonfarm unincorporated businesses owned by individuals or households, which means that these are part of the family businesses.

Whereas studies and publications tend to focus on the failing businesses, such as the 7% in the case above, there is need to know what the succeeding businesses, are doing to remain operational despite odds such as COVID-19 and political volatility. It is worth noting that even during the 'command economy' and political instability of the 1970s, some the businesses that were already in existence remained and are still in place. An example is that of Mehta Group of

Companies. Researchers and policymakers should therefore be interested in picking lessons from such businesses which can be used to facilitate other businesses to succeed.

On the demographic aspect, the country's population offers both opportunities and challenges for families and businesses. According to National Population Council (2019), Uganda is one of the countries with the youngest populations with more than half the population being younger than 15 years old, which comes with the challenge of high age dependency ratio to families and government but which young population can become a source of demographic dividend. Incidentally, the same report indicates that 21.4% of the population was in extreme poverty as of 2016/17. 2014 Census report indicates that the age dependency ratio was so high at 103, which means that for every 100 economically active Ugandans, the dependents are 103. There is need to study the implications of demographics on the management and performance of businesses in general, and family businesses in particular, due to the fact that by their very nature family businesses are impacted by an intricate interaction between three subsystems of family, ownership and business. Family businesses that have managed to survive and transition from one generation to another can be a good source of information for such a study and the results can be helpful in informing management of family businesses especially those in their startup phases.

Furthermore, religion or faith forms a bigger factor in the lives of Ugandans, and actually in most African countries, and therefore its impact on business and management is worth investigating. According to Uganda Bureau of Statistics (2016), only 0.2% of the population are non-religious while three dominant religions are the Catholics at approximately 40%, Anglicans at 32%, Muslims at 14%. In their study of the businesses in the informal sector in Uganda, Namatovu, Dawa, Adewale, and Mulira (2018) found out that the beliefs of the entrepreneurs played a big role in their behaviors and business practices.

The study highlighted the need to study the role of entrepreneur's religious beliefs and business effectiveness and sustainability. This study on the informal businesses and the fact that most Ugandans are religious lays good ground to investigate the role of religious beliefs on family business performance and sustainability in Uganda. Special attention on family businesses in both formal and informal sectors focusing on the relationship between the faith of the founders, family and non-family managers and the performance of the family business is worth carrying out.

Lastly, culture plays a critical role in the way of living, managing and doing business in Uganda. Uganda's culture is diverse because of the different ethnicities. The country has 56 indigenous tribes (Parliament of the Republic of Uganda, n.d.), who form the four ethnic groups namely Bantu, Nilotics, Nilo Hamites and Hamites. Culture and its impact on managerial leadership in Sub-Saharan Africa has been studied indicating both positive and negative effects. Wanasika, Howell, Littrell, and Dorfman (2011) study of five countries, namely Namibia, Nigeria, Zambia, Zimbabwe and South Africa – only involving the blacks, identified common positive themes that revolved around the cultural attribute of indigenous '*ubuntu*' which mainly emphasize shared mission and communal wellbeing. On the other hand, is the negative colonial-culture oriented attributes inherited from the former colonial masters that are mainly oriented towards exploitation and corruption by leaders but which are usually overcome by practicing the former.

The study actually recommended the *ubuntu* approach to business organizations within Africa as the most effective way. The study findings provide a rich basis for investigating how different cultures facilitate or hinder family businesses in Uganda and other developing countries. This study is especially relevant for countries that were not part of that study since cultures differ from country to country and also between ethnicities. There is need to know whether family culture affects family firm culture positively and or negatively. This is critical since Dyer (1988) asserts that the culture of the family business is key in determining family business continuity beyond the first generation. Related to this is the need to investigate common leadership and management styles that have been applied by successful family businesses in Uganda vis-à-vis the styles have been commonly used by those that have closed shop in line with Wanasika *et al*. findings.

The above political, social-cultural, economic and religious background gives a snapshot of the context in which Ugandan family businesses exist which can form a basis of further investigation into their past, current and possible future operations.

2.2 – *Theoretical Framework*

Resource-based view (RBV) approach was applied as the substantive theory while grounded theory was used in data analysis as a supplementary theory. The resource-based view approach has its roots in strategic management with the emphasis on the company's internal resources and capabilities that give the company a sustained competitive advantage (Barney, 1991; Peteraf, 1993; Priem & Butler, 2001). These resources can be tangible such as physical assets, and intangible such as reputation, culture and social capital. The theory emphasizes the fact that these resources and capabilities are considered unique and able to give a company enduring competitive advantage if they are valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable (Barney, 1991; Thompson, Peteraf, Gamble, & Strickland, 2020). The theory therefore focuses on the internal resources the company posses and not the external resources as a source of competitive advantage. However, the theory does not ignore the presence of external resources and the need to exploit. Instead, the emphasis is on identifying and maximizing internal resources and capabilities, minimizing the weaknesses in order to effectively exploit external opportunities and defuse threats (Barney, 1991).

Whereas resource-based view approach has been commonly used in strategic management in general, it has also been used to study family businesses. Tokarczyk, Hansen, Green, and Down, (2007) applied RBV in their study and found out that family businesses can exploit identified internal resources and capabilities to sustainably compete in the market. Similarly, Fang, Memili, Chrisman, and Welsh (2012) applied RBV approach in their study while studying family and non-family firms and found out that aspects like professionalization of family businesses in developing countries can be an internal competitive advantage for family firms. Therefore, previous studies attest to the fact that RBV is an essential approach that can be used to study firms, including family businesses' identification and utilization of internal resources and capabilities and be able to use them to exploit and manage external opportunities and threats respectively.

3 – Methodology

3.1 – *Study Design*

A qualitative multi-case study approach, from a social constructivism worldview, was applied using in-depth interviews to capture the participants' social, cultural, historical and other experiences regarding the topic. This approach allowed for an in-depth engagement with the respondents hence effectively capturing their stories as regards what works and does not work concerning the role of business families in the growth and continuity of family businesses, how and why.

A qualitative approach was applied because it is helpful in understanding and describing complex phenomena as observed from the context, realities, relationships, explanation, attribution and interpretation of the meanings (Sofaer, 1999) which is necessary for making meaningful conclusions. Use of a qualitative approach was in line with the call by Nguyen, Nguyen, Le, Luong, and Vuong (2021) who advocated for qualitative approach in understanding population specific factors. Since this study is concerned about context specific and population aspects, qualitative approach was more applicable. Therefore, a qualitative approach was applied for purposes of facilitating an in-depth understanding (Walle, 2015) of the respondents' views from their social and cultural perspectives, their perceptions and exploring meanings within the context (Merriam, 2009). The choice of applying qualitative method from a social constructivism worldview was therefore justified by the fact that it facilitated an understanding of the topic from the participants' contextual, personal, and historical understanding (Creswell, 2014) and subsequently their understanding, interpretation and description of the subject at hand within their natural setting. Subsequently, it was easy to capture individual unique responses to questions as per their experiences and understanding which was aggregated into key general themes as derived from different study sites. To ably capture this kind of understanding, an in-depth unstructured interview design was applied.

In addition, this study could only make meaningful and generalizable conclusions when a number of family businesses are involved hence settling for a multi-case study. A case study has been defined by Woods and Calanzaro (1980) as "an intensive, systematic investigation of a single individual, group, community or some other unit in which the researcher examines in-depth data relating to several variables" (cited in Heale and Twycross, 2018, p.7) Fortunately, a case-study approach is helpful in creating a comprehensive understanding of complex issues within their actual context (Crowe, Cresswell, Robertson, Huby, Avery, & Sheikh, 2011). Understanding the intricacies involved within the business family and how it is organized to contribute towards the growth and continuity of the business across generations is a complex and sensitive issue that requires a case approach. In this study, each of the participating family businesses was considered a case hence a multi-case study meaning the study of all family businesses in this research. Therefore, as asserted by Heale and Twycross, using multi-case study approach was aimed at facilitating a thorough understanding of the cases taken together as one unit by comparing similarities and differences as found in each of the cases. Multi-case study also known as collective case study, according to Stake in Crowe *et al*. (2011) allows for investigating a number of cases from which a broader and deeper appreciation of an issue can be got from which trends and conclusions can be drawn that can be generalized to similar cases as those involved in the study. In this case, each family business was considered a case hence the need to compare similarities and differences between different family businesses as a multi-case from which conclusions were made.

Surveys in form of in-depth unstructured interviews were conducted for this multi-case qualitative study. In-depth interviews are instrumental in collecting a variety of qualitative data since respondents are able to give unique responses in their own words (Walle, 2015). The rationale behind using in-depth interviews was to enable the researcher tailor-make, ask questions and probe further for the responses given by the respondents. Qualitative approach enables the researcher to ask the "what", "why", and "how" questions that give detailed and rich information about a phenomenon.

In addition, documents about the respective family businesses were reviewed before and after the interviews for purposes of gathering background information and subsequently guiding the researcher on the questions to ask and validating responses.

3.2 – *Sampling and Sample Size Determination*

Seven large size family businesses participated in the study selected from a list of twenty-four businesses in Greater Kampala Metropolitan Area (GMKA) provided by Private Sector Foundation Uganda (PSFU). PSFU is an umbrella organization involved in capacity building and advocacy programs for members within the private sector in Uganda. Currently, PSFU has over 230 registered members, some of which are family businesses of different sizes in terms of total assets and number of workers employed. On the other hand, GMKA is composed of Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA)'s five divisions of Central, Kawempe, Makindye, Rubaga, and Nakawa., plus the neighboring districts of Mukono, Mpigi, and Wakiso. GMKA contributes approximately 31.2% of Uganda's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and boasts of 46% of the formal employment opportunities (National Planning Authority, 2018).

Purposive sampling was used to select study sites and the respondents. Purposive sampling is a qualitative method usually used in multi-case studies to identify and select only relevant cases that are very knowledgeable about a phenomenon under study (Sofaer, 1999). Cases or participants were selected following a predetermined criterion. Purposive sampling was suitable for this study because, according to Maxwell (2013), it enables the researcher to select study sites and respondents that are appropriate for study goals and questions. In fact, purposive sampling empowers the researcher to select respondents basing on predetermined criteria in line with the study objectives (Guest, Bunce, & Johnson, 2006; Palinkas, Horwitz, Green, Wisdom, Duan, & Hoagwood, 2015). Purposive sampling, therefore, enabled the researcher to take care of the predetermined selection criteria of ensuring population heterogeneity of respondents and family businesses until saturation was reached.

In this study, study sites were purposively sampled in way to ensure that both business families of indigenous Ugandans and Ugandans of Indian descent were selected, consideration of gender issues in terms of either the founder and or incumbent business leader/ owner, and finally, representation of all the sectors of the economy. In this case, Simon Kuznets's broad categorization of the sectors of the economy in terms of agriculture, industry, and services (Kenessey, 1987) was used. Kuznets' categorization is based on the differences between the three sectors in terms of how each of them utilizes natural resources, the production processes involved, scale of operation, and the final products. Therefore, making generalizations on the growth and continuity of family businesses in Uganda can only be complete if family businesses in all sectors are investigated rather than depending on the findings from one sector. Who knows, it may be easy for family businesses to operate in one sector than another or to succeed in two sectors not all, or in all sectors, something that needed to be investigated. In this study, only large size family businesses operating in GMKA and have been in existence for more than twenty-five years were the target cases. As a result, 15 family businesses out of the twenty-four (24) that were provided by PSFU qualified for the study. All the fifteen family businesses were reached out to and interviews carried out until saturation was reached. Purposive sampling was also used to select business family members and senior non-family business managers. As a result, nineteen participants from seven family businesses participated in the study. Purposive sampling was again used to select participants from each of the study sites. The principles of purposive sampling that is, availability, willingness to participate in the study, and ability to articulate ideas and experiences (Palinkas *et al*., 2015) were followed in identifying respondents from each of the study sites. However, care was taken to ensure that collected information and conclusions would not be based on bias hence the study targeted two main categories of participants namely: family members and non-family business managers. Furthermore, instead of interviewing only one family member per study site, two were targeted, plus a non-family business manager for purposes of validating information collected.

Targeted participants from the family were the incumbent business leader and a family member whether involved in the family business or not. In instances where the incumbent business leader was a non-family professional business manager, the other two participants had to be family members. Specifically, two family business members and one non-family business manager who were well versed with the family business were targeted for the study per family business

Data saturation was reached after the sixth study site but a decision to collect more data from one more site was made to ensure that indeed saturation had been reached. Three people per family business, that is two people from the business family and one non-family business manager per family business were targeted for this study. However, nineteen out of twenty-one targeted participants from seven sites participated in the study. Fortunately, this sample size is within the recommended saturation ranges of 12-30 respondents for studies that involve heterogeneous studies, 6-8 respondents in case for homogeneous samples (Mason, 2010) and the recommended 4-10 cases for multiple case study (Stake, 2005). Saturation is a term used to mean that collection and analysis of additional data does not generate new information or themes (Saunders, Sim, Kingstone, Baker, Waterfield, Bartlam, Burroughs, & Jinks, 2018). Saturation is considered to have been reached, when after reaching a certain number of respondents, there is a tendency of reaching diminishing returns as the researcher gathers and analyses more information that does not generate new data hence a wastage of time. Therefore, saturation is a basis for deciding whether to continue or discontinue collecting and or analyzing data, meaning that enough rigor has been reached in qualitative research. This study was considered heterogeneous because of involving indigenous Ugandans and Ugandans of Indian descent, gender issues, and representation of sectors of the economy, that is primary, secondary and tertiary.

3.3 – *Data Collection*

Data was collected using in-depth face to face interviews, observation and analysis of documents. Using an interview guide (Appendix 1), 19 respondents were interviewed from seven study sites.

A voice recorder was used to capture in detail the proceedings of the interviews but with the permission from respondents. In addition, some of the key points and observations were also written down during the interviews. This enabled the researcher to link some responses according to their patterns during interviews and even ask follow up questions according to observed patterns. Furthermore, literature about the different sites and business families was searched both online and at the sites for purposes of further understanding the topic, seeking clarification as well as triangulating data.

The final stage was to ensure that all collected data was in text form for easy analysis using a software. As a result, the voice recorded data was personally transcribed by the researcher into text form just as observations, additional field notes and information from documents were equally rewritten in full sentences for easy management during analysis.

3.4 – *Data Analysis*

Collected data was analyzed using NVivo software version 12. NVivo is a computer software package supplied by QSR International that assists in analysis of qualitative data. NVivo software facilitated the process of managing, organizing and making sense out of the raw data that had been collected using interviews, observations, and documentary review. The following steps were followed during data analysis.

The first step was the creation and saving of a new project within the NVivo software package on my laptop. A password was created for this particular project as an additional safety measure even when the laptop had another password. This was done for purposes of ensuring adherence to ethical promises made to the respondents as regards confidentiality of the information given.

Since all recorded interviews had been transcribed into word documents just like the observations and information from reviewed documents, all these documents were then imported as files bearing given interviewee and site names. The document browser was thus used to recognize the imported documents. The reasons for transcribing electronic data before entering it into the software was to ensure that software transcription does not get distorted because of the local accents that may make translation of the statements in English lose the original meanings.

Thereafter, the coding process was carried out hence enabling categorization of data into free nodes and subsequently into tree nodes. In order not to leave out critical information, information that remained in the free node area were also considered. The coding process was carried out using the coder within the software. This process enabled the questioning and grouping of the data. Finally, analysis of data was carried out by developing concepts, categories and themes from which conclusions were made in relation to the study objectives and questions. This was phase was critical in deriving the study report and making conclusions. In a nutshell, NVivo was instrumental in analyzing and making sense of the data collected by drawing themes from which conclusions about the role of the family in transgenerational family business growth and continuity.

4 – Results and Discussion

This study aimed at identifying the role of family businesses in facilitating growth and continuity of family businesses across different generations. Specifically, the study focused on the roles of individuals as well as different groups within the family. During the course of the study, external factors that can hinder transgenerational continuity of family businesses were identified as discussed in the following section.

4.1 – *Characteristics of the Family Businesses and Respondents*

Seven family large size family businesses that have been in existence for more than twenty-five years participated in the study as shown in Table 1.

Table 1 - Summary Information about Family businesses' that Participated in the Study

s/n	Name of the business	Founder	Year of Founding	Sectors Engaged in	Employees in Uganda
1	Mehta Group of Companies (Business studied: SCOUL	Mr. Shri Nanjibhai Kalidas Mehta	1924	Primary, secondary and tertiary	Over 7,000; Group employs 15,000 globally.
2	Fairway Hotel and Spa	Jaffer family (Mr. Bandali Jaffer)	1971	Tertiary	About 200 people
3	Ntake Group of Companies	Mr. Gaster Lule and wife	1978	Primary, secondary and tertiary	Over 1,200 people
4	Aponye Uganda Limited	Mr. Apollo Nyegamehe	1989	Secondary and tertiary	Over 100 people
5	House of Dawda Group (Charms Uganda Ltd)	Mr. Hasmukh Dawda	1962 (Group)1991 in Uganda	Secondary and tertiary	Over 7,000 people
6	Delight Uganda Limited	Dr. (h.c). Julian Adyeri Omalla	1996	Primary, secondary, tertiary	Over 1,000 people
7	Graphic Systems Uganda	Mr. Safir Hajee & Mr. Aziz Dewji	1997	Tertiary	Over 200 full time; 150 part-time staff

Nineteen people from seven family businesses participated in the study as shown in Table 2.

Table 2 – Demographic Characteristics of the Participants

Characteristic	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Males	16	84
	Females	03	16
Age	18-29 years	0	0
	30-39 years	06	32
	40-49 years	05	26
	50-59 years	05	26
	Over 60 years	03	16
Education level	Primary and below	01	5
	Secondary level	0	0
	Diploma	03	16
	Bachelor's Degree	10	53
	Master's Degree	05	26
Position	Family members	12	63
	Non-family Professional Manager	07	37

4.2 – *The role of enterprising families in facilitating growth and continuity of family businesses*

The study identified the role of the family in facilitating family business growth and continuity as being establishing and consolidating a strong foundation for both the family and business on which the two institutions depend for their survival, growth, transition, and continuity across different generations. More specifically, the roles played by the founder, founder's spouse, different generations, and their spouses were highlighted during the study.

4.2.1 – The Role of the Founder towards the Growth and Continuity of Family Business

The founder and generally the first generation was found to be responsible for establishing a strong foundation for both the family and business on which the two institutions base for their survival, growth, and continuity across different generations. The strong foundation enables the harmonization of family and business foundational beliefs, vision and mission executed with high level credibility and reputation exemplified by the business founder which is passed on to both the family and business. The founder and the laid down foundation become the glue that unites the family and business as well as an initial yardstick for performance which makes it easy for the two institutions, family and business, to coordinate and support each other. One of the respondents had this to say:

> The founder established the business culture based upon his values such as integrity, excellence, love for the people. The family business' values and culture are still a true reflection of what the founder cherished. – Respondent XD3

This was corroborated by another respondent from another family business as follows:

> …the founder laid the business foundation based on his values, character and entrepreneurial spirit … he used his personal finances to start and expand the business …the spouse worked as a co-director and supporter in establishment of the business … he [the founder] has nurtured and mentored family members and non-family employees into the management of family business. – Respondent YA3.

Actually, it was found out that the founder informs the family and business culture as shared by one of the respondents.

> The family philosophy shapes the business philosophy… Instead of generating funds and taking out the money, the policy and the philosophy of the founder was and still is to invest back and expand the businesses. Families should have a practice of reinvesting most of the profits that come from the businesses. – Respondent XA1

And indeed, this was a general feeling as shown in Figure 1 below.

Furthermore, the founders were found to use different strategies to achieve their objective of building a strong and sustainable business such as applying an enterprising resource mobilization, development and utilization strategy that enables frugal use of resources and reinvesting profits, tailor made family governance mechanisms such as meetings (Figure 2) and other engagements that lead to family cohesion and proper coordination with the business.

One of the respondents emphasized the need for family governance mechanisms in relation to family business continuity as follows:

> The family members regularly meet to discuss their business…Family members also deliberately meet for social gatherings to bond. This has also been extended to the staff of this business. There are many social gatherings whereby the family members meet with us,

the employees, for bonding and sharing. For example, they always involve us in their cultural festivals. They make us feel like one big family not as employees of the company. – Respondent XB2

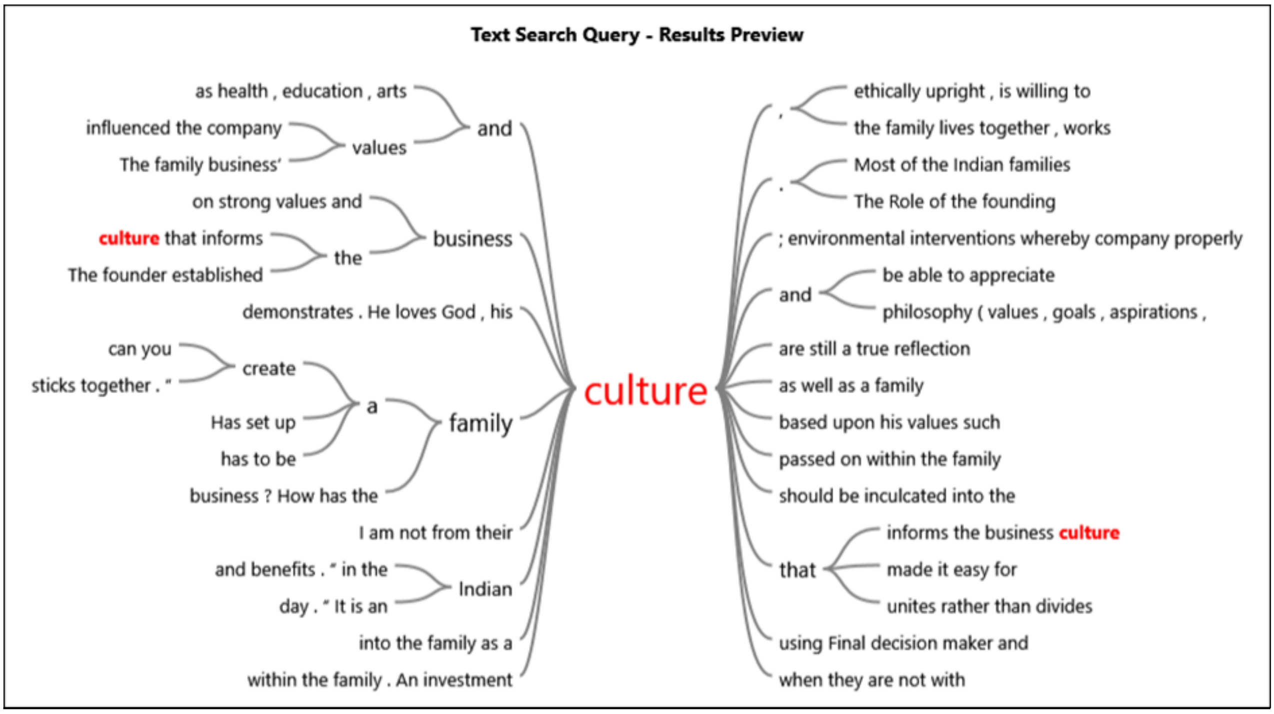

Fig. 1– Family Culture Shapes Business Culture
(Source: Researcher's own processing from the software)

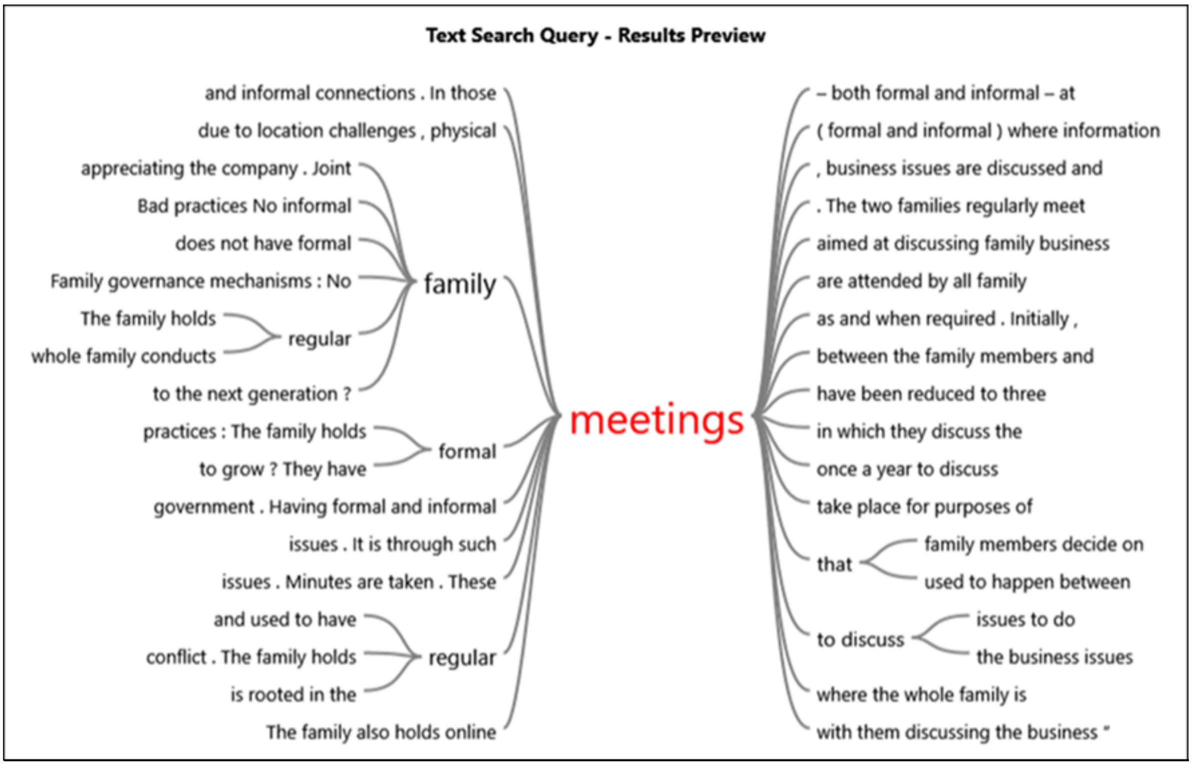

Fig. 2 – Family Meetings as a Mechanism for Family and Business Governance
(Source: Researcher's own processing from the software)

Other strategies used by family business founders is deliberate succession planning and overseeing business leadership transition from themselves to successors by engaging family members in the business, empowering them and handing over responsibilities early enough; modeling the desired family and business character and culture. Some of the respondents had the following to say as regards this:

Another theme that emerged was the fact that founders set the pace for succession planning and transition management to guarantee continuity of their businesses. Some of the excerpts from the interviews are as follows:

> … The founders planned early for their retirement. The founders established and implemented three plans: retirement, empowerment, and succession. They also professionalized the business as early as possible. -Respondent XB1.

A similar response was given by a respondent from another company as follows:

> [The founder] has introduced family members to his business partners, suppliers, financiers and other key stakeholders. Social capital generated by the founder is being passed on to the family members… Secondly, management of funds is no longer the sole responsibility of the founder. For example, he is not the sole bank signatory. …Thirdly, is overseeing the succession planning process. The successor has been identified, positioned in a key position and is being groomed for succession. – Respondent YA3

In addition, family business founders initiate early and lead the process of clarifying who belongs to the family and does not as regard the business, clarify who the shareholders are plus their obligations in addition to putting mechanisms of transferring shares. Family governance aimed at clarifying family business ownership and coordination, allocation of shares, and professionalization of the business are meant to ensure that there is separation and yet proper coordination of the two institutions, namely the family and the business, with the emphasis being on professional management of the business.

Relatedly, the founders of businesses that exist from generation to generation formalize and professionalize their businesses early enough by employing professionals to assist them build great business and by adopting good governance practices and principles. However, it was noted that most of the founders just initiate the processes of adopting good governance practices and practices while the subsequent generations pick it up from there. Different respondents corroborated this point as follows:

> … [the founder] engaged professionals and children in the business right from the early stages of the business. This has enabled the business systems, processes and procedures to be formalized even as children are mentored into the business. – Respondent YC3

Similarly, another respondent said,

> The founder professionalized the business as fast as possible. I have actually realized that founders of family businesses should professionalize the business and let different professionals guide the business as soon as the business begins to expand, at least, as soon as the turnover qualifies the business to graduate from a micro-enterprise to a small enterprise… – Respondent XD2

More so, the study found out that business founders ensured that their stories of the founding of business and ultimately their own were passed on to significant family business stakeholders such as the family and employees. These stories become a source of inspiration for subsequent generations. However, not all founders had had their stories documented by the time of the study though the memory was already passed on to family members and employees.

The other significant role played by the founders was to mobilize and utilize social capital which was in most instances realized through their philanthropic familial stakeholder engagement kind of giving, an equivalent of corporate social responsibilities. The study found out that it is through such established relationships and generated social capital that continued support and vouching for family businesses is sustained even when family business founders pass on. The emotional attachment generated from the established relationships remains a social capital for the family business as beneficiaries of the assistance from the family business and the founder feel obligated to support the business. One of the respondents shared the views on this aspect as follows:

> …Take care of the environment and the people that are working with you. Have a wonderful relationship with all your stakeholders if your business is survive and thrive. You all benefit when you have a wonderful relationship with your stakeholders. – Respondent XD1

In addition, family business founders use their relational and mobilization skills to gather different resources, including human, financial to build the family business. Moreover, most founders of the family business were found to have an amiable and hard-working character that easily attracts resources to the business including credit and labor. It was therefore found out that the founder's character facilitates the startup, market penetration, survival, growth, initial formalization and competitiveness of the family business.

4.2.2 – The Role of the Founder's Spouse

On the other hand, the founders' spouses were found to play a supportive role either actively or passively. Whereas some of the founder's spouses were found to directly contribute physical, financial and socio-emotional support towards the startup and continuity of the family business, some others were found to passively engage in the business by giving the moral, advisory and advocacy roles which enable business founders to succeed. However, most family businesses were found to use family physical capital, finances and time which qualifies the fact that the role of the spouse is fundamental especially in the start-up and growth phase of the family business.

That notwithstanding, whether spouses play an active or passive support role to their spouses and the family business at large, their role ultimately enables family business growth by not negatively interfering in its management. Spousal support, therefore, makes ownership and management of the family business easy since no disputes arise that would have otherwise negatively affected growth and continuity of the business.

4.2.3 – The Role of the Second Generation

The second generation was found to be very instrumental in the consolidation of the gains by first generation by ensuring that the foundations laid for both the family and business by the first generation is sustained while at the same time ensuring continued expansion and professionalization of the business.

More specifically, the second generation, through their family business leader, adopts and improves the founders' business strategies, reinforces professionalization of the business and strengthens family governance mechanisms aimed at ensuring a highly cohesive and coordinated family that facilitates growth and continuity of the business. One of the respondents commented as follows:

> Children were involved in the business since they were very young. They have been well mentored to run the business. They are also heavily involved in the expansion and formalizing of the business. – Respondent YC3

Some of the common initiatives that the second generation was found to take include subscribing to value adding associations and quality assurance bodies in addition to adopting and improving on corporate governance practices. The results of the strategies and initiatives by the second generation were found to result into the family members continued interest in the business, fused family and company reputation, aligned family and company values and philosophy, engaged stakeholders such as employees, suppliers and creditors, cohesive and coordinated family with no visible disagreements over ownership and management of the family business.

4.2.4 – The Role of the Spouses to the Second and Subsequent Generations

The role of the spouses to the second and subsequent generations in ensuring family business growth and continuity was quite revealing. Generally, it was found out that spouses to the second and subsequent generations was to passively engage in the family business by supporting their spouses instead of being active participants in the same. It was revealed that most of the family businesses that have been able to transition from generation to generation have clearly defined who belongs to the family as far as business is concerned and the roles played by others that are related but not included within that definition. However, in order to keep spouses interested in and supportive of the family business, spouses are shareholders in the family business through their spouses. One of the families is actualizing this in the following ways:

> … In laws are not supposed to participate in the business. That is why the family decided to support the children and grandchildren with soft loans that are payable back to the business. These soft loans are used to start their own businesses which may or may not feed into the group of companies. That way, the in-laws are also interested in the growth and continuity of their spouses' family business and yet without interfering in its management. – Respondent YB1

As a result, spouses bring on board their social capital, emotional support and advice through their spouses. They also advocate for the family businesses among their contacts. The non-interruption but interest in the business and support given by spouses to the second and subsequent generations makes it easy for the family to remain cohesive, coordinated and committed to the growth and continuity of the family business from generation to generation.

4.2.5 – The Role of the Third and Subsequent Generations

Finally, the third and subsequent generations were found to play similar roles as those of the second generation though they happen to be more sensitive to the local and global trends. This is because they are in charge of businesses that have matured and are aiming at both national and international markets. As a result, this generation focuses more on formalization and professionalization of the business by adopting tailor-made family and business governance mechanisms, business and products' innovations, creativity and emphasis on equity rather than profit sharing. One of the respondents commented as follows:

> The founder started it [the family business], the children expanded it and the grandchildren are not only maintaining existing businesses but are also expanding the company businesses. Family members are always looking for ways of continuing to grow the company but not 'milking' it. – Respondent XA1

The impact of the roles of the third and subsequent generations is evident in continued alignment of family and business culture, company and brand entrenchment, strong company rooted in the founder's philosophy and engagement with stakeholders. The efforts, cohesiveness, and emotional attachment to the business of the third and subsequent generations lead to business consolidation, formalization, expansion, introduction of new products and or services, penetration of new markets, profitability, maturity and business competitiveness which ultimately are crucial for family business continuity.

4.2.6 – Family Specific Resources and Capabilities

The family, through different individuals and generations were found to contribute physical assets, financial, human and social capital as well as skills and competences at varying stages of the growth and development of the family business in varying degrees.

More specifically, the first generation was found to contribute start-up capital that is in most instances either not paid back or paid later on when the business stabilizes, physical assets, labor, foundational family and business philosophical beliefs, structures and culture.

The governance structure, vision and strategy, clarity of goals and expectations provided by the family business founder was found to be instrumental in keeping both institutions, the family and business, cohesive and well-coordinated which are essential for the growth and continuity of the business. In addition, recouping most of the business profits as well as injecting in further capital in the business helps the business to survive and thrive in the long run. The founders also contribute social capital accumulated for themselves and their families to the business since the two institutions are almost synonymous to the founder.

Lastly, founders of family businesses bring their leadership skills in the mix to initiate and oversee leadership succession and transition processes and ensure buy in from both the family and business institutions. The ability to successfully manage this process in time and ensuring acceptance of both institutions was found to be one of the essential roles and skill necessary for continuity of family business from one generation to another. Related to the above is the ability of the founder to manage family wealth growth and transfer from generation to generation. The hard decisions taken by the founder to lead the process of who is family and who is not, who is the shareholder and the transfer of family wealth when not boldly taken by the founder were founder to negatively effect transfer and continuity of the family business from one generation to another. This capability was therefore noted to be very instrumental. Generally, the rest of the family members in different generations were found to also contribute their professional, human and social capital to consolidate family business growth and continuity. Their knowledge and skills were especially realized in the way they professionalize their family businesses and venture into businesses that feed into existing business aimed at reducing costs and maximizing profits as well as introducing new products and or services.

4.2.7 – Other Emerging Issues that Affect Family Business Growth and Continuity

The presence of other challenging factors that can negatively affect the growth and continuity of the family businesses despite possession and utilization of internal resources and capabilities resident in the family for the benefit of the business were noted. Actually, some of these factors are too strong that they can easily lead to the closure of the family business. Notable among these are the political and economic operating environment and culture.

The political and economic environment in which family businesses operate need special attention by the government and political leaders. Governments, through their policies, programs, legal and regulatory requirements can either facilitate or hinder family business growth and continuity.

Respondents shared their experiences regarding disruptions of their businesses emanating from the political and governance challenges.

Notable disruptions by the governments were the 1970s economic war declared by the then President Idi Amin that led to takeover of the Asian businesses as well as war in the 1980s that affected the operations of businesses generally. Takeovers of some of the family businesses, lack of incentives to businesses and high taxes are among those that have been major challenges for family businesses.

Culture was identified as one of the external factors that can be within the control of the business family especially the family heads for the sake of ensuring family business growth and continuity.

Specifically, the impact of polygamy, producing many children and especially having children outside marriage that are not introduced to the mainstream family before the business founder dies and a way forward thought was among cultural issues identified as being detrimental for the growth and continuity of family businesses. The following are some of the responses from respondents.

> Our family has historically had few children. The founder had one son and one daughter, …the grandchildren are also few. You see, continuity of the business depends on the family head. It is advisable not to produce very many children if the family head desires to see the business continuing without conflicts from the family. – Respondent XA1.

As a way of confirming the above, a respondent from another company shared as follows:

> Most African men are polygamous and they do not share secrets with their wives and children… most African entrepreneurs either have children out of wedlock and other wives … hence banking some of their money in foreign banks which they use to sustain those other families and children … Such men hide the profits they make in foreign banks instead of reinvesting the same in their businesses; and when they die, their businesses ran bankrupt. Unfortunately, when the men die, those undeclared wives and children come to fight for the man’s wealth which affects continuity of the business. - Respondent XB1.

Study findings therefore revealed that an enterprising family plays a number of strategic roles in ensuring growth and continued of the family business across different generations. The following section discusses the findings in view of existing literature and makes recommendations for further research.

5 – Interpretation and Discussion of the Findings

The study confirmed some of the previous study findings and also added knowledge to the existing literature as discussed in the following section.

First and foremost, study findings confirmed the assertion by the resource-based view theorists that identification, development and utilization of unique valuable, inimitable and dynamic resources and capabilities within an organization is critical for the firm’s competitiveness (Habbershon & Williams, 1999; Le Breton–Miller & Miller, 2006). This study decided to focus on the resources and capabilities resident in the families that own the businesses and whether they play a critical role in facilitating the growth and continuity of their family businesses. It was indeed found out that the families that participated in the study had different skills, knowledge and capabilities and each of those the families were using theirs in a unique manner aimed at make their different businesses unique, competitive and sustainable. This confirms the findings by Heider, Hülsbeck, and von Schlenk-Barnsdorf (2022) concerning the importance of family businesses identifying and utilizing their unique resources and capabilities to be able to ably compete. Undeniably, what was common throughout the study is the fact that business families are different and hence have and utilize unique resources and capabilities resident within individuals and the families as a whole to uniquely grow, develop, position and continue family businesses from generation to generation. Families owning businesses are able to achieve this by utilizing individual members and collective family resources and capabilities at different stages of family business development and ownership well knowing that the business is for the family. Recognition of the different developmental stages and needs of the family and business (Gersick, Lansberg, Desjardins, and Dunn (1999) and appropriately utilizing individuals and generations for the benefit of the business was noted as being critical to the success and continuity of family businesses across different generations. Emotional attachment and desire to build a business for the family makes family members committed to it. For example, family members are able to sacrifice and give their physical and financial resources such as assets, survivability and patient capital which in most instances is not possible for non-family businesses.

The study also confirmed the findings by Neubaum and Payne (2021) regarding the fact that only functional families are able to keep the family business in business especially during hard times. Actually, this study went further to conclude that functional families are not only required to keep the business in operation during hard times but at all times. The fact is that a dysfunctional family is a disaster to both itself and the business since growth and continuity of a family business is hugely dependent on the health of the family that owns the business. This is why spousal support and continued cohesion of the family through proper governance of both institutions leads to proper coordination among the two, something that is essential for the growth and continuity of the family business. Therefore, a functional family, that is in turn emotionally attached to and well-coordinated with the business, is a prerequisite for family business growth and continuity. Just as a functional family is able to continue in existence while emotionally attached and identifying with the forefathers, the same attachment is extended to the business and all efforts are made by family members to enable it transition for generation to generation basing on the foundational philosophy of the founder.

Regarding different roles played by different generations at different stages of family business ownership and development as previously asserted by Gersick *et al*. (1999), a number of similarities were confirmed and at the same time new information added. The study confirmed the fact that the business founder plays a critical role in establishing the family business just as earlier stated by Gersick *et al*. However, study findings contrasted the assertion that the founders act as a controlling owner for most of the time only to oversee a short transitional period characterized of uncertainty just as is the case for all transitions as seen in Figure 3 below. Instead, most of the founders were not referred to by all respondents as being controlling but enablers. Actually, they were seen as being very collaborative with and empowering towards the second generation, just as subsequent generations also collaborate, mentor and empower the subsequent generations. In addition, whereas Gersick *et al*. assert that there are short transitional periods from one generation to another, the study asserts that businesses that successfully transition from one generation to another have longer transitional periods with the successors. In fact, the findings from all those that have had more than one transition indicated that the long empowering transitional periods were the secret behind the successful transitions from one generation to another. In addition, the founders were found not only to have a direct, intentional, empowering and coaching relationship with the successors individually but also had an informal mentorship relationship with the second generation. As a result, our study findings did not agree with the founder and first generation as always being controlling or else that is likely to result into a failed transition.

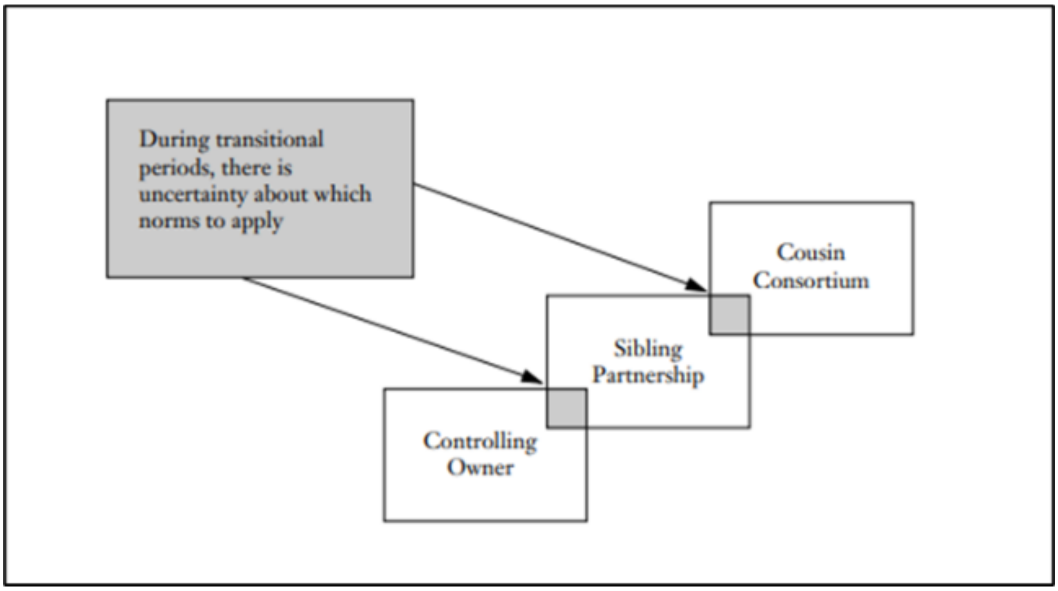

Fig. 3 – Transitional Periods (Source: Gersick *et al*.,1999)

In addition, it was revealed from study that whereas the family business development stages follow that order as indicated by Gersick *et al*., in actual sense the interaction is not one directional from the older generation to the younger one but rather an interactive one especially after the founder has established the business on a firm foundation. Moreover, it was found out that confident founders do not take long to feel that they are in charge of the business and therefore can easily bring on board others, including the second generation to assist them build the business. The study found out that the founder does not only enter into a collaborative relationship with the next generation especially as the business begins to grow but also starts an informal mentoring relationship with the third generation as they are being exposed to the business. Incidentally, even this relationship is two-way as the two generations share ideas with the older generation being open to new ideas that may be of help to the business while the younger children learn how to manage business. This is done for purposes of interesting more than one generation into the business thereby increasing the chances of continuity. This same approach is then followed with the subsequent generations. The relationships involved between different generations for purposes of increasing interest, emotional attachment and continuity of family engagement is indicated in Figure 4. This study recommends the model shown in Figure 4 as a model for successful family business succession and transition management.

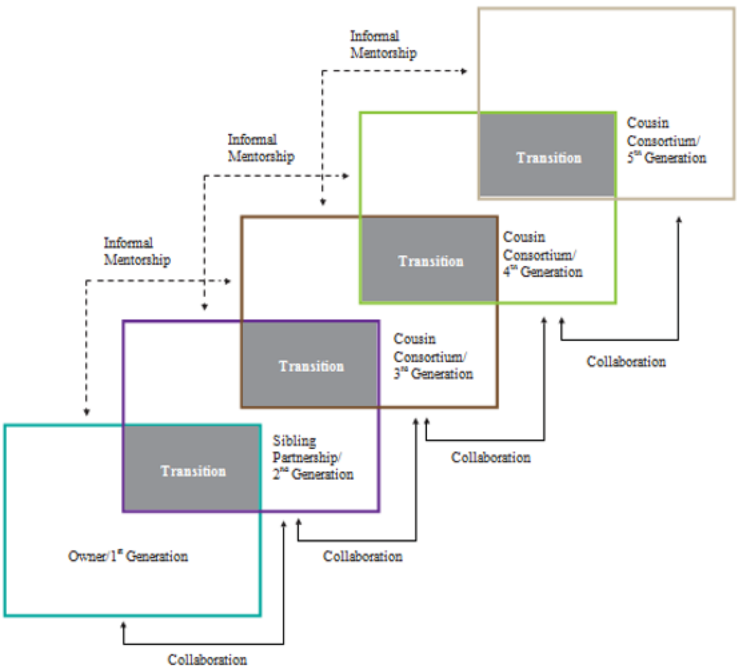

Fig. 4 – Succession and Transition Management Model
(Source: Author's expansion of Gersick *et al* (1999) Transitional Periods)

In addition, findings revealed that owners of family businesses that survive their formative years and continue in business were frugal and reinvested most of the profits. In addition, they comply with the legal and regulatory requirements and try as much as possible not to go for high interest loans. These findings are in agreement with the findings by Matama (2016) that frugality was instrumental in growing family business and Nangoli *et al*. (2013) emphasis on reinvesting profits, being tax compliant and spending according to key business priorities. The character of the family business founder is therefore very instrumental in laying a solid financial and professional foundation that enables the business to survive and continue in existence. By setting the business on such a solid ground, founders enable the next generation not to inherit sn indebted and or legally non-compliant business that may easily be wound up as soon as they take it over.

On other hand, contrary to Nangoli *et al*. (2013) conclusions that family business performance and continuity was dependent on the education level with those of at least undergraduate level being able to succeed more than their counterparts that are less educated, study findings revealed that there were other factors beyond education that can explain family business survival, growth and continuity. Actually, this study found out that businesses by both the highly educated and less educated had managed to transition beyond the first and second generations. Actually, some of the founders of these businesses did so when they had not attained secondary level education and yet the family businesses were very successful just as those started by the well-educated ones. What was found out as key was the business founder's entrepreneurial abilities and motivation for venturing into business rather than their level of formal education. That is key during the formative years of the business. However, different from their well-educated counterparts, the less educated have to hire professionals as soon as possible to enable them professionalize and grow the business. Therefore, the less educated use their entrepreneurial capabilities to start the business and thereafter recruit and engage professionals especially as the business starts to expand to facilitate growth, compliance to legal and regulatory requirements and continued operations in a profitable manner. The conclusion from the study is that business founders have to have the vision, passion, mission and values which enable them to start and grow the business before they bring on board others to support them in the achievement of their dreams. This underscores the fact that a good business idea can be borne and nurtured by anybody irrespective of their level of education but successful execution of the same has to be carried out by a well selected team of members that complement one another.

Furthermore, the study confirmed findings by Balunywa, Rosa, Ntamu, and Nagujja's (2013) and Nangoli *et al*. (2013) that character of the founder is critical for the continued existence of the business since the business gains from the founder's credibility to access certain services like credit facilities and other favors. This study agrees that the character of the founder is a strong foundation on which the family and business are either established or the reverse, which is the collapse of the business will happen. It is through the character of the founder that the family is well governed, coordinates well with the business and effective transition from one generation to another is carried out.

Regarding the role of the founder's spouses towards the growth and continuity of the family business, study findings confirm findings and conclusions by Monteith and Camfield (2019) and Okello (2018) that spousal support is very critical for the success of family business. However, our findings go on further to explain that the kind of support does not only have to be active participation and contribution towards the business but even moral and advisory support. How active or passive the spouses engage in the family is an issue that the concerned family has to discuss in advance and right procedures put in place and followed. What is essential is that spousal support is given and there is a shared motivation and emotional commitment to the growth and continuity of the businesses from the spouses.

Furthermore, study findings agree with Barney and Hansen (1994) and Miller, Steier, and Le Breton–Miller (2016) that social capital generated through social relationships, trust, trustworthiness, credibility and reputation brought to the business from the family, that facilities family business growth and continuity. This study noted that enterprising families, beginning with the founders, that intentionally build strong form of trust and reputation that result into strong partnerships which in turn support and sustain businesses especially in turbulent times such as during pandemics. For example, trust and trustworthiness established with different stakeholders such as suppliers, employees, and credit facilities were found to be the basis for the different service providers going an extra mile to provide goods and services on credit to the business sometimes below market price especially in turbulent times. However, study findings disagree with Balunywa *et al.* (2013) that the family being large would easily bring social capital to the business. On the contrary, it was discovered that large families can easily be a source of conflict that can easily lead to the closure of business especially with the demise of the founder. In fact, most of the respondents recommended small families and strong governance systems aimed at keeping families united and supportive of the business.

Involvement of the different generations as well as individuals within the family for purposes of generating shared commitment and emotional attachment to both the family and the business was one of the major findings. Findings revealed that family businesses that have performed well and continued for generations involve family members in long-term planning of their businesses. It was revealed that when family members discuss and feel that they are part of the current, short and long-term future of their family business are more likely to commit to supporting the business. This is in agreement with Ward's (1988) assertion that family involvement in business planning and evaluation improves integration of the family and business as the family ensures alignment of family and business goals thus increasing the family's long-term commitment to business growth and continuity. Furthermore, findings attest to the fact family involvement in the business bring into the business resources and capabilities that are unique to the family (Calabrò, Torchia, Kallmuenzer, Yezza, & Feng, 2022) which gives a family business an advantage over a non-family business.

6 – Conclusion

Families that own businesses that transition from generation to generation play a strategic role of facilitating growth and continuity of their businesses by building and consolidating strong foundations for the growth and continuity of both the family and business across different generations. This role is played by individuals and collective members of the family aimed at building, coordinating, consolidating and continuing both institutions. Enterprising families of such businesses identify inherent family-specific resources and capabilities which they apply to ensure growth and continuity of the business within and across generations. Family members identify and execute complementary roles using identified strategies and exhibiting certain behaviors which in turn give their businesses competitive advantage over others hence being able to survive, grow and continue from generation to generation.

In a nutshell, the study confirms the assertion by Sirmon and Hitt (2003) concerning unique resources and capabilities at the disposal of every family which have to be identified and effectively utilized to keep the family business in business across generations. The study further confirms Drozdow's (1999) indicators of family business continuity as including family cohesion, engagement in governance and management, a great extent of fusion of family and business culture, and continued ownership of the business.

6.1 – *Contribution of the study*

The study adds to the body of knowledge helpful in facilitating family business growth and continuity by family business owners, non-family professional managers, consultants, scholars and policy makers. The study identifies and recommends the main and supporting roles played by families owning businesses in facilitating business growth and continuity from generation to generation. More specifically, the roles played by individuals such as the founder, spouses and children from different generations and roles played by collective members of the family such as generations are identified and discussed. This is in addition to accompanying resources, capabilities, strategies and inputs that families bring on board to facilitate business growth and continuity. As a result, a transgenerational growth and continuity model and a succession planning and transition model have been recommended. This information can be used by the aforementioned stakeholders of family business to facilitate business growth and continuity. For example, tailor-made trainings and coaching programs can be developed based on these findings according to the developmental needs and stages of the family and family business.

Family business practitioners, family business owners and professional non-family business managers and consultants can use these study findings to guide business growth and continuity, policy makers have been provided with information critical in formulating relevant policies aimed at supporting family business growth and continuity. The role of the government in providing a conducive environment has been highlighted and so government policies should be designed with that in mind. Policies aimed at supporting family businesses to survive and thrive do not only help families, their businesses and beneficiaries of these businesses such as employees, suppliers and customers but also boosts the economy. Therefore, governments should have a keen interest in family businesses by ensuring their growth and continuity.

Most importantly, this study provides rich knowledge from the developing country's context on the best practices being implemented by successful family businesses that have enabled them to successfully transition. The study confirms some of the previous study findings, adds on some and brings out new data as well as providing a basis for further research.

6.2 – *Limitations of the Study*

The study was not without limitations. In the first instance, only four out of seventeen participants were females. Even then, all the four females were family members and none was a non-family professional manager. This may be a reflection of the patriarchal setup and outlook that is dominant in the society where this research was carried out. Fortunately, no serious divergent views contradicting those given by the male counterparts were raised by the four females that participated in the study. That notwithstanding, future studies may consider a more balanced representation of both males and females.

Furthermore, the study concentrated on the process, that is the how, followed by business owners and families in succession planning and transition management and not the content used in the process.

Lastly, the study focused on successful businesses and did not compare the findings with the family businesses that failed to continue yet they had initially been performing well including having had seemingly successful transitions from the founder to the next generation.

6.3 – *Recommendations and Areas for Further Study*

The impact of African culture on the growth and continuity of family businesses is an area that is recommended to be studied in future. This study found out that polygamy and producing many children was detrimental to the growth and continuity of family businesses from generation to generation. However, this finding contradicts Balunywa *et al*. (2013) study findings of a family business that concluded that large size families are a source of social capital necessary for the business. The study had highlighted the fact that strong family heads can ensure bonding but this study that focused on large family businesses concluded otherwise. Further studies should find out whether there are large size families, especially involving extended families, that have been successful across generations and how they have managed to do so. The impact of culture on family business growth and continuity from generation to generation is therefore worth investigating further.

Lastly, the study concentrated on the family's role on the process and not the content of family business planning and continuity. This study recommends further studies aimed at investigating the content, that is the what, followed by business families to ensure successful planning and transition management of family businesses from one generation to another.

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APPENDIX 1 –Interview Guide

The following interview questions guided the interview processes that was personally conducted by the researcher. However, questions were not followed as they are but were adjusted according to the flow of the interview and emerging issues but making sure that key research questions are answered by the end of the interview process.

1. **Respondent characteristics**

   a. Respondent's age gender: i) Male ii) Female
   b. Respondent's age brackets: i) 18-29 years ii) 30-39 years iii) 40-49 years iv) 50-59 years v) 60 years and above
   c. Respondent's role in family business: i) founder ii) family business manager …iii) family business employee iv) non-family business manager
   d. Respondent's education level: i) Primary and below ii) Secondary education iii) Diploma iv) Bachelor's degree v) Master's degree vi) Doctorate vii) Professional qualification (please specify)

2. Company History and Characteristics

a. How long has the company been in existence? i) 10-15 years ii) 16-20 years iii) Over 20 years iv) 25 years and above (please specify) ……
b. In which business sector is the company engaged? ……….
c. What prompted the starting of this business? Who started it?
d. What was / were the original products / services (sector of operation) & what was the catchment area? ………..
e. What are the current products and or services the company is involved?
f. When, who and what led to venturing into other products / services / sectors? (In case there has been expansion of the business into other sectors)

3. How has the business family contributed towards the growth of the family business?

a. Roles played by different family members (individually and collectively) across different generations
   i. Roles that were / have been played by the founder – individual or with spouse or with another different family?
   ii. When did other family members get involved in the business and how?
   iii. Role played / have been played by different generations (in the growth and continuity of this business)
b. How many members of the family are directly involved in the business and in which way?
c. How many members are indirectly involved in the business and why?
d. At what stage of the business (When and why) did the family begin hiring / engaging external professionals (employees and board members) to support the family business?
e. How has the family culture and philosophy (values, goals, aspirations, etc) affected the running of the business?

4. How has the business family contributed towards continuity of the family business beyond their generation?

a. Who is considered a business family member (nuclear family, extended family, biological children, in-laws, others- explain.)?
b. Does the family have shared (collective) goals, expectations and interests in the business?
   - If yes, what are they?
   - How did they agree on the same?
c. How are the above-mentioned shared family goals, expectations and interests harmonized and coordinated to ensure non-interference with business goals?
d. How is the family involved in investments and or divestment decisions?
   - Who is involved?
   - Who is not involved?
   - Why?
e. Is there any form of mechanism (whether formal or informal) that is in place to facilitate family discussions / social interactions with the business?
   - If there is, how regular?
   - Who attends and how is it conducted?
f. How are individual family members' interests harmonized with the dominant members' interests?
g. How are contentious family issues that are likely to affect the family business (such as succession management, conflicts, profits-sharing, remuneration of family business managers, disciplining errant family members, individual family members' interference with the business, hiring, promotion and firing of business employees and managers.) managed at family level?
h. What are the roles and responsibilities being played by the business family members in ensuring that the family business continues across generations?
i. How does the family coordinate with the management / governance of the business?
j. Is there any guiding document that serves as a guideline of how the family (individual and collective members) should relate with the business?

k. How is the current board or management composition (how many family-members' vs non-family members)?
   - What is the criteria of including some family members in the management / governance and excluding others?

l. How are business family goals and values connected with the family business goals and values?

m. Who informs the formulation and review of the family business' foundational beliefs, namely vision, mission, goals, values and beliefs?

5. What are the family-specific resources and capabilities that exist within the business family that are being utilized to facilitate transgenerational growth and continuity of the family business at different stages of the business?

a. What are the some of the main contributions of the family members to the growth and continuity of the business?

b. How is the passion and potential of individual family members tapped into within both the family and business? Are there any deliberate mechanisms, systems and or processes to identify different capabilities of family members, supporting their development & utilization for the sake of the business?

c. How do members of different generations in the business family relate for purposes of growing and continuing the business?
   - i.e., how does the family manage and harmonize different family members' individual and sub-groups' (for example, different generations, gender, education qualifications, position in family) interests?

d. Has the family addressed any crisis / crises (arising from either the family itself or externally, for example., national / international) that was / were likely to negatively affect the growth and continuity of the business?
   - If yes, how was the crisis / crises managed that it either did not negatively or minimally affect the growth and continuity of the business?

e. What resources, capabilities, opportunities, connections and others that come from individual and or collective members of the family have been used for the benefit of the business?

f. How has possession and/ or lack of certain resources and or capabilities amongst family members, but needed in the business, been managed before?

g. How are family members organized to ensure that they support the growth and continuity of the business in view of the perceived and real individual and collective family interests and goals?

h. How do family business employees and managers relate with non-family business employees and managers?

i. How does the business family in general relate with business employees and managers?

j. What deliberate measures are taken by the business family to ensure that the current and next generations are interested in and promote the growth and continuity of the business across different generations?

k. How would you describe the business family members' relationship with different stakeholders (for example., government, customers, employees, other business owners, suppliers, community members)?

l. How is the past experience and history of the family business passed on to the next generation?

6. Lessons learnt from your business and generally

From your experience,

a. What are the common challenges that business owning families face that affect growth and continuity of their businesses?
   - How can they be overcome?

b. What are the good family practices that you recommend to business families aiming at growing and continuing their businesses across different generations? that is., what has made this family been a success that it is?

c. What are the bad family practices that are not worth emulating by business families if their aim is to grow their businesses from generation to generation?

d. Any concluding remarks?

Thank you very much for accepting to participate in this study and sharing such invaluable information. I promise to get back to you with a report on the findings which may be of benefit to your business.

End
