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Sensemaking of family enterprise business model

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Sensemaking of family enterprise business model

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ABSTRACT

This paper aims to provide an alternative perspective on the constructs of family enterprise model. The conceptual model shows the nexus of family and enterprises in four quadrants: Kin, Business; Kin, Not-business; Not-kin, Business; and, Not-kin, Not-business. This construct synthesis aims to cover family enterprises from ancient to contemporary times to contribute to a theoretically founded conceptual framework. The two constructs to form a definition of family enterprise are enterprise, and attachment. The enterprise construct consists of two dimensions, Business and Not-Business. The attachment construct comprises two dimensions, Kin and Not-Kin, which are then offered with conceptual definitions. The paper proposes several ways to appropriately measure the constructs to address research questions. To the best of my knowledge, it is the first academic paper that includes not businesses such as not-for-profit as part of family enterprise business model. It examines the concept of family as member attachment to the enterprise rather than member ancestry. Practitioners and policymakers seeking solutions to family enterprises can use the four quadrants to investigate the issues, as each quadrant contains unique characteristics.

1. Introduction

This paper presents the conceptual underpinnings of family enterprise business model. How to define a family enterprise is one of the most discussed, with no commonly agreed single definition but has several working definitions. The literature also has synonymously used the family business for the family enterprise. The definitions differ based on the authors' perspectives about family members' ownership, control, involvement in the management, input into crucial decisions, and board compositions. Some definitions consider these at a given time and others over time. Even when defining the family enterprise, like in defining family business, it has referred to ancestral biological connection as family identity. That enterprise engaging in profit-making activity or business is an essential condition (Inc The Family Institute and The Family Institute Inc, 2013; Sciascia and Mazolla, 2008).

The motivation for this study is to question the current use of kinship and being a business as two necessary conditions to become a family enterprise business model. The paper is new in pointing out that a family enterprise business model includes kin and not-kin as family members and an enterprise is a business and not-business. Common to family types is the emotional ties they share leading to the attachment, and in the context of this study, to the enterprise (Benkraitis, 2015; James et al., 2021; Yip et al., 2015). It is a fact that not-for-profit firms make

substantial social contributions, grow faster than profit-making firms, and employ a large workforce (Hamilton, 2019). Some employees volunteer to work, and others are satisfied with less pay because they have developed an attachment to the enterprise (Yip et al., 2015). The more inclusive perspective on family enterprise business model allows researchers to investigate family business-related determinants and consequences in research in the broader context and practitioners and policymakers to consider their effects in a broader context. These include studying family-related conflicts (Qui and Freel, 2020) and working additional hours without expecting remuneration (Bassanini et al., 2013) from attachment to the enterprise. This paper makes compelling, logical, supporting evidence for a conceptually well-rounded position and its practical relevance. With the rapid growth of not-for-profit organizations, it is crucial to engage in such discussion now (Hamilton, 2019; Whetten, 1989).

This paper visits the project of defining family enterprise business model by conceptualizing a definition statement that involves connecting the key constructs and their relations. The literature has defined family business in the context of profit making entities with kinship relationships. The paper expands the conceptual boundaries to include non-profit making entities and also include those with non kinship relationships. The constructs enable variables be operationalized to examine real-life phenomena, with those findings informing the

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constructs from which they derived their meaning. They rest on a law-like, or nomological, net, too narrow in scope and applicable to acknowledged research periods. Thus, this approach strengthens the theoretical or conceptual understanding concerning real-life family-enterprise situations.

Family enterprises have been with us from well before medieval times. Historians have studied family business models, which have wrapped around kinship arrangements and marriages, from primitive times to the present day. Anthropologists trace back to kinship arrangements that existed in primitive ancient cultures. Approximately 50 years ago, in the United States, the multigenerational family business faced several issues: ownership transfer, a changing economic environment, and divorces, which led to disunity and the rearrangement of family businesses (Peréz and Puig, 2013, pp. 13–33).

Scholars have successfully shared knowledge and lessons learned from American family businesses to help resolve business-related problems. In the 1980 s, scholars recognized that family firms had unique business issues compared with non-family businesses, and most research conducted focused on large and medium-sized family businesses (Peréz and Puig, 2013, 13–33). On the other side of the Atlantic, the United Kingdom, France, and Spain saw first-generation younger family businesses that required help with business survival.

Despite the vast body of literature on the family business models, and although authors have attempted to provide a workable definition of “family business”, the project has not been concluded (Connolly et al., 2012). This is because several authors have used operational variables to define family business to resonate with contexts in which they conduct research instead of using constructs (Cano-Rubio et al., 2017; Magrelli et al., 2022). Those authors who have referred to constructs or constructs have operationalized a specific research endeavor they are undertaking, rather than advancing conceptualizing the family business (Collins, 2012; Duarte Alonso et al., 2018; Harms, 2014).

The next section discusses the literature that has examined the definition of a family business model. Construct development is then considered, establishing the indirect and direct validity of the constructs. The paper define the “enterprise” construct as an organized activity conducted for the benefit of stakeholders, Business construct that benefits owners and investors, and Not-Business construct, which helps other stakeholders. The discussion section shows how constructs might be represented to examine real-life phenomena by isolating constructs such as “enterprise” and “family” (traditional and non-traditional), providing examples of operational variables representing constructs for research endeavors. The last section provides final remarks.

2. Family-business definitions

Past studies have defined family business model, and authors have implicitly or explicitly drawn the meaning of definitions using constructs. Litz (1995) proposed two approaches to defining a family business: structure based and intention based. The structure-based approach proposed family involvement in ownership and management as two constructs, each with three dimensions: individual, familial, and widely held. The intention-based approach focused on the value preferences of the family business having intra-firm aspirations. The intention-based process describes a family business whose members desire to increase intra-organizational family-based ownership and managers’ control. The structure-based approach defines family business according to the extent of the concentration of ownership and managerial control within a family unit. (Litz, 1995).

Chua et al. (1999) distinguished family and non-family business models based on behavior motivations. They noted that research had represented family behavior with operational variables that insufficiently identified family versus non-family businesses and argued that behavior is a core aspect of family businesses. Family involvement shapes the family business according to their inquiry. They showed some

authors defined family business model using ownership and management but stated that such structural arrangements do not make firms behave as family businesses, asserting that the definition must distinguish between family and non-family businesses. Thus, Chua et al. proposed two theoretical constructs, intention and vision, to capture the behavioral aspects of a family business model. Family businesses behave with a sense of helping family members, having the core purpose of creating a better future for family members; these intentions equate to the core purpose of the vision.

Family business model is defined as “The family business is a business governed and/or managed with the intention to shape and pursue the vision of the business held by a dominant coalition controlled by members of the same family or a small number of families in a manner that is potentially sustainable across generations of the family or families” (Chua et al., 1999, 25). They then used this definition to conduct partial least-squares analysis to examine concerns over family succession and professionalization. Chua et al. did not aim to provide a theoretical statement to capture the family-business phenomenon. The restrictiveness of the definition became apparent in its reference to powerful actors called the “family-controlled dominant coalition” in the business that charters the vision. However, not all family businesses may have articulated their vision, and these firms can include small and start-up businesses. Small and medium-sized family businesses may not have a dominant coalition of actors (Chua et al., 1999).

Astrachan et al. (2002) proposed family influence as a construct to solve the dilemma of the definition of family business. They suggested a continuous measurement scale to measure family influence using measurable subscales of power, experience, and culture (the F-PEC scale). The subscales underpinned an assumption that the definition should differentiate family and non-family business models or serve a distinct purpose. Their paper noted that the explanation must accurately measure what it intends to measure. They obtained a team of experts to develop the subscales, used factor analysis to determine subscale stability, and tested for internal consistency using intercorrelations of the subscale measurement items using Cronbach’s alpha. They tried their subscales in Australia, Britain, Europe, Germany, and the United States to establish generalized applications across those countries. However, their scaled instrument was admittedly an operational measurement tool to conduct their specific research rather than to propose a set of constructs broadly supporting the conceptualization of family business model.

The literature then noted that most researchers used business-centered operational definitions for their empirical investigations (Sharma and Chua, 2013; Zellweger et al., 2012). These included studies considering sons-in-law (Santiago, 2011) and adopted children as part of the family (Mehrotra et al., 2013). Sharma and Chua (2013) show that most researchers have failed to offer a clear definition of the family; instead, they have distinguished operational variables on operational grounds, such as structure, composition, and behavior, but Sharm and Chua (2013) emphasized the importance of including the construct of family in the defining operational variables.

Harms (2014) attempted to cluster the family-business definitions in the literature to decrease potential ambiguity by focusing on the periods in which researchers conducted studies and the associated contextual factors influencing the results. Harms used the frequently cited definitions in the literature to guide the clustering process and presented six family-business definitions offered by previous researchers (Anderson and Reeb, 2003; Astrachan et al., 2002; Chua et al., 1999). The researchers concluded that family-business model definitions are vague and tend toward self-developed illustrations. These unsurprising conclusions become clear in acknowledging that these kinds of studies have used operation-based definitions; in contrast, Harms’s (2014) study collated, analyzed, and drew conclusions based on the literature that defined family business model but did not synthesize a conceptual definition. Santiago (2011) states that studies that compared performance, leadership, and management has eventually led to developing a

definition of family business model, but such definition has not included in-laws and not family members. Any future refined definition must consider their inclusion. Notably, this confusion has risen from attempting to establish a construct from researcher-developed operational variables, restricting the scope.

3. Construct development

“Constructs” are abstracts deliberately invented for a purpose (MacCorquodale and Meehl, 1948). Each must have distinguishing clarity and avoid overlapping meanings. They are observable abstract statements or categories comprehensible to researchers (Priem and Butler, 2001; Suddaby, 2010). A construct must: (1) precisely generalize the construct category or statement; (2) restrict the scope; (3) have a semantic (logical or language-based) relation to other constructs; and (4) indicate the theoretical argument or position via the overall relationship established. A widespread error is presenting constructs that are too general or too narrow in scope, and the construct statement should not provide surplus connotations about a real-life event (Suddaby, 2010). “Scope” refers to the research that the nomological net can accommodate, not contextual factors, in research studies. The “context,” sometimes confused with scope, relates to the surroundings associated with the investigated phenomenon (Cappelli and Sherer, 1991). The “setting” can offer different results for the same investigation. Context sets operational boundaries, whereas scope sets conceptual limits (Johns, 2006). The “period” is the accommodating time interval of studies falling within the nomological net.

A “construct” is the mental definition of a variable, translated into an operational definition of a variable employable for the event. The construct is the concept in operationalizing empirical studies used to make inferences about a real-life phenomenon. These inferences help describe or predict the phenomenon (Tenopir, 1977) using research techniques and methods. Because the construct is abstract, and the operational measurement uses it to make inferences about a real-life event, the researchers must ensure that the chosen operational variable is sufficiently valid to represent the construct (conceptual variable) with relevance for the period and scope demarcated for the construct.

As shown in Fig. 1, the four validities of a construct are: (1) concurrent, (2) predictive, (3) content, and (4) face. (1) In concurrent validity, more than one measurement is sufficiently and operationally similar. Concurrent validity helps replace an old measurement variable with an improved one to obtain more relevant findings. For example, the taxation definition can guide us to identify entities as sole traders, partnerships, trusts, and companies for taxation. An alternative is to classify entities as incorporated and unincorporated. The relevance of one measurement over the other becomes contextual because real life is a contextual situation. If the research is about tax effectiveness, then the entity variable provided by the Tax Office becomes a more relevant variable classification. With concurrent validity, both measurements are sufficiently similar representations of the entity construct, but one measure could be more helpful in making inferences about the phenomenon.

(2) A construct is time bound, which means any predictions made from the construct are valid for a specific period. The operational measure used for the construct is such that, at different time intervals, the measurement predicts the same real-life outcome with high accuracy, providing predictive validity. Firm size is measurable in several

ways. The Tax Office uses 10 million Australian dollars aggregated turnover to operationalize a small enterprise. The Bureau of Statistics (ABS) uses fewer than 20 employees to operationalize a small enterprise. If a study is about population demographics, the measurement variable proposed by the ABS can provide more predictive findings. The preferred measure is the one that offers higher predictive validity and is guided by the real-life contextual situation.

(3) A construct is scope bound, meaning its application has spatial limits readily observable in an empirical investigation. The content validity of the construct measures such validity. The measurement instrument is readily visible in research (Schwab, 1980). It is about how well the visual content is a measurement instrument that examines the phenomenon to make valid conclusions. For example, a survey questionnaire to represent the construct must apply to the study with the questions included in the questionnaire as content relevant to the research questions being examined in the study.

(4) The measurement procedures followed provide face validity; some measurement procedures provide improved inferences. For example, the data-sampling framing in a study can enhance the relevance of findings for generalizability.

The concurrent, predictive, content, and face validities offer validation about the construct deployed in various ways in the research. The confirmations undertaken concern the operational aspects of the study.

A vital endeavor in research is establishing construct validity toward the operational aspects of the design and implementation of a research study. The mental meaning of the construct must guide the operationalizing of variable definitions. Researchers’ worldviews (ontology) can influence the design and implementation of the research study, and they devise the constructs meaning in line with their worldview. The operationalized definitions of operational variables must provide the most valid findings according to the worldview of the real-life contextual situation. A construct is ideational; an idea can translate into various meanings. The conceptual nature of the construct allows researchers with different worldviews to operationalize them accordingly. The validities (concurrent, predictive, content, and face) in the study design and implementation help validate the inferences made. The concurrent, predictive, content, and face validity are aspects that indirectly measure the construct validity. Those findings then inform the ideational construct that leads to operationalizing variables.

The two ways to measure direct construct validity are convergent and discriminant validity. There can be different questionnaire types to measure different family influences. One is the socio-economic wealth (SEW) paradigm questionnaire (Gómez-Mejía et al., 2007), and there can be other competing questionnaires. The strong correlation between the questionnaire types leads to convergent validity, showing that measuring instruments can share the explained meaning of the construct (Schwab, 1980). Usually, a measurement instrument cannot fully explain the construct because a measuring device is an operational tool with limitations.

Convergent validity differs from concurrent validity. The concurrent validity focuses on the accuracy of two measurement types, leading to inferences. Concurrent validity applies to measurement instruments; it concurrently associates with reliability testing of the survey instrument using indicators, such as Cronbach’s alpha. The convergent validity checks whether two measures of measuring the construct (for example, survey questionnaire and participant observation as two measurement scales) shows similar findings about the construct being examined. For

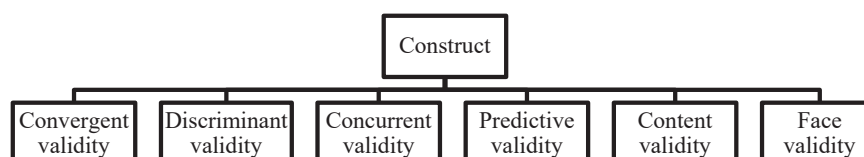


Fig. 1. Validities of a construct.

example, the SEW questionnaire must always (reliably) measure different family influences. Discriminant validity extends the conclusions that are typically made from convergent validity about a single construct. Discriminant validity ensures that two constructs are dissimilar, because one construct is redundant if they are similar.

4. Construct measurement

Operationally, the Kin construct dimension is measurable in several ways. The Accounting Standard on related-party transactions can be used to investigate an accounting phenomenon (AASB, 2015b). The Accounting Standard states that a “related party” is a “related person” or entity, relating them to the entity preparing its financial statements, called a “reporting entity,” to identify kinship. A “related” person or a close family member of such a “related person” is related to the reporting entity. The standard then provides three possibilities of such relatedness: (1) the “related person” has control or joint control of the reporting entity, (2) the “related person” has a significant influence over the reporting entity, or (3) the “related person” provides critical management personnel services to the reporting entity or a parent of the reporting entity.

The Accounting Standard further explains the “related entity” with eight situations concerning the reporting entity: (1) the related entity and the reporting entity are members of the reporting entity group; (2) the related entity and reporting entity is an associate or joint venture of the entity; (3) both entities are joint ventures of a third party; (4) one is a joint venture of a third entity, and the other is an associate of the third entity; (5) both entities are joint ventures of the same third party; (6) one entity is a joint venture, and the other entity is an associate of the third entity; (7) the related entity is a post-employment (example, superannuation) benefits plan, in which the employees of the reporting entity or another entity that is related to the reporting entity are members of the benefit plan entity; and (8) the entity or any member of a group it is part of provides essential management personnel services to the reporting entity or the parent of the reporting entity (AASB, 2015b).

The second way to measure kinship uses an anthropological focus (Stewart, 2003). From this perspective, kinship is the hereditary network of relationships and social ties developed from the relations of hereditary parenthood (Holy, 1996, 40). Finally, a third way to measure kinship is to extend beyond biological kinship and culturally define it to include the concerns of society (Goody, 1996, p. 312).

Each operationalization must meet construct validities (concurrent, predictive, content, and face) that indirectly validate the construct representation as hallmarks of sound research. Cassar and Mankelov (2000), revealed that when asked what a family business model is from participants in survey questionnaire, participants displayed different understandings about it. Researchers can eliminate such ambiguities by offering an operational definition for each variable. Once chosen, each variable must carry a working definition that best meets the intended investigation and assists in the construct validation. Following are two illustrative lists of operational variables:

Enterprise construct operationalization under the Business and Not-Business construct dimensions: Business (Chua et al., 1999), Not-Business (Stewart, 2003), Business and Not-Business (Stewart, 2003), enterprise location, organization type (sole-trader, partnership, trusts, company) (ATO, 2017), organization type (personal services business, sole-trader, partnership, trusts, company) (ATO, 2017), industry membership, age, profitability (net profit margin, gross profit margin, earnings per share), incorporated versus unincorporated, innovation, internationalization (Pukall and Calabró, 2013), enterprise size by revenue and by aggregated revenue (ATO, 2017), profits, assets, total net assets, equity, long-term financing (equity and long-term loans), and the number of employees in an enterprise.

Attachment construct operationalization under the Kin and Not-Kin construct dimensions: Related parties (AASB, 2015b), same family members, same and extended family members, culturally treated as

family members, socially treated as family members, family ownership, family management, family governance, succession (Chua et al., 1999), professionalization (Chua et al., 1999), family conflicts, family moral order (Stewart, 2003), emotional support, and access to resources (Stewart, 2003).

5. Discussion

This section discusses the two main constructs of family enterprise: the enterprise, then family in two parts: traditional and non-traditional. The illustrations discussed here are widely known globally, and these enterprises operate globally. Given their relatively sizeable not-for-profit sector in those countries, the situational illustrations from Australia and USA but not set boundaries to construct applications.

5.1. Enterprise

The Australian Accounting Standards Board (AASB) (AASB No. 3: *Business Combinations*) (2015a) describes a “business is an integrated set of activities and assets conducted to provide a return to investors. It then further explains the nature of a business as “consist[ing] of inputs, processes applied to those inputs, and resulting outputs that are, or will be, used to generate revenue” (AASB, 2015a).

The literature also extends the discussion on business classifications based on size and control to meet specific contextualized objectives. For taxation, the taxation (ATO, 2017) defines a small business as having an aggregated turnover of 10 million Australian dollars. The “control” definition used by the taxation (ATO, 2017) is when the taxpayer’s enterprise and its affiliates have over 40% voting power in the other entity or may receive approximately 40% of the distribution from the controlling entities. An “entity” can be a sole proprietorship, partnership, trust, or company (ATO, 2016). A “large business” has a combined turnover of over 250 million Australian dollars from all sources - public, private, and foreign-owned companies, partnerships, trusts, and super funds (ATO, 2019a).

Different statutory bodies represent small businesses with varying benchmarks to meet their mission and objectives in Australia. The unfair dismissal laws consider the number of employees in a firm to be fewer than 15 (Fair Work Ombudsman, 2023), the ABS uses a benchmark of fewer than 20 employees, and the Australian Securities and Investments Commission defines a small business as that employs fewer than 50 employees for annual report filing. As for the Tax Office, Prudential Supervision uses a revenue benchmark of less than 50 million Australian dollars and an individual loan size of less than 1 million Australian dollars, while the Reserve Bank of Australia uses an individual loan size of less than 2 million Australian dollars to analyze financing conditions. The benchmark may sound too generous or meager depending on the currency under consideration, because several factors, including the size of the economy and per capita income, can influence the benchmark (Connolly et al., 2012).

The concept of “business” has taken precedence over family-business studies, and most research has examined performance but reported confounding results (Craig et al., 2008; Mahto et al., 2010; Yu et al., 2012). This might be because family businesses may not be overly concerned about performance, as they steer processes and systems with economic and kinship logic. It is not surprising that family-business studies have indicated conflicting results on financial performance (Craig et al., 2008; Jiang and Peng, 2011; Mahto et al., 2010).

Family businesses play a vital role in Australia, representing 70% of all businesses and employing approximately half of the workforce (Australian Small Business and Family Enterprise Ombudsman, 2020). However, what constitutes a family business is unresolved in the literature (Chua et al., 1999; Fernández-Roca and Hidalgo, 2017). The Oxford Dictionary refers to “business” with a countable meaning as a commercial organization (Oxford University Press, 2023a). The uncountable implications are making, buying, selling, or supplying goods

or services for money; work that is part of a job; and the amount of work performed by a company. The Oxford Dictionary refers to “enterprise” with a quantitative or countable meaning as a business or company or a large, complex project. A business has a commercial focus, whereas an enterprise may not. An “entity” exists separately from other things and has its own identity (Oxford Learners Dictionaries, 2020). Not-for-profit organizations such as the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation are family enterprises helping people live healthy, productive lives (Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, 2023).

Therefore, I define the “enterprise” construct as an organized activity conducted for the benefit of stakeholders. I describe two construct dimensions: Business, which benefits owners and investors, and Not-Business, which helps other stakeholders.

5.2. Traditional family

Kinship has two uncountable meanings in the Oxford Reference (Oxford University Press, 2023b): the fact of being related in a family; and it also can be the feeling of being close to family because of similar origins or attitudes. It is about people. I refer to “family” with the countable meaning of a group comprising one or two parents and their children; it can also be a group comprising one or two parents, their children, and close relations.

Stewart (2003) approached the family-business model definition from an anthropology perspective, indicating that ancient kinship has developed into family enterprises in market economics. Ancient kinship centered on long-term reciprocal bonds prescribed by accommodation and altruism, whereas modern kinship with market dynamics centers on short-term unidirectional aspects of the property. The versions of ancient kinship rooted in family businesses can cause family involvement to interfere with economic performance, resulting in economic advantages and disadvantages.

Contemporary literature has attempted to include kinship in various fragmented ways, with two principal ways being relatedness and involvement (Litz, 1995). For example, mere kinship is enough to defy logical investment, promoting allegiance over expertise and practicing nepotism (Whyte, 1996). Typically, friends or in-law family members are not family members may finance a family business model (Santiago, 2011). Reciprocally responding to needs of those who are not blood relatives are part of the kinship. Kinship can be to help specific people in the short term, or it could be a generalized norm in a community of practice or society. Kinship can replace what typically family members do to help each other informally. Hence, “kinship” as a concept trumps the family (Stewart, 2003).

Most literature has focused on the ancestral factor in conceptualizing family. Nuclear and liberal family arrangements have also led to informal arrangements (Becker, 1991). They include partners and cohabitants of mainstream, gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender orientations having marital or marital-like relationships. Kinship captures these people, whereas a traditional family concept does not. The current laws defining a family for various operational purposes may have influenced the restrictive outlook of the family. These include the idea of the family used in Census data collection (Cassar and Mankelov, 2000; Santiago, 2011) and family subsidy payments (Australian Government Services Australia, 2020).

5.3. Non-traditional family

A relationship that volunteer staff has with a not-for-profit enterprise occurs for social, cultural, or religious reasons. In the 2017 reporting period, there were approximately 47,000 charities in Australia. The most common activity of charities is religion, representing 30%. About 65% of charities are small, with an annual turnover of less than 250,000 Australian dollars. Volunteers operate half of the charities, amounting to 400,000 volunteers. Not only volunteers but also donors has a reciprocal relationship with not-for-profit enterprises. Registered charities

received \$9.9 million Australian dollars in donations and gifts (Australian Charities and Not-For-Profits Commission, 2019). In the United States, in 2016, not-for-profit enterprise sector was the third largest employer (Gee et al., 2022). In 2017, 25 per cent of adult engaged in volunteer work, and nearly one half them through not-for-profit enterprises ((McKeever, 2018).

In a traditional family-business situation, family involvement and conflicts arise because family members are attached to the enterprise. The family members can have different ancestral relationships such as a parent, child, and grand child. Their identification with commitment to the firm drives the attachment to the enterprise. Attachment theory points out that individuals have attachment styles and they can be primed by organizational states, and these states can predict relational and affective outcomes (Mikulincer and Shaver, 2007; Yip et al., 2015). Not for profit firms can reflect their beliefs and expectations in the social system where they are likely to become volunteers to the organizational cause (Evans et al., 2021; Harms, 2011; Sumer and Knight, 2001). The workers are often volunteers in a non-business enterprise model such as a not for profit firm can become emotionally attached to the enterprise and committed to its cause, using their financial and labor resources and time invested to support the enterprise goals. This study defines the “attachment” construct as the feeling of staff commitment earned by the enterprise aside from remuneration (Wang, 2022). The two dimensions in the attachment construct are Kin and Not-Kin. “Kin” is the feeling of obligation that an enterprise has earned from ancestral relation to the owners, not because of remuneration. “Not-Kin” is the feeling of allegiance to the enterprise aside from remuneration among those who are not ancestral people (Fig. 2).

Fig. 3 shows the dimensions of the enterprise and attachment constructs, providing us with four possible conceptual scenarios encompassing traditional and non-traditional family enterprise models. Walmart is a publicly listed business of which the Walton family owns over 50% (Ramadani et al., 2020). Launched in 2000 and founded by Bill Gates and his wife Melinda Gates, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation is a leader in venture philanthropy. Bill Gates, Melinda Gates, and Warren Buffett are the controlling partners of the foundation trust (Matthews and Ho, 2008). Change.org is a website on which the public can post petitions, having over 390 million users. On Change.org, people everywhere are starting campaigns, mobilizing supporters, and working with decision makers to drive solutions (Change.org, 2023; Wijaya et al., 2019). The National Heart Foundation of Australia is a charitable trust established in 1959 to conduct cardiovascular research, develop health-promoting activities, and educate and assist the public with cardiovascular disease (Atkins et al., 2023; Heart Foundation, 2023). In the McGrath Foundation, Glenn McGrath is a co-founder of the not-for-profit enterprise formed with his deceased wife, Jane McGrath, that raises money to place breast-care nurses with cancer patients (McGrath Foundation, 2023; Mahony et al., 2019).

Attachment and enterprise construct have time and space boundaries that empirical evidence can inform and refine. For instance, they can become bound by contexts where societal cultures differ. The context is the surroundings associated with the research interest (Cappelli and Sherer, 1991). First Nations culture in Australia will likely shape their

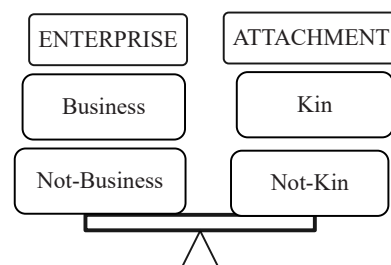


Fig. 2. Constructs in a family enterprise.

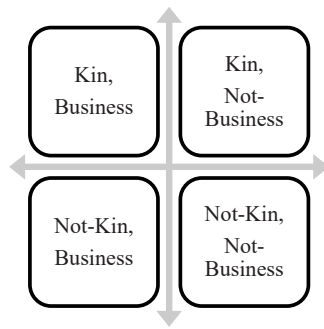


Fig. 3. Construct quadrants.

attachments through their network of people sharing similar spiritual connections (Dietsch et al., 2011; Yip et al., 2015). The not-kin arrangements are likely to be more substantial and widespread in national cultures with higher collectivism dimensions in the Hofstede cultural dimensions model (Hofstede, 2011). An enterprise can vary in its actual performance, which can impact staff remuneration and bonuses. Staff remuneration can become a determinant for employees to become attached to businesses because organizational events can trigger attachment responses (Yip et al., 2018). Families and enterprises can influence contexts, and vice versa, and these changes limit the meanings of constructs to particular periods with relevant contexts (James et al., 2021).

6. Final remarks

This article highlighted some key findings of family-business model definitions reported in the literature. It then showed that many such attempts have tried to define the concept to operationalize research. Although they have served the undertaken studies well, these efforts have not sufficiently considered the conceptual nature of a family and a business. In laying the foundation for developing the family-business concept, this paper discussed the construct-development literature. The discussion covered establishing construct validity by indirect and direct means.

Studies have used the concept of family business in a restrictive manner to include members of the same family or, at most, extended family with biological ancestry. The paper showed that family could exist for ancestral reasons and social, cultural, and religious purposes. The underlying reason for this is an attachment to the enterprise beyond the remuneration received. People have developed attachments to the enterprise because they have committed to its cause. The attachment construct has two dimensions: Kin is the feeling of obligation that an enterprise has earned from ancestral people, not because of remuneration. Not-Kin, is the feeling of allegiance to the enterprise aside from remuneration among those who are not ancestral people, and attachment theory is positioned to offer a theoretical explanation.

Although the literature focuses heavily on business, families also conduct organized activities that are for not-for-profit purposes. Thus, this article proposed the concept of enterprise to include all ordered family-based endeavors. The enterprise construct has two dimensions, Business and Not-Business. The paper provided examples under a quadrant of Kin, Not-Kin and Business, Not-Business, whereby enterprises in each quadrant can become successful ventures by creating expected value for stakeholders. Further empirical examination will assist in a theory of family enterprise, as empirical evidence can establish the interconnections between the proposed constructs in real-life situations. Such construct examination using carefully designed operational variables can refresh the family-enterprise literature.

This study is novel and counterintuitive because it has questioned the widely held belief about family is restricted to ancestral connections and enterprise is a business; pointing to a theoretically revelatory insight of

broadening the perspective from family business model to family enterprise model. The insights shift the focus from family business model to family enterprise model. Determining problems and resolving those issues, has broadened practitioners and policymakers practical utility where they now can perceive that some issues they previously thought were unique (for example, family conflicts and staff motivations) to family businesses or not for profit organizations are common to both. It is because members become family members because of their attachment to the enterprise rather than ancestral connections. The quadrant provided in Fig. 3 allows practitioners and policymakers to investigate issues by clustering them as to whether it is kin or not-kin attachment; and business or not-business enterprise. There are four archetypes in the quadrant, and each behaves differently. For example, appreciating the difference between kin and not-kin assist in understanding the motivational differences between them. Knowing whether they work in a business family model or not-business family model assists in evaluating the motivational issue with a sharper focus in arriving at a more refined solution ((Li and Zhang, 2020; Rexhaj, 2011).

The study also presents scientific utility by presenting constructs and how they relate to and proposing applicable limits in which they are likely valid (Corley and Gioia, 2011). The sensemaking of family enterprise model contributes to conceptual and practical clarity. It is an era where organizations have different structures and purposes, and sensemaking becomes invaluable.

Open innovation enhances the sensemaking of family enterprise. Family enterprises can deviate from conventional ways of innovating, not only innovating differently internally but also innovating with other enterprises and receiving innovations from outside the family enterprise (Chesbrough et al., 2006, p. 1). It is then a family enterprise that can use tacit knowledge best – a crucial strategic resource available within and outside to improve innovation capability effectively. Against that backdrop, the study presents five research propositions from the expansive conceptualization construct quadrants (Fig. 3).

First, digitisation has notably impacted how enterprises conduct their affairs with search engines, social networks, and trading platforms, where enterprise models have been co-created (Funta, 2019). Research has shown that attachment styles can play a moderating role in digitisation (Young et al., 2020), and future research can investigate how the attachment styles of Kin and Not-Kin stakeholders can play a moderating role in the four construct quadrants. Second, future research can investigate the attachment styles of stakeholders in the four construct quadrants that contribute to sustainable development by strategically enabling the enterprise models. For example, they can be investigated in relation to improving global health. There are seven grand challenges: 1) improving childhood vaccines, 2) creating new vaccines, 3) controlling insects that transmit diseases, 4) improving nutrition to promote health, 5) improve medicinal treatment of infectious diseases, 6) cure latent and chronic illnesses, 7) measure health status accurately with a focus on emerging nations (Matthews and Ho, 2008). Research shows that generational involvement negatively moderates the Kin, Business quadrant in adopting green innovation to support performance (Bauweraerts et al., 2022; Peráček et al., 2020). With the Not Kin-Business quadrant, multinational firms have slowly adopted and contributed to the United Nations sustainable development goals (UN SDGs) (Tulder et al., 2021). It is commonly agreed that family enterprises must contribute towards UN SDGs, and hence, rather than focusing on why, the research can investigate how the four quadrants can respond to UN SDGs by changing their business models. An example of such a business model response can be collaborative innovation. For instance, research Not-Kin Not-Business quadrant firms engaging in collaborative innovations helped them to contribute to a broader array of UN SDGs (Mariani et al., 2022), but a comparative study that examines all four construct quadrants can bring a deeper understanding of it. Third, there is little understanding of the attachment styles of the four construct quadrants, and such knowing can contribute to developing human capital to augment value creation. Fourth, a formidable body of

literature about Kin, Business construct quadrant engaging in intrapreneurship and entrepreneurship during stable and unstable business outlooks (Abeyssekera, 2023; Jankelová et al., 2018). Future research can contribute to the less comprehensive understanding of how other construct quadrants use intrapreneurship and entrepreneurship in their value-creation business models. Fifth, all four construct quadrants can have special projects contributing to value creation. The special projects that take the form of social enterprises can require different project models to function within the mainstream enterprise model. Future research can contribute to a greater understanding of project-based orientations of family enterprise business models (Abeyssekera, 2020). In that, demographic factors, such as enterprise size and age, and contextual factors, such as market complexity, circular economy, cluster economy, and industrial ecology, can affect its behaviour and business models (Srebalová and Vojtech, 2021). Future research can contribute to understanding business model adoption because of demographic and contextual factors in construct quadrants. The findings could be used to develop policies, strategies, and business models for family enterprises to increase their ESG performance conducive to UN SDGs.

Ethical Statement/Approval

Ethical review and approval did not apply to this study, as there were no human or animal interactions.

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Declaration of Competing Interest

The author declares no conflict of interest.

Data Availability

No datasets were analyzed in this study.

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