

Strategic Entrepreneurship Amidst Disruption: A Qualitative Case Study of an Immigrant in Thailand

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Abstract

This study focuses on a qualitative exploration of an immigrant ethnic minority entrepreneur's journey to leverage technological opportunities within a period marked by significant market disruptions. Employing a case study methodology, this research aims to elucidate the interplay between the entrepreneur's minority immigrant status and his strategic plans to establish and scale a successful online business venture. The subject of this study is an individual from an ethnic minority immigrant who has notably thrived as an online entrepreneur amidst the challenges and opportunities presented by the disruptive era. Data were gathered in 2022 through semi-structured, face-to-face interviews and a comprehensive review of the entrepreneur's digital marketing strategies on various social media platforms. Through content analysis, the findings are narratively presented, highlighting the entrepreneur's background, the strategic exploitation of disruptive opportunities, the impact of his ethnic minority status on business operations, and his forward-looking business strategies. This research contributes to the entrepreneurial literature by offering insights into the critical factors facilitating the success of entrepreneurs from marginalized communities in navigating the complexities of the digital age. It holds significant implications for aspiring entrepreneurs, particularly those from minority backgrounds, by shedding light on the key elements of entrepreneurial success in the contemporary disruptive landscape.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship, Disruption, Ethnic minority, Online entrepreneur

Introduction

The disruptive era, characterized by rapid technological and societal changes, presents a landscape in which businesses must adapt swiftly or face obsolescence (IGI Global, 2022). This period, also identified with the Fourth Industrial Revolution, couriers an abundance of opportunities and challenges for global businesses (Fauzan, 2018). These dynamics necessitate a shift in marketing paradigms, influencing strategies and operational frameworks across industries (Kinzel, 2016). McKinsey & Company (2022) put forward that the dissemination of digital technologies during this disruptive era significantly impacts business operations, offering substantial opportunities for sectors and individuals adept at embracing these changes. Conversely, entities resistant or slow to adapt may struggle to sustain their market presence (Bughin & Woetzel, 2022).

With Thailand's population reaching approximately 70 million in 2022 (Worldometer, 2022), the Shan people, or Tai Yai, represent a significant ethnic minority group, particularly in Northern Thailand. Despite historical socioeconomic disadvantages and employment barriers due to citizenship status, a noteworthy shift has been observed among the Tai Yai. Many have transcended these limitations, achieved economic prosperity and acquired assets, reflecting attributes of diligence and entrepreneurial spirit (Chiang Mai A La Carte, 2022).

The COVID-19 pandemic underscored these challenges, with widespread layoffs and business closures leading to increased unemployment. However, this period also unveiled new entrepreneurial avenues, with some individuals capitalizing on the emerging opportunities for business creation and success.

The objectives of this study were to explore a case study of a Tai Yai immigrant who leveraged such an opportunity to attain remarkable success. The detail of the study included background of the informant, opportunities arising during the disruptive era and how the informant seized such opportunity, the impact of ethnic minority status and how he overcame it, and his future plans. This study researched through his journey, highlighting the traits and strategies that contributed to his achievement. Furthermore, this study examines the significance of his ethnic minority status in the context of entrepreneurship, offering insights into overcoming societal barriers to business success.

Literature Review

Entrepreneur and Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship is characterized by the capacity to initiate a new business venture, encompassing the assumption of associated risks and rewards as well as recognitions. Entrepreneurs are identified by their innovative spirit, contributing novel ideas, products, services, and operational methodologies to the business ecosystem (Hayes, 2022). Venkataraman (1997) articulates that entrepreneurship is closely linked to the synergy between the availability of business opportunities within a specific locale and the entrepreneurial individual's aptitude to capitalize on these opportunities. A critical attribute of successful entrepreneurs is their ability to identify and exploit business opportunities, judiciously manage resources, mitigate risks, and devise solutions to emerging challenges (Clouse et al., 2008). Adzo (2022) identifies ten pivotal characteristics that epitomize an effective entrepreneur, including creativity and innovation, a focus on growth and learning, commitment and drive, persistence and resilience, a strong work ethic, a will for risk-taking, leadership skills, adaptability, proficient communication skills, and a deep-seated passion for their business.

This study extends the discussion on entrepreneurship by examining the unique entrepreneurial journey of a Tai Yai immigrant entrepreneur in Thailand. It explores how the aforementioned entrepreneurial characteristics manifest in contexts characterized by

significant social and economic barriers. By analyzing how the entrepreneur recognizes and seizes opportunities within the disruptive era, this research contributes to a deeper understanding of entrepreneurship in immigrant minority communities. It also investigates the role of immigrant ethnic minority status in shaping entrepreneurial pathways, thereby bridging a gap in the existing literature on entrepreneurship in diverse cultural and socio-economic contexts.

Disruptive Innovation

Disruptive innovation, a concept introduced by Christensen and Raynor (2003), describes a type of innovation that forges new markets through the introduction of various principles, often rendering existing markets obsolete. This form of innovation typically emerges when a disruptive market entrant introduces alternative products or services that are more affordable and accessible, challenging the status quo of larger, established companies. As the process of innovation evolves, disruptors progressively enhance the value of their offerings, maintaining affordability and convenience. Importantly, disruptive innovation is not confined to tangible products alone; it also encompasses novel methodologies in production or delivery that improve accessibility or efficiency for consumers (Christensen & Raynor, 2003).

The relevance of disruptive innovation to this study lies in its potential to illuminate the entrepreneurial journey of a Tai Yai immigrant ethnic minority entrepreneur in Thailand. This research examines how the subject capitalized on disruptive innovations to carve out a new niche in the market, thereby overcoming both social and economic barriers inherent to minority status. By investigating the strategic exploitation of disruptive innovation within a marginalized community, this study contributes to a broader understanding of how entrepreneurial activities can be leveraged as a vehicle for social and economic advancement in the face of structural challenges.

Minority Group

Minority groups are defined as culturally, ethnically, or racially distinct populations that coexist within a society dominated by another group holding greater power and privilege. The role and influence of minority groups vary significantly across different social systems, largely dependent on the structural dynamics of the society and the relative strength and cohesion of the minority group itself (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2022b).

Ethnic minorities constitute a specific category of minority groups, characterized by shared attributes such as clan connections, language, nationality, or ethnicity. Often, these groups have histories of migration from their ancestral lands due to economic, political, or religious pressures, which in turn shapes their experiences and identities within new social contexts (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2022a).

This study focuses on the entrepreneurial endeavors of a Tai Yai immigrant ethnic minority entrepreneur in Thailand, a context that underscores the complex interplay between minority status and economic opportunity. By exploring the entrepreneurial journey within the framework of disruptive innovation and immigrant minority group dynamics, this research aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of how an immigrant ethnic minority entrepreneur navigates and leverages his unique positions. Specifically, it examines how the Tai Yai entrepreneur's immigrant minority status influences his business strategies and success in the digital marketplace, thereby offering insights into the broader implications of immigrant ethnic minority entrepreneurship in transforming socio-economic landscapes.

Methodology

This study employs a qualitative research methodology, focusing in-depth on a case study of a singular character. The data was collected in 2022. The research design is structured around an in-depth, qualitative case study approach, as advocated by Yin (2014), who emphasizes the utility of this method in exploring and understanding complex phenomena within the real-life contexts. Qualitative research, as noted in the literature, is particularly proficient at capturing the authentic essence of practical environments, allowing for a nuanced examination of the subject matter (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011).

Denzin and Lincoln (2011) further articulate that a case study can function as a comprehensive research method in its own right, offering a robust framework for investigating specific instances in a detailed and holistic manner. The methodology for this research is delineated as follows:

Informant

The informant for this study is an individual immigrant from an ethnic minority group who has achieved notable success as an entrepreneur by leveraging the opportunities presented during a period of technological disruption. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2019 caused a significant economic downturn, compelling many traditional retail businesses to terminate operations due to their inability to adapt to rapid technological advancements and sudden shifts in consumer behavior. This case study was chosen specifically because the informant's experience provides valuable insights into overcoming the challenges posed by an extraordinary economic climate and adapting to the profound changes in marketing technologies. To ensure ethical research practices, including the protection of the informant's identity, all personal details have been anonymized. Throughout this article, the informant will be referred to by the pseudonym "Zin."

Research Scope

The scope of this research encompasses the narrative arc of the informant's journey, beginning from his arrival in Thailand through to the establishment and successful operation of his online business within the context of a technologically disruptive era. This study meticulously applies the Kipling Method, commonly referred to as the 5W1H framework, to thoroughly investigate and understand the informant's experiences and the lessons derived therefrom. The 5W1H framework, which encompasses the queries of what, where, when, why, who, and how, serves as a comprehensive tool for data collection and analysis (Reyes, 2023; Möller, 2012). Utilizing this methodological approach enables the informant to reflect upon and articulate his experiences, offering insights from a personal perspective.

Data Collection Tools

The study utilized a semi-structured interview guide as the primary tool for data collection. To ensure the collection of comprehensive and in-depth data, additional questions were incorporated into the interview process as deemed necessary. Data collection was conducted through face-to-face interviews, facilitating a deeper understanding of the informant's perspectives, ideas, and experiences concerning the topics of interest. Moreover, the researcher engaged in an examination of the informant's social marketing efforts on TikTok, including an analysis of viewer comments, to glean insights into his business development strategies and customer engagement.

At the onset of the interview and subsequent data collection phases, the researcher explicitly sought and obtained verbal consent from the informant to record the interviews and gather data through other means. The interview guide was organized into four primary sections:

1. Background of the informant
2. Opportunities arising during the disruptive era
3. Impact of ethnic minority status
4. Future plans

This structure aimed to systematically explore the informant's journey, highlighting the critical elements of his entrepreneurial success and the influence of his ethnic minority status.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted through a detailed content analysis process, which involved transcribing and summarizing the interview findings and integrating observations from the informant's TikTok livestreams. The analysis framework was structured around the 5W1H questions (what, where, when, why, who, and how), providing a comprehensive lens through which to examine the collected data. The results of this analysis are presented in a narrative format within the paper, incorporating direct quotations from the informant to enrich the discussion and provide authentic insights into his experiences and perspectives.

Results

The results are provided below following the 4-part question list as discussed in the Data Collection Tools part.

Background of Zin

Zin's journey from Shan State in Myanmar to settle down in Thailand summarizes the resilience, adaptability, and an entrepreneurial spirit of a person navigating through the complexities of migration, integration, and economic empowerment. At the age of 17, inspired by the success stories of fellow Tai Yai migrants, Zin started on a life-altering journey to Thailand, seeking opportunities that were absent in his native Myanmar, a country mired in political unrest and economic stagnation under a military regime. This backdrop set the stage for Zin's pursuit of a better life, marking the beginning of a narrative filled with challenges, learning, and eventual success.

Upon his arrival in Thailand, Zin, like many of his compatriots, entered the workforce as an illegal immigrant, finding employment at a construction site in Chiang Mai. This period of his life was characterized by hard labor and low wages, with Zin and his fellow workers earning a mere 65 Thai Baht per day. The turning point came in 2004 when the Thai government offered illegal immigrant workers the chance to legalize their status. Seizing this opportunity, Zin obtained what is colloquially known as a "White Card," granting him a legal migrant work permit. This legal recognition was pivotal, offering Zin a semblance of stability and hope for the future.

Despite the linguistic and cultural barriers, Zin's unwavering commitment to self-improvement and integration into Thai society was evident. With no prior knowledge of Thai, he embarked on a self-taught journey to master the language, relying on interpersonal interactions and educational resources. His efforts to bridge the linguistic divide underlined his resilience and determination to build a new life in Thailand. This linguistic achievement not only facilitated Zin's social integration, but also expanded his employment opportunities, marking a significant stride towards self-reliance and economic stability.

The shift from construction work to employment at a swine farm represented a significant improvement in Zin's working conditions and quality of life. Although the initial

salary was comparable to his earnings from construction, the job at the swine farm came with added benefits, including medical welfare and housing for his family. This job transition highlighted Zin's strategic adaptability and his continuous pursuit of better employment conditions. Over time, Zin's skill set diversified, encompassing construction, maintenance, and repair work, further enhancing his income through additional compensation. This versatility in skills not only improved his financial standing but also reinforced his value as a multifaceted worker.

Zin's personal life flourished in parallel with his professional growth. His marriage at 19 to a woman he met at a Tai Yai event was built on a foundation of mutual support and shared aspirations. Together, they navigated the challenges of life in Thailand, working diligently to save money and invest in their future. Their collective efforts enabled them to support their son's higher education, accumulate savings, and acquire significant assets, including a house and a pickup truck. These achievements are testaments to Zin's strong work ethic, commitment, and drive, qualities that have been instrumental in his journey from a migrant worker to a successful, integrated member of Thai society.

Reflecting on his journey, Zin's sense of satisfaction and accomplishment is profound. His narrative transcends the personal to highlight the broader experiences of ethnic minority migrants in Southeast Asia. Zin's story illustrates the transformative impact of legal status, linguistic acquisition, and employment opportunities on the lives of migrants. It underscores the potential for economic and social mobility in the face of adversity, offering insights into the resilience and entrepreneurial spirit required to navigate the challenges of migration and integration.

Through Zin's experience, this study sheds light on the complexities of ethnic minority migration, the importance of legal recognition and social integration, and the profound impact of personal agency and community support in achieving economic empowerment and stability. His journey from a state of vulnerability to one of success and fulfillment serves as a compelling case study of resilience, adaptability, and the entrepreneurial spirit among ethnic minority migrants in Thailand.

Opportunity in the Disruptive Era

The beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2019 marked a significant life changing in Thailand, catalyzing a widespread lockdown that significantly disrupted traditional business operations. This period of upheaval led to the closure of numerous businesses, yet simultaneously, it paved the way for the emergence of new opportunities within the online marketplace. As physical movements were restricted, consumer behaviors underwent a dramatic shift, transitioning from in-person shopping experiences to digital platforms. This shift was not limited to commerce alone; social lifestyles also evolved, with an increasing reliance on social media for connection and entertainment. Platforms like Facebook and TikTok saw a substantial rise in the user engagement, setting the stage for innovative online business models.

Zin, whose initial use of Facebook was to maintain connections with friends and family, gradually immersed himself in the digital landscape. He began exploring live streams for both product sales and entertainment, eventually extending his digital footprint to TikTok. Zin's raid into content creation on TikTok, primarily through singing, garnered a modest following, enhancing his engagement with the platform. *"I started to sing and broadcasted myself online via platform like TikTok. I enjoyed myself very much and I started to have some followers. I was delighted of their positive feedback,"* Zin reflects, highlighting the joy derived from his early digital interactions.

However, Zin's life took an unexpected turn following a serious accident at a construction site, which left him hospitalized and significantly impaired. During his recovery,

a friend recommended a black sesame pill, marketed for its restorative properties. Despite its steep price, Zin's experience with the product was profoundly positive, catalyzing a rapid and remarkable recovery. This personal testament to the product's efficacy was a pivotal moment for Zin, inspiring him to delve into the world of multi-level marketing (MLM) as a sales member for the host company that produced the black sesame pill.

Seizing this new opportunity, Zin embarked on a strategic journey to market the product and other company offerings through live streams. He decorated a home studio, dedicating a corner of his house for this purpose, and began broadcasting regularly. Initially, his live streams attracted minimal viewership, but undiscouraged, Zin persisted. His commitment to a fixed streaming schedule, combined with a diversified content strategy and attention to presentation, gradually built a substantial following. Zin's approach to engaging his audience was threefold: diversifying discussion topics to maintain viewer interest, ensuring a professional appearance and setting to build trust, and establishing a consistent streaming schedule to foster viewer loyalty.

These strategies highlighted Zin's entrepreneurial shrewdness, particularly his risk-taking ability, communication skills, and leadership qualities. The growth of his audience, eventually exceeding 10,000 viewers on some occasions, was a testament to his effective engagement strategies and his deep belief in the products he endorsed. Through this journey, Zin not only navigated the challenges posed by the disruptive era but also leveraged the opportunities it presented, transforming a period of personal adversity into a thriving online business venture.

Zin's story exemplifies the potential for individual resilience and innovation in the face of widespread disruption. His transition from a traditional laborer to a successful online entrepreneur encapsulates the dynamic shifts in the global marketplace, highlighting the critical role of digital platforms in facilitating new forms of entrepreneurship. Through strategic adaptation and a commitment to genuine engagement, Zin tapped into the evolving consumer landscape, marking his place within the digital economy of the disruptive era.

Effects of Ethnic Minority Status

Zin's journey from Myanmar to Thailand encapsulates the resilience and entrepreneurial spirit of the Tai Yai ethnic minority amidst adversity. Under Myanmar's military regime, the Tai Yai community faced severe oppression, with their villages subjected to arbitrary raids and destruction by soldiers, leaving them without access to basic welfare and education. This backdrop of hardship underscored Zin's early life and the lives of many Tai Yai people, setting a stage of struggle that persisted even as they sought better opportunities in Thailand. As undocumented workers in Thailand, Zin and his peers were underpaid and devoid of social welfare, a testament to the challenges they faced in a foreign land.

Despite these adversities, the Tai Yai community's resilience was evident in their strengthened bonds and collective determination to improve their circumstances. The Thai government's initiative to legalize undocumented immigrants through the "white card" system offered a semblance of hope, albeit with continued challenges, particularly in the job market where Tai Yai workers found themselves at a disadvantage due to the preference for local labor and the bureaucratic hurdles of work permit renewals. Zin's reflection on these experiences highlights the persistent barriers to employment and social integration faced by the Tai Yai community in Thailand.

However, Zin perceived his ethnic minority status not as a limitation, but as an opportunity, particularly in the realm of online marketing. His bilingual broadcasts in Thai and Tai Yai resonated with the Tai Yai community, garnering a significant following on social media. This unique approach of leveraging his ethnic identity enabled Zin to connect deeply with his audience, offering products and services that met the specific needs and preferences

of the Tai Yai people. Zin's insight into the cultural nuances of health and wellness preferences among Tai Yai, as opposed to the general Thai population's skepticism towards food supplements, underscores the importance of cultural competency in entrepreneurship.

Moreover, Zin's online platform served as a conduit for sharing valuable information and experiences relevant to the Tai Yai migration into Thailand. From practical advice on legal documentation and banking to cultural engagements and events, Zin's content fostered a sense of community and support among his followers. This approach not only solidified his social media presence, but also exemplified a model of entrepreneurship that transcends mere commercial transactions to encompass social empowerment and community building.

Zin's ability to navigate the complexities of ethnic minority status, coupled with his entrepreneurial acumen, has enabled him to carve out a successful niche in the online marketplace. His story is a compelling narrative of overcoming adversity through innovation, community engagement, and the strategic leveraging of cultural identity. It highlights the potential of digital platforms to offer economic opportunities and a sense of belonging for marginalized communities, demonstrating the transformative power of entrepreneurship in bridging cultural and economic divides.

Future Plan

Zin's venture into the online business world over the past eight months has been a journey of profound personal and professional growth. Initially shy and unsure of how to engage with others, Zin discovered his voice and confidence through live streaming, transforming from a reticent individual into a charismatic and effective communicator. *"I used to be unconfident being in front of people because I do not know how to say things properly. But after getting myself familiar with broadcasting myself, I felt much more comfortable being myself in front of the camera and talk about what I like,"* Zin reflects with a smile.

This new confidence has translated into significant success, with his audience expanding from none to peak of over 10,000 viewers. Motivated by this growth and the lessons learned from fellow online entrepreneurs, Zin is committed to continuing and expanding his online business. Despite starting with modest earnings, his revenue has grown sixfold in just eight months, a testament to his dedication and the potential of his venture.

Yet, Zin remains pragmatic about his professional priorities. His work at the swine farm and additional income from construction jobs continue to form the backbone of his financial security. The online business, while increasingly lucrative, is considered an additional stream of income rather than his primary focus.

Careful due diligence on the MLM company's credibility and the safety of its products underscores Zin's cautious approach to business. The company's mission resonates deeply with him, reinforcing his belief in the business's low-risk, high-reward model. As technology evolves rapidly, Zin remains committed to continuous learning and staying open to new opportunities. Above all, his vision for the future is clear: achieving financial stability while ensuring a happy and fulfilling family life.

Discussions

This case study reveals the inspiring journey of Zin, a Tai Yai individual from Shan State, Myanmar, who migrated to Chiang Mai, Thailand, in pursuit of a better life. Through Zin's narrative, we explore the embodiment of entrepreneurial characteristics that are pivotal for success, including creativity, innovation, commitment, resilience, and a strong work ethic, among others (Adzo, 2022). Zin's story is a testament to the potential of individuals from ethnic minority backgrounds to overcome adversity and achieve entrepreneurial success.

Zin's transition from a life marked by hardship in Myanmar to becoming a successful entrepreneur in Thailand underscores the significant challenges faced by ethnic minorities. These challenges include limited access to education and social welfare, legal and socio-economic barriers in migration, and the constant need to adapt to new environments. Despite these obstacles, Zin and his peers cultivated a strong community bond and work discipline, essential qualities that have been identified as crucial in navigating the entrepreneurial landscape (Yi et al., 2022).

The literature suggests that the adversities experienced by individuals like Zin can foster a greater propensity for entrepreneurship, characterized by an enhanced tolerance for risk and a drive for innovation (Caliendo et al., 2010). This aligns with Zin's innovative approach to leveraging social media platforms for business, highlighting his creative and adaptive strategies in a rapidly changing digital economy. His ability to continuously learn and grow, despite having a limited formal education, challenges conventional narratives about the prerequisites for entrepreneurial success, echoing research that questions the direct correlation between education level and business achievement (Peters & Bridjlal, 2011).

Zin's entrepreneurial journey also illuminates the role of personal and cultural identity in business strategy. His bilingual communication skills and deep understanding of the Tai Yai community's needs allowed him to foster a strong connection with his audience, leveraging his ethnic minority status as a unique value proposition (Ivanova-Gongne et al., 2021). This approach not only facilitated business growth, but also contributed to the preservation and promotion of Tai Yai cultural heritage, illustrating the multifaceted impact of entrepreneurship on community cohesion and cultural diversity.

The case study of Zin is a small-scale version of the broader dynamics of immigrant entrepreneurship, which plays a critical role in the global economy. Immigrants bring diverse perspectives, innovative ideas, and a wealth of cultural knowledge, enriching the entrepreneurial landscape and fostering economic dynamism (Li et al., 2018). Studies have shown that the interaction between immigrant and native populations can lead to knowledge spillovers, enhancing creativity and innovation within the entrepreneurial ecosystem (Hernandez, 2014; Hornung, 2014; Rahman et al., 2014).

The increasing rates of migration, driven by global issues such as war and climate change, highlight the importance of understanding and supporting immigrant entrepreneurship. Zin's success story offers valuable insights into the resilience, adaptability, and an entrepreneurial spirit of ethnic minorities, underscoring the need for policies and programs that facilitate their integration and economic participation. As Zin aptly puts it, "*I insist that everyone of us have own ability and we should do what we want to do now. Do not hesitate, there is nothing without risk. Simply be mindful of how to handle the upcoming challenges. If opportunity comes into your way, grasp it,*" reflecting the ethos of seizing opportunities amidst uncertainties.

In conclusion, Zin's entrepreneurial journey from a marginalized ethnic minority in Myanmar to a successful online entrepreneur in Thailand embodies the essence of resilience, innovation, and cultural identity. His story not only enriches our understanding of the

entrepreneurial potential among ethnic minorities but also calls attention to the broader implications of immigrant entrepreneurship for economic diversity and social integration. Further research is necessary to study deeper into these themes, providing a fuller understanding of the ways in which immigrants and ethnic minorities can contribute to and benefit from a dynamic, inclusive economy.

Conclusion and suggestions

While this case study provides valuable insights into the entrepreneurial journey of Zin, a Tai Yai ethnic minority entrepreneur in Thailand, it also opens avenues for further research. The nature of focusing on a singular narrative, though rich in detail and depth, means that the experiences of other ethnic minority entrepreneurs in Thailand and beyond might differ. This specificity is not a shortfall but rather a foundation upon which broader explorations can be built.

The study's concentrated scope on one individual's experience presents a unique opportunity to research deeply into the complexities and nuances of ethnic minority entrepreneurship within a specific socio-cultural and economic context. It serves as a detailed exploration of the interplay between individual agency, cultural identity, and entrepreneurial success in a challenging environment.

Acknowledging this, future research stands to gain by extending the investigation to include comparative analyses across diverse ethnic groups and geographical settings. Such expansion could enrich our understanding of the varied pathways to entrepreneurship among ethnic minorities, offering more generalizable insights and highlighting universal themes as well as distinct differences.

In embracing the study's focused approach as a stepping stone, we invite a wider academic conversation about the role of culture, identity, and resilience in entrepreneurship. This research paves the way for a comprehensive exploration of ethnic minority entrepreneurship, encouraging a multidimensional inquiry that spans different cultures, economies, and societal contexts.

Recommendation

This study has illuminated the entrepreneurial journey of a Tai Yai ethnic minority entrepreneur within Thailand, opening a vista onto the interplay between migration, entrepreneurship, and ethnic identity. Given the emerging nature of research in this domain, particularly within the Thai context, there exists a fertile ground for academic inquiry and practical exploration. To build upon the foundational insights provided by this case study, the following recommendations are proposed to extend the scope and depth of understanding in this vital area:

1. Broadening research with quantitative methods

Future studies should consider incorporating quantitative research methodologies to collect data from a broader population of Tai Yai immigrants and possibly other ethnic minority groups engaged in entrepreneurship in Thailand. This approach can facilitate the identification of prevalent entrepreneurial environments, essential skills, and traits that contribute to the success of immigrant entrepreneurs. Quantitative data will complement qualitative insights, offering a more holistic understanding of the factors influencing entrepreneurial outcomes among ethnic minorities.

2. Exploring diverse entrepreneurial environments

Further research is encouraged to examine the variety of entrepreneurial environments within Thailand, including urban versus rural settings, different industries, and the impact of

digital transformation on immigrant entrepreneurship. Understanding how these environments shape the entrepreneurial journey can provide valuable insights into support systems, policies, and initiatives that can enhance the success rates of immigrant entrepreneurs.

3. Identifying key skills and traits

Building on the rich narrative of individual experiences, subsequent studies should aim to identify and analyze the key skills and traits that are most conducive to entrepreneurial success among immigrants. This investigation can help in developing targeted training and development programs, tailored to the unique needs of ethnic minority entrepreneurs.

4. Policy implications and support structures

It is recommended that policymakers and stakeholders leverage the findings from such research to create more inclusive and supportive environments for immigrant entrepreneurs. This could include simplifying legal procedures, providing access to financial resources, offering language and business training programs, and fostering networks that connect immigrant entrepreneurs with local business communities.

5. Cross-cultural comparative studies

Engaging in cross-cultural comparative studies can provide a richer, more nuanced understanding of immigrant entrepreneurship as a global phenomenon. Such research can uncover universal challenges and opportunities faced by immigrant entrepreneurs, facilitating the exchange of the best practices and innovative solutions across different contexts.

By pursuing these recommendations, the academic and professional communities can significantly contribute to the empowerment of immigrant entrepreneurs, not only in Thailand but globally. This research trajectory not only enriches our academic understanding but also holds the promise of fostering more inclusive, and resilient entrepreneurial ecosystems.

New knowledge and the effects on society and communities

The case study of Zin, a Tai Yai immigrant entrepreneur in Thailand, provides new knowledge in understanding the intersection of ethnicity, digital entrepreneurship, and socio-economic development. This knowledge yields several effects on both societal and economic levels.

New Knowledge

1. Digital entrepreneurship as a pathway for immigrant ethnic minorities

Demonstrates how ethnic minority entrepreneurs can leverage digital platforms to overcome traditional barriers to business success, offering a model for economic empowerment and integration.

2. Cultural capital in business

Reveals the significance of cultural identity and community connections in building successful business ventures, suggesting that cultural heritage can be a unique asset in the entrepreneurial process.

3. Resilience and innovation in adversity

Highlights the critical role of resilience, adaptability, and innovative thinking in navigating the challenges of entrepreneurship, particularly for those from marginalized backgrounds.

Effects on Society and Communities

1. Economic Integration

Zin's entrepreneurial journey underscores the potential for ethnic minority entrepreneurs to contribute to economic diversity and growth, fostering a more inclusive economy that values and utilizes the unique contributions of all its members.

2. Cultural Preservation and Promotion

By integrating Tai Yai cultural elements into his business, Zin not only finds success but also plays a crucial role in preserving and promoting ethnic heritage, enriching the cultural tapestry of Thai society.

3. Inspiration for Future Entrepreneurs

The visibility of Zin's success serves as an inspiration to other individuals from similar backgrounds, encouraging them to pursue entrepreneurship. This has the potential to foster a more diverse, and innovative business landscape, strengthening community ties and enhancing social cohesion.

In sum, Zin's story adds to our understanding of the ways in which entrepreneurship can serve as a vehicle for social and economic advancement, particularly for those from marginalized backgrounds, and underscores the importance of supportive ecosystems that recognize and leverage the diversity within society.

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