

HOW ASIAN ENTREPRENEURS BALANCE BUSINESS AND FAMILY LIFE: A CASE STUDY FROM TAIWAN

Tzong-Ru (Jiun-Shen) Lee

Department of Marketing, National Chung Hsing University, Taichung, Taiwan
trlee@dragon.nchu.edu.tw

Szu-Yu Liu

Department of Marketing, National Chung Hsing University, Taichung, Taiwan
s6428417@gmail.com

Per Hilletofth

Department of Industrial Engineering and Management, School of Engineering, Jönköping University,
Sweden
per.hilletofth@jth.hj.se

Abstract:

Entrepreneurship is one of the hottest research topics in the world and one common research area within this field is the entrepreneurial model or process. The successful entrepreneurial model in the western world is a well-discussed topic. However this model is not applicable in the Asian world due to cultural differences. In the western world, business and family life are clearly separated, but in Asia, there is no clear boundary. The aim of this study is to investigate how Asian entrepreneurs balance business and family life. The study focuses on how the entrepreneur balance business and family life in the entrepreneurial process and on identifying the most critical factors for long-term entrepreneurial success. These issues have been examined through a single case study including the Taiwanese enterprise FU NIANG FANG. This study has identified twelve key factors leading to the enterprise's success. These key factors are: (1) Product and service innovation, (2) Mechanism to ensure service and product quality, (3) Quoted purchase, (4) Interaction with suppliers, (5) Market segmentation, (6) Value proposition, (7) Site selection, (8) Barriers to market entry and relationships with competitors, (9) Interactions with customers, (10) Talent demand, (11) Entrepreneurial team members and their experiences related to entrepreneurship in past, and (12) Venture financing. This study is explorative in nature and is limited to one company located in Taiwan. Thus, more empirical data should be gathered to reinforce the validity of the findings.

Keywords: entrepreneurship, Eastern culture, Asian, Taiwan, vinegar, FU NIANG FANG, family

1. PREFACE AND CASE STUDY

In the business history of Western culture, working and living were clearly separated. Westerners would not talk of work after work. When managing family life and business, westerners possessed a different attitude. In Eastern cultures, however, there are cases that showed family life and business was closely related and can be integrated.

In Asia, which Taiwan belongs to, there was an enterprise that started by brewing vinegar. The enterprise started from the founder's hope that wanted to bring health to his family. Compared with other enterprises, the founder's vinegar business grew slowly because when founder started his business, he took each step for the sake of his family. In traditional Chinese culture, there was a proverb describing seven necessities that were important in maintaining domestic daily lives: "Firewood, rice, oil, salt, sauce, vinegar and tea ". Vinegar was an important one, showing vinegar was inseparable from people's lives.

The founder had gone to China for work. His major was food science. After graduated, he also applied his major in his work. However, he and his spouse's first child was suddenly diagnosed with Kawasaki's disease, so that he could not be at ease in China and then he gave up his job in China and went back to Taiwan. He was very concerned about children's health issues and for the reason that he majored in food science; he decided to improve his child's health by food therapy. Why did the founder choose vinegar to start a business? The reason was that when the founder was in his college period, he has a good impression about an article about vinegar which his junior classmate had researched and thus become attached.

The founder brewed vinegar for his child and hoped the vinegar drinks could improve his child's health. Therefore, the founder chose to brew pure vinegar by traditional procedures. The founder had also insisted on crops used to brew vinegar. However, as the founder immersed wholeheartedly in researching how to brew vinegar, it took him three years. During these three years, the founder had no income. He only relied on his spouse's financial support that assured him to concentrate on researching how to brew vinegar. Faced with the pressure given by his other family members, the founder's spouse gave spiritual support to the founder instead. Finally, when the founder was studying about brewing vinegar technology, he also applied his knowledge about food science and brought the innovative technology into the vinegar's manufacturing process.

In order to test his vinegar drinks in the market, the founder chose to start at the vegetable market and began to interact with customers. Moreover, he actively made good use of governmental resources to solve the financial problem when starting an enterprise. In order to promote their own vinegar products, the founder and his spouse had looked for a designer to do the product packaging design. In addition, they also continued to attend exhibitions and competitions in order to promote and market FU NIANG FANG's products. As a result, FU NIANG FANG's product quality and packaging design were highly recognized by receiving international awards and by media's continual publicizing and reporting. After FU NIANG FANG's entrepreneurial success, the founder's spouse joined the entrepreneurial team together with the founder and the founder's junior classmate who majored in food science was also invited to join in.

In product marketing channels, the founder had cooperation programs for temporary cabinets with department stores in northern Taiwan. But in order to understand customer demands, it was required to interact directly with customers. Therefore, the founder decided to open a sales outlet on his own. The site selection of the store was hoped to be able to balance family life and business growth. Therefore, central Taiwan was the founder's choice.

From starting an enterprise to selecting the site of the sales outlet, the founder centered on the family as the core and took the family for his consideration. Each step of his corporate strategy was to make his family live better. Even after the business was busy, the founder and the spouse insisted on sparing time for their children and taking care of their family members' health. These were their highest goals.

2. KEY FACTORS FOR ENTREPRENEURIAL SUCCESS

The case study of FU NIANG FANG's entrepreneurship was published in the book "Theory and Practice of Entrepreneurial Management" (ADD SOURCE). The book summed up seventeen key factors of entrepreneurial success and introduced a tremendous amount of successful entrepreneurial key factors. This study analyzed the key factors reported in the case study and ended up in twelve key factors leading to the enterprise's success. These twelve factors are described below in turn. Actually, the way how we present this case company is similar to the paper published in Handbook of East Asian Entrepreneurship (Muhos et. al, 2015)

- a) *Product and service innovation*: It all started from the parents that hoped their child can be much more healthier

The founder's original intention beginning researching and developing vinegar products was for his child's health. Before starting a business, the founder had been worked in China. At that time, his career was about to take off. However, his child was diagnosed with Kawasaki disease, an acquired disease associated with immune, vascular diseases. So far, Medicine had not found the cause of Kawasaki disease which the child was diagnosed with and it can only be inferred to be infected or be related to the response of the immune system. Doctors said that although the child was recovered from Kawasaki disease, it was needed to pay attention to the recrudescence possibility. The child needed to keep track of Kawasaki disease until the child was 18-20 years old. In order to take care of his child's health, the founder gave up his opportunities developing his career in China and came back to Taiwan. Because of his child's illness, the founder paid more attention to health issues; he even hoped to do something for his child's health. He recalled that in his study period, he had read an article about vinegar. When he worked in China, he observed that most Chinese people had kept the habit to drink a cup of vinegar after meal. These thoughts inspired the founder starting his health career. He decided to make vinegar by himself in order to let his child drink healthier and to bring health to more and more people.

In manufacturing technology, FU NIANG FANG's vinegar products have two innovations: (1) Filtering out good bacteria to ferment so that in the pure brewing process, better vinegar can be made; (2) In manufacturing process, using "membrane filtration" technology to filter bacteria, remove impurities, retain more nutrition, leaving the vinegar become crystal clear, and gentle and delicious.

After observing vinegar drinks in the market, the founder found that they were mostly added vinegar. Because this kind of vinegar drinks' large molecules, they were not easily being absorbed by human bodies. Therefore, drink this kind of vinegar drinks were useless to human bodies. On the other hand, good vinegar drinks that can really make the body healthier were required to be produced by following the traditional method and brewing process. The process was very time-consuming, and the procedure was complicated. To brew healthy vinegar, the founder began to study the knowledge about vinegar, and even researched thousands of years of Oriental culture – "the classic of vinegar." He found that the traditional way to brew vinegar was to put the vinegar jug under the air and let the vinegar brew by itself. However, the bacteria strains' qualities in the air varied and this made it easily influencing the success of vinegar brewing. In order to have a higher percentage of successfully brewing vinegar, the founder not only began to study bacteria strains but also continued to experiment with different bacteria strains to brew vinegar, and he finally selected the best bacteria strains and was able to brew the healthy and delicious vinegar.

Furthermore, the founder even researched and developed "membrane filtration" technology to solve the turbidity of pure brewing vinegar. Generally, because of the microbes or nutrients' chemical interactions in the vinegar liquid, the traditional way of brewing pure vinegar would become cloudy and it was easy to influence consumers' perception and willingness to drink. However, the founder's "membrane filtration" technology can filter other bacteria and microbes, retain beneficial nutrients and let the vinegar liquid become crystal clear without acrid odor and meanwhile with smooth and delicious taste.

b) *Establish Product and Service Quality Mechanisms: Brewing Vinegar was for the Child's Health; Keeping Strict Checks to Ensure Product Quality in the Three-Step Producing Process*

The founder brewed vinegar for his child. In the process of brewing vinegar, he kept strict checks to ensure product quality, including (1) Raw Vinegar Crops; (2) Vinegar Production Processes; (3) Vinegar Quality Inspection. Each of them was explained as follows.

(1) Raw Vinegar Crops

The founder carefully selected crops with local features in Taiwan as raw materials for brewing vinegar, reducing food miles and carbon footprints. The founder insisted to look for natural, organic crops. In particular, he would find farmers who treated Taiwan's land kindly and bought the crops they planted, hoping to leave a clean land to the next generation and can also making a contribution to Taiwan's environmental protection and agriculture.

Through contract farming with small farmers in Taiwan, the founder mastered crops' quantities and sources. In order to understand the quality of crops, each year, the founder would go to crop production lands 3-4 times in order to see about crop growth conditions, farmers' planting methods. The founder also talked to farmers, understanding crops' planting situation for the year and then estimated that year's crop yields and raw materials' quality.

(2) Vinegar Production Processes:

The founder adhered to go through traditional vinegar production processes: saccharification, alcoholization and acetification, so that vinegar's molecules can become smaller for human bodies to absorb. In the manufacturing process, the founder also used "membrane filtration" technology to filter bacteria, preserve more natural crop's nutrients and leave the vinegar liquid became crystal clear and thorough, gentle with no odor choking nose.

(3) Vinegar Quality Inspection

For self-brewed products, FU NIANG FANG would go through self-examination, and also regularly sent to outside inspection in order to guarantee consumers' health. FU NIANG FANG's products were all going through the food inspection by the German TÜV Rheinland Aimex Ltd(TÜV).

In addition, the founder was very confident about their own product quality. He had sent FU NIANG FANG's roselle vinegar aboard for international competition and the product had been given two golden stars in the Superior Taste Award of iTQi (The International Taste & Quality Institute) in Belgium in 2013. iTQi association is composed of 120 international Michelin chefs. This award also showed that FU NIANG FANG's vinegar drinks quality was highly recognized internationally.

In the manufacturing process, many enterprises focused on the proportion of input and output and strictly controlled the cost of production. However, FU NIANG FANG's founder paid more attention on product quality not on the cost or the proportion of input. Take crops for example. Its quality will vary due to seasonal changes, such as water and sweetness, and these will affect the quality and output of vinegar. For example, in summer, 10 kg crops can achieve 100% of acetification and produced 100c.c vinegar liquid. But in winter, it is required to use 15 kg crops which were 1.5 more than the 10 kg crops in summer, to achieve acetification even though the output of vinegar liquid was also the same as the output of vinegar liquid in summer.

c) *Quoted purchase: The Founder's Product impressed designers; Its packaging design conveyed the entrepreneurial spirit and had honorably won two design awards in Germany*

FU NIANG FANG's product packaging design conveyed the spiritual concept of the product: "natural." The founder valued the ecological environment and the sustainable concept very much. Therefore, the packaging of their products was on the choice of environmentally friendly materials. Although using environmentally friendly materials made the unit cost higher, but the founder cared more about making contributions to this piece of land.

The combination of product and packaging made it possible for consumers feeling from the outside packaging that FU NIANG FANG's packaging was simple but not monotonous and thus feeling from within the founder's careful nurturing to the product quality. All the packaging design was completed by

a Taiwanese designer, so that the image of the product and the concept of packaging design could be consistent, showing a simple, rustic image sense. FU NIANG FANG using water mold paper as packaging materials, and using soy-based inks printed pattern, and in order to reduce the printing area, even using steel printing, the whole packaging was simple but with abundant layering. FU NIANG FANG's vinegar product packaging had won the German Red Dot Design Award in 2012 and two German iF international design awards.

FU NIANG FANG's product packaging design was actually hard-earned. At first, the founder visited the designer, asking him to design FU NIANG FANG's product packages and was rejected. The reason was that the designer in the past had contacted with a lot of cases related to vinegar product packaging design. But he did not have good impression on vinegar so that he decided not to take any case related to vinegar product design. After the refusal, the founder went home, feeling pity about being rejected even when his products had not been tasted by the designer. Then he contacted the designer through phone, and made an appointment to visit the designer again on the other day, hoping the designer could reconsider his decision after tasting his vinegar drink. When the designer tasted the vinegar drink, he also found that this vinegar drink was different comparing to the vinegar drink which he had tasted in the past. Therefore, he agreed and promised to design FU NIANG FANG's packages. What inspired the designer and motivated him to design the package so match with the product was the founder's never-give up spirit and his insistence on product quality.

d) *Interaction with suppliers:* Exchanging values of health with Taiwan's farmers and making a contribution to sustainable development together

Because the founder brewed vinegar for his child, he required for natural and healthy raw materials for brewing vinegar. The founder said that Taiwan's foundation was agriculture and the most abundant resources in Taiwan were also agricultural crops. Therefore, the founder hoped to find out crops that featured Taiwan's characteristics as ingredients for brewing vinegar. People planted crops, and finally these crops were eaten by the people themselves, so the crops were needed to be nurtured in a healthy way. The best way of planting was organic planting with no toxic and no pesticides, and the planting methods must also be kind to Taiwan's ecological environment and land. Therefore, he started to look for farmers who shared the same idea as his and started to contract farming with these farmers.

Initially, the founder and Taiwan's farmers would talk about ideas of this piece of land and planting. Then the founder communicated his idea to farmers, hoping farmers could treat Taiwan's land and the ecological environment much friendlier. The founder discovered that through interactions and communication with farmers, he also saw farmers had changed on the way of planting. Farmers would gradually reduce the use of chemical fertilizers and making crops grow more healthily by planting in an organic way. There was even a farmer created a farm as an ecosystem that could co-exist with insects, making it possible for land's sustainable management.

In order to ensure the quality of raw materials for brewing vinegar and the production, the founder would go to the farmers' farms each year, looking out for the growing status of their crops, and talked with farmers about climate and water, etc., to understand the quality of crops in that year and forecasted for crop production. Meanwhile, the founder showed his appreciation for farmers nurturing crops carefully and providing him with the best crops for brewing vinegar. Farmers learned from founder's behavior that the founder and themselves are all caring about the growing status of crops, the ecological environment and this piece of land.

e) *Market segmentation:* With Natural Pure Brewing, Human Body will discern good vinegar by drinking

For those consumers who cared about their health, they knew drinking vinegar was good for their health. However, in the market, vinegar drinks were various; also the prices and qualities varied. Therefore, consumers only can buy really good pure brewing vinegar via observing, tasting and comparing. FU NIANG FANG's vinegar drinks came into the market, featuring "pure brewing" producing process to attract consumers. Meanwhile, they educated consumers on the entrepreneurial websites by telling them how to tell good vinegar apart.

According to different producing processes, vinegar drinks can be divided into three types: drink vinegar, soaked vinegar and fermented vinegar. The advantages of the first two types of vinegar were fast, easy to produce and can be mass produced. However, their nutrients were less valued than fermented vinegar. On the other hand, FU NIANG FANG's vinegar belonged to fermented vinegar. Its producing process was complicated. Also, every little drop of the vinegar was the accumulation of time and wisdom. Its producing cost a lot but it contained abundant nutrients.

In addition to balance pH value of the body, drinking vinegar can also promote metabolism and anti-aging, which was very attractive to women who cared beauty. Girls loved drinking vinegar more than boys. However, according to human body structure, men needed more vinegar drinking than women. However, those who needed and perceived health consciousness and concept of keeping healthy were mostly women. Therefore, FU NIANG FANG hoped to attract office ladies who emphasized on health and were willing to invest in their health. Actually observed FU NIANG FANG's consumer groups, they were indeed high-income female office workers. After they drank FU NIANG FANG's fermented vinegar and felt wonderful changes inside their bodies, many office ladies bought one more cup of FU NIANG FANG's vinegar drink for their family members or lovers, sending this blessing to their family.

- f) *Value proposition:* Responding to environmentally friendly ideas, The Founder welcomes customers every day to take a few sips of vinegar.

For FU NIANG FANG, offering the most healthy and natural vinegar drinks and conveying health to more people were their business philosophy. In addition to cooperating with distributors in northern Taiwan, FU NIANG FANG also opened their own store in Taichung, and provided "vinegar sips" sales mode. All the dealings were based on 1g as 1 units, so that guests could buy vinegar drinks based on their will.

FU NIANG FANG's own operating store was called "YunNiangLife Vinegar Drink Shop." It was a café shop featuring "Health and Environmental protection." It offered natural and healthy light meals and vinegar drinks and welcomed guest come here to take a few sips of vinegar drinks. In the store, the vinegar containers imitated wine containers in bars which were used to install wine in them. In the vinegar drink shop, there were 8 types of vinegar drinks. Each of them was filled in crystal containers so that consumers could see the crystal vinegar when they stepped in. When the consumers offered a cup of vinegar, the vinegar would be installed in a glass standing cup. Therefore, consumers could have a sense of elegance and fashion just like tasting wine when they tasted vinegar drinks.

YunNiangLife Vinegar Drink Shop welcomed consumers buy vinegar based on their own will. It offered consumers free glasses and let consumers pick up the flavors they loved and started to take the amounts of vinegar they needed. In order to respond to the environmentally friendly idea, it welcomed consumers bring clear, empty glass by themselves to buy vinegar drinks. It also offered different types and sizes of glasses for consumers to buy and make consumers convenient to take the amounts of vinegar they wanted. If consumers wanted to gift giving, YunNiangLife Vinegar Drink Shop also offered gift boxes and packages combined different flavors of pure vinegar and provided customers to choose. Take the product "Handedly little vinegar" for example. It had six flavors: Roselle, coffee, flowers, matcha, candied and plum. Each bottle was 50 ml and 11 cm in height and was packaged in a transparent glass. The whole six bottles were fastened by a single paper string. Such simple, neat and environmentally friendly packaging design reflected that the founder educated consumers about paying more attention to the concept of protecting the environment, and reducing the damage to the planet when the founder sold vinegar and passed health to consumers through product packaging and the sale mode.

- g) *Site Selection:* Balancing Family Life and Business; selecting the New Location and Start Again.

FU NIANG FANG's product marketing channels were mainly located in Taipei, but its production site was in southern Taiwan - Pingtung. In order to expand the product's marketing channels, the couple often attended exhibitions in Taipei. They even had cooperation programs for temporary cabinets with department stores in Taipei to develop vinegar drinks' market, As a result, the couple often ran around to the north and south Taiwan. Whenever the couple had to depart from Pingtung to Taipei, they can only hand over their little children to their relatives and even to their father and mother for taking care of their little children.

During the enterprise's growing period, at the expense of not being able to spare time to accompany their children and in order to balance family life and business, the couple decided to open a vinegar drink sales outlet on their own in Taichung which was between Taipei and Pingtung. The reason why they chose Taichung was because Taichung's spending power was only after Taipei and also Taichung's rent and the living were lower than Taipei so that opening a sales outlet was very suitable. In addition, commuting from Taichung to Taipei or from Taichung to Pingtung only cost half of a day. It was able for the couple to take into account the co-channel vendors in Taipei, and the manufacturing factory in Pingtung, and also able for the couple to spare more time to accompany their children. Therefore, it was a win-win-win choice.

When it comes to FU NIANG FANG's cooperation marketing channels in Taipei, their business philosophy and their products were all centered on "natural and healthy." They included FreshOne and Maji food & Deli. These cooperative marketing channel partners were not chain system so that the founder's vinegar drink products had a lower degree of exposure. But the founder hoped that his vinegar drinks can pass the value of health to consumers. Even the well-known chain distributors in Taiwan came to discuss cooperation matters, the founder declined. FU NIANG FANG's vinegar drink products could be seen by Taiwan's well-known chain represented that they had an enormous sales potential. The main reason why the founder would refuse was that FU NIANG FANG'S products were limited to production. In the founder's mind, he hoped the distributors could really pass vinegar drinks' health value to consumers, and not just sold his products. In order to communicate and interact with customers and actually pass his business philosophy and values, the founder chose to open his own sales outlet. After taking the family life and business development into consideration, he finally decided to select Taichung for his sales outlet.

h) *Barriers to market entry and relationships with competitors:* Having innovative vinegar-brewing producing technology and the quality was proven

In order to give his child the most natural healthy vinegar drinks, the founder decided to brew vinegar by pure brewing process. However, based on the founder's observation, the vinegar drinks sold in the market in Taiwan were mostly synthetic vinegar or soaked vinegar. These two types of vinegar were not made by pure brewing process. Synthetic vinegar was synthesized by chemical ingredients. There was no nutritional value in it and it was harmful to the human body when drinking too much. Soaked vinegar was made by using vinegar as the base, and immersed other fruit flesh in it to acquire fruit nutrients. On the other hand, pure vinegar was made by using one kind of fruit as the raw material, and through the microbial strains to help it achieve saccharification, alcoholization, acetification so that the vinegar would retain a lot of nutritional value. During the initial period of studying how to brew vinegar, the founder would buy any vinegar labeled pure brewing, tasted them and had a further research. However, the practice of brewing natural vinegar cost a lot and was time-consuming, and it was required to control the bacteria ecology in the vinegar jug in order to successfully get the pure brewing vinegar. It was technically a big challenge. The air temperature and humidity were just part of the factors affecting the ecology of bacteria. If there were a link went wrong in the whole vinegar jug, all the labors would be in vain.

In order to grasp the vinegar brewing technology, the founder not only constantly opened books and did researches, but also consulted other experts. He even studied the article which had been spread thousands of years from the oriental culture--"the classic of vinegar." He studied the ancient practice of brewing vinegar from the article and experienced the spirit of brewing vinegar from ancient people and understood the important value of vinegar in the history. After constantly trying and experiments, experienced several fails and started again, the founder spent 3 years to successfully master the vinegar brewing tips. During these 3 years, the founder had no worries and concentrated wholeheartedly on researching the brewing vinegar technology. It was attributed to the founder's couple's living and spiritual supports. Also, because the whole family members were willing to believe firmly that this brewing vinegar business was a health business, so that the founder could made innovative breakthroughs in vinegar brewing technology.

There were two innovative features in the founder's process of brewing vinegar: "complete fermentation technology by a single bacteria strain" and "membrane filtration technology." These two innovative features had honorably won the 20th Taiwan SMEs Innovation Award. The founder made progresses in the pure brewing vinegar process, using one single bacteria strain to complete the whole fermentation and let the raw material keep stable in the fermenting process to ensure the quality

of vinegar. Also, the “membrane filtration technology” was able to filter other impurities and preserved the whole nutrients of the vinegar. Because FU NIANG FANG had the best vinegar brewing technology, their product had been given two golden stars in the Superior Taste Award of iTQi (The International Taste & Quality Institute) in Belgium in 2012. When consumers came to choose “natural pure brewing” vinegar commodities, FU NIANG FANG’s products were more favored by consumers.

- i) *Interactions with customers:* Keeping an open mind to face consumers and listening to consumers’ opinions.

When the founder discovered the pure vinegar brewing technology, friends and relatives showed appreciation for his self-brewed vinegar drinks. After living a no-income life for three years and being suggested by his friends and relatives, the founder decided to sell vinegar drinks. However, the vinegar drinks had no package and he did not have any marketing channels. The only sale direction he could think of was the vegetable market near home. Therefore, the founder diluted the vinegar, selling vinegar drinks to consumers cup by cup by following Taiwanese traditional vendor selling herbal jelly ice’s method. The beverage containers he used were the most traditional and most cost-saving plastic cup and plastic lid, featuring the characteristics of vegetable markets. For the stalls which started operating in the market, people tended not to patronize because they were not familiar with. In order to let more guests know he stalled here, the founder gave away free glasses of his vinegar drinks. When the guests passed by, he would ask whether the guest want to give his vinegar drinks a try. A few days later, a woman came in front of the founder’s stall and constantly praised his vinegar drinks. The reason was that she had suffered from constipation but after drinking one cup of his vinegar drinks for constant two days, she could defecate smoothly. The woman said that she had only intended to buy a cup of vinegar but when thinking the vinegar drink had such a great effect on the body, so that she decided to buy two cups of vinegar drinks today and she wanted to give one cup of the vinegar drink to her family member. Because of the woman’s praises, the founder was getting more confident about his products. Every time the founder heard that his customers shared that their bodies had gone through wonderful and subtle changes after drinking his vinegar drinks, he also felt happy for them. If the customers asked curiously about how the founder started to sell vinegar drinks, the founder would also share his original purpose of brewing and selling vinegars. The founder started to brew vinegar in the hope to improve his child’s health by diet therapy. Through telling his own story and customers’ word-of-mouth marketing mode in the vegetable market, the founder’s vinegar drinks had become increasingly popular.

The founder decided to popularize vinegar drinks and let more people know so that he held activities on the Internet and those who filled the questionnaires could get free vinegar drinks. Based on thousands of users’ opinions, the founder adjusted the flavors of vinegar drinks and asked a designer to do the packaging design for the vinegar drink products in order to build a good product impression. When the vinegar drink products were packaged in a modern fashion, the founder actively participated in exhibitions in an effort to advertise his vinegar drink products to more people.

- j) *Talent demand:* The couple’s touching beliefs motivated the founder’s junior classmate to join the vinegar brewing enterprise

When the founder had a positive focus on product marketing and promotion, exhibiting continuously FU NIANG FANG’s vinegar drinks, he, however, faced with the problem of talent shortage. Because the entrepreneurial team was only the founder and his partner, they really were undermanned. When the couple put efforts on product marketing and expanding the distributing access, they could not take the vinegar production and manufacturing into account.

In the early days, the founder also looked for people to join their entrepreneurial team. He had invited his junior classmate who also majored in food science to participate, but his junior classmate did not agree to the founder’s invitation. The reason was that the founder’s junior classmate thought he just entered the workplace and there were many things for him to learn. Choosing the same background people from food science department was not surprising. What really made the founder invite his junior classmate was that his junior classmate’s research paper was studying about vinegar when he was a graduate student. The research paper inspired the founder and the founder had a really good impression on an article his junior classmate had researched about.

With FU NIANG FANG's vinegar drink market was gradually opened, the business was gradually growing, and the founder needed talent people to help manage vinegar brewing factory so that the founder and his lovely partner could withdraw to exhibitions in Taipei, and continually promoted FU NIANG FANG's vinegar drinks. When the founder invited his junior classmate for the second time, his junior classmate nodded his head immediately. The reason was that he saw the couple insisted in sharing the healthy beneficial vinegar drinks to more people. Their insistence touched him so that he decided to follow the couple and worked devotedly together.

k) *Entrepreneurial team members and their experiences related to entrepreneurship in past:*
Experiences in the past were materials that brewed good vinegars

FU NIANG FANG's main entrepreneurial team was composed of three people: the couple including the founder and his spouse and the founder's junior classmate in university. The three people majored in food science in the past and started a business about vinegar and applied their knowledge learned in the past into the vinegar brewing process.

In the past, the founder had also worked in China. The company he had worked for was a well-known food industry group's branch company. His work was about food studies that related to his major in university. This work experience had cultivated the founder's research spirit of food and had also accumulated his practical experience about research. Therefore, the founder could still focus on researching about brewing vinegar even after he returned to Taiwan, and took three years in order to brew natural, healthy and delicious good vinegar.

The founder's experience of working in a big company prepared him to have related basic practical concepts about large companies' manufacturing processes as well as food packaging. Therefore, after completing the development of the vinegar brewing technology, the founder could step by step find the resources, financing, get ready to set up the company, and at the same time, find a designer to do packaging design for the product. Having the best products, and the most matching packaging that matched to the spirit of the product, FU NIANG FANG's products were very bright when stepping into the market. Their packaging design had won two German Design Awards and their product quality had also received two golden stars in the Superior Taste Award of iTQi (The International Taste & Quality Institute) in Belgium.

l) *Venture financing:* When one started an enterprise, one must grasp make good use of various resources.

During the period of researching how to pure brew vinegar, the founder had invested a lot of money on the purchase of equipment and raw materials. Among them, studying the brewing vinegar technology cost the most. Due to the continuous experiments, it was required to spend a lot of money buying raw crops for brewing vinegar, and in the course of the experiment, the founder often failed to grasp skills so that the whole tank of vinegar smell out as a result. Even though the founder felt pity about it, he knew he must discard the whole jug of the spoiled vinegar.

During the period of researching about how to pure brew vinegar, the vinegar brewing factories had suffered from disasters and the founder lost out heavily to the extent that he must be re-invested in order to re-establish. Losses caused by disasters have ever shaken the founder's decision. He had to decide whether he should continually adhere to the vinegar brewing career or not. After all, during the period of researching about brewing vinegar, the founder had no other source of income and he was supported by his wife's income to live. Faced with this dilemma, the founder's elders in his family had advised him to give up and to re-find a job. But the founder's spouse considered that a health career must be carried on. His wife ignored other family members' oppositions, continually support the founder economically for the living and other expenses, so that the founder could continue to research about brewing vinegar.

Just when the founder continued to seek financial resources in order to purchase new equipment and raw materials, he found that the government had provided various resources. Among them, the youth business start-up loan plan would be able to solve the founder's financial problem when starting an enterprise. According to the plan provisions and for those who wanted to apply for the youth business start-up loan plan, they had to attend 20 hours of business training courses to be qualified for applying. Through training courses about entrepreneurship, the founder had a clearer planning and

blueprint for his vinegar brewing career. He knew the inadequate parts and what needed to be prepared. Because the founder received government's financial resources, the youth business start-up loan was like the rain after droughts, motivating FU NIANG FANG's entrepreneurial seeds to come up. This business start-up loan was the important key for the founder to stand up and started up again.

When the founder got everything ready, and decided to start up an enterprise, his spouse was also moved by his insistence and thus she gave up her previous work, and decided to work together with him by immersing wholeheartedly in the vinegar brewing career. This was one feature of the oriental culture. Women in the Oriental culture were willing to follow their spouses' careers, cooperated together with their spouses in families and in careers and gave more spiritual supports. Now, FU NIANG FANG also actively seized the various opportunities and make the best use of all resources to help the business grow.

3. SUMMARY

This is a SME case in Taiwan. Also, it is a successful family business one. The reason that this company runs successfully is defined as 12 key factors. 1.Product and service innovation, 2.Establish Product and Service Quality Mechanisms, 3.Quoted purchase, 4.Interaction with suppliers, 5.Market segmentation, 6.Value proposition, 7.Site Selection, 8.Barriers to market entry and relationships with competitors, 9.Interactions with customers, 10.Talent demand, 11.Entrepreneurial team members and their experiences related to entrepreneurship in past, 12.Venture financing.

REFERENCE LIST

1. Almgren, H. (1999). Towards a framework for analyzing efficiency during start-up: an empirical investigation of a Swedish auto manufacturer. *International Journal of Production Economics*, 60-61, pp.79-86.
2. Bellgran, M.; Säfsten, K. (2010). *Production Development: Design and Operation of Production Systems*. London: Springer.
3. Matti Muhos, Tzong-Ru Lee, Shu-Ting Chang and Pekka Kess . *Handbook of East Asian Entrepreneurship* (ISBN: 978-0-415-74323-5(hbk) & 978-1-315-76569-3(ebk)). LONDON AND YOURK, USA: Routledge. 2015. Growth Strategies in early-stage technology-intensive firms, In Fu-Lai Tony Yu & Ho-Don Yan(Eds.), p.p. 68-80, Ch.5, 2015 .