

## Article

# The Innovative Entrepreneurial Marketing Journey and Sustainable Development of Southeast Asian Immigrants

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**Abstract:** The southeast Asian new immigrants face significant barriers in employment due to language and cultural differences, making it challenging for them to find jobs. Consequently, many southeast Asian immigrants have turned to entrepreneurship as a means to achieve economic independence and contribute to their family's income. This study adopts entrepreneurial marketing (EM) as a theoretical lens and utilizes a process research methodology, based on sequentially ordered events, to explore the entrepreneurial journey of immigrant micro and small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Employing purposive sampling, twenty-two southeast Asian immigrant entrepreneurs were selected for in-depth interviews to ensure data quality through multiple data collection methods. The research developed a dynamic adjustment model and management mechanisms for the entrepreneurial marketing of immigrant micro and SMEs. These findings not only bridge theoretical gaps in immigrant entrepreneurship strategy but also deepen the academic understanding of the dynamism in entrepreneurial marketing. Practically, the outcomes assist immigrant micro and small business entrepreneurs in developing operational strategies and serve as a reference for governmental units in crafting immigrant policies.

**Keywords:** entrepreneurial marketing; strategic entrepreneurship; sustainable development; southeast Asian; immigrant; small and medium-sized companies; innovative strength



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## 1. Introduction

Taiwan is a society of immigrants, having experienced several waves of immigration throughout its history. In the 17th century, immigrants from China (mainly from Fujian and Guangdong) poured into Taiwan in large numbers to change their impoverished lives. Another significant wave occurred in 1949 when the Nationalist government was defeated by the Communist Party in the Chinese Civil War, leading to its relocation to Taiwan.

Since the 1990s, Taiwan has experienced growing numbers of commercially arranged marriages between southeast Asian women and socioeconomically disadvantaged Taiwanese men. Prior to 2023, more than 200,000 southeast Asian women migrated to Taiwan through transnational marriage [1]. Over the last three decades, a rapidly increasing number of women in less economically developed regions of southeast Asia have married men in wealthy areas of eastern Asia to obtain a better life. These women constitute one sector of the essential international migration flow [2]. Individuals who came to Taiwan for marriage, immigration, and settlement have been referred to as “new residents”, distinguishing them from the immigrants of the past migration waves to Taiwan. The majority of these new residents have come from Vietnam, Indonesia, and the Philippines. New residents from different countries forming families in Taiwan contribute to the diversity of Taiwanese society.

The majority of these new immigrants are women, among whom southeast Asian new immigrants face significant barriers in employment due to language and cultural differences, making it challenging for them to find jobs. Consequently, many southeast Asian immigrants have turned to entrepreneurship as a means to achieve economic independence

and contribute to their family's income [3]. Many of these immigrant women have resided in Taiwan for several years now and have flourished across various parts of Taiwan. The integration of diverse ethnicities is evident everywhere, with the presence of ethnic snack bars, beauty salons, grocery stores, and more, showcasing a multicultural landscape on the streets of Taiwan. This study aims to delve deeply into how they have managed to carve out their own niches in the nooks and crannies of urban Taiwan, creating a space uniquely their own.

In the domain of entrepreneurial studies, immigrants fulfill the intertwined roles of being both entrepreneurs and marketers. As entrepreneurs, they engage in the continuous pursuit of opportunities, the innovative use of resources, and the readiness to embrace risks. Concurrently, in the capacity of marketers, they face the challenge of not only establishing ventures in their adopted countries but also employing proficient marketing strategies.

Addressing the noted deficiency within academic research on immigrant entrepreneurship, particularly its lack of dynamic analysis that accurately reflects entrepreneurs' adaptive strategies to market fluctuations, this investigation adopts entrepreneurial marketing (EM) as the foundational theoretical framework. The core aim is to examine the strategic adjustments made by immigrants in reaction to environmental shifts, enhancing our understanding of the dynamic relationship between immigrant entrepreneurship and marketing practices. This inquiry acknowledges the critical need for immigrants to develop competencies in both entrepreneurial and marketing disciplines to identify and exploit entrepreneurial opportunities effectively, thereby building enduring professional and sustainable paths. It seeks to enrich the discourse on the complex landscape of immigrant entrepreneurship by offering insightful perspectives into their entrepreneurial activities.

To encapsulate this, the study questions how new immigrants employ entrepreneurial marketing to enhance their entrepreneurial trajectory. Utilizing a processual methodology, it selects emblematic new immigrant enterprises as subjects. The research delineates an adjustment model for entrepreneurial marketing within the immigrant entrepreneurial journey, underscoring management mechanisms as pivotal for stage transitions. Theoretically, it addresses gaps in immigrant entrepreneurship regarding micro or small enterprise management by applying entrepreneurial marketing theories to relationship management across these businesses. This elucidation deepens the understanding of entrepreneurial marketing's dynamism and offers strategic management insights for immigrant business operations, potentially augmenting entrepreneurial success rates and sustainable development of immigrant enterprises. Moreover, it reveals obstacles faced by immigrant entrepreneurs, providing valuable policy implications for host governments.

Immigrant enterprises serve as crucial conduits between immigrant communities and the broader society, fostering social integration and cohesion. Sustainable immigrant businesses enhance the host society's overall resilience and vibrancy, cultivating a diverse and prosperous business ecosystem. Moreover, exploring the sustainability of immigrant businesses through entrepreneurial marketing models reveals the complex interplay among migration, entrepreneurship, and socioeconomic mobility. Future research could explore dynamic marketing models tailored to various immigrant types or industries, potentially yielding more accurate sustainable entrepreneurship models for immigrants.

The paper's structure encompasses an introduction, literature review on immigrant entrepreneurship and sustainable development, methodology, analysis, discussion with propositions, and concludes with contributions, practical implications, research limitations, and future directions.

## 2. The Study Framework

### 2.1. Entrepreneurial Marketing

The entrepreneurial marketing orientation is characterized by its versatility, primarily applied in marketing activities of micro, small, or resource-limited enterprises, deriving from the entrepreneur's social networks and creativity. Unlike larger or well-resourced firms, it focuses more on creating new customer value for profit [4]. Entrepreneurial

marketing is defined as a cultural representation of an enterprise—it is a business mindset and actions developed to navigate complex business environments, centered around the entrepreneur [5]. Abdul Rahim et al. integrated marketing theories into the entrepreneurial spirit to meet market demands swiftly and accurately, outlining seven dimensions that merge entrepreneurial orientation elements (e.g., opportunity-driven, innovation focus, risk management, and proactiveness) with marketing orientation elements (e.g., customer-centric, resource utilization, and customer value creation) [6].

Jones and Rowley [7] proposed the EMO conceptual model (entrepreneurial marketing orientation conceptualized model), which includes four major aspects: entrepreneurial orientation, market orientation, customer orientation, and innovation orientation. Entrepreneurial orientation reflects that entrepreneurs have the courage to take risks and face and utilize opportunities proactively. Market orientation means that entrepreneurs actively integrate and use market intelligence from enterprises, competitors, and customers to gain competitive advantages. Customer orientation emphasizes the relationship with customers. The interaction is committed to focusing on the extent of customer needs, understanding and responding to customer needs and expectations, and working hard for the value of both parties. The innovation orientation is used to create new methods and value through the dissemination and application of knowledge. Overall, this four-facet model is based on existing entrepreneurship and marketing theories, but it puts more emphasis on co-creating value with customers and the impact of innovation on business performance.

Overall, entrepreneurial marketing refers to the strategic intentions and behaviors exhibited in marketing-related activities by entrepreneurs, owners, or managers of micro or small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), or start-ups, based on their entrepreneurial traits [8,9]. It involves “proactive opportunity identification and exploration to acquire and maintain profitable customers, through innovative methods of risk management, resource leverage, and value creation” [4]. This definition integrates theories from both the entrepreneurship and marketing domains [10,11] and is frequently used to examine the marketing strategies employed by small and resource-constrained enterprises. Entrepreneurial marketing is conceptualized as a dynamic process encompassing the creation, communication, and delivery of customer value [12]. EM represents a paradigm shift in the field of marketing, offering new perspectives and approaches to achieving marketing goals.

In recent years, the concept of entrepreneurial marketing has progressively emerged as a significant subfield within marketing strategy literature, yet its development still lacks a systematic and comprehensive theoretical foundation. Reviewing existing literature reveals applications of entrepreneurial marketing primarily in how micro- and small-enterprise entrepreneurs tackle uncertainties through entrepreneurial marketing [13], exploration in new ventures [14], and value creation through networking and innovation [15]. Recent scholarly suggestions advocate for extending entrepreneurial marketing applications across various scales and types of enterprises to elucidate its impact on entrepreneurial outcomes and innovation [16]. Consequently, this study expands the application level of entrepreneurial marketing to immigrant entrepreneurs, examining the development process of immigrant entrepreneurship and addressing the gaps identified in the literature.

## 2.2. Entrepreneurial Marketing and Sustainable Development

Sustainability in micro and SMEs is a topic of growing importance. Research has shown that SMEs face various challenges and opportunities in their sustainability transformation. The proactive approach toward sustainability transformation is crucial for SMEs, especially in the existence and survival stages [17]. Factors such as digitalization, business strategy, and competitive advantage have been found to impact the sustainability of SMEs, including women-owned businesses [18]. However, micro and SMEs often struggle with sustainability due to factors such as lack of operating capital, ineffective management, and insufficient application of management accounting practices [19].

Immigrant enterprises are typically classified as micro, small, or medium-sized businesses. Immigrant enterprises serve as crucial conduits between immigrant communities

and the broader society, fostering social integration and cohesion [3]. By generating employment, income, and tax revenues, these businesses significantly contribute to national economic growth and development. Understanding the sustainability journey of immigrant enterprises reveals the challenges faced by immigrant entrepreneurs, such as limited access to resources, discrimination, and cultural barriers, which is vital for policymakers to develop more effective policies. Resilience factors, such as leadership, business networks, and change orientation, have been found to impact the corporate sustainability of micro and SMEs, particularly in the post-COVID-19 period [20,21].

Among various strategies and modes of analysis, entrepreneurial marketing has been found to have a significant positive effect on business sustainability, specifically through the utilization of networking resources, innovativeness, and proactiveness [22]. It is postulated that entrepreneurial marketing is a key strategy for driving and determining small and medium-sized enterprises' (SME) business sustainability [23]. Additionally, marketing techniques play a crucial role in the expansion of sustainable enterprises, and poor performance of leaders, workplace issues, and low employee engagement can negatively impact business sustainability [24]. Entrepreneurial marketing (EM) is crucial for maintaining the viability and sustainability of start-ups and small-scale enterprises amidst volatile market environments. As a strategic framework, it offers entities the means to sustain operational efficacy and foster expansion under uncertain conditions. It outlines a tactical approach characterized by the constructive impact of utilizing network alliances, innovation, and a proactive attitude on business resilience [23]. EM embodies the integration of adaptive and innovative marketing methods, aligning with the fluidity of market conditions, enabling companies to enhance their competitive edge and improve business outcomes through the deployment of entrepreneurial marketing strategies.

In essence, entrepreneurial marketing strategies are vital for promoting sustainable marketing approaches and ensuring the long-term prosperity and success of enterprises, especially those operating in uncertain and rapidly evolving environments.

### *2.3. Immigration, Entrepreneurship, and Enterprise Type*

Many immigrants from developing countries, unable to compete in local job markets, are compelled to start their own businesses due to language and cultural barriers, a lack of locally recognized qualifications, or the absence of mainstream social networks [25]. Despite possessing qualifications, they often face exclusion from employment opportunities due to discrimination and unfamiliarity with mainstream culture [26]. Immigrants leverage social capital formed through ethnic community networks to establish businesses in low-capital and labor-intensive industries, such as restaurants and garment manufacturing [25]. Lacking access to loans from local banks due to perceived high risks, they primarily rely on financial support from family, friends, and ethnic networks, leading most immigrant entrepreneurship to commence with micro or small enterprises [26].

For micro and small enterprises, the characteristics of entrepreneurs are key to sustainable operation and development. These sectors are highly heterogeneous, involving a broad range of activities [27]. Due to their small scale, adapting swiftly to environmental changes is crucial, and every decision is significant. The low entry barriers often mask the high risks involved, making the likelihood of survival slim. Particularly, micro and small immigrant businesses face scarce resources and high uncertainty in host country markets.

Immigrant entrepreneurs are increasingly recognized for their pivotal role in the entrepreneurial landscape, predominantly serving as catalysts for job creation rather than occupying existing employment opportunities and contributing disproportionately to the domain of high-growth entrepreneurship. These individuals employ a multifaceted strategy toward opportunity identification, driven by a blend of passion and enthusiasm, rather than sheer necessity. Furthermore, immigrant entrepreneurs derive advantages from the entrepreneurial ecosystems of both their host and origin countries, leveraging resources and opportunities inherent to their native environments [28]. The influence of the country of origin on immigrant entrepreneurial activity necessitates a comprehensive

analysis, taking into account the synergies between the entrepreneurial ecosystems of both the host and home countries.

The corpus of extant literature methodically examines the shifts in opportunities, resources, and outcomes associated with immigrant entrepreneurship. The majority of research endeavors have delved into the determinants of immigrant entrepreneurial activities, encompassing variables such as risk perception, the facilitation of social networks that bridge cultural divides, experiential knowledge, and the availability of entrepreneurial support mechanisms. The notion of an immigrant entrepreneurial ecosystem has been advanced as an analytical framework to scrutinize the interplay between immigrant enterprises and their operational milieu [29].

From the above, it is evident that existing literature on immigrant entrepreneurship primarily focuses on the environmental context and resource allocation for immigrant entrepreneurship or the utilization of immigrant capabilities and resources, with little attention given to the dynamic process of immigrants establishing sustainable enterprises.

This study explores how entrepreneurial marketing can enhance competitive advantage by understanding the dynamic decision-making process of entrepreneurs. The findings aim to assist immigrants in developing comprehensive marketing strategies and serve as a valuable reference for government policymaking.

#### *2.4. Immigration and Entrepreneurship Marketing*

In the comparative analysis of literature on immigrant entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial marketing, this study posits that the concepts of entrepreneurial orientation, customer orientation, innovation orientation, and market orientation within the entrepreneurial marketing orientation (EMO) model are particularly applicable to the research domain of the immigrant entrepreneurial journey. Regarding entrepreneurial orientation, immigrants exhibit a propensity for risk-taking and a proactive response to entrepreneurial opportunities. That is, new immigrants must independently assess the likelihood of business success, bearing the risk of business failure on their own. To achieve business success and sustain livelihoods in a new country, new immigrants strategically utilize their resources and strengths to actively construct their business territories; thus, embodying the entrepreneurial marketing traits of risk-taking and opportunity exploration emphasized within entrepreneurial orientation [15].

In terms of customer orientation, as outsiders, new immigrants face the challenge of how to approach customers in a new environment, how to create and maintain customer relationships, and how to penetrate mainstream society, all of which are worthy research directions. These efforts, as found in the context of relationship marketing with a focus on customer-centric care behaviors [15], can lead to reciprocal personal connections and positive interpersonal relationships over time [30,31], enhancing a comprehensive understanding of customers, thereby fostering shared preferences and value creation characteristic of customer orientation [32,33].

Regarding innovation orientation, new immigrants bring foundational knowledge from their home countries. Additionally, activities, such as ongoing governmental support and community sharing in the new country, aid in the emergence of new thinking or innovative solutions to personal challenges. The continuous willingness to learn and apply new things thereby reflects the essence of innovation capability inherent in entrepreneurial orientation [24].

Moreover, market orientation, encompassing the understanding and dissemination of market information, concern for competitors, and the integration of business processes, is crucial in the entrepreneurial activities of new immigrants. It also serves as an indicator of how immigrants acquire social capital and assimilate, actively integrating and utilizing market intelligence from businesses, competitors, and customers to gain competitive advantages [29].

In summary, the focus of this study is on the growth journey of new immigrant entrepreneurs, examining the context of their entrepreneurial ventures from the perspective



of entrepreneurial marketing to deconstruct the changes in the four dimensions of entrepreneurial marketing throughout the process. This study aims to elucidate how new immigrants maintain awareness and progress toward entrepreneurial goals. Furthermore, through the analysis of longitudinal process data, it seeks to deepen subsequent researchers' understandings of the dynamics of entrepreneurial marketing theory. This research organizes the four orientations of entrepreneurial marketing under the new immigrant business model, as shown in Table 1, serving as the framework for data analysis and interpretation in this study.

**Table 1.** The four orientations of entrepreneurial marketing.

Entrepreneurial Marketing Dimensions	Definition	Components
Entrepreneurial Orientation	The attitude of a business toward risk-taking and the ability to respond to opportunities in a driven manner.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The capability to take risks</li> <li>• Proactiveness toward opportunities</li> </ul>
Customer Orientation	Focusing on the customer as the center and closely connecting with them to meet their needs and desires.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The ability to respond to customer needs</li> <li>• Communication skills with customers</li> <li>• The understanding/delivery of customer value</li> </ul>
Innovation Orientation	Actively seeking new opportunities in ways different from the past and using unique methods to solve customer problems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The ability to build foundational knowledge</li> <li>• The capacity for continuous innovation</li> </ul>
Market Orientation	Understanding the market to integrate market information with internal processes, differentiating from competitors, and satisfying diverse customer needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding and dissemination of market information</li> <li>• The ability to penetrate markets</li> <li>• Responsiveness to competitors</li> <li>• Integration of business processes</li> <li>• Networking and relationships</li> </ul>

### 3. Research Methodology

Considering the temporal dynamics of corporate growth and sustainable development, it is essential to excavate the potential transformations enterprises may undergo throughout their journey. Since the evolution of processes represents a tangible yet complex phenomenon, which cannot be solely elucidated through the relational analyses typical of quantitative research, this study necessitated an in-depth examination of the causative processes that are challenging to observe directly. Accordingly, this research adopted a qualitative approach, specifically the process research method [34,35]. In terms of research validity, the study adhered to the three principles proposed by Yin [36] and Creswell and Creswell [37]: the validity of data sources, the accuracy of data transcription, and the validity of the researcher's data analysis.

This research employed triangulation to ensure the validity of the derived conclusions through the collection of data from multiple sources [38]. The primary data sources included: first, field notes from participation in new resident award ceremonies and lectures; second, data from focus group discussions and in-depth interviews, and third, archival documents, encompassing internal company documents, newspapers and magazines, case company articles, and official website information. Furthermore, verbatim transcripts of the interview recordings were provided to the interviewees for content verification or amendment to minimize distortion or misunderstanding [39].

### 3.1. Case Selection and Description

This research targeted immigrants as the subjects and employed a purposive case sampling strategy [40], guided by the principles of theoretical sampling [41]. The criteria for case selection necessitated theoretical relevance or potential for extension and the capability to richly narrate the context and events to depict a comprehensive view of the background or issues at hand. Therefore, in alignment with the objectives of this study, the case must satisfy the following two requirements: (1) Reflect the context of relevant theoretical literature, embodying entrepreneurial spirit as enterprises founded by immigrants, with proven operational performance and outcomes, and having business volumes that align with the scale of small to medium-sized enterprises. (2) Have been operational in Taiwan for over seven years and undergone at least one significant transformative or sustainable development change, relevant to the theme of exploring the entrepreneurial journey of start-up enterprises. This study aims to achieve analytic generalization through the narrative of cases and subsequent theoretical dialogue. (refer to Table 2).

**Table 2.** The background of the participants.

Code	Age	Time in Taiwan (Years)	Education
P1	35	12	High school
P2	30	11	College
P3	48	23	Middle school
P4	35	15	College
P5	40	18	Middle school
P6	41	17	Middle school
P7	38	8	College
P8	39	7	High school
P9	52	25	College
P10	50	18	High school
P11	45	20	College
P12	38	15	High school
P13	29	9	College
P14	35	12	College
P15	37	12	College
P16	43	20	Middle school
P17	41	8	College
P18	40	15	Middle school
P19	38	15	Middle school
P20	37	17	Middle school
P21	31	10	High school
P22	29	8	College

### 3.2. Data Collection Methods

In the selection of interviewees, this study identified 22 suitable participants. To ensure the quality of the data obtained [36,38], this research adhered to the participant criteria proposed by Merriam and Tisdell [42], Creswell and Creswell [37], and Crick [38]: the validity of the respondents, their willingness to share, and the diversity of their participation experiences.

Initially, prospective interviewees were asked to fill out a basic information questionnaire for scrutiny to confirm their identity's validity. During the interviews, researchers invited participants to discuss the theme with a partner present to reduce unfamiliarity and enhance their willingness to share. Notably, over half of the participants had received accolades or had been interviewed by media, possessing comprehensive entrepreneurial experiences relevant to addressing the research questions.

Two key issues were preliminarily identified: (1) defining the foundation of different stages in the entrepreneurial process, and (2) identifying potential significant events within these stages. This study employed a one-on-one in-depth interview technique, utilizing narrative interviewing to focus on each respondent's stories, narratives, and structures [37,43].

This method allows for the exploration of deeper narratives [41], constructing a comprehensive context of the immigrant's entrepreneurial journey. The in-depth interview questions were structured and specific [44], guiding respondents to focus on the issues, thereby enabling researchers to capture more accurate entrepreneurial experiences [45].

Each interviewee was interviewed for an average duration of 45 to 60 min. All interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim. Participants were informed of the research's purpose and intent before the interviews, including their right to withdraw from the interview at any time. The full names of the participants were kept confidential. The multiple sources of data collected in this study are organized in the table below.

### 3.3. Data Analysis Method

This study followed the data analysis principles outlined by Gibbs [39] and was divided into the following three steps.

Step One: Conduct the initial level of data induction. Researchers first transcribed the audio recordings of the interviews into verbatim transcripts, supplemented by field notes, and combined these with confidential documents provided by the respondents, such as product catalogs, internal business data, market research plans, etc. This process allows for the induction of significant entrepreneurial marketing activities across three entrepreneurial phases identified in the respondents' journey: "the foundation building phase", "the growth and strengthening phase", and "the sustainable mutual benefit phase". Activities identified included: "exploring business opportunities", "establishing customer transactions", "learning new entrepreneurial knowledge", "gathering market information", "utilizing business opportunities", "establishing partnerships", "applying new entrepreneurial knowledge", "expanding market breadth", "cultivating business opportunities", "strengthening partnerships", "integrating new entrepreneurial knowledge", and "clearly segmenting the market".

Step Two: Perform the second level of typological matching. Researchers used the entrepreneurial marketing activities generated in step one to match with the components of the four dimensions of entrepreneurial marketing: "risk-taking propensity, opportunity proactiveness, customer responsiveness, customer value communication ability, value understanding ability, knowledge foundation building ability, innovation application ability, market information understanding and dissemination, market penetration ability, competitor response ability, business process integration, and networks and relationships" (refer to Table 3).

Step Three: Integrate the model development. Researchers interpreted the reasons behind the transitions and transformations in immigrants' entrepreneurial stories at different stages, extracting the "objectives", "business focus", and "emphasized entrepreneurial marketing activities" of each phase to present the immigrant entrepreneurship journey model within this analytical framework. However, during the analysis of step three, researchers identified that the smooth transition between stages is a critical factor in the development of immigrant entrepreneurship. Therefore, the researchers returned to the verbatim transcripts to explore the narrative units of immigrants' business operations, identifying relevant data on relationship management at each stage, and further developed concepts related to the mechanism of stage transition, such as "adaptive selling", "personal rapport", and "relational trust", to develop the mechanisms that advance through the entrepreneurial stages, linking to a complete entrepreneurial journey model.



**Table 3.** The entrepreneurial marketing dimensions and activities.

Three Entrepreneurial Phases	Entrepreneurial Marketing Dimensions	Entrepreneurial Marketing Activities
The foundation building phase	Entrepreneurial orientation	Exploring business opportunities
	Customer orientation	Establishing customer transactions
	Innovation orientation	Learning new entrepreneurial knowledge
	Market orientation	Exploring market information
The growth and strengthening phase	Entrepreneurial orientation	Utilizing business opportunities
	Customer orientation	Establishing partnerships
	Innovation orientation	Applying new entrepreneurial knowledge
	Market orientation	Expanding market breadth
The sustainable mutual benefit phase	Entrepreneurial orientation	Cultivating business opportunities
	Customer orientation	Strengthening partnerships
	Innovation orientation	Integrating new entrepreneurial knowledge
	Market orientation	Clearly segmenting the market

#### 4. Research Findings

Based on an analysis of interview data, public records, and internal documents, this study synthesized the entrepreneurial marketing activities of immigrants and aligned these temporally sequenced entrepreneurial marketing activities with entrepreneurial marketing theory. From this alignment, the study extracted the objectives and primary activities aimed at different stages of entrepreneurship [39,46]. It delineated three stages in the entrepreneurial journey of immigrants toward achieving sustainable operation.

##### 4.1. Foundation Construction Phase: Objective of “Breaking through the Status Quo”

During this phase, immigrants, despite their lack of familiarity with the market of the host country, are predominantly driven by the necessity to sustain their livelihood or to cultivate a superior lifestyle. They actively leverage their personal resources, skills, or connections and resources from their home country to assess the feasibility of entrepreneurial risks. Upon perceiving that their products or services preliminarily align with market demands (not necessarily targeting the mainstream market but rather focusing on an immigrant-dominated market) and securing partial support from fellow countrymen and family members, they venture into entrepreneurship. At this point, immigrant entrepreneurs, generally inexperienced, often start by promoting among their close friends and community members through direct conversations or personal experiences with customers, or by utilizing online immigrant communities to enhance the visibility of their new ventures. As beginners in their new enterprises, they dedicate significant time to acquiring knowledge, especially by participating in government-sponsored courses or seminars. Following these learning activities, these entrepreneurial novices (for instance, those who were initially homemakers) develop their sales capabilities while assimilating new knowledge, embarking on diverse new lifestyle paths.

In summary, immigrant entrepreneurs in the foundational construction phase, aiming to alter their current circumstances, contemplate embarking on business creation with the goal of “breaking through the status quo” within a context of manageable risks. To mitigate losses and waste in the initial stages of entrepreneurship, they address issues using the manpower of close friends or contacts, and resources introduced by them, opting to

utilize or extend existing resources to circumvent unnecessary expenditures and minimize risks. Despite lacking seasoned experience or skills, and even facing language barriers, they endeavor to learn the required capabilities. Consequently, immigrant entrepreneurs commit to entrepreneurial marketing activities, such as “exploring business opportunities, establishing transactional relationships, learning new entrepreneurial knowledge, and probing market information”. (refer to Table 4).

**Table 4.** Breaking through the status quo.

Stage	Factor	Entrepreneurial Marketing Activities across Four Dimensions
Entrepreneurial Orientation (Exploring Business Opportunities)	Risk-Taking Propensity: New immigrants, unfamiliar with entrepreneurship in a foreign country, consider their personal circumstances and available resources. They believe they can undertake business risks in a new environment and remain optimistic about the future.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When I first came to Taiwan as a migrant worker, I stayed in Taiwan after getting married. Initially, I was taking care of the children at home. Because I helped the neighbors with beauty and hairdressing services, and they all liked it, I started my own business once the children grew a bit older.</li> <li>After divorcing my Taiwanese husband, I started my own business because I had to work while taking care of my children. I thought of selling some Vietnamese food I am good at making because my friends always said the food I made was delicious.</li> </ul>
	Opportunity Proactiveness: Immigrants harness and utilize networks and resources from their home country or host country to facilitate the development of their ventures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I have many Indonesian friends on Facebook. Initially, I started live streams for them to chat, and later on, they would sometimes tell me about things they wanted to buy. So, I began selling Taiwanese products to Indonesia.</li> <li>I was a student and initially worked in a manpower agency. Knowing that many manufacturers needed to enter southeast Asia, I later started helping Taiwanese manufacturers to list new products on Vietnamese platforms, writing copy for them, and handling marketing-related tasks.</li> <li>Back then, Vietnamese food in Taiwan was all about rice noodles, so I started selling dry rice noodles from northern Vietnam. Many migrant workers who missed the taste of home would come to eat.</li> <li>My family in Vietnam knows a cosmetics OEM factory. Initially, I took some facial masks and cosmetics to give to friends and relatives in Taiwan. They felt the quality was better than what was available on the market, so I started to sell them.</li> </ul>
Customer Orientation (Establishing Customer Transactions)	Customer Responsiveness: Immigrants begin their search for customers among friends, family, or within their previous social circles to cultivate a basic customer base.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Being a former migrant worker, I have friends from the migrant worker community who helped promote my business, quickly attracting many migrant worker friends as patrons.</li> </ul>
	Communication Skills with Customers: Immigrants primarily use their everyday social circles or previous life circles as a basis to spark consumer interest in their products, subsequently establishing transactional relationships.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Migrant workers enjoy gathering at my store to chat, vent, or share happy moments.</li> <li>Many immigrants and international students like coming to me for hairdressing, sharing recent life events.</li> </ul>
	Understanding Customer Value: Immigrants often start with services in a foreign land, using emotional nostalgia to persuade consumers or highlighting exotic features as selling points to attract local consumers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I have many migrant workers in my online community. I host live sessions to chat with them. I'm more familiar with the situation in Taiwan and share a lot of information. They trust me greatly and like the products I recommend.</li> <li>My Taiwanese friends also love the delicacies I prepare, saying they taste just as good as what one would find in Bangkok, unlike the typical Thai chain restaurants in Taiwan.</li> </ul>

Table 4. Cont.

Stage	Factor	Entrepreneurial Marketing Activities across Four Dimensions
Innovation Orientation (Learning New Entrepreneurial Knowledge)	Knowledge Foundation Building Capability:  Immigrants effectively utilize their previous knowledge and even import resources from their home countries to build foundational capabilities for entrepreneurship.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Through continuous lessons from relatives in Vietnam on the variety of dishes, and by importing spices, I can create flavors closer to those found in Vietnam.</li> </ul>
	Innovative Application Capability: Immigrants begin to experiment with new methods of work or lifestyles and learn the language, culture, and regulations of Taiwan, constructing basic capabilities for entrepreneurship.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I learned about the basic regulations for opening a store and the things to watch out for through friends.</li> <li>I have attended many government-offered courses to understand the fundamental laws and processes of starting a business.</li> <li>For some ingredients that are not available in Taiwan, I have tried alternative methods to prepare meals that customers can accept.</li> </ul>
Market Orientation (Exploring Market Information)	Understanding and Dissemination of Market Information: Through shared immigrant status, information about the market is disseminated and obtained.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Choosing the store location was based on areas where migrant workers are more likely to visit, understanding their needs through the migrant worker community.</li> </ul>
	Capability to Penetrate Markets: Expanding market capabilities through the networks of friends and family.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I use the internet to share information about my products within communities where there are many immigrants or migrant workers.</li> <li>Initially, I asked my friends and family to help me promote.</li> </ul>
	Responsiveness to Competitors: Adopting a more conservative approach to avoid competitors or focusing on discounts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I avoid areas where there are many Vietnamese restaurants.</li> <li>I often send discount coupons to my friends and family.</li> </ul>
	Integration of Business Processes: Mostly individual or family businesses, with unclear division of labor and processes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most of the tasks in the store were completed by me alone.</li> <li>When it's busy, I asked friends to help out.</li> <li>My husband helped with the store's tasks after his work.</li> </ul>
	Networking and Relationships: Primarily spreading through networks of friends and family.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Migrant workers or immigrants are my main customer base, and they really like my stuff.</li> <li>There are also customers introduced by my husband's friends and family, but not too many.</li> </ul>

#### 4.2. Growth Expansion Phase: Objective of “Entering Mainstream Society”

Initially, immigrant entrepreneurs often target fellow countrymen or immigrants as their primary audience. For continuous business growth, it becomes imperative for these entrepreneurs to expand their operational scope into the host country's mainstream society. At this juncture, immigrants encourage their past customers or the friends and family of these customers to use word-of-mouth marketing to increase business visibility. In the interaction process, new immigrants, based on their experiences in Taiwan, actively engage in their customers' lives, seizing opportunities to market their businesses. Moreover, new immigrants also build friendships and trust with customers by empathizing with them and considering their perspectives. Through frequent interactions, they are committed to applying the knowledge and experience acquired at this stage, or employing internet marketing techniques, using advertising copy that is acceptable to mainstream society for online marketing. In summary, this study found that during the growth expansion phase, immigrants aim to “enter mainstream society” as their business goal, focusing on “utilizing business opportunities, establishing partnerships, applying new entrepreneurial knowledge, and expanding market reach”. (refer to Table 5).

Table 5. Enter mainstream society.

Stage	Factor	Entrepreneurial Marketing Activities across Four Dimensions
Entrepreneurial Orientation (Utilizing Business Opportunities)	Risk-Taking Propensity: Immigrants, when facing their core customer base, believe that leveraging the achievements accumulated in the early stages can propel their business to a higher level, and thus are willing to expand their operations or formally establish a company.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• With a basic audience and more stable traffic, I am more capable of introducing the products I want to recommend, experimenting to see if they can be sold to Taiwanese customers.</li> <li>• After establishing a basic customer base, I then truly sought a storefront to formally start the business.</li> </ul>
	Opportunity Proactiveness: Aligning with the market trends of mainstream society and combining personal past experiences to engage in actions beneficial to customers, thereby fulfilling their potential needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There was a time when Vietnamese-style hair washing became quite popular, so I adapted one of our services to offer Vietnamese-style hair washing.</li> <li>• By promoting products that are very popular in Taiwan to migrant workers or immigrants, I facilitate their deeper understanding of Taiwanese culture.</li> </ul>
Customer Orientation (Establishing Partnerships)	Customer Responsiveness: Immigrants are capable of communicating with the majority of consumers, distinguishing between local and non-local differences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• My customers include Vietnamese and Taiwanese, and they all enjoy my cuisine. Vietnamese find it authentic, while Taiwanese also find it delicious.</li> <li>• Among my customers are immigrants, migrant workers, and ordinary Taiwanese people, because my products are more affordably priced, and the quality is reasonably good.</li> </ul>
	Communication Skills with Customers: Immigrants are able to understand the customs and culture of the host country, establishing relationships with different types of customers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• My Chinese is quite good now, so I can chat with all kinds of customers. Most of my customers are women, and we talk about family and life matters, which is unrelated to their nationality—it's about everyday life.</li> <li>• My main customer base is Indonesian migrant workers, but even after they return to their country, they continue to watch my live streams, reminiscing about life in Taiwan.</li> </ul>
	Understanding Customer Value: Immigrants pay attention to customers' thoughts and attitudes, starting from a consumer mindset to improve their business.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Through conversations, I understand the customers' needs for products, and then I try flavors that are more acceptable to Taiwanese people.</li> <li>• I take suggestions from my customers seriously and gradually make improvements.</li> </ul>
Innovation Orientation (Applying New Entrepreneurial Knowledge)	Knowledge Foundation Building Capability: Immigrants construct basic work processes and procedures, formalizing their past work processes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I establish basic work processes to make it easier when teaching others.</li> <li>• I document the recipes and cooking methods, creating documents to ensure consistency in taste regardless of who does the cooking.</li> </ul>
	Innovative Application Capability: Immigrants engage in continuous learning of new business knowledge and skills, communicating with customers to enhance consumer attraction to immigrant entrepreneurial products or services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I discuss recipes with suppliers and try to incorporate flavors that appeal to Taiwanese tastes.</li> <li>• Taiwan offers some courses, which I attend to enable my products to be sold online.</li> <li>• For some ingredients that are not available in Taiwan, I experiment with alternative methods to create dishes that customers will accept.</li> </ul>

Table 5. Cont.

Stage	Factor	Entrepreneurial Marketing Activities across Four Dimensions
Market Orientation (Expanding Market Breadth)	Understanding and Dissemination of Market Information: Immigrants have grasped an overview of the host country's market, obtaining and disseminating market information from mainstream society.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I learn about the current popular trends through Taiwanese suppliers and consumers.</li> <li>• I frequently observe what is popular among women in Taiwan, which could be applied to my products.</li> </ul>
	Capability to Penetrate Markets: Immigrants attract more consumers by organizing online or offline events around mainstream societal activities and festivals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I organize some events to make more people aware of our products.</li> <li>• Through online communities, we serve different customers with two groups: one in Chinese and another in Indonesian.</li> <li>• By participating in Taiwanese events and setting up booths, more Taiwanese people become aware of our products.</li> </ul>
	Responsiveness to Competitors: Immigrants begin to adjust their business models to expand their customer base and create differentiation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I adjust the flavors to better suit Taiwanese tastes compared to other shops.</li> <li>• I decorated the store in a style that is more appealing to Taiwanese.</li> </ul>
	Integration of Business Processes: Immigrants effectively utilize their experiences, combining the business with resources from the host country to integrate operational processes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We hire full-time staff, including Taiwanese and Vietnamese; hence, we have different job allocations.</li> <li>• We have fixed partnerships with suppliers, ensuring regular delivery and procurement.</li> </ul>
	Networking and Relationships: Gradually integrating into the networks of the host country.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Besides immigrants, Taiwanese also like our products.</li> <li>• Many of our customers became loyal fans after seeing reviews on the internet.</li> </ul>

#### 4.3. Sustainable Mutual Benefit Phase: Objective of “Securing a Foothold for Sustainable Development”

At this stage, as the market becomes increasingly mature and the number of competitors rises, consumers on the market are no longer unfamiliar with the businesses run by immigrants. To ensure continuous growth, maintain market position, and achieve sustainable operation, immigrants begin to develop diversified channels, enhance brand visibility, differentiate niche markets, and solidify their market stance. They even utilize digital technology to maintain customer service or communicate with suppliers, thereby boosting the confidence of both suppliers and consumers. Moreover, to address the growing complexity of business challenges, they also review and revise corporate structures, incorporating more external business resources to fortify business development.

During this phase, close interaction between immigrant entrepreneurs and business members fosters a sense of symbiosis among business partners, particularly supporting members who are also immigrants, encouraging them to advance their knowledge and skills, and applying “sharing” in business activities. In the stable phase of business symbiosis, aiming to “secure a foothold for sustainable development” becomes the business goal, demonstrating entrepreneurial marketing activities, such as “cultivating business opportunities, strengthening partnerships, integrating new entrepreneurial knowledge, and clearly segmenting the market”. (refer to Table 6).



**Table 6.** Secure a foothold for sustainable development.

Stage	Factor	Entrepreneurial Marketing Activities across Four Dimensions
Entrepreneurial Orientation (Cultivating Business Opportunities)	Risk-Taking Propensity: When facing difficulties in entrepreneurial management, immigrants believe that leveraging past successful experiences can help overcome challenges and thereby strengthen their conviction in steady management.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Even during the pandemic, we never considered closing the business because there are still many people who need us.</li> <li>• We applied for a government loan during the pandemic because I believed that once it was over, business would return to normal, which has indeed been the case.</li> </ul>
	Opportunity Proactiveness: Immigrants adeptly exploit the customs, festivals, and activities of both their home country and host country to successfully develop a brand image distinct from that of host country enterprises.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In addition to celebrating Indonesian festivals, we also organize related activities and promotions during Taiwanese festivals.</li> <li>• We collaborate not only with other Taiwanese stores but also with Vietnamese enterprises, positioning ourselves within a highly internationalized beauty industry.</li> </ul>
Customer Orientation (Strengthening Partnerships)	Customer Responsiveness: Immigrants have developed the capacity to deepen connections, thoroughly understanding consumer needs and suggestions, and providing feedback.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our staff comprises individuals of various nationalities, most of whom can communicate with customers in Chinese. Even for Vietnamese customers, if they speak Chinese, we respond in Chinese.</li> <li>• Most of our clients require translation services tailored to the demands of their industry, and we can offer different quotes and solutions based on their specific needs.</li> </ul>
	Communication Skills with Customers: Immigrants utilize digital technology to solidify consumer relationships, with no significant difference from local Taiwanese enterprises.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We offer VIP membership services to gain a deeper understanding of our customers.</li> <li>• We use Line groups to stay in touch with customers, maintaining good relations at all times.</li> </ul>
	Understanding Customer Value: Capable of conducting differentiated marketing according to the type and nature of customers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We can distinguish between the different needs of Taiwanese and Vietnamese customers regarding hair and nail services, offering varied plans.</li> <li>• As the number of Taiwanese customers in our store increases, we continue to develop products that they prefer.</li> </ul>
Innovation Orientation (Integrating New Entrepreneurial Knowledge)	Knowledge Foundation Building Capability: Immigrants are capable of sharing knowledge and experience among themselves and their members, not only enhancing business management practices but also constructing sustainable business models.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I have systematized the fundamental knowledge and distributed it among employees of different nationalities, allowing everyone to find and utilize their specialties effectively.</li> <li>• I guide employees step-by-step in their tasks, which increases their engagement and loyalty, encouraging them to stay longer.</li> </ul>
	Innovative Application Capability: Immigrants internalize learned knowledge and practical experience, employing new techniques or attitudes to realize their business values.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I attempt collaborations with different suppliers to create diverse products.</li> <li>• We sell our products on various platforms, each with a different customer base. I provide differentiated services tailored to the specific audience of each platform.</li> </ul>

Table 6. Cont.

Stage	Factor	Entrepreneurial Marketing Activities across Four Dimensions
Market Orientation (Clearly Segmenting the Market)	Understanding and Dissemination of Market Information: Gradually becoming a well-known brand in the market through accumulated reputation and leveraging digital communities for faster dissemination.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Through word-of-mouth from our customers and shares on the internet, our store has rapidly become well-known to many.</li> <li>We have a certain reputation in the market. We often look for new products from Vietnam that can complement the Taiwanese market.</li> <li>Many consumers know that we carry special trending products from abroad, thus becoming regular customers.</li> </ul>
	Capability to Penetrate Markets: Utilizing past management achievements, marketing strategies, and online communities, while actively expanding overseas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We make our customers feel that our products are of great value and unique, encouraging them to visit us frequently.</li> <li>We organize events regularly, primarily to encourage regular customers to repurchase and also to attract new customers.</li> <li>Through collaboration with well-known Indonesian companies, such as Bali restaurants, after social media marketing, Taiwanese consumers have greatly appreciated it.</li> </ul>
	Responsiveness to Competitors: Segmenting the market, promoting the brand, and adopting more flexible business strategies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We continue to expand our stores and have branches overseas, becoming a truly international company known to more consumers.</li> <li>We collaborate with different well-known Vietnamese shops, which is something our Taiwanese competitors cannot do.</li> <li>Our services extend overseas, providing assurance no matter where you are, which is a significant advantage for us.</li> </ul>
	Integration of Business Processes: Keeping up with digital transformation, actively managing suppliers, employees, importers, and customers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We adopt an online live-streaming system that can quickly integrate all platforms and interact directly with consumers.</li> <li>We have a POS and information system, allowing us to manage different branches and suppliers efficiently.</li> <li>Our recruitment methods have evolved from primarily relying on referrals from friends and family to formally conducting open market recruitment.</li> </ul>
	Networking and Relationships: Having established a professional image, becoming a word-of-mouth business.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Our store has been open for a long time, and consumers no longer see it as a shop opened by a foreign bride but as a Vietnamese cuisine restaurant.</li> <li>Our translations are of a certain standard: consumers no longer question the quality of the translation but discuss the proposals.</li> <li>Our beauty and hair products are competitive, even other Taiwanese hair salons purchase from us.</li> </ul>

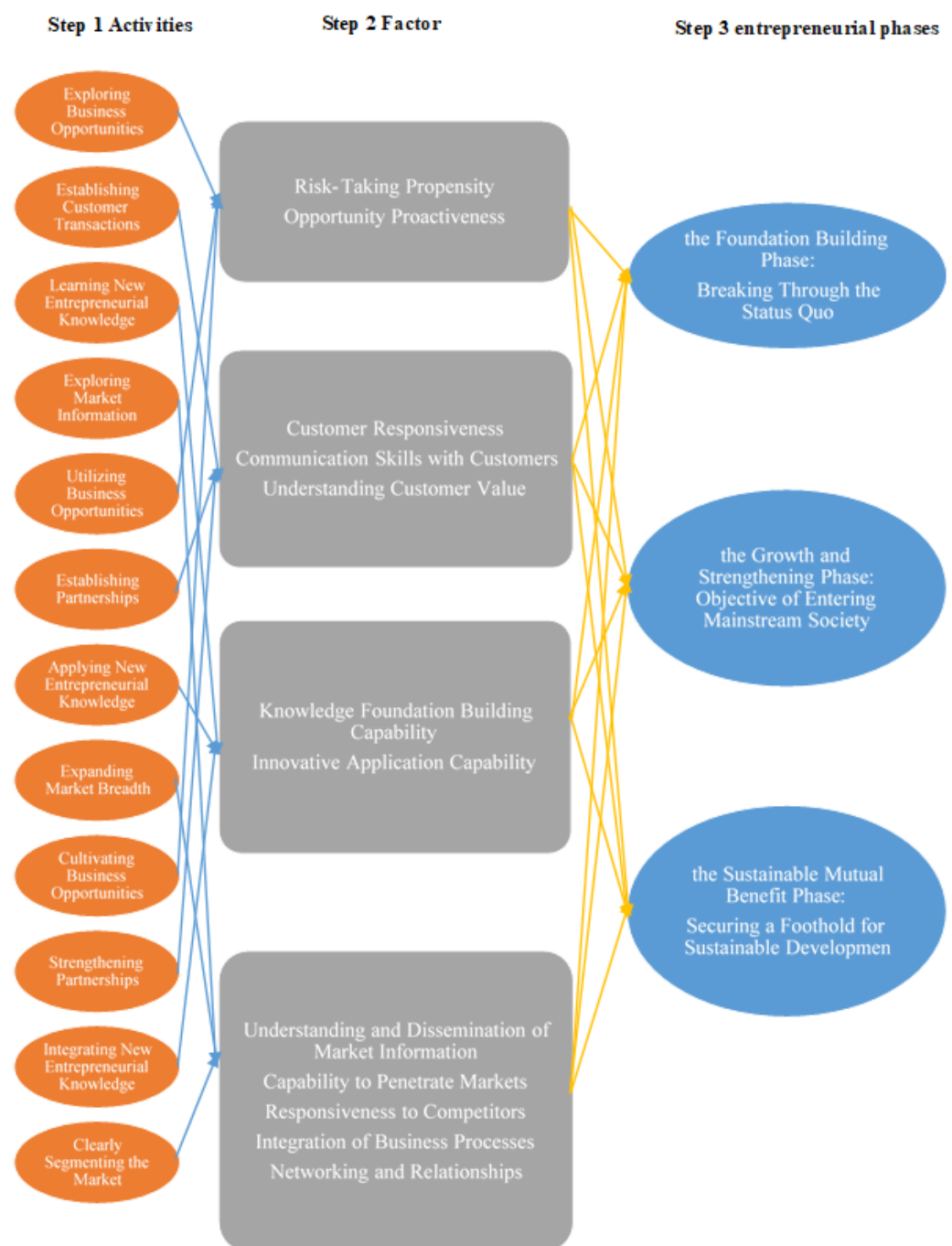
## 5. Discussion

### 5.1. How Immigrants Utilize the Four Dimensions of Entrepreneurial Marketing to Develop Their Entrepreneurial Journey

#### 5.1.1. Foundation Construction Phase: The Stage with the Objective of “Breaking through the Status Quo”

We integrated steps one, two, and three into the entrepreneurial marketing dynamics model, as depicted in Figure 1. In the beginning stages of their entrepreneurship,

immigrants, much like other entrepreneurs operating independently, consider potential challenges and market opportunities for their business inception [47]. During this phase, after evaluation, entrepreneurship is seen as a start to change the current situation, and there is a willingness to take on the risks associated with breaking away from the status quo [48]. Immigrants explore possible transaction opportunities through their networks from both their home country and current connections, demonstrating proactive behavior. Furthermore, immigrants actively learn languages, cultures, entrepreneurship, and other knowledge and skills to positively face these transaction opportunities [16]. Specifically, this study found that upon entering business, immigrants, embodying the entrepreneurial spirit, significantly exhibit the entrepreneurial orientation dimension with regards to risk assessment, a proactive attitude toward opportunities, and a high level of engagement.



**Figure 1.** Entrepreneurial marketing model.

However, in terms of customer orientation, immigrants have yet to deeply engage with customers' personal lives and needs [4,9]. As Jaramillo and Grisaffe [49] stated, genuinely understanding customer needs and generating corresponding sales behaviors require businesses to devote effort and time. At this point, immigrants are still in the initial stages of their business, with a lesser understanding of customer needs and lacking corresponding adjustments in behavior, thus interacting with customers from their own perspectives and past perceptions. Therefore, the investment shown in the customer-centric dimension of entrepreneurial marketing is less pronounced.

Additionally, in terms of the innovation orientation dimension, this study observed that upon entering entrepreneurship, immigrants fall into two categories. One group of immigrants is eager to change the status quo and actively builds the knowledge needed for entrepreneurship, willing to apply what they learn in customer transactions and adapt to new life. The other group, more conservative, strives to maintain their consumer base among fellow immigrants, showing less enthusiasm for innovation and learning. However, the latter group, as the market stabilizes slightly, may also shift toward the first type.

Finally, regarding the market orientation dimension, immigrant entrepreneurs expand their market and obtain market intelligence through past connections and current friends and relatives. They tend to avoid direct confrontation with competitors, preferring strategies that avoid direct conflict. In the case of sole proprietorships, immigrant enterprises do not actively engage in the digitalization and systematization of information. Overall, businesses founded by immigrants are closely tied to immigrant networks, often becoming spaces for gatherings and exchanges among immigrants and migrant workers.

In summary, during the foundation construction phase of their business, immigrants, aiming to break through the status quo, should focus on uncovering business opportunities, utilizing entrepreneurial thinking and actions to achieve this stage's objective. Thus, the most critical dimension of entrepreneurial marketing leading this stage is entrepreneurial orientation, especially reflected in risk-taking and opportunity proactiveness. As for the other three dimensions—customer orientation, innovation orientation, and market orientation—while there is contact through networks and learning of relevant knowledge, they are relatively less crucial at this stage. Accordingly, this study proposes the following proposition:

**Proposition 1.** *In the “foundation construction phase”, with the objective of “breaking through the status quo”, the focus of entrepreneurs is on “uncovering business opportunities”, with “entrepreneurial orientation” being the key dimension.*

#### 5.1.2. Growth Expansion Phase: The Stage with the “Objective of Entering Mainstream Society”

In this phase, immigrant entrepreneurs face more complex and diverse opportunities for market expansion, similar to other entrepreneurs [50]. Compared to the earlier phase aimed at “breaking through the status quo”, the focus on customer orientation becomes more qualitative and quantitative in the stage of entering mainstream society to expand the market. Interactions reveal that immigrants explore the value their business can offer customers, exhibiting many adaptive sales behaviors. This includes collecting customer information during interactions, listening to what customers say, and responding differently to meet their needs [16,51], especially toward both fellow immigrant consumers and those from the mainstream society. Interactions between immigrants and customers help strengthen trust: sharing personal and business information with customers facilitates solving customer problems, mutual understanding, and reduces purchase uncertainty, thereby establishing relationship norms and enhancing dependency and the strength of the relationship. Therefore, from the perspective of customer orientation, this study found many examples of immigrants showing concern for, responding to, and conveying customer value to penetrate mainstream society. This includes actively fulfilling customer product needs and deeply understanding personal life requirements [52], thus fostering reciprocal behavior and positive feedback from potential customers [46,53]. In other words,

based on customer-oriented and adaptive sales interactions, trust relationships between immigrants and customers are established, along with reciprocal affections and personal connections [32].

In terms of innovation orientation, immigrants in this phase not only continue to absorb new knowledge but also integrate personal experience for business development. Compared to the previous stage, immigrants now have the capability to compile business and mainstream societal preferences, thereby constructing a knowledge structure infused with personal characteristics, systematically applying this structure to seize business opportunities [5,17].

In market orientation, immigrants integrate into mainstream society in this phase, and their business is no longer segmented into services for immigrants or mainstream society alone. Their market expansion methods shift from close word-of-mouth interactions to using marketing strategies and employing digital technology and social networks to gain visibility in mainstream society.

Overall, in the growth expansion phase, immigrants optimize business opportunities by entering mainstream society. Besides continuously applying entrepreneurial orientation to actively seek partnership opportunities and take risks, they focus more on conducting customer-focused emotional activities and adaptive sales behaviors, striving to understand customer needs and respond accordingly, transforming transactional relationships into relationships based on brand trust. This stage sees immigrants continuing to integrate personal and mainstream societal knowledge sources, encouraging personalized knowledge application and customer involvement in understanding the business. Marketing strategies are used to expand the market and gradually construct an informatized and organized business entity. Hence, customer orientation becomes the most crucial dimension for immigrants expanding their business territory during this phase.

Accordingly, this study proposes the following proposition:

**Proposition 2.** *In the “growth expansion phase”, with the objective of “entering mainstream society”, the focus of immigrant entrepreneurs is on “optimizing business opportunities”, with “customer orientation” being the key dimension.*

#### 5.1.3. Sustainable Mutual Benefit Phase: The Stage with the Objective of “Securing a Foothold for Sustainable Development”

In this stage, the entrepreneurial orientation of immigrants, akin to entrepreneurs in the later development phases of a start-up, continues to delineate growth opportunities. They also obtain and apply unique information and resources through relationships in their home country or mainstream society, leading to stable business development [47]. In terms of customer orientation, this stage exhibits stable and in-depth development. As the range of customer interactions by immigrant entrepreneurs expands, this study found an increase in adaptive sales behaviors within customer relationships [49,54]. Additionally, immigrants typically have a complete team by this stage. As team managers, the primary content of interactions is establishing shared life experiences among the team [55], which helps understand member needs, provide problem-solving solutions, and enhance member understanding, trust, and closeness, thereby creating shared value [56].

Regarding innovation orientation, as emphasized by Siguaw et al. [57], past discussions on innovation orientation have focused on innovation-related outputs, such as the form, speed, and type of innovation. However, merely focusing on these outputs does not ensure long-term survival or sustained competitiveness. More fundamentally, it is whether business managers and employees can construct this knowledge and persuade others to use it, forming a learning philosophy. Specifically, teams can use innovative thinking as a tool to explore potential business opportunities, continuously re-energize employees, and reinforce the shared value of the firm [53], thereby driving sustained business growth [53].

Finally, in terms of market orientation, immigrants at this stage focus on transmitting brand values and principles, establishing brand identity, evoking consumer memory points, and enhancing brand image dissemination. Additionally, through a series of internal



business training, employees understand the core values of the brand, thereby being capable of providing customer experiences that align with the spirit of the brand, building customer loyalty, and creating market differentiation among many homogeneous products. Importantly, in this stage, digital and technological strategies become more prominent, with immigrants extensively using digital tools to gather market information to enhance brand value.

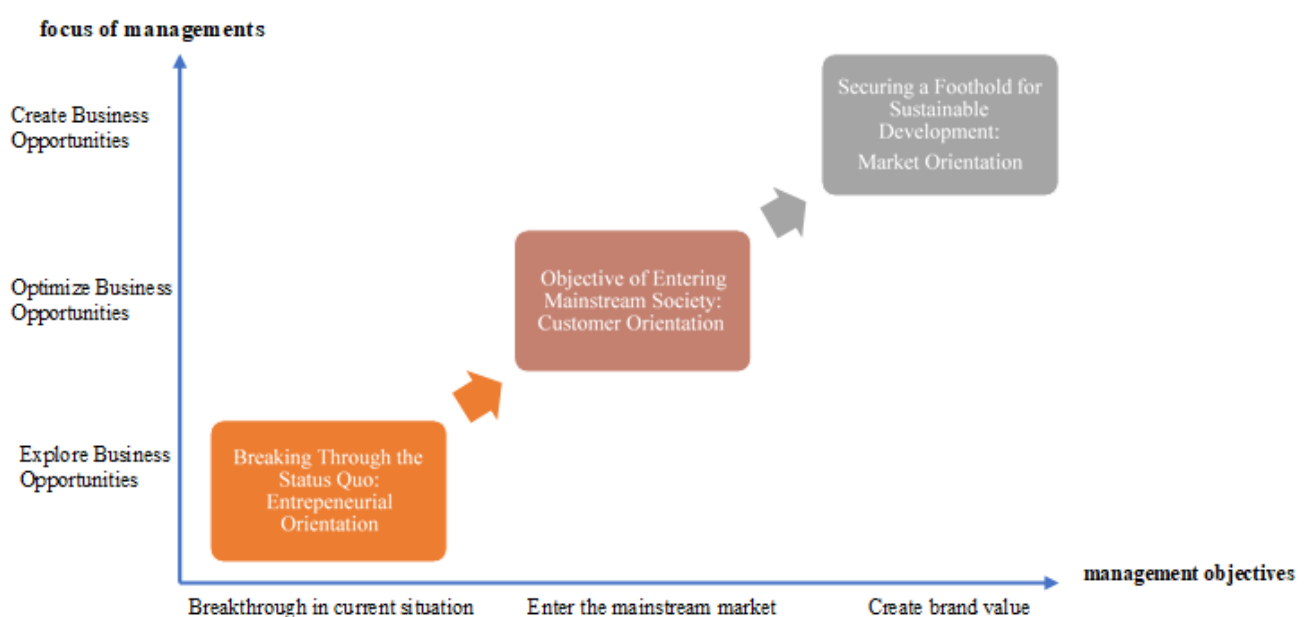
Overall, in the sustainable mutual benefit phase, immigrant entrepreneurs strive to build the brand through opportunity and knowledge sharing and learning, utilizing digital technology, marketing strategies, and channel layouts to pursue business development. This phase presents a more diverse and rich market orientation than the previous two phases, aimed at the sustainable development of the business. Thus, market orientation becomes a crucial driver for promoting business growth among immigrants. Based on this, the study proposes the following proposition:

**Proposition 3.** *In the “sustainable mutual benefit phase”, with the objective of “securing a foothold for sustainable development”, the focus of immigrant entrepreneurs is on “enhancing opportunity value”, with “market orientation” being the key dimension.*

### 5.2. Entrepreneurial Marketing Dynamic Adjustment Model and Stage Transition Mechanism

Synthesizing the foregoing, this study integrated and summarized the characteristics of the entrepreneurial journey of immigrant entrepreneurs, as follows: immigrant entrepreneurs adjust and combine their entrepreneurial marketing activities in response to the different objectives of each business phase, constructing the four dimensions of entrepreneurial marketing to develop their entrepreneurial journey.

Based on the discussion of the entrepreneurial journey of immigrant entrepreneurs, this study constructed an entrepreneurial marketing dynamic adjustment model, as shown in Figure 2. The horizontal axis represents the management objectives throughout the development of the immigrant entrepreneurial journey, while the vertical axis signifies the focus of management. The squares in the diagram display the names of the three phases and the main entrepreneurial marketing dimension activities, with dashed lines indicating the relationship management mechanisms that facilitate phase progression. The model emphasizes that these four dimensions are not fully present from the outset but need to be gradually constructed and focused upon as the entrepreneurial objectives change, continuously propelling the entrepreneurial journey forward.



**Figure 2.** Entrepreneurial marketing dynamic adjustment model.

Moreover, this study identified two major relationship management mechanisms that immigrants can use to facilitate the transition between different phases. The first mechanism is “optimizing customer relationships”, which assists immigrants in transitioning from the foundation construction phase, focused on entrepreneurial orientation, to the growth expansion phase, primarily oriented toward mainstream customer orientation. Once immigrants have passed the stage of exploiting business opportunities and fully utilizing personal networks, they must actively be accepted within mainstream society. From the perspective of relationship marketing, immigrant entrepreneurs are in a trial-and-error process of relationship building, striving to select customers who have the potential to move from a short-term transaction orientation to a long-term relationship orientation [58–60]. Initially, through good and frequent interactions and communication with customers, different conditions and requirements are understood [30]. After establishing customer knowledge, adaptive actions are demonstrated, offering solutions to meet different customer needs [61], such as actively providing product introductions, offering optimized services, complete systems, and various resources, thereby creating concrete prospects and positive beliefs for customers [30], reducing customer doubts and uncertainty about products or services [62]. Therefore, this study proposes that the “optimizing customer relationships” mechanism, focusing on interaction communication and resource provision, is a key mechanism for transitioning from the foundation construction phase to the growth expansion phase.

The second relationship management mechanism is “establishing brand value”, assisting immigrants in transitioning from the phase focused on establishing and expanding interpersonal relationships to the sustainable mutual benefit phase. Once immigrants have successfully made a name in the mainstream market, the focus of relationship management shifts from customer management to brand management [28]. By market positioning and identifying the core values of the brand, the brand’s value propositions are concretely displayed [30]. Only by highlighting the differences between the brand and competitors can a unique business image be established in consumers’ minds, attracting their attention, and increasing the purchase rate. Through internet digital marketing and self-media to create cultural content, thereby conducting dissemination and management, it helps to form brand recognition and image, aiding in expanding market share and even entering overseas markets. Based on this, the study proposes the “establishing brand value” mechanism, focused on investment, as another crucial mechanism for stage transition, facilitating the smooth progression of the business from the growth expansion phase into the sustainable mutual benefit phase.

## 6. Conclusions

This study contributed both theoretical and practical implications. Theoretically, it developed the dynamic process of immigrant entrepreneurial marketing, addressing research gaps and enriching the body of knowledge on immigrant business journeys, while extending and deepening the application of entrepreneurial marketing theories. Practically, understanding the dynamic decision-making process through entrepreneurial marketing highlighted how immigrant enterprises can leverage these concepts to gain a competitive edge. The anticipated sharing of future research findings aims to assist immigrants in formulating and implementing comprehensive marketing strategies, potentially increasing the likelihood of entrepreneurial success, and serving as a valuable reference for government policymaking.

### 6.1. Contribution to Immigrant Entrepreneurship Theory

This research developed a model of the dynamic process of entrepreneurial marketing among immigrants to fill the academic research gap on immigrant entrepreneurship. Through process research, it delved into the business development trajectory at the individual operational level of immigrants. It not only validated the key factors of immigrant success through the four dimensions of “entrepreneurial marketing” but also examined the evolutionary and adaptive aspects of these key elements through entrepreneurial marketing

activities. This provided insights into the development process of immigrant businesses, addressing gaps in individual-level research.

### 6.2. Contribution to Entrepreneurial Marketing Theory

The findings also contribute to the application and extension of entrepreneurial marketing. Firstly, responding to scholars' calls [63], this study extended entrepreneurial marketing theory to the development process at the individual business level, broadening the scope of theoretical application. Furthermore, the entrepreneurial process model and the stage transition mechanism proposed in this study address and deepen the research gap in the dynamism of entrepreneurial marketing [10,64]. Unlike past cross-sectional studies [11,16], this research, from a process perspective, better reflects how entrepreneurs respond to market environment changes, and engage in opportunity exploration, customer interaction, communication, and co-creation of value amidst different temporal challenges, adapting actions and integrating knowledge and resources to solve customer problems and continuously expand their businesses.

### 6.3. Practical Implications

This study offered practical contributions to immigrant entrepreneurship, providing essential reference principles for immigrants developing personal businesses. Individual entrepreneurs, often limited by resources, rarely have comprehensive preparations before taking action; thus, balancing stage changes, flexible and agile marketing, and maximizing limited resources are key to successful entrepreneurship. The two relationship management mechanisms identified in this study facilitate smooth transitions between different stages of the entrepreneurial process for direct sellers, transforming short-term transactional relationships with customers into long-term growth partnerships. The "optimizing customer relationships" mechanism helps cultivate appropriate customers and expand market opportunities, while the "establishing brand value" mechanism consolidates relationships with the mainstream market and drives overall sales growth through integration and innovative applications.

Moreover, the study found that government assistance helps stabilize the entrepreneurial foundation for immigrants, offering pre-entrepreneurial courses to help immigrants assess their situation, evaluate risks, and stimulate entrepreneurial thinking. During the entrepreneurial process, government support not only provides basic courses but also offers professional technical courses for immigrants at different levels and backgrounds, providing soft resources, such as networks and knowledge, to effectively achieve entrepreneurial goals at each stage. In summary, based on the entrepreneurial process model and relationship transition mechanisms of this study, immigrants can plan comprehensive and strategic projects to solidify long-term sustainable business development.

### 6.4. Research Limitations and Future Directions

This study interpreted the entrepreneurial journey of immigrants through the development of four dimensions of entrepreneurial marketing, revealing relative changes in orientations but lacking objective measurement standards for these changes. Future research could develop objective measurement indicators for entrepreneurial marketing dimensions [53]. Additionally, the interview subjects of this study were primarily immigrants who have successfully operated businesses, providing complete successful entrepreneurial cases but lacking data for comparison with immigrants newly entering the industry or those with poorer entrepreneurial performance. Therefore, to deepen the analytical depth of the research, future studies could conduct heterogeneous research on immigrant entrepreneurs of different backgrounds or stages of entrepreneurship for multiple comparisons, enhancing the precision and reliability of the findings [40,41].

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**Institutional Review Board Statement:** Ethical review and approval were waived for this study because this study is a non-interventional one. However, all the participants in this study were fully informed that their anonymity and privacy were assured, why the research was conducted, and how their data would be used. Besides, informed consent was obtained from all the participants.

**Informed Consent Statement:** Informed consent was obtained from all subjects involved in the study.

**Data Availability Statement:** The data are not publicly available due to the privacy of the participants.

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**Conflicts of Interest:** The author declares no conflicts of interest.

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