Moving beyond western methods: a methodological toolbox for family entrepreneurship research in tourism by including children's voices

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Recently, tourism scholars turned their attention to families, specifically children's experiences. Yet, research illustrating children's voices in tourism family entrepreneurship is missing. Social researchers are encouraged to include children's voices to reveal their lived experiences rather than considering them too vulnerable to be interviewed. This qualitative study, underpinned by constructivist epistemology, explored how families are embedded within lifestyle migration and the tourism entrepreneurial process on Hainan Island in China. A combination of methods was adopted to create a toolbox suitable for family research, including children's voices through whole-family interviews and LEGO® Serious Play® workshops. Playing LEGO® seriously ensures that the researcher does not drive participants' thoughts, and children can freely express their opinions in playful, metaphorical, and meaningful ways. Moving beyond Western-centered methods, data was collected at Old Dad Teahouses (or Lao Ba Cha 老爸茶 in Chinese) to create a friendly environment. Old Dad Teahouses are a Hainanese cultural ritual where locals gather to enjoy tea along with local savory snacks. Historically, the name Old Dad Tea refers to predominantly male customers over 50 years of age who regularly attended tea houses in the afternoon as part of their leisure. Nowadays, people who go to Old Dad Tea are more diverse in age and gender, and spending time there represents a popular leisure activity among families living in Hainan. We emphasize that our methodological toolbox allows us to explore how individuals construct their understanding through their own belief systems and culture. The methodological toolbox allowed us to understand the scholarship on family tourism entrepreneurship from a Chinese cultural perspective by providing insight into the experiences of 15 children from eight entrepreneurial families, providing agency to the children. This study aims to enrich the definition of family entrepreneurship by identifying how children as family members can influence migration and entrepreneurial behaviors and exploring the experiences gained by children through the entrepreneurial process. Children's voices are usually filled by adults within the family business unit. However, children are also rights holders and social agents. This study supports the right of children to participate and have their voices heard.

KEYWORDS

tourism entrepreneurship, family entrepreneurship, children's rights, childism, LEGO® Serious Play®, Old Dad Tea, whole-family research

1 Introduction

In recent years, tourism scholars have grown their interest in studying children from three major aspects: the roles, needs, and experiences of children in tourism (Canosa and Schänzel, 2021), children's impact on tourism destinations and activities (Koščak et al., 2023; Séraphin and Chaney, 2023), as well as the impact of tourism on children (Small, 2008). According to Koščak et al. (2018), children are important family members, and their lives are influenced by their living community, especially where tourism is the main industry. The tourism industry consists mainly of family businesses (Lin and Wen, 2021). Children can play a significant role during the entrepreneurial process as an insider. However, research on the role of children in tourism entrepreneurship families is scarce (Canosa and Schänzel, 2021).

Children in tourism studies have been involved in three ways: from an adult perspective, from an adult and children perspective, and from a children perspective (Feng and Li, 2016). Children's voices are increasingly acknowledged in tourism research; however, children in tourism studies are often linked to childhood travel with their family, with Western tourism scholars defining this phenomenon as "family holiday" or "family vacation" (Carr, 2011). Although family vacation and family entrepreneurship subjects have been studied in the past decade (Canosa et al., 2016), research illustrating children's voices and their lived experiences in tourist destinations is predominately emerging from Western countries (Koščak et al., 2023). Tourism scholars have conducted research in South Asia and Southeast Asia, including the voices of children (Yang et al., 2020), however, children in East Asia remain under-researched. Concerted efforts are needed to ensure the inclusivity of children in tourism in all parts of the world. This study takes place on Hainan Island, China, focusing on lifestyle migrant tourism entrepreneurial families. Due to the one-child policy (which ruled from 1979 to 2015), children in China receive more attention and pressure from their families (Wu and Wall, 2016). As such, not only parents focus their lives on their only child, but also grandparents devote much attention to the one child in their family. Yet, this vast but marginalized group of children in tourism has been overlooked in research.

During the last four decades, the business environment in China has changed tremendously (Shaffer and Gao, 2020). Most mainlanders typically preferred large cities such as Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, and Shenzhen, commonly referred to as top-tier cities. However, despite not being one of these top-tier cities, Hainan has seen an influx of mainlanders migrating to the island and starting a business in the tourism industry. Hainan Island has been recognized as a key island tourism destination in China offering entrepreneurial opportunities to businesspeople (Huaxia, 2021). The popularity of Hainan as a tourist destination led tourism to become the main industry in Hainan. Hainan has shown an increasing and above-average trend in long-term household settlements and newly registered enterprises since 2018 and the tourism industry represents the cornerstone of Hainan's top three pillar industries (Hainan Provincial Bureau of Statistics, 2021). As a result, many families from mainland China have migrated to Hainan and started their business in tourism.

Most tourism family entrepreneurship research has focused on the performance of family companies instead of exploring from the perspective of each family member during the entrepreneurial process (Getz and Carlsen, 2005; Canosa and Schänzel, 2021). Furthermore, tourism entrepreneurship studies in China seem to have neglected Hainan Island as one of the most popular migration destinations for families. The phenomenon of lifestyle entrepreneurial migration is not new and has been extensively researched by tourism researchers (Greenwood et al., 1990; Carson and Carson, 2018; Zhang et al., 2020). However, lifestyle entrepreneurial migration has been limited to individual entrepreneurs' behaviors linked to company performance without considering the experiences of their families who migrate with them, especially children are absent within the lifestyle tourism entrepreneurial families. Understanding the family lifestyle migration experiences, including children's voices, within this context is a valuable area for exploration for tourism research.

Chinese families provide an ample sample for analysis (Chu and Yu, 2010), especially considering China's population size and history. China has diverse family structures and traditional cultures, providing abundant resources for family research. According to Chu et al. (2011), Chinese families tend to have multi-generational living arrangements. The essence of multigenerational living in China lies in its fundamental purpose: to provide a convenient environment that fosters collaborative care for children within the familial setting, and there is empirical evidence that a third of Chinese live in multi-generational families (Xu et al., 2014). Historically, families play a crucial role in Chinese society; strong family ties and roots are considered the most critical responsibilities of a family (Raymo et al., 2015). However, Chinese families are impacted by globalization and are transitioning under the rapid modernization of social changes (Xu et al., 2014; Whyte, 2020). As the attention of tourism scholars has shifted toward entrepreneurial families, Chinese families should also be considered to contribute to tourism entrepreneurship scholarship.

The positioning of children has been ambiguous in emerging tourism family entrepreneurship. By taking a child-inclusive approach, this study explores the lifestyle tourism family entrepreneurial migration phenomenon in China to contribute to existing tourism family entrepreneurship studies and family studies. Aiming to gain insights directly from children rather than relying solely on their parents' perspectives (Khoo-Lattimore et al., 2015, 2018; Bakas, 2018), this study employs an innovative and creative method - LEGO® Serious Play® (LSP) at Old Dad Teahouses (or Lao Ba Cha 老爸茶 in Chinese) to provide children with a channel to reflect on their lived experiences as part of a lifestyle migrant tourism entrepreneurial family. This study aims to position Chinese children in the tourism entrepreneurial family discourse and facilitate their active engagement in the research process.

2 Study site: Hainan Island

In recent years, China has been extensively promoting Hainan Island through its tourism development and the establishment of a free trade port as part of its economic growth strategies.

A series of favorable tourism policies were initiated on Hainan Island by the Chinese central government, including tax rebate policies on Hainan Island (Zhang and Yan, 2012), electric vehicle promotion policies (Xu et al., 2020), international tourism island policies (Yamori et al., 2017), and free trade zone policies (Matthew et al., 2019). Ma and Xu (2016) state that these tourist destinations have location advantages, comfortable natural environments, and favorable tourism policies that can attract entrepreneurs. Many mainland Chinese citizens, especially entrepreneurs, are attracted to migrating with their families and establishing tourism businesses on Hainan Island. Entrepreneurs and their families have become essential for the development of tourism on Hainan Island.

A study on the Canary Islands, Spain, documented that migrants bring new social dynamics to the destination area, thereby influencing tourism development and economic performance (García-Almeida and Hormiga, 2017). However, the role of children is overlooked within entrepreneurial families. Koščak et al. (2018) highlighted that the living community has influenced children's lives, where tourism is the primary industry. Therefore, Hainan Island was chosen as the study site where mainland migrants relocated from different parts of China. The eight participating Lifestyle Migrant Tourism Entrepreneurship (LMTE) families, including children in Hainan, provide a perfect focus for this study of Chinese tourism entrepreneurial families.

3 Literature review

3.1 Children in tourism entrepreneurial families

Childism has been emerging as an ontological and epistemological lens to explore the world through the eyes of the child while also challenging the adultism ingrained in our way of doing research (Séraphin and Chaney, 2023) for over a decade. According to Wall (2022), childism is different from childhood study; it is an approach similar to feminism, post-genderism, and environmentalism, which is a critical movement that calls for more attention to children's experiences of their interpretation of realities and lives (Canosa and Schänzel, 2021). Childism is now finding its place in various fields of study (Wall, 2022), including tourism. This study adopts the concept of childism used by Wall (2022), which argues that childism is an approach that tries to change the marginalized situation of vulnerable children across different disciplines.

According to von Braun (2017), children form the heart of a family, the center of their community and society as active agents. Children caught the attention of tourism academics, maintaining that children play an important role in tourism (Séraphin and Chaney, 2023). For example, researchers discovered the significant role of children involved in the travel decision-making process (Schänzel and Jenkins, 2017; Yang et al., 2020). As a result of growing attention to childism and the position of children within a family, family tourism research has started including children's voices. Previously, many scholars treated children as objects, with empirical data capturing indirect perceptions of children instead of their direct voices (Feng and Li, 2016). As such, during family interviews, children's voices were collected indirectly, and their parents or guardians communicated their perceptions (Canosa and Graham, 2016).

Bakas (2018) concluded that children are significant social agents who play an essential role in the tourism industry as crucial members of their families. Although children's voices were not obtained directly from them, Bakas (2018) found that children became "replacement entrepreneurs" who contributed to the survival of their family tourism business. Children are thus not only the direct consumers as tourists but also those who influence consumers and future consumption.

Family life is constructed by every family member, including adults and children, and not a single person can represent the whole family, making the roles played by each family member within tourism entrepreneurship significant (Wilson, 2007). Nonetheless, the perspective of children in tourism family entrepreneurship scholarship has been under-studied. Lifestyle migration and tourism entrepreneurial processes impact children in their own way. Thus, children's experiences with these processes should be conceptualized by children themselves (Carr, 2011).

Regardless of whether it is about family tourism or family tourism entrepreneurship, tourism scholarship calls for the participation of children in research for the long-term benefit of everyone (Séraphin and Chaney, 2023). Based on Canosa and Schänzel (2021) review, only nine studies explored children's role in tourism entrepreneurial families in the tourism industry, with only one study from Asia. These studies focused on economic-related issues, such as child labor or children working as unpaid workers within the family (Zhao, 2009; Bakas, 2018), rather than the lived experiences of children. Yet, children are co-creating the tourism entrepreneurial experience with their family members. Within LMTE families, grandparents, parents, and children contribute to their family life and the children's voices need to be included.

3.2 Methodology for including children's voices

Tourism research, including resident children's voices, is still emerging. For example, Koščak et al. (2018) asked host children about their perception of tourism in central European tourist destinations, while their recent research in 2023 included children's voices discussing the impact of tourism in six European tourist destinations. This study was conceptualized to understand the quality of life of children, for example, their interpretation of their lived experiences as members of entrepreneurial families, which is absent from the previous literature (Yang et al., 2020). Recent studies only included children from Western countries (e.g., Koščak et al., 2018, 2023), while Chinese children in tourist destinations have been neglected. Therefore, there is a need for Chinese children's voices regarding LMTE families to be included in tourist destinations such as Hainan.

The lack of tourism research on children can be explained by an insufficient understanding of their unique needs and experiences and the common focus on the adult market. Children in tourism research are often overlooked for four reasons (Séraphin and Chaney, 2023). The first reason is related to ethical issues, children's research involves ethical and legal considerations that

require special attention, potentially adding to the complexity of conducting such studies (Khoo-Lattimore et al., 2018) such as child labor (Khoo-Lattimore, 2015). Few empirical studies cover this sensitive topic because the researcher needs to consider possible distress issues of children and other potential risks. Thus, the ethical approval process can be challenging on account of social norms of child protection and child safety (Carr, 2006). The second reason is related to the vulnerability of children. Khoo-Lattimore (2015) argued that children do "function" and can effectively communicate but it is up to us researchers to facilitate the process in the best possible way (Monterrubio et al., 2016). The third reason, involving children in research requires suitable and professional data collection methods (Khoo-Lattimore et al., 2018; Yang et al., 2020; Séraphin and Chaney, 2023). Furthermore, the tourism framework is insufficiently developed to conceptualize children's behaviors and experiences, as it lacks theoretical insights (Poria and Timothy, 2014). Consequently, tourism research has marginalized children (Feng and Li, 2016). To address these issues, our study adopted innovative and creative research methods that have not been widely adopted in tourism research, allowing the inclusion of children's voices.

Traditionally, children are recognized as a vulnerable group and require comprehensive ethics review processes when involving children as participants. However, the concept of vulnerability is ambiguous (Buchanan, 2023). The central idea of vulnerability in human subject research is to protect participants instead of excluding them (Gordon, 2020). "Vulnerable groups receive less attention from researchers, and there is no reason, however, why they should be excluded from any research" (van den Hoonaard, 2018, p. 4). Social researchers are encouraged to include children's voices to reveal their lived experiences rather than considering them too vulnerable to be interviewed.

Greig et al. (2007) argued that qualitative research is suitable for conducting research with children, and the qualitative approach has proven its substantial contribution to tourism studies (Wilson and Hollinshead, 2015). Carr (2011) supported the use of qualitative methods to conduct research with children and suggested starting with small-scale research. Increasingly, researchers claim that children should be actively involved rather than passive observers (Monterrubio et al., 2016; Canosa and Graham, 2022). This study aligns with these researchers and adopts a qualitative approach to include the voices of children from tourism-entrepreneur families. Thus, qualitative research methodologies should allow children to be heard to understand their thoughts, perspectives, and experiences.

Qualitative methods were previously applied for different tourism research involving children, such as focus groups, ethnography, and visual methods (Yang et al., 2020). Visual methods are the most frequently used qualitative method, which may involve drawing (Aït-Yahia and Ghidouche, 2020), participatory film (Canosa et al., 2017; Seraphin and Green, 2019), and photographs (Schänzel and Smith, 2011), which recognize the competence of children and involve children in the research process as co-creators. This allows researchers to access the data that are difficult to express through text and better understand children's life experiences in tourism studies (Rakić and Chambers, 2010; Canosa et al., 2017). This study adopted an innovative research

strategy to include children's participation, to make them speak freely in their family members' presence and have an enjoyable co-creative experience. This study obtained children's voices directly from children employing the innovative methodological research of LSP workshops at Old Dad Teahouses.

3.3 Methodological considerations

This research is grounded in constructivism epistemology, considering that the underlying reality of tourism entrepreneurial families is complex and that undercover meanings of their lived experiences are constructed by subjective knowledge (Wengel et al., 2016). Constructivism methodology encourages researchers to employ different methods, engaging different participants, and considering different cultural backgrounds, aiming to enhance the richness and accuracy of the research. This aligns with the critical turn in tourism questioning the traditional positivist approaches in tourism studies (Ateljevic et al., 2005; Wilson et al., 2020). Jennings (2010) pointed out that the researcher's epistemology impacts their choice of research method and subsequently influences how participants reflect their subjective experiences. According to Creswell (2013), a constructivist researcher and their participants co-construct the realities. Thus, the relationship between the researcher and the participants becomes essential, and the perspectives of the participants important.

This study involved all family members taking a whole-family approach (Schänzel, 2010), including all adults and children. Families have different characteristics across countries due to different histories, cultures, and economic stances (Wu and Wall, 2016). All participants in this research were from China, and this research design took considerable time to underscore these study backgrounds. Wu and Wall (2016) argued that researchers who study Chinese families in tourism research should understand the character of Chinese families, such as the child being the center of a family (due to China's one-child policy), who are taken care of by parents and grandparents, the multigenerational structure of the family, and cultural traditions. Life experiences are linked to many aspects where the place of residence provides an essential family component (Butler and Sinclair, 2020). Hence, the choice of any qualitative tool needs to be tailored to participants, especially children.

First, we reviewed the qualitative and visual methods that have been adopted in involving children. Within a tourism study of participants' experiences, some qualitative methods may not be suitable for Chinese children. For instance, talk-based approaches, such as focus groups, have been criticized by Bosco and Herman (2010) in that opinions and biases within the group, such as the facilitator, may affect other participants (Nyumba et al., 2018). For example, in some East Asian regions, such as China, families may be wary of external researchers. Interviews with the entire family might be challenging since young Chinese tend to respect the opinions of older people. Grown-ups tend to fulfill society's expectations and may not speak the truth under this pressure. The Chinese can be conservative, typically keeping their family issues to themselves, and can be shy to talk (Scroope and Evason, 2023). Thus, the talk-based approach may not be suitable for

Chinese families. Also, previous scholars stated that Eurocentric ontologies, epistemologies, and methodologies may be unsuitable within Asian contexts, as Asia's economic and social culture differs from Western culture (Raymo et al., 2015; Mura and Khoo-Lattimore, 2018). The written-based approach may encounter difficulties if participants have disabilities in writing or drawing their experiences (Wengel et al., 2021). Additionally, the use of drawing is influenced by individual skills and cultural factors (Restoy et al., 2022). Not everyone is proficient in drawing, and not every cultural background considers drawing a primary means of expression (Martikainen and Hakoköngäs, 2023). In tourism and hospitality research, the task-based research method, in which participants are given specific tasks or activities, is often implemented when children participate in research (Demirdelen et al., 2019). Consequently, the creative visual research method of LSP was chosen as an appropriate data collection method to include children's voices. Furthermore, the Old Dad Teahouse was chosen as the study setting, which is specifically tailored for researching families, including children, and suitable for Chinese culture.

LSP was created in the early 2000s to serve as a planning tool for solving business problems and later was used in education, psychology, tourism, and hospitality (Wengel et al., 2016). The LSP method is an innovative methodological approach developed from psychology and behavioral science (Quinn et al., 2021). It allows researchers multiple interpretations rather than a traditional positivist approach, which separates the researcher from their research participants (Ateljevic et al., 2005). It draws from Piaget's theory of constructivism (Piaget, 1969) and was further developed by Papert and Harel (1991), who extended it to constructionism. Constructivism illustrates that children acquire knowledge based on their understanding and experience of the world instead of believing what grown-ups tell them. This means that their knowledge is constructed through their own experiences rather than imposed by adults. Children are active learners who are theory creators (Kristiansen and Rasmussen, 2014). Papert further incorporated the constructionism theory, emphasizing that knowledge is generated more efficiently and comprehensively when the learner is actively involved in learning with an external product (Papert and Harel, 1991). Hence, LSP incorporates theories that propose learners, including both children and adults, can express their internal emotions, feelings, experiences, and thoughts using tangible objects like LEGO bricks. This utilization of tangible objects allows for a deeper refinement of ideas and contributes to the construction of their subjective realities (Quinn et al., 2021).

Wengel et al. (2021) described LSP as a workshop technique guided by constructivist epistemology, allowing participants to express their understandings creatively and metaphorically through hands-on construction and play. LSP is a visual method that provides richer and deeper insights regarding complex phenomena (Rakić and Chambers, 2010). The LSP visual research method is engaging and suitable for study with children (Pink, 2011). Everyone can contribute to real-world problems and exchange opinions through tangible LEGO bricks. Children can express their experiences with tangible LEGO bricks by adopting this creative method. Furthermore, playing LEGO® "seriously" ensures that the researcher does not drive the thoughts of the participants and that

the children can have the freedom to express their opinions in a playful, metaphorical, and meaningful way.

LEGO® entered the Chinese market in the early 1990s. The first impression of LEGO® for Chinese people was "expensive" since China's economy was developing then and LEGO® as a brick toy was sold for a high price. To position itself in China's market, LEGO® made efforts to establish LEGO® Education Activity Centers nationwide, conveying the educational philosophy of learning through doing, learning through playing to Chinese consumers, and creating an image of LEGO® as educational and beneficial for learning. At that time, China implemented the One-Child policy, and families paid extensive attention to children's education. Hence, LEGO® became a highly popular educational toy that parents eagerly supported (Bloomberg, 2020). LEGO® also produced minifigure themes based on actual locations, including China (Maciorowski and Maciorowski, 2016), and these minifigures better align with Chinese culture. In research, LSP has become a powerful tool to break the ice, especially considering the Asian cultural trait of modesty, where people may hesitate to speak up, particularly at gatherings involving the entire family. In such situations, children's voices are often overlooked and overshadowed by their parents' opinions. Previous studies applied LEGO® to Chinese children with autism spectrum disorder and found that through these play activities, children's social communication and interaction skills improved, and playing with LEGO® resulted in positive effects on these children (Hu et al., 2018; Lee et al., 2023). Consequently, LSP was deemed as an appropriate data collection method to include children's voices in this research. Therefore, the creative, co-constructive, artifact-based method of LSP workshop was used in this study (Wengel, 2020).

Researchers gave additional thought to the social and cultural context in China (Loveridge et al., 2023). The researchers considered the interview setting, emphasizing the importance of creating a comfortable environment that encourages families to speak openly without feeling any undue pressure. Most importantly, to protect children's rights and dignity, a familiar place and safe environment could minimize the potential distress of children.

The LSP method was adopted and modified in this study by holding workshops at Old Dad Teahouses with Chinese children and their families.

Feng and Zhan (2006) described the Teahouse culture in Hainan as a tea-drinking culture where people gather in the public sphere, not only as a leisure activity but also as a social space. They concluded that this teahouse culture signified local rather than indigenous Hainan culture since the native Li people adopted it from immigrant mainlanders in 1988 (Feng and Zhan, 2006; Wang, 2007). However, as time passed, locals turned this immigrant activity into their own culture as Old Dad Tea. Old Dad Tea represents the rich cultural heritage of Hainan Island, reflecting the region's values of filial piety, kinship, and the spirit of togetherness. It offers unique traditional beverages that have a special place in Hainanese culture. Chen (2012) gave a more explicit description of Hainan's unique Teahouse culture as "Old Dad Tea" (老爸茶 Lao Ba Cha in Mandarin). Hainan men's historically more privileged attitude toward life has created the "Old Dad Tea" phenomenon. This activity occurs in open teahouses on the island that provide

TABLE 1 Participants information details.

#	Code	Tourism business	Original living province	Age	Education backgroud	Length of living in Hainan (yrs)	Family member(s) Detail			
							Relationship to the entreprneur	Age	Occupation	Notes
1	Yalong	Agri-tourism	Guangdong	34	Master, UK	9	Son	10	Student	
							Daughter	6	Student	
							Spouse	34	Housewife	
							Father in law	61	Retired	
							Mother in law	60	Retired	
2	Sanya	Agri-tourism	Hebei	44	Bachelor, CHN	17	Daughter	17	Student	
							Son	15	Student	
							Spouse	42	Housewife	
3	Haitang	Duty-free buyer	Shanxi	43	Bachelor, CHN	20	Daughter	16	Student	Spouse is local people
							Son	12	Student	
							Daughter	6	Student	
							Spouse	45	Entrepreneur	
4	Riyue	Accommodation	Beijing	65	PhD, CHN	8	Son	10	Student	Husband and wife ran the business together
							Spouse	41	Entrepreneur	
5	Qizi	Tourism influencer	Inner Mongolia	36	Bachelor, Russia	7	Daughter	6	Student	Spouse does not live with the family all the time
							Spouse	50	Entrepreneur	
							Father	64	Retired	
							Mother	63	Retired	
6	Bo'ao	Tourism agency	Xi'An	34	High School	7	Daughter	8	Student	Husband and wife ran the business together
							Spouse	35	Entrepreneur	
7	Shimei	Tourism social media CEO	Shandong	36	Master, Korea	5	Son	12	Student	Spouse is local people
							Daughter	8	Student	
							Daughter	6	Student	

(Continued)

TABLE 1 (Continued)

#	Code	Tourism business	Original living province	Age	Education backgroud	Length of living in Hainan (yrs)	Family member(s) Detail			
							Relationship to the entreprneur	Age	Occupation	Notes
8	Qingshui	Restaurant and Bar	Jiangxi	32	Bachelor, CHN	7	Spouse	37	Entrepreneur in Tourism	
							Mother in law	61	Retired	
							Father in law	62	Retired	
							Son	14	Student	
							Daughter	8	Student	
							Brother	36	Government Official	Divorced and live with brother's family

customers with tea, coffee, and dim sum in the afternoon at low prices, comparable to a pub in Western countries but with lower prices and suitable for all family members. Cummings (2022) conceptualized this activity as an "old dad" teahouse (laoba cha). Locals and visitors often enjoy Old Dad Tea as a symbol of hospitality and warmth. This study continued Chen (2012)'s description of this phenomenon as Old Dad Tea and the location adheres to Cummings (2022)'s terminology of Old Dad Teahouse.

Today, LSP has become a facilitated workshop which is a group work tool that has been applied in different situations. For example, using LSP to improve autistic children's social interaction skills (Hu et al., 2018), facilitate individual coaching (Quinn et al., 2021), make better business decisions (Kristiansen and Rasmussen, 2014), and in teaching and learning (James, 2013; Kurkovsky, 2015). To gain insight into Chinese children in tourism entrepreneurship families, the creative and innovative method of LSP was chosen for this study. The LSP workshops were held at Old Dad Teahouses as a suitable way for children to immerse themselves in local customs and break the ice. The whole family, including the children, came together to enjoy their favorite dim-sums and dishes alongside the delightful taste of Old Dad Tea. This family activity experience fostered a sense of togetherness and allowed children to participate and discover their role in the entrepreneurial family without pressure.

4 Study design

As constructivism forms the basis of this research's methodological framework, a purposive sampling model was employed in this research. Eight participants and their families were selected based on their experiences and originally living in provinces other than Hainan. To add confidence to this research, the sample included a comprehensive range of participants representing families with different structures (three generations within a family live together, single parent family, etc.), different original living places, different duration of living length in Hainan Island, and different ages. All the participants recruited were Chinese, which helped to evolve the body of research knowledge on Asian tourism entrepreneurship families (Mura and Sharif, 2015).

This research adopted the innovative method LSP, as the first to employ this method with Chinese children in tourism. The main researcher facilitated the workshop at local Old Dad Teahouses to provide a relaxed atmosphere for a family, including children, to talk freely about their experiences. The workshop was held during the afternoon teatime based on the steps developed by Wengel (2020): posing the question, construction, sharing, and reflection. Each workshop implemented two building techniques: building individual models and stories and building shared models and stories (Wengel, 2020). Each family interview took 90 to 120 min. Children were given opportunities to "opt out" during the workshop, with participants taking turns to introduce their models, and if the child finished building their models, they could share first and leave the table.

This qualitative research explored lifestyle migrant tourism entrepreneurial family members' behaviors and experiences on Hainan Island. The nature of qualitative research requires a small sample (Wilson-Youlden and Bosworth, 2019; Hack-Polay et al.,

2020). Hence, the research sample for this study included eight lifestyle migrant tourism entrepreneurial families who owned tourism businesses on Hainan Island and migrated from mainland China after 2013. All participants chosen for this study are families that migrated to Hainan with their close family members, including children, and operated tourism-related businesses, such as agritourism, surf shops, hotels, and restaurants. Ethics approval was attained through the university ethics committee and ethical procedures were followed. Two types of consent forms were created—one tailored for children and another for adults. Interview participant recruitment posters were sent via a local Chamber of Commerce's secretary with prior permission. Interested potential participants contacted the researcher via email. The recruitment of LMTE families was done on a first-come basis. First, two pilot interviews were conducted because pilot interviews can help the researcher refine interview questions and protocols (Abbasian, 2021). These two interviews were then followed by interviews with the other six families. This resulted in 37 participants, including 15 children aged 6 to 17 (see Table 1).

4.1 Interviews conducted at old dad teahouses

Face-to-face family interviews were conducted with the lifestyle migrant tourism entrepreneurial families at Old Dad Teahouses. As the interviews in this study focused on storytelling, the researcher wanted to establish a welcoming environment that encouraged sharing among family participants. Choosing this localist perspective for the interview location provided me with additional insights and a better understanding by considering the cultural background and linguistic complexities of the interviewees

(Qu and Dumay, 2011). The Old Dad Teahouses provided a place where the participants felt familiar and were more willing to share their stories with me. LSP workshops were held here for data collection, in which all family members, including children, participated together. For each family, a VIP room was booked before the group interview with a large round table that could comfortably seat ten people, and afternoon tea was served as a token of appreciation for their participation in the research, helping ease families into a more relaxed interview at Old Dad Teahouses along with the LSP data collection environment. Considering that children may get hungry during the interview, providing children with dim sum food before the workshop helped the children feel more at ease and participate (see Figure 1).

4.2 LEGO® Serious Play® workshop

Interview guides were prepared before the interview and all participants received a hard copy to refer to during the workshop sessions. Before each session started, the research aim and procedure of the workshop were introduced to the participants. Then the participants were asked to build a transportation tool based individually on their exploration kit in 60 s to warm up. After a warm-up exercise, participants were asked to remove pieces and then to change their transportation tool, to highlight positive or negative experiences of living in Hainan in 2 min. After that, they were asked to build their individual model to describe their positive or negative family lifestyle migration experience on Hainan Island with custom LEGO bricks in 5 min. Lastly, they were asked to use previous individual models from stage three to build the final model in 5 min. During this step, they were asked to think about each individual model's relationship with other models and orient each model in relation to other models in a way that reflects their

FIGURE 1
Interview location at Old Dad Teahouse.

family's lifestyle after their family moved to Hainan Island. After each construction phase, each participant had their own time to introduce their own model and share stories one by one in equal time. During their reflection, further questions were asked, such as "What was the process of deciding to move to Hainan? What was the most impressive thing/story you could think of after migrating to Hainan?" Meanwhile, the facilitator ensured that at each stage, every participant, especially children was given the opportunity to share their stories. Each workshop took on average 90 to 120 min.

5 Findings

In the LSP family workshops, lifestyle migration and tourism entrepreneurial experiences were asked for all family members, including children. The focus here is on the themes derived from children through LSP family workshops. Five key themes emerged: desire for settlement, aspirational lifestyle, shared migratory experience, family togetherness, and potential future entrepreneurs (see Table 2).

5.1 Desire for settlement

The participating children were from mainland China, where urbanization is typical. Mainland cities where they originally lived are more characterized by skyscrapers than by green plants. The children reflected their desire for settlement in Hainan in their models. Countless blue bricks were used as an implication of the sea around Hainan Island, yellow bricks for the beach, and green bricks to represent the green environment of Hainan (see Figures 2, 4).

The Haitian family boy's model is shown in Figure 2. He said, *"I have spent most of my (leisure) at the sea. I love sand and sunshine. I can spend all day on the beach downstairs from our home."* Another boy from the Riyue family also enjoyed the beach and the sand and made a similar comment:

> I visit the beach after school every day with my classmates from class who are also my neighbors. Playing with the sand is my favorite activity…after living here, I seem to have a "social butterfly" special ability…. (Family Riyue, boy).

The Hainan education system is different from mainland China. Students do not have the same pressure and instead have more free time. The personalities of the children changed after migrating to Hainan and became more open and outgoing.

The sense of "community" in Hainan is strong. Unlike other big and busy cities in China, Hainan still preserves the "community" life. The children live within the same community and go to the same school. Children who live in the same community generally play safely together without their guardians. Other children who live in larger cities in mainland China usually have less opportunity to bond since their lifestyle pace is faster and children have many after-class courses. The boy from the Riyue family continues,

> My best friend in Beijing usually chats with me every weekend in his parent's car, he is so busy, he sleeps and eats in the car because he has many different courses to take and

TABLE 2 Thematic framework derived from children's voices.

Codes	Sub-themes	Themes
➤ Study is boring but school has a lot of fun ➤ Study stress is lower than hometown	Better growing-up environment	Desire for settlement
➤ Social butterfly ➤ Enjoy playing with community friends ➤ Outgoing personality	Personality change	
➤ Zoo is very joyful place ➤ Flower can be seen all year round ➤ Slow-paced life ➤ School is fun ➤ A lot leisure time and activities ➤ Eating habit change	Joyful lifestyle	Aspirational lifestyle
➤ Hainan is too far away, longer time for parcel to arrive ➤ Public security is not so good	Under-developed island	Shared migratory experience
➤ Family is important ➤ Being together with family is important	Strong family bonds	Family togetherness
➤ Want to earn a lot of money in the future	Financial awareness	Potential future entrepreneur

there is no time for him to sleep and eat, I don't like that kind of life. I have only one golf course here already keeps me very busy (Family Riyue, boy).

All these positive experiences make Hainan a desirable place for settlement from the children's perspectives.

5.2 Aspirational lifestyle

The participating children used many animal minifigures. They argued that the variety of Hainan animals made them happy (see Figure 3).

> You know, the zoos here are fantastic, animals walk side by side with you, you can touch them. See, our house is this white and blue building, which is very close to a zoo. It only takes 10 min from my home to the zoo (Family Qizi, girl).

Another girl from the Qingshui family said, *"The zoos here in Hainan are much bigger than my hometown's, many kinds of animals, even many kinds of birds. I love zoos, I hope I can live in a place close to the zoo."* The zoo is one of their favorite places.

Also, the girl from the Yalong family built a zoo with Hainan's flagship species, Hainan Gibbon. She believed *"it is very special and that only living in Hainan I can have a chance to frequently see the Gibbon which I never saw it before elsewhere; thus, I like Hainan more than my hometown"* (see Figure 4 below).

FIGURE 2
Desire for settlement models.

FIGURE 3
Zoo model.

In addition to zoos, the children mentioned that the flowers here in Hainan could be seen all year long (see Figure 5).

> I love flowers, this is my home's flower garden which is at the entrance of my house. This is me sitting there taking care of my flowers. In the future, my home will look like this exactly which have all different kinds of flowers around me, I will stay in Hainan thus my flowers can always bloom (Family Qingshui, girl).

The verdant environment of Hainan, including its zoos, beaches, and sea is highly preferred by young children who aspire to grow up in such an environment. Hainan offered

FIGURE 4
Zoo with Hainan Gibbon.

more opportunities to have profound experiences with nature for children.

5.3   Shared migratory experience

The Qingshui family built a shared model of Old Dad Tea (Lao Ba Cha) Street, which reflected their shared migratory experiences after migrating here (see Figure 6). Their model is close to a real Old Dad Teahouse where the kitchen is always open and transparent to all customers, and people can order directly from the chef.

All members of the Qingshui family enjoy their lives in Hainan and believe it is better than their mainland city. One of the children, a girl, used many flowers in various colors, expressing her happiness that she can always see flowers at any time of the year and enjoy outdoor activities. The boy also enjoys life here by building a model of a BBQ place with customers highlighting Hainan's variety of nightlife. He perceives life here as more colorful and never dull.

5.4   Family togetherness

The traditional Chinese traditional culture can also be seen through the children's models (see Figure 7), representing their togetherness as a family. Family is considered the most important thing; they believe that the family should always stay together. The

girl from the Sanya family recalls her memory of the Lunar Chinese New Year.

> One year during the Chinese Lunar New Year, my dad got sick and had to be in a hospital. On New Year's Eve, we couldn't celebrate together as a family. It left a deep impression on me as my mom took care of him in the hospital and they couldn't come home. My younger brother and I stayed with our grandmother that night, and the feeling of the empty home without them was quite profound (Family Sanya, girl).

She put a 阖家团员 (gathering of the whole family) brick like an umbrella in her model to show her feelings for her family and that she wishes they could always be together. It refers to gathering family members to spend time together, especially during significant holidays or occasions, symbolizing a harmonious and happy family relationship. She used this brick to express her good wishes for family togetherness and a joyful life.

5.5   Potential future entrepreneur

The children of the Qingshui family put two bodyguards in front of their store to protect their fortune. They believe good fortune is important for daily life and should be protected safely. The son of the Riyue family mentioned that he desperately wants money to buy things he likes and that he wants to become an entrepreneur like his father. The best thing about his school here is that he can discuss his business ideas with his classmates. Other children support these sentiments. One boy created a vault model and placed several yellow bricks representing fortune. He believes that his family can make a good fortune here (see Figure 7). The seven-year-old girl from the Bo'ao family used the brick 招财进宝 (attract wealth and treasures) and put it in front of her model's door (see Figure 8). The 招财进宝 brick was used in four models. It is an idiom used in China frequently, especially during Lunar New Year and celebratory events, which means attracting wealth and bringing in treasures. It expresses the hope of attracting good fortune by welcoming wealth home. Children from Chinese tourism entrepreneurial families showed their strong recognition of fortune and wished to become rich people in the future.

These family LSP workshops helped the researcher to understand how children see, experience, and co-construct their lived experiences on Hainan Island. Furthermore, LSP allowed the researcher to better understand the lifestyle experiences of children and other family members after they migrated to Hainan Island, their aspirational lifestyle, and how they feel about living there.

6   Discussion

This study applied LSP as a research tool. In revisiting childism within the context of this research, it is essential to underscore how the methodological choices align with and contribute to the aims of this ontological lens. Throughout this research, the LSP method has been implemented to actively engage children in the research process, a decision rooted in the constructivist

FIGURE 5
Flower model.

perspective that positions children as active contributors to knowledge construction. This intentional choice serves to challenge traditional power dynamics by recognizing and valuing children's agencies. By providing a platform for children to shape the research narrative through creative expression, we actively work against discriminatory tendencies, fostering an environment where children are empowered to share their unique perspectives. Thus, our methodology not only aligns with the ontological lens but serves as a practical manifestation of our commitment to implement childism in the research context.

LSP yields two notable advantages in including children from Chinese tourism entrepreneurial families in the research. First, the application of LSR enables the incorporation of children's perspectives into studies of family entrepreneurship in the tourism sector. This approach is particularly effective at the Old Dad Teahouse, where the whole family can participate simultaneously, mitigating ethical concerns associated with research involving children. The Old Dad Teahouses, with their relaxed atmosphere and engaging experiences, facilitate a conducive environment for family interactions, aligning with the concept of "fun" as defined by Podilchak (1991) by deriving pleasure from constructive activities and fostering social interaction.

Secondly, children's life experiences can be better understood by researchers through the playful LEGO building process. Using metaphors with LEGO bricks model building reflects deeper meanings with no right or wrong answer. Children often looked at their parents at the beginning of each workshop; this action may repeat several times, awaiting their parents' permission. During the subsequent process of building the LEGO models, the children gradually got empowered and, eventually, stopped looking at their parents and freely expressed their feelings and shared their stories.

This illustrates that methods such as LSP can enable children to express their voices and participate actively in research co-creation.

The findings underscore the early development of a wealth-conscious mindset among children of Chinese tourism entrepreneurial families. These children gained a profound understanding of business from an early age (Zagkotsi, 2014). Although being immersed in a business-orientated environment can be enriching, it is crucial to ensure that children have the autonomy to explore their passions beyond the confines of their family businesses.

The prominent finding of desire for settlement revolves around the profound sense of belonging that children on the island attribute to their natural surroundings. The rich tapestry of narratives underscores the deep connection these children feel with the local environment. Most Lego creations manifested a profound sense of belonging and connection that children feel toward the natural surroundings in their new community. This discovery corresponds with research on children raised in host communities, indicating that the way children and young individuals perceive nature and demonstrate environmental awareness is shaped by socio-cultural contexts (Canosa et al., 2020). This sense of belonging extends beyond mere physical presence; it encapsulates a holistic relationship that intertwines with their identity formation and daily experiences. The children's stories reveal how the island's natural elements become integral components of their personal narratives, shaping their perceptions, values, and even aspirations. This noteworthy theme sheds light on the multifaceted ways in which the island's environment contributes to the wellbeing and identity construction of its young residents. It invites a deeper exploration into the nuanced interplay between ecological factors and the socio-emotional development of children, signaling the

FIGURE 6
Shared model from Qingshui family: shared migratory experience.
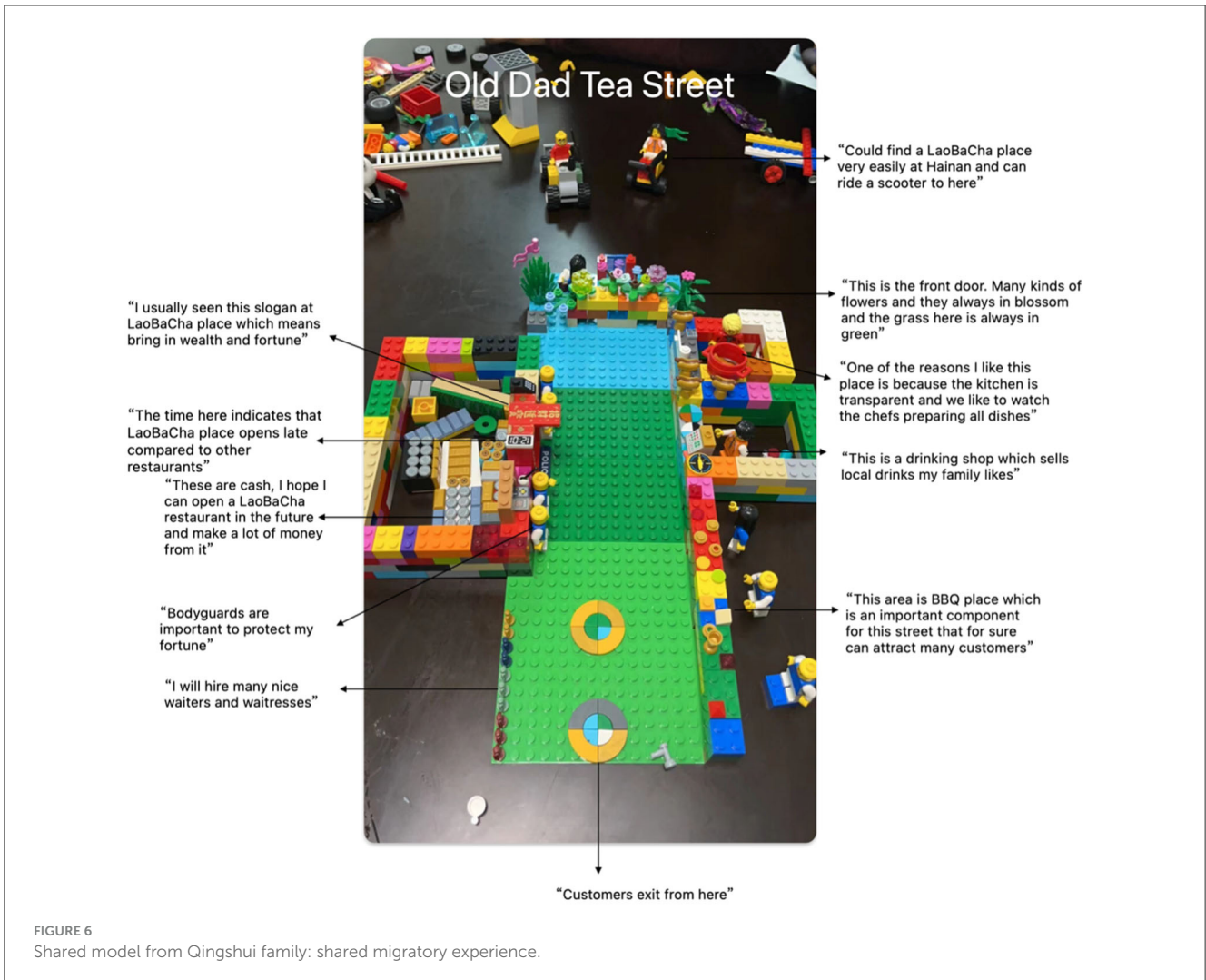
need for a more comprehensive understanding of the pivotal role that the natural environment plays in shaping their lives.

These children exhibited a strong familial attachment, supported by both parents and grandparents in China's child-centered family structure (Wu and Wall, 2016). However, this intense family focus requires a delicate balance to ensure holistic growth. Excessive attention can impose undue expectations and pressures on children, potentially constraining their development of independence and decision-making skills. Consequently, while being central to the family and being offered with consideration, a careful equilibrium for children's optimal development is needed. The study further uncovered the impact of cultural transition on young migrants. Relocation from mainland China to Hainan introduces lifestyle, traditional, and normative changes. Cultural adaptation, an overlooked aspect in previous studies, emerges as an essential experience. Similarly, education plays a pivotal role, with participants navigating the distinct Hainan education system characterized by reduced homework and more leisure time.

The findings illustrate that a sense of community provides children with an additional support system; community members who can offer emotional support during times of adjustment and stress. This support can help children feel less isolated and more connected to their new environment and their peers in Hainan. During LSR, the children expressed a sense of cultural adaptation as they navigated differences in language, customs, and local practices. This adaptation experience of children from tourism entrepreneurial families has been regrettably inadequate in previous studies. For example, Wilson (2007) explored the lifestyle motivations of adults, only paying minor focus on children as family helpers. To better understand the development of tourism family entrepreneurship beyond economic issues, children should be engaged in research and their experiences considered.

Ethical considerations within this research extended to the physical research environment, fostering a space where children felt at ease expressing themselves creatively and sharing their perspectives openly. These "in situ" ethical decisions aimed not only to comply with procedural requirements but, more significantly, to create an atmosphere that respected and upheld the autonomy, wellbeing, and dignity of the participating children. This reflective enhancement strengthens the ethical foundation of our research with children, aligning with contemporary standards and acknowledging the paramount importance of ethical considerations in studies involving this demographic.

FIGURE 7
Family togetherness.
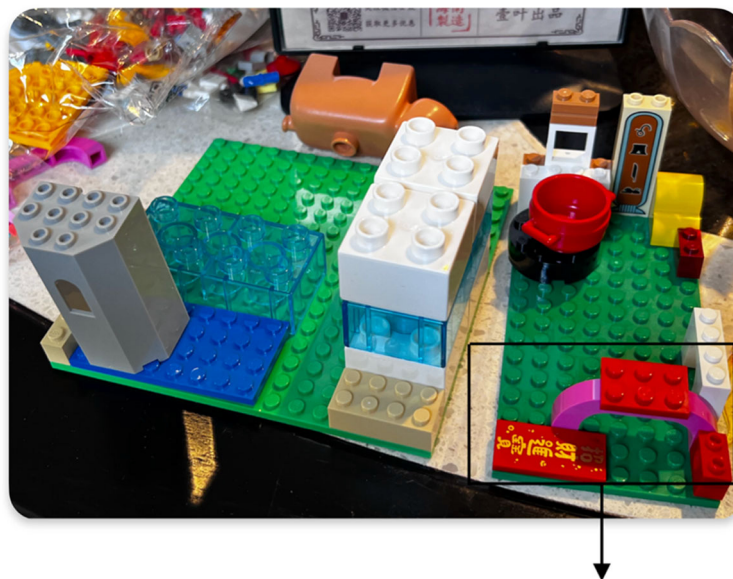
FIGURE 8
Potential future entrepreneur.

In general, these findings illuminate the intricate dynamics that children raised in tourism entrepreneurial families face. Their narratives provide profound insight into multifaceted experiences within such unique contexts. This study underscores the need for a comprehensive approach to supporting and nurturing children in these families, acknowledging both benefits and challenges.

7 Conclusion

The implementation of the LSP for engaging Asian children is a significant avenue of inquiry in the field of tourism and child development. It is effective and appropriate for diverse cultural settings. LSR workshops are well suited for Chinese families when

involving children as they offer several advantages. First, Asian cultures often emphasize group harmony, respect for authority, and adherence to traditional norms. LEGO bricks encourage creative thinking and imagination. There is no right or wrong answer in the workshops, and children can freely express themselves and create unique models, facilitating better communication with the researcher. Using LEGO bricks for visual expression, children can share their thoughts and emotions, promoting effective communication within the family and with the researcher. Moreover, as Asian societies evolve, LEGO finds acceptance due to its compatibility with modern education. Third, the shared model activity allows all family members to collaborate, providing a good opportunity for all family members to exchange their thoughts. Surprisingly, unlike anticipated challenges with LSP by the grandparents, in our workshops the senior participants engaged and enjoyed building LEGO because it allowed them to spend meaningful time and helped them understand the issues faced by their grandchildren during the family relocation to Hainan.

Lastly, having the LSP workshops held at Old Dad Teahouses can create cherished family memories. Engaging in the creation and sharing of LEGO models then becomes a meaningful and memorable experience. This pleasant environment provides a stress relief activity for participants, meaning less tension during the workshop and more freedom to talk about their experiences.

The application of LSP to involve Asian children holds promise to advance future tourism studies on children and understand child development. This research has the potential to shed light on how innovative qualitative tools can be tailored to specific cultural contexts while promoting collaborative learning, creative thinking, and communication skills among children in Asia.

Studying children from tourism entrepreneurial families has revealed a mix of opportunities and challenges that shape how they grow up and what they might do in the future. By hearing these young people's stories, we learn important lessons about the many different aspects of growing up in a family that is focused on running tourism-related businesses and the opportunities and challenges that shape their cultivation and prospects. The narratives and life experiences shared by these children highlight the unique blend of advantages and complexities associated with their familial backgrounds. Their direct engagement can cultivate an entrepreneurial spirit and innovation, setting the stage for future entrepreneurial endeavors. Yet, alongside these opportunities lie distinct challenges, such as balancing family obligations with personal aspirations and navigating the expectations that carry forward a family legacy.

While these young people benefit from being exposed to various cultures and business skills, they also need personalized advice and mentorship to navigate the intricate expectations placed on them within their families and the broader community. Maintaining a balance between their obligations and their development is a recurring idea highlighting the necessity for comprehensive support systems. Looking ahead, the government should recognize the diverse needs of these entrepreneurial tourism migrant children and their families by providing comprehensive support to facilitate a smooth transition and ensure beneficial outcomes. Longitudinal studies could further illuminate the long-term effects of migration and entrepreneurial experiences on these children's development, academic achievements, and overall wellbeing.

In conclusion, the stories emerging from the children in tourism family businesses unveil a rich tapestry of experiences, aspirations, and challenges. This study encourages us to acknowledge the subtle interaction between tradition and modern ways, individual advancement and family responsibilities, and safeguarding culture while promoting new ideas. By recognizing and dealing with the complexities of their experiences, we can enhance the ability of these young individuals to confidently navigate their life course, positively contributing to the ongoing development of their family's heritage and progressing the tourism entrepreneurship discourse. By gaining insight into their challenges and opportunities, informed strategies can be developed to enhance their experiences, promote their wellbeing, and ultimately contribute to the successful integration of these young migrants into Hainan's evolving social fabric.

Data availability statement

The raw data supporting the conclusions of this article will be made available by the authors, without undue reservation.

Ethics statement

The studies involving humans were approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee. The studies were conducted in accordance with the local legislation and institutional requirements. Written informed consent for participation in this study was provided by the participants' legal guardians/next of kin.

Author contributions

XJ: Writing – original draft. YW: Writing – review & editing. HS: Conceptualization, Supervision, Writing – review & editing. CL: Writing – review & editing.

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