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Assessment Cover Page

Module Title:	Applied Business Research Project
Assessment Title:	CA2
Lecturer Name:	Rory Byrne
Student Full Name:	Nelva Sulme Bautista Prado
Student Number:	2021347
Assessment Due Date:	15-05-2022
Date of Submission:	15-05-2022

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How to Improve Employee Efficiency Practices for Small Family Businesses

by
Nelva Sulme Bautista Prado
2021347

May 2022,
Dublin - Ireland

Abstract

The aim of this research project is to examine the efficiency of employees from the perspective of small family businesses and the workable solutions to improve low efficiency. The sampling method chosen to conduct this research was non-probabilistic and the type of sampling used was expert sampling. The non-probability sampling investigation was conducted using the qualitative research method, which this research project pursued.

An interview was undertaken with an expert in the field of business development and productive development issues who is an ILO Specialist for Latin America and the Caribbean.

The results of the research showed that trust between managers and their employees is crucial where managers should not be afraid in letting their employees solve problems on their own and to delegate important tasks without the fear of relinquishing important knowledge. Employee working conditions, employee and managers use of time was emphasized and where appropriate training was available it should be availed of by the employees, implementation and change management were essential where employers must pursue improvements and training for their employees and this pursuit of talent is essential to increase employee efficiency. Entrepreneurs must recognise the gains that can be pursued through internal improvements and finally by building stakeholder relationships and work were all drivers for increasing low efficiency in small family businesses. One of the main conclusions from this research is the pursuit of growth and ongoing training on the part of managers for their employees. And managers should not be afraid to embrace change or else they will have a stagnant working environment where employees are disinterested and will pursue opportunities elsewhere.

Keywords: efficiency, productivity, small business, family business

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my special thanks of gratitude to the faculty of CCT college whose modules in some ways were helpful to me in developing this project and their support throughout my research project.

I would also like to express a special thanks to my beloved boyfriend Barry, for all his support, patience, and guidance in the challenge I took on.

Lastly, I would like to thank myself who one year ago was unsure if I would be able to complete such a mammoth task.

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Chapter 1

1 Introduction

This applied business research project presents studies regarding the problems of small family businesses with the efficiency of their employees. I grew up in a family of businessmen in the city of Ayacucho - Peru, until I moved to the capital Lima, to study at the college UNIFE. After completing my five years of study, I returned to my city, and while I was writing my thesis to graduate as an engineer, I had initial contact with small family businesses from different regions of my country. After graduating as an engineer, I entered my father's business until I took charge of directing one of them. The observant and analytical eye is part of my personality, which is why I have been observing the behaviour of small family businesses, identifying similar patterns that repeat themselves in a variety of small family businesses and even in a variety of countries, Dublin is not the exception. I worked in the hotel industry, in events and restaurants, where I was also able to closely observe the same pattern of behaviour of employees, and the same problems that small family businesses experience, related to the low efficiency of their employees.

The structure of small family businesses is different than medium and large companies, thus, owners and managers don't spend time using complicated metrics to gauge employee efficiency. In addition, it is important to recognize that small family businesses are more focused on the day-to-day business, they do not have all the knowledge about business theory, they have a simple and multitasking administrative system, they have employees for the important activities of the business, and they barely have employees who can be in charge of making specific metrics on the efficiency of the employees. Therefore, I am interested in helping managers and owners to better manage this problem to increase efficiency and save money in their business. Owners and managers of small family businesses don't realize how much time and resources they lose due to a lack of internal organization. Mosby (2014) considers that small companies are the ones that create the most new jobs, but they are also the ones that cause the most layoffs. Neckebrouck et al. (2018) in their study showed that around 60% of family businesses generate employment worldwide. Small family businesses exist in large numbers, they employ skilled and unskilled employees, they are an important source in the financial system, as well as an important source of tax revenue according to Sánchez González (2018).

Chapter 2

2 Research Question and Objectives

To address this research project, it is important to ask the question to which the main objectives will be addressed.

- What are the possible solutions to improve employee efficiency in small family businesses?

The stated objectives intend to provide possible solutions that can help small family businesses to be more successful and profitable.

- The main objective of this business research project is to provide best practices and approaches to address low employee efficiency in small family businesses.
- To be a reference document for owners and managers of small family businesses seeking to address their business problems related to poor employee efficiency.

Chapter 3

3 Research Design Methodology

Agarwal (2015) defines research methodology as a systematic and in-depth investigation in a field of knowledge designed to unravel hidden information or establish principles based on experiences, theorizations, or observations. In addition, he proposes ways for attaining objectives.

The research methodology is considered as the justification or fundamental principle that determines the use of some of the research methods as explained by Firdaus et al. (2021).

Walliman (2010) mentions that research tries to discover knowledge that was not known before with solid foundations. To delve into research, it is necessary to apply techniques such as research methods, which guide the process of collecting, organizing, and analysing information to draw conclusions. There are many types of

research design to address a research project, the choice of the appropriate design depends on the type of problems that are intended to be analysed and the objectives that are intended to be achieved during the investigation.

The proposed research design methodology is exploratory because it adapts to the qualitative research approach. This type of exploratory research design was chosen for its flexibility to address the problem of low efficiency of employees of small family businesses.

3.1 Research Method

Walliman (2010) explains the quantitative method which analyses data where numbers relate to statistics, results about science, population densities, etc. while the qualitative method is analysing data related to words, such as human problems, groups of people, cultural judgments, thinking, ideas, attitudes to work, aspirations, loyalty, etc and giving some measures of controlling the causes and effects of the findings.

Interview tools will be used for qualitative data collection, as suggested by Creswell (2018) where it can be done in person, by call, video call, focus group, or e-mail. The data collected by this method can provide historical information, indirect information to filter. The researcher can manage the questions by using structured questions and if it is necessary can go deep when the interviewed are not open.

This research project was conducted under the qualitative research approach, focused on the interview with the specialized in business development and productive development issues in ILO (see Appendix B for more details), who has a lot of experience in the field of economics in small, medium, and large companies. His contribution is significant for this research, because from his point of view he provides a general view of the problems of small family businesses and looks towards their future, so that they can survive and/or grow gradually.

The short time to carry out this research project meant optimizing time and resources to present the results of the most important findings, focused on finding solutions and not so much the problems.

Chapter 4

4 Literature Review

4.1 Basic Definitions

There is an extensive and technical literature on efficiency that is difficult for busy owners and managers to understand; therefore, this project addresses the issue in a simple and understandable language for managers and owners of small family businesses.

Many may confuse that the problem of low efficiency is synonymous with low productivity, so it is better to differentiate what the concepts of productivity and efficiency refer to. As the target of the project is the owners and managers of small family businesses, Kurian (2013) gives an easy-to-understand definition in his dictionary of Business:

***“Productivity** Measure of output per unit by input such as labour, raw materials, or capital; used as an indicator of profitability and efficiency.*

***Efficiency** 1. Technical efficiency is the ability of an organization to produce maximum output with minimum inputs. 2. Economic efficiency or productive efficiency is the ability of an organization to produce and distribute at the lowest possible cost, regardless of its production cost. 3. Allocative efficiency derives from the rational, timely, and productive allocation of resources.”*

For Board (2014) productivity is defined in his dictionary as:

***“Productivity** The rate at which goods are produced based on how long it takes, how many workers are required, how much capital and equipment is needed, etc.”*

For Tangen (2005) there is a close relationship between the definition of productivity, efficiency, and effectiveness but they have different meanings, see Figure 1. Tangen (2005) defines them as:

“...productivity is closely related to the use of resources, meaning that a company’s productivity is reduced if its resources are not properly used. Second, productivity is also strongly connected to the creation of value...”

“...Efficiency, in an organizational context, is related to the utilization of inputs during the transformation process; effectiveness is concerned with the correctness and enhancement of the output, i.e., higher quantity and/or quality of output.”

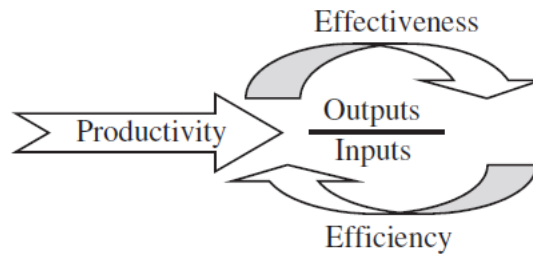


Figure 1: Relationships between Productivity, Efficiency, and Effectiveness. [Source: Sanchez Gonzalez (2018)]

With the definitions given by the authors on productivity, efficiency, and effectiveness, it is understood that although they are related, their meanings are different, as well as their problems.

4.2 Rigorous Literature Review

This research project will only address the most important aspects that result from the research. Under this framework, this research project must find out how adequate this statement to help owners and managers of small family businesses with solutions tailored to them, easy to apply and using the least possible resources. I am aware that any solution will imply changes and some economic investments that small family businesses will have to implement to obtain a positive result.

Neckebrouck et al. (2018) in their studies showed that family business owners have hiring and supervision problems, they face motivation and efficiency problems of their employees. Machado and Davim (2017) refer to efficiency as an interdependence between the starting point represented by objectives and goals, the work factor represented by behaviour and the result of work activities. Brackett (2021) says that not all employers have the resources to evaluate employees at the time of hiring with regards to their productivity and efficiency, which is why she suggests that they should permanently evaluate them with qualitative and quantitative metrics. Being realistic how many small family businesses can have the time and the resources to do it?

While Carroll (2012) suggests a change in three areas of the companies: the management model, the business model, and the learning model. Hanaysha (2016) mentioned that employee productivity is measured by the physical presence at work instead of the presence mentally. The current market is very changeable and demands a lot of competitiveness, companies that do not adapt to change are doomed to failure. As Carroll (2012) says, no change can happen if companies continue with the old practices, condemning their future to the past. It is known that small and large companies are different when it comes to hiring.

For Leybourn (2013) Agile Business Management adapts to any type and size of business, where the important thing is to deliver satisfactory results to its clients, with low-waste processes on a day-to-day basis to achieve high productivity. Nevertheless, running the Human Resources department as Chief Marketing Officer of People to attract talent is the proposal of Navin and Creelman (2018) to get the most out of talent and do a great experience for the employees. Banya (2017) talks about whether employees should receive awards for the quality of their work or receive praise to be stimulated by the work they do.

It is important to choose the right technique as Childs (2009) tells of the successful transformation of the Dallas Tax Office, with efficient and productive customer service, applying only 4 concepts of the many that the books recommend as secrets:

1. Be clear about the mission
2. Empower staff
3. Measure results
4. Constant adaptation and revision of practices.

While to achieve business annual goals, Brackett (2021) suggests the use of certain methods to monitor the performance and goals of the team, such as the SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-based) method and OKR (objectives and key results) method.

One of the ways to control the problem under study according to Brackett (2021) is to specify in the job description the skills and competencies necessary to cover them, the employers should also ask themselves if the employees have the necessary skills to carry them out. Pakroo (2020) also agrees that small businesses require having a formal job description, responsibilities, experience, required skills, and everything that is important to the job. Brackett (2021) also suggests taking into consideration the development of the staff's skills to achieve the goals. The result of the training

experiment carried out by De Grip and Sauermann (2011) showed that participants who were trained had a 10% increase in their productivity, in addition to a positive effect on other workers who were not trained.

On the other hand, stress affects front-line employees, added to a low salary and lack of training, says Singh (2000) in his research. Furthermore, he denotes two sources of stress: the employer and the clients. The first requires efficiency and productivity, and the second requires quality care. For Bitzan et al. (2016) efficiency is compared to how good a person can be at improving their own personal bests, having as a point of reference the best mark of another person doing the same activity.

In his book, Pérez La Rotta (2018) talks about Integrated Business Transformation, where one must be aware of what is happening within the business and around it, make changes with a new vision of reality, leaving behind a truth that the business believed, to give way to organizational learning, implement changes and renewals of capabilities in a highly competitive environment, make significant and sustainable improvements that allow growth.

Machado and Davim (2017) mentions that human resources are vital in organizations because with their knowledge, skills, and creativity they can generate change, however, it is insufficient if there is no proper behaviour. While Swaroopa and Chandrasekhar (2019) proposed that the values in the workplace of each collaborator are important in the role they play because they impact the result of the business. The tool known as Behaviour Analysis according to Yates (2017), helps to improve behavioural habits in the work environment, obtaining better employee efficiency. The behaviour of a person impacts the positive or negative response of another person, making a difference in relationships, for which it is recommended to have a flexible behaviour according to the role played within an organization.

According to Wulfeers (2017), the new focus of leaders is to be quick to respond appropriately to any situation. In addition to having the ability to generate trust, security, hope, positively influence, inspire, and empower those who require it, generating optimal results in the efficiency and production of the work team.

ILO (2020) considers that small companies operate partially or totally in poor conditions regarding occupational health and safety. In Ireland, the IBEC- Small Firms Association (2016), as part of the Irish Business and Employers Confederation (IBEC), assists small businesses with laws relating to the employer-employee relationship, health, and safety, business, and finance. ILO (2020) and EU-OSHA (2017) in the

studies of European countries determined that there is a weak application of regulations to small companies, due to the lack of budgetary capacity to carry out labour inspections to too many small companies, giving higher priority to sectors such as construction.

Bussin (2018), considers that retaining key employees is important for the business, because when they leave, they not only take knowledge with them, but the business is left without that know-how, training a new person takes time and money that costs the business. Among the most important findings of why employees tend to leave their jobs are: the opportunity to receive a better salary elsewhere, the lack of growth opportunities, the feeling of earning less than in other similar jobs, dissatisfaction with the responsibilities assigned, feeling of receiving less salary when they have more responsibilities.

During the reading of various authors to present the literature review, I identified topics related to the problem presented, where the authors expose interesting topics such as: the difficulty in hiring and keeping employees, employers need to adopt practices that improve the work environment, implement control measures for the designated activities aimed at achieving the objectives, redefinition of business management, improvement or development of communication, job description, implementation of training, improvement of working conditions, generating an environment of freedom, confidence to innovate and improve certain aspects of the business, implement motivational practices and recognition of employee performance such as recognition of the employee of the month or offer small incentives in high seasons, offer work environments that respect the framework of health and safety at work, and retain key employees. We are in a time where everything is changing rapidly, which is why small family businesses must also adapt to change and implement continuous improvements that will have a positive impact on the productivity of their employees, and the quality of the service or product they offer. Employees are important partners in getting a business off the ground or into bankruptcy. Employers who do not commit to innovation and change in their operations will eventually not be successful.

Chapter 5

5 Results (Research Findings)

5.1 Sampling Methods and Sampling Type

For Vehovar et al. (2016), a sample is a small example of a population, taken to learn from the entire population. Probability sampling was developed to take random samples from the entire population to study them, on the contrary, non-probability sampling selects its samples to be studied, which is known as a deviation from probability sampling. Within the types of non-probabilistic sampling they mention different ones, of those that fit the case study are purposive sampling (judgmental sampling) and expert selection, which together address the selection of a representative and specific sample for study, as well as the knowledge of an expert. According to Etikan and Bala (2017), non-probability sampling is the technique by which the researcher deliberately selects certain elements of the universe based on the criteria of a conceived base. It also mentions that the type of expert sampling collects the required information directly from a recognized specialist in the study area. The type of judgment or intentional sampling focuses on the researcher's criteria to choose those who are going to provide him with the information he seeks to carry out his study.

The sampling method chosen to conduct this research is non-probabilistic and the type of sampling is expert/judgement sampling. The non-probability of sampling investigates in connection with the qualitative research method, which this research pursues.

5.2 Research Instruments

Considering that my interviewee is in Peru, the interview was by video call using the link that the interviewee sent me through Microsoft Team Meetings. The interview took place in general in normal terms, although at times the internet signal stopped, the interview could be arranged.

The interview consisted of addressing 6 questions. During the interview some notes were taken, which at the end of the interview were completed to expand the notes of the interview.

5.3 Word Cloud

The use of word clouds allowed the detection of a pattern of words or phrases from each of the interview questions. It allows for the capture of common themes that were reflected from the interviewee as they contemplated on the questions asked. This allowed for the capture and evaluation of key concepts from the interviewee and to identify the absence of key words deemed important. A word cloud is a visual presentation of a set of words in which attributes of the text such as size, weight or colour can be used to represent frequency of the occurrence of the emphasized words.

5.4 Research Findings

From analysing the result of the interview there were several recurring themes. As the expert was asked the questions emphasized in Appendix B.

1. Trust
2. Working Conditions
3. Respect for time
4. Implementation and Change
5. Entrepreneurs and improvement
6. Relationships and work

5.4.1 Theme 1: Trust



Figure 2 Theme 1: Trust

The first theme to emerge from question one was trust. The expert was asked from his experience what are the main challenges and difficulties faced by small family

businesses regarding the efficiency of their employees and how can they cope with the low productivity. The expert explained from his experience of working with diverse group across Latin America that the number one problem was the lack of trust between the management and the employees. The management were reluctant to delegate tasks to their employees to solve problems. This reluctance on the part of the management was because as a small business the management felt that the employee could leave the company and take the privileged information with them. The result being that they could then setup a rival business or go to a competitor. This is a real genuine problem facing many small family businesses and one way to address this problem was to develop a communication system to promptly detect problems and communicate possible failures, thus the employee could be empowered to solve the problems by themselves resulting in the business becoming more efficient in detecting and solving these problems. The expert noted that one way to solve for this lack of trust on the part of the management was to pursue growth opportunities as there is no incentive for an employee to stay with a company where the benefits are low, and the business is not growing. Building trust is also important to achieve teamwork and the expert emphasized that by building internal practices on how to generate trust at all levels of the small business it would empower the worker and give him security in what he is doing. The management should delegate tasks and not concentrate them in one person.

Quicaña (2022) says:

“The intangibles of the business are the organizational practices”

5.4.2 Theme 2: Working Conditions



Figure 3 Theme 2: Working Conditions

The second issue that emerged from question two was working conditions. The expert was asked his opinion on how small family businesses could retain their staff to avoid high turnover. The expert explained from his experience that it is important to establish more attractive working conditions such as the formality of a contract and avoid informality. Small family businesses that are established or grow can offer stability and more competitive salaries to their employees, therefore, it is important that companies have projections for the future, where employees also feel that they can grow and feel stable. The growth of small family businesses requires technical assistance, which can be provided in collaboration with NGOs or large companies to which they provide products or services. They also need to innovate, digitize business processes, have financing, and receive help from the State with measures that promote them, provide training and education.

Quicaña (2022) says:

"The growth of small family businesses must plan to implement the gradual management of human talent, with a policy of recruitment, selection and retention of its personnel"

He also believes that successful business models such as the Toyota Way, the Cleaner Way, and the Lynch Way can serve as examples for small businesses to adapt to their production systems. It is important that companies work under safety and health measures at work.

The change systems that are implemented must take place in cooperation between the administration and the employees, to achieve greater efficiency, greater productivity, and better working conditions. For this, I emphasize the application of the 3 pillars: internal communication, generating trust, and respect.

Employees feel comfortable in a job when they are listened to, respected, have growth projections, respectable salaries, work within the law and have the possibility of accessing benefits, where health and work are an essential part of protecting employees.

5.4.3 Theme 3: Respect for time



Figure 4 Theme 3: Respect for time

Another theme that emerged from the research was respect for employees and management time. The expert was asked what the solutions are to improve employee efficiency. The expert points out that employees and management must respect each other's time to have a good working relationship and that respect is very important for the efficiency and productivity of the business. Productive work meetings should also be promoted to listen to the employees' ideas for improvement, because they are the ones who are at the forefront of the task and may have great ideas to do a more effective job, but if they do not receive respect and support, they lose those ideas. Managers must respect the established dates for maintenance and cleaning of equipment, and environments to offer safe work environments, optimize time and employee performance.

Establish cooperative work systems between managers and workers, to increase the efficiency of employees.

Quicaña (2022) says:

“There is no specific recipe for family businesses but internal respect with production times, collaborative work, machinery maintenance and to respect scheduled meetings”

5.4.4 Theme 4: Implementation and Change



Figure 5 Theme 4: Implementation and Change

When the expert was asked what small businesses should do to face the changes we are seeing today and if they will be able to survive. The expert pointed out that it is a challenging and very current question, especially with Covid, which accelerated certain changes for small businesses, such as digitization. Small family businesses need to be clear about looking for digital skills. Human talent must be developed based on experience and ongoing training. A worker re-training policy should be implemented, not only in technical aspects but also in soft skills that involves identifying problems and solving problems. There must be the adoption of technologies, best practices, and better working conditions to improve production systems, customer service systems, reduction of waste of inputs, implementation of health and safety at work, care of the environment in their activities and consequently reduce the stress of the employees who will respond better to do an effective job. The more successful a business is, the better chance it has of surviving and thriving in the future.

The expert mentioned that, to increase the potential for growth and profitability of small family businesses, they must innovate and develop products and services that are in demand. To achieve this, he considers that it is important to receive support from the government or NGOs in training managers in business management, innovation and development, clean energy, among others. Knowledge about management systems is essential to direct the business towards the achievement of efficiency in all business units, and therefore aim to improve the efficiency of employees.

The companies that know how to read the future, visualize, and adapt quickly to changes, are the ones that will prosper in the future. The expert considered that the market is another determining factor for the subsistence of small family businesses:

Quicaña (2022) says:

“Without demand there is no survival. It is not only about observing and surveying internal practices, but also important to look at how the market is behaving and how the flow of demand is going to be in the future”

No matter how good the internal systems are within the company if they do not choose the correct market, they will not survive.

Small family businesses, like other larger businesses, need to professionalize their business, younger members can apply their knowledge and give the business a fresh air, without neglecting the experience and knowledge of older members.

5.4.5 Theme 5: Entrepreneurs and improvement



Figure 6 Theme 5: Entrepreneurs and Improvement

Another issue related to a previous question was to what extent employees can accept solutions and how employers can address them. For the expert, the managers and employees learn by doing and from experience. Considering that many managers of small family businesses are adults, changing their preconceived and rigid ideas is a challenge, getting them to change, copy and implement similar practices is achieved by showing them successful experiences of other companies where they must learn from how they incorporated improvements, how they achieved greater efficiency, how they achieved an adequate understanding between managers and workers within an organization.

The ILO has systematized a study in Latin America and Asia, the SCORE¹ program to identify the best business practices of world-class companies. What do these companies do? This program has systematized tools that companies can apply to improve their productivity and working conditions in five modules:

1. Labour cooperation
2. Cleaner production
3. Quality management
4. Safety and health at work
5. Quality Systems

Everything that is co-created between employees and employers is sustainable. Employees today do not just work for a salary and follow orders, that was the way employees worked traditionally and in an authoritarian way, but now there is an emphasis on co-creation with employers, for example, the implementation of the box of ideas, where employees suggest how to make improvements in their daily activities, that is to build with them, and they value it. Avoid top-down solutions, ideally go bottom-up.

¹ [The SCORE Programme \(ENTERPRISES\) \(ilo.org\)](http://www.ilo.org/enterprises)

5.4.6 Theme 6: Relationships and work



Figure 7 Theme 6: relationship and work

The expert was asked to recount successful practice cases where small businesses achieved employee efficiency, and what lessons can be learned. One of the emerging themes was the relationship with stakeholders. Based on his experience, he took as an example an Andean grain company, Wirachocho, which, although it did not start in the nucleus of a family, but as a small business created by friends, it has had spectacular growth with a presence on 4 continents and reaching 37 countries. The elements of its success are in the capacity and technical training of the founding partners, they had the professional knowledge, work experience and they knew how to articulate with the stakeholders. They structured lines of business based on demand and visualized the future. They wondered what products were going to be in demand, and they started with organic quinoa today they added ginger to its portfolio. For its growth, the relationship with the various programs and services offered by the government and financial entities was important. Their growth has allowed them to keep many employees from when they started. With the training that they impart to their employees they are more efficient, the old employees transmit their knowledge to the new members, they drive the growth opportunities by skill, experience, and knowledge. They apply the coordinated work model with their employees and small suppliers. In its new position, the company works with interest groups where they provide training to farmers in the areas where they operate, vulnerable populations, and developed their ability to link with the different institutions that make up the

productive ecosystem in the territory where they operate. Internal management has been incremental and today they have various management systems and divisions that have been gradually developed.

Chapter 6

6 Conclusion and Further Work

6.1 Conclusions

Small family businesses will not have all the professional knowledge and management systems in place to improve their performance, but they have the desire to remain stable and grow in the market, for which there are those who seek simple practices and approaches. Consequently, researchers and scholars who wish to delve further into the subject must present their results in a way that is easy to understand and realistic to put into practice.

The results of the research project shown in this study answer the research question and are very important and need to be considered to implement improvements and changes that lead to a better work environment for greater efficiency and performance of workers in small family businesses.

The result of the investigation revealed that the lack of trust of employers towards employees can be improved with the delegation of well-defined tasks, clear messages, clear responsibilities, and follow-up. The bottlenecks and problems that the employees cannot solve should be coached and accompanied to solve the problems. Develop communication systems that help employees detect problems and give them the confidence to solve them in a timely manner. Teamwork generates greater security in employees about what they are doing.

The working conditions offered by employers influence the high turnover of employees. Working within the legality with employment contracts for employees is a form of guarantee to commit more to their role. Apply successful models adapted to small businesses such as SCORE and others. Implement human talent management. Guarantee health and safety at work. Improve communication channels to listen, respect and value employees. Companies must aim to be stable and grow to offer

better opportunities and working conditions to retain their key employees and be attractive to future employees.

Respect must be considered to improve the efficiency of the employees, in the sense of respecting the established times to do the maintenance of equipment, machinery, and environments. Respect the initiatives and ideas of employees to improve the efficiency of their performance. Respect for knowing how to listen to employees. Respect scheduled meetings with employees to discuss improvements and do not keep them waiting or cancel them at the last minute.

The implementation and change requires the adoption of technologies, digitization of their systems, developing human talent, permanent training, having a retraining policy, letting employees solve problems by themselves, providing better working conditions, improving production systems, customer service, implement health and safety at work, encourage care for the environment with less waste in production, develop and innovate, reduce employee stress by reducing workload and responsibilities and to delegate tasks reasonably.

Learn and copy practices from successful businesses, how they achieved an adequate understanding between managers and workers within an organization. Apply co-creation between employers and employees because it is sustainable over time. Implement solving problems from the bottom up and not from the top down.

Small family businesses can grow just like any other type of business, and to achieve this, they require the practices and incremental internal management according to their growth. The administrators must act intelligently with the stakeholders, to guarantee the stability and growth of their businesses, consequently, guarantee better conditions for their employees, applying the coordinated work model with their employees and small suppliers.

6.2 Further Work

The short period to carry out this investigation has not been able to carry out more in-depth studies, analyses more cases, carry out more interviews with other experts. However, it has laid the foundations to be considered, and delve deeper into the problem, investigate more results that add to those already shown and continue to shape with other solutions more to help the owners and managers of small family businesses.

Comparison of pre and post interview responses to show any differences. Identify important concepts and to home in on these concepts which would warrant closer investigation.

This research has addressed a common problem that many small family businesses go through, the results shown are just the top of the iceberg and there is much to investigate for scholars in economics, business, management, and other areas.

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9 Appendix B: Evidence of primary research undertaken

Interview day: 3rd May 2022

Time: 9pm Irish time / 3pm Peruvian time

About my interviewee

My interviewee authorizes the publication of this information:

MSc Efrain Quicaña Navarro

ILO specialist for Latin America and the Caribbean on business development and productive development issues

Email: quicana@ilo.org

He graduated from the National University of San Cristóbal de Huamanga (Peru) in business administration, has a master's degree from the Catholic University (Chile) in Regional and Local Development Management, international postgraduate degrees (in Chile, Italy and Spain) in productive development, business development, rural development, development of market systems and value chains, sustainable companies, comprehensive management of territorial economic development and management of regional and local public policies.

His experience at the ILO includes:

From 2011 to 2017, at the ILO Office for the Andean Countries where he held the position of specialist in Business, Rural Development and Cooperatives and was Coordinator of several joint Programs of the United Nations System and Projects to promote decent work in the economy, rural, productive development and business development.

From 2018 to the present, he holds the position of Regional Specialist in Rural Economy of the ILO Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC). Its main lines of work include innovation processes for the promotion of employment and decent work in rural areas; social dialogue and executive boards for productive development and economic diversification for more and better jobs; associativity and productive articulation between MYPES and medium and large companies, among others.

I chose my interviewee for his extensive career and work experience, with MYPES, medium and large companies, as well as close relationships with governments due to his position in the ILO. His contact with different realities of the countries, his access to the global information of the ILO, and for being a neutral party.

Questions used for the interview:

1. What do you think are the main challenges and difficulties faced by small family businesses with the efficiency of their employees?
2. How do you think small family businesses can retain their staff and avoid high turnover?
3. What do you think are the solutions to improve employee efficiency?
4. From the changes we are seeing today, how do you think it will affect the future of small family businesses? Will they be able to survive?
5. What extent can employees accept the solutions and employers can address them?
6. Tell me if you know closely the experience of successful small family businesses and how they did it from the point of view of the efficiency of their employees.

10 Appendix C: Reflections

The development of this module allowed me to remember, learn and relearn how to investigate, collect data, analyse it, and report on it. Throughout the process I had many confusions and to clear them up I consulted the teacher, inquired for more information in EBSCO, Google Scholar, repeatedly watched the videos of the classes in Moodle where certain points were not clear to me, I leaned on other educational videos to supplement my understanding, review past CCT alumni project posts on the ARC Academic Research Collection platform. All the literature that I read increased my knowledge, answered my questions, but also opened the door to new questions and questions about aspects related to the subject under investigation, as well as about the methodology to follow and the types of existing sampling methods, their similarities, and differences.

This module also allowed me to fulfil a very important topic that had been on my mind for some years, I would have liked to do a deeper investigation but given the nature of the time and the scope that had to be covered in this module, it was not possible.

I hope that this research project can contribute to future research that aims to help small family businesses in how to improve their efficiency and other fields related to improving their performance, being more efficient, saving resources and being more profitable in a competitive market where only the strongest and most solid survive and/or grow.