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**Succession in family business based on gender in Saudi Arabia**

Do the family put more pressure to follow family business based on

gender in Saudi Arabia?

**Research Methodology**

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1. **Research Methodology**

Research methodology chapter gives a comprehensive description of the philosophical and methodological stance of the study. The organization of this chapter is guided by Rea and Parker (2012) and Pearson and Boruch (2012): Research philosophy, research design, defining survey, selecting survey and area of study, data collection, analysing, interpreting and reporting surveys, rigorous in study, and ethical considerations. The aim of the study is to identify the priority in running the family business based on gender in Saudi Arabia and the most important related factors. Therefore, the purpose of the research methodology chapter is to describe how the study will be designed, how data will be collected, and how analysis will be done to ensure effective testing of variables. This chapter gives a detailed description on how data will be collected, methods to be used in data collection, and the philosophical stand to be adopted in the study. Ethical considerations are mentioned in this chapter. In this study, gender is the independent variable while management of family- based businesses is the dependent variable.

* 1. **Research Philosophy**

Kothari (2004) discussed two basic methodologies to research; quantitative and qualitative methodologies. Quantitative methodology involves gathering data in numerical form and the collected data can be subjected to rigorous analysis in a rigid and formal manner. Therefore, according to Kothari (2004), quantitative methodology aims at producing research findings that are reliable, reproducible, valid, and objective. Qualitative methodology on the other hand, uncovers trends in opinions and thoughts and dig deeper into the problem under investigation. Qualitative methodology gathers non- numerical but descriptive data with an aim of getting meanings ands, definitions, and concepts of the problem under investigation. Therefore, qualitative methodology helps in developing ideas for potential quantitative inquiry (Marcyk, DeMatteo & Festinger 2005).

Quantitative research methodology is grounded in positivism philosophy which views research as a strategy or a way of discovering the hidden truths and understanding the reality. As such, positivism philosophy allows the research to make predictions and generalisations based on the data collected and analysed. Positivism determines reality from statistical tests and therefore, positivists assume that reality can be determined through testing hypotheses in order to produce statistical statement about the facts under investigation. For instance, in this case the relationship between gender and priority of running family- based businesses in Saudi Arabia will be determined statistically rather than descriptively. Under positivist stance, all statements are divided into false, true, and meaningless categories. Statistics are used to determine these realities or statements.

Non- positivism qualitative methodology has a more realistic approach because it is based on the premise that there are multiple constructive realities. Interpretations are done by the research based on their subjective and objective assessment of behaviour, opinions, and attitudes. Therefore, qualitative research function as researcher’s impressions and insights and the data collected is a joint product of the researcher and the item researched. However, in this study qualitative and quantitative approaches shall not be mutually exclusive but they should be viewed as complementing each other.

A mixed method approach will be adopted for this study for various reasons. Quantitative methodological approach will mainly focus on the confirmatory stages of research such as hypothesis formation and collection of numerical data (Murkherji & Albon 2014). The aim of quantitative research will be to measure the extent of a phenomenon. Therefore, numerical data will be collected because they are easy to analyse using statistical tests. For instance, it is easy to measure the relationship between gender and business performance in family- based firms using statistical tests. Quantitative method will be used to collect and analyse demographic data of the respondents. On the other hand, qualitative approach will be used because it is more indicated than quantitative methods especially in this research where the objective is to determine whether gender has an impact on the priority of running a family business in Saudi Arabia. Therefore, qualitative approach was used because it is mainly concerned with describing experiences (Murkherji & Albon 2014).

An inductive research approach will be used in the study since the researcher will be open to opinions and ideas that emerged from listening to participants and from examination of own perspectives on the subject under study during and after data collection (Matthews & Ross 2010; Mitchell & Jolley 2012). An inductive research process will be followed in the study whereby data will be collected and analysed to build theories, hypotheses, and concepts rather than testing a theory or hypothesis.

* 1. **Research Design**

Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2012) defined research design as the overall strategy chosen to integrate various elements of a study in a coherent manner. The authors classified qualitative research into five sections: Grounded theory, narrative research, case study, phenomenology, and ethnography. Riemer, Lapan and Quartaroli (2012) on the other hand classified quantitative research design into six categories; correlational, review, descriptive, experimental, meta- analytic, and semi- experimental. The choice of a research design is determined by the type of research adopted and the data required in answering the research questions or testing the research hypotheses. In defining research design, Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2012) noted that survey research can be used in qualitative and quantitative research methods. Descriptive research design will be chosen in this study which includes survey. Non- experimental research design will be adopted in this study whereby the variables will not be manipulated by the researcher and therefore, multiple constructive realities will be used whereby different opinions and ideas will be used to make conclusions.

Survey design will be conducted with a view of making statistical inferences on gender and priority of running family owned businesses in Saudi Arabia. Survey include questionnaires and interviews which will be conducted in order to gather data which, when analysed help to achieve the research objectives. Without imposing the highly rigid and structured conceptual framework that is advocated by Mitchell and Jolley (2012), this study will follow a framework suggested by Pearson and Boruch (2012) and Rea and Parker (2012) to collect data and organize the emerging findings. Sample used in the study will be drawn from the population and will be studied once (cross sectional study). Survey design will be used because it is applicable both in qualitative and quantitative approaches and therefore it will clearly display research triangulation in data collection. Survey design will be used because it is grounded in positivism philosophy and non- positivism philosophy, thus, quantitative data will be gauged using positivism philosophy (Montgomery, Peck & Vining 2001). Yin (2012) and Yin (2013) advocated for case study design and criticized survey design because of its lack of speciality. These proponents of case study argued that any research must show clearly where data was gathered and describe and define the case under study. Since this is not a characteristic of survey design, the origin of data gathered and analysed in the study will be clearly indicated by showing the purposiveness of the respondents chosen. However, Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2012) supported survey design by noting that it is used to gather data from a large sample size making it easy to analyse representative data which are used in making predictions and generalizations.

The research question will be carefully designed and will be based on the previous literature. The scope of the study is to identify the priority in managing the family business based on gender in Saudi Arabia and identify the most important related factors. In achieving this research aim, the study aims at answering the research question: Do the family put more pressure to follow family business based on gender in Saudi Arabia? To answer this research question, the study will gather data through interviews and questionnaires from respondents.

* 1. **Sample Size and Sampling Technique**

It is important to collect the views and opinions of all members of a population, but this is very costly, time consuming, and tiring. It is almost impossible to gather data from the whole population and that is why a sample of the population is selected. That notwithstanding, the sample selected must be representative of the population in terms of characteristics (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2012; Mitchell & Jolley 2012). As stated by Saudi Arabian Monetary Agency (SAMA), over 90% of Saudi Arabian businesses are family owned and thus, the population for family based businesses in the country is very high. It is therefore, not statistically and logically possible to survey all the family owned businesses in Saudi Arabia. A sample is defined by Riemer, Lapan and Quartaroli (2012) as the subset of the population under study that is selected for the actual study. The main purpose of sampling is to ensure that representative samples are used to avoid bias in research. Riemer, Lapan and Quartaroli (2012) further mentioned that biases compromise the reliability of research findings making it hard to make generalizations or predictions regarding the research problem or question.

A sample size of six participants will be selected for the interviews (3 males and 3 females). The rationale of selecting a small sample size is to ease the interview process and allow collection of a wide range of data. Marcyk, DeMatteo and Festinger (2005) criticized the use of a small sample size by indicating that very little information is gathered as compared to a large sample size. The authors argued that participants have different views and opinions and hence they may give a wide range of information when interviewed, however, if the sample size is very small, there is no diversity and hence the information gathered may not effectively achieve the set aim. Nonetheless, a small sample size will be used in this study because the selected participants have relevant information regarding gender and priority of running family based businesses. Additionally, interviews use a small sample to save time and resources in the process of data collection.

On the other hand, a large sample size will be used to gather quantitative data. In this study quantitative data analysed from data collected through Global University Entrepreneurial Spirit Students' Survey (GUESSS). According to Shirokova, Tsukanova and Bogatyryeva (2014), GUESSS gathers data from a large sample size mainly across the target country. Therefore, data collected through GUESSS on gender and family owned businesses in Saudi Arabia will be very effective in answering the research question and achieving the research objectives. A large sample size will be used in quantitative research because it is easy to analyse numerical data using statistical methods and tools.

 Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2012) discussed two types of sampling procedures; probability and non- probability. In the probability, all subjects of the population have an equal chance to chosen as representatives while in non- probability sampling, subjects of a population do not have equal chance of being selected as representative sample. Non- probability sampling will be used to select participants for qualitative data. In this case, purposive sampling method will be used whereby the selected participants must possess relevant and required information that will be used to answer the research question. Riemer, Lapan and Quartaroli (2012) criticized non- probability sampling citing potential biases which can compromise the process of data collection. However, purposive sampling technique will be used in this study to ensure that only the selected participants have relevant information thus, avoid time wastage in gathering the right information. On the other hand, probabilistic sampling will be used in collecting quantitative data. Several surveys such as GUESSS use simple random sampling method where all members of the target population have equal chances of being selected to avoid biases.

* 1. **Data Collection**

Data collection in a survey is one of the most critical activities because of the wide range of information required and a large sample size and hence what is required is skill and effectiveness of data collection method (Matthews & Ross 2010). Many authors (Marcyk, DeMatteo & Festinger 2005; Mitchell & Jolley 2012; Riemer, Lapan & Quartaroli 2012) advocate the use of data triangulation (use of multiple data sources). There are various types of triangulations which researchers can use: In this study a mixed method research approach will be used to achieve data triangulation. Qualitative data will be collected through interviews while quantitative data will be collected through surveys. Therefore, data triangulation will be achieved by gathering data through different methods. The use of multiple sources of data helps in gathering a wide range of information and achieving reliability and research validity. For instance, data collected from students (3 males and 3 females) with background information on how gender impacts the priority of running family owned businesses will complement data collected through GUESSS.

Survey method usually involves use of multiple sources of data using a range of quantitative and qualitative methods. In this study, qualitative and quantitative data will be generated from structured interviews and surveys. Interviews will be conducted on 6 participants who have relevant background information on gender and priority of running family based firms in Saudi Arabia. The six participants will be students must have family businesses in their families. These interviews will be conducted in their respective offices to ensure that there is no inconvenience caused on the participants. Each interview session will run for 25-35 minutes. As mentioned by Matthews and Ross (2010), interviews should be timed because long interviews are tiring and may cause provision of wrong information or hinder some information because participants get tired. On the other hand, when the session is too small some information is hindered due to time constraints. To ensure that adequate and relevant information is gathered, the interviews will be timed. Face- to- face interviews will enable the researcher to get closer to the participants’ experience of the phenomenon. Semi- structured interviews will help the researcher to maintain the focus on the research during interviews. Mitchell and Jolley (2012) criticised interview method of data collection as time consuming and does not gather data from a large sample size. While this is a shortcoming, interview method will be used because it gathers a wide range of data whereby clarifications can be made and more detailed data can be gathered through probing.

Survey method will be used to collect quantitative data. Quantitative survey will be conducted by analysing data provided by my advisors, Dr Dalal Ali. Alrubaishi and Dr Roisin Lyons, that has been collected through Global University Entrepreneurial Spirit Students' Survey (GUESSS). GUESSS is a large, global research project done in Saudi Arabia area. GUESSS will be used because it covers a large sample size and area in the country and hence it will be representative of the target population. Riemer, Lapan & Quartaroli 2012) advocated for the use of surveys in collecting quantitative data because they are highly representatives and are easy to analyse especially when using statistical tools.

* 1. **Data Analysis, Interpretation and Reporting**

Qualitative and quantitative data analysis methods will be adopted in the study. Thematic analysis will be used to analyse, interpret and report patterns of qualitative data collected from interviews. Thematic analysis is defined by Marcyk, DeMatteo & Festinger 2005) as the search for themes that emerge and are relevant to understanding the question or topic under study. Themes will therefore be understood through a process of reading and re-reading the collected data and the emerging themes will become categories for analysis (Marcyk, DeMatteo & Festinger 2005). In this study, thematic analysis will go beyond data organization and description to include interpretation of different aspects of the themes. Measures of central tendency will be used to analyse quantitative data. In this case, quantitative data will be analysed through mean and standard deviation values. Correlation and regression will be used to analyse the relationship between gender and priority of running family owned businesses. The use of both qualitative and quantitative data analysis will help in achieving quality research because each method can complement the other. In this case, the shortcomings of thematic analysis will be addressed by measures of central tendency used in quantitative research.

* 1. **Rigour in Research Study**

Researchers use rigour to prove competence and integrity. Sometimes qualitative research is criticized for lacking scientific rigour especially because the results are not generalizable (Murkherji & Albon 2014). Transparency will be used in the study to achieve rigour whereby the researcher explains and describes all the steps involved in data collection and analysis. Transparency will allow readers to engage in reasonable speculation on whether the research findings are applicable to other cases and thus, transferable.

* 1. **Ethical Issues**

Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2012) argued that any study involving human beings as subjects must consider ethical issues. The authors further noted that failure to address ethical issues contributes to participants failing to give the required information. One of the ethical issues that will be involved in this study is confidentiality. Riemer, Lapan and Quartaroli (2012) maintained that participants fail to give information if they feel that there is no confidentiality measures for the information they give. To get trust and confidence from the participants, research objectives and aims will be clearly read out to all participants and they will be assured that the information they give will be used for academic purposes only and will not be released to unauthorized individuals. This will help the researcher gain the trust of the 6 interview participants. To ensure anonymity, each interview participant will be given a code which will be used to identify them. Participants will be informed that they have freedom to opt out of the study at their free will and that no monetary gain will be offered for participating in the study.

* 1. **Conclusion**

A positivist correlational survey design will be used in this study. The reasons for adoption of this design have been explained in this chapter. A mixed method research approach will be used in the study with survey and interview data collection methods being proposed for data collection. The reasons for using a mixed method approach have been described and explained in this chapter. This study also explains how rigour in research will be achieved and has identified the ethical issues potential for the study and explains how these issues will be considered.

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