

Managers and their philosophy as a basis for competitiveness in SMEs established in Salvatierra, Guanajuato

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Abstract

Business competitiveness, certainly much studied in recent times by researchers as it is considered one of the main factors related to the permanence of the same, however, little has been studied in the research area addressed here, Salvatierra being a rural community, whose main attraction now is its denomination as "Magic Town", which, causes to turn to it and realize an analysis in reference to the economic activity, specifically we refer to business activity, which is the main engine in the local economy. One question raised by researchers often is: Why do small and medium sized enterprises disappear within the first two years of its existence? Certainly the causes are multiple, but researchers rarely direct their gaze towards managers, few studies exist on the analysis of the manager's personality, their age, their academic degree, etc., as factors influencing the management of a SME. In this study an analysis is presented on what is the business philosophy of small and medium sized enterprises and details how the manager sets the tone for the success or failure of it, associating this with greater or lesser competitiveness. The philosophy of the manager in various fields (personal, academic, professional and labor) is influenced in most cases by their values, level of education, age and the environment in which they operate. All this, plus other factors unrelated to the subject of the study generate a unique personality for the manager, which while being responsible for managing an organization, determines their actions and have a direct influence on the competitiveness or failure thereof, associating this with the permanence or disappearance of the small and medium sized enterprises, which are the organizations that exist the most in the municipality of Salvatierra. The study of the characteristics of managers or people in charge of SMEs has received much less attention in research on entrepreneurship, being the main reason for this research to have a qualitative approach with a descriptive scope, through a cross-sectional design and the implementation of a research instrument validated by three experts in the field of research. The instrument is composed of 30 items prepared considering the Likert scale applied to 145 small and medium sized enterprises established in Salvatierra Guanajuato, an environment of tourist influence and a city known as "Magic Town", with the objective to determine the influence of the manager's academic preparation, values and age in business philosophy, as elements that influence the competitiveness of SMEs established in this municipality. The relationship of these elements to competitiveness and the results of field research show that the main barrier for small and medium sized enterprises to be competitive and able to survive is ironically its founder or manager, for they themselves are the main cause of success or failure of companies, for that reason, it is recommended to stop looking outside as the causes of early disappearance of SMEs, however, it is encouraged to seek a solution in the internal analysis of small and medium sized enterprises, it is to say, analyze the business philosophy of their leader (manager or person in charge), through a SWOT analysis, orienting their own actions and the actions of their personnel towards the implementation of shared management strategy based on a strategic SWOT analysis.

Business Philosophy, Competitiveness, SMEs, Strategic Management

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Introduction

This article describes the results obtained from a research with a qualitative approach and a descriptive scope. A non - probabilistic, intentional sampling and a non - experimental and cross - sectional research design were carried out for 145 SMEs established in the municipality of Salvatierra, Guanajuato, in order to determine how the entrepreneur and his business philosophy are the basis of competitiveness in SMEs, in addition to presenting a series of recommendations that allow guiding the business philosophy towards achieving the objectives of SMEs in the environment Of the current competitive market.

Often in small and medium-sized enterprises, Gte. Of a SME is the very founder of the company, which by necessity was forced to self-employment, with little secondary education and rarely with a higher level of professional training, in such a way that SMEs emerge in this environment, where The manager's poor academic level determine not only his / her personal and family life, but also his / her work life and, therefore, his or her acting as an entrepreneur.

Therefore, it is considered that the academic preparation received by the managers or owners Of SMEs can influence to a lesser or greater degree in the business philosophy that they apply in the organizations that they are in charge of directing, since it is expected that the greater the level of study of the same, the greater the concern to develop strategies Entrepreneurships that allow SMEs to be competitive, and thus contribute to their survival because of the behavior on which their actions are based. However, it is not only the academic preparation of the human being that determines its action, we also have its age and the values that govern its actions, as it is expected that a Gte.

Young person is generally a person with innovative ideas, with values not well cemented and in many occasions with ideals not feasible and without fear to take risks.

Contrary to what is expected of an older manager with more experience in the business field, it is considered that this person tends to be a person who reasons more their decisions and often slows down their impulses of innovation and design Of entrepreneurship strategies for fear of uncertainty, which consequently provides little impetus to the SMEs it runs and it is precisely this philosophy of the entrepreneur that limits small and medium enterprises, stagnating them and stopping their growth until they disappear.

The importance of the research presented here is because the manager is the cornerstone in strategic decision making in SMEs and it is important to know the information obtained after the application of the instruments to determine the extent to which managers of SMEs Established in the so-called Pueblo Magico "Salvatierra, Guanajuato", have university studies, it is important to know if values and age influence the decisions they make.

The instrument was considered as a variable, the level of preparation of the manager, included items related to the age of the same and others that allowed to obtain information regarding some indicators in question of behavior based on values.

Review of literature

The business philosophy of an organization has the personal touch of its leaders and its staff in general, therefore, the strategic decisions that are made in small and medium enterprises reflect the very personality of those who run them.

According to Justo Villafañe (2004) an important aspect that shapes the identity of organizations today is the organizational philosophy and mentions that it is conformed by the axiological factors of culture, which explain the internal and external factors of the organization, including We have: 1) Shared values, attributes of a general nature that define culture from certain features such as the structure of relationships, professional values, beliefs, basic assumptions, the organic design of the company and the value of the individual in the organization. 2) Their forms of thinking and learning, determine the type of mentality of employees and the criteria used for problem solving and work performance. 3) Relations of power influence, which is determined through the organizational structure and the overall relationship of the company. 4) Tools of motivation and reward, criteria that dominate in each organization to encourage its members to improve their management and reward their good behavior.

Organizational culture

According to the literature consulted on the issue in question, decisions made by managers in organizations intervene innumerable factors, some of them contribute a greater or lesser degree of influence, however, tend to underestimate certain aspects, generating disinterest in them, as they are the values and the influence in the daily act of the human being. However, it is important to mention that organizational culture can be understood as the set and combination of different factors (values and beliefs, norms of behavior, policies, forms of thought and learning, power relations, forms of influence and change and instrument of Motivation) that make up the companies and that are represented by its members, building the Corporate Identity. (Costa, Pizzolante and Villafañe, 2004).

Therefore, a business philosophy somehow also considers what the organizational culture is, not only its leader, but all the staff who work there.

Considering previous conceptions, it is essential to know that organizational culture plays an important role as a differentiating element for the triumph of organizations, as it is present through the conduct of the company and its employees - who manage and assume their own role And their commitment within and outside the company - reflecting the particular flow of activities and relationships that are exposed to clients: "the quality of employee care, experienced and lived directly with the public in the world of The services, is in itself a value, and in turn, a strong distinctive of the tangible personality of the company "(Costa, 2004: 66)

The academic preparation of the manager

"Professionals need to know that today they have to diversify and make their human capital flexible. That means they have to be willing to reinvent themselves quickly, "says Alejandro Gaviria, dean of the Faculty of Economics at the Universidad de los Andes. In addition, he mentions that academic training should not be understood as mere reception of data and accumulation of degrees on the contrary, it is part of a process of intellectual growth that allows the person to develop his analytical and critical capacity, and the same Time to be prepared for problem solving. Any organization is small, medium or large requires to be competitive from an endless resources and the efficient management of them is directly related to the business philosophy applied by the manager or manager of the company, and this in turn applies strategic management Which has a direct relationship with the academic degree or degree of preparation that this person has, since the knowledge generates breadth of criteria and broad vision in the business field.

The weaknesses in the financial environment of this type of companies according to empirical evidence is due to the fact that SMEs develop commercially unprofitable proposals or projects, recurrently because in the case of the Mexican entrepreneur presents / displays absence of knowledge of the business that initiates, the lack of administration Professional approach impedes proper planning and therefore deficient ability to interpret economic and financial variables, poor definition of objectives, inadequate formulation of the mission, vision of the company that is lost in the daily operation without a long-term vision with expectations Unrealistically, cash flows inconsistent with available working capital and even less with obtaining long-term capital (García and Villafuerte, 2015).

Without a doubt, the role played by the manager or in charge of a small or medium-sized company set the tone for the whole organization and specifically its staff, as they play a leading role and become a role model.

The human being and specifically the leader is the central axis of productivity and competitiveness of the SMEs that lead, because without a doubt, the manager or manager is responsible for implementing the ideology, strategic orientation and cultural dynamics that characterizes a particular company.

Therefore, it is important to mention that the competitive advantage of an organization can also originate from the internal characteristics of a company, where the human management processes - admission, application, compensation, development, maintenance and monitoring - applied in a way Coherent and original based on the company's culture, can be key in developing a unique business identity (Ortiz, 2008).

Competitiveness

According to Saavedra-García, Milla-Toro and Tapia-Sánchez (2013), competitiveness is a multidimensional element because it evaluates internal aspects of small and medium-sized enterprises such as strategic planning, production, quality, marketing, human resources, accounting, finance, Environmental management systems and information systems; This is why competitiveness is a key element for the development, growth and sustainability of SMEs The elements or internal aspects that are important to analyze are all the elements that integrate the institutional philosophy, among which we can mention: mission, vision, values Policies, rules, objectives, strategies, organizational structure, marketing strategies, financing strategies, market analysis, distribution channels, etc.

Often the achievement of objectives in organizations is related to competitiveness and directly with the business philosophy applied by its manager or manager, because the objectives are a purpose that establish possible measurable results and provide strength to the long-term management (León, 2013). Every economic organization has at least three general objectives: survival, growth and profits (Arce, 2010).

For Andrade and Morales (2008) the market analysis is the starting point for decision making about the products and services to be offered, defining the segments towards which the company's efforts will be directed.

According to the above, segmentation of the market allows companies to identify the main needs of the customer to design a marketing plan to be positioned in the minds of consumers.

If one speaks of business competitiveness, it is also important to carry out an in-depth analysis of the structure of markets, of existing substitutes, of distribution channels, of marketing strategies, etc., elements that in some way form the analysis Internal to a SME and that undoubtedly also integrate what is the business philosophy, subject of study.

The dominance of large firms in the global market defines market structure as the distribution of economic power of firms in a particular market (Hernández 2007).

The distribution channel is the path that the goods take in their flow from the producers to the consumers, because it deals with giving fluidity to the products, incorporating their property, communication, financing, payment and risks that accompany it, As a structure of people or interdependent organizations, from the producer to the final consumer, performing basic functions such as: transaction, information, logistics, facilitation and promotion (Hernández et al., 2002).

Hernández, Domínguez and Ramos (2002) affirm that in Guanajuato distribution channels have specific characteristics, for example in San Francisco del Rincón palm, paper and felt hats are made; Exhibit shops abound, and wholesale and retail their hats in the area of small factories. Similarly in Salvatierra Guanajuato, the majority of the population is engaged in agriculture and the sale of artisanal products.

Salvatierra has 232 companies, of these 207 are of services, so registers as data updated on July 4, 2016 the Mexican Business Information System. The dynamism of business and the emergence of technologies for distribution have made channels an advantage and an opportunity to reduce costs and boost productivity (Hernández et al., 2002).

A marketing strategy in crafts (for example) is the link between business, the closeness of the place of sale, the image of the premises and the personal service of small businesses; Other factors that are also considered are short- and medium-term planning, employee performance, values and priorities to the consumer by the owner (Hernández et al., 2002).

Competitiveness has as indicators the participation in the market due to the changing conditions of this one, due to the competition that arose and the market context is oriented to consider the organization's achievements in the sector to which it belongs, such as performance, evolution and prestige; However, competitiveness does not imply a defensible position, but rather the ability to maintain a position in the domestic and foreign markets (Hernández et al., 2002).

A competitive country makes it competitive (Saavedra-García, 2012). In Salvatierra the analysis of the organizational structure is framed within the Theory of Structural Contingency, which arises to show that there is no unique form of structuring, because the division of labor, organizational process and its coordination, will depend on the various factors and Of the situational conditions in which the organization operates (Marín, 2012).

Productivity is closely related to costs; therefore, it is important to improve systems and modes of production to achieve an increase in productivity and result in a decrease in production costs. 88% of MSMEs apply a system of cost-per-production orders, which is congruent with the way in which they program the production that is ordered by customers (Gómez-Niño, 2011).

Implementing cost systems allows you to set sales prices adjusted to real conditions; On the other hand, the cost system provides valuable information for proposing improvement plans in production, finance, administration, marketing and sales; And to make decisions in order to redirect the company or to establish productivity and competitiveness strategies to ensure success factors in these businesses (Gómez-Niño, 2011).

People called investors have surplus capital and seek to monetize it by investing in business alternatives that yield adequate returns or return on investment according to their expectations (Santos, 2008). The SWOT analysis is a powerful internal planning tool, oriented towards the outside and is used to determine competitive strategies (Otero and Gache, 2006).

Until it has a clearly defined objective, the company has neither strengths nor weaknesses. Therefore, in order of precedence, this is the objective that the SME wants to fulfill, which determines its strengths and weaknesses for that objective and in the chosen environment Opportunities and threats will be given as a logical consequence of decisions (Otero and Gache, 2006). Once defined the Strengths and Weaknesses with which the company intends to achieve the objectives set, it is necessary to make use of the analysis of the variables of the macroenvironment, in which the company will be developed, as the environment will arise the Opportunities and Threats that will ultimately make possible the permanence of the Pyme (Otero and Gache, 2006). Competitive advantages arise when, thanks to the strengths acquired through personal effort, the opportunities presented in the market can be enhanced or better exploited than other competitors; The comparative value will depend on the way in which market opportunities are enhanced (Otero and Gache, 2006).

Objective

To determine how the entrepreneur and his philosophy are the basis of the competitiveness of SMEs established in Salvatierra, Guanajuato.

Specific objectives

- Identify the factors alluding to the entrepreneur that influence the business philosophy applied by Gte.
- Apply a research instrument that allows knowing the relationship between academic preparation, values and age of the manager with the competitiveness of the SME.
- Propose strategies that contribute to increase the competitiveness of SMEs.

Materials and method

Research was carried out with transversal design, descriptive scope and qualitative approach. In order to apply the research instrument, an intentional non-probabilistic sampling was carried out. For this purpose, the research instrument was applied to 145 SMEs belonging to different economic sectors established in Salvatierra, Guanajuato. The instrument consists of 30 items (10 sociodemographic questions and 20 of them structured considering the Likert scale, where the score used was 1 to 5, and 1 means completely disagree and the 5 completely agree.

Results

To perform the analysis of the information obtained, the descriptive statistics were used and the following could be appreciated:

The academic preparation of the managers of the SMEs surveyed is distributed as follows:

56 company managers seldom own secondary school.

71 have a high school diploma.

18 have undergraduate level preparation.

In other words, 39% of SMEs are run by a person who has just attended secondary school, 49% of whose manager is technically equivalent and only 12% of small and medium-sized enterprises are run by a person who has Degree level studies.

Considering the above and if we compare the information that was obtained we can realize that in some way the degree of preparation of the managers if it has relation with the degree of competitiveness of the SMEs Salvaterrenses, because if we associate the competitiveness with the early disappearance of the SMEs, this phenomenon is evident.

Salvatierra has 232 companies, as registered as updated data on July 4, 2016 the Mexican Business Information System, this is an indicator that relates to weaknesses in management, chances of failure and therefore of survival mentioned by Molina, Armenteros, Plascencia, Barquero and Martínez (2014) announcing that 200,000 new businesses are generated each year in Mexico, 65% disappear before two years, 50% fail in the first year and 30% in the second year, coupled with studies Conducted by the OECD indicate that out of every 100 new companies, only 10 are able to consolidate in the formal market in the tenth year of operation.

The family control of small and medium-sized enterprises is no doubt a double-edged sword, which over time seems to bring more disadvantages than advantages, since the strategies and decisions that are made on many occasions present emotional nuances and are far removed from converting these Companies in real competitive threats.

Regarding this we can mention that in Salvatierra Guanajuato of the sample that was taken to carry out the present study that was of 145 SMEs, in 110 of them the control or direction of the same is in the hands of a person who has consanguineous ties with the owners Or entrepreneurs, it was not possible to obtain information on whether they were the owners themselves, since even if the instrument does have an item referring to this, 96% of the companies surveyed refused to answer this question. It was also obtained as a result that SMEs that have ten years of life onwards, are those whose managers or managers have knowledge about administrative areas and entrepreneurship, also agrees that are managers who have a professional preparation at university level.

With regard to the items that question the values-based behavior of managers, it is also possible to appreciate a slight inclination of the managers of the SMEs to act based on family values and to put as a priority the consanguineous ties that on several occasions unite the members Of SMEs, because it is possible to appreciate in those entrepreneurs who do not have a university preparation a tendency to make their employee satisfaction priority, above customer satisfaction and decision making is not purely objective, applying strategies based on The subjectivity that undoubtedly slows the growth of SMEs, this is contrary to the behavior of managers who have university academic knowledge and who try to separate family aspects of their business day by day.

The competitive advantage of Salvadoran small and medium-sized enterprises lies in the existence of resources to produce goods consumed by the local market. Their business philosophy without clear strategies are aimed at producing a quality product as this is their main competitive advantage and their main strength.

The market is not structured the sale and / or service is direct, so that the distribution channels are few links in the chain, ie the market is constituted by local consumers, originating in the communities, other municipalities And tourists

The general objective of SMEs is to obtain profits through a good product and / or service, lacking strategic planning, aiming to increase profits and expand the market, avoiding debt and reinvesting approximately 50% of the profits obtained.

There is no concern for substitute products, it is thought that people always return for the product because they consider it quality and have zero concern about the price of the product, because to establish the price are based only on production costs, another important fact that without Doubt are directly related to the business philosophy.

Regarding the internal part, they do not have a defined organizational philosophy, nor clearly defined functional structure, however, and even if neither the organizational philosophy nor the analysis and description of positions have been documented, if they are attributed responsible.

Conclusions and discussion

According to the information obtained, it is possible to state without doubt that external factors do influence the functioning of SMEs, but it is also important to mention that if the organization does not have a leader capable of dealing Strategic to the threat posed by the external environment, all the efforts of the authorities to support the development and growth of SMEs, such as the various supports that government agencies can contribute to the strengthening of SMEs, will not be of any use.

It is not possible to have externally healthy SMEs, if you do not begin to heal internally the organization, providing strategies that without doubt the leader or manager should be the maximum promoter of them.

In the same way it is also possible to add that Salvadoran SMEs do not internally analyze their companies, looking for areas of opportunity within, prefer to wait for them to receive economic support from governmental or foreign agencies and prefer to be told how to increase their sales to obtain Utilities, they accept that the thinking of their leaders are their own limitations because they believe that if they earn income they will survive and be competitive. Few SMEs are able to detect in their own staff their own strengths and limitations, but with a goal of profitability, a very basic organizational design, focus on the quality of their product and consider that their main strength and advantage Competitive, trust their product and through a direct sale, they dedicate themselves to listening to the suggestions of the public to improve.

Recomendations

- Do an introspective analysis, that is, the inside of SMEs and detect areas of opportunity.
- Analyze the business philosophy of its leader, in such a way, that the organizational philosophy based on a culture of entrepreneurship and oriented to innovation is perfectly defined.
- Create a business philosophy that helps and strengthens a close relationship with both actual and potential customers.
- The corporate philosophy must be shared, as this creates a commitment of employees and encourages the development of corporate identity.

- Managing internal factors and coordinating them with external factors, so that the generation of business strategies contemplate both the micro-environment and the macro-environment of the SME when making decisions.
- Conduct a traditional SWOT analysis and develop the EFE and EFI matrix, and then perform a Strategic Foda Analysis aimed at achieving the competitiveness of the SME.
- It is suggested that the business philosophy is based on the application of a style of situational and participatory leadership by its leader or manager.

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