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Management methods and tools in family businesses: Impact on the effectiveness of achieving goals

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Abstract. Efficient management at family businesses, like all other enterprises, requires the use of appropriate methods and tools. However, in many cases, the people managing these entities do not have any formal business education and often follow their intuition and act on experience gained over the years. The purpose of this article is to determine the extent to which select management methods and tools are used in Polish family businesses and to examine their impact on the effectiveness of achieving various objectives. A survey was conducted on a group of 182 managers of family businesses from Poland, who were asked about the effectiveness of achieving goals and the methods and tools used in management. The goals have been aggregated into three main groups: family goals, business goals, and a mix of family and business goals. Then, using statistical methods, the impact of the selected management methods and tools on the effectiveness of these three groups of objectives was examined. The conducted analysis has shown that family businesses in Poland make little use of professional management methods and tools and are rather limited to the intuitive use of the simplest methods, which they often cannot even professionally name. The research results indicate that the use of these methods only partially influences the effectiveness of achieving the set goals, and this impact can be observed in all three groups. In view of the above, the basic task of the broader family business environment is to improve the knowledge of professional management methods and tools among family business managers. From the scientific point of view, further research in this area is also necessary because little use of management methods and tools, especially those more

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professional, makes it difficult to broaden the study of the actual impact of these instruments on the effectiveness of achieving family business objectives

Keywords: family business, family firms, family business management, family business goals, management tools in family businesses, family business effectiveness

JEL Classification: D1, M290

1. INTRODUCTION

Family businesses are nowadays one of the most important components of economies in most countries. The examples of giants such as Wal-Mart, Ford Motor Company, Koch Industries, DELL Technologies, ALDI Group, Arcelor Mittal, Estee Lauder or Sodexo indicate that family businesses may run their activities on an enormous scale, achieving global success and being leaders in their market segments. Due to the above, they may be no longer associated with small, not always professionally run companies. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that a vast majority of family businesses are small entities hiring few employees, where the owner manages all activities. This owner, being very often the founder of the family business at the same time, must ensure the accomplishment of various objectives, both typical business-related and family-motivated ones, set by individual family members involved in the business (including themself). Therefore, it seems obvious that they (like those managing non-family businesses) need to apply relevant methods and tools. In many cases, people managing these entities do not possess specialized business education, and they are often guided by intuition and experience gained over years. This raises the question of the factors considered most important in management by family business managers and the place of professional management methods among them. Thus, the first hypothesis assumes that managers of family businesses do not consider the use of professional management methods to be the most significant issue in management.

Regardless of the hierarchy of factors essential for the efficient and effective management of family businesses, thus the accomplishment of the assumed objectives, management methods in each entity play their role in this process. Due to the lack of specialized business education among managers, it seems that the simplest methods, frequently applied intuitively may be particularly important in here. Therefore, the second hypothesis assumes that, in family businesses, simple management methods are used, which however significantly affect the efficiency of the accomplishment of objectives.

Family businesses, like all other entities, in order to stay in the market and ensure competitiveness to themselves, must take actions related to development, innovation, or care for their image. These operations require slightly more knowledge of issues from the scientific area of management, they cannot be effectively implemented ad hoc, with no strategy. The knowledge and use of professional management methods may significantly facilitate their implementation and contribute to an increase in the efficiency of management of the entire family business. Therefore, the third hypothesis assumes that the application of professional management methods most significantly influences the accomplishment of objectives oriented to development, and not only survival and basic operations of family businesses.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Family businesses are a specific type of enterprises since it follows from their very essence that they combine two different subsystems: the family and the business. These subsystems are based on various standards, principles, values, objectives, motivation, and expectations (Cesaroni & Sentuti, 2016), however, simultaneously they are strongly interrelated, therefore, all the processes occurring in one of the subsystems automatically affect the functioning of the other. The co-existence of the family and business subsystems has an impact on many aspects of the operation of these entities, and particularly on establishing the business objectives. The family, which is the key group of stakeholders, in addition to the implementation of business projects, also expects the accomplishment of various family objectives (Aparicio et al., 2017), often non-economic ones. The objectives set by family businesses must therefore consider these two areas and be a kind of compromise between endeavors characteristic of the business perspective and endeavors of the family as a whole and its individual members involved in the functioning of the company (both in terms of ownership and management). The co-existence of family and business objectives is also related to the fact that the family business is to implement a significantly wider range of targets (Williams et al., 2018) than the non-family business. The detailed catalogue of family business objectives is presented, among others, by Basu (2004), Lutz & Schraml (2011), Katiuska Cabrera-Suarez et al. (2014), Aparicio et al. (2017), Basco (2017), Garcés-Galdeano et al. (2017), Astrachan Binz et al. (2017), Vazquez (2018), Williams (2018) or Machek & Hnilica (2020). Such a large number and variety of objectives bring about that family businesses may take different approaches to the hierarchy of objectives. Some entities may be oriented to the implementation of primarily family objectives, some concentrate on business objectives, and some attempt to balance both types of endeavors. Additionally, the division of objectives into economic and non-economic ones makes it possible to distinguish various optics adopted by family businesses (Basco, 2017, Aparicio et al., 2017).

The co-existence of these two, often contradictory groups of objectives may generate conflicting preferences in terms of the use of the resources possessed (De Massis et al., 2018), which has an impact on the entire process of family business management. The involvement of the family and the need to consider their endeavors brings about that family business management has its unique specificity. Dyer Jr and Handler (1994) and Hoy and Verser (1994) indicate that informal management practices are primarily used in family businesses, while minimizing documentation and bureaucracy. The entire management process is usually centralized in the hands of one person (or at most a few people), who is usually the owner (Kotey, 2005), which allows for taking fast and specific decisions (Chrisman et al., 2013). Moreover, formalized performance evaluation procedures (Astrachan & Kolenko, 1994), internal auditing (Levytska et al., 2022) and management control systems (Duréndez et al., 2016) are rarely used in family businesses managed by owners. The personal objectives of the founder and family objectives significantly affect the shaping of the company's operating strategy and taking current operational decisions. In family businesses, risky decisions are usually avoided since any business failure affects the functioning of the owner family and may result in serious consequences for them (Kotey, 2005).

All of this brings about that family business management is a much more complicated task than non-family business management. Therefore, in the subject literature, one may come across the whole sets of good practices concerning the management of these enterprises (Dana & Smyrnios, 2010). Managers also possess various management methods and tools which may significantly facilitate and streamline this task. It seems that most well-known management methods, properly adjusted to the specificity of the family business, can be used in family businesses. Meanwhile, management, particularly in small family start-ups, is usually in the hands of the owner who is often not properly prepared for this in terms of education. They are guided by their intuition and experience, however, using professional management methods is unfamiliar to them. This, in turn, may affect the efficiency of the implementation of the whole management process and accomplishment of the assumed objectives. The studies indicate that there is a clear relationship between high managerial skills and performance in family businesses. Higher managerial skills allow the managers of family businesses to design essential strategies and internal structures adjusted to the business environment, thus, to achieve an increase in operational efficiency (Garcés-Galdeano et al., 2016).

Measuring the efficiency of family businesses (and in a sense the management of these entities) and the factors affecting it is a quite important research topic (Mazzi, 2011). Various issues are addressed in this regard. Some of them are investigated within the social capital management of business entities (Mishchuk et al., 2022), supply chain and risk management (Cepel et al., 2020; Setyaningsih & Kelle, 2021). The research on the impact of family involvement in the ownership and family business management (m.in. Arosa et al., 2010, Sacristán-Navarro et al., 2011, De Massis et al., 2013, Poutziouris et al., 2015, González-Cruz & Cruz-Ros, 2016, Beuren et al., 2016, Wang & Shailer, 2017) and the composition of the board (among others, Brenes et al., 2011, Bhatt & Bhattacharya, Samara & Berbegal-Mirabent, 2018, Hussain et al., 2018) comes to the fore. However, there are also studies focusing on other aspects related to the family subsystem. For example, Hoelscher (2014) proved the impact of family capital on the efficiency of family businesses. Blanco-Mazagatos et al. (2016) investigated the effect of the agency conflict between active and passive family owners in Spanish family businesses. Allen et al. (2018) concentrated on the process through which trust within family firm leadership contributes to firm level performance. Kiwia et al. (2020) investigated the relationships between succession plans and the efficiency of family businesses, and the results of their research indicate that successors chosen by founders are characterized by higher efficiency than successors chosen by other family members. Issues related to succession were also investigated by Kodama et al. (2021) focusing on verifying how the predictions of managers concerning future succession affect the performance of small family businesses. On the other hand, Arteaga & Menéndez-Requejo (2017) proved the impact of possessing the constitution on the efficiency of operation of family businesses. Kolarov & Georgieva (2020) examined the impact of the composition of the management team on the effectiveness of internationalization activities. The impact of the gender of management body members on the performance of family businesses also seems an increasingly important direction of studies (m.in. Chadwick & Dawson, 2018, Fėlix & David, 2019).

Most studies on the efficiency of the functioning of family businesses use traditional financial measures (Williams, 2018), and the specificity of family businesses often requires the application of other evaluation methods which will enable the holistic view of the endeavors of family businesses and their performance (Kim & Gao, 2013, Williams et al., 2019). Chua et al. (2018) pinpoint that the assessment of the performance of the family business significantly depends on how objectives and results are measured. If the measures are not relevant to the enterprise, the assessment will be incorrect and incomplete. However, there are still few studies to adopt such an approach. Therefore, in the article, the authors focused on the effectiveness of achieving the objectives established by family businesses, recognizing this as the best measure of the overall efficiency of family business management. The basic advantage of such an approach is the possibility of assessing not only business aspects, most frequently related to financial, or more broadly, economic indicators, but also family aspects that are difficult to measure and usually non-financial.

A significant part of the studies on family businesses also focuses on issues concerning the strategy and management of family businesses (Nordqvist & Melin, 2010, Goel et al., 2012, Barros et al., 2016), or the professionalization of family business management (Polat, 2021, Razzak et al., 2021). However, there is practically no research on the methods and tools of management used in family businesses and the impact of individual management methods on the effectiveness of family business management, both in terms of traditional economic efficiency and even broadly understood efficiency including also non-financial objectives. Therefore, this article responds to both problems, dealing with the analysis of management methods used in family businesses and their impact on the effectiveness of accomplishment of objectives, which may constitute the basis for assessing the effectiveness of management.

3. METHODOLOGY

The basis for the analysis is the primary data collected in the survey questionnaire carried out among the managers of Polish family businesses. The study, in the course of which 182 complete questionnaires were collected, lasted for 8 months. The selection of the sample was not random – the research was assumed to cover family entrepreneurs meeting certain requirements. The research concerned the achievement of family business objectives and the factors that are crucial for the effective family business management, including the use of simple and professional management methods in these entities.

One of the basic challenges of the analysis of the research results was the aggregation of the results of the question on the degree of achievement of the objectives. In this question, 22 objectives were identified, the most characteristic of family businesses – this group included both business and family objectives, and each item was assessed on a point scale from 1 to 5. The analysis of each of these objectives separately and relating them to the investigated issues would be practically impossible, therefore the aggregated objectives were created using the factor analysis.

In the first stage of the factor analysis, the so-called eigenvalues were estimated, and the analysis of factor loadings was carried out. Unrotated factor loadings for selected factors were estimated and 5 groups of factors meeting the adopted conditions were distinguished, however, owing to the fact that the last two factors were composed respectively of only 2 and 3 unit objectives, only the first three aggregated objectives that allow for better reflection of the essence of the investigated issue were adopted for further analysis. This led to the creation of the aggregated objectives with different characteristics: the family objective, the business objective, and the family-business objective. The first aggregated objective (the family one) included the following objectives: maintaining the family control over the company; providing jobs to the owner family members; handing over the company to the next generation; ensuring the identification of the owner family members with the company; incorporating family values in the company; maintaining family cohesion by uniting its members around a joint venture; being perceived as a family business by customers. The second aggregated objective (the business one) consists of the following subobjectives: good relationships with contractors based on mutual respect and trust; maintaining high ethical and moral standards in the enterprise; good knowledge of customer needs and expectations; providing high-quality products and services; improving financial indicators (profit, revenues, productivity etc.), increasing sales, reducing debts. On the other hand, the third objective (the family-business one) consists of the following specific objectives: building good reputation of the owner family in society; charity activities for the benefit of the local community; creating employees' loyalty; international expansion; introducing innovation. Therefore, it consists of objectives, among others, related to development and innovation, i.e., the priorities broader than the ones connected with basic survival.

Following the creation of the aggregated objectives, it was necessary to assess if they had been properly selected. For this purpose, the linear correlation coefficients R of all unit priorities were estimated between each other and in the created aggregated objectives. The analysis of the obtained results indicated high values of the linear correlation coefficient between the subobjectives creating the established aggregated objectives. The last stage was the reliability assessment, based on the evaluation of the Cronbach's alpha coefficient of consistence and indicated a very good and good selection of the aggregated objectives.

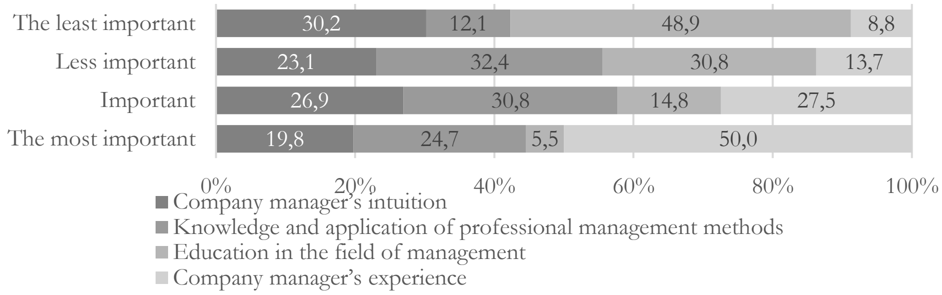
The other data obtained in the study were subject to the descriptive analysis and statistical analysis, in which the level of significance (Type I error) $p<0.05$ was adopted. To verify the second and third hypotheses, the non-parametric Mann-Whitney U rank sum test was applied.

4. EMPIRICAL RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In order to verify the first hypothesis, the responses to the questions on the significance of selected aspects affecting the efficiency of family business management were analyzed. The data obtained in the study are presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1

The structure of responses to the question concerning the ranking of selected aspects affecting the effectiveness of family business management (N=182)



Source: Authors' results.

Half of the respondents indicated the company manager's experience as the most important for effective family business management, which proves that, in family businesses, experience gained in the course of conducting a business comes to the fore. On the other hand, the highest priority was the least often assigned to education in the field of management. Despite assigning low significance to education, the knowledge and application of professional management methods, in the opinion of the respondents, is an aspect with the largest or a very large impact on the efficiency of conducting a family business. The fact that they are valued higher than the manager's intuition is certainly positive. This indicates that family business managers realize that relying only on intuition, which is not supported by the knowledge and application of professional management methods will not provide them with appropriate tools for the effective management of the company which is supposed to last for generations. The above analyses indicate that family business managers actually do not consider the knowledge and application of professional management methods as the key aspect in effective family business management. Therefore, the first research hypothesis can be verified positively.

The verification of the other two hypotheses requires the use of more developed analyses. First of all, the responses on the use of simple management methods and tools were analyzed. They were deliberately not named directly but described to check whether they are actually applied by enterprises since it had been assumed that these simple methods could be used by enterprises even without being aware of the existence of their scientific description and naming them directly could obscure the results (since it is possible to use a method not knowing its name). The results of the responses to these questions are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

The structure of responses to the question concerning the application of simple management methods and tools (N=182)

Question content	Response (% of indications)	
	yes	no
Does your company have the formulated vision and mission?	64.29	35.71
Do you make regular comparisons to competitors?	55.49	44.51
Do you make periodic assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of your company?	59.89	40.11
Do you periodically monitor the company's environment in terms of opportunities and threats?	65.38	34.62
Do you outsource the performance of some tasks?	67.58	32.42

Source: Authors' results.

In terms of possessing the formulated vision and mission, most of the respondents (about 64%) replied in the affirmative, which means that the surveyed family businesses understand and appreciate the role of clearly formulated mission and vision. A significantly smaller percentage of the respondents confirmed making regular comparisons to competitors (benchmarking) – it is applied by slightly more than 55% of the surveyed enterprises. The components of the SWOT analysis are applied slightly more often – strengths and weaknesses are periodically assessed by nearly 60% of the respondents and the monitoring of the environment in terms of opportunities and threats is carried out by over 65% of those questioned. However, the most popular is the outsourcing of certain functions to external entities, which can be explained by the small size of most of the surveyed companies and the trends prevailing in the modern economy. Microenterprises very often decide on the outsourcing of such areas as bookkeeping, human resources, safety and health or IT to specialized entities – since they are not able to economically bear the weight of employing specialists in these areas.

In the subsequent step, the analysis of the responses to the questions relating to the three aggregated objectives was carried out, i.e., the family, business, and family-business ones. This analysis was conducted using the Mann-Whitney U test, and its objective was to investigate if the application of simple management methods and tools (not scientifically named) has an impact on the accomplishment of family objectives. The results of the study for the analyzed five questions in relation to these aggregated objectives are presented in Table 2 and Figure 2 (only methods for which there is a statistically significant difference).

Table 2

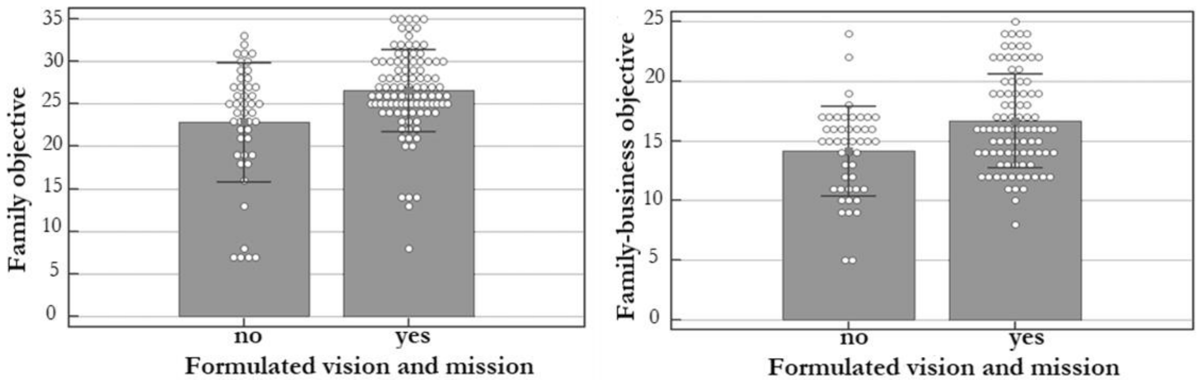
The summary of the results of the Mann-Whitney U test for simple management methods in relation to the three aggregated objectives

Method	Mann-Whitney U test level		
	Family objective	Business objective	Family-business objective
Formulated vision and mission	**p = 0.0018**	p = 0.1050	**p = 0.0030**
Comparison to competitors	**p = 0.0001**	p = 0.0541	**p = 0.0011**
Assessment of strengths and weaknesses	**p = 0.0022**	**p = 0.0160**	**p = 0.0444**
Searching for opportunities and threats	**p = 0.0169**	**p = 0.0082**	**p = 0.0070**
Outsourcing	p = 0.3810	p = 0.1119	p = 0.8815

Source: Authors' results.

Figure 2

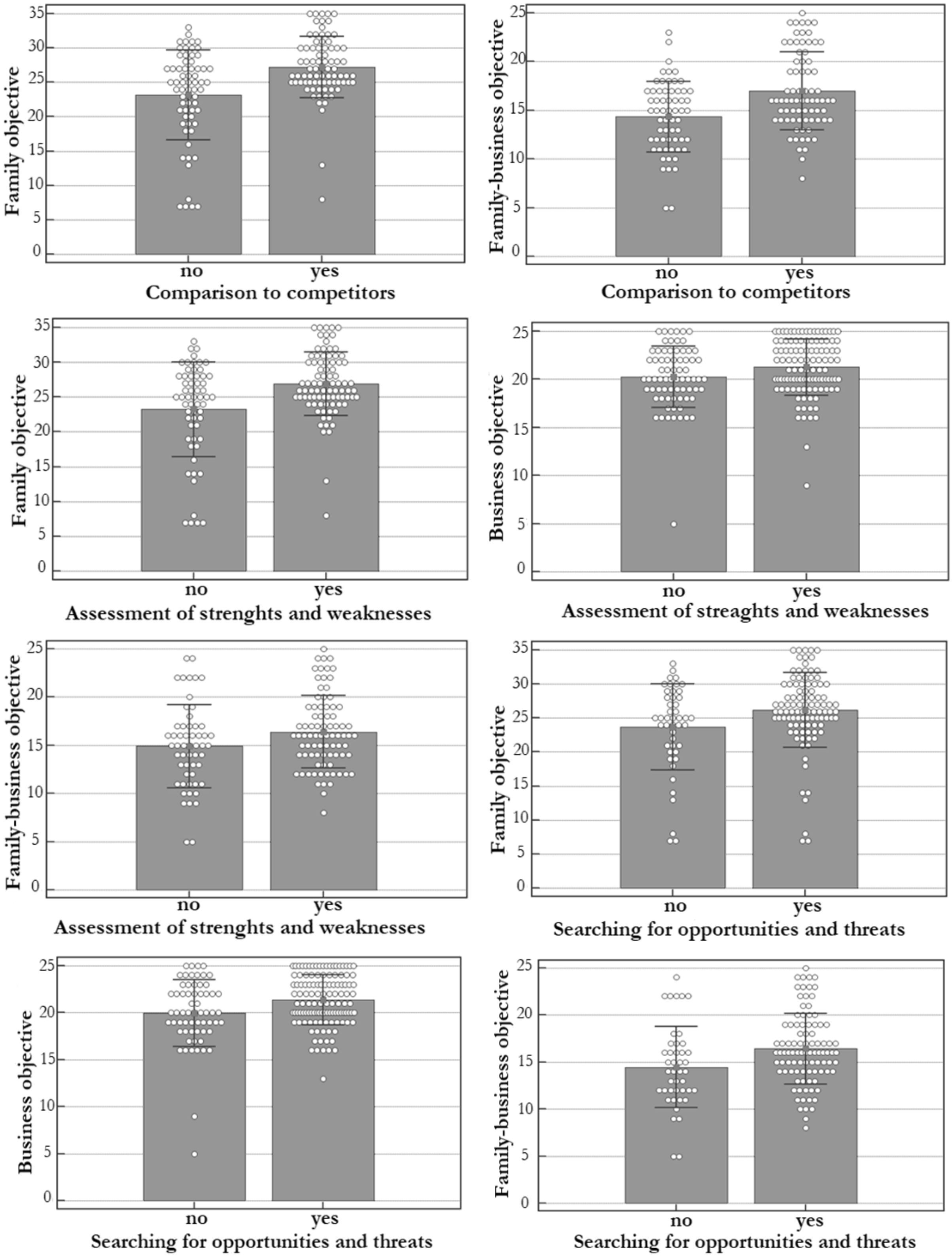
Selected test results for simple management methods in relation to the three aggregated objectives



Source: Authors' results.

Figure 2 cont.

Selected test results for simple management methods in relation to the three aggregated objectives



Source: Authors' results.

In the case of the company having a formulated vision and mission, a statistically significantly higher level of assessment of the degree of achievement of the family objective (p=0.018) was found. The second aggregated objective (the business one) is also achieved to a higher degree by the entities possessing a vision and a mission, however, there is no statistically significant difference (p>0.05) in this case. The family-business objective was also assessed higher by the enterprises declaring the possession of a formulated vision and a mission, and the difference in the assessment is statistically significant (p=0.0030). The companies regularly making comparisons to competitors assess the level of accomplishment of all the three aggregated objectives higher. In two cases, one may indicate the occurrence of statistically significant differences between the entities making and not making such comparisons. They apply to the family objective (p=0.0001) and the family-business one (p=0.0011). In the case of the business objective, the difference in assessment is not statistically significant, however, the adopted level of significance is nearly achieved.

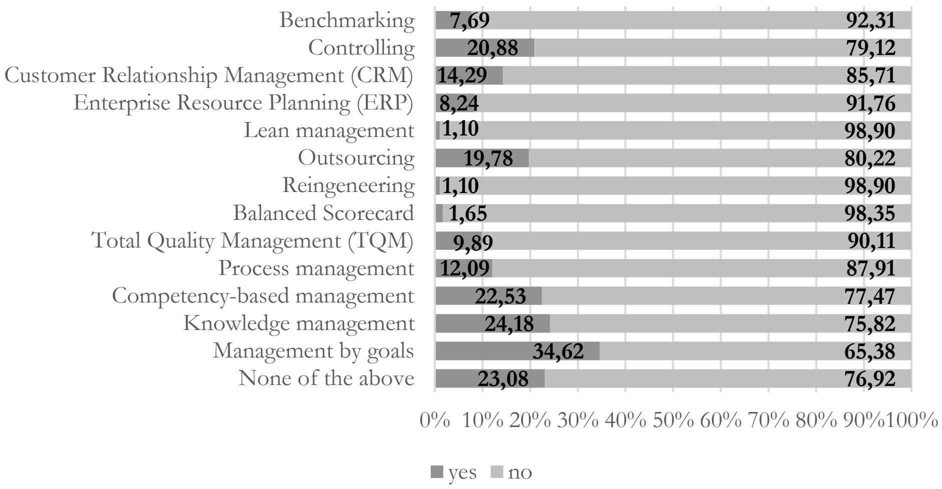
In the family businesses monitoring their strengths and weaknesses, a statistically significantly higher level of assessment of the family objective (p=0.0022) was found. There is also a statistically significant difference in the case of the business objective (p=0.0160) and the family-business one (p=0.0444). In the case of the periodic monitoring of the business environment in terms of opportunities and threats, statistically significant differences were found in relation to all the three aggregated objectives. All these objectives were assessed statistically significantly higher by the entities periodically monitoring the environment in the search of opportunities and threats to the future operations. On the other hand, the enterprises outsourcing the performance of some tasks related to their activities assess the degree of achievement of all the aggregated objectives higher, as opposed to a few issues discussed above. In the case of outsourcing, a statistically significant difference was not recorded for any of the objectives.

When analyzing the results for individual objectives, one may observe that, in the case of the family and family-business objectives, statistically significant differences were recorded in relation to the four aspects: possessing the formulated vision and mission, making regular comparisons to competitors, assessing the company's strengths and weaknesses and monitoring the environment in terms of opportunities and threats – the entities using these methods assessed the degree of implementation of the objectives creating these categories higher. On the other hand, the high evaluation of the accomplishment of the business objective only to a certain extent is determined by the application of these methods – statistically significant differences were found for the assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the company and monitoring the environment in terms of opportunities and threats. When analyzing the above overall data, it can be noticed that the use of the investigated management methods and tools affects both the implementation of the selected business and family priorities. Therefore, it seems that the obtained results allow for the positive verification of the second hypothesis formulated in the introduction, assuming that simple management methods, which however significantly affect the effectiveness of the accomplishment of objectives, are applied in family businesses.

The third hypothesis concerning the application of professional management methods was also analyzed in terms of various aspects. Initially, the responses concerning the use of scientific (named directly) management methods and tools were analyzed. Some of them (benchmarking and outsourcing) were previously hidden in the "descriptive" questions, due to which it was possible to verify to what extent the respondents know professional terms for the methods and tools applied by them. The structure of responses to the question on the use of scientific management methods and tools is presented in Figure 3. The structure does not add up to 100% since it was possible to tick more than one response. The only response which did not accept the coexistence of other options was „none of the above".

Figure 3

The structure of responses to the question: "Which of the listed management methods are used in your company?" (N=182)



Source: Authors' results.

The above data depict not a very favorable image of the use of professional management methods and tools in Polish family businesses. The most often applied method (management by objectives) was indicated by slightly more than 1/3 of those questioned. Over 20% of the respondents declared the application of knowledge management, competency-based management and controlling. On the other hand, balanced scorecard, reengineering, and lean management are the least used – each of these methods is applied in less than 2% of enterprises. One may also be concerned about a high percentage of family businesses in which none of the methods included in the study is used – the response of "none of the above" was indicated by more than 23% of the respondents. It is also worth mentioning here that the respondents had an opportunity to give other methods they applied (the questionnaire contained the response "others" with a request to enter the name of the method), however, this option was not selected in any of the survey questionnaires.

However, it seems that a relatively low level of indications of the use of professional management methods may be due to the lack of knowledge of their names. This is evidenced by a large difference in indications concerning benchmarking and outsourcing in the case of their proper designation and simple description. Therefore, one may assume that many family businesses use scientifically named and described management methods and tools, even not being aware of that. One may also doubt if the highest frequency of indications of management by objectives is due to suggesting the respondents about the research topic. However, regardless of the above doubts, it was decided to conduct the further analysis of the data.

The second step that was to enable the verification of the third hypothesis set in the introduction was to refer the results of the question concerning the application of professional management methods and tools to the degree of accomplishment of the three aggregated objectives. For this purpose, the analysis of the Mann-Whitney U test was reused. The most important data resulting from the analysis of these objectives was presented in Table 3 (for the respondents for whom it was possible to estimate such an assessment) and Figure 4 (only methods for which there is a statistically significant difference). Due to too few positive responses for balanced scorecard, reengineering and lean management, these methods were not subject to the analysis.

Table 3

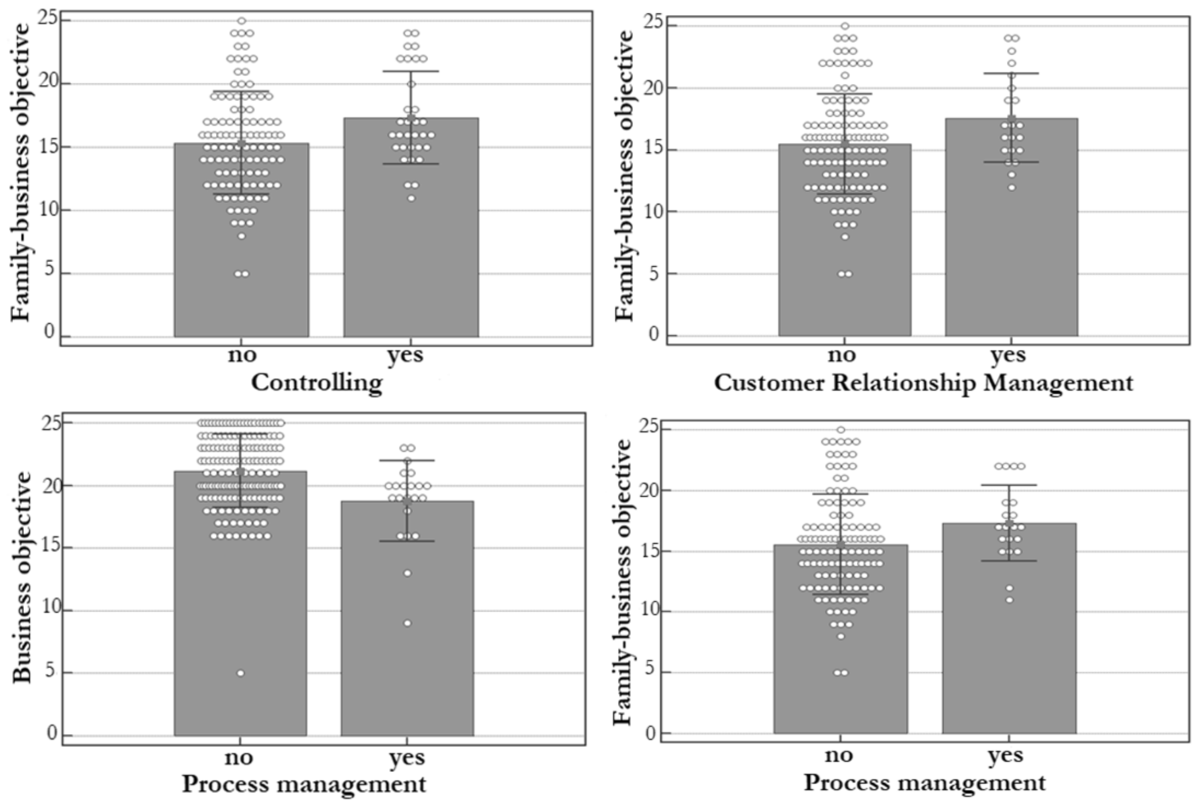
The structure of responses to the question "Which of the listed management methods are used in your company?" and the scoring of the family, business, and family-business objectives

Management method	Manna-Whitney U test		
	Family objective	Business objective	Family-business objective
Benchmarking	p = 0.0871	p = 0.9614	p = 0.5305
Controlling	p = 0.5701	p = 0.2265	**p = 0.0189**
CRM	p = 0.1644	p = 0.2002	**p = 0.0310**
ERP	p = 0.1270	p = 0.6241	p = 0.1270
Outsourcing	p = 0.8553	p = 0.8289	p = 0.7312
TQM	p = 0.8589	**p = 0.0467**	p = 0.9752
Process management	p = 0.5020	**p = 0.0013**	**p = 0.0282**
Knowledge management	**p = 0.0272**	p = 0.6448	**p = 0.0058**
Competency-based management	**p = 0.0272**	p = 0.2338	**p = 0.0294**
Management by objectives	p = 0.1566	p = 0.2132	p = 0.9231
None of the above	***p = 0.0112***	*p = 0.5150*	***p = 0.0077***

Source: Authors' results.

Figure 4

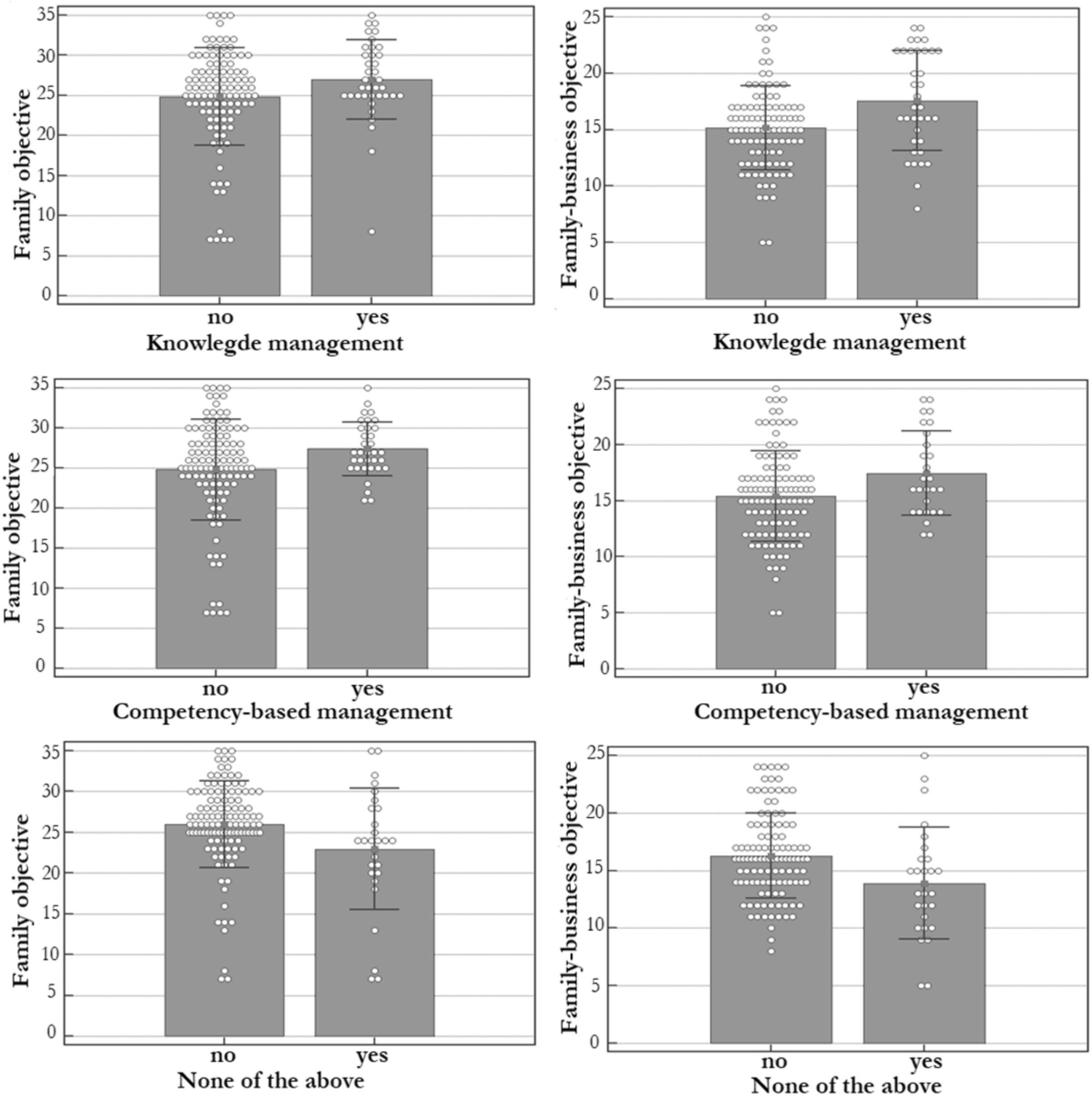
The structure of responses to the question "Which of the listed management methods are used in your company?" and selected scoring of the family, business, and family-business objectives



Source: Authors' results.

Figure 4 cont.

The structure of responses to the question "Which of the listed management methods are used in your company?" and selected scoring of the family, business, and family-business objectives



Source: Authors' results.

In relation to the family objective, statistically significant differences were found in the case of two management methods. The respondents who declared the use of competency-based management and knowledge management assessed the level of the accomplishment of objectives included in the discussed category statistically significantly higher. This aggregated objective also received a statistically higher rating in the case of the use of any management method (the response "no" in the option of "none of the above" – this is a reverse question). In the case of the second aggregated objective (the business one), statistically significant differences were recorded for two methods: TQM and process management. The level of the accomplishment of the second aggregated objective was assessed statistically significantly higher in family businesses using these methods than in other enterprises. On the other hand, the assessment of the degree of accomplishment of the family-business objective indicates a quite high correlation with the use of scientific management methods and tools. This aggregated objective is assessed significantly higher by the enterprises that apply controlling, CRM, process management, competency-based management and knowledge management, as well as by the ones that use any management methods (again, a reverse question is dealt with – the option "no" in the response of "none of the above").

Among the listed management methods and tools, the largest impact on the assessment of the degree of accomplishment of the analyzed objectives is exerted by process management, knowledge management and competency-based management. On the other hand, the use of benchmarking, ERP and outsourcing seems to have no effect on the effectiveness of implementation of the investigated aggregate objectives (it was not possible to indicate a statistically significant difference between the entities using and not using these methods). By contrast, it was indicated that the assessment of the degree of accomplishment of individual objectives can be influenced by various management methods and tools. Based on the reversed question, it can also be concluded that the application of any management methods and tools has a statistically significant impact on the level of implementation of the aggregated objectives (mainly the family and the family-business ones). In view of the above, the third hypothesis was verified positively.

5. CONCLUSION

Most family business managers in Poland refer primarily to their business experience, considering it as the most important factor of the effective business management and placing it above the use of scientific management methods and tools. If they do apply any management methods and tools, they are primarily simple methods, whereas they are very often unaware of their scientific terms. It can be perfectly seen on the example of benchmarking, which, professionally known as a method used in the company, was indicated only by about 8% of the respondents, however, when simplified under the term of "making regular comparisons to competitors", it was indicated by about 56% of those questioned. A similar case is outsourcing – when called professionally, it was indicated by nearly 20% of the respondents, by contrast, when using a simplified version known as "delegating the performance of certain tasks outside the company", it was indicated by 68%.

The conducted analysis indicated the existence of the impact of using some management methods and tools on the assessment of the level of accomplishment of the aggregated objectives. Possessing the formulated vision and mission, making comparisons to competitors, assessment of strengths and weaknesses and monitoring the environment in terms of opportunities and threats significantly affect the accomplishment of objectives established in family businesses. Such an impact was not recorded only in the case of outsourcing.

More professional management methods and tools are relatively rarely used in family businesses, however, the analysis concerning them also provided some interesting conclusions. The significance of only a small proportion of them was indicated whereas it cannot be ruled out that the aforementioned ignorance of the terminology affected the obtained research results. The largest impact of the listed methods and tools was observed for the family-business aggregated objective (statistically significant differences for 5 items). Therefore, it can be noticed that professional management methods and tools are rather unimportant for the achievement of primary objectives (both family and business ones), whereas they are much more essential in case of objectives related to innovation and business development. This seems justified since the orientation towards innovativeness and development proves a slightly higher level of the conducted business and requires the application of more professional tools.

The authors are aware of the fact that the issue of the impact of using professional management methods and tools on the effectiveness of accomplishment of objectives requires further research and analyses since it is a multi-aspect and multifold issue. A quite significant constraint of the conducted analyses is due to little use of management methods and tools, particularly those more professional in the surveyed entities. This impedes a broader description of the actual impact of these instruments on the effectiveness of accomplishment of family business objectives. Therefore, it seems necessary to carry out further large-scale research. It would be also interesting to relate to various characteristics of family businesses, i.e., the size, age, leading generation, or family involvement in management, which was not possible in this study due to volume restrictions.

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