

PROCEEDINGS OF THE 19TH INTERNATIONAL
CONFERENCE

WORK AND ORGANIZATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY 2020

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PSYCHOLÓGIA PRÁCE A ORGANIZÁCIE 2020

ZBORNÍK PRÍSPEVKOV Z 19. MEDZINÁRODNEJ
KONFERENCIE

**Ivana Piterová,
Denisa Fedáková,
Jozef Výrost (Eds.)**

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**Institute of Social Sciences, CSPS SAS
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Introduction

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic the 19th International Conference Work and Organizational Psychology 2020 took place online between 20 and 21 May 2020.

Despite the unprecedented situation, over 35 participants took part in the Conference with 11 online presentations and 19 posters. The online presentations were divided into three sections: Psychology in Organisations; Diagnostics in Work Psychology, and the Social Context of Work.

In this book of conference proceedings, following a now over 20-year tradition, we present 23 selected studies, which have been presented in the form of a lecture or a poster at the conference and later submitted as written papers and peer reviewed. We would like to thank our colleagues from Charles University in Prague, Palacký University in Olomouc, Tomas Bata University in Zlín, Masaryk University in Brno, Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra, P. J. Šafárik University in Košice and from the Centre of Social and Psychological Sciences in Košice for their valuable help with the organization of the conference and for their cooperation in the review process. We wish that the readers of the proceedings will find interesting information and inspiration for their own work tasks and practice.

This conference, organized by the team of the Centre of Social and Psychological Sciences in Košice, was a special one due to the global pandemic and consequently a time of physical and social distancing. However, it is worth emphasising that the organizers succeeded in keeping the conference continuity, and despite the online distancing the conference climate still enabled valuable and inspiring discussions between participants.

*Ivana Piterová, Denisa Fedáková & Jozef Výrost
editors of the conference proceedings*

Úvodné slovo

Kvôli celosvetovej pandémie COVID-19 sa 19. ročník medzinárodnej konferencie Psychológia práce a organizácie 2020 konal online, v dňoch 20. – 21. mája 2020.

Navzdory okolnostiam a neobvyklej situácii sa konferencie zúčastnilo viac ako 35 ľudí, s 11-timi online prezentáciami a 19-timi posterami. Online prezentácie boli rozdelené do troch sekcií: 1. Psychológia v prostredí organizácie; 2. Psychologická analýza pracovnej činnosti a psychodiagnostika v psychológii práce; a 3. Práca a jej sociálny kontext, jednotlivec v práci.

V tomto konferenčnom zborníku z konferencie, ktorá má viac ako 20 ročnú tradíciu, prezentujeme 23 príspevkov, ktoré boli na konferencii prezentované formou prednášky alebo posteru a neskôr boli v písomnej podobe zaradené do recenzného procesu. Radi by sme sa poďakovali našim kolegom z Karlovej univerzity v Prahe, Univerzity Palackého v Olomouci, Univerzity Tomáše Bati v Zlíne, Masarykovej univerzity v Brne, Univerzity Konštantína Filozofa v Nitre, Univerzity Pavla Jozefa Šafárika v Košiciach a z Centra spoločenských a psychologických vied SAV v Košiciach, za ich pomoc s organizáciou konferencie a ich spoluprácu na recenznom procese. Želáme čitateľom tohto zborníka, aby našli zaujímavé informácie a inšpiráciu pre ich vlastnú vedeckú prácu, aj odbornú prax.

Tohtoročná konferencia PPaO 2020, organizovaná tímom Centra spoločenských a psychologických vied SAV, bola kvôli globálnej pandémie a z toho vyplývajúcich fyzických odstupov realizovaná v netradičnej online podobe. Napriek tomu, stojí za to zdôrazniť, že organizátori uspeli v udržaní kontinuity konferencie a napriek fyzickej vzdialenosti, online podmienky konferencie umožnili hodnotné a inšpirujúce diskusie medzi jej účastníkmi a účastníčkami.

*Ivana Piterová, Denisa Fedáková & Jozef Výrost
editori konferenčného zborníka*

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Family Businesses, Roles and Relationships

Rodinné podnikanie, roly a vzťahy

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Abstract

Objective. *The aim of the paper is to investigate and analyse the reasons for launching a family business. It also focuses on family members' views of the roles and relationships in family businesses. A small number of similar studies have been conducted around the world but none in Slovakia. Hence the paper aims to fill this gap in the psychological research on family businesses in Slovakia.*

Method. *The sample consisted of 21 participants: 6 fathers, 5 mothers, 8 sons and 2 daughters from 10 small family businesses agreed to participate in the structured in-depth interviews.*

Results. *The content analysis of the interview transcripts enabled us to identify the reasons for launching (and running) a family business. Moreover, we analysed the work-family roles and work-family relationships in the business.*

Conclusions. *The in-depth interviews provide insights into the family business environment obtained through analysing the reasons for launching the business, the assignment of family business roles and the types of relationships identified. The results are interpreted paying particular regard for the generational and gender dimensions.*

Limitations. *Not all family members of the participating family businesses had the time to participate equally in the study. The small number of daughters in the sample had a negative effect on data saturation. Furthermore, the family firms were located in one region of Slovakia (Košice region) making it difficult to generalize from the findings.*

Keywords. *family business; roles; relationships; structured in-depth interviews*

Abstrakt

Cieľ. Cieľom príspevku bolo zamerať sa na identifikovanie dôvodov pre vstup do rodinného podnikania, s ním súvisiacich rolí a vzťahov prostredníctvom výpovedí samotných aktérov, členov rodinného podniku. V odbornej literatúre celkovo, je psychologických štúdií v tomto zameraní málo a na Slovensku absentujú, takže cieľom príspevku bolo aj vyplnenie tejto medzery.

Metóda. Vzorku tvorilo 21 účastníkov/čok, ktorí sú súčasťou rodinného podniku. Šesť otcov, päť matiek, osem synov a dve dcéry z 10 malých rodinných firiem sa po vyjadrení súhlasu zúčastnilo štruktúrovaných hĺbkových rozhovorov.

Zistenia. Obsahovou analýzou prepisu rozhovorov boli identifikované dôvody pre zahájenie rodinného podnikania a zotrvanie v ňom. Navyše, zamerali sme sa na kategorizáciu rolí a popisy vzťahov v rodinnom podniku.

Záver. Uskutočnené hĺbkové rozhovory priniesli vhľad do prostredia rodinného podnikania prostredníctvom identifikovania dôvodov pre rodinné podnikanie, vzťahov a rolí v rodinnom podniku. Zistenia sú interpretované aj s ohľadom na generačný a rodový aspekt.

Limity. Z dôvodu pracovnej vyťaženia oslovených sa nám nepodarilo uskutočniť rozhovory so všetkými rodinnými príslušníkmi, ktorí sa angažujú vo vybraných rodinných podnikoch, čo mohlo spôsobiť skreslenia v zisteniach. Predovšetkým dcéry boli vo vzorke málo zastúpené, čo ovplyvnilo saturáciu získaných dát. Rovnako, ku skresleniam mohlo prispieť aj to, že vybrané (dostupné) rodinné podniky pôsobia v iba v jednom regióne Slovenska.

Kľúčové slová. rodinné podnikanie; roly; vzťahy; štruktúrované hĺbkové rozhovory

Introduction

Family businesses have long been part of market economies. They occupy a distinctive position in the world of work and the economic world (Cagné et al., 2014). A family business can, in general, be defined as a business run by two or more family members from one or more families who have a considerable share in the business (Lukeš et al., 2005). In Slovak research studies, family business has been defined, for example, as a business run by at least two generations of one family who share a business policy (Mucha et al., 2016). In our study, family business is defined as an entrepreneurial activity performed by at least two family members.

The family firms which participated in our research study were small and most were run by a married couple/partners, (parents) who had one or two children. In the current study, we focus on some of the particularities (strengths, weaknesses, roles and relationships) of family businesses in Slovakia. Family firms represent a relatively limited means of entrepreneurship in Slovakia, as it was not possible to set up a family business until 1989. Although several decades have passed since then, very little research attention has focused on family businesses (Moresová et al., 2020). Thus far, to our knowledge, psychological studies have focused on the reasons for entering into a family business. The roles and relationships between the family business actors have received little attention. However, we agree with Pieper (2010) that a psychological perspective may prove beneficial to understanding family businesses. The intention behind this study is to extend knowledge in this area.

The aim of the paper is to investigate and analyse from the perspective of family business members i) the reasons for setting up the family business; and ii) the perceived roles and iii) relationships within it. Only a few studies of a similar character have been conducted internationally and almost none in Slovakia.

Relationships in family businesses

Well-performing family businesses are characterized by a higher level of trust and pressure to maintain that trust (Sundaramurthy, 2008). Dyer (2003) suggests that family relationships affect all aspects of individual, group and organizational behaviour in a family business. Naturally, the family members rely on each other's help, encouragement and cooperation. They often share the same vision and values (Gao & Bai, 2011). The cohesion among family members may lead to participants feeling more committed to the firm (Vozikis et al., 2013). In general, personal relationships are thought to underpin family firms (Hoover & Hoover, 2013). Gagne et al. (2014) suggest that two types of 'exchange' relationships are typically found in family businesses: relationships based on economic exchange (immediate transactions) and relationships based on social exchange (trust building and the vision of relationships which continue in the future).

One of the main objectives of this study was to focus on the relationships in the family business and identify the various relationship categories.

Roles in family businesses

A family business is a specific type of entrepreneurship. Family businesses or firms form part of the broader family context. Here two important spheres in a person's life – work and family – merge together. This naturally leads to a blending of roles. Most typically the 'traditional' division of roles is described. Whereas men tend to see the company in terms of rational decision-making and effectivity and their role as leading the company, women tend to focus on emotions, relationships and cohesion (Danes et al., 2005; Karataş-Özkan et al., 2011). In our investigation of the roles in family businesses, we were particularly interested in the male roles (fathers and sons) and female roles (mothers and daughters) in the family business as well as place and function.

Method

The data for this study was collected via in-depth structured interviews from January to February 2020. The discussion points of the interviews were framed by the areas of interest: family businesses, roles and relationships. The respondents answered the following questions: Why did you decide to set up a family business? What relationships are there in your family business? What is your role in the family business? The questions were exploratory in character and the aim was to obtain relevant information on the business, roles and relationships in Slovakia. Based on the parents' and children's answers, we tried to capture the generational dimension in the topic content and categorization.

To enhance the objectivity of the results, the transcribed interviews were subjected to two independent analyses. This was followed by a debriefing on each of the analyses, in which the aim was to identify the most relevant content and categorizations. The final categories were obtained based on the consistency between the outputs of the two analyses, the content (quotes) and the number of roles categorized.

Sample

After having obtained informed consent, we interviewed 21 respondents (male and female) from 10 family firms. The sample consisted of 14 men (66.7%) and 7 women (33.3%): specifically, 6 fathers (28.6%), 5 mothers (23.8%), 8 sons (38.1%) and 2 daughters (9.5%). The respondents were in the 18–63 age range. The average age was 37.4 years. Most had completed secondary school (38.1%) and just over a quarter of the sample were university graduates (28.6%). Respondents with a bachelor's degree represented 14.3% of the sample and

respondents holding a primary education degree represented 14.3% too. Finally, there was one respondent with a PhD (4.8%). The family firms taking part in this part of the research were from the Košice region and from various business fields. They had been running their business for 3–30 years and two generations were involved. The family firms were selected randomly. Participation in the interviews was voluntary and participants could terminate their interview at any time at their own discretion.

Results

Below we present the findings on perceptions of the family business. We analysed the reasons for establishing the family business and its strengths and weaknesses.

Reasons for establishing a family business

The question exploring this, ‘Why did you decide to start a family business?’, was answered mainly by the parents. They were the generation that had founded the business and they considered it essential to give a reason for their decision. In ‘young’ firms (started only a few years ago) the children also answered the question (as observers/participants of the process).

The content was organized into the following five categories (P stands for parents and indicates the ‘source’ of the category; C stands for children and indicates the ‘source’ of the category):

THE ERA MADE IT POSSIBLE ‘...children of the velvet revolution...we didn’t think about it, we started it offhand’; ‘I didn’t want to be limited (any)more.’ (P)

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY/ A COINCIDENCE ‘We went for a walk as a family and there was a sign saying, *for rent*. A building.’; ‘We had a really big family house, so we started renting out the rooms.’ (P; C)

SKILLS ‘I’m a skilled carpenter and I have always enjoyed my job.’; ‘The family had to be involved as I couldn’t manage all the responsibilities myself.’ (P; C)

DREAM ‘Me and my wife always wanted it – we had a dream.’; ‘I would say, it is a dream that’s come true. Definitely a dream I once had [that’s] fulfilled.’ (P)

FREEDOM AND AUTONOMY ‘...your own business offered freedom’; ‘We wanted to have it our own way.’; ‘I take responsibility for myself.’ (P)

Relationships in the family business

Here the aim was to identify the categories of relationships in the family business and to capture the generational dimension between parents and children (P stands for parents and indicates the ‘source’ of the category; C stands for children and indicates the ‘source’ of the category). We identified eight relationship categories. Parents reported the following relationships: partner relationship, business relationship, parent–child relationship and sacrifice in a relationship. The children reported parent–child relationships and being annoyed with the relationships. Both generations reported family relationships and cohesion.

PARTNER RELATIONSHIP ‘I think it made our relationship stronger.’; ‘I think it’s really positive because we know about each other at work too, we know what the other one is doing, in fact you don’t just know the person at home, you know your partner’s work character.’ (P)

FAMILY RELATIONSHIP ‘Just as the family is important to us at home, we consider the work relationships to be equally important.’ (P, C)

PARENT–CHILD RELATIONSHIP ‘I can rely on them (children), I know how it works, they know how it works, I trust them fully.’ (P)

CHILD–PARENT RELATIONSHIP ‘I think the relationships are good, we’re better at sorting out problems than, for example, my school mates.’; ‘I feel my father trusts me more.’ (C)

BEING ANNOYED IN THE RELATIONSHIPS ‘...we see one another quite a lot. Sometimes, we get annoyed with one another.’ (C)

BUSINESS RELATIONSHIP ‘...the relationships with clients. We have loads of long-term clients. We made something for the grandma, then for her children and now for the grandchildren.’ (P)

SACRIFICING FOR THE RELATIONSHIP ‘I was the victim who had to devote all my time to the family and my husband had more freedom, but this is how it probably always works in relationships.’ (P)

COHESION ‘it’s natural’; ‘it’s important’; ‘we’re one team’; ‘making the relationships stronger’ (P, C).

As relationship cohesion was mentioned in many different forms and contexts, below we present the subcategories generated from the cohesion category. The following seven subcategories occurred most frequently:

It's important (5): 'It's not important just in a family business, it's important in any kind of entrepreneurship.'

One team (5): 'We're all like equal. It doesn't matter if you're older or younger, we're equal.'

It's natural (4): '...of course, it doesn't work any other way. It's natural.'

Sustaining the relationships (4): '...every time we complete an order, we have a party.'

Adjusting (2): 'Maybe there are some things I would have done differently, but I know that the majority [of us] agreed on them.'

Loyalty (2): '...then you appreciate the loyal ones more.'

Responsibility (2): '...responsibility for yourself...us, as a unit.'

Roles in the family business

The aim of the study was to identify the roles taken on by the men and women (as members of the family business). The respondents answered the following question: What is your role in the family business? Table 1 presents the roles identified and the role rate.

Table 1. *Categories of roles in the family business*

Man/father (N=6)	Woman/mother (N=5)
In charge of creativity (3) I sort out the orders and clients (3) Me, the entrepreneur (2) The boss (3) Responsible for the firm (3) A specialist (carpenter, programmer) (3)	Keeps everything in order (documents, methods) (5) Reliable (2) Change; the role changes over time (2) Controller/ bookkeeper (6) I look after the guests; clients (4) Designer, planner (1) Blending of the colleague–wife–mother roles (4)
Man/son (N=8)	Woman/daughter (N=2)
Assistant; I do everything that is necessary (7) Sales representative (3) Technician (2) Manager (2) Son (3)	Accountant (1) Contracts and financial claims (1) Daughter (boss's daughter) (2) Assistant (2)

Discussion and conclusion

The results show that on the one hand there are diverse reasons for setting up a family business, such as circumstances – how long the firm has been in business; opportunity – coincidence; skills – education or dreams – plans. On the other hand, all participants also gave a single, unanimous reason: autonomy, the freedom to make decisions and taking responsibility for one's decisions. When giving reasons for setting up the family business, the generational dimension was evident in the length of time the participants had been in business. In the firms founded 20 years ago, only the founders (parents) answered that question, as the children were not involved or were too young to have much awareness of it or to be capable of defining it. In family businesses started less than five years ago, some children were able to explain the reasons for starting the family business, as they had been involved in the family preparations for setting up the business.

Another aim in this study was to create categories representing the relationships that were depicted in many different ways and at different levels (the strengths of the relationships, family relationships, fair relationships etc.). Parents and children consistently described the family relationships and the cohesion in the family business. We identified a generational dimension in the following relational aspects parents mentioned regarding the family business: partner relationships (in line with Burns, 2016) parent–child relationships and business relationships and sacrifices within the relationship. On the other hand, the children mentioned the child–parent relationship and being annoyed within the relationships. Cohesion was most frequently used to describe the relationships. Cohesion was one of the 'relationship categories' identified as being a feature and outcome of relationships. Cohesion is perceived as part of the concept of familiness which links the family and the business – especially relationships (greater sensitivity to the family business) and distinguishes family businesses from traditional businesses (Irava & Moores, 2010). It may be that familiness, including fair family relationships and cohesion, is one reason why parents and children alike value and emphasize family relationships.

The assignment of roles confirmed the dominance of the traditional perception of roles in the family business. Among the parents, the fathers took the lead and made decisions while the mother looked after everything. The children often perceived a 'family hierarchy' and mostly found themselves in the roles of 'helpers', which may be linked to their age (18). An interesting finding was the blending of roles among mothers, sons and daughters. The fathers did not report such blending. It should be noted here that the small number of daughters in the

sample led to poor saturation of data for the daughters' role categories. Nonetheless, the identified categories are worth mentioning.

Limits

Owing to some of the participants' family business responsibilities and lack of free time we were unable to interview all the members involved in the family business, which may have affected data saturation (especially in relation to daughters). All the family businesses were located in one region of Slovakia (Košice region), which makes it difficult to generalize on the basis of the study findings.

Benefits

Gaining insights into the family business research in Slovakia has a number of benefits. Socio-psychological findings relating to the generational and gender dimensions of family businesses could prove helpful as regards the management, sustainability and development of small family firms. The paper contributes to the psychological research on family businesses. The authors hope this study encourages researchers to devote attention to family businesses and helps emphasize the importance of further socio-psychological studies.

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