



Study of some Particularities of Algerian Family Businesses through the case of the Wilaya of Tizi-Ouzou

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Abstract

This article examines the specificities of Algerian family businesses, through the case of the wilaya of Tizi-Ouzou. More precisely, it looks at three specificities, namely; the profile of the manager, the method of financing and growth and the institutional context. It shows that the first two are strongly influenced and conditioned by the involvement of the family and the socio-cultural environment in a rather negative way, while the third does not contribute, as it should, to improve the other two.

The family businesses of Tizi-Ouzou thus find themselves in a logic of action that is not dynamic, slow and cautious, even suspicious of its environment. Due to the interweaving of the family sphere and that of the company, social and family inertia, reflection of a conservatism and a strong attachment to traditions, and leaves more room for the emotional and the irrational to the detriment of the rational and the economic, is in fact reflected on the family business.

✓ **Keywords:** Family Business - Specificities - Algerian Family Businesses - Institutions - Financing - Tizi-Ouzou.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The rediscovery of the importance of family businesses by the literature of the 90s responds to an awareness of the existence of differentiations distinguishing family businesses from non-family businesses. Since then, the studies devoted are part of this logic of distinction between the two types of companies. Almost all of these studies agree on recognizing the specificities and particularities of family businesses. The numerous studies devoted, theoretical and empirical, highlight several specific, even distinctive, traits of family businesses and which constitute today as many research themes on this type of business.

2. Problems and research methodology

While being part of this perspective, the present contribution questions these specificities in the case of Algerian family businesses. More particularly, it examines three particularities, namely; the profile of the managers, the financing and the growth of family businesses and the perception of the institutional context by the managers, taking as an example and field of study the family businesses in the wilaya of Tizi-Ouzou.

2.1. Problematic

Our goal is to answer the following question :

What specificities emerge from family businesses in the wilaya of Tizi-Ouzou with regard to the characteristics related to the profile of the managers, the methods of financing and growth and the institutional context ?

Through this question it is a question of answering a number of underlying questions, namely ;

- What is a family business and what are its specificities ?
- How can it be defined and characterized in the case of Algeria and more particularly in Tizi-Ouzou?
- What is the profile of the managers of family businesses in Tizi-Ouzou ?
- How are the family businesses in the wilaya of Tizi-Ouzou financed and how do they approach their growth ?
- What is the impact of the Algerian institutional context on family businesses in Tizi-Ouzou ?

2.2. Assumptions

To answer our problem and the underlying questions, we start from the following assumptions :

- H_1 . The managers of the family businesses in Tizi-Ouzou are strongly influenced by the family.
- H_2 . The methods of financing and growth are restricted and limited.
- H_3 . The Algerian institutional context is not favorable to family businesses in Tizi-Ouzou.

2.3. Research objectives and usefulness of the topic

- Penetrate the world of Algerian family businesses in search of their specificities.
- Appreciate and/or evaluate their role and their interaction with the local socio-economic and

institutional environment.

- Contribute to enriching research and knowledge on family businesses which constitute the most widespread type of business in Algeria.

Moreover, our study seems important to us in that it provides additional knowledge on a theme relatively little addressed by the Algerian economic literature. This could help to outline the contours of an official, or even legal, definition of the Algerian family business that currently does not exist.

2.4. Approach methodology

We adopt a theoretical and empirical approach for our study. First, we draw up a review of the literature on the definition and specificities of family businesses, trying to identify the salient features. Secondly, we present our field study; sampling, survey instruments (documentary research, questionnaire, semi-directive interviews, observation) as well as the general characteristics of the companies surveyed. Finally, in a final step, based on the results of our investigation, we analyze, respectively, the profile (personal, professional and psychosociological) of the managers of the Tizi-Ouzou family businesses, the financing and growth methods adopted within their companies and their perception of the institutional framework that governs entrepreneurial activity in Algeria, while trying to determine their impact on the activity of the managers and their relationships with their families.

3. A theoretical Framework for the Study of Family Businesses

Since the renewed interest in research on family businesses, since the 90s, the theoretical works that have attempted a state-of-the-art literature (Allouche & Amann, 2000; Missonier & Gundolf, 2017) lead to the observation of the persistent absence of consensus on the definition of the family business, despite the advances and new avenues addressed.

On reading the theoretical and empirical works available, it can be seen that, at the current state of knowledge, the criteria for defining a family business are increasingly diverse and the number and type to be used for a definition are still debated within the scientific community. Just as they are a function of variables that increasingly go beyond the field of economics.

3.1.From the Definition of the Family Business

The profusion of analyses of the family business is due to the particular character of this form of business which mixes individual trajectories, family trajectories and company trajectories. In other words, it is not simply through specific legal forms and / or sizes that the family business can be understood but it is the entanglement of family-company values that it is a question of dissecting. These questions are found at the foundations of the various definitions given of the family business and make them numerous, diverse and heterogeneous. Thus, there are definitions based on one criterion (single criteria) and definitions based on more than one criterion (multicriteria).

3.1.1. Here are the Single-Criteria Definitions

These definitions often retain either the criterion of ownership, or that of control, or that of the company-family interaction (power of influence of the family on the company).

Based on the ownership criterion, the family business is defined as the property of an individual or members of the same family (Barnes & Hershon, 1976; Lansberg & al., 1988). It is also defined as a company owned by a family or by several families or by a member of the family, in the position of main shareholder (Daumas, 2002; Germain 2006).

On the basis of the control criterion the family business is defined as a company controlled by a family, more or less extended, the board of directors is the privileged place of this control (Barry, 1975; Handler (1989). It is also defined as a company whose legal or de facto control is held by members of one or more families (Croutsche & Ganidis (2009). On the basis of the criterion of power of influence, the family business differs from another non-family one by the influence of the family on the behavior of the company (Arrègle & Mari, 2010).

3.1.2. Here are the Multi-Criteria Definitions

They combine two or more criteria (ownership and control, ownership-control-transmission, ownership-control-power of influence, ownership-control sustainability, ownership-control-power of influence-transmission, ownership-control-power of influence-social capital, etc. Those that combine ownership and control (Lobet (2006) ; Poulain-Rhem (2006)). Bégin & Chabaud (2010); Coeurderoy and Lwango (2012), Turki & Omri (2008); Charliet & Lambert (2009; 2013). Those that combine property-control-transmission (Allouche & Amann (2002); Robic & Antheaume (2014) ; Berrada El Azzizi & al. (2014); Mzid Ben Amar & Mezghan (2012); Bégin & Chabaud (2010); Charliet (2014), etc.).

Other definitions combine property-control-power of influence (Poulain-Rhem (2006); Miller et al. (2009); Bauweraets & Colot (2014), etc.).

Those that combine ownership-control-sustainability (Mignon (2000); Mzid Ben Amar & Mezghani (2012); Robic & al. (2015), etc.).

Those that propose a quadri-combination of property-control--power of influence-transmission (Robic & al. (2014); Fayolle & Bégin (2009); Colot & Croquet (2007), etc.), or even property-control-power of influence-social capital Coeurderoy and Lwango (2012; 2014); Arrègle & al. (2004); Mahmoud-Jouini & al. (2010), etc.).

However, we should note the generalization of multi-criteria approaches for the definition of the family business.

3.2. What Should we Remember about the Definition of a Family Business ?

It emerges from these developments that the decisive element in the definition of the family business, as its name suggests, is the dominance of the family over the company. This family importance is expressed by the following triptych: ownership, the influence of the family on the behavior of the company and the permanent concern for transmission to the following generations.

Therefore, the definition to be given of the family business, while basing itself on this

trptych, should also be part of the socio-cultural and institutional context, and therefore spatiotemporal, of the study. Likewise, from this fundamental characteristic (the triptych) of family businesses and the context of the study derive their specificities distinguishing them, both from non-family businesses and from each other. In the following, we relate some recurring specificities often included in the literature on family businesses.

3.3. Some Recurring Specificities of Family Businesses

Most of the studies conducted on family businesses, especially in comparison with non-family businesses, agree on recognizing the specificities specific to family businesses (Allouche & Amann, 2000). Likewise, this aspect is most invested by research on family businesses.

However, we agree with Allouche & Amann (2000), citing Westhead & Cowling (1998), to the nuance as to the relative nature of these specificities, because this is indeed linked to the definition of the family business chosen.

Studies seek to demonstrate that the family business is different. More recently, we are trying to explain the what, the why and the how of these differences (Missonier & Gundolf, 2017). The studies thus seek to decipher this specificity. More particularly the underlying mechanisms and the impact on the company but also on the family (Missonier & Gundolf, 2017).

If the specificities of family businesses, linked to their performance, their governance and their borders, were recurrent until the 2000s, those studied since then broaden the scope of their diversity, as is the case of themes related to; their sustainability (Mignon, 2000), their "familiness" or familiarity (Arrègle & al., Robic & al. (2015); Mzid Ben Amar & Mezghani (2012), the choice of growth (Cadiou & Cadiou (2014), the choice of financing (Daumas (2002); Blondel (2012); Berrada El Azizi & al. (2014), to their social responsibility (Berger-Douce & Deschamps (2012) ; Bon (2007), their social capital (Miller & al. (2009); Coeurderoy & Lwango (2012; 2014); Mignon and Mahmoud-Jouini (2014), the role of the wife (Labardin & Robic (2008), innovation (Mahmoud-Jouini et al. (2010), their resilience (Bauweraerts & Colot (2014); Begin & Chabaud (2010) , etc. Studies analyzing several specificities at the same time are also numerous.

Missonier & Gundolf (2017) point out that studies on "familiness" have been the most fashionable in recent years, especially in Francophone research. The authors believe that this would be due to the transversal character of the theme which provides in a way a synthesis of the specificities of the family business in an economic and social vision.

Mainly, it is the family-company entanglement that most characterizes the family business compared to the others, and it is this aspect that is the basis of the various study themes related to family businesses. This is what is also at the heart of our empirical study that we present in the following.

4. The Specificities of Family Businesses in Tizi-Ouzou: Description of the Field Study

This second part of the study consists in presenting the field study on which the theoretical framework described above will be transposed.

4.1. Sampling

It is not easy to select family businesses, especially in an environment such as ours where an official definition, especially legal, does not yet exist¹. Our first benchmark is the status of a private company. Moreover, even if we know the weight of the family in the life of an individual in Kabyle society, the family link is not obvious at first glance. From this point of view, it seems to us that to retain a definition approaching the conceptions of (Hugron (1998), Hirigoyen (1981), Handler (1989)), considering unlisted family businesses, as is the case of companies in the wilaya of Tizi-Ouzou, from which we could say that "The family business is an organization on a human scale, whose ownership and management power are under the effective control of the members by birth or by marriage of the same family. This is most often reflected in an implicit confusion of the patrimonies of the family and the company".

In this kind of company, the "family system" (managed according to a logic of emotionality) and the "company system" (managed according to a rational logic) are mixed. Thus, the role of the manager in this case is threefold; to manage the company with rationality, to care about the preservation of his power both within the company and the family, to care about the future of his family members and the notoriety of his name. This triptych perfectly corresponds to the figure of the Algerian, or even Kabyle, head of the family and manager of a family business.

We have also introduced another criterion, namely; the direct affirmation of the respondents to the questionnaire question whether it is a family business or not².

We also took into account the criterion of the company's "willingness to transmit" to the following generations in response to the question posed directly in the questionnaire.

In total, five key criteria allowed us to choose our study sample, namely ;

- The date of creation of the company (before 2022 or more than one and a half years),
- The family ownership of the company (share of share capital greater than 50%),
- The affirmation of the family character of the company by the interviewees,
- The participation of family members in the management,
- The affirmed desire to pass on the company to future generations.

These five criteria are the subject of the first part (series of questions) of our questionnaire, which allowed us to directly select, during the counting, the companies that meet our selection criteria as being family-owned and those that are not.

Given the time constraints and the difficulties in the field that we know from experience, we were, in spite of ourselves, forced to opt for a "simplified" and "circumcised" questionnaire, both to encourage the respondents to answer it and for the treatment that would then result from it.

Given the absence of a reliable database of companies in the wilaya of Tizi-Ouzou, we opted for an empirical sampling. The choice of companies was made according to the so-called

¹In the absence of a theoretical consensus on the definition of the family business, the results of the research would also depend on the definition chosen.

² That is to say if they themselves consider their business to be family-run.

"snowball" and "according to investigated" techniques. Also taking into account the circumstances of the investigation (summer period, reluctance of the respondents, the distribution of companies over several municipalities and travel constraints, the time constraint,...) and in order to have as many answers as possible, we targeted a sample of 70 companies, for which we administered, in a self-administered way, by interviewer and/or by email, questionnaires.

Of these 70 questionnaires distributed, only 44 were returned to us. Of these, 08 have not been fulfilled, 04 do not meet our criteria for defining the family business, 05 have only been partially fulfilled (incomplete). Therefore, only 27 questionnaires were exploitable, i.e. a response rate of approximately 38.57%. Note also that not all questionnaires sent by email have been returned. We had some semi-directive interviews with some leaders, as we also used documentary research and direct observation of the field.

4.2. General Characteristics of the Companies Surveyed

The 27 family businesses surveyed fall under different sectors of activity, namely; agri-food (12), building and construction (02), building materials (03), chemistry and rubber (02), steel, metal, mechanical and electrical industry (ISMME) (03), textiles (02), cabinet making (02), services (01). These 27 companies are spread over 11 municipalities. Some general characteristics of these companies are described in the following (Table n° 01).

Table 1: General Characteristics of the Family Businesses Surveyed

Year of Creation	%	Legal Form	%	Number of Employees	%
Before 1980	07,41	Limited liability company	44,44	Less than 10	37,04
1980 - 1989	07,41	One-person limited liability		10 - 49	48,15
1990 - 1999	22,22	company	29,63	50 - 250	14,81
2000 - 2009	48,15	Natural person	18,52	-	-
2010 - 2021	14,81	General partnership	07,41	-	-
		-	-		
Total	100	Total	100	Total	100

Source: processing of our survey data.

4.2.1. The Age of Companies

From the point of view of the creation date, the companies surveyed are rather young. With regard to advanced references in the literature (Anderson & Reeb, 2003, in Moumou, 2018), our family businesses are less than 50 years old, so they are young, or even very young for almost 75%

of them³. Almost 63% were created after 2000. The oldest (07.41%) were created in the 70s.

4.2.2. The Size of the Companies

In our case, the size is measured, for lack of other indications, by the number of employees. In this case we will say that our sample consists exclusively of SMEs, that is to say companies with less than 250 employees, divided, in accordance with the Algerian definition of SME⁴; into three strata as follows; very small companies or micro-companies with less than 10 employees (37.04%), small companies between 10 and 50 employees (48.15%) and medium-sized companies between 50 and 250 employees (14.81%).

4.2.3. The Legal Nature of Companies

It seems, according to the data in Table 01, that the managers of the Tizi-Ouzou family businesses opt above all for legal statutes limiting their liability, either as a company (SARL), the most frequent case (44.44%), or as individuals (EURL), 29.63%, where the father or the founding brother still officially holds absolute control of the family business even if family members actively participate in the company's affairs, pending their official integration as the company grows (as we know will see it later), of a better control of the activity and once the concerns inherent in their integration are lifted. This is usually the case with new companies.

On the other hand, the SNC status, which implies the commitment of the responsibility of the managers and their family patrimony, is very little adopted (only 07.41%).

5. The Specificities of Family Businesses in the Wilaya of Tizi-Ouzou: Restitution of the Results of The Study

The purpose of this paragraph is to highlight, based on the results of the field survey, the specificities of family businesses in the wilaya of Tizi-Ouzou. We examine these according to three points of view, namely; the profile of the owner-managers, the financing/growth and the institutional environment.

5.1. Profile of the Manager of the Tizi-Ouzou Family Business

It is known in the literature that the behavior, even the strategy, of family businesses, especially SMEs, strongly reflects the profile of the manager. Also, entering the profile of the manager makes it possible, to a great extent, to understand the managerial specificities of the family business.

In this paragraph we are interested in the profile of the manager of the Tizi-Ouzou family business. We examine his personal, professional and entrepreneurial profile and his psychosociological profile. This will allow us to highlight the weight of the family on the manager, in particular from the point of view of his entrepreneurial spirit, his strategic vision, his decision-making, etc. So many elements that impact the functioning and sustainability of the family business.

³In their approach, Anderson & Reeb, cited by Moumou (2018), distinguish two age categories among family businesses; "young" family businesses that are 50 years old or younger and "old" family businesses that are over 50 years old.

⁴See the new definition of SME within the meaning of Law 17-02 of January 11, 2017. In Official Journal of the Algerian Republic n° 02 of January 11, 2017, pp 3-8.

5.1.1. Personal Profile

We examine this according to the age and level of education of the leaders.

The majority of leaders are younger

It emerges from the results of our survey that we have to deal with a young and not so young population. 51, 85%% are 50 years old and over (of which 18.52% are over 60 years old) and 48.15% are under 50 (of which 07.41% are under 30 years old). However, the largest proportion (40.74%) is that of 30 to 49 year olds. Let's also note that all the leaders in our sample are men.

Leaders with an appreciable level of education

It also emerges from the results of our investigation that our leaders have an appreciable level of education. 44.44% have a university level, 37.03% have a high school level and 18.52% have an average level. In addition, among them 40.74% are also graduates of vocational training.

5.1.2. Psychosociological Profile

To draw up a psychosociological profile of the managers of the Tizi-Ouzou family businesses, we tried to examine some aspects related to their conceptions of things and their current practices, these elements being the subject of questions in the questionnaire.

List of leaders from the region of location

74.07% of the managers surveyed are from the municipality of location. Some on the very place of their location (the apartment building). Even in the business areas, the overwhelming majority of entrepreneurs come from the municipalities (or dairans) where these areas are located. With the exception of the municipality of Tizi-Ouzou (industrial zone, Tala-Athmane activity zone and the depot zone) where there are entrepreneurs born outside the municipality but who still, almost all, have residences in the municipality⁵. This means, again, the weight of family attachment.

Under the weight of irrationality and superstition

If we are in the context of a Maghreb society, particularly Kabyle, we would not be surprised at the observation of the importance of the irrational and superstitious practices among our respondents. Thus, reflecting the socio-cultural environment, 37.03% frankly declare that they have (or have had) recourse to cultural and/or religious, ritual, or even superstitious practices as part of their activities. These practices aim, according to their words, to ward off the evil eye, to "bless" the activity, especially in the early stages of the launch of projects, and to contribute to success. 25.92%, certainly embarrassed, do not declare it directly, but do not deny it (neither yes, nor no), which increases the proportion of those who resort to it, while 22.22% say they do not resort to it at all. We will nevertheless note a tendency to these practices.

We will also note, in the same direction, that 55.55% declare to believe in the evil eye and that

⁵These comments were not communicated to us by those concerned but by certain leaders with whom we have had discussions and who are well aware of the issue.

none affirmatively declare not to believe in it at all (neither yes nor no, no not really).

Likewise, our interviewees have both a rational and irrational conception of gain. Thus, half of them declare that the gain depends both on their skills (talent) and fate (divine will according to their words). Only 28.6% of respondents believe that their earnings are certainly influenced by their skills.

From the point of view of these observations, we can say that the managers of the Tizi-Ouzou family businesses are the product of their socio-cultural background and their families. These aspects obviously have repercussions, as shown in the following, in their professional life.

5.1.3. Professional and Entrepreneurial Profile

In this paragraph we are interested in the professional and entrepreneurial profile of the manager of the Tizi-Ouzou family business by examining some aspects related to the exercise of their entrepreneurial activity.

Professional experience

When asked about their occupation before running the current family business, our respondents showed, for the largest number of them, a history of experience in the activity in question. Thus, 40.74% were employed in the field (of which 51.85% in the family business), 29.63% were resellers in the same field of activity and 25.92% were trainees in the field. While citing several occupations at the same time, we also find managers who were previously (employees in another sector, shopkeeper, students, without occupation, informal, ...).

A Choice of Activity Dictated by Experience and Family Tradition

The respondents gave, for many of them, several reasons at once that motivated their choice of activity. Through our direct question of the questionnaire and the four suggested answers, we highlighted two major reasons: experience in the field (77.77%) and family experience or tradition (59.26%).

To these we can add the motives of love of the profession (51.85%) and mimicry (prompted by the success of others 25.92%).

We also note the reason "Extension of an already existing activity" (25.92%) among the answers put forward by the respondents to the item "Other". This response, very important in our opinion, means the creation of other production units, by the same family, specialized in other types or varieties of products. These units are usually entrusted to the children (sons) of the founder, a form of "swarming" of the initial activity. This has been observed especially in the agri-food sector in the Boghni, Tizi-Ouzou and Azazga regions. Finally, others surveyed emphasize the fact that their activity was the first of its kind in the wilaya at its creation, while others advanced its lucrative side.

Family and Ethnic Attachment as the Main Factor of Localization:

The respondents have, a priori, chosen their places of location by family and ethnic attachment (88.89%): "This is our region! ", "This is where we live! ", answered those with whom we were able to talk. 74.07% mentions the family ownership of the premises / land, 66.67%

mentions the security motive or the feeling of security (of being at home), 51.85% emphasizes the socio-industrial atmosphere favorable to the activity. These proportions show the importance of the family, in a reduced and broad sense, as a criterion for choosing the location. Other criteria have also been mentioned, in small proportions, such as; the existence of similar activities, the reputation of the municipality for the activity in question, etc.

From Refraction to Work in Association

66.67% declare that they do not agree to partner with someone as part of a business project. If they are forced to do this, our respondents would prefer to do it with a very close family member (brother or sister) (81.48%), friends (74.07%), a relative on the maternal side (uncles) (33.33%), a relative on the paternal side (cousins) (18.51%), a relative of the in-laws (14.81%). Thus, the family, according to our respondents, is above all the close family of the same father and mother (brothers and sisters). Likewise, friends come before extended family to cousins and uncles, while the in-laws are seen as the last echelon of the extended family.

Predominantly Socio-Ethnic-Lineage Relations with other Companies:

On the question of the existence of relationships with other companies in the territory, 55.55% declare that they have a little or sometimes, including with those in the same branch, while 33.33% are shared (neither yes nor no).

As for the nature of these relationships, we were surprised to discover that they are mainly socio-friendly than economic or professional: 66.67% declare that they are socio-friendly relationships, only 29.62% declare that they are sometimes associated with work relationships⁶. In other words, these family businesses in the Wilaya are professionally distant from each other⁷. Other observations, in the following, will allow us to support this conclusion.

Absence of Agreements and Collective Actions with other Companies

The processing of the survey data shows that 74.07% consider the behavior of the other leaders of the territory rather selfish. This would explain that 77.77% declare that they have not already undertaken a joint action with the other companies in the territory.

It also follows that 81.48% declare that they do not have agreements with other companies in the territory (of which 55.55% have never had any)⁸.

⁶ These working relationships relate mainly to the exchange of inputs (repurchase of unused inputs troubleshooting during periods of stock shortage), sometimes equipment and tools and maintenance assistance, in case of breakdowns and also the exchange of information.

⁷In Boghni and Azazga, we noted that for family companies that are part of a network of companies of the same family, including outside Wilaya, relations are activated only with these, in total and deliberate rupture, with companies from the wilaya of Tizi-Ouzou and the same territory. In this case, it is the family businesses located outside of Wilaya that provide most of the information and needs of family businesses, managed by their brothers, in the wilaya. These families are known in their respective regions as conservative and very silent about professional information.

⁸All attempts to reach an understanding have so far failed. Thus, according to a former beverage producer who recalls episodes of attempts to reach agreements on sales prices and the prohibition of sales to the final consumer (individuals) but, he emphasizes, after the meetings each one did only at his own head and no one respected the commitments made.

Banal Technologies and an Uncreative Mind

The production method as a whole is artisanal, based essentially on deliberately unsophisticated equipment (preference for solidity) and trivialized stains to the maximum. This meets two major objectives; on the one hand, to circumvent the insufficiency, or even the absence, of qualified manpower in the region and, on the other hand, to avoid the costs and hassles (lack of local skills) of sophisticated technical maintenance of equipment.

In terms of creativity, 55.55% of our respondents declare themselves "rather" creative, none declares it affirmatively or exclusively. By the way, our interviewees explain to us that they produce what sells according to their knowledge of the market and their experience. It seems to be working fine. Everyone has their own clientele and their market area and produces according to this. Their creativity also depends on this. For some, it involves risk and costs.

The Opinion of Family and Friends Instead of Expert Advice

The creativity of our respondents is not based, contrary to what one might think, on the opinions and recommendations of experts and consulting offices in the field (00% of citation), but on those of family and friends (66.67%), the media and the internet (59.26%) and "Others" (recommendations from customers and suppliers (37.04%)).

The creativity of our interviewees is based more on personal and socio-cultural considerations, in the sense that mimicry, by observing what others are doing, especially in other countries, through the internet and the media, and the opinion of family and friends prevail over that of advisors and specialists in the field.

Use of Relational Networks and Word of Mouth as a Means of Information

Also in terms of information, our interviewees turn mainly to the traditional word of mouth channel, with friends, suppliers / customers, accountants, (100% of quotes), whom they turn to. While less than half of them get information from public institutions (37.04%), the media / internet (29.63%), none of them request the services of the competent agencies. It is therefore thanks to the networks of relations of friends and professionals, through traditional or even informal channels, that our interviewees access professional information.

The same is true of marketing. None of the respondents claim to use modern marketing practices (advertising campaigns, trade commissioners, ...), it is mainly classic techniques that are used; exhibition inside the establishment (66.67%), customer trials (40.74%), passing customers (33.33%), visits to resellers (37.04%). This is in line with the observation, established earlier, that our respondents are guided as much by personal and socio-cultural considerations as by economic and rational calculation. What about the financing and growth of our companies? This is what we analyze in the following.

Another manager of a construction company evokes a previous agreement on the minimum wage granted to the workforce but, he emphasizes, since the end of the 2000s, this one being rare, this commitment has become difficult to keep and is therefore no longer respected.

5.2. Financing and Growth of the Tizi-Ouzou Family Business

Studies have highlighted the relationship between the objective of sustainability of the family business and a prudent financial and development strategy of its managers (Hirigoyen, 1982). In our case, we are looking at this for the family businesses of Tizi-Ouzou. Although our investigation focuses on very general aspects of the issue of financing and growth of Tizi-Ouzou's family businesses, given the circumstances of its realization, the fact remains that it provides us with very interesting elements of reality.

5.2.1. The Financing

Family businesses have many specificities in terms of financing. In the following we try to show, based on the results of our investigation, those of the Tizi-Ouzou family businesses.

Family Capital, the First Source of Financing

88.89% of respondents declare that family capital contributed to the creation of the company. These came, in 70.37% of cases, in addition to personal savings and bank borrowing (66.67%). Borrowing from friends is cited by 22.22% of respondents. The opening of the capita is not mentioned by any of them.

In other words, it is self-financing that is favored by the family businesses of Tizi-Ouzou. This observation is moreover confirmed by the question of the questionnaire relating to the preference in terms of method of financing, (creation and exploitation), to which all the respondents answered self-financing (family and staff).

From the point of view of the literature, this observation is nothing new, given that it has been reported for a long time that own financing is the first source solicited and that it represents a constant of the family business. However, in the case of Kabylia, this reality also conceals a cultural explanation that goes back to the ancient traditions of society. Culturally speaking, and in the Kabyle tradition, going into debt outside the family circle (in the strict and expanded sense) was not something good for the image and reputation of it and even had a derogatory connotation. Therefore, family solidarity makes it its duty to come to the aid of the member in need of financing so that he does not address foreigners, which would be detrimental to the image of their family.

Similarly, family financing, in our case, can also intervene in kind, in particular by making available to the manager land, buildings, equipment (case of the family network of family business)⁹ and other necessary investments, both for the creation and operation of the family business.

Moreover, self-financing also allows the manager, in particular the founder, to control and consolidate his power within the family business after the creation phase.

⁹We have seen these cases in Boghni, Azazga and Tizi-Ouzou.

Bank Loan, an Inevitable Method of Financing ?

As diverse and as important as it is, self-financing in family businesses is most often insufficient. Therefore, recourse to other sources becomes inevitable. The family businesses of Kabylia resort in this case, and after the insufficiency also of the help of friends, when it intervenes, to the bank loan.

It should be noted beforehand that access to bank credit in Algeria has improved markedly compared to the 90s. Interest rates that exceeded 30% have been reduced to less than 10% in the last two decades. As well as aid, support and facility conditions have been introduced to facilitate bank financing of the various cycles of activity of private sector companies.

It should also be noted that, after the creation, our managers resort to bank loans mainly to finance their investments, and much less for operating needs.

Curiously, it is especially after the creation that our respondents are reluctant to resort to bank credit. Also, some, in particular those working in the agri-food branch, marked today in Algeria by the development of increasingly severe competition, explain to us that this recourse is imposed by the sandstone of their will¹⁰.

However, it should be noted, according to the statements of those concerned, that these investments were decided only after very long periods of consultation and procrastination (three to seven years in the examples cited at the bottom of the page) with the family members participating in the activity of the companies in question (sons and / or brothers). It is above all the idea of resorting to the bank that was the point of contention, recalling that for our entrepreneurs it rhymes with risk, both for the company and the family's property¹¹.

The Absence of a Banking Culture Among Executives

88.89% of respondents declare that they have only one bank as part of their activity¹². 11.11% have two and none have more. This explains the use of bank financing only because our entrepreneurs are forced (insufficient self-financing) and especially the absence of a business culture based on banking transactions. In our opinion, this would be due to several reasons that are not solely the will of our entrepreneurs. Indeed, we can cite the Algerian banking environment

¹⁰ This is what a confectionery producer tells us, who explains to us that competition in this activity rhymes with production capacity, which, in turn, rhymes with automation, the latter implying an exorbitant acquisition cost. The average speed of automated machines today is 500 sweets / minute, hence the need to upgrade at the risk of completely disappearing.

We find the same reasoning with a flavored beverage manufacturer who also explains to us that the pressure of competition and the imperative to reduce its production and cost costs force it to internalize functions and services previously solicited from others. The latter acquired the machines that make it possible to manufacture plastic bottles (blowers), an expansion investment that forced him to apply to the bank despite his own and strong contribution to the financing of the operation.

A construction materials manufacturer has also made an expansion investment, but gradually, by acquiring trucks (a semi-trailer and a large-tonnage truck) to internalize the transport function that it once solicited from transport providers.

¹¹In Kabylia, it is most often, and by tradition, the lands (inherited from the ancestors for several generations) that are offered as guarantees. Today, we even hire the houses and property of the company. Added to what this implies from a cultural point of view, as mentioned above, we then understand the reluctance of family members to take the risk of a bank loan.

¹²In this case, we did not take the personal accounts of the managers and/ or their associates.

which is not yet very competitive since it remains dominated by state-owned banks. These, due to the rigidity of the Algerian banking system, lack flexibility and present practically the same products under the same conditions and the same services.

In this sense, 55.55% said they had already changed banks, only five of them are "Rather satisfied" with it. The reasons for these changes are due to the exaggerated lengthening of deadlines, bureaucracy, quality of services, etc.

It should also be noted that those who have not changed banks have not done so because they are satisfied, but for many of them it is because it implies losing the seniority advantage established with the bank. In other words, a share capital that takes time to be rebuilt with another bank and, what is more, nothing guarantees a better service elsewhere, especially given the lack of flexibility of the banks mentioned above.

Banking Circuit vs Informal Transactions

Asked about the use of the banking circuit in their transactions, 74.07% declare to use it. Nevertheless, this is not the means used par excellence. Indeed, 85.18% declare (and admit for some) to use the informal circuit. The use of it is justified, according to the respondents by several reasons, namely ; a requirement of certain partners, in particular suppliers of scarce inputs on the market, the absence of invoicing, a way for our respondents to avoid worries related to the risk of blank checks and / or the suspicion of potential bad debts, the sometimes low amounts, etc. In front of all these situations, it is the cash settlement that is preferred. We believe we know, according to our own deductions that the informal circuit is the most used.

The Opening of Capital, the Capital Sin ?

The opening of capital is rarely operated by family businesses in Algeria. In practice, family businesses prefer the closure of the share capital. Their reduced size is the visible expression of this. In our sample, we did not find any such cases. The legal structure preferred by the family businesses of Tizi-Ouzou, as noted in our sample (predominance of Limited liability company One-person limited liability company) testifies to this desire to control the family share capital. These two legal structures allow the other partners (family member) to oppose the transfer of shares to foreigners, on the one hand, and the easy intercession of shares between partners, on the other hand. They also make it possible to protect the family's assets in the event of default. Their choice is therefore not accidental.

Moreover, the opening of capital not only can it lead to a redistribution of power within the company (risk of loss of that of the manager-head of the family), in the Algerian economy, it should be recalled, the Algiers stock exchange is still beyond the reach of the large number of family businesses.

After this overview on the financing dimension of Tizi-Ouzou's family businesses, what is the impact on the growth of these companies? This is what we examine in the following.

5.2.2. The Growth

Our sample, it should be recalled, consists of more than 85% of small and very small companies, that is to say less than 50 employees. The managers with whom we spoke expressed their willingness, or rather their wish, to increase their activity.

A Relative Growth of Family Businesses

In our case, family businesses are mainly oriented towards extension investment. However, let's emphasize that for the large number of our respondents, it is mainly about internal growth. In this sense, 48.15% declare that their companies have experienced growth, both in the number of employees and in production capacities. 22.22% say that their companies are still growing, while 18.52% say that they have subsequently stagnated and 11.11% have no opinion. A finding that we explain by several reasons ; we mainly have young companies (81.48% are under the age of 25), our managers prefer solidity (synonymous with sustainability) to sophistication and its corollary shortage and costs of maintenance skills, the reluctance of managers (especially founders), etc.

We have also encountered cases of replacement investments. Nevertheless, these are old companies and companies that are part of a network of family businesses, as is the case in Boghni.

Swarming, a Form of Growth of Tizi-Ouzou's Family Businesses ?

We noted during our investigation that some family businesses were created as a form of extension or growth of the first family business of the founder (grandfather or fathers), some of which date back to before independence (case of Boghni and Tizi-Ouzou). Most often they come under the same activity as the first family business but producing a different variety of products (case of three families operating respectively in the biscuit factory, chocolate factory and confectionery in Boghni), as they also fall under another type of activity (case of an Azazga family operating in the flour milling, construction and real estate and another operating in the flour milling and brick factory in Tizi-Ouzou). Most of the time they are entrusted to the sons, in particular to avoid conflicts between them and to "launch" them after having been trained in the first family business. Thus, instead of growing in size, these family businesses prefer to grow in number. This "tradition" seems to be perpetuated within these families.

Originally this strategy, which would also explain the scarcity of large companies in the Wilaya, aimed to circumvent the risk of nationalizations of the first years of independence. Subsequently, with the arrival of children in the business, the founders found in them the ideal, legitimate and trustworthy "partners" (in the cultural sense of the term) to, on the one hand, expand the family business, and, on the other hand, avoid management conflicts between brother partners by entrusting them with separate responsibilities but with relative autonomy. It is also a form of transmission in itself.

Strategic Planning, the Blind Navigation ?

All the companies surveyed do not have a strategic plan, except for production plans (varieties and quantities to be produced). In the smallest family companies produced even according to orders. There would be, so to speak, according to the words of some, a "standardization" of supply and demand, where everyone is content with their own market while waiting for better circumstances.

"We have our (loyal) customers, we understand each other on several points, that's enough for us. In the meantime, we'll deal with it," some tell us. A wait-and-see attitude that our respondents put on the account of the uncertainty that characterizes the local business environment and what it can induce as a risk.

Vertical Integration as the Preferred Mode of Production

Most of the companies surveyed adopt vertical integration as a method of organizing production. In other words, the subcontracting of segments of the productive process is avoided whenever possible. This observation is to be compared with that of the refraction at work in association, already mentioned above, and also presupposes the reduction to a minimum of external transactions.

A Relative Aptitude for Change

According to our results, only 55.55% of the respondents declare that they have already made (to varying degrees) changes in the family business. However, the latter mainly concern the diversification of the items produced (74.07%) and marketing techniques (62.96%), in particular the improvement of packaging, credit sales, home deliveries, ... to have the most customers and also keep the old ones. The changes also concern, to a lesser extent, the organization of work (42.9%), in particular the distribution of positions, the computerization of management, the maximum trivialization of tasks to circumvent the glaring shortage of qualified manpower, the increase or reduction in the number of machines, staff and / or work surfaces, depending on the company, etc. Moreover, 44.44% declare that they do not like the change in their activity at all, it rhymes, according to them, with costs and risks.

A Banal Workforce and Preference for Local Job Pools and Networks of Friends in Terms of Recruitment

The results of our investigation concerning the human resource show very interesting realities. Indeed, since respondents can give several answers at once, the recruitment area for family businesses is essentially communal (81.48%). It also covers the Daïra (70.37%) and the municipalities of the neighboring daïras (48.15%). Only 14.81% recruit beyond these limits. This is, in our opinion, to be linked to the ethnic attachment mentioned above, on the one hand, and the size of the companies that are satisfied with the offer of the local labor market.

On the other hand, in terms of recruitment mode, the most used is by recommendations from friends or employees (100%). Then, that through the intermediary of an employment agency (ANEM) (62.96%). Then other modes, such as announcements, partner recommendations, etc.

However, what is striking is the very low recruitment of employees with a relationship (in the sense of extended family and non-nuclear) with managers (22.22%). We were explained that, knowingly, the recruitment of these people is problematic in more ways than one; on the one hand, it is difficult to apply the same disciplinary rigor to them as other employees and, on the other hand, any concern or work conflict that would result would be detrimental to relations with the families in

question. Therefore, we prefer to intervene for them by hiring them from friends instead of taking them into our own company.

Finally, it should be noted that in 74.07% of companies the staff is versatile and not specialized. This is easy to understand given that the production method as a whole is artisanal, based essentially on deliberately unsophisticated equipment (preference for solidity) and trivialized tasks as much as possible, in particular to circumvent the insufficiency, or even the absence of skilled labor in the region and the costs of technical maintenance of sophisticated equipment.

5.3. The Perception of the Institutional Environment by the Managers of Family Businesses

The Algerian private company, in general, and the family business, in particular, have been evolving in a changing environment since the late 80s. In Algeria, the process of establishing the market economy has been gradual and in which we can distinguish two phases; that from 1990 to 2000, marked by stagnation, and that after 2000 marked, on the contrary, by the return of growth. This was particularly favorable to the creation of private SMEs with all the aid and support measures initiated by the State. Thus, the average creation rate of private SMEs has increased from 06.31% in the 90s to 10.35% from 2001 to 2021 (Hadjem, 2023).

Research work on Tizi-Ouzou family businesses has shown the influence of the institutional framework on FES (Moumou, 2018; Gheddache, 2012)¹³.

A Negative Vision of the Algerian Institutional Context

92.6% of respondents have a rather negative idea of the institutional framework in which they work. Likewise, 77.78% find the problems related to it very heavy. It is especially the VSES who have the most negative visions.

In addition to the problem of financing, in particular banking, discussed above, in the following we examine the problems encountered by the managers of the investigated family businesses. For this, we combine the results of our own investigation as well as those of previous work.

Bureaucracy, a Thorny Problem

It is becoming recurrent, in the study of the business environment of Algerian companies, to constantly see the bureaucratic problem arise, related to constraints and administrative burdens. These problems manifest themselves both at the creation of the company and after its entry into operation. In our survey 81.48% of respondents cited this problem. According to our respondents, it is linked to the complexity of administrative files (banking, technical, authorizations, ...), lack of involvement, even laxity, of public institutions, overlap and lack of coordination between them, lack of information, laxity in the fight against the informal and the unfair competition it induces, the volatility of administrative decisions, etc.

We have also noted, surprisingly, that even those who have created their companies with the support of aid schemes (ANADE, CNAC, ANDI and others), denounce the same problems and find these aids insufficient and even, for a good part, inadequate.

¹³In his thesis on the financial strategy of family businesses in the wilaya of Tizi-Ouzou, Moumou (2018) established a strong correlation (coefficient "r" = 0.811) between the institutional framework and debt level. In other words, family businesses in the Wilaya would resort to debt if the institutional framework is better.

One of our interviewees, a university graduate by training and manager with his two brothers of a cabinetmaking company, makes an interesting remark, stressing that the actions and state aid are too "technical" and "modern" and do not take into account the socio-cultural and institutional side of entrepreneurs, especially for family businesses. Which, in his opinion, explains their ineffectiveness.

It is understood from our investigation that bureaucracy, in its forms and its consequences, is one of the sources of conflicts between associates within the Tizi-Ouzou family businesses.

Under the Weight of Taxation

Algerian companies are deemed to be subject to high taxation, compared to those in the Maghreb and the rest of the world¹⁴. It is also common to hear, in the wilaya of Tizi-Ouzou, that the wilaya is the one that pays the most taxes at the national level. Something, however, that we have not been able to verify. From the results of our investigation, it emerges that our entrepreneurs would suffer a tax burden to the extent that 70.37% find the tax rate very high, 22.22% find it rather high and 07.41% find it neither high nor low. On the other hand, none finds it low.

Corruption and Lack of Transparency, the New Scourge of the 2000s

Recurring also in the empirical work of recent years, the problem of corruption seems to be imposing itself more and more. Without wanting to give too many details about the problem, for reasons that can be understood, our respondents confirm its prominence (77.78%). Some point out that this is a real contagion that affects all state administrations and to which the staff are increasingly devoted. A real obstacle to entrepreneurial action, within family businesses it poses the problem of circumventing it. Some leaders thus find themselves in conflict with their family members, especially fathers and their children, as to the means of circumventing it, knowing that these are often illegal, even immoral. More often than not, it is the monetary value of the means that is discussed than their illegal or immoral nature¹⁵.

Entrepreneurs-Public Institutions, Problematic Relationships and Limited Trust

81.5% of respondents believe that public institutions do not contribute to the efficiency of their activities (ten of them are certain of this), while only two think that they may be contributing. This negation is explained by the rather cold, even constrained, and unproductive relations between entrepreneurs and these institutions. We cite, as an example, the remark of a young entrepreneur and his brother, who created their cabinetmaking business, in the municipality of Béni-Zmenzer, as part of the aid schemes and who are entitled to 20% of the public order, but they have never benefited from it, including at the level of their municipality.

¹⁴According to Moumou (2018), in 2016 it would be ranked 47th among 54 countries on the African continent, with a tax rate higher than the reference value set at 47.1%.

¹⁵In his investigation, Moumou (2018) cites the figure of 02.7% of the annual turnover paid, as "coasters" and gifts, by some managers to public officials to facilitate their operations (customs, taxes, licenses, ...). In our investigation we could not establish an average or amounts but we confirmed their existence.

We will also cite the case of a food producer, in the municipality of Draâ-El-Mizan, who told us the episode of a promise from the wali, during a fair / exhibition, to set up a mechanism or commission which was to be responsible for releasing a share of the public demand emanating from school canteens throughout the wilaya, but this idea has not yet materialized.

We will also cite the case of the Djurdjura Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCID), apart from the certification of commercial documents and some technical services, among other benefits provided, our entrepreneurs do not find the effective and real support they want. Moreover, this institution is criticized for the lack of transparency, inequity and breach of trust¹⁶.

Finally, we will highlight in the last point the question of the confidence of our entrepreneurs vis-à-vis these institutions. 62.96% of respondents declare that they rather do not trust local public institutions, while 29.63% declare that they do not have any at all, a total of 92.59% have an unfavorable opinion, while 07.41% have no opinion.

We sought to find out the reasons for this lack of confidence, through a closed question in the questionnaire, provided for this purpose, and to which the respondents can give several answers at once. The answers indicate; the incompetence of the institutions (not to be confused with that of the staff but that of the laws and regulations) (74.07%), the absence of consultation (66.67%), partiality (18.52%), non-constructive attitudes (14.81%) and other.

In the end, it emerges from all these observations that the Algerian institutional context is not favorable to the action of the Tizi-Ouzou family businesses.

6. CONCLUSION

At the end of the present study, it emerges that the family businesses in Tizi-Ouzou bear their name well. Taking into account the socio-cultural and institutional context of their territorial insertion, the wilaya of Tizi-Ouzou, a necessary condition, as we stressed in the theoretical part, for the study of family businesses, we note that these are, in our case, constituted by the interweaving of two spheres; one family, responding to an affective and irrational logic, the other economic, responding to an economic and rational logic. However, the first seems relatively dominant over the second.

From this interweaving, and from its mechanisms, their specificities derive. By examining these from three points of view, our conclusions seem, modestly, very instructive.

Knowing the weight of the family in Kabyle society and its influence on the life of the individual, we can see that it is, in fact, transposed into the business environment. Indeed, the profile of the managers of the Tizi-Ouzou family businesses is strongly impacted by their family and their environment. Whether they are young or old, ascending or descending, the manager of the family business in Tizi-Ouzou is strongly linked to his family.

Observed from the point of view of their profiles, the managers of the family businesses of Tizi-Ouzou, marked by a strong family and ethnic attachment, which they express by their choices of activity and location, the acquisition of know-how, they also bear the stigmata of the socio-

¹⁶One of our interviewees describes it as a "Buddy Club", an allusion made to its elected and administrative bodies.

cultural environment of their insertion. In the sense that they show a considerable part of irrational reasoning and a reference to superstitious beliefs. In their exercise as leaders, this is reflected in the reluctance to take risks, to work in association, to change, to work relationships with others, to technological evolution, to lack of creativity.

Observed from the point of view of financing and growth, the family is also present, in particular to favor self-financing, on the one hand, and to, if necessary, reduce the amount of the bank loan (which is becoming increasingly necessary) and to vouch for it, on the other hand. The Kabyle family tradition does not cope well with external debts. The opening of capital, synonymous with "violation of family intimacy" is feared and avoided by the managers of kabyles family businesses. None, in our sample, resorted to it.

The weight of the family and the environment also constrains the growth of family businesses. These, preferring vertical integration, the recruitment of banal manpower around the municipality and in the absence of real strategic planning, opt above all for internal growth. External growth rarely occurs and especially by "swarming" by creating new small units, like the old one, for the wires.

Observed from the point of view of the institutional context, family businesses operate in a framework that is hostile to them, dominated by bureaucracy, corruption and tax pressure. Therefore, a crisis of confidence sets in between our leaders and public institutions. This climate is also a source of conflict between the leader and his family members as to ways to circumvent these constraints.

In the end, we can say that the family businesses of Tizi-Ouzou are strongly marked by the family sphere and their insertion environment. The latter determine their specifics. These, while authorizing entrepreneurial action, however seem to maintain it in its traditional, even archaic form, limiting the actions and synergistic relationships of family businesses with economic partners by drawing them more towards the family sphere. The Tizi-Ouzou's family companies thus ensure their survival and their sustainability but remain generally small in size with rather traditional modes of production and organization, where irrational and affective reasoning takes precedence over economic logic.

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