

Disputes among Inheritors and Their Impact on the Continuity of Family Enterprises in the Western Region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia: Applied Study

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Abstract

This research examines disputes among inheritors in family enterprises in the Western Region of KSA as a result of personal problems among them, distribution of inheritance, modern lifestyle and educational, age and social backgrounds. The research also presents findings and recommendations that may contribute to finding solutions, such as governance and transformation of family businesses into joint stock companies (Howards, 2010). Therefore, 162 questionnaires were distributed to managers, owners and employees of family enterprises. A preliminary study was conducted on the questionnaire and on its basis, the questions required for the study were developed. The study shows that there is a statistically significant correlation between the way of raising children and the continuity of family enterprises, a statistically significant correlation between the personal traits of some children and the survival and continuity of family enterprises, a statistically significant correlation between the adopted management methods and the survival of family enterprises, a direct correlation between the disputes among children of the second and third generations and the continuity of family enterprises, a direct correlation between the continuity of family enterprises and the children educational backgrounds, a statistically significant correlation between the financial aspects and the continuity of family enterprises, a statistically significant direct correlation between the size and the continuity of family enterprises and a statistically significant direct correlation between the role played by courts and the seriousness of family disputes in enterprises. Findings have shown that family disputes are of the key variables causing the fall of many family enterprises. The research recommends resolving disputes before referral to courts and applying dispute settlement laws to disputes occurring between sons and cousins of the second and third generations in businesses.

Keywords: disputes, inheritors, continuity, family enterprises, Saudi Arabia.

1. Introduction

Family enterprises make a significant contribution to the economies of countries, including Saudi Arabia. Many family businesses under family names are still being operated by the second and third generations. However, some of these companies have become outdated and exited the commercial market due to many reasons, including disputes among inheritors, which is one of the significant reasons that led to the fall of such enterprises. Despite the importance and huge size of such enterprises, there is no term defining them. Family enterprises are often companies owned by families and named after them, and their financial and managerial decisions are made by these families. In spite of their economic significance, such family businesses have not been given the due attention in terms of scientific research (Said, 2013).

1.1 Research Problem

Many family enterprises suffer from signs of falling apart during the periods of the second and third generations, while some of them fall even during the first generation due to external factors. The common factor of falling apart in such enterprises is family disputes together with external and internal factors. This research intends to identify the types of family disputes in family enterprises in the Western Region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The research attempts to answer the following question: What are the disputes among inheritors that may cause the fall of family enterprises? Accordingly, the issue dealt with here is the disputes among inheritors, their types and severity and children unwillingness or inability to find solutions for the survival and continuity of their enterprise.

1.2 Hypotheses

- 1- There is a statistically significant correlation between the way of raising children and the continuity of family enterprises.
- 2- There is a statistically significant correlation between the personal traits of some children and the continuity of family enterprises.
- 3- There is a statistically significant correlation between the concepts of the second and third generations and the continuity of family enterprises.
- 4- There is a statistically significant correlation between the founder's culture and the continuity of family enterprises.
- 5- The variable of education and experience has a positive impact on mitigating disputes among inheritors and the continuity of family enterprises.
- 6- There is a direct significant correlation between the adopted management methods and the continuity of family enterprises.
- 7- There is a direct significant correlation between the nature and size of family enterprises and their continuity.
- 8- There is a statistically significant correlation between the financial aspects and the continuity of family enterprises.
- 9- There is a statistically significant direct correlation between the role played by courts and the seriousness of disputes among inheritors in family enterprises.

1.3 Research Objectives

There are three objectives of the current study. Firstly, it aims to identify and understand family disputes that arise in family enterprises, find out whether disputes among inheritors and their severity have an impact on the continuity and survival of such enterprises, create an appropriate environment free from or mitigates such family disputes and identify whether the attention paid by formal entities, such as universities and scientific, legal and judicial bodies, is capable of or contributes to the continuity of such enterprises. Secondly, this study aims to encourage and urge parents to prepare and educate the second generation and develop their managerial and financial abilities, so that they can run such enterprises. Finally, this study aims to provide solutions and recommendations that may contribute to enhancing of the situation of Saudi families, improving work cooperative environment and reducing the occurrence of such disputes (Howards, 2010).

1.4 Research Significance

This research is of a great importance due to its association with family enterprises, representing more than 88.1% of the total number of enterprises (Chamber of Commerce and Industry, 1990). In addition, family enterprises have not been given due time, effort or attention by business administration researchers. It should be noted that disputes in such enterprises have not received full attention and even society, culture and media have rarely addressed the topic of family disputes in enterprises. They consider handling such topics as taboo and somehow prohibited so they avoid discussing them and consider them highly confidential, even if they feel that such disputes among brothers are the reason for the poor performance of their company. This research is one of the first studies that address the connection between two important topics; disputes among inheritors and family enterprises. The scientific importance of this research is to help scientific research students identify the disputes among inheritors in family enterprises and contribute to the reduction of such phenomenon. A family enterprise is a company that is owned and managed by a family, whose members struggle to build and maintain family-based organizational relationships (Litz, 1995). Mutual trust among family members in a family enterprise is higher compared to other enterprises (Jefry, 1989). In family enterprises, family members often spend as much time as possible in the workplace, and this advantage increases the strength of family ties, which is reflected on the company's management and investment activities (Jefry, 1989). Despite the fact that a large number of businessmen in family enterprises are not well-educated, many of them are skillful at management and characterized by being insightful; loyal to the enterprise, due to the fact that they are the business owners. In such cases decisions are made promptly as a result of the unilateral management of the enterprise. Therefore, the owners and at the same time managers of the enterprise give the company all of their time and effort to remain strong (Abdelhamid, 2002). On the other hand, there are some disadvantages, such as kinship playing a role in the process of recruitment, regardless of management efficiency; disregarding errors when committed by a family member; unclarity of the powers and responsibilities of management members from family;

Facing the need for change with resistance by the employees of family enterprises as many of them are unwilling to be or do not have the potential for being trained on modern technology; favoring some children by parents which may create an uncomfortable atmosphere among the employees from the second generation; tendency towards centralization of management; the role played by personal confidence in measuring the efficiency of employees and the owner's inclination to employ relatives, which may adversely affect the performance of the enterprise.

In Saudi economy, the size of family investments is estimated at about SAR 250 billion and there are 45 family enterprises among the top 100 companies in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. In 2003, the revenues of such companies exceeded SAR 120 billion. Such companies play an important role in human development and contribute to reducing unemployment through employing Saudi and non-Saudi labor (Issa, 2007).

Human behavior and nature are of the characteristics of such companies, which may influence decision-making. Decisions influenced by human behavior may lead to the lack of modern management methods use, the lack of use of experts from outside the family, failure to apply the principle of continuous training of the company's employees and lack of use of modern technologies in developing the company's products under the pretext of reducing expenses, which may prevent such companies from keeping up and competing with their counterparts and may eventually lead to their collapse and exiting the market.

The average age of such companies is approximately 40 years. In the UK, 30% of family businesses have continued operating to the second generation, the percentage dropped to about 18% of the companies that have continued operating to the third and fourth generations and less than 1% has continued operating to the fifth generation (Issa, 2007). Family businesses have two main philosophies; (I) a family business management will remain able to survive, flourish and develop itself in its all activities, whether information, marketing, production or services; (II) the future of family businesses is fraught with internal and external risks. Such internal risks are associated with the competition among family members to undertake the management of the company, under the pretext of introducing new ideas and modern methods to the management, which is met with resistance by the existing family members responsible for management, under the pretext of having the required know-how and field experience which make them the best for the company's management. Such internal risks may also be associated with the fatherly method of managing the company, instead of engagement in decision-making. The external risks include the company's ability to develop, innovate and adopt modern management methods (Sarih, 2013). The owner's unwillingness to make use of experts, consultants and accountants may be due to his culture, as he began his small business without having any management experience, even some of them were uneducated, and with continuous work, experiences and economic opportunities, as a result petrodollar, he earned large profits. However, such owners still use the same fatherly method and take unilateral decisions without accepting any intervention by others in the company's affairs. When the company expands, owners do not base recruitment on competence as they recruit family members or the children of the close employees, trusted by the owner. Such owners continue to adhere to this method without accepting any development to their company and become a stumbling block in the way of the company's growth locally and regionally. They focus on the company's survival and continuity, and may never accept any regional expansion or partnership strategy or partnership with international agencies or companies (Kano, 2016).

It would be better for family businesses, particularly the ones with large capital, to try to establish strategic partnerships with the companies from which they have obtained a commercial agency, so that they not only act as a commercial representative, but also seek to contribute to the development of imported products and open up new markets. There are many advantages for establishing strategic partnerships between family businesses and the international companies from which they import products, at the top of which is the transfer of advanced technology and training employees on them. In order for family businesses to continue, they must be converted into public joint stock companies, even if this causes them to relinquish part or all of their right to own their company upon accepting the conversion from a family company into a public joint stock company and listing the shares in the exchange market as a preparation for the age of globalization (Baltiyour, 2015).

However, many owners refuse to convert their companies into joint stock companies for the fear of being exposed to pressures by formal authorities, the shareholders' intervention in investment decisions and disclosure of the company's secrets (Dabbas, 2017).

2.1 Generations in Family Enterprises

2.1.1 The First Generation:

In the first generation, a family business begins as an individual enterprise by a person with a practical and adventurous mentality, who has an idea of forming a business that he will exert every effort to succeed. Such person, in his capacity as the owner, has the upper-hand in such enterprise. As the time goes by, this enterprise turns into a family enterprise by the engagement of the sons of the founder in the service of the enterprise. Hence, family businesses have a renewable life cycle and certain phases that start with what can be called the first generation or phase one, which is the phase of forming and developing the enterprise. The first generation is characterized by the absence of conflicts and disputes in the company and tends to cooperation among the company's individuals.

The first or founding generation is characterized by central leadership, preservation of the company and dedication to work. Often, the first generation has the ability to control the company's conditions, and rely on the strength of leadership personality, determination and experience in dealing with external pressures (Robbins et al., 2015). The more they have the feeling that they are able to control the issues of the company they face, the more they can find solutions. Most often, this is a key characteristic of the first generation of family businesses. Other owners may feel they lack the ability to control things, and this will make things even worse, and they will start blaming external factors, such as the economic factors, for the failure of their companies (Selye, 1956).

Cultures play a pivotal role in the success of the first generation or its following generations. Arab and Gulf societies are considered to be power societies that have power cultures. A good manager in these societies must be powerful, strict and moderate. He should protect and honor his employees, and, in return, workers display loyalty and obedience (Pheysey, 1993).

Despite the fact that the first generation is characterized by fatalism, they have some ways to deal with the future, such as social organization, which regulates the behavior of the individual; the religion, which civilizes his behavior; and the regulations and laws, which reduce the spread of chaos among the members of society. For example, it has been found that the reasons for the success of Japanese companies (especially Toyota) include the participation of employees in making management decisions concerning the company and personnel affairs, which reassures them of their future as they know what the company will decide in the future (Drucker, 1985); and also the guarantee of employee future or the guarantee of lifetime job.

The ways of dealing with the future of companies in the Chinese society include the custom, tradition and culture of Chinese businessmen taking their sons with them to their stores or businesses at an early age, so that the sons can engage with the businesses environment from the beginning of their life. These ideas were present in the past in some companies and institutions in the Gulf countries. Currently, the son spends his life in education, perhaps overseas, and returns after a period with a higher educational degree and then engages in a career life. Upon the death of the company's founder, the son undertakes the management of the family enterprise without having any experience in business (Ghamri, 2009). Some of the second generation's sons are of the opinion that future security is career stability by having a governmental job, while others from the first generation of owners see that it is represented in the strong desire for self-fulfillment, achievements and the continuity of the family business (McClelland, 1961).

2.1.2 The Second Generation:

When the founder of a family business becomes sick or disabled, he has to, under family pressure, give up the company's management to his eldest son or the one closest to him, but not often to the most efficient son. The son undertaking management is most often or sometimes the one who was the father's assistant in conducting the company's business. At that moment, the continuity of the company depends on several aspects, including the son's personality, in terms of his willingness to manage the enterprise; his administrative experience; receiving support from brothers; cohesion of the family or their hostility to each other; trust among family members and the cultural, educational and family backgrounds of the family members. The eldest son may have no desire for business or have a private job, in which case he leaves the task of managing the business to his younger brother. In this generation, the second generation's manager tries to maintain harmony and support the team spirit among family members, because they know that there are many partners, not one owner.

The manager also tries to strengthen the ownership of the company; the manager pays attention to the needs and requirements of other brothers and close associates and uses his position to provide job opportunities to his brothers or nephews in order to ensure their satisfaction by improving their career status (Handy, 1985). It is noted that the second generation's behavior in business differs from that of the founder of a family company. This can be attributed to the feeling of the managing son that the family company is in a different position. For example, the president was his father and his brothers were his colleagues in the management of the family company, but after his father's death the managing son feels that there is a competition among his brothers and each of them has an authority as a result of just holding the name of the family. There has been no competition among family members during the owner's life, since the owner was having all powers, making all decisions unilaterally as a result of his absolute authority, in most cases, adopting the method of avoiding conflicts in the company and amicably settling disputes. However, competition is characterized by disputes and clashes among brothers after the death of their father, the business founder. As a result, following the sudden death of the father without leaving any will, the second generation's managing son feels the need to diversify the family company's income through, for example, investing in real estate, stocks and land. This may be driven by the fact that the sisters of the new manager of the second generation have shares in the company, and they in turn, put him under pressure to indirectly preserve their right in the money. As a result, he tends to invest in real estate, because it is less risky than commercial activities, and withdraws funds from the company, which may affect the company's future and financial capabilities.

2.1.3 The Third Generation:

It may be called the Cousins Confederation. In this phase, the family's name and level of cohesion is lesser in grandchildren compared to children. This is sometimes due to competing for positions in the company more than paying attention to the survival and development of the company. In such cases, each grandson tries, as fast as possible, to seize the bounties of the family company, especially if they feel that there is a financial and management deterioration. This issue arises due to the larger size of the family in the third generation, the absence of the culture of family cohesion and focus on personal interests. Even if they are educated, the culture of making every effort and dedication to work may disappear because the enterprise is a joint venture, not a private company, so the motivation becomes less. Unfortunately, it is difficult to amicably solve problems among grandchildren, and eventually either the company goes under liquidation or the dispute is referred to courts for settlement. The style of conflict in this phase is characterized by disloyalty and dissatisfaction with the company's management and fierce competition among grandchildren for holding positions and powers in the company with no attention paid to the family's interests or the future of the company. Just before his death, a father may appoint his son, in the will, to manage the company. As is known in Eastern societies, the eldest son includes his appointment as the company's manager, in writing, in the will before the death of the founder, so that it becomes inevitable for him to be appointed as the company's manager. However, the eldest son may not be able to persuade his brothers to appoint one of the grandchildren as his successor and, hence, disputes arise. If the family company continues to exist, this generation tries to resolve family disputes, engage the family's grandchildren in the company and distribute the company's profits and shares to them. If the company ceases to exist, it will enter the final phase, i.e. falling apart. This phase begins with thefts and robberies due to the absence of a powerful leadership, mistrust and fights of children among themselves or with cousins (Al Dabal, 2016). Selecting, training, developing the abilities of and transferring administrative powers to the next leader is considered to be the essence of family businesses' concentration. This process is often difficult and raises tension, as it is always a critical point in the life of any family or family business (Churchill & Hatten, 1997). It is important to cultivate leadership thinking in the second and third generations of the owner's sons and to avoid fatherly authoritarian leadership that forces sons to engage in and focus on the company's management. The sons of the second and third generations with high levels of education may stumble in front of cultural differences among them. We may also find differences among brothers in one generation as a result of age differences, e.g. the difference between the elder brother and the young brother may be twenty years. Such differences may lead to lack of communication and mutual understanding among them. Therefore, there should be awareness of other cultures and cultural differences between the second and third generations. One of the best methods to develop understanding of the cultures of the second and third generations in family enterprises is to engage them in business, in order to identify their abilities, help them actively engage in the family's enterprise, adapt their behavior and mentality and help them get rid of the idea of concentrating on the satisfaction of their material desires, as some individuals see their material life as more important than the continuity of the family enterprise.

In another report, it is also noted that the third generation's concentration on material temptations, such as cars and tourism, is larger compared to their concentration on the continuity of the company. Finally, the owner should pay attention to the rapidly-changing customs and traditions of the next generation, as we live in a rapidly-changing world not only in terms of technology but also in terms of customs and cultures.

2.2 Obstacles Encountered by Family Enterprises

1- Disputes among Inheritors: Many disputes may arise among inheritors as a result of the type of upbringing and culture that characterize our Eastern society which focuses on family hierarchy, obeying the eldest, marginalizing the role of women in business, not accepting the views of others, not participating in management decisions, authoritarianism, domination and reliance on the fatherly approach. All such beliefs and traditions are recorded, since the very beginning of childhood, in the mind of children and kept in their minds until manhood and beyond. Hofstede has defined culture as approaches collected in human mind from what is learned from parents, school and work, as well as the prevailing religious and social values. Such acquired knowledge has an impact on human behavior and values (Hofstede, 2011). The one applies the beliefs and traditions he acquired throughout life to the management of his company. He does not want anyone to share him the domination he has on the company. He is the sole commander who has the ability to make any decision about any aspect of the company. He treats his employees including his sons working with him in a fatherly manner. The traditions of his community require him to make the eldest son responsible for the family and company in his absence or after his death, regardless of the eldest son's management capabilities, work inclination or efficiency.

On the contrary, In case there is a lack of transparency between the eldest brother and his brothers, the eldest brother may resort to misusing his powers, cheating, falsifying facts, forging documents, filing malicious lawsuits, slandering and insulting. This may also lead some children to place their father, the owner, under guardianship by obtaining a falsified medical report establishing that he is mentally ill. As a result, the rights of younger brothers and sisters, women, minor children and handicapped people may be lost; and the elderly, the owner, may also lose his legal competence, especially in case of liquidation of the family enterprise. Such disputes may go beyond the jurisdiction of public courts with referrals to criminal courts, the Board of Grievances and judicial committees, especially if an inheritor or a family member holds a foreign nationality, such as the sons of a foreign wife or a foreign wife (Karoub, 2015). Disputes among inheritors are very common and may occur after the death of the owner of a family enterprise in many Saudi families. These disputes end up being referred to courts and the company's assets, properties and land are being sold under a court order due to lack of trust among the sons and grandchildren of the owner (Al-Kahfi, 2015).

2- Leadership: Leadership, in its essence, requires the leader to weight up among his approach, the efficiency of his followers and their commitment to the values of the organization. Effective leaders can identify the needs of the staff, and then adapt their leadership or management approach to meet such needs (Al-Zahrani, 2012). The greater the family participates in management, the more likely the enterprise continues to the second and third generations (Basco, 2015). Powers, duties and objectives must be clear, and double standard, routine and centralization must be avoided, as centralization requires that all decisions be made by the managing owner, which reduces the speed of communications and leads to the loss of time and information (Saleh, 2009). Communication must be bidirectional between the owner, on the one hand, and the sons and employees on the other, so as to achieve job satisfaction so It would be better to have a democratic leadership that contributes to the participation of employees in decision-making, so as to be a continuous training tool and contribute to raising their morale and motivation, with the absence of authoritarian management that alienates children from working with their father. An organizational structure should be created, including the position of an accountant, who provides updates regarding the company's financial position.

One of the disadvantages of family businesses is that they often do not have a human resources department with duties such as providing trainings, promotions, compensations and incentives (Al-Jabari, 2011). It has also been noted that women, despite receiving higher education, do not have any leadership roles and family enterprises that are often controlled by men. Percentage of women in family enterprises is less than 10% due to the peaceful nature of the Saudi women as they, as much as possible, avoid clashes with their brothers and settle any dispute by relinquishing their legitimate rights (Eastern Chamber, 2012). Other disadvantages of family businesses include that sales operations depend on personal relations, rather than modern ways of advertisement and promotion. Besides, Many of such companies do not have after sale services.

It should be noted that a scientific approach should be used by family enterprises in collecting and analyzing data to make it valuable for achieving the company's objectives and continuity; addressing problems through logic and comprehensive thinking, instead of emotions, personal interests and authoritarianism; and establishing the culture of efficiency and justice in recruitment.

3- The Preparation of Children: The owner must prepare his children for the management of his enterprise in case he becomes disabled or deceased, especially the third generation of grandchildren, through developing a system and organizational structure for the company, stating the powers and responsibilities of each person and that recruitment processes should be based on efficiency rather than kinship. The children preparation system must be strictly followed, so that the best of them, after a long preparation period, is appointed and monitored to identify the extent of his efficiency in running the company, after giving him the chance to work in all of the company's departments to acquire the required experience and form a comprehensive idea about the company. The appointment of the owner's children and grandchildren in the company's management shall not be temporary, during summer vacation or until having a job outside the company, but rather they shall be officially appointed and provided all the required powers, responsibilities and financial and administrative information.

Finally, it is necessary to keep pace with changes and external influences and accept new changes in modern technology, including the means of computer, Internet, e-mail and e-money and accept dealing with them, as they contribute to the speed and accuracy of completing transactions. The use of modern technology in CRM systems, accounting tools and storage systems helps reduce thefts (Samurai, 2012). The computer must be used in the profit and loss system, balance sheet, inventory levels, employee selection and throughout the company (Heneman et al., 2015). In order for the company to grow, the owner must seize opportunities in both commercial and industrial fields. If he imports foodstuffs, it is preferred to try to obtain globally known agencies that contribute to the growth of his company as an agent, not only in Saudi Arabia, but also in the Gulf countries. This depends on the owner's expansion strategy worldwide, instead of following a stability strategy.

2.3 Entrepreneurial Family Enterprises and Intelligence

A family enterprise entrepreneur must be aware of any cultural, economic, political and technological changes around him. He should know the capabilities of competitors, the purchasing power of customers compared to the company's managerial and financial capabilities, and the abilities and expertise of employees. All of this should be formulated in a systematic form that can be amended by people with highly organized thinking skills and abilities, in order to develop a future vision based on the creativity and innovation of the entrepreneur. Entrepreneurial intelligence depends on three main axes: the entrepreneur, the second and third generations and the external influences.

Firstly, the axis of the entrepreneur is concentrated in two parts: the first part is the entrepreneur's ability to understand the strengths and weaknesses of the company; the tendencies, abilities and desires of his sons and employees; control their management; build family and human relations and consider the family business as a comprehensive culture. The entrepreneur must be characterized by creativity, vision, intuition, moral thinking, the ability to benefit from intellectual capital, partnership, motivation, avoidance of threatening others, insistence on seizing opportunities and avoidance of sudden risks and changes. The second part is the entrepreneur's concentration on technology to keep pace with environmental and technological changes and the provision of understandable, ready information to set future plans with the required expertise, intuition, creativity and wisdom in case he utilizes tactical strategic intelligence in order to measure the company's short-term performance in operations and achievement of objectives on the long-term. Entrepreneurial intelligence provides the efficient official with the appropriate information in a timely manner, which contributes to speeding up the decision-making process, improving the company's performance and productivity, reducing costs and competition locally and regionally and identifying customer accounts and inventory (Bukhamkham & Mohammed, 2012).

Secondly, the owner's children and grandchildren of the second and third generations are the building blocks of entrepreneurial family enterprises. However, most of them lack boldness, skills and ability to innovate, and here comes the role of the father with his ability to develop such traits through experience and learning in order to prepare them for working in the company at an early age and encourage them to participate in making critical decisions, train them on how to wisely deal with internal and external influences and establish in them the characteristics of being leaders rather than followers. The entrepreneur's dedication and love of work, attention to anything new occurs around him, development.

Consultation with knowledgeable people and other entrepreneurs, use of modern technologies in all aspects of the company and use of technology to develop the company's expansion and continuity strategies using the idea of entrepreneurial intelligence contribute to keeping the company strong and give the first and second generations the motivation for creativity and innovation, as the company's future is the fate and future of the family as a whole. Thirdly, the external influences are represented in the understanding of cultures and customs of other businessmen both locally and internationally. For example, a business deal may fall apart due to lack of understanding of the other party's culture, despite the availability of expertise and management abilities. The culture of communicating with others is attained by understanding their customs. A Japanese businessman may not accept a business deal by remaining silent, while the other party explains such attitude as acceptance of the deal. External influences affect the family enterprise's future. This is demonstrated on the long-term in developing the company's profile in the mind of the owners from the second generation and competitors, as the environmental changes and technological prediction most often have an adverse effect on the continuity of family enterprises, in case the owner or his sons from the second generation do not have the ability to adapt to such environmental and technological changes. Such changes are like a double-edged weapon; they may have a positive effect on competitors and negative effect on the owner's sons, if they, for example, do not use the modern technology. The ability to keep pace with changes adds value, creates opportunities and opens new doors for new customers. It is essential to be aware of, analyze and understand the competitive environment, the status of the economic environment, in terms of recovery and recession, as well as the political environment in which the family business operates. A link should be developed between the past, present and future phenomena of such environments.

2.4 Entrepreneurial Intelligence

Entrepreneurial intelligence is more limited to the concept of entrepreneurial family enterprises and concentrates on using and analyzing the data collected from the company's various departments so as to be up-to-date, ready, clear and organized. Such data are then stored, processed and updated in accessible databases, in order to be used in a way that helps the management and financial decision makers, the owner and the second and third generations of family companies to identify the status of the external environment and improve the company's competitive position.

2.5 Strategies of Family Companies

Family companies and some other companies may follow specific strategies in the first, second and third generations. For example, the first generation may prefer following the stability strategy instead of a growth strategy, which is the tradition of most small businesses or family enterprises during the first five years of their inception, as they see that such strategy is effective for their company, but it may be adopted for a temporary period because they focus on the survival more than the expansion of the company. The owners also prefer to retain their market share rather than facing the difficulties of expansion and growth.

2.0 Review of Literature

As the owners from the first and second generations experience success, they begin to pursue expansion or incremental strategies, either by diversifying their products from importing foodstuffs to trading in building materials or to the establishment of supermarkets.

- Sometimes, the owners follow the strategy of buying other existing enterprises, such as buying a foodstuff factory or medical clinic.
- In joint venture strategies, the owner may enter into partnerships with some international companies, which is the fast way of international expansion (Robbins et al., 2015).
- The owner may sometimes seek international growth and open branches in Bahrain, UAE or Egypt.
- In case of deterioration of the company's performance, owners from the second and third generations start to follow a rehabilitation strategy. If there are many problems in a family enterprise, the owner may decide to decrease the number of workers and employees to reduce costs which is known as turnaround strategy. Owners may reduce the number of company branches to reduce rents and employees too or cease trading in some kind of unwanted products which is known as divestiture strategy.

They may sell some of the company's projects at low prices to provide the liquidity required to repay the debts due from the company.

- Owners from the second and third generations may sell the company's assets, including factories and buildings; shut down the entire company; lay off the employees; auction the property of the family company, including land and goods; and eventually declare bankruptcy which is known as bankruptcy strategy in case the company cannot repay the debts of other companies and banks. (Belcourt et al., 2013).

2.5 Previous Studies

In a study conducted by Afifi (2002) on the Compatibility between the characteristics of family businesses and successful change management requirements, Afifi concluded that family businesses are more able to manage change in case of equal circumstances compared to other types of companies. However, the study recommended carefully taking such findings into consideration, as the spirit of sticking to what is old and rejecting anything new may dominate some of these family businesses, whose leaders refuse risk and creative conduct, and focus on stability strategy.

In another study conducted by Abu Baker (2002) on the organizational and managerial components of the success of family enterprises with an application to Egypt, he found out that there is a strong correlation between the age and size of the business and the ability to achieve the objectives and interests of the family enterprise and the unclarity of duties, responsibilities and powers.

Abu-Znada (2016) conducted a study titled "Family Business in Bethlehem" on the phenomenon of family companies, identifying their characteristics, analyzing the business environment where such enterprises operate and the challenges they face, including the risky and instable environment where they operate. The findings of the study have shown an apparent absence of women in the management of family enterprises in Bethlehem, lack of business planning and absence of awareness of the importance of technology in business. The study provides some valuable and important recommendations to the managers and owners of enterprises and policy makers.

Al-Farra (2005) conducted another study titled "Assessment of Management Practices in Family Enterprises in Gaza Strip". The study concluded that such enterprises suffer from poor planning practices, as most of plans are short-term and unwritten. Besides, there is a relation between the capital size and the plans implementation and most of enterprises have no balance sheets. Moreover, the main objective of most enterprises is survival and continuity rather than expansion and increase of market share. In addition, decisions tend to be central and made by the eldest in the family and such enterprises do not have an organizational structure while attention is paid to the preparation of reports assessing staff performance by non-family members and poor attention is paid to the assessment of the performance of family members. The study also found out that 36% of recruitment in family enterprises is from relatives, which may be due to lack of job opportunities and spread of unemployment in Gaza. In Gulf countries, this percentage is maybe lesser, as education and employment opportunities are far much greater. The study has also established that, in family enterprises, 39% the father is the manager, 42% the eldest son is the manager in the second generation, 4% the manager is a non-family member, 76% of such enterprises is self-financed and 24% is bank-financed. The study recommended keeping pace with change in family enterprises, including competition, globalization and technology changes; separating ownership from enterprise's management; basing recruitment on efficiency rather than kinship and preparing the second generation to take control of everything.

The Economic Affairs Sector at the Center for Studies and Research in Asharqia Chamber (2012) conducted a study titled "Activating Women's Role in Family Businesses". The study showed that the women's participation in decision-making in family enterprises is low, despite the characteristics of Saudi women, including her positive impact on company business, ability to adapt to various circumstances, willingness to participate, loyalty to family and willingness to have an effective role in the company. However, there are legal and social factors that may limit her important role in running the family business. The study concluded that women's entrepreneurial role and participation in family enterprises has significantly positive impact on the performance of family business, in particular, and on the national economy, in general. The study recommended raising women's managerial awareness, developing their leadership skills and promoting their self-esteem, which will be positively reflected on their role in family businesses. In a study conducted by Al-Karim (2015) titled "Family Businesses Falling in the Third Generation). The study illustrated that family businesses suffer from problems, at the top of which the family aspect and governmental laws.

The field study showed that there are many disputes among family members. The study concluded that the domination of a family member over the process of making the decisive decisions may lead to the fall of the enterprise. The study indicated that it is necessary to employ non-family members in the management of the company which contributes to the continuity and success of the enterprise. It recommended paying more attention to effective strategic planning which facilitates the transfer of management from a generation to another. The study also focused on the role played by family councils in resolving disputes before resorting to courts. Finally, the study recommended having regulations in place for the settlement of disputes among the owners of family businesses from the second and third generations.

3.0 Methodology & Administration

3.1 Procedures of the Study

1- Research Methodology:

The analytical descriptive approach has been employed in the current research and study procedures because it is the most appropriate to study this phenomenon and the most common approach to study human and social phenomena in general.

2- Study Community:

All family enterprises operating in the Western Region in all fields of commerce and industry.

3- Sampling:

A random sample has been used in this study. 162 questionnaires were distributed to the owners of family enterprises and their employees.

4- Data Collection:

Data were collected from their primary sources by distributing questionnaires to businessmen in family enterprises and their employees.

5- Secondary Sources:

The library was searched for books specialized in the field of family enterprises and family disputes. A search was also made on the internet on the same topic. Some interviews were conducted with businessmen, which contributed to providing some important ideas about disputes among inheritors in family enterprises.

6- Study Tools:

Statistical Analysis Methods: SPSS software has been used in the statistical analysis of data. Statistical measures, such as percentages, Cronbach's alpha test, Spearman–Brown formula, Kolmogorov–Smirnov test, plus other tests appropriate for this type of research have been used.

Research Limits: this research is limited, in terms of the human factor, to businessmen in family enterprises and their employees. A piloting sample of the questionnaire has been distributed first then, after the questionnaire was improved, the specified number of questionnaires was distributed to the sample.

7- The Time Limit:

Reviewing books and journals, searching the Internet for data, distributing and analyzing questionnaires and drafting the research paper took about a year.

8- The Spatial Limit:

The place of conducting the study was identified to be the cities of the Western Region between the city of Jeddah, as the leading commercial center in Saudi Arabia, and Mecca with its various cultures.

9- The Topic Limit:

The study has focused on disputes among inheritors in family enterprises to identify the reasons for and types of such disputes and the role they play in the continuity of family enterprises.

10- Challenges:

The lack of interest of businessmen in the research in general, as they did not give sufficient time to the interview or the questionnaire or completed the questionnaire quickly without any concentration or interest and sometimes they refused to participate in the questionnaire either for fear of liability or because they are unwilling to cooperate at all.

11- Study Terminology:

Family enterprises, the first generation, the second generation, the third generation, disputes among inheritors, strategies of family enterprises, entrepreneurial enterprises, entrepreneurial intelligence.

4.0 Data Analysis

4.1 Demographics

The total number of participants was 162 who were all males and they have various years of work experience. Table 1 below indicates the details of years of experience of the participants.

Table 1. Years of Experience

Experience	Frequency	Percent	
Valid	less than 5 years	150	93
	6 to 10 years	2	1.4
	11 to 20 years	9	5.6
	Total	162	100.0
Total	162	100.0	

With regards to the participants' qualifications, the majority of the participants were holders of Bachelor degrees followed by Masters and PhDs then by high school certificates. Table 2 illustrates the qualifications of the participants.

Table 2. Qualifications of the participants

Qualifications	Frequency	Percent	
Valid	Masters and PhD	45	27.3
	Bachelor	98	60.0
	High School	19	12.7
	Total	162	100.0
Total	162	100.0	

With regards to the ages of the participants, the majority of them were less than 30 years old at 71% as table 3 below illustrates.

Table 3. Ages of the participants

Qualifications	Frequency	Percent	
Valid	less than 30 years old	115	71.0
	31 – 40 years old	25	15.4
	41 – 50 years old	12	7.4
	51 – 60 years old	10	6.2
	Total	162	100.0
Total	162	100.0	

4.2 Cronbach's Alpha

Following the primary data collection of the responses from the 162 participants to the 41-item questionnaire, data were entered and treated using IBM SPSS Statistics 24® where the data were checked for reliability by calculating the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of the nine constructs of the survey pertaining to this research study. This is due to the fact that the Cronbach's alpha is the most commonly used reliability estimate today (Urdu, 2016; Zumbo & Chan, 2014). Table 4 below illustrates the Cronbach's alpha coefficients for each construct.

Table 4. Cronbach's Alpha Coefficients of the nine constructs of the survey of the study

Construct	Items	Cronbach's Alpha
The method of raising children and the sustainability of family projects	3 – 4 – 12 – 14	0.886
The personal characteristics of children and the continuity of family projects.	1 – 2 – 7 – 11	0.786
The adopted concepts of second and third generations and continuity of family projects	8 – 9 – 18 – 24	0.849
The company's founder culture and the sustainability of family projects	5 – 6 – 10 – 15 – 16 – 36	0.827
The variable of educational qualification and experience to reduce the differences between heirs and the continuity of the family projects	26 – 27 – 28	0.963
The management methods used and the survival of family projects	13 – 19 – 20 – 21 – 22 – 23 – 25	0.914
The nature of the project and its size and the sustainability of family projects	29 – 30 – 31 – 32 – 33 – 34	0.865
The economic aspects and sustainability of family projects	17 – 35	0.778
The role of the courts and the strength of the heirs' differences in family projects	37 – 38 – 39 – 40	0.881

As can be seen from the values of the coefficients calculated above, they show high reliability of the data as well as its strong internal consistency. Thus, it was satisfactory to move to conduct further data analysis tests which included the Kolmogorov-Smirnov (K-S) test as well as the Spearman correlation test.

4.2 Kolmogorov-Smirnov (K-S) & Spearman Correlation Tests

Due to the fact that the collected data in this study were not at the interval or ratio level of measurement but rather on an ordinal scale, (i.e. Likert Scale), the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Spearman's Rho Correlation tests were chosen. The Spearman's correlation, which is a non-parametric statistical approach, requires the data to have normal distribution. As such, Kolmogorov-Smirnov tests of normality were applied to examine the distribution of each construct of the study. This test was applied to survey normality of the gathered data. Since most of the nine constructs (7 to be exact) were not normally distributed, Spearman's Rank-Order Correlation (non-parametric statistic) was used instead to analyze the relationship between these constructs. Table 5 indicates the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test for normality indicating that the data were not normally distributed and thus, further substantiating the use of Spearman's Rho.

Table 5. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test for normality values. ($p < 0.05$) indicates deviation from normality)

Construct	Items	K-S Result ($\alpha = 0.5$)
The method of raising children and the sustainability of family projects	3 – 4 – 12 – 14	0.032
The personal characteristics of children and the continuity of family projects.	1 – 2 – 7 – 11	0.028
The adopted concepts of second and third generations and continuity of family projects	8 – 9 – 18 – 24	0.001
The company's founder culture and the sustainability of family projects	5 – 6 – 10 – 15 – 16 – 36	0.002
The variable of educational qualification and experience to reduce the differences between heirs and the continuity of the family projects	26 – 27 – 28	0.05
The management methods used and the survival of family projects	13 – 19 – 20 – 21 – 22 – 23 – 25	0.12
The nature of the project and its size and the sustainability of family projects	29 – 30 – 31 – 32 – 33 – 34	0.04
The economic aspects and sustainability of family projects	17 – 35	0.029
The role of the courts and the strength of the heirs' differences in family projects	37 – 38 – 39 – 40	0.038

Table 5 illustrates that the significance amount for all variables are less than standard error (0.05), so normality of statistical data was rejected. As such, Spearman's Rho (r_s), which produces a correlation coefficient that is either positive or negative and has a numerical value between -1.00 and +1.00 (Weinbach & Grinnell, 2014).

For the purpose of this study, it was decided that the generally accepted value of 0.05 rejection level was used to determine if the hypotheses could be supported (Weinbach & Grinnell, 2014). Results, as shown in Table 6, indicate the values of Spearman's Rho (r_s) for the constructs in the study.

Table 6. Spearman's Rho Coefficient Values (r_s) for the constructs of the study

Construct	Items	K-S Result ($\alpha = 0.5$)
The method of raising children and the sustainability of family projects	3 – 4 – 12 – 14	0.67**
The personal characteristics of children and the continuity of family projects	1 – 2 – 7 – 11	0.81**
The adopted concepts of second and third generations and continuity of family projects	8 – 9 – 18 – 24	0.66**
The company's founder culture and the sustainability of family projects	5 – 6 – 10 – 15 – 16 – 36	0.70**
The variable of educational qualification and experience to reduce the differences between heirs and the continuity of the family projects	26 – 27 – 28	0.69**
The management methods used and the survival of family projects	13 – 19 – 20 – 21 – 22 – 23 – 25	0.81**
The nature of the project and its size and the sustainability of family projects	29 – 30 – 31 – 32 – 33 – 34	0.68**
The economic aspects and sustainability of family projects	17 – 35	0.449**
The role of the courts and the strength of the heirs' differences in family projects	37 – 38 – 39 – 40	0.589**

**Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

As per table 6 above, the following can be inferred from the calculated Spearman's Rho (r_s) values:

1. It can be seen that the values of the Spearman's Rho (r_s) are above 0.05 level and thus, positively correlated.
2. For the first construct, it can be seen that the Spearman's Rho (r_s) is 0.67 which indicates that there is a statistically significant correlation between the way of raising children and the continuity of family enterprises for the items 3 – 4 – 12 – 14.
3. Similarly, the Spearman's Rho (r_s) value for the second construct (items 1 – 2 – 7 – 11) is 0.81 which indicates that there exists a statistically significant correlation between the personal characteristics and traits of some children and the survival and continuity of family enterprises.
4. With regards to the third construct (8 – 9 – 18 – 24), the Spearman's Rho (r_s) value was calculated at 0.66 which indicated a statistically significant correlation between the adopted concepts of second and third generations and the continuity of family projects.
5. Also, with regards to the fourth construct of the survey (5 – 6 – 10 – 15 – 16 – 36), the Spearman's Rho (r_s) value was calculated at 0.70 which indicated a direct correlation between the company's founder culture and the sustainability of family projects.
6. With regards to the fifth construct (26 – 27 – 28), the Spearman's Rho (r_s) value was calculated at 0.69 which indicates that there exists a statistically significant correlation between the variable of educational qualification and experience to reduce the differences between heirs and the continuity of the family projects.
7. The calculated Spearman's Rho (r_s) for the sixth construct (items 13 – 19 – 20 – 21 – 22 – 23 – 25) was 0.81 which indicates a statistically significant correlation between the followed administrative methods used and the survival of family projects.
8. Also, the calculated Spearman's Rho (r_s) for the seventh construct (items 29 – 30 – 31 – 32 – 33 – 34) was 0.68 which indicates a statistically significant correlation between the nature of the project and its size and the sustainability of family projects.
9. the calculated Spearman's Rho (r_s) for the eighth construct (items 17 and 35) was 0.449 which indicates a statistically significant correlation between the economic aspects and sustainability of family projects.
10. the calculated Spearman's Rho (r_s) for the ninth construct (items 37 – 38 – 39 – 40) was 0.589 which indicates a statistically significant correlation between the role of the courts and the strength of the heirs' differences in family projects.

5.0 Findings & Recommendations

5.1 Findings

The study concludes that the way of bringing up children is significantly correlated with the continuity of family enterprises as disputes mostly arise after the death of the founder father. In addition, a statistically significant correlation was established between the personal traits of some children and the continuity of family enterprises. Moreover, the adopted management methods found statistically significantly correlated with the continuity of family enterprises. Besides, there is a direct correlation between the disputes among children of the second and third generations and the continuity of family enterprises and a direct correlation as well between the continuity of family enterprises and the children educational backgrounds where better education mitigated the impact of such disputes on the continuity of family enterprises. Furthermore, the financial aspects and the size of the family enterprises were found of a direct significant correlation with the continuity of family enterprises. Finally, the role played by courts was found significantly of a direct correlation with the seriousness of family disputes in enterprises. Findings have shown that family disputes are of the key variables causing the fall of many family enterprises.

5.2 Recommendations

- Selecting the most efficient for the leadership of family enterprises regardless of kinship.
- Engaging employees of family enterprises in following up the company's progress.
- Adhering to objectivity and professionalism in assessing the performance of employees in family enterprises
- Engaging employees in developing a general and comprehensive vision for the company.
- For local laws and their relation to the fall of family enterprises, the researcher recommends implementing dispute settlement laws and developing the existing laws that regulate enterprises' affairs.
- Concentrating on leadership vision and strategic planning.
- Avoiding relying on self-financing abilities and taking advantage of bank-financing, as most owners try to keep away from usury from an Islamic perspective.
- Spreading the culture of using technology to the owner, the second and the third generations.
- Spreading the culture of family business, preparing children and grandchildren to undertake the responsibility of the company's management and Spreading the culture of dedication and hard work.
- Encouraging and motivating women to play a significant role in her father's family enterprise and strengthening her entrepreneurial personality.
- Engaging experts, consultants, accountants, IT specialists and computer programmers in family enterprises.
- Convincing owners of family enterprises to convert them into joint stock companies.

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