

Proposal to improve the organizational performance of SMEs in Ciudad Obregón, Sonora

Propuesta para mejorar el desempeño organizacional de las PYMES de Ciudad Obregón, Sonora

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Abstract

The present study is of a qualitative and descriptive approach, where a diagnosis was made to the administrative process of SMEs in the locality, and based on the results obtained, proposals for improvement to their organizational performance were prepared, contributing to the increase in the probabilities of success and permanence in the market, thus fulfilling the established objective and responding to the question posed: How to improve the organizational performance of local SMEs to increase their chances of success and permanence in the market? As a contribution of this research is to provide support to local SMEs to solve problems and/or areas of opportunity detected, and in this way make proposals for improvement that are precise, timely, adequate and focused on the findings obtained, impacting in the same way on the economic development of the region, since when these proposals are implemented, SMEs are strengthened, improving services offered to clients, in addition to minimizing risks and possibilities of failure.

Improvement of organizational performance, SMEs, Administrative Process

Resumen

El presente estudio es de enfoque cualitativo y de tipo descriptivo, donde se realizó un diagnóstico al proceso administrativo de PyMEs de la localidad, y con base en resultados obtenidos, se elaboraron propuestas de mejora a su desempeño organizacional, contribuyendo en el aumento de probabilidades de éxito y permanencia en el mercado, cumpliéndose así con el objetivo establecido y dando respuesta a la interrogante planteada: ¿Cómo mejorar el desempeño organizacional de PyMEs de la localidad para aumentar sus probabilidades de éxito y permanencia en el mercado? Como contribución de esta investigación está proporcionar apoyo a PyMEs de la localidad para solucionar problemáticas y/o áreas de oportunidad detectadas, y de esta manera realizar propuestas de mejora precisas, puntuales, adecuadas y enfocadas en los hallazgos obtenidos, impactando de igual forma en el desarrollo económico de la región, ya que al implementarse dichas propuestas, las PyMEs se fortalecen, mejorando servicios ofrecidos a los clientes, además de minimizarse riesgos y posibilidades de fracasar.

Desempeño organizacional, PyMEs, Proceso Administrativo

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Introduction

According to a study by Ropega (2011), reasons for SME failure can include management errors, insufficient control mechanisms, operational inefficiencies and lack of financing or poor management.

According to Del Ángel (2016) SMEs represent 97% of companies in Mexico, generating 80% of employment and 36% of the Gross Domestic Product, which justifies attending to and supporting this type of companies as they are the basis of the Mexican economy, the same opinion provided by Díaz (2010), who assures that this type of organisation plays an important role in the generation of employment, contributing to prevent poverty from increasing, however, they are the least supported and when they are provided with some type of support, it is not well focused. On the other hand, Franco and Urbano (2010) in their research assert that it is important to define the parameters of success of companies, considering that in the literature there are various ways of measuring success: quantitative, where sales, number of employees, cash flow, returns on investment are taken into account; and qualitative, evaluating the satisfaction of entrepreneurs in relation to the results of the company, comparing the results of the company with those of the competition and the permanence of the company in the market over time. Therefore, the success of an SME is generally related to its consolidation and growth, job creation and profit for its shareholders. However, the authors state that "quantitative measures are not always adequate to measure the success of SMEs, as many of them require the long term to show positive financial results" (p. 83).

In addition, Fatoki (2014) analyses the causes of the high failure rate of new SMEs in South Africa, revealing that the causes are both internal and external. Internal factors include lack of management experience, lack of functional skills, poor staff training and development, and poor attitudes towards customers. External factors include the unavailability of a logistics chain and high distribution costs, competition, rising business costs, lack of finance and crime. The study suggests the need for owners of new SMEs to develop their personalities, especially in the area of business management skills through training.

It also suggests that government agencies should organise training courses for new SME owners on how to prepare business plans and manage enterprises. Awareness of the training programmes should be created through advertisements in the local and national media. In addition, government agencies can establish a mentoring approach to assist new SMEs; and concludes that the high failure rate of SMEs in South Africa negatively affects their ability to contribute significantly to job creation, economic growth and a more equitable distribution of income in the country.

Based on the above, the following question arises: How to improve the organisational performance of local SMEs in order to increase their chances of success and permanence in the market?

Justification. As Santamaría (2018) rightly mentions, organisations must improve their performance and become more efficient, which will lead them to seek ways to reinvent themselves, helping them to ensure their permanence in their environment. Due to this, it is considered important to provide support to local SMEs to solve the problems and/or areas of opportunity they present, carrying out an administrative diagnosis in order to, based on the results obtained, develop improvement proposals that contribute to the quality of their products and/or services, strengthen their performance and provide the company with greater probabilities of success and permanence in the market.

Similarly, Ramírez (2017) states that the support that can be given to SMEs consists of providing them with advice on competitiveness, teaching them the factors that have the greatest impact in this area, such as human resources, innovation, quality, technology applied to processes, strategic management, among others; without forgetting social responsibility, which can lead to certification as a socially responsible company (ESR); the country cost, which means that the better infrastructure a nation has, the cheaper it is to carry out commercial transactions with it, and finally, the business incubator factor, where support is provided to entrepreneurs through qualified consultancy to start up activities and increase their chances of success, which is what this research seeks to achieve.

In relation to the above is what is stated by Costa et al. (2023), who state that small and medium-sized enterprises should be given specific attention, as they represent 90% of all enterprises and 50% of employment worldwide. In addition, SMEs have very particular characteristics that distinguish them from large enterprises, they tend to be less productive and pollute more, they have more flexibility and agility to adapt to new circumstances, their resources are more limited and they have specialisation capabilities. However, SMEs require specific dimensions, variables and mathematical tools to measure their performance. Also, Vargas and Cárdenaz (2019), state that due to the importance that SMEs have for the economy in Mexico, it is necessary to implement strategies that support them in their consolidation, mainly because, according to INEGI (2016), cited by the authors, the life expectancy of this type of companies is very short, being the national average of 6.9 years; this is due to the different challenges they face, one of them being the administrative type, as they are usually managed by people who make all the decisions despite not having external advice, thus affecting the correct implementation of plans, as well as the effective way of carrying out the processes and the correct measurement of the expected results; one more reason to provide them with the appropriate advice and support to SMEs in the locality.

Objective

The objective of the research is: To elaborate improvement proposals for the organisational performance of local SMEs based on the results of a diagnosis carried out on their administrative process, thus increasing their probabilities of permanence in the market.

Frame of Reference

Organisational performance. According to Barradas et al. (2021), this term is difficult to conceptualise because "there is no single universally accepted definition" (p. 23), as it has been evolving over time.

These authors provide various definitions of organisational performance, among which are those provided by Shu-Mei and PeiShan (2014) who state that "It is the level of objectives achieved, as well as an assessment of the effectiveness of individuals, groups or organisations" (p. 25); Crook et al. (2005), who state that "It is the economic outcome that arises from the interaction between the organisation's behaviours, attributes and environment" (p. 25).

In their research, Barradas et al. (2021) conclude that to measure organisational performance it is not possible to consider only a general indicator, because this will depend on the strategies and goals established by each organisation. They also state that organisational performance should be evaluated considering two dimensions: objective and subjective. Within the subjective measurement, aspects such as customer satisfaction, leadership style, quality, innovation, work climate and interpersonal conflicts, employee satisfaction and stakeholder perception should be taken into account. For objective measurement, sales, cash flow, growth rate, market share, investment in research and development, financial indicators, market value and productivity should be considered, which will help to "delimit, establish and prioritise the problems detected and thereby design concrete actions that contribute to the effectiveness of the organisation" (p. 35). Miller and Proctor (2016) conduct research on change performance across more than 300 organisations and 400 000 data points over a 21-year period, where they present five main capabilities: adaptive leadership, effective execution of individual change, managing the demand for change, hiring resilient people, and creating the context for successful change; they also offer a practical roadmap for organisations to close the gap between the change they want to achieve and their capabilities to do so.

Related to this, Contu (2020) concludes in his study that organisational performance depends on the leader's ability to create a cooperative work climate and lead a team, and that individual performance can influence the performance of the whole organisation in a positive or negative direction. The study emphasises the importance of leadership in achieving organisational performance and the need for continuous learning to achieve the proposed objectives.

Based on the above, it can be said that an improvement in organisational performance will have an impact on several areas of the company, reflecting positively on financial issues as well as on aspects related to customer and employee satisfaction, organisational climate, quality of products and/or services offered, etc.

SMEs. In the literature review of the research conducted by Kotane and Kuzmina-Merlino (2017), they state that SMEs can be described as catalysts of the economy of the future, citing Forsman (2008) who considers it necessary to accelerate their growth and improve their competitiveness. The authors mention that SMEs have some specific characteristics according to their size and possibilities; they also point out that lack of resources can be considered as one of the main problems and a typical characteristic of this type of enterprises, taking into account that resources do not only refer to personnel, but also to management as well as financial stability and security.

For his part, Romero (2006) provides a statistical definition of SMEs, which is related to the number of employees and states that it differs in each country, the most common being to consider them in this category when they have between 10 and 250 employees, distinguishing them from micro enterprises because they have fewer than 10 workers, and from large ones, since they have more than 250.

"They are economic entities that generate employment, economic income, improve the standard of living of society and represent a substantial contribution to the gross domestic product (GDP) of each nation" (Basuki et al., 2021, cited by Lara and Cervantes, 2022, p. 38). They are led by entrepreneurs who have very particular, but well-defined characteristics; some with academic studies and others with empirical knowledge.

For their part, Shirokova et al. (2020), assures that this type of companies face adverse scenarios, which makes them be in constant defence against the unusual situations they face, which makes them seek to improve their performance and implement unplanned strategies that in turn cause expenses, due to the fact that they were not considered in a strategic plan from the beginning.

The above reinforces the importance of supporting this type of companies, providing them with advice that will result in an improvement in their performance, which will give them greater opportunities to remain in the market and continue contributing to and impacting the economy of the region where they are established.

Administrative Process. It is defined by Hernández and Hernández (2019) as a series of stages that are used for administrative practice, ensuring that this process is the beginning of any administrative activity whose main objective is the systematisation of knowledge to achieve efficiency. They also refer that currently the most universally accepted phases are: planning, organisation, management and control. The authors state that planning is considered to be the most important stage, since it is where objectives are set and it functions as a support for rational decision-making. The organisation stage is about achieving the objectives that were set in planning. The management phase seeks to delegate authority and coordinate activities; and in control, the criteria to be applied to measure and evaluate the results obtained are defined.

Coinciding with the above is what is stated by Blandez (2014) who assures that it receives the name of administrative process because in all organisations "all the important activities for the achievement of objectives are systematised" (p. 10), first, establishing them, then delimiting the necessary resources, coordinating the activities and, finally, verifying that the objectives have been met. Some other authors consider that another stage of the administrative process is forecasting, which consists of confirming whether the conditions exist to be able to do what is being planned.

Likewise, Mero (2018), assures that there are authors who call it the "administrative cycle" and that it is composed of stages that are continuous or cyclical: planning, organisation, management and control, which are of vital importance for decision making within the company.

However, Vargas and Cárdenaz (2019), conceptualise it as the basic methodology for implementing administration; the means that integrates different activities to be able to implement the organisational strategy, once the company's objectives have been defined and the strategy to be developed has been formulated, carrying out an analysis of the environment that surrounds it, the tasks to be performed, as well as the technology and people involved for it.

Finally, Márquez et al. (2021) defines the administrative process as "a set of cyclical, systemic, holistic, interdependent and flexible administrative management operations" and, whose main characteristic is "morphogenesis", which means that, as an open system, organisations can "modify their basic structure to better respond to internal and external stimuli" (p. 371).

After analysing the concepts provided by the different authors, it can be concluded that the administrative process is the series of cyclical stages that are carried out in an organisation to ensure that it functions effectively, achieves the established objectives and supports decision-making.

Methodology to be developed

This is a qualitative and descriptive research, where an administrative diagnosis was carried out in order to obtain information about the organisational performance of SMEs in Ciudad Obregón, Sonora, Mexico, participants in the study and, based on this, to develop recommendations in the areas of opportunity detected.

Subjects of the study. There are six companies participating in this study. They are small and medium-sized enterprises from Ciudad Obregón, Sonora, Mexico, which showed interest and willingness to participate in this research.

The participating companies are named as companies A, B, C, D, E and F, in order to respect their confidentiality.

Company A belongs to the industrial aquaculture sector and has 22 employees, of which four are female and 18 are male, their level of education ranges from high school, technical school to university degree. The products offered are frozen and fried shrimp.

Company B is a family business dedicated to the purchase and sale of agrochemicals, fertilisers, seeds and agricultural inputs. It has 140 employees, consisting of 75 women and 65 men. Most of the company's employees have a bachelor's degree and two have a master's degree.

Company C, also a family business, sells clothing, footwear, perfumery and accessories for men, women and children. It has four female employees, all of whom have a high school education.

Company D is a family business dedicated to providing marketing services, with 11 employees, seven of whom are women and four of whom are men. The level of education of the people involved is one with a master's degree and the rest with a bachelor's degree.

Company E offers toilet and portable sink rental services, as well as cleaning of septic tanks, grease traps and rubbish containers. It has 33 employees, of which four are women and 29 are men. The educational level of these workers is six with a bachelor's degree, 15 with high school and 12 with basic education.

The last company, F, is a family business that sells and rebuilds automotive parts; it has eight employees, of which two are women and six are men. The educational level of these employees is three with a bachelor's degree and five with a high school education.

Instruments. Two instruments were designed, one to characterise each of the participating SMEs and the other to obtain information to carry out the diagnosis of the administrative process, evaluating the phases that make it up: planning, organisation, integration, management and control, applied to each of the participating companies.

The first instrument, the characterisation of the company, is divided into three sections; the first is to obtain general data on the business, such as its name, address, telephone number, RFC, date of commencement of operations, background or history of the organisation, its main activity, size, number of employees and their level of education, as well as its main products and/or services to offer, customers and suppliers.

The second instrument was designed to obtain information about the administrative process implemented in the company. This instrument is divided into five sections:

- a) Planning, where we asked about the philosophical platform of the business (mission, vision, values, objectives), as well as its strategies, regulations, policies, budgets, programmes and procedures.

- b) Organisation, where we asked whether the company has an organisational chart and whether it is updated or not, whether it has job descriptions and specifications, and whether it has administrative manuals.
- c) Integration, where we inquired about the recruitment, selection, hiring and induction of personnel.
- d) Management, questioning about aspects of leadership, motivation and communication within the company.
- e) Control, to obtain information about the measures and types of control implemented by the business, as well as the establishment of standards, the use of formats and reports for the follow-up of actions.

Procedure. The process followed in this research is based on the one proposed by Hernández (2018), with some adaptations, as follows:

1. Compilation of theoretical information on the research topic. A bibliographic search was carried out on the variables to be investigated, in order to have prior knowledge on the subject of study.
2. Determination and selection of the sample size. Different local SMEs were invited to participate in the research, and six businesses agreed to take part in the study.
3. Design of the measurement instruments. Two instruments were designed to collect the necessary information about the characteristics of the participating SMEs, as well as to carry out a diagnosis of the administrative process implemented by them, questioning the phases of planning, organisation, integration, management and control.
4. Application of the designed instruments to the participating SMEs. The two instruments designed were applied through interviews with the representatives of the SMEs to obtain reliable and trustworthy information about what we wanted to know.
5. Analysis and interpretation of the results obtained. Once the instruments were applied, an analysis of the information obtained was carried out, which resulted in

knowing the current situation of each of the participating SMEs in terms of the implementation of the administrative process.

6. Elaboration of improvement proposals for each of the participating SMEs. Based on the findings obtained, improvement proposals were designed for each of the SMEs studied, as each of them presented specific and particular areas of opportunity.
7. Drawing up conclusions and recommendations. Conclusions and recommendations were drawn up for the implementation of the improvement proposals designed.
8. Preparation of the final report. Each of the studied SMEs was given the findings of the present research, as well as the improvement proposals specifically elaborated for them.

Results

These are presented in two sections: the findings obtained in the diagnosis of the administrative process, for each of its phases, followed by the proposals for improving organisational performance made to each of the SMEs participating in the study.

Results of the diagnosis of the administrative process

The information obtained through the application of the instrument designed to diagnose the administrative process of each of the companies participating in the study is as follows:

Company A. In Planning, it was found that it does not have any of the types of plans formally established in writing. It only has budgets defined and established in writing. Organisation: in this phase the only deficiency found is that it does not have a procedure manual for the human resources area. Integration: there is no procedure for the recruitment of personnel and no external sources or means of dissemination for this purpose. For the selection of personnel, no knowledge or skills tests are applied to candidates, nor are medical examinations requested prior to recruitment to verify their state of health. Management: little work is done in groups or teams, which affects the level of performance, innovation and motivation generated by working in this way. Control: No areas of opportunity were observed in this phase.

Company B. Planning: there is a mission and vision, however, they lack certain elements and most of the staff are not aware of them; contrary to the values, which are known and accepted by the staff. Organisational objectives exist, however, it was found that not all areas have specific objectives.

There are no defined strategies. Policies are not known to all staff. There are no written procedures or programmes. There is a general budget and there is oversight to ensure that resources are not diverted, however, the needs of all areas are not taken into account when defining the budget. Organisation: There is no organisational chart. Although there are all the job descriptions that exist in the company, they are not up to date and do not have the specifications required by the occupants.

There is no organisation, procedures or induction manual. Integration: there is a formal process and only internal sources are used for recruitment and selection of personnel, however, no knowledge or medical examinations are carried out at this stage, only the candidate's profile is considered. There is also no induction programme, which delays the incorporation and adaptation of the new employee. Management: a lack of empathy on the part of the leader was detected, which prevents harmonious working.

Staff are motivated through monetary incentives, but the impact of this is not measured. In terms of communication, there is no mechanism for the management and control of information. Teamwork is not supported. Control: there are no control measures, no standards, objectives or indicators are set to measure the performance of the areas, they are only used for the sales area. The only form of control used is concurrent and feedback, they do not make a preliminary control to avoid problems. The critical points necessary for the control of each area are not identified, nor are the actions and reports presented followed up, and there are no formats designed to be applied to the actions that require it.

Company C. Planning: has a mission and vision, but they lack the essential elements to be considered as such, and they are not placed in any visible place in the company, so they are unknown to the employees.

As far as objectives are concerned, there is one, but it is not formally set out in any document that can be used to verify that it is actually being fulfilled. In the same way, there is no formal establishment of strategies, those that are applied are empirical, without foundation, and it is not verified whether they provide the expected result.

In general terms, the company lacks policies, regulations, procedures, programmes and budgets. Organisation: there is no organisation chart, as the owner does not consider it necessary due to the small number of employees. As a result, there are no job descriptions, organisation manual, procedures manual or induction manual. Integration: there is no formal procedure for recruitment, selection, hiring and induction of staff. Management: The owner of the company considers that the leadership exercised in the company is adequate, as it influences people to follow it. The leadership that is managed has not caused problems in the company and favours working in harmony to achieve the objectives that the owner has in mind. It is customary to motivate employees with trips and also informally give them bonuses for the fulfilment of activities, but there is no evaluation of the impact of the motivation provided.

Communication within the company is personal, verbal and direct between the boss and the employees, so it is clear and without confusion. There is teamwork within the company, which increases the effectiveness of the functions. Control: The company uses measures to control its activities, however, they are not documented. The control measures are not made known to the employees as they are considered very sensitive. The company has no established standards, objectives or indicators to measure the performance of each area of the business. As a control mechanism, only inventory is managed, but this is done informally in a notebook for the control of the entrepreneur; no system or software is used for its management. In addition, monthly sales statistics are kept, but this is not done in a formal way either, they are only presented on a sheet of paper so that the accountant is aware of the income and expenditure for the period. The type of control commonly used by the company is preliminary and preventive.

Company D. Planning: they have a mission statement, but it is not visible anywhere in the company, but it is on the platform and everyone has access to it. Organisation: there is no structured and formally defined organisation manual, nor is there a procedures manual, but employees are aware of the activities they have to carry out. Integration: In the selection process for new staff, there are no skills or psychological tests and there are no staff selection policies. Similarly, there is a lack of a formal induction process and a manual to support this process, which hinders the integration of new employees into the company. Management: there is no evaluation of the impact of motivation on staff; there have been problems with written communication, when requesting an activity by mail or message it is not entirely clear to employees, thus causing delays in carrying them out. Control: employees are unaware that performance evaluations are carried out in a formal manner, according to them they are only evaluated by observing them when performing their work, but not in writing, and they are not provided with feedback, so they do not know the areas in which they need to improve. Nor is there a formal follow-up report on the company's actions that pays attention to suggestions, complaints and/or recommendations made by the clients to whom the service is offered.

Company E. Planning: there is a written mission and vision, but it lacks certain elements and it is necessary to have them in sight. Regarding the objectives, they are not known by the employees, so there are no evaluations to verify their fulfilment. Strategies are not formally established, nor are policies. There are rules, but they are not updated and are not known by the staff. There are also no formally established procedures. Organisation: there is an organisational chart, but it is not updated and is not known to the staff. There is a job description, but it contains very generalised information and is not detailed. There is no organisation manual. There is a procedures manual, but it is not available to employees. Integration: There is no formally established process for recruitment or selection of personnel, the questions in the interviews of candidates are asked as the conversation progresses, there is no written report, there are no knowledge tests, only anti-doping tests, nor are the data provided by the candidates verified. Nor is there any training for staff.

Management: in the area of motivation, there is only the financial incentive; in written communication there are problems, as the staff do not read the instructions given to them. Control: there are no checks on internal functioning, nor are there any reports to generate activity reports.

Company F. Planning: There is no officially written mission, vision or values, but the latter are put into practice.

There are general objectives, but they are not in writing, nor is there a means of supervision to verify compliance with them. There are also no policies, rules, procedures and budgets. Organisation: There is no established organisational chart, nor is there a job description, job specification, organisational manual or procedures manual. Integration: there is no formal recruitment or selection procedure for hiring new employees; when hiring, there is a process for integrating the personnel file and affiliation with the corresponding institutions, but there is no induction programme or manual; however, the direct boss is in charge of providing the necessary training. Management: the leadership that is exercised in the company is not adequate and therefore has caused problems, so it is considered that work must be done to achieve harmony towards the achievement of the objectives. However, the company constantly tries to motivate employees by giving them money and quality of working life according to their performance. Communication within the company is another point that needs to be worked on because, despite having personal communication, it is not clear between the boss and the subordinate, and there are often problems in written communication because there are no mechanisms for managing and controlling information. Control: Control measures are in place, but no standards, objectives or indicators are set to measure the performance of each area of the organisation. The most commonly used type of control is concurrent, as it is carried out when the action is being carried out and the critical points that need to be controlled in each of the company's areas are identified.

Proposals for improving organisational performance for the participating companies.

Company A. All types of missing plans (mission, vision, objectives, values, strategies, etc.) were designed in writing and included in an organisational manual and an induction manual that will provide support to welcome the new employee, ensuring a comprehensive knowledge of the institution and its functions within the company. A procedures manual was also designed for the human resources area, specifically for the recruitment function.

Company B. The mission and vision of the business was redefined for this SME, taking into account the elements that were lacking, and a quotation was provided to place these plans on acrylic sheet to place them in a visible place so that the staff would be familiar with them. Support was provided for the establishment of specific objectives for each area of the company, in addition to creating a control board to periodically verify compliance with these objectives, which in turn has an impact on the area of opportunity detected for the control phase. The organisation chart of the business was designed, as well as updating the descriptions and specifications of each position that make up the organisational structure. With the above information, the organisational manual was designed, as well as the procedures manual for the production area. An interview format or guide was designed containing questions related to the basic knowledge of the position to be filled. In order to improve leadership, motivation and effective communication in the organisation, training courses on these topics were quoted and presented to the manager.

Company C. The mission and vision of the business were redesigned, and were produced in an eye-catching, large format so that they could be placed in a visible place for both employees and customers. The objectives, values and strategies of the company were written down, as well as the company's policies and rules, and the company's budget was put in a formal document. In the same way, the organisational structure chart was designed, complemented with the corresponding job descriptions, which served as input for the design of the organisational and procedures manual. A written procedure was designed for the functions of recruitment, selection, hiring and induction of staff. An induction manual was drawn up to complement the previous processes and a proposal was made to the owner for the creation of new posts necessary for the optimal functioning of the company.

A training course on leadership and effective communication was also proposed. Documents were designed for the company to formalise its inventory control activities, sales, information on income and expenditure, as well as an instrument to keep track of its clients; and another one where employees are informed of the internal regulations and policies, and their signatures are obtained to ensure that they have been informed about them.

Company D. The marketing service company had its vision and mission statement updated and posted in a visible place for employees and customers. The objectives were set out in writing and the strategies that will help to achieve them were formulated. In the same way, the organisation manual and the procedures manual were drawn up with the actions and operations to be followed to carry out the general functions of the company in order to optimise them. Likewise, the policies for the personnel selection process were designed, which will allow for the effective recruitment of suitable personnel for each position, and for them to contribute to the company's mission and the achievement of its objectives, In addition to formally establishing an induction process, complemented with the design of a manual so that new staff feel familiar and identified with the company's way of working and ideology, facilitating their adaptation and integration into the organisation, as well as the responsibilities corresponding to their job. Likewise, an incentive plan was proposed to stimulate the work performance of the employees, increasing the productivity of the business. For the control phase, it was proposed to carry out performance evaluations of employees to determine their compliance and to be able to offer them adequate and timely feedback. An action follow-up report format was also designed to give the required attention to complaints and suggestions made by customers regarding the service offered by the company.

Company E. This company's mission and vision were updated and placed in a visible place for employees; the objectives were formally established in writing and made known to all employees, in addition to supporting managers in defining strategies, as well as the policies and regulations to be implemented in the business.

Likewise, the organisation chart was updated and made available to everyone; the job descriptions were complemented, detailing the activities according to the functions performed, and included in an organisation manual, which was designed according to the needs of the company so that it can perform its functions properly, as well as designing a procedures manual for each of the services provided by the company, in order to minimise work risks, maximise the performance and quality of service, as well as extend the life of the equipment used. Likewise, a manual for recruitment and selection of personnel was designed, in order to fill existing vacancies in the most appropriate way. A detection of training needs was carried out, and based on the results obtained, quotations were requested for courses in basic mechanics, safety, electrical systems, computers and technology, etc. Likewise, motivational strategies were designed for the staff, such as the placement of a mural with the employee of the month based on the fulfilment of goals, the granting of recognition to staff for their good performance, as well as offering incentives such as bonuses for goals achieved and prizes for the care of work equipment. Finally, it was recommended that internal audits be carried out in order to improve processes.

Company F. This SME dedicated to the sale and reconstruction of automotive parts had its mission and vision designed, as it did not have them; its values and objectives were established in writing, and its policies and regulations were drawn up. The organisational chart for the company was created, as well as the description of the positions that make up the organisational structure of the business, which served as input for the preparation of the organisational manual. The induction manual was also developed to support the induction process for new staff. Leadership, communication and motivation strategies were also designed, as well as the establishment of indicators to measure the performance of the different areas of the organisation. A format for weekly sales control was also designed, which will be used to identify the best salesperson of the month and award him/her with a stimulus or recognition, in addition to providing information on the sales made.

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Conclusions

It can be said that the present research fulfilled its objective, since proposals for improving the organisational performance of the local SMEs participating in the study were elaborated, based on the findings of the diagnosis of their administrative process, thereby seeking to increase their chances of remaining in the market.

As stated by Rodrigues et al. (2021) SMEs can achieve sustained growth and competitive advantage by focusing on success factors such as strategic planning, management capacity, entrepreneurship and innovation, human resources, networks and partnerships, and financing. In turn, Ojha et al. (2023) states that SMEs must constantly review and adapt their strategic plans to changing market conditions, customer needs and other external factors, which will allow them to respond in a more agile and timely manner to market changes.

Therefore, it is considered of utmost importance that the businesses studied implement what has been proposed as part of an efficient management; In turn, coinciding with Ramírez (2017) and Santamaría (2018) who state that providing advice to organisations so that they can be competitive, reinvent themselves and improve their performance, will help them to guarantee their permanence in their environment, so it can be said that this research is contributing to the local SMEs in providing them with this guidance, so that they can be successful in the market where they operate, hoping that they follow the specific and specific suggestions that were pointed out to them to obtain the best results.

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