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Abstract

The causes of the high attrition rate of non-owner middle managers in a family-owned corporation in the Philippines.

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This DBA thesis focused on exploring the role of emotions towards decision making for non-owner middle managers in a family firm in the Philippines. The Philippines is one of the fastest-growing economies in the world and Asia after China. This family firm has over 8000 employees nationwide and is rapidly expanding in the Association of Southeast Asian (ASEAN) region. This DBA thesis tries to answer what are the causes of the high attrition rate of non-owner managers leaving the family firm. As a member of the owning family and as a second-generation owner-manager, I need to dwell on this issue, which could affect our business in the long run.

For me to discuss this in my thesis, I used numerous literature which reframed my understanding and my first-hand experience in the phenomenon, which I think is happening in the family firm. These pieces of literature focused on coping, cognitive appraisal, emotions, identity or social identity, regret theory, decision making and professionalization of family firms. It also helped me as an owner-manager to use a qualitative ethnographic, phenomenological action research method. This method will best fit the action I intend to use to achieve change in the family firm. The action came from the guidelines or framework provided by the thematic analysis and coding as part of my methods. The stages of the action research I did focused on five stages. These stages include observation, semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, pilot test project and consolidation of feedback from the participants. Aside from this, I also used a storytelling approach together with my diary, which incorporated in the DBA thesis that is part of the rich data used to support the method of research used.

When I did my interviews with the participants, I made sure that the privacy and profile of these respondents remain anonymous as indicated and approved during the ethics approval stages of this DBA thesis. The reader of this DBA thesis expects to understand what are the factors that affect the decision making of the non-owner managers and how these decisions could be changed by looking into the emotions and identity of the individual. The reader of this DBA thesis will also appreciate the role of the non-owner managers in family firms (disvalued or disregarded based on the story I will elaborate here) to achieve an ideal family firm by empowering them to make decisions, giving the non-owner managers ample training and guidance, changing their salary schemes and making the workplace environment a collaborative one make this possible.

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#MABUHAY!

Declaration of Own Work

I declare that this thesis has been done by myself and the contents written in this DBA thesis is of my own. This thesis has not been submitted for any other work or degree qualification. All sources used in this DBA thesis have been cited accordingly.

September 10, 2019

Glossary of terms

Below the line advertising - Below the line advertising is a kind of advertising (the other one as above the line advertising) that focuses on direct to consumer marketing. It is a specific type of advertising which ensures that there is high conversion (brand loyalty) but low reach (market penetration).

1. In Store below the line advertising- It is a specific type of advertising that focuses on malls, supermarket, events and other ad hoc projects.
2. In Home below the line advertising- it is a specific type of advertising that focuses on house to house, store to store and public market activation using different strategies to tap the consumer market.
3. In Community below the line advertising- it is a specific type of advertising that focuses on ensuring that brand loyalty is in place by executing NBA (Neighborhood Brand Ambassadors) targeting speciifc point of market entry markets.

Medium sized family owned corporations - These are specific type of family firms which are owned 100% by the owner-managers and employ at least 500 regular employees or more.

Non-owner managers - These are individuals who do not own any shares into the family firm.

Owner managers - These are owners of the family firm who belongs to the first- and second-generation owners.

Philippines - The Republic of the Philippines is a sovereign state in archipelagic Southeast Asia Region, with 7,641 islands spanning more than 300,000 square kilometers of territory. It is divided into three island groups: Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao. The capital is Manila located in the National Capital Region.

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1. Introduction

1.1. Background and Research Focus

For the past 17 years, a family firm in the Philippines has been continuously expanding by providing top-notch below-the-line advertising services to its partners. It is the biggest in the country utilizing its forty offices in the country. It is also rapidly expanding in the South East Asian region. As of to date, it continues to provide top-notch services to different multi-national companies such as Procter and Gamble, Huawei Telecommunication, Universal Robina Corporation among others. As such, it has established itself in the industry for its credibility and reputation as reflected from different awards it has received.

Given that this is the situation, I have noticed as an owner manager in the family firm that the suggestions or feedback from those who do not belong to the owning family (who are non-owner managers) are not empowered to make decisions, nor are their suggestions or feedback being listened to. One example is when the suggestions of non-owner managers were not given importance when non-owner manager A was about to propose to the owner-managers regarding a specific business strategy that could attract new and potential clients. When he was about to request for a schedule to present, the executive assistant of the CEO of the company said that there is no need for such proposal because new accounts acquisition is limited only to owner-managers. This event increases the hesitations of the non-owner managers in participatory decision making.

Noticeably for a company of its size and influence, it continues to behave along the lines of a small family firm with its family-centric locus of power and decision making As of to date, we have a total of 8000 employees in the Philippines covering the islands of Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao. The company is very diversified; the proportion of men into women is 1:2. The family firm also gives equal opportunity to everyone as long as they have the willingness to adapt to the ever-growing culture of the company since its founding. The culture of the family firm is based on its 24/7 corporate capabilities values which are embedded on 'providing unlimited services to our marketing partners, our employees are strategic thinkers, driven by accomplishment to make things possible and nothing is impossible.' These are shared values must be instilled in the hearts and minds of every single employee of the family firm.

In other words, it has failed to adopt the decentralized structure or culture that would reflect its internal differentiation and diversity. As an owner-manager myself, I consider this as an opportunity and a problem that I need to look at, and I also need to ensure that organizational crises (Paraskevas, 2006) will not happen in the long run if this continues to happen.'

This problem which I see as a result of my diagnosis and as a member of the owning family is potentially alarming and could impact the sustainability of the business in the medium or long term. Arising from my pre-understanding and experience, decisions coming from these non-owner middle managers about accounts management and operations are neglected. I feel it is imperative that these decisions, made by the people who are dealing with the everyday operational matters, should be acknowledged by senior managers as a failure to do so could have a negative impact on the direction of the business in terms of growth and profitability. I sense a relationship between the above situation with the high attrition rate of non-owner middle managers, who play a crucial role when negotiating with partners in the industry and who are considered to be well trained and have understood the corporate familial culture since they have been employed with an average tenure of two years.

As an owner-manager, I have sensed that when non-owner managers are not empowered to make a decision, they illustrate a negative emotion (fear, sadness, disappointment and demotivation) based on the way they react on the current situation. These negative emotions as a result of my observation as an owner-manager persist when non-owner managers felt that they are not given value and disengaged from being part of the family firm. As a result of my observation, I think, due to the rapid growth of the family firm, there are specific details which are not given importance, such as providing value to non-owner managers decision making. Aside from negative emotions, I also think that non-owner managers are not having a sense of fulfilment as employees in the family firm because they are not able to do what they wanted to do. It gives limitations and constraints that hinder their growth.

As result problems are accruing both for the company, which is failing to benefit from the decision-making capabilities of experienced staff operating at the customer interface and eventually losing a high proportion of those staff themselves, as well as for those staff who are working with unnecessary frustrations and below their capabilities. The intended outcomes of this research, therefore, are to provide an evaluation of this lack of empowerment upon the emotions and behaviours of non-owner middle managers and to understand its role in their high attrition rate.

I intend to focus my inquiry approach using a qualitative phenomenological, ethnographic action research method (Brannick, 2007). Completing the five stages of action research focused on non-owner managers are as follows: observations, semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions. It is then followed by the pilot test and feedbacks. This pilot study will be strictly observed and supported by the use of a diary and journal, followed by further interviews to gain their feedback and to reach recommendations. The action research stages intend to focus on emotions (Bee, 2014) and how these affected the high attrition rate of non-owner middle managers leaving the family firm and as well as their identity and roles (Stets, 2000). I focused on this since, as a result of my observation for the past five years, I have been on this senior role, non-owner middle managers exhibit a behaviour known as ‘organizational silence.’ Morrison (2000) said that it is ‘a phenomenon whereby the non-owner middle managers are disengaged and feel that they are afraid to voice out what they could contribute to the organization.’ It leads to demotivation and behaviours exhibiting a negative emotion. A focus I intend to look at this DBA thesis as a result of my double-loop learning approach (Carmeli, 2008).

Furthermore, as a result of this phenomenon, non-owner middle managers experienced a feeling of regret (Zeelenberg, 1996) when they joined the family firm. As such, they lose motivation along the way based on what they need to do on their day to day lives. This regret they experienced is a result of the corporate culture within this family firm. As an owner-manager, I am well positioned to this research since I will be taking over the role of a chief executive officer of the company. Concerning this, I have also understood that owner-managers do not listen to feedback that non-owner middle managers want to share to them because they think (as a result of my observation) that this is no longer needed since the business is already stable.

As a result of my diagnosis, it clearly shows that this is not a ‘leaderful’ organization as argued by Raelin (2003), because collaboration is not taking place among the owner-managers and non-owner managers. Moreover, Lack of distribution of power to other members of the organization is another issue, which leads to a lack of empowerment for non-owner middle managers. To me it appeared that these non-owner middle managers must be empowered because I see them as fully capable and performing members of staff, possessing the willingness and the ability to accept the responsibilities of the delegation of formal power

The problem outlined above-provided scope to study the situation through a wide range of research concepts, such as leadership, culture, motivation, communication, RBV and HRM. However, while I use and refer to many of these (and other terms) throughout, I decided that it would be better to forego scope in favor of depth thus limiting my research to emotions and behaviours of a cohort of middle managers before and after their empowerment to make autonomous decisions (see Chapter 3). Limiting my study as such is in accordance with the ‘QAA Characteristics Statement for Doctoral Degrees’ (2015) which states [that candidates should] “think critically about problems to produce innovative solutions and create new knowledge” (p.4). I considered, therefore, that whereas leadership, culture etc. would provide universal coverage of the firms’ situation, it was more important here than the knowledge presented to be acceptable and understandable to the firms’ owner-managers, such that real and sustainable change would ensue.”

1.2. Problem statement

Summarizing the background to my research (above), I propose the following:

- Suggestions or feedback from non-owner managers are not being acknowledged by the owner-managers and as such:
- Power and decision making are concentrated at the very top of the organisation leaving non-owner managers feel disempowered.
- This has led to the situation whereby owner-managers and non-owner managers do not collaborate.
- Over the past five years there has been a high attrition rate of non-owner middle managers, averaging eight per cent per quarter, which I sense is linked to the above situation.

1.3. Research Question

To identify the emotions and behaviours of non-owner middle managers in the family-owned corporation in the Philippines

1.4. Sub research questions

Which factors restrict non-owner managers in decision making and how can these factors be reduced?

How do non-owner managers behave when given the freedom and authority to participate in decision making?

How would greater participation in decision making reduce the rate of attrition of non-owner middle managers in the family-owned corporation in the Philippines?

1.5. My role in my research

As the next CEO of our company and as the current assistant vice president for business development and operations, my role would focus on being an insider action researcher (Coghlan, 2008) who tries to balance the role of the researcher while at the same time a member of the owning family. I am well-positioned to do this research because I am in a position to initiate the needed change for the family firm I am researching in the Philippines. It is exciting research because the company has a unique culture because of its location in south-east Asia. Culture plays an important factor since the culture is collective, which is distinct compared to those companies from western countries (Sharma, 2005). I need to do this research because it will benefit not just myself but also those who I think are valuable to the company who are non-owner middle managers. When I had direct interaction with them for the past few years as an owner-manager, I have noticed that they also want to make a difference and not just a simple employee working in the family firm. As an owner-manager, when these non-owner managers are leaving the family firm, I consider this alarming since these non-owner managers are part of the pool of well-skilled talented individuals who take care of our company in the context of business development and operations.

As an owner-manager, there are different lens I am looking at: First, either this could be because they are not empowered to make decisions. After all, they are not allowed to do so, or they are not motivated to be engaged in decision making. Second, the owner-managers neglect their value where they ignore what the non-owner middle managers intend to contribute to the organization. As an insider action researcher, I can utilize all the data that I have access to and use these data as part of my research. These data, together with my diary, where I wrote my observation, will help me identify the phenomenon taking place where there is a high attrition rate of non-owner middle managers leaving the family firm.

Another role I see myself in this study is when I have access to the data I need and how I can use these data as an advantage to let the owner-managers see a different perspective. It will be done using thematic analysis and validating these themes utilizing action research. Also, I will be able to discuss these unknown factors to the owner-managers, which is still yet to be identified that will have a significant impact on the non-owner middle managers working in the family business.

1.6. Chapter summary

I shared in this chapter the background how did I arrive about with the problem of the organization. As an owner-manager and as well as an insider action researcher, I discussed that since the establishment of the company, I have observed and noticed that there has been a high attrition rate of non-owner middle managers leaving the family firm. As a result of my critical reflection and observation for the past ten years as an owner-manager, the focus of my research, therefore, is the high attrition rate of non-owner middle managers in the family firm. It is to identify the reasons why they are leaving as it could affect the sustainability of the business. Because if no one else will do this, we will lose highly qualified and trained non-owner managers who want to make a difference in the organization.

2. Literature review and contribution

2.1. Overview

The literature review I intend to use for my DBA thesis focused on addressing the research problem I have in the medium sized family firm. The family firm I am researching is not to be associated with a typical family firm that exists in the Philippines. Even if it is classified as a family firm, it is too large to be associated with a typical family firm (usually small with maybe one owner-manager in complete control). The family firm I am researching is very much considered a medium-sized family firm due to its number of employees. The opportunity dwells on its original identity and not changed as it has grown.

I focused on several pieces of literature which are related to emotions and behaviours of non-owner managers in different contexts and how their decision making is affected as non-owner managers. It will give me a robust framework that will enable me to understand the background of the phenomenon of the research problem I have. As discussed in the first chapter, I want to know how emotions and behaviours of non-owner managers in the medium sized family firm are identified and how these emotions or behaviours shown in the phenomenon restrict their decision making. I also want to look into literature which is related to different cases where the non-owner manager plays a role in different situations. By the end of this chapter, I am expected to share what are the best theories that address the research questions I have for my thesis and how could this support the method I intend to use in the next chapter.

2.2. Cognitive appraisal theory of non-owner managers

Lazarus and Folkman developed the cognitive appraisal theory, and there are three essential aspects to the process; 1a) Primary appraisal 1b) Secondary appraisal and 2) Coping. (Folkman, p992. 1986). Cognitive appraisal is a process through which the person evaluates whether a particular encounter with the environment is relevant to his or her well-being, and if so, in what ways. Folkman (1986, p.992) argued that this cognitive appraisal is either in the context of the primary or secondary appraisal. Both of these affects the non-managers in a medium sized family firm because it affects their well-being as non-owner managers. It is essential to focus on the primary and secondary appraisals as a basis of how they manage a stressful situation since the cognitive appraisal is related to emotions.

In primary appraisal, the person evaluates whether he or she has anything at stake in this encounter. Questions such as, is there potential harm or benefit concerning commitments, values, or goals? Is the health or well-being of a loved one at risk? Is there potential harm or benefit to self-esteem? are raised. For an example, if a non-owner manager wants to participate in decision making regarding accounts management in the medium sized family firm, he foresees that it could harm his employment to the medium sized family firm since decision making is limited to owner managers. He could regret this chance of participatory decision making at the end of the day.

In secondary appraisal, the person evaluates what if anything can be done to overcome or prevent harm or to improve the prospects for benefit. One example is when a non-owner manager who is part of the account's management team weigh on his options when he is going to decide on a new developing account that is about to join the medium sized family firm. He already anticipated the consequences and foresaw the possibilities as a result of the decision he is going to make. If he expected, it minimizes risks and alleviates the harmful impact on his well-being as a non-owner manager.

I intend to discuss how the Cognitive Appraisal (CA) relates with Regret and Identity theories since it focuses on the being of the non-owner manager in the medium sized family firm and as part of the individual's thinking process. I also intend to use Bee's (2014) discussion of how this relates to non-owner managers day to day lives and concerns example (fear, conflicts, hopes, among others).

Coping, on the other hand, occurs where a non-owner manager can manage a stressful situation in the medium sized family firm if it arises. Handling this situation in the context of coping could either be trait oriented or process oriented, as argued by Folkman (1986). Coping is essential as this is how a non-owner manager manages the psychological and environmental demands that affect him as a person. A manager must handle a stressful situation because if they are unable to process this through coping, it leads to undesirable outcomes such as the feeling of loss or demotivation as a result of their cognitive thinking. Coping is how the person changes their cognitive thinking that affects their behavioural efforts to manage specific external or internal demands that a non-owner manager could manage or could not manage. Coping can either be defined as process oriented or contextual.

The process-oriented aspect of coping focused on what the non-manager does and what do they do to ensure that there is stability than intended change.

Contextual is where the manager and the situation variables affect the efforts on coping. It is clear, however, as argued by Folkman (1986, p.993) that 'coping is either good or bad and how they manage as the situation arises.' There is a need to focus on coping because we can identify if, and how, the non-owner manager experiences a stressful situation. Coping could either be emotion focused coping or problem-solving coping.

Emotion focused coping, according to Folkman (1986, p.993) is "how stressful emotions are regulated while problem solving coping is how a person change the environment which causes his distress." The non-managers in the medium sized family firm can also use four forms of coping with managing the stressful situation, and these are employing "confronting coping, accepting responsibility, planful problem solving and positive reappraisal" as argued by Folkman (1986, p.1000). The intent of coping is to manage undesirable emotions that could happen to the non-manager in the medium sized family firm. It is why I relate this with the article of Bee (2014) who emphasize the impact of emotions on non-owner managers in the medium sized family firm if they have experienced situations that affects their motivation. If the non-owner manager is unable to cope up with a stressful situation, it leads to negative emotions.

Bee (2014) discussed this phenomenon in their cognitive appraisal theory. The approach argues that "emotions have a direct impact on the outcome of the decision of the individual in an organization." It happens because of the emotional ownership of the non-owner managers and their attachment to their current role (Bee, p.324, 2014)" affects their employment in the medium sized family firm. These emotions coming from the non-owner managers affects the outcome of the decision they make. These causes that directly affect their emotions as non-owner managers arise from their personal feelings such as pride, self-worth and educational opportunities which are not fulfilled because they are unable to cope up with a stressful situation. If these are not met, it could lead to a job which is not satisfying to these non-owner managers. As such, there are additional factors which must be considered in understanding the being of the individual according to Bee (2014) and these are “effects, moods and attitudes.” These three are the essential basis that affects the non-owner managers in the medium sized family firm.

The cognitive appraisal approach provided a different perspective on how the environment affects the non-owner manager with regards to decision making in the organization which they belong to. This environment, according to Bee (2014), contributes to the ‘development of the emotions of the non-owner manager.’ Therefore, if the environment does not have any significant impact on the non-owner manager, the feelings will not be as meaningful as expected since there are desirable situations that affect them. It means that there is no valid emotional response coming from the non-owner manager since there is no basis of what they feel and think. Also, the emotion produced by the non-owner manager is coming from their ‘emotional embeddedness’ that is assessed from either their ‘frequency, duration and intensity of communication of information and emotion (Bee, 2014, p.326).’

This emotional embeddedness and identification are considered to be high in medium sized family firms, as argued by Bee (2014), which makes it dynamic and complex one. One way to examine the embeddedness and identification of the individual with the medium sized family firm is utilizing the notion of ‘congruence’. Congruence explains the consistency or inconsistency of the goals, needs, or desires of a non-owner manager working in the family corporation and how they manage their expectations. When a non-owner manager experiences inconsistency with regards to the emotions and expectations of how he or she relates to the environment he or she is working, there will be a conflict that eventually leads to negative emotions. On the other hand, when a non-owner manager experiences consistency, it leads to desirable and pleasant positive emotions. It means that this congruency has a direct relationship between the non-owner manager's environment and how this affects him in the medium sized family firm. This is the reason why coping is not needed in desirable situations.

The cognitive appraisal also suggests that non-owner managers can control their emotions they feel depending on their control potential if it is high or low (Bee, 2014). A non-owner manager with a high control potential can usually manage a situation and could still change it before the decision is made. On the other hand, low control potential is when a non-owner manager is unable to manage the situation due to his real or perceived inability to change it, and if it’s already too late since there is already an outcome of the decision made or if they are unable to cope up**.**

These positive or negative emotions are both necessary because if these non-owner managers have a feeling of belongingness to the medium sized family firm they are working, it will change how these non-owner managers feel. It also depends if they are happy or sad or they feel fulfilled or disappointed depending on how the environment affects that non-owner manager. It is necessary, therefore, to assess if there is congruency or incongruency with regards to the non-owner manager's embeddedness and identification in the medium sized family firm. Bee (2014) argued that the incongruency of the non-owner manager's embeddedness and identification is addressed when there is an “increased awareness and the emotional intensity is fixed (p.328).” Bee (2014) also mentioned that constant communication is necessary to alleviate the incongruency and achieved congruency at the end of the day. The feelings of affiliation and association of these non-owner managers are also needed to mitigate demotivation when incongruency happens.

When there is congruency on the embeddedness and identification, it leads to positive emotions, which includes “happy, joy, glad, motivation, driven” as mentioned by Bee (2014). Bee (2014) said that non-owner managers in medium sized family firms would only experience positive emotions when they can meet what they are expected in return for what they have contributed to the organization or when they can cope up (Folkman, 1986). When this happens, they become engaged and driven as a result of their motivation. It also means that they have the willingness to be part of the medium sized family firm (Raelin, 2013). The non-owner manager must choose the best decision and be satisfied with the outcome of the result of the decision they made so that there is congruency on the emotion he felt and experienced (Bee, 2014).

Positive emotions are also considered as positive discrete emotions according to Bee (2014) since it changes and expands the traditional way of thinking and acting of a non-owner manager. This increases their pride and motivation that leads to increased engagement in the medium sized family firm. Bee (p.238, 2014) also said that the “positive emotions increase the non-owner managers intellectual, physical and social resources.” Negative emotions, on the other hand, is a kind of feeling that non-owner manager experience when there are incongruencies on their embeddedness and identification with regards to what they expect in return in the medium sized family firm. If there is incongruency, Bee (2014) said that these non-owner managers experience “disappointment, sadness, anger, guilt, depression among others which are examples of negative emotions.” When these negative emotions happen, it leads to decisions which could affect their employment in the medium sized family firm that will push them to be disengaged and eventually lose their willingness to work. These negative emotions also came from their ego involvement and responsibility. Negative emotions are also classified as negative discrete emotions, whereas it affects the non-owner manager that will enable him to create decisions which are irrational and unsubstantiated.

Also, both positive and negative emotions can either be experienced or expected (forecasted) emotions for non-owner managers. Both the experienced and expected emotions prepare the person for future emotions they expected to experience (Labaki, p.120, 2012). Both kinds of emotions affect the emotional part of the decision-making process based on the mutual influence that results from what is happening or what is about to happen. When incongruency happens between what is expected and received on behalf of the non-owner managers, it leads to dissatisfaction. These negative emotions affect their cognitive thinking towards what they see as ideal for them as employees in the medium sized family firm.

To identify the behaviours of these non-owner managers in the medium sized family firm, we need to look at the impact of both positive and negative emotions to them. Astrachan (p.42, 2008) argued that “emotions play a critical role and part in making decisions.” These emotions affect strategic judgment during decision making and have an essential link between emotion and individual decision making. Since we discussed what positive and negative emotions are, we need to understand how it impacts the non-owner managers. Astrachan (2008) argues that positive emotions such as “pleasant, joy, happiness among others” will have a direct relation in making decisions however they are more prone to risks since they are expected to maintain their positive moods whatever happens. Negative emotion, on the other hand, leads to increased risks due to their greater desire and interest to change their emotions. When non-owner managers then decide while having a negative emotion, Stanley (2014) clearly states that they invest more resources such as time and effort to reverse this. However, if they are unable to do this, it leads to undesirable outcomes that make the situation worse and if they are unable to cope up on this stressful situation.

2.3. Managing incongruencies of non-owner managers

Since we have understood the impact of positive and negative emotions to non-owner managers, it is necessary, therefore, to foresee how can we mitigate the effects of negative emotions on non-owner managers. Bee (2014) argued that there are two ways to manage the incongruencies of non-owner managers in terms of their negative emotions. “It is achieved first using emotional dissonance and surface focus and second, employing emotional expression and regulation (Bee, 239, 2014).”

Emotional dissonance and surface focus argue the value of the well-being of the non-owner manager that has a positive impact on them. Emotional expression and regulation are how emotions affect the behaviours of non-owner managers. Non-owner managers must consider the ‘state of contagion’ where emotional interaction, non-verbal cues and less conscious state of mind occurs at the same time. Both emotional dissonance and surface and emotional expression and regulation are related to feelings of regret and their regulation strategies which is discussed later on in the regret theory context.

2.4. Identity theory and Social Identity Theory of non-owner managers

Another approach I want to look at in the context of non-owner managers behaviours is in the context of identity and Social Identity Theory. Both theories define how the identification process affects the non-owner manager as a member of the medium sized family firm. Stets (2000) explained that there is an overlap between these two theories, but there are still differences with regards to this. I used this argument because this is the only way how the non-owner manager identifies himself in the medium sized family firm. Stets (2000, p.224) said that Social Identity Theory is focused on categories or groups identification, while identity theory is in the aspect of roles.

The second important aspect that Stets (2000) focused on is in the context of activation of identities of these non-owner managers and the salience concept. Stets (2000, p.224) made it clear that these activations of characters are related to the cognitive appraisal mentioned by Folkman (1986) and Bee (2014) that involves depersonalization and self-esteem (Social Identity Theory), self-verification and self-efficacy (identity theory). The non-owner manager tends to be reflexive because he tends to reflect on his value as in the medium sized family firm both in the context of identity or Social Identity Theory. The non-manager self-categorized himself in the medium sized family firm as argued in the Social Identity Theory. At the same time, there is the identification of his role, such as Business Manager in the identity theory.

I intend to use the Social Identity Theory because “the non-owner manager will realize that he belongs to that specific group such as in medium sized family firm as part of his knowledge (Stets, 2000, p.224)”. The group is a set of individuals who has a common social identification or view of themselves as a member of the same social category, such as a single-family firm entity. When a non-owner manager has this social identification, it involves their “emotional, evaluative and other psychological aspects (Stets. 2000, p.224).” It means that the non-owner managers must consider their self-categorization (formation of their identity) and their social comparison.

In the identity theory, non-owner managers agree that they recognize one another belonging in a single category or positions they hold in the medium sized family firm as a result of them being reflexive. They have understood that they belong in that group or role.

2.4.1. The basis of identity of non-owner managers.

Stets article (2000, p.226) is also crucial since we focused based on the identity of non-owner managers in the medium sized family firm. A non-owner manager will have a social identity when they see that they are one with them in a particular group, and they see a common perspective altogether in contrast with other groups. On the other hand, one will have a role identity when they can fulfil the expectations of the role, and they have in a specific organization like in a medium sized family firm. They take advantage of this opportunity to negotiate and interact with other individuals who hold a different role in the organization (Stets, 2000, p.226). Social identity emphasized the uniformity of perception, having a similar action between the group members. Also, role identity is based on the differences in what they think and do that are affected based on their role in the medium sized family firm. When the non-owner manager confirms their group identification, it leads to more significant commitment and less desire to leave the medium sized family firm. It means that there is no need for them to cope since there is no stressful situation.

It is essential, therefore, to consider that more significant commitment as a result of this social identification minimizes demotivation and reduces the risk of leaving the medium sized family firm. The non-owner manager also perceives these behaviours as groupthink as a result of their high identification and as part of their social identification. The basis for the identity for identity theorists focused on the link between the individual meanings of those non-owner managers having a particular role and how they behave while fulfilling that role to others as argued by Stets (2000, p.226). In role-based identities, there is interaction and negotiation to do a specific function that is focused on interconnected uniqueness and not merely as a result of non-owner managerial uniformity of perceptions and behaviours.

Perceiving the group varies from the point of social identity and identity theorists. According to Stets (2000, p.228), “social identity theorists consider the group as a collective of similar persons where they identify with each other and see themselves in similar ways and hold similar views.” Identity theorists, on the other hand, “consider the group as a set of interrelated individuals where each performs unique but integrated activities, sees things from his or her perspectives and negotiates the terms of interaction.” Stets (2000, p.229) emphasizes that even if non-owner managers role identities are maintained, the identity of the manager must be kept. A manager, according to Stets (2000), cannot be based alone by role identities. There is a need for the non-owner manager to balance the demands of role identities with the requirements of personal identities (Stets, 2000, p.229). It means that they affect each other, and it reflects that they operate at the same time in a given situation based on their expectations.

2.4.2. Activation of the identity of non-owner managers

Another aspect I intend to do is show the identity is activated and where does salience come in for non-owner managers. Stets (2009, p.229) argued: “the activation of identity theory and Social Identity Theory arises when the activation of the identity of the non-owner manager happens.” Once this salience is activated, the identity of the non-owner manager increases since the membership is confirmed in a specific group such as the medium sized family firm.” It means that their identity is embedded in the group where they belong since it is approved by the medium sized family firm where they belong using a binding agreement between the non-owner manager and the social group. Their identity, therefore, is activated as part of the social categorization of the self. When this happens, Stets (2000, p.230) said that there is congruency with regards to their comparative or normative aspects such as the non-owner managers fit and accessibility. When the identity of the manager is activated, it permits managers to accomplish their personal and social goals in the medium sized family firm, and this increases their satisfaction.

The focus of the identity theory for non-owner managers is based on the role of function they need to do in the medium sized family firm. It means that when they have a specific role, they need to comply with the said role as part of their identity, such as a business manager. There is, however, a difference between activation of the identity and salience for managers for identity theorists. Non-owner managers salience is based on how an individual need to do his role in a specific situation similar to identity theorists. One example that identity is activated is when there is a self-verification process of the self, as mentioned by Stets (2000, p.231).

The identity of the non-owner manager in the context of the Social Identity Theory is ‘based on a structured, organized hierarchy of inclusiveness (Stets, 2000, p.231).’ This where they identify themselves in an individual level, the department where he belongs to such as Business Development or Operations and regional (as part of a medium sized family firm in an operating country) such as the Philippines. The identities of these non-owner managers change as the situation varies depending on the hierarchy of inclusiveness where they belong. The activation, therefore, of the identity of the non-owner manager depends on the situational activation as argued by the Social Identity Theory that best defines salience.

There is, however, a claim with regards to this, as explained by Stets (2000), ‘non-owner managers must consider the perceiver and fit of the situation.’ Both the Social Identity Theory and identity theory should complement one another.

2.4.3. Cognitive and motivational processes of non-owner managers.

Aside from salience and the activation of identity, another aspect I want to look at is in the context of central cognitive processes between the identity theory and the Social Identity Theory as argued by Stets (2000, p.231) for non-owner managers. The fundamental cognitive process in Social Identity Theory is considered as *depersonalization,* where the manager sees the self as an embodiment to the in-group prototype or recognized as the medium sized family firm. This personalization is a necessary process which defines the underlying phenomena where they classify themselves as part of the group identity because of their cooperation. *Self-verification* is also needed for non-owner managers when their status is activated in a specific group that is achieved when there are role playing and role making that illustrates their identity to the medium sized family firm. Both depersonalization and self-verification are needed to confirm the non-owner managers membership or identification in the social group. This identification defines that the non-owner manager exists in society and influenced by the medium sized family firm where they belong. The non-owner manager motivation is also affected when these are related to their commitment and salience.

The higher their commitment to the medium sized family firm, the greater their salience would be, the higher that would enact the identity. “When the non-owner manager then can manage their role and leads to positive assessments, their self-esteem and self-efficacy would be higher, as argued by Stets (2000, p.233).” It means that the identity is only confirmed when they are motivated driven by *self-efficacy, self-esteem, self-consistency and self-regulation.* In the medium sized family firm for an example, the most reliable means of confirmation of the identity is through acceptance of others and confirmation of membership of other members of the group as argued by Stets (2000, p.234).

Both identity and Social Identity Theory argues that there is a need for a merger as this means reflection, being and behavioural perception of the self as non-owner managers. Both theories are best supported when there is participation in the macro-level (group, role and person), a commitment to the medium sized family firm and in the micro-level when there is inter or intragroup relations where their roles vary depending on power and status. Also, at the micro-level, the non-owner manager focused on their motivational process (self-esteem, efficacy and authenticity) in the verification of their identity. It leads to them feeling happen about themselves when they associated themselves with others in a medium sized family firm, as argued by Stets (2000, p.234).

Cognitive appraisal approach furthermore focused on the congruency and incongruency of the emotions depending on the non-owner manager's embeddedness and identification. It is also necessary to focus on Identity theory (Bagger, 2014), Folkman (1996) and Bee (2014). It is the reason why when non-owner managers are unable to manage their commitment to the medium sized family firm because they are unable to confirm their social identity to it, it leads to a stressful situation which is entirely undesirable for the non-owner managers. This situation leads to regret that is a negative emotion.

Bagger (2014) defines Identity theory where non-owner managers feel regret when they are unable to manage the conflict between their role as a non-owner manager in the medium sized family firm and their commitments outside of work. "Identity theory argues that when non-owner managers fail to manage the competing demands as part of their responsibility to their family or work and they are unable to make a choice and prioritize the options they have in the table; it leads to undesirable outcomes (Bagger, p.214, 2014)." Identity theory also states that people should also consider the 'centrality' of their roles, whereby if they are asked and required to choose between their role as a non-owner manager. As a member of the medium sized family firm, they need to make a choice.

Bagger (2014, p.306) also argued that "identity theory correlates the silent roles from what a person's responsibility is, since every role is based on a set of behavioural expectations that they are expected to portray." It is how the non-owner "middle managers know what they need to do and what kind of behaviours they need to show" as mentioned by Bagger (2014, p.306). They must, therefore, be able to respond to who and what they do when they work in the family business. It defines who they are and what could they contribute to the organization as non-owner manager.

Dubin (1956) central life interest also defines what identity theory for non-owner managers. It is essential because the focus is on the person's individual preference and the choices they make. The central life interest is an opportunity when and where they intend to allocate their time as a result of the decision they made. Identity theory, therefore, states that confusion arises when mixed emotions exist. It happened when a decision made resulted in conflicts between their work and personal commitments.

If they are unable to manage this mixed emotion, it means that the non-owner manager cannot balance their duties between work and personal life. Non-owner managers, therefore, must consider this role centrality which has a significant impact in terms of the individual's self-esteem and well-being of a person, and they need to identify their embeddedness and identification to the medium sized family firm and ensure that there is congruency (Bagger, 2014).

Stanley (2010) supported this approach, where he emphasized the role of non-owner managers in the medium sized family firms. He said that being part of the family business, owner-managers are different from non-owner middle managers in making decisions. The owner-managers have the identity attached to the team as shareholders of the company, which the non-owner middle managers do not have. Non-owner middle managers must have that same identity assigned to the medium sized family firm they are working for, so that they will work harder at what they need to do and contribute to managing their mixed emotions. Stanley (2010), therefore suggested activating the identity of the non-owner managers. Zona (2016), on the other hand, defined the differences in how non-owner managers manage their responsibilities to the owner managers of the medium sized family firm. If Stanley (2010) focused on the lack of identity of non-owner managers to the medium sized family firm, Zona (2016, p.737) focused on the differences of the decision-making skills of the non-owner managers from owner-managers as it involves the cognitive conflict of the individuals in an organization." Non-owner middle managers in the family business should be valued because their knowledge and skills are mostly objective compared to the owner-managers who demonstrate subjective decision making.

2.5.1 Regret theory of non-owner managers

Aside from identity theory and Social Identity Theory, one way to explore the impact of emotions of non-owner managers in decision making is through Regret Theory (Zeelenberg, 1996). The feeling of regret as argued by Zeelenberg (1996, p.148) is "more or less a painful cognitive and emotional state of feeling sorry for misfortunes, limitations, losses, mistakes or misfortunes". This regret can affect non-owner managers in two different ways.

First, it can lead people to try to undo the effects of their regretted choice after the decision is made. Second, it can affect people's picks before the decision is made when they anticipate the regret they cause later. This regret theory approach varies from one point to the other as it came from classical, prospect-based theories of decision making which argue that the expected utility of choice options depends only upon the possible pain and pleasure associated with the outcome of that particular option. In regret theory, an action-based theory, as argued by Zeelenberg (1996, p.147) states that the "utility if a choice option additionally depends on the feelings suggested by the outcomes of rejected options." The regret theory argued two assumptions.

The first assumption, "people compare the actual outcome with what the outcome would have been and had a different choice made, and the experienced emotion is a consequence (Zeelenberg, p.148)." People experience regret when the inevitable outcome would have been better, and the rejoicing when the foregone would have been worse. The second assumption of regret theory is "that the emotional consequence of decisions is anticipated and taken into account when making decisions as argued by Zeelenberg (1996, p.148)." Thus, the tendencies to avoid negative post decisional emotions such as regret and disappointment and to push for positive feelings and passions such as rejoice, motivation and pride are factors that affect the decision making of the individual.

Zeelenberg (1996,) argued that non-owner managers tend to regret averse rather than risk-averse and therefore, are motivated to make regret minimizing (rather than risk-minimizing) choices. These regret reducing opportunities may either be risk-avoiding or risk-seeking. Zeelenberg (1996) argument is clear: "if a non-owner manager cannot compare what is what have been, there should be no reason for regret in the decisions made." Zeelenberg (p.149, 1996) made it clear that the resolution of both the chosen and unchosen option is central to regret theory. The result of this means that those non-owner managers who regret adverse make choices to minimize the possible future regret. These choices can either relatively risk-seeking or risk-avoiding.

The research done by Zeelenberg (1996, p.156) argues that "the safe and risky option can alleviate regret" and this applies both in the context of losses and gains. The anticipation of regret also shows that individuals are more motivated to maximize rejoice instead of minimizing regret. It is also clear that not all non-owner managers want to reduce disappointment; some of them want to receive feedback on the options which was made in decision making. This feedback leads to regret or rejoicing because their curiosity is awarded or punished. Regret aversion also plays an essential factor with regards to the stages of decision making. Zeelenberg (1996) expects that “non-owner managers prefer to avoid information that could be the cause for them to regret their decision. However, it is a case to case given that feedback can either be positive or negative from their other peers as part of their identification process.”

It is therefore assumed that regret would be painful when the choice made is irreversible and expect regret aversion effects on post decisional information. When this happens, they are unable to cope up with the situation that leads to negative emotions. Therefore, it is clear that feedback can provide valuable information about how to improve the current situation. The feedback is similar to non-owner managers commitment to the medium sized family firm. When individuals also prefer to deter feedback, it limits the learning from the experience of the non-owner manager. It means that feedback is central in alleviating regret, as argued by Zeelenberg (1996, p.157), and “it argues that regret aversion is necessary for the different stages of decision making.” This regret aversion is similar to the regret regulation strategies Bagger (2014) discussed.

2.5.2. Regret regulation strategies of non-owner managers

Non-owner managers experience regrets when they make decisions between their role in the medium sized family firm and their roles to their families similar to the central life interest Bagger (2014) argued and if they are unable to minimize regret or cope up with the stressful situation. This regret happens when decisions they make turn out to be less than ideal. Burke and Stets (2009) mentioned “that non-owner managers tend to allocate more resources to critical functions than those who are less risky.” It is the reason why non-owner managers have to make a choice which commitments they will prioritize.

It is necessary, therefore, to alleviate regret since the feeling of regret is considered to be a negative emotion that non-owner managers feel or experience if they are unable to manage the situation. It is minimized when they anticipate the impact on them when they make a specific decision while working in the medium sized family firm or when there is feedback or confirming their identity to the medium sized family firm. It was Lerner (2015) who said, “that there is a need to ensure the congruency with regards to their expectations as non-owner managers in the medium sized family firm.” Anticipating regret is necessary where non-owner middle managers must consider because it is a psychological process where the non-owner manager manage the conflict between their work or personal demands. Alleviating regret is only achieved when we use regret regulation strategies. These regret regulation strategies will provide the best possible solution between the choices they have to minimize disappointment. Regret regulation strategies alleviate if not removes the guilt of the decision made.

Anticipating regret according to Bagger (2014) reflects the need for non-owner middle managers to allocate their time with their preference specifically and there is a way to check the decisions which involve competing demands and interest which has direct conjunction with role centrality. This decision making, which Bagger (2014) argues, is part of the cognitive exercise that from positive, negative, or mixed emotions and as well as central life interest (Astrachan, 2008). Bagger (2015, p.315) suggested several regret regulation strategies which non-owner managers could use to alleviate regret and these strategies, according to him, are as follows:

1. The decision focused which are concerned with the process of making decisions
2. Alternative focused that deals with alternative options
3. Feeling focused aims to experience regret directly.

Bjalkebring (2016) made the same argument with regards to the regret regulation strategies Bagger (2014) argued. These regret regulation strategies are either "anticipated or experienced regret (Bjalkebring, p. 382, 2015)." Anticipating (forecasting) regret happens when the non-owner manager has not experienced the situation yet, and they still have an opportunity to change the decision they are about to make. Experienced regret is a regret which had already happened, and it is too late to for the non-owner manager to change the decision that was made. It is a situation where a non-owner manager already experienced a negative emotion.

Both experienced and forecasting regret are managed internally. It is about real-life decision making, but these posits risks along the way as a consequence of the decision made. It is necessary, therefore, to use these strategies to create desirable outcomes as a result of the decision. Hence, what Bjalkebring (2016) was implying is "that non-owner managers must forecast regret to manage expectations before they decide any decisions in the future." It is needed so that the decisions will not lead to a possible failure because of these undesirable outcomes. There is a possibility, however, that these non-owner managers could not anticipate or forecast regret because of bounded awareness as argued by Bazerman (2008). Bounded awareness ignores the nitty-gritty events that are occurring, and it does not use the regret regulation strategies effectively, which should have changed the outcome of the decision as employees in the medium sized family firm.

What Bjalkebring (2016) suggested is to "manage regret as who has learned from the mistakes committed in the past and how this will change the behaviours based on forecasted or experienced emotions." It is a pre-requisite to function at an optimal level and could achieve a state of performing organization. Aside from this, alternative options such as using feedback from non-chosen outcomes that delay the decision made will be helpful for non-owner middle managers. Furthermore, "justifying the reversal of the decision made, emotion regulation and suppression" (Bjalkebring p.385, 2016) will be helpful as well to manage the impact of regret to emotions and how this is related with decision making.".

Bjalkebring (2016) also argued that there is a need to investigate the regret regulation strategies used in decisions made by the non-owner middle manager and should not use this instantaneously. It is achieved by using either a diary or a journal to record what had happened in the past. It is part of the learning curve which we use for the future. Bjalkebring (p.384, 2016) said that "regret is an important feature of how decisions made in post decisional experience which is why the regret regulation strategies are used on a day to day basis in making decisions which are necessary to alleviate the negative feelings to avoid negative results."

Labaki (2012) is another scholar who mentioned about the relationship between regret and decision making for non-owner managers. The approach he used, however, focused on the role of emotions in decision making in the context of both the family systems and business systems that are overlapping with each other." It is similar to the central life interest I discussed earlier and as well as the embeddedness and identification of the non-owner manager in the medium sized family firm by Folkman (1996). Labaki (2012) explanation, however, differs from those of Bjalkebring (2016) because when one regret happens in one system, it affects the other system in place as well. It is necessary, therefore, to understand why and how this is happening. Labaki (2014) argument focused on non-owner managers who have to make a choice or a decision between their responsibility.

Labaki (2012) said that non-owner managers must remain active in the medium sized family firm for a more extended period utilizing their identification. Being active in the medium sized family firm is derived from several reasons, and these reasons are motivation, culture and their attachment as non-owner middle managers. It will increase their embeddedness and identification to the medium sized family firm they are working. The definition of regret for Labaki (p. 121, 2012) is the "emotion that an owner-manager realizes in the current situation, understood on the other hand of the business would have been better if he acted differently." Labaki (2012) emphasize regret as a complementary approach in the realm of family business decision making. As such, Labaki (p.121, 2012) emphasize "regret theory which has a significant basis for understanding the regret related preferences of the non-managers over actions that could have an impact on the medium sized family firm." Aside from this, Labaki (p.122, 2012) also compared the differences between family-based regret and a business-based regret. Family-based regret "take into consideration the account of the family effect upon decisions made while business-based regret is where the business effect upon decisions made (Labaki, p.122, 2012)."

Regret theory complements the reasons why decisions made in the family business as a result of the emotions of the non-owner managers. The regret theory provides a framework to have a better understanding of the non-owner manager's decisions over actions that has a direct impact on the medium sized family firm. Labaki (p. 121, 2012) "mentioned that there are two components of regret theory, and these are value and regret." Previous scholars did not explain this definition regarding the breakdown of regret since the focus before was more into either positive or negative emotions that have an impact on the decision making of the owner-managers and the identification and embeddedness of non-owner managers in the medium sized family firm.

This regret is "defined as a negative cognitive emotion where owner-managers experience if the situation could have been better or a positive cognitive emotion where owner-managers are experiencing a good outcome" (Labaki, p.121, 2012). In the context of the detrimental cognitive emotion, there are two essential kinds of regret for Labaki (2012). If the non-owner managers are unable to expect regret (by minimizing or alleviating) as a result of this decision, it affects the cognitive appraisal thinking of the person that leads to negative emotions. The ideal thing to do is to forecast the feeling of having more regret compared to what they have experienced.

2.6. Decision making of non-owner managers

Decision making for non-owner managers is considered as either subjective or objective, as argued by Zona (p.741, 2016). The decisions of the non-owner managers, according to Zona (2016), are considered to be essential since both knowledge and skills are vital to ensure that the outcome of the choices is sustainable. Objective decision making for non-owner managers, as mentioned by Zona (2016) is “based on a factual basis and not on hearsays.” They have already experienced the decision they made, and they think it will contribute to the medium sized family firm, perhaps because of trying to mitigate regret.

These objective decisions made by the non-owner managers are not heard and not valued in the medium sized family firm by the owner-managers because these decisions as what the owner-managers think will not contribute in maximizing shareholder wealth or increases profit. For owner-managers, maximization of shareholder wealth by the non-owner managers is not on their objective as argued by Martin-Santana (2014. P.289). Owner managers put a priority on maximizing shareholder wealth because they want to get the best return of investment from the capital they used.

Formal power, therefore, is not distributed across all the levels of the organization. There is a need to have a second look in the family culture of how non-owner managers can make decisions. Martin-Santana (2014) mentioned that the influence of the owner-managers must be based on objective decisions or non-financial goals and not just limited to maximizing shareholder wealth or generation of profit. It means there is a need for owner-managers to understand their employed non-owner managers if they are capable of positioning themselves when they intend to make a decision depending on their capacity. There are three different aspects to be considered before the non-owner manager decides on the medium sized family firm (Martin-Santana, p.290, 2014), and these are as follows:

1. Emotional cohesion is “how owner-managers set the non-financial goals of the medium sized family firm so that the non-owner managers will be able to adjust and change the way they make decisions when this happens (Martin-Santana, 2014, p.290).” It is the influence of family climate and identification that is related to the intensity of the emotions between non-owner middle managers. It is how the non-owner manager relates from one another and how they balance the decision output of owner-managers.
2. Cognitive cohesion is “how the non-owner middle managers are involved about the goals, needs, and activities of those whose who are new to the medium sized family firm as employees (Martin-Santana, 2014, p.290).” It is where we can see if there is proper turnover, transition, and training to the new non-owner middle managers from those who have been employed for more than two years now and was able to adopt already to the culture of the organization.
3. Open communication is the “level of interaction between and among non-owner middle managers and up to what extent the non-owner middle managers can participate in decision making and how this affects their relationship to owner-managers (Martin-Santana, 2014, p.290)”.

As mentioned by Martin-Santana (p.291, 2014), the identification of non-owner managers and owner-managers can either be in the context of the individual or group identification. The individual identification is the foundation of a substantial group identification that has a powerful impact on the willingness of the non-owner managers to alleviate the personal gain to preserve the common good. Group identification is a result of a “higher identification that gives higher importance to non-financial goals in the decision-making process of the company.” Group identification happens when non-owner managers feel that they belong to the medium sized family firm and when they always collaborate with the owner-managers with regards to the decision of the organization. Both individual and group identification are related to the activation of the social identity discussed earlier. Also, non-owner managers should be empowered to make decisions based on their capacity as long as they have a basis for the decisions made and there is proper training and guidance provided if they do not have the willingness and the ability (Raelin, 2013). The owner-manager must assess the situation by giving focus on non-owner managers first if they are capable of making a decision. If they are unsure about this, the owner-managers can use a third-party consultant or a change agent to assess this. It will give the owner-managers a different lens regarding that specific situation once they have provided their recommendation or suggestions. This argument made by Martin-Santana (2014) is one-sided and was counter-argued by Gomez Mejia (2016), where he mentioned that there is a need for the preservation of the socio-emotional wealth. When we put in place the management process, strategic choices, organizational governance, stakeholder relationships and new business venturing, the family firm can achieve this (Gomez-Mejia, p.493, 2016).”

Gomez Mejia (2016) argues that decisions must be limited to owner managers decision alone for medium sized family firms which is mostly subjective. It is an opposite view of Martin-Santana (2014), which favours the non-owner manager's decision in the organization. Gomez-Mejia (p.501, 2016) said: "that there is a need for owner-managers decision to be prioritized since family firms are more prone to risks." These medium sized family firms are also unstable since the wealth of the family is associated with the owner's managers, high-risk strategies that affect the shareholder's wealth. The management of a medium sized family firm is often different from managing a non-family firm. Non-family firms, in general, are managed systematically i.e. through diversified skills and knowledge bases - usually in the form of departments, compared to a family firm where such delineation of responsibilities may remain blurred due to the power nexus between owner and non-owner managers.

When an organization is considered to be a medium sized family firm, it means that there is a higher probability that the medium sized family firm needs a third-party consultant or a change agent that will guide the owner-managers in making decisions. Gomez-Mejia (2016) argued that they are in favor of maximizing shareholder wealth. However, there should be an emphasis on seeking guidance from external agents which will balance the decisions made by the owner-managers. Also, Gomez Mejia (2016) said: "that if the medium sized family firm is considered to be traditionalistic, there is a higher probability that the non-owner middle managers do not work as a team." It depends, however, on the assessment made by the third-party consultants or change agents if the non-owner managers are qualified or capable or not. Coghlan (2014) agreed on this approach of Gomez-Mejia (2016) where he said, “that these third-party consultants will professionalize the organization and will address the opportunities to change the systems and process in place in the medium sized family firm.” It will professionalize the non-owner middle managers since its values objectivity that non-owner middle managers need to have since they are empowered to make decisions. When this happens, a favorable climate is achieved.

It is necessary, therefore, that in decision making, there should be a balance between subjective and objective as a basis for the decision made. It is achieved only when there is a collaboration between the owner-managers and the non-owner managers in the medium sized family firm using leader-member exchange approach (Graen, 1995). Zona (2016) argued that owner-managers should empower non-owner managers to make decisions in the medium sized family firm most importantly if they have the willingness and the ability (Raelin, 2003) to do so to achieve the balance between subjective and objective decision making. Owner managers must, however, assess first their non-owner managers if they are capable of making decisions and if they have undergone proper training and guidance have been provided. If these non-owner managers, however, do not possess either one of these assessments as mentioned by Raelin (2003), care should be given priority, and there is a need to assess the situation if coaching or guidance is needed for these non-owner managers before they make decisions on their own. Aside from this, decision making for non-owner managers in medium sized family firms must not be either in one of these rooms elaborated by Baron (2015, p.3). These rooms are the “one room house, the missing room and the messy rooms.” These rooms are applicable for the non-owner managers because we will know where they will position themselves. It is necessary to understand these rooms so that the medium sized family firm will not experience organizational failure or crisis.

2.6.1. The One room house

The one-room house is a kind of room “where cyclical decisions made leads to organizational failure (Baron, p.3, 2015)”. Even if dialogues are happening, they are still no decisions finalized which should have translated into action. If there is an action agreed upon, no one makes a follow up which had happened in the first place. Therefore, it means that there is no direction where the organization is heading. Decision making is informal in the family business in this situation (One room house) that is why both the owner-managers and non-owner managers are unaware that the decisions agreed did not go through a proper deliberation which led to the effectiveness of the decision. Baron (p.3, 2015) therefore suggested that “having a robust and sophisticated foundation is needed for effective decision making.” The non-owner middle managers must know how to translate these plans into substantial concrete actions which should lead to organizational change. It means that the decision is not limited to theory alone but also in practice. Non-owner managers must be able to bring this up to the owner-managers if they think that the decision agreed upon is not moving forward. It is part of their confirmation that the non-owner managers’ social identity is confirmed to the medium sized family firm and minimizing regret is a choice they made as part of their plans.

2.6.2. The missing room

The missing room is a kind of room "where the systems and the processes are in place, but the individuals who have authority and power are unaware about the decisions made because there is no direct control towards the prevailing issues and decisions (Baron, p.4, 2015)." The owner-managers need to ensure that the business is heading to the right decision with the help of the non-owner middle managers. When dialogues between owner-managers and non-owner managers are taking place, and both parties agreed on the same decision before the implementation of the decision, it means that the business is in the right track and there is a two-way feedback system.

However, if the owner-managers are not proactive in the business, and they are not contributing to making decisions in the organization, and they ask someone else on their behalf must make the decision, it is a missing room as mentioned by Baron (2015). The person who has the authority and power to drive the organization forward must have its decision in line with the direction of the business itself. If this is not aligned, there is incongruence between the vision and the mission of doing the business that leads to unexpected results and negative emotions. Non-owner managers must instill dialogues to the owner-managers so that positive feedback occurs, which is a source of the non-owner manager's motivation and identification in the medium sized family firm.

2.6.3. The Messy rooms

The messy rooms according to Baron (p.5, 2015), is "kind of a room where those who are responsible for making decisions are not qualified enough because they do not have the ability or the skills to do so." The decision made is not diverse enough, and the proportion between owner-managers and non-owner middle managers is not balancing. It does not imply however that the non-owner managers must have direct control of the business but Baron's (2015) argument highly suggest that the owner-managers must retain their influence if not total control of the business. The direct involvement of the non-owner managers also leads to the professionalization of the family business. Formal power, therefore (Mechanic, 1962), must be distributed across all the strata of the organization.

Baron (2015) also said that when there is an active non-owner manager who is actively participating in decision making who is also a member of the board, it will realign with the strategic decisions of the owner-managers. What is ideal, therefore is that there is the direct interaction between the owner-managers and owner-managers (shareholders) to ensure that these kinds of rooms will not happen in medium sized family firms. It also ensures that transformational change happens, and not just transactional change is achieved (Graen, 1995). A collaborative environment is a key to the success of the medium sized family firm by ensuring that there is care provided. It is necessary to consider three crucial guidelines to mitigate these kinds of rooms from happening, according to Baron (2015). These three essential guidelines are as follows:

First, there must be direct involvement between the owner-managers and the non-owner managers in decision making. This interaction is not limited to dialogues alone but rather a collaborative decision making. It means that decisions are not subjective but objective as well. It also ensures that the incongruencies between the parties' expectations happen to alleviate negative emotions.

Second, the owner-managers must assess the non-owner managers if they are capable of making a decision which is suitable for the medium sized family firm. It means that they qualify to make one. Qualification in terms of their willingness and ability. These decisions must be factual and have a basis of moving forward.

Third, decisions implemented must be based on actionable knowledge so that it is a result of theory and practice. The decision made must, however, be for the welfare of the medium sized family firm since these are strategic decisions. These strategic decisions will benefit both the owner-managers and non-owner managers.

Also, non-owner managers decision making is affected is in the context of culture. Culture plays an essential role in the medium sized family firm to succeed, as argued by Vitell (p. 754, 1993). Vitell made it clear that "developing countries such as the Philippines belong to a collectivist culture." It means that non-owner middle managers need suggestions from other non-owner managers before they can make a decision. When a decision becomes collective, it affects their perception and their emotion towards a decision. These non-owner managers that came out from the collectivist culture have a disadvantage when their decision is affected by parental altruism, i.e. .it is based on loyalty, commitment and long-term factors (De Massis, p.167,2013).

Decision making in a collectivist culture must support ethical decision making. It means that even if there is an agreement between owner-managers to distribute power to non-owner managers. However, there is no transfer of leadership, and it will affect the non-owner managers' emotions due to a lack of guidance from the owner-managers. It is what De Massis (p.174, 2013) argued as 'fractional ownership'. If the owner-managers made a poor decision as a result of this fractional ownership, it leads to non-owner managers poor performance. What is needed, therefore, for non-owner managers is achieving a state of "authentic leadership". A situation where non-owner managers in a collectivist culture will be able to influence in return to their owner-managers in terms of decision making. It adheres that there is reciprocity or exchange between owner-managers and non-owner managers. When authentic leadership occurs in all levels of the organization, there is the professionalization of the medium sized family firm.

2.7. Professionalization of medium sized family firms

The professionalization of the medium sized family firm happens when there is a distribution of formal power. The distribution of formal power happens across all levels of the organization from the owner-managers to the non-owner managers. It also serves as a solution to issues mentioned in 2.6 of this literature reviews. As a result, it improves decision making since the non-owner managers will be accountable for the decisions they make and the risks it has. One way to manage these risks and to decrease negative emotions is by letting non-owner managers attend seminars and pieces of training that will improve their decision-making capacity in a collectivist culture.

When then there is diversification in terms of who is in charge of decision making, the professionalization of medium sized family firm in a collectivist culture happens. Non-owner managers must have a significant proportion of decision making, which is a full-time salaried employee and not part of the owning family. Either they are individuals or as a collective, “non-owner managers also in a collectivist culture must have significant meritocratic values where they have undergone formal training and having an organized structure where they act as independent directors (Stewart, p.59, 2012)”. Meritocratic values such as achievement and aspiration could be limited to non-owner managers when the owner-managers do not distribute formal power. These meritocratic values increase the motivation of non-owner managers in decision making in the medium sized family firm. The professionalization of the medium sized family firm is similar to the professional management whereas this does not limit on the creation of general knowledge to implement a business strategy as argued by Stewart (p.61, 2012) but also to have a moral code that improves on the capability of the non-owner middle managers. “The professionalization of family firms is an excellent opportunity for non-owner managers to experience positive emotions.

It is also an avenue for non-owner managers to confirm their identity and have this activated because employing more non-owner middle managers shows a higher level of risks taking behaviour than those who do not (Stanley, p.1087, 2014).” Lastly, Stanley (2014) said that once the professionalization of the medium sized family firm happens, “medium sized family firms are expected to be more successful compared to medium sized non-family firms.” It is because medium sized family firms are more dependent as such non-owner managers employed in the medium sized family firm not just maximize shareholder wealth but also increases ethical decision making.

2.8. The ideal medium sized family firm of non-owner managers.

Aside from the need for professionalization for medium sized family firms for non-owner managers, I also want to focus on defining what an ideal medium sized family firm where non-owner managers play a significant role is. Davis (1996) said that this is important because we will know what the direction of the business will be and what is the right strategy in place. Ideal medium sized family firms as argued by Davis (p.199, 1996) is driven by “two or more members of the extended family driving the decision of the family firm depending on the role of the management or ownership rights and how will the non-owner middle managers contribute with regards with this strategy creation.”

Family businesses can either be small or large, depending on where the firm belongs. Today this is considered to be part of the small and medium enterprise (SME). The ideal medium sized family firm is where non-owner managers influence decision making in a small or medium enterprise. Davis (p. 203, 1996) “argued that the strength and weakness of the family business would come from how the non-owner managers’ decisions affect important decisions related to succession and nepotism and how will they adjust to this.” Davis (p. 200, 1996) mentioned that an ideal medium sized family firm is where “owner-managers only own at least 50% of the total shares while the balance 50% must belong to the public or where these shares are equivalent to the right to decide for non-owner managers.” An ideal medium sized family firm according to Davis is where the owner-managers distribute ownership and formal power from the shareholders to the non-owner managers across all levels of the organization because this will improve the sustainability of the business."

2.9. Chapter conclusion

The framework used in the literature review focused on the cognitive appraisal aspect that defines the emotions of non-owner managers and how this affects decision making. Furthermore, I also tackled the theory of identity and how does the identification process occur for non-owner managers. Aside from this, I also discussed how regret as a result of the decision made by the non-owner manager is taken care of using regret regulation strategies. Most importantly, I tackled how the professionalization of medium sized family firms takes place to achieve an ideal medium sized family firm in a collectivist culture. The literature used in this chapter reframed my thinking about the event that is happening in my organization. As such, I shared below the themes that are considered to be relevant to the DBA thesis I am writing.

2.9.1. Themes that are relevant to the DBA thesis

Leading from the literature that I have used in this DBA thesis, I have identified themes that are significant as I move forward for this research. These themes are classified as primary and supplementary themes. The central themes that I intend to use are the themes that reframe my thinking towards the method I plan to use in the succeeding chapter. As a capstone, I consolidated the authors of the various literature I used in this chapter. Please refer to table 2.9.1.1. As reference.

For example, I used Bee (2014) article concerning Astrachan (2008) who discussed Cognitive Appraisal as an approach about family firms. From these, I have identified the primary themes which are relevant in this DBA thesis. These fundamental themes include but not limited to 'effects, moods, attitudes, positive and negative emotions.' Also, as a result, the following supplementary themes came out from these literature reviews, and these are examples of specific emotions about the behaviour of non-owner managers as individuals in the family firm.

Aside from this, I consolidated the arguments of Stets (2000) into those of Dubin (1956) and Stanley (2010) who argued about the identity theory approach and social identity approach. These three scholars argued the identification of the individual, such as non-owner managers in the family depends on the role they do and their group identity as a result of their activation through membership. The confirmation of the non-owner manager's position into the family firm as suggested from the secondary themes only arises when there is 'depersonalization, self-efficacy, self-esteem, self-consistency and self-regulation.'

Another example that I intend to use, which I see has a value in this DBA thesis is in the context of decision making of non-owner managers in the family firm. Zona (2016) article is synonymous with Martin-Santana (2013) and Gomez-Mejia (2014) and as well as those from Raelin (2012) with regards to the need for non-owner managers to participate in decision making. It is only possible if the family firm portrays a collaborative environment regardless if the decisions non-owner managers are making are purely objective or could be subjective as well. They also presuppose that there is a need for the distribution of formal power throughout the family firm. When this happens, the group and individual identification arise. These primary themes are supported by the supplementary themes which focus on the different rooms in decision making and the tools needed that non-owner manager should have so that they can decide on the family firm.

Furthermore, the article of Zeelenberg (1996) about regret theory is related to the material of Bagger (2014), Bjalkebring (2016) and Labaki (2012) who discussed how regret is managed to employ regret regulation strategies. It is the reason why I have arrived at a point to use the primary themes on the identification of their roles based on what they need to do while working and externally which comprises their other positions in the family firm. It also presupposed the use of strategies such as ‘anticipating regret and forecasting regret’ to ensure that negative emotions, as discussed in this chapter, is minimized. These had led to the use of secondary themes which are considered as secondary strategies to mitigate regret such as ‘decision focused, alternative focused and feeling focused.’

These primary and secondary themes I have elaborated is crucial because it acts as a framework that reshapes my understanding about a specific event I have experienced first-hand in the family firm. These primary and secondary themes that came out from the literature is vital to the DBA thesis because it also suggests for an ideal method that tries to answer the research problem I have in my organisation. I also consider these as tools which I can use as an insider action researcher so that I can explain in a scholar-practitioner way the following events that I am about to partake in this DBA thesis.

2.9.1.1. Primary and Secondary Themes from the Literature Review

	Author	Literature	Primary Themes	Supplementary Themes
1	Lazarus & Folkman (1986)	Cognitive Appraisal	Primary Appraisal Secondary Appraisal Coping	Emotion Focused Coping, Secondary Appraisal, Emotional Embeddedness and Identification
2	Bee (2014) & Astrachan (2008)	Cognitive Appraisal and Family Firm Emotions	Effects Moods, Attitudes Positive Emotions Negative Emotions	Happy, Joy, Glad, Motivation, Driven Disappointment, Sadness, Guilt, Anger, Depression Congruencies and expectations Incongruencies and expectations
3	Stets (2000), Dubin (1956) Stanley (2010)	Identity Theory Social Identity Theory Central Life Interest	Role Identity Group Identity Activation of Identity	Depersonalization Self Efficacy, Self Esteem,

				Self-Consistency Self-Regulation
4	Zeelenberg (1996), Bagger (2014) Bjalkebring (2016) & Labaki (2012)	Regret Theory & Regret Regulation Strategies Decision Making Regret	Identification Feeling of Regret Anticipating Regret Forecasting Regret Positive cognitive emotions Negative cognitive emotions	Misfortunes, limitations, losses, mistakes "Decision Focused Alternative Focused Feeling Focused" Motivation, Culture, Attachment
5	Zona (2016), Raelin (2013) Martin-Santana (2014) Gomez-Mejia (2016)	Decision making of non-owner managers	Objective Decision making, Subjective Decision making Distribution of Formal Power Group and Individual Identification Systems and processes in place	Emotional Cohesion Cognitive Cohesion Open Communication One room house decision making The missing rooms decision making The messy rooms decision making
6	Stewart (2012) Stanley (2014)	Professionalization of Family Firms	Decision making diversification	Professional Management Meritocratic Values
7	Davis (1996)	Ideal family firm of non-owner managers	Decision making allocation 50% public ownership, 50% shareholders	Ownership distribution across all levels of the organisation Small Medium Enterprise (SME)

The primary themes mentioned in the table above are terms that will inform in the creation of the interview questions I intend to ask the participants of my DBA thesis. These codes, together with the result of my experience and pre-understanding reframed the questions. The codes intend to inform the questions, and these questions will be used to explore the phenomenon happening in the family firm I am researching. The secondary themes, on the other hand, will serve as a supplementary code that justifies the responses of the participants during the data collection process.

2.9.2. Guideline for identifying the emotions and behaviours of non-owner managers

This chapter elaborated several pieces of literature which will contribute to *reframing the methods* I intend to use for this DBA thesis in the succeeding chapter. Focusing on non-owner managers, I was able to identify how emotions affect the decision making of non-owner managers in the family firm. Identifying the emotions of the non-owner managers is achieved through engaging with them. It is the basis for the method I intend to use. I also understood how non-owner managers identity is confirmed and activated as part of social confirmation. One way to understand the behaviour of these non-owner managers is by observing them in the organization where they belong. Also, there is a need for me to consider this event happening as a phenomenon in the family firm. This observation occurs when I do a narrative analysis

(Horowitz, p.6, 2012) because this defines the identity and relationship conflict within a family firm. The use of the narrative analysis will also simplify the complexity of information using paraphrasing and storytelling what had happened that will complement the phenomenon happening where non-owner managers emotions, identity, behaviours and decisions are affected by their cognitive thinking as a person. Subjectivity, therefore, as argued by Horowitz (p.9, 2012) must be part of this analysis.

3. Methods and Methodology

3.1 Overview

The aim and nature of the research in this DBA thesis is to identify the emotions and behaviours of non-owner managers in a family-owned corporation in the Philippines. In the introduction section, I provided an in-depth overview of the problem I have in my organisation. The pre-understanding I have as a scholar-practitioner was reframed by the literature review in the second chapter. It has reframed and changed my mindset and outlook where I realized that there is a phenomenon happening in my organisation, and there is a need for an intended action to explore more on this further. Hence, I need to choose an ideal method that will best address the research problem I have. It is the reason why I intend to use an ideal method discussed in this chapter which will serve as a framework to address the research problem. This method will also answer the primary and sub-research questions I have re-enumerated below:

Research Question

To identify the emotions and behaviours of non-owner middle managers in the family-owned corporation in the Philippines.

Sub research questions

1) Which factors restrict non-owner managers in decision making and how can these factors be reduced?
2) How do non-owner managers behave when given the freedom and authority to participate in decision making?
3) How would greater participation in decision making reduce the rate of attrition of non-owner middle managers in the family-owned corporation in the Philippines?

Leading from the literature review, I mentioned that one way to focus on behaviours and emotions of non-owner managers of this DBA thesis is engaging myself as an owner-manager and as insider action researcher to the research participants who are non-owner managers in the family firm. It happens when I look into an action-inquiry approach in the context of a qualitative study investigating a particular phenomenon where there is a significant turnover of non-owner managers leaving the family firm. An action research approach is ideal in this thesis because it involves a single action research approach which has five stages. These five stages comprise the research design I intend to use for my DBA thesis that will identify the behaviours and emotions of non-owner managers. The literature discussed earlier will inform the methods and methodology of the action research methodology in this chapter. The full details of the themes and the literature from which they used in this method are in chapter four.

3.2 Research Design

I intend to use a qualitative ethnography phenomenological action research methodology in my doctoral research. The research design focuses on a single cycle of action research that involves five stages.

3.2.1 Phenomenology Philosophy

As an overview, the research focuses on the causes of high attrition rate of non-owner managers leaving the family firm. The statement itself considers being an event or a phenomenon that is happening in the family firm I am employed. This phenomenon Bresler (1996) said is a study of a lived experience because it is based on facts. It is an "important tool that has a temporal structure that is philosophical than methodological in nature (Bresler, 1996, p.11)." Being part of the research and engaging myself in the study is therefore necessary. It succeeds when I will directly observe and conduct interviews with these participants and ask them what they think feel and think. When I intend to do my observation of the said phenomena where non-owner managers are leaving the family firm, I will write these findings into a diary that will be part of the data collected for subsequent methods I plan to use.

The process of observing and engaging myself is necessary as a mean to confirm the phenomenon is happening that is part of the lived experience. This phenomenology philosophy supports the usage of semi-structured interviews and focuses on group discussions. Both the semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions will enable me to explore and have a profound experience that is meaningful to the lives of the research subjects and as an owner-manager acting as an insider action researcher (Bresler, 1996, p.11). It is also the reason why I intend to do a thematic analysis because this will serve as a basis for the pilot test project I plan to do.

3.2.2. Ethnographic Research

The phenomenology philosophy also supported the ethnographic method as an approach to my action research. This ethnography approach is a form of observation and interaction that understands and or assumes that the world is phenomenological. It is the reason why the phenomenology philosophy is related to the ethnographic research method because it provided the framework for my action research methodology. As an insider action researcher and owner-manager, I observed the events that are occurring in the organization where I am working. I came to believe that the high attrition rate of non-owner manager leaving the family firm presented the opportunity and interest to me that I needed as this could affect the stability of the family firm. This pre-understanding came from my first-hand experience and raised the flag or urgency.

Ethnographic research occurred when the data collected resulted from observation is written in a diary as long as the setting is natural without bias, and it happens directly. The feedback coming from the semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions should also be written in the diary or that act as a local knowledge since it came from direct interaction from them. It is also necessary that the interest of the participants is not affected (Krueger, 2001, p.52), and I am part of the research process as an owner-manager.

3.2.3. Qualitative study

I will use a qualitative study because "it is a kind of research that discusses the independent controlling regarding a set of individuals and how they participate or cooperate (Heron, 1997, p.9)." It is also a "social science which has cooperative inquiry in a wide-ranging science about any factors that the human condition which a group of researchers similar to what I am researching participate in the cultures they study that leads to cooperative inquiry (Heron, 1997, p.10.)."

3.3. Action Research

Aside from the use of the qualitative study, I intend to use an Action Research, which is a "research in action than research about action (Brannick, 2007, p.50)." Smith (2012, p.59) argued that action research is a "specific method where there is change using the intervention." It means that there is a pre-understanding about a specific given situation which are all part of the family firms' issues. Smith (2012, p.60) also said that "action research is not a collection of data but more into the data exploration." There is data exploration because there is direct engagement to the subjects of the research that involves interconnected stages. It is also an ideal method because it is "iterative, rigorous and has a collaborative process (Susmen, p.45, 1978)." I am going to use this in my DBA thesis because it is collaborative by nature, and the participants must work very closely to understand the problem. I also need to dwell and explore more the phenomenon happening supported by the literature I used earlier. In the case of this doctoral research, I intend to use five stages on a single action research cycle that will explain the phenomenon happening in the family firm as an insider action researcher.

3.3.1. Stage I: Observation Method

The first stage of the action research method I intend to use is through observation. I identified, diagnosed, and examined the phenomena that are taking place in a social group. I reviewed the efficiency and effectiveness of how decisions made in the family firm as a result of emotions through observation. When I used the observation method, I realized as part of my pre-understanding that non-owner managers are leaving the family firm. It is clear that from the literature used, non-owner managers leaving the family firm could be a result of their failure to meet their self-expectations as employees. It means that there is incongruency with regards to their goals or expectations that eventually leads to negative emotions (Bee, 2014) or because they are unable to cope up with a stressful situation that led them not to cope (Folkman, 1986). Another reason Stets (2000) mentioned that a non-owner manager leaves because they were unable to identify themselves as middle managers in the family firm. It is because either their identity was not activated, or they are required to do more which was not part of their role. It must be clear that non-owner middle managers make decisions depending on what they feel and think as a result of the environment that affects them individually in the family firm, as mentioned previously.

Using this as a framework, I have observed that these non-owner managers are leaving. After all, they feel that they are not motivated because they do not have the freedom to make decisions. I have written in my diary that some of them are quiet in some instances and that they isolate themselves from others. It had happened when another owner-manager asked one of them to do something which was not part of his role but felt forced to do so because he had no other choice. Also, I had noted in my diary that this person showed the same reaction when he did not have a chance to present some proposals, he intended to share with the board with regards to new strategies about business development. Coming from the results of these observations, my critical reflexivity was enhanced, and I identified that I needed to explore this phenomenon further, explicitly tackling the emotions of the non-owner managers. This observation supports the phenomenology and ethnography action research I used for this thesis since this method of observation involves the need to continue delving into this phenomenon. One way to do this is by doing a semi-structured interview and focus group discussions.

3.3.2. Stage II: Use of semi-structured interviews

The second stage of my action research methodology is through conducting semi-structured interviews. Based on the questions I created from the literature, and my first-hand experience as a -owner-manager, the semi-structured interviews will support the first stage of my action research methodology. Heron (p1997, p.5) mentioned "that the basis for the use of the semi-structured interviews come from both ontological and epistemological questions." The ontological questions suggested the use of both the subject and objective approach asking questions during data collection. The subjectivity questions support a participative inquiry strategy that entices participants to respond freely to the questions asked; on the other hand, objectivity ensures that there is a truth coming out from their responses. It means that there has to be a balance between the two to achieve a "shared culture, language, values, beliefs and norms (Heron, 1997, p.5)". Aside from using ontological questions, I also used epistemological questions in asking questions to the participants of the research. It must be "experiential, presentational, propositional and practical (Heron, 1997, p.4)." It is necessary that as an owner-manager doing this research in exploring more on the phenomenon taking place, I need to make sure that I will achieve action inquiry.

The use of the semi-structured interviews is ideal compared to a structured and unstructured interview because a structured interview will be too objective and could lead to issues because the questions that will be asked are sensitive as this involves emotions of individuals. By contrast, unstructured interviews could be too subjective, and answers or topics may no longer be relevant to the issues that ask. The questions I intend to ask in the semi-structured interviews have to be within the realm of the problem which I want to explore. It is for me to understand the phenomenon happening. Furthermore, the interview process could become too tedious, and it may no longer be relevant.

Using the semi-structured interviews, I collected the data by selecting a cohort of non-owner managers in the family business. To date, the family firm has 60 (sixty) non-owner managers in the company, and I used eleven (11) participants from this pool of non-owner middle managers. The reason behind this number is because this would suffice to represent the non-middle managers who came from different departments. These eleven (11) non-owner middle managers come from various departments of the company. Four (4) will be coming from the business development team, four (4) from operations, and three (3) from finance. Once I finalized the choice of participants for the semi-structured interviews, I scheduled an interview with them personally depending when they will be available.

The interview sessions conducted in a private place in the office where they can voice out and answer freely to the questions. I asked these participants questions without them having the feeling of being coerced into giving answers they may have felt I wanted to hear. Furthermore, when I used the semi-structured interview technique, I allowed the non-owner managers to dictate the direction of the questions and their corresponding answers pave the way to the flow of discussion. Caven (p. 43, 2012) argued that interviews are a “conceptualized form of exchange in terms of power, space, and identity that is necessary to understand a specific phenomenon such as a support to my pre-understanding with regards to non-owner managers leaving the family firm.” It is also necessary that the exchange of information must take place to achieve integration and learning (Ely, 2001) to create new knowledge.

The participants gave their time, attention, and focus on the interview in exchange for data. Since I, as an owner-manager, is the person going to collect the data, I made sure the relationship between myself as the interviewer and the interviewee were maintained. The questions come from the key topics identified in the literature. For example, in the literature, it was argued that when non-owner managers are unable to cope up with a stressful situation, this will lead to negative emotions, as explained by Folkman (1986). As such, using this as an idea, this concurred with my previous observations of the problem situation. Aside from this, Chell (2004) make it clear ‘that I need to use a critical incident technique to explore other aspects of the participants’ feedback such as what they feel and think about the particular question. Once I had completed the collecting the data using semi-structured interviews, I needed to analyze these data using thematic analysis so that I could explore more and dig deeper to confirm the responses of the same participants by using a focus group discussion.

3.3.3. Semi-Structured interview questions

The questions I intend to ask for the participants of this doctoral research came from the literature I used in the previous chapter. The literature provided me with a robust framework together with my first-hand experience as an owner-manager in the creation of the questions I intend to ask the non-owner managers during data collection chapter. It will enable me to explore the issues and problems about the phenomenon regarding the high attrition rate of non-owner managers leaving the family firm.

The role of the literature is critical as this will enable me to discover the phenomenon that is currently happening in the family firm I am researching. The literature is also necessary because it will inform the questions I intend to ask the participants of the Action Research study. Furthermore, the literature will help me to create codes from the thematic analysis according to Braun's (2008) method (see S3.3.5 p.44) . The codes that will come out of the data collected during the data analysis will be reverted to the literature to confirm if these codes are supported by the literature I used in chapter two. The initial interview questions were based upon the literature themes outlined as follows:

The **first question** I asked the participants is about the identity of the non-owner managers (Stets, 2000) and what are the responsibilities of owner-managers in decision making (Baron, 2015). I need to ask this question so that I will know where the owner-managers and non-owner managers will be involved in decision making in the family firm. This question is necessary because the non-owner managers will understand what their role in the family firm will be when owner-managers make decisions. I also need to ask this question so that I will know if the family firm is a collaborative one. It also enhances their critical reflexivity regarding their current employment in the family firm

The **second question** focused on the opinion of non-owner managers when owner-managers are making decisions in the family firm. This question focused on the activation of the non-owner manager's identity (Stets, 2000) where they will fit in the family firm and how they can contribute in return to manage incongruencies on their expectations if there are any. The activation of the identity relates to the identity theory and social identity theory because both argue that the non-owner managers belong to a specific group. These groups, such as being part of the business development department or either based on the role they need to perform as part of their identity in the family firm. It means that decision making must not be limited to the owner-managers alone. The response of the participants paves the way for the need for non-owner manager empowerment in the family firm.

The **third question** I asked the non-owner managers led me to ask questions regarding their feelings as a result of allowing them to make decisions on the organization. These emotions, as argued by Bee (2014), is essential to the outcome of the intentional choice of the individual as a result of the primary and secondary appraisal (Folkman, 1986). It also means that as non-owner managers, if they are allowed to make decisions, there is congruency with regards to what they expect in return as a result of their employment in the family firm.

The **fourth question** I asked the participants came from the identity and social identity theory concerning regret theory, where I asked about the positive and negative implications if non-owner managers have the authority to make decisions. It goes back to where would the non-owner managers fit into the organization based on their roles and responsibilities (Stets, 2000). It also serves as a basis for the non-owner managers' identity and how their identity is activated when they have the authority to make decisions. This question also focused on regret theory whereas I intend to identify if they will feel regret if they asked to make decisions as non-owner managers in the family firm and if there are any, what are the strategies that we can use to minimize regret.

The **last and fifth question** I asked the non-owner managers is about the empowerment of non-owner managers in making decisions. It is where there is direct involvement between owner-managers and non-owner managers happens. This empowerment of non-owner managers (Baron, 2015) to make decisions (De Massis, 2013) also makes the family firm an ideal one as a result of this professionalization (Stewart, 2012). It is also necessary for me to explore what will be the emotions of the non-owner managers when they are empowered to make decisions.

3.3.4. Stage III: Focus group discussions

The third stage of my action research was conducting the focus group discussion to the participants. Nyumba (p.21, 2017) stated that "focus group discussion is a technique where a researcher assembles a group of individuals to discuss a specific topic that tries to focus on the complex personal experiences, beliefs, perceptions, and attitudes of the participants utilizing moderated interaction." This method is related to participatory research since there is "active experimentation with focus groups even before the time of the academic, social sciences (Nyumba, p.21, 2017)." When I used this approach, it had to be collaborative between myself and the participants. Nyumba (p. 21. 2017) argued "that this focus group discussion is related to the use of semi-structured interviews that I did because they relate with regards to further exploration of the data collected." It also enables the same participants in the focus group discussion to be more reflexive since they will use critical reflection. The non-owner managers also realize as a result of their responses, that their answers are not necessarily unique or different from their fellow non-owner managers participating in the study. This stage is vital as it confirms that their responses are related to the phenomenon that I have observed before the study. The total number of participants I intend to use is eleven because Nyumba (p.20, 2017) argued: "that there should be at least ten participants to make the data significant to the research I am about to do."

During the focus group discussions, I will use a notebook for recording the responses of these participants and as well as an audio recorder using my cellular phone to ensure that my notes were accurate for data analysis. I planned to use a single focus group discussion that focuses on exploring the phenomenon that I want to investigate in my research. It will give me a source of rich data that came from their feedback since I acted as a facilitator among the respondents. Coghlan (2014) said that "the use of a research notebook is a meaningful method to develop reflective skills I intend to do in the research." It allows me to see and think about the situation happening in the family firm regarding non-owner managers leaving the family firm.

It also helps me as an insider research practitioner to see the possibilities of what I have experienced during the research process. Coghlan (2014, p.235) also argued that "these possibilities push scholar-practitioners such as me who is an owner-manager to integrate the information and experiences that help us understand the reasoning processes and forecasted behaviours and foresee experiences before trying them." The feedback from these participants is combined again using thematic analysis and coding. The notebook used as a way of recording events of dates and participants feedbacks interviewed. The notebook has an interpretative, self-evaluative rich data that includes the participant's first-hand experience, thoughts, emotions and feelings that confirms the study of the phenomenon happening in the family firm. The responses of every participant in the focus group discussion are essential since their responses confirm what they think and feel from one another about the questions asked of them. This discursive format enhances the respondent's critical reflexivity and reflection towards the questions asked from them regarding what is happening in the family firm.

3.3.5. Thematic analysis

Once I have collected the data coming from the participants of the focus group discussions, I intend to use a thematic analysis which will form the basis for the pilot study stage of the research. Braun (2008, p.77) discussed that "this thematic analysis is a flexible method of analysis and is important in the context of qualitative analysis because the approaches are diverse and complex." The thematic analysis derived upon a) selected topics from the literature review; b) sub-themes which emerged from the semi-structured interviews and c) further data arising from the focus group discussions. To support the design of the next Action Research stage (the pilot study), the analysis has reflected the lived experiences of the participants. It is based on the action because it "examines how events, realities, meanings, and experiences affect the range of discourses within a specific data set occurs (Braun, 2008, p.81)." The themes to be used for this thematic analysis is significant as long as they meet the following criteria: 1. they will come from multiple sources of data. And 2., there is consistency with regards to the themes that came from the participants. This consistency means there is a prevalence of the same feedback from the data set (participants) used.

I intend to use both the inductive and deductive approach (Braun, 2008, p.83) in the analysis of the participants of the data because it will give me as insider action researcher a holistic approach towards the themes emerged. Aside from both the inductive and deductive method, I also used both latent and essentialist thematic analysis (Braun, 2008, p85) from the data coming out from the eleven participants of the study. Before I proceed with the implementation of the action research project that will serve as a pilot test of my research, I need to make sure that I followed the step by step guidelines Braun (2008, p86) enumerated. It is to ensure that I can use the data correctly, and is a valid basis for the intended pilot test project. The step by step guidelines as mentioned by Braun (2008, p.87) includes "familiarizing myself with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing the themes that came out, defining and naming these themes and producing the report."

There is however a precaution with regards with the use of thematic analysis which Braun (p. 87) argued, "I need to ensure that there is proper data collected from the participants to minimize the gap and the analysis created must be enticing in a way that is congruent with the central idea of the questions asked from the semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions." Mismatch, therefore, has to be avoided at all costs if possible, between the data and analytic claims. Lastly, the interpretation of the data has to be in line with the literature I used since the intent of the data exploration using a qualitative method is to confirm the phenomenon and identify the underlying causes of non-owner managers leaving the family firm.

An excellent thematic analysis must include three important aspects which I need to use before the implementation of the action component of this study. It is the basis for me to proceed and to ensure that I will minimize the gap existent between theory and practice. An excellent thematic analysis must have the process of transcription, coding, analysis and the final or overall report. Braun (2008, p.95) argued “that the use of a thematic analysis provides methods of analysis that is applied rigorously to the data.”

3.3.5.1 Codes developed by the thematic analysis

Once I have accomplished the thematic analysis, the prevalent themes coming from the non-owner managers will be linked back to the literature I used in Chapter Two. This literature used in Chapter Two is about cognitive appraisal theory and emotions (Bee, 2014), the basis for the non-owner manager’s identity and activation in the context of identity and social identity theories (Stets, 2000), regret theory (Zeelenberg, 1996), non-owner managers decision making (Zona, 2016) (Baron, 2015) (De Massis, 2013) and professionalization of family firms (Stewart, 2012). Once accomplished, several draft codes created. These codes then are categorized into general codes which are the basis for the pilot test project. The codes must come from the most significant number of prevalent themes that have emerged from the responses of the non-owner managers during the interviews did. These developed codes used as an analysis for the pilot test project.

3.3.6. Stage IV: Implementation of the pilot test project

The fourth stage of the action research I intend to do is to conduct a pilot test project as a result of my thematic analysis and coding. Using the themes from my semi-structured interviews and focus group discussion (Braun, 2008), I intend to do the action component of this research. The implementation of the pilot test project has to be completed in one quarter or for three months from October of 2018 up to December of 2018. This pilot test will be a framework to serve as the basis for changing the management style of the owner-managers towards non-owner managers. It happens by giving them the freedom and authority to make decisions on their own as a result of their recommendation from their feedback and suggestions.

The scope of the implementation of the pilot test project will be limited to a specific department. As an insider action researcher, I will facilitate the implementation of this and ensure that there is minimal intervention from the side of other owner managers to make sure that it is in a natural bias-free environment. The actions which I intend to do as an owner-manager is to empower non-owner managers to make decisions within the scope of their responsibility. The non-owner manager can do this as a result of their identification to the family firm. The actions or decisions they could make includes accounts management (external relations), cost estimate creation, business planning and strategy creation, all of which has an intended result of business growth or sustainability.

The literature points to reasonable anticipation that, as a result of this action in the pilot test project, the non-owner managers will exhibit positive emotions and be motivated because of empowerment given to them. It anticipates that they will be able to make better decisions as a result of training and development. The non-owner managers expect to be motivated since the department where the pilot test project used exhibits a collaborative environment where they could voice out freely what they think and feel best for the family firm. Once a collaborative environment happens, non-owner managers expect to attain participatory decision making. However, the challenges I foresee from doing this pilot test project includes resistance from the non-owner managers to make decisions on their own due to risks and uncertainty as a result of their negative emotion (Bee, 2014). There is also a risk for non-owner managers not to cope up with a stressful situation, and their expectation could not be met (Folkman, 1986). To assess the impact of the pilot test project, I will observe their proactiveness and their initiative to provide feedback as a result of empowering them to make decisions and making the department concerned a collaborative one. Also, another way which I intend to use to assess the effects is from the responses these non-owner managers share in the suggestion boxes provided in the department concerned. A follow-up questionnaire after the pilot test project asked to review their experiences from taking part.

The actions, emotions and behaviours of the non-owner managers will be recorded in a research diary to ensure that any significant action, emotions and behaviours are written down. I also intend to take down notes of their feedback or responses which are part of the action component to make sure that both positive and negative responses recorded accurately. I must seek the approval of the management committee before the implementation of the pilot test in a specific department. As part of ethical considerations, once I have received authorization, I shall then inform the participants of the details of the pilot study.

3.3.7. Stage V: Follow up interviews

After three months of implementation of the pilot study, I intend to ask the participants what they feel and think about the action component of the research. It is to check if there has been a significant impact with regards to what they have achieved. I will ask them questions about what they feel and think about their self-identification within the family firm and how they coped (or not) with any stressful situations. The questions I intend to ask will come from my literature section to explore and confirm if they still experience any regret or any (positive or negative) emotions as a result of the action research. Any meaningful feedback will be taken down in the diary and recorded as part of the data collected. The follow-up interviews will also help me as an owner-manager to identify what will be working and what will not be working or as considered as opportunities. The feedback or responses will also act as a basis what I could do next after this DBA thesis is submitted.

3.4 Participant demographics

The demographics of the participants are focused on the non-owner managers of the family-owned business. As discussed, I used eleven (11) subjects or participants of the said research. These non-owner managers working with the family firm has a minimum of two years of work experience and a maximum of

10 years of work experience and have adopted the culture of the family firm. Given that they have been working in the family firm, the expectation is, they already know what the culture of the family firm is and how owner-managers make decisions. The participants will be coming from different departments of the family firm, namely Business Development, Operations and Finance. It is to ensure that there will be diversity with regards to their responses since their line of work is different from one another. The range of age given their experience is from 23 years to 33 years old. There is also a mix of male and female participants, as gender is not an issue. Before they get to participate in the research I intend to do; I need to seek their consent and approval if they are willing to be part of the research I plan to do. The non-owner managers are observed, asked questions from semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions and be part of the pilot test project. I will also discuss to them what is the objective and reason behind the action research I plan to do.

The location of the family firm where the participants will be involved in the data collection for this research is in Quezon City, Metro Manila; The Philippines. It is the headquarters of the family firm in the country and for the Asia Pacific region. The exact location will be on the second floor of the said office where the meeting rooms and board room is located. It has to be a comfortable and convenient environment where every participant could voice out freely what they feel and think about the questions I intend to ask them. The meeting rooms in advanced are reserved every after-work hour. These meeting rooms are also isolated and heavily tinted for privacy and confidentiality and so that these will not be visible from the outside when I intend to do my semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions.

3.5. Ethical considerations

Before I involve the participants in the research I intend to do, I need to make sure first that I will follow the ethical considerations in collecting data for this DBA thesis. The University of Liverpool Management School provided the guidelines for doctoral research. There are several steps which I did, and these steps are as follows:

1. I asked the eleven participants if they can be part of the research I intend to do in the family firm. I talked to them individually and discussed to them what will be the objective and reason behind the research I plan to do for the family firm as an owner-manager.
2. I asked them individually after they have agreed with the consent to sign the participant information sheet. Aside from the permission to the participants, I will also ask for a consent to the President of the family firm acting as a chief executive officer to permit me to do my doctoral research in the family firm so that I can start collecting data.
3. After the accomplished participant information sheet, I will fill up the ethics response form or the ERF and have this submitted to the ethics committee of the University of Liverpool. Dr Hanley will be approving this on behalf of the committee.

4. Once I have submitted the ethics response form to the ethics committee of the University, I need to accomplish the full ethics application form, where will I consolidate all the required forms for ethical approval. The full ethics application form is where the application for approval of a project involving human participants, human data or human material can be located. It is necessary since I am going to engage myself with individuals who are pertinent to the methods of my research. The full ethics application form states the declaration between myself as a researcher and doctoral tutor.

These ethical considerations are vital because it would give the participants of the research safety against any harm they could get when they get to participate in the research. It also upholds respect and dignity for the participants. Aside from the respect and dignity of the participants, I need to ensure that I have obtained full consent to ensure the privacy of the research. There is a need to consider the confidentiality of the participants to ensure their profile is with utmost privacy. There is also honesty, transparency and integrity on the intended research in the family firm. Bryman (p.69, 2007) argued that ‘these are all taken into consideration so that the non-owner manager’s employment in the family firm will not be at risk.’

3.6 Chapter summary

The chapter focused on the methods I intend to use for my DBA thesis for the succeeding chapter. It will pave the way like a guideline of what I intend to do for my single action research cycle. I have mentioned that I will use an action research methodology that will have five stages. These stages include the observation method, use of semi-structured interviews, conducting focus group discussions, implementation of the pilot test project, and lastly asking for feedback. I also discussed that I intend to use a thematic analysis which will serve the link and bridge between the themes that will emerge and the implementation of the proposed action for the fourth stage of the action research which is the pilot test.

In this chapter, I also discussed the questions created for the participants. These questions derived from the literature I shared in the previous chapter and my first-hand experience as an owner-manager. I also discussed that I complied and followed the ethical considerations for the participants of my research which will be approved by the University of Liverpool. I chose the qualitative phenomenological ethnographic action research method because it will support the research I intend to explore. I focused on exploring on the phenomenon happening in the family firm where there is a high attrition rate of non-owner managers leaving the family firm supported by the literature that provided the framework on the emotions, identity, decision making and coping of non-owner managers in the family firm.

4. The Action Research story

4.1. Overview

Coming from the framework of my methods which I discussed in the previous chapter, this chapter focuses on the action research cycle that involves five stages. As an insider action researcher, the use of action research is necessary to confirm and explore the phenomenon happening in my family firm. I have discussed that I used qualitative research focused on an ethnographic, phenomenological action research method. This research intends to identify the reasons for the emotions and behaviours of non-owner managers in the family-owned corporation in the Philippines. It is shown here in this chapter the result of observations, semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, implementation of the pilot test project and the feedback from the participants from the pilot test project.

4.2. Results of Action Research

Using a qualitative ethnographic, phenomenological action research method, I was able to accomplish a single cycle of action research method. It is necessary so that I can explore more on the phenomenon that was happening in the family firm. The single Action Research I did focus on five important stages. The result of the single Action Research are as follows:

4.2.1. Observation Results

As an owner-manager, I was observing the phenomenon where there has been a high attrition rate of non-owner managers leaving the family firm for the past eight years. I have been observing this since 2012, and I have understood that there is a need to identify the reasons why non-owner managers are leaving the family firm. It has supported my outlook that this is a valid phenomenon for research. When I was about to start my DBA thesis, I have written in my diary that non-owner managers show disappointment whenever they want to share their feedback to the owner-managers what they think is best for the family firm and not heard. One example as I have written in my diary is that:

> *'Dated August 23, 2017, when a business manager wants to respond to an account which he sees profitable to be part of the family firm which is a potential partner because they have outstanding credit standing in paying the services delivered to them. However, when he was about to suggest accepting this, it was neglected by the owner-managers. The owner-manager said that the owners are only allowed to make decisions regarding new accounts acquisition. After following him back to his cubicle, I have noticed that he was disappointed and exhibited a negative emotion of fear.'*

It is a clear example of my observation that when a non-owner manager wants to voice out what they think they could contribute to the family firm, they were not heard and led to negative emotions as a result of what had happened to him. This non-owner manager, after two weeks, submitted his resignation letter to the HR Director and left the family firm after thirty days. Another example I want to use is:

> *'Dated March 9, 2018, whereas the business director wants to create a proposal with regards to market planning and strategy for the family firm for the second quarter. However, when he has the time slot for him to present his proposal on March 16, the appointment was cancelled one day before and was no longer was rescheduled for another meeting. When the business director asked the reason why, the assistant of the owner-manager said that it was not urgent and there is no need for such a proposal. When I followed him, I saw from his reaction how disappointed he was as he created the proposal for a month waiting for the day when he is going to present.'*

On the same year, another incident happened,

> *'Dated August 3 of 2018, the management decided to reshuffle the non-owner managers in terms of the account they currently handle. Non-owner manager A needs to oversee what account B handles. In contrast, non-owner manager B needs to manage account A which was managed previously by manager A. The transition was swift to the point that the moment the transition on accounts management has to be accomplished in two days. Both non-owner managers were confused about the direction instructed to them since the accounts they manage are different from each other in terms of their nature. The former was from a fast-moving consumer goods while the latter is from the appliances sector.*
>
> *Given that the decision to transition this was quick and the timelines were very short, both non-owner managers were not sure if they will continue what was being asked from them to manage the new account or they will leave. After the transition in a matter of two days is accomplished, both non-owner managers were having a hard time coping up with the situation since they have to be reintroduced again to their new partners who are principal partners of the family firm. Several months have passed, and non-owner manager A still cannot cope up with the role he needs to do. As such, on February 6,*

2019, non-owner manager A tendered his resignation and left the company after the thirty days' notice grace period.'

Also,

'Dated November 3 of the same year when a non-owner manager wants to suggest to his immediate superior (the assistant vice president for operations) and who was an owner-manager regarding the implementation of new processes for recruitment and selection. When he suggested, he was ignored and advised that there is no need for it since it is not needed. When I saw what happened, I saw the reaction of the non-owner manager immediately, and I was sure that he was heartbroken about this. I think that from his facial reactions, he was extremely disappointed and demotivated. The following day, November 4, he never went to work for three days. The week after the incident, he tendered his resignation letter to the HR director.'

Using these examples for the first stage of my observation method, I have realized that these non-owner managers exhibit an emotion which is unacceptable for them when they are not allowed to voice out what they think is useful to the family firm. Also, these non-owner managers, based on my understanding as an insider action researcher, signifies a negative emotion because of the external environments affects their cognitive thinking. It also shows that when non-owner managers identity is not corresponding to what they expect to do based on their role in the family firm, these non-owner managers will have a hard time coping up with a stressful situation. There is a need to explore more on the result of my observation of these non-owner managers. One way to do this is by engaging myself with the research subjects. Engaging with them is needed to so that I can identify their feelings and emotions with regards to the family firm. Its best suits the phenomenology approach I am using for my doctoral research.

One way to confirm and explore more on the results from my observation is through semi-structured interviews with these non-owner managers. The semi-structured questions that I intend to ask these non-owner managers will be coming from my pre-understanding as an insider action researcher and as an owner-manager supported by my literature which has reframed my thinking about that particular situation.

4.2.2 Semi-structured interviews

As discussed, one way to explore and engage in the research subjects or participants is by direct interaction with them. The direct interaction happens through an action inquiry that promotes participatory action research. The basis for the semi-structured interviews came from my first-hand experience and as well from the observation I did before the interviews. The questions relate to the observation written in the diary to confirm the phenomenon taking place where there has been a high attrition rate of non-owner manager leaving the family firm. Aside from this, the literature I used in chapter two act as frameworks to construct the questions I will be asking from the participants. One example was when a non-owner manager was unable to cope up with the situation, and it led him to experience negative emotions.

These negative emotions led him to make decisions which are also not suitable for his employment in the family firm, such as filing a resignation letter. I want to know by asking the participants of the research how emotion will have a direct impact towards the outcome of the decision they make in the family firm and what are the factors that contribute to this. The basis for the question focused on the congruency between the goals and expectations of these non-owner managers. If there is incongruency such as the one he expects to receive as an employee, it leads to negative emotion. The basis for the questions came from the events recorded in the diary towards the exploration of the phenomenon that came from the answers to the five questions I will be asking from them.

The non-owner manager doing a task as he does not expect to do and which is not part of his role defeats the purpose of the identity theory, as stated in the diary. As such, he resigned from as a result of this incident. However, given that the role he needs to do was beyond his position, there is no self-verification and self-efficacy (Stets, 2000). As such, the activation of identity is not corresponding to what he intends to do. Coming from the literature used and from the observations I had, I have created five questions which I mean to ask the participants to explore more on the phenomenon and to understand narratively what is happening. The basis for the questions I asked the participations are from:

Q1. What is your opinion of owner-managers making decisions in the family firm?

This question came from Baron (2015) with regards to the identity of the non-owner managers and their responsibilities to make decisions in the family firm.

Q2. Do you think that decisions must be limited to the owner-managers alone even if this is there money?

This question came from the activation of the identity of non-owner managers in the family firm and how this identity could fit their role in a specific department as argued in the context of identity and social identity theory (Stets, 2000)

Q3. How would you feel if non-owner managers will be given a chance to make crucial decisions in the family-owned corporation?

This question focuses on exploring more on the emotions of the non-owner managers in the family firm and what are the implications of these emotions (Bee, 2014) as employees (Folkman, 1986).

Q4. Can you elaborate what are the positive and negative implications if non-owner managers are given the authority to make decisions in the family-owned business?

This question came from the identity and social identity theory (Stets, 2000) and its relation to regret theory and my experience as an owner-manager. It is also a question of how to relate this to the individual's roles and responsibilities as non-owner managers in the family firm and if they have experienced any regret from the decisions they made.

Q5. What do you think any significant result if owner-managers empower non-owner managers to make decisions in the family-owned business?

This question focuses on decision making (Zona, 2016) and empowerment of non-owner managers (Martin-Santana, 2014) in the family firm. It also tries to explore if the empowerment I did leads to the professionalization of family firm (Stewart, 2012) that makes it an ideal place to work for non-owner managers.

4.2.2.1. Duration of semi-structured interviews

I did the semi-structured interviews for the eleven participants. Depending on the non-owner managers' response and feedback, the duration of interviews did last for about thirty minutes up to one hour. To ensure that no one could see the interview was done from the outside, the interviews held individually in the meeting room on the second floor—also, reservation to the meeting rooms done in advance.

4.2.3. Coding results and patterns (themes from semi-structured interviews)

One way to do the coding coming from the responses of the participants is by employing thematic analysis (Braun, 2008). The themes of the literature related to the responses of the participants from the interviews as discussed. A pattern is repetitive, regular, or consistent occurrences of action/data that appear more than twice. "At a basic level, pattern concerns the relation between unity and multiplicity. A pattern suggests a multiplicity of elements gathered into the unity of a particular arrangement" (Stenner, 2014, p. 136).

Alvesson and Kärreman (2011) said that a "caution that a narrow focus on codification for pattern making with qualitative data can oversimplify the analytic process and hamper rich theory development." By this, they refer to data anomalies, i.e. statements which might lead the researcher in unexpected directions. I took the advice of these authors by reflecting upon my codes, trying to ensure that they, together with the ensuing patterns which emerged, presented an accurate representation of meaning. A code in qualitative inquiry is most often a word or short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing, and evocative attribute for a portion of language-based or visual data. "The data can consist of interview transcripts, participant observation field notes, journals, documents, literature, artefacts, photographs, video, websites, e-mail correspondence, and so on" as Saldana, (2016, p.3) mentioned.

Liamputtong & Ezzy (2005, pp. 270–3) "recommend formatting pages of data into three columns rather than two. The first and widest column contains the data themselves – interview transcripts, field notes, etc. The second column contains space for preliminary code notes and jottings, while the third column lists the final codes." Table 4.2.4. (below) employs Liamputtong & Ezzy's (2005) recommendations. To construct the discussion in the following chapter, I used both the First and Second Level codes in the table below:

4.2.4. Semi structured interviews responses

Table: 4.2.4.1. Transcript and Coding of Responses

Q1: What is your opinion of owner managers making decisions in the family owned business?		
Transcript of response	**First level Coding** **Segmentation & summarization**	**Second level coding** **Application of concept**
Respondent 1 "I think owner managers are making decisions in the family business because they want to protect the reputation and stability of the company. The middle managers are only given the authority to decide as long as they are authorized to make decisions. Most of the decisions regarding accounts management and operations must be given to the non-owner middle managers. Decisions related, however, with costings or budget management is a responsibility of the management committee or owner managers."	Do not trust middle managers to maintain reputation or stability of a firm. Authority to make decisions sporadically given Imperative that operational decisions be devolved to middle managers Strategic decisions are the responsibility of owners	**[Trust]** Use of Power Inconsistency in practices Collaboration Improvement of the company **[Collaboration]** No change needed **[authority]**

Respondent 2 "In the current setup of the organization, most if not all of the decisions made is coming from the owner managers. However, it is right because the decisions they make cannot be justified since they are not exposed to the field or a certain specific department. Participatory decision making varies from one department to the other. For an example, in the food and beverage account, she is managing, they are allowed to make decisions, but in the account where I belong, I am not allowed to make decisions because my immediate superior does not permit me to allow make decisions. I always wait for his advice before I make decisions since he is the direct superior, which happens to be the owner manager."	Sometimes owner managers lack specific knowledge to make decisions (middle managers know better) Participation in DM depends upon immediate superior Adapts behaviour to fit with the regime Does not use own initiative	Improvement of the company **[Organizational Change]** Inconsistency in practices – Power **[Decision Making]** Passivity, motivation Scared, regret, demotivated **[Emotions]**
Respondent 3 "It is challenging based on my experience from handling an account, specifically if you are handling a bundling project. I think we are not empowered to make decisions. If ever that there is a chance to actually participate in decision making, conflict arises given that we are not heard regarding our comments or suggestions, we want to share to them. For an example, when client A aligned with me that they need to do outside of the scope of services we agreed to do, I wanted to step back from the said request and ask	Challenging in anxiety-provoking provoking – challenging & exciting Not empowered Participate in decision making Confusion Not heard or listened to by the owner managers	**[Trust]** **[Regret]** **[Collaboration]** **[Regret, demotivation]**

for more time. However, it would not be possible given that our suggestions will not be heard and listened by the owner managers. The owner managers must listen to our feedback and suggestions because we know the fundamentals and timelines in executing a project."	Desire to provide feedback	**[Collaboration]**
Respondent 4 "Most of the decisions are coming from the owner managers themselves. They do not think what could happen to their employees and their **welfare** because their decisions only what matters the most. The issue at hand is fraction among employees. It happens when there is a separation between team one and team two inside the family firm. **Not everybody is cooperating** from one another. It then affects the welfare of the employees because they feel that they are not united, and their morale will be affected at the end of the day."	Participate in decision making Lack of collaboration Lack of unity	Lack of empowerment of non-owner managers **[Empowerment]** Dialogues are not happening between owner managers and non-owner managers The issue of social identity and their role in the family firm. **[Collaboration]**
Respondent 5 "It is okay that the decisions of the organization are coming from the owners themselves, but this should not always be the case given that non-owner managers have to make decisions in the family business as well. The situation is a case to case basis depending on the situation. Some decisions made must not be limited to the owner managers given that we are being paid to do our work and we need to do our part by **contributing to**	The issue on the empowerment of non-owner managers Participate in decision making	Decisions coming from the owner managers Decentralization of formal power to non-owner managers **[Decision Making]**

decisions which we think are relevant to the organization. What is the point of compensating us if we just keep on receiving orders and implementing them? We also have ideas and make sure that these ideas are translated into actions.”		
Respondent 6 “It is not going to be an issue for me as a non-owner middle manager when the owner managers make decisions for the family owned business. What I just need to do is I need to be as transparent as possible to my superior so that we can achieve the objectives of the account I am managing.”	Transparency between non-owner managers and owner managers	Trust between owner managers and non-owner managers. **[Trust]**
Respondent 7 “Decision making must be on a case to case. The owner managers themselves must make final decisions as a result. However even if this is the case, we (as non-owner middle managers) must be able to make decisions as well depending on what scale and scope we are asked to do. We need to least **share with them** what we feel and think about a particular issue.”	Participate in decision making by the non-owner managers in the family firm. Being open with the owner managers on the decisions that non-owner managers makes	Non-owner managers to make decisions **[Decision Making]** **[Transparency]**
Respondent 8 “As an HR Director, when decisions are limited to the owner managers, it could lead to different negative complications in the organization. When most of the decisions come from the owner managers (80-90% of the time), the	The issue on approval of decisions coming from the non-owner managers.	Bureaucracy and decentralization of power [**Power]**

remaining 10% will not be sufficient for non-owner middle managers decisions to have a significant impact to the family firm. Also, it takes a lot of time before the decision gets approved. It makes the process a tedious one. This is not a healthy environment where we are **not empowered** because there is so much bureaucracy taking place. Also, there will be **less accountability** from our side because most decisions are coming from the stakeholders. For us to improve the family firm, there is no need to change the system which has been in place for 17 years because this will be pointless. What business owners should do is **empower us** to make decisions on our own without being coerced, forcing us or scaring us to do the same. What the owner managers could do is to maintain our **accountability** from the decision we make."	Limitation on decision making of non-owner managers Permit the non-owner managers to make decisions and held accountable as a result of these decisions	Empowerment of non-owner managers in the family firm. **[Empowerment]** **[Accountability]**
Respondent 9 "In all honesty, this is okay if this is the case. It is fine with me if they are making the decisions on our behalf because it is their right. It is however suggested that there are cases where **we want to speak up**, but we are not able to do so."	Opportunity to voice out what they think is best for the family firm	Lack of opportunity to speak up in the family firm. **[Empowerment]**
Respondent 10 "I think it is possible for owners to make **a decision** and run their own business so they can always be on top of everything."	Owner manager decision making	Decisions are limited to shareholders. **[Decision Making]**

Respondent 11 For me, owners managing their family business is not a bad idea. The proliferation of family owned businesses in our country and abroad simply shows that running one's owned family business has been successful for some time now. If this is done correctly, it could lead to success."	Owner manager decision making	Decisions are limited to shareholders. **[Decision Making]**

Q2: Do you think that even if the owner managers money is at stake, do you believe that decisions must be limited to them alone?		
Transcript of response	**First level Coding Segmentation & summarization**	**Second level coding Application of concept**
Respondent 1 "No, decision making has to be on a case to case basis. When non-owner middle managers make decisions as well, even if it is the money of the owners, we will be **held accountable** for the decisions made."	Lack of participation to make decisions Lack of trust to non-owner managers to make decisions	The issue of empowerment on non-owner managers **[Empowerment]** Trust issues **[Trust]**
Respondent 2 "I think it's a no. It will be ideal if we ask **feedback from the middle managers** or non-owner managers. This will, in return, will lead to a better decision. This is not, however, happening in the whole organization of the family owned business given that there are two owners. Sometimes, the decisions of these two non-owner managers are **conflicting from one another,** and we do not know who to follow. The	Feedback coming from the non-owner managers are not heard. Conflict of decisions and confusion authority and power	Lack of collaboration between owner managers and non-owner managers **[Collaboration]** Roles and Responsibilities delegation on roles **[Decision making]**

contradicting decision affects the entire direction of the family firm even if this decision is limited to a particular department alone.”		
Respondent 3 “Eventually, it would still be the non-owner middle managers who is going to execute the project. What is needed is **constant communication** between the owner managers and the middle managers at all time if possible.”	Role of non-owner managers in the family firm. Communication issues	Emphasis on the identity and social identity approach of non-owner managers **[Communication]**
Respondent 4 “Employees who are **non-owner managers also has opinions which I think are better than the opinions of some owner managers** of the family owned business. One example is the opinion with regards to the direction of the organization of the business. What is needed is open communication between the owner managers and non-owner managers. If the discussion is related to operations or executions, decisions must be heard from the side of the non-owner managers. Still, if the decisions are related to finance or anything related to costings, the sole decision must be coming from the owner managers. In addition to this, our ideas and opinions are feasible for the direction of the organization. Still, these decisions are **not given value** because the owner managers **ignore** them most of the time. I think that **feedback** must be given to us, which are all necessary	Non-owner managers opinions or suggestions are better than owner managers due to objectivity. Communication between owner managers and non-owner managers (open dialogues) Lack of support from the owner managers	Trust on the decisions of non-owner managers in the family firm. **[Trust]** Lack of collaboration between owner managers and non-owner managers **[Collaboration]** Demotivation and not valued. **[Motivation]**

for the future of the company. The biggest part why middle managers are leaving the company is because there are issues on compensation and management of the family owned business. They are **not motivated** and is **demoralized** because there is no support from the owner managers. It simply means that they are **not valued.** For an example, before I joined the current department right now and was asked to do a different role, I felt like I was valued and appreciated because it means that I was doing the right thing. However, it does not happen anymore today because there was **no recognition** made as a result of my contribution did to the family firm.”		
Respondent 5 “It is no given that we have an organizational structure in place. The owner managers cannot make the decisions alone given that they have a lot of issues that they need to address. Middle managers are separated by work aside from **power and authority.** If all the decisions are limited to the owners, what is the essence of having someone in the position such as ourselves if we do not have a say in the company.”	Limitation on the decisions made by the owner managers Distribution of power and authority across the family firm.	Empowerment of non-owner managers to make decisions **[Empowerment]**
Respondent 6 “No, because as a middle manager, we are given **the position to handle concerns** and think of ways how we can	Emphasizing on the decisions of non-owner managers	Decision making of non-owner managers **[Decision making]**

manage the account. What the middle managers need to do however is to make sure that we **align** with the owner managers anything about to the major decisions we intend to do to ensure that this will lead to stability of the account we are handling."	Alignment with the owners on decisions made	Collaboration between owner managers and non-owner managers **[Collaboration]**
Respondent 7 "As discussed, the final decisions must come from them. The owner managers, however, must provide the basic tools to the non-owner managers to maximize our performance in the family owned business. These tools include **training** that will be the basis to enhance our decision-making skills. These non-owner managers, in return, must at least provide a draft proposal to the owner managers, but the final decisions must come from the latter. I would suggest, however, that, there must be **open communication** in how decisions are made. It is my recommendation because it is not happening in the family firm. After all, there is resistance from the owner managers to listen from us."	Decisions as long as this is not risky must not be limited to owner managers, The need for coaching and training for non-owner managers to make decisions Open communication and dialogues between all parties concerned.	Empowerment of non-owner managers decision making **[Empowerment]** Training and Development **[Training]** **[Collaboration]**
Respondent 8 "I think it's a no. The owner manager must take into consideration what the non-owner middle manager **suggests.** Delegation of power must be in place, and little power must be allocated to owner managers anything relates to the operations or execution. In running a business, it is ideal that the non-owner	Suggestions made by the non-owner managers must be heard and given value Opportunity to level up (career progression) using learning.	Collaboration by means using from non-owner managers **[Collaboration]** **[Training and Development]**

middle managers are empowered to make decisions. These non-owner middle managers must not have a feeling of a leash tied to them every time they are going to decide because this will limit their **chance to grow** in the company."		
Respondent 9 "Yes, they have the right to make decisions on their own, but there are, certain decisions which should not be constrained to them. The owner managers should be **open to us** as non-owner middle managers. It is necessary because we non-owner managers are in charge of taking care of the account and we know the nitty gritty details that we need to do as a requirement to our customers. We experience it first-hand, therefore, the decision that I Intends to make is for the best for the account. I will do everything on the decisions I make that leads to undesirable consequences. There is a limitation, however, with regards to this because decisions that are considered as contained and sensitive must be limited to owner managers."	Owner managers becoming transparent in the direction of the business in cases of decision making. Level of decision making, or scope of decisions made.	Transparency and trust of owner managers to non-owner managers **[Transparency]** **[Decision making]**
Respondent 10 It would be better if they consult other financial advisers to make them aware of the possible options they have on the table. Aside from this, they can also ask us for **feedback** with regards to our opinions or suggestions if they are	Consultation to third party agents or other sources of opinions aside from the owner managers.	Feedback from non-owner managers **[Collaboration]**

uncertain about issues that arise from the company.	Open dialogues employing feedback between parties concerned.	
Respondent 11 "For me, owners managing their family business is not a bad idea. The proliferation of family owned businesses in our country and abroad simply shows that running one's owned family business has been successful for some time now. If this is done properly, it could lead to success."	Trust on the owner managers to make decisions	Limitation of decisions to non-owner managers due to trust **[Trust]**

Q3: How would you feel if non-owner managers will be given the given a chance to make important decisions in the family owned corporation?		
Transcript of response	**First level Coding Segmentation & summarization**	**Second level coding Application of concept**
Respondent 1 "When the owner managers gave a chance to non-owner managers to make decisions, the owner managers **trust** you. The non-owner managers have a good reputation from the owner managers. But on the contrary, if you do not have a good reputation, then they do **not trust you,** or you are, not yet capable of deciding.	When non-owner managers are given a chance to make decisions, it means that they are important	Trust to the non-owner managers. **[Trust]**
Respondent 2 "As a non-owner middle manager, it would be a great solution when owner managers of the company support non-owner middle managers decisions that would boost their **morale and**	Support coming from the owner managers when non-owner managers make decisions.	Owner managers give the opportunity for non-owner managers to make decisions. **[Decision making]**

motivation as employees of the family firm. It is ideal for working altogether; however, it is not happening in the current situation in the company."	Non-owner managers initiative to make decisions.	Positive emotions. **[Emotions]**
Respondent 3 "I am **scared** when we are given a chance to decide in the family owned business. I am afraid of the risks that came out as a result of the decisions we make will not turn out to be okay. What is needed is an agreement between the non-owner middle managers and the owner managers of the family owned business. For example, the policy of the family firm is, whenever there is no purchase order, we will not deliver the services being asked. However, some decisions made by the owner managers are contrary to this. The owner managers do not sometimes give special treatment to accounts which they directly manage. Once these owner managers then found out that the execution did not push through because the non-owner middle managers did not comply because they do not have a purchase order, the owner managers will get **angry** to us because they did not consider any exemptions to the case. The **burden and accountability** will now be in the hands of the non-owner middle managers, which is not in a good position."	Non-owner managers exhibit a negative emotion or uncertainty when they decide on the family firm. Communication between the owner managers and non-owner managers does not happen due to negative emotions.	Demotivation due to uncertainties to make decisions. **[Decision Making]** Afraid to collaborate because they are afraid **[Emotions]**

Respondent 4 "If ever that non-owner managers are allowed to make decisions in the family owned business, I would feel **delighted, pleased and very honoured** for the first time. Since I joined this company, I wanted to do contribute back to the family firm as an employee. Given a chance, I would take this as a challenge, and I will be **accountable** for this as a result of my decision since we are part of the family firms decision making. It will also mean that the owner managers will **trust** us as middle managers. This is not happening; however, in the current situation. When there is an opportunity to speak up regarding a particular decision, we are not heard because there is **resistance** from the owner managers to listen to our sentiments."	Non-owner managers experience a feeling of happiness and honour. The non-owner managers will be accountable for the decisions they make The feeling of trust because they are allowed to make decisions Resistance to be heard as non-owner managers	Positive emotions **[Emotions]** **[Accountability]** The owner managers gave trust to non-owner managers. **[Trust]** Lack of collaboration **[Collaboration]**
Respondent 5 "I would be **proud** because the owners can **trust us** because the tasks are given to us. If I am in the position of the owners, I do not need to guide them because I can see that they can do what they need to do depending, of course on their **ability** as individuals. If they give us their **trust,** all operational executions will be accomplished and what we need to do is only update the owner managers what we have accomplished. The non-owner managers have to be **independent** in certain cases."	Non-owner managers exhibit a positive emotion as a result of letting them make decisions. Giving the non-owner managers to execute tasks as a result of the decisions made.	Positive emotion as a result of empowerment **[Emotions]** **[Trust]**

Respondent 6 "Other decisions, such as people management must be given to non-owner middle managers. This is basic decisions that are considered to be basic, and we expect the owner managers to give this to us. It is essential given that we deal with those who work for us (front liners and those who are on the field) and those who are owner managers. It also depends on what kind of people management we need to do as middle managers. **Transparency** in making decisions between the front liners and the owner managers is also important."	Giving the non-owner managers to make decisions that are not risky. Guidance must be provided. The need for transparency between owner managers and non-owner managers	Empowerment of non-owner managers to make decisions which have limitations **[Empowerment]** **[Transparency]**
Respondent 7 "It will be a welcome change for us since we will have the chance the manage our account independently based on our capacity and capability. However, this opportunity must have limitations. Decisions about monetary issues must be coursed through the owner managers because it is considered to be a sensible decision that also affect business sustainability, and we want to protect the money that the stakeholders or owners are investing. What we can act upon are decisions that are related to accounts management or operations. This includes material deployments for events or man fill rate compliance for these accounts."	Delegation of authority to non-owner managers to make decisions and an opportunity to share their feedback Limitation of decisions by non-owner managers that do not cover risky choices as long as within their scope for roles.	Empowerment of non-owner managers which has limitations. **[Empowerment]** Decision making and identity approach. **[Decision Making]**

Respondent 8 "I would feel **great** as a non-owner middle manager if I am given a chance to make important decisions in the family business. I would feel great because of the **trust** given to us. As a non-owner middle manager, we will feel pressure (but this is a good kind of pressure). The non-owner middle manager will not only function or work to please the owners (or protect their capital or investment,) but they will also work because this will give us a **chance to grow** personally and professionally while working in the family owned business. These non-owner middle managers then will have more **accountability** since they are the one making the decision."	Non-owner managers exhibit positive emotions such as happiness, trust, accountability and an opportunity to grow Being accountable as a result of trust given to them as non-owner managers.	Positive emotions as a result of the empowerment of non-owner managers. **[Emotions]** **[Accountability]**
Respondent 9 "I will feel **honoured** and should be **responsible** for whatever decision I am making. It is my accountability as a non-owner manager. I would feel honour because I would feel that the owner **trust** me in running my role in the family firm in that account. It is flattering to me, and this would **boost my morale** in return."	Non-owner managers exhibit a positive emotion when making decisions such as honour, trust and accountability. The motivation also increases in return.	Decision making that leads to positive emotions (trust) **[Emotions]** Motivation **[Motivation]**
Respondent 10 "I feel that it's fine because not all owners are **capable of making critical decisions** for the company. Also, some non-owner managers are more knowledgeable about other operations in the company."	Decision making capacity of owner managers	Training provided to make critical decisions. **[Decision Making]**

Respondent 11 "I don't see anything wrong with it, as long as the non-owner managers are fully **qualified** to make such an important decision."	Qualifications of the non-owner managers in making decisions	Training and development **[Qualification]**

Q4: Can you elaborate what are the positive and negative implications if non-owner managers are given the authority to make decisions in the family owned business?		
Transcript of response	**First level Coding Segmentation & summarization**	**Second level coding Application of concept**
Respondent 1 "The positive implication is that this will give a chance that the company owners **trust** you. Given that this is a family corporation, the negative implication is when the owner managers do not agree with the decision you made because they are not convinced that you are capable of making decisions in the organization since you are not an owner manager."	Non-owner managers are trusted when they are allowed to make decisions Disagreement to the decisions made by the non-owner managers	Lack of opportunity to make decisions **[Empowerment]** Conflict due to lack of trust **[Trust]**
Respondent 2 "Partly yes because it is the money of the shareholders which are at stake, however, they should ask **feedback from other non-owner middle managers** because their decisions are also valuable and necessary to achieve the goals of the organizations."	Owner managers should ask non-owner managers with regards to what they think about a specific situation that needs interaction. (feedback)	Collaboration between owner managers and non-owner managers. **[Collaboration]**
Respondent 3 "It is a twofold approach. It will have a positive implication given that decision		

making will be swift, and the middle managers will have **ownership or control** to the said project since the decisions came from us. In other words, we have the right to say what best suites the decision. When the non-owner managers are **empowered** to make a decision, the positive implication is that most of the decisions are good for the company since the intentions are clear. However, the negative implication is when these non-owner middle managers will signify a behaviour of making a good impression, this does not translate to action and results that are insignificant given that decisions made are drastic."	Making decisions will be efficient as a result of the distribution of power to non-owner managers Non-owner managers behaviour in making decisions	Empowerment of non-owner managers to make decisions **[Empowerment]** Negative behaviour **[Emotions]**
Respondent 4 "On a positive note, I would feel **very happy** and **honoured** to decide for the family firm. For a very long time, I wanted to recommend and suggest, but I was not given a chance to do so. On the negative side, I am not yet sure if my initiative will be supported by the owner managers given that the decisions, I make does not guarantee 100% success. What happens in the current set up is, whoever escalated an issue first to the owner managers, the first person who escalated this to the owner managers stands correct. It is **unfair for me** as a non-owner manager. Because of this incident, miscommunication arises, and conflict arises."	Non-owner managers feel happy and honoured when they make decisions, but this does not happen. Lack of support coming from the owner managers. Lack of equality on the treatment of decisions made.	Positive emotion as a result of making decisions **[Decision making]** Owner managers do not value non-owner managers. **[Emotions]**

Respondent 5 "On the positive side, if there is going to be a new project, all decisions but not all (such as budget requests among others) will be efficient **since it is faster**. There will be less bureaucracy, and the process will be less tedious. What the owner managers need to do is only to validate the decisions and made by the non-owner managers. Once the decision made is confirmed from the owner managers, I think what we need to do is to execute these plans based on what was agreed upon. On the negative aspect, when middle managers decisions are not validated and double checked, this could lead to an issue where the decisions we made could lead to **failure.** There must be proper **intervention and guidance** coming from the owner managers to us."	Decision making is more efficient—clear delegation of non-owner managers in making decisions. Need for guidance and coaching before making decisions	Empowerment of non-owner managers **[Empowerment]** Training and Development **[Training]**
Respondent 6 "As a non-owner middle manager, the decisions made will be faster and quicker in terms of implementing the decisions since this will pave the way for new ideas, innovations and suggestions on the positive side. The **credit** will also be given back to us as non-owner middle managers from the decisions we made. On the contrary, if the owner manager, who is our direct superior is not in the office, the process will become tedious. Some important decisions such as budget approval and executions will be	Efficient decision-making results in new ideas Gives credit to those who are deserved to receive when they can make decisions effectively.	Decentralization that leads to empowerment of non-owner managers. **[Power]** Rewards and recognition for non-owner managers. [**Rewards]**

on hold until they have approved on this. There will be no sense of urgency.”		
Respondent 7 “On the positive side, the process will be quicker and faster, and this will allow middle managers to develop and act based on their position and scope of responsibility. This will also be a good **training ground** for them to grow in the company in the medium or long term. On the contrary, when these decisions are given to the non-owner middle managers, these non-owners middle manager could become hardheaded and think that the decisions we make are the ones which are always correct. What I am implying is, the non-owner middle managers must be **held responsible** with any decisions they are making in the organization if they are **empowered** by the owner managers to make decisions.”	Efficient decision making and opportunity for non-owner managers to do what they need to do based on their role that leads to learning. Non-owner manager behaviour when there is an opportunity to make decisions	**[Decision making]** Accountability and empowerment of non-owner managers in decision making using training **[Training]**
Respondent 8 “As discussed, and mentioned previously, one of the positive things which can happen when they make decisions in the family business is this will give more **authority** to non-owner middle managers who then gives them room for more growth that eventually leads to better performance. If we are given a chance to make decisions, we will eventually stay. Not in all case that non-owner managers are after the value of their money or the benefits they could get but more into **how**	Opportunity for non-owner managers to make decisions that will enable them to grow. Non-owner managers opinions or suggestions are not heard	Empowerment and delegation of powers **[Empowerment]** Lack of Collaboration between owner managers and non-owner managers. **[Collaboration]**

their opinions and suggestions are valued."		
Respondent 9 "Positive implications? Decisions making will be faster because there is no need for further approval which makes the process longer. If there are issues arises, it will be addressed immediately on our level. In general, I think non- owner managers such as myself would stay with the company given that we are given the control and authority at our level. We feel that there is **trust.**	Quicker decision making and less bureaucracy that reduces the time for approval.	Owner managers trust non-owner managers. **[Trust]**
Negative? If there is one decision which did not course through and directly impacted the company, it is my **accountability,** and I could be removed from the organization. The owner managers misinterpret some decisions, and these decisions might lead to my removal. The non-owner managers could become **hardheaded** as well depending on the power and authority given to us. We can suggest ways of how to resolve the issue and align this with the owner manager so that they coincide on what they want to achieve together."	The behaviour of non-owner managers in making decisions given a chance to decide	Abuse of power when non-owner managers are allowed to make decisions. **[Accountability]**
Respondent 10 Positive: No emotions involved. They can make decisions objectively based on the interest of the many.	Objective decision making of non-owner managers	Performance-based decision making **[Objectivity]**

Contrary: Other people may take advantage of you or make decisions for their benefit.	Taking advantage to make decisions	
Respondent 11 "Positive: Non-owner managers can be **objective** in making important decisions regarding what is good for the business Negative: These managers have little to lose compared to the owners; therefore, in some instances, they tend to make too many **risky decisions."**	Objective decision making is a vital driver for business Uncertainties on decisions	Performance based decision making (KPI) **[Objectivity]** Decisions that affect the business. **[Decision Making]**

Q5: What do you think any significant result if owner managers empower non-owner managers to make decisions in the family owned business?		
Transcript of response	**First level Coding Segmentation & summarization**	**Second level coding Application of concept**
Respondent 1 "If the owner managers will not permit the non-owner middle managers to make decisions, the middle managers will feel **demotivated**. Regardless of their capability, it will appear that as middle managers, they are not considered as competent and qualified when they are not allowed to make decisions in the family firm. This will give them a mindset to look for other better opportunities outside of the family firm. But if they will provide us with a chance to be part of the decision-making process, this means that they **trust** us. The non-owner middle manager, however, must be keen on details when this happens. There must be a basis for every decision made. This opportunity to participate in decision	Lack of motivation for non-owner managers to make decisions in the family firm. Better opportunities outside the family firm due to lack of opportunity and salary issues.	Non-owner managers decision making and motivation **[Motivation]** Opportunities and better compensation **[Compensation and Rewards]**

making must be maximized. It must not be overused as the reputation of the company might be at stake that could lead to wrong representation to the owner managers and eventually misalignment of goals. Also, aside from the responses the R1 shared, he mentioned that there are "four other specific reasons why non-owner middle managers are leaving the family firm" and these reasons are as follows:	The owner managers do not believe in what the non-owner managers could do.	Lack of trust has resulted in a lack of empowerment. **[Trust]**
1. **The compensation** package of the non-owner managers in the family firm is relatively lower in comparison to other companies which offer a higher salary on the same position they hold. In the context of the Filipino culture, the higher the job title, the higher the salary he is expected to receive.	Issues on compensation and benefits for non-owner managers	Salary issues are given to the non-owner managers – **[Compensation]**
2. The **benefits** that they get from other companies which include but not limited to incentives, KPI and transportation expenses are higher compared to the family firm they are working. 3. Flexibility on work hours. In this family firm, he said that it is fixed. 4. **Training opportunities** (seminars and conventions) where they could get a certificate is limited."	Training opportunities.	Training and development **[Training]**
Respondent 2 "One of the positive aspects, when we are empowered to make decisions in this company, is that these decisions will not	The benefit of empowering non-owner managers to make decisions	Empowerment of non-owner managers **[Empowerment]**

be biased. Also, it will benefit the middle managers and their owners. On the negative side, when the non-owner middle managers are allowed to make decisions as well, they could **abuse the power** given to them. I think the owner managers can only **trust** us as non-owner middle managers when they are done assessing our performance in the company and if we can contribute in the past or did something significant. Decisions are also continuously changing because of innovation. I think as a non-owner middle manager; the owners must see what we can do something relevant and what could work. When non-owner middle managers then are allowed to contribute to decision making, I think that there is going to be a change in the organization. I am in the shoes of the owner manager; it is also lovely to get feedback from these non-owner managers.	Disadvantages when non-owner managers are making decisions. Trust Believe what the non-owner managers could do in the family firm.	Non-owner managers behaviour when empowered to make decisions [**Accountability]** **[Trust]** Opportunity to be heard. **[Collaboration]**
Aside from these responses, there are additional comments with regards to the possible reasons why non-owner middle managers are leaving on the side note, as mentioned by R2, and these are as follows: 1. **Lack of growth or progression** (for an example, after the BDD role, what could be the next after this position given that the following post is owners or management committee?)	Lack of direction	Lack of opportunities for non-owner managers employed in the family firm **[Growth]**

2. **Compensation.** She said that not everyone is fairly compensated depending on the role they need to do 3. **Confidentiality.** The salaries of the people are also broadcasted and not kept with privacy. 4. **Work allocation** among employees of the family business is not equal. This means that some employees are overworked, and other employees are just browsing on social media most of the time when in the office."	Salary issues Privacy Delegation of roles and responsibilities to non-owner managers.	The need to adjust the compensation of non-owner managers **[Compensation]** Lack of transparency Identity of non-owner managers and their roles in the family firm **[Trust]**
Respondent 3 "The **empowerment** of non-owner middle managers to make decisions could lead for owner managers experience feeling of **regret**. It happens when owner managers cannot allow any non-owner middle managers to make decisions given that there are different kinds of non-owner managers. Some are capable of making decisions, while others are not. Using this as an example, I need to make sure that I will contribute something significant to the company before I make a decision. I am also **afraid** to experience a state of **failure** from the decisions made. I will also feel **motivated and valued** when I am empowered to make decisions in the family owned business."	Distribution of formal power to non-owner managers Qualifications to make decisions in the family firm Decision making and motivation	Empowerment of non-owner managers to make decisions without hesitation **[Empowerment]** Right skills that non-owner manager should have in decision making **[Training]** Motivation as a result of non-owner manager decision making. **[Decision making]**
Respondent 4 "The owner manager must not experience any regret if they trust the	Feeling of regret to make decisions	**[Regret]**

non-owner managers to make decisions. If they feel **regret** that they are losing money, it is considered to be part of the risk as a result of the direction. If a non-owner middle manager has an idea, **she has to speak up and voice it out,** and she has to say it freely without hesitation. What happens is, how would you decide if someone reports that a non-owner manager is about to make a decision ahead of everyone else?	Owner managers allowing non-owner managers to speak up what they think is best for the family firm without experiencing any regret.	Free and open communication without hesitations **[Collaboration]**
Why would the non-owner managers decide the first place if it would lead to the family firm losing money? It only that the owner managers **do not trust** us if they do not give us a chance to speak up what is right for the family firm. One of the essential things that can happen is when there is the integration of ideas coming from the non-owner managers and owner managers; it entails **collaboration.** This collaboration is an exchange of ideas that help us non-owner managers to learn new things coming from new ideas. When this happens, I would be **thrilled and will be very happy** if there is an opportunity that this is going to happen."	Owner managers do not trust the non-owner managers because the latter are not empowered to make decisions Collaboration between owner managers and non-owner managers	**[Trust]** **[Collaboration]**
Respondent 5 "I feel like I am the owner of the business since we are **empowered** to make decisions on our own. There will be ownership, and we will have a sense of accountability and validation. I feel like I am running the company even if I am just a non-owner middle manager. Decisions	Entitlement of non-owner managers to make decisions Ownership and accountability	Empowerment of non-owner managers in decision making **[Empowerment]** **[Accountability]**

related to execution or operations must be given to us. There are also other factors to consider why the motivation of non-owner managers is also affected. This includes compensation and recognition properly given to them."	Compensation and rewards	Adjustments on salaries **[Compensation]**
Respondent 6 "This would be of great opportunity when we are given a chance to make decisions in the family firm because it means that the owner managers give us their **trust and honour**. They give us their trust and honour because we can execute the tasks and responsibility based on what is expected from us. Aside from these, there are also additional reasons why middle managers are leaving the company and these includes but not limited to "low compensation to non-owner managers". When there is **low compensation,** other companies tend to pirate them who offers higher pay or better **compensation package** for the same position." I would also like to share that there are no issues with regards to the environment we are working with because there is **free and open communication** between the non-owner middle managers and the owner managers. This is the first time that I voiced out my opinions regarding a particular issue given that some managers were unable to voice out their concerns regarding a specific problem. Non-owner managers also need support in decision making, given that the	Opportunity to make decisions that led to trust and honour of non-owner managers. Low compensation led to non-owner managers leaving the family firm Non-owner managers and owner managers lack communication within the family firm.	As a result of the opportunity to make decisions, they felt trusted. **[Trust]** Adjustment on the compensation of non-owner managers **[Compensation]** Collaboration is not taking place between the owner managers and non-owner managers.

business is continuously expanding for the past few years. One of the issues in the current organization of the family firm is that there are so many superiors who are owner managers managing the family business. Also, when you are working in service-based corporation, you have two essential superiors. These superiors whom we report to are the owner managers and the clients whom we deal with on a day to day requirements. As such, our responsibility is divided."		**[Collaboration]**
Respondent 7 "Most if not all of the results will be positive, given that non-owner middle managers are managing most of the corporations today. When the decision making is given to non-owner middle managers, this will show how they can manage their account on their own with little intervention or supervision from the owners themselves. They are given the independence to manage their business. The owner managers should not interfere with the non-owner middle managers in the decision making as much as possible not unless if these decisions could impact the stability of the business. Some decisions also become too personal because these decisions are derived from their feelings which could affect the organization in the short or long term. There are also several reasons why non-owner middle managers are leaving the company.	The opportunity to make a decision is not given to non-owner managers. Limitation of owner managers intervention in decision making related to operations	Empowerment of non-owner managers to make decisions without hesitations. **[Empowerment]** Decision making limitations and guidelines. **[Decision making]**

These reasons include opportunities offered to them by those employees who left the company already and was inviting them to join them because the new company they are working with currently offers a better compensation package. Once the non-owner manager who is still working with the family firm heard about this and was able to receive the offer, they intend to resign and leave because it is an opportunity for them to look for greener Pasteur. It would also mean to enhance their career opportunity as the next direction for them.”	Opportunities outside of the family firm who offers a better compensation package	Compensation issues of non-owner managers **[Compensation]**
Respondent 8 “Yes. As an HR director, one of the reasons why we are not empowered to make decisions was because of the **regret** of letting us make decisions and the consequences of the choices we are making. What happens in the family owned business is, the owners are willing to gamble on their own choices instead of the decisions of others such as the non-owner middle managers because they think that it is their own money they spent. When middle managers then are given a chance to make decisions, we will **anticipate creative freedom**. This creative freedom will come from new and innovative ways of how to grow and retain the business. One of the risks, however, when non-owner middle managers are making the decision is	Owner managers are having a feeling of regret when they empower non-owner managers. Decisions from non-owner managers led to creative freedom (innovation) Disadvantages of non-owner managers, whereas they could	Negative emotion if non-owner managers do not make decisions. **[Regret]** New ideas came from the decisions of the non-owner managers- Integration and learning. **[Collaboration]** The behaviour of non-owner managers when

that we could backfire the owner managers, most importantly, that the industry has been up and running for almost 17 years. These decisions might be relatively new to the company and eventually could not work. I would feel **great** because I can voice out my	take this decision against the owner managers.	they are empowered to make decisions. **[Decision making issues]**
opinions or ideas within the company. These ideas might finally help the company. Aside from this, middle managers such as myself are not growing inside the company because of issues regarding stability. For example, if a non-owner middle manager made a	Empowerment of non-owner managers led to new ideas that help the family firm	Positive emotion as a result of non-owner manager empowerment. **[Emotions]**
mistake with regards to a cost estimate or a simple project presentation, they are always accountable and **not given a chance to explain their opportunities**. Aside from this, their consistent compensation package is also an issue with regards to their tenure ship. In other cases, middle managers then become	Lack of opportunities for non-owner managers. No sense of direction or guidance from the owner managers.	**[Training and development]**
complacent, which are understandable on the first two years of their employment with the family owned business since they are still learning the ropes. We, non-owner middle managers then will reach a climax stage where they feel demoralized because they are still receiving the same salary after how many years. It means that they are not	The salaries of the non-owner managers are too low that led to demotivation of non-owner manager leaving the family firm.	Need to make adjustments on the salaries of the non-owner managers. [**Compensation]**
going up the ladder anymore and they are nowhere to go. Compensation will always be a factor depending on the personal goals of the non-owner middle manager staying in the company. **Opportunity and growth** are also some	There is a limitation with regards to opportunity and growth	Career progression **[Opportunities]**

factors to consider why non-owner middle managers are leaving the family owned business."		
Respondent 9 "I think, as an individual, it would boost the **productivity of** the non-owner manager. They will not just be compliant or dependent on the decision of the owner manager. Their work ethic will be enhanced, as well. But I would say, it is hard to make decisions and there should always be limitations. There should be constant alignment between the non-owner manager and the owner manager using **interaction**. Issues related to budget and costs are always brought into the table because these are issues which we do not want to be involved in. If I am on my own, I can immediately request the budget, but I have to make alignments first to the owner managers. If there is a comparison between the family owned business and public listed companies based on my experience, the owner managers should not always be informed about every small decision I intend to make because it would entail micro-management. Also, one of the repercussions, when this happens, is that the owner manager may immediately reject the plan we intend to do. It would not pave the way for us to learn from the decisions we make, and there will be no **empowerment.** When this happens, non-owner managers will	The productivity and work ethic increase when non-owner managers are given a chance to make decisions Interaction between owner managers and non-owner managers. Scope of decision making for non-owner managers in the family firm. Lack of interaction led to no empowerment	Result of non-owner managers making the decisions **[Decision making]** **[Collaboration]** Guidelines on decision making for non-owner managers. **[Decision making]** Lack of collaboration **[Empowerment]**

always feel **fear** whenever they want to make a decision."		
Respondent 10 "The results will depend on how **efficient and competent** managers are. It means that they need to have **adequate training** before participating in decision making."	The results of the decisions come from how qualified the non-owner managers are Need for coaching and training.	Lack of skills in making decisions of non-owner managers Need for training and development **[Training]**
Respondent 11 "As previously stated, **fully trained and adequately capable** non-owner managers can bring in the necessary skills in the day-to-day running of the business. It also includes making important decisions that are within their respective **qualifications and skills set."**	The role of training that enhances the skill set of the non-owner managers for decision making	Training will enhance the skills of non-owner managers in decision making. **[Training]**

As a result of the semi-structured interviews, I based the responses of the eleven participants to identify the themes I intended to explore again in the focus group discussions. The codes that came out from the non-owner managers' responses on the semi-structured interviews using thematic analysis are as follows:

Table 4.2.4.2. Clustering of sub themes into general themes

Respondent	Q1 Themes	Q2 Themes	Q3 Themes	Q4 Themes	Q5 Themes
R1	Trust Collaboration Authority	Empowerment Trust	Trust	Empowerment Trust	Motivation Compensation Trust Training
R2	Organizational Change Decision Making Emotions	Collaboration Decision Making	Decision making Emotions	Collaboration	Empowerment Accountability Trust Collaboration Growth Decision Making

R3	Trust Regret Collaboration	Communication	Decision making Emotions	Empowerment Emotions	Empowerment training Decision Making
R4	Empowerment Collaboration	Trust Collaboration Decision Making	Emotions Accountability Trust Collaboration	Decision Making Emotions	Regret Collaboration trust
R5	Decision Making	Empowerment	Emotions Trust	Empowerment Training	Empowerment Accountability Compensation
R6	Trust	Decision Making Collaboration	Empowerment Transparency	Power Rewards	Trust Compensation Collaboration
R7	Transparency Decision Making	Empowerment Training Collaboration	Empowerment Decision making	Decision Making Training	Empowerment Decision Making Compensation
R8	Power Empowerment Accountability	Collaboration Training	Emotions Accountability	Empowerment Collaboration	Regret Collaboration Decision Making Emotions Compensation Training
R9	Empowerment	Transparency Decision Making	Emotions Motivations	Trust Accountability	Decision Making Collaboration Empowerment
R10	Decision Making	Collaboration	Decision Making	Objectivity	training
R11	Decision Making	Trust	Qualifications	Decision Making Objectivity	Training

The table mentioned above is the themes that came out from the eleven responses of the non-owner managers from the five questions I asked them individually. For an example, the theme that has emerged from R1 (Respondent 1) from the first question I asked him regarding his opinion of owner-managers making decisions in the family firm is the authority (Zona, 2016). The theme authority came out because his response is about giving the non-owner managers formal power to make decisions in the family firm (Astrachan, 2008).

Another example is the answer of R7 (Respondent 7) on my second question to him that “even if owner-managers money at stake, does he think that owner-managers decision must be limited to them?” The theme that came out from his response is training because non-owner managers such as himself can only decide if there is ample training given to them.

The table above is categorized altogether, coming from the literature I used. For example, the words from the responses of the participants, such as “guidance in making decisions” and “skills” are part of the theme: Training. Another example is the words “opportunity to make decisions and speak up to share their suggestions” is part of the Theme: Empowerment.

Similarly, the words of ‘great’, honoured’, ‘regret’ and ‘being happy’ are categorized into the ‘Emotions’ theme, as mentioned by Bee (2014) cognitive appraisal. ‘Communication’ and ‘feedback’ are words clustered together as collaboration for participatory decision making for non-owner managers. ‘Power, ownership and authority’ have words coming from the participants have categorized altogether as the empowerment of non-owner managers.

Table 4.2.4.3. Prevalence of themes:

Themes	Prevalence	Ranking
Decision Making	23	1
Empowerment	20	2
Collaboration	18	3
Trust	18	4
Emotions	13	5
Training	11	6
Compensation	8	7
Accountability	6	8

The table (4.2.4.3.) shows the prevalence of the themes that came out from the semi-structured interviews, which were linked back to the literature used in the previous chapter. It shows that the most significant number of themes that came out was decision making which has a prevalence of twenty-three. It is followed by empowerment which has a prevalence of twenty. It is then followed by Collaboration and Trust with a prevalence of eighteen. It is followed by emotions which has a prevalence of thirteen. Training then is the next theme that came out, which has a prevalence of eleven. The last two themes that came out are compensation which has a prevalence of eight and then followed by accountability which has a prevalence of six. The prevalence of the themes enumerated above is essential as a reference if the same themes will come out from the responses of these participants in the next stage of this action research, the focus group discussions. One way to achieve this is by exploring this further using the same participants in the semi-structured interviews.

4.3. Stage III. Focus group discussions

The themes that had emerged as a result of the coding process from the second stage of action research are used to explore further in the context of focus group discussions. These themes (decision making, empowerment, collaboration, trust, emotions, training, compensation and accountability) were used as a reference on the three essential substages of the focus group discussions.

4.3.1 Focus group discussion results

Following the semi-structured interviews, I conducted focus groups with the same participants. I used the prevalence themes that have emerged from the semi structured interviews to create the questions used during the three phases of the focus group discussions: *the probing, follow up and exit questions*. "These three phases are all necessary for exploring the themes in greater depth and to help each participant improve their critical reflexivity and reflection about the phenomenon taking place in the family firm" as discussed by Nyumba (2018).

4.3.2. The first phase (Probing Questions)

How familiar are you with how decision making made in the family-owned business?

Eight (8) out of eleven (11) participants said that it is acceptable for them when the shareholders make decisions since they have the authority and the right to decide because it is their money which they invested in for this business. However, they said that the decisions the owner manager makes should be focused on monetary reasons alone or depending on the urgency in a given situation. **(Theme: Authority)**

Q1. How often do you participate in decision making as a non-owner middle manager in the family-owned business?

> *"Seven (7) out of eleven (11) participants mentioned that in a case to case basis, we can make suggestions or get to participate once we have the plan and possible results of the* ***decisions*** *made.* **(Theme: Decision Making).** *Some of them were also involved in decision making when it is related to personnel concerns. Some responded that it depends on how big the account they are handling. There is a need to consider also the scope of the decisions we intend to make. Also, most of us get to participate in cases when they are asked to create proposals, suggestions and recommendations. One respondent mentioned that it depends on who their immediate superior is and the right timing to voice out their suggestion* **(Theme: Fear).** *Before, she was unable to voice out her suggestions and can make a decision, but now she can do so already."*

Q2. What is your opinion when owner-managers make decisions in the family-owned business?

They mentioned that when an owner-manager makes a decision, it cannot be altered, void, changed or revised since its final and must be executed. **(Theme: Regret)**

> ***"R1*** *said that "the decisions coming from the* ***owner-managers must be implemented*** *or carried on depending on what the owner says."* ***(*Theme: Feedback)**
>
> ***R2*** *said that the decisions of the owner-managers involve emotions such as a burst of tempers. It happens in cases of loses and issues on the interest of the business financially****.*** **(Theme: Fear)**
>
> ***R3*** *argued, "that there should be a venue where they can voice out their suggestions depending on the right timing and the mood of the owner-managers themselves****."*** **(Theme: Afraid)**
>
> ***R4*** *mentioned that when the owner-manager makes a decision, it is already* ***final, and it ends there****. There is no opportunity to rebut or change this since it came from the owners of the family firm***. (Theme: Decision Making)**
>
> ***R5*** *and* ***R6*** *respondents said that "It is their power and right to make a decision when it comes to business decisions therefore what we can only do is* ***agree with them*** *because we think it is what is best for the company***." (Theme: Decision Making)**
>
> ***R7*** *mentioned, "that this is a two-fold approach because even if it is the right of the owner-manager, the owner-managers must give us a chance as non-owner middle managers to decide so that we will have importance and value as well in the company."* **(Theme: Trust)"**

4.3.3. Second Phase (Follow up questions)

Q1. What are your emotions when you are allowed to participate in decision making in the family-owned business?

The follow-up questions focused on emotions to the decision made by the non-owner managers.

R1** said that "they would feel **great** and **happy** when they permit to make decisions on the family business because they can decide regardless of whether or not the outcome will be good or bad." (Theme: Happy**)*

***R2** and **R3** mentioned, "that they are **empowered** since the owners have given them their trust to participate in decision making, even if there is a hint or feeling of **nervousness** in making one decision." The decisions I am making, as he mentioned, have an impact on all employees as an HR head in the family firm.* **(Theme: Empowerment)**

***R4** "mentioned that she would feel **happy** because the owner-managers recognized her capabilities. They will feel **challenged** as he needs to analyze things (pros and the cons) before a decision made." He will also feel privileged because the owner-manager **valued his worth**.* **(Theme: Happy)**

***R5** mentioned "that they feel they are **acknowledged** and **trusted** and had a chance to voice out their opinions and suggestions in the family firm.* **(Theme: Trust)**

***R6** said that she would feel **happy** because we are allowed to decide and execute what she sees correct or proper in terms of execution."* **(Theme: Happy)**

***R7** mentioned about "**honour** and **pride** as the owner-manager trusts him." If they trust us, this means that we are valued as an employee in the company. It means that they believe in our capacity as a leader and a middle manager.* **(Theme: Trust)**

***R8** mentioned that "he will feel **happy, proud**, and **motivated** because we ensure that we provide quality services to our clients and our company.* **(Theme: Proud)**

***R9** argued, "that it is a **privilege** for them to be given a chance and feel **happy** that the management trusts me that I can do it."* **(Theme: Rewards)**

Q2. What is your opinion when you receive higher compensation and receive extrinsic rewards from the decisions you made?

Most of the respondent's feedback came from mixed emotions.

> *"**R1** mentioned that "he would feel **fulfilled** because this will boost our morale and be more competitive in the workplace. On the contrary, there will be competition, politics, and culture because everyone wants acceptable compensation."* ***(*Theme: Compensation*)***
>
> ***R2** said that "a higher compensation means that this will **boost our morale** of everyone in the non-owner middle manager, but It must be apparent. However, high compensation is just an extrinsic reward".* ***(*Theme: Compensation)**
>
> ***R3** said that "these employees are **valued** these days because they are appreciated and recognized by their superiors."* ***(*Theme: Trust*)***
>
> ***R4** and **R5** mentioned, "that, the owner-managers feel his **value**, and it will help him contribute with his expenses for his family." (*Theme: Trust***)***
>
> ***R6** said that would "boost his **morale** and become more **proactive** and be careful in making decisions."* ***(*Theme: Proud*)***
>
> ***R7** mentioned that owner-managers should let the non-owner middle managers receive **acceptable compensation**. Still, they need to let us first make decisions not just limited to operations and business development but also on strategic decision making.* ***(*Theme: Compensation*)***
>
> ***R8** responded that this would gain **trust** from the management if they make a decision that should not lead to failure.* **(Theme: Trust*)"***

Q3. What do you think the reason why owner-managers must give you the chance to make decisions in the family-owned business?

The third question I asked the eleven (11) participants during the focus group discussion is about the opportunity if non-owner middle managers given a chance to make decisions in the family firm.

"R1** said that "as a non-owner middle manager, I know the processes of the account or project I am handling. Therefore, the owner-managers must give us an opportunity to share our ideas which is integrated into the decision of the owner managers for the company. If this happens, we can give our commitment to the decision we made. It will boost our morale because they (owners) considered our decisions that are best for the company." (Theme: Empowerment*)**

R2** argued that "they have fresh ideas that improve the business aspects on a personal level. Also, he said that he wanted to be **involved in decision making** and learn from the people who run the company (owners) because they want to have a successful organization."* ***(*Theme: Decision making*)

R3** mentioned that if this happens, "this will **ease the tension** between the client and the middle managers. It also minimizes the issues regarding budget requests and liquidations."* ***(*Theme: Regret*)

R4** said, "if ever that they are allowed to make a decision, and this decision is a failure, they will **grow** from this failure and **learn**."* ***(*Theme: Accountability*)

***R5** and **R6** said that "if they have experienced failure as a result of the opportunity given to them to make a decision, they still need guidance from the owner-managers so that they can make their own decisions."* ***(*Theme: Guidance)**

R7** argued that the owner-managers must let the non-owner middle managers decide because they have their own **experience** and **knowledge** on the job they need to do.* **(Theme: Decision making*)

R8** said that before the non-owner middle managers make decisions, they need to know the operational nitty-gritty and the things that need to do. They cannot just make decisions without having a sufficient basis in everything that we do. (**Theme: Accountability*)***

*Also, **R9** said that "if they trust you, they should give us the **chance to make decisions** and I agree that these decisions will help us grow whether we* *succeed or not because it is our experience that will help us conquer these challenges." (***Theme: Trust***)"*

Q4. How can you feel that you are given a chance to grow in the company, and an opportunity is given to you by the owner-managers to work?

I asked the respondents again with regards to how would they feel if they are given a chance to grow in the company and an opportunity to work. Their response is as follows:

> ***R1*** *said, "this is going to be a* ***challenge*** *for them because they are allowed to make a decision. However, R1 suggested to the owner managers to let non-owner middle managers attend* ***pieces of training or seminars*** *that will enable them to grow. As such, these seminars will equip them to make better decisions in the family firm.* ***(*Theme: Training*)***
>
> ***R2*** *said that "every day will then be a learning experience when they have a chance to grow in the family firm. (***Theme: Opportunity***)*
>
> ***R3*** *argued that they would feel* ***happy and privileged*** *because whatever their achievements are, it will reflect on them being part of the family firm. Also, if they have a chance to grow in the company by the owner-managers, this is an opportunity to them because it means they entrusted, and this will make them feel important and acknowledged on the efforts they did to the family business.* ***(*Theme: Happy*)***
>
> ***R4*** *mentioned that "this would be great if this happens since every person has to grow in the company.* ***(*Theme: Opportunity*)***
>
> ***R5*** *mentioned that he would feel* ***blessed*** *and* ***determined*** *to do every task and responsibility given to them. The owner-managers needs to see our* ***courage*** *and* ***determination*** *because this means that we are optimistic that we will have a career path in the company. If this will happen, the non-owner middle managers will become* ***proud*** *because their capabilities are put into the test as decision makers in the family firm.* ***(*Theme: Happy*)***

4.3.4. Third Phase (Exit Questions)

Q1. What would you recommend to the owner-managers in making decisions in the family firm? Is there anything else you would like to add?

The last question I asked in the focus group discussion focused on an approach that focused on the recommendation to the owner-managers in terms of decision making. The majority of the respondents (eight out of eleven participants) mentioned that **there is a need to have a standard or guidelines for decision making to their non-owner managers.** They said that

> *"When there is a proper standard in decision making, it brings a more professional and corporate approach to the family firm. It will eliminate in return decisions of non-owner managers to leave the family firm as a result of their demotivation and stress. It is again as a result of the negative emotion they have experienced because of cognitive appraisal*. **(Theme: Suggestions)"**

Some respondents mentioned that the suggestions and proposals of the non-owner managers must be heard. Therefore, the owner-managers should allow them to explain the full idea of how they arrived on decisions, opinions, and recommendations presented. The non-owner middle managers must give a chance to **participate** in decision making that will let them become a better non-owner middle manager. In return, it would be beneficial to the company soon. **(Theme: Decision Making)**

> ***R7*** *said that the "decisions of the non-owner middle managers must be* ***integrated*** *into the decisions of the owner-managers This is done utilizing* ***listening and participation*** *in decision making." (***Theme: Suggestions***)*

> ***R8*** *made an interesting feedback, that when a decision made by the non-owner middle manager became a* ***failure,*** *"a proper* ***investigation*** *made by creating a process in decision making on the side of the owner-managers whereas jumping into conclusions without going through a thorough process avoided." (***Theme: Fear***).*

> ***R5*** *agreed to what the previous respondent said. He said "that owner-managers must have more* ***support*** *on decisions made by non-owner managers. He furthermore argued that non-owner managers must have analytical and reasonable thinking in making decisions*." **(Theme: Trust)**

***R8** said "that owner-managers must be **considerate** in every mistake and lapse on the decisions made by the non-owner managers. Same to the previous respondent, he concurred that there should be a due process and proper investigation has to take place."* **(Theme: Regret)**

R9** finally shared his sentiments and said that "a **motivationa**l programmer for successful decision making is beneficial to the company." The last respondent **decided not to share** his views regarding the said topic. (Theme: Fear)**

4.3.5. Thematic analysis

4.3.5.1. Themes from the three phases of focus group discussion

	First Phase Probing Questions		Second Phase Follow up Questions				Third Phase Exit Questions
	Q1	**Q2**	**Q1**	**Q2**	**Q3**	**Q4**	**Q1**
Theme 1	Authority	Regret	Happy	Compensation	Empowerment	Training	Suggestions
Theme 2	Decision making	Feedback	Empowerment	Compensation	Decision making	Opportunity	Decision making
Theme 3	Fear	Fear	Happy	Trust	Regret	Happy	Suggestions
Theme 4		Afraid	Trust	Trust	Accountability	Opportunity	Fear
Theme 5		Decision making	Happy	Proud	Guidance	Happy	Trust
Theme 6		Trust	Proud	Compensation	Decision making		Regret
Theme 7			Proud	Trust	Accountability		Fear
Theme 8			Rewards		Trust		

As a result of the focus group discussion method I did, enumerated above are the responses of the non-owner managers using the first, second and third phases in a thematic map. Braun (2008) said that "this thematic map shows the codes that came out from the responses of the participants coming from the three phases of the focus group discussion". The first column elaborates the themes from the responses of the participants during the first phase or probing questions. The second column is the themes that came out from the reactions of the participants during the second phase or follow up questions. Lastly, the last column is the themes that came out from the responses of the participants when I did my third phase or exit questions.

Using the steps Braun (p.96, 2008) mentioned, I transcribed every response and clustered it as a potential theme. Using this as a reference, I have arrived at a point to further group these sub-themes into general themes enumerated below. As such, I have reached on six important broad themes (please refer to 4.3.5.2.) The basis for the clustering these sub-themes into general themes came from the literature that I used in the second chapter in the context of coping (Folkman, 1986), emotions of non-owner managers (Bee, 2014) concerning the identity and social identity theories (Stets, 2000), regret theory (Bagger, 2014) (Zeelenberg, 1996) and decision making approaches (Zona, 2016) (Baron, 2015). These data set and data coding supported the verbatim data I recorded in the diary I used.

4.3.5.2. Clustering of sub themes into general themes

Themes	Prevalence	Ranking
Emotions	16	1
Decision Making	8	2
Trust	6	3
Empowerment	5	4
Compensation & Rewards	4	5
Training	3	6

Using the literature provided and linked this with the sub-themes that have emerged coming out from the three phases of the focus group discussion, I have arrived with six general themes. The explored themes that came out from the semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions suggested that there is a need to focus on the need for **empowerment** and **trust** of non-owner managers in **making decisions**. There should be **ample training** for non-owner managers so that they can make ideal decisions in the family firm, and there is a need to address the **negative emotions** that these non-owner managers could experience. Lastly, there is a need to adjust or **change the compensation** of non-owner managers. These themes are related to the literature review I used. For example, Support, Motivation, Fear and Failure relate to trust, which are part of empowerment. Motivation refers to Compensation and Rewards (Intrinsic)—Participation and Support relate to Collaboration. Guidelines, Support, Motivation, Fear and Failure relate to empowerment. Fear, Failure, Proud, Happy, Honoured relate to Positive and Negative Emotions. Lastly, the themes 'motivation, Participation, Empowerment, and Overcoming fear of failure' in decision making related to training and development.

Therefore, the guidelines on the implementation of the pilot test project must come from the general themes that came out from the thematic analysis I did. These broad themes I collected serves as a framework for the implementation of the pilot test project for one quarter during the fourth stage of my Action Research. These themes are the primary goals of the pilot test project, which relate very closely to the first two objectives of my DBA thesis. The pilot test project must focus around providing guidelines, participation, support and motivation and in observing (and preventing) fear and failure.

The focus group discussions, however, did not give any new and additional data from the themes that came out from the semi-structured interviews based on the data that I have collected. The value of the focus group discussions I did, however, helped the participants validate their own emotions and thinking about each other regarding the phenomenon that is happening in the family firm I am researching. It confirms or supports the existing data on the shared event. They also exhibit an in-depth use of their critical reflexivity since they will have a pre-understanding.

4.4. Stage IV. Implementation of the pilot project

Once I have accomplished the thematic analysis, I will use the prevalent themes which are significant for the action component of this DBA thesis. The action component is essential as this will address the gap between theory and practice. It is also necessary as part of the action research component because there is change through intervention.

4.4.1. General Objective of the pilot project

The general objective of the action research project is to “to identify how do non-owner managers behave when given the freedom and authority to participate in decision making?”. The action research project must answer the questions, “What they are doing and what they have not been doing?.” If they are empowered as agreed by the owner-managers to let them make decisions, what could have been the reasons why they failed to take action when they have a chance to make decisions? I also need to explore if any other additional factors affect the decision-making capacity of the non-owner managers, which are all crucial as part of my observation from the action research.

4.4.2. Sub Objectives of the Action Research Project

The sub-objectives of the AR project tries to identify how the themes derived from the semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions applied in the pilot test. It will determine if this will have an impact to the family firm when they are empowered to make decisions on their own using empowerment and if the emotions that will portray a positive feeling which is significant to their motivation as non-owner managers in the family firm. After the accomplished pilot test, I intend to ask for feedback about what they have experienced. The documented significant experiences and feedbacks of the non-owner managers are in the diary. It will serve as a basis for critical reflection.

4.4.3. Overview

One of the critical aspects of this DBA research is the implementation of the action research project as a result of the methods of research I was able to do. As an overview, I plan to implement the action research component of my thesis in the context of reflection and action within the meaning of critical subjectivity. I did a small scale pilot test which could represent the entire organization I am working. Given that I am working in an advertising agency, the focus of the action research component would be in the

'Business Development department' which I directly manage acting as an owner-manager and as a member of the management committee.

The business development department is in charge of accounts management and sustainability of the business. There are at least twenty five (25) non-owner middle managers in the department concerned. I used the emergent themes of emotions, decision making, trust, empowerment compensation and rewards and training as a basis for the implementation of the action research project. As shown in the organizational structure of the 'Business Development', the non-owner middle managers are composed of Business Development Managers (BDMs), Business Development Directors (BDD) and Management Trainees (MT). These roles either belongs to the junior management or senior management. Both junior management and senior management belong to the classification of non-owner middle managers in the family firm. Their identity came from their function they expect to do.

The implementation of the action research component began with critical reflection resulted from the themes that came from the feedback of these respondents. The themes that came from the responses of the non-owner managers serve as my basis for my action. I discussed these themes for my action to the owner-managers during the planning phase. To reduce conflict, I made sure that there is a mutual understanding between the parties concerned. I had this arranged and aligned with them at an informal meeting in advance. The owner-managers and non-owner managers of the family firm agreed on this direction.

I did this four weeks (1 month) before the implementation of the action research project. I already gave them a heads up beforehand when I asked them to sign the consent form and the ethics approval form, which were all approved by the University of Liverpool Management School. I got the approval after I shared with them the intent of the pilot test, which has a focus on Business Development department after two days. Using the prevalent themes that came out from the thematic analysis I did, I used these prevalent themes (emotions, decision making, trust, empowerment, compensation and training) for the pilot test. I discussed these themes to the owner-managers regarding the intended changes I plan to do in the business development department so that they are also informed about this.

4.4.4. Duration

The duration of the pilot test project I did in the family firm lasted for three months (October, November and December 2018) or one quarter. One quarter is sufficient to see significant results from the changes made in the Business Development Department.

4.4.5. Guidelines

The guidelines were discussed to all participants before I have implemented this in the business development department. I made sure that the scope and limitations are clear to all parties concerned so that they will know what the boundaries of the implementation of the pilot test are. The limit includes the following guidelines:

1. The non-owner middle manager will make decisions based on their scope and function in the business development department. For example, as a business development manager, they need to make decisions on their own with minimal intervention from the owner-managers in the realm of accounts management, cost estimate creation, approval of new accounts as long as it does not include decisions about budget and finance.
2. The owner-managers and non-owner managers must agree with the decision making guidelines before the implementation of the pilot test.
3. During the implementation of the pilot test project, the feedback, observations, emotions, and the behaviours of non-owner managers are in the diary.

4.4.6. Implementation

The following four essential action criteria are the basis of the pilot test. These intended action tries to address the research questions of this thesis. The implementation focused on 1. making the business development department a collaborative department, 2. empowering non-owner managers to make decisions on their own, 3. making adjustments on their compensation and lastly, 4. putting a value on training and development. These steps will address the feedback of the non-owner managers during the second and third stage of this action research.

4.4.6.1. Collaborative department

The first thing I did as a member of the owning family was ensuring that there is a two-way communication process between the owner-managers and the non-owner managers. This communication process allows the non-owner managers to share their feedback and suggestions freely and indirectly. They can do this when I asked the owner-managers to set up suggestion boxes on the second floor near the exit where the business development department is. Once the non-owner managers can share their feedback into the suggestion boxes, this will be opened every end of the week and then consolidated into a PowerPoint presentation. As an owner-manager, I will be merging these feedback and have this summarized and presented to my fellow owner managers for implementation.

One example is when one non-owner manager suggested creating a single file where they can track the growth of the business and setting up targets on an annual basis. When presented to the owners, they concur that it should happen as this will not just improve the size of the business but also track what will be the direction of the organization. There is an option for those non-owner managers not to disclose their identity when making suggestions to protect who they are as employees in the family firm.

Even in the most straightforward ways like sharing their feedback in the suggestion boxes, this two-way communication process gives them the freedom to voice out what they think is best for the family firm. It is also an opportunity to be heard even if this is indirectly to achieve organizational change in the business development department. It indicates that there is a **two-way communication process** from the suggestions made by the non-owner managers towards implementation. It also promotes participatory decision making in the department since the non-owner managers continually have weekly meetings and a once a month meeting with me as the head of business development and as an owner-manager. It is also necessary since when there is a collaborative environment, it adheres to the integration of ideas and creation of new knowledge which is essential to innovation. This innovation is critical for change of the department in the organization.

4.4.6.2. Non-Owner Middle Manager Empowerment

Another action component that I did is through empowering non-owner managers to make decisions as long as it is on their scope, capacity and capability. It will help these non-owner managers to be accountable for the decision they intend to make. An opportunity for them to grow and increases their value in the family firm as non-owner managers. The non-owner managers are asked in the business development department to make decisions on their own regarding accounts management, cost estimate creation and planning. It is the first time that non-owner managers will be allowed to create cost estimates regarding a specific project since all cost estimates before were only limited to owner managers to mitigate exposure on data regarding the company's revenue or profit and alleviate risks as a result of this empowerment.

The owner-managers were afraid about disclosing the information about cost estimates to the non-owner managers because the owner-managers think that it could affect the behaviour of the non-owner managers and they can use this data or knowledge as an advantage to spend the money of the owner-managers in operations or for personal reasons needlessly. It will also give them an idea that the family firm business is vast, and it would be okay for non-owner managers to be lenient since they think that the company is stable. It is the reason why, before, decisions about budget requests or cost estimates were limited only to owner-managers. The idea behind this was the protect the capital and investment of the owner-managers into the family firm.

During the pilot test, empowering non-owner managers is a need by creating a standardized guideline in decision making. It includes the service level agreement (SLA) and the standard operating procedures (SOP). Both the SLA and the SOP provided the non-owner managers with a framework that gave the owner-managers in return convenience since these ensure that the decisions that the non-owner managers make are objective. It will reduce risks and improves the quality of the choices that non-owner managers make in the Business Development department. Aside from this, before implementation, the SLA and the SOP were both approved by the owner-managers.

4.4.6.3. Adjustments on Compensation and Salary

Aside from the first two actions, I did in the Business Development department (collaborative environment and empowerment of non-owner managers), I asked my fellow owner managers to adjust the compensation scheme of the non-owner managers based on industry standards. One of the themes that emerged from my thematic analysis was about emotions and how this is related to compensation and extrinsic rewards. What I did was, I first escalated this with our internal HR director and to create an extrinsic rewards program that will benefit, the business managers, business directors and management trainees. We created an industry based compensation scheme across all the non-owner middle managers in the Business Development Department. It took at least a week to have this approved by the HR director in collaboration with the owner-managers since it involves additional funding and capital for this kind of change. The recommended salary scheme is cascaded individually by the HR department and aligned to them personally. The proposed and approved salary percentage increase is about 25% of what the non-owner managers were receiving before. The remuneration package must be based on their respective KPI agreed between the HR Director and the owner-managers.

Before the changes on compensation, the basis for the salaries of the non-owner managers was purely subjective and had no base such as key performance index (KPI) for the past few years. Even if there was an evaluation submitted to the HR department and owner-managers, the evaluation of the non-owner managers of the Business Development department is only for formality purposes since the final decision on the wages of the non-owner managers would still come from the owner-managers without having valid basis.

When the HR department cascaded to the Business Directors, Business Managers and Management Trainees regarding the new salary change, the HR department was also able to discuss a clear key performance indicator that they need to achieve. It will serve as a basis for the HR Department to calibrate and further adjust the salaries of the non-owner managers with a corresponding valid basis. The non-owner managers, then, in return, need to achieve their key performance index set to them by the family firm. The adjustment on compensation to the non-owner managers increases their willingness and their ability to do more. It includes their motivation, drive and fulfilment to their function based on their role in the family firm.

4.4.6.4. Training and Development

Last but not least, the fourth action component that I did for the family firm is by putting a value on training and development. Coming from the thematic analysis I did, it shows that non-owner managers are looking for opportunities that will enhance their knowledge, and that will benefit them. One way to do this is through pieces of training or seminars that the non-owner managers need to attend. Since non-owner managers are now empowered to make decisions, and they can indirectly voice out what they think is best for the family firm; the owner-managers have to ensure that the decisions they are making are significant. It is significant as long as the decisions they make have a basis as a result of their ability. This ability only increases when there is ample training given to them. During the pilot test, the owner-managers approved on inviting speakers who will give a talk to the non-owner managers. The Business Director, Business Manager and Management Trainees were able to attend leadership seminars that will enhance their skills and enhance their role in the family firm. Leading from the thematic analysis I did, the non-owner managers agreed that they need guidance so that they are willing to make decisions that are risks to them. These mitigated risks happen when there are ample guidance and coaching to them. It also reduces the uncertainties of the non-owner managers to participate in decision making.

Coaching is also necessary so that they will slowly but surely know the fundamentals of management. Since they are non-owner middle managers, they deal with the front liners and the owners of the family firm. They, therefore, need to give the opportunity to understand the strategy in place, and how to become situational, effective and efficient leaders in their own right. During the last two months of the pilot test, aside from inviting speakers who will do talks to them, the owner-managers also asked professional coaches who will work with them remotely and in person. These coaches provided three hundred and sixty degrees of feedback to support their personal and professional growth. It also aims to ensure and guarantee that whatever they have learned from the seminars they have attended will have a direct impact on their day to day lives in the workplace. The non-owner managers will also realize they are essential to the family firm because the owner-managers are investing in these tools that will improve their skills as non-owner managers. It will motivate them, and they will be happy about it in return.

The enhancement of the onboarding (induction) process is also essential to new non-owner managers in a twofold approach. The first one is for new non-owner managers who are about to join the family firm without having any idea about how it is to work in the family firm. The second one is when one non-owner manager will be transferred to another role inside the company. The onboarding process must be at least 30 days that will give the non-owner manager ample time to adjust to the new roles and responsibilities he will be asked fulfil as part of this identity and commitment as an employee and a manager.

4.5. Results of the pilot test project

4.5.1. First two weeks

During the first two weeks, I have observed that eight (8) out of eleven (11) non-owner middle managers are still adjusting to the guidelines prepared to them in terms of decision making. I have noticed that they were not used to the norm when they are making decisions on their own since they are still uncertainties when they make decisions. There were instances that they always asked my guidance on what they need to do and how will they do it in terms of decision making. At this stage, they need to attend workshops regarding leadership. It is a way to enhance their thinking of how effective the decisions they made. As a result of the workshop they have attended, they need to submit their reflection papers as an output of their attendance.

At this stage, I have written in my diary,

> *‘That ten (10) out of eleven (11) non-owner managers are still having uncertainties regarding the freedom that was given to them since they are unsure about what they are currently experiencing. As such, there was an*

instance that they approached me and asked me if the decisions they are about to make will be significant to the other owner-managers. They want to make sure that the decisions they made do not lead to an organizational crisis and conflict inside the department and in the family firm. These feelings that these non-owner managers exhibits are examples of negative emotions. Since this is a pilot test, these non-owner managers do not want to take risks that will affect their employment. They are also afraid to participate in sharing their thoughts and feedback in the suggestion boxes provided in the Business Development department. It means that emotions have a direct impact on the output of their decisions. I noticed that these emotions that they have felt include but not limited to fear, nervousness and regret.'

However, one of the significant change I have noticed at this stage is that they seem to be curious about what they have been experiencing since it is entirely new to them. The non-owner managers are slowly adjusting to the new norm because I can see that they have realized that there was a minimal intervention from me as an owner-manager. I noticed at this stage that non-owner managers become challenged since they realize that they are now empowered since they need to make a decision. This is the first time that this had happened to them. At this stage, the negotiation is still ongoing for the wages of the non-owner managers. The salaries still need to be adjusted, and changes for the KPIs still need to be finalized. In return, it will increase the motivation of the non-owner managers on the succeeding weeks of the pilot test project.

4.5.2. Third and fourth weeks

During the third and fourth weeks, I observed that they were at least independently functioning based on what they think on their capacity and as a result of the adjustment stage on the first two weeks of the action research project. These non-owner middle managers who participated in the business development department were anxious about what they have since this is new to them. At this stage, I made sure that there is constant communication between myself and the non-owner managers. I ensured during this stage that there is little or no intervention with regards to decisions they make, such as the creation of cost estimates and business planning for a new project. Again, this is a result of empowerment I did to these non-owner managers. Any decisions, however, about budget requests are still limited to us owner-managers since these are risky decisions. Another significant improvement I have seen was that their response to my questions concerning their motivation to work in the family firm. I have noticed that

'Five (5) participants said that they are starting to feel motivated when they were allowed to make decisions on their own since they feel the change that they have been waiting as non-owner managers. Since they feel motivated as

a result of this empowerment where they are allowed to make decisions, they are trying their best to participate in the suggestion boxes installed in the Business Development department. The continuity of my guidance to them as an owner-manager increases their ability to perform their tasks based on the roles they need to do. As a result of my assessment, on this stage, I have identified that they feel more valued and driven as a result of this changes, but they are not yet able to completely accomplish their tasks because these tasks are relatively new to them. If being forced to make independent decisions at this stage which are not yet final, there is a probability that this could lead to failure. It is a situation which we do not want to happen during this stage. Therefore, what is needed is a proper guideline where these non-owner managers need in decision making in the business development department.'

4.5.3. Second month

During the second month of the pilot test, I made sure that non-owner managers are given autonomy on their own to make decisions. Five (5) non-owner middle managers asked me at this stage if they are doing the right thing in the choices they make based on their role and function in the family firm. They asked me this question because the non-owner managers said that they have hesitations with what could happen as a result of the decisions they make that could have an impact on the owner-managers. When non-owner managers are experiencing a feeling of hesitation with the choices they make, it led to a sense of uncertainty. However, the thought of the opportunity is limited because non-owner managers are adjusting slowly but surely with the changes made. The seminars provided to them on leadership have contributed to mitigating negative emotions to make decisions. At this stage, the new salary scheme has been implemented and will take place in the next cutoff. The changes in the salaries were discussed to them individually by the HR Department and their corresponding KPIs that they need to meet.

As a result of this change, I have noticed that their motivation has increased significantly, and they became more eager to participate. I cannot disregard the fact that these non-owner managers are still exhibiting negative emotions because it's been four weeks since I have implemented the pilot test project. However, one significant observation that I have noticed that the identity of the non-owner managers is confirmed, and their social identity as well is aligned throughout the entire company. They have realized that their role in Business Development is essential. The non-owner managers need to know this because the Business Development department is the fuel to achieve sustainability of the business.

One example I have written in my diary,

'When a non-owner middle manager needs to decide on a particular account which the family firm currently handles, and this decision was approved subsequently by the owner-managers, the non-owner manager who

> *was pleased about the approval of management because he felt that he contributed to the growth of the business. He had seen his value and his worth. As such, this led to an increase in his motivation and drive. Therefore, I did a minimal intervention at this stage when these non-owner managers are going to make decisions. I just need to continuously guide and coach them if needed since they are not sure about the decisions they made. Since I am part of the owning family, my intervention is very minimal and kept the door open if these non-owner managers will ask for feedback and guidance of what they intend to do next*.'

This feedback and insights that they have exhibited are part of the "integration and learning" as Ely (2001) mentioned which is needed to create new ideas and decisions. When I implemented this, four non-owner managers seems to be exhibiting an act of collaboration between themselves. Some of these non-owner managers asked me questions regarding how to achieve effective negotiations that eventually lead to the closing of new accounts. It is also interesting that these non-owner middle managers are working very closely with me as their immediate superior, and it is also a good indicator that they are learning all together. It is central to participatory decision making, and it means that they are collaborating.

In some instances, these non-owner middle managers now attend meetings on their own. I also observed that decision making is more efficient because bureaucracy is minimized in terms of approval on executions for different operational requirements for different accounts coming from the owner-managers. As a result of the seminars and coaching given to these non-owner managers, the lead time to approve a new project which the family firm will be handling reduced significantly making the implementation of the new account efficient and more effective. The opportunity to be heard on their suggestions and feedback happens. There are still limitations as I have noticed with regards to decision making. I have written in my diary that,

> *'that even if I gave the non-owner middle managers the autonomy to make decisions, they are not yet motivated enough to make decisions because there are other factors that affect their motivation. One of the factors was the lack of implementation on the change of the salaries of the non-owner managers was delayed, which should have taken effect at the last week of the first month of the pilot test.'*

It means that no matter how motivated and driven the non-owner managers are, they will still not exert their best effort to make better decisions because of extrinsic rewards or salary issues. I had confirmed on the third week of the second month of the pilot test that the change in their salaries had taken effect. As such, they became more aggressive and driven in achieving their respective KPIs or key performance indexes. It is because they already know what the things that they need to do compared to what they have previously been. The non-owner managers also signify a positive emotion that has changed their outlook towards the family firm and their disposition as employees. The basis for this was because the non-owner managers are very active in asking questions if they are unsure about the steps they have taken as part of their roles and responsibilities.

4.5.4. Third month

During the third month of the pilot test implementation, I have noticed notable improvements in the Business Development Department. These significant changes I have written in my diary are as follows:

> *'I have seen that non-owner managers are empowered to make decisions with minimal intervention coming from the owner-managers. Aside from this, they were very proactive and felt accountable for the decisions they make as a result of their function or responsibility as a non-owner manager. They were accountable based on my observation because they were not afraid to take risks, and they also know what they need to prioritize when making decisions in the family firm.' It became possible as a result of the first two months of the pilot test and the second seminar which they have attended to regarding strategy.'*

Aside from this, during the last month of the pilot test implementation, the changes in salaries and compensation had taken effect together with the corresponding KPIs per non-owner manager in the Business Development department. As a result, these non-owner managers are more motivated to collaborate because they are very proactive in scheduling meetings with one another and with the owner-managers. During this period,

> *'I have noticed that the non-owner managers are sharing their ideas and thoughts in the suggestion boxes from time to time as a result of the autonomy and freedom given to them. I have observed that they are not afraid to take risks because they do not have uncertainties or hesitations about participating. It was the result of owner-manager empowering non-owner managers. They are empowered because there were minimal intervention and sufficient guidance given to them.'*

This collaboration brought about an increase in participatory decision making and making these non-owner managers performing since they now have the willingness and ability as a result of the pilot test project I did. During the third month as well, the non-owner managers are more proactive, not just within the Business Development department but also in other departments of the family firm. It is the reason why I have noticed that other non-owner managers from other departments which do not involve the Business Development department were curious about the changes we did since they have changed their behaviour and approach from one another. It means that these non-owner managers are more engaged with the different levels of the organization. They are engaged when 'they have the intention to contribute to the direction and growth of the organization. Also, they have the will that made these non-owner managers in the Business Development department increased their performance readiness (Hersey, 2008) that explores the traits and values of the person.'

The way the non-owner managers in the Business Development Department perform and function came from their **confidence, commitment and motivation**. These had happened because they were empowered to make decisions, they did not exhibit any hesitations or uncertainties which is the result of coping up with negative, stressful emotion, they have ample training and guidance, and their compensation was changed to manage their expectations to achieve congruency. Because these non-owner managers are now empowered, and as a result of being collaborative from one another, I have written in my diary that,

> '*Non-owner managers now create significant decisions as a result of the positive emotions they felt and experienced in the family firm. They think that they are valued because they are now acknowledged and take credit for whatever they contribute to the family firm. They see this as an opportunity to grow and learn new things moving forward. When I asked them again about what they think about where will they go five years from now and if they see themselves in the company, they said that they are a higher chance that they will stay because they know that the company needs them and they also need the company in return. There is now a state of stability, and the cognitive thinking of the non-owner middle managers has improved significantly without experiencing any state of negative cognitive emotion.'*

However, I can't deny the fact that there is a possibility that there are instances that some if not all non-owner managers are still having doubts why are we doing this pilot test since it was the first time that this had happened in the family firm. One non-owner manager asked me if this will be in the long term or if this is just a temporary. I think it needs to be clear from them what will happen next after this pilot test. As an owner-manager, I need to reassure them that the pilot test I conducted will not be limited to the Business Development Department in just one quarter.

4.6. Stage V. Feedback from the pilot test project

The last and final stage of my action research project is asking about the feedback of the non-owner managers as a result of the pilot test project I did (stage 4 of the action research). This feedback is essential, which will serve as a basis for my discussion in the succeeding chapter. Also, I need this feedback so that I will know what they think about the action research project I did that covers four critical stages coming from the observation, semi-structured interviews, focus group discussion and the pilot test project in the Business Development Department. The feedback includes the non-owner managers' behaviours, thoughts and emotions that written in my diary as an insider action researcher. The feedback of the non-owner managers conducted in a focus group discussion. I asked the feedback of the non-owner managers (Business Directors, Business Managers and Management Trainees) of the Business Development Department after work hours to ensure that there are a focus and minimal distraction. Aside from the diary, I used a voice recorder to ensure the details of their feedback are all captured to ensure accuracy.

4.6.1. Feedback from the non-owner managers

The questions that I asked the non-owner managers will come from the implementation of the pilot test project for one quarter. The questions came from the literature I used and as well as my observation when I did the pilot test project. The questions I asked are as follows;

Q1. What do you think and feel about the pilot test implemented for the past three months?

> *'**R1** said that as a result of the pilot test project did. He said that it was the first time that this had happened when they had an opportunity to decide with regards to retaining an account in the family firm. He said that he felt glad about this and felt valued as non-owner managers.'*

> *'**R2** adhered to **R1** and supported his statement. He said that this opportunity to participate in the pilot test (when he participated in decision making) changed his outlook and mindset as a non-owner manager in the family firm. If this continues to happen, he said that he would be motivated to do what is best for the family firm as long as they have the authority to make decisions within their scope and responsibility. He was also hoping that whatever implemented in the pilot test for the past three months, will be adopted to the other departments of the family firm so that non-owner managers will also experience the same. He was also hoping that the pilot test conducted was not limited to short term (3 months) but also for the medium or long term because the family firm will benefit on this in the long run.'*

> *'**R3** furthermore agreed on **R2,** and **R1** statement and **R3** said that the suggestion boxes placed in the Business Development Department make the*

*working environment collaborative. It means that whenever the non-owner managers wanted to share their ideas or thoughts to the owner-managers, they can do this now without having the feeling of hesitations, fear or uncertainties since he said that no one would reprimand them from whatever they want to ideas to the owner-managers even if indirectly****. R3*** *even said that the implementation of the recommendations they have submitted in the suggestion boxes makes it more motivating for them to participate more because he said that he is trusted and given value.' The suggestions they have shared also led to implementation, which makes it more enticing for them as non-owner managers.*

'R4 *made an additional comment whereas he said that the experience that they have been through for the past three months must not only happen during the scope of the pilot test project (three months). Once the accomplished research, it is a need to continue this change to the other departments of the family firm such as Finance, Operations and Human Resources. If this happens, it will adhere to a collaborative environment where the non-owner managers are empowered to decide without having the feeling of uncertainties. It also fosters for continuous interaction and open communication between owner-managers and non-owner managers.* ***R4*** *also said that the change on compensation hopefully would also be done in other departments because the other non-owner managers outside of the Business Development Department were also asking when this will be implemented to their departments as well.'*

'R5 *mentioned to* ***R4*** *that this collaboration between the owner-managers and non-owner managers reduces their uncertainties and their feeling of fear to speak up what they think is best for the family firm. Also,* ***R5*** *argued that their participation in the pilot test project means that something right is happening for the first time in the family firm.* ***R5,*** *however, suggested that there should be continuous momentum that will happen in the future because it increases the assurance of the non-owner managers to be more active in the family firm.'*

'R6 *mentioned that their participation in the pilot test project signifies that as non-owner managers, they have the power and autonomy to make significant contributions through decisions they make. It also means more* *from them as non-owner managers since they are trusted. Aside from this, he said that the collaboration, as discussed by* ***R5*** *and* ***R4****, is vital in making sure that the non-owner managers feel valued and honoured being employees. They are happy about what they have been through, and he said that 'I hope it does not end here.'*

'R7 *decided not to respond to the question I asked from him as he was still unsure if his response that could affect his employment in the family firm as a non-owner manager. He is still afraid what will happen next if he gets to respond to the questions, I asked from them. I noticed, however, that whenever he told me this, he was direct to the point not showing any negative emotion. I think he just wants to make sure that his interest Is protected.'*

'R8, *however, reacted to the behaviour of* ***R7****, stating that he should speak up to what he thinks is right since he was with* ***R7*** *when the pilot test implemented. He said that he saw* ***R7*** *engaged with the Management Trainee and Business Director in participatory decision making****. R8*** *was with* ***R7*** *when they were directly engaged in business planning and strategy creation when a new account is about to join the family firm.* ***R8*** *also said that the pilot test project should be extended and should not be limited to three months.* ***R8*** *said that he was very excited about what happened in the past, and he was also looking forward to what could happen in the months to come. It is the next big step for them to share their thoughts about what is the best family firm.'*

'R9 *agreed with* ***R5, R4*** *and* ***R8*** *who said that there is need to expand the pilot test project because the pilot test project helped them realize that they play an important role as non-owner managers in the family firm. There is also a need to adopt this pilot test project to other departments and not just limited to one specific department alone since the pilot test project has so much potential. Also, they were pleased with what they have been through, even if they are mentally and emotionally challenged.*

Q2. Did you feel any regret when you were given to participate in the pilot test?

'R1 *said that he never felt any regret when he has the opportunity to make decisions regarding his role in business development.* ***R1*** *mentioned that he never had a feeling of regret because the decision to participate was the best* *thing that ever happened to him as a non-owner manager. He was hopeful that the contribution he made through suggestions and decisions at his scale would benefit the family firm in return.'*

***'R2** agreed on **R1** because any decisions they made is for the best of the family firm. **R2** said that he tried his best to meet the expectation of others from him to perform and he tried as much as possible to collaborate with other non-owner managers so that the decision he is about to make came from collective decision making. In return, it alleviates his feeling of regret when he was empowered to make decisions since they were together in that journey, he says.'*

***'R3** mentioned that he never felt any regret because the decision he made was the result of the salary increase he had received as a result of the adjustment made to the compensation as a result of the pilot test. Also, he met his expectations because he was performing based on his ability and capacity. He also said that the pieces of training and seminars they have attended improved their decision-making skills. It reduces the regret that they could feel because they are now certain with the decisions they make.'*

***'R4** argued that the changes made to the compensation made a significant factor why he never had any regret with regards to his roles and responsibilities in the family firm. **R4** supported the statement of **R3** because both of them experienced an increase in motivation rather than the feeling of regret. They also mentioned that for them to alleviate the feeling of regret, they tried to anticipate the negative consequences they could experience as non-owner managers. They also tried their best as what **R4** said to manage expectations employing interaction and dialogues.'*

***'R5** said that the feeling of regret he experienced was the inability to fully participate in decision making when he has the opportunity to do so during the pilot because he was unsure about the decisions, he is about to make in the family firm. However, **R5** said that if he has another opportunity to make a decision, he will not feel any regret as an outcome of the decision he made since this is the right moment for them to speak up what is best not just for them but also for the company.'*

> *‘**R6** and **R7** both said that why would they feel any regret if what they did is significantly based on what they think is necessary. The suggestion boxes created meaningful changes to the family firm that leads to immediate action. They also felt happy and honoured and not regret about the recognition given to them as non-owner managers when the owner-managers recognized them from the opinion they suggested and implemented.’*

> *‘**R8** mentioned that he would feel regret if the suggestions they made during the pilot test project were ignored because there was resistance since the beginning. Since there was no resistance from the side of the owner-managers regarding the suggestions we make, they feel that they need to do more as a result of this collaboration. Also. **R8** said that practicality wise, he gets to participate more since he is now motivated since he is compensated higher than what he receives before.’*

> *‘**R9** said that he did not felt any regret when he participated in the pilot test project because he said that his capability to fulfil his roles put into test. **R9** also mentioned that he never had a feeling of regret because he wants to maximize all possible means to the creation of strategy and improving accounts management efficiency in the family firm.’*

4.7. Chapter Summary

This chapter focused on the action research story and the stages I did. The action research cycle intends to dwell and explore the phenomenon that is happening in the family firm. I did a qualitative phenomenological ethnographic action research method that has five critical stages on a single action research method.

The first stage is the **observation method**. Since this is a phenomenological and ethnographic study, I directly engaged myself with the issues at hand as an owner-manager in the family firm. Since my pre-understanding was reframed by my first-hand experience and by the literature, I used in chapter two, I have come to the point that I need to engage myself as an insider action researcher to the non-owner managers.

One way to do to achieve by this is by using **semi-structured interviews** which is the second stage of my action research. The use of semi-structured interviews helped me explore directly on the responses of the participants from the five questions I asked them derived from the literature and my pre-understanding. The responses from the semi-structured interviews will be analyzed using thematic analysis using coding. Once accomplished, I need to proceed with the focus group discussions, which is the third stage of the action research.

The use of the **focus group discussion** is central in exploring further the themes that came from the semi-structured interviews. It validates the responses of the same participants I used in the semi-structured interviews. The focus group discussion enhances the non-owner managers critical reflexivity as it confirms the phenomenon was happening in the family firm. The responses from the focus group discussions were analyzed using thematic analysis and coding. The six prevalent themes (Emotions, Decision Making, Trust, Empowerment, Compensation and Training) used as a framework and a guideline for the next stage of the single action research cycle, the implementation of the pilot test project.

The fourth stage of the action research is the **implementation of the pilot test** project from October to December of 2018 in the Business Development department. The implementation of the pilot test project involves four important action components. It consists in making the department a collaborative one, non-owner managers empowerment for making decisions, training and development and adjustments on compensation and salary.

After the pilot test project, I then asked for their **feedback** about what they think and feel about the changes I did in the specific department and if they had any regret from participating from the pilot. It is to identify what did they feel and think about the action I did in the specific department or if they had any hesitations from the actions the non-owner managers did. The feedback of the non-owner managers who participated in the action research cycle is needed as it will be the reference for the next succeeding section on the discussion.

5. Discussion

5.1. Overview

Following the completed Action Research method and its analysis, this chapter engages in discussion regarding the factors that restrict non-owner managers in making decisions and what are the causes of high attrition rate of non-owner managers. The discussion extends to how non-owner managers behave when they have the freedom and authority to participate in decision making.

It is essential to mention here that the findings and discussion points arising, are strictly derived from the literature as explained on pp.94 and 95: the six major themes being; 'Emotions, Decision making, Trust, Empowerment, Compensation & Rewards and Training'. Using Braun's' (2008) three-stage thematic analysis method, verbatim responses are segmented and summarized during the first level of coding, before being applied to the research context in the second level of coding. It then became possible to discuss the findings of the essential themes derived from the literature and per my aims and objectives.

5.2. Factors that restrict non-owner managers in decision making

5.2.1 Decision making is limited to owner-managers

One of the factors why non-owner managers are unable to decide on the family firm because of formal power (Mechanic, 1967) was constrained to owner-managers. When this happens, formal power is not decentralized across all the members of the organization that includes non-owner managers. The lack of decentralization of power also limits the authority of the non-owner managers. As such, a leader-member exchange approach or LMX does not occur (Graen, 1995). Coming from the results of the Action Research I did and from the semi-structured interviews, I mentioned in the diary dated February 3, 2019 when R3 stated that 'when the owner-managers make a decision, it is already final, and it ends there. There is no opportunity to rebut or change the decisions since it comes from them (owner-managers)'. This statement is a clear example that whatever the decision of the owner-manager is, it cannot be altered or changed and is final. R5 and R6 also agreed to R3. They said that 'it is their (owner-manager) power and right to make a business decision.'

The response of R3, R5 and R6 are shown in the literature on decision making on family firms for non-owner managers stated by Zona (2016) whereas the decisions of the non-owner managers are mixed of subjective and objective decisions. These decisions came from both knowledge and skills that are necessary that the outcome of the decision is sustainable. Therefore, the decisions of the non-owner managers must be heard to achieve cognitive cohesion, open communication and emotional cohesion as argued by Martin-Santana (2014).

Therefore, when non-owner managers are not empowered, 'non-owner managers argued that what they can only do is agree with them since we think that it is best for the company as stated in my diary dated February 5, 2020. Lastly, I want to use the response of R7 in the diary dated February 6, 2019, whereas he said that 'even if it is the right of the owner-managers to make decisions, the non-owner managers must give them a chance to decide what is best for the family firm.' I have also observed and written from my observations during the Action Research I did that ever since; 'the decisions of the other managers always have the bearing in every given situation.' When power and authority are constrained to the owner-manager, it does not also promote a collaborative environment that limits participatory decision making between owner-managers and non-owner managers.

It also adheres to Baron's (2015) argument where the organisation is exhibiting a 'one-room house' type of decision making. A situation where in the literature argues that "decisions made by non-owner managers could lead to organizational failure because decisions does not turn into action, and no one is making a follow up with regards to the next corresponding steps (Baron, p.3, 2015)."

5.2.2 Fear and Disappointment of non-owner managers

Aside from decision making is limited to owner-managers; another reason that I have explored why non-owner managers were not allowed to make a decision was because of their fear and disappointment. Both fear and disappointment occur as a result of formal power-constrained to the owner-managers. The feeling of disappointment demotivates non-owner managers to participate in decision making because they are afraid of the consequences or results of the decisions that come from the owner-managers.

Both fear and disappointment, as stated in the literature I used, are an example of negative emotions of non-owner managers, as mentioned by Bee (2014) in their cognitive appraisal approach. It has to be clear that negative feelings arise as a result of an individual's incongruency from what they expect to receive and their "identification into the family firm". When there is incongruency, it leads to negative emotions similar to fear and disappointment that I have discovered in the Action Research I did. What is needed, therefore, as argued by Bee (2014) is to manage these incongruencies employing emotional dissonance and surface focus or by using emotional expression and regulation strategies. When these strategies happen, the non-owner managers are expected to experience positive emotions such as joy, motivation, glad and happiness. It is also necessary that non-owner managers can cope up with these kinds of emotions as argued by Folkman (1986) or else we will go back again from the vicious cycle.

Coming from the Action Research and stated in my diary dated February 15, 2019, it was shown from my observation that 'a non-owner manager proposal for business planning and strategy was not accepted because the owner-manager sees this as insignificant or irrelevant.' Thus, owner-managers do not consider their suggestions. 'As a result, the non-owner manager went back to his cubicle and exhibited a negative emotion of fear.' Based on the responses from the non-owner managers, whenever they want to participate in decision making, 'they are neglected and not given importance since they think that decision making is always limited to owner-managers.' In return, it does not activate their identity based on their role (Stets, 2000) as part of the family firm.

Another example based from the diary I used is 'when a non-owner manager wanted to suggest new processes on recruitment and selection to his supervisor, dated April 3, 2018 but was subsequently ignored by the owner-manager since there was no apparent need for such a proposal.' The non-owner managers do not want to experience regret as a result of their initiative to decide because they do not want to feel disappointment. R2 stated in the dairy I used dated November 4 of 2018 argued that the ‘decisions of the owner-managers involve emotions such as a burst of tempers.’ These bursts of tempers sometimes are what the non-owner managers wanted to avoid because they are afraid to experience this where they will be scolded based on what they have proposed or suggested. After all, all they want was to make a difference. The non-owner managers also do not want to feel disappointed or reprimanded as a result of what they have contributed because they expect that they will receive praise or recognition. When these happen, the non-owner managers will exhibit incongruency based on what they have to get in return, vis a vis their personal goals and objectives (Bee, 2014).

5.2.3 Non-owner managers hesitations

Aside from fear and disappointments, another factor that restricts non-owner managers decision making as a result of my Action Research was their hesitations due to their cognitive appraisal. These hesitations came out as a result of the current situation where the power to make decisions are limited to owner-managers.

These non-owner manager hesitations are also considered as negative emotions which were also discussed by Bee (2014) on his cognitive appraisal approach. Moreover, these hesitations that non-owner managers experiences arise as a result of their feeling of regret why did they join in the family firm since their expectations are not met based on what they expect to receive. These hesitations arise, as mentioned by Zeelenberg (1996, p.148) occurs ‘when a non-owner manager has more or less a painful cognitive and emotional state of feeling sorry for misfortunes, limitations, losses among others.’ Another reason why non-owner managers are having personal hesitations because they are experiencing uncertainties which raises the question if they can do the tasks asked from them to do in the family firm. It is part of confirming their identity as non-owner managers in the family firm. Stets (2000) argued that non-owner managers identity is activated when “there is congruency with regards to their comparative or normative aspect.” So, if they are unable to accomplish and permit their personal and social goals in the family firm, it leads to dissatisfaction and eventually raises their hesitations.

These hesitations are questions of uncertainties that non-owner managers feel whenever they want to decide on the family firm. Stated in the diary dated May 10, 2018 during the focus group discussions, I mentioned that both R2 and R3 argued that ‘they still have the feeling of nervousness in deciding on the family firm.’ R4, on the other hand, said during the semi-structured interviews ‘that she could only decide without having any hesitations.’ Meaning, she can participate freely and openly without any feeling of uncertainties.’ Their hesitation arises based on their past experiences as non-owner managers.

They know for a fact that power is limited to owner-managers; it raises the question of what their role will be. As such, when I asked them what significant results could happen if owner-managers empower them to make decisions during the action research, R3 said when I asked his feedback in the diary dated March 3, 2019, ‘that as much as he wants to contribute to deciding on the family firm, he was afraid to do so because he could experience regret as a result of his hesitation.' The non-owner managers exhibit their hesitations to make decisions because they are unsure and uncertain about what could be the outcome of the decisions they make.

5.3. Causes of high attrition rate of non-owner managers

The factors that restrict non-owner managers to make decisions led to the causes of the high attrition rate of non-owner managers. It is what I intend to discuss resulting from my Action Research. The Action Research method provides a transformational experience for me as an owner-manager. Using the stages of the single Action Research cycle, I have arrived at a point to explore and confirm the phenomenon where there is a high attrition rate of non-owner managers leaving the family firm due to several factors. These factors include 1. the lack of empowerment of non-owner managers to make decisions, 2. the negative emotions that non-owner managers experience, 3. The non-owner managers were unable to cope up with a stressful situation, 4. there was an issue with regards to the compensation or salary that they expect to receive. Lastly, 5. there was an issue with regards to the lack of training that enables them to make the right decisions for the family firm.

5.3.1. Lack of empowerment of non-owner managers to make decisions

The first cause for the high attrition rate of non-owner managers is the lack of empowerment. As discussed previously, since decision making is limited to the owner-managers since power is constrained to them, it limits the opportunity for non-owner managers to participate and have dialogues with the owner-managers. Until today, formal power is not just limited to the first generation but also the second-generation owner-managers. Empowerment is a prevalent theme both came out from the semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions. Empowerment is followed by decision making as a secondary prevalent theme. The framework for the pilot test project came from these prevalent themes. The pilot test project addressed the issue on the lack of empowerment as shown from the feedback of the non-owner managers during the Action Research. I stated in the diary dated January 12, 2019 when I asked both 'R2 and R1, they said 'that the opportunity to participate in decision making changed their outlook regarding their role.' These non-owner managers lost motivation to work when decision making was constrained to the owner-managers, and no empowerment had taken place.

In the diary I used dated January 18, 2019, I mentioned that R3 also agreed on 'R2 and R1 stating that during the pilot test project when we made sure that the suggestion boxes were in place, this action paved the way for a collaborative environment in the Business Development department.' These suggestion boxes acted as a channel to communicate between the non-owner managers and owner-managers even if indirectly without having the feeling of fear, disappointment and hesitations.' The value of the suggestion boxes will remain as it is as long as all the suggestions, recommendations or feedback will reach the owner-managers and this will translate into concrete action and to ensure that will not become a one-room house that delays organizational change (Baron, 2015). R5 even argued that this 'collaboration as a result of this empowerment employing indirect communication paves the way in reducing their uncertainties to contribute back to the family firm.' Aside from this, during the pilot test project, I mentioned in the diary dated February 20, 2019 where R6 said that the 'action research project gave them some power and autonomy to make decisions.' R8 even suggested to R7 'that they were both together when they were asked to be engaged to create business planning and strategies which is significant to them.'

The feedback of these non-owner managers means that they need to be empowered to make decisions so that they can fulfil their expectations and goals as employees. It will pave the way for non-owner managers to act on the role that they need to do. If these non-owner managers are not allowed to make decisions, and they are unable to accomplish their responsibilities, they will continue to exhibit a negative emotion of not being valued that eventually leads to undesirable outcomes that affect the way they think and feel that is part of their cognitive appraisal (Bee, 2014). However, if they are allowed to participate in decision making, it means that they are trusted. The non-owner managers need to be trusted, as shown in the pilot test project because non-owner managers believe that they can contribute to the family firm. Trust is one of the prevalent themes that came out as a result of my thematic analysis in the semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions. It means that there is a need for owner-managers to trust non-owner managers. In the Action Research, R1 responded in Q3 during the semi-structured interviews where he mentioned 'when the owner-managers gave a chance to non-owner managers to make decisions, the owner-managers trust us.'

However, it does not happen before the Action Research because the non-owner managers were not authorized to voice out or suggest to the owner-managers what they think is best for the organization. After all, there was resistance from the side of the owner-managers. When the non-owner managers were not heard and were not engaged in the decision-making process, it led to their demotivation. Also, when non-owner managers were not empowered to make decisions, and they were unable to cope (Folkman, 1986) with a stressful situation, there is a higher probability that they resign. One example is shown from my Action Research is when 'a non-owner manager asked to do something which is no longer part of his responsibility without proper transition that had taken place last March 9, 2018, but he does not have a choice. After two weeks, he tendered his resignation.' Another example is when a non-owner manager was neglected and disregarded when he wanted to share his idea of improving the business processes of a specific department. He was not also allowed to speak about what he had prepared. The same event happened twice in a year. Thus, he lost all hope and did not want to share his thoughts anymore.' These examples are cases when non-owner managers are unable to cope up with a stressful situation.

Due to the lack of empowerment of non-owner managers to make decisions, it pushes the non-owner managers to experience regret from the decision that they could share to the family firm since they will just be ignored or disregarded instead of being rewarded. Non-owner managers even said during the Action Research that 'they will experience regret whenever they want to decide because whenever the decision has been shared to the family firm, it cannot be altered, revised or changed.' What the non-owner manager wants to happen as indicated in their feedback was that the owner-managers must support the non-owner managers so that they will feel that they are also important. R8 said during focus group discussions that 'owner-managers must be considerate in every mistake or decisions that non-owner managers do so that they will not experience any regret.' The need for empowerment is also critical because it advocates a collaborative environment which is a prerequisite for a leaderful organization.

5.3.2. Negative emotions for non-owner managers

The second cause why non-owner managers are leaving the family firm was because of the negative emotions they experienced. I mentioned earlier that both fear and disappointment are one of the factors that limit decision making. Both fear and disappointment are negative emotions that affect non-owner managers. As an owner-manager, I arrived at a point that emotions have an impact on the outcome of the decision of non-owner managers. Leading from the results of my Action Research, I have understood that there is a need for non-owner managers to have the freedom and power to participate in decision employing empowerment from the owner-managers. One example is when R2 said on his feedback after the pilot test project that 'he will only be motivated to do what is best for the family firm as long as they have the authority to make decisions within their scope and responsibility.'

As a result, the non-owner managers exhibit a positive emotion as a result of this freedom and authority (empowerment) because they can do their function and there is congruency with regards to what they expect to do and what they expect to receive (Bee, 2014). When they are happy and motivated, they will become motivated as their willingness increases. Hence, they will be fully engaged in doing what they need to do as non-owner managers. It is stated in the diary dated November 7, 2018 when R8 said that 'he saw R7 engaged in business planning and strategy during the pilot test project. He directly worked with him during this time.' These non-owner managers also did not exhibit any feeling of regret (Zeelenberg, 1996) when they have to participate in decision making since they know that the decisions, they made are significant to the family firm. It is shown when R1 responded as part of his feedback on the second question during the semi-structured interviews. He said that 'he never felt any regret when he was allowed to make decisions.' R6 and R7 supported this statement and said, 'why would they feel any regret if what they did is significant and necessary.' It means that that the non-owner managers are accountable for the decisions they make. The non-owner managers were also happy and felt trusted when they have a chance to make decisions because they are now heard and empowered during the pilot test. When this happens, the non-owner managers will not exhibit negative emotions and increase the possibility that they will stay.

5.3.3. Lack of training and development

Another reason why the non-owner managers did not experience any regret or negative emotions was that there was ample training given to the non-owner managers. The lack of training is one of the reasons that causes non-owner managers to leave the family firm. This training and development are necessary because non-owner managers need to make decisions which are crucial for business sustainability. One of the prevalent themes that came out from the semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions was training or 'improving their skills.' It is mentioned in the diary dated January 24, 2018 where 'R3 responded in the second question from the feedback asked from him stating that 'the pieces of training and seminars they have attended improved their decision-making skills.' R7 on his response to the second question of the semi-structured interviews said that 'training is one of the tools that will enhance their decision-making skills.' R10 and R11 responded in Q3 during the semi-structured interviews that 'they need to attend training because it will improve their decision making and their qualifications.' The responses of these non-owner managers mean that as much as they want to make a decision, they need to ensure that the decision they make is ideal for the family firm. It also alleviates their hesitation and their fear of making decisions.

Aside from this, if there is no training and development provided, the non-owner managers are unable to make decisions based on their role, as mentioned by R1 dated August 12, 2018 in the focus group discussions. He said, 'it is going to be a challenge for him to grow in the company if they want to make decisions because there were not allowed to attend training or seminars that will equip them to make better decisions.' Also, if they need to decide without proper guidance, it increases their hesitation and state of confusion. If this continues to persist that no training given to non-owner managers, it causes the non-owner manager to think about his current employment since he is no longer happy about what he does as part of his role. It eventually leads him to leave and resign, increasing the risk of attrition rate of non-owner managers. These pieces of training will also serve as an opportunity for the non-owner managers to learn new things and opportunity for them to challenge themselves to go outside of their comfort zone.

5.3.4. Compensation issues

The last reason that has caused the high attrition rate of non-owner managers is compensation. Both the semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions showed a prevalent theme on salary or compensation. The responses of the participants indicate that the amount of payment that the non-owner managers receive was below industry standards. I have mentioned in my diary dated May 5, 2018 that 'Enticement to leave the family firm increases, as mentioned by R7 in the semi-structured interviews because 'other companies offer a better compensation package doing the same role or function.' R8 also mentioned during the semi-structured interviews that 'they still receive the same salary after working with the family firm for a certain number of years.' Furthermore, R7 said during the focus group discussions that 'they should receive adequate compensation as non-owner managers.' Lastly, R4 said that 'the changes on their compensation made a significant factor why he never had any regret with regards to his roles and responsibilities.'

The compensation theme is also related to the motivation theme of non-owner managers working because it is one of the determining factors for them to stay. It is another indicator that they are exhibiting a positive emotion as non-owner managers. As also discussed in the action research project, the issue on low compensation is also one of the reasons why non-owner managers are pirated by other companies providing the same services even if these non-owner managers are not applying to them since these companies offer a better compensation package or salary. When they are pirated despite their long tenure with the family firm, there is a higher probability that they will leave since they see that opportunity to grow as part of their career progression. When they do this, it is indicated in the action research project that they can fulfil their aspirations as individuals. It also excites them to leave the family firm because there is congruency with regards to what they do and what they expect to receive in return from that different company.

5.4. Reduction of attrition rate of non-owner managers through participation

Once I have explained the causes of the high attrition rate of non-owner managers, I intend to explain how participation through decision making reduced the attrition rate of non-owner managers. The pilot test project is significant because I was able to identify how greater participation reduced the attrition rate of non-owner managers. It has reduced the attrition rate of non-owner managers because there is greater participation of non-owner managers in decision making as a result of their empowerment during the pilot test project. As such, they had exhibited a positive emotion when they were able to fulfil their responsibilities as non-owner managers. Using the Action Research I did and as stated in the diary dated February 26, 2019 in Stage five on feedback on my second question from them, R1 said that 'they never felt any regret when they were allowed to decide in during the pilot test project.' R2 even 'said that the decisions they made during the pilot test were the best decision they ever made as non-owner managers. In return, it reduced their feeling of regret.' R9 even argued that he did not feel regret when he participated in the pilot test project because of his capability to fulfil his role put into test.

These statements mean that when they have participated in decision making, it has significantly reduced their feeling of regret. Thus, there is no need to use regret regulation strategies anymore. The higher chance of participation in decision making also made the Business Development department a collaborative one. Even if one way to do this a collaboration are utilizing suggestion boxes, it has paved the way for the non-owner managers to speak up what is best for the family firm. One of the reasons also why greater participation reduced the attrition rate of non-owner managers because when they were able to make decisions, they were able to confirm their role. This confirmation has led to the congruency with regards to what they expect to get in return. This congruency, as argued in the literature review, leads to positive discrete emotions (Bee, 2014).

This positive cognitive emotion that these non-owner managers have felt led to motivation that keeps them engaged as part of their willingness and ability to stay as non-owner managers. Another imperative factor why also these non-owner managers did not show any hesitations with regards to the decisions they make was because their uncertainties to make decisions alleviates because there were ample training and guidance were provided to them before they make a decision. These positive emotions overcame the intention for non-owner managers to leave the family firm because this has affected their thoughts, behaviours and motivation. Also, when salaries of the non-owner managers increased changed as a result of their suggestions, it entices them to do their responsibility.

However, and this must not be underestimated, there are other factors at play that affect attrition rates, namely:

1. **Management style:** where top-down hierarchical management - particularly where, as in this instance, decision making is the exclusive right of owner-managers, appears to play a major role in affecting the self-esteem, self-identity and motivation of those who do not belong to this group. Thus someone appointed to a role of 'middle-manager', would rightfully and reasonably expect the freedom to make decisions, having amassed the qualifications and experience as befitting the role. They are, in other words, managers in name only. If they can expect to be given such freedom and responsibility in another firm, then it should not come as a surprise when they decide to leave.

2. **Lack of Training and Development:** Even though the middle managers are experienced and qualified, it is essential that they undergo initial and continuing training for them to assimilate with local conditions, procedures and technology. It is perfectly feasible, for example, that a person will be moving from another industry sector, and while possessing the generic management skills, will require induction into the technical aspects of the new job. Styles of decision making too, vary between jobs, as does the expectations placed upon decision-makers as to the degree of risk, they are allowed to display in making the decision. Levels of risky behaviour or risk-averseness vary between different companies and industry sectors, making it essential that middle-managers fully understand the limits to their authority. This understanding can be developed both formally, through written procedures or informally by observing others' behaviours, but without training or development has resulted in fear, disappointment and hesitations on the part of non-owner managers in making decisions.

3. **Compensation systems.** The term **'**compensation' covers a range of tangible and intangible rewards and is covered extensively by scholars and practitioners across the Management, Psychology, Sociological and Education disciples. Throughout this thesis, the main focus has been on intangible, psychological factors of which emotions and regret are a part. It is clear though, that middle managers' salary – the most basic of Douglas McGregor's (1960) 'Theory X' factors (full ref: McGregor, Douglas M. *The Human Side of Enterprise*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1960.), remains unfulfilled as a motivator within this family firm. Perhaps the relatively low salaries awarded in the firm, reflect the low expectations bestowed by senior owner-managers, who in colonizing decision making for themselves, project a lack of trust and responsibility upon the middle managers. Of note also, is the lack of prospect for improving one's salary with experience over time. It is a 'given' that experience exposes a manager to higher-level decisions and their associated risks, and thus, it is only right that they should be rewarded appropriately.

5.5. Chapter Summary

Following the research question outlined in Chapter One, throughout this chapter, I have explained the emotions and behaviours of non-owner middle managers in the family-owned corporation. This explanation serves to address the Problem Statement, also identified in Chapter One i.e.

There is a high attrition rate of non-owner middle managers leaving the company for the past five years in the family firm in the Philippines with an average rate of 8% per quarter.

As explained, therefore, the central issue revolves around the restrictions on decision making placed upon middle managers and the ensuing negative emotions they experience. I now turn my attention towards the sub-research questions from Chapter One in turn:

1. **Which factors restrict non-owner managers in decision making and how can these factors be reduced?**

The first part of this question has been clearly explained above. The second part, dealing with its resolution has been partly explained here but will be continued in the following, final chapter, where I address the practicalities and difficulties which might be encountered in seeking solutions.

2. **How do non-owner managers behave when given the freedom and authority to participate in decision making?**

This question was addressed from the results of my Pilot Project, where for the first time, the middle managers were allowed the freedom to partake in decision making. The Pilot Project, acting as an Action Research cycle will also be presented in the following chapter as a discrete element of Actionable Knowledge, where I will outline the opportunities to scholar-practitioners as well as the difficulties which might be encountered.

3. **To what extent might greater participation in decision making reduce the rate of attrition of non-owner middle managers in the family-owned corporation in the Philippines?**

This sub-research question has already been partly subsumed into the two previous questions, but as explained in point ‘C’ above, there are other factors at play which will affect attrition. I would like to make it clear; therefore, that participation in decision making will, in all likelihood, only partly reduce attrition if it is not accompanied by improvement in intangible methods compensation, i.e. salary and progression in salary and other perks associated with greater risk.

6. Conclusion of the Thesis

6.1. Overview

In the final chapter, I discuss the outcomes and feedback of my Action Research to the owner-managers. This feedback coming from the owner-managers will serve as the 'action' component from the findings I have discovered in the Business Development department. Also, the feedback serves as a reference that other departments could use for the planned pilot test. It will shape the recommendations I intend to do after this DBA thesis. Aside from these, I also plan to discuss what was my learning throughout my doctoral journey using the diary and how it changed my outlook on how non-owner managers are making decisions. Furthermore, I also discuss in this chapter, the limitations and implications of this doctoral thesis and as well as the intended further research or next steps after this DBA thesis. Most importantly, I outline the actionable knowledge stemming from the thesis.

6.2. Actionability of my findings

For the past three years of writing this DBA thesis, I have sought to identify the reasons behind the high attrition rate of non-owner middle managers leaving the family firm. As an insider action researcher, I had been able to meet the research objectives as a result of the five stages of action research methodology and be able to confirm the phenomenon that is happening. Supported by the literature that has reframed my thinking and my pre-understanding, I have explored the reasons why non-owner managers are leaving the family firm. As stated in my discussion, these were because of 1. Lack of empowerment of non-owner managers to make decisions, 2. Negative emotions that non-owner managers feel, 3. Lack of training and development given to the non-owner managers and 4. Compensation issues. Coming from these findings of my action research, I have to explain these issues and the positive emotions exhibited by the non-owner managers since their participation in the Pilot Project. As a result, I brought to their attention the need to continue and expand this piloting beyond the Business Development department. There is a need to keep the pilot test because the non-owner managers become motivated and driven as a result of these changes.

6.2.1. Presentation of the findings to the owner-managers

I presented these findings to the other owner-managers, who are also my fellow owner-managers. The owner-managers involved in the decision-making process are the president of the family firm who acts as a Chief Executive Officer, the Vice President for Finance and the two junior managing partners who are working as second-generation owner-managers. There is a total of six owner-managers, including myself. I made sure that the presentation was concise and straightforward to ensure that they will have a clear understanding of what was the objective of the research. It was also imperative that they knew the reason why it is essential to the family firm. I also needed to make sure that the presentation was direct to the point and addresses the critical aspects of the research objective and its value to the organization.

On the day of the meeting dated February 18, 2019, I have written in my diary that,

> *'I was able to get the approval from my fellow owner-managers that they are available in the entire afternoon. I was able to get their time for two hours from two o'clock until four o'clock pm. I created a ten slides PowerPoint presentation with a simple layout so that the message of the presentation I am about to share to them is not confusing. I went inside the board room and started discussing to them what was the result of my research and why it is imperative for the family firm. I began by discussing the agenda, objective, the research objectives, findings from the action research, and what will be the next steps. The value and importance of this doctoral thesis shown in practice where if neglected could affect the business in totality. The moment I started with my presentation, I was nervous and anxious because I know that the presentation I made is a break or make for me to continue with the changes I intend to do for my family firm in the coming months'*

During the presentation to the owner-managers, I have written in my diary,

> *'I could remember that they were listening to my presentation, and they were open to the feedback as a result of my findings to them. They were also shocked because they never knew that these 'phenomenon' as I call it is already happening. They never realized this not until I have told them these findings during the presentation.'*

Arising from these statements, I realized that there is a disconnect with regards to what the owner-managers know and the non-owner managers thoughts and their emotions are. These statements are further supported as I have written in my diary,

> '*When I had a meeting with them, I did not dwell so much on literature because I know that my fellow owner-managers will not be able to appreciate this. Instead, I focused on the feedback of the non-owner managers when I did the Action Research. I told the owner-managers what the non-owner managers wanted to happen, and I told my fellow owner-managers that I have directly engaged myself with the non-owner managers to get the data that I needed for the intended and accomplished three months pilot test. Aside from these, I also mentioned 'that the changes we did in the pilot test addressed the issue on the negative emotions that had caused for the non-owner*

> *managers leaving the family firm that had resulted in a higher attrition rate.' The implementation of the pilot test project (four action components,) also contributed to the motivation of the non-owner managers, which led them to stay (as discussed from the feedback they shared with me).*

The meeting lasted for an hour and forty-five minutes. My presentation lasted for forty-five minutes and the remaining time was more on discussions about the presentation I have shown to them. It was indeed a memorable experience because it was the first time that a meeting happened not to discuss the business which tackles about growth or profit but instead what we intend to do next as a result of this meeting about the Action Research Feedback.

6.2.2 Feedback of the owner-managers

As a result of my meeting with my fellow owner-managers, I noticed and have written in my diary that,

> *'After the presentation, with regards to the results of the action research, 'the president of the company was the first person who asked me what my experience was when I had direct interaction with the non-owner managers during the pilot test such as resistance to participate in decision making and sharing their feedback with me as an owner-manager among others. I gave the owner-managers an overview of the feedback and what they wanted to change. Aside from this, The VP for finance wanted to call for a meeting with the HR Director. The intent was to inquire how much was the total cost and investment that the family firm did when the salaries or compensation made to the Business Development Department. She also said that 'it would be a welcome change for the family firm if we can finalize the KPI or Key Performance indexes not just limited to the Business Development department but also other departments such as Operations, Finance, Logistics and Human Resources.' The Managing partners who belong to the second-generation owner-managers asked for a timeline and the next corresponding steps regarding this to me.*
>
> *'The president of the company wanted to understand the changes in a two-fold approach. 'First, what are the benefits or consequences if the entire company will adopt the research. Moreover, second, how much time do we need to make this possible?' They have used my recommendations such as setting up suggestion boxes, empowerment of non-owner managers,*

continuous support for training and development and changing the salary scheme.' However, there is a limitation as concurred between the owner-managers. The owner-managers agreed to adopt this change in the family firm. They will adopt the changes as long as there is a guideline (limitations) with regards to the implementation of the pilot test project. The framework must be discussed not just amongst the owner-managers, but it should involve the non-owner managers as well. Also, they wanted to innovate and use online tools which will serve as a 360 degrees feedback not just among peers but also the owner-managers as well.'

Leading from the responses of the owner-managers, I can confirm that owner-managers exhibited openness for change. They were also receptive with regards to the steps that I have undertaken as an insider action researcher. However, this opportunity must not lead to a one-room house (Baron, 2015) where there is already an agreement made to implement these changes, but unfortunately, it does not translate into action or concrete plans. The next step I intend to do is to ensure that I will have a solid timeline that will be agreed upon by the owner-managers and non-owner managers and I need to make sure that the framework is concurred upon by all parties concerned. It supports a collaborative environment that fosters the exchange of ideas that creates new knowledge as a result of these dialogues (Ely, 2001).

6.2.3. Feedback of the non-owner managers

Aside from the feedback of the owner-managers, I also considered the competitive positions or point of view of non-owner managers about the findings I had when I did my Action Research. At first, the non-owner managers were unsure if there is an issue with regards to the limitations imposed by the owner-managers to them in terms of decision making since what matters most to them is their salaries they are receiving every month. It occurs since they are only doing what they need to do as employees in the family firm. However, their point of view has changed when they get to participate in the Action Research, and they were able to confirm that the opportunity dwells on how the owner-managers managed to create a process or a system where decisions are only limited to owner-managers. They also agreed that, as much as they want to participate in decision-making, they are unable to do so due to lack of training and demotivation. It is shown from the feedbacks they have shared with me during the data collection process. The negative emotion also arises when there is incongruency with regards to what they expect to receive as non-owner managers. They have also confirmed that they are only able to fulfil their roles based on what needs to be done when they have the full trust and confidence of the owner-managers.

6.3. My personal learning as an owner-manager

As an owner-manager and as an insider action researcher, this DBA journey gave me a different perspective on management and research. I realized that there is a need to listen and engage myself outside of my role as an owner-manager. For the past few years, I have realized that I only put into consideration the interest of the shareholders without taking into factor the importance of non-owner managers. The journey is an eye-opener for me because at first, I thought it was only an isolated case where a non-owner manager is leaving the family firm. Then from this isolated case, it later became a continuous event that became a vicious cycle. It is the reason why I went outside of the usual norm from what I used to do before, and I need to interact with the non-owner managers directly. When dialogues are taking place between the owner-managers and non-owner managers, interaction happens. These interactions are all recorded in my diary to ensure that all details are adequately documented. The literature has reframed my first-hand experience and the pre-understanding I used in the second chapter. I was able to appreciate the literature review because aside from reframing my pre-understanding, it also acted as a basis to frame the questions I intend to ask the non-owner managers during the semi-structured and focus group discussions.

As such, I was able to put a value of theory into practice. I supported this argument from the feedback of my action research methodology. Using the five stages of action research, I used a qualitative ethnographic, phenomenological action research approach. The first stage of my action research focused on my observation. Upon reading on the literature, I used in the second chapter; the literature reframed my view that calls for an action outside of this observation I have in the phenomenon. As such, I have realized that one way to confirm this phenomenon is through engaging myself directly with the non-owner managers. Engaging myself as I learned, is employing semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions. I have also realized that the questions I intend to ask from these non-owner managers must come from my pre-understanding and from the literature I used.

After I have directly engaged with the non-owner managers as an insider action researcher, I was able to use their responses which are part of the **"rich data"** that will be the basis for the proposed change I plan to do. I have realized that this change cannot be done in the entire family firm because I know that it will lead to issues which affect my relationship with my fellow owner-managers. I can only do this change using doing a pilot test project in a specific department. To make this possible, I decided to use the Business Development Department, which I directly manage as an owner-manager which gave me direct access and ease to the data I need. I used thematic analysis and coding, which provided me with the framework and guideline for the implementation of the pilot test project that bridges theory into practice. It can be a useful tool for insider action researchers to achieve action outside of theory.

As an owner-manager and as an insider action researcher, the vital knowledge I have gathered during the pilot test project is that the feedback and the richness of the data coming from the participants of the semi-structured and focus group discussions are an essential basis for implementing the action. The action involves, i.e. the empowerment of non-owner managers, putting a value on training and development, changing the salaries of the non-owner managers and making the environment a collaborative, addressed what the non-owner managers want. Upon the implementation of the pilot test, I realized that the pilot test was successful because it led to desirable outcomes such as positive emotions and their desire to stay in the company. They never felt any regret during the process. I have also addressed the research questions I stated in the DBA thesis.

In a nutshell, I was able to confirm the phenomenon happening where there is a high attrition rate of non-owner managers leaving the family firm due to the reasons I mentioned earlier. Because these are the reasons why they are leaving the family firm, I have learned and put a value on the role of non-owner managers in our family firm. Giving non-owner managers direction (guidance) through training and development, empowering them to make decisions, addressing the negative emotions that they could experience by listening to them and providing them extrinsic rewards such as changing their salaries are ways for them to be heard and given importance. In return, non-owner managers will stay and will take good care of our customers at the end of the day.

6.4. Paradigm shift as an owner-manager

The action research project is only a small part of the bigger picture of the change I intend to continue after this DBA thesis. I need to make sure that the agreement amongst the owner-managers must translate into concrete action in the following months or years. This specific action happened as a result of how theory translates into practice. Since the family firm I am working on is human resources based for advertising services, the owner-managers never dwell so much on theory because they only think that what we need in our day to day operations is practice. Perhaps, it is one of the reasons why there was resistance to engage in dialogues or feedback with the non-owner managers because these non-owner managers are focused on objective decisions. The owner-managers think that these objective decisions do not contribute to the business direction of the family firm. My paradigm has shifted when I convey the results of the DBA thesis and the journey, I have been through to my fellow owner-managers. As a result, the proposed change does not limit only to one department of the family firm but hopefully to the entire family firm. Importantly, the other non-owner managers will also be able to benefit from this in the medium or long term.

My paradigm has also shifted when I have realized that the role of non-owner managers is essential in the family firm because they have provided objective decisions that will drive the organisation forward. They can contribute to the family firm when they decide as a result of guidance and training provided to them. Furthermore, when they are capable of making a decision, it directly affects their emotions. For example, when non-owner managers are not empowered to make decisions, this specific phenomenon triggers the negative emotion that led them to be demotivated and disengaged. I have realized as an owner-manager, and as a scholar-practitioner, I need to give value to their feelings and their decisions as non-owner managers in the family firm.

Most importantly, though, the ‘paradigm’ shift, or change in worldview, is what has occurred to me as the research-practitioner. It became clear that I had not only to make changes in the non-owner managers’ conditions of work but to understand that it was I who was also becoming enlightened as an enabler of change. From the beginning, when I sensed something was wrong in the firm, and subsequently started to gather data and opinions informally, it may have been easier to do nothing – to let things continue as they were and to bury my concerns. It is, however, essential for a person in a senior management position such as me to go deeper and to confront the challenges of changing ‘hearts and minds’ - not through the imposition of further regulations and management diktats, but rigorous research and engagement. One of these challenges is of course, is the potential loss of one’s credibility, should you be perceived as shallow or manipulative in the way that data is handled – hence the need for rigor and transparency.

In the section below, ‘Actionable Knowledge’, I lay out a range of steps to achieve a respected research outcome into a family firm. Personal challenges arise at almost every step because of the time and effort required to fulfil them, but also because many of these steps require the research-practitioner to think, reflect and act following the facts presented as opposed to one’s preconceptions and biases.

6.5. Actionable Knowledge

Based upon my own experiences, my reflections on the successes and limitations of my research, I propose the *following actions and warnings for scholar-practitioners elsewhere*:

1. **In starting your research begin an open mind as in my case**, where on observing high attrition rates, I sought possible explanations from the literature. It led me to consider emotions and regret theory, which I had no previous knowledge of, as possible explanations. Then allow the literature to shape your research questions and methods. Although you will have already established initial research questions it is important that you keep these flexible so as to account for new knowledge that will come your way from reading literature.

2. **Be prepared to engage with people at all levels relevant to the research in hand**. In my case, while I continually engaged with the non-owner middle managers in my department, I made only cursory engagement with senior owner-managers, and then, only at the very end of my research. In so doing, as I mention later in the ‘Limitations’, you run the risk of missing out the views of important stakeholders. For others who, unlike me, are not a directly related of the family firm, it could be catastrophic not to engage senior managers in the aims and methods of your research from the start. I included here the action of getting senior approval to begin the project, as this is essential in every case.

3. **Look for the hidden linkages** – In this case, on noticing high attrition rates it was important to go beyond everyday observations of the middle managers behaviours as they did not reflect their deep dissatisfaction with their work of the company. The only measure of their dissatisfaction was the fact that high numbers of them were leaving the firm. This is a clear indication that, in not speaking out, these employees had decided that leaving was their only form of protest and recourse. The advice to future research - practioners is as mentioned in 1 above, in seaerching

for theoretical and empirical alternatives, your mind will be opened to new knowledge and "ways of knowing" (epistemology).

4. **Be prepared to change your mind – or to have your mind changed for you**. Be guided by the data, not by your assumptions. Such a change of mind (paradigm) can be stressful and make it seem that you have been wasting your time, or doing the wrong thing, but this is not so. By using Action Research, the data from each 'cycle' should guide planning and action in the next. Therefore, a change of mind will lead to new, exciting questions and possibilities for discovering things you do not already know or even think about. It happened to me on discovering just how negative were non-owner middle managers in their emotions.

5. **Take action** as I did, using a pilot project or other method for trying out your new understanding. In doing so be very careful to set specific objectives for the trial as I did (see pp. 92-102 for a full account). In brief, this means:

    - **Set a duration for the trial** such that it will be long enough to allow you to gather meaningful data, but not so long that the participants will lose interest.

    - **Set realistic objectives for the trial**. It may not be possible to test everything you have learned in the thesis, so keep it focused on key issues. In my Pilot Project, it was decision-making. The implementation of the pilot test was based on four important action criteria: (i) making the business development department a collaborative department, (ii) empowering them to make decisions on their own, (iii) making adjustments on their compensation and (iv) putting a value on training and development.

    - **Ensure that the actions of the participants allow them to do something new** or to do it differently, without causing them stress or be overly-discomforting. In my case, it was very important that the decisions they were permitted to take were within their capabilities and did not breach other peoples' areas of responsibility.

    - **Carefully monitor participants throughout the trial**. If you see they are losing interest or motivation, be prepared to revitalize the trial.

    - **Keep a diary or journal**. I used a diary for proper documentation of anything significant that includes the emotions and behaviours of the non-owner managers during the implementation of the action research.

- **Provide feedback on your findings to the participants** and senior management at the end of the trial or key points within it.

6.6. Limitations

There is a limitation to the DBA thesis I have written even if I was able to layout the plans of my action research to the owner-managers and the non-owner managers. These limitations are as follows:

a) The high attrition rate of non-owner middle managers, as discussed in the DBA thesis was focused on the following: 1. lack of empowerment of non-owner managers, 2. negative emotions, 3. lack of training and development and lastly, 4. compensation issues. Future scholar-practitioners could also focus on other factors or causes why non-owner managers are leaving the family firm.

b) The methodology I used focused on a qualitative ethnographic, phenomenological action research approach. Future scholar-practitioners in similar issues could also use other methods of research such as quantitative analysis or mixed methods. In analysing the data, I only used a thematic review which provided the framework and guideline for the implementation of the pilot test project.

c) The participants of the DBA thesis I used focused on the non-owner middle managers. The owner-managers were not involved when I conducted the semi-structured interview and focus group discussions which are part of my data collection methods. The owner-managers were only involved when they permitted me to proceed with the pilot test project in the Business Development department. For future research, insider action researchers could also involve the owner-managers in the methods of analysis (data collection) they intend to do.

d) The implementation of the pilot test project was limited to the Business Development Department alone, which I directly handle as an owner-manager. Future owner-managers who are also insider action researchers could also use other departments for their research.

e) The duration of the pilot test project lasted for one quarter or three months. Future insider action researchers could extend the length of the pilot test project such as bi-annual or annual depending on how big the scope of the pilot test project would be.

6.7. Further research and next steps

As a scholar-practitioner, the DBA thesis I wrote does not end here. As discussed, I and the other owner-managers, together with the non-owner managers, had discussions of what should happen next. The following next steps I plan to do are as follows:

a) I will create a concrete timeline or a **critical path schedule (CPS)** which will serve as tracking on the implementation of the next essential steps for the adoption of the said action research stages in other departments.

b) I need to directly **involve the owner-managers and non-owner managers** with regards to the implementation of the action research in other departments such as Human Resources, Finance and Operations. The application of the action research project to the other departments should reflect upon the implementation of the same pilot test project as a result of what I did in the Business Development department.

c) I will **share the results** of the action research project in Business Development with the other non-owner managers who was not directly involved. It will entice them why and how will they intend to participate in the planned action research to their respective departments.

d) I need to align with the owner-managers managing specifically other departments such as the VP For Finance for the Finance Department **when do I intend to do the action research project** to their department as reflected in the Critical Path Schedule.

e) I plan to allocate **three months** for each department who will undergo the same pilot test project.

f) I need to align with the owner-managers concerned with regards to the **progress of the action research** project I am about to execute to them. The non-owner managers should also be involved when I intend to share with the owner-managers the results of the action research.

6.8. Implications

As a result of the action research method, one of the implications of this study is in the context of psychological research is in the realm of the family business. Insider Action Researchers who are also acting as owner-managers could also use this research to focus on the behaviours of the non-owner managers. The literature used in this DBA thesis provided a guideline and a framework with regards to understanding the phenomenon I have observed. It has also supported the structure which will put a value on the role of the questions I asked during the semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions.

The findings leading from the action research methodology I used will have a significant contribution to theory because it has confirmed that non-owner managers who are unable to cope up with a stressful situation (Folkman, 1986) that leads to negative emotions (Bee, 2014). These negative emotions are central to the output or outcome of the decision they make as non-owner managers. Owner managers have to look into the cognitive appraisal of the non-owner managers in family firms (Bee, 2014) because if the owner-managers are unable to look into this, the owner-managers are unable to identify the behaviours of the non-owner managers which leads to undesirable outcomes.

Aside from these, the argument of cognitive appraisal as a result of the action research, confirmed that non-owner managers identity is activated (Stets, 2000) if they perform their roles and duties, respectively. However, if they are not empowered to make decisions (Bagger, 2014), they will be unable to fulfil their duties. If they are unable to fulfil their duties, their identity is not activated. Before any other undesirable outcomes arise, the literature suggested to the non-owner managers who are not still able to cope up with the stressful situation must use regret regulation strategies (Bjalkebring, 2016) (Labaki, 2016) as early as possible.

Insider action researchers and owner-managers could use the pieces of literature shown in the action research, to identify specific reasons that determine the reasons why non-owner managers are leaving the family firm. These reasons why non-owner managers are leaving the family firm is supported by substantial evidence as shown from the action research method, such as the responses of the participants of the research and the thematic analysis. Also, the implementation of the pilot test project implies that the reasons why non-owner managers are leaving the family firm were because of lack of empowerment, issues on compensation, there is no ample training provided and the negative emotions that they exhibit. The argument of the literature is confirmed, supported by the outcome of the Action Research through feedback. It has important implications for family business researchers today and in the future.

6.9. Chapter Summary

In this final chapter, I have discussed the actionability, of my findings resulting from the Action Research feedback. These are all important because these are the bases how significant the doctoral thesis is to the family firm. Aside from this, I also shared in this chapter my learning as an owner-manager throughout the journey of my DBA thesis. Furthermore, this personal learning has reframed my thinking and changed my perspective on how to make the family firm an ideal one (Davis, 1996) to achieve professionalization (Stanley, 2014). Also, I discussed the limitations of the study, and what are the next steps that other insider action researchers (acting as owner-managers in their organizations) who are interested in doing the same research on family firms. Lastly, I shared with the reader the implications of this DBA thesis.

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VI. Appendix

1. Manual Coding (semi structured interviews)

Respondent	Q1 Themes	Q2 Themes	Q3 Themes	Q4 Themes	Q5 Themes
R1	Trust	Empowerment	Trust	Empowerment	Motivation
	Collaboration	Trust		Trust	Compensation
	Authority				Trust
					Training
R2	Organizational Change	Collaboration	Decision making	Collaboration	Empowerment
	Decision Making	Decision Making	Emotions		Accountability
	Emotions				Trust
					Collaboration
					Growth
					Decision Making
R3	Trust	Communication	Decision making	Empowerment	Empowerment
	Regret		Emotions	Emotions	training
	Collaboration				Decision Making
R4	Empowerment	Trust	Emotions	Decision Making	Regret
	Collaboration	Collaboration	Accountability	Emotions	Collaboration
		Decision Making	Trust		trust
			Collaboration		
R5	Decision Making	Empowerment	Emotions	Empowerment	Empowerment
			Trust	Training	Accountability
					Compensation
R6	Trust	Decision Making	Empowerment	Power	Trust
		Collaboration	Transparency	Rewards	Compensation
					Collaboration
R7	Transparency	Empowerment	Empowerment	Decision Making	Empowerment
	Decision Making	Training	Decision making	Training	Decision Making

		Collaboration			Compensation
	Power	Collaboration	Emotions	Empowerment	Regret
	Empowerment	Training	Accountability	Collaboration	Collaboration
R8	Accountability				Decision Making
					Emotions
					Compensation
					Training
	Empowerment	Transparency	Emotions	Trust	Decision Making
R9		Decision Making	Motivations	Accountability	Collaboration
					Empowerment
R10	Decision Making	Collaboration	Decision Making	Objectivity	training
	Decision Making	Trust	Qualifications	Decision Making	Training
R11				Objectivity	

Themes	**Prevalence**	**Ranking**
Empowerment	20	1
Decision Making	23	2
Collaboration	18	3
Training	11	4
Emotions	13	5
Trust	15	6
Transparency	3	7
Compensation	8	
Accountability	6	

Disregarded:

Organizational change

2. Manual Coding (Focus Group Discussions)

	First Phase		Second Phase				Third Phase
	Q1	Q2	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1
Theme 1	Authority	Regret	Happy	Compensation	Empowerment	Training	Suggestions
Theme 2	Decision making	Feedback	Empowerment	Compensation	Decision making	Opportunity	Decision making
Theme 3	Fear	Fear	Happy	Trust	Regret	Happy	Suggestions
Theme 4		Afraid	Trust	Trust	Accountability	Opportunity	Fear
Theme 5		Decision making	Happy	Proud	Guidance	Happy	Trust
Theme 6		Trust	Proud	Compensation	Decision making		Regret
Theme 7			Proud	Trust	Accountability		Fear
Theme 8			Rewards		Trust		
	3	6	8	7	8	5	7

Themes	Prevalence	Ranking
Empowerment	5	3
Decision Making	8	2
Training	3	4
Emotions	16	1
Compensation & Rewards	4	5
Trust	6	

3. Coding Process Guidelines

a. Code as many potential themes or patterns as possible which you never knows what could be interesting later.
b. Code extracts of data inclusively and keep a little of the surrounding data if relevant, a common criticism of coding when the context is lost.
c. Remember that you can code individual extracts of data as many different themes as they fit into so an extract which could be uncoded or could be coded as much as one want.