

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Administrative management for staff development at La Milagrosa Company, Portoviejo canton, Ecuador

Gestión administrativa para el desarrollo del personal en la empresa La Milagrosa, cantón Portoviejo, Ecuador

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The study analyzes administrative manage-**Abstract** ment and its impact on staff development at La Milagrosa company in Portoviejo, Manabí, Ecuador. Recognizing that effective management is essential for business operations and employee development, both theoretical and practical aspects of relevant variables were evaluated. A non-experimental, correlational, and cross-sectional methodology was applied, using historical-logical, analytical-synthetic, and inductive-deductive methods. The field research involved 25 employees and five administrative staff members to validate the proposed guidelines. The results revealed that while administrative management meets the company's basic operational needs, it lacks a structured plan for staff development based on employees' skills and competencies. Therefore, it is recommended to implement a professional development program to foster the growth of employees and partners, strengthening their performance within and beyond the organization.

Keywords administrative management, staff development, processes, training, motivation.

Resumen El estudio analiza la gestión administrativa y su impacto en el desarrollo del personal de la empresa La Milagrosa, en Portoviejo, Manabí-Ecuador. Considerando que una gestión efectiva es clave para el funcionamiento empresarial y el desarrollo de los empleados, se evaluaron teórica y prácticamente las variables relacionadas. Se aplicó una metodología no experimental, correlacional y transversal, utilizando los métodos histórico-lógico, analítico-sintético e inductivo-deductivo. La investigación de campo incluyó a 25 empleados y cinco funcionarios administrativos para validar los lineamientos propuestos. Los resultados mostraron que, aunque la gestión administrativa satisface las necesidades básicas de la empresa, carece de un plan estructurado para el desarrollo del personal basado en sus habilidades y competencias. Por ello, se recomienda implementar un programa de desarrollo profesional que fomente el crecimiento de empleados y socios, fortaleciendo su desempeño dentro y fuera de la organización.

Palabras clave gestión administrativa, desarrollo del personal, procesos, capacitación, motivación.

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Introduction

Nowadays, we live in a totally globalized and competitive world, where not only is the creation of micro-enterprises important to maintain a stable economy, but rather, to have good administrative management to strengthen and maintain this (Falconi et al., 2019). Micro-enterprises, due to their origin, are major problems related to the organization of their internal activities, which affects decision-making by administrators and undoubtedly reduces the possibilities of increasing their profitability and sustainability (Rodríguez, 2022).

For this reason, in order for micro-enterprises to function and meet their objectives effectively, they must implement the fundamental principles of administration, planning, organization, direction, and control, that is, the administrative management process, since in this way, the activities they develop will always be aimed at meeting the objectives set.

Administrative management applied in organizations is a key element in the development of their activities; it allows for the improvement of the relationship between productivity, costs, and quality and also allows for the achievement of objectives in the established times and deadlines (CANTO, 2021). Administrative management is a large-scale issue for the company; it is worked on in order to seek the greatest use of resources, taking into account that through these means, resources are integrated, formulated, and used (Flores, 2015).

Given the above, it is necessary to highlight that administration is considered a science, technique, or art that allows the resources available to the organization to work together to achieve the same objective. In other words, human talent tries to use material, financial, and technological resources in the best way possible to achieve the planned goals.

This allows companies to make more efficient use of the material, human, and financial resources that the organization has, all of which are always oriented towards fulfilling the organization's objectives. In other words, it is responsible for using resources efficiently. To do this, activities are organized, directed, and controlled for better results (Rodríguez-Toala & Peñafiel-Loor, 2022).

As a fundamental element within administrative management, there is the unifying and systemic aspect, which has been supported by the business, economic, social, and technological development proposed in recent years (González, 2020). It is established that administrative management is a process that involves the development of four basic functions, such as planning, organization, direction, and control. Returning to the personnel who manage it is a dynamic as-

pect with clear functions for obtaining institutional objectives

Within companies, González (2020) states that administrative management is the function that a person performs by assigning tasks to teams or departments, as well as allocating resources to such departments. Therefore, Chiavenato (2009) himself states that the organization is a space with great openness to creation, where the evolution of administrative management can be observed, and a change in business development as such can be perceived, considering its organization, operation, and functionality.

Therefore, it is considered that depending on the effectiveness of the administrative management maintained by the company, the development of the personnel working there will be equally effective. Depending on the administration, the personnel will be clear about what obligations they must fulfill within their work activities to achieve a common objective, which, when unified, allows the achievement of the business objective initially formulated by the company's administrators.

For its part, human capital has taken on great importance within companies as a fundamental element for the success of their functions. According to Gaspar (2021), the organization of human talent is an element that cannot be dispensed with in the business world. Thus, the success of modern organizations lies in the ability to integrate workers into the business projects of companies.

According to Castro (2020), as part of human talent, efficiency is one of the main elements of the organization in job performance, so needs such as the achievement of objectives, competitiveness, motivation and training, and behavior must be met. Gaspar (2021) mentions that for there to be true staff development within a company, it is necessary to carry out recruitment processes based on the opportunities offered by the company, an ideal selection of staff, constant training, rewards for recognition of the work done, and performance evaluations of each employee in order to enable their development based on their activities performed.

Thus, administrative management is closely linked to staff development, which must include strategies and planning of staff requirements, as well as their professional growth management, training, and forming a good organizational culture.

Based on the above, the author of the research intends to analyze the administrative management of the company La Milagrosa del Cantón Portoviejo and its impact on staff development to establish the level of effectiveness in deci-



sion-making in the latter for the benefit of both employees and the company in general.

According to Janoski and Lepadatu (2014), in the Province of Manabí, companies experience problems related to their internal organization, which affects their administrators' correct decision-making regarding truthful and reliable information.

Within the company La Milagrosa, belonging to the community El Milagro in the parish of Picoazá in the canton of Portoviejo, there are 23 partners, both women and men, who have been working associatively since 2010, intending to boost the country's economy. The company Milagrosa, in administrative management, is the business activity that seeks to improve the productivity and competitiveness of the company through its managers.

Traditional banana flour and cinnamon-flavored flour are being developed and distributed in several local stores in Portoviejo and Manta. They are dedicated to the production of banana flour in different presentations and flavors with the best techniques and good manufacturing practices, allowing through the commercialization of the products to improve the living conditions of the associates and, therefore, of the clients, providing a product with high quality and nutritional standards.

Methodology

The research is non-experimental, correlational, and transversal. It is based on a process that involves subjecting an object or group of individuals to certain conditions, stimuli, or treatments (independent variable) to observe the effects or reactions that occur (dependent variable).

The scope of the research is exploratory, descriptive, and correlational. It uses a mixed approach, that is, qualitative and quantitative since its purpose was to determine, analyze, and describe the characteristics and qualities applied in administrative management and their impact on the personal development of the company La Milagrosa in the canton of Portoviejo.

Mixed research methodology involves collecting, analyzing, and integrating both quantitative and qualitative research. This approach is used when a better understanding of the research problem is required (Dawadi et al., 2021).

Regarding the methods, the historical-logical method assesses the evolution of the variables and their behavior over time from the theoretical and practical foundations, as well as the essential stages and characteristics of the process of improving work motivation. The analysis-synthesis method

aims to examine the theoretical information related to staff motivation and administrative management, from general to particular topics or aspects within the research. The induction-deduction method is for the study of the basic aspects of the research, specifically for the study of the literature, which allows the discovery of the particular aspects of motivation at work and its relationship with the organizational climate.

For the collection of research data, various techniques were employed, including document review, observation, survey, and interview. The document review involved analyzing the organization's documents, including regulations, laws, programs, and methodological guidelines related to human resources activities, as well as textbooks and annual and strategic plans. The observation, both structured and participatory, was conducted at the company La Milagrosa using an observation guide to diagnose and characterize administrative management in personal development within the organization. Additionally, a structured survey was administered to employees to assess the current state of administrative management and its impact on personal development, as well as the relationship between both variables. Finally, a structured interview was conducted with the company's manager or legal representative to gather details about the management carried out within the organization.

This research work requires a universe to study. This universe is composed of the company's main authority, the president of the Board of Directors of the La Milagrosa company from the Portoviejo canton, Manabí province. As well as the personnel that work daily within the company, which between partners and employees, make up a total of 25 people. Therefore, it is necessary to consider the population universe in order to obtain reliable results for the processing of the information and to present it clearly in the present study. Additionally, five partners from the administrative part were considered for the validation of the proposal.

Results and discussion

The company La Milagrosa, belonging to the El Milagro community in the Picoazá parish of the Portoviejo canton, is made up of 23 partners, both women and men, who have been working together since 2010 to boost everyone's economy. They are currently developing traditional plantain flour and cinnamon-flavored flour, which they already distribute in several local Portoviejo and Manta stores.

Once the direct information has been collected through different techniques, each of the data obtained is analyzed in compliance with the objectives set at the beginning of the research. These objectives include a theoretical analysis of



administrative management, personnel development, and the influence of these variables within the company La Milagrosa.

For this purpose, various graphs based on the field research carried out are presented so that the reader can know the results obtained in detail. To validate the results, the data were confirmed by the same person considered in the research to be certain of what was stated. Excel and Word programs were used to process and present the information that provides validity to the study carried out, especially in the descriptive and analytical methods used.

Factors that affect the administrative management of the company La Milagrosa

La Milagrosa has maintained an unchanged administrative process for several years, conditioned by the COVID-19 pandemic. This process allows them to meet market demand without overburdening their staff, working at full capacity.

Based on the surveys applied, most employees feel satisfied with the work done; even though the company does not provide them with constant training or rewards such as awards or recognition for their work, it does fulfill its work obligations, which allows the staff to be percentage-wise satisfied with the current conditions. Therefore, the following graphs provide a better view of the research work.

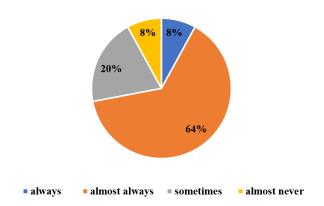


Figure 1. Suitable environment for work development.

The majority of employees (64%) stated that the work environment within the company is almost always adequate, allowing personnel to develop according to their work requirements or needs. Only 8% of those surveyed stated that they almost never maintain a work environment conducive to such development, which suggests that not all personnel are satisfied with the conditions the company offers its employees and partners.

In this aspect, the adequate conditions for carrying out

the work daily have also been evaluated, with the majority (44%) stating that they sometimes have these conditions, 40% stating that the conditions are almost always adequate, and 8% stating that these conditions are always and almost never obtained.

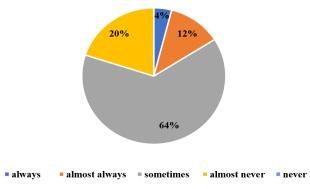


Figure 2. Employee training.

According to the data obtained, it can be shown that partners and employees state that only sometimes (64%) receive training to improve and perfect the work carried out daily. 20% consider that this type of internal activity is almost never carried out, 12% express that it has almost always been carried out, and only 4% consider that these actions are always carried out. Based on the above, it is possible to analyze that the company does not have an activated training system for employees and partners, which makes the work to be carried out empirically with the knowledge acquired at the beginning of each position, without the most outstanding possibility of improvement of the staff, so that they develop their skills with the possibility of a promotion within the institution.

It should be noted that the company is run by workers and partners who have initial knowledge of the work they must perform and that it does not frequently make significant changes to its process or major implementation of machinery, which means that they do not feel the strategic need to continually provide productive development to their staff, which is why it is considered. Those surveyed have stated that no further training is provided periodically; it is usually done at the beginning of each job, where the obligations of each worker and the role they must fulfill are established in order to satisfy the needs of their position.

When asked about training independently, it was found that 44% never do this type of training, 36% almost never, 16% of employees say that they have sometimes done some training, and the remaining 4% consider that they almost always receive training in different professional aspects. This leads to the conclusion that the staff only does their job



and receives what the company provides for professional development and that no activity is carried out to improve their personal and work skills.

Through observation, it was found that employees know the production process and know what they must do in their position, so they carry out their work naturally, with the knowledge previously acquired to fulfill their functions. Likewise, through the interview with the manager, it was found out that a job training process has been carried out, but some years ago, specifically before the COVID-19 pandemic, currently what has been carried out is health training, that is, the care that must be taken in the face of the pandemic, and what to do to prevent and counteract this health eventuality.

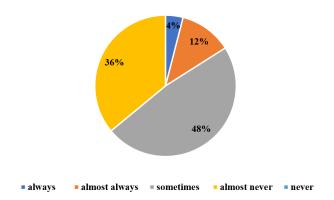


Figure 3. Recognition that encourages staff development.

After tabulating and graphing the recognition that the company provides to its workers and partners to improve staff development, it was established that 48% consider that they sometimes receive fair recognition for their work participation in the company, 36% express that this type of recognition is almost never given, 12% consider that this type of activity is almost always carried out to encourage employees and 4% state that recognition has always been given for the work done.

According to the respondents, recognition is given at the end of the year, where partners thank all their employees for the work done throughout the year and for the sales achieved. Considering that the staff is the engine that drives the company, making them meet the deliveries and achieve the objectives proposed at the beginning of each year. Likewise, it was possible to learn through field research that they receive work incentives at the end of each fiscal period, where rewards are given for their work, and the work that each of the partners has had within the organization is highlighted.

According to the data presented in Figure 4, regarding the work responsibility of the company's employees, 48% consider that they always carry out their work within the company effectively, 36% express that each individual's responsibility is almost always fully fulfilled, and 16% state that the work

to be done is sometimes satisfactorily completed.

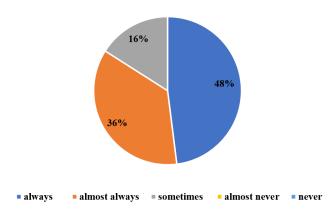


Figure 4. Work responsibility.

Based on the above, it can be stated that in this area, employees consider that the work is done efficiently, thus satisfying the partners and manager of the company to continue working with the same employees for a longer time.

Regarding professional skills, respondents have stated that they are capable of assuming new responsibilities as appropriate since if they are directly related to the work they are currently doing, they would be fully capable of doing so. However, suppose the company wants to implement new production lines. In that case, it is necessary to hire specialized personnel or, on the contrary, train current employees to be capable of carrying out the work.

It should be noted that the company is an agro-industrial association that produces flavored banana flour and, therefore, can implement a new production line. However, at present, it only does so based on the same product but with different flavors to increase sales annually. A process for the implementation of a new product has not been initiated, so the same level of production is maintained.

Therefore, it was learned that work activity is constant, establishing that 60% of those surveyed consider that they almost always carry out the same work activity for which they were hired, 32% express that they sometimes rotate their activity, depending on the productive needs of the company, and 8% stated that they always remain in the same position so that each employee has full knowledge of the activity that they must carry out daily, in order to fulfill their work for which they were initially hired satisfactorily.

When analyzing Figure 5, it can be observed that 56% consider that the company almost always maintains security within it, 28% express that there is always a security system that allows them to feel safe doing their daily work, and 16% state that sometimes the company provides this type of security.



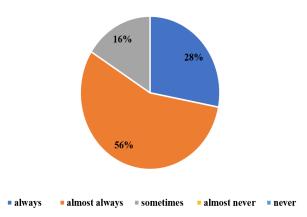


Figure 5. Occupational safety.

Based on the interviews conducted with the manager, he can state that the company La Milagrosa maintains a capable internal security system for employees, ensuring the rapid application of supplies or any other type of need required to cover an emergency.

It was established that workers have more experimental or empirical training than professional training as for professional and experimental training. Since the people who work daily in the company are not professionals directly in the specialty they perform, they have learned, based on experience and training provided by the company, to perform optimal work and continuously improve it.

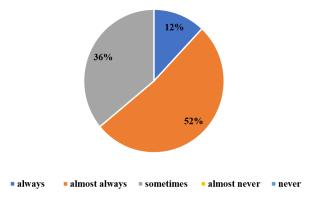


Figure 6. Remuneration received by employees.

Results obtained through surveys conducted with employees of the La Milagrosa company show that compensation is almost always fair based on the work performed and in compliance with the State's labor regulations. 36% say that this type of compensation is sometimes met, and the remaining 12% say they always receive fair compensation according to the laws and the work performed.

Within the same surveys, it was found that 44% consider that salaries are almost always and sometimes paid on time and 12% state that they are always paid on time. In this way, it can be interpreted that salaries are frequently received on time since sometimes there may be eventualities that cause a delay in payments, but they are generally covered in the agreed week (last week of the month).

Once the survey was completed for all employees, they were directly contacted to find out about the satisfaction generated by the research work carried out within the company. It was found that the majority of employees and partners consider that this type of research allows the development of the company in some way since it makes the company and what is carried out in it known so that many more people are aware of the great work carried out and that in this city there are companies that undertake and grow with the effort of their own partners and employees.

In order to know the administrative management that the company La Milagrosa, from the city of Portoviejo-Manabí, currently maintains, an interview was conducted with the company manager to learn more about this variable. The administrative processes were inquired about, to which it was established that several changes have been made, with the purpose of constantly improving the situation, especially after COVID-19, the changes were more recurrent, making the company continue to operate, despite the serious world situation and especially of the families that depend directly on this company.

It was learned that a basic administrative process is generally applied, where the planning of each activity is one of the most important points for everything to go well in the company. The organization with which each activity is carried out is fundamental, and constant control makes everything go well despite the complications inherent to production and the environment.

The company's work team was investigated, which was corroborated with the preliminary information available, taking into account the 25 people who work daily in the company, where each of them has established their position, and what they must do to obtain the expected results periodically.

Regarding the control process carried out by the administrative part, it was found that it is constant since even though each employee or partner knows their daily work, events always occur that make the presence of management necessary to provide a quick solution to continue the work. Now, we are working usually, since during the pandemic, work was carried out on a rotating basis to minimize the possibility of contagion among the staff. However, there were difficult times for everyone since the management part required a constant presence; even so, others felt safe going to their workplace, with the conviction that monitoring and improvement were being carried out in the systems for occupational safety.



Different controls are required for strategic plans. It is necessary to establish the type of activity carried out and the scope of the work in order to maintain control that employees satisfactorily carry out their daily work and, therefore, what is planned monthly or periodically by the administration. This also depends greatly on the demand for the product; the greater the demand, the greater the labor intensity required. However, the company already has a stable demand that allows for balanced work on a daily basis.

As a final part of the interview, the administrative management's effectiveness in the company was investigated to fully meet the business objectives established at the beginning of the fiscal year. For this, it was possible to establish that the administration has been satisfactory since the established goals have been met, which has been evidenced in the general balance sheet of the year ended. Therefore, the same administrative guide is maintained, fulfilling what is necessary for all company members and especially for its partners, who daily try to contribute to the improvement of the company and maximize its productivity.

Action guidelines to improve administrative management about the development of the staff of the company La Milagrosa

- Evaluate the feasibility of an administrative management system that compensates employees based on their functions in each production process. To do this, various participatory actions are carried out, where the administration can directly observe employees' competence and willingness to perform work activities efficiently.
- Propose integration activities outside of working hours to motivate employees, develop empathy among members, and facilitate direct communication with authorities in a welcoming and pressure-free environment.
- Establish an internal communication system to know the concerns of the company's employees and partners and the improvements that could be made. You never know where a good idea may come from to improve a process that allows you to reduce time, money, and work effort.

- Carry out a socialization process between the staff and the administrative part, promoting internal participation and mutual help for possible eventualities that originate in the environment, such as COVID-19, where the participation and understanding of all members were necessary to provide a safe space without ceasing to produce and comply with the acquired business obligations.
- Propose a training system so that employees feel fully capable of performing their duties and also promote external education based on each employee's or partner's tastes or preferences.
- Ensure job stability for employees so that everyone works with the security of knowing that they have a stable job that supports them and is committed to the environment.
- Propose a feedback system that allows establishing employee and company satisfaction in each production process carried out. The aim is to better direct each phase and place staff in the most capable and productive positions.

These guidelines were developed and validated with the cooperation of the company La Milagrosa, since the work being carried out was promoted. Work days were coordinated, where the administrative part was aware of the improvement guidelines and allowed their development, considering that they are points that can be met and especially that they can influence the development of the staff and partners who have worked within the company, since the results of five officials of the administrative part are presented where they expressed their opinion on it.

As can be seen in the table, most administrative partners consider these guidelines appropriate. They state that this will allow the company to form a strong bond with employees and generate peace of mind regarding their employment status.

During the development of the satisfaction of the guidelines, it was stated that the part of professional development has not been carried out as it should have been during the years of operation of the company since only hiring is done based on the required position and considering that it is a person with the necessary knowledge to perform such a function. However, it was not analyzed that these positions

Table 1. Level of satisfaction with the guidelines

	Level of satisfaction with the guidelines presented				
Guidelines	Not at all satisfactory	Unsatisfying	Satisfactory medium	Satisfying	Very satisfactory
1	_	-	-	4	1
2	-	-	-	-	5
3	-	-	-	3	2
4	-	-	-	-	5
5	-	-	-	4	1
6	-	-	1	3	1
7	-	-	-	4	1



should be occupied by people who like the work to be performed or at least provide them with more training to grow in knowledge and experience.

Staff development is a topic rarely addressed by managers since they have not seen the need for their employees to continue to improve professionally. Considering themselves a small company, they said that there are not many possibilities for growth. However, with the research carried out, especially the work provided in preparing the guidelines as a proposal for linking business management and staff development, they have noticed the importance of maintaining a trained, motivated staff with a vision of growth, whether this is internal or external. Therefore, a schedule for implementing such guidelines is presented to help readers better understand the improvement dynamics that the thesis project proposes.

Based on the applied instruments presented in the operationalization of the study variables and by establishing the objective of the research about the factors that influence the administrative management carried out by the company La Milagrosa, as well as the factors that affect the labor development of the said company, applying the observation sheet technique, it can be stated that the company requires new administrative strategies, which allow obtaining better results for the company.

It was also clearly observed that the staff requires greater internal training to carry out the work efficiently, reducing production costs and improving the company's weekly production level. In summary, a lack of organization was observed at various productive moments, which prevents the full fulfillment of business objectives.

Employees and partners are divided when it comes to giving their opinion on the appropriate conditions for carrying out an optimal job, which is why it is considered that the company should stop at this section to talk with employees and partners so that they can renew their work, achieving its fulfillment to satisfaction.

The results obtained in this study confirm the close link between effective administrative management and staff development, consistent with what González (2020) stated, which establishes that planning, organization, direction, and control are fundamental pillars in achieving business objectives. In the case of the company La Milagrosa, the research showed that, although the existing administrative processes fulfill their operational function, there is a significant opportunity to optimize the development of human talent through more comprehensive strategies.

Authors such as Gaspar (2021) and Castro (2020) highlight that human talent plays a critical role in the success of modern organizations, suggesting that staff development must go beyond the operational, encompassing constant training, performance evaluations, and motivation programs.

The findings of this study reinforce this perspective: La Milagrosa employees reported feeling satisfied with their work environment but also indicated that the lack of an ongoing training program limits their professional development.

For example, while González (2020) argues that the allocation of resources and tasks must be dynamic and adaptive to foster organizational growth, in La Milagrosa, an administrative structure was found that has remained static since before the COVID-19 pandemic. This situation coincides with what was proposed by Janoski and Lepadatu (2014), who identified that in Manabí companies, administrative processes are often limited by internal organizational problems.

Survey data revealed that only 4% of employees felt that training is always conducted, while 64% mentioned that it only occurs occasionally. This highlights the need to implement more consistent training programs aligned with the human talent management principles proposed by Gaspar (2021). Incorporating frequent training could increase productivity and foster greater job satisfaction, as suggested by Vasciuc (2020) guidelines on professional development.

Similarly, 48% of employees reported that the lack of job recognition limits motivation. This suggests the importance of establishing a formal system of rewards and incentives, consistent with the models suggested by Bilderback and Miller (2023) to improve employee engagement and performance.

The results support the need for more adaptive administrative strategies, as proposed by Rodríguez-Tóala and Peñafiel-Loor (2022). The guidelines suggested in this study, such as implementing internal communication systems and promoting integration activities, could address the identified gaps. Furthermore, the historical-logical analysis carried out in the research underlines the importance of linking administrative processes with clear professional development goals, as also emphasized by González (2020).

While the study highlights the positive aspects of La Milagrosa's current management, it is clear that the company could benefit from integrating a more strategic approach to staff development. This would strengthen human capital and increase the company's resilience and competitiveness in the face of market challenges.

Conclusions

The study concluded that the administrative management of La Milagrosa, located in Portoviejo, Manabí, is considered adequate by employees and partners. Through field research, including interviews with employees, partners, and the company manager, as well as a direct observation guide, it was determined that efficient management is essential for organizational success. According to various authors, planning, di-



recting, controlling, and evaluating are key stages that must be carried out and organized to achieve the company's strategic and tactical objectives. Likewise, factors influencing employees' professional development were identified, such as training, motivation, promotion of responsibility, performance evaluation, and word recognition, which significantly impact their satisfaction. Finally, it was established that the company's administrative management, developed since its inception, is proportionally adequate, as it has clear objectives and well-structured processes to meet administrative and production needs within the required timeframe. The company operates as an association that produces flavored banana flour to prepare smoothies and beverages for family consumption.

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Conflicts of interest

The authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest.

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Data availability statement

The datasets used and/or analyzed during the current study are available from the corresponding author on reasonable request.

Statement on the use of AI

The authors acknowledge the use of generative AI and AI-assisted technologies to improve the readability and clarity of the article.

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