

CHAPTER 8

El Buen Pastor Farm: Blending Entrepreneurial Mindset, Stewardship and Faith in Coffee Production and Diversification

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Abstract

This chapter focuses on El Buen Pastor's family business (The Good Shepherd), which harvests and commercializes specialty coffee. The family business is located in the central region of Honduras, Central America. The firm has begun exporting its coffee-to-coffee trading companies in the U.S. Firm leaders wanted to integrate principles of the Christian faith into developing their business. The development of the case allows readers to consider an approach to integrating faith through entrepreneurial stewardship and entrepreneurial mindset in aspects such as branding strategy and diversification. This case addresses two fundamental questions: How can a young family firm integrate a Christian perspective into its growth and development? How can such integration enhance its diversification strategy?

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Introduction

This case study is motivated by the need to explore the approach and rationale behind strategic decision-making in a family business that engages in specialty coffee production and wants to integrate the Christian faith into its operations. Such a focus is essential, as recent studies suggest that family businesses may engage in diverse strategies to compete without neglecting their religious beliefs (Audretsch et al., 2013; Cavalcanti Junqueira et al., 2023). Discerning how and why the Christian faith is integrated into a family business is relevant (Benefiel et al., 2014; Discua Cruz, 2018). Prior studies suggest that family business strategies, such as product differentiation, may only be understandable within the specific context and place in which they occur, as they reflect unique dynamics where family members interact with diverse actors across time (Roscoe, Cruz, & Howorth, 2013; Cater & Alderson, 2022). In the coffee industry, product differentiation can be achieved by highlighting factors linked to a place of origin (Teuber, 2010; Discua Cruz et al., 2020). Yet, the increasing association of family dynamics involving religion and farming strategies cannot be underestimated (Fitz-Koch et al., 2019; Cater III & Alderson, 2022). Thus, this case study focuses on the approach and rationale behind a family in business and their decision to integrate the Christian faith into their business venture. However, to do so, it is vital to understand the interplay between the global staging of the coffee industry and the context of this study.

Global coffee consumption between 2020 and 2021 was estimated at 167.26 million 60-kilogram bags, a slight increase from 164 million bags in the previous year, with North America, Europe and Japan accounting for more than half of coffee consumption (ICO,

2023). Estimated statistics from the International Coffee Organization (ICO) suggest that around 3 billion cups of coffee are consumed daily worldwide. Coffee is a long-standing, internationally traded agricultural commodity. Nevertheless, increasing levels of competition, changing customer demands and product overload demand a better understanding of the coffee supply chain and its actors (Rueda & Lambin, 2013). Coffee production in countries known for their product's high quality has long been associated with family firms (Lourenzani et al., 2020). Concepts such as 'free and fair trade' have been used as a model for ethical business practices (Claar & Bradley, 2010), while uncertain and complex socioeconomic contexts (Zahra et al., 2008; Discua Cruz et al., 2020) have also become part of this industry's narrative. In this case study, we focus on a family firm in Honduras, Central America, that is involved in the production and commerce of coffee.

Honduras, situated in Central America, is home to approximately 10.475 million people (IMF, 2023). The country's GDP (PPP) is \$62.9 billion (World Bank, 2021). The country is often characterized as one of Central America's most economically challenged nations (IFC, 2022). In 2022, Honduras' GDP per capita was recorded at \$3,040, a significant contrast to the United States, where the GDP per capita for the same year reached \$76,622 (World Bank, n.d.). This stark disparity underscores the two countries' living standards and substantial economic differences. Nevertheless, access to two oceans has facilitated Honduras to become a leader in Tilapia and shrimp exports.

In the Honduran agrarian sector, coffee production leads the sphere, followed by bananas and plantains (IFC, 2022). World Coffee Research is a nonprofit organization focusing on coffee research and development as part of the USDA-funded program Maximizing Opportunities in Coffee and Cacao in the Americas (MOCCA). Their research on Honduras reveals that in the past twenty years, the country has ranked first in Central America, third in Latin America, and fifth globally in coffee production (WCR, n.d.; Gomez,

2018). Current research indicates that coffee, as the leading agricultural export product in the region, is supported by 120,000+ coffee farms that contribute a third of agricultural GDP. In this environment, Honduran coffee is grown at high altitudes, with 61 percent of farms located between 3,900 and 5,200 feet above sea level (Gomez, 2018). The Coffee Institute in Honduras, IHCAFE, reports that 95% of producers are small producers with less than 5 hectares (IHCAFE, 2021).

Interestingly, although previously perceived as a country with a majority of catholic adherents, the country's religious diversity has increased with protestant evangelist Christians on the rise (Martin, 1990; Berger, 2010). This rise is noteworthy because it seems to be dismantling the previously accepted behaviors of the contextual Catholic practice in this region, such as the 'compadres system (Berger, 2010)' with its fiestas and extravagant spending towards a mindset of frugality that allows individuals and families to save and develop businesses and institutions. This practice resembles Weber's early discussions (1985) of the Protestant Ethic, which has an affinity for economic development, business creation, and dynamic changes (Berger, 2010).

Christian entrepreneurs in the country may follow an evangelistic worldview (Mandryk, 2010). The word 'worldview,' from the German "Weltanschauung," signifies an individual's unique outlook shaped by their context, influencing their perception of reality (Pearcey, 2004). Worldviews significantly impact regional culture, shaping ideas in arts, religion, education, media, politics, and business (Kim et al., 2009). Knab et al. (2022) state that a Christian worldview encompasses foundational beliefs and assumptions, centering on an all-powerful, omniscient, and loving Triune God and Christian Scriptures. The Triune God is the creator and sustainer of all, including humanity, serving as the ultimate source of knowledge, moral values, and life's meaning and purpose (Knab et al., 2022). Therefore, Christian entrepreneurs would benefit from active dialogues in their context involving diverse

perspectives because it can lead to a more thoughtful and informed reflection on behaviors and decisions, ultimately enhancing understanding of business practices in the region.

Against this background, prior and recent studies have recently highlighted the importance of Christianity in family businesses worldwide (Discua Cruz, 2015; Higginson & Robertshaw, 2017; Zigarelli, 2019). Such studies call for further scrutiny of cases where family members aim to integrate their faith into business operations (Discua Cruz, 2013). Recognizing the significance of the above statistics, we explore a single case study, El Buen Pastor farm, to understand the approach of family members to coffee production from a faith-based entrepreneurial perspective coupled with current market demands and their dynamics. The owners of El Buen Pastor farm have worked on unfurling their mission, purpose, and vision to integrate the precepts of the Christian faith and an entrepreneurial stewardship perspective to advance a branding strategy, product and services diversification and new market expansions.

Following a family business model, we aim to provide valuable insights into family businesses in developing economies (International Trade Administration, 2022) by answering the following questions: How can a young family firm integrate a Christian perspective into its growth and development? How can such integration enhance its diversification strategy?

Methodology

In pursuit of evaluating and assessing participants' perspectives, our study embarked on an exploratory empirical research endeavor. Employing the principles of experiential learning delineated by Kolb (1984), we orchestrated a real-life experiential business project (El Buen Pastor) spanning from 2021 to 2022. This undertaking was assumed in collaboration with upper-level undergraduate business students, who willingly engaged by endorsing

human subjects' participation release agreements. Notably, these agreements granted students the discretion to abstain from participation.

The student cohort was subsequently organized into small groups comprising two to three students, encompassing approximately 25 students per course. We established the following criteria: 1) Enrollment in course disciplines encompassing marketing, business, and management research was vital for participation during the project's execution. 2) Prospective participants were required to possess a genuine interest in acquiring knowledge about market research and consulting practices.

The business professors overseeing and mentoring this project served as subject matter experts. The research and consulting protocols were systematically developed to support a holistic influence of experiential learning on the participating students' academic and professional development trajectories.

Background of El Buen Pastor Farm

El Buen Pastor History

El Buen Pastor (“EBP” hereafter) is a farm geographically located in Potrerillos, Siguatepeque, in the central region of Honduras. The farm is about 40 minutes from the main international airport of Honduras (XPL). The extension of the farm is 160 acres, resting at 1650 meters above sea level. The coffee production includes Arabica coffee varieties, such as Red Catuai, Caturra, Pacas, Lempira, IHCAFE 90, Parainema, Ovata, and Colombiano (Algrano, n.d.). The high altitude offers breath-taking views of the region, and uncultivated land is covered by tropical jungle, harboring exotic flora and fauna (i.e., orioles, toucans, armadillos, tepezcuintles) and a superb waterfall. Figure 1 provides the geolocation and image of the area:

Figure 1. Map of Honduras and the central region of Siguatepeque (dashed circle).



Before 1999, the El Buen Pastor farm was abandoned by its owners and almost lost due to neglectful environmental and agrarian preservation practices (Alliance for Coffee Excellence, n.d.). In 1999, some members of the Menonita Pilgrim Conference bought the farm, and American missionaries were called to manage it to support and finance a children’s orphanage called the Good Shepherd in Villa Alicia, Siguatepeque. After four years of intense labor, the farm started to thrive and flourish because of effective management and the demanding work of the families in the area (Alliance for Coffee Excellence, n.d.). Finally, in 2007, the farm won the National Coffee Excellence Cup award with a cupping score of 92.25 (Serve Coffee, n.d.). Going further, El Buen Pastor (EBP) has received awards for its coffee produced in high altitudes. It seized the designation ‘Strictly High Grown’ (Algrano, n.d.). The benefit of producing coffee in high altitudes is that the plant will develop slower, thus significantly increasing mineral and nutrient content. As a result, the coffee flavor is more robust and sought-after because this designation indicates the highest quality coffee by

Honduran standards (Algrano, n.d.). Hence, the farm has proven a frontrunner in quality bean-producing capabilities.

In 2016, Stanley and Gabriela Yoder acquired the El Buen Pastor Farm. At the time of the sale, the previous owners expressed their hope that Stanley and Gabriela would keep social and environmental objectives, such as helping a local orphanage under the same name as the farm, at the heart of the mission of the company and environmentally friendly coffee production practices (Alliance for Coffee Excellence, n.d.). As a family in business, the Yoders were enthusiastic about the farm and wanted to establish a firm with unique goals and objectives beyond financial goals (Davis et al., 1997). They are committed to integrating their Christian faith into business practices to improve the livelihood of the region's economic development while benefiting their workers and families for years to come and aligning with the U.S. Business Roundtable statement and the stewardship view (Business Roundtable, 2019; Davis et al., 1997). They have decided to keep the name of El Buen Pastor farm and build on its meaning for coffee production, environmental sustainability, diversification and regional development. Nevertheless, economic, environmental and ethical challenges might challenge their goals towards responsible stewardship (Davis et al., 1997; Hernandez, 2008; Zahra et al., 2008) and sustainable business practices (Báú et al., 2021).

Description of the El Buen Pastor Business

El Buen Pastor has distinguished itself from other regional farms by adhering to a Christian worldview and establishing a solid sustainability purpose (Discua Cruz & Calvancanti Junqueira, 2022). Damon, Menon, & Bronk (2003) describe purpose as an enduring intent to accomplish personally meaningful goals while galvanizing valuable social engagement that goes beyond self-interest. Over time, this purpose and commitment have

enabled novel improvements in their coffee production capabilities while aiming to adapt and modernize the environment within which they operate.

El Buen Pastor trades their products with coffee trading companies that can market and roast their coffee. On this front, EBP has an advantage. With individuals becoming more concerned about health issues and disease prevention, offering green coffee (Bosso et al., 2021) and premier roasting can enhance EBP's commercial and marketable value. EBP can also be identified as a company that creates awareness and value for the Siguatepeque community. Furthermore, the Yoders' desire to diversify offerings (i.e., coffee production and environmental activities) in an international location can foster an added significance for consumer segments interested in learning about coffee production, ecotourism, and destination travel opportunities.

Christian Worldview And The Family Business Dynamics

Family firms often face critical considerations regarding family values and interests coupled with intentions to develop an ethical and thriving business (Sorenson & Milbrandt, 2022). Typically, family businesses manage risks depending on the nature of relationships within the family business and market undercurrents. Alternatively, a Christian family business can manage the novelty of trends and business risks in the marketplace by being committed to Christian precepts that allow them to exercise purpose-oriented decisions through normative behavior such as prayer and seeking out the counsel of experienced Christian business mentors and faith-based community circles (Cavalcanti Junqueira et al., 2023). These businesses often seek transparency, especially when collaborating with intraorganizational and interorganizational relationships (Discua Cruz and Cavalcanti Junqueira, 2023). Additionally, developing a good reputation and sound financial practices

can provide clarity, thus allowing leaders to make strategically sound decisions (Jiang, Jiang, Kim, & Zhang, 2015).

Coffee Market Considerations

El Buen Pastor Farm, a specialty coffee provider to distributors and a roasted coffee seller, holds a promising position in the coffee production and consumption market. Notably, in 2020/2021, most Honduran coffee exports were successfully distributed to countries like Germany, the United States, Belgium, and France. Furthermore, Honduras has established a free trade agreement with South Korea, which happens to be the seventh largest export market (Ucles, 2021). Consequently, coffee producers like El Buen Pastor Farm could effectively develop strategic choices to address regional competition and tap into profitable global markets.

The Yoders have indicated that they are interested in pursuing the North American markets more actively. They are positioning the El Buen Pastor brand through a few U.S. distributors. Examining North America's largest market, the U.S., it is vital to review consumer market trends. According to the longest-running study of American consumers' coffee drinking patterns, The National Coffee Data Trends (NCDT) report, coffee remains popular even after the pandemic (NCA, 2023). However, the place of consumption has shifted somewhat towards home (NCA, 2023) or to novel business models (i.e., drive-through-only coffee preparation shops), becoming more prominent after the pandemic. Going further, since 2020, coffee consumption by adults aged 40-59 increased by more than 6%; adults aged 25-39 increased by nearly 5%. Older adults (60+) consumption increased by 1.5%, and 18 – 24-year-olds remained consistent (NCA, 2023). Studies indicate that 7 in 10 Americans drink coffee weekly, making coffee one of the largest segments in the non-alcoholic hot beverage market (Statista, n.d.; NCA, 2023). These market considerations are

significant as the El Buen Pastor farm develops its strategy for marketing the brand and developing new market opportunities.

Critical Events Impacting Coffee Production and Exports in Honduras

In the past few years, traditional Honduran coffee production farms experienced the constraints of leaf rust, other diseases, and severe weather, with hurricanes Eta and Iota striking the country in November 2020 (International Trade Administration, 2022). These critical occurrences reduced production rates and impacted the coffee industry's growth for a time (Ucles, 2021). Additionally, the past two years of challenges arising from the COVID-19 pandemic have significantly stressed the coffee market in Honduras. The coffee-producing and roasting industry was structured by the policy mandates and realities that significantly impacted them.

A significant event is that Honduran coffee prices have fluctuated due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The world crisis affected coffee-producing families and allowed them to pause and reflect on how and why they do business (Discua Cruz, 2020b). One of the primary reasons is that demand slowed down as Germany and other European countries exercised mandates that caused prolonged residential confinement (Ucles, 2021). However, by May 2021, Honduras exports had risen to \$611 million, 2% higher than MY2019/20 and a 17% increase in average price per bag (\$145.90) (Ucles, 2021). On the other hand, coffee businesses that focused on cultivating high-quality coffee for export were especially subjected to multifaceted challenges. For instance, export restrictions targeting agricultural products caused 'millions of sacks of coffee' to be wasted by sitting in shipment dockyards (Discua Cruz, 2020b). The outcomes of the COVID-19 pandemic in Honduras continue to present concerns to the coffee industry. Coffee producers remain on high alert as they must learn to navigate the post-hurricane and COVID-19 interventions that are still being processed and

implemented (Ucles, 2021). Thus, the development of an entrepreneurial mindset is a necessity under the constraints of the past few years.

Entrepreneurship and Entrepreneurial Mindset

Family and Entrepreneurship

The previous sections have set the stage for exploring the Yoders' need to develop an entrepreneurial mindset and seek new opportunities when challenges in their industry arise. The past two years' critical events and export restrictions have undermined the market system's effectiveness, regional development, and the viability of agricultural communities in Honduras. Against this background, this study focuses on family businesses because this is the El Buen Pastor model and is prevalent in this context.

Entrepreneurship is linked to family businesses (Howorth, Jackson, & Discua Cruz, 2014). The connection between family and entrepreneurship is ancient and persistent (Rosa, Howorth, and Discua Cruz 2014; Hoy and Verser 1994). The family unit is one of the fundamental reasons for individuals to engage in entrepreneurship (Johannisson 2003) and for family businesses to maintain the entrepreneurial spirit across family generations. Many entrepreneurs found a business in the first place because of their family dynamics (Johannisson, 2003). A broad consensus prevails that entrepreneurship deals with individuals and teams engaged in *'the discovery, evaluation and exploitation of opportunities to introduce new goods and services, ways of organizing, markets, processes and raw materials, through organizing efforts that previously had not existed'* (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000, p. 218). Around the world, entrepreneurs engage in the entrepreneurial processes supported by and in the company of family members (Discua Cruz, Hadjielias, & Howorth, 2017; Fletcher, 2010).

Aldrich and Cliff (2003) strongly contend that although research on entrepreneurship has gained importance, little attention has been given to the influence of family dynamics on the process leading to the development of new firms, namely, the identification, evaluation and exploitation of opportunities. They argue that neglecting family considerations in research on the entrepreneurial process is somewhat surprising, mainly for three reasons: a) two or more related individuals found a large proportion of new organizations. This suggests that more than one family member can be engaged throughout the entrepreneurial process and beyond. b) the founding of a firm may represent responses to changing family dynamics rather than outcomes of the rational assessments of business opportunities; c) during the start-up process of a venture, family involvement plays an essential role in identifying, mobilizing or procuring both tangible and intangible resources (Sirmon & Hitt, 2003). In this context, a family perspective on entrepreneurship supports the view that economic activities, originating from entrepreneurial pursuits, might be “embedded in family relationships rather than family relationships embedded within economic activities” (Stewart, 2003, p. 388).

Recently Discua Cruz and Basco (2018), based on an extensive literature review in the fields of family business and entrepreneurship, brought forward that a family perspective on entrepreneurship acknowledges several aspects, such as a) the natural life cycle of families and its influence in entrepreneurship over time; b) the family provision of physical, emotional, and material resources for entrepreneurship where the family becomes an incubator for entrepreneurs; c) a family perspective on entrepreneurship embraces the relevance of family as a fundamental social unit, with unique relational systems that can support but also affect entrepreneurship. The interaction and participation of family members influence the development of particular and idiosyncratic ways of approaching business activities. Prior work by Weigel and Ballard-Reisch (1997) pinpointed the instrumental and relational aspects of family involvement in business. An instrumental function, families

provide resources to pursue opportunities, guide planning and decision making and delimit boundaries that can influence the development of a business. A relational function will see families, through nurturance, caregiving, and socialization activities, developing values, attitudes, and expectations in individuals throughout their lives. The relational function is essential as relationships place individuals in different social spheres, first within the immediate family, which can then influence business activities. Moreover, relational functions provide a foundation for developing vision and values, which can influence the family, business and individual levels. Both functions influence an entrepreneurial mindset, which we discuss next.

An Entrepreneurial Mindset

Entrepreneurship scholars have recognized that an entrepreneurial mindset can find opportunities to uphold a business (Dasmit et al., 2023; Wright, Hoskisson, Busenitz, & Dial, 2000) even under uncertain economic environments. However, there are a plethora of definitions on the subject (Dasmit et al., 2023). Some scholars concentrate on examining motivation, skills and life experiences which might influence entrepreneurial thought processes, decisions and actions (Davis, Hall, & Mayer, 2016: 22). Hence, the practice of some Christian entrepreneurs to integrate Christianity (Woodhead, 2004), faith and ethics with their business decisions has been observed in a variety of contexts (Audretsch et al., 2017; Dana, 2009; Discua Cruz, 2015). In the family business model, Christian religious beliefs might be associated with how products, markets and new business prospects are considered and followed by family firms (Discua Cruz, 2015).

In this study, we will use the Dasmit et al. (2023) definition, which states an “entrepreneurial mindset is defined as a cognitive perspective that enables an individual to create value by recognizing and acting on opportunities, making decisions with limited

information, and remaining adaptable and resilient in conditions that are often uncertain and complex.” We acknowledge that an entrepreneurial mindset might manifest differently depending on the context. In this respect, certain factors such as education, culture, social and financial status, and travel opportunities (Daspit et al., 2023; Outsios and Kittler, 2018) might underpin the development of an entrepreneurial mindset and the way entrepreneurs harvest new opportunities.

As a family business, El Buen Pastor owners have recognized the importance of developing an entrepreneurial mindset to navigate market uncertainties while seeking new business opportunities that could improve the development of their business and community. Additionally, their approach to integrating their values is manifested through an entrepreneurial stewardship perspective in aspects such as branding, management and diversification of products and services.

A Stewardship Perspective

The Yoders, entrepreneurial owners of El Buen Pastor farm, have expressed the desire to formally establish an entrepreneurial vision and mission for their business that integrates their faith and commitment to the region while setting up ways to impact their community and future generations positively. Davis et al. (1997) propose in their formulation of the stewardship theory that individuals are not always self-serving. The theory underscores relationships focusing on non-financial objectives to serve the organizational good (Davis et al., 1997). Researchers in this field have observed that entrepreneurs might follow their business mission while safeguarding the needs of their communities (Discua Cruz, 2020; Hernandez, 2008).

A stewardship perspective can create change (Hernandez, 2008) based on shared beliefs and the desire to establish long-term and sustainable business goals (Davis et al.,

1997). This concept is particularly relevant to the dynamics of this case study. The Yoders' beliefs and values are such that they want to succeed in maintaining support for their community and regional development while stewarding good practices that will benefit their business. In this regard, a stewardship perspective highlights the significance of responsible and strategic practices. Ethical business practices are at the core of a Christian family stewardship strategy because they align with a Christian worldview of serving others for the glory of God. Right at this juncture of stewardship, ethics, respect and caring for others, the Christian faith converges in the marketplace. Nevertheless, economic, political and environmental challenges might challenge their commitment to responsible stewardship and long-term business practices. Hence, a faith foundation, an entrepreneurial mindset, and a stewardship perspective might allow El Buen Pastor Farm to seek new opportunities to enhance its business prospects.

The Transition and Dilemma

El Buen Pastor family business has positioned its core operations in the Honduran coffee industry. However, their desire to sustain their Christian character while developing sustainable practices to enter markets in different countries requires revisiting their business model. Hence, revisiting their value proposition to build their brand and complementary offerings, including ecotourism possibilities, are at the forefront of their considerations.

The Transition

The uncertainty experienced over the past two years has spurred an entrepreneurial mindset in the EBP leadership. EBP continues to evaluate its corporate processes to appraise performance. Immediate concerns, such as a decline in return on equity or a significant drop in revenue, are not present, and there are currently no imminent threats that would prompt a forced sale or business closure. Nevertheless, EBP's leadership is actively pursuing strategies

to sustain its position in the regional industry while focusing on enhancing financial stability. This posture involves well-planned initiatives, including diversifying its product and service offerings and implementing effective financial and marketing practices such as pricing optimization and distribution channel enhancement.

Considering the challenges faced in recent years, the company is also diligently assessing external factors that could impact its operations. Hence, EBP's leadership is adopting a proactive stance by recognizing the potential for growth and transition within its current operations. Going further, EBP's exploration of diversification opportunities will encompass expanding its product and service portfolio and refining its branding to better resonate with its target audience. This approach underscores EBP's determination to maintain its current status while leveraging its strengths for sustainable growth, stewardship and success within the regional industry.

To achieve a growth mindset and an effective strategy, it is essential to realize that the challenge for Honduran coffee-producing entrepreneurs in this context is to seek other options besides international export. Additional options might include selling their specialty coffee within the country, in this case, Honduras. In this respect, Honduras currently leads in intermediate local coffee consumption among the Central American countries of Panama, Mexico, and Guatemala (Ucles, 5). This ranking of Honduran coffee regional consumption represents an opportunity for El Buen Pastor to enhance its presence in the Honduran market. Hence, El Buen Pastor has been transitioning to create and establish a coffee portfolio with unique coffee packaging and a tagline for local consumption. Their environmental and sustainability concern is reflected in their brand story, which has propelled them to continue using natural pest control methods that make the process as eco-friendly as possible. This value-added approach seems to appeal to environmentally conscious local and international

consumers. They have also improved their operational technologies by installing a solar coffee dryer, which allows their coffee crop to be ready for sack-packaging in 18 days. Developing good relationships and partnerships is at the core of the business, as the farm sends its dried coffee to a local packaging company. Stanley Yoder has also cultivated an export relationship since 2017, where they sell their micro-batch production to coffee trading companies in the U.S. A partnership with a coffee exporter is essential to enter and trade their product to the U.S.

Although this transition has had positive outcomes, another constraint, in this case, is the lack of diversification (Discua Cruz, 2020c). As stated, a positive aspect of the pandemic and other critical events in this context was a natural prompting of an entrepreneurial mindset across EDP leadership. The owners of this family business had to critically evaluate their available resources and capabilities and actively seek new avenues for innovation and diversification in their offerings. Hence, the dilemma became apparent as the EDP leadership firmly acknowledged the need to steward and uphold their coffee production and export undertakings. At the same time, they also understood the need to reevaluate their marketing endeavors and the unused portion of their land to diversify their range of products and services.

The Dilemma

The case of El Buen Pastor Farm was presented to a group of Christian university marketing and business student consultants from the U.S. The students explored the diversification option using the existing resources given the farm's unused land. The consultants approached the challenge by selling the idea to U.S. target groups. Upon researching the targeted segments in the U.S. by interviewing relevant participants, here are

some of their recommendations for diversification and developing the brand through marketing endeavors:

1. Individuals emerging from the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic have become interested in new prospects, including extraordinary leisure opportunities (Kang, 2021).

Therefore, some of the possible offerings by EBP could be:

- a. Destination Adventure and ecotourism (i.e., education, ecotourism, and recreation). Located in Honduras, El Buen Pastor could provide experiences centered around the region's culture and natural environment. Attracting coffee enthusiasts to stay in rustic accommodations at the farm or even camping grounds on EDP's property could afford visitors a destination experience surrounded by the ecological beauty of the area. The offering could be attractive for Hondurans and international visitors as a way to learn about growing, preparing, and distributing coffee. The farm areas not part of the coffee production could be developed to offer nature trails. Guided tours and lessons about the regional fauna and flora would also attract nature and environmental enthusiasts.

- b. Partnership with Christian Organizations. Based on EBP's desire to promote their Christian worldview, engaging with organizations such as Christian organizations, schools, and universities in the U.S. could be an attractive proposition for students and individuals who would like to work alongside EBP staff at the farm and learn about the business while also engaging and serving multiple needs at Villa Alicia, Siguatepeque, Honduras.

2. The student consultants' market research has indicated that there has been an increase in ecotourism opportunities for coffee farms and destination adventures in Latin America (Horton, 2009). Most destinations are well-publicized. However, EBP does not have a robust digital footprint. The consultants identified the difficulty of the average customer in finding information about El Buen Pastor farm products and services. Hence, some of their marketing recommendations to increase sales and destination visits should include the following:

- a. Improved Logo and Packaging. The students appreciate the efforts of EBP to create an attractive logo and packaging. They felt the colors were suitable to imply excellence in coffee quality. In this respect, they felt the story should be summarized on the back of the coffee packaging because of the compelling history of the farm. They also suggested some slight changes to the logo to portray the Christian worldview and purpose of the business that align with its owners' values. Figure 2 compares the EBP's current logo and packaging to the consultant's suggestions.

Figure 2 – EBP's current Logo and Packaging compared to consultants' suggestions to target U.S. Christian consumers.

<Insert Figure 2 about here.>

- b. Tell a story. Audiences love stories. EBP should invest in a new website to provide a sense of trust, information, and history, including information that might not be conveyed through the packaging or other channels. The company's vision, mission, and historical information must inform and

promote transparency while providing brand credibility and a sense of legacy. All design elements can be rearranged to tell a compelling story about EBP. The website could be linked to multiple social media channels and digital marketing efforts. The ultimate goal of social media is to engage with potential customers and coffee trading companies. For example, companies such as Socii Coffee, a family business in Forney, Texas, USA, are interested in developing personal, year-round relationships with farmers in Honduras, Guatemala, Sumatra, and Laos to benefit farmers in the region (Socii Coffee). Other companies that follow similar purposes are Mission Coffee Roasters in Colorado Springs, CO (Mission Coffee Roasters) and Legacy Coffee in Hopewell, Virginia, USA.

- c. The unique selling proposition of a Christian Worldview - El Buen Pastor should strive to develop a consistent brand image that reflects its purpose and the company's Christian worldview. EBP should intentionally set itself apart from the competition by implementing its history, values, and Christian origins into the branding messages and digital channels. Additional research could provide leads to churches, clients and organizations interested in EBP work. Additionally, Universities that promote a Christian worldview through ecotourism and service to communities across the globe, for example, could be contacted to establish an interest in collaborating with El Buen Pastor Farms coffee production and ecotourism opportunities.

These recommendations align with Hoarau-Heemstra and Eide's (2016) suggestion regarding 'The importance of and concern for culture and heritage lead to business creation, innovations and local development.' Diversifying offerings (i.e., coffee production and outdoor activities) in an international location can foster added value for consumer segments interested in ecotourism and destination adventures. Hence, tourism and adventure organizations must become familiar with new trends. There is a chance for ecotourism and destination adventures to complement and strengthen the coffee production sector and create a more sustainable economy for the Siguatepeque region and Honduras.

These recommendations seem sensible from the student consultants' perspective. In light of the challenges experienced by the Honduran coffee-producing farmers, the dilemma is the orchestration and implementation of these recommendations and potential diversification. For example, costs are attached to creating and maintaining a website and social media presence. There are time considerations when an entrepreneur has to devote attention to building a social presence. Additional investments are needed to develop the land and facilities to draw regional and international clients. Concerns such as severe weather and safety protocols might influence customers' decisions. Given the difficulties of previous years, it would be profitable for EBP to address potential financial and operational drawbacks that could derail their plans and potentially harm their performance.

Conclusion

In developing this case study, we sought to answer the following questions: How can a young family firm integrate a Christian perspective into its growth and development? How can such integration enhance its diversification strategy?

The answers to these questions suggest that during this season of uncertainty, El Buen Pastor has learned the necessity to build resilience through their Christian faith. Resilience entails swiftly rebounding from setbacks by generating fresh options and maintaining a keen awareness of the imperative need to replace failing strategies (Hamel & Välikangas, 2003). Meanwhile, Duckworth et al. (2007) define grit as unwavering perseverance and a fervent commitment to long-term objectives. For Christian entrepreneurs, cultivating resilience and grit grounded in their Christian faith provides them the strength to confront failure and the confidence to uncover alternative opportunities that can lead to success (Muriithi et al., 2019). Within the Christian doctrine, resilience and enduring times of hardship and suffering are pathways to self-discovery and a means to construct a life anchored in unwavering trust in God (Thomas, 2021). These beliefs can significantly empower a business like EBP to adeptly receive, interpret, and translate environmental cues into internal organizational adjustments and behavioral shifts that foster survival and business expansion. Part of this adjustment includes the IBP leadership applying an entrepreneurship mindset to seek new opportunities to improve established practices.

The EBP owners have attempted to integrate their Christian worldview by faithfully stewarding their resources and capabilities with sustainable practices. Additionally, they have moderated the constraints arising from the COVID-19 pandemic to amplify a family business culture that supports innovation and sustainable agricultural methods. Indeed, El Buen Pastor has established strategic choices, networks and partnerships that can benefit its overall financial and business outlook. EBP has also moved toward promoting its brand through new packaging. Nevertheless, addressing the students' consulting report regarding marketing and diversification recommendations will require careful evaluation. El Buen Pastor owners' desire to capitalize on the unused land will entail superior orchestration and alignment with their family business purpose and business model.

Suggested classroom topics, issues and questions

Teaching and experiential learning

This case study can help educators to present an international market research project. The case can be discussed with students during class, followed by research workshops where students can give short presentations of their progress until a final report can be formulated. Instructors can formulate questions that will conform to the design of their courses. We suggest the following topics and questions as a way to help the students engage with the project:

1. Research into the coffee industry worldwide.
2. Research the coffee industry in Honduras export processes and procedures.
3. Research the impact of COVID-19 on the Honduran coffee industry.
4. Research El Buen Pastor's history or another Latin American Coffee Producing Farm.
5. Review current packaging and information regarding this brand.
6. What do you know about a family business model?
7. What are some factors that help family businesses identify opportunities?
8. Based on your research, what information about the farm business is needed to attract coffee trading companies and customers?
9. In light of COVID-19, several farms are seeking diversifying opportunities. What are some areas that the business farm could diversify?
10. How is the business farm integrating its Christian worldview into its business?
11. What types of actions related to the Christian faith could be observed in a business setting?

12. Should the business farm diversify? How can diversification be integrated with current offerings? Why?

Implications for Business Practitioners

This case study is valuable for managers, entrepreneurs, and business practitioners, providing insights into integrating theory and practical skills through experiential learning. The case reflects Christian family business owners who have to design and execute strategies where their faith will influence decision-making. As their beliefs may take primacy, they can also influence how family and business objectives integrate into their strategies. It examines a real-world case study, emphasizing the paths to success and the potential pitfalls in business development. It highlights the importance of considering stewardship as a key principle in decision-making while cultivating an entrepreneurial mindset. This approach may allow practitioners to strengthen their knowledge and skills through discussions on diversification, engagement, and brand awareness. This approach empowers individuals to apply theoretical concepts effectively in the ever-changing business world, grounded in a Christian worldview perspective, for real-world success. Associated questions that may be followed in similar cases include: what are the implications and insights derived from a comprehensive examination of diversification processes and outcomes in a region? How have entrepreneurs benefited from and gained knowledge through these diversification efforts?

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