



## The ordinary management in a family business in Manaus (am):

the case of the Bela Massa Pizzeria

Marcella Alinny Guerreiro Paiva<sup>1</sup> | lizzmarcella@gmail.com

Marcelo de Souza Ramos<sup>1</sup> | 1marcelo.ramos@gmail.com

José Vitor Palhares dos Santos<sup>2</sup> | titopalhares@hotmail.com

1 – Universidade Federal do Amazonas (UFAM) | Manaus – AM

2 – Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais (UFMG) | Fundação Osorio | Rio de Janeiro – RJ

### Abstract

This paper aims to understand the everyday business practices developed in a family enterprise located in the Novo Israel neighborhood, in Manaus (AM). In order to achieve the proposed objective, a descriptive research with a qualitative approach was developed. The data were collected using the life history method, through interviews conducted with the owner and manager of a small family business. Data analysis was performed using content analysis. Among the main results, we found non-planning, improvisation and spontaneity as everyday business practices present in the ordinary management of the family business analyzed here.

**Keywords:** Everyday Business Practices. Ordinary Management. Family Business.



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Marcella Alinny Guerreiro Paiva | Marcelo de Souza Ramos | José Vitor Palhares dos Santos

## **Introduction**

This article aims to understand the everyday business practices developed within a family enterprise located in the Novo Israel neighborhood in Manaus, Amazonas, through the lens of ordinary management studies. Our intention is to broaden the discussion on the dynamics and survival of small family businesses in a city that is often primarily recognized for its industrial hub—the Manaus Free Trade Zone—thus relegating to the background the debate surrounding the ordinary management of micro and small family enterprises, despite their economic importance to the region.

The Novo Israel neighborhood is located in the northern zone of Manaus and, according to an updated projection by the Amazonas Executive Secretariat for Planning, its population in 2021 was estimated to exceed 21,000 inhabitants (SEDECTI, 2021). Its historical process of formation resembles that of several peripheral neighborhoods in the city, marked by irregular occupation and disordered growth (Giatti, 2010). A distinguishing factor is that it originated from a former deactivated landfill, a stigma that persists to this day, whether in environmental or infrastructural terms (Aniceto, 2018). Within this territory, several low-income families established their homes and fostered the neighborhood's population growth (Giatti, 2010).

As a result, different family-managed businesses emerged, notably a high concentration of enterprises in the commercial and service sectors (Lima, 2014). This brief contextualization is necessary because, according to Marins and Ipiranga (2017), neighborhoods express spontaneous cultural practices and, therefore, it is necessary to rethink their spaces within cities in order to expand the understanding of everyday modes of organizing in the context of Organizational Studies. In addition, we emphasize the need to consider local particularities in studies on Management, as proposed by Barros and Carrieri (2015) and Wanderley and Barros (2018).

Interest in the ordinary management of family businesses has appeared in several recent studies, aiming to understand and give prominence to the everyday business practices of small merchants and the social relationships they establish,



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which enable the constitution and organization of businesses in daily life. The studies by Carrieri et al. (2012), Carrieri, Perdigão, and Aguiar (2014), Vale and Joaquim (2017), Carrieri et al. (2018), Palhares and Carrieri (2018), and Correia and Carrieri (2019) are among the current works in the field of Organizational Studies that address the everyday business practices undertaken by managers of family organizations and, therefore, guided the development of this article. This research is further justified because, according to Pena et al. (2016) and Palhares and Carrieri (2018), despite the growing academic interest in recent years, new studies on the ordinary management of family businesses are still necessary for the deepening and consolidation of this theme in the field, especially those involving micro and small enterprises, which are important for strengthening local and national economies.

Thus, we seek to corroborate the aforementioned studies by addressing the everyday business practices of ordinary individuals who are disregarded by the hegemonic discourse of Management, introducing the concept of ordinary management to question and rethink the rationality and universality of mainstream studies in the field. In this way, rather than starting from hegemonic managerial perspectives that study and reproduce knowledge focused solely on large businesses and specialist entrepreneurs—establishing them as the sole models for understanding administrative knowledge—we highlight the knowledge, experiences, and everyday practices of ordinary subjects, often disqualified and marginalized in Management manuals. In doing so, we aim to deconstruct the stigmatization attributed to non-formal knowledge and to highlight the creative potential enabled by ordinary management.

With regard to family businesses, we emphasize that they present certain specificities, whether related to structure, organizational model, or established everyday management practices, encompassing a variety of activities based on the family's productive force that are not necessarily arranged within a hierarchy, formalized relationships, or the legal framework of the business (Davel & Colbari, 2003). As highlighted by Carrieri et al. (2012) and Lopes, Carrieri, and Saraiva (2013), family organizations are permeated by strong affective ties among their members and by the lack of a clear distinction between professional and family roles, which fosters



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the emergence of particular everyday business practices that are essential for the survival and maintenance of these organizations. In this sense, this study also contributes to deepening knowledge about the reality of family businesses and their specificities.

To achieve the objective proposed in this article, a descriptive study with a qualitative approach was conducted. Data were collected using the life history method, through a series of interviews carried out with the owner and manager of a small family business located in the Novo Israel neighborhood in Manaus (AM), here referred to as Pizzaria Bela Massa. Once the data were collected, the analysis was performed using Content Analysis, according to the assumptions proposed by Bardin (2010).

This article is structured into six sections, beginning with this introduction. The following two sections address the theoretical framework that underpins this study, namely everyday business practices from the perspective of ordinary management and family businesses, respectively. Next, we describe the methodological paths followed in conducting the study. Subsequently, we present the results and discussions regarding the everyday business practices undertaken in the family organization examined herein. Finally, we offer the concluding remarks of the research and suggestions for future studies.

## **Ordinary Management and Everyday Business Practices**

Emerging as a critique of traditional management models, which interpret organizations based on rigid assumptions and formal structures, ordinary management “departs from managerialist parameters by focusing on the everyday life of the ordinary individual who manages ordinary businesses” (Carrieri et al., 2014, p. 699). This terminology derives from the studies of De Certeau (1994), who reflects on the idea of ordinary culture.

From this perspective, an approach has emerged that draws multiple analyses from everyday practices observed in both family and non-family businesses, referred



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to by Carrieri, Perdigão, and Aguiar (2014) as ordinary management. This approach seeks to grasp the nuances of management in day-to-day life, carried out by ordinary people who often operate informally and on the margins of the logic of traditional managerialist theories. In this sense, ordinary management does not present itself as an alternative model or as a definitive theory. Rather, it offers a critique of established models and invites us to rethink prevailing views of small businesses, seeking to understand how and through which everyday business practices they survive and endure over time, even without the use of formal management instruments (Barros & Carrieri, 2015).

By highlighting the Ordinary Individual (Martins, 2008) in management, Carrieri et al. (2014) prioritize discussing survival practices, social relationships, ways of organizing businesses, and how meaning is attributed to surrounding spaces, as well as other characteristics of everyday experiences in managing one's business.

For De Certeau (1994), everyday life is a space of varied inventions, where the ordinary individual acts and moves, whether through “bricolage” that evokes the so-called “ways of doing,” or through a certain antidiscipline that, rather than planning, resists imposed formalities and circumvents them through a series of particular practices. Despite acknowledging the difficulty of delimiting these everyday practices, the author argues that they are ways of doing, subtle ruses, strategies, and tactics that alter objects and codes in daily life, establishing a (re)appropriation of space and its use according to each practitioner's own style.

De Certeau (1994) further emphasizes that some everyday practices maintain and legitimize social structures, while others act to subvert their components, and that these practices occur silently and astutely in everyday life, yet are no less present for that reason. As the author states

[...] To a rationalized, expansionist production that is centralized, noisy, and spectacular, there corresponds another production, qualified as ‘consumption’: this one is astute, dispersed, but at the same time insinuates itself everywhere, silently and almost invisibly, since it does not manifest itself through its own products, but through the ways of



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using the products imposed by a dominant economic order (De Certeau, 1994, p. 39).

Thus, when referring to the analysis of everyday business practices, we propose examining the arts of doing or ways of doing of ordinary managers of family businesses, seeking to understand their styles of action that enable (re)invention in and of everyday life, ensuring the survival and continuity of their businesses. Such practices are often neither systematized nor recognized by formal management mechanisms, yet they nonetheless provide opportunities for new forms of knowledge, as noted by Carrieri, Perdigão, and Aguiar (2014).

Holanda (2011) and Palhares et al. (2019), in studies on the everyday practices of ordinary people in management, reveal that everyday business practices and the prevailing popular knowledge guiding entrepreneurial activities are perceived by the mainstream of Management as improvised, amateurish, and lacking professionalism. Consequently, these forms of knowledge and their creative potential are disqualified within the field. In contrast to this perspective, ordinary management seeks to value the historical trajectories and organizational practices of small shopkeepers, street vendors, snack bar owners, market vendors, and small traders in general.

As the environment in which these practices unfold, Correia and Carrieri (2018, p. 104) highlight the neighborhood as a diverse and dynamic space of coexistence "that allows operations on stable objects through the actions of historical subjects," where ways of being and acting are created and recreated, established patterns are inverted, and a silent logic of one's own is produced. This enables the constant (re)invention of everyday life by practitioners and, consequently, broadens the understanding of everyday modes of organizing and management.

## Family Businesses

Scholarly interest in family businesses has grown in recent decades, along with the proliferation of conceptual approaches to the topic (Davel & Colbari, 2000). Borges, Lescura, and Oliveira (2012) argue that this diversity of concepts reflects the



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heterogeneous nature of studies on family organizations and, therefore, highlights the need for greater scientific production addressing the wide range of symbolic interactions observable in family-managed enterprises. Davel and Colbari (2003) assert that the scope of the topic remains quite limited, given that existing research has focused predominantly on financial, economic, functional, and evolutionary issues, while neglecting more subjective aspects. Carrieri et al. (2012) add the need to understand the informality of relationships and the affective dimensions surrounding family members and the community in which the firm operates.

Despite the existence of numerous studies on family businesses—justified by the dynamism and richness of possibilities encompassed by the field—there is no consensus within Management regarding its definition. For instance, based on a succession-oriented logic that still permeates much of the research on family organizations, a family business is considered to be one that has been owned by a family for no fewer than two generations (Grzybowski, 2007).

In this article, a family business is understood as a particular type of organization that includes two or more members of the same family (or of different families) who actively participate in business management (Cançado et al., 2013). We adopt this perspective because, according to Lanzana and Costanzi (1999), a family that retains ownership and control over business decisions already constitutes a family business, without the need to meet succession requirements—especially since many of these organizations do not descend from, nor will they ascend to, other generations.

In this sense, research on the topic has emphasized that family involvement in the business influences the definition and conduct of specific management practices, bearing significant responsibility for the enterprise's direction (Donnelley, 1964; Chrisman, Chua, & Sharma, 2005). Moreover, family businesses represent the most prevalent business structure in most countries and play a substantial role in employment and income generation (Zellweger, 2017).

According to Carrieri et al. (2008) and Carrieri, Perdigão, and Aguiar (2014), family businesses constitute one of the forms of organized life that construct subjects,



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relationships, and a fused view between the internal and external worlds of enterprises. This occurs because, in family businesses, there is no clear separation between business and family. Family values are reaffirmed in the workplace and in business matters, just as the organization may also influence family dynamics (Lopes, Carrieri, & Saraiva, 2013), thus challenging the guidelines of traditional Management manuals regarding the separation between business and family.

Furthermore, according to Cruz and Oliveira (2014), the affective-emotional factor permeating intrafamily relationships in this type of business can influence various organizational aspects, from decision-making processes to business succession. In a similar vein, Carrieri et al. (2012) argue that the particularities of the family business context—marked by affectivity—enable the development of specific strategies and tactics by family members.

Thus, subjective relationships mark family enterprises, as these affective ties stem from family relationships themselves, causing manifestations of power to appear in different ways in the management of these organizations. This is because, within the family business environment, professional roles—considered more rational and objective—are intertwined with family roles, which are more affective in nature (Lopes, Carrieri, & Saraiva, 2013).

It is worth noting that, while these affective relationships and degrees of kinship can serve as sources of integration and trust among workers in family businesses, they can also be sources of conflict (Lescura et al., 2012). As workers in these businesses are often parents, children, siblings, uncles, and so forth, they may bring into organizational life all the particularities of their family relationships, including conflicts, which can directly interfere with the ordinary management of the enterprise. Such conflicts—or even difficulties in working with family members—often stem precisely from the intimacy of affective ties, as work relationships overlap with family relationships.

Another characteristic commonly present in family businesses is a clear sexual division of labor, in which women assume roles socially considered “more feminine,”



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such as positions in human resources and customer service, while men are responsible for more operational and financial functions (Palhares & Carrieri, 2018).

Carrieri et al. (2018) further point out that spontaneity, improvisation, intuition, acting and responding to the environment without prior planning, extended working hours, the non-adoption of pre-established protocols and procedures, and management not oriented by models or productivity can be everyday business practices often present in the ordinary management of family enterprises.

Finally, it is important to highlight that family businesses have the capacity to play a dual role in societal dynamics: they are able to shape and structure the historical, social, cultural, and economic contexts in which they operate, while simultaneously assimilating and reflecting the influences of these contexts, and, at times, adapting to the historical-social transformations occurring around them (Fischer, 2000; Palhares & Carrieri, 2018). For this reason, in studying the ordinary management of family businesses, it is essential to consider the particularities of the spaces/neighborhoods in which these enterprises are embedded, as they enable a broader understanding of everyday modes of organizing (Marins & Ipiranga, 2017; Correia & Carrieri, 2019).

## **Methodological procedures**

To achieve the proposed objective of understanding the everyday business practices developed in a family enterprise located in the Novo Israel neighborhood in Manaus (AM), in light of ordinary management studies, we conducted a descriptive study with a qualitative approach. According to Minayo (2009), this type of approach allows researchers to address a reality that cannot be quantified, as it involves beliefs, symbols, values, and meanings underlying individuals' actions. This definition aligns with the purpose of this article and with De Certeau's (1994) considerations, who argues that, in analyzing everyday practices, attention should be paid to ways of doing and the astute movement of these practices, rather than to statistical methods and generalizations.



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The investigative method chosen to support the qualitative research was the life history method, aimed at understanding the subject's trajectory based on their own narrative. According to Mozzato, Colet, and Grzybowski (2018), this strategy entails foregrounding the human being through the experiences and feelings emerging from accounts of their own lived experiences. Moreover, within the field of Organizational Studies, this method is defended as a means of highlighting subjects in positions of professional invisibility (Fernandes, 2010) and of expanding the understanding of social behavior within organizations (Vergara, Silva, & Gomes, 2004), as is the case in this study. Palhares and Carrieri (2018) also emphasize the need for studies using the life history method to more broadly understand everyday management practices and the historical trajectories of workers in family businesses, since, particularly in these organizations, employees' personal and family histories intersect with their professional histories, given the lack of a clear separation between family and business.

Due to the flexibility of this method, there is no imposition of specific procedures for data analysis, nor a fixed number of interviewees. In this article, the choice of the research subject was based on accessibility, intentionality, and the fact that the individual manages a family business that has been operating in the market for more than 13 years, which, in a way, points to the creative potential of everyday business practices and modes of organizing management, even if informally.

Accordingly, the research was conducted in a small pizzeria located in the Novo Israel neighborhood, in the northern zone of Manaus (AM). The execution of the study was approved by the Research Ethics Committee involving Human Subjects. Fictitious names were adopted for the company—here referred to as Pizzaria Bela Massa—and for the company's workers mentioned in the results presentation and discussion section, in order to preserve the company's identity and data confidentiality, as agreed with the interviewee upon her acceptance to participate in the study. Data were collected in 2022 through three interviews with the owner and manager of the family business, here referred to as Maria. The interviews totaled approximately six hours, were audio-recorded, and subsequently fully transcribed.



The collected data were analyzed using Content Analysis from the perspective of Bardin (2010), which can be understood as a set of analytical techniques employing systematic procedures for describing message content in order to obtain knowledge regarding the conditions of production. Considering that content analysis may be qualitative or quantitative—the latter focusing on the frequency of recurring characteristics in the text—we opted for qualitative content analysis, which seeks to consider the presence or absence of given content characteristics within message fragments (Bardin, 2010).

Thus, based on Bardin (2010), we followed the following stages to conduct the content analysis: (a) organization of the analysis; (b) coding; (c) categorization; and (d) treatment of results, inference, and interpretation. In the first stage, we organized and conducted an initial reading of the data to become familiar with them. Next, we coded the data by extracting sets of sentences that indicated relevance to the research topic. In the third stage, we categorized the data by isolating and classifying the previous excerpts in order to organize and group the data. Finally, we processed and interpreted the data, focusing on addressing the research objective and confronting the findings with the theoretical framework, as will be presented in the following section.

## **The Ordinary Management of Pizzaria Bela Massa**

Pizzaria Bela Massa was founded in 2009 by the couple Maria and Wilson, both 21 years old at the time. The enterprise currently employs eighteen workers, distributed across two locations in the city: the headquarters, located in the Novo Israel neighborhood, and a branch (food truck) in the Parque Dez neighborhood. The headquarters, which is the focus of this study, operates on the ground floor of the family home and is almost exclusively oriented toward delivery services, although it also serves customers who come to the location, albeit in smaller numbers.



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The interviewee reports that the business began as a response to financial difficulties within the family. The initial idea of supplementing household income motivated the decision to undertake an entrepreneurial activity in what seemed to be the easiest sector to enter at the time: food services.

My husband worked as a welder and earned very little. We had our five-year-old son to raise, and I was pregnant, so we saw the need. He [my husband] already knew how to make these snacks, how to prepare the dough, the esfihas, pizzas, everything handmade. He learned it from his uncle during adolescence [...]. We ourselves started the business by selling some of our belongings. What we had at the time to invest were some gold jewelry items.

In the family kitchen, using basic equipment acquired after selling the couple's jewelry, the production of pizzas, esfihas, and sandwiches began to serve the neighborhood. The interviewee notes that, at that time, promotion occurred informally among nearby neighbors and that the reception was positive, given the absence of snack bars or pizzerias in the vicinity.

The neighbors started to get to know our work, they began to like it, and that was it—we first sold to people nearby. In the evenings, I would take orders at people's houses on our street, and we would prepare the snacks and deliver them to their homes, because there was no space for people to sit and eat at our house, but the important thing was that we sold.

The beginning of the business, with little planning, was not discouraging for the interviewee, as evidenced by the improvisation involved in service provision. This point resonates with De Certeau (1994) and Correia and Carrieri (2019), in which the ordinary subject undertakes everyday practices of adaptation and struggle in daily life in order to survive and seek better opportunities, as reflected in the statement "but the important thing was that we sold." As reported by Carrieri et al. (2018), lack of planning, improvisation, and spontaneity also emerge as everyday business practices in the ordinary management of Pizzaria Bela Massa.



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The initial profits were sufficient to replenish raw materials and enabled the purchase of soft drinks to resell alongside the snacks. During this period, Wilson resigned from his job as a welder to dedicate himself fully to the new venture. The transition from the home kitchen to a commercial establishment occurred one month later, with the acquisition of a commercial space near the family's residence.

The space was given to us by his father as soon as a tenant moved out. We set up a very small structure and managed to use part of my husband's severance pay to buy tables and chairs, some tableware. The downside was that this place was on a very isolated street, with no pedestrian or vehicle traffic at all.

Business expansion proved to be a major challenge, given the lack of a steady flow of people on the street where the pizzeria was located. Although there was still a neighborhood clientele, the interviewee recognized the need to increase the business's visibility and attract more customers to consume on-site:

To gain more customers, we started handing out flyers, because at that time that's what brought customers. With the flyers, we gained customers that we still have today—and our last flyer campaign was in 2014. We also paid for a sound car; it would advertise a supermarket and then announce our snacks.

According to the interviewee, sales increased immediately after flyer distribution but declined after some time, requiring new campaigns. She also reports that improvements in the establishment's infrastructure led to increased customer flow, which again declined after a few months. According to Maria, many customers stopped visiting the location due to fear of robberies in the area, since the pizzeria operated at night, a time with reduced pedestrian traffic in many parts of the neighborhood.

After approximately six years at this location, the interviewee reports that the pizzeria moved to a new and definitive site on the ground floor of the family home. This change facilitated work and provided greater business stability but did not significantly increase foot traffic or sales. The initial difficulty caused by low customer



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flow is first presented as an obstacle and later identified as a catalyst for a new type of service in the region: home delivery. A significant increase in sales was only observed after the decision to implement pizza delivery, which was a novelty in the neighborhood at the time:

I believe we were among the first to work with delivery, at least for neighborhood snacks. Customers saw it as something new [...] in more remote neighborhoods there wasn't much of a culture of ordering delivery, because for people here, ordering a snack from Parque Dez, for example, was unthinkable—delivery fees were between 10 and 15 reais and it wasn't worth it. The type of esfiha was also a differentiator; only we made it.

The lack of security is highlighted by the owner as a decisive factor in prioritizing delivery services over on-site service. Although delivery itself was not an innovation in the pizzeria sector, the Novo Israel neighborhood lacked this convenience due to what the owner described as a general “fear” among other snack bar owners of expanding their businesses—“not wanting to hire people, wanting to work only by themselves.” According to Maria, the core of this insecurity among local merchants relates to “people’s desire to try different things,” which would discourage owners from expanding and hiring staff due to the risk of losing customers in a context of limited nighttime foot traffic: “One day you eat pizza, the next you want sushi, the next you want barbecue.” In this sense, the interviewee emphasizes the pioneering role of her establishment in implementing delivery, which not only improved service but also allowed the business to cover a broader area beyond the immediate commercial location. With the success of the delivery service, the pizzeria became a source of inspiration for other local businesses:

We were the first to employ several people—first for deliveries, then in the kitchen. We posted photos on Facebook of staff gatherings, with everyone wearing the snack shop’s shirt; the delivery workers went out in uniform and advertised us as well. Then many others started doing the same, even asking how much we paid the delivery drivers. I



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see that people really get inspired by us, by what we do; they see what works.

Seeking to expand the enterprise's reach, and given the feasibility of delivery services, the owner took advantage of the growing popularity of social networks and messaging applications around 2011:

The business started to improve when WhatsApp arrived and I saved the contacts of people who ordered snacks to create a customer group. But it didn't work out and I ended up deleting it because other people who were starting businesses took those contacts and sent their promotions privately, which made us lose many customers. Then I had the idea of using broadcast lists—it was the most practical way to reach people. Every day we sent prices, promotions, and some photos. That made people who ordered occasionally start ordering more often.

Considering the challenges imposed by the business's location, the owner pursued yet another everyday "invention" to increase sales and compensate for the lack of foot traffic. Implementing delivery alone was insufficient; it was also necessary to remain visible to prompt customer orders, while facing the risk of losing customers to competitors adopting similar strategies. This turnaround in circumventing both competition and spatial limitations reflects the "ways of doing" or "bricolage" described by De Certeau (1994), in which the ordinary individual creates everyday practices to overcome difficulties.

According to Maria, business growth was sustained not only by the intuitive understanding she and her husband had of the local market, but also by the effort to offer "quality products with good ingredients, made with homemade dough and without preservatives," with "heavily topped" pizzas and a family-recipe esfiha as differentiators. Thus, the development of everyday business practices at the pizzeria aligns with Carrieri, Perdigão, and Aguiar (2014), as it does not rely on mainstream management pillars or on the formal qualifications of the owners. Instead, understanding was built through day-to-day observations of what could best foster sales growth.



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To further scale sales, the owners partnered with delivery platforms such as iFood, Uber Eats, and 99Food, consolidating the establishment's orientation toward delivery not only within the neighborhood but throughout the city of Manaus. Despite investing in delivery as a means of sustaining the business, the owner did not miss the opportunity to expand to another location with higher foot traffic. Thus, she and her husband established a new sales point at the Urban Social Center (CSU) of Parque Dez, a place frequented by families and host to a popular annual June festival.

After two years working at the first location, we started operating at the Parque Dez CSU, during the annual festival, and we sell a lot there—it's like our thirteenth salary. With that money, we were able to expand the snack shop, buy new equipment, and also buy our first car. In the beginning, we couldn't expand using profits from here alone because we also needed to live. We ended up becoming permit holders [at the CSU] and placed a container there permanently. So he works there, and I work here.

To manage the establishment, the owners divided responsibilities early on, and this arrangement remains unchanged. The husband is responsible for financial management and purchasing, while Maria handles customer service and business promotion.

My husband does the management. He doesn't write very well and doesn't have formal education—he studied up to the sixth grade—but he's very good at math. He knows how much a pizza costs us, how much he earns on each pizza; he knows how to divide everything. He became interested in learning this, and combined it with the experience he already had. Today, my role is customer service and promotion.

This account illustrates how the pizzeria's ordinary management reproduces a clear sexual division of labor, as discussed by Palhares and Carrieri (2018), in which women assume socially perceived “feminine” roles, such as customer service, while men handle operational and financial functions. Despite this division, the interviewee



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states that she “understands the business and could run it very well alone,” but believes it is better for her husband to “be on the front line, doing the heavy work,” while she oversees other aspects, “without taking her eye off what is happening.” These statements align with Palhares and Carrieri (2018) and Correia and Carrieri (2019), which also identify female protagonism in family businesses managed by couples within the context of ordinary management.

Moreover, as highlighted by Carrieri, Perdigão, and Aguiar (2014) and Palhares et al. (2019), the everyday practices of ordinary people in managing the pizzeria reveal popular knowledge acquired through experience as predominant in guiding the business. Wilson, despite “not writing well and lacking formal education,” plays a key managerial role, using basic criteria and calculations to price products and acting as the business’s financial manager.

Family labor, which once comprised the entire workforce—including brothers-in-law and siblings of the owner—now includes only the couple and their eldest son, currently 17 years old, who works as a grill cook. According to Maria, difficulties in working with family stem from intimacy, as work relationships intertwine with family relationships, as highlighted by Lescura et al. (2012) and Lopes, Carrieri, and Saraiva (2013).

Sometimes he [our son] wants to work carelessly and I correct him, because the business is his, he has to set an example, he has to be the best at what he does. He’s about to turn 18, he’s still a boy, there’s a lot he has to learn. Working with my husband is difficult because we disagree on many things. For it to work, he has to stay over there at the CSU and I stay here... We meet at the end of the night to talk about the business.

Statements such as “he has to set an example” and “he can’t work carelessly” show how admonitions enter the private sphere through maternal teachings and advice on how to work. The phrase “he’s still a boy” reflects a maternal tone rather than that of a hierarchical superior. This leniency is not extended to the husband, as working too closely together is described as “difficult” due to disagreements often



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rooted in the marital relationship, necessitating physical separation for work to function better. This confirms the intense and emotional nature of family–work relationships (Davel & Colbari, 2003). As noted by Lopes, Carrieri, and Saraiva (2013), there is no clear separation between business and family; family values are reaffirmed in business matters, and the business also influences family dynamics. At the same time, as Lescura et al. (2012) point out, these affective ties and kinship relations can serve as sources of both integration and conflict.

A resident of the Novo Israel neighborhood since childhood, the interviewee expresses satisfaction in having a business in the area, noting that years ago there was limited access to diverse food establishments:

We contributed a lot to increasing this type of commerce here. When I was a child, if we wanted to eat pizza, it was only at Gosto Gostoso, a traditional pizzeria in the city that operated between the late 1990s and early 2000s. And we ate there maybe once a month, if that. There wasn't this ease of eating something different here, and everyone likes to try something new, have more options [...] having delivery closer is many people's preference.

Although the business was not intentionally designed to develop local commerce, the interviewee positions herself not merely as a merchant but as a community member, sharing the same experiences as neighborhood residents. This reinforces the business's local commitment and customer identification. Geographic proximity serves as a means to attract, retain, and empathically connect with customers, as observed by Correia and Carrieri (2019), with trust as a central component in a context where "everyone knows everyone."

On the other hand, the owner also faces the stigma of operating in a peripheral area, which has led her at times to conceal the business's origin:

Having a snack shop here in the neighborhood generates prejudice in other neighborhoods. Surprisingly, if people from other areas know it's from Novo Israel, they only order once. Our neighborhood is very poorly regarded because of crime, and also because it's more humble,



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which ends up being a negative point for us. That's why, at least on the apps, we don't list the exact neighborhood—we say it's nearby—so we don't lose sales because of prejudice. If we don't do that, the number of orders drops.

This practice shows that, to maintain business operations and sales levels, the owner sometimes feels compelled to deny her local identity—an identity connected not only to the organization but also to the territory and the neighborhood (Saraiva, Carrieri, & Soares, 2014), and to her own self-construction as a resident and founder of a local enterprise. This highlights how studying neighborhood particularities broadens understanding of everyday modes of organizing (Marins & Ipiranga, 2017; Correia & Carrieri, 2019), revealing that the family business both influences and is influenced by the neighborhood's socioeconomic dynamics (Fischer, 2000; Palhares & Carrieri, 2018).

Despite this, the interviewee reaffirms satisfaction with the business's position in the neighborhood due to its strong delivery focus, which allows the coexistence of multiple food businesses without direct competition:

I think there's room for everyone; you just have to know how to work. If there were greater demand in the neighborhood, we wouldn't be able to handle it right now. The good thing is that now there are other people here who deliver—it almost seems coordinated: we're off on Mondays, some are off on Tuesdays, others on Wednesdays. Everyone knows each other and helps each other. Sometimes there are too many orders and we run out of an ingredient, so we check if a colleague from another snack shop has it, and vice versa. That's why competition doesn't affect us much here in the neighborhood—we've already secured our place.

Thus, the business has consolidated itself over the years, facing difficulties but continually seeking progress to remain in the market. Believing that the pizzeria serves as a reference for other entrepreneurs motivates the owner to persist:

We went through a lot of hardship over the years to avoid running out of supplies; we stopped going out for leisure to save money. For ten



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years of our lives, it was like that—we made that choice. With our profits, we upgraded our car to make purchases more easily, we built this space in our home, improved the kitchen—it's now larger, with bigger machines and counters. Our next investment will be a new location that we're still looking to buy here in the neighborhood, in a busier area. Delivery will stay here, and in-person service will be at another location. We have many customers who want to eat after church, bring their families, but they're afraid of safety issues here, so they don't come. That's what we're thinking about for the future.

Despite establishing popularity through delivery, the owner still aspires to overcome the longstanding barrier of low foot traffic, whether by opening a second location in a busier neighborhood or a third point within the same neighborhood but in a more favorable area.

In conclusion, the business's survival was made possible not only by resilience and dedication but also by the owner's intention to elevate the peripheral locality where she lives by offering convenience through delivery services—an innovation in the neighborhood at the time. Experiencing low foot traffic despite high product quality led her to recognize that insecurity keeps people at home, making home delivery a key differentiator. Practically speaking, the foundations of this business's longevity lie in the combination of the owner's promotional practices, her husband's accumulated experience despite limited formal education, and the establishment of cooperative ties with other nearby food business owners.

## **Final considerations**

In this study, we were able to understand the development of certain everyday business practices of a family enterprise located in the Novo Israel neighborhood, in Manaus (AM), from its foundation to the present day, from the perspective of the co-founder and owner of the establishment. To this end, we drew on studies of ordinary management (Carrieri et al., 2014) in order to understand how a family business survives over the years even without the use of formal management instruments.



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To achieve the proposed objective, a descriptive study with a qualitative approach was conducted. Data were collected using the life history method, through a series of interviews carried out with the owner and manager of a small family business, referred to here as Pizzaria Bela Massa. Once the data were collected, they were analyzed using Content Analysis.

Among the main results, we identified non-planning, improvisation, and spontaneity as everyday business practices present in the ordinary management of the family business analyzed. It is worth highlighting that these practices are developed based on previous experiences, present events, and the lived sphere. Other aspects that emerged include a clear sexual division of labor, the lack of separation between business and family, affectivity and intimacy as sources of specific everyday business practices—as well as sources of conflict—and the importance of studying neighborhood particularities in broadening the understanding of everyday modes of organizing. In addition, it should be noted that the interviewee balances between in-person service, which she still aims to expand, and online service, which currently constitutes her main source of income.

Thus, we sought to highlight and value the ordinary management of a family business based on so-called common, amateur, and non-formal knowledge, which is often disregarded by management manuals, but which enables new forms of knowledge and sustains the longevity and growth of a business that has endured for more than a decade. By understanding these practices that emerge in/from everyday life, even when grounded in past experiences, our main contribution lies in recognizing that managing a business goes far beyond what traditional managerial theories prescribe, opening space for diverse forms of management with multiple meanings, (re)constructed in many ways, such as through everyday practices.

Another contribution lies in the fact that, considering economic instability and the survival and maintenance of businesses—such as in the context of new waves of the COVID-19 pandemic in Brazil and worldwide—the ordinary management of family enterprises has emerged as a set of everyday organizing practices that enables them to face the constant challenges of society. Finally, as a suggestion for future research,



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we recommend a deeper exploration of the theoretical relationship between the organization of cities and the ordinary management of family businesses, in order to analyze how the organization of neighborhoods may influence the ordinary management of businesses, and vice versa.

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