

FAMILY BUSINESS RESEARCH GENERAL TRACK

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Abstract

Interest in family business as a field of academic research has grown in recent years (Chrisman et al., 2005; Chrisman et al., 2010), in part because family-owned firms are one of the foundations of the world's business community. Using three criteria, the number of family managers, the proportion of family ownership and the expectation of family succession, Chrisman et al. (2004) found that 79 percent of businesses in their national sample of 46 states were family businesses (FBs). Although facing many of the same day-to-day management issues as publicly-owned companies, they must also manage many issues specific to their *status*.

During the past decade, FB studies have advanced significantly but research still largely focuses on a limited number of topics and theory development requires on-going attention. On the one

hand, although the discipline is progressing in terms of theory building, it still lacks a systematic adoption of thorough and theoretically-based frameworks (Chrisman, Chua, & Sharma, 2003; Sharma, 2004). Theory is crucial for the scientific advancement of a field, because it allows scholars to explain and predict phenomena of interest (Colquitt & Zapata-Phelan, 2007). On the other hand, FB research is still dominated by a limited number of topics, the main ones being succession, economic performance, and firm governance (Chrisman et al., 2003; Debicki, Matherne, Kellermanns, & Chrisman, 2009). While this reflects the key issues for FB managers (Chua, Chrisman, & Sharma, 2003), there are gaps in the literature concerning other topics on effective management and governance of FBs. One such area relates to the trade-off between economic and non-economic goals of FBs, the emotional aspects of performance, and the avoidance of the conflict that may arise from the incongruity of such goals (Debicki et al., 2009; Klein & Kellermanns, 2008; Gomez-Mejia et al, 2007;).

The European Academy of Management annual meeting with an ad-hoc “**Family Business Research**” Track within the **FAMILY BUSINESS RESEARCH Special Interest Group (SIG)** should be *an ideal opportunity to assess the conceptual development, empirical research, and future direction of the family business field*. We envision a track about “Family Business Research” composed of papers that provide new insights of topics that have received significant attention in the past, such as succession, professionalization, conflict, performance dimensions, family processes, and governance (Yu et al., 2009). However, we especially encourage scholars to undertake innovative papers and discussions of topics that have not received much attention but are important in the field, such as family governance systems, relational governance, non-economic goals, the role of trust, the role of enterprising families, psychological/responsible ownership, internationalization, capital structure, socioemotional wealth, etc.

We welcome papers investigating one or several dimensions of FBs, with multi-theoretical and level approach (e.g. management, entrepreneurship, finance, psychology, sociology, etc.) and cross-cultural research. We are particularly interested in advancing “Family Business” as an autonomous Research Field with contributions which offer Rigor to the Academia and Relevance to owner-managers, practitioners and local communities.

Keywords

Family business, theoretical development, multi-theoretical and level approach, empirical issues, future directions