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Stream 4

Diversity and Family Businesses

Stream Chair:

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The conference theme of the EDI 2020 conference focuses on sustainability, which embraces social, ecological, and economic dimensions. According to the Brundtland definition, sustainability refers to ‘development that meets the needs of the present, without comprising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs’ (WCED, 1987, 2.1). Due to their long-term orientation, it is primarily this inherent intergenerational element, which underlies the necessity for family firms of behaving in a sustainable way.

Family firms are the predominant form of business organization throughout the world (La Porta, Lopez-de-Silanes, & Shleifer, 1999). Because of their predominance in most economies, family firms play a crucial role in the development and performance of most economies. They are often long-term oriented (Lumpkin & Brigham, 2011), and mostly privately controlled and owned. The field of family business research is today becoming more multilayered and nuanced, as it progresses towards becoming a distinct academic discipline in and of itself, within business and management research (Bird, Welsch, Astrachan, & Pistrui, 2002; Chua, Chrisman, Steier, & Rau, 2012).

Since family business research is still a relatively new field, predominantly general findings have so far been extrapolated, identifying the traits and issues that family businesses have in common, so as to develop a theory around them (Chrisman, Chua, & Sharma, 2003; Gibb Dyer Jr & Sánchez, 1998). Increasing attention is, however, now being paid to the heterogeneity of family businesses (Chua et al., 2012), or the diversity within the entrepreneurial family (Jaskiewicz, Combs, Shanine, & Kacmar, 2017). Shifting role perceptions and the pluralization of life scripts bring with them increasing challenges, in terms of finding suitable and willing successors in family businesses (McMullen & Warnick, 2015). This makes gender issues, for example, more relevant (Ahrens, Landmann, & Woywode, 2015), but also highlights issues related to other dimensions of diversity. Since they are often small- or medium-sized enterprises, family businesses are also subject to a limitation of resources; nevertheless, their commitment to corporate social responsibility would seem to be higher than that of non-family businesses (Block & Wagner, 2014; Campopiano & Massis, 2015), which appears to be a

paradox. Paradoxes do not exist to be solved; they exist essentially to be observed and understood. Therefore, in this stream we aim to address the role of diversity and heterogeneity in family businesses.

This stream welcomes papers on any issue related to the realm of equality, diversity, and inclusion, in the context of family businesses. The following is a suggested, but not exhaustive, list of possible topics:

Diversity within the family in the family business, e.g.

- The impact of different family types (e.g. nuclear family, patchwork family, etc. as well as different sizes of family)
- Impact of the life-cycle of owner families on the family business
- The impact of a family's values and norms, e.g. those based on religious beliefs

Diversity within the family business, e.g.

- Issues related to the workforce diversity of family businesses (including any facet of diversity, such as age, disability, nationality, sexual orientation, religion, appearance, gender identity, social class, etc.)
- Ownership structures
- Diversity in the top management teams (e.g. family members and non-family members, etc.)
- Gender diversity in family businesses (e.g. in the family business succession situation)
- Long-term-orientation of family firms and issues of equality, diversity, and inclusion
- Corporate social responsibility and family businesses

Embeddedness of family businesses, e.g.

- Context-based diversity (e.g. impact of country, social and moral concepts, industry etc.)
- The influence of context factors on family firms

Diversity initiatives in family businesses, e.g.

- How can family firms support diversity? Coaching for diversity / leading for diversity
- Interrelation between diversity management and power structures in family firms
- Interrelation of family diversity and the shape of diversity initiatives

Submissions to the stream can be in the form of long abstracts (up to 1500 words), developmental papers (3000-5000 words, including references) or full papers (no length restrictions) by the deadline of 1 March 2020. Please process your registration and paper submission online via www.edi-conference.org.