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Women Executives in Thai Family Businesses

Natenapha Wailersak (Yabushita)

In Thailand, the rate of women participating in industrial and service sectors is vividly high. It is common to see a large number of female white-collar workers and middle management in business sites. However, when considering the top management level, the status of Thai women is relatively low. This article examines the existence of Thai women executives in the board of family-owned listed companies and factors influencing their career advancement. The results suggest that, in addition to family membership, education and professional experiences have played important roles in explaining Thai women's advancement to executive positions. Nevertheless, a small number of non-family women executives indicates that some significant barriers such as gender discrimination have strongly remained.

Women Board of Directors in Spanish Family Firms

Silvia Gómez Ansón and María Sacristán Navarro

The purpose of this paper is to highlight gender diversity on boards of directors of firms listed on the official Spanish stock market, comparing female presence in listed Spanish non-family firms to that of listed family firms, in an attempt to demonstrate the intensity of female presence in listed Spanish family firms by means of a descriptive analysis. The presence of women in family firms is undoubtedly much higher than what we observed from our analysis of listed firms, but will nevertheless serve as an initial measure.

This paper explores gender diversity on boards of directors of Spanish listed firms, comparing female presence in listed non-family firms to that of listed family firms in an attempt to demonstrate the intensity of female presence in listed Spanish family firms by means of a descriptive analysis. The results of this analysis confirm the low gender diversity of Spanish firms. Nevertheless, family firms are characterised by a larger gender board diversity compared to non-family firms. The majority of women with seats on the board of directors are appointed to represent significant stakes, most of which belong to families.

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Women in the US Family Business Ownership and Management

Matthew C Sonfield and Robert N Lussier

While family firms account for an estimated 80% of all American businesses, and about one-third of these family businesses are owned by women, there has been minimal study of gender issues in family business ownership and management. In contrast to early (pre-1980) gender comparisons in management and entrepreneurship, this study found general similarities and few significant differences in a variety of management activities and styles between family businesses with at least half the owner-managers being women and those with less than half. These findings add to the limited and currently inconclusive body of knowledge regarding gender issues in family business, entrepreneurship, and management in general.

Women's Leadership in the US Family Businesses: Role of Family vs. Business Priorities

Margaret A Fitzgerald and Cathleen Folker

Various studies have found that women's firms tend to be smaller – perhaps focusing more on lifestyle businesses rather than high-growth ventures (Brush, 1992). It is possible that women will create both lifestyle and high-growth ventures depending on their motivation: whether they put family first or business first. The purpose of this study is to ascertain the influence of a female business owner's orientation towards prioritizing business or family needs first on the success of the business and the family (n = 189). Data are from the US National Family Business Survey, 1997 panel.

Findings indicate that female business owners did differ on their orientation towards business or family first, and low levels of family/business tension were related to higher family satisfaction or functionality. Moreover, prioritizing family needs was a positive and statistically significant predictor of family functionality while prioritizing business needs was not a significant predictor of business profit.

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Role Carryover Between Spouses in US Family Businesses: Development of a Model

Marilyn F Reineck

This study used qualitative and quantitative data to develop and test a model of role carryover problems between spouses in US family businesses. A theoretical model was constructed to explain the process by which communication behaviors aggravate or alleviate role carryover problems. Model testing proceeded in three phases. Stage I gathered descriptive data about model variables from interviews with spouses who work together in family businesses. In Stage II, scales for several model variables were constructed from interview data and pretested. Stage III consisted of a survey that gathered data to test the model. LISREL analysis revealed differences between husbands' and wives' models in perceptions of Hierarchy, Work-Family System Overlap and Role Carryover conflict's relationship to Work Satisfaction.

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Women Learning Business Leadership: Journeys in the Family Firm

Mary Barrett and Ken Moores

The family business literature has thus far not devoted much attention to understanding female vantage points in family firms. A few small-scale studies, notably Poza and Messer (2001) and Curimbaba (2002), describe the varying roles that women adopt, but without explaining why they adopt such roles. Our research aims to examine the career progression of women leaders in family businesses, specifically how they progressively learn skills and competencies.

In our book (Moores and Barrett, 2002) we found that successful family firm CEOs encountered a series of unique paradoxes. Exploring, understanding and perhaps managing these paradoxes took them on a learning journey to leadership in which they progressively learnt business (L1), learnt our business (L2), learnt to lead our business (L3), and learnt to let go our business (L4).

Here we seek to establish whether and how the journey of women family business leaders follows different pathways. This chapter focuses on the 'long march, short journey' cases, focusing on women who have achieved senior positions in the family firm, but whose experiences differ greatly in other ways.

Gendered Discourse about Euro-American Family Business

Sharon M Danes, Heather R Haberman and Donald McTavish

Language patterns of Euro-American family business owners were explored by identifying discourse styles and emphasized ideas in four presenting contexts: business, family, intersection of family and business, and business success. The content analysis supported the existence of a general discourse style within family businesses and of both similarities and differences between men and women in emphasized ideas as they frame their family businesses. The emotional discourse style (words of personal involvement, concern, and preference) was prominent across presenting contexts for both genders, and there was a distinct absence of analytical language. Women had a higher emotional discourse style score for managing the business than did men; men balanced their emotional language with the practicality of planning tasks and creating efficiencies.

Work in Family Business and Gender Relations: Recent Korean Immigrant Women in Toronto

Min-Jung Kwak

This study explores the effects of women's participation in family businesses on gender relations. I examined statistical data, conducted a case of participant observation in the Korean immigrant community, and interviewed in-depth fifteen recently immigrated Korean women in the Toronto CMA. In this study, I explore the reasons and the ways in which women involve themselves in running convenience stores after migration. Unlike typical images of immigrant women, the fifteen participants are found to be active decision makers and significant economic contributors. However, their significant contributions to their businesses do not necessarily influence their fundamental beliefs about traditional family relationships that place women and men in different social positions according to patriarchal gender ideologies. The different local contexts and various social relations that are maintained within the immigrant community were speculated as critical factors affecting the ways that patriarchal relations were reshaped.

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The Gendered Moral Order of Chinese Immigrant Business Families in Finland

Saija Katila

Earlier studies indicate that in Chinese family firms patriarchal hierarchies of gender and generation determine access to resources and control, and filial piety influences bonding and exchange among the family members. This paper explores how well founded these arguments are in the case of Chinese family businesses the catering sector of Helsinki Metropolitan Area, Finland. To be able to surface the familial moral orders, biographical interviews were chosen for the study. This paper challenges the static and idealized nature of the earlier studies by highlighting agency of different family members. Families do not necessarily act in concert or adhere to patriarchal arrangements of gender in their everyday life. The relations of dependency, expectations and trust are intimately intertwined and disregarding this phenomenon in family business research can lead researchers astray.

Gender, Diversification and Family Farming in the Netherlands

Bettina B Bock

As a result of the crisis in agriculture in Europe, many farm families try to find extra sources of income that allow them to continue farming. Women play an important role, especially in starting up new on-farm businesses, but also in finding off-farm paid work. We conducted semi-structured interviews in the Netherlands between 1995 and 2001 with 79 farmwomen engaged in new economic activities, focused on their motives, strategies and experiences during the process. The findings demonstrate that women shape their entrance into off-farm work or an on-farm business around the needs of the family and the farm. In order to accommodate to the idea of a good mother and farm wife, women are ready to shoulder the triple burden of farm, family and extra income generation and to accept low wages, stress and lack of time off. Thus, women not only reconfirm the existing conservative gender system but also contribute to its perpetuation. But they are also satisfied about the possibility of realizing their personal ambition and about the respect and recognition they finally receive. In addition many women experience a greater sense of ownership of the farm business, as they now contribute more visibly to its survival.