

Insights on Trends of Academic Research into Family Business

Vhled do vývoje vědeckého poznání rodinného podnikání

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Abstract

The question of family business ranks among the most intensively followed areas of research. At the same time, it is a question with a palpable impact on the economic and social environment; in other words, it is a question with a high degree of social relevance. It is a topic both appropriate and necessary, yet very challenging in terms of its interdisciplinarity and scope. The goal of this article is to summarize the research question of family business via a systematic review of literature primarily in terms of topical areas, scientific methods, and study sample size. To evaluate which methods are suitable for examining the issues of family business. The authors drew methodological inspiration from the bibliography of De Massis et al. (2012), in which the authors gathered and organized information related to the topics of empirical articles, including a short description of the sample, a description of the data collections methods used, and a list of secondary data sources used. They reached the conclusion that the use of qualitative research seems logical for research in the areas of identity, culture, values, and relationships, which is the primary socioemotional wealth of family businesses.

Keywords

family business, research methods, strategy, management, succession, relations, asset management

JEL Codes

M00

DOI

<http://dx.doi.org/10.37355/acta-2021/1-01>

Abstrakt

Problematika rodinného podnikání patří mezi intenzivně sledované oblasti výzkumu. Zároveň se jedná o problematiku s nezanedbatelným dopadem na ekonomické a sociální prostředí, tedy o téma s vysokou společenskou relevancí. Téma je vhodné a potřebné, ale je velmi náročné vzhledem ke své interdisciplinaritě a šíři. Cílem příspěvku je přiblížit výzkumnou problematiku RP prostřednictvím systematického přezkumu literatury především z pohledu tematických okruhů, vědeckých metod, velikosti výzkumného vzorku. Vyhodnotit, které metody jsou vhodné pro zkoumání problematiky rodinného podnikání. Autorky se metodologicky inspirovaly bibliografií De Massis et al. (2012), ve které autoři shromáždili a uspořádali informace týkající se témat empirických článků, včetně krátkého

popisu vzorku, popisu metod použitých ke sběru dat a seznamu sekundárních zdrojů dat, které byly použity. Mimo jiné došli k závěru, že využití kvalitativního výzkumu se zdá být logické pro výzkum v oblasti identity, kultury, hodnot a vztahů, což je hlavním socioemocionálním bohatstvím rodinných podniků.

Klíčová slova

rodinné podnikání, vědecké metody, strategie, řízení, nástupnictví, vztahy, správa majetku

Introduction

The issues of family business appeared in the academic field at the beginning of the 1980s. 80 years prior, the term “family business” only appeared occasionally, consisting of meager empirical research and articles of a purely theoretical character. In 1988 the first issue was published of an academic journal *Family Business Review* (FBR). It combines academic research and practical experience in a journal devoted exclusively to analyzing the dynamics of family businesses. Its interdisciplinary forum captured learning from a variety of academic fields – management, marketing, financial management, human resources management, etc.

In the 1990s, research into family businesses became an independent multidisciplinary field. Studies focused on a range of paradoxes at the intersection of various academic disciplines, combining economic, managerial, sociological, and psychological issues, as well as many others. One of the first compilation studies of topics and research methods for family business was the work by Sharma et al., 1996. They reached the conclusion that no dominant theory of the family business existed at the time that could provide a sufficiently robust and unambiguous explanation of the behavior and performance of the family and the business, the positive and negative connection of two entirely different entities. The development of a theory associated with family business was at its very beginnings. We describe how this area of knowledge developed further in the following text.

1 Theoretical concepts of family business analysis

Family businesses are entrepreneurial entities in which a family owns capital sufficient to exercise control over the business, where family members occupy top management positions, where the objective is to pass the company to subsequent generations (Colli, Rose, 2016; Poza, Daugherty, 2014; Krošlákova, 2013a). Expert estimates indicate that 80–85% of all European businesses are family businesses (Záborská, 2015), generating over 60 million jobs, i.e. on average 40–50% of all jobs in the private sector (EFB, 2019). 85% of startups throughout the world are based on contributions from family financing (FFI, 2012). Family businesses play an important role in employment, creation of income, and accumulation of wealth (Colli, Rose, 2016; Sanguino, 2017) and significantly participate in the creation of GDP (Osunde, 2017). For this reason it is important to focus on researching

family business and creating a theory associated with its success or failure. The unique character of family businesses creates an opportunity to pose numerous interesting research questions (Bird et al., 2002). Publications on the topic of family business appear in numerous journals, e.g. *Journal of Family Business Strategy*, *Journal of Business Venturing*, *Small Business Economics*, and others.

The bibliography of De Massis et al. (2012) entitled *Family Business Studies* built on the publication by Sharma et al., 1996 and cataloged 215 of the most cited empirical, theoretical, and practical articles about family business published from 1996 to 2010 in 33 journals. The goal of the authors of this essay is to follow the trends and directions of family business research, discuss emerging trends in empirical studies, and provide detailed information on the data and methods used in empirical studies on family business.

Flores, Bringas (2018) determined that if we wish to assess the competitiveness, performance, or resilience of family businesses, it is necessary that we take into consideration two dimensions: the size of the business and the size of the family. Academic publications should aid a deeper understanding and comprehension of the atmosphere of family businesses and the identification of factors that lead to their success. By way of example, Suess-Reyes (2017) considers the development of a transgenerational orientation to be one of the most significant challenges that family businesses face. Sadkowska (2018) examines the outlook of family businesses from a perspective of building internal relationships and relationships with external affected parties.

However, the research of family firms matters in different ways depending on the context because family firms can exhibit best and worst practices (Morck & Steier, 2005). Therefore, Sharma (2004) investigated qualitatively family firm performance and family firm definitions to understand the domain and the scope of the research field. Yet up until now, it has not been clarified conclusively in an empirical way whether family firms have a better performance than nonfamily firms. Guan et al. (2019) identifies six main categories that influence the competitiveness of family businesses. These include entrepreneur innovation ability, entrepreneur innovation spirit, social capital, institutional environment, business innovation behavior, and innovation performance of family businesses. Kleve et al. (2020) covered a combination of research into family business, organizational studies, and theories of systems. They sought out a correlation between typical family relationships and formal decision-making processes for commercial and family strategy. Evert et al. (2015) to identify and evaluate empirical trends, and make suggestions for future research, we examine 319 empirical articles published in *Family Business Review* since 1988. These studies are compared with 146 family business research articles published in top-tier journals not dedicated to family business research over the same timeframe. While we substantiate growth in rigor and sophistication, we address specific family business research challenges regarding construct validity, generalizability, causality, temporality, and multilevel issues. Suggestions are provided for future empirical research across six major topical areas. According to them, six main topical areas of academic research can be identified: These are:

- 1. Characteristics and attributes (hereinafter CHA) – this area includes analyses,** statistical tests, whether specific or unique characteristics of family businesses influence their performance, generalization of the strong and weak sides of family

businesses, examining the variance between attributes of family and non-family businesses, e.g. during the course of the life cycle of the business, in the process of intergenerational transfer, in access to human resources management, etc.

2. **Strategy and management of family businesses (hereinafter SM) – this area includes causal** mechanisms, strategic selection, motives, preferences and values involved in strategic decisions that influence either the family or the business. Their goal is to assess the differences in the behavior of individual, of family and non-family businesses, to evaluate strategic decision making, processes, selection of strategies for success, competitiveness and resiliency of the family business, etc.
3. **Business performance and growth (hereinafter BPG) –** the goal is to understand whether and how non-financial values (e.g. socioemotional wealth) growing (over time) among individual family members, influence performance and the business/ financial results, and growth, of the family business. It evaluates development, verifies factors of financial and non-financial impact on sustainability, social corporate responsibility, entrepreneurial ethics, and commercial success. It examines the influence of changes in management or ownership over time, analyzes the history and trends in relation to growth/bankruptcy, liquidation of the family business, influences of organizational crisis (economic decline, death of a CEO, scandal, etc.) on the competitiveness of the company, etc.
4. **Interpersonal family dynamics (hereinafter IFD) – this area includes socioemotional wealth**, combinations of family systems and organizational structures in relation to the character, causes, reasons, and consequences of various types of conflicts. Identification and assessment of the motivations of the family for achieving business objectives. Examining the correlation between relationships of family and non-family managers, differences in dynamic growth trends between generations, etc.
5. **Succession (hereinafter SN) – this area includes** examining the progress of succession strategies, generalization of processes of managing succession strategies. Methods of handover and administration of the business (to family and non-family members), asset management and transfer of ownership (trust funds), evaluation of the impact of transfer of the business on employees, customers, vendors, the wider public, innovation, internationalization, competitiveness, investment, etc.
6. **Governance (hereinafter GV) – this area evaluates** relationships between family and non-family members in relation to the system of administration (CEO duality, CEO approaches, company culture, exercise of power, family counsel, family meetings, family constitution, etc.) (Evert et al., 2015).

Articles published after 2015 can also be categorized in the above thematic areas. For example, **SM** – prospective strategic management of family businesses: past, new perspectives, future directions (Daspit et al., 2017, Kupec et al., 2020, **IFD, BPG** – ethics and social responsibility of family business (Michalski, 2014, Varquez, 2018, Minth, 2018), **IFD, SM, BPG** – pressure of SEW on the transition to sustainable production and the system of circulation economics (Núñez-Cacho et al., 2018), **SM, BPG** – influence of strategic activities and market orientation on the performance of family business (Zainal et al., 2018), **BPG, SM** – internationalization and forms of entry of family businesses on foreign markets (Kontinen, Ojala, 2010, Lehrer, Celso, 2017, Sanchez-Famoso et al., 2019), **IFD** – influence of SEW on

entrepreneurial orientation of family businesses (Hernández-Perlines et al., 2019), **CHA**, **IFD**, **SN**, **BPG** – concepts of resilience taking into account how the family, the progress of succession, and the nature of non-economic factors influence their performance (Beech et al., 2020, Nađová Krošláková, 2020), **GV** – theory and practice, agency, contractual relationships, conflict of interest (Panda, Leepsa, 2017, Hastori et al., 2015), etc.

While other topics, or areas of interest, appear in the technical literature, the above six rank among the most commonly discussed. For this reason the authors decided to exclude the less frequent areas and to focus on the six basic ones, specified in the above text. They acknowledge that the undiscussed topics also may influence success, independent functioning, and competitiveness of family businesses.

2 Research methods

The authors examined the research question of family business via a systematic review of literature primarily in terms of topical areas, scientific methods, and study sample size. (2012). The authors assumed that the classification of topical areas according to Evert et al. (2015) is generally applicable, nonetheless they considered it appropriate to verify whether the articles published in the text below can be assigned to the specified areas. They have formulated the following research questions:

- **RQ1** – Can the same or similar six main topical areas of academic study as formulated by Evert et al., 2015 be observed in selected countries of the former socialist bloc?
- **RQ2** – Which research methods are used by authors in the selected countries of the former socialist bloc for the identification of issues associated with family businesses?
- **RQ3** – What is the size of the study sample of respondents used by authors in the selected countries of the former socialist block as a basis for family business research?

When evaluating topics and suitable methods for analyzing the specifics of family businesses, the authors focused on the following countries of the former socialist bloc¹ (Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, Bulgaria, Czech Republic). The selected countries have similar histories, academic interest in family business is similarly dated from the 1990s, and potential collaboration may be assumed in joint studies. The following parameters were selected for systematic literature review:

- The authors searched the ProQuest and Google Scholar databases for the term “family business in Poland”, “family business in Slovakia”, “family business in Hungary”, “family business in Bulgaria”, “family business in the Czech Republic”.²

1 The socialist bloc consisted of the countries in Comecon, primarily the USSR, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Albania, East Germany, Mongolia, Cuba, Vietnam etc.

2 As of 12 June 2020, the search term “family business” entered into the ProQuest database of academic journals yields 646,743 search results. As of 12 June 2020, the search term “family business” entered into the Google Scholar database for the time period from 1998-2020 yields 1,310,000 results.

- The articles searched were primarily those published in technical journals in the English language.
- Articles from a random selection for which it was possible unambiguously to identify the topical areas or the relationships between them, the research method and number of respondents, were included in tables and subsequently evaluated using descriptive statistics.
- In subsections 4.1–4.5 a total of 62 citation references are given, with 39 articles included in descriptive statistics.

3 Outputs and discussion

3.1 Progress, status of understanding issues and research methods in Poland

Entering the search term “family business in Poland” into the ProQuest database (academic journals) yielded a total of 7 results, the Google Scholar database yielded 297,000. For the purposes of this essay, the following studies were selected:

In Poland the interest in family business issues dates back to the 1990s. In the 1990s, the transformation of the market was linked to rapid founding and subsequent development of small family business. These became the dominant type of business over the last 30 years. Paradoxically, we still know relatively little about the characteristics of these commercial entities (Sułkowski et al., 2017). The leading researches in this field include Trembaczowski, who presented the results of a qualitative study of 12 companies in relation to the issue of succession in a broader prospective strategy of social reproduction (2018). Koladkiewicz (2013) identified the role of 1st and 2nd generations in the process of the internationalization of a business operating in the MSE sector. She selected a research method of a qualitative character – she produced six case studies, the primary research tool was the unstructured conversation. The conversations were conducted in the years 2008–2009. The author was one of the first to reference the role of the second generation in the process of internationalization of family businesses. According to Leśniewski (2016), 36% of Polish business subjects represent family businesses, 10% of whom contribute 10% to creation of GDP, 60% of which practice succession planning. The goal of this essay was also to prove how family businesses may effectively use strategic analysis when planning strategic goals. Socha, Majda-Kariozen (2017) published a study presenting a view of administration and management of family businesses via assessment of financial performance. The empirical analysis prepared on a sample of 24,000 Polish family businesses in the period from 2008–2013 used the method of linear regression. Domanowska (2017) introduced the issue of hostile takeover in a case study of the family jeweler W. Kruk, established in 1840. Glod, Flak (2017) analyzed factors of competitiveness in Polish family businesses. The authors consider as a competitive advantage the prioritization of long-term profits over short-term profits, and flexible decision-making. Marjański, Sułkowski (2019) analyzed articles published in Poland in the years 2009–2018. They reached the conclusion that the quantitative analysis was applied in the years 2009–2010, whereas the qualitative approach (interview, case study, etc.) was applied in research projects in 2014–2018. The methodology of quantitative research, while it

can be representative and lead to a more certain generalization, always prevents deeper understanding of the complicated social processes taking place in family businesses. In contrast, they state that qualitative methods are particularly useful for examining family business issues and the connection of specific commercial (economic) relationships with family (with an emotional, personal, and private environment).

Table 1: Topical areas, methods, and scope of analysis of family business issues in Poland

Year	Authors	Topic and its classification into categories according to Evert et al.	Qualitative research	Quantitative research	Number of respondents
2007	SAFIN	Strategic behavior of family business and the factors that influence it. SM, CHA, BPG, IFD, SN		Questionnaire	600
2010	SURDEJ, WACH	Succession strategy. SN, CHA, IFD	61 in-depth interviews	Questionnaire	496
2014	PAWLAK	Progress of the process. SN, CHA, IFD	Direct semi-structured interviews lasting 1 hour		6 randomly selected family businesses
2016	LEŚNIEWSKI	Effectiveness of use of strategic analysis when planning strategic goals. SM, CHA		Questionnaire	23 respondents
2017	DOMANOWSKA	Process of hostile takeover. GV, SN, CHA, SM	Case study of a family jeweler		1
2017	SOCHA, MAJDA-KARIOZEN	Evaluation of financial performance. GV, CHA, BPG, IFD		Linear regression, data from public sources	24,000
2018	TREMBACZOWSKI	Prerequisites for successful succession, capital structure. SN, GV, CHA,	Qualitative study		12 randomly selected family businesses

Year	Authors	Topic and its classification into categories according to Evert et al.	Qualitative research	Quantitative research	Number of respondents
2019	MARJAŇSKI A SUŁKOWSKI	Systematic literature review of the issues of family businesses. CHA, SM, BPG, IFD, SN, GV		58 articles	The articles were based from 1,310 respondents

Source: author analysis

3.2 Progress, status of understanding issues and research methods in Slovakia

Entering the search term “family business in Slovakia” into the ProQuest database (academic journals) yielded a total of 4 results, the Google Scholar database yielded 26,000. For the purposes of *this* essay, the following studies were selected:

In Slovakia, issues of family business have been examined for some time by Helena Strážovská and Ľubomíra Strážovská (Strážovská, Strážovská, 2002, Strážovská 2004, Strážovská et al., 2008). In 2010, for example, they studied 128 family businesses and determined, that only the first generation is employed in 31% of those questioned, in 63% the first and second generations work together, in 6% the second and third generations are both employed at the same time (Strážovská, Strážovská, 2010). Krošlákova builds on their work. In 2013 lecture notes were published (Krošlákova, 2013, Krošlákova, Strážovská, 2013). The subject of Family Business was included in the curriculum of the Business School of the University of Economics in Bratislava. Family businesses were believed to contribute to the increased stability and economic independence of families and increased appeal of entrepreneurialism (Kočišová, Stoličná, 2017). In 2011 a study was produced using qualitative research entitled Family Business in Slovakia. 11 interviews were conducted with representatives of family businesses. Research questions focused on issues associated with business, the person of the founder, and his or her willingness to transfer the family business, as well as the area of relationships between the family and the business (Serina, 2011). Marosi, Katona (2015) analyzed a sample of 143 students ranging in age from 18–33 years using quantitative research to determine their attitudes toward involvement in the management of a family business. The goal of the study by the authors Peracek et al. (2017) was to analyze selected problems of family businesses in the conditions of the Slovak Republic using comparison of technical texts. Naďová Krošlákova (2020) followed on this work. She proposed a recommendation for the development of family businesses in Slovakia in the area of legislation and administration, approach to capital and support programs, education, consultation, and informedness, employment. The goal of a study by Mura, Mazák (2018) was to reveal trends associated with the innovation activity of family

businesses. The evaluation of study of 320 respondents used the chi-squared test (χ^2 test) – Pearson test of goodness of fit, statistics of average values. The authors assume that the frequency of innovation activities is influenced by factors such as quality, technical development, organization of work, marketing, and sales. Lušňáková et al. (2019) assessed the preparedness of Slovakian family businesses on generation change of owners, on ensuring fluid transfer of management and ownership of the family business to the younger generation. The research method was a questionnaire based on a 5-degree Likert scale. Assessment of the influence of various factors on entrepreneurial initiatives in the Czech Republic, Poland, and Slovakia was addressed by Bilan et al. (2019). They stated that in addition to the quality of higher education of the succeeding generation, the business initiatives of young people in relation to involvement in management of a family business are dependent on other important factors: macro and microeconomic, social, business environment, state support of business, access to grants and funds, etc.

Table 2: Topical areas, methods, and scope of analysis of family business issues in Slovakia

Year	Authors	Topic and its classification into categories according to Evert et al.	Qualitative research	Quantitative research	Number of respondents
2011	SERINA	Entrepreneurialism, relationships, founder personality. BPG, IFD, CHA	Personal interview		11
2015	MAROSI, KATONA	Attitude of younger generation to succession. SN, IFD, CHA, GV		Questionnaire	143
2017	PERACEK	Systematic literature review of the issues of family businesses. CHA, SM, BPG, IFD, SN, GV		21 articles	
2018	MURA, MAZÁK	Family business innovation activity. SM, BPG, IFD, CHA		Questionnaire	320
2019	LUŠŇÁKOVÁ et al.	Preparedness for succession. SN, GV, IFD, CHA, SM, BPG		Questionnaire	412

Source: author analysis

3.3 Progress, status of understanding issues and research methods in Hungary

Entering the search term “family business in Hungary” into the ProQuest database (academic journals) yielded a total of 7 results, the Google Scholar database yielded 220,000. For the purposes of this essay, the following studies were selected:

Family business issues in Hungary have been studied by academic personnel since the year 1992. Innovation and growth potential of new beginning family businesses was evaluated by studies between the years 1992–1999. Scharle followed on the research of Fóti (1997), Czakó (1997), Gábor (1985, 1990, 1994), Laky (1998). In a study focused on the influence of involvement of family members and other factors on the economic effectiveness of the company, the author used a method of comparing simple statistics, estimates using multinomial models of probability (Scharle, 2002). The author Bogáth (2015) sought an answer to the question of how business and family goals can be linked, analyzed the situation of family businesses in Hungary using a review of Hungarian and international literature. She identified three family philosophies, long-term success is achieved only once the proper balance between the family and the business can be established. Kása et al. (2017) analyzed the % share of family businesses in the SME segment, to identify the specifics of business issues. Csákné (2012), Németh (2018) emphasize the importance of Hungarian family businesses for the national and regional economy. Németh, Németh (2017) used quantitative research to analyze popularity of tools for administration and management of a family business, visualizing it in the form of a “Pyramid” of family administration. The topic of the individual conduct of the owner in relation to succession was the subject of a two-year qualitative study by Darabos, Baracskai (2018). The work method used by the group The Solutionist Group was the best practice model. It allowed for the characteristics of family businesses to be presented, showing how the process of sustainable business differs in the environment of family and non-family businesses (Tobak et al., 2018). Tobak, Nábradi (2020) subsequently presented a new methodology for evaluating the trends, maturity, and life cycles of family businesses, calling it the TONA model. It includes a dimension of family-business-ownership in relation to the 1st to nth generation. Factors of international competitiveness of family businesses were studied by Ružeková, Kaštaláková (2018). Szirmai, Németh (2019) submitted a literature review on the position of family businesses and compared the outputs of research focused on the importance and possibilities of succession planning.

Table 3: Topical areas, methods, and scope of analysis of family business issues in Hungary

Year	Authors	Topic and its classification into categories according to Evert et al.	Qualitative research	Quantitative research	Number of respondents
2002	SCHARLE	Innovation and growth potential, SM, BPG, IFD, SN, CHA		Analysis of data from publicly accessible sources	876

Year	Authors	Topic and its classification into categories according to Evert et al.	Qualitative research	Quantitative research	Number of respondents
2015	BOGÁTH	Systematic literature review of the issues of family businesses. CHA, SM, BPG, IFD, SN, GV		15 articles	
2017	KÁSA et al.	% of family business representation in the SME segment, specifics of business issues of family businesses. BPG, CHA		Questionnaire	382
2017	NÉMETH, NÉMETH	Tools for administration and management of family businesses. GV, CHA, IFD	In-depth interviews	Quantitative analysis and online research	9/177
2018	DARABOS A BARACSKAI	Behavior and decision-making of owners of family businesses. IFD, CHA, GV	Comparison, interview		140
2018	TOBAK et al.,	Evaluation of factors of successful succession. SN, CHA	Model of best practice of companies with tradition of over 100 years/fourth generation of owners		1
2019	TOBAK, NÁBRADI	Proposal of the TONA model. SN, GV, IFD, CHA, SM, BPG			Only created model, hypothetically outlining 6 variants of achieved results

Year	Authors	Topic and its classification into categories according to Evert et al.	Qualitative research	Quantitative research	Number of respondents
2019	SZIRMAI, NÉMETH	Systematic literature review of the issues of family businesses, primarily succession. CHA, SM, BPG, IFD, SN, GV		64 articles	

Source: author analysis

3.4 Progress, status of understanding issues and research methods in Bulgaria

Entering the search term “family business in Bulgaria” into the ProQuest database (academic journals) yielded a total of 11 results, Google Scholar database yielded 64,300 Results. For the purposes of this essay, the following studies were selected:

Dadak (1995) focused on an analysis of macro and microeconomic factors influencing competitiveness and entrepreneurialism of Bulgarian family businesses in the years 1988–1993. Small (2005) presents a study of the influence of family on structural changes in agriculture in middle and eastern Europe. In a study from 2008, Mandl presumes that in predominantly agricultural areas, family businesses are represented in primary traditional branches of agriculture and forestry by 30% employment (Mandl, 2008). Flether et al. (2009) focused on relationships within small family businesses. Yordanova (2016) studied and compared models and their overall predictive capability, which would enable the proper classification of differences between family and non-family businesses. It was based on comparison of the texts of 110 technical articles. She created her own model, which compared and evaluated 14 factors of 235 analyzed businesses. Marinova, Marinov (2017) opened the topic of internationalization and factors influencing the success of Bulgarian family businesses during entry and expansion on the international market. Castellano, Ivanova (2017) explain the progress of fundamental institutional changes during the sociopolitical transition from a centrally planned to open market economy in Bulgaria. The authors appeal to the size of the company, technical knowledge, modern style of management, and fulfillment of changing needs, requirements, and expectations of customers in the regional and international market environment.

Table 4: Topical areas, methods, and scope of analysis of family business issues in Bulgaria

Year	Authors	Topic and its classification into categories according to Evert et al.	Qualitative research	Quantitative research	Number of respondents
1995	DADAK	Factors limiting family business growth. CHA, SM, BPG, IFD, SN, GV	Interview		45
2009	FLEATHER et al	Family relationships and their impact on success IFD, CHA, SN	Interview		69
2016	YORDANOVA	Differences between family and non-family businesses. CHA, SM, BPG, IFD, SN, GV	Structured interview		235
2017	MARINOVA, MARINOV	Internationalization and proactive behavior on the international market. BPG, CHA, IFD, SM	Semi-structured interview		9
2017	CASTELLANO, IVANOVA	Creation of the identity of a family business in the course of transformation of the economy to an open market economy. CHA, SM, BPG, IFD, SN, GV	Semi-structured repeated interviews in October 2007, October 2010, July 2015		8

Source: author analysis

3.5 Progress, status of understanding issues and research methods in the Czech Republic

Entering the search term “family business in Czech Republic” into the ProQuest database (academic journals) yielded a total of 28 results, Google Scholar database yielded 123,000 results. For the purposes of this essay, the following studies were selected, the author (Petrů) intentionally did not include the outputs of her own publishing activities:

One of the first publication activities was a dissertation by entitled *Re-Establishing Traditional Czech Family Businesses: A Multiple Case Study on the Present Challenges*. The main goal of the study was to observe, name, and understand the primary challenges (problems) faced by restituted Czech family businesses after 10 years of doing business. (Hanzelková, 2004). Since about 1997 this topic the team of Professor Koráb has studied family business issues. Kalouda et al. (1998), in addition to the individual characteristics, goals, priorities of each individual from the family and business, ascribe specific characteristics, goals, priorities,

to their own systems. Whereas the family system demonstrates a particularly emotional character with which its priorities are associated as well, in business the system functions on the basis of rational consideration, whereas the main priority would seem to be the achievement of results. Family business are and will continue to be an integral part of the Czech economy. In relation to the need to grow the business it is necessary to implement a system of education, consultation, and support (Koráb, 2008). Odehnalová (2011) built on the work of this team, referencing the differences in the development of family and non-family businesses in the Czech Republic in a monograph entitled *Advantages and Limitations of Family Business*. This trend was monitored within the framework of the first three phases of the Greiner Growth Model of organizational growth, specifically in its first three development phases of creative management, crisis leadership, and professional leadership. Petlina, Koráb (2015) focused on the characteristics of family business, identified its strengths and weaknesses, and compiled a SWOT analysis. Zapletalová (2016) empirically examined and assessed whether a difference existed between family and non-family businesses in providing the management of international business activities with human resources. Břečková (2016) examined samples of 505 family businesses and focused on the perceptions of advantageousness of a family business to its owners. Rydvalová et al. (2016) sought an answer to the question of whether family business can be considered a tool for municipal development. The purpose of a publication by the Author Collective (2017) was to define the process for evaluating economic subjects with specifics of a family business, and use them for creating as knowledge base. Murinova (2017) use the method of a case study to analyze relationships with 108 vintner³ family businesses in the Czech Republic. Case studies and research interviews confirmed the influence of family relationships on the performance of the business. The study confirmed the influence of family relationships on the effective functioning of a family business. Koráb, Murinova (2018) set out to describe family businesses in the Czech Republic and to define the tendency for their specification, and to present a model of successful handover of management of the company to a subsequent generation, called “relay”, applied primarily in small family businesses. Zapletalová (2018) focused on defining and specifying the characteristics of the internationalization process of entrepreneurial activities of Czech family businesses. Horčíčková (2019) examined the philosophical reflection of the role of the family as a community subject in the business environment. Hnilica et al. (2020) evaluated whether and how the behavior of owners in private companies could influence the economic and non-economic results. According to Machek et al. (2019), family businesses are often associated with a notion of greater stability. The goal of the study was to use linear multiple regression analysis to examine the differences in various stabilities, including the stability of the number of employees, assets, income, and earnings. Kubíček, Machek (2020) through a systematic literature review evaluated the current state of research of conflicts in families and in family businesses, systematized their findings and outlined a path for future research.

3 The wine business is a representative of the oldest and traditional economic activity in the Czech Republic.

Table 5: Topical areas, methods, and scope of analysis of family business issues in the Czech Republic

Year	Authors	Topic and its classification into categories according to Evert et al.	Qualitative research	Quantitative research	Number of respondents
2004	HANZELKOVÁ	Challenges for restituted Czech family businesses after 10 years of operation. CHA, SM, BPG, IFD, SN, GV	Case study		3
2011	ODEHNALOVÁ	Characteristics of family businesses in the area of administration and management in development phases of the life cycle of a company. VM, CHA, SN, IFD, GV, SM	Observation, in-depth interviews	Empirical analysis of the competitiveness of businesses (250 questions), data completed from publicly available sources on the webpages of the companies.	432 respondents, of which 91 family businesses
2015	PETLINA, KORÁB	Family business as an economic phenomenon, SWOT analysis. CHA, SM, BPG, IFD, SN, GV	Interviews	Analysis of secondary data TOP family business from the company Forbes.cz	65
2016	ZAPLETALOVÁ	Difference in securing the management of international business activities with human resources. IFD, BPG, CHA	Personal inquiry		600, of which 246 family businesses
2016	BŘEČKOVÁ	Perceptions of values of family businesses by owners of family businesses. GV, CHA, IFD	CATI – telephone inquiry lasting 12 minutes		50 5
2016	RYDVALOVÁ et al.	Family business as a tool for the development of a municipality. CHA, SM, BPG, IFD, SN, GV		Questionnaire in electronic and written format.	63/48 family businesses. 15 towns

Year	Authors	Topic and its classification into categories according to Evert et al.	Qualitative research	Quantitative research	Number of respondents
2017	MURINOVA	Impact of family relationships on the performance of the business. IFD, BPG, CHA, SM, BPG, SN, GV	Case studies, interviews		108
2018	KORÁB, MURINOVA	Model of a successful succession strategy... SN, IFD, BPG, GV, CHA	Case study		1
2018	ZAPLETALOVÁ	Typical features of the process of internationalization. CHA, BPG	Oral interview		297
2019	HORČIČKOVÁ	Identification of the attitudes of young people to their involvement in family business. CHA, IFD, GV		Questionnaire	1,951/ of which 602 from family businesses
2019	MACHEK et al.	Differences in various stabilities, including stability in number of employees, income, earnings, and assets GV, BPG, IFD, CHA, SM		Questionnaire	1,795 non-family/384 family businesses
2020	HNILICA et al.	Influence of the attitudes and behavior of owners on the economic and non-economic results of their companies. GV, BPG, IFD, SM,	2nd phase telephone interviews	1. phase in AMADEUS database 11,400 family businesses 3rd phase – online questionnaire (CAWI method)	48 323
2020	KUBÍČEK, MACHEK	Conflicts in families and in family businesses IFD, SN, CHA, GV, SM	Systematic literature review		88 articles

Source: author analysis

3.6 Evaluation of topical areas, methods, and scope of analysis of family business issues

Given the above research questions, an evaluation was conducted of the literary occurrence of the topical areas in question in countries that have economic development similar to that of the Czech Republic. The essay incorporates the frequency of occurrence of the given topical areas in relevant technical publications (see Tables 1–5) with a focus on family business. This frequency of occurrence is stated in Table 6.

Table 6: Frequency of occurrence of topical areas in categories according to Evert et al. (Absolute frequency of responses)

Topical area	frequency of occurrence in Poland	frequency of occurrence in Slovakia	frequency of occurrence in Hungary	frequency of occurrence in Bulgaria	frequency of occurrence in the Czech Republic	frequency overall
characteristics, attributes, CHA	8	5	8	5	13	39
strategic management, SM	4	3	4	4	8	23
business performance, BPG	3	4	5	4	10	26
dynamics and interpersonal relations, IFD	5	5	6	5	12	33
succession, SN	6	3	4	4	7	24
governance, GV	4	3	5	3	11	26

Source: author analysis

In subsections 4.1–4.5, 62 citation references were systematically analyzed, 39 of which were included in the statistical evaluation. The authors named in Tab. 1–5 worked with primary and secondary data. Literary research was based on analysis of secondary sources; in all of them the characteristics and attributes of the family business were stated, and the topics could be assigned to categories according to Evert et al. Given the subjective assignment of topical areas, their subsequent evaluation, and while concurrently taking into account both factual and mathematical limitations the authors used, RQ1 may be commented in the following manner:

- **RQ1** – Can the same or similar six main topical areas of academic study as formulated by Evert et al., 2015 be observed in selected countries of the former socialist bloc? According to tables 1–5, table 6–7 it can be assumed that the topic in question can be assigned to six main topical areas of scientific research. If, however, we wish to raise this claim, it would be necessary to supplement the parameters of a systematic literature review, focus on individual topics, conduct a review of a substantially larger sample of analyzed articles, and use more advanced statistical methods for evaluating the relationships and associations. From the above insights, however, it is possible to observe the fact that the individual topics intersect and build on each other.

- The topical areas per Evert et al. (2015) are also valid for family businesses in the Czech Republic.
- It can be assumed that factors drawn from topical areas have a substantial influence on the activity, competitiveness, and future success of the family business in the Czech Republic.

When evaluating methods and number of respondents, the total number of outputs was enumerated, the average was calculated, and the percent representation of the evaluated parameters was determined. For summary results see Table 7.

Table 7: Statistical evaluation of methods and number of respondents when examining the issues of family businesses

Number of articles	Only qualitative research	Average number of respondents	Only quantitative research	Average number of respondents	Mixed research	Average number of respondents	Literature review	Average number of articles	No respondents
39	17	103.72	10	2789, by extension 667	6	259.33	5	49.2	1
100%	43.58%		25.64%		15.38%		12.82%		2.56%

Source: author analysis

To understand the phenomenon of family business, historical information in secondary sources about the development of the concept of the family business in the 20th and 21st centuries was used, with chapters also prepared on the basis of a study of the most cited academic works. To compare the findings of the evaluation, the authors used general academic methods, in particular the methods of analysis, synthesis, analogy, comparison, generalization, deduction, expert estimate, etc. Secondary data was obtained from the websites of the companies studied, from statistical data, or from publicly available collections of documents. **For obtaining primary data:**

- **43.58%** authors used **only qualitative research**. The average number of respondents was 103.72, whereas the lowest number was 1 case study, the highest was 600 personal interviews. Researchers used the following methods: observation, in-depth interviews, semi-structured interviews, CATI telephone surveys, best practice model, case study.
- **25.64%** of authors used **only quantitative research**, the average number of respondents was 2,789, whereas the lowest number was 23 respondents, who completed a questionnaire, while the highest number was 24,000 companies, who the researchers evaluated as family businesses on the basis of review of statistical data. If we exclude this far-flung value from the average (the highest number of respondents), then the average number of respondents of the quantitative research would amount to 667.

- **15.38%** of the authors used **mixed research**, which took place in several phases. Data obtained via questionnaire were supplemented by information from in-depth or semi-structured interviews.
- Where researchers focused on systematic literature review, the average number of articles analyzed was 49.2.

On the basis of the above, RQ2 and RQ3 can be commented in the following manner:

- **RQ2** – Which research methods are used by authors in the selected countries of the former socialist bloc for the identification of issues associated with family businesses? To obtain primary data 43.58% of authors used only qualitative research, 25.64% of authors used only quantitative research, 15.38% of authors used mixed research; where the researchers focused on systematic literature review, the average number of articles analyzed was 49.2.
- **RQ3** – What is the size of the study sample of respondents used by authors in the selected countries of the former socialist bloc as a basis for family business research? The average number of respondents to the qualitative research was 103.72, whereas the lowest number was 1 case study, the highest was 600 personal interviews. The average number of respondents to the quantitative research was 2,789, whereas the lowest number was 23 respondents, the highest was 24,000 companies.

4 Recommendations for future research into trends of academic knowledge of family business issues in the Czech Republic

Family business in the Czech Republic is a relatively frequently represented economic category whose importance will continue to grow in relation to global economic processes. The given issues are reaching a state where it is not within the power of a small team of researchers to cover it completely. The family business environment is dynamically evolving, the results obtained must be continually updated, reviewed, supplemented, and other topics raised, such as succession. For this reason it seems appropriate that a team of research workers from various facilities in the Czech Republic as well as international facilities should work on the issues in question together, in order that the topics, data, and research methods may be shared, and the outputs compared and evaluated.

To seek partners not only from the academic sphere, but also from the ranks of consulting firms and application work, suitable providers of support (Technology Agency of the Czech Republic, V4, Norway Grants, etc.) for financing research activities, to collaborate in the creation of requests and projects focused on family business research.

In future it is necessary to thoroughly focus not only on setting parameters and research methods, but also on the use of suitable applications and analytical tools for evaluating or updating the data obtained. It seems appropriate for the further development of knowledge in the area of family business to perform an analysis of options for further

study. On the basis of the results of this analysis to propose what topical areas to focus on in relation to their relationships and associations, what methods to use to conduct the research, to set limits and critical parameters for how to process the results obtained in an objective mathematical manner, and how and to whom to subsequently present them.

Results obtained from research conducted thus far enable a much wider use of data than those stated in the individual essays. It is therefore worth considering further processing with more advanced statistical methods for possible extrapolation of deeper economic associations or dependencies.

It would be interesting to identify leading authors who have been attending to this question for some time in the individual countries. To evaluate their findings in the specific topics over time using a systematic literary review and to compare whether and how the chronology of the topics differs in countries with an uninterrupted continuity of family businesses, unlike the countries of the former socialist bloc.

Conclusion

The goal of this article was to evaluate a research method suitable for studies of family business. The use of qualitative research seems to be logical for research in the areas of identity, culture, values, and relationships. As demonstrated by the experience of many scientists, qualitative methods compared to quantitative methods allow for effective acquisition of data on the “sensitive” topics with which family businesses are associated (emotion, relationships, etc.). According to Švaříčka, Šedové et al. (2014), the progress of the qualitative research primarily took on a circular form. This means that over the years it is possible to return to the individual phases of the research, to supplement and modify them retroactively – which has been used, for example, by Castellano, Ivanova (2017). In the question of family business, this method is also logical due to the fact that it allows the progress and success of a family business to be examined over the course of several generations. The suitability of FB's qualitative research is also proved by a new publication by an international multidisciplinary team of experts (De Massis, Kammerlander, 2020). Researchers using qualitative methods in other social sciences found the method of qualitative research in the field of emotions relevant and useful.

Qualitative research methods allowed for a view of the subject of the study, its contextual logic, and the explicit and implicit rules that function in the practice of the issues being studied. The types of data include transcription of field notes from observations, interviews, photos, audio and video, transcripts of texts of television programs, personal commentary, notes, official documents, excerpts from books or articles from publicly accessible sources, texts based on key studies, personal introspection, life stories, visual and interactive texts. The principle of everything that allows the reality of the observed group of people, events, and processes in their natural environment to be better approximated. The limit of this type of study, however, is the fact that for the most part it does not allow for findings to be generalized.

Acknowledgements

The result was created during the solution of the student project “Intergenerational transfer of family trades – a challenge for the phenomenon 4.0”, number 7427/2020/03 with the use of targeted support for specific university research at the University of Finance and Administration, a.s. This study was prepared with the support of a project of the Technical Agency of the Czech Republic, registration number TL02000434 entitled “Family Businesses: generators of value and determinants of value in the process of succession.”

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