



Family Business in Emerging, Developing, and Transitional Economies The relevance of context

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The aim of this special track is to increase the understanding of family firms in developing, emerging, and transitional economies.

Currently, the vast majority of family business studies have mostly focused on developed economies (e.g. North America and Europe). Moreover, theories in the family business literature are often developed based on particular points of view (e.g. Anglo-American) and tested in developed economies. This limits our understanding of family firms around the world as the contexts where they have been founded, developed and operated may differ substantially. Therefore the validity, reliability and applicability of existing theories may be questioned. While recent studies have attempted to resolve this issue by focusing on culture in terms of its effects on family entrepreneurial behavior and family firm heterogeneity, (e.g. Discua Cruz and Howorth, 2008; Gupta and Levenburg, 2010; Rosa et al., 2014) and by relating family firms and their geographical context (Basco, 2015), we still know little about family businesses in developing, emerging and transitional economies.

Family firms are ubiquitous and yet unique (Howorth et al., 2010). They are heterogeneous in terms of behavior and performance (Basco, 2013). Yet, the diverse and often complex contexts in which they dwell are largely overlooked (Gupta et al., 2008). Recent studies prompt researchers to look closely at the heterogeneous nature of context (e.g. historical, institutional, spatial, and social contexts) in which family firms dwell, as it influences the genesis, development and continuity of family firms (Wright et al., 2014). There is a need to concentrate on contextualizing theory (theories in context) and/or theorize about context (theories of context) (Whetten, 2009) in family business research. Studies that acknowledge and explore unique contexts would contribute significantly to the family business field (Smallbone and Welter, 2001; Welter, 2011). This track encourages studies that acknowledge and explore family businesses in developing, emerging and transitional economies.

The main goal of the ***Family Business in Emerging, Developing, and Transition Economies***¹ track is to encourage the presentation of studies in such unique contexts related, but not limited, to:

- Traditional family business research topics (such as succession, management, corporate governance, and ownership among other) but contextualizing the study in emerging, developing and transition economies.

- The economic and social impact of family businesses in emerging, developing and transition economies.
- The origin and evolution of family businesses in emerging, developing, and transition economies.
- Historical, sociological and anthropological perspectives to study family businesses in emerging, developing, and transition economies.
- Cooperation and/or competitive dynamics of family businesses in emerging, developing, and transition economies.
- The role of government policies in the start-up, development or death of family businesses in emerging, developing and transition economies.
- The applicability of mainstream theories in understanding family business behavior in emerging, developing and transition economies.
- Strategies adopted by family businesses to counteract/compromise/obey institutional isomorphism in emerging, developing and transition economies.
- Corporate entrepreneurship and innovation in family business in emerging, developing, and transition economies.
- Family business (economic and non-economic) performances in emerging, developing, and transition economies.
- Internationalization of family businesses in emerging, developing, and transition economies.
- Comparative studies considering differences and similarities between family businesses in developed and developing countries or among developing countries.
- Family businesses, family business groups and family elites in emerging, developing, and transition economies.
- Cultural aspects that frame family and family business values, norms, and ethics in emerging, developing, and transition economies.
- The impact of the context on shaping family business management and governance practices in emerging, developing, and transition economies.

We believe that this special track at EURAM (European Academy of Management) will make several contributions to family business research. First, by contextualizing family businesses we may have a better understanding of the diversity of family firms across contexts (e.g. historical, temporal, institutional, special and social). Second, by contextualizing borrowed theories (agency theory, institutional theory, institutional logics, etc.), we may validate, extend or contrast mainstream theories in the family business field. More importantly, we may be able to contextualize existing theories in the family business literature aiming to improve the validity, reliability and applicability in diverse settings. Finally, by theorizing about the effects of context on family firms we expect to generate the discussions that could lead to a generic Theory of Context useful for family business studies.

A workshop about “**contextualizing family firms**” will take place in EURAM 2016. The objectives of this workshop will focus on awareness, theories, methods and existing works that highlight the relevance of context in the study of family firms.

To submit your paper to the [EURAM 2016 Conference](http://www.euram-online.org) - Deadline 12th January 2016



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¹ The International Monetary Fund' list of developing countries is used to determine the countries that fall within such category: [World Economic Outlook - 2014](#)