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What Do We Know About Business Families? Setting the Stage for Leveraging Family Science Theories

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Abstract

Researchers recently pointed to family science as one avenue for better understanding business families. We submit, however, that leveraging family science will require building on what researchers have already learned, often without the benefit of family science theories. Thus, we review progress from studies that investigate links between business family attributes and family firms and integrate our review with descriptions of family science theories that pertain to each attribute. By pairing what is known about different business family attributes with the appropriate family science theories, our hope is to accelerate efforts to understand the myriad ways business families shape family businesses.

Keywords

family science, business families, family business, family dynamics

Introduction

Family businesses are defined by reciprocal relationships between two systems, family and business (Sharma, 2004). Although early family business researchers drew on a wide spectrum of family- and business-related theories and focused on both family and business outcomes (e.g., Dyer, 1986), there has been a steady shift toward using business-related theories to explain how families shape business decisions and outcomes (James, Jennings, & Breitkruez, 2012). In their review of family business research from 2006 to 2013, for example, Odom, Chang, Chrisman, Sharma, and Steier (2019) list agency theory, the resource-based view, stewardship theory, socio-emotional wealth (SEW), and institutional theory as the top five theoretical perspectives utilized. All of these emanate from business-related scholarship. This research has yielded important insights about, for example, how family firms differ from nonfamily firms (e.g., Chrisman, Chua, & Litz, 2004; Gómez-Mejía, Haynes, Núñez-Nickel, Jacobson, & Moyano-Fuentes, 2007; Gómez-Mejía, Patel, & Zellweger, 2018), the different ways families exert influence (e.g., Astrachan, Klein, & Smyrnios, 2002), the strategic advantages of family involvement (e.g., Habbershon & Williams, 1999), succession (e.g., Handler, 1994; Miller, Steier, & Le Breton-Miller, 2003), and how families and institutions interact globally (e.g., Morck & Yeung, 2003).

At the same time, "The increased use of business paradigms and corresponding decreased use of family paradigms . . . have contributed to the field's growing discomfort with overly simplistic dichotomous comparisons between family and nonfamily firms" (James et al., 2012, p. 88). Scholars increasingly recognize the vast

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diversity among family firms and have called for a greater focus on business families—the families that own and influence family firms—to explain such differences (e.g., Aldrich & Cliff, 2003). Theories from business research, such as leader–member exchange (LMX)—on leadership (e.g., Eddleston & Kidwell, 2012), agency theory (e.g., Lubatkin, Durand, & Ling, 2007), and game theory (e.g., Michael-Tsabari & Weiss, 2015)—have been applied to understand business families. However, as with other theories developed in a business context (cf. Odom et al., 2019), these were not developed with the rich diversity among families in mind and thus make generic assumptions about business families and their likely behavior in family firms (cf. Bernardes, 2003; Cigoli & Scabini, 2006). As a result, scholars remain "remarkably ignorant about family life" (Bernardes, 2003, p. 83).

In answer, researchers have pointed to interdisciplinary research known as family science that describes how various elements of familial relationships (e.g., cohesion, communication, conflict), family member roles (e.g., parents, children, siblings), and family transitions (e.g., marriage, divorce, birth of a child, retirement) influence outcomes for families (e.g., children's health and academic performance, marital health), and they have suggested that family science theories might help explain how differences among families shape differences among family firms and how family firms, in turn, shape business families (James et al., 2012; Jaskiewicz, Combs, Shanine, & Kacmar, 2017; Jaskiewicz & Dyer, 2017). We fully agree that family science research holds promise but suggest that embracing it requires building on what researchers have already learned about business families. Before being formally introduced to family science (e.g., James et al., 2012; Jaskiewicz & Dyer, 2017; Jaskiewicz et al., 2017), researchers investigated numerous ways in which business families' relationships, roles, and transitions influence family firms' actions and outcomes. Most of this research was conducted without reference to or knowledge about family science. As a consequence, much of it is descriptive (e.g., Grubbström, Stenbacka, & Joosse, 2014), not grounded in theory (e.g., Jiang, Jiang, Kim, & Zhang, 2015), or adopts theory from business that was not developed to capture the rich diversity among families (e.g., Jayantilal, Jorge, & Palacios, 2016). In a few cases, researchers have begun reinventing the proverbial wheel by building "new" theory, unaware that well-established theory already exists (e.g., Lubatkin et al., 2007). By taking stock of these fragmented investigations and connecting them to pertinent family science theories, we hope to offer a foundation for leveraging family science while still benefiting from what has already been learned about the links between different aspects of business families—their relationships, roles, and transitions—and family firms' actions and outcomes.

We begin by describing the process through which we identified the 55 studies that we reviewed and our conceptual framework depicting how constructs relate. Two studies explored how external antecedents (e.g., government policy, religious norms) affect business family attributes—that is, family relationships, family member roles (e.g., spouse, parent), and family transitions (e.g., marriage, births). Most of the studies in our review relate business family attributes directly to family firm actions (e.g., strategy) or outcomes (e.g., financial performance), or indirectly through what we call "linking constructs" that sit between the family and the firm. Our focus is on linking constructs that operate at the family level of analysis (e.g., work–family harmony). A final set of papers address how family firms affect business families. As we move through the review, we summarize the family science theories that pertain to each set of relationships, and we show how family science theories help bind together and explain disparate prior findings. In connecting summaries of family science theories (similar to those offered elsewhere: e.g., James et al., 2012; Jaskiewicz & Dyer, 2017; Jaskiewicz et al., 2017) to business family research, we point broadly toward a future research agenda that joins what is already known about business families to well-established theoretical traditions.

Review Method

Our goal was to provide a thorough review of published English language research describing the links between business families (relationships, roles, and transitions) and family firm actions and/or outcomes. To this end, we searched all articles that contain the keywords "family business" or "family firm" within all available years for each of the following electronic databases: Web of Science, Social Science Index Citation, Science Direct, and EBSCO Host. This initial search generated a total of 1,760 articles. From this population, articles on clearly unrelated research topics (e.g., forestry, nursing, chemistry) were removed, leaving 1,315 articles. We then removed duplicates that resulted from the same articles appearing in multiple search engines, yielding 915 distinct articles. Two coders then individually reviewed each article's title, keywords, and abstract to determine if it investigated an issue that in any way might describe business families (e.g., conflict among family members, number of children, configuration of family members, parenting style). The coders were instructed to include any articles where this was not entirely clear. The ICC(1) (intraclass correlation coefficient) for these judgments was .88, indicating high interrater reliability. The two coders then compared notes on ambiguous cases to develop a final consensus. Once consensus was reached, a total of 175 articles remained.

These articles were then subjected to several additional exclusion criteria. First, 21 literature reviews and commentaries were removed, the latter because insufficient space is devoted to developing insights. Second, 12 practitioner-focused articles were eliminated because it was unclear how the asserted relationships and/or insights were derived. Third, three studies were removed because the family firms were only contexts for studying other relationships (e.g., leadership). Fourth, two articles were not included because they only reviewed a construct's use/definition or validated a scale. Fifth, we removed 13 case studies that were purely descriptive in that they described a family or set of families (and their family firms) without drawing conclusions about how differences among the families relate to their family firms. Sixth, eight studies were about the different ways in which engaging in the entrepreneurial process affects entrepreneurs' families; they were not reviewed because multiple family members were not involved—a defining feature of family firms (e.g., Chua, Chrisman, & Sharma, 1999). Finally, on closer examination by the entire author team, we identified another 28 studies that did not deal with business families. Ten of these studies simply compared family and nonfamily firms, and another 18 only dealt with firm-level constructs or phenomena (e.g., strategy, performance, succession processes) without telling anything about the business families.

As we began reviewing the remaining 88 articles, we excluded two other categories. First, several articles investigated the relationships between the particular configuration of family members involved in the firm (e.g., father–son teams, couples, sibling teams) and firm-level variables (e.g., Danes, 2006; Davis & Tagiuri, 1989). We believe that these studies are important because these configurations describe how the family is linked to the firm, but we only included them if they also said something about the family (e.g., how they relate or deal with family change). We excluded the other 18 family configuration studies because simply knowing that a couple (e.g., father–son team) is at the helm of a family firm tells little about the family itself, other than that it contains at least one couple (or father–son combination, etc.). Second, we excluded 8 studies that used constructs such as familiness (Habbershon & Williams, 1999), family-to-business support (Powell & Eddleston, 2017), and familial stewardship (Bizri, 2016) to describe families. These constructs describe the level or amount of overlap, integration, or resource sharing between the family and the firm but do not describe the family itself. They tell nothing about why a particular family is high or low on one of these constructs.[1]

To ensure minimum quality among the articles included in our review, the remaining 62 articles were screened relative to the broad and inclusive Australian Business Deans' Council's (ABDC) journal quality list. A total of 16 articles were published in journals that are not on the ABDC list. However, to ensure that this quality screen did not bias against nonmanagement journals, we kept nine articles that were not in journals on the ABDC list because they are family science journals rather than low-quality business journals. The following review includes 55 articles. Table 1 lists and summarizes the articles.

Research on Business Families

Based on the remaining studies, Figure 1 emerged as our organizing framework. The boxes in Figure 1 represent the categories of related constructs, and the arrows depict the potential links between categories. The figure comes from a very broad application of the idea of causal chains (Goldman, 1967), wherein studies are grouped according to whether they focus primarily on antecedents, the family itself, or logical consequences/outcomes. The concept of "linking constructs" emerged when we realized that there was a set of constructs that were neither wholly in the family nor in the actions/outcomes occurring in the firm.

Thirty-six of the 55 studies deal primarily[2] with one of three aspects of business families: the quality of family member relationships (e.g., conflict, cohesion), family member roles (e.g., as parents or siblings), or family transitions (e.g., marriage, divorce). Two are primarily about antecedents to why the family is as it is (e.g., cultural or

Table 1. Summary of Business Family Research.

Studies of the topic	Sample/analysis	Findings/theoretical logic
Antecedents (Suggested family science theory: structural functionalism)		
Cao, Cumming, and Wang (2015)	Regression based on survey data from 4,912 Chinese family firms	The Chinese one-child policy imposes human capital constraints resulting in (1) reduced founder expectations for within-family succession, (2) reduced actual within-family succession, and (3) reduced investment in future growth. Results support human capital and tournament theories.
Jiang et al. (2015)	Regression based on data from 4,159 family firms throughout China	The religiosity of family business founders affects risk taking, such that higher religiosity results in less risk taking in the form of lower leverage and less investment in fixed and intangible assets.
Family relationships (Suggested family science theories: family systems theory, family communication patterns theory, and intergenerational solidarity theory)		
Cabrera-Suárez, Déniz-Déniz, and Martín-Santana (2014)	Structural equation modeling on data from 374 Spanish firms from Informa Dun and Bradstreet database	In line with SEW research, family climate (communication, cohesion, and intergenerational attention) influences family members' identification with the firm, which in turn influences members' perception of the importance of nonfinancial goals.
Cater, Kidwell, and Camp (2016)	Grounded theory analysis of 19 family firms	The authors propose a four-stage model wherein family history, dynamics, personal experiences of the successor, and an invitation from the predecessor combine to lead to the formation of a "successor team." The continuity of the business depends on whether the successor team follows a positive track characterized by commitment or a negative track characterized by conflict.
Claßen and Schulte (2017)	Grounded theory process using 21 German family business members	Using systems theory, the researchers explain how the resolution of the different types of conflict—open conflict (explicit and visible) and latent conflict (occurs privately)—and awareness of the risk of upcoming conflicts lead to organizational change.
Davis and Harveston (2001)	Survey of 1,002 family-owned firms.	Contrary to the authors' hypothesis, greater social interaction among family members increased the extent of conflict across all generations. However, the influence exerted by uninvolved family members significantly reduced both the extent and the frequency of conflict among the third- or later-generation firms.
Gudmunson and Danes (2013)	1997–2000 study of 326 family firms from the National Family Business Panel	For firms that were still in existence at Time 2, the presence of high family functional strength (a measure of family social capital assessing family adaptation, growth, affection, and resolve) was associated with reduced business-related tension.
Jayantilal et al. (2016)	Applied game theory model	Conflicts between siblings erode the family's harmony and risk continuity via succession.
Kellermanns and Eddleston (2007)	Regression based on survey data from 55 family firms	Cognitive conflict (work-related disagreements) negatively affects family firm performance, while process conflict (who is responsible for which tasks) positively influences performance when information exchange among members is high.
Morris, Williams, Allen, and Avila (1997)	Regression and structural model based on 209 second- and third-generation family firms	When successors are better prepared, when there is trust and affability among family members, and when wealth transfer and taxation are planned for, incumbents perceive the transition process as having occurred much more smoothly.
Paskewitz and Beck (2017)	Structural equation model analyzing online surveys of 204 family firms	Family members with open-conversation communication patterns experienced significantly less conflict (e.g., task, relational, process, and status), whereas family members characterized by a conforming orientation had significantly more conflict.

(continued)

Table 1. (continued)

Studies of the topic	Sample/analysis	Findings/theoretical logic
Scholes, Mustafa, and Chen (2016)	Case study analyzing 6 small international family firms in Singapore	There is a general desire in family firms to maintain harmony within the family, and a distrust toward outsiders that inhibits the internationalization of the family firm. Internationalization is often limited because networks were limited to the extended family and friends, resulting in limited resources for the firm.
Solomon et al. (2011)	Grounded theory based on 10 family business owners facing succession	The following conditions seemed to facilitate the succession process: (1) having separate identities for self and firm, (2) nontraditional marriages (i.e., those on their second marriage), and (3) the presence of a natural successor (i.e., son or son-in-law).
Sorenson (1999)	Analysis of variance and multivariate analysis of variance based on surveys from 59 family firms	Collaboration is the most important conflict management strategy. Family businesses with positive outcomes work together (accommodate) and compromise with one another to address both family and business concerns. Negative family and business outcomes occur when there is competition and avoidance.
Trevinyo-Rodriguez and Bontis (2010)	Deductive theory building using a case study of one family firm	The authors use cultural-historical activity theory to explain how intergenerational knowledge occurs based on the strength of family ties (strong vs. weak) and the emotions experienced by family members (positive vs. negative). Four types of intergenerational knowledge acquisitions are discussed based on these dimensions.
Zellweger, Richards, Sieger, and Patel (2016)	Regression of archival survey data on 3,293 potential successors in 16 countries	On average, family business successors expect a 57% discount when purchasing the family firm. Family cohesion significantly increases expectation of a discount, while a successor's fear of failure and stake in the family business significantly decreases expectations.
Family member roles (Suggested family science theories: parental control theory, family niche model of birth order and personality, and symbolic interactionalism)		
Avloniti, Iatridou, Kaloupsis, and Vozikis (2014)	Theoretical study of factors that influence sibling rivalry and its impact on succession	Negative parental attitudes and behaviors during upbringing, children's perceptions of unfairness, frequent parental interference in children's attempted conflict resolution, and differences among siblings lead to lower quality sibling relationships, which harms succession
Cater and Kidwell (2014)	Theoretical article based on grounded theory using 9 family firms	Successor leadership effectiveness depends on cooperation, agreement among group members to share power and authority, and the development of trust. Conversely, excessive competition among group members hinders leadership group effectiveness.
Eddleston and Kidwell (2012)	Theoretical article that applies leader–member exchange theory to parent–child relations	Parent–child relationships and subsequent leader–member exchange relationships form a child's behavior toward the family firm. The likelihood of deviant behavior by the child is affected by their status (in-group vs. out-group) and the extent of parental altruism.
Farrington, Venter, and Boshoff (2011)	Structural equation modeling analyzing survey data from 371 siblings	The better the quality of relationship between siblings, the more likely the business is to perform financially well. Furthermore, siblings' perceived fair treatment by parents is positively related to firm growth performance. Sibling partnerships with clear strategic leadership (agreed-on vision and goals, and leadership process) experience greater family harmony.
Hauck and Prügl (2015)	Regression analysis using surveys of 103 Austrian family firms	The succession process is perceived as an opportunity for innovation in the presence of family adaptability and family member closeness.

(continued)

Table 1. (continued)

Studies of the topic	Sample/analysis	Findings/theoretical logic
Kidwell, Kellermanns, and Eddleston (2012)	Structural equation modeling using survey responses from 147 chief executive officers (CEOs) of family firms	Consistent with ethical climate theory, family harmony norms (integration and synchronization among family members) and fairness perceptions reduce family impediment (the Fredo effect). Conversely, role ambiguity regarding potential conflict between one's role in the family and in the firm increases family impediment.
Lubatkin et al. (2007)	Theoretical study introducing parent–child relationship types	The authors propose three new types of parent–child relationships based on their altruistic orientation (i.e., family oriented, paternalistic, or psychosocial). They then discuss how parent–child relationships affect family and family firm governance efficiencies.
McDonald, Marshall, and Delgado (2017)	Probit regression of survey data from 736 small and medium-size family firms	Spouse's self-select into a copreneurial business when there is a greater degree of relationship satisfaction. Copreneurial businesses characterized by high relationship satisfaction are more successful than non-copreneurial businesses.
McMullen and Warnick (2015)	Theoretical paper examining how parenting affects intrafamily succession	The authors develop a framework based on environmental factors (e.g., parental support of children) as well as psychological mediators (e.g., child's motivation) that affect intrafamily succession.
Michael-Tsabari and Weiss (2015)	Uses game theory to model the interaction between founder and successor during the succession process	Inadequate interpersonal communication between founder and successor (termed *communication trap*) leads to disagreements and reduces family harmony during succession.
Mussolino and Calabro (2014)	Theoretical study of paternalistic leadership style on succession beliefs	The predecessor's benevolent or moral paternalistic leadership style positively influences the successor's beliefs regarding the success of the succession. The predecessor's authoritarian paternalistic leadership style negatively influences the successor's beliefs about success.
Schroder and Schmitt-Rodermund (2013)	Structural equation modeling using survey data from 152 family firm adolescents	In line with self-determination theory, teens who perceive their parents as controlling feel obligated to become successors. Teens who feel parental relational support and who score high on entrepreneurial competence feel internally motivated to become successors, which leads to a higher perceived likelihood of becoming a successor.
Stamm (2016)	Biographical case reconstruction of 12 German entrepreneurial families	Analysis of the life histories of family members reveals the concept of "linked lives," whereby the roles one has during their lifetime is related with the roles of others. These life links in family firms are stronger in business families and are fostered by parental expectations, adjusting to one another, and entrepreneurial narratives.
Van Auken and Werbel (2006)	Theoretical study of the relationships between spousal commitment and firm performance	Spousal involvement increases commitment, which increases emotional and instrumental support (e.g., labor, financial resources). Low spousal commitment leads to criticism of the firm and places higher time demands on the entrepreneur, especially females.
Vozikis, Weaver, Dickson, and Gibson (2012)	Theoretical study of the effects of parental empathy on succession	If parents communicate empathy and children reciprocate, then the survival of the firm depends on both parties and succession will be satisfactory. If only one or the other (i.e., parent or child) communicate empathy, this makes the succession process more difficult.

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Table 1. (continued)

Studies of the topic	Sample/analysis	Findings/theoretical logic
Family transitions (Suggested family science theories: family development theory and life course theory)		
Aisa, Andaluz, and Larramona (2017)	Regression based on interviews with 1,497 Spanish Roma residents	Having a family or male-owned business relates positively to the number of children.
Bertrand, Johnson, Samphantharak, and Schoar (2008)	Regression using survey data from 93 Thai family firms	Sons of the founder increase their ownership once the founder is gone. Families where the founder has more sons show lower firm performance, more so after the founder dies.
Bunkanwanicha, Fan, and Wiwattanakantang (2013)	Regression using data from 131 marriages in Thai family firms.	Stock markets react positively to news of marriages that involve political or business networks (i.e., marriages in which at least one partner has a political or business family background).
Cole and Johnson (2007)	Grounded theory using 9 postdivorce copreneurs (total of 18 participants).	All the participants mention "trust" as a condition for making the business relationship work postdivorce. Other conditions include compartmentalization (of romantic and business issues), keeping an emotional connection, having synergistic capabilities, and postdivorce female empowerment.
Mehrotra, Morck, Shim, and Wiwattanakantang (2011)	Regression on data from Fogel's (2006) index of the 10 largest businesses in 41 countries	Family businesses are more predominant in countries with greater acceptance of inequality, collectivism, and risk avoidance. More family businesses theoretically exist in such cultures because such cultures tend to have arranged marriages rather than love marriages.
Minola, Brumana, Campopiano, Garrett, and Cassia (2016)	Theoretical study linking family development to corporate venturing	The authors use family development theory to explain when family firms are motivated to engage in entrepreneurial activities (i.e., corporate venturing). One of their central propositions is that the birth of a child and children leaving home are stressors that cause tension and reduce motivation for corporate venturing.
Santiago (2011)	Grounded theory based on 300 individuals (114 of whom were in-laws) from 82 Philippine family firms	For the majority of the Philippine families, in-laws play a role in the family business and at times own shares. The relative influence of in-laws differs depending on the type of in-law (i.e., son-in-law vs. daughter-in-law), in-law characteristics (e.g., personality), familial interaction, and company characteristics (e.g., size).
Linking constructs (Suggested family science theories: All can be beneficially applied)		
Akhter, Sieger, and Chirico (2016)	Inductive theory building based on 6 case studies of Pakistan families	Using social identity theory, business families with a strong identification with the family firm would rather shut down poorly performing portfolio businesses than sell to a third party, more so if the family identifies strongly with the struggling portfolio business.
Arteaga and Menéndez-Requejo (2017)	Regression based on data from 265 Spanish family businesses	Implementation of a family constitution, which is a formal protocol aimed at improving coexistence and cohesion in the family, was significantly and positively related to business performance.
Cooper, Kidwell, and Eddleston (2013)	Theoretical study linking work–family conflict, role ambiguity, and deviance behavior	In line with boundary theory, the authors theorize that family employees who are not able to segment work and family experience work–family conflict, especially those who prefer to segment. The negative emotions from work–family conflict will subsequently lead to deviance in the family and family firm.
Hammond, Pearson, and Holt (2016)	Theoretical study that defines the dimensions of family legacy	Family legacies are transmitted through biology, materials, and social relationships. These form "family legacy orientations" that shape decision making through "family firm legacy orientations."
Jaskiewicz, Combs, and Rau (2015)	Inductive study using interviews from 21 multigenerational German wineries	The term *entrepreneurial legacy* is introduced to describe the family's historical stories of past successful entrepreneurship and resilience in tough times. A process model describing succession processes in firms with entrepreneurial legacies is presented.

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Table 1. (continued)

Studies of the topic	Sample/analysis	Findings/theoretical logic
J. Lee (2006)	Regression using survey data from 88 second-generation Chinese family firms	Family adaptability significantly and positively relates to organizational commitment, work satisfaction, and life satisfaction. Organizational commitment significantly reduces the propensity to leave the organization.
McGrath and O'Toole (2018)	Case study based on 6 Belgium microbrewers	Using social network theory, the authors found that firms with weaker family identities are able to develop better relational capability with external networks than those with strong family identities.
Memili, Chang, Kellermanns, and Welsh (2015)	Theoretical model describing how role conflict can be mitigated	Family members' dual roles (i.e., family member and family firm employee) create role conflict, which is mitigated by reciprocal altruism (e.g., between parents and children) and collective efficacy, which in turn positively influences firm performance.
Memili, Zellweger, and Fang (2013)	Structural model based on 349 German family business CEOs	Family harmony and work–family conflict both positively affect ownership attachment, which in turn positively affects affective organizational commitment.
Sprung and Jex (2017)	Correlational analysis on 217 married farm couples	For both husbands and wives, work–family enrichment (the process by which both job and family enhance each other) is positively related to both partners' psychological health.
The effects of the family on the firm (Suggested family science theory: ABCX model of family stress)		
Bee and Neubaum (2014)	Theoretical study predicting family member emotions	Cognitive appraisal theory is applied to describe six antecedent conditions that shape people's emotions in the family business context.
Collins, Worthington, and Schoen (2016)	Regression based on survey responses from 256 family firms	Wealth, having an established successor, and secured continuity/viability all relate to CEO expectations of achieving retirement well-being, which in turn relates positively to firm performance.
Houshmand, Seidel, and Ma (2017)	Regression on 8 years of data from Statistics Canada's National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth	Adolescents working year-round in a family firm have greater relationship quality with parents and higher psychological well-being.
Lambrecht and Lievens (2008)	Qualitative analysis of 20 individuals from 17 family firms	Pruning involves reducing the number of shareholders. It aids in financial performance because managing the firm is simpler and conflict among family members is reduced.
Y. Lee, Danes, and Shelley (2006)	Regression using surveys from 225 females working only in the family firm	The following situations each result in increased perceptions of female household manager well-being: higher management activity, achieving family goals, lower education, less competition between family and business resources, and less family cash flow problems.
Y. G. Lee, Hong, and Rowe (2006)	Regression based on 545 married women in the 1997 National Family Business Survey	Using neoclassical theory and Becker's household theory, the researchers found that women working in a "third shift" in the family business have higher work–family conflict and reduced levels of family harmony.
Nordstrom and Jennings (2018)	Grounded theory using 19 Hutterite colonies in Western Canada	Three overarching guidelines (referred to as enterprise-level strategies) and three methods or policies (referred to as task-level practices) are used to enhance familial well-being.

institutional environment). We also found 10 studies that dealt primarily with family-level linking constructs that describe the ways in which family members think about and experience the family firm. Arrows run in both directions between business family attributes and family firm actions/outcomes, to reflect the fact that many studies link aspects of business families directly to firm actions and outcomes without invoking the intervening

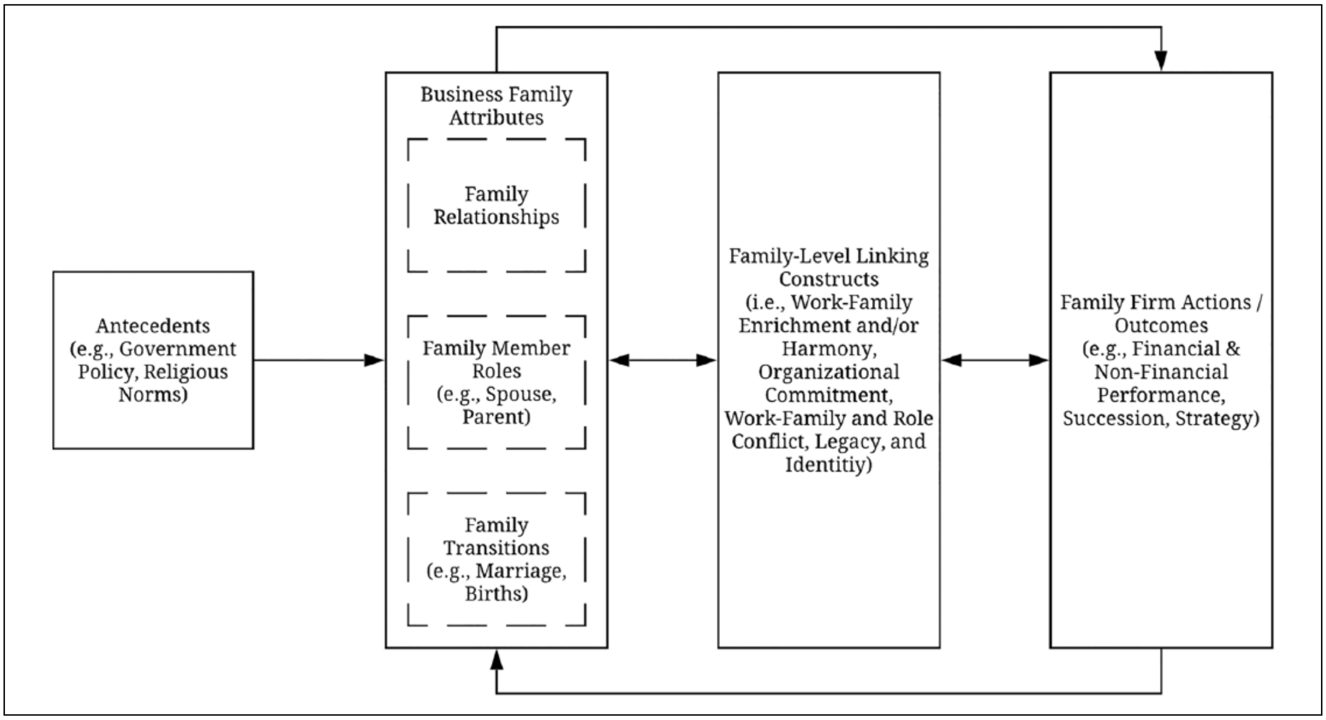

Figure 1. Framework for the relationships among types of business family constructs.

linking constructs. Finally, seven studies directly investigate how the family firm, in turn, affects the business family.

Antecedents

We included antecedents because it seems logical that researchers should be interested in understanding how external factors help create and mold business families. Only two of the studies in our review, however, dealt explicitly with external antecedents. Both look specifically at how aspects of the Chinese context influence the family. Cao et al.'s (2015) survey of 4,912 Chinese family firms found that the one-child policy imposed human capital constraints that diminish the likelihood of within-family succession and reduce investments in future growth (e.g., less likelihood of having an IPO plan, less likelihood of raising funds via bonds, lower R&D intensity). A second study showed the importance of religion. Looking at 4,159 family firms throughout China, Jiang et al. (2015) found that family firms with highly religious founders have lower propensity for risk taking in the form of lower leverage (debt to assets) and less investment in fixed and intangible assets, and the effects were stronger for founders who adhere to Western religions compared with Eastern religions.

These studies point to the merit of investigating the exogenous factors that shape the emergence of business families and the way they manage family firms, but the lack of studies in this area suggests that much remains to be learned. To this end, structural functionalism theory (Parsons, 1951) might be particularly helpful. On a societal level, structural functionalism explains how families play a functional role in society that generates stability, making the family a core building block among institutions (e.g., education, religion, government). Accordingly, as in the studies from China (e.g., Cao et al., 2015; Jiang et al., 2015), factors such as government policy and religion can be investigated to learn how they affect business families and the role such families play in society. On a family level, structural functionalism views the family as organized around traditional role structures (e.g., the husband as breadwinner) to achieve equilibrium and balance so that it can withstand threats from the external environment. Although the assumptions surrounding structural functionalism came under attack as traditional family role structures declined (e.g., Holman & Burr, 1980), nontraditional family structures can also be important for maintaining social stability (Bengtson, 2001). DeLeire and Kalil (2002), for example, found that teenagers living with a single mother and at least one grandparent have developmental outcomes that are similar and sometimes better than teenagers living in married families. Thus, the theory continues to be significant for family research (Kingsbury & Scanzoni, 2009). Family business researchers might draw on structural functionalism to explain the antecedent conditions that create family structures that are more likely to enter and remain in business (see also James et al., 2012; Jennings, Breitkreuz, & James, 2014). Such research, for example, might explore whether the changing laws and attitudes regarding same-sex marriage encourage gay or lesbian entrepreneurs to invite other family members to participate in the business and whether such actions play a stabilizing role for the family and/or the businesses.

Business Family Attributes

Family members interact with one another across multiple dimensions, and each dimension, in turn, can influence others as well as the family firm. The studies in our review investigated three broad dimensions of family: family relationships, family member roles, and family transitions. Family relationships describe the different ways in which family members interact. Family member roles includes the different roles that family members have (i.e., as parents, siblings, children), the different ways these roles are performed, and the consequences of role performance for the family and the firm. Finally, several studies investigate the effects of changes in the family structure due to, for example, marriage, divorce, death, or the birth of a child.

Family Relationships. Studies of relationships among family members focus either on conflict or on constructs that describe positive family relationships, such as cohesion, climate, and strength of family ties. Conflict is often perceived negatively: Jayantilal et al. (2016), for example, use game theory to argue that conflict due to competition among the business family's children for being named successor creates emotional costs that lower each child's probability of being appointed, even for the preferred candidate. Other studies, however, suggest that the negative impact of conflict depends on the type of conflict, who is involved, and how it is managed. In their study of 55 family firms, Kellermanns and Eddleston (2007) found that two types of conflict have different effects on performance. Cognitive conflict among family members (e.g., disagreements related to working tasks) negatively relates to firm performance, but process conflict (i.e., who is responsible for which tasks) relates positively (only) when family members are actively exchanging information. Furthermore, while first-generation firms successfully encourage and engage in cognitive conflict, conflict between the first and second generations appears unproductive. Kellermanns and Eddleston's results are largely consistent with Davis and Harveston's (2001) study based on a Gallup survey of 1,002 self-identified family firms; close social interactions among family members involved in the business increases the extent of conflict in the business regardless of generation, but close social interactions only increases the frequency of conflict in the third- and later-generation family firms. Claßen and Schulte (2017) took a different approach by describing three types of conflict identified through interviews with participants in 21 German family firms—that is, open conflict, latent conflict (present but not openly discussed), and future risk of conflict—and relating all three types to organizational change. Finally, Sorenson (1999) surveyed 59 family firms to assess the impact of the leader's conflict management strategy. He investigated five conflict management styles: competition (use of owner authority to force solutions), accommodation (reducing conflict by focusing on others' needs), collaboration (attempts to satisfy all concerns), compromise (each party gives in some), and avoidance (failure to address conflicts). He found that collaboration relates to less conflict in the family and perceptions of stronger firm performance; competition and avoidance indicate the opposite.

Different types of positive family relational qualities have been investigated and described using different, but often conceptually overlapping, construct labels, including cohesion, trust, climate, and harmony. Consistent with Trevinyo-Rodriguez and Bontis's (2010) theorizing that the combination of strong ties (i.e., social and spacial closeness) and positive emotions helps families transfer knowledge from one generation to the next, four studies in our review point to the important role of healthy relationships in successful succession. Interviews with 19 multigenerational family firms revealed that positive family dynamics, broadly defined, is an important factor in successors' decision to work in the business as adults (Cater et al., 2016). Morris et al.'s (1997) study of 209 family firms found that family trust (i.e., open and honest interactions) among family members and affability (i.e., mutual respect) between generations relate to incumbents viewing the transition process as having occurred more smoothly. In a qualitative study of 10 family firms, Solomon et al. (2011) similarly found that high-trust owners who do not overidentify with the firm have an easier time relinquishing control. Finally, cohesion appears to influence the terms of succession. In a survey of family firms across 16 countries, Zellweger et al. (2016) found that successors in family firms with high cohesion expect a 57% discount, on average, when purchasing the family firm.

The same positive relational features that reduce conflict and benefit succession, unfortunately, appear to slow family firms' growth and turn them toward nonfinancial goals. Based on interviews with six international family firms from Singapore, Scholes et al. (2016) showed that the desire to maintain family harmony combines with a distrust of outsiders to inhibit internationalization efforts. Family firm social networks are often restricted to close ties (i.e., family and friends), which limits resource development and internationalization. Finally, in a study of Spanish family firms, Cabrera-Suárez et al. (2014) found that a strong family relationship climate (i.e., bonds of attachment) is related to increased identification with the firm, which in turn influences the perceived importance of nonfinancial goals (e.g., preserving a positive family reputation).

On the other hand, healthy families might endure longer. Evidence from the National Family Business Panel in the United States shows that family functional strength (i.e., one item each for family members' satisfaction with help [adaptation], communication [partnership], support for new activities [growth], expressed affection, and time together [resolve]) reduces business-related tension (i.e., demands and stresses on the family) among families who continue their business but not among those whose business was discontinued (Gudmunson & Danes, 2013).

Overall, family business researchers have identified several negative (e.g., different kinds of conflict) and positive (e.g., affection) aspects of family relationships that affect different elements of the business (e.g., succession, goal focus), but the research lacks a unifying theoretical narrative and/or framework. At least three family science theories appear to have potential to provide the much-needed theoretical grounding: family systems theory (Broderick & Smith, 1979), family communication patterns theory (Fitzpatrick & Ritchie, 1994; Ritchie & Fitzpatrick, 1990), and intergenerational solidarity theory (Bengtson & Roberts, 1991).

Family systems theory (Broderick & Smith, 1979) describes the family as an open system whereby members interact through circular communication processes within a hierarchy of established rules and rituals. The best-known model depicting the family system is the circumplex model (Olson, 1988), which, as of Olson's (2000) review, had received empirical support in more than 250 studies. The model explains family outcomes based on a typology of 16 family types based on different levels of cohesion (i.e., emotional closeness) and adaptability (i.e., ability to perform different roles/tasks as needed), which are moderated by communication quality (Olson, 2000). By providing a framework for embracing the complexity among families, the circumplex model (and systems theory, more generally) might help family business researchers develop a common language for assessing family relationships and move beyond simple links between single family relationship dimensions and outcomes in the family firm. For example, while cohesion (often different other terms[3] are used) is generally viewed positively (e.g., Cater et al., 2016; Morris et al., 1997; Trevinyo-Rodrigues & Bontis, 2010), it might yield poor business outcomes (e.g., little innovation) if the controlling family is also low on adaptability and adopts a communication style that demands conformity.

A frequently ignored dimension of the circumplex model is communication (Olson, 2000), which is where another family science theory, family communication patterns theory (Fitzpatrick & Ritchie, 1994; Ritchie & Fitzpatrick, 1990), holds promise. The theory describes four communication patterns along two dimensions—conversation and conformity: *protective* (high conformity, low conversation), *pluralistic* (low conformity, high conversation), *consensual* (high conformity, high conversation), and *laissez-faire* (low conformity, low conversation). One study in our review adopted communication patterns theory. Paskewitz and Beck (2017) used an online survey of 204 family farm members and found that conversation patterns reduce four types of conflict (i.e., task, relational, process, and status), while conformity patterns increase relational, process, and status conflict. Although the authors were not able to link conflict back to either job satisfaction or family firm performance, it is difficult to ignore the potential for communication to play an important role. Research shows that collaboration, for example, is an important conflict management strategy with positive results (Sorenson, 1999) and that some types of conflict can yield positive outcomes under certain conditions (Kellermanns & Eddleston, 2007). It seems logical that how conflict is communicated might usefully explain when family conflict produces effective solutions in family firms.

Finally, intergenerational solidarity theory (Bengtson & Roberts, 1991) argues that the bonds among family members (i.e., solidarity) across generations of adults can be defined by combinations of six dimensions: *affect* (i.e., emotional closeness), *association* (i.e., frequency of interaction), *consensus* (i.e., belief system agreement), *function* (i.e., sharing resources), *norms* (i.e., obligation), and *structure* (i.e., geographic proximity). Rather than studying individual attributes of intergenerational relationships in isolation (e.g., conflict), this theory offers a unifying framework for holistically capturing such relationships. Future research might investigate how different combinations of the six dimensions affect, for example, succession processes and outcomes (e.g., Jayantilal et al., 2016; Zellweger et al., 2016) or the pursuit of nonfinancial goals (e.g., Cabrera-Suárez et al., 2014; Scholes et al., 2016).

Family Member Roles. Each family member plays one or more roles as, among others, a parent, child, sibling, grandparent, or cousin. Broadly speaking, adaptability—a key construct from Olson's (1988) circumplex model of family systems—is a positive feature of family roles, as Hauck and Prügl's (2015) study of 81 family-owned Austrian motel and guest houses found with respect to the perceived suitability of innovation during the succession process. Furthermore, in a study from the family science literature, Stamm (2016) used biographical case reconstruction to analyze the life histories of the members of 12 German business families to understand their adaptation of their roles as family members. She drew on the concept of "linked lives" and argued that the roles they play over their lifetime (e.g., parent, husband, employee) are deeply linked with the roles of others (child, wife, and employer, respectively), such that the decisions and events one member makes affect the role choices and outcomes of others (MacMillan & Copher, 2005). Stamm (2016) argued that life links are even closer in business families and identified three coordination tasks business families must accomplish, that is, positioning (or crafting roles), coordinating, and material transfers), and three mechanisms through which to do so, that is, the pedagogy of succession (parents creating expectations), life course evidence analysis (adjusting to one another), and explicit communication (asking for children's participation, sharing entrepreneurial narratives).

With respect to specific roles, how parents treat their children and, to a lesser extent, the role behavior of siblings and children have captured attention. Lubatkin et al. (2007) described three salient types (out of five) of parent–child relationships with respect to altruism and related them to how well the family and family firm are managed (what they call "governance efficiencies"). They argued that owner-parents should strive for psychosocial altruism, wherein parents not only provide basic resources such as love, nurturance, and security but also work to socialize children into acceptable values and norms. This form of altruism results in durable family bonds and (family and firm) governance efficiencies. Less fruitful is paternalistic altruism, wherein parent-owners impose their judgments about what they believe is best, which erodes family bonds and creates governance inefficiencies (e.g., children rebelling). Finally, family-oriented altruism reflects parent-owners' desire to unconditionally satisfy their children's economic needs, resulting in inefficient governance wherein children are not held accountable for their actions. Indeed, this altruism type might result in what Kidwell et al. (2012) call the "Fredo effect." Fredos are entitled and lazy family members who are toxic to the family firm. Kidwell and colleagues found that family harmony norms and fairness perceptions reduce, and role ambiguity increases, relationship conflict among family members, which in turn relates positively to the Fredo effect (measured as whether a problematic family member works in the firm). Finally, in an effort to further understand problematic (or deviant) behavior by adult children in family firms, Eddleston & Kidwell (2012) adopted LMX theory (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995) to predict that children with poor parent–child relationships feel like out-group family members, which leaves them feeling detached from the firm and more likely to engage in deviant in-firm behavior. Parental altruism exacerbates this problem.

Several studies describe parents' role in succession. Michael-Tsabari and Weiss's (2015) game-theoretic model suggests that both the parent's and the child's intentions must be communicated. Otherwise, succession might not take place even when both parties desire it. Vozikis et al. (2012) argue that empathy between parent and offspring is critical. When it is reciprocal, the survival of the firm depends on both parties, and succession will probably be satisfactory and successful. Otherwise, survival depends on the more empathetic party or a third party if neither parent nor child is able to express empathy. Mussolino and Calabro (2014) put forth a theoretical model of parental leadership style that distinguishes between paternalistic and authoritarian parental leadership styles as indicators of whether parental influence has a positive or negative effect on succession processes. Consistent with their model, Hauck and Prügl's (2015) study of Austrian motels and guesthouses found that exercising strong authority (i.e., authoritarian parenting) relates negatively to perceptions of the potential for innovation during succession. Schroder and Schmitt-Rodermund (2013) provide supportive evidence for self-determination theory, which predicts when individuals will be internally self-motivated versus motivated by external factors (Deci & Ryan, 1985). They surveyed 152 adolescents from family firms and found that parents who encourage exploration of multiple career options increase their children's self-determined interest in becoming a successor; trying to force children toward a particular career (inside or outside the family firm) is related to introjected motivation (i.e., not wanting to disappoint their parents). In one of the six studies in our review that leverage family science theory, McMullen and Warnick (2015) build a theoretical model grounded in self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985) that links parental control style (e.g., Baumrind, 1971; Maccoby & Martin, 1983) to intrafamily succession. The central idea is that if parents nurture children's need for autonomy, competence, and relatedness, and children feel as though their needs are satisfied, they will experience intrinsic (or autonomous) motivation that fosters affective commitment to the family firm and, ultimately, intrafamily succession.

We noted in the Introduction that one reason for integrating a review of business family research with pertinent family science theories is that it is necessary to avoid reinventing the proverbial wheel wherein management researchers construct "new" theories that mirror the theories developed by family science researchers over the past half-century. Parenting is the area where management researchers have gone the furthest toward reinventing well-established theory. Parental control theory (Baumrind, 1971; Maccoby & Martin, 1983) outlines four parenting styles along two dimensions: (1) responsiveness (to children's needs) and (2) demandingness—that is, *authoritative* (high responsiveness, high demandingness), *authoritarian* (low responsiveness, high demandingness), *indulgent* (high responsiveness, low demandingness), and *negligent* (low responsiveness, low demandingness). Nine reviewed articles theorize about parenting constructs that conceptually overlap parental control theory, but only one leverages it to build new family business theory (i.e., McMullen & Warnick, 2015). Furthermore, management researchers' "homegrown" theorizing sometimes introduces new terms but results largely in parallel parental control theory. For example, the constructs of psychosocial, paternalistic, and family-oriented altruism (Lubatkin et al., 2007) seem to mirror the authoritative, authoritarian, and indulgent permissive parenting from parental control theory, respectively (Baumrind, 1971; Maccoby & Martin, 1983), and deviant in-firm behavior as a result of poor parenting (Eddleston & Kidwell, 2012) mirrors the child outcomes associated with indulgent permissive parenting (cf. Lamborn, Mounts, Steinberg, & Dornbusch, 1991). Accordingly, we submit that parental control theory can provide a unifying framework and a common language for reconciling past results and developing new knowledge about how parenting affects succession and other family business outcomes.

Other family roles have received less attention. The spousal role appears to be one of support and commitment. Van Auken and Werbel (2006) theorized that strong spousal support is a source of competitive advantage. Specifically, spousal support is linked with a willingness to utilize family-based resources within the business, and a lack of spousal support reduces resources for the business. The authors suggested that conflict between the family firm's objectives (e.g., the founder's business goals) and the spouse's career preferences lowers spousal support but that spousal involvement increases organizational commitment. Their model is consistent with McDonald et al.'s (2017) data on 736 small and medium-sized family businesses in the U.S. Midwest gathered as part of the 2012 Intergenerational Family Business Survey. These authors found that respondents who have people they could turn to at home and at work (called relationship satisfaction) are more likely to become copreneurs (i.e., owning and managing a business as a couple) and be successful in doing so.

Children's roles also received some attention, both as siblings and as potential successors. Avloniti et al. (2014) theorized that negative parental attitudes and behaviors during siblings' upbringing, perceptions of unfairness by children, frequent parental interference in children's conflict resolution, and differences among siblings lead to lower quality sibling relationships that ultimately harm succession. Their theory is largely consistent with Farrington et al.'s (2011) study of 371 family business siblings, wherein better overall sibling relationships relate to improved financial performance and siblings' sense of fair treatment by parents relates to higher firm growth. Children also have roles as prospective successors. Cater and Kidwell (2014) conducted in-depth interviews with top managers of nine family firms with multiple successors, or successor teams—either siblings or cousins. They found that while a spirit of competition among successors destroys team effectiveness, cooperation, team decision making, and trust enhance effectiveness, which in turn further enhances trust. They also identified multiple effective configurations of successor teams, ranging from having a dominant leader in an unequal group to teams composed of complete equals, suggesting that the configuration of roles among siblings and/or cousin successor teams can have important consequences for family firms.

One family science theory that has the potential to expand knowledge about sibling teams and their impact on family firms is the family niche model of birth order and personality (Sulloway, 1996), which asserts that children adopt specific niches and personalities (e.g., the conscientious firstborn, the gregarious last-born) that help them compete for their parents' attention and resources. Existing research shows that conflict among founders' children harms successors and/or succession processes (Jayantilal et al., 2016), which raises questions about how different configurations of children's niches create unhealthy rivalries that harm succession. Research also indicates that there are healthy forms of conflict within family firms (Kellermanns & Eddleston, 2007). Extending this research, the family niche model of birth order and personality might help explain which families are likely to develop healthy forms of sibling rivalry. For example, when one child is very talented in a particular domain (e.g., sports), do other children compensate by working harder in the family firm? Is the talented child more likely to feel entitled? More broadly, it would be useful to know how different siblings in business families garner their parents' attention and how different niches within the family foster or harm children's participation in the family firm and succession.

While parenting style theory (Baumrind, 1971) and the family niche model of birth order and personality (Sulloway, 1996) focus on specific family roles, other family science theories might more broadly explain the family member's role identity and performance. One such theory is symbolic interactionism (Blumer, 1969; Mead, 1934), which explains how individuals create meaning through interactions with one another and how this influences behavior within society (LaRossa & Reitzes, 2009). Mead (1934) claimed that the self and society have reciprocal interactions. Families are social groups wherein individual family members create identities and garner meaning in their roles based on their interactions with other family members. Thus, as also suggested by James et al. (2012) and Jennings et al. (2014), family business researchers might find value in adopting this theory to explain how family member roles affect role performance in the family business. For example, symbolic interactionism might help explain the links between the roles that siblings and cousins play in the family versus the firm (cf. Cater & Kidwell, 2014).

Family Transitions. The structure of families can change with the addition of new members through birth and marriage or subtraction through death and divorce. Mehrotra et al. (2011) attribute the differences in the dominance of family firms in developed economies versus less developed economies to differences in arranged versus love marriages. Using a sample of 41 countries' 10 largest businesses, the authors found that the dominance of large, family-controlled, "old-moneyed" (second generation or higher) firms is associated with cultural "proxies for arranged marriage" (p. 1129); they argue that such dominance reflects the survival benefits of arranged marriages, which, in contrast to love marriages, let business families select for talent and business connections. Bunkanwanicha et al. (2013) showed direct evidence of the benefits of certain marriages. They studied 131 marriages within Thai family firms and found that the stock market reacts positively (i.e., shows abnormal returns) to news of marriages involving political or business networks (but not marriages to "ordinary citizens").

While marriages bring new resources, integrating those resources can be challenging. Santiago (2011) interviewed 300 individuals from 82 family firms in the Philippines to determine what role (if any) in-laws play. She discovered that the relative influence of in-laws differs depending on the type of in-law (e.g., male vs.

female), in-law characteristics (e.g., personality), familial interactions (e.g., shared values), and company characteristics (e.g., firm size). For example, female siblings-in-law integrate freely into the family firm, but male siblings-in-laws need to be technically competent. The challenge of integrating resources through marriage is further demonstrated in Cole and Johnson's (2007) qualitative study wherein they sought to understand what factors make business relationships work after divorce. The major finding was that trust is key but other factors such as compartmentalization (i.e., separating romantic and business issues) also give confidence to staff, vendors, customers, and clients that the divorce will not undermine the business.

Although birth and death are clearly important transitions within families, only two studies in our review linked these topics to business outcomes. In one of only six studies that built directly on a family science, Minola et al. (2016) leverage family development theory (Rodgers, 1964; Rodgers & White, 1993) to explain when family firms are motivated to engage in entrepreneurial activities (i.e., corporate venturing). They suggest, for example, that the birth of a child and children leaving home are stressors that cause tension and reduce motivation for corporate venturing, especially when these events occur in the early stage of the firm. Another study offered a detailed analysis of public companies in Thailand, finding that the number of sons the founder has relates negatively to firm performance, especially after the founder's death (Bertrand et al., 2008). Also, more sons (but not daughters) relates to a larger discrepancy between control/voting and ownership rights, which generates incentives for tunneling (i.e., extracting resources at the expense of other investors). Bertrand et al. (2008) concluded that excess control rights, especially after the founder's death, creates a "race to the bottom" wherein each brother attempts to tunnel resources before the other brothers can do so.

The handful of studies we reviewed made some important progress toward understanding how specific family transitions (e.g., marriage) affect family firms, but this inquiry lacks a theoretical frame to generate testable hypotheses about specific family transitions or, more important, to build a body of knowledge that explains broadly how families coevolve with their firms. As evidenced by Minola et al.'s (2016) theory about family firm innovation, family development theory (Duvall, 1957; Rodgers, 1964) (aka the family life cycle perspective) appears well suited. The theory initially presented eight family life cycle stages based on major "events": (1) establishment, (2) first parenthood, (3) family with preschool child, (4) family with school-age child, (5) family with adolescents, (6) family as a launching center, (7) family as the empty nest, and (8) family in retirement. A criticism of this theory is that not everyone chooses to have children or families. Thus, later work identified alternative living patterns that are more prevalent today (e.g., divorce, voluntary single parenthood, blended families, same-sex couples, etc.) (e.g., McGregor & Ellison, 2003). Building on Minola et al. (2016), future research might investigate other family firm outcomes and test how shifts in the family shape the firm across multiple family development stages.

An alternative, and closely related, perspective, life course theory (Elder, 1985, 1994; Elder, Johnson, & Crosnoe, 2003), was developed in response to the criticism that not everyone chooses to have children or families. It describes five key constructs that illustrate the connections between an individual's roles in life and life events and the historical and socioeconomic context in which his or her life unfolds: life span development (i.e., development and aging are lifelong processes), human agency (i.e., the life courses is the result of an individual's choices and actions), historical time and geographic place (i.e., the life courses is influenced by the times and places an individual experiences), timing of decisions (i.e., events affect individuals differently depending on when they occur in the life course), and linked lives (i.e., life courses are interdependent) (Elder et al., 2003). The major difference between this perspective and family development theory is that life course theory focuses on individuals whereas family development theory focuses on families (Aldous, 1990). Though focused on individuals, life course theory can be illuminating for family business research. Indeed, Stamm's (2016) article in our review drew on one of the concepts from this theory—that is, linked lives—to describe how family members change roles and adapt in response to one another. Thus, adopting the theory more broadly has promise for explaining how family members' lives unfold and affect the family business.

Family-Level Linking Constructs

Many studies in our review linked family elements (i.e., relationships, roles, and transitions) directly to business-related activities and outcomes (i.e., succession, performance, strategy), but many others linked family elements to the firm indirectly through other constructs that do not sit fully inside the family or the firm. We refer to these as linking constructs. Actually, there are many constructs that link business families to family firms, such as those that distinguish between family and nonfamily firms—for example, ownership (e.g., Chrisman et al., 2004; Gómez-Mejía et al., 2011) and participation in management and/or the board (e.g., Chua et al., 1999; Sharma, Chrisman, & Chua, 1997)—and those that describe the level of integration, resource sharing, or overlap between the family and the firm—for example, familiness (Habbershon & Williams, 1999), family-to-business support (Powell & Eddleston, 2017), and familial stewardship (Bizri, 2016). However, because family science theories operate at the family level of analysis, our focus is on the set of linking constructs that describe the ways family members experience and think about the family firm. Specifically, work–family enrichment/harmony, organizational commitment, work–family and role conflict, legacy, and identity were the constructs that emerged.

Work–family enrichment describes the ways in which the job and the family enhance each other, such as when involvement in the family firm puts a spouse in a good mood that crosses over into the family. Sprung and Jex (2017) examined the relationship between work–family enrichment and subsequent health outcomes in 217 copreneurial couples. Work–family enrichment was found to enhance psychological health and reduce harmful physical health symptoms for both partners.

In many ways, the opposite of work–family enrichment is work–family role conflict, which in this context stems from having dual roles in the family and the firm. Memili et al. (2015) present a model wherein reciprocal altruism among family members and collective efficacy (i.e., shared belief in the group's ability to accomplish goals: Bandura, 1997) reduce work–family role conflict, which in turn enhances firm performance. Cooper et al. (2013) similarly theorized that family members who find it difficult to separate their work and family roles perceive work–family conflict, especially if they prefer to segment (i.e., separate) work and family. The authors argue that work–family conflict elicits negative emotions that increase deviant behavior in the firm and the family. They conclude that families should create regular discussions regarding work–family roles and create boundaries between roles to avoid work–family conflict and deviance. Indeed, Arteaga and Menéndez-Requejo (2017) found just that; the 265 Spanish firms in their sample that implemented a family constitution—that is, a set of formal protocols regarding governance, nepotism, ownership, and so on—performed better in the following 2 years than the 265 sample firms that did not. These effects are stronger when the CEO is a family member, in the presence of multiple family owners, and when later generations are involved—all factors that might increase work–family conflict.

Family members' organizational commitment is another potentially important linking construct. In one of six studies that drew directly from a family science theory—that is, Olson's (1988) circumplex model—J. Lee (2006) surveyed 88 second-generation Chinese family firms and found that the family's adaptability (to change) and cohesion relate to higher organizational commitment (as well as job satisfaction and life satisfaction). Memili et al. (2013) similarly developed a structural model to explain the organizational commitment (to the family firm) of family members. They adapted "organizational attachment" from the concept of product attachment in marketing (i.e., Ball & Tasaki, 1992) and showed in a sample of 349 family firm CEOs that organizational attachment mediates the effects of family harmony, relationship conflict, and work–family conflict on affective organizational commitment.

Families also have "legacies" that help family members think about their families, their firms, and their roles in both. In a qualitative study of 21 multigenerational German wineries, Jaskiewicz et al. (2015) introduced the term *entrepreneurial legacy* to describe the family's imprinted historical stories of past successful entrepreneurship and resilience. They explained that families who possess and share such stories involve their children in the business, push them to receive strategically beneficial (to the firm) education and work experience, and engage in a succession process that leverages the next generations' knowledge toward entrepreneurship. Hammond et al. (2016) theoretically describe three forms of family legacy: biological (e.g., genes, name), material (e.g., family heirlooms), and social (e.g., values, norms). They suggest that these can be oriented toward either the family or the firm, which yields different firm-level outcomes.

Finally, Akhter et al. (2016) draw on identity theory to suggest that the role that the firm plays in the family's identity shapes the way the firm is managed. They explain why the six families in Pakistan's hostile competitive and economic environment often closed down portfolio businesses even when they could be sold to generate cash. The more the family identified with the business (i.e., it was once a core business, it had the family's name on it) the more likely the family would shut it down (in the hope of someday reopening) rather than sell it. Similarly, based on interview data from six Belgian microbrewers, McGrath and O'Toole (2018) found that family firms with strong family identities emphasize relational capabilities within the firm at the cost of external network ties, which results in less collaborative innovation.

Most of the studies in our review describe and/or measure one or more attributes of business families and link these theoretically and/or statistically directly to events and/or outcomes in family firms, but as the studies that evoke family-level linking constructs suggest, there are important mediators between the family and the firm. McMullen and Warnick's (2015) theoretical model provides a nice example: Parenting style affects organizational commitment, which in turn improves intrafamily succession potential. Accordingly, rather than recommending any specific family science theory to investigate family-level linking constructs, we believe that each of the family science theories and their rich descriptions of family can reveal important relationships with linking constructs, which in turn affect family firms. Indeed, we believe that linking constructs are where family science and business theories might come together to enhance researchers' understanding. Family science theories, for example, can help explain different potential successors' organizational commitment or describe their central identities, and management theories can help explain how organizational commitment and/or identity, in turn, affects the family firm.

Family Firm Actions/Outcomes

Although the majority of theoretical and empirical studies investigating business families emphasize the role families play in influencing firms, a few studies point in the opposite direction by describing ways in which the firm shapes the family. Bee and Neubaum (2014) draw on cognitive appraisal theory (Lazarus, 1991) to describe family business situational factors that give rise to family members' positive and negative emotions. Cognitive appraisal theory states that emotions, which "are a reaction to an evaluation of the environment related to a specific goal" (Bee and Neubaum, 2014: 324) emerge from six situational factors: (1) the personal significance of a situation, (2) congruence between personal goals and the situation, (3) the degree to which the situation affects one's self- or social identity (called ego involvement), (4) the extent to which one feels responsible for the situation, (5) uncertainty regarding future expectations, and (6) a sense of personal control over the situation. Bee and Neubaum (2014) used this framework to describe how each situational factor sparks different emotions, such as pride from seeing a child become the successor or guilt over making the succession choice. While not from the family science domain, appraisal theory might have broad application for family business researchers seeking to draw on family science, because emotions likely mediate the relationships between family situations and business decision making. Sibling rivalry and parenting style, for example, might influence family members' sense of personal control and/or identification with the firm, which could spark anger and sabotage behavior or, alternatively, sadness and withdrawal behavior (cf. Bee & Neubaum, 2014).

The impact of the firm extends beyond emotions. Collins et al. (2016) conducted a study of 256 family firms and found that higher levels of wealth, having an established successor, and securing continuity all result in higher CEO expectations of achieving retirement well-being. Y. Lee, Danes, et al.'s (2006) survey of 225 females who were working only in the family firm similarly showed that their perceptions of well-being related to success in achieving family goals, less competition between the family and business resources, and more family cash flow.

However, family firms can also be a source of conflict. Y. G. Lee, Hong, et al. (2006) investigated 545 married women who were household managers (i.e., responsible for activities such as meal preparation, laundry, cleaning, and child care) and found that the balancing act of taking part in the family firm and managing the household resulted in higher levels of relationship and work–family conflict, which relates negatively to family harmony. The authors conclude that because of the desire for family business success this effect is worse for women taking part in a family firm than for women employed in other organizations.

Family firms appear to have a positive influence on children. First, at least among Spanish Roma families, owning a family firm creates incentives to have more children (Aisa et al., 2017). Evidence from Statistics Canada's National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth, which surveyed 426,204 adolescents over an 8-year span, indicates that adolescents who work in their family firms on a year-round basis develop better relationships with their parents and better psychological well-being (i.e., higher self-esteem, lower depression) than children who work in nonfamily firms (Houshmand et al., 2017).

Other studies suggest that the way the family firm is managed is key to how the family responds. In a qualitative ethnography of 19 Canadian communities composed of extended-family businesses, Nordstrom and Jennings (2018) identified three overarching guidelines (called enterprise-level strategies*)*—ensuring family–firm overlap ("blending"), remaining in close proximity ("keeping close"), and ensuring that the business remains small ("staying small")—and three methods or policies (called task-level practices)—ensuring that all are involved ("involving"), ensuring cross-training ("covering"), and tolerating mistakes ("tolerating"). These guidelines and practices keep the members of these extended families emotionally close while working together in family businesses. In a more traditional setting, case study evidence from 17 family firms suggests a different management approach. Lambrecht and Lievens (2008) reveal that "pruning" the family from the firm (reducing the number of family owners) is associated with greater financial performance and can be an important avenue for preserving family harmony.

Overall, the studies in our review point to several quite different ways in which family firms affect business families. One family science theory that might offer an effective framework for unifying these efforts is the ABCX model of family stress (introduced by Hill, 1949, and expanded by McCubbin & Patterson, 1983). This theory says that family stress is the result of a stressor event (A), family resources to address the event (B), and the family's perception of the event (C). The degree to which the event becomes a crisis (X) is the product of A, B, and C. A family business can both be a source of stress (A) (e.g., Y. G. Lee, Hong, et al., 2006) and provide resources for addressing stress (B) (Collins et al., 2016; Y. Lee, Danes, et al., 2006). Involving children in the business (e.g., Houshmand et al., 2017) and/or strategies for managing the family–firm interface (e.g., Lambrecht & Lievens, 2008; Nordstrom & Jennings, 2018) might affect how families perceive stressor events (C). There are likely many specific sources of stress from family businesses (A), different types of resources that firms provide (B), and many variables that affect how such events are viewed (C). Thus, the framework provides an intuitive way to understand how firms generate either resilience or crises (X) in families.

Discussion

While management researchers have long recognized that family firms integrate two systems—that is, the family and the firm—research has typically adopted theory from the business domain (e.g., Odom et al., 2019) and focused largely on the firm—that is, how it differs from nonfamily firms (e.g., Chrisman et al., 2004; Gómez-Mejía et al., 2007; Gómez-Mejía et al., 2018) and how it is affected by integration, overlap, or resource sharing with the family system (e.g., Bizri, 2016; Habbershon & Williams, 1999; Powell & Eddleston, 2017). In an effort to shift the focus toward the business family, scholars pointed toward interdisciplinary family science research as a foundation for advancing understanding of how business families affect family firms (i.e., James et al., 2012; Jaskiewicz & Dyer, 2017; Jaskiewicz et al, 2017).

To fully leverage family science theories, we submit that it is important to first take stock of what researchers have already learned about business families—often without the benefit of family science—and join this knowledge with the appropriate family science theories. Failure to do so increases the likelihood that family business scholars will reinvent the proverbial wheel, either by reproducing existing knowledge and justifying such replications on the grounds that (family science) theory now exists to explain results or by developing "new" theory on topics that family science researchers have been studying for more than half a century. Indeed, we noticed that such reinvention has already occurred with respect to the most popular topic in our review. Of the nine studies that investigate parenting, only two cite and review Baumrind's (1971) parental control theory (i.e., Kidwell et al., 2012; McMullen & Warnick, 2015), and only one (i.e., McMullen & Warnick, 2015) leverages parental control theory to build new insights. Given that most family science theories have been continuously investigated and refined over decades (e.g., Baumrind, 1971, has more than 7,400 Google citations as of this writing), we submit that it will be much more efficient for scholars to advance by contextualizing what is already known from family science, rather than attempting to build theory de novo, and by adopting family science early in the design phase so that appropriate measures of established constructs can be used to advance empirical research.

The purpose of our review, therefore, is to bring together what has already been learned about business family attributes with summaries of the family science theories that pertain to each attribute (similar summaries are offered elsewhere—i.e., James et al., 2012; Jaskiewicz & Dyer, 2017; Jaskiewicz et al., 2017). Juxtaposing the studies focused on different aspects of business families with appropriate family science theories (1) provides a set of theoretical frameworks that bind together and help explain many of the disparate findings from this fragmented literature and (2) broadly offers a research agenda for moving forward. With respect to antecedents, we suggested that structural functionalism (Parsons, 1951) might frame research explaining how societal institutions affect the emergence and stability of business families and describe their role in stabilizing society. The circumplex model (Olson, 1988) and systems theory more broadly (Broderick & Smith, 1979), family communication patterns theory (Fitzpatrick & Ritchie, 1994; Ritchie & Fitzpatrick, 1990), and intergenerational solidarity (Bengtson & Roberts, 1991) offer family business researchers a common language for moving beyond simple investigations into single-family relationship dimensions (e.g., conflict). We offered parental control theory (Baumrind, 1971) and the family niche model of birth order and personality (Sulloway, 1996) as theoretical foundations for explaining how children and sibling roles, respectively, develop and shape the way family firms are managed. Symbolic interactionism (Blumer, 1969; Mead, 1934) offers a broad framework for explaining how multiple family member roles interact with one another to affect family businesses. As families evolve and change, we offered the family development (Duvall, 1957; Rodgers, 1964) and life course (Elder et al., 2003) theories as avenues for explaining when resources are added and subtracted from family businesses and how these changes affect firm strategy and performance. With respect to how family firms affect business families, we suggested that the ABCX model (Hill, 1949; McCubbin & Patterson, 1983) might prove useful for understanding how firms generate either resilience or crises in business families. Finally, many studies investigated family-level linking constructs that describe how family members experience and think about the family firm. We suggested that each of the family science theories can help explain these constructs and that these, in turn, as pivotal constructs that sit between the business family and the family firm, can help explain family firm actions and outcomes with the help of and integrated with business-oriented theories. We do not wish to imply that our suggested pairings between aspects of business families and specific family science theories are the only way forward; they offer only one broad avenue for advancing understanding about business families and the myriad ways they affect family firms. We can imagine many other creative ways in which family science theories might be fruitfully deployed (cf. James et al., 2012; Jaskiewicz & Dyer, 2017; Jaskiewicz et al., 2017).

Overall, by describing appropriate family science theories in the context of what is known about business families, our review offers several important implications for the evolution of the body of research we anticipate—that is, research that helps explain why a particular family, with a particular set of family relationships, roles, and/or transitions, manages the family firm in a particular way.

Implications for Future Research

One implication pertains to how the different family science theories might be used in relation to one another. While they collectively form a starting point for leveraging family science, it might be that broader theories that cut across multiple dimensions of family, such as structural functionalism, family systems, and family development, might prove more useful in the early stages of building theory and narrower theories such as the family niche model of birth order and personality and the ABCX model might become increasingly important as researchers make progress toward mapping the many different ways in which business families shape family firms (and vice versa). Alternatively, there might be merit in integrating multiple family science theories to explain the links between business families and family firms. Broadly speaking, parental control theory (Baumrind, 1971) and the family niche model of birth order and personality (Sulloway, 1996) both describe how adult children might behave when they start interacting with the firm. Family development theory (Duvall, 1957; Rodgers, 1964) describes stress-generating events in families; the impact of such events might usefully be explained by the ABCX model of family stress (Hill, 1949; McCubbin & Patterson, 1983). Finally, while family systems' circumplex model (Olson,

1988) assigns an important role to communication in a broad sense, it might be enhanced by integrating the specific communication patterns found in family communication patterns theory (Fitzpatrick & Ritchie, 1994).

A second implication is that although the purpose of our review and research agenda was to lay a foundation for bringing family science into the family business domain, we wonder if management scholars might also "give back" to family science. Some studies in our review, for example, draw on management theories such as LMX (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995), imprinting theory (Marquis & Tilcsik, 2013), and self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985). While these theories were not developed to explain families, they might be useful for advancing understanding at the intersection between the business family and family firm. For example, Baumrind's (1971) parenting style theory explains how parenting affects children, and LMX theory explains how leaders affect followers (Graen & Uhl-Bein, 1995). Perhaps together these theories can help explain how family business successors (i.e., the children of the founder) affect employee-level outcomes such as motivation, job satisfaction, and deviance. Alternatively, imprinting theory might be used to investigate how the founder's family structure and relationships influence the nature of the imprints that emerge and the way subsequent changes in the family affect how such imprints are prioritized, expanded, or allowed to decline (Marquis & Tilcsik, 2013; Sinha, Jaskiewicz, Gibb, & Combs, 2019).

A third, and we believe important, implication is that reviewing the business family literature forced us to separate what we called *family-level linking constructs* from other ways in which families and firms are linked. Doing so led us to think through a hierarchical typology of linking constructs that, while not central to the review, provides what we believe is a useful organizing framework. The family-level linking constructs we reviewed are at the lowest level; they define the way family members experience and think about the family firm. These include work–family enrichment/harmony, organizational commitment, work–family and role conflict, legacy, and identity. We believe that there are likely others, such as purpose. Research on immigrant entrepreneurship, for example, shows that many are family firms (e.g., Sanders & Nee, 1996), but rather than seeking SEW or transgenerational control, their purpose is to provide support for the next generation's professional training (e.g., as doctors, lawyers, and engineers) in the hope that the children will *not* be entrepreneurs or business owners. It seems likely that these businesses are managed differently than those where parents seek SEW or envision transgenerational control.

At the next level of abstraction are *configuration-level linking constructs*, which define the specific configuration of family members who are involved in the business. These might be "copreneurs" (i.e., romantic couples) (e.g., Barnett & Barnett, 1988), female leaders (e.g., Remery, Matser, & Hans Flören, 2014), father–son or father–daughter teams (e.g., Haberman & Danes, 2007), or siblings (e.g., Farrington et al., 2011). Studies that draw on configuration-level linking constructs investigate how particular configurations of family members manage the firm. These configurations do not tell much about the business family, other than that it contains a couple, a female, parents and children, or siblings (or other configuration) and it is willing to let these individuals represent the family in the firm. However, the configuration of insider-principals (i.e., key insider-owners in the family firm) can also be viewed as "representatives" or "agents" of the larger family, who are "superprincipals" with influence over the insiders' actions (Villalonga, Amit, Trujillo, & Guzman, 2015). The idea of family member configurations as both principals in the firm and agents of the larger family raises new questions for future inquiry (see Villalonga et al., 2015). The impact that different configurations of family insiders have on family firms likely depends on the nature of the family they have to answer to.

On a higher level of abstraction higher are *system-level linking constructs*, which depict the amount of integration, overlap, or resource sharing between the family and the business. These include constructs such as familiness (Habbershon & Williams, 1999), family-to-business support (Powell & Eddleston, 2017), and familial stewardship (Bizri, 2016). Indeed, although SEW is usually viewed as an unmeasured theoretical mechanism that explains the differences between family and nonfamily firms (e.g., Gómez-Mejía et al., 2007; Gómez-Mejía et al., 2018), it can also be thought of as a system-level linking construct depicting family–firm systems with more versus less SEW (Berrone et al., 2012; Gómez-Mejia et al., 2011). Studies of system-level linking constructs are important because they help distinguish between family firms that are more versus less influenced by the family, which likely places a boundary on the extent to which the family matters. That is, if familiness, SEW, or other indicators of family–firm integration are low, then relationships, roles, and transitions in the family might be less likely to affect the firm.

Finally, at the highest level of abstraction are *definition-level linking constructs*, typically the family's percentage of ownership and/or voting rights (e.g., Anderson & Reeb, 2003; Chrisman et al., 2004) and/or the number of family members serving as top managers and/or board members (e.g., Chua et al., 1999; Gómez-Mejía et al., 2018; Sharma et al., 1997). The importance of these constructs cannot be understated because they are essential for claiming that family firms are different and worthy of study. The very important theoretical insight that SEW lies at the heart of family and nonfamily firm differences emerges from definition-level linking constructs (Gómez-Mejía et al., 2011), and it is impossible to investigate lower-level linking constructs without first defining what is meant by a family firm.

Ultimately, we believe that a complete understanding of the links between business families and family firms will require integrated theory development across all four levels. For example, definition-level research shows that family firms, on average, invest less in innovation and growth (e.g., Block, 2012); system-level research describes the processes through which familiness affects innovation (Carnes & Ireland, 2013); configuration-level research shows that copreneurial couples experience more growth (partly from innovation) than sibling-managed family firms (Bird & Zellweger, 2018); and family-level research suggests that changes in the family's structure influences firms' appetite for innovation (Minola et al., 2016). At each level, as linking constructs move closer to the family, researchers increase the granularity of theorizing and move closer to explaining specific family business implications from families' specific configurations of relationships, roles, and transitions.

A final implication emerged from our efforts to grapple with the number of family science theories, the relationships among them, and the vast number of empirical tests. Although two members of the author team have read extensively and previously published research grounded in family science, all of us received our primary training in business-related disciplines. Our experience suggests that family business research might benefit from deeper academic ties with family studies researchers. We urge our colleagues to reach out to the family science scholars on their respective campuses; attend family studies conferences, such as those of the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences; and convince established family science scholars to join research projects focused on business families. Indeed, there have been calls in family science outlets urging researchers to pay more attention to business families (e.g., Jennings, Breitkreuz, & James, 2013), which suggests that there is an openness among family science researchers to work with their colleagues in business.

Conclusion

Researchers recently advocated the use of theories from family science to help explain the links between business families and family firms (e.g., Jaskiewicz et al., 2017). We submit that embracing family science theories requires that scholars first identify what has already been learned about business families and join this knowledge with the appropriate family science theories. We hope that our review and proposed research agenda offer a first step toward more granular theorizing that helps explain how a particular family, with its particular set of relationships, roles, and transitions, manages the family firm in a particular way.

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Notes

1. We include socioemotional wealth (SEW) in this category. SEW is usually used as an unmeasured theoretical mechanism that explains the differences between family and nonfamily firms (e.g., Gómez-Mejía et al., 2018), but it can be measured (Berrone, Cruz, & Gómez-Mejía,

2012) and used to describe the extent to which family firms emphasize SEW in decision making (Gómez-Mejía, Cruz, Berrone, & De Castro, 2011). However, it says nothing about why some families seek more SEW than others. Furthermore, SEW is a multidimensional construct that contains dimensions such as identity, which we review separately.

2. Most of the studies investigated multiple constructs that fall into multiple categories in our model. We placed them in "primary" categories based on the number of constructs in each category or the study's central theoretical focus.
3. *Strong ties, positive emotions* (Trevinyo-Rodriguez & Bontis, 2010), *positive family dynamics* (Cater et al., 2016), *trust* (Morris et al., 1997; Solomon et al., 2011), and *cohesion* (Zellweger et al., 2016).

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