


Uncovering Implicit Assumptions: Reviewing the Work–Family Interface in Family Business and Offering Opportunities for Future Research

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Nava Michael-Tsabari¹, Marjan Houshmand²,
Vanessa M. Strike³, and Dorit Efrat Treister⁴

Abstract

The work–family interface (WFI) in family businesses (FBs) is an underrecognized area of research. The permeable nature of the boundaries in FBs between work and family is often treated as self-evident and as preventing (rather than inviting) research. We review the WFI in FBs based on 72 published articles and highlight implicit assumptions that have given rise to gaps in this literature. We show how boundary theory, the work–home resources model and the resource-based view can be used to highlight issues related to ownership, work–family enrichment, and contextual factors at the individual, family, and firm domains.

Keywords

family business, work–family interface, boundary theory, COR, WH-R, resources

Introduction

The work–family interface (WFI) is defined as the “interdependencies between work and family domains” (Powell et al., 2018, p. 99). While the defining characteristic of family businesses (FBs) is work and family interdependencies, scholars in the mainstream literature have, to date, shied away from studying the WFI in the context of FBs. Indeed, researchers have suggested that in FBs, “work and family are *too closely intertwined* [italics added] to be considered separately” (Edwards & Rothbard, 2000, p. 180).

This exclusion of FBs from the wider WFI literature has given rise to an isolated stream of research on the WFI within the FB discipline (Rothausen, 2009), often on the basis of various implicit assumptions. An implicit assumption is a premise that supports an argument or theory without being made explicit; and thus, the holder of the theory or argument may often be unaware of it. For example, the assumption that the WFI in FBs is too complicated has led to its exclusion from the wider WFI literature and little

comparisons with non-FBs. This isolated stream has caused FB scholars to develop their own language and additional, implicit assumptions by fostering discrete definitions (e.g., divergent definitions of work and family) and drawing on distinct theories (e.g., the sustainable family business model [SFBM] or fundamental interpersonal relationship orientation [FIRO]), with little communication between the FB WFI and wider literatures. Moreover, FB scholars have studied the WFI under varying names and guises, including work–family conflict (WFC; e.g., Amarapurkar & Danes, 2005), work–family roles (e.g., Li & Piezunka, 2019), gender (e.g., Otten-Pappas,

¹Tel Aviv University, Tel Aviv, Israel

²University of Hawaii, Honolulu, HI, USA

³University of British Columbia, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada

⁴Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Beer-Sheva, Israel

Corresponding Author:

Nava Michael-Tsabari, Tel Aviv University, Tel Aviv, Israel.
Email: navamichael@tauex.tau.ac.il

2013), and work–family characteristics (e.g., Cooper et al., 2013), among others.

As a result, we note that FB research suffers from three main limitations that prevent the literature from both moving forward in FB scholarship and contributing to the wider WFI domain. First, the literature is fragmented. With the exception of one early review article that examined boundaries and transitions among copreneurial couples (Marshack, 1993), and Rothausen’s (2009) study suggesting a social systems model of fit, there have been no systematic review efforts to address the WFI within the discipline of FBs. Second, the theoretical basis of WFI research within the FB literature has relied largely on models that draw from family systems theory and are specific to FBs, such as SFBM and FIRO. While these models broadly explain that resources flow between the family and firm systems, there is an opportunity to extend these theories so as to deepen our understanding of how these resource exchanges affect individuals within both the work and family realms. In the wider literature, these exchanges of resources across the work and family boundaries have been recognized as key factors influencing how individuals experience WFI in general (ten Brummelhuis & Bakker, 2012). Third, scholars have not been able to show how the unique features of the FB context may be seen as a catalyst for the WFI because work and family roles are more likely to be so highly intertwined. This has resulted into two different streams of WFI studies in the FB context and the broader literature with little transfer of knowledge between the two. This unsatisfactory status quo motivates our overarching research question: How can scholars overcome limitations in the literature and advance our understanding of the WFI in FBs?

To answer this question, we conduct a systematic literature review to (a) investigate the current state of the WFI studies in the context of FBs; (b) uncover the implicit assumptions and associated limitations, which underlie much of that research; and (c) identify relevant gaps in the literature to propose promising research questions for future research. More precisely, we identify and analyze 72 articles that deal with the WFI in the context of FB research. We discuss in detail the findings of our review in relation to definitional issues, the theoretical lens employed, the study contexts, and the factors influencing the WFI in FBs. In doing so, we employ theories and findings from the wider literature to

highlight the unique features of FBs and to offer fresh insights into the WFI in this setting.

Our article thus offers a roadmap for advancing study of the WFI within the realm of FBs and to engage with the wider literature on the WFI, and vice versa. Our contribution has three main facets. First, we uncover implicit assumptions in the FB WFI literature that, to date, has impeded the development of research in this area. Second, we show how particular theoretical frameworks—namely, boundary theory and theories of resource exchange, such as the work–home resources (WH-R) model—can serve as useful and fresh perspectives for examining the WFI in FBs. Third, by unearthing implicit assumptions and drawing on alternate theories, we derive 19 meaningful research questions to serve as a guide for future studies.

Method

To conduct a systematic search of the FB WFI literature, we review academic journals from 1988 to 2019 using the following search engines: PsychINFO, EBSCOhost Business Source Premier, ABI/INFORM, JSTOR, Econlit (EBSCO), and Google Scholar. To be included in the study, articles have to contain terms that refer to both FBs and WFI. To identify articles on FBs, we use the following search terms: *family business, family firm, family enterprise, family influence, family control, family owner, family owned, family managed, family member, founder, generation, private, and closely held*. To capture articles on WFI, we use *work non-work, work life, time management, work family, work home, business family, conflict, enrichment, integration, interface, balance, crossover, and spillover*. To exhaust the relevant literature, we follow citation trails that lead to other contributions on WFI in the context of FBs. Finally, to ensure we have not missed any articles in the key FB journals, we reviewed the tables of contents of all issues of *Family Business Review* and the *Journal of Family Business Strategy* for the study period.

Our initial literature search unearthed 231 articles. All authors independently reviewed the articles to determine their relevance for the review and to conduct preliminary coding. We discussed each article until agreement on the relevance and coding was reached. We follow Chua et al.’s (1999) definition of an FB as a business governed and/or managed “by members of the same family” and “potentially sustainable across generations of the family

or families” (p. 25). Criteria for exclusion are articles focusing on entrepreneurs, sole owners, or home-based businesses that do not identify as an FB (78 articles), and articles that address work–family issues other than the WFI (e.g., intrafamily conflicts due to conflicts of interest or other factors outside the realm of WFI; 81 articles). The final number of articles is 72. In Table 1, we provide an overview of each of the reviewed studies, including the following attributes: geographic context, FB system (family, firm, or ownership), theory, method or type (quantitative, qualitative, conceptual, or review), key topic, level of analysis, and key findings. We also reviewed each article for its definitions of the WFI and whether they focused within FBs or compared FBs with non-FBs. We elaborate on these findings below.

Review of the FB WFI Literature

To gain a better understanding of the current state of the FB WFI literature, we proceed in two steps. First, we provide an overview of FB WFI studies by distinguishing their (1) definitions, (2) theoretical lenses, and (3) study context (including empirical approaches and geographical focus). Second, we then examine the factors influencing WFI in FBs and develop a framework to present our findings based on the domains of (1) individual, (2) family, and (3) work.

Definitions

Our review (of 72 articles, see Table 1) reveals inconsistencies in defining constructs in the FB WFI literature (e.g., Amarapurkar & Danes, 2005; Cole, 2000; Danes, 2006; Gudmunson et al., 2009; Karataş-Özkan et al., 2011; J. Lee, 2006; Venter et al., 2009). For example, among the studies that deal with WFC, 27 articles (37.5% of the full sample) employ either the seminal definition of WFC by Greenhaus and Beutell (1985), namely “a form of inter-role conflict in which the role pressures from the work and family domains are mutually incompatible in some respect” (p. 77), or the classic definition of Kahn et al. (1964): “role conflict, or incompatibilities between role expectations.” Only 16 articles (22% of the full sample) apply definitions adapted for the FB context. However, some of these definitions still examine conflicting role pressures emanating from the two spheres of life—family and work—as per Greenhaus and Beutell’s (1985) original definition of WFC. For

example, Gudmunson et al. (2009) define work–family balance (WFB) as “the absence of overwhelming work demands that would detract from the business owner’s ability to engage satisfactorily in personal and family life” (pp. 1102–1103). Surprisingly, 29 articles (40%) discuss the WFI issues using no definition. This large number reflects an implicit assumption that the meaning of the WFI in FBs is self-evident and does not need to be further defined. However, having consistent and explicit definitions is critical to draw comparisons between FB studies and to compare FBs with non-FBs.

These definitional discrepancies also carry from the FB WFI literature across to the wider WFI literature. For instance, in the FB literature, *work* refers to paid and unpaid activities carried out by FB owners and/or other family members in the FB itself (Cole, 1997). Conversely, in the wider WFI literature, *work* refers to an individual’s paid employment in any organization (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). The context that FB WFI scholars study, therefore, differs from that of general WFI scholars where the integration of work and family is not as close, making comparison difficult. In turn, FB WFI researchers can capture insights because of the close integration of work and family that are more difficult for wider WFI researchers to perceive in their research setting. There are more differences in terms. In FB scholarship, *family* refers to the family system, which includes family members who work together in the FB (Danes & Morgan, 2004), as well as those who do not (Rothausen, 2009). Conversely, *family* in the wider literature refers to the nonwork part of an individual employee’s life, which is separate from work (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). In the FB literature, *business* refers to the family’s firm, where other family members may work and have ownership shares. As such, in FBs, there are various degrees of overlap between *work*, *business*, *family*, and *ownership*. *Business* in the wider literature refers to the employer of an individual in his or her paid work. These definitional inconsistencies make it difficult to compare the findings of studies both within the FB WFI literature and the general WFI literature. As a result, we have found only a small number of articles (9 studies, or 13%) that directly compare the WFI between FBs and non-FBs, a figure in keeping with our observation that there are two separate and isolated streams of the WFI research—one in the general literature and another in the FB literature. The small number of comparisons also suggests that scholars

Table 1. Literature Review of the Work–Family Interface in the Family Business Literature.

Authors (year)	Geographic context	Firm/family/ ownership	Theory	Method	Key topics	Level of analysis	Key findings
1 Amarapurkar & Danes (2005)	United States	Family–firm	SFBM, FIRO	Quantitative: 206 farm couples	Conflict	Couples	For both husbands and wives, locus of control was negatively related to business tensions and business tensions were negatively related to relationship conflict quality, but for husbands, relationship conflict quality was positively related to satisfaction with spouse; while for wives, business tensions were negatively related to satisfaction with business-owning spouse
2 Avery et al. (2000)	United States	Family–firm	Management systems model	Quantitative: 673 FBs	Gender	Multilevel: individual, family, firm	Household managers who work in the FB are less likely to outsource child care, women less than men
3 T. Barnett et al. (2009)	United States	Ownership–family–firm	Identity	Quantitative: 156 FBs vs. non-FBs	Performance, roles	Firm	FB status moderates the relationships such that the career role salience of a business owner is positively and more strongly associated with performance outcomes in FBs than in non-FBs
4 Beach (1993)	NA	Family–firm	Absorptiveness	Conceptual	NA	Conceptual	Home-based work is chosen to manage the demands of both work and family. Home-based work informally draws other family members into the business, including children, and expose the family to the work
5 Beehr et al. (1997)	United States	Ownership–family–firm	Role	Quantitative: 24 FBs vs. 21 non-FBs	Roles, family vs. nonfamily	Multilevel: individual, family, firm	More advantages to family members of FBs compared with other groups, less interrole conflict, and higher personal advantage and family expectations
6 Bjursell & Backvall (2011)	Sweden	Family–firm	Role	Qualitative: 308 media texts	Roles, gender	Individual	Women of FBs appear in the media as mothers and as business managers but less as owners
7 Boles (1996)	United States	Family–firm	Interrole conflict	Quantitative: 116 owners, 72 work with family members	Roles	Multilevel: individual, firm	Results vary among owners depending on whether or not they work with other members of their immediate family. Owners who employ other family members experience significantly higher levels of work–family conflict
8 Campopiano et al. (2017)	NA	Family–firm	Gender	Review	Gender	Multilevel: individual, firm, family	This article reviews 87 articles on women in FBs and synthesizes the findings based on different types of involvement of women in FBs. The involvement includes entrepreneurial entry, succession, career dynamics, and presence in FBs
9 Carr & Hmieleski (2015)	United States	Family–firm	Roles (conflict, pressures, salience)	Quantitative: 79 FB, 144 non-FB leaders	Roles	Multilevel: individual, firm	FB founders have greater work tension from WFC than non-FB founders; WFC has more negative effects on non-FB founders than on FB founders
10 Chen et al. (2018)	China	Family–firm	Institutional theory, family embeddedness	Case study	Gender	Multilevel: individual, family, culture	Institutional change in China affects the role of women family members, which gave rise to women leadership in China's FBs. Women leadership is more concerned with balancing WFC, more dependent on the family's endowment of resources, and more likely to favor a participative decision-making style
11 Cole (1997)	United States	Family–firm	Gender perspective	Qualitative: 23 FB members	Gender	Individual	Balancing children and work still seemed very much a woman's concern

(continued)

Table 1. (continued)

Authors (year)	Geographic context	Firm/family/ownership	Theory	Method	Key topics	Level of analysis	Key findings
12 Cole (2000)	United States	Family-firm	Role	Qualitative: 9 FBs	Roles	Multilevel: family, firm	Therapy with the concepts of connection, separation, and expectations of family and work roles
13 Cooper et al. (2013)	NA	Family-firm	Boundary, relative deprivation theory	Conceptual	Roles	Conceptual	The tensions between work and family, and difficulties in transitioning between their associated roles, can create a cycle of deviance in the family and family firm domains
14 Crawford & Naar (2017)	United States	Family-firm	NA	Quantitative: 120 B&B owners	Withdrawal behaviors	Multilevel: individual, firm	Higher WLB correlates with lower exit intentions
15 Danes (1998)	United States	Family-firm	Role	Quantitative: 513 farm women	Roles	Individual	The study explores different factors that influence how farm women manage and balance their multiple roles. Role involvement, self-esteem and locus of control predicted their satisfaction with living
16 Danes (2006)	United States	Family-firm	FIRO model, SFBM	Quantitative: non-FBs 187 couples	Gender	Couples	This article explores tension between couples based on 187 business-owning wives and husbands
17 Danes & Morgan (2004)	United States	Family-firm	EFT	Quantitative: non-FBs, 187 couples	Gender, roles	Couples	This article proposes family FIRO model as an assessment tool
18 Danes & Olson (2003)	United States	Family-firm	FIRO model	Quantitative: 391 FB couples	Gender	Couples	Business-owning husbands and wives reported that conflicts related to WFB and unfair distribution of resources between family and business systems create the greatest tensions
19 Danes et al. (1999)	United States	Family-firm	FIRO model	Quantitative: 414 FBs	Conflict	Multilevel: family, firm	More tensions when wife works in the FB and when having more than one decision maker in the business
20 Danes et al. (2008)	United States	Ownership-family-firm	SFB model	Quantitative: 572 FBs	Family-firm interface	Firm	A family health assessment (APGAR) was the highest predictor of firm tensions for both household and firm managers
21 Davis & Tagliuri (1989)	United States	Family-firm	Life cycle	Quantitative: 89 pairs	Conflict	Multilevel: individual, family	Interface and business management significantly explained business revenue and congruity between business and family
22 Day (2013)	United States	Family-firm	Dialectical relationship	Qualitative: 12 FB daughters	Gender	Individual	Work relationship quality varies over the surface of the life stage matrix, and the life stage intersect of father and son accounts for some of the variation in quality
23 C. A. Dumas (1989)	United States	Family-firm	Systems	Qualitative: 40 FB family members	Gender	Individual	FB culture provides flexible policies for family emergencies, but is less accommodating for FB daughters who are mothers, who experienced relational tensions regarding motherhood
24 C. A. Dumas (1990)	United States	Family-firm	Identity, self-psychology model	Conceptual	NA	Conceptual	Majority of fathers and daughters expressed strong conflict in managing these roles, daughters experienced difficulties in establishing their own sense of identity
25 Fitzgerald et al. (2001)	United States	Family-firm	Role conflict	Quantitative: 673 FB owners	Roles, adjustment	Individual	This article explores the relationship between CEO-father and successor-daughter in the development of daughter's personality

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Table 1. (continued)

	Authors (year)	Geographic context	Firm/family/ownership	Theory	Method	Key topics	Level of analysis	Key findings
26	Foley & Powell (1997)	NA	Family-firm	Spillover, equity	Conceptual	NA	Conceptual	Suggested a model of WFC for business/marriage partners
27	Gudmunson et al. (2009)	United States	Ownership-family-firm	Hobfoll's COR	Quantitative: 109 couples	Gender	Couples	This article investigates the role of emotional spousal support on owner's perceived WFB when they launch an FB
28	Halbesleben & Wheeler (2007)	NA	Family-firm	P-E fit	Conceptual	Roles	Conceptual	This article draws from a demand-resource perspective to highlight the costs and benefits of working with family
29	Houshmand et al. (2017)	Canada	Family-firm	Ecological theory of human development	Quantitative: about 500,000 people	Generational effects	Multilevel: parents and children	Adolescents who work in their FBs on a year-round basis report a better relationship with their parents and better psychological well-being than their non-FB working counterparts
30	Haynes et al. (1999)	United States	Family-firm	NA	Quantitative: 103 FBs	Roles	Multilevel: individual, family, firm	Household managers who work in the FB less likely to outsource child care than families where members also work outside the FB
31	Helmie et al. (2014)	United States	Family-firm	Boundary theory, role theory	Quantitative: 210 copreneurs	Roles	Individual	WLC negatively related to perceptions of WLB. Job involvement, flexibility at work, and permeability of communication significantly relate to perceptions of WLC. Spousal support had a direct influence on perceptions of WLB
32	Huang et al. (2015)	United States	Ownership-firm	NA	Quantitative: 102,888 employees from 993 public firms	Ownership	Individual	Employees who work for FBs with active founders are more satisfied with their WLB. This effect is even more pronounced if the founder is also the CEO. In contrast, employee satisfaction in descendant FBs does not differ from non-FBs
33	Karataş-Özkan et al. (2011)	Turkey	Family-firm	NA	Qualitative: 8 FB women	Gender	Individual	62.5% of women suffer from work-home role conflict; 87.5% experience challenges of WFB such as clashing commitments and/or separating work and personal life
34	Karofsky et al. (2001)	United States	Family-firm	NA	Quantitative: 156 family owners	Work characteristics	Individual	Frustration and after-hours work were significant predictors of anxiety, and a measure of accomplishment was a highly significant predictor of positive outlook toward the future
35	Khanin et al. (2012)	United States	Family-firm	Embeddedness institutional overlap	Quantitative: 111 employees	Withdrawal behaviors	Individual	FB embeddedness and work centrality magnify family employees' job satisfaction; job satisfaction is negatively related to family employees' turnover intentions
36	Kwan, Lau, & Au (2012)	Hong Kong (Chinese)	Ownership-family	Hobfoll's COR; utilitarianism; boundary theory	Quantitative: 158 business owners	Owners who work with family vs. those who do not	Individual	In non-FBs, the relationship between owners' WFC and job satisfaction is negative, relationship between their WFC and social network is positive. In FBs, owners' WFC is not related to job satisfaction and social networks suggesting that FBs buffer WFC effects

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Table 1. (continued)

Authors (year)	Geographic context	Firm/family/ ownership	Theory	Method	Key topics	Level of analysis	Key findings
37 J. Lee (2006)	Singapore-Chinese	Family-firm	Olson's circumplex model	Quantitative: 88 G2 Singapore—Chinese	Withdrawal behaviors	Multilevel: individual, family	Family cohesion is not significantly related to work and nonwork outcomes; family adaptability is a positive predictor of organizational commitment, work and life satisfaction; organizational commitment is negatively related to propensity to leave
38 M.-S. Lee & Rogoff (1996)	United States	Family-firm	Family business system	Quantitative: 231 FB owners	FBs with or without family involved	Multilevel: firm, family, and individual	No difference in firm goals between FBs and non-FBs; owners of firms with family participation experience more WFC, but the conflict is managed and does not interfere with firm objectives; owners see the involvement of family as positive
39 Y. G. Lee et al. (2006)	United States	Family-firm	SFBM	Quantitative: non-FBs, 545 women	Gender roles	Multilevel: individual, family	Successfully achieving family goals, having lower education, less competition between family and business resources, no family cash flow problems, and higher management activity contributed to positive perceived well-being
40 Y. G. Lee et al. (2017)	United States	Ownership-firm—family	SFBM	Quantitative: 593 minority FB owners	Gender roles	Multilevel: individual, firm	Women owners are more likely to reallocate family resources to help with firm tasks and to intertwine both tasks than are men owners
41 Li & Piezunka (2019)	China	Family-firm	Role, boundary, network	Qualitative: 7 FBs	Boundary, roles, succession	Multilevel: individual, firm, family	FB actors in multiplex relationships (i.e., members related to each other through multiple ties) can carry out single-domain role transitions while avoiding disruptions to the family and firm by relying on the legislation of a third actor
42 Litz (2008)	NA	Family-firm	Möbius Strip	Conceptual	Interface	NA	Conceptualizing the family business and business family as a Möbius strip
43 Mari et al. (2016)	Italy	Family-firm	Family embeddedness	Quantitative: 307 women firm owners	Conflict	Multilevel: individual, firm	Help from the partner negatively affects firms' performance while a help from household workers and from the public/private services positively affects performance
44 Marshack (1993)	NA	Review	NA	Review	NA	Couples	A literature review on copreneurial couples
45 Marshack (1994)	United States	Family-firm	Boundary, systems theory	Quantitative: 30 copreneurs and 30 dual earners	Sex role orientation	Individual	Copreneurs rely on gender differences to construct boundaries between husband and wife; dual-career couples rely on changes in self-concept to construct boundaries between home and work
46 Memili et al. (2013)	Germany	Ownership-family	Ownership attachment and commitment	Quantitative: 326 FBs	Ownership attachment	Multilevel: individual and family	Ownership attachment is positively affected by both family harmony and WFC; WFC is influenced by relationship conflict. WFC affects ownership attachment
47 Memili et al. (2015)	Conceptual	Family-firm	Stewardship theory	Conceptual	Roles	Conceptual	There is an inverted U-shaped relationship between family SMEs' proportional representation and economic growth
48 Miller et al. (1999)	United States	Family-firm	Systems theory	Quantitative: non-FBs, 673 households	Roles	Individual	An individual performing dual roles is more likely than two separate managers to make adjustments by bringing household responsibilities to the firm and the firm responsibilities home

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Table I. (continued)

	Authors (year)	Geographic context	Firm/family/ ownership	Theory	Method	Key topics	Level of analysis	Key findings
49	Moshavi & Koch (2005)	United States	Firm	Resource dependency, institutional	Quantitative: 59 FBs 78 non-FBs	Work characteristics	Firm	When FBs adopt work-family practices, they favor flexible scheduling arrangements for nonfamily employees to reduce WFC. Work-family practices are used less in FBs than in non-FBs In nonsurviving firms, managers reported a greater tendency to bring work home. Surviving firms were more likely to hire help
50	Niehm et al. (2009)	United States	Family-firm	Field theory	Quantitative: 421 FBs	Adjustment strategies	Individual	This article suggests three enterprise-level strategies and three task-level practices that strengthen family member satisfaction and family system effectiveness, showing that firm level measures can positively influence family well-being
51	Nordstrom & Jennings (2018)	Canada	Family-firm	Grounded theory	Case study	Interface	Multilevel: individual and family	Reducing family tension, living in a two- or three-generation family, reallocating time from sleep to the business and hiring temporary help during hectic periods increased firm revenue
52	Olson et al. (2003)	United States	Family-firm	SFB model	Quantitative: 673 FBs	Strategies for success	Multilevel: family and firm	Combination of calculative and affective commitment was found when the women successor chose a career in the FB to be able to combine career and child care responsibilities
53	Otten-Pappas (2013)	Germany	Family-firm	Successor commitment model	Qualitative: women in 6 FBs	Gender	Individual	Work-family issues in family business: family influence permeates the organization, including within employee, management, and ownership realms
54	Pieper et al. (2016)	Conceptual	Ownership-family-firm	NA	Conceptual	Conflict, roles	Conceptual	SME founders who owned FBs experienced higher levels of family-to-business support than those who owned non-FBs
55	Powell & Eddleston (2017)	United States	Ownership-family-firm	Social support, family embedded	Quantitative: 211 SME owners	Family-to-firm support	Multilevel: individual and firm	Examination of the intersection of family, FB, and entrepreneurship fields; research recommendations
56	Randerson et al. (2015)	NA	Ownership-family-firm	NA	Research note	NA	Research note	No significant difference in the mean use of the business environment to achieve family objectives due to gender; number of employees, or length of time in business
57	Riordan & Riordan (1993)	United States	Family-firm	Field theory	Quantitative: 108 small FB owners	Interface	Individual	Summary of 25 years of organization science research on work-family, highlighting implications for building family capital in FB, and for future research
58	Rothausen (2009)	Conceptual	Family-firm	NA	Conceptual	Role	Review	Women do the most restructuring of work time and space and generate less income, men have less WFC, are more likely to have an exclusive work space and have help with the work
59	Rowe & Bentley (1992)	United States	Family-firm	Family-work interface	Quantitative: 899 FBs	Gender	Individual	WFB has a positive impact on job satisfaction and employees' commitment. Medium-sized firms present lower levels of WFB
60	Ruizalba et al. (2016)	Andalusia (Spain)	Firm	NA	Quantitative: 219 FBs	Work characteristics	Individual	For copreneurs, the disadvantages of working together are outweighed by opportunities for maximum autonomy and personal gains. Copreneurship promotes a "family-friendly" work environment for employees
61	Smith (2000)	Australia	Family-firm	NA	Qualitative: 20 copreneurs	NA	Individual	

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Table I. (continued)

Authors (year)	Geographic context	Firm/family/ownership	Theory	Method	Key topics	Level of analysis	Key findings
62 Smyrnios et al. (2003)	United States and Australia	Family-firm	Family-firm interface, role conflict	Quantitative: 1,320 Australian, 156 U.S. FBs	Roles	Multilevel: individual, family	Work-interpersonal conflict is associated significantly and negatively with family cohesion, which is related negatively to owners' reports of anxiety
63 Song (1995)	Britain; Chinese women	Family-firm	Gender roles	Qualitative: 25 Chinese FBs	Gender	Individual	Family and work lives are very intertwined; children experience tension and conflict working with family members especially when there is financial pressure for survival
64 Stafford & Tews (2009)	Conceptual	Family-firm	Family studies	Conceptual, commentary	Roles	Conceptual	Work-family scholars have the potential to integrate research in economics, sociology, and psychology and so help form interdisciplinary teams to conduct research on family businesses. A fit model is suggested.
65 Stoner et al. (1990)	United States	Family-firm	NA	Quantitative: 92 women small firm owners	Gender	Individual	Women owners experience significant WFC; younger, recently married women with lower levels of life satisfaction and marital happiness experience higher levels of WFC
66 Sundaramurthy & Kreiner (2008)	Conceptual	Family-firm	Boundary, systems theory	Conceptual	Boundaries, permeability	Conceptual	Boundary theory can be a useful perspective to understand the dynamics of FBs
67 Van Auken & Werbel (2006)	Conceptual	Family-firm	Person-role conflict; decision making	Conceptual	Roles, gender	Conceptual	The survival of a family business is partially dependent on spousal commitment.
68 Venter et al. (2009)	South Africa	Family-firm	Relational-based factors	Quantitative: 380 FB spouses	FB and non-FB	Couples	Copreneurs' balance between home and work has an impact on the successful functioning of copreneurial firms; WFB positively related to financial performance and perceived success
69 Vera & Dean (2005)	United States	Family-firm	Research on women in FBs	Qualitative: 10 interviews	Gender	Individual	Balancing time between work and personal life is the principal challenge facing daughters who head up FBs
70 Werbel & Danes (2010)	United States	Family-firm	Social capital, SFBM	Quantitative: 110 new SMEs	Roles	Couples	When a spouse experiences WFC, she or he is likely to be a resource constraint that creates physiological strain for the firm owner
71 Wu et al. (2010)	Taiwan	Family-firm	Family system theory	Quantitative: 202 copreneur women	Gender	Individual	Copreneur family boundaries (WIF) are more permeable than work domains (FIW); work impacts family more than family impacts work; WFC is negatively related to perceived business success and marriage satisfaction
72 Zody et al. (2006)	United States	Family-firm	Boundary (structural family therapy)	Quantitative: 187 FBs	Roles	Multilevel: individual, family, firm	Negative relationship between home-to-work spillover and family functioning (mediated by family satisfaction); disengagement was more important than enmeshment, in a negative way, for system functioning

Note. FB = family business; P-E = person-environment fit; WFC = work-family conflict; WFB = work-family balance; WLB = work-life balance; WLC = work-life conflict; WIF = work influences family; FIW = family influences work; FRO = fundamental interpersonal relationship orientation; SFBM = sustainable family business model; EFT = emotionally focused therapy; COR = conservation of resources; SME = small medium enterprise.

implicitly assume that the WFI in FBs differs too profoundly from that prevalent in other types of firms to allow for any mutual cross-fertilization between these lines of research.

A related problem stems from taking terms such as WFB as self-evident (Wayne et al., 2017) and from the implicit assumption that two distinct things are the same because they bear the same name. Such assumptions are common with emerging constructs, but they prevent theory and research from advancing (Suddaby, 2010). Within the FB WFI terminology, FB scholars define terms such as WFC, WFB, *conflict*, *balance*, and *enrichment* quite broadly (e.g., Danes, 2006; Danes et al., 1999). For instance, M.-S. Lee and Rogoff (1996) define WFC as conflicts between family members rather than as an individual's interrole conflict between opposing demands; one of their measures of WFC is "I have a lot of conflict between my business and my family members" (p. 432). In turn, Karataş-Özkan et al.'s (2011) definition of WFC includes not only interrole conflict between family and work roles but also how FBs infringe on individual personal space, where loyalty is demanded first and foremost to the firm. Other FB adaptations of the WFC definitions deviate from the standard notion of conflicting role pressures emanating from the two spheres of life and look at other issues. To illustrate, Danes and Morgan (2004) state that

role conflict focuses on degrees of confusion about roles that may be related to task performance or decision-making authority. The role confusion can arise when family members work together or when the insider/outsider phenomenon arises in the situation in which the family business employs others who are not part of the family. (p. 245)

This definition moves from conflicting pressures at the individual level to confusion at a group level. Danes et al. (1999), for their part, use a much wider definition, noting that "work/family conflicts are issues that surface at the intersection of the family and the business system" (p. 243). This definition is broad enough to include all types of conflicts, at all levels of analysis.

Beyond the different meaning of the same terms in the FB WFI versus general WFI literature, we note that even the definition of the WFI differs across these study contexts, which makes synthesizing the WFI findings in the FB context more challenging. Overall, we found that scholars differ across studies in defining the WFI in various ways, including (1) the level of analysis (e.g., the system level vs. the individual level [e.g., Danes &

Olson, 2003] or the group level [e.g., J. Lee, 2006]); (2) whether the business or family is treated as more central (e.g., Venter et al., 2009); (3) whether conflict is treated as inherent to the combination of family and business in FBs (e.g., Cole, 2000); (4) whether the focus of the definition is role pressures or other pressures such as conflicting messages from family members (Cole, 1997); and (5) whether other constructs are included, such as infringement of the business into family life or loyalty to the firm (Karataş-Özkan et al., 2011).

This ambiguity surrounding the definition and operationalization of the WFI constructs such as WFB and WFC in the FB scholarship challenges the field to allow comparison both within the FB WFI studies and with the wider WFI literature and contributes to fragmentation in the field. We suggest that scholars of FBs should adopt Powell et al.'s (2018) definition of the WFI, commonly used in the broader WFI literature: the effect on individuals of "interdependencies between work and family domains" (p. 99). This definition is widely accepted, and it is simple and straightforward enough to allow for isolating the WFI phenomenon within the realm of FBs while still permitting comparison with the wider WFI literature.

Theoretical Lenses

In the wider literature, due to the intertwined nature of work and family in FBs, the implicit assumption held by scholars is that FBs are too complicated to be included in the theoretical development of the WFI research (Edwards & Rothbard, 2000). This has led to two separate streams of research. We review the theoretical lenses used in FB WFI research and compare them with some of the main theoretical lenses used in the wider WFI literature to identify whether important and promising theoretical lenses from the wider literature have been underutilized or ignored in the FB WFI context. This brings fresh perspectives to the field and enables us to identify important future research opportunities.

The 72 articles that we reviewed draw on more than 30 different theories (see Table 1). Many of the studies utilize multiple theories within one article, often from divergent disciplines, all suggesting further fragmentation within the literature. These include theories rooted in FB studies, such as SFBM and FIRO (e.g., Amarapurkar & Danes, 2005; Danes, 2006); family science (e.g., emotionally focused therapy, circumplex theory; Danes & Morgan, 2004; J. Lee, 2006); general

management (e.g., stewardship theory, boundary theory; Cooper et al., 2013; Memili et al., 2015); organizational behavior (e.g., person–environment fit; Halbesleben & Wheeler, 2007); and psychology (e.g., role theory; Bjursell & Bäckvall, 2011; Helmle et al., 2014). In borrowing theoretical frameworks from mainstream WFI research, scholars describe the juxtaposition of multiple life roles in terms of WFC, balance, and spillover, and highlight the challenges and benefits of role multiplexity (Li & Piezunka, 2019). They inquire into strategies used by individuals and organizations to better control their WFI, manage work and family lives, and strive to identify elements critical to successfully integrating work and family roles. This integration is important since WFC models rest on the basis that individuals have limited resources, such as time and energy, with which to fulfil different roles (ten Brummelhuis & Bakker, 2012). Therefore, demands in one domain make it difficult to meet demands in the other domain, creating WFC and strain (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985).

Role theory is the most common theory used in these studies. Authors draw on role theory to explain and explore concepts such as conflict (Fitzgerald et al., 2001), tensions (Carr & Hmieleski, 2015), transitions (Li & Piezunka, 2019), satisfaction (Danes, 1998), and expectations within and between work and family roles (Boles, 1996). Several insightful studies by Danes and colleagues rely on the promising concept of resource exchange (Danes, 2006; Danes et al., 2008; Danes & Morgan, 2004; Olson et al., 2003). This lens explores how resources are exchanged between the family and business, thereby increasing our understanding of the distribution and transfer of resources across work and family boundaries. Danes and her colleagues give equal recognition to family and business systems and to the interplay between them in achieving mutual sustainability (Danes et al., 2008). Understanding how resources move between the family and business systems can help both scholars and FBs seeking to achieve a better WFI balance. For example, using the SFBM, Danes et al. (2008) consider how an approach aimed at simultaneously managing family and business system resources can help meet the overlapping needs of both domains and improve business outcomes. The main takeaway from the SFBM studies is that the interface management of family and business explained significant proportions of the variance in both measures of firm success (e.g., gross revenue) and family success (e.g., satisfaction with congruity between family and business systems).

The authors develop a complex model with more than a dozen correlated variables, tested primarily in small and farming FBs, and call for further studies to understand causal relationships in other FB contexts.

The WFI research in the wider literature historically focused on roles and, specifically, on the conflict between work and family roles—that is, WFC (Allen, 2012). In recent years, the field has moved beyond WFC to also encompass positive aspects of engagement in multiple roles, using terms such as *WFE* (e.g., Greenhaus & Powell, 2006), *positive spillover* (e.g., Grzywacz & Marks, 2000), *facilitation* (e.g., Wayne et al., 2007), and *enhancement* (e.g., Graves et al., 2007). Moreover, the notion of WFB has also gained increasing attention (e.g., Wayne et al., 2017). Studies examine this relationship in both directions, examining the influence of work on the family as well as the influence of the family on work. Other important theories that have been fundamental for theory development are boundary theory and the WH-R model. These theories, as we explain shortly, are relevant to FB research, and we are surprised to see that FB WFI research has largely ignored them.

Boundary theory is concerned with different boundaries individuals have in various domains. As they cross work and home boundaries, individuals frequently transition in and out of various roles in micro-role transitions (Ashforth et al., 2000). Two of the numerous factors that affect these micro-role transitions are the flexibility of spatial and temporal boundaries and permeability—the “degree to which a role allows one to be physically located in the role’s domain but psychologically and/or behaviorally involved in another role” (Ashforth et al., 2000, p. 474). Boundary management processes may affect both positive and negative experiences of the WFI. For instance, a sense of boundary control at the personal level—a perception that one can control the timing, frequency, and direction of mental, physical, and temporal transitions between domains—has been linked to lower psychological distress and reduced WFC (Kossek et al., 2012). Boundary theory is relevant to FBs as role boundaries are by nature often both flexible and permeable. Frequent micro transitions may enhance confusion and anxiety about which role identity is or should be most salient or could lead to positive outcomes because of higher control. When work and family are highly integrated—that is, when flows between the two systems are maximized—the boundaries between the two domains can become blurred, leading to positive and negative outcomes. For

instance, the ability to make extended personal calls at work would allow an employee to manage the demands coming from the home domain while still attending to work. Yet, at the same time, transitioning to the family role at work might also be disruptive if it happens in the middle of a productive time slot and distracts the employee from giving the full attention to the work responsibilities.

The second theory prevalent in the wider WFI literature is WH-R model, which posits that exchanges of resources across the home and work domains shape how individuals experience WFI (ten Brummelhuis & Bakker, 2012). At an individual level, the gain and loss of resources across home and work lead to potential WFE or WFC. WH-R draws on conservation of resources theory, which suggests that individuals are motivated to protect their current resources (conservation) and build up new resources (acquisition), and they are threatened by the potential or actual loss of these valued resources (Hobfoll, 1989). The value of resources for an individual is tied to his or her personal experiences and situation (Halbesleben et al., 2014). For example, spending time with one's family may be viewed as a valuable resource by one person, while for another, it may be less valued or may even be perceived as a threat to other resources. The gain of resources in the home or work domain as the result of influence of another domain is associated with individuals' experience of WFE, whereas the loss of resources implies WFC. The characteristics of work and home domains also provide or deplete resources and hence influence the WFI process. For example, Lapiere et al. (2018) show that support from the boss and coworkers can supply resources in a way that is positively associated with WFE. Again, such findings raise questions in the context of FBs, where the boss and coworkers may be family members. Boundary theory and the WH-R model have much to offer to extend our understanding of WFI in FBs. We draw from the WH-R model to organize and synthesize our literature review. Similarly, in the discussion section, we draw from these theories to identify the gaps in the literature and, subsequently, suggest future research.

Study Contexts

Another implicit assumption in the field appears to be that the WFI looks and behaves similarly in different kinds of FBs. To examine this assumption more closely,

we review the studies' empirical and geographic contexts. In Table 1, we show both the research methods used (i.e., the empirical context) and the geographical setting in which the data reside. In terms of methods, a majority of the articles reviewed are quantitative (44 articles, or 61%). There are 13 qualitative articles and, interestingly, an equal number (13) of conceptual articles (both 18%). The last two articles are review articles (3%). The studies are predominantly situated in the United States (41 articles, or 57%, e.g., T. Barnett et al., 2009; Carr & Hmieleski, 2015). The U.S. context has been characterized by the wider WFI literature as more extreme in segmenting between the family and work domains compared with the rest of the world (T. L. Dumas & Sanchez-Burks, 2015). Other geographic settings include Asia (Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore, China; e.g., Chen et al., 2018), Europe (Germany, Britain, Italy, Sweden, Turkey; e.g., Bjursell & Bäckvall, 2011), Canada (e.g., Houshmand et al., 2017), Australia (e.g., Smith, 2000), and South Africa (e.g., Venter et al., 2009). Only one article conducts a comparison across cultures—the United States and Australia (Smyrnios et al., 2003). These results suggest a U.S.-centric topography with next to no cross-cultural assessment or exploration. There appears to be an underlying implicit assumption that the WFI is consistent in different contexts such as across cultures and geographies. However, research in the wider WFI literatures shows that culture and geography can offer unique findings (e.g., Allen et al., 2015).

Factors Influencing the WFI in FBs

To examine the factors influencing the WFI in FBs, we turn our attention to the wider literature. Our preferred definition of the WFI highlights the interdependencies between the family and work domains and how individuals perceive this interface (Powell et al., 2018). ten Brummelhuis and Bakker (2012) argue more specifically that it is the exchange of resources across the work and family domains that shapes individuals' experience of the WFI, leading potentially to WFC or WFE. Furthermore, segmentation and integration of roles across family and business boundaries are influenced by individual as well as by contextual factors (Sundaramurthy & Kreiner, 2008). Consequently, we structure our review of the factors that influence the WFI within FBs based on three domains: individual,

family, and work. While most of the studies we identified can be categorized as dealing with one of the three domains, there are some exceptions. For example, Marshack (1994) looks at both the family and work domains.

Individual Domain

Personal attributes not only influence the factors that promote or constrain resource conservation or acquisition but also provide a sense of control over boundaries between work and family in FBs. Attributes examined in the literature include personal abilities, personality traits, values, and sociodemographic factors such as gender and well-being (e.g., Danes, 1998; Foley & Powell, 1997). For example, Foley and Powell (1997) theorize how individual partner inputs such as having dissimilar attitudes and uncomplimentary skills and abilities can lead to higher WFC among married couples working together. The authors propose that experienced WFC, in turn, affects the quality of the relationship in the marriage and, consequently, affects the success of the business. Danes (1998) examines three individual attributes of 513 farm women—namely, age, self-esteem, and locus of control. She finds that younger women perceived being controlled more by external forces and had a higher discrepancy in their WFB. In turn, older farm women who experienced more internal control had higher self-esteem and were more satisfied with their level of living. Similarly, Karofsky et al. (2001) examine age, finding that older business owners experience less WFC.

Gender. The most common variable to emerge from our review is gender (e.g., Fitzgerald et al., 2001; Otten-Pappas, 2013; Randerson et al., 2015). Findings surrounding gender are consistent across researchers: Women in FBs often shoulder more home and family care responsibilities compared with men (Smith, 2000), women are more affected by tensions surrounding business issues and the negative impact of those tensions on both the family and the business (Danes & Olson, 2003), and women business owners are more likely than men business owners to reallocate resources from family to work to help the business (Y. G. Lee et al., 2017).

Many gender studies focus on the roles of wives versus husbands. For example, scholars have found that wives are more likely to experience greater tension over

competition for resources between the family and business domains in comparison to their husbands (Danes, 2006), wives are more likely to report reduced satisfaction with their spouse in the face of business tensions (Amarapurkar & Danes, 2005), and husbands and wives working together have differing priorities, with the former identifying business goals as their number one priority and the latter naming the family relationship (Danes, 2006). What is especially interesting across the studies is an implicit overarching theme that women have an integral (and potentially silent) role in resource exchange in the WFI—whether they constrain and compete for resources (e.g., tensions around resources such as child care, time, money, family expectations, and values can contribute negatively to an FB's stability and sustainability; Amarapurkar & Danes, 2005) or manage resources across domains (e.g., when women perceive more internal control, there are fewer relationship and business tensions, allowing for both human and financial resources to be focused on agreed-upon goals; Danes, 2006).

Generational gender issues may further complicate the WFI in FBs. Daughters experience greater role carryover than do sons, as they balance being both “Daddy’s girl” and a businesswoman, resulting in increased role ambiguity and role conflict (C. A. Dumas, 1989). FBs are also not necessarily accommodating regarding the child care needs of daughters who are involved in the business (Day, 2013). This lack of flexibility may derive from patriarchal assumptions and cultural norms, pressure from other family members, or even the daughters’ own passion for and identification with the business (Day, 2013). Such gender issues and their consequences for the WFI may therefore be more visible for scrutiny and study in a FB context.

Culture. Societal culture also influences how women experience the WFI. For instance, Wu et al. (2010) studied 202 Taiwanese FBs. They showed that women are more likely than men to feel caught between their parent/spouse and business roles and to feel imprisoned by the FB as opposed to enjoying its benefits. Karataş-Özkan et al. (2011) found that the family values dominant in Turkish culture contribute to the role conflict faced by women in FBs in Turkey, while Swedish scholars found that women’s maternal roles are taken for granted and women’s business roles are often seen as problematic (Bjursell & Bäckvall, 2011). Two recurring themes may be noted. First, there is a similarity across

cultures in that men's and women's roles in relation to WFI differ from each other. In FBs, women often have to manage multiple roles while living and working with their partners, a situation that can lead to greater pressure on the women partner. Second, gender roles and the entrenched behaviors and values that are considered to be appropriate for women and men differ across cultures. As such, strategies for coping with the WFI may differ for women compared with men family members working in an FB. While receiving help from their partners (e.g., their husband) can help women business owners manage their WFI more effectively (Mari et al., 2016), ownership may add unique challenges for women owners as compared with men.

Family Domain

The family context has an integral effect on the WFI among family members in FBs (Beach, 1993). Important characteristics include the quality of the relationship between family members, their commitment to the business, and financial issues, all of which can affect whether working with family members augments or constrains resources for the individual as well as the family as a whole (e.g., Danes & Morgan, 2004).

Spouses. Many of the studies to date explore the relationship between spouses who run a business together. For instance, drawing on Hobfoll's conservation of resources theory, Gudmunson et al. (2009) showed that spouses in FBs who communicate well with one another were better able to extend emotional support, with corresponding benefits for WFB. Danes and Morgan (2004) found that when family functionality is lower, wives who work with their husbands report more tension over business issues and that transfers of resources from family to business are associated with greater tension. When a spouse experiences WFC, he or she is likely to be a resource constraint for an FB start-up, because this spouse creates more physiological strain for the firm operator, an outcome that is exacerbated when spousal commitment to the new business is higher (Werbel & Danes, 2010). The spousal commitment to the business is also influenced by the extent to which the spouses experience person–role conflict (i.e., when demands of the business role are incompatible with the individual's personality or skills; Van Auken & Werbel, 2006). Reciprocal altruism among family members mitigates

some of the negative effects of individual interrole conflict on performance of the FB (Memili et al., 2015). In the same vein, spousal commitment and quality of the relationship play a key role in business performance. Given the link between the WFI and spousal outcomes, several studies find that a family's effective management of the WFI is related to the financial performance of the FB. For instance, Venter et al. (2009) find that the better copreneurs balance their commitments between work and family, the more likely the firm is to perform well financially.

Parents and Children. Another important factor in the family domain in relation to the WFI is the relationship between parents and children in FBs. Here, it is notable that unlike the general WFI literature, FB studies include family-level variables and implications for multiple generations. In this respect, as with spouses who work together, findings suggest that the parent–child relationship in FBs can have positive or negative outcomes on the FB. For instance, C. A. Dumas (1990) suggests that the relationship between a CEO father and his successor daughter can lead to the daughter's identity having insufficient structuring, rigid structuring, or balanced structuring. A daughter who has an identity with insufficient structuring is overly dependent on her father, resulting in avoiding responsibility in the FB and difficulty taking over the FB; a daughter who has developed an identity with her father that is rigidly structured is overly independent, resulting in power struggles and wanting to take over the business without showing empathy or care for her father; in turn, the midpoint or balanced structure represents a healthy identity where the daughter is confident, conflict is healthy, and she takes care of both the FB and her father. Working together with one's parents also affects nonwork outcomes for both younger and older children and influences the parent–child relationship. Drawing on ecological systems theory, Houshmand et al. (2017) find that adolescents who work in FBs have better psychological and family outcomes compared with their peers who work for non-FBs, including better relationships with their parents and higher psychological well-being. On the other hand, integrated work and family roles between parents and children and the permeability of boundaries between work and family domains may lead to deviant behaviors at both work and home. For example, if a family member joins the FB and there is role

conflict between the parent (CEO) and the adult child, or if there is role ambiguity (i.e., conflicting expectations between work and family roles), the adult child may experience negative emotional responses (e.g., anger, guilt, frustration) and exhibit deviant behavior (e.g., workplace aggression, low levels of effort), leading to damaging effects on both the FB and the family (Cooper et al., 2013). J. Lee (2006), looking more broadly at the effects of family relationships on children, found that family adaptability is related to job satisfaction for the second generation working in their FB. It is also noteworthy that spouses who work together in (and possibly own together) an FB differ with respect to managing household responsibilities from spouses in the general WFI who are just dual earners. For instance, household managers with an FB are less likely to outsource their child care than their counterparts who work outside the FB (Haynes et al., 1999).

Work Domain

Characteristics of the work domain also influence the WFI in ways that differ between FBs and non-FBs. Powell and Eddleston (2017) study family and nonfamily founders of small and medium enterprises. Their results show that founders of FBs experience higher levels of family-to-business support than founders of non-FBs. As a result, family involvement in the firm is indirectly related to improved firm outcomes through family-to-business support. These results suggest that the interaction between the family and business systems, and support as a family-level variable, can positively influence firm outcomes and increase founders' work satisfaction. Similarly, the findings of another study suggest that because of support from the family, the founders of FBs experience less tension at work stemming from WFC than do founders of non-FBs (Carr & Hmieleski, 2015). Moreover, positive WFI outcomes in FBs are not limited to family members. Nonfamily employees also report higher levels of work-family satisfaction compared with employees of other businesses, at least during the founder's generation (Huang et al., 2015).

While the above studies focus on the positive aspects, other studies have found that involvement of family members in the business is associated with greater business-family conflict for FB owners compared with owners of non-FBs (e.g., M.-S. Lee & Rogoff, 1996). For

instance, owners who are highly involved in their job spend more time dedicated to the firm at the expense of the family, resulting in increased WFC. Moreover, having less work flexibility leads to higher WFC (Helmle et al., 2014). Furthermore, family member conflict can increase WFC: a study of 326 FBs reveals that relationship conflict in the business domain—e.g., anger between family members over work issues—is positively correlated with WFC (Memili et al., 2013). In this regard, FB studies differ from the general WFI literature, where the family level of analysis regarding work influences is generally not examined or not considered relevant.

Family-Friendly Workplace Policies. A small body of work deals with an important aspect of the work context: family-friendly workplace policies such as flexible scheduling and help with child care. An assumption in the field is that FBs should have more family-friendly policies because the value of such policies is embedded in their family logic (Pieper et al., 2016). Moshavi and Koch (2005) found that while FBs do permit flexible scheduling, they are generally less likely than their non-FB counterparts to adopt family-friendly practices for employees who are not family members. Findings on family-friendly policies for family employees have been mixed. Some studies find that family members in FBs have more flexibility regarding child care (Avery et al., 2000; Haynes et al., 1999). However, Day (2013) observed that even though first-generation founders may create a family-friendly business culture, this does not necessarily extend to those FB-owning women who are mothers. Day's study focused its attention on women in the next generation and how they experience the overlap between family and business domains. While the FB created flexible policies for family emergencies, the same perspective was not extended to child care.

Home-Work Boundaries. In this vein, the permeability of home-work boundaries is the subject of research by Niehm et al. (2009). They found that during hectic and challenging times, boundary crossing is more problematic in one direction than in the other. Comparing FBs that failed with those that survived, they found that managers are more likely to bring work home in the former, whereas bringing family responsibilities to the business occurs in surviving and failing firms.

Lessons From the Review

The detailed review of 72 studies of WFI in FB contexts has revealed a number of research gaps in this area. First, the FB WFI discussion does not recognize the ownership system. Specifically, the influence of ownership on the WFI in FBs is an implicit assumption that is often taken for granted. Many studies refer to family members or owners without operationalizing ownership in any way. For example, Boles (1996) and Carr and Hmieleski (2015) both compared WFC among founders who worked with family members and those who did not. Founders who employed family members exhibited higher WFC (Boles, 1996) and greater tension from WFC (Carr & Hmieleski, 2015). However, both studies looked at *family* characteristics rather than *ownership* characteristics. When considering the exchanges of resources across family and work systems, which shape WFI in general, the ownership system in FBs is a unique feature. FB scholars acknowledge ownership as a third system or domain, with specific characteristics and evolution over time (Gersick et al., 1997). Gersick et al. (1997) draw a “critical distinction” between the ownership and management (work) systems, as some individuals are owners but not involved in the operation of the business, while others are managers but do not own shares (p. 5). As each system (family, work, and ownership) entails specific resources and demands, which change over time, an integrated understanding of the WFI in FBs has to take into account how it is affected by ownership. Categorizing the articles according to the three systems of firm, family, and ownership, we find that the majority of studies (85%—61 articles) focus on family and firm variables to examine WFB or WFC without referring specifically to ownership.

Second, we identify asymmetries within the literature. We find that most of these studies are concerned with negative aspects of the WFI in FBs, such as WFC (37% of the articles). This reflects an implicit assumption that business ownership is “primarily detrimental to the functioning of the family system and/or the well-being of individual family members” (Nordstrom & Jennings, 2018, p. 318). As a result, only 10 articles (14%) study positive aspects, or WFE, even though FBs are a prevalent business form and research suggests that FBs are a context that allows individuals to thrive as a result of their role multiplexity (Valcour, 2002).

Third, summing up the ecological system¹ (i.e., the effects of national culture and transitions and life cycle shifts), it appears that existing studies make an implicit

assumption of homogeneity across FBs. The majority of studies focus on a single context, mainly in the United States, and emphasize a specific family/firm life-cycle stage or point in time. In the following section, we discuss our findings, highlight the research gaps we identified, and delineate research questions for future scholars to explore.

Discussion and Opportunities for Future Research

How can we advance the WFI studies within the literature on FBs? The field is fragmented, with many implicit assumptions. It relies on many different theoretical lenses that make it more challenging for the FB literature to connect to broader theories such as boundary theory and the WH-R model and engage in knowledge exchange with the wider literature. By drawing from important theories in the wider WFI literature, we identify major gaps in FB studies, which form the building blocks for future research in this area. We begin our discussion by elaborating on the three major research gaps that we identified: (1) considering ownership at the WFI, (2) focusing on the positive outcomes of the WFI, and (3) embedding WFI in the ecological system. Specifically, we will discuss research opportunities for each of the three gaps on the individual, family, and work domains. In total, we propose 19 research questions along with potential theories to inspire future scholars.

Research Gap 1: Ownership

Ownership is a defining component of the FB phenomenon. As owners, family members control the resources that move in and out of the FB (Gersick et al., 1997). FB family members can take on a variety of roles on top of *work*, including current vs. future owners (e.g., owning firm shares) or governance (e.g., board membership) and are, therefore, likely to confront a wider set of conflicts than their non-FB counterparts (Pieper et al., 2016). Over two decades ago, Riordan and Riordan (1993) already regarded it as “critical” for ownership to be reflected in the theoretical framework used in the study of FB WFI (p. 66). Yet today, ownership is still largely missing from the WFI discourse in the FB literature.

Research Domain 1a: Ownership—The Individual Domain. Owning a firm, or being a member of the owning family, influences both resources and constraints in the context

of the WFI. In our review, many studies looked at WFC (37% of the whole sample). They emphasize the negative influence of the intertwined nature of the family and the business (e.g., Danes & Olson, 2003; Helmle et al., 2014). They implicitly assume that ownership is only a burden, with its multiple conflicting responsibilities and accompanying constraints on owners' time and attention. Yet the evidence from the general WFI literature is that holding multiple roles with conflicting responsibilities does not in itself result in negative outcomes (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006; ten Brummelhuis & Bakker, 2012). Instead, individuals in multiple roles have fewer mental and physical health problems than those who engage in fewer roles; multiple roles contribute to buffering, income, social support, success, an expanding frame of reference, and increased self-complexity (R. C. Barnett & Hyde, 2001).

Indeed, several studies in our review also point to benefits of ownership, sometimes contrary to their authors' expectations (e.g., Memili et al., 2013). While scholars typically assume a conflictual WFI and a negative influence of firm on family (Nordstrom & Jennings, 2018), FBs may actually buffer against the effects of WFC (Kwan et al., 2012). These findings support our call to consider ownership as an important prism through which to study the WFI issues in FBs. WH-R, which considers how individuals' resources and constraints influence their decision making, provides a useful framework for this purpose. Personal resources that have already been found to influence WFI in general include self-esteem, self-efficacy, and optimism (ten Brummelhuis & Bakker, 2012). Other management resources include social power, status, and the ability to participate in decision making (ten Brummelhuis & Bakker, 2012), all of which accrue to FB owners or members of the owning family, including successor generations (Halbesleben et al., 2014). Owners can use their power and position to divide their time and tasks between the family and the firm and plan activities more efficiently, abilities that have been found to influence the WFI in general (ten Brummelhuis & Bakker, 2012). Boundary control, whereby owners may have more control over boundaries, swiftly moving resources between systems, can become a resource for the whole family. However, these ownership advantages may be utilized differently across owners' gender (Danes, 2006) or the number of owners involved in the firm (Boles, 1996). Advantages therefore accrue to FB owners who can flexibly manage the needs of both systems, as the increased overlap between work and family allows for the transfer

of family tasks to the business, and vice versa (Niehm et al., 2009). Important questions that address this research gap by applying the WH-R model thus include *how ownership itself can be a source of resources (e.g., social power, autonomy), and influence other resources (e.g., self-esteem)* (Research Question 1 [RQ1]), and *how ownership resources change under different conditions (e.g., market conditions, internationalization) and owner types (e.g., copreneurs versus siblings) over time, gender, firm stage, family generation* (RQ2).

Boundary theory is also a relevant lens through which to study the WFI at the individual level of ownership. FB owners need to manage and control firm and family role boundaries through multiple layered ties—e.g., father–daughter and boss–employee. The consequent role multiplicity inherently leads to permeability in the boundaries between different roles. Family members in FBs manage the relationship between work and family in terms of a continuum between segmentation and integration of the two domains. Different locations along this continuum are associated with different costs and benefits (Ashforth et al., 2000). FBs offer a way of explaining how resource-enriching and -depleting processes can happen simultaneously in one particular context through permeable boundaries and boundary work. The rich context offered by FBs, which allows for existing theories of the WFI to be tested, extended, or altered, is also an area of potential interest to the WFI scholars in the wider literature (Pieper et al., 2016). As FB research suggests that during the first generation the systems of family and firm are primarily overlapped (Labaki et al., 2013), this implies that family members at this stage manage their WFI in an FB mainly characterized by permeable boundaries between family and work. Therefore, questions related to using boundary theory for Research Domain 1a include *whether first generation owners are better integrators than later generation, and if so, how and why* (RQ3) and *how preferences for segmenting vs. integrating work and family life change over an owner's life cycle stages* (RQ4).

Research Domain 1b: Ownership—The Family Domain. The relationship between FB ownership and the WFI can be explored from the family domain perspective. This can occur in two ways. First, owner families may have shared norms and expectations regarding the flow of resources between the family and firm systems, including across-system boundaries. For example, a family may have a shared norm that firm resources (e.g., cars) should not be used for family needs. Second, they

may have inputs in the firm domain and outputs in the family domain, such as buying a home for a family member because he or she worked hard in the FB. Contextual resources for owners may include norms and expectations at the societal, organizational, and familial levels, including broader work and career options for owners, as well as legacy and long-term planning for family members (Ladge & Little, 2019). Family-related norms, therefore, influence the WFI process. Future research on ownership at the family domain of WFI may draw on boundary theory to consider questions such as *whether there are family norms and expectations regarding segmenting/integrating preferences and how these differ across generations of owners* (RQ5). Additionally, owners working with family members, such as spouses, may have access to different types of resources. For instance, they might receive greater instrumental and emotional support, which positively influences FB founders' satisfaction and firm outcomes (Powell & Eddleston, 2017). The shared ownership arrangement of spouses (i.e., copreneurs) also in turn shapes the process of resource transfer across boundaries, for example, whether a couple moves more resources across firm and family boundaries when both share ownership equally, versus when only one of them is an owner, leading to *how styles of resource allocation differ between different types of owners (e.g., same person managing both systems, copreneurs, equal shares)* (RQ6).

Research Domain 1c: Ownership—The Work Domain. The influence of FB ownership on the WFI is also evident from the perspective of the work domain. For instance, nonfamily employees in FBs experience higher levels of satisfaction with their WFI during the founder's generation compared with employees in later generation FBs and non-FBs (Huang et al., 2015). This finding that employees' WFI differs between first and later generations of family ownership directly ties ownership with work domain influences on the WFI, which go beyond the owning family itself (Huang et al., 2015). To date, few studies have explored family-friendly human resource (HR) policies in FBs. Future scholars are encouraged to research HR policies in FBs and their role between various ownership structures (e.g., generations, number of owners) at the firm level of WFI for nonfamily employees. Family-friendly HR policies may be considered a unique resource at the firm level, as part of "familiness" (Habbershon & Williams, 1999), with an

influence on the employees' WFI. While the WH-R model is a suitable theory in discussing the transfer of individual resources across boundaries, we draw from the resource-based view (RBV; Barney, 1991) to discuss resource transfer at the firm level. Drawing on RBV, scholars could gain further insights by exploring *contextual norms and expectations regarding different ownership combinations (e.g., copreneurs, dual-role, different generations) and their influence on family-friendly policies in the firm* (RQ7).

Research Gap 2: Asymmetry

In our review, we find that the FB WFI literature has an asymmetric focus. Most of the identified studies investigated negative aspects of the WFI, such as WFC, and only a handful of articles studied positive aspects. Theories used to study the WFI in FBs largely focus on the negative aspects of family members having multiple roles. Very little work offers a theoretical foundation for how and when family members can actually benefit from holding overlapping roles in the business and family settings, and the potentially positive consequences for both domains. Moreover, of those articles examining a positive influence, most look at the effect of the family on the firm. Very few consider the opposite direction—the positive effect of the business on the family (see Nordstrom & Jennings, 2018, for an exception). Early FB scholars who studied the WFI note that this focus on the business side, while ignoring family owners' ability to allocate resources in noneconomic ways to fulfill personal and family goals, ignores reality (Riordan & Riordan, 1993).

Research Domain 2a: Asymmetry—The Individual Domain. A few studies in our review that report positive findings point to potential unique resources and outcomes accessible to owners and their individual family members. For example, Beehr et al. (1997) found, in the opposite direction from their hypotheses, that family members were actually better off than the nonfamily comparison groups, being more satisfied with their careers. Looking at positive influences of WFI, researchers in the wider WFI literature have begun to simultaneously assess interference and enhancement, but there remains a gap regarding our understanding of how the two processes combine to determine outcomes and their resulting effects on work performance (Graves et al., 2007). For example, Graves et al. (2007) were surprised to find,

contrary to their expectations, that commitment to family roles had positive effects on work performance, suggesting that family “role commitment confers benefits at work that are not captured by enhancement” (p. 52). FBs provide a rich setting where simultaneous interference and enhancement coexist, lending an opportunity for scholars to look at individual-level decision making and processes concerning WFI in a longitudinal manner. We therefore strive for a better understanding of the WFI individual-level decision making used by owners on a daily basis and how they differ from nonowners. Drawing on WH-R, scholars can explore *whether the WFI of some ownership types (e.g., copreneurs) has a more positive influence (e.g., on satisfaction) compared with owners such as parent–child, siblings, or cousins* (RQ8). Regarding the simultaneous existence of interference and enhancement processes, it could be argued that better business results and a larger number of family members involved in the firm could enhance the WFI for an owner, leading to questions such as *how do enhancing and interfering processes interplay on an individual level, and what are their causal antecedents in the family and/or the firm* (RQ9).

Research Domain 2b: Asymmetry—The Family Domain. Family members’ involvement in the FB can result in positive spillover in the family domain. For example, next generation adolescents with year-round involvement in their family’s business have better relationships with their parents compared with their peers working in non-FBs (Houshmand et al., 2017). These findings point to potential unique resources flowing from the firm to the family, as shared work experience can strengthen family-level variables and family system effectiveness. Nordstrom and Jennings (2018) describe three specific strategies employed by FBs with their members of the next generation: involving (expecting every child to work in some capacity in the FB), covering (developing family members into “jacks-of-all-trades” so that they can cover the duties of others when needed), and tolerating (considerable tolerance and even expectance of transgressions and mistakes within the FB). All three strategies strengthen family member satisfaction and family system well-being (Nordstrom & Jennings, 2018). Future research could shed light on the family-level mechanisms, resources, and characteristics that improve family members’ WFI, studying *why some families are better at using firm-level resources to benefit*

family members (RQ10), and *how family norms for using these resources transfer from generation to generation* (RQ11).

Research Domain 2c: Asymmetry—The Work Domain. Looking at possible symmetrical influences of the WFI at the work level, some industries may enhance the flow of resources between family and firm compared with others. For example, in the context of the hotel and hospitality industry, where it is possible for the owning family to actually physically live in the hotel and enjoy the same resources in both family and work domains, or an FB restaurant, where the family members can eat their meals at work and not at home. These examples describe families with less conflicting role demands, as some of the family demands (e.g., cleaning, cooking) are covered by the firm. How does the convenience of the work location (e.g., hotel) or product (e.g., restaurant/food) influence their owners’ WFI? Or looking at the common pattern of founding a start-up in a home garage or kitchen—some early FB stages may differ regarding the physical proximity of family and work domains compared with later stages, which may differently influence the WFI of owners. Exploring this interface more broadly, RBV would be a valuable lens for scholars to explore *how business characteristics (e.g., industry, products or location) affect norms in facilitating the use of work resources to benefit family members* (RQ12).

Research Gap 3: The Ecological System

The WH-R model posits that contextual characteristics at both work and home are resource providing, while others are resource depleting; individuals’ experience of the WFI depends on their access to and use of these resources. Contextual characteristics include macrolevel variables such as national culture or microlevel variables such as instrumental help from significant others (ten Brummelhuis & Bakker, 2012).

Numerous scholars in the mainstream literature have called for a deeper examination of how the WFI differs across cultures (e.g., Allen et al., 2015). As our review reveals, even the meaning of family varies according to national and cultural contexts (Wharton & Blair-Loy, 2006). Moreover, the cultural context includes macrolevel facilitators such as socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, and living in a developing economy, which all influence the WFI, thereby opening up a fruitful research

agenda for FB scholars. The ecological system includes not only culture but also transitions and shifts in one's life span (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). This may incorporate sociohistorical contexts that have far-reaching influences across generations. Even in the wider literature, life transitions and shifts in the WFI have generally been neglected, resulting in current calls for the development of theory that would take into account how temporal factors affect WFI experiences (Powell et al., 2019).

Research Domain 3a: Ecological System—The Individual Domain. A range of cultural factors shape individuals' WFI, including national policies (Budig et al., 2016), gender norms (Lyness & Judiesch, 2014), and work centrality (Lu et al., 2016). Subsidized public child care may enable couples to become dual earners, as well as becoming copreneurs. Also, in developed countries, the economic necessity for both partners to work may be lower (ten Brummelhuis & Bakker, 2012), potentially influencing whether a spouse joins the FB and how the workload is divided. Cultural values have also been shown to moderate the WFI, so that the same stressors (e.g., workload) have different influences on well-being (Spector et al., 2004). Cultural context may explain divergent findings between and across studies. For example, using an American sample, Danes and Morgan (2004) showed that wives who worked with their husbands in FBs reported increased WFC and perceived their joint workload as unfairly distributed. In turn, based on a sample of Chinese immigrants working in Britain, Song (1995) found that wives preferred working in FBs as it enabled them to spend more time with their family and oversee their children. These differences highlight the need for a better understanding of how culture and gender influence the individual family members' WFI in FBs. Drawing on cross-cultural theory (Hofstede, 1993), future scholars may seek to answer questions such as *how do cultural norms (e.g., regarding gender and equality) influence WFI for women FB members compared with men FB members* (RQ13).

Transitions and shifts in one's life cycle—e.g., the shift from short- to long-term calculations as one grows older, or the transition to ownership for the second generation—may also have various implications for individual family members. For FBs, sociohistorical contexts can also be especially influential, as FBs often have strong legacies that are passed through the generations. Jeffery Greenhaus advocates for this research direction when he suggests in an interview that there is a

real opportunity to study collaborative decision making between partners and family members around work–family issues learnt as children, and how these experiences later influence effective adult collaborations (Powell et al., 2018). For example, siblings' rivalry can teach their next generation negative lessons about how to collaborate with close family members, which may negatively influence their future patterns. Randerson et al. (2015) refer to the influence of time in their research note linking entrepreneurship and FBs, when they suggest studying how the WFI changes in nature between synergizing and conflictual over time. For instance, there is little causal understanding of how different antecedents give rise to enrichment or enhancement, on the one hand, and conflict or interference on the other (ten Brummelhuis & Bakker, 2012). Rather than focusing only on a static description of conflicting demands emanating from different systems (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985), scholars should strive to understand changing/evolving WFI processes over time. For example, when a firm is first founded, spouses and family members may understand the need for a work (vs. family) focus, where decisions are made to put the FB first. However, in later stages of the FB's life cycle, if the focus doesn't start to shift back to the family, increased conflict between family and work needs may result. Time may also play a role before and after a family member becomes an actual shareholder, as he or she may be willing to favor firm needs in the WFI calculations once becoming an owner. Applying the WH-R model, we suggest future researchers address questions such as *how do family owners' WFI preferences change over time? For example, are owners more willing to bear negative WFI outcomes in the short term for more positive WFI outcomes in the long term?* (RQ14), and *how does the WFI change for successors between the pre- and postsuccession periods, and before and after inheriting ownership shares?* (RQ15).

Research Domain 3b: Ecological System—The Family Domain. The parent–child relationship can be shaped by the ecological system, which in turn, can shape the WFI of family members. For example, role modeling of WFI to the next generation was noted by Beach (1993), who studied home-based FBs. In such situations, work habits were not learnt through lecturing but rather by raising awareness and involving children in the work domain. Examining how the WFI changes as family members go through different stages in life or between generations

complies with calls to explore and increase our understanding of the heterogeneity of FBs (Jaskiewicz & Dyer, 2017). To provide insights into whether families have patterns for managing the WFI across generations, future researchers could ask *how different types of business families based on the life stage in which they are in (e.g., young family, working together, empty nested) manage their WFI* (RQ16), or *how different cultural contexts influence the familial norms about their WFI management?* (RQ17).

Research Domain 3c: Ecological System—The Work Domain. Huang et al.'s (2015) finding that FB employees are more satisfied with their WFI is found in a North American context. As North America is the context with the highest segregation between the work and family domains (T. L. Dumas & Sanchez-Burks, 2015), looking at other cultures is needed. Huang et al. (2015) also found employees' satisfaction with the WFI to be influenced by the owners' generation. Specifically, employees reported higher satisfaction with their WFI during the first generation of an FB compared with non-FBs or scion FBs. These findings open the door to discussing how owners and FBs influence the WFI of nonfamily employees, how cultural norms may differently influence the WFI for FB employees around the world, and the influence of life stages and transitions. For example, the wider WFI literature has recognized how gender roles affect WFI differently across cultures: In low gender-egalitarian countries, women are perceived as having more difficulties than men in balancing family and work (Lyness & Judiesch, 2014). Similarly, the centrality of work depends on culture and gender since different cultures place varying levels of importance of work in men's or women's lives (Lu et al., 2016). For example, high- versus low-egalitarian cultures may explain having more or less copreneurs working together, leading to questions such as *how cultural norms at work (e.g., high egalitarian vs. low egalitarian) influence the resource allocation between family and work domains and shape the WFI of family member employees* (RQ18) and *non-family employees in FBs* (RQ19).

Conclusion

In this study, we ask how we can advance FB WFI research. Our literature review reveals a number of implicit assumptions, which leave research in this area underdeveloped. Indeed, scholars outside of FB work

under the assumption that the WFI in FBs is too complicated to study. Likewise, FB scholars take the interface between family and work for granted, as a definitional premise of the whole field, without teasing apart its components. Moreover, FB scholars implicitly assume that outcomes for family members WFI are likely to be negative and that the ownership system needs no description. Furthermore, most existing research on the WFI in FBs focuses on a few variables, such as gender or copreneurial relationships, and do so largely in the U.S. context. To deepen our comprehension of the WFI in FBs and in general, we call on scholars to push the boundaries of their theoretical thinking. We suggest that studying the WFI through boundary theory and theories of resource exchange such as WH-R and RBV would provide rich insights. In addition, we propose that issues surrounding ownership, the positive aspects of the FB WFI, the cultural context, and transitions and life cycle shifts offer exciting avenues for future research that will further the development of the field. We hope that the research agenda that we offer will fuel both the amount and quality of research on the WFI in FBs while contributing to and drawing from the wider WFI literature.

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ORCID iDs

Nava Michael-Tsabari  <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1242-9109>

Marjan Houshmand  <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8511-205X>

Note

1. Ecological systems theory posits that humans are influenced by five different types of environmental systems. For the purposes of the study, we focus on the macrosystem and the chronosystem. The macrosystem embodies an

individual's culture. It consists of an individual's (and their family's) socioeconomic status, their ethnicity, race, and living in a developed or third world country. The chronosystem includes an individual's transitions over his or her life cycle, including sociohistorical contexts such as the history of the family and the FB (see Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

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Author Biographies

Nava Michael-Tsabari is the founder and director of the Raya Strauss Center for Family Business Research at the Coller School of Management, the Tel Aviv University. She received her PhD from the Technion, Israel Institute of Technology. Her research focuses on emotions, organizational behavior, and the family in family firms. Her articles have been awarded the FFI 2012 Best Unpublished Paper and the 2014 Best Published in *Family Business Review*.

Marjan Houshmand is the Associate Faculty Director of the Family Business Center of Hawaii and an assistant professor of management at Shidler College of Business at the University of Hawaii. Her research has been published in leading journals such as *Family Business Review*, *Human Relations*, and *Research in the Sociology of Work*.

Vanessa M. Strike is the CIBC Professor in Applied Business Family Studies and the Director of the Business Families Centre at the Sauder School of Business, University of British Columbia. She received her PhD from the Ivey Business School, Western University. Her research focuses on governance, sensemaking, and advising in family firms. Her articles have been published, among others, in *Academy of Management Journal*, *Journal of Management Studies*, *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, and *Family Business Review*.

Dorit Efrat Treister is an assistant professor (lecturer) at the Guilford Glazer Faculty of Business and Management, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev. She received her PhD in Organizational Behavior at the Technion, Israel Institute of Technology, and continued as a postdoctoral fellow at the Sauder School of Business, University of British Columbia. Her articles have been published, among others, in the *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, and *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*.