

Family Business Models. The Family as Strategic Asset across different stages of business maturity in differing economics contexts- a comparative Investigation in Poland and Germany.

The project is concerned with the specific aspects involved in the functioning of family firms. Despite their prevalence among businesses in most economies, knowledge about them tends to be limited. Most clearly is this true in the area of family's strategic behaviors and influence on success (failure) of companies in the long term. The research findings produced so far are fragmentary in their nature failing to consider either economic or historical contexts. Hence, the aim of the research project is to develop a comprehensive theory about the family's influence on long-term sustainable success of family firms. Empirical research will involve analyzing the overall impact exerted by the family on family business models. To this end, we will use the method of multiple case studies.

The comparative case studies will, on the one hand, allow us to observe the family phenomenon, as an embedded part of the firm, in its important contexts while, on the other hand, they will enable us to draw conclusions based on the patterns, similarities and differences produced by them.

From each of the five dominant family business models identified by previous research we will select six cases varied in terms of industry and characteristics specific to a given case. This will result in about 30 case studies on either side (PL and GER).

The research findings will lead to the development of a model which will allow FB strategic behaviors to be reconstructed and their key determinants to be identified.