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### The practice-driven evolution of family business education

Pramodita Sharma <sup>a</sup> ... Matti Koiranen <sup>d</sup>

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#### Abstract

Starting from Calder's dissertation in the early fifties, key developments in family business education are presented in a 130-item chronology. The emergence of the field is tracked to the demand from practitioners rather than the pull of scholarly inquiry. Causal evolutionary drivers of variation, selective retention, and struggle for survival, provide a framework for understanding the past and current status of the knowledge base for family business and hinting at future development. The critical role of infrastructure “ family business centers and professional associations “ is evident in the path dependent evolution and growth of the field. Although the last two decades have witnessed rampant infrastructure growth and variety in offerings, some evidence of selective retention is beginning to surface. In the future, increasing competition and collaboration can be expected to lead to higher standards of family business education.



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## Keywords

Education; Evolutionary theory; Family business

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† An earlier but substantively different version of this article has been published by [Hoy and Sharma \(2006\)](#) as a chapter in the Family Business Research Handbook edited by Poutziouris, Smyrnios and Klein, Edward Elgar Publishing. The authors are grateful to Craig Aronoff, Kristin Cappuyns, Jim Chrisman, Jess Chua, Guido Corbetta, Sadie Dalton, John Davis, Nancy Drozdow, Gibb W. Dyer Jr., Joyce Fasanella, Pat Frishkoff, Miguel Gallo, Kelin Gersick, Judy Green, Ramona Heck, Jane Hilburt-Davis, Paul Karofsky, Ken Kaye, Andrew Keyt, Ann Kinkade, Sabine Klein, Alden Lank, Kristi McMillan, Drew Mendoza, Ken Moores, Panikkos Poutziouris, Kosmas Smyrnios, Ritch Sorenson, Alex Stewart, Lloyd Steier, Albert Jan Thomassen, Thuy Tran, Nancy Upton, Karen Vinton, and John Ward for sharing insights that enabled an expanded understanding of the evolution of family business studies.

1 Tel.: +1 915 747 7727.

2 Tel.: +1 770 423 6045.

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