



**BUILDING BRIDGES BETWEEN GENDER AND FAMILY  
BUSINESS LITERATURE TO ADVANCE WOMEN'S  
EMPOWERMENT**

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3 **BUILDING BRIDGES BETWEEN GENDER AND FAMILY BUSINESS LITERATURE TO**  
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6 **ADVANCE WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT**  
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10 **Abstract**  
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14 **Purpose:** This study underlines the importance of addressing gender issues in family firms. It  
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reinvigorates research in this field by revealing its current state, identifying research gaps, and  
suggesting future agendas.

**Methodology:** A bibliometric approach using a co-word analysis of 376 papers from the Web  
of Science database and their 885 keywords was performed to reveal the thematic structure  
of gender and family firm research, research topics, associations among them, and their  
evolution over the last 30 years (1991–2021).

**Findings:** This review provides an extensive literature base and suggests research topics that  
facilitate the adoption of a gendered lens in family firm literature and business practice.

**Originality:** This study shows the need to address women's empowerment in business,  
considering different sociocultural contexts in addition to a Western focus. It also calls for  
embracing gender and feminist perspectives in research.

**Research and practical implications:** This review demonstrates how gender issues are  
intertwined with management, leadership, and family firm approaches. Our observations

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3 inform scholars, policymakers, and practitioners on the need to integrate gender issues into  
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6 organizational culture and to connect empowerment strategies with the sociocultural  
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9 environment.  
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13 **Keywords:** gender, family firm, diversity, women empowerment, bibliometric, co-word analysis,  
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## 1. INTRODUCTION

*Empowerment* is a term used to describe “the processes by which those who have been denied the ability to make choices acquire such an ability” (Kabeer, 2005, p. 13). It has become increasingly popular over the past few years, especially with regards to “women’s empowerment,” a term coined at Beijing’s Worldwide Women Conference of the United Nations (1995) to refer to the process of ensuring women’s equal access to and full participation in power structures and decision-making, among other efforts to achieve equity and equality. Empowering women in the economy and addressing gender gaps at work are central issues in the 2030 Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted by the United Nations in 2015; in particular, SDG 5—achieving gender equality, SDG 8—promoting full and productive employment and decent work for all, and SDG 10—reducing inequality. These growing social concerns have led to empowerment-related issues being considered ‘grand challenges’ in management research (George *et al.*, 2016). This has led to an increasing number of studies investigating the underlying factors that foster, drive, or impede women’s empowerment, many in the context of family firms.

Family firms are presented as combinations of two systems—the family and business—that overlap and interact. They determine the distinctive characteristics derived from familial influence in the business, significantly affecting family firm goals, strategic decisions, and

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3 behaviors (Chrisman *et al.*, 2012). Given that the continuity of a business across generations  
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6 depends on its long-term survival and prosperity and the succession of the owner's family  
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10 (Sharma and Salvato, 2013), family firms may be more likely to encourage women to take on  
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12 leadership or run a business (Bjursell and Bäckvall, 2011). However, a "family" is also  
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15 considered a patriarchal institution that maintains hierarchical relationships among its  
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18 members (Hamilton, 2006; Jaim, 2022). This influences business activities because gender  
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21 roles in a family are often carried over to a business.  
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26 Inspired by the idea of promoting inclusive change and empowering women in businesses, this  
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29 paper aims to provide an overview of research on gender and family firms (GEFF) with the  
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32 expectation that it may help advance women's empowerment and outline avenues for  
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35 interdisciplinary research. Each academic contribution is considered a piece of a puzzle that  
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38 must be put together to show where the research on this subject currently stands, and what  
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41 we know and do not know about it. Our research questions (RQs) were:  
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46 RQ1: How does research on gender and family firms evolve?  
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50 RQ2: What research streams converge in the fields of family firms and gender?  
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54 RQ3: What research topics in this subject can contribute to women's empowerment?  
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3 To put the pieces of the puzzle together, we adopted a bibliometric approach using co-word  
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6 analysis, allowing us to delve into its sources, interconnections, and evolution over the last 30  
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9 years and explore future research trends. In this way, our review makes three contributions to  
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12 the body of knowledge on the GEF: (i) presenting publications that show gender barriers,  
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15 motivations, and drivers identified by scholars; (ii) highlighting research gaps as well as  
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18 emerging and underexplored areas; and (iii) suggesting opportunities for the GEF as a  
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21 research approach.  
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26 To move against gender stereotypes that present women's unequal place in business and  
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29 male-dominated systems and networks as "natural" and "normal," we map the GEF  
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32 landscape as a basis for shedding light on gender mainstreaming in family firm studies.  
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35 Previous reviews have made significant research advances but categorized gender only as a  
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38 one-dimensional property of women (see Table I), as opposed to the stereotype of an individual  
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40  
41 (male) owner-manager who undertakes the processes of founding and leading a business  
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43  
44 (Hamilton, 2006). However, gender is a social and cultural construct that shapes most of our  
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46  
47 lives because it is part of an individual's identity (Hamilton, 2014), which determines the roles  
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50 played by men and women and the expectations placed on them (Stead, 2017). Our analysis  
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53 illustrates the evolution of the key facets of GEF research.  
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[Table I: Related work]

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3 By showing the convergence of the GEFf fields, we can observe the professional development  
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6 of women in a masculinized context, such as a family firm (Hamilton, 2006). The review helps  
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9 us understand gender stereotypes and biases in these firms and identify the progress made in  
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11  
12 favor of women's participation in power structures and decision-making. It serves as a  
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15 springboard to stimulate an interdisciplinary research agenda and explore promising trends for  
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18 academics and policymakers, responding to calls for more studies that help empowered  
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21 women promote inclusive growth (George *et al.*, 2016). Our discussion of the research gaps  
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24 also bridges the two fields of family firms and gender, which have evolved in parallel for years,  
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27 offering an overview of the interconnections between them to suggest future research trends.  
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## 32 2. METHODOLOGY

### 33 2.1. Bibliographic retrieval strategy

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36 We built our dataset using a replicable and transparent protocol that complies with the  
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39 principles of systematic search and review (Kraus *et al.*, 2020), ensuring that all relevant data  
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42 have been covered. This selection does not depend on the reviewer's knowledge or  
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45 preferences, thus reducing their subjectivity and bias. Using a five-step protocol, we identified  
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48 376 papers on GEFf through an automated search of the Web of Science (WoS) database.  
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52 Table II details the information that enables the replicability of our search.  
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[Table II: Search protocol]



## 2.2. Bibliometric research design

We used two bibliometric methods to identify the knowledge structure of GEF research: performance analysis, a compilation of general quantitative indicators concerning scientific production and citations, and co-word analysis, which enables the generation of networks of co-occurrences among bibliographical items and their visualization.

Co-word analysis is used to map the strength of the relationship between keywords with the premise that keywords represent the content of a publication and that research topics can be characterized by a list of the most important keywords. When two keywords co-occur in a document, the two research topics they represent are related. A higher co-word frequency implies a stronger correlation between the two keywords, suggesting that they are related to the research theme (Feng *et al.*, 2017). Many co-occurrences around the same keywords in different papers indicate a correlation, thus revealing their closeness.

Hence, bibliometric analyses contribute to the systematization of the literature review as they use replicable, objective, and transparent protocols that minimize human error and mapping bias. Consequently, bibliometric studies complement traditional literature review methods, are particularly suitable for overviewing a research field, and provide a robust roadmap for further investigation. Indeed, bibliometric techniques are used in many topics of family business research (Aparicio *et al.*, 2021).

### 2.3. Data analysis

Before the data analysis, we extracted keywords to homogenize words referring to the same items but written in different forms. This was done by merging singular and plural forms, correcting alternative spellings, and merging synonymous terms, none of which altered any other terminology. Of the 995 initially identified keywords, 885 were retained after homogenization.

We used the VOSviewer software tool (Van Eck and Waltman, 2010) to analyze the co-occurrence relations between GEFf keywords and graphically visualize them and their interconnections. The size of the resulting spheres depends on the number of documents that contain each keyword (i.e., the keyword's frequency). The lines between spheres indicate relations between keywords (i.e., the correlation between keywords), and the distance between them indicates their degree of proximity. Thus, the graphical representation of co-word analysis helps us identify major topics in a field and the relationships between topics.

### 3. RESULTS OF PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS

Performance indicators are used to evaluate scientific activity and track the quantitative evolution of a field, which allowed us to answer our RQs regarding how GEFf research has evolved from 1991—when the first paper was published by Wicker and Burley (1991)—to 2021.

### 3.1. Citations

The number of citations provided an overview of the most influential research. It should be noted that a paper starts being cited some time after its publication; therefore, fewer citations do not mean they have a lower impact or contribution.

Table III shows the 10 most-cited publications in decreasing order of their citations in the WoS, from their publication until December 2021. Analyzing the total citations, we found an average rate of 20.625 citations. Of all the papers, 11.44% had never been cited, while less than half (42.21%) had been cited at least 10 times. It is also interesting to analyze the approach of the studies included in Table III. Focusing only on paper titles, we observe that, in most cases, gender topics were explanatory variables for identifying different topics related to family firms.

#### [Table III: Influential papers on GEFF]

### 3.2. Authors

According to our dataset, 376 papers were authored by 881 authors, 91.49% of whom had published only one paper on GEFF. This reflects the degree of dispersion of authorship. Furthermore, 11.24% of the authors had yet to receive any citations, and only 3.97% had received 100 or more citations. This tendency is common in emerging disciplines (Casillas and Acedo, 2007).

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3 Table IV presents a complete overview of authors with three or more papers (productive  
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6 authors) and those that received more than 150 citations in the WoS (influential authors).

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9 Sharon Danes (12 publications and 805 citations) and Kathryn Stafford (five articles and 565  
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12 citations) were the most influential authors. Bennedsen, Nielsen, Perez-Gonzalez, and  
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16 Wolfenson, with only one article, ranked third in the number of citations.

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20 **[Table IV: Influential authors on GEFF]**

### 21 22 23 *3.3. Journals*

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26 Papers on GEFF issues published in various journals were ordered according to productivity.

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29 Table V presents journals with three or more published papers.

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33 The three main journals were *Family Business Review* (FBR, 16 papers), *Journal of Family*  
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37 *Business Strategy* (JFBS, 16 papers), and *Journal of Family Business Management* (JFBM,  
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40 14 papers). These journals specialize in family firms. It is also important to highlight two  
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43 journals specializing in gender studies: the *International Journal of Gender and*  
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46 *Entrepreneurship* (IJGE), ranked eighth with seven papers, and *Gender in Management* (GIM),  
47  
48  
49 with four papers. All these journals are crucial for the development of GEFF research. Note  
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52 that several journals have not specifically published GEFF-related papers, which may signify  
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56 their growing importance and interest among editors, authors, and readers.

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60 **[Table V: Influential journals on GEFF]**

### 3.4. Keywords

Keywords are commonly used as first approximations to reveal the knowledge structure of a research field (Ding *et al.*, 2001). The many keywords used to define GEF-related papers (885) indicates that this field has been examined from several perspectives.

The most repeated words, as one might expect, were search-related words: family business (92), gender (57), family firm (46), and women (18). Other keywords that appeared in more than three papers address the following themes: *succession* (“succession,” “strategic planning”); *economic and non-economic firm’s outcomes* (“performance,” “economic development,” “innovation,” “corporate social responsibility,” “sustainable family business”); *governance and management* (“corporate governance,” “board of directors,” “gender diversity,” “women directors,” “ownership,” “leadership,” “women’s leadership,” “decision-making”); *entrepreneurship* (“women entrepreneurs,” “entrepreneurship,” “copreneurs,” “self-employment,” “entrepreneurial intentions,” “small business”); *family and firm’s resources* (“identity,” “work-family conflict,” “human capital”); and *theories* (“institutional theory”, “agency theory”, “socioemotional wealth”). Table VI summarizes the statistics for the most frequently used keywords.

[Table VI: List of keywords with more than two occurrences]

### 3.5. Publication trends

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3 Figure 1 shows the progression of GEF research over time and the essential keywords  
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6 selected by the authors to identify the content of their research. Going deeper into the  
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9 distribution of the 376 papers over the last 30 years (1991–2021), we can see that interest in  
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11  
12 the domain was almost anecdotal in the initial years. From 2015, there was a clear upward  
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15 trend in the number of publications, which peaked in 2019. Commitments to gender equality  
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18 from different spheres may have boosted interest in GEF research in recent years. The  
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21 increase in academic journals addressing GEF issues has also contributed to the expansion  
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24 of research (Maseda *et al.*, 2022).  
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29 Thus, considering 2015 as the turnaround year, we identified two sub-periods in the evolution  
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31  
32 of publications on GEF: *emergence and first steps* (1991–2015) and *expansion and*  
33  
34  
35 *consolidation* (2016–2021). Figure 1 shows the number of papers published annually on GEF  
36  
37  
38 and the most popular keywords used in the two subperiods.  
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42

43 **[Figure 1: Publication trends and the most frequent keywords]**  
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45

46 The most frequent keywords used in the first period (1991–2015) seem to suggest that much  
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48  
49 of the GEF literature focused on family and business systems, as well as the family-business  
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52 interface, as components of a unique system of relationships in which women take a secondary  
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55 but multifaceted role. The influence of the family and the invisibility of women in family firms  
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58 are determined by keywords related to *values, culture, and power*, such as “ethnicity,” “family  
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3 capital," "human capital," "household," and "unpaid work." The *influence of business on families*  
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5  
6 seems to be derived from terms such as "copreneurs" or "work-family conflict." Families and  
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10 relations among family members are considered key to analyzing the sustainability of family  
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13 firms.

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16 In the second period (2016–2021), we observed a significant change in keywords, which may  
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19 indicate a change in research topics. "Family firm," as an organization to be analyzed, assumed  
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21  
22 a greater role in relation to "family" as an entity. This period shows growing interest in  
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24  
25 examining corporate and management mechanisms in family firms and the role of women in  
26  
27  
28 them. Thus, keywords are related to *board of directors* and *diversity* ("board composition,"  
29  
30  
31 "corporate board," and "board diversity") and *leadership* ("women leadership," "CEO," "career  
32  
33  
34 progression," "generation," and "gender diversity"). Additionally, some keywords have been  
35  
36  
37 used repeatedly, such as those related to *entrepreneurship*, *succession*, *business ownership*,  
38  
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40  
41 and *performance*.

#### 46 4. RESULTS OF CO-WORD ANALYSIS

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49 As noted above, co-word analysis has the potential to determine connections and relationships  
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51  
52 among keywords in a research domain to identify topics as well as their thematic evolution  
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54  
55 over time (Ding *et al.*, 2001). The more frequent the co-occurrence between keywords, the  
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57  
58 higher their correlation (Feng *et al.*, 2017).  
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3 To display the structure of GEF research and ensure the presence of co-word networks, each  
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5  
6 keyword in a network should have at least two occurrences in the first period of analysis (i.e.,  
7  
8  
9 each keyword should be present in two papers) and four occurrences in the second period of  
10  
11  
12 analysis (i.e., at least four papers should have used each keyword). Considering the threshold  
13  
14  
15 of these frequencies in keyword occurrences, the VOSviewer software identified 32 keywords  
16  
17  
18 that the algorithm assigned to *six clusters* in the first period (1991–2015) and 26 keywords  
19  
20  
21 assigned to *five clusters* in the second period (2016–2021). Table VII presents the keywords  
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23  
24 included in each cluster as a result of the co-word analysis.  
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30 **[Table VII: Main keywords and themes]**  
31

32  
33 Visualization of co-word analysis through bibliometric maps helps illustrate the strongest  
34  
35  
36 associations between keywords (topics). Figures 2 and 3 show a visual representation of the  
37  
38  
39 clusters obtained using VOSviewer. A more detailed analysis to facilitate the interpretation and  
40  
41  
42 discussion of the results is presented below<sup>1</sup>.  
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45

46 *4.1. Knowledge map from 1991 to 2015*  
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48

49 Cluster 1 (*family and work*) reveals the relationships among family firms, work, and self-  
50  
51  
52 employment. The topic of “self-employment” was relevant in this period, with interesting studies  
53  
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56  
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58 <sup>1</sup> The 376 bibliographic references are included as Appendix.  
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3 published on gender differences in business initiatives (Broussard *et al.*, 2015; Hoffmann *et*  
4  
5  
6 *al.*, 2015). Other studies have shown that gender norms and blindness contribute to the  
7  
8  
9 preservation of barriers that hinder the advancement of women in business (Overbeke *et al.*,  
10  
11  
12 2013). Studies have paid particular attention to the division of roles and responsibilities within  
13  
14  
15 households and businesses. This demonstrates the influence of family identity and values on  
16  
17  
18 the role of women in family firms (Jiang *et al.*, 2015; Low *et al.*, 2015), revealing the secondary  
19  
20  
21 role of women in family business initiatives (Zhang and Pan, 2012) and their invisibility  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26 (Hamilton, 2006).

27  
28  
29 Cluster 2 (*succession necessity or opportunity for entrepreneurship*) refers to succession and  
30  
31  
32 how it can motivate new entrepreneurial opportunities as the core of this cluster. According to  
33  
34  
35 the literature, a wide range of possible situations may lead women to become entrepreneurs,  
36  
37  
38 one of which is family business succession. Although women are not the first candidates to  
39  
40  
41 take over a business, their presence may be required to continue a family dynasty or make a  
42  
43  
44 firm sustainable (Martínez-Jiménez, 2009). Studies have shown stereotypical roles for women  
45  
46  
47 (daughters) and their challenges in families and businesses. There is also a strong relationship  
48  
49  
50  
51 between this topic and “unpaid work,” which suggests that the role of women in business is not  
52  
53  
54 considered in a professional manner (Bessiere, 2014; Micheletto, 2014).  
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2  
3 Cluster 3 (*governance and performance*) address the so-called “glass ceiling” phenomenon to  
4  
5  
6 explore board gender diversity by examining the presence of women in boardrooms and its  
7  
8  
9 implications. Many studies have analyzed whether and how gender diversity (male and female)  
10  
11  
12 in governance structures enhances business performance. While Miguez-Vera and Martin  
13  
14  
15 (2011) argued that the presence of women on boards negatively impacts family firm  
16  
17  
18 performance, Low *et al.* (2015) affirmed that increasing the number of female directors on  
19  
20  
21 boards positively affects firm performance. Moreover, research has focused on family firms in  
22  
23  
24 developed countries, providing evidence that the appointment of female directors is strongly  
25  
26  
27 related to family ownership, firm size, and board size (e.g., Nekhili and Gatfaoui, 2013; Bianco  
28  
29  
30 *et al.*, 2015). Studies have shown inconclusive results, and their findings may not be  
31  
32  
33 generalizable because of different gender quota regulations/recommendations and cultural  
34  
35  
36 differences across countries (Saeed *et al.*, 2016).  
37  
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42 Cluster 4 (*family support for women in business*) shows the association between “financial  
43  
44  
45 capital,” “human capital,” “family capital” (Cetindamar *et al.*, 2012), and “social capital” (Danes  
46  
47  
48 *et al.*, 2009). The literature recognizes the importance of families in women-run businesses,  
49  
50  
51 particularly the economic, human, social, and emotional family support they generate,  
52  
53  
54 providing the basis for accessing other types of resources. Social capital is an important  
55  
56  
57 mechanism for spreading values and beliefs among families and between families and  
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1  
2  
3 businesses (Jones, 2005). The literature also suggests that social capital is a key element that  
4  
5  
6 differentiates men from women because of several gender-based structural constraints that  
7  
8  
9 limit women's social networks to family and kin members (Renzulli *et al.*, 2000).  
10

11  
12  
13 Cluster 5 (*family and firm culture*) reveals an inseparable relationship between family firms and  
14  
15  
16 families. The relationships between children, parents, and cultures were analyzed in this  
17  
18  
19 cluster. Women's leadership in family firms began to be analyzed during this period (1991–  
20  
21  
22 2015), although gender mainstreaming was limited. Hamilton (2006) points to alternative  
23  
24  
25 gender discourses and practices and evidence of clear resistance to patriarchy. Given that the  
26  
27  
28 meaning of concepts like gender and women's empowerment may vary from culture to culture,  
29  
30  
31  
32 Ram and Holliday (1993) used an ethnographic approach to explore how the notion of family  
33  
34  
35 operates at the workplace level, examining the role of "family" in organizing business  
36  
37  
38 management, hiring, and controlling the workplace.  
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42  
43 Cluster 6 (*copreneurial business partnerships*) attempts to explain the dynamics of  
44  
45  
46 entrepreneurial couples who work and share ownership, risk, responsibility, and management  
47  
48  
49 of their businesses. The research topics covered in this cluster show how copreneurial couples  
50  
51  
52 divide responsibilities at home and work and the work-family benefits and conflicts that result  
53  
54  
55 from such an overlap (e.g., Wu *et al.*, 2010). Women's unofficial and supporting roles are also  
56  
57  
58 shown in many cases, detecting differences between spouses' degrees of influence and  
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3 visibility in relation to their businesses (Poza and Messer, 2001). The closeness between  
4  
5  
6 “copreneurs,” “performance,” “copreneurial couples,” and “family embeddedness”  
7  
8  
9 demonstrates that these terms are closely related (Hedberg and Danes, 2012).  
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13  
14 **[Figure 2: Co-word network map of GEF research: 1991–2015]**  
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#### 20 *4.2. Knowledge map from 2016 to 2021*

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23 Cluster 1 (*board gender diversity and economic performance*) deals with the effects of gender  
24  
25 diversity (male and female) on board governance (dynamics and decision-making), particularly  
26  
27 firm performance (Solakoglu and Demir, 2016; Gonzalez *et al.*, 2020) and examines the  
28  
29 possible differences between family and non-family firms (Terjesen *et al.*, 2016). Many studies  
30  
31 have analyzed the effects of board gender composition, considering whether boardroom  
32  
33 homogeneity can lead to poor decision-making (Ferreira, 2015). However, some authors argue  
34  
35 that the gender quota system allows for a definitive reduction in the persistent gender gap  
36  
37 (Samara *et al.*, 2019). The determinants of board gender diversity composition in the context  
38  
39 of emerging economies have been examined, showing the institutional and cultural factors that  
40  
41 influence women’s access to boards in family firms (e.g., Chauhan and Dey, 2017; Mustafa *et*  
42  
43 *al.*, 2020; Saeed *et al.*, 2016). The literature uses several theoretical perspectives, such as  
44  
45 agency, stewardship, resource dependence, institutional, contingency, and network theories,  
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3 to justify the composition of family firm boards, compare male and female directors' behaviors,  
4  
5  
6 and explain their impact on organizational performance. The socioemotional wealth approach,  
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8  
9  
10 which has been one of the most commonly used in family firm literature in recent years with  
11  
12  
13 some exceptions (e.g., Poletti-Hughes and Briano-Turrent, 2019), is still scarce. Social  
14  
15  
16 psychology and gender diversity theories have been rarely used (Chadwick and Dawson,  
17  
18  
19 2018).

20  
21  
22  
23 Cluster 2 (*women's and family entrepreneurship*) is a continuation of Cluster 1, identified in the  
24  
25  
26 period 1991–2015. Studies in this period examine an interrelated set of macro-, meso-, and  
27  
28  
29 micro-level factors that can help explain some drivers of women's and family entrepreneurship.  
30  
31  
32 Macro-level studies indicate that entrepreneurship should be contextualized in relation to legal,  
33  
34  
35 cultural, and institutional factors (macro-level), given the persistence of gender stereotypes  
36  
37  
38 (Adapa and Sheridan, 2021; Stead, 2017; Welsh *et al.*, 2018). Research calls for further  
39  
40  
41 investigation of women entrepreneurs and family firms in developing and emerging economies  
42  
43  
44 (e.g., Kaciak and Welsh, 2019). The literature also highlights how social circumstances, such  
45  
46  
47 as belonging to a business family or relying on a family's social, financial, and emotional  
48  
49  
50 support (meso-level), increase the likelihood of women's entrepreneurship, regardless of social  
51  
52  
53 context (Kilenthong and Rueanthip, 2018). The gender perspective in copreneurial family  
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55  
56 businesses has also been studied to analyze the roles and responsibilities of co-entrepreneurs  
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3 (Franco and Piceti, 2018; Kuschel and Lepeley, 2016; Jurik *et al.*, 2016). Certain personal  
4  
5  
6 characteristics, motivation, attitude, and other personal circumstances (micro-level) were  
7  
8  
9 identified as key drivers for determining women's entry into a business. Likewise, cognitive  
10  
11  
12 factors, such as how women perceive themselves or their empowerment processes, also help  
13  
14  
15 foster entrepreneurship and perceive self-employment as an opportunity (Liguori *et al.*, 2018;  
16  
17  
18 Lim and Suh, 2019).

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22  
23 Cluster 3 (*board gender diversity and non-economic performance*) is closely related to Cluster  
24  
25  
26 1. It links corporate gender diversity to the environmental, social, and ethical policies of firms,  
27  
28  
29 examining whether gender diversity influences environmental or corporate social responsibility  
30  
31  
32 (CSR) initiatives, voluntary disclosure, and less corporate fraud, among other aspects (e.g.,  
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35 Sundarassen *et al.*, 2016; Beji *et al.*, 2021; Cruz *et al.*, 2019). According to the literature, female  
36  
37  
38 directors may prioritize non-economic performance more than their male counterparts (Ho *et*  
39  
40  
41 *al.*, 2015; Kirsch, 2018). The co-word map illustrates that "corporate governance" is related to  
42  
43  
44 the "board of directors," while "female directors" are closer to "CSR" (see Figure 3). Several  
45  
46  
47 theories (e.g., stakeholder, upper echelon, contingency, and social identity) help explain the  
48  
49  
50 organizational outcomes of gender balance in boardrooms (e.g., diversity, independence,  
51  
52  
53 transparency, reputation, and openness).

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3 Cluster 4 (*women in leadership succession*) focuses on women's motivations to join family  
4  
5  
6 firms and their roles, challenges, and opportunities to take over leadership. The processes that  
7  
8  
9 characterize daughters' entry into leadership positions suggest the existence of gender  
10  
11  
12 selection biases and stereotypical views (Dwivedi *et al.*, 2018). The literature also focuses on  
13  
14  
15 access to management positions in male-dominated family firms, examining gender  
16  
17  
18 positioning around predecessors' leadership (e.g., Hamilton *et al.*, 2021). Research suggests  
19  
20  
21 that social contextual factors and preexisting mechanisms within social structures (family,  
22  
23  
24 business, and society) may cause gender bias (Byrne *et al.*, 2021; Ramadani *et al.*, 2017).  
25  
26  
27 Notwithstanding these factors, family support and parental mentoring for leadership seem to  
28  
29  
30 facilitate female succession (Ramadani *et al.*, 2017). The term "succession" underpins this  
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32  
33 cluster (Kubiček and Machek, 2019), while the small spheres of the remaining keywords show  
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35  
36 the scarcity of relationships between them, indicating the need for further development (Figure  
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Cluster 5 (*gender diversity and financial performance*), which focuses on the influence of  
gender leadership diversity on performance, is closely related to Cluster 1. Some studies have  
compared family and non-family firms and examined whether the inclusion of women in top  
positions is associated with financial performance (e.g., Chadwick and Dawson, 2018; Nekhili  
*et al.*, 2018). Other studies analyze women's leadership styles compared to men and their

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3 effect on organizational outcomes and, ultimately, on family firm performance. Based on upper  
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6 echelons, leadership, and resource dependence theories, research expects that the presence  
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9 of women in top positions generates increased cognitive diversity, which may positively affect  
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12 long-term firm performance (e.g., Bjuggren *et al.*, 2018).  
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17 **[Figure 3: Co-word network map of GEF research: 2016–2021]**  
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24 To conclude this section, we present a list of the most relevant papers in each cluster, along  
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27 with their citations (Table VIII).  
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31 **[Table VIII: Top cited papers in each thematic cluster]**  
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## 38 **5. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

### 39 40 41 *5.1. Synthesis and future research agenda*

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44 The role of gender in management and leadership has been the subject of growing attention  
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47 in family firm research. The performance analysis results show that this interest was anecdotal  
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50 from 1991 to 2015; however, publications experienced significant growth from 2015 onward  
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53 (more than 75% of the articles have been published since then). This reveals the novelty of  
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56 the present study. Initial research on GEF was published in specialized journals on family  
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3 firms (FBR and JFBS) and women's studies (IJGE and GIM). In recent years, studies of GEF  
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6 have been published in many academic journals, reflecting this increasing interest (see Table  
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9  
10 V). In terms of the main topics, the most frequent keywords were related to themes such as  
11  
12 *succession, economic and non-economic outcomes, governance and management,*  
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14  
15 *entrepreneurship, family and firm resources, and related theories* (Table VI). These findings  
16  
17  
18 may help researchers identify the topics that are most active and have the potential to provide  
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23 research and practical implications.  
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26  
27 Based on a co-word analysis and subsequent literature review, we show how both family firm  
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29 and gender research converge. In the first period, interest was focused on the role of women  
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32 in the family and business spheres and the importance of family social capital and support for  
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35 women entrepreneurs. Studies have also shown the predominance of gender stereotypes in  
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38 families, businesses, and society, the poor visibility of women's involvement in family firms,  
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41 and the scant recognition of their work. The thematic clusters of the second period (2016–  
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43  
44 2021) suggest a shift in researchers' interests, focusing on comparing men and women  
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46  
47 (gender diversity) regarding economic and non-economic performance, upper-echelon  
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50 positions, and succession processes. Gender and entrepreneurship themes were analyzed  
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52  
53 considering the influence of familial, cultural, and societal contexts. Following the latest trends  
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58 that attempt to differentiate leadership (focusing on people) from management (focusing on  
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3 systems), gender-related leadership issues in male-dominated environments also constitute a  
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6 hot topic. Identifying individual competencies (skills and attitudes), styles, and behaviors of  
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9 female leaders and their impact on decision-making processes and outcomes are of particular  
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12 importance. Instead of being considered a biological condition, gender begins to be  
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15 conceptualized from the perspective of personality attributes, capabilities, or behaviors. Why  
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18 and how gender bias can be eradicated by exposing its nature and drivers, as well as new  
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21 pathways to advance women's empowerment and leadership in business, is also a topical  
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24 issue. The review also reveals that many GEF studies do not incorporate the adopted  
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27 theoretical perspective. Those that do, adopt a plethora of theoretical approaches, most of  
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29  
30 which are rooted in economic/managerial science, such as agency, resource-base, social  
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33 capital, or socioemotional wealth perspectives, in some cases in combination with institutional  
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36 theory following a micro-level analysis. Few articles use identity theories to study gender  
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39 dynamics in family firms, and even fewer apply feminist theories.  
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45 To address the main gaps identified in the last years (2016–2021), we propose suggestions  
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48 for future research. Our review shows that scholars have prioritized research in Western  
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51 countries. It contributes to adopting a reductionist view of women's experiences and the  
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54 context through which empowerment occurs, which may marginalize other experiences.  
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57 Considering that cultural contexts determine gender-role attitudes and affect different ways to  
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3 understand empowerment, we suggest a greater focus on non-Western cultures, as different  
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6 geographic spaces might provide different opportunities and constraints for women.  
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10 Institutional logic can help understand contextual factors that mold individual and group  
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12 behaviors in the family and the business in which they are embedded. This might provide a  
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14  
15 holistic view of the micro-, meso-, and macro-factors that can hinder or drive women's  
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17  
18 intentions and orientations toward entrepreneurship and leadership (Deng *et al.*, 2021; Maseda  
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21  
22  
23 *et al.*, 2022).

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26 However, although Western countries are advancing toward a gender stance in which feminist  
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28  
29 values of equality, community, or participation emerge to define leadership styles and  
30  
31  
32 behaviors (Humphreys, 2013), gender bias still exists. A common phenomenon in many  
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34  
35 developing countries is their high level of "masculinity" (Franco and Piceti, 2018) and hostile  
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38 institutional systems for women (Welsh *et al.*, 2018). Our review identifies gender-based  
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41 stereotypes that create barriers to women's leadership, leading to their under-representation  
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44 in upper-echelon positions and little influence on decision-making processes. As "culture is  
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47 essentially an embedded phenomenon shaped by generations, and thus, is not easy to  
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50 influence, despite any changes in government or legislation" (Foss *et al.*, 2019, p.12), future  
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52  
53 research should also focus on understanding how gender bias intersects with religion, culture,  
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55  
56 and patriarchal norms that are embedded in persistent (hidden) forms and different levels of  
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3 society. Theories rooted in psychology and sociology would also help to understand how and  
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6 why women's empowerment differs depending on the cultural context. In this way, studies  
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9 would become more theoretical robust by incorporating social, cognitive, affective, and  
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11  
12 behavioral principles (Porto-Robles *et al.*, 2022). Future research should also consider gender  
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15 roles in new copreneurial start-ups, which are created and managed by couples and represent  
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17  
18 over a third of family firms (Dyer *et al.*, 2013). Feminist perspectives can help explain women's  
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20  
21 subordinate roles and make gendered practices visible (Henry *et al.*, 2016). As leadership  
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23  
24 succession is one of the most crucial aspects of family firms' long-term survival (Kubíček and  
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26  
27 Machek, 2019), another promising topic is integrating a gender perspective into intra-family  
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29  
30 leadership succession research. Although women in family firms have more opportunities to  
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32  
33 attain leadership positions and increasingly assume leadership in their firms (Bjursell and  
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36 Bäckvall, 2011), unfortunately, differences persist. Succession is also embedded in the  
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38  
39 environment in which it occurs, and differences persist regarding successors' gender  
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41  
42 preferences, selection, and preparation, among others (Humphreys, 2013). We agree with this  
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44  
45 author regarding examining intra-familial succession from multiple perspectives, including  
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47  
48 social and cultural trends.  
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55 In short, we believe that family firms are a suitable context for examining gender roles in both  
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57  
58 family and business structures. By showing women's involvement in governance and  
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3 management structures of family firms, we may broaden our knowledge about business  
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5  
6 families and their firms and contribute to changing perceptions of women in management  
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8  
9 positions, culturally associated with masculinity and men. Research should explore how the  
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11  
12 gender perspective is nested within management, leadership, family firm approaches, and  
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14  
15 family structure. This can help address a significant gap in GEF research and promote  
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17  
18 women's empowerment.  
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22  
23 We also expect a wider perspective of gender to be embraced in the GEF studies. Gender  
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25  
26 should be understood as a constellation of multiple masculinities and femininities that people  
27  
28  
29 enact when interacting with different stakeholders. Adopting this approach would deepen the  
30  
31  
32 different gender roles that leaders adopt, regardless of biological sex, to gain support and  
33  
34  
35 legitimacy within family firms and business families. Efforts should therefore be directed toward  
36  
37  
38 developing a multidisciplinary theoretical approach that analyzes the processes of constructing  
39  
40  
41 gender identities in families and businesses. We agree with Byrne's *et al.* (2021) comments  
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43  
44 concerning the importance of abandoning the idea that gender is a "problem" that affects only  
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47 women. Thus, GEF research can make important contributions to the process of  
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50 empowerment.  
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## 54 55 56 *5.2. Implications for theory and practice* 57 58 59 60

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3 This review reveals the novelty of GEF research, which still has a long way to go. Many  
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5  
6 studies have used a descriptive approach, such as comparative analyses, to explain male–  
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8  
9 female differences. Despite this progress, family firm studies from gender and feminist  
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11  
12 perspectives are scarce. We consider new theoretical approaches through a feminist lens to  
13  
14  
15 advance the understanding of GEF. In this regard, our study also indicates that gender  
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17  
18 biases, usually analyzed independently, can be studied interconnectedly in family firms, as  
19  
20  
21 they are present in families and businesses. Gender behaviors and their (in)congruence within  
22  
23  
24 a situation or group can be studied more easily in family firms. Likewise, the family firm context  
25  
26  
27 allows an in-depth examination of the preconceptions regarding the discrepancy between  
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29  
30 gender stereotypes and perceived attributes for management positions, as the presence of  
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32  
33 women in upper-echelon positions is greater than that in non-family firms.  
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38  
39 The literature also shows that social and cultural norms reinforce gender-based stereotypes,  
40  
41  
42 constituting one of the main constraints on women’s employment, entrepreneurship, and  
43  
44  
45 leadership. Business organizations and other parties should take action to close gender gaps  
46  
47  
48 that limit women’s opportunities, creating an environment where women can turn viable  
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50  
51 business ideas into reality. Empowering women is a key issue in sustainable development  
52  
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54 worldwide. Eliminating gender biases requires developing and adopting laws and policies that  
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57 support diversity and gender equality in education, training, culture, the labor market, upper-  
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3 echelon positions, and the media, among other aspects. Women-owned and women-led firms  
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5  
6 should gain better access to markets, financial resources, and business support services.  
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9  
10 Policymakers may also find this study useful in identifying areas that promote women's access  
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12  
13 to top management positions, for instance, in the succession process, one of the biggest  
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15  
16 challenges facing family firms. It must be ensured that there are laws that protect women's  
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18  
19 right to succession in family firms, on par with men, by promoting a culture of equal rights for  
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21  
22 men and women. All of the above show the great potential of this field of research, and we  
23  
24  
25 hope that our review offers paths for its advancement and consolidation.  
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### 29 *5.3. Limitations and conclusions*

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33 This study has some limitations that may indicate future research opportunities. We used only  
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35  
36 the WoS database as a source of information, overlooking other databases, such as Scopus  
37  
38  
39 and Google Scholar. Moreover, only journal papers were considered in this study; therefore,  
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41  
42 the structure and evolution of GEF research should be interpreted according to the scope our  
43  
44  
45 dataset. Another limitation is related to the application of bibliometrics. The co-word analysis  
46  
47  
48 assumes that the authors carefully select the keywords and represent the papers' content;  
49  
50  
51 however, these keywords may not be exempt from author bias. Despite the advantages of  
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54 bibliometrics in overcoming these biases, a bibliometric analysis should serve as a  
55  
56  
57 complement to conventional literature reviews.  
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3 We believe that these limitations do not detract from the contributions of this study. This review  
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6 demonstrates the knowledge generated in GEF research and its limitations. It offers an  
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9 objective exploration of the underlying structure of GEF research and identifies several  
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12 elements and dynamics affecting women in family firms. Our suggestions for the future show  
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15 that GEF research has great growth potential and that family firms offer many challenges and  
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18 opportunities to advance knowledge on management and leadership from a gender  
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21 perspective. In the context of family firms, organizational culture can be tinged with masculine  
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24 or feminine identities, which can serve as an example of women's empowerment in business.  
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27 West and Zimmerman's (1987) expression "doing gender" is particularly relevant in this  
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30 context, associated with an ambitious research agenda.  
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Table I. Related work

Author (year)	Focus
<b>Women's involvement in family firms</b>	
Martínez-Jiménez, R., (2009). Research on women in family firms current status and future directions. <i>Family Business Review</i> , 22(1), 53-64.	Reveals several barriers to women's involvement in family firms.
Heinonen, J., and Hytti, U. (2011). Gender in family firms: A literature review. University of Turku, School of Economics, TSEEntre1, Pori Unit, 2.	Explores how gender issues have been tackled in family business research.
Gupta, V., and Levenburg, N.M. (2013). Women in family business: three generations of research. In <i>Handbook of Research on Family Business</i> . Edward Elgar Publishing.	Highlights the historical invisibility of women in business and their roles in family firms.
Campopiano, G., De Massis, A., Rinaldi, F.R., and Sciascia, S., (2017). Women's involvement in family firms: Progress and challenges for future research. <i>Journal of Family Business Strategy</i> , 8(4), 200-212.	Focuses on women's involvement in family firms according to a drivers-behaviors-outcomes framework.
Giménez, D., and Calabrò, A. (2018). The salient role of institutions in Women's entrepreneurship: A critical review and agenda for future research. <i>International Entrepreneurship and Management Journal</i> , 14(4), 857-882.	Focuses on the role of institutions in women's entrepreneurship.
Sentuti, A., Cesaroni, F. M., and Cubico, S. (2019). Women and family firms: a state of the art literature review. In <i>Rigour and Relevance in Entrepreneurship Research, Resources and Outcomes</i> . Edward Elgar Publishing.	Identifies several research topics on women in family firms.
Nguyen, M.H., Nguyen, H.T.T., Le, T.T., Luong, A.P., and Vuong, Q.H. (2022). Gender issues in family business research: A bibliometric scoping review. <i>Journal of Asian Business and Economic Studies</i> , 29(3), 166-188.	Examines the growth trajectory of the field during the last three decades.
Maseda, A., Iturralde, T., Coopers, S., and Aparicio, G. (2022). Mapping women's involvement in family firms: a review based on bibliographic coupling analysis. <i>International Journal of Management Review</i> , 24(2), 279-305.	Develops an integrative framework of the women's involvement in family firm research.
Bağış, M., Kryeziu, L., Kurutkan, M.N., and Ramadani, V. (2022). Women entrepreneurship in family business: dominant topics and future research trends. <i>Journal of Family Business Management</i> . Ahead-of-print	Examines the 65 most influential journal papers on women's entrepreneurship in family businesses.
<b>Women and family business succession</b>	
Wang, C. (2010). Daughter exclusion in family business succession: A review of the literature. <i>Journal of Family Economic Issues</i> , 31, pp. 475-484.	Detects barriers that discriminate daughters in family business succession.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 Nelson, T., & Constantinidis, C. (2017). Sex and gender in family business succession research: A review and forward agenda from a social construction perspective. <i>Family Business Review</i> , 30(3), 219-241.	Analyzes the use of gender terms vocabulary and establishes gender themes representative of the overall historical literature.
Kubíček, A. and Machek, O. (2019). Gender-related factors in family business succession: a systematic literature review. <i>Review of Managerial Science</i> , 13, 963–1002.	Identifies three categories of gender-related factors in family firm succession.



Table II: Search protocol

<b>Web of Science database</b>	Social Science Citation Index (SSCI), Emerging Sources Citation Index (ESCI)
<b>Time period</b>	Until December 2021
<b>Document types</b>	Article or review
<b>Language</b>	English
<b>Categories</b>	Business, Management, Economics, Women Studies, Business Finance, Family Studies, Sociology, Ethics and Psychology Applied
<b>Topic tab</b>	Title, Keywords, and Abstract
<b>Keywords</b>	[("family firm*") OR ("family business*") OR ("family enterprise*") OR ("family influence*") OR ("family own*") OR ("family SME*") OR ("family control*") OR ("family involvement") OR ("family capital") OR ("founder firm")] AND [("gender" OR "woman" OR "women" OR "female" OR "wife" OR "wives" OR "daughter" OR "sister" OR "spouse")]

Table III: Influential papers on gender in family firm research

	Title	Authors	Journal	Year	TC
1	Inside the family firm: The role of families in succession decisions and performance.	Bennedsen, Nielsen, Perez-Gonzalez, and Wolfenzon	QJE	2007	507
2	The impact of the family and the business on family business sustainability	Olson, Zuiker, Danes, Stafford, Heck, and Duncan	JBV	2003	269
3	Gender differences in business performance: evidence from the Characteristics of Business Owners survey	Fairlie and Robb	SBE	2009	251
4	Does the presence of independent and female directors impact firm performance? A multi-country study of board diversity	Terjesen, Barbosa, and Morais	JM&G	2016	192
5	Family Capital of Family Firms Bridging Human, Social, and Financial Capital	Danes, Stafford, Haynes, and Amarapurkar	FBR	2009	185
6	Does family employment enhance MSEs performance? Integrating socioemotional wealth and family embeddedness perspectives	Cruz, Justo, and De Castro	JBV	2012	156
7	Whose story is it anyway? Narrative accounts of the role of women in founding and establishing family businesses	Hamilton	ISBJ	2006	144
8	An examination of the challenges daughters face in family business succession	Vera and Dean	FBR	2005	133
9	Research on Women in Family Firms Current Status and Future Directions	Martínez-Jiménez	FBR	2009	123
10	Relative merits - family culture and kinship in small firms	Ram and Holliday	SJTBSA	1993	117

Abbreviations: R: rank, TC: total cites, QJE, Quarterly Journal of Economics, JBV, Journal of Business Venturing, SBE, Small Business Economics, JM&G, Journal of Management & Governance, FBR, Family Business Review, ISBJE, International Small Business Journal, SJTBSA, Sociology-The Journal of The British Sociological Association.

Table IV: Influential authors on gender in family firm research

Authors with three or more papers					Authors with 150 or more citations				
	Authors	TP	TC	TC/TP		Authors	TP	TC	TC/TP
1	Danes, S.M.	12	805	67.08	1	Danes, S.M.	12	805	67.08
2	Saeed, A.	7	65	9.29	2	Stafford, K.	5	565	113.00
3	Welsh, D.H.B.	6	110	18.33	3	Bennedsen, M.	1	485	485.00
4	Stafford, K.	5	565	113.00	3	Nielsen, K.M.	1	485	485.00
5	Kaciak, E.	5	96	19.20	3	Perez-Gonzalez, F.	1	485	485.00
6	Haynes, G.W.	4	240	60.00	3	Wolfenzon, D.	1	485	485.00
7	Ismail, K.N.I.K.	3	47	15.67	7	Duncan, K.A.	1	260	260.00
8	Ramadani, V.	3	37	12.33	7	Heck, R.K.Z.	1	260	260.00
9	Igwe, P. A.	3	20	6.67	7	Olson, P.D.	1	260	260.00
10	Madichie, N.O.	3	20	6.67	7	Zuiker, V.S.	1	260	260.00
11	van der Merwe, S.P.	3	4	1.33	11	Fairlie, R.W.	1	241	241.00
					11	Robb, A.M.	1	241	241.00
					13	Haynes, G.W.	4	240	60.00
					14	Hamilton, E.	2	200	100.00
					15	Amarapurkar, S.S.	1	175	175.00
					16	Barbosa Couto, E.	1	173	173.00
					16	Morais Francisco, P.	1	173	173.00
					18	Terjesen, S.	1	173	173.00
					19	Cruz, C.	2	164	82.00
					19	Justo, R.	2	164	82.00

Abbreviations: R, ranking, TC and TP, total citations and papers

Table V: Influential journals on gender in family firm research

	Journal	TP	TC	TC/TP
1	Family Business Review	16	967	60.44
2	Journal of Family Business Strategy	16	296	18.50
3	Journal of Family Business Management	14	68	4.86
4	Journal of Business Ethics	9	274	30.44
5	Small Business Economics	8	593	74.13
6	International Small Business Journal	8	301	37.63
7	Family Relations	7	176	25.14
8	International Journal of Gender and Entrepreneurship	7	80	11.43
9	International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behavior & Research	7	58	8.29
10	Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice	6	92	15.33
11	History of The Family	6	43	7.17
12	Journal of Family and Economic Issues	6	20	3.33
13	Corporate Governance-The Internat. J. of Business In Society	5	114	22.80
14	International Entrepreneurship and Management Journal	5	102	20.40
15	Journal of Business Venturing	4	515	128.75
16	Corporate Governance-An International Review	4	152	38.00
17	Journal of Business Research	4	125	31.25
18	Management Decision	4	49	12.25
19	European Journal of International Management	4	29	7.25
20	Business History	4	25	6.25
21	Gender in Management	4	23	5.75
22	Journal of Entrepreneurship In Emerging Economies	4	18	4.50

Abbreviations: R, ranking, TC and TP, total citations and papers

Table VI: List of keywords with more than two occurrences

KW	T	P1	%P1	P2	%P2	KW	T	P1	%P1	P2	%P2
Family business	92	26	28,3%	66	71,7%	Agency theory	4	2	50,0%	2	50,0%
Gender	57	15	26,3%	42	73,7%	Audit committee	4	0	0,0%	4	100,0%
Family firm	46	7	15,2%	39	84,8%	Board composition	4	0	0,0%	4	100,0%
Corporate governance	41	5	12,2%	36	87,8%	Daughter	4	2	50,0%	2	50,0%
Succession	37	9	24,3%	28	75,7%	Decision making	4	0	0,0%	4	100,0%
Women entrepreneurs	26	6	23,1%	20	76,9%	Developing countries	4	1	25,0%	3	75,0%
Entrepreneurship	24	8	33,3%	16	66,7%	Disclosure	4	2	50,0%	2	50,0%
Board of directors	23	4	17,4%	19	82,6%	Economic development	4	2	50,0%	2	50,0%
Women director	21	1	4,8%	20	95,2%	Emerging markets	4	0	0,0%	4	100,0%
Gender diversity	19	2	10,5%	17	89,5%	Human capital	4	4	100,0%	0	0,0%
Women	18	9	50,0%	9	50,0%	India	4	0	0,0%	4	100,0%
Firm performance	14	3	21,4%	11	78,6%	Legitimacy	4	1	25,0%	3	75,0%
Board diversity	12	1	8,3%	11	91,7%	Literature review	4	0	0,0%	4	100,0%
Innovation	12	0	0,0%	12	100,0%	Malaysia	4	0	0,0%	4	100,0%
Corp. social responsibility	11	2	18,2%	9	81,8%	Risk-taking	4	1	25,0%	3	75,0%
Family	11	3	27,3%	8	72,7%	Sustainable FB model	4	3	75,0%	1	25,0%
Copreneurs	8	4	50,0%	4	50,0%	Women leadership	4	0	0,0%	4	100,0%
Entrepreneurial intention	8	1	12,5%	7	87,5%	Work-family conflict	4	4	100,0%	0	0,0%
Household	7	5	71,4%	2	28,6%	Bank loans	3	0	0,0%	3	100,0%
Identity	7	2	28,6%	5	71,4%	Emotions	3	0	0,0%	3	100,0%
Self-employment	7	3	42,9%	4	57,1%	Entrepreneur	3	1	33,3%	2	66,7%
Work-family enrichment	7	0	0,0%	7	100,0%	Ethics	3	2	66,7%	1	33,3%
China	6	2	33,3%	4	66,7%	Family involvement	3	0	0,0%	3	100,0%
Ethnicity	6	4	66,7%	2	33,3%	Family management	3	0	0,0%	3	100,0%
Leadership	6	3	50,0%	3	50,0%	Family-owned firms	3	0	0,0%	3	100,0%
Ownership	6	1	16,7%	5	83,3%	Firm value	3	0	0,0%	3	100,0%
Performance	6	1	16,7%	5	83,3%	Generation	3	0	0,0%	3	100,0%
Social capital	6	3	50,0%	3	50,0%	Governance	3	1	33,3%	2	66,7%
Systematic review	6	0	0,0%	6	100,0%	Independent directors	3	0	0,0%	3	100,0%
Diversity	5	1	20,0%	4	80,0%	Institutional theory	3	0	0,0%	3	100,0%
Earnings management	5	0	0,0%	5	100,0%	Internationalization	3	0	0,0%	3	100,0%
Emerging economies	5	0	0,0%	5	100,0%	Job satisfaction	3	0	0,0%	3	100,0%
Family capital	5	4	80,0%	1	20,0%	Kinship	3	0	0,0%	3	100,0%
Family ownership	5	0	0,0%	5	100,0%	Resilience	3	1	33,3%	2	66,7%
Financial performance	5	1	20,0%	4	80,0%	Risk	3	1	33,3%	2	66,7%
Small business	5	1	20,0%	4	80,0%	Role conflict	3	1	33,3%	2	66,7%

Socioemotional wealth	5	1	20,0%	4	80,0%	Turkey	3	1	33,3%	2	66,7%
Strategic planning	5	1	20,0%	4	80,0%	Unpaid work	3	3	100,0%	0	0,0%

T, P1 and P2 refer to the number of articles, which contains the keywords in the periods 1991-2021, 1991-2015 and 2016-2021, respectively. The parameter %P1 is calculated by taking the number of times a specific keyword has appeared in P1 and dividing it by the total number of times the variable appears in both P1 and P2. %P2 is calculated likewise. Thus, %P1 and %P2 indicate the percentage of keywords that appear in the articles in the periods P1 and P2 out of the total. As the percentage of articles published in each period is different, 24.3% of articles in the period P1 and 75.7% in the period P2, the percentages that %P1 and %P2 represent must individually be compared with the 24.3% and 75.7%.

Table VII: Main keywords and themes

Clusters	Keywords and frequency	Research focuses
<b>Period 1991-2015</b>		
Cluster 1	family (3), self-employment (3), Asia (2), China (2), work (2)	Family and work
Cluster 2	entrepreneurship (8), succession (5), unpaid work (3), women entrepreneurs (3), business (2), economic development (2)	Succession necessity or opportunity for entrepreneurship
Cluster 3	corporate governance (5), board of directors (4), firm performance (3), agency theory (2), ethics (2), gender diversity (2)	Governance and performance
Cluster 4	human capital (4), family capital (3), social capital (3), family-owned business (2), financial capital (2)	Family support for women in business
Cluster 5	ethnicity (5), leadership (3), children (2), culture (2), parents (2)	Family and firm culture
Cluster 6	work-family conflict (4), copreneurs (3), copreneurial couples (2), family business performance (2)	Copreneurial business partnerships
<b>Period 2016-2021</b>		
Cluster 1	firm performance (11), women directors (6), earnings management (5), family ownership (5), board gender diversity (4), emerging markets (4), Malaysia (4)	Board gender diversity and economic performance
Cluster 2	entrepreneurship (16), family (8), copreneurs (4), entrepreneurial intentions (4), India (4) literature review (4), women's entrepreneurship (4)	Women's and family entrepreneurship
Cluster 3	corporate governance (32), board of directors (19) female directors (6), performance (5), corporate social responsibility (4)	Board gender diversity and non-economic performance
Cluster 4	succession (12), women entrepreneurs (6), China (4), identity (4)	Women in leadership succession
Cluster 5	gender diversity (17), financial performance (4)	Gender diversity and financial performance

Table VIII: Top cited papers in each thematic cluster

<b>Period 1991-2015</b>	
<i>Cluster 1. Family and work</i>	
Ram et al. (1993). Sociology-The Journal of The British Sociological Association, 27(4).	117
Low et al. (2015). Pacific-Basin Finance Journal, 35(Part A).	90
Jiang et al. (2015). Journal of Corporate Finance, 33.	79
<i>Cluster 2. Succession necessity or opportunity for entrepreneurship</i>	
Martínez Jiménez (2009). Family Business Review, 22(1)	123
Schroder et al. (2011). Family Business Review, 24(4)	74
Welsh et al. (2014). Journal of Business Research, 67(5)	49
<i>Cluster 3. Governance and performance</i>	
Nekhili et al. (2013). Journal of Business Ethics, 118(2)	93
Low et al. (2015). Pacific-Basin Finance Journal, 35(Part A)	90
Amore et al. (2014). Management Science, 60(5)	84
<i>Cluster 4. Family support for women in business</i>	
Danes et al. (2009). Family Business Review, 22(3)	185
Cetindamar et al. (2012). Entrepreneurship and Regional Development, 24(1-2)	92
Panwar et al. (2014). Journal of Business Ethics, 125(3)	60
<i>Cluster 5. Family and firm culture</i>	
Hamilton (2006). International Small Business Journal, 24(3)	144
Hoffmann et al. (2015). Small Business Economics, 44(1)	41
Barrett et al. (2009). Journal of Management & Organization, 15(3)	22
<i>Cluster 6. Copreneurial business partnerships</i>	
Danes et al. (2007). Journal of Business Research, 60(10)	72
Hedberg et al. (2012). Journal of Family Business Strategy, 3(4)	26
Wu et al. (2010). International Journal of Human Resource Management, 21(5).	23
<b>Period 2016-2021</b>	
<i>Cluster 1. Board gender diversity and economic performance</i>	
Terjesen et al. (2016). Journal of Management & Governance, 20(3)	192
Arzubiaga et al. (2018). International Entrepreneurship and Management Journal, 14(1)	34
Abdullah & Ismail (2016). Asian Review of Accounting, 24(4)	26
<i>Cluster 2. Women's and family entrepreneurship</i>	
Urbano et al. (2019). Small Business Economics, 53(1)	97
Liguori et al. (2018). International Entrepreneurship and Management Journal, 14(1)	47



Campopiano et al. (2017). Journal of Family Business Strategy, 8(4)	39
<i>Cluster 3. Board gender diversity and non-economic performance</i>	
Sundarasan et al. (2016). Corporate Governance-The Int. Jr of Business in Society, 16(1)	55
Cordeiro et al. (2020). Business Strategy and the Environment, 29(3)	33
Nadeem (2020). Corporate Governance-An International Review, 28(2)	27
<i>Cluster 4. Women in leadership succession</i>	
Hytti et al. (2017). International Small Business Jr.-Researching Entrepreneurship, 35(6)	39
Ramadani et al. (2017). Journal of Enterprising Culture, 25(4)	19
Kubiček & Machek (2019). Review of Managerial Science, 13(5)	16
<i>Cluster 5. Gender diversity and financial performance</i>	
Nekhili et al. (2018). Journal of Business Ethics, 153(2)	30
Chadwick et al. (2018). Journal of Family Business Strategy, 9(4)	16
Bjuggren et al. (2018). Corporate Governance-The Int. Jr. of Business in Society, 18(2)	14

Abbreviations: TC, total citations

Figure 1: Publication trends and the most frequent keywords

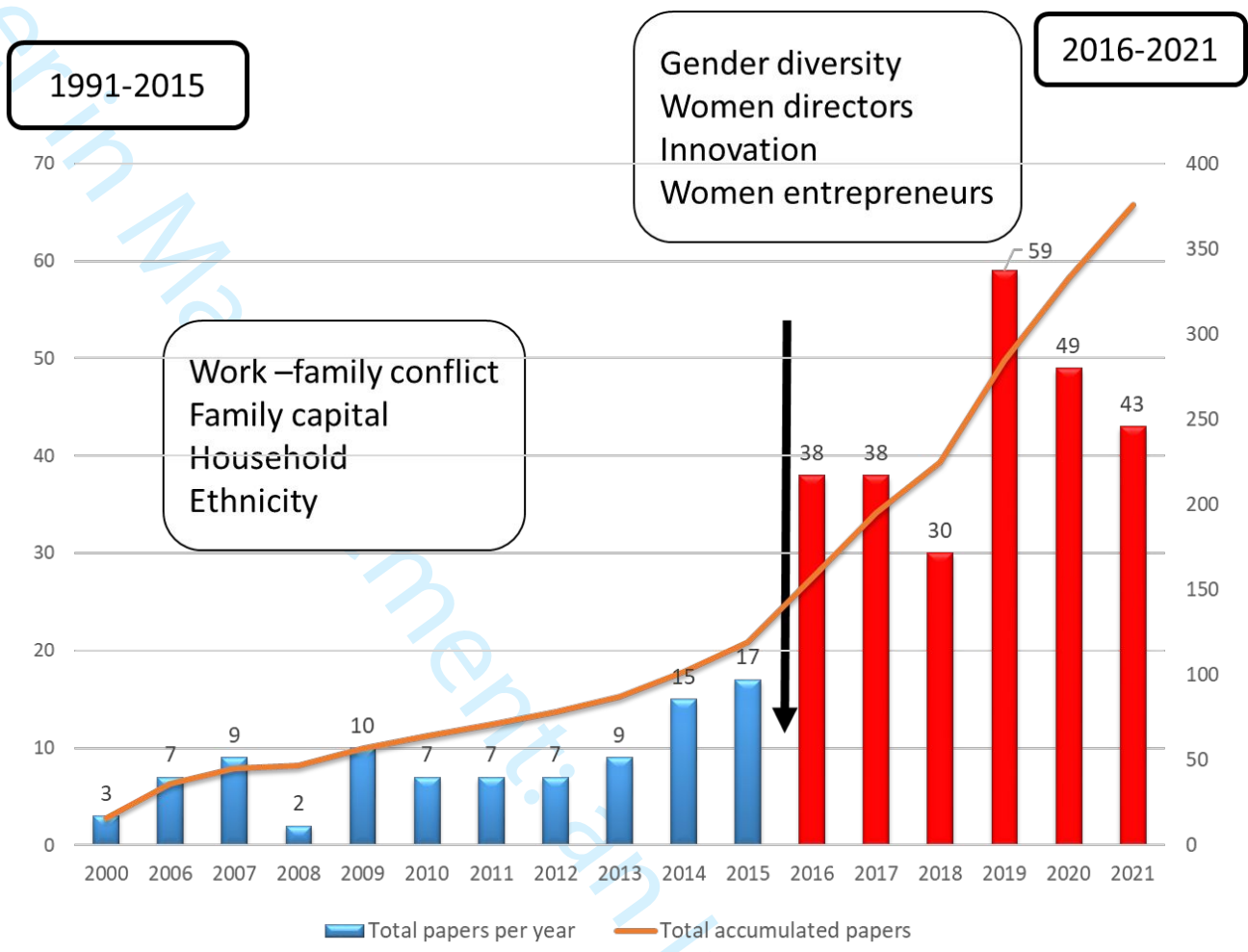


Figure 2: Co-word network map of gender in family firm research: 1991–2015

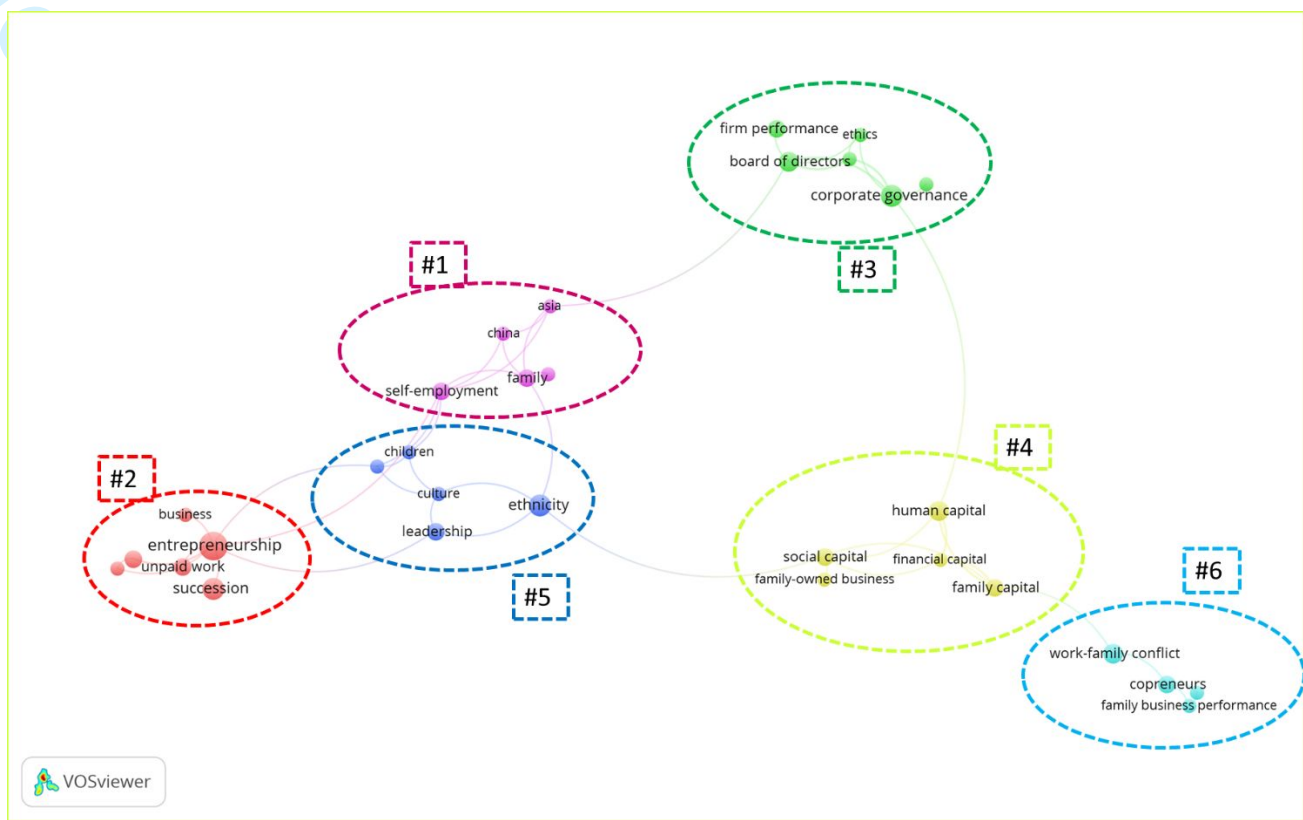


Figure 3: Co-word network map of gender in family firm research: 2016–2021

