The Gender Question and Family Entrepreneurship Research

Ogechi Adeola, Michael Zisuh Ngoasong, and Olaniyi Evans

Women are the largest untapped reservoir of talent in the World.
Hillary Clinton, former Presidential Aspirant, USA

Abstract Gender in family entrepreneurship is still exploratory and, despite an increase in family entrepreneurship research, most of the studies give little or no information role of gender in family business. Existing research on family entrepreneurship tends to focus only or primarily on men, and the women appear invisible in the studies. However, there is little evidence that of extensive research focus on the issue of family entrepreneurship with the aim of building a cohesive understanding of gender in family entrepreneurship and the interactions existing between the different dimensions and components. Consequently, this chapter examines how gender issues are addressed in family entrepreneurship research. In particular, the chapter provides a critical review of the literature around the gender question in entrepreneurship, focusing on the resource-based view, organizational studies and gender in family entrepreneurship. Based on the review, a gender-aware framework is developed depicting three key areas for understanding the gendered process in family entrepreneurship: the determinants of women's entry into family businesses, their gendered roles and the associated outcomes. Finally, implications and future research opportunities are identified and discussed.

Keywords Gender • Family • Entrepreneurship • Family business

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1 Introduction

Described as entities owned and controlled by members of a family (Brockhaus, 2004), family businesses constitute 80% of firms in Europe and Asia, and 80–95% of all businesses in Latin America and the United States (Poza & Daugherty, 2014). Family businesses provide 50% of total employment and more than 50% of developed economies' GDP (Shepherd & Zacharakis, 2000). Family business plays a major role in promoting entrepreneurship, skills training, investing for long-term growth, and the dynamism and strength of the whole economy (Siakas, Naaranoja, Vlachakis, & Siakas, 2014). Therefore, as a vital economic engine, the role of family businesses in the economy cannot be ignored.

Gender is defined by Acker (1992, p. 250) as the "patterned, socially produced, distinctions between female and male, feminine and masculine". Since gender is an important concept for understanding how women face skepticism and suffering in family businesses, the gender question in the family business should inspire great interest and reflection (Staffansson, 2015). Gender in family entrepreneurship is still a new concept in entrepreneurial activity. Research into gender issues in family entrepreneurship or the role and the involvement of women in family firms has been driven (Barrett & Moores, 2009; Benavides Velasco, Guzmán Parra, & Quintana García, 2011; Dugan et al., 2011; Hamilton, 2013a, 2013b), especially in recent years, by a general increase in the visibility of women's work as self-employed, the rising number of women entrepreneurs, and the increasing appreciation of gender as a key analytical variable (Rodríguez-Modroño, Gálvez-Muñoz, & Agenjo-Calderón, 2015).

Though there has been a growing interest in gender in entrepreneurial activity, gender is largely unexplored in family entrepreneurship (Sonfield & Lussier, 2009). Research incorporating gender as a key analytical variable is still insufficient, compared to other issues studied regarding family firms. In most analyses, the family firm is the core of the research rather than the individuals. In most studies investigating individuals, the emphasis is on the owner/manager (Hamilton, 2006), even when individual roles are identified in the family business (Heinonen & Hytti, 2011). This chapter, therefore, focuses on the gender aspect.

Considering the international evidence on the significant changes in women's roles and positioning within family businesses (Cappuyns, 2007), the changing dynamics has started to influence theoretical developments. To this extent, gender theory in family business research has begun to contribute to the theoretical reconstruction of family businesses. However, while continuously evolving, the gender question is still largely under-researched within the family business research (Sonfield & Lussier, 2009). Moreover, the role and involvement of women in family businesses is an issue of great interest. An increasing number of women enter family businesses and face many obstacles to their participation/involvement, such as succession, primogeniture, stereotyped roles and inconspicuousness (Jimenez, 2009).

Thus, this chapter confronts and addresses the gender question in family business research. The gender question explores how family business research faces methodological problems of too much emphasis on firms with male owner-managers as respondents, a faulty gendered process, leading to the neglect of 'familiness' even at the core of family business research. Familiness refers to "... the unique bundle of resources a particular firm has because of the systems interactions between the family, its individual members, and the business" (Habbershon and Williams 1999: 11). It can be a source of competitive advantage, value creation and wealth generation in a firm (Monroy, Solís, & Rodríguez-Aceves, 2015), particularly with positive influence of family involvement (Pearson, Carr, & Shaw, 2008). Dye (2010) described Gendering as 'the process of ascribing characteristics of masculinity or femininity, femaleness or maleness to a phenomenon (i.e., a role, position, concept, person, object, organization, or artifact), usually resulting in power and privilege, voice and neglect, or advantage and disadvantage, as drawn along the lines of sex and gender.' In this case, the gendering process is geared towards the male owner-managers.

The purpose, therefore, is to explore the interface between gendered processes and the family entrepreneurship domain. By exploring the extent to which gendered processes are reinforced in family business research, the study unravels how the literature has contributed to our understanding of gendered in family business. This chapter explores three key areas to understand how to identify and resolve the gender question in family entrepreneurship research. It highlights the gender question in family firms: the barriers faced by women regarding entry or collaboration; the inconspicuousness and lack of recognition of their work and, thus the low compensation it receives; and the gendered roles in these businesses. By focusing on gender, the chapter highlights the decision-making process in the household and the business, and related division of roles and responsibilities. It shows how family business research faces methodological problems of too much emphasis on firms with male owner-managers as respondents and the gendered processes, leading to the neglect of 'familiness' even at the core of family business research.

The chapter is organized into six sections. Following this preliminary introduction, the next section presents the gender order which explains the gender question. To answer the gender question, a review of literature follows which explores women and family entrepreneurship, gender in organizational studies and gender in family business. The concluding chapters discuss the findings and provide suggestions for future research.

2 The Gender Order

"A woman's place is in the home", famously declared Aeschylus in 467 B.C. While this dictum is vigorously rejected by women everywhere, the gender order continues to follow societal norms (Eckert & McConnell-Ginet, 2014). According to Hirdman (1992), the gender order is an obvious pattern in the society on a general level and has segregation and hierarchization as its two primary logics. Segregation suggests the stereotypical segregation between men and women, and between masculinity and femininity. Hierarchization is the formation of a gender-based hierarchy with men and masculinity ascribed higher status than women and femininity. The two logics often lead to female subordination and male domination (Staffansson, 2015).

Though women entrepreneurs are found in most industries, segregation still continues between male- and female-dominated businesses (Bolton & Muzio, 2008), and can be found in the rest of the labour market (Statistics Sweden, 2010). In particular, in welfare states where women's participation in the labour market is high, gender segregation is quite striking, as jobs in health care, care for the elderly and childcare are female gender-labelled and female-dominated (Bolton & Muzio, 2008; Statistics Sweden, 2010).

Broomhill and Sharp (2005, p. 103) states: "although many aspects of the traditional gender order remain intact, it has been profoundly disrupted by restructuring within the labour market and also by the decline of the nuclear family and other socio-economic changes affecting gender arrangements within households." Such changes have led to more complexity in existing gender arrangements. To further complicate the process, changes and continuities in gender order are not evenly experienced, leading to growing polarisation in gender roles and order in different socio-economic groups. Thus, the gender order explains the gender question in family entrepreneurship research. To consider the gender order, a review of literature follows which encompasses women and family entrepreneurship, using the resource-based view, gender in organizational studies and finally gender in family business. Our research focuses on women as 'owner-manager' and not women as 'workers', providing an in-depth review of literature on how gender issues are addressed in family entrepreneurship research.

3 Women and Family Entrepreneurship: Resource-Based View

One of the most widely used theories in the organizational literature, the resource-based view (RBV) is an approach to attaining competitive advantage that emerged in the 1980s, after Wernerfelt's (1984) study on "*The Resource-Based View of the Firm*". The proponents of RBV argue that firms should look inside the firm to find its unique sources of competitive advantage instead of looking for it in the competitive environment (Barney, 1991; Wernerfelt, 1984). Essentially, RBV is a theory that views resources as essential to superior firm performance. Resources can be tangible or intangible. While tangible resources consist of land, capital, and machinery among others, intangible resources comprise skills, knowledge and brand reputation among others (Runyan, Huddleston, & Swinney, 2006).

There are two important assumptions in the RBV. Firstly, resources are immobile. That is, resources do not move from company to company, at least in the short-run. Therefore, rivals' resources and processes cannot be easily replicated. Secondly, resources are heterogeneous. In other words, organizational capabilities and resources differ from one company to another. Therefore, RBV assumes that by using their individual bundles of resources, companies achieve competitive advantage (Jurevicius, 2013). Although having immobile and heterogeneous resources are crucial to attaining competitive advantage, these are not enough in order to sustain competitive advantage. The resources must also be VRIO: valuable, rare, inimitable and organized (Rothaermel, 2013). Only the firms that are capable of exploiting their valuable, rare, inimitable and organized resources can attain sustained competitive advantage (Jurevicius, 2013; Runyan et al., 2006).

A small number of studies have considered family firms from an RBV perspective (Rau, 2014; Zahra, Hayton, & Salvato, 2004). Family firms are such that must rely heavily on the resource of family skills. This is especially true of female small business owners, as 85% of them have no employees other than the female owner (Adler, 1999; Runyan et al., 2006). However, while access to tangible resources may differ by gender (Marlow & Patton, 2005), the facility to exploit intangible resources may equalize women's chances of success in family businesses (Runyan et al., 2006).

3.1 Gender in Organizational Studies

The glass ceiling, a phrase coined in the 1980s, is a metaphor for the invisible and artificial barriers that hinder women from moving up the corporate ladder (Johns, 2013). The Glass Ceiling Commission (1995) reported several barriers to the success of women in reaching the top of the corporate ladder. These included societal barriers such as opportunity and attainment, cultural, gender, and prejudice and bias (Hurley, Hurley, Choudhary, & Choudhary, 2016; Johns, 2013).

However, in contrast to The Glass Ceiling Commission (1995) and other earlier studies, Cole (1997) found that women were neither hindered because of their gender, nor up against the dreaded glass ceiling. The women in Cole's (1997) study had a positive outlook on their careers. They had accessed sectors conventionally viewed as masculine, such as the construction industry. Epstein, Seron, Oglensky, and Saute (2014) argued that Cole's (1997) findings were made possible by the introduction of flexible schedules, which enable women to combine child care and their professional responsibilities (Dumas, 1998; Epstein et al., 2014).

Notwithstanding Cole's (1997) findings, organization theory has mostly ignored gender issues (Staffansson, 2015). Studies such as Calás and Smircich (1996) have argued that organizational scholarship is primarily written by men, for men, and about men. They noted that to make the field more inclusive, feminist theories would have to be seen not as only women's issue. In furtherance of Calás and Smircich (1996), Alvesson and Billing (2009) argued two strong motives for taking an interest in gender, which are injustice and business management. In this regard, the authors suggested that women are strongly underrepresented in higher positions, and have less autonomy and control over work.

In recent decade, increasing attention has been paid to gender in entrepreneurship (Ahl, 2006; Jimenez, 2009; Heinonen & Hytti, 2011; Staffansson, 2015). In entrepreneurship research, gender studies have mainly examined the experiences of women (Bruni, Gherardi, & Poggio, 2014; Henry, Foss, & Ahl, 2016). The key role of the gender perspective in entrepreneurial research is that it shows sundry ways of entrepreneurship and diverse ways of running a business, without constraints of 'arrant' masculinity that grows on risk-taking, technical innovation, full-time employment, and huge ambitions for growth (Pettersson, 2008). Studies such as Bjursell and Melin (2011) have therefore argued for a shift away from the current focus of the entrepreneur as masculine towards appreciating entrepreneurship as a blend of the feminine and the masculine. Viewing entrepreneurial identity as a narrative construction, the authors noted the impact of the move from the family context to the business context on the individual woman's identity process. As a result of gendered expectations, women in family firms may find themselves in circumstances where they are not regarded as potential leaders/owners by the older generation. This is because, in family firms, the construction of meaning and identity among family members are context-influenced by family, business, and gender (Bjursell & Melin, 2011).

In recent years, both in the empirical and theoretical literature in the entrepreneurship domain, scholars are actively introducing gendered analyses which depict the limitations of much of the entrepreneurial literature to date (Ahl, 2006; Marlow & McAdam, 2013; Al-Dajani, Bika, Collins, & Swail, 2014). These analyses portray the contemporary entrepreneurial discourse as fundamentally masculine, and constrains the character of an entrepreneur and the definition of entrepreneurship (Ahl, 2006; Al-Dajani et al., 2014). Thus, women are depicted to be outsiders or intruders to entrepreneurship (Taylor & Marlow, 2009), which diminishes the potential contribution of women, as family business actors and entrepreneurs, to the economy and society as a whole (Al-Dajani et al., 2014). Besides, the outcomes of women businesses are considered as under-par, because they are risk-averse, smaller, and lacking growth orientation (Brush, 1992 as cited in Al-Dajani et al., 2014). In fact, almost any conceivable damaging business term possible has been used to describe the hapless female entrepreneur (Marlow, 2013).

4 Gender in Family Business

The woman in the family is an important role (Staffansson, 2015). Surprisingly, little research has been done on investigating the role of the woman in family entrepreneurship/businesses. Studies of gender in entrepreneurship are increasing, but those devoted to the role of women in family entrepreneurship are still fragmented (Heinonen & Hytti, 2011). Despite the role and the involvement of women in family firms, it is not until recent decades that gender is incorporated as a result of the mix of feminist theories, and social, and business and cultural history (Gálvez, 2004; Rodríguez-Modroño et al., 2015). Moreover, the studies on family firms focus on the role of women in the course of inheritance (Cole, 1997; Dumas, 1992; Vera & Dean, 2005) and on relational family dynamics, underscoring principally three spheres related to the procreative role of women: making the next generation, educating future business leaders, and transmitting values (Dugan et al., 2011), or the linkage between their working experience restricted to a few sectors and their entrepreneurial abilities (Gálvez & Fernández Pérez, 2007).

Historically, women have played important roles in the establishment, management, and expansion of family firms, either visibly or hiddenly (Dumas, 1998; Vera & Dean, 2005). Although women have often and directly been involved in daily management, historically they have received little recognition, either in the form of a management position or a reasonable salary (Hollander & Bukowitz, 1990; Nelton, 1998). The relative invisibility of women in entrepreneurship highlights the need to unravel the differences and the inimitable role of women entrepreneurs (Hamilton, 2013a, 2013b); their unique experiences and their natural, feminine styles. Indeed, the literature has argued that women possess some unique qualities vital for business success, making women a valuable resource (Miller, 2012; Salganicoff, 1990). Studies such as Francis (1999) has suggested that most women have characteristics and skills deemed necessary for the success of managers and leaders. These include the ability to multitask, and to trust instinct and intuition rather than analysis and rationality.

Some authors even adopted the term ‘emotional leadership’ in reference to women, especially in family firms (Jimenez, 2009; Lyman, 1988; Meroño-Cerdán & López-Nicolás, 2017; Ward, 1987). The view is that women have high emotional intelligence: the ability, or skill to assess and manage the emotions of oneself and of others. In family firms, women are capable of assessing and managing the behaviour of family members and of ensuring consideration for people’s feelings. Women have “certain gender characteristics that make them better suited to the roles of caretaker, peacemaker and conflict solver, roles that are fundamental to the success and survival of the family firm” (Salganicoff, 1990, as cited in Staffansson, 2015, p. 1).

For example, Colli et al. (2003, as cited in Rodríguez-Modroño et al., 2015, p. 8), who studied family firms in Italy, Great Britain and Spain in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, showed that ‘women constituted an important hidden resource, although their participation was not formally recorded. Women contributed vital capital resources and access to trusted business and family networks. In nineteenth Century Great Britain, for example, women were under the protection of their spouses and could not inherit until the second half of the nineteenth Century, so that many were de facto partners in a business, but lacked the legal right to the business capital or other properties. This pattern was also fairly common in Europe in the twentieth Century. However, business interests and the family were fully interlinked and the phantom tasks performed by women extended even to finance”.

Another study by Parsons and Bales (1956), which adopted traditional functionalist approaches to gender analysis, found that, in a capitalist society, role specialization was necessary within the family, with men involved in the cut-throat world of business and the women carrying out the roles of nurturing. The presumed mutual exclusivity of these roles provided justification for the type of family that became dominant: the 'traditional' or breadwinner/housewife family (Bradley, 2007).

Despite the considerable change in patterns of employment and family composition which have altered the opportunities available for venturing in recent decades, Arber and Ginn (1991) contended that family and work are still independent spheres, with women's advances in market position not commensurate with advances in their family position. In fact, Ahl (2004, p. 167) sums this aptly, "the existence of a line dividing a public sphere of work from a private sphere of home, family and children is also taken for granted in the entrepreneurship literature". Remarkably, there are now approaches in the institutional entrepreneurship literature that integrate these two spheres (e.g. Bika, 2012). Also, the social capital approach to 'familiness construct' and its components is rectifying this deficiency (Pearson, et al. 2008), and thus views the family and the business as intertwined, rather than as separate entities. Though this is auspicious to the field of family entrepreneurship, the leaning in the existing literature is still to abstract women in family business as side-lined through paternalism or patriarchy (Hamilton, 2006).

A stream of the literature also delved into why women's role and involvement in family firms are hidden (e.g. Gálvez & Fernández Pérez, 2007; Rodríguez-Modroño et al., 2015). For example, Gálvez and Fernández Pérez (2007) found that the bulk of women's role and involvement in family firms are executed without a contract, or benefits, and even when women receive some sort of compensation, it is always less than their male counterparts, though the variance is not attributable to differences in productivity. In the nineteenth Century when women often helped out family firms in agriculture and commerce without wages or recognition, many women managed the businesses for years, and yet despite abundant responsibilities, were never accorded as owners. Even in large mercantile cities where women managed the business while the men were away (Fernández, 1996), their participation was dependent on the wishes of their male folks.

Also, in a recent study, Rodríguez-Modroño et al. (2015) identified the reasons why women contributions to family firms have been hidden. First, due to the division of labor between the family and business subsystems, women are usually assigned informal support functions such as assistants, or mediators between the family members (Gillis-Donovan & Moynihan-Bradt, 1990) or sometimes, an emotional leadership role (Salganicoff, 1990). Second, because the cultural and legal framework barred the incorporation of women into the labor market, the management and ownership of business, or sometimes impede the formal recognition of women in family firms (Fernández & Hamilton, 2007; Gálvez & Fernández Pérez, 2007). Thus, the works of women and their roles in business are not only marginalized but repressed, and even purposely distorted (Wiesner-Hanks, 2001).

Using a radical subjectivist view of economics, Canada, Barrett and Moores (2009), in a case study of 16 women in leadership positions in family businesses in the US, the UK, the Middle East, Southeast Asia, and Australia, investigated the various contextual factors of women's entrepreneurship in the family business. The study took the first step away from the limitations of a particular feminist ideology towards creating a gender-aware framework of entrepreneurship in the manner of

Brush, de Bruin, and Welter (2009) by providing a new theoretical direction for exploring gender and family entrepreneurship. The findings concerning the entrepreneurial imagination, self-organization, empathy, and modularity challenge existing ideas of women's entrepreneurship, illustrating how family business prepares rather than encumbers women for entrepreneurship and leadership within, and beyond the family.

Daughter succession is another under-researched area in family entrepreneurship (Al-Dajani et al., 2014). The available studies on succession planning in family businesses show that many family firms still utilize the primogeniture criterion, where the firstborn male child takes over the family firm (Deng, 2015). Glover's (2014) '*Gender, Power and Succession in Family Farm Business*' provides useful insights into how power and gender issues operate in the succession process of small firms, in line with Robert Smith's theory of matriarchy. Applying an ethnographic approach to a family farm in the Midlands of England, the author depicted how one daughter navigated gender issues as she became an eventual successor. "To this extent, Glover's article turns the focus of scholarly enquiry away from the role of traditional farmers' wives and shows how contemporary women enter the farm business through succession rather than marriage in the twenty-first century. In this family business context, gender bias emerges as a determinant of routine farm management but not of strategy" (Al-Dajani et al., 2014, p. 13).

In Deng's (2015) study, only 23% of all single family successors in the sample are females, indicating a high preference for male heirs. "Family successions are significantly more likely to occur when the predecessor has a son. Under specific family structures, such as when both genders are represented among the predecessors' children, the number of female successors decreases to 19% of family successions with one successor. Sons increase the likelihood of CEO succession contest constraints. We observe that the selected female family successors seem to be equipped with higher levels of human capital compared to the selected male family successors" (p. 38). The study thus indicates that male successors are chosen not because of higher human capital but because of the gender preferences for male heirs. The primogeniture criterion frees fathers from the unpleasant task of comparing and choosing between their children (Staffansson, 2015).

Consistent with Cole (1997), one of the real opportunities for women to reach the highest positions in business (i.e. president, a member of the board of directors) are family firms. The family firm is, therefore, an ideal setting to prepare daughters as a leader, in the sense that the father serves as a natural mentor (Dumas, 1998). However, daughters come up against substantial obstacles to gaining power in family firms. Founders are usually reluctant to hand over the running of the firm to their daughter (Jimenez, 2009). Often, daughters join the family firm, especially at times of crisis or when the father has no sons (Dumas, 1998). Vera and Dean (2005) noted that, though the father is the definer of his daughter's position in the firm, a daughter may face many problems once she takes over the running of the firm. The authors added that the daughter could, however, have higher credibility and self-confidence if armed with experience outside of the family firm.

Recent studies have challenged the stereotyped perception of the husband being the lead (male) entrepreneur. For example, Deacon, Harris, and Worth (2014), using a multiple exploratory interview and ethnographic approaches, delved into contemporary gender and entrepreneurship theories to unravel "the division of labour, capitals and capacities and gendered identities within husband and wife heterosexual copreneurial businesses… Expelling the myth of the "male lead entrepreneur", this study found that entrepreneurial identity and roles and responsibilities within a copreneurial business are shared and complementary, and are dependent upon the unique capacities and capitals of each partner. While there is evidence of duties that could be stereotypically described as either "men's work or women's work", there was no apparent role tension between the partners. Thus, no partner's contribution was deemed more valuable than the other" (p. 317). The authors thus suggested that copreneurship is not a process of gender but a gendered process whereby the former designates a fixed physiological typology and the latter a fluidity of psychological application. The study questions the appropriateness of assigning (son/father, mother/daughter) labels to the husband and wife, which have gendered connotations and carry distinct societal expectations (Al-Dajani et al., 2014; McAdam & Marlow, 2010).

It must be noted that the increased recognition of women's work, the social advances towards greater equality, and women's access to formal education have enabled family firms to train women as future managers, and the resulting growth in women entrepreneurs and woman heads of family firms has reduced the gender gap in business (Jimenez, 2009; Rodríguez-Modroño et al., 2015). For example, Jimenez (2009), in a review of 48 articles, 23 books and 3 doctoral dissertations published since 1985 on women and family businesses, found an increase in the involvement and role of women in family businesses.

However, Rodríguez-Modroño et al. (2015) maintained that the important role and involvement of women in family firms is still underappreciated since their participation is not necessarily as owners/managers, but still very often as collaborators and informal leaders. Other studies such as Sharma (2004) and Vadnjal and Zupan (2009) have also shown how women are still under-recorded, therefore unrecognised as business people in the official statistics of companies, and are stereotyped into reproductive, informal and secondary roles. Occupational segregation, underrepresentation in management, and societal expectations restrict women, affect their motivation and goals for their businesses. Jimenez (2009) further highlighted the difficulties or obstacles that women continue to face in family firms, especially the lack of appreciation for their contributions, exemplified by inconspicuousness, stereotyped roles, succession and primogeniture. Indeed, women in family businesses face not only constraints faced by all businesswomen (Starr & Yudkin, 1996), but also problems unique to their situation.

5 Gendered Processes in Family Entrepreneurship

Understanding the Gender Question in Family Entrepreneurship
Based on a critically review of the literature on women and family entrepreneurship from a resource-based view, organizational studies and gender in family business, it has become clear that a thorough conceptual and methodological re-thinking is needed not only to change the focus on male owners/managers as respondents, but also the stereotypical assumptions reinforced in the existing studies. Contemporary entrepreneurial discourse is fundamentally masculine and constrains the character of an entrepreneur. Historically, women have played important roles in the management of family firms, either visibly or hidden, although they have received little recognition. Today there are many women entrepreneurs, yet the dominant model of an entrepreneur is a male. We, therefore, concur with Bjursell and Melin (2011) who argued for a shift away from the current focus of the entrepreneur as masculine towards appreciating entrepreneurship as a mix of the feminine and the masculine. Family entrepreneurship research, policy and practice should be released from the shackles of masculine domination through a reconstruction of the images, narratives and discourses of entrepreneurs, entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial practices.

Three key areas of research highlight the gender question in family firms: the determinants of women's entry into family businesses, the gendered roles in the family business and the associated outcome (Fig. 1). Although Aeschylus's notion that "A woman's place is in the home" is being vigorously rejected by women, Fig. 1 illustrates that the gender order still continues. In terms of determinants, the first key area, an increasing number of women enter family businesses today and face many obstacles to their involvement, such as inconspicuousness, stereotyped roles, succession and primogeniture. They face the glass ceiling of societal barriers such as opportunity and attainment, cultural, gender, and prejudice and bias (Gillis-Donovan & Moynihan-Bradt, 1990; Jimenez, 2009). Identifying these determinants and the extent to which they serve as either incentives or barriers is a starting point to understanding and resolving the gender question in entrepreneurship.

Secondly, the gender order continues to deter women in the labor market, the management and ownership of business, and their formal recognition in family firms. The managerial and operational activities that women undertake in their roles in family businesses are still marginalized, repressed, and even distorted. Their important roles and involvement in family firms are underappreciated and under-recorded, as they are stereotyped into reproductive, informal and secondary roles. In order to resolve the gender order (and the myth of the "male lead entrepreneur"), our proposed gender-aware framework recognizes the resources and support available to help women make informed choices about their roles in family businesses. Indeed, the family firm is an ideal setting to prepare women as leaders. The family business should, therefore, prepare rather than encumber women for entrepreneurship and leadership within, and beyond the family, because the real opportunities

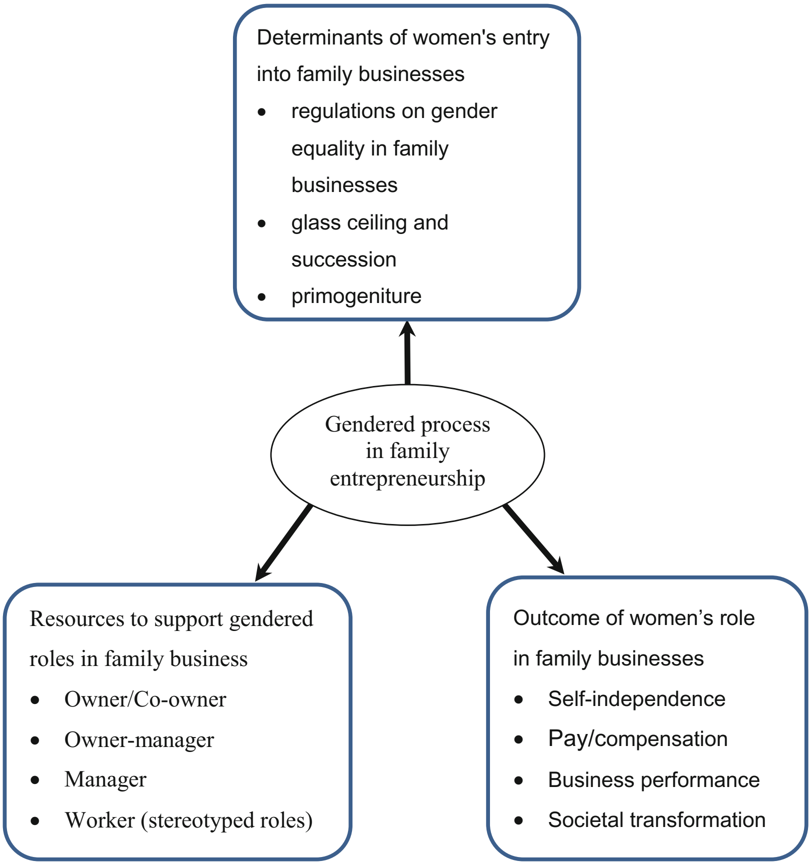

Fig. 1 The gender question in family entrepreneurship

for women to reach the highest positions in business (i.e. president, a member of the board of directors) are family firms.

Thirdly, the outcome for encouraging and supporting women's roles in family businesses is beneficial where it promotes self-independence for the woman, as seen in social and economic independence and wealth creation. It can also serve as a means to achieve societal transformation, for example through successful women in business serving as role models, promoting and empowering other women (Kimbu & Ngoasong, 2016). Thus, the gender question in family entrepreneurship also has to take into account the nature of the outcome of women's involvement in the family business both as an end in itself (business performance and self-independence) but also as a means of encouraging more women entrepreneurs and managers in family businesses.

6 Future Research Opportunities

Progress has been made on gender in family business research, but many important areas and research questions remain. For example, a number of gaps can be identified in the understanding of the gendered processes in family businesses by applying the framework depicted in Fig. 1 to different family businesses in different contexts. The gender factor is believed to be a function of the family business context. In this regard, Staffansson (2015) suggested areas for further research, such as the kind of society, the type of business or industry, the types of customers served, the prevailing gendered processes, and the gendered overlap between family and business. Also, Jimenez (2009) suggested areas for further research in regard to women supposed emotional leadership; succession and primogeniture, and the effects on family business; women's insignificance in the family business; the making of a professional career in the family firm; and the running of the family firm, involvement and motivation. This is related to determinants of women's entry into family businesses and their gendered roles.

Many studies used the essentialist view of men and women to propose the view that women have unique traits; this is limiting and biased towards heterosexuality. Future research should apply Acker (1990, 1992) model of four gendered interactions in the family business context, in order to extend the organizational gendering processes to the family gendering processes. According to Staffansson (2015), Ackers' model is based on the assumption that work and everyday life are separate, though work is the first priority of the worker. It has to be noted that work and family overlap, the gendering processes in business and family must also overlap. As suggested by Kvande (2002) and Staffansson (2015), it would be interesting to explore how women construct femininity in family businesses; how different versions of femininity are constructed through relations with men in family businesses in different industries; how women choose to promote themselves; and how they see themselves as men's equals.

As Hamilton (2013a, 2013b) noted, academic research perpetuates the discourse of entrepreneurship as a form of masculinity. A study of the theory of male-dominated entrepreneurship would be atopic worthy of investigation. Such enquiry would need to challenge the primary discourse that women are inconspicuous. Gender in family entrepreneurship research should focus more on "how gender is accomplished rather than study what it is" (Ahl, 2004, p. 192). There is need to understand the family business as a blend of the feminine and the masculine (Bjursell & Melin, 2011). A more grounded understanding and conceptualization of gender in the entrepreneurial field, as argued by Wharton (2009) and Hamilton (2013a, b), would make family entrepreneurship more inclusive. According to Fletcher's critical theory approach (Fletcher, 2014), there is little understanding of how family settings, business structures and practices create relations of power or asymmetry. Future research should, therefore, question the norms of the gendered processes in family businesses.

Another promising avenue to pursue would be to study the different family businesses inherited and run by women in male-labelled or male-dominated industries, such as the real estate or the construction industry. For example, how do family and business overlap? How do they negotiate femininity while pursuing their career? Is it different from the non-family business?

It is necessary to move beyond conventional molds of the family unit. Al-Dajani et al. (2014) suggested that future research should explore gender in family business, in the context of stepfamilies, single parent families and extended families. This can offer ample research opportunities to exploring gendered processes within the family business from all directions.

There is a need to investigate the complex process of 'familiness' and entrepreneurship with a special emphasis on gender. Further studies would, therefore, need to focus more on capturing the notion of 'familiness' as the focal point in family entrepreneurship.

7 Conclusion

This chapter has explored the gender in family entrepreneurship research and provided insights into how women face inconspicuousness, stereotyped roles, succession and primogeniture in family businesses. It highlights the need to investigate the complex process of 'familiness' and entrepreneurship with a particular emphasis on gender. Research into gender issues in family entrepreneurship has been driven in recent years by a general increase in visibility of women's work as women entrepreneurs, and the increasing appreciation of gender as a key analytical variable. While it can be said that gender theory in family business research has begun to contribute to the theoretical reconstruction of family businesses, gender in family business research is still evolving, as the gender question remains largely under-researched within the family business research. Research incorporating gender as a key factor is still insufficient, compared to other factors studied in family business research.

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