

# Qualitative Inquiry in Family Business Research: Challenges and Trends

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## **Abstract**

Due to the prevalence and importance of family companies on both national and global scale, family business research has been firmly growing over the past two decades. This exploratory study investigates the state of qualitative inquiry in family business research and its qualitative methodologies to assess the strengths and weaknesses of family business research endeavors. The goal is to identify further research directions and qualitative tools that would enrich and deepen the understanding of family firms, both from a theoretical and practical point of view. From a theoretical perspective, this will answer the need for family business-based theories or specific home-grown theories that capture the complexity of family business subsystems' interdependencies. From a practical point of view, the value of this endeavor relies on the need to develop tools that will allow family businesses to better face their multiple challenges and support their drive for continuity, renewal, and intergenerational succession.

**Keywords:** case study research; family firms; methods and methodologies; qualitative research; theory