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**Windesheim**



# Ten Clarenwater Thesis Award 2022



**DUTCH CENTRE  
OF EXPERTISE IN  
FAMILY BUSINESS**



**MAY 13 2022 TEN CLARENWATER THESIS AWARD**

## Introduction

This booklet presents the results of the seventh edition of the Ten Clarenwater Thesis Award. The Dutch Centre of Expertise in Family Business, part of Windesheim University of Applied Sciences, is happy to organize this award for theses written on the topic of family businesses. One of the distinguishing factors of family businesses is the overlap between the systems of the family, the business and ownership. These systems interact and are interdependent. This has an impact on strategic issues in the business and on the functioning of the family as well. Research will help to better understand these dynamics and to develop instruments to deal with them. Knowledge dissemination is important to make sure that new insights reach the target group, family businesses, advisors, and students.

The Dutch Centre of Expertise in Family Business focuses on knowledge development and knowledge dissemination to strengthen the entrepreneurial power of family businesses. The research domain of family businesses is a relatively young discipline, in which the Dutch Centre of Expertise in Family Business at Windesheim has a strong position in the Netherlands. The focus on applied research makes the centre unique. The activities of the centre are funded by Windesheim in combination with external funding from grants and projects.

Summaries of the nominated theses can be found in this document. Full theses are available on request.

## Ten Clarenwater Thesis Award 2022: Jury report Maser thesis

In this report, the jury of Ten Clarenwater MSc Thesis Award 2022 reports the winner of the master thesis award. In addition, the selection process is briefly described. Normally we have two awards, both at the bachelor and master level. Unfortunately, we have only received one bachelor thesis this year and therefore had to cancel the bachelor thesis award. Because of the excellent quality of this bachelor thesis, we have decided to include it for the master thesis award.

The jury consisted of:

- **Lisanne Bouten**, Associate professor of Innovative Entrepreneurship at the *Saxion University of Applied Sciences* in Deventer & Enschede
- **Koen Nijland**, second generation co-owner and manager of *Nijland Cycling*, a family firm producing bikes in the town of Heeten;
- **Jurgen Geerlings**, Family business advisor, a partner of *MESA Family Business Consultants*, an owner/manager of *Equimerio* and the managing director of *IFBK* (Institute for Family Business Administration)

The jury had the joyful task to read six very interesting master theses, and one bachelor thesis of master level quality, and the very difficult task to select three nominees and ultimately a winner. **The following theses were assessed:**

- **Marinelli Angele** from *Maastricht University*, wrote her thesis on the impact of the family on sustainability in family firms;
- **Charlotte Bruggink** from the *Radboud University* in Nijmegen researched the role of gender in intergenerational succession of leadership in family businesses;
- **Johanna Chatterjee** from the *WHU Otto Beisheim School of Management* in Vallendar and Düsseldorf, wrote her thesis on the impact of family involvement in the resilience of family firms;
- **Tessa Dijkkamp** from the *Free University Amsterdam* and the *University of Amsterdam* has investigated family learning in the preparation of the next generation in family businesses;
- **Sanne van der Donk** from *Nyenrode Business University* in Breukelen has looked at the importance of parental support in next generation succession intentions;
- **Niels Kuijpers** from *Utrecht University* has researched the effect of social emotional wealth preservation on entrepreneurial orientation in family firms;
- **Caroline McKeown** from *Dublin City University Business School* wrote her thesis on the experiences of a multi-generational family firm exploring consumer-led innovation.

After careful deliberation, the follow three theses were nominated:

- **Marinelli Angele** - *The Impact of Family Involvement on Family Firms' Sustainability: The Moderating Effect of Emerging Economies' Institutions;*

- **Johanna Chatterjee** - *Resilience drivers of family firms: The family's involvement as an opportunity or hindrance;*
- **Tessa Dijkkamp** - *Family Learning in Next Generation Preparation  
A multiple case study of Dutch SME Family Businesses.*

The summaries of the three nominated theses are included in this booklet.

### **Winner –Tessa Dijkkamp:**

It is a distinct honor to present this year's thesis award to a remarkable student who has not only demonstrated a keen theoretical understanding but has also seamlessly blended academic rigor with practical relevance.

The winning thesis delves into the intricate dynamics of family-owned businesses, shedding light on the vital concept of Family Learning in Next Generation Preparation. Through a series of insightful interviews, the student has navigated the complexities of family relationships within the context of business succession planning. The depth and nuance with which she explores this topic are commendable.

However, every journey has its twists and turns, and our winner's path was no exception. While her theoretical foundation is robust and her insights profound, there were instances where the breadcrumbs of her research were not as clearly laid out. A few missteps in referencing and a lapse in detailing the process of identifying interviewees occasionally cast shadows on an otherwise good work.

Yet, it is precisely in these imperfections that we find the human element of academic pursuit. We recognize that the student has chosen a topic that is not only academically relevant but also deeply personal. Her commitment to exploring the nexus of family and business, a topic intimately tied to her own experiences, adds a layer of authenticity and sincerity to her work. Despite the personal experience, she transcended the boundaries of her own experiences, offering a nuanced analysis that goes beyond a mere personal perspective.

The strength of her work lies not only in the theoretical soundness and the profound insights she has shared but also in the delicate balance she struck between academic rigor and practical relevance. It is this unique combination that sets her thesis apart and makes her the worthy recipient of the Ten Clarenwater award.

### **Runner Up – Angele Marinelli:**

As we celebrate academic achievement today, it is my privilege to acknowledge the exceptional work of our runner-up for this year's thesis award. This student has undertaken a rigorous exploration into the complex interplay between family involvement and the sustainability of family firms, with a specific focus on the moderating effect of emerging economies' institutions.

The title alone speaks volumes about the depth of research and the commitment to understanding the intricate dynamics of family-owned businesses on a global scale. The thesis is a testament to the student's academic prowess, utilizing various databases to provide an external perspective on sustainability within family firms. This external view, encompassing companies from diverse corners of the world, facilitates a comparative analysis across different types of economies—an undoubtedly novel and commendable approach.



While the thesis excels in academic rigor, it is important to note that it leans more towards theoretical insights than immediate practical or social relevance. The sheer number of hypotheses, though indicative of a thorough exploration, raises questions about the feasibility of translating the findings into actionable outcomes. Nonetheless, the student's dedication to social responsibility is evident, as the research aligns with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

In conclusion, our runner-up has not only contributed to the academic landscape with a meticulous study but has also delved into a socially relevant topic. The journey to understand the impact of family involvement on the sustainability of family firms is a commendable endeavour, despite the inherent challenges and limitations. We extend our congratulations to the runner-up for her outstanding academic achievement, wishing her continued success in her scholarly pursuits.

**Honorable mention – Johanna Chatterjee:**

The honorable mention for this year's thesis award is a student whose work has caught our attention not only for its content but also for the unique circumstances surrounding it. Remarkably, this student has been recognized despite presenting a bachelor's thesis in a competition for master's level work. The resilience drivers of family firms take center stage in her research, specifically exploring the ambivalent nature of family involvement. The decision to explore this complex issue at the bachelor's level reflects a keen intellect and a passion for the subject matter. In recognition of her efforts, we extend our congratulations for your excellent work.

**Lisanne Bouten**  
**Koen Nijland**  
**Jurgen Geerlings**

## Members of the jury | Master

### Lisanne Bouten

Associate professor of Innovative Entrepreneurship at the *Saxion University of Applied Sciences* in Deventer & Enschede



### Koen Nijland

Co-owner and manager of *Nijland Cycling*, a second-generation family firm producing bikes in the town of Heeten.



### Jurgen Geerlings

Family business advisor, a partner of *MESA Family Business Consultants*, an owner/manager of *Equimerio, visual dialogue for the family business* and the managing director of *IFBK* (Institute for Family Business Administration)



# Thesis summaries

## Tessa Dijkkamp

*Free University of Amsterdam & Amsterdam University*

### **Family Learning in Next Generation Preparation**

This study aims to understand how Dutch SME family businesses are preparing the next generation in the context of family learning. Therefore, an inductive qualitative research approach is used for this study. A total of twelve interviews were conducted with predecessors and successors of seven different family businesses. All of the participating businesses are Dutch SMEs. The participants either are in the middle of the succession process or they just finished this process. The findings are coded and analysed using the Gioia methodology, with the formulation of first-order codes, into second-order themes to create aggregate dimensions.

According to the interviews, three main factors within the context of family learning were considered essential in next generation preparation. Education as formal education (University or courses) and work experience (internships or at another company). Learning by doing with the subjects of making your own decisions, having your own responsibilities (like running your own department or having your own projects) and knowing that next generation preparation is a lifelong learning process which starts at an early age. Lastly, coaching from the predecessor as well as external coaching from family members and professionals were experienced as relevant factors of successful next generation preparation. This study provides an empirical understanding of the topic within the field of family business research. It also creates an understanding of how learning types contribute to next generation preparation. Likewise, this study developed a framework containing the elements of next generation preparation which can be used as a guideline.



## Johanna Chatterjee

*WHU Otto Beisheim School of Management*

### **Resilience drivers of family firms: The family's involvement as an opportunity or hindrance;**

The topic of resilience is as important as ever considering the frequently and unexpectedly emerging adversities that family firms ought to overcome. Thus, the aim of this thesis is to identify resilience drivers of family firms, particularly investigating the influence of the family on the family firm resilience. As such, the study follows a qualitative approach by analysing a total of 16 interviews conducted in 4 family firms. As a result, four main areas of resilience drivers are identified, namely prevailing resilience drivers, external influences, family involvement and subsequent organisational structures, and lastly family-specific resilience drivers.

The study proposes that the latter are characterised by the ambivalence of the drivers as they can be both a source of advantages and disadvantages, depending on the context. Therefore, drivers such as the leadership style or the generational involvement of the family are ambivalent, whereas drivers like the involvement of external managers, the long-term orientation and the financial commitment of the family are distinctly positive and foster the firm's resilience. In that sense, a final evaluation regarding the family's influence will remain rather opaque as the family has the potential of embodying the firm's greatest opportunity as well as hindrance.

**Marinelli Angele**

*Maastricht University*

**The Impact of Family Involvement on Family Firms' Sustainability: The Moderating Effect of Emerging Economies' Institutions;**

This research studies the impact of family involvement on various dimensions of corporate sustainability. It theorizes that this relationship is moderated by emerging economies' institutions and that family firms can leverage their *familiness* to implement substitutive informal institutions, which allows them to increase their corporate sustainability. Through multiple ordinary least squares analyses of 120 family firms in both emerging and developed economies, the thesis confirmed this theory and found a negative relationship between family CEO membership and corporate sustainability, specifically regarding ESG ratings, environmental performance, and leadership and governance. This relationship, however, was not found in emerging economies, providing evidence supporting the theory put forth in this research. These findings provide developments in three fields of study: sustainability, family businesses, and emerging economies. Further, it puts forth interesting managerial recommendations for family firms in both emerging and developed economies.

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