

**Call for Papers: Special Issue of *Journal of Business Ethics***

**Values, Spirituality And Religion: Family Business And The Roots Of Sustainable Ethical Behavior**

Submission Deadline: **October 30, 2018**

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**Introduction to the Special Issue**

Research shows that family firms differ from their non-family peers in terms of their desire for ethical behavior (e.g., Adams, Taschian, & Shore, 1996; Blodgett, Dumas, & Zanzi, 2011; Yusof, Mohd Nor, & Edward Hoopes, 2014). However, while family business ethics is gaining attention, there remains a lack of empirical and conceptual research (Vazquez, 2016).

Family firms have long been known to be particularly value-oriented, and ethical behavior is demonstrably prevalent in value-based organizations (García-Álvarez & López-Sintas, 2001). Indeed, family firm values are derived from, and reinforced by, both the owning family and the business system (Distelberg & Sorenson, 2009). In many cases, family business values are supported by a third value reinforcing system: the religious or spiritual identity of the owning family.

Given that organizational values are crucial to ethical behavior (García-Álvarez & López-Sintas, 2001), and family firm values may be steered by a deep sense of spirituality and religious identification (Discua Cruz, 2013; Kellermanns, 2013; Paterson, Specht, & Duchon, 2013; Sorenson, 2013), we believe there is a need to take a closer look at ethics, values and the role religion and spirituality play in influencing ethical behavior in the family business context.

The role of the spiritual or religious identity of the owning family in value formation and preservation has been largely overlooked, even though these morally binding values may have profound effects on organizational behavior, decision making, and performance (Hilary & Hui, 2009). Family-owned companies provide ample room for religious beliefs to affect family, business, and individual decisions (Discua Cruz, 2013; Kellermanns, 2013). Family business religious beliefs are often rooted in the founder's religious convictions that are conveyed through generations, permeating the business and shaping organizational values and culture (Sorenson, 2013). In this sense, religion might work as an overarching logic that provides a set of principles guiding everyday practices and relations with the family and multiple stakeholders, including employees, customers, the community, suppliers, and other external constituents (Balog, Baker, & Walker, 2014). However, these beliefs may engender conflicts whenever they are not equally shared among all the members of the family and/or the firm (Kaye, 1996; Yan & Sorenson, 2004). Given that the inclusion of religious—or in a broader sense, spiritual or ethical—values fundamentally alters organizational behavior and decision-making (Discua Cruz, 2013; Kellermanns, 2013; Paterson et al., 2013; Sorenson, 2013), religious family firms might represent a particularly rich and adequate context to re-assess the relationship between ethical beliefs and behaviors, and a diverse set of business

outcomes, such as growth orientation, economic and non-economic goal structure, performance, corporate citizenship or customer orientation.

This *Special Issue* aims to contribute to a better understanding of how family members' religious and spiritual beliefs shape the characteristics and behavior of the family and the business system. We invite scholars to investigate the following research questions:

### **Effects on the family system**

- How do religious or spiritual beliefs influence family identity, identification and commitment?
- How do religious or spiritual beliefs affect family cohesion, emotions, intra-familial communication and conflict management within the family?
- How do religious or spiritual beliefs affect the morale of the family members, family ethics and governance?

### **Effects on the business system**

- How do religious or spiritual values affect business strategy and the decision-making process?
- How do religious or spiritual values affect policy formulation and implementation, e.g., CSR policies HR policies, customer service policies?
- How do religious or spiritual values affect stakeholder relationships?

### **Effects on family and business goals**

- How do religious or spiritual values affect financial and non-financial, family and business centered goals?
- How do religious or spiritual values affect prosocial, ethical goals, citizenship and community social responsibility and philanthropic activities?
- Can religious or spiritual beliefs serve as a unifying logic in the family business system and if so, how?

### **Types of Submissions**

We encourage methodologically rigorous submissions using different approaches and innovative methods, including qualitative as well as quantitative methods that allow for the generation of new insights regarding the phenomenon at hand based on theoretical and methodological variety.

### **Manuscript Development Workshops**

The guest editors of this special issue are holding several paper development workshops at the IFERA Conference 2018 and the EURAM Conference 2018. Please note that participation in a workshop does not guarantee final acceptance of the paper in the special issue. Furthermore, attendance of a workshop is not a prerequisite for publication.

### **Submission Instructions**

JBE Special Issues generally comprise 8 to 10 papers. We invite authors to submit papers with 7.500-9.000 words. Authors are strongly encouraged to refer to the Journal of Business Ethics website for instructions on submitting a paper and for more information about the journal: <http://www.springer.com/philosophy/ethics+and+moral+philosophy/journal/10551>. **Submission to the special issue—by October 30, 2018**—is required through Editorial Manager at: <http://www.editorialmanager.com/busi>. Upon submission, please indicate that

your submission is to this Special Issue. Questions about expectations, requirements, the appropriateness of a topic, etc., should be directed to the guest editors.

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