Industrial Relations Research Unit / OHRM
Warwick Business School
University of Warwick
Seminar Series

Wednesday 17th May 2017

2.00-3.30 pm, 3.002d, Warwick Business School

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‘Explaining the Adoption of High-Performance Work Practices in British Family Firms’

Abstract

Extending understanding of the impact of business ownership and control, we develop propositions from the Harvard model of HRM to explore the adoption of high-performance work practices (HPWPs) in family-owned firms. Drawing on nationally-representative data from the 2011 British Workplace Employment Relations Study, we find the adoption of HPWPs to be lower in both family-owned and managed (FOM) and family-owned but non-family managed (FNM) firms than in non-family firms. In explaining this, we find that organizational size helps explain the lower adoption of HPWPs in FOM firms, and business strategy and conditions (in terms of industry clustering) help explain the lower adoption of HPWPs in both FNM and FOM firms. However, the adoption of HPWPs remains lower in both FOM and FNM firms than in non-family firms even once these factors are controlled for. We attribute this finding to concerns for the achievement of socio-emotional wealth in both FNM and FOM firms.

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