

Family-Friendly Policies and Organizational Performance Revisited: The Moderating Roles of the HR Director Attributes and HR Department Characteristics

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Based on the resource-based view and upper-echelon theory, this study investigates the relationship between family-friendly policies and corporate performance, as well as the moderating role of two organizational context factors: the characteristics of HR directors and HR department attributes. The sample of this study consists of 1,775 business establishments in South Korea, using Workplace Panel Survey data from 2005 to 2013. Panel data analysis is used to estimate the effect of family-friendly policies. The results indicate that the bundle of family-friendly policies is positively associated with financial firm performance. Furthermore, the family-friendly policies bundle may affect performance when the HR director is female, younger, and has a shorter year of service. There is weak evidence that the size of the HR department has an impact, while the HR does not affect the family-friendly policies on performance. This paper implies that specific attributes regarding HR directors and departments are better suited to promoting organizational performance.

Keywords: Family-friendly Policies, HR Directors, HR Department, Corporate Performance, Upper-echelon Theory.

1. Introduction

The family-friendly policy is a vital area of human resource management that has received increasing attention from policymakers, organizations, management, and employees (e.g., McCarthy et al., 2010). In a survey by The Boston Consulting Group and the European Association for People Management (2017) of HR Directors, work-life balance is top-ranked as one of three challenges facing HR today. Despite its increase in women's social advancement, female employees still suffer from double duties at home and work, which in

turn lead to a negative impact on individuals, corporations, and society. Specifically, conflicts between employees' work and their families have exacerbated the organization's productivity, negatively affecting its productivity by lowering employee satisfaction, commitment, and job satisfaction (Bae and Goodman, 2014). Indeed, women have avoided marriage and childbirth to resolve the conflicts, leading to falling birth rates in some cultural contexts (e.g., Kim and Lee, 2017). For example, in the case of Korea, the total fertility rate was 0.78, facing the most serious low birth rate problem among OECD countries (Statistics Korea, 2022). Part of the reasons can include a work culture that makes employees hesitant to take childcare leave for, as well as a patriarchal culture that imposes the burden of sacrifice on women (Cho and Ahn, 2014; Hsu and Roh, 2014). Thus, it is imperative that individuals must achieve a work-life balance to preserve various social levels of care and support of good quality female human resources (Bae and Goodman, 2014; Clifton and Shepard, 2004; Grover and Crooker, 1995; Halpern, 2005; Hsu and Roh, 2014).

This trend is not without exceptions in the Korean context (Bae and Goodman, 2014; Cho and Ahn, 2014). It is noteworthy that the government initiated the motivation for adopting the family-friendly management (FFM) system by granting government certificates in Korea. Specifically, in 2007, the 'Act on the Promotion of Work-Life Balance and Support for Working Families' was enacted to provide legal support. The Ministry of Gender Equality and Family in Korea has also developed and implemented a family-friendly certification system and a Family Friendliness Index to promote family-friendly management within organizations (Park and Choi, 2013). This is because Korean firms have yet to consider family-friendly policies as a part of their core management strategies, one of which is the lack of confidence in the effectiveness of a family-friendly system at the early stages (Chung and Chang, 2005). However, as social attention increases along with growing social requirements by the government, all types of organizations in Korea have attempted to adopt the family-friendly management (FFM, hereafter) system under government monitoring (Lee and Kim, 2009). Additionally, in April 2020, the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family revised the certification criteria for family-friendly companies to encourage the use of family care leave as part of the government's efforts to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic (Korea Policy Briefing, 2021). Responding to these changes, many Korean firms have introduced and implemented family-friendly HR policies, such as flexible working hours and locations, leave of absence systems, and employee support systems, to effectively utilize and support female employees. As a result, the employee job satisfaction rate has improved significantly (National Statistics Portal, 2022).

Despite its supposed positive effect of FFM, mixed empirical findings have characterized prior research on the effects of FFM on firm performance. On the one hand, scholars have validated that organizations that provide a more comprehensive range of family-friendly systems are associated with higher organizational effectiveness, such as productivity, quality, and marketability (Morgan and Milliken, 1992; Delaney and Huselid, 1996; Perry-Smith and Blum, 2000; Heras et al., 2015; Park, 2016). But on the other hand, these policies often have unintended consequences, discouraging employers from hiring women because they fear women will leave for long periods or use expensive benefits (Mehra et al., 2023). This empirical inconsistency in the relationship between FFM and firm performance suggests that organizations differ in their ability to deal with the impact of family-friendly practices.

Moreover, some studies call for a new mechanism through which FFM can affect firm performance (Heras et al., 2015; Park, 2016). In this vein, the important question of how the relationship occurs and under what conditions FFM affects organizational performance remains.

Thus, this study aims to revisit the relationship between family-friendly policies and firm performance in the Korean context, and explores the potential moderating effects of HR directors' and HR department attributes in understanding the impact of FFM on organizational performance. We focus on the observable and demographic attributes of HR directors and the HR department, which have been less studied in the literature. Previous research suggests that HR directors play a crucial role in determining the effectiveness of a firm's strategic choices (Purcell and Hutchinson, 2007). Additionally, the upper-echelon theory posits that upper-echelon elements, composed of observable variables including age, functional expertise, education, and socioeconomic roots, may influence organizations' strategic choices and organizational outcomes (Hambrick and Mason, 1984). Building on the upper-echelon perspective, we attempt to identify a certain set of demographic characteristics of HR directors including age, gender, and tenure, that are better matched with the effectiveness of FFM within the organization.

Moreover, we contend that the degree to which HR has discretion over and is actively involved in strategic decision-making can determine the success of a firm's strategic choices such as FFM. Scholars have proposed that the HR department can have legitimate power when it has physical signals or commodities that symbolize the department's importance in the organization (Kim et al., 2004; Teo and Rodwell, 2007). The size of the HR department can be an important signal to employees because it accrues investments of organizational resources, which entail considerable costs (Pfeffer 1992; Chung and Kang, 2013). Additionally, the level of discretion in the HR department is positively related to organizational outcomes by influencing how employees can embrace and utilize intended HR strategies and practices (Chung and Kang, 2013). The positional power of the departmental head, the HR director, is positively related to a degree of HR discretion (Park and Ryu, 2017). This is because the formal hierarchy is perceived as one of the most potent and legitimate power sources (Astley and Sachdeva, 1984). Therefore, the level of management positions that HR directors occupy may represent the discretion of the HR department as a proxy. We explore the possibility of using HR's characteristics, which proxy for the degree of HR discretion or importance, by measuring the size of the HR department and the positional status of HR directors, respectively.

In sum, this study seeks to fill the gap in the literature by examining the relationship between FFM and firm performance in the Korean context, and investigating the potential moderating effects of HR directors' and HR department attributes on this relationship. Specifically, we propose to explore the observable and demographic attributes of HR directors, including age, gender, and tenure, and the HR department's size and positional status of HR directors, as potential moderators. We argue that these attributes may serve as proxies for HR discretion or importance and may affect the success of FFM implementation within organizations. Overall, this study contributes to a better understanding of the relationship between FFM and firm performance and highlights the importance of considering HR directors' and HR department attributes in understanding this relationship.

1. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND HYPOTHESES

2. Family-friendly Policies and Organizational Performance

The most basic concept of family-friendly policies starts with work and family conflict (Scheibl and Dex, 1998; Tausig and Fenwick, 2001; Wood et al., 2003). This conflict is defined as roles in the two areas of work and family that do not coexist and become relatively negligent in one part when they are fulfilled (Frone, Russell & Cooper, 1992). Family-friendly policies refer to a system that helps eliminate such conflict between work and family and allows people to enjoy a balanced life (Yim, 2007). Family-friendly policies were adopted after the 1980s when more women entered the market in the United States and Europe with various family forms (Lockwood, 2003; Naithani, 2010). In addition, the policies became more critical as a part of the firms' consideration of the employees' families as the rate of female employees increased (Freedman et al., 1995; Kirby and Krone, 2002; Mackey Jones and McKenna, 2002; Rosenzweig et al., 2002). As noted earlier, this refers to a corporate system that supports employees to combine work at the workplace with work at home (Yim, 2007).

Although agreement on the components of family-friendly policies as a part of the firm's internal system does not exist, it established a family-friendly system by incorporating existing prior research, including flexible labor time system, maternity leave, childcare support, workplace childcare facilities and childcare related to care for the elderly (Barker, 1995; Capowski, 1996; Johnson, 1995; Lawlor, 1996). The Ministry of Health and Welfare in Korea also divides the family-friendly system into a flexible work system and creates a family-friendly society and culture (Lee et al., 2008). Family-friendly policies are utilized in several ways to implement the complicated method. The types can be classified into vacations or leave, flexible work, childcare support, and support system for dependents and employees. Included in the holidays or leave system are maternity leave, childcare leave, childcare leave for male employees, family care leave, and unpaid leave. The paternity leave system gives employees time off to work for their childcare while retaining their employees' status.

A few studies found that the flexible work system also positively influenced the firms' performances when the flexible work system was implemented as a system that received considerable attention in empirical studies (Appelbaum et al., 2000; Huselid, 1995; Perry-Smith & Blum, 2000). This system allows employees to perform their work more harmoniously by providing them with time elasticity (Appelbaum et al., 2000; Batt, 2002; Huselid, 1995; MacDuffie, 1995). Put differently, employees with secured time flexibility can solve their children's childcare and elderly care problems to a certain extent. In addition, a system of selective working hours, flexible working hours, job-sharing systems, and telecommuting is available (Hogarth et al., 2000).

Moreover, the childcare support system is closely related to the low birthrate (Hughes and Durio, 1983), which has recently become a problem in Korea. In practice, a childcare support system is related closely to the fact that many female employees face conflicts between working at home and working at work (Lewis and Cooper, 2005). Specific strategies for resolving these conflicts include childcare allowances, providing information on childcare, work daycare or linkage with an external institution, and after-school programs for preschool children (Hossain and Rokis, 2014). Lastly, the employees-support system, known as the work-support or worker counseling program, can provide education and counseling for

employees who face conflicts at work and home (Galinsky et al., 1998). The programs include information and service systems related to household activities, home-related administrative and legal advice systems, and regular family-friendly events such as family invitations or education (Pitt-Catsouphes et al., 2004). These schemes aim to alleviate personal problems, such as worker absenteeism, tardiness, and turnover, and to help organizations improve their performance while improving the lives of their employees and their families (Roberson et al., 2017). A variety of individual systems that make up these family-friendly schemes are used in numerous ways, depending on the purpose and characteristics of the study.

The adoption of family-friendly policies has been categorized into two theoretical approaches, symbolic activity perspective (Pfeffer, 1981) and rational choice approaches (den Dulk, 2005). Specifically, when an organization offers family-friendly policies, it seems plausible that employees will interpret this as a sign that the company places importance on their contributions and cares about their personal well-being, not just solely focused on making profits and generating revenue (Jing et al., 2012). Regarding family-friendly policies, current and potential employees are given special treatment when creating organizational values or principles (Pfeffer, 1981). When firms implement a more comprehensive range of family-friendly policies, employees feel that the firms are focused on their welfare and value systems and that firms are employee-oriented. In addition, positive employee awareness of the organization will eventually positively influence employee commitment, which could subsequently lead to the firm's performance (Grove and Croker, 1995). Therefore, the bundle of family-friendly policies has positively contributed to an organization's performance by considering its employees' health and value and signaling that more effort is being made to achieve or succeed in organizational objectives (Perry-Smith and Blum, 2000). As a result, the bundle of family-friendly policies has relevance to corporate performance, and the more diverse and family-friendly policies they use, the greater their significance.

The rational choice perspective proposes that employers willingly adopt policies that support employees' families due to the economic advantages they bring. Organizations generally introduce family-friendly policies with the aim of enhancing their overall performance, financial outcomes, labor productivity, and reducing employee turnover. According to the rational choice approach, individuals or organizations are rational and driven by self-interest, seeking to maximize benefits while minimizing costs (Seyler et al., 1995). In line with this perspective, firms believe that the benefits gained from implementing family-friendly policies outweigh the associated costs. For instance, a study conducted on a Fortune 500 company with 120 employees revealed that 97% of employees and supervisors reported increased productivity as a result of family-friendly programs like teleworking (Riley and McCloskey, 1997). Kim and Campagna (1981) also found that employees participating in flextime programs showed a decrease in unpaid absences and an improvement in performance efficiency. Thus, we put forward the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1. Family-friendly policies are positively associated with firm performance.

3. Family-friendly Policy and HR Directors' Attributes and HR Department Characteristics

4. Family-friendly Policy and HR Directors' Attributes

The resource-based view was developed to criticize the industrial organization's argument that it is determined by the industrial structure in which firms are located (Barney, 1991, 1994, 2001). Thus, from the resource-based view, all firms have different experiences, technologies, and organizational cultures, and different strengths and capabilities of each company have further competitiveness within the firm than the characteristics of the industry (Grant, 1996; Hamel and Prahalad, 1994; Helfat and Peteraf, 2003; Teece et al., 1997). And how a company effectively uses its resources and capabilities determines its competitiveness. The mechanism through which the attributes of the various human resources are identified and the decision-making based on them are aligned to the performance of the firm is used for research on how the background of the top management, which plays an essential role in corporate decision-making affects a firm's performance (Hambrick and Mason, 1984; Kim et al., 2006). This argument has been made since Hambrick and Mason (1984) argued for an organizational upper-echelon theory with a consistent relationship between the characteristics of top management and organizational performance. The organizational upper echelon theory's fundamental premise is that top management's observable characteristics are connected to their cognitive and psychological characteristics. Based on these assumptions, the organizational upper-echelon theory asserts that a special relationship exists between the observable demographic characteristics as an indicator of the perceived basis and value of top management and the firm's performance (Chae and Song, 2009; Mullins, 2018).

As a precondition for the organizational upper echelon theory, the variables that can be observed include age, tenure, education level, and functional background. Eventually, the mechanism in which the psychological aspect of an individual's cognitive and psychological aspect influences decision-making is challenging to present as an empirical study, thus representing the demographic characteristics of individuals as a critical element of their psychological factors (Choi, 2005; Hochschild, 1997; Vincula, 1998). Based on the upper echelon theory, applying it at the HR department level would yield similar logic. According to the sense of the organizational upper echelon theory, the demographical characteristics of human capital to make decisions at an organization's core can influence a firm's overall performance. This mechanism can eventually explain that the attributes of the key decision-makers in the HR department affect the performance of the HR system. The performance of the HR Department is equivalent to implementing a family-friendly policy as an HR scheme that could eventually impact the organization's performance positively. Ultimately, the implementation of the family-friendly policy is influenced by the cognitive aspects of HR decision-makers or directors in the HR department, which is reflected in the demographic characteristics of the director's individuals. Although the role of HR departments and HR directors in establishing various HR schemes and implementing policies is essential, the expected part of HR directors is more likely to be influenced by the desired demographic characteristics of the HR directors, especially in the case of family-friendly schemes. That's because the family-friendly system works very closely with the demographic characteristics of individuals.

There are several studies about whether or not firms with more female employees develop more extensive family-friendly policies. Konrad and Mangel's (2000) research in the United States found that firms with more female employees were likelier to have more extensive

family-friendly policies. Galinsky and Bond (1998) found that in the US, having a more significant proportion of top executive positions filled by women is associated with a more substantial provision of family-friendly policies. They also found that companies with a considerable proportion of women were more likely to invest in job sharing, part-time work, flexible time off policies, and childcare. Companies were more likely to invest in costly options such as paid parental leave when women constituted a smaller proportion of the workforce. Firms with a large proportion of women employees are likely to provide family-friendly policies. Still, the proportion of women in top executive positions is a better indicator.

Some studies suggest that the recognition of normative homomorphism of the family-friendly policy appears when HR directors grow older (Won and Sung, 2016). It indicates that HR directors recognize the need to implement family-friendly policies. Furthermore, as age is generally associated with a position in firms, an aged director has the authority to voice the introduction or implementation of the system. Also, awareness of the importance of family-friendly policies is increased through experiences related to fertility, childcare, and education. As such, a high recognition of the necessity of the family-friendly policy and a position to voice their opinions to introduce the system have interacted, so recognizing normative homomorphism has increased. Thus, we formulate the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 2: The demographic characteristic of HR directors moderates the relationship between a family-friendly policy and the firm performance

Hypothesis2a. A positive relationship between a family-friendly policy and the firm performance will be stronger when the HR director is female.

Hypothesis2b. A positive relationship between a family-friendly policy and the firm performance will be stronger when the HR director is younger.

Hypothesis2c. A positive relationship between a family-friendly policy and the firm performance will be stronger when the HR director has worked at the firm longer.

5. Family-friendly Policy and HR Department Characteristics

The upper-echelon theory posits that the personal characteristics of HR directors in the firm would significantly influence the HR system's implementation. However, for an HR director to implement the scheme at the corporate level, the HR department's characteristics should also be considered rather than relying entirely on the individual factors of the HR director. Specifically, each firm has different features, such as the size and composition of its HR departments. The rationale behind this is that the attributes of HR departments are determined by various factors, such as their resources, view, and interests of HR departments at the corporate top management level. Therefore, an understanding of the attributes of an HR department is closely related to strategic decisions at the corporate level and decisions made by the corporate top management team. Therefore, it is vital to consider the attributes of the HR department.

Prior research has shown the effect of the size of HR departments on corporate outcomes. For instance, Meyer and Rowan (1991) demonstrated that corporations that follow institutional pressures, like more prominent organizations such as the size, must be trusted for legality and survival in an environment that quickly values or encourages new behaviors. The size of these organizations is determined by the number of workers, which can be defined as larger

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organizations as the number of workers increases. Therefore, when the size of HR departments is substantial, HR directors can introduce and actively implement the scheme at their cognitive levels (Chung and Kang, 2013).

Additionally, studies also propose that the HR department can have legitimate power if it has physical signals or commodities that symbolize the department's importance in the organization. Huge departmental size or lucrative working conditions, for example, can be such symbols because they necessarily accrue investments of organizational resources, which entail considerable costs (Pfeffer, 1992; Chung and Kang, 2013). Additionally, Cho et al. (2006) showed that the relative size of the HR department is related to the organization's effectiveness, including the capacity of the human resources, the professionalism of the HR management staff, the turnover rate of absenteeism, sales, and the rate of operating profit. The relative size of the HR department's influence on the organization's performance means that the larger and more discretionary the HR department is, the stronger it will be perceived as needed by the system or policy.

Moreover, Chung and Kang (2013) argued that HR department discretion significantly increases organizational performance by influencing how corporate members embrace and utilize intended HR strategies and practices. They also present bases (expert, legitimate so on) for measuring HR department power which can offer a degree of HR discretion. According to French and Raven (1959), those with practical knowledge or special skills have an expert power base. Therefore, group members perceived to be more talented in some tasks control a resource that the other members of an interdependent task group need and want in that they share the goal of performing the tasks quickly, efficiently, and with high quality.

Furthermore, the more experience an HR director has in HR management, the more knowledge and skills they have in HR management. And the director has the experience and skills to plan for and execute this knowledge and skills in reality. As a result, the director will have the expertise and ability to adequately address the various issues and issues presented in the HR management, and they can implement effective HR management (Ryu and Kim, 2013). Another indicator that can show HR department discretion is legitimate power. This power source reflects a social system's properties rather than the particular attributes or behavior of any specific individual or unit (Astley and Sachdeva 1984). Because of the socially shared, standardized nature of hierarchical positions, formal hierarchy is perceived as one of the most potent power sources. Therefore, the level and the number of management positions that HR directors occupy may represent legitimate discretion as a proxy (Pfeffer 1992).

Hypothesis 3: The demographic characteristic of HR directors moderates the relationship between a family-friendly policy and the firm performance

Hypothesis 3a. A positive relationship between a family-friendly policy and a firm performance is strengthened when the size of and HR department is large.

Hypothesis 3b. A positive relationship between family-friendly policy and the firm performance is strengthened if the HR director is in a higher position.

2. Methods

1. Sample and Data

The analysis in this study was conducted at the establishment-level using a sample drawn from the Workplace Panel Survey (WPS), a government-sponsored national employer survey in Korea. The WPS tracks information on HR strategies, practices (including hiring and training), and labor-management relationship status for more than 2,000 establishments in Korea on a yearly basis. The primary format of the survey is a questionnaire administered to HR directors, labor-related officers, and workers' representatives. Information on the company's family-friendly policies and other HR-related variables were obtained through the questionnaire for HR directors. The unit of analysis is business establishment, and one HR manager (or labor manager) per establishment responded, collecting establishment-level information related to HR practices.

The WPS survey is conducted every two years, and the panel data from 2005 to 2013 is used in this study. The survey samples included establishments in all industries, except for public administration, that had more than 30 regular workers. The final survey conducted in 2013 investigated 1,775 establishments. Out of the total of 1,775 establishments, the number of individual firms were 1,393 because some firms operate multiple establishments (or workplaces). For reference, the total number of publicly listed companies in Korea in 2013 was 1,786, and the sample included 1,096 firms out of 1,786, which represents about 62 percent of the entire listed firms in Korea and is sufficient to represent the entire population.

2. Measurement and Analyses

The measurements of the variables discussed above are as follow. First, 16 family-friendly policies were found in the WPS. Previous researchers have classified various family-friendly systems into lower levels, such as maternity protection, work-life balance policies, and family-friendly vacations. Still, each researcher has a slightly more detailed line. The Ministry of Health and Welfare of Korea determined the classification of the family-friendly system. The system supports the flexible work system, the birth and education of children, the support of dependents, the support of workers, and the creation of a family-friendly society. However, the distinction between a support system for dependents and a support system for workers was unclear, except for establishing a family-friendly social culture that could not be found (Yim, 2020). Accordingly, the study included flexible work time, a caring child system, and financial support system or support of the cost of childcare in the family-friendly system.

As other studies support the setting of these variables, Kim's (2011) and Lee and Kim (2009)'s study also consisted of a flexible work system, maternity protection system, and financial support system. In this study, we investigated the relationship between the family-friendly policy at the bundle level and organizational performance. First, that is because the effects of the HR system could be more significant if it is carried out in bundles than individual policies. Therefore, the family-friendly policies were to be verified based on the visible effects of the bundle (Yang, 2017). Second, the characteristics of the HR director will influence the relationship between family-friendly policies and corporate performance, depending on gender, age, and years of service.

The guidelines of the family-friendly system often benefit females, older adults, and long years of service. Therefore, if the HR directors have these demographic characteristics, the family-

friendly schemes can improve the performance of firms. Based on this, personal level characteristics such as HR directors' age, gender, and years of service will determine the relationship between family-friendly schemes and corporate performance.

Third, the measurement used for this study is carried out with characteristic variables of an HR department. When measuring the characteristics of the HR department, use the size and discretion of the HR department (position of HR director). However, these two features are likely to have a very close correlation, and HR's control is relatively small when the department is small. As such, variables associated with HR department characteristics are likely to be significant and appropriate in the same direction, so it is considered that the HR department is more likely to have these variables.

Finally, the performance assessment at the corporate level should be measured in several ways, including human resource management performance, such as turnover and job satisfaction, and the return on capital and financial performance, including current gains, productivity, quality, and service levels. In this study, the per capita sales corresponding to the version of the management of the company's human resources are used by implementing the family-friendly system, even with sales per capita divided by the total number of employees.

Control variables, which may account for some variation in the dependent variables at the firm level, were collected from WPS. This study presented company size, age of firms, presence of labor unions, the percentage of female employees, and industrial classification as controlled variables. These control variables were chosen based on previous studies. Although, as in previous studies, there were cases in which each control variable affected the utilization of the family-friendly system, this effect was controlled. Yang (2017)'s study found that the older the corporate history is, the more workers are, and the more unions are present, the more family-friendly system bundles are. It suggests employers are more willing to consider adopting the family-friendly system in workplaces with more significant workers and unions. By contrast, the higher the ratio of female employees, the more flexible working hours are adopted. In addition, three dummy variables (manufacturing, construction, professional) were created and included by industry to reflect the characteristics of the industries that make up the sample.

We conducted panel data analyses in the study. Panel data provide information on individual firm behavior across individual establishments (or workplaces) (i) and over time (t). The panel data models used in this study provide valuable insights into the bundles of family-friendly policies adopted by individual establishments, as well as the characteristics of their HR departments and overall performance. The panel data we used is unbalanced since establishments are not observed in all periods. Proper model selection is crucial in panel data analysis to ensure accurate estimation of the parameters. As the panel data used in this study were unbalanced, endogeneity problems may arise during the estimation process. To address this issue, we employed the Hausman test method to prevent incorrect estimation. The Hausman test compares the estimates of the coefficients from the two models and determines if they are significantly different.

Two popular models for analyzing panel data are the fixed-effect model and the random-effect model (Greene, 2019). After conducting the Hausman test, we found that the random-effect model was more appropriate for our study. Its value ($\text{prob} > \chi^2$) we obtained from the test was

0.1139, which is not statistically significant within the significance level (1% or 5%). Therefore, we cannot reject the null hypothesis, which suggests no correlation between endogeneity and explanatory variables. Therefore, we conducted the random-effect regression model to test hypotheses and included control variables in all models to account for their potential influence on HR practices. The following is the empirical specification model used in this study.

$$\ln(\text{Performance}_{it+1}) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{FFB}_{it} + \beta_2 \text{HR Director Attribute}_{it} + \beta_3 (\text{FFB} * \text{HR Director Attribute})_{it} + \beta_4 (\text{Controls})_{it} + \epsilon_{it}$$

3. Results

Descriptive statistics and correlations for all variables are presented in Table 1.

Table 1 shows the results of descriptive statistics and correlations to verify the sample characteristics between each variable before hypothesis testing. For example, the dependent variable, sales per capita, averaged 11.05, and the standard deviation was 2.21. And there is also a significant correlation between the independent variable, the bundle of family-friendly policies ($\beta=0.316$, $p<0.01$), and sales per capita.

Table 1 Descriptive Statistics and Correlations

Variables		Mean	S.D.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1	Sales per capita(log)	11.05	2.21	1													
2	Family-friendly policies' bundle(FPB)	7.97	3.99	0.32***	1												
3	HR directors' gender	1.18	0.39	-0.16*	-0.13**	1											
4	HR directors' age	38.98	7.69	-0.21**	-0.10***	-0.25***	1										
5	HR directors' tenure	9.38	6.45	0.07***	0.06***	-0.10***	0.60***	1									
6	HR department's size	4.66	15.20	0.19***	0.10***	-0.02***	-0.04	0.02	1								
7	Discretion of HR department (Status of HR director)	2.51	0.80	-0.17**	-0.19**	0.09***	0.04**	0.03	-0.08***	1							
8	Firms' size(log)	5.08	1.25	0.63***	0.33***	-0.16***	-0.16***	0.05***	0.26***	-0.20***	1						
9	Firms' age	8.95	2.86	0.03*	0.01	0.11***	0.09***	0.10***	-0.05**	0.02*	-0.05***	1					
10	The ratio of female employees	0.29	0.24	-0.08***	0.15***	0.13***	-0.07***	-0.04***	-0.03	0.02*	0.03***	0.01	1				
11	Existence of labour union	1.58	0.51	-0.34***	-0.12**	0.14***	-0.07***	-0.21***	-0.04	0.12***	-0.41***	0.09***	0.18***	1			

12	Manufacturing Industry(dummy)	0.10	0.30	-0.07*	0.06***	-0.05**	-0.02	0.01	-0.05*	-0.03*	0.14**	-0.03*	-0.06***	-0.08**	1		
13	Construction Industry(dummy)	0.09	0.29	-0.07*	-0.08**	0.01	-0.01	-0.04**	-0.04	0.05***	-0.10**	0.01	-0.02**	0.08**	-0.11**	1	
14	Professional Industry(dummy)	0.11	0.31	0.18***	0.06***	0.09***	-0.10**	-0.03**	-0.04	-0.02	-0.04**	0.00	0.06***	0.05***	-0.12**	-0.11**	1

Notes: † P<0.1, *P<0.05, **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

The results of a regression analysis on the bundle of family-friendly policies and corporate performance are presented in Table 2. In conclusion, hypothesis 1, 2a were empirically supported while hypothesis 2b, 2c, 3a and 3b were not supported.

Table 2 the Results of Regression Analyses

Variables	Corporate performance (Sales per capita)						
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7
Family-friendly policies' bundle(FPB)	0.028***	0.002**	0.105**	0.041***	0.038***	0.043***	0.179
HR directors' gender		-0.42**					-0.66
HR directors' age			-0.0046***				-0.07***
HR directors' tenure				-0.019			0.096*
HR department's size					0.027***		0.037*
Discretion of HR department (Status of HR director)						0.014	-0.16
FPB*HR directors' gender		0.020†					-0.011
FPB*HR directors' age			-0.002†				0.003
FPB*HR directors' tenure				-0.001			-0.002
FPB*HR department's size					0.001***		-0.001
FPB*discretion of HR department						0.006	0.001

Variables	Corporate performance (Sales per capita)						
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7
Firms' size	1.144***	1.14***	1.11***	1.15***	0.93***	1.14***	0.80***
Firms' age	0.051***	0.057***	0.06***	0.05***	0.03*	0.05***	0.05***
The ratio of female employees	-0.94***	-0.88***	-0.93***	-0.93***	-1.001***	-0.93***	-0.78***
Existence of labor unions	-0.65***	-0.64***	-0.69***	-0.63***	-0.47***	-0.65***	-0.43***
Manufacturing industry	-1.16***	-1.16***	-1.16***	-1.16***	-1.54***	-1.16***	-1.47***
Construction industry	-0.008	-0.004	-0.015	-0.01	-0.17	-0.0063	-0.1388
Professional industry	1.578***	1.59***	1.51***	1.58***	1.80***	1.58***	1.63***
adjusted R ²	0.597	0.599	0.601	0.595	0.520	0.597	0.552
F value	706.11***	582.88***	588.8***	579.11***	81.9***	578.08***	54.31***
Number of observations	7083	7083	7083	7083	1364	3426	921

Notes: Coefficient is standardized β . FPB: Family-friendly Policies bundle. Variables, which are Firms size and Sales, were changed to logged variables to reduce the degree of distortion.

† P<0.1, *P<0.05, **p<0.01; ***p<0.00

First, the regression coefficient of the family-friendly bundle on sales per capita was strongly positive and significant. ($\beta=0.028$ p<0.01) Thus, Hypothesis 1 was supported. It indicates that

the workplaces that implanted family-friendly policies report higher sales per capita, supporting previous studies. Second, hypothesis 2a was empirically supported, but hypotheses 2b and 2c were not supported. In the case of hypothesis 2a, when the demographic characteristics of the HR director, such as gender, enter the relationship between the main variables as a moderator variable, the relationship between the family-friendly policies bundle and corporate performance appears. It presents that the HR director's gender interacts with the family-friendly policies bundle, influencing sales per capita. The regression coefficient of the interaction terms of family-friendly policies bundle and women in HR director on sales per capita was significant. ($\beta=0.020$, $p<0.1$) The results indicate that the family-friendly policies bundle makes higher sales per capita, and when the gender of HR director is female, it will further reinforce the elevation.

However, when the HR director is older, the regression coefficient of the interaction terms of the family-friendly policies bundle and the HR director's age was negative and significant. ($\beta=-0.002$, $p<0.01$) This result contradicts our hypothesis that family-friendly policies will support corporate performance when the HR director is older. A one-year increase in the HR director's age (the average age being 39) may result in a 0.0046% decrease in sales per capita. Research shows that the older HR directors are, the less recognition they may have of the necessity and importance of implementing family-friendly policies. Similarly, when the HR manager has worked at the firm longer, the regression coefficient of the interaction terms of family-friendly policies bundle and HR director's year of service was negative relation but not significant. This result is related to hypothesis 2a, which we discussed earlier. As it is likely that the years of service will be high for a relatively older director, a negative relationship has been predicted, as with the previous hypothesis.

Finally, hypotheses 3a and 3b were empirically not supported. A result of hypothesis 3a showed that the interaction between the family-friendly policies bundle and the size of the HR department worked negatively and was not significant. Also, the interactive effect of family-friendly policies bundled with the discretion of the HR department negatively affected corporate performance, and this result was not significant.

In sum, the size of the HR department and the discretion of HR department that characteristics of HR department were presented as measurable variables. To assess the degree of the HR department's control, the HR director's highest position was set as a variable in this study. The size of the HR department and the director's status do not control the impact of the family-friendly system on performance. In other words, the results were insignificant. Additionally, the results from the negative relationship show that the director's status is low, and the smaller the department, the more positive the family-friendly system can have on its performance.

4. Conclusions and Discussion

This study analyzed Korean firm-level panel datasets to investigate family-friendly policies' effects on corporate performance, representing sales per capita. We first identified the configuration of a family-friendly system as an organizational effort to reduce conflicts between employees' work and their families in Korea's social environment. The introduction of family-friendly policies in Korea can be seen as legally and socially enforced and can impact

firms' performance. More importantly, we further explore the attributes of HR departments and the characteristic of an HR director that a family-friendly system can support and contribute to organizational performance. Specifically, the role of the HR director in implementing a family-friendly system is essential, and the director's attributes can determine the managers' decisions and functions. Then we empirically find evidence that such institutional elements, including directors and departments of HR, in enacting HR policies, when combined with family-friendly systems can promote the firm performance.

Our findings present that the family-friendly policies bundle significantly impacted corporate performance. Moreover, we examine the possibility that the HR director's characteristics and attributes of an HR department can moderate the supposed positive relationship between family-friendly policies and firm performance. Specifically, the family-friendly policies bundle may affect corporate performance when the HR director is female, younger than average, and has a short year of service. The size of the HR department and the discretion of HR do not affect controlling the impact of family-friendly policies on performance.

The findings extend the prior studies in contributing to the potential roles of HR directors and departmental attributes in the family-friendly practices-performance relationship. For instance, Yim (2007) demonstrated whether organizational characteristics, such as the size of the organization, the age of the organization, the proportion of female workers, and the proportion of working female employees who have children in the family-friendly system, affect HR performances. In addition, Hailey et al. (2005) also suggested that the HR department's role should be emphasized to increase the organization's performance. When the gender and number of children of employees are equal or similar, implementing a corporate's family-friendly system has a positive result, boosting the employee's job satisfaction and performance (Yoo, 2007).

The results have the following implications. First, the traditional studies of family-friendly systems at the macro level identified the two types of investigations into which the effectiveness of organization-level analysis was performed and the characteristics of firms that have adopted the family-friendly system. Despite the vigorous study of the former, the latter empirical studies still need to be revisited. Thus, we presented the features of HR departments and directors, not of the existing prior studies, to present the characteristics of another firm needed for the active implementation of the family-friendly system (Yang, 2017).

Second, it is worth noting that the role and importance of the HR department based on the resource-based view and the upper-echelon theory. The characteristics of the HR department and HR directors can influence the implementation of HR practices throughout the organization. Despite growing interests in human capital and the continuing insistence from many firms on its importance, the role of HR departments across firms is small or often only focused on recruiting and educating new employees. However, the HR department will more actively intervene to introduce and implement the corporates' schemes and policies, implying that the role of HR departments and the characteristics of HR directors are essential for family-friendly system effectiveness.

The limitation of the present study should also be mentioned. First, the sample used in this research included firms in Korea; nation-specific characteristics may have affected the results of this paper. Thus, this finding should be carefully interpreted before generalizing the results

of this study. Secondly, additional research is needed into the family-friendly system of firms with little or no HR department role. Many small and medium-sized enterprises do not have functional HR departments themselves, directors in other departments are responsible for HR tasks simultaneously, and outsourcing work directly makes HR departments less significant. Therefore, it isn't easy to proceed with discussing this study against these firms. Furthermore, it is vital to understand how additional family-friendly issues can be addressed when the role of HR departments is absent or when the power of HR directors needs to be stronger.

Finally, among the various features of the family-friendly system, each practice has its cases where its introduction and implementation are forced upon the government or law. Thus, it seems plausible that the characteristics of HR departments and directors have little influence on the opening and performance of the system. On the other hand, the elements of the HR department and HR directors have mixed effects on the policies. Therefore, the various approaches that make up the family-friendly system can be introduced and implemented depending on factors outside the organization. Further research will be required to investigate the factors influencing the introduction and implementation of more specific practices of family-friendly policies.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that the research was conducted without any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

Author Contributions

J. Ahn and S. Bang contributed to the original draft's conceptualization, methodology, investigation, and writing. J. Han and J. Ahn participated in the manuscript revision, review, editing, and validation. All authors performed the data collection, data curation, and formal analysis and have read and approved the final manuscript.

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