

The Characteristics of the Chairman of Board of Directors That Are Associated with Better Levels of Performance

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Abstract : Analyzing company boards of directors is a relevant and timely topic. As the representative of shareholders, the board is the most senior management body of this type of company. Therefore, ascertaining the best kind of candidates to nominate, namely the most appropriate characteristics for leading the board to achieve better levels of performance, is certainly of great interest. The companies selected for this study were the 1,000 largest non-financial companies and the 100 largest financial companies in Portugal according to the Instituto Nacional de Estatística for 2010. The information stemmed from a questionnaire addressed to the person in charge of daily company management and then processed through STATA 17 with the multivariate analysis of variables - MANOVA. The study may correspondingly report that the vast majority of boards in the sample operate a dual leadership structure. By in terms of its prevalence, unitary leadership represents only a minority. Agency theory and stewardship theory postulate different characteristics for the ideal chairman but neither receive confirmation from our results. On the other hand, our findings do validate the behavioral theory of firms (BToF), concluding that experience is associated with organizational performance. This study is also relevant due to its analysis of companies not listed on the financial markets not only because of their weighting in the economy but also because they remain only very poorly studied in this field and thus also correspondingly contributing to deepening the literature.

Keywords : agency theory, behavioral theory of the firm, board of directors, corporate governance, stewardship theory

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