

# **Non-sequential internationalization processes in SMEs: The impact of strategic orientations**

**Neubauer Herbert und Repe Siri**

Institute for Small Business Management and Entrepreneurship

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Vienna University of Economics and Business Administration

Austria

## **Abstract**

Studies of non-sequential internationalization are carried out against the background of research into international entrepreneurship (IE). To date they have been mainly confined to those firms that actually begin life as international companies, known variously as ‘born globals’ (BGs), ‘international New Ventures’ (INVs) or ‘global start-ups’. Yet established enterprises long focused on their domestic markets may also opt to internationalize non-sequentially. To date, such cases have been largely ignored by the existing literature or at best discussed in passing. Similarly, most models that attempt to establish necessary and sufficient conditions for IE have focused mainly in international start-ups.

Also unanswered so far is the question of whether small and medium enterprises (SMEs) meet the requirements for non-sequential internationalization. Yet SMEs form a large proportion of all firms and are thus of enormous importance, both economically and socially. And, like other businesses, they are facing increasing pressures to go international. This paper, which is intended to provide a theoretical basis for further research, therefore aims to establish whether SMEs fulfill the conditions for non-sequential internationalization, actually or potentially.

According to existing studies, neither managers’ objective characteristics nor organizational factors, have much direct impact on the internationalization of firms or on IE, because of their essentially proxy functions. Also financial resources are not a decisive factor for internationalization, although they are probably a necessary condition for it. On the other hand, as has been shown for SMEs and in general, firms’ intangible resources are of enormous importance for IE.

Such resources consist of attitudes and behavioral predispositions at the individual and, to an even greater degree, organizational level. They thus reflect corporate culture and the strategic

operations grounded in that. Our analysis has shown that, while international growth and network orientations seem to be important for all types of internationalization, an international market or learning orientation is associated rather with the outcomes of (non-sequential) processes. Only the international entrepreneurial orientation has proved to be an essential prerequisite for non-sequential expansion abroad.

### **Debating points**

- Which resources are important for international entrepreneurship?
- Which benefits do firms enable to limit the perceived risk involved in internationalizing?
- What is the role of management characteristics in the internationalization of SMEs?

## **1. Introduction**

Studies of non-sequential internationalization are carried out against the background of research into international entrepreneurship (IE). To date they have been mainly confined to those firms that actually begin life as international companies, known variously as ‘born globals’ (BGs), ‘international new ventures’ (INVs) or ‘global start-ups’. Yet established enterprises long focused on their domestic markets may also opt to internationalize non-sequentially, giving rise to the terms ‘born-again globals’ and ‘reborn globals’ (Bell et al. 2003, 339ff). To date, such cases have been largely ignored by the existing literature or at best discussed in passing (Dimitratos & Jones 2005, 120; Keupp & Gassmann 2009, 602). Similarly, most models that attempt to establish necessary and sufficient conditions for IE have focused mainly in international start-ups.

Also unanswered so far is the question of whether small and medium enterprises (SMEs) meet the requirements for non-sequential internationalization. Yet SMEs form a large proportion of all firms and are thus of enormous importance, both economically and socially. And, like other businesses, they are facing increasing pressures to go international (Neubauer 2011, 67). This paper, which is intended to provide a theoretical basis for further research, therefore aims to establish whether SMEs fulfill the conditions for non-sequential internationalization, actually or potentially. To that end, it seeks first to identify necessary and sufficient conditions for IE in firms generally. In order to do so, it makes use in Section 2 of a particular view of internationalization, the resource-based view. The third section narrows down the search to the various strategic orientations that firms may adopt, specifically those relevant for internationalization, while the fourth takes the findings made and applies them to the particular case of SMEs. The paper ends with a brief conclusion that sums up the foregoing and identifies certain limitations it displays.

## **2. Effects of firm resources on internationalization**

This section will examine one way of understanding internationalization, the resource-based view (RBV) as the basis for identifying necessary conditions for the non-sequential variety. The RBV derives from the notion that internationalization demands resources that are both limited and unevenly distributed, especially among SMEs. This implies that such variation in resource stocks and availability can help to explain why different companies follow different internationalization processes and display varying degrees of internationalization.

The RBV regards enterprises as “unique bundles of accumulated tangible and intangible resource stocks” (Roth 1995, 200, cited in Bloodgood et al. 1996, 64). Insofar as they display

certain qualities (value, rarity, imitability, imperfect substitutability), both resource types can bring competitive advantages. The RBV assumes that they are unevenly distributed among firms within a given sector (Barney 1991, cited in Bloodgood et al. 1996, 64 and in Tseng et al. 2007, 962). Together with the immobile nature of some resources, this affects the range of strategies available to a particular firm as well as its actual choice of strategy (Oliver 1997, Madhok 1997, both cited in Tseng et al. 2007, 962). Given that some combinations of resources provide a better basis for internationalization than others, and that every firm possesses a specific resource stock that is relatively unique in its composition, different degrees of, and strategies to achieve internationalization can thus be explained (Bloodgood et al. 1996, 62; Tseng et al. 2007, 962).

In its customary forms, the RBV emphasizes the role of organizational factors and tangible resources in internationalization processes. However, the latter are reduced in amount or value by usage, which also restricts their usage by others.

Intangible resources, by contrast are unaffected by usage. Moreover, the relevant literature indicates that they may well have greater importance for internationalization (Rialp et al. 2005a, 161) as well as a strong influence on its various dimensions (Zahra et al. 2000, cited in Zahra & George 2002, 265), for various reasons. First, unlike the tangible variety, they can be used by multiple users without loss to their amount or value. Second, they are (relatively) unique to the enterprise and difficult to imitate, and, third, they can compensate for a lack of tangible resources (Knight & Cavusgil 2004, 137; Barney 1991 and Teece et al. 1997, both cited in Liu et al. 2011, 382; Tseng et al. 2007, 963).

Intangible resources are considered to include: a wide variety of strategic orientations (Ripollés et al. 2011, 12; Jantunen et al. 2005, 238; Liu et al. 2011, 382; Ruokonen & Saarenketo 2009, 19; Armario et al. 2008, 486); corporate culture<sup>1</sup>; knowledge, experience, expertise and skills; attitudes in general; and relationships, in particular individual and group networks (Zahra 2005, 21; Barney 1991, cited in Moores 2009, 173; Evers 2011, 515; Dib et al. 2010, 238; Ciszewska-Mlinaric & Mlinaric 2010, 239ff).

Yet in this context perhaps the most important intangible resource is a firm's global mindset. At the company level, this is, of course, influenced by both organizational structure and

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<sup>1</sup> Corporate culture can be defined as "a set of cognitive elements, namely values, beliefs, norms, and assumptions, which determine the thoughts, feelings, and actions of organizational members" (Dimitratos & Plakoyiannaki 2003, 191, following Sackmann 1991 and Pettigrew 1979).

sector-wide factors such as the degree of globalization (Nummela et al. 2004, 58). Yet it also depends heavily on the organization's resources (whether tangible or intangible) and on the mindset of the senior management team. Just as at the individual level, it conditions the interpretation of, and reactions to the environment (Paul 2000, 190ff), and so determines whether and how opportunities are grasped, as well as the strategies employed to do so.

Empirically-based quantitative findings (see Appendix, Table 1) suggest a positive relationship between global mindset and - non-sequential - internationalization processes. Various case studies have come to a similar conclusion. Indeed, the crucial factor distinguishing 'born globals' from firms that internationalize non-sequentially is seen as being the presence of a strongly global mindset (Rialp et al. 2005b, 159ff). In other words, a positive attitude to internationalization (Hutchinson et al. 2006, 527f; Zhang & Tansuhaj 2007, 53; Arenius 2005, 122; Bell et al. 2004, 37), expressed through 'a strong belief in a global strategy' (Andersson & Wictor 2003, 265) and allowing a firm to see "the world as its marketplace" (Zhang & Tansuhaj 2007, 53), is the key characteristic of non-sequential internationalization. As a result, an international orientation can be seen as a prerequisite for IE – and some aspects thereof probably also for any form of internationalization.

Up to now, we have examined attitudinal aspects of global mindset. Of the behavioral facets, a firm's strategic orientations (e.g., its international entrepreneurial orientation) are particularly important for internationalization processes as they are anchored in its corporate culture (Zahra 2005, 21; Paul 2000, 191). They also strongly condition its capabilities, the way it takes decisions, its feasible strategic options, the strategy finally adopted and the way decisions are put into practice (Ruokonen & Saarenketo 2009, 18f; Dimitratos & Plakoyiannaki 2003, 190f; Gatignon & Xuereb 1997, cited in Liu et al. 2011, 382). What is more, companies with particular strategic orientations tend to possess certain dynamic capabilities (Toyne 1989, cited in Zhou 2007, 282), which enable them to reconfigure their resources and processes in such a way as to better respond to the demands of their environment (Jantunen et al. 2005, 227). As a result, such firms are well - or better - placed to identify and exploit international opportunities (Knight & Cavusgil 2004, 129). All this suggests that strategic orientations play a crucial role in internationalization.

### **3. Strategic orientations and non-sequential internationalization**

This section will attempt to establish necessary conditions for non-sequential internationalization. In light of the findings of the previous section, it will examine in turn the

five strategic orientations that may play a role in non-sequential internationalization: international entrepreneurial orientation, international market orientation, international learning orientation, international network(ing) orientation<sup>2</sup> and international growth orientation (Dimitratos & Plakoyiannaki 2003, 193f; Zhang et al. 2009, 296; De Clercq & Bosma 2008, 295). For each of these, theoretical findings about the characteristics that are necessary or beneficial for non-sequential internationalization are reviewed. It is thereby assumed that no existing theory can fully explain the internationalization process, so that this must be viewed holistically, by drawing on competing theoretical insights (Spence & Crick 2006, 526; Rialp et al. 2005a, 155; Bell et al. 2004, 24). Relevant empirical findings are then summarized in order, finally, to identify those characteristics that represent conditions for international entrepreneurship.

### **3.1. International entrepreneurial orientation**

A firm's entrepreneurial orientation<sup>3</sup> can be defined as its "predisposition to engage in entrepreneurial processes, practices, and decision making, characterized by its organizational culture for [sic] innovativeness, risk taking, and proactiveness" (Matsuno et al. 2002, cited in Zhou 2007, 283). In contrast, a non-entrepreneurial firm is "one that innovates very little, is highly risk-averse, and imitates the moves of competitors instead of leading the way" (Miller 1983, 771). Accordingly, the key elements of an international entrepreneurial orientation (IEO), in other words an orientation toward international markets, are innovativeness, proactiveness<sup>4</sup> and risk-taking (Lumpkin & Dess 1996, 136f).

Innovativeness is defined as "a firm's tendency to engage in and support new ideas, novelty, experimentation, and creative processes that may result in new products, services, or technological processes" (Lumpkin & Dess 1996, 142). This dimension of (I)EO can be measured by self-assessment using scaled items<sup>5</sup>, by R&D expenditure<sup>6</sup>, and by the number

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<sup>2</sup> Dimitratos & Plakoyiannaki (2003, 193f) subsume certain aspects of this and other orientations under the concept of an international entrepreneurial culture, which "facilitates and accommodates the entrepreneurial activities of the firm in the international marketplace". By contrast, Zhang et al. (2009, 296) speak of international entrepreneurial capability. This term refers to a rather different combination of elements that enables firms to apply resources to identify, evaluate and exploit international opportunities.

<sup>3</sup> Zhou (2007) terms this 'entrepreneurial proclivity'.

<sup>4</sup> Some authors (e.g., Zhang et al. 2009) do not explicitly include proactiveness in international entrepreneurial capability. Instead, they subsume it under the capability to behave innovatively and with a positive attitude to risk. Dimitratos & Plakoyiannaki [2003] and Dimitratos et al. [2010-, 589f] regard proactiveness as an integral part of an orientation towards competition.

<sup>5</sup> Typical items used are: "My company favors a strong emphasis on (...) innovation of products and technologies, "Our top management is very receptive to innovative ways of exploiting international market

of patents possessed (Autio et al. 2000, 916). There are several theoretical grounds for asserting its positive impact on internationalization. First, the high intensity within a firm of both technology<sup>7</sup> and knowledge<sup>8</sup> associated with innovativeness, which in most cases leads to high R&D expenditure, may make internationalization necessary in order to amortize the investment rapidly (Autio et al. 2000, 911). Such companies will be anxious to profit from their innovations before they are imitated by competitors (Bloodgood et al. 1996, 66; McNaughton 2003, 301). It also seems likely that their more innovative - and thus more competitive - products open up more opportunities for innovative firms on international markets, and so push them to internationalize (Dib et al. 2010, 245). Finally, it is argued that innovative firms with higher knowledge intensities are more likely to develop learning skills and orientations (see Section 3) than companies that rely mainly on tangible resources. For not only can they identify international opportunities, they are also willing and able to make the changes necessary to exploit these, for example, by adapting to new environments, by abandoning old practices or simply by learning (Autio et al. 2000, 913; Ripollés Meliá et al. 2010, 779; Grant 1996, cited in Ripollés Meliá et al. 2010, 779; Frishammar & Andersson 2009, 61).

The main features of proactiveness<sup>9</sup> are anticipatory, future-oriented action, initiative and willingness to change. In the search for fresh opportunities, a proactive firm closely monitors its environment, which it attempts to exploit and change to its own advantage, perhaps by launching new products or by working on new markets (Lumpkin & Dess 1996, 146f; Bateman & Crant 1993, 103, cited in Acedo & Florin 2006, 53 and in Acedo & Jones 2007, 240; Zucchella & Scabini 2007, 7).

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opportunities"; and "Our firm is usually among the first to introduce new products in the industry" (Ripollés Meliá et al. 2007, 71; Zhou 2007, 291; De Clercq et al. 2005, 418).

<sup>6</sup> McDougall et al. (2003, 77) suggest that, while R&D spending may well be a suitable metric for established firms, it is less applicable to young enterprises. For product development in the latter will often have taken place in garages or at the previous workplace, so that its true costs will not be reflected.

<sup>7</sup> "Technology intensity is defined as the extent to which companies utilize their core technology." (Harveston 2000, 27).

<sup>8</sup> Knowledge intensity can be defined as "the extent to which a firm depends on the knowledge inherent in its activities and outputs as a source of competitive advantage" (Autio et al. 2000, 913).

<sup>9</sup> Typical scaled items used to measure proactiveness are: "I can see opportunities way before others do"; "I always look for better ways of doing things"; "No matter the odds, if I believe in something I will make it happen"; "Our top management regularly monitors the trend of export markets"; and "Our top management actively explores business opportunities abroad" (Acedo & Jones 2007, 248f; Acedo & Florin 2007, 113; Acedo & Florin 2006, 63; Acedo & Galan 2011, 670; Zhou 2007, 291).

Last but not least, willingness to take risks<sup>10</sup> is “the extent to which managers are willing to make risky decisions” (Harveston et al. 2000, 94). Such decisions involve the application of sometimes large resource amounts and the genuine possibility of failure (Miller & Friesen 1978, 923, cited in Lumpkin & Dess 1996, 144; Zucchella & Scabini 2007, 7). Since internationalization is inherently associated with risk, attitudes toward risk are important in pursuing it<sup>11</sup> (Liesch et al. 2011, 852; Sommer 2010, 295; Pellegrini 1994, cited in Sommer 2010, 294; Frishammar & Andersson 2009, 62). And, since non-sequential internationalization processes are probably riskier than traditional ones, it is thought that firms which adopt them are comparatively willing to take risks, whereas those that follow traditional paths are more risk-averse (Harveston et al. 2000, 94; Cavusgil & Knight 1997, cited in Harveston et al. 2000, 94).

The link between innovativeness (or the level of innovation, or knowledge and technology intensity) is largely confirmed by empirical studies (see Appendix, Table 2). Case studies (e.g. Rialp et al. 2005b, 162ff) reach similar results. No reliable conclusions can be drawn regarding the impact of the other two factors due to the small number of quantitative studies carried out (see Appendix, Table 3), even if these tend to suggest some connection with internationalization. Case studies, however, do not merely support the notion that willingness to take risks is linked to internationalization processes (Stoian & Rialp-Criado 2010, 341ff; Hutchinson et al. 2006, 525ff); they actually highlight its decisive role in them (Perks & Hughes 2008, 322f). What is more, those studies that focus on the overall concept of (I)EO (again see Table 3) strongly confirm the positive connection, as do some others (e.g., Ruokonen & Saarenketo 2009, 26f; Zhang & Tansuhaj 2007, 62).

### **3.2. International market orientation**

A focus on customers and competitors<sup>12</sup> is one indicator of an (international) market orientation, or IMO<sup>13</sup> (Narver & Slater 1990, cited in Dimitratos & Plakoyiannaki 2003, 194),

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<sup>10</sup> Willingness to take risks is measured using items such as: “Owing to the nature of the environment, it is best to explore it gradually via cautious, incremental behavior”; “My company has a strong proclivity for high-risk projects with chances of very high returns”; “Our top management focuses more on opportunities than risks abroad”; “Our top management values risk-taking opportunities abroad”; or “Our firm rewards taking calculated risks” (Ripollés Meliá et al. 2007, 71; Zhou 2007, 291; De Clercq et al. 2005, 418).

<sup>11</sup> For example, Leonidou et al. [1998, 90f] established by means of a literature review [1960-1995] that exporting firms display a greater willingness to take risks than non-exporters.

<sup>12</sup> It should be noted that a (proactive) focus on competitors is regarded by Dimitratos et al. (2010, 589) as a dimension of IEO.

<sup>13</sup> Market orientation is operationalized using such scaled items as: “We gather information about our



An IMO aims to help firms locate themselves in the market and so to implement their marketing concepts (Frishammar & Andersson 2009, 60). It is intended to assist companies, not only in recognizing opportunities on (international) markets, but also in grasping these by means of products tailored to customer needs (Zhang et al. 2009, 298; Knight & Cavusgil 2004, 130; Weerawardena et al. 2007, 301). As a “strategic mindset that determines the priority placed on seeking and using market information to create and deliver superior customer value” (Noble et al. 2002 cited in Liu et al. 2011, 383), the market orientation is operationalized within companies by a “set of cross-functional processes and activities directed at creating and satisfying customers through continuous needs assessment” (Deshpande & Farley 1999, 228, cited in Frishammar & Andersson 2009, 60).

IMO is often regarded as a fundamental driver in exploiting new, foreign markets (Liu et al. 2011, 383; Ruokonen & Saarenketo 2009, 22; Beck et al. 2011, 258), where it promotes and facilitates learning. It also enables firms to develop the skills needed to – rapidly – acquire market knowledge and to react correctly to particular market conditions (Armario et al. 2008, 491). Yet it can also have negative impacts. On the one hand, an excessive focus on existing – local – markets may mean that most resources are utilized there, with the result that the remaining resources are insufficient to allow internationalization (Liu et al. 2011, 386 & 390). On the other, this process may be held back since IMO implies that considerable time is spent on building up relationships within the market (Perks & Hughes 2008, 321).

In this respect, the results of large-scale studies (see Appendix, Table 4) do not allow clear conclusions to be drawn, while those of case studies are ambiguous. Some point to a link between IMO and internationalization (Perks & Hughes 2008, 321), in particular with the non-sequential type exemplified in born globals (BGs) or international new ventures (INVs) (Zhang & Tansuhaj 2007, 61; Evers 2011, 513ff). Other case studies, however, find no strong connection and even suggest a closer linkage between firms who internationalize by the traditional route and their clients (Rialp et al. 2005b, 163ff). All in all, two conclusions are possible. First, market orientation may impact more strongly on the outcome of internationalization than on other aspects of such processes (Ruokonen & Saarenketo 2009, 30f; Kuivalainen et al. 2010, 143). Second, the relationship between the two variables may in fact be U-shaped (Liu et al. 2011, 386 & 390).

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competition on a regular basis”; “Market research insights are used for decision-making purposes”; or “Our product or service development is heavily based on good market and customer information” (Armario et al. 2008, 509f; Dimitratos et al. 2010, 591).

### 3.3. International learning orientation

An international learning orientation (ILO)<sup>14</sup> implies the capacity to apply existing knowledge, to question existing assumptions, to acquire new knowledge and to use it to one's own advantage (De Clercq et al. 2005, 410; Argyris & Schön 1978, cited in Ruokonen & Saarenketo 2009, 21; Slater & Narver 1995, cited in Dimitratos & Plakoyiannaki 2003, 198). It is relevant here because internationalization demands certain processes, skills and capacities (Kuivalainen et al. 2010, 136) that many companies lack, the knowledge and skills they already possess being inapplicable in international contexts (McDougall & Oviatt 1996, cited in Bruneel et al. 2010, 164). In some cases, the missing skills and knowledge may be acquired from other sources<sup>15</sup>, such as the experience of individual managers or network partners (see 2.2.4) (Bruneel et al. 2010, 165). Otherwise, filling the gaps must become an integral part of internationalization. As a result, the efficiency of the learning process, and the quality of the knowledge acquired by means of it, will often be decisive factors in international expansion. They will determine whether the company concerned can adapt appropriately to external and internal stimuli, and they can reduce the perceived costs of internationalization as well as the uncertainty surrounding it. The result may be a greater commitment to go international (Autio et al. 2000, 910; Sadler-Smith et al. 2001, cited in Ruokonen & Saarenketo 2009, 21; De Clercq et al. 2005, 411).

Since few quantitative, empirical studies of the link between ILO orientation and the various dimensions of internationalization have been carried out (see Appendix, Table 4), little of importance can be concluded from them. And, while some case studies find a strong focus on learning in BGs and INVs (Zhang & Tansuhaj 2007, 62; Evers 2011, 513ff), in others this orientation tends to be linked specifically to the outcome internationalization processes (Ruokonen & Saarenketo 2009, 28f). Nonetheless, it is often regarded as a prerequisite for even initiating such processes, and for non-sequential ones in particular (De Clercq et al. 2005, 409f; Brown 1998, cited in Dimitratos & Plakoyiannaki 2003, 198; Dimitratos & Plakoyiannaki 2003, 199; Zhang et al. 2009, 297). Specifically, ILO is thought to influence the speed of internationalization (Oviatt & McDougall 2005, 543).

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<sup>14</sup> Dimitratos et al. (2010, 592) operationalized learning orientation by items such as "We have many formal information links established between departments & functions involved in the activities in this foreign country" or "My firm has many formal or informal processes that evaluate the effectiveness of its activities in this foreign country".

<sup>15</sup> The ability to tap knowledge from highly diverse sources, and to learn from it, is ascribed above all to young enterprises [Bruneel et al. 2010, 368]

### 3.4. International network(ing) orientation

Networks play a major role in both theory and practice of internationalization<sup>16</sup> (Loane & Bell 2006, 468). They are to be understood as sets of inter-connected organizations or individuals, in which the connections may take many different forms (Coviello & Cox 2006, 115f). Here it should be noted that, although academic research – generally based on the network approach – long concentrated on organizational networks (Ellis 2011, 102), personal networks<sup>17</sup> are of equal importance when companies internationalize<sup>18</sup> (Andersson & Wictor 2003, 255; McDougall & Oviatt 2003, 15). It is generally considered that “the process of network interaction creates social capital that represents one of the most critical resources of the entrepreneurial firms enhancing their abilities to go abroad and influencing the direction and organization forms of this process”(Shirokova & Storchevoy 2011, 3). This importance of relationships and networks is derived theoretically from the market approach, which sees markets as systems of relationships among numerous mutually dependent, interacting players: customers, suppliers, competitors, government agencies, relatives, friends, and so forth (Coviello & Munro 1995, 50; Coviello & Munro 1997, 365; Osarenkhoe 2009, 290).

Networks have three dimensions (Nahapiet & Ghoshal 1998, cited in Musteen et al. 2010, 198), each of which may influence internationalization (Musteen et al. 2010, 198). The relationship dimension refers to the strength of the connections concerned, which in turn consists of the “combination of the amount of time, the emotional intensity, the intimacy and the reciprocal services that characterize the tie“ (Granovetter 1973, 1361, cited in Kiss & Danis 2010, 277). The cognitive dimension encapsulates the assumption that the more distinctive the characteristics shared by network members, such as a common language or a common value system, the more effective and conflict-free will be communication between them (Musteen et al. 2010, 198f). Finally, the structural dimension, which is manifested in the architecture and configuration of the network as a whole, relates to its size, diversity and density<sup>19</sup> (Musteen et al. 2010, 198; Granovetter 1990, cited in Kiss & Danis 2010, 275).

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<sup>16</sup> “It’s not what you know but who you know” (Hitt et al. 2002, 368).

<sup>17</sup> Personal networks (also known as social networks or social ties) consist of all an individual’s relationships to other people (Burt 1992, cited in Ellis 2011, 102). Organizational, or business networks, on the other hand, consist of (long-term) relationships between firms and customers, suppliers, marketing intermediaries, competitors, government agencies, etc. (Easton & Hakansson 1996, cited in Ellis 2011, 102; Johanson & Mattsson 1988, cited in Chetty & Campbell-Hunt 2003, 7).

<sup>18</sup> As, in a sense, an enterprise’s social capital contributes to that of its employees, it is sometimes hard to distinguish one from the other (Hitt et al. 2002, 356).

<sup>19</sup> Network density is the ratio of the number of existing links between members to the maximum

Large, diverse networks are thought to facilitate internationalization by providing access to large amounts of highly varied information, but they are also hard to manage (Kiss & Danis 2010, 181; Hitt et al. 2002, 367f). On the other hand, low-density networks, in which there are relatively few direct links between members, are associated with higher total information content and greater knowledge benefits (Burt 1992, cited in Kiss & Danis 2010, 281).

A wide variety of advantages are ascribed to networks and social capital. The first is that network relationships generate international opportunities and allow these to be recognized and grasped (Coviello & Munro 1995, 59; McDougall & Oviatt 2003, 15f; Oviatt & McDougall 2005, 544; Cooper 2001, cited in Hitt et al. 2001, 481; Chetty & Campbell-Hunt 2003, 17; Evers 2010, 410). In order to grasp such opportunities, many firms will need the resources, skills and knowledge of others<sup>20</sup>, which can be accessed via networks<sup>21</sup> (McDougall & Oviatt 2003, 15f; McEvily & Zaheer 1999, cited in Hitt et al. 2001, 481; Osarenkhoe 2009, 290) and “which could not have been obtained by acting in isolation”<sup>22</sup> (Pla-Barber & Escriba-Esteve 2006, 262). These factors may include, alongside others, financial resources, market knowledge and technological expertise (Jarratt 1998, cited in Kennedy & Keeney 2009, 261; McDougall & Oviatt 2003, 15f; Chetty & Campbell-Hunt 2003, 8f & 18; McEvily & Zaheer 1999, cited in Hitt et al. 2001, 481; Arenius 2005, 125; Schwens & Kabst 2009, 327; Garcia-Canal et al. 2002, cited in Kennedy & Keeney 2009, 260; Arregle et al. 2007, 77). Furthermore, networks increase firms’ credibility, visibility and legitimacy and so also improve their market strength and competitiveness position (McDougall & Oviatt 2003, 15f; Garcia-Canal et al. 2002, cited in Kennedy & Keeney 2009, 261; Arenius 2005, 126; Coviello & Munro 1995, 57). Last but not least, networking can lead to strategic partnerships or alliances<sup>23</sup>, or to other forms of cooperation (Oviatt & McDougall

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possible number of such connections (Marsden 1990, cited in Kiss & Danis 2010, 281).

<sup>20</sup> While networks and relationships can assist firms of all sizes to internationalize (Hitt et al. 2002), they are especially important for SMEs because these are particularly affected by resource constraints (Mort & Weerawardena 2006, 551f; Drago 1997, cited in Kennedy & Keeney 2009, 262; Zahra 2005a, 21).

<sup>21</sup> The importance of networks and relationships in gaining access to resources was early identified by Oviatt & McDougall (1994, 45 & 54f) as one reason for the creation of INVs. The notion that many firms need to access resources and capabilities is also one of the basic assumptions of the network approach (Johanson & Mattsson 1988, cited in Chetty & Blankenburg Holm 2000, 80; Osarenkhoe 2009, 290).

<sup>22</sup> These resources and capabilities can be accessed by outsourcing certain activities to partners, by exchanging information or through inter-organizational learning, or by cooperating in building up new stocks (Coviello & Munro 1997, 377; Hitt et al. 2001, 483; Mort & Weerawardena 2006, 565; Garcia-Canal et al. 2002, cited in Kennedy & Keeney 2009, 260; Bruneel et al. 2010, 169). The nature of the resources generated by networking may, however, change over time (Coviello & Cox 2006, 125).

<sup>23</sup> Strategic alliances or partnerships are to be understood as forms of cooperation involving two or more companies that – without loss of independence by any party – pool resources and capabilities in order to

2005, 544), because they help, not only in identifying potential foreign partners, but also in choosing the right ones.

All these benefits enable firms to limit the perceived and actual risks involved in internationalizing, and to overcome certain disadvantages such as the so-called 'liabilities of foreignness, newness and smallness'. International competitiveness is increased, while internationalization is facilitated and accelerated (Arenius 2005, 125; Schwens & Kabst 2009, 327; Pla-Barber & Escriba-Esteve 2006, 262; Garcia-Canal et al. 2002, cited in Kennedy & Keeney 2009, 260; Hitt et al. 2002, 362; Mort & Weerawardena 2006, 566; Chetty & Campbell-Hunt 2003, 17; Evangelista 2005, 184; Osarenkhoe 2009, 290).

However, networking is also associated with certain problems. These include some loss of control, the fact that available strategic options may be affected or limited, and a degree of dependence on network partners (Coviello & Munro 1995, 56ff and 1997, 377; Mort & Weerawardena 2006, 567; Harris & Wheeler 2005, 204; Loane & Bell 2006, 474). It is therefore particularly important to find the right partners in terms of resources and capabilities. Bolstering, expanding, tending, and managing relationships with them in a strategically effective manner must be seen as an integral part of a firm's internationalization strategy (Gulati et al. 2000, cited in Chetty & Campbell-Hunt 2003, 8; Brush et al. 2001, cited in Coviello & Cox 2006, 115; Garcia-Canal et al. 2002, cited in Kennedy & Keeney 2009, 262; Loane & Bell 2006, 479; Hitt et al. 2002, 367). Doing that demands a corresponding focus on networks and, from managers, dynamic networking skills (Coviello & Munro 1995, 60; Osarenkhoe 2009, 305; Mort & Weerawardena 2006, 560ff; Loane & Bell 2006, 470; Evers 2011, 513; Lee & Park 2006, 198). In particular, if information exchange with, and inter-organizational learning from partners are to assist internationalization, they must be based on mutual confidence and on effective, systematic processes (Amal & Rocha Freitag Filho 2010, 613; Hitt et al. 2002, 364; Yli-Renko et al. 2001, cited in Bruneel et al. 2010, 169; Shirokova & Storchevoy 2011, 4f; Hitt et al. 2002, 364).

It is true that no clear connection between networks and (non-sequential) internationalization has yet emerged from large-scale, empirical investigations (see Appendix, Table 5). However, numerous case studies have highlighted their importance in such processes, especially for young firms and SMEs (e.g., Coviello & Munro 1995; Chetty & Blankenburg Holm 2000;

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achieve their own, and also common goals and to increase their competitiveness (Hitt et al. 2000 and Ireland et al. 2002, both cited in Hitt et al. 2002, 362; Varadarajan & Cunningham 1995, 282, cited in Kennedy & Keeney 2009, 260).

Andersson & Wictor 2003; Chetty & Campbell-Hunt 2003; Sharma & Blomstermo 2003; Arenius 2005; Evangelista 2005; Andersson & Evangelista 2006; Coviello 2006; Loane & Bell 2006; Spence & Crick 2009; Kennedy & Keeney 2009; Rialp et al. 2005a; Mort & Weerawardena 2006; Hutchinson et al. 2006; Evers 2011; Bruneel et al. 2010).

This apparent contradiction may derive partly from the difficulty of describing firms' networks using traditional quantitative methods (Zucchella et al. 2007, 277). At the same time, it is important to consider the network types investigated in each case. Thus, personal, or informal networks appear to be employed mainly in the early stages of companies' development, whereas later the formal variety tends to be more used - and more useful<sup>24</sup> (Hutchinson et al. 2006, 526; Musteen et al. 2010, 203; Evers 2010, 410). In addition, networks are also employed – if perhaps not to the same extent – by firms that internationalize traditionally<sup>25</sup> (Dib et al. 2010, 244ff) and so seem not to be a prerequisite exclusively of non-sequential processes (e.g.. Rasmussen et al. 2001, cited in Osarenkhoe 2009, 304). Indeed, there is considerable evidence that all types of corporate internationalization can be driven, accelerated and facilitated – but also held back or thwarted - by appropriately configured networks and relationships (Coviello & Munro 1997, 366; Osarenkhoe 2009, 304).

### **3.5. International growth orientation**

An (international) growth orientation (IGO)<sup>26</sup> is regarded as a prerequisite for companies to expand, specifically within the framework of an internationalization process (Nummela et al. 2005, 5 & 8). Of course, not all firms are interested in growing (internationally), while those that are may choose various different strategies to achieve that aim. Nevertheless, it seems plausible that growth-oriented enterprises are more likely to internationalize than others. One reason is that such firms are more willing to take risks and to accept the uncertainty inherent

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<sup>24</sup> A study by Agndal et al. (2008, cited in Kontinen & Ojala 2011a, 136) came to a similar conclusion. Its results suggest that direct, or strong relationships are important in the early stages of foreign market penetration, while indirect, or weak ones predominate later on.

<sup>25</sup> In an extension to the Uppsala Model, networks are considered to slow down internationalization since building relationships costs time and resources, and so proceeds incrementally (Johanson & Vahlne 2006, 168).

<sup>26</sup> Terms such as 'growth aspiration', 'growth intention' or 'willingness to grow' are used synonymously (Nummela et al. 2005, 8). In order to measure (international) growth orientation use is made of items such as: "Strong growth is essential for us to secure our forthcoming positions"; "The domestic market still offers sufficient growth potential; or "The growth we are aiming at can be achieved mainly through internationalization" (Nummela et al. 2005, 13). Alternatively, the relative importance assigned to aims such as raising sales, technological superiority, or the company's stability and longevity may be used (Autio et al. 2000, 924).

in internationalizing in order to achieve their expansionary goals. It can also be assumed that IGO tends to increase optimism about the firm's ability to profit from international opportunities, since internationalization is usually accompanied by an increase in the pool of human capital (De Clercq & Bosma 2008, 295f; Spence & Crick 2009, 212; Nummela et al. 2005, 15f; Delmar et al. 2003 & Crick & Spence 2005, cited in Spence & Crick 2009, 212).

Empirically it has been shown that companies with an (international) growth orientation tend to be more willing to take risky decisions such as those involved in internationalization (De Clercq & Bosma 2008, 295; Autio et al. 2000, 917<sup>27</sup>; Nummela et al. 2005, 14), even if this attitude is not a distinguishing factor between firms that internationalize sequentially and non-sequentially (Tuppura et al. 2008, 482ff). This allows us to conclude that it is a prerequisite for internationalization in any form, and not just for the non-sequential type.

### **3.6. Summary of the conditions for international entrepreneurship**

The above analysis was intended to establish potential personal and organizational prerequisites of international entrepreneurship. At the same time, the significance of managers' and firms' characteristics for non-sequential internationalization processes was examined. Since - as already shown in the relevant literature - managers' objective features, like certain organizational factors, impact only indirectly on internationalization and entrepreneurialism, the main focus was placed on intangible resources and on mindsets, individual and corporate, and above all on a number of relevant strategic orientations. This approach was based on the consideration that capacities and resources, be they individual or organizational, are of no use to internationalizing firms unless they are suitably deployed, utilized, and tended.

Appropriate global mindsets, individual as well as organizational, and including both their attitudinal and behavioral elements, can be seen as necessary conditions for non-sequential internationalization. Specifically, a positive attitude toward internationalization - a global vision or international orientation - that allows enterprises to see the whole world as their market constitutes an essential condition for international entrepreneurship (IE). Much the same is true of the behavioral aspects of global mindset, which manifest themselves in various different strategic orientations. The international entrepreneurial orientation, whose core elements - innovativeness, proactiveness and willingness to take risks - are present in the very definition of IE, can justifiably be regarded as a prerequisite for non-sequential internationalization, even if the importance of its elements may well vary. Although market

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<sup>27</sup> The connection established by Autio et al. (2000, 917) between growth orientation and internationalization (or its extent) is not a significant one.

and learning orientations also play a role in such processes, empirical studies suggest that they are relevant for process outcomes rather than other aspects. Finally, network and growth orientations appear to be prerequisites for companies to internationalize in any way, and not solely by the non-sequential route; indeed, networking in particular may even hold back or constrain internationalization.

#### **4. SMEs and internationalization**

In general, SMEs tend to internationalize sequentially, or incrementally, along the lines of the Uppsala model. First, they establish, relatively risk-free, weak links in markets that are geographically close; these connections are then extended further afield as greater market knowledge is acquired. By contrast, non-sequential internationalization processes, or international entrepreneurship (IE), require firms to act innovatively and proactively, and to take risks in order to identify, evaluate and, if appropriate, exploit opportunities abroad. Since more and more firms, both established and young, are internationalizing non-sequentially, this paper aimed to establish whether the conditions for IE are present also in (family-owned) SMEs. To this end, it made use of an analytical framework derived from the common features of various IE models, which classified the conditions into the - objective and subjective – characteristics of managers, on the one hand, and firm-specific features such as company size or age, along with tangible and intangible resources, on the other.

According to existing studies, neither managers' objective characteristics nor organizational factors, have much direct impact on the internationalization of firms or on IE, because of their essentially proxy functions. Nor are financial resources are not a decisive factor for internationalization, although they are probably a necessary condition for it. On the other hand, as has been shown for SMEs and in general, firms' intangible resources are of enormous importance for IE.

Such resources consist of attitudes and behavioral predispositions at the individual and, to an even greater degree, organizational level. They thus reflect corporate culture and the strategic operations grounded in that. Our analysis has shown that, while international growth and network orientations seem to be important for all types of internationalization, an international market or learning orientation is associated rather with the outcomes of (non-sequential) processes. Only the international entrepreneurial orientation has proved to be an essential prerequisite for non-sequential expansion abroad. It should be noted, though, that its



relative significance may vary depending on the environment, while IE probably requires at least a certain amount of every single orientation.

Given that internationalization is generally a lengthy process, SMEs' long-term orientation should be an advantage in undertaking it. However, their focus on the local may mean that expanding abroad is barely recognized as a strategic option. Family-run SMEs, in particular, are less likely to display international market and network orientations than those where ownership and management are divorced, as a result of their tendency to focus on internal matters at local level and their fears of being taken over. This further restricts their chances of internationalizing (successfully) in a non-sequential manner. Furthermore, even if SMEs may well display a degree of growth orientation, it is relatively unlikely that this will be focused on foreign markets or that it will trigger non-sequential internationalization. More probably, SMEs will choose to grow domestically or to expand cautiously, and thus incrementally, abroad.

With regard to international learning and entrepreneurial orientations, the particular features of SMEs can have both positive and negative effects. Some of their characteristics (e.g., conservatism, lack of knowledge management) might suggest a relatively low learning potential, yet SMEs are uniquely well-placed to promote learning by designing appropriate corporate cultures. Similarly, it would be wrong to say that SMEs in general have little in the way of international entrepreneurial orientation. For they sometimes display behavior that is undeniably innovative and they act - at least on occasions - proactively and with a willingness to take risks (depending on their environment and the way risk is assessed). All in all, our results show clearly that small firms can generate IE, although - given that many cannot meet the necessary conditions in full - they are on the whole less likely to do so than larger enterprises.

Thus, in this sense, SMEs constitute a distinctive class of firm (Casillas et al. 2010, 28). But this does not mean that they form a homogenous group. For, whereas in some cases they never show any sign of enterprise, in others entrepreneurial features are displayed from the founding generation. And at least some SMEs succeed in reconciling their desire to retain control with the urge to expand abroad (Litz & Kleysen 2001, cited in Cruz & Nordqvist 2012, 44) - as is proved by the existence of 'family born-again globals', which have internationalized in own distinctive way.

An investigation of such firms in Switzerland has indicated that strategic reorientation was usually the result of a change, perhaps generational, in leadership. This underlines the

importance of human factors in driving internationalization, which in turn makes such firms attractive to highly qualified, internationally minded, committed employees. Many of the new leaders already possessed international experience, as well as particular attitudes and the predisposition to certain types of behavior. An important, though not decisive factor in these firms' expansion abroad was undoubtedly the small (Swiss) domestic market and the related appreciation that their profitability and survival would be jeopardized if they failed to go international (growth orientation). All the companies investigated displayed high levels of entrepreneurial thinking, proactiveness and willingness to take risks, as well as ongoing innovativeness and some degree of focus on R&D (in other words, an international entrepreneurial orientation). Furthermore, they proved capable of switching from a product to a market orientation and so to identify more opportunities. Also associated with their internationalization processes were readiness and ability to develop new skills and competences and to adapt company goals, values and systems (learning orientation). And, although networks played little part in initiating the move into foreign markets, they were built up in the course of internationalization, a high value being placed on maintaining relationships once they had been established (Baldegger & Wyss 2007, 55ff & 65ff).

## **5. Concluding remarks**

To sum up, we can say that family-owned SMEs are in an essentially unique situation. For, thanks to the participation of entrepreneurs and their families in both ownership and management, all those involved have the necessary understanding of the potential benefits and disbenefits of strategic decisions and the authority to implement these (Zahra et al. 2004, 363). Yet IE appears to be possible above all in SMEs that manage - for instance, by adapting their cultures - to eliminate their inherent disadvantages and to overcome the associated challenges (Ward 1997, 330ff). This may appear to be an extremely difficult task, in which many will fail and which others will accomplish only after lengthy efforts. Yet, given that SMEs' corporate cultures seem to have a greater and possibly even qualitatively different impact on entrepreneurship from those of larger firms, the challenge seems to be worth taking up (Zahra et al. 2004, 365 & 374; De Vries 2002, cited in Graves & Thomas 2005, 93).

Finally, mention must be made of certain limitations of this paper. First, in Section 3, the various strategic orientations were examined separately, although it seems likely that they are to some extent mutually dependent, so that shortfalls in one can be balanced out by another. In addition, neither their form nor their importance will be unaffected by aspects of the external and internal context, such as sectoral conditions or ownership relations (Lumpkin & Dess 1996, 159ff). Moreover, the paper assumes that each of the orientations must be present to at least some degree in order to enable international entrepreneurship. The second weakness is that the prerequisites of IE may change over a firm's life-cycle (Casillas et al. 2010, 29). Finally, the existing academic literature on IE, from which the paper derived the conditions for this, makes little mention of SMEs. Yet the relationships identified between the various strategic orientations and IE, or its prerequisites, may not hold for SMEs because of the special characteristics of this type of firm. It is therefore recommended that the conditions for IE be analyzed directly, in SMEs themselves.

## Appendix

Author / Year	Country	Branch	Hypothesis	Result
Harveston et al. (2000)	USA	high-technology	Born global firms will have managers with more geocentric mindsets than managers of gradual globalizing firm	supported
Nummela et al. (2004)	Finland	information & communication technology	There is a positive relationship between a global mindset and the financial indicators of the international performance of the firm (share of foreign revenues, of foreign customers, ... )	supported
Pla-Barber/ Escriba-Esteve (2006)	Spain	divers	The transmission of a global strategic vision will increase the likelihood of adopting an accelerated internationalisation process	rejected
Rutihinda (2008)	Canada	divers	SMEs with owner managers with an international orientation are more likely to proactively undertake international operations (and succeed)	supported
Osarenkhoe (2009)	Sweden	---	The executive managers of born globals have an explicit global vision and mindset	supported
Ciszewska-Mlinaric/ Mlinaric (2010)	Slovenia	divers	A favorable management attitude toward expanding internationally is positively associated with the level of SME internationalization	supported

Table 1: Empirical findings on attitudinal elements in the Global Mindset

Variable	Author / Year	Country	Branch	Hypothesis	Result
Innovativeness	Bloodgood et al. (1996)	USA	divers	The greater innovativeness of the new U.S. venture, the greater the extent of its internationalization	rejected
	Autio et al. (2000)	Finland	electronics	The knowledge intensity of a high-technology firm is positively related to its growth in international sales	supported
	Harveston (2000)	USA	high-technology	Born global firms will have higher levels of technology intensity than gradual globalizing firms	supported
	McDougall et al. (2003)	USA	divers	INVs will place more emphasis on innovative differentiation than will DNVs	supported
	McNaughton (2003)	Canada	manufacturing	The number of geographic markets served is positively associated with proprietary products	supported
	McNaughton (2003)	Canada	manufacturing	The number of geographic markets served is positively associated with knowledge-intensive products	supported
	Andersson et al. (2004)	Sweden	manufacturing	The international activities in small firms are positively related to technology level of the firm	rejected
	Patterson (2004)	Australia	service sector	Exporters spent on average more on R&D than non-exporters	supported
	Lee/Park (2006)	USA	divers	R&D intensity has a positive effect on internationalization	supported
	Karadeniz/Göçer (2007)	Turkey	manufacturing	The R&D intensity of a firm is positively related to the internationalization of that firm	supported
	De Clercq/Bosma (2008)	Belgium/ Netherlands	---	Among existing firms, internationalization is positively associated with level of innovation	rejected
	De Clercq/Bosma (2008)	Belgium/ Netherlands	---	Among existing firms that internationalize, the choice of high-risk entry modes is positively associated with level of innovation	rejected
	Zhang et al. (2009)	China	manufacturing	Born global firms are significantly different from traditional exporters in innovative capability	rejected
	Nkongolo –Bakenda et al. (2010)	Canada	manufacturing	Innovation has a direct, positive effect on the globalization of the firm	supported
	Dib et al. (2010)	Brasilia	software development	Innovativeness is associated with a higher probability to follow a born global internationalization path (rather than a traditional one)	supported
	Naude/Rossouw (2010)	China	divers	Exporters/direct exporters tend to spend more on R&D, and bring out more new products than non-exporters/indirect exporters	supported
Ripollés Meliá et al. (2010)	Spain	service sector	The more small- and medium-sized firms are oriented towards innovation, the quicker their entry into foreign markets will be	supported	
Serra et al. (2012)	UK/Portugal	textile industry	Firms with greater technological orientation have a higher propensity to export	supported	

Tabelle 2: Empirical Studies on Innovativeness

Variable	Author / Year	Country	Branch	Hypothesis	Result
proactiveness	Acedo/Florin (2006)	Spain	divers	A CEO's international posture (especially his proactive personality and his international orientation) will have a positive influence on the firm's degree of internationalization	supported
	Pla-Barber/Escriba-Esteve (2006)	Spain	divers	A proactive attitude on the part of the management team, in relation to international strategy, will increase the likelihood of adopting an accelerated internationalisation process	supported
	Pla-Barber/Escriba-Esteve (2006)	Spain	divers	A reactive attitude on the part the management team, in relation to international strategy, will increase the likelihood of adopting a more gradual internationalisation process	supported
risk tolerance	Harveston et al. (2000)	USA	high-technology	Born global firms will have managers with higher risk tolerance than managers of gradual globalizing firms	supported
	Osarenkhoe (2009)	Sweden	----	The executive managers of born globals are often greater risk-takers than managers in traditional firms	supported
	Zhang et al. (2009)	China	manufacturing	Born global firms are significantly different from traditional exporters in risk-seeking capability	rejected
(I)EO	Harveston (2000)	USA	high-technology	Born global firms will have higher levels of international entrepreneurial orientation than gradual globalizing firms	supported
	De Clercq et al. (2005)	Belgium	divers	A firm's entrepreneurial orientation is positively related to its internationalization intent	supported
	Ripollés Meliá et al. (2007)	Spain	divers	Internationalized firms will show a more entrepreneurial orientation than non internationalized firm	supported
	Ripollés Meliá et al. (2007)	Spain	divers	A firm's entrepreneurial orientation positively influences an increase in international degree for established firms	supported
	Ripollés Meliá et al. (2007)	Spain	divers	A firm's entrepreneurial orientation will positively influence international scope (geographic diversification) in established firms	supported
	Zhou (2007)	China	manufacturing	For early internationalizing firms, international entrepreneurial proclivity facilitates foreign market knowledge, which in turn leads to a faster pace in born-global internationalization	supported
	Liu et al. (2011)	China	---	In firms from emerging markets, EO is positively related to the level of internationalization	supported

Tabelle 3: Empirical Studies on proactivity, risk taking and (international) Entrepreneurial Orientation

Variable	Author / Year	Country	Branch	Hypothesis	Result
Market Orientation	McDougall et al. (2003)	USA	divers	INVs will place more emphasis on marketing than will DNV	supported
	Armario et al. (2008)	Spain	divers	Market orientation is positively related to foreign market knowledge acquisition and subsequently to foreign market commitment	supported
	Zhang et al. (2009)	China	manufacturing	Born global firms are significantly different from traditional exporters in international marketing capability	rejected
	Dib et al. (2010)	Brasilia	software development	Customer orientation (as % of customized products) is associated with a higher probability to follow a born global internationalization path (rather than a traditional one)	supported
	Kuivalainen et al. (2010)	Finland	information & communication technology	Marketing capabilities have a positive effect on degree of internationalisation (DOI) and international performance	rejected (neg. effect)
	Liu et al. (2011)	China	---	In firms from emerging markets, the relationship between MO and internationalization is an inverse U-shape	supported
Learning Orientation	De Clercq et al. (2005)	Belgium	divers	A firm's international learning effort is positively related to its internationalization intent	supported
	Zhang et al. (2009)	China	manufacturing	Born global firms are significantly different from traditional exporters in international learning capability	supported
	Kuivalainen et al. (2010)	Finland	information & communication technology	Managerial/organisational capabilities have a positive effect on degree of internationalisation (DOI) and international performance	rejected

Tabelle 4: Empirical Studies on (International) Market Orientation and Learning Orientation

Variable	Author / Year	Country	Branch	Hypothesis	Result
Network(ing) Orientation	Pla-Barber/Escriba-Esteve (2006)	Spain	divers	The intensity of the “network” of relationships established with customers, competitors, suppliers and institutions will increase the likelihood of adopting an accelerated internationalization process	partially supported
	Zucchella et al. (2007)	Italy	manufacturing	Formal inter-firm agreements and social relationships are associated with precocity of internationalization (=starting exporting in the first 3 years)	rejected
	Rutihinda (2008)	Canada	divers	Firms that have more established international contacts are more likely to undertake international operations	supported
	Osarenkhoe (2009)	Sweden	---	The founders’ networks are a vital enabler of the pattern of internationalization	supported
	Schwens/Kabst (2009)	Germany	divers	The more intensive international network contacts of the firm, the higher the likelihood of early internationalization	supported
	Zhang et al. (2009)	China/ Taiwan	manufacturing	Born global firms are significantly different from traditional exporters in international networking capability	supported
	Bruneel et al. (2010)	Belgium	high-technology	The greater the interorganizational learning from key exchange partners, the greater the extent of internationalization of a young firm	supported
	Dib et al. (2010)	Brasilia	software development	The use of partnerships is associated with a higher probability to follow a born global internationalization path (rather than a traditional one)	rejected
	Dib et al. (2010)	Brasilia	software development	The use of business networks is associated with a higher probability to follow a born global internationalization path (rather than a traditional one)	rejected
	Dib et al. (2010)	Brasilia	software development	The use of personal networks is associated with a higher probability software development to follow a born global internationalization path (rather than a traditional one)	rejected
	Dib et al. (2010)	Brasilia	software development	The insertion in clusters is associated with a higher probability to follow a born global internationalization path (rather than a traditional one)	rejected
	Nkongolo –Bakenda et al. (2010)	Canada	manufacturing	Networking has a direct, positive effect on the globalization of the firm	rejected

Tabelle 5: Empirical Studies on (International) Network(ing) Orientation



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