



**Micro-Foundations of Small Business Internationalization:
Introduction to the Special Section**

Journal:	<i>Cross Cultural & Strategic Management</i>
Manuscript ID	CCSM-04-2020-0100
Manuscript Type:	Research Paper
Keywords:	Small business, SMEs, Internationalization, Entrepreneur, Personality, Micro-foundation

SCHOLARONE™
Manuscripts

Micro-Foundations of Small Business Internationalization

Introduction to the Special Section

Abstract

Purpose: We introduce and summarize the selected papers of the Special Section on the “Micro-Foundations of Small Business Internationalization”.

Design: We briefly summarize the state-of-the-art of the literature regarding the micro-foundations of small business internationalization. Then, we summarize the selected papers of the Special Section, highlighting their main contributions. We end with suggesting future research avenues.

Finding: We move beyond the usual suspects such as gender, education and experience to bring together internationalization studies that open up the individual lens to small business internationalization. To do so, we selected papers examining deeper-level behavioural and psychological constructs impacting the internationalization process, going from internationalization intention to internationalization behaviour, and eventually leading to internationalization performance.

Originality/value: We stress the importance of the entrepreneur as a person to better understand small business internationalization. We address the current lack of attention attributed to psychological and behavioural drivers (e.g., motives, attitudes, ambitions and aspirations) throughout the internationalization process, and we urge future researchers to further develop this research stream.

Key words

Small business; SME; Internationalization; Entrepreneur; Personality; Micro-foundation

The aim and scope of the Special Section

Long before the upsurge of entrepreneurship research, Edith Penrose pointed to the difficulty of including “entrepreneurship” into a general economic theory of firm growth because of its close association with the personality and temperament of the individuals involved (Penrose, 1959). In this Special Section, we put central those individuals who, so we argue, are of interest to better understand small businesses’ growth and, in particular, small businesses’ internationalization. Recent evidence suggests that small businesses show differences in growth patterns while appearing similar in terms of organizational and environmental characteristics, such as size, sector, governance and access to finance (Hamelin, 2013; Hurst and Pugsley, 2011). Such findings are at the centre of a longstanding discussion in the entrepreneurship literature (Carland et al., 1984) about whether and how an entrepreneur’s individual characteristics influence firm outcomes, including internationalization (e.g., Siepel et al., 2019).

The individual characteristics examined in growth studies include aspects such as gender, educational background and personality traits (Baron, 2000; Baum et al., 2014; Boone et al., 1996; Brandstätter, 2011; Lee and Tsang, 2001; Wijnbenga and van Witteloostuijn, 2007; Zhao et al., 2010). For example, it has been demonstrated that aspects such as gender (Verheul and Van Mil, 2011), social background, education and experience (Cassar, 2006; Guzmán and Santos, 2001) have a direct impact on an entrepreneur’s growth ambitions. Interestingly, a number of empirical studies dive deeper into psychological and behavioural aspects, such as an entrepreneur’s attitudes, motives and ambitions, and show, among other things, that growth attitudes and intentions are important predictors of subsequent firm growth (Davidsson et al., 2006; Stam and Wennberg, 2009).

In this Special Section, we follow this research stream and move beyond the usual suspects such as gender, education and experience to bring together internationalization

1
2
3 studies that open up the personal lens. In this way, we further develop the state-of-the-art on
4
5 the psychological and behavioural drivers (e.g., motives, attitudes, ambitions and aspirations)
6
7 of small businesses internationalization. Indeed, whereas the literature has, for example,
8
9 established that growth aspirations influence expected firm growth (Cassar, 2006; Wiklund
10
11 and Shepherd, 2003), the specificities and determinants of entrepreneurs' underlying
12
13 psychological and behavioural aspects impacting small business internationalization are far
14
15 less known. For example, it has been argued that growth-oriented entrepreneurs have higher
16
17 intrinsic motivations residing within specific needs such as those for personal development
18
19 (Guzmán and Santos, 2001); whether (or not?) there is a distinction between the intrinsic
20
21 motivations of entrepreneurs oriented towards the domestic market only, and those seeking
22
23 for international expansion, is still to be discovered. This is exactly what we explore further
24
25 within the scope of this Special Section, published in volume 27, number 1 of this journal, and
26
27 supplemented with Haapanen (2020).
28
29
30
31
32

33
34 Overall, the papers of our Special Section address the paucity of studies on
35
36 individuals' psychological and behavioural aspects in the field of internationally growing
37
38 small businesses. As such, more generally, we respond to the need for a deeper understanding
39
40 of micro-foundations to explain small business international competitiveness and performance
41
42 (Abell et al., 2008; Coff and Kryscynski, 2011), in the tradition of what became known as
43
44 behavioural strategy (Powell et al., 2011). We thus explicitly put the entrepreneur (and her /
45
46 his team) in the central position, and try to answer the question: "What makes that some
47
48 entrepreneurs (want to) explore and exploit international markets while others do not, apart
49
50 from their businesses' organizational features and perceived business opportunities abroad?"
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

Current state-of-the-art of the micro-foundations of small business internationalization

The study domain of small business internationalization – also called International Entrepreneurship (IE) – is incredibly large with many different themes and subthemes (Jones et al., 2011). Rightfully, the three levels of analysis (the entrepreneur, the firm, and the environment) are recurring cornerstones in IE studies (e.g., Keupp and Gassmann, 2009; Mejri and Umemoto, 2010), with more and more studies stressing the importance of a contingency view where two or more levels of analysis are studied in an integrative manner (Kiss et al., 2012; De Clerq et al., 2012). Although such more complex models (e.g., Child and Hsieh, 2014; Handrito et al., 2020) are, without any doubt, very useful to further advance research in the field of IE, the constructs taken into account in IE studies at the level of the entrepreneur tend to neglect deeper-level psychological and behavioural aspects (Handrito et al., 2020).

That is unfortunate, in particular because earlier personality studies do portray national differences. Jung et al. (2001) and Thomas and Mueller (2000), for example, portray country differences when probing into concepts such as entrepreneurial self-efficacy, internal locus of control and risk-taking propensity. They find that perceptions of entrepreneurial self-efficacy are lower in collectivistic nations than in individualistic ones (Jung et al., 2001), and argue that in countries culturally distant from the United States, an entrepreneur's internal locus of control and risk-taking propensity are lower (Thomas and Mueller, 2000). Given that entrepreneurial self-efficacy is positively related to entrepreneurial intentions and actions in a highly individualistic country (Jung et al., 2001) it seems that entrepreneurial activities such as firm internationalization thrive more in some countries than in others. Whether this is indeed the case, however, is yet to be discovered.

When probing deeper into studies focusing on the relationship between individual aspects and internationalization, it is apparent that the first studies in this domain only started

1
2
3 to emerge around the mid-2000s (Jones et al., 2011). This is much later than general
4
5 entrepreneurship research, including that with a behavioural flavour, Schumpeter (1912/1988)
6
7 already advocating at the beginning of the twentieth century for a central place of the
8
9 entrepreneur in economic development studies. Overall, we can roughly subdivide small
10
11 business internationalization studies into the chronology of the internationalization process,
12
13 starting from pre-internationalization and internationalization intention to internationalization
14
15 behaviour, and ending up with research on internationalization performance (see, e.g., Jones
16
17 and Coviello (2005) who adopt a similar process view).
18
19
20
21

22 For example, Casillas and Acedo (2013) show in a review study that education abroad
23
24 (e.g., Bloodgood et al., 1996; Reuber and Fisher, 1997) or a global vision (e.g., Oviatt and
25
26 McDougall, 1994) are determinants of internationalization speed, and Zuchella et al. (2007)
27
28 explain that prior international experience nurtured in family firms drives early firm
29
30 internationalization. Jones and Coviello (2005) pinpoint that aspects such as the
31
32 entrepreneur's tolerance for ambiguity or flexibility, need for achievement, risk perception or
33
34 risk tolerance all influence internationalization intention. In an extensive review study on IE,
35
36 Keupp and Gassmann (2009) show that 25 per cent of the studies in the domain focus on the
37
38 impact of socio-cognitive or demographic properties of owners / managers on the propensity
39
40 to internationalize. Even though this seems relatively high, the attention attributed to
41
42 individual aspects is surprisingly low in specific sub-domains of IE, and studies on deeper-
43
44 level psychological and behavioural aspects are clearly underrepresented.
45
46
47
48
49

50 More specifically, there is a clear lack of studies focusing on the impact of the
51
52 entrepreneur's characteristics as an antecedent of an SME's entry mode.¹ Bruneel and De
53
54 Cock (2016), for example, show in their systematic literature review on an SME's entry mode
55
56
57
58
59

60 ¹ In this paper, please note that we employ the terms SME and small business interchangeably.

1
2
3 that although 81 per cent of the studies focus on antecedents, almost all attention goes to
4 environmental uncertainty and asset specificity. They only found one study that focused on
5 the individual level; Pinho (2007) showed that the entrepreneur's ability to innovate and its
6 international experience are positively associated with an equity-based entry mode. This lack
7 of attention to the individual level does not only contradict general small business and
8 entrepreneurship literature (Shepherd, 2011), but also ignores SME internationalization
9 research (Oviatt and McDougall, 2005) where it is argued that the manager / owner is in the
10 centre of the entrepreneurial decision-making process (Bruneel and De Cock, 2016; Peschken
11 et al., 2016).

24 The second remark relates to the lack of research on deeper-level psychological and
25 behavioural aspects in relation to the pre-internationalization phase. Although the extant body
26 of knowledge does recognize the importance of individual aspects such as the entrepreneur's
27 proactiveness and risk or opportunity perceptions (e.g., Acedo and Galán, 2011), deeper-level
28 constructs such as the entrepreneur's motivational system are under-researched in relation to
29 the intention to internationalize. This is unfortunate, in particular because studies such as
30 those El Shoubaki et al. (2019) and Hermans et al. (2017) reveal that to advance our
31 understanding of company goals and growth, studies need to integrate insights on
32 entrepreneurial motives. A sole focus on human capital dimensions is insufficient (El
33 Shoubaki et al., 2019). In the IE domain, Handrito et al. (2020) reveal that an entrepreneur's
34 implicit need for achievement is associated with an SME's internationalization performance.
35 Given that motivational dispositions and specifically deep-rooted implicit needs energize
36 individuals and predict stable, long-term behaviour (Schultheiss and Brunstein, 2010;
37 Slabbinck et al., 2018), it goes without saying that studies about such deeper-level
38 psychological and behavioural constructs in relation to internationalization intention are badly
39 needed.

1
2
3 In sum, even though the body of knowledge on the pre-internationalization phase thus
4 shows that individual aspects such as risk perception (e.g., Acedo and Jones, 2007; Shrader et
5 al., 2000), higher education levels (e.g., Amorós et al., 2016) or international experience
6 (Child and Hsieh, 2014) impact the decision to internationalize and its timing, the specificities
7 on the impact of such individual aspects in specific sub-domains are under-researched (e.g.,
8 Bruneel and De Cock, 2016) and the number of studies on deeper-level psychological and
9 behavioural aspects is still surprisingly low (Acedo and Florin, 2006; Geh, 2010; Peschken et
10 al., 2016).
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21

22 When we turn our attention to actual internationalization behaviour, it is apparent that
23 a large number of studies in the IE domain focus on patterns and processes of
24 internationalization (Jones et al., 2011). Within this group of studies, however, only a few
25 acknowledge the importance of individual-level aspects. Indeed, although a large number of
26 IE studies examine if and how the entrepreneur's demographic and socio-cognitive
27 characteristics favour early internationalization (Keupp and Gassmann, 2009), the
28 interlinkages between such individual elements and actual firm internationalization behaviour
29 are under-researched.
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40

41 One notable exception is Child et al. (2017), who examine three distinct international
42 business models and show that the decision-maker's international experience predicts the
43 adopted international business model. For example, they find that decision-makers with
44 previous international business experience tend to adopt an ambidextrous explorer business
45 model, which is a "business model [that] combines exploration and exploitation, though with
46 a much greater investment in exploration than the other models" (Child et al., 2017, p. 670).
47 Another exception is Rialp et al. (2005), who stress the importance of a firm's
48 internationalization capabilities. They define internationalization capabilities as "an
49 unobservable or 'invisible' strategic asset mostly characterized by scarce home-based path
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

dependencies but high levels of tacitness and causal ambiguity in its accumulation process” (p. 161), and reveal that the entrepreneur’s human capital drives such capabilities.

When we relate these insights to Mejri and Umemoto’s (2010) knowledge-based model of SME internationalization, in which experiential knowledge is put central throughout the internationalization process, one can argue that the development of experiential knowledge – which is an individual-level constructs comprising network, cultural and entrepreneurial knowledge – starts in the pre-internationalization phase, and is further strengthened during the subsequent internationalization process (Mejri and Umemoto, 2010). Again, in this viewpoint, individual aspects such as personal experiential knowledge are thus prevalent throughout the entire internationalization process.

The usefulness of a knowledge-based approach is also implicitly embedded in Perks and Hughes’ (2008) study, who argue that it is rather the entrepreneurs’ connections to customers, and their tacit knowledge, vision and product-service complexity that define whether or not the entrepreneur decides to internationalize. Indeed, by extending these insights to Mejri and Umemoto’s (2010) knowledge-based internationalization model, we argue that Perks and Hughes’ (2008) strategy-related aspects are *underpinned* by experiential knowledge development throughout the entire internationalization process: Thanks to experiential knowledge development, the entrepreneur is able to further develop, e.g., its connections to customers and product-service complexity throughout the entire internationalization process.

Finally, when turning our attention to internationalization performance studies, it turns out that a large number of IE studies examine the association between organizational issues and internationalization performance (Jones et al., 2011). This is much less the case for studies acknowledging a direct association between individual-level aspects and internationalization performance. Notable exceptions are Ruzzier et al. (2007) and Handrito et

1
2
3 al. (2020), who show that the entrepreneur's risk perception and international orientation
4 influence the firm's degree of internationalization (Ruzzier et al., 2007), and unravel the
5 relationship between the entrepreneur's implicit need for achievement, risk perception and
6 internationalization performance (Handrito et al., 2020). More specifically, the latter show
7 that the highest level of internationalization performance is achieved by entrepreneurs scoring
8 high on implicit need for achievement and who perceive risks as very high.
9

10
11
12 In sum, these results suggest that although individual-level aspects such as the
13 manager's global vision (Johnson, 2004) or international experience and knowledge (Terjesen
14 and Elam, 2009) are often taken into account in relation to internationalization decisions
15 (Terjesen et al., 2016), direct associations with internationalization performance are examined
16 to a much lesser extent. This does not seem to be justified, in particular not in relation to
17 deeper-level psychological constructs which define, as discussed above, long-term behaviours
18 and outcomes (Schultheiss and Brunstein, 2010), such as internationalization performance
19 (Handrito et al., 2020).
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37

38 **The Special Section contents**

39
40
41 The articles in the Special Section advance our knowledge on the individual drivers of the
42 internationalization process of small businesses. We purposefully selected papers that take
43 account of behavioural and psychological constructs such as motives, attitudes, ambitions or
44 aspirations to advance our lack of knowledge in this domain. Table 1 provides an overview of
45 the Special Section's contributions.
46
47
48
49
50
51

52 [Insert Table 1 about here]

53
54
55 The *first* paper by *Bowen* (2020) examines the motives of SME internationalization in
56 a comparative study of Wales and Brittany. The study allows us to gain a comprehensive
57
58
59
60

1
2
3 understanding of the barriers that either favour or prevent firms to internationalize, and more
4 specifically how variables at different levels (i.e., individual, firm and environment) interact
5 to influence the motives to internationalize. Specifically, the fact that the author positions the
6 underlying motives to internationalize as being proactive or reactive (Czinkota & Ronkainen,
7 2006; Hollensen, 2014) of already internationalizing entrepreneurs, and that he argues that an
8 entrepreneur's attitude to internationalization can be active or passive depending on
9 underlying personal, firm and environmental variables, is of interest for this Special Section.
10 All in all, the paper can be positioned as a pre-internationalization study.
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21

22 Although not explicitly referred to, the author relies on contingency theory to argue
23 that different levels of analysis jointly influence an entrepreneur's motives and attitudes to
24 internationalize. He adopts a mixed methods approach, and focuses on a single industry (food
25 and drinks) in two specific regions (Wales and Brittany) to minimize environmental variation.
26 This allows him to not only probe into the web of underlying factors towards (non-
27)internationalization, but also to explicitly take into account cultural and environmental
28 differences between these regions. He first distributed an online questionnaire to capture
29 factors impacting the firm's internationalization status (i.e., exporting or not exporting). In a
30 second phase, he conducted 37 semi-structured interviews to further probe into the
31 questionnaire findings. To do so, he separately analysed the data of the two earlier mentioned
32 groups: Exporting and non-exporting SMEs. The choice of separating the sample firms
33 according to their internationalization status (exporting versus non-exporting firms) in the
34 qualitative study allows the author to explore whether motives and attitudes to
35 internationalization vary in function of the internationalization status of the firm. In addition,
36 the assumed symmetry between the perceived drivers and inhibitors of firms in a pre-
37 internationalization phase, and of those that already (cautiously) started to internationalize, is
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3 questioned. Overall, this mixed method approach allows the author to obtain a holistic view of
4
5 the underlying factors of SME internationalization.
6
7

8 When probing into the findings of the paper, it is apparent that Bowen's quantitative
9
10 results point to a mixture of proactive and reactive motives for internationalization. Proactive
11
12 motives turn out to be, amongst others, an international growth strategy and growth
13
14 opportunity awareness, whereas reactive motives are underpinned by being risk averse.
15
16 Moreover, the results unravel differences in both motives and the conditions to
17
18 internationalize across the two cultural contexts studied: Wales and Brittany. These findings
19
20 are further investigated in the qualitative phase of the study. Here, he explicitly subdivides the
21
22 data coming from internationalizing and non-internationalizing firms. He observes that
23
24 already internationalized firms subdivide the motives to internationalize into three motivation
25
26 themes: Reactive, proactive, or mixed. Interestingly, for non-exporters, Bowen distinguished
27
28 three underlying attitudes towards internationalization: (1) No desire for internationalization,
29
30 (2) passive towards internationalization, and (3) an active desire for internationalization that
31
32 failed. Regarding the regional differences (Wales versus Brittany), he observed that
33
34 environmental conditions are perceived as more favourable in Brittany, where less barriers to
35
36 internationalize were listed. Here, the desire to internationalize also turned out to be greater.
37
38
39
40
41
42

43 Overall, the findings of this paper explicitly show that the three levels of analysis
44
45 (entrepreneurial, firm and environmental) play a significant role in shaping the motives for
46
47 and attitudes to internationalization. Specifically, it turned out that environmental conditions
48
49 lay the foundations for many firm attitudes to internationalization. Moreover, the results
50
51 underline that although firms of all examined characteristics have the ability to
52
53 internationalize, internationalization is more likely to occur when the firm adopts a more
54
55 proactive attitude towards internationalization. Finally, the results also underline that the local
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3 culture / ecosystem is an important driver of internationalization. It echoes, in a novel manner,
4 the stylized fact of observed differences in small business internationalization across Europe.
5
6

7
8 The *second* paper, written by *Evans, Ermilina and Salaiz (2020)*, scrutinizes the role
9 of reciprocity in the internationalization of social enterprises. According to the authors, the
10 question of how internationalization occurs within social enterprises (SEs) has been
11 overlooked in small business and entrepreneurship studies, while this question is particularly
12 salient because many SEs address global problems. Social enterprises generally seek to
13 simultaneously address two goals: The achievement of a socially desirable outcome,
14 combined with financial self-sufficiency (Sharir and Lerner, 2006; Battilana and Lee, 2014).
15 They do so as non-profit, for-profit or hybrid forms of organization (Mair and Marti, 2006).
16 Until today, internationalization successes in SEs have been ascribed to the characteristics and
17 networks of the owners, as well as the transposability of various resources, including
18 financial, logistic and operational resources (Hutchinson et al., 2006).
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33

34 In their quest for the micro-foundations of small firm internationalization, the authors
35 rely on social exchange theory (SET) in order to explain the role of reciprocity as a key
36 component within the internationalization process of SEs. As one of the central pillars in SET,
37 reciprocity refers to the mutually beneficial exchange between partners (Gouldner, 1960).
38 Recognizing the numerous transactional relationships in social life, SET has found reciprocity
39 to be a crucial component of mutual exchange and commitments, also in organizational
40 studies (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005; Gouldner, 1960). Relying on SET and reciprocity,
41 Evans and her colleagues theorize that the internationalization process of small businesses
42 with a social purpose could be distinct from that of other enterprises, because reciprocity leads
43 to faster rates of embeddedness and knowledge exchange with local stakeholders.
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56

57 As such, the article suggests that the theoretical framework of the Uppsala
58 internationalization model (Johanson and Vahlne, 1977) may be less applicable to SEs.
59
60

1
2
3 Rooted in the behavioural theory of the firm (Cyert and March, 1963; Penrose, 1959), the
4
5 Uppsala model has been the result of an empirical study of how Swedish manufacturers
6
7 entered foreign markets, revealing the sequential steps in the process. It has become a
8
9 prominent conceptual tool for the interpretation of internationalization processes, which, since
10
11 its inception in 1977, has been regularly revisited by accounting for new perspectives and
12
13 research results (e.g., Johanson and Vahlne, 2009; Vahlne and Johanson, 2013, 2017). As a
14
15 dynamic theory of the internationalization process, the Uppsala model regards
16
17 internationalization as a result of an incremental learning process: Enterprises expand
18
19 incrementally from one psychic close market to the next one, and, by learning and building up
20
21 market knowledge and resources, they cope with the risks and uncertainties commonly
22
23 associated with the expansion into foreign markets (Johansen and Vahlne, 1977).
24
25
26
27
28

29 Evans and her colleagues derive from the Uppsala model the proposition that the lack
30
31 of knowledge about foreign markets makes up the largest hurdle in firms' incremental
32
33 internationalization processes, and they argue that social enterprises are able to bypass the
34
35 obstacles and incrementalism traditionally ascribed to internationalization by means of
36
37 reciprocity. Based on their theorizing, the authors suggest that social enterprises may be
38
39 capable of internationalizing more swiftly compared with organizations lacking the social
40
41 purpose, and they elicit how the social mission can be a driver of the internationalization
42
43 process (cf. Kalinic and Pater, 2013). Hence, so they argue, the social orientation of a SE is an
44
45 “essential tool for establishing effective connections with local stakeholders via positive
46
47 reciprocal exchanges” (p. 77), which they illustrate with two examples (one is the Jibu clean
48
49 water project in Africa; the other one the Educate Girls project in Rajasthan, India): When
50
51 SEs enter a foreign market, a social exchange process is set in motion. Bringing a good or
52
53 service with social properties into a new market installs a process of reciprocity, which
54
55 originates in an affective commitment and increased levels of trust (e.g., Bishop and Scott,
56
57
58
59
60

2000) between the SE and local stakeholders. Evans and her colleagues argue that such reciprocal relationships will lead to a local embedding of the SE that exceeds the pace with which any other enterprise would succeed in doing so. Once embedded in the local social structure, SEs will not only benefit from economies of time, but also from a greater likelihood of knowledge exchange (Uzzi, 1997), as well as higher levels of commitment and cooperative behaviour. In contrast to internationalizing enterprises that are not involved in reciprocal relationships, so Evans and her colleagues argue, SEs will be less affected by information deficiencies because of the established trust.

The variance of a SE's internationalization success is then dependent on the extent to which this process of reciprocity is effectuated within a local social community with its specific values and norms. The authors develop a number of propositions based on Hofstede's (1991) dimensions of national culture. Firstly, in collectivist countries (cf. Hofstede, 1991), the accelerated rate of embeddedness through reciprocity will be greater than in individualist countries. Also, secondly, a country's level of femininity (compared with masculinity, cf. Hofstede, 1991) affects the rate of SE internationalization, with feminine cultures more prone to relational values thus reciprocity. Thirdly, cultures with weak uncertainty avoidance are more comfortable with the unknown (Hofstede, 1991), and thus likely to be less suspicious to the value propositions of SEs.

Taken together, while social missions are the very reason why SEs internationalize, Evans and her colleagues conceptualize of an organization's social orientation as a valuable intangible asset that can ease the process of internationalization through reciprocity. Such a take on small firm internationalization is important, not only because it is essential to understand the behaviour of SEs, which are no longer a marginal phenomenon, but also because other enterprises could benefit from establishing reciprocal relationships in foreign

1
2
3 markets in order to overcome the barriers commonly associated with a lack of information or
4
5 trust.

6
7
8 The *third* paper of Gundlach and Sammartino (2020) probes into individual
9
10 differences within one specific entrepreneurial segment: Women entrepreneurs, a group
11
12 whose social and economic importance cannot be overestimated (Holmquist and Carter,
13
14 2009). The authors compare the individual traits and attributes of women entrepreneurs with
15
16 those of their female decision-making counterparts in larger organizations. As such, they
17
18 pinpoint the specificities of businesswomen, and challenge the idea that the “the ideal
19
20 entrepreneur is typically represented as ‘a risk-taking innovator who proactively exploits
21
22 international growth opportunities’ (Welch et al., 2008, p. 116)”, cited in Gundlach and
23
24 Sammartino (p. 93). Gundlach and Sammartino explain that the critics of this definition
25
26 argue that its inherently masculinist orientation does not do justice to female characteristics of
27
28 entrepreneurship. For this, studies probing into differences of female entrepreneurs compared
29
30 to female employees are necessary. Gundlach and Sammartino follow this argument and
31
32 stress that a focus on women allows us to understand deeper-level differences within one
33
34 gender type, as opposed to further reinforcing male dominance in the field of
35
36 entrepreneurship. For this, studies probing into differences of female entrepreneurs compared
37
38 to female employees are necessary. Gundlach and Sammartino follow this argument and
39
40 stress that a focus on women allows us to understand deeper-level differences within one
41
42 gender type, as opposed to further reinforcing male dominance in the field of
43
44 entrepreneurship.

45
46 To do so, the authors set out a survey among Australian businesswomen. They
47
48 gathered data on 186 female entrepreneurs (business owners) and 137 decision-making
49
50 employees. Of the female entrepreneurs, 130 were already internationally active, as compared
51
52 to 112 of the female decision-making employees. They employed independent samples *t*-tests
53
54 to compare small business owners with decision-making employees, and internationalizing
55
56 with non-internationalizing businesswomen on personality traits, perceived self-efficacy and
57
58 perceived barriers to internationalize.
59
60

1
2
3 The authors find that proactiveness is higher among small business owners, but that –
4
5 contrary to the expectations – decision-making employees score higher on tolerance for
6
7 ambiguity and management self-efficacy. Interestingly, tolerance for ambiguity turned out to
8
9 be significantly higher for businesswomen who were already engaged in international
10
11 activities, compared to those who were only focusing on the domestic market. This difference
12
13 did not hold for business owners, where no statistical difference between internationalizing
14
15 and non-internationalizing business owners on individual traits and attributes could be found.
16
17 Finally, Gundlach and Sammartino portrayed that decision-making employees perceive
18
19 resource barriers to internationalize as significantly lower than small business owners. In
20
21 addition, they found significant and consistent differences of five types of internationalization
22
23 barriers between internationalizing and non-internationalizing businesswomen: Perceived
24
25 knowledge, resource, procedure, exogenous and personal barriers. These differences remained
26
27 stable (albeit not always significant) for the sub-groups of small business owners and
28
29 employees only.
30
31
32
33
34
35

36 When probing deeper in their findings, it is apparent that there are no statistical
37
38 differences on personality traits and attributes between internationalizing and non-
39
40 internationalizing female business owners. This seems to suggest that for female business
41
42 owners, other explanations need to be discovered with regard to the decision to
43
44 internationalize. Perceived barriers to internationalize seem to be a good candidate to do so.
45
46 Such barriers turned out to be significantly lower for small business owners already
47
48 internationally active compared to small business owners not yet internationally active. This
49
50 seems to suggest that once female small business owners are internationally active, they are
51
52 more flexible to travel internationally, and have more confidence in pursuing international
53
54 business opportunities.
55
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3 Taking all results together, Gundlach and Sammartino propose that the choice to
4 internationalize a small business is dependent upon the owner's perceptions about the firm's
5 available resources, knowledge and networks. Specifically related to individual-level
6 constructs, they propose that the owner's perception about personal self-efficacy in the
7 internationalization domain defines the decision whether or not to internationalize. This seems
8 to suggest that although firm and environmental variables cannot be neglected in the decision
9 to internationalize, that individual constructs such as personal self-efficacy should be taken
10 into account as well in a study on small business internationalization.
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21

22 Finally, in the *fourth* paper, *Haapanen, Hurmelinna-Laukkanen and Puumalainen*
23 (2020) acknowledge that similar levels of internationalization can be achieved through
24 different pathways. In their contribution to the Special Section, the authors empirically
25 investigate how attributes at both the manager's level (dynamic capabilities) and the team
26 level (consensus) jointly yet differently impact internationalization, by means of a
27 configurational (QCA) approach (Ragin, 2014). The management and international business
28 literatures have articulated the importance of a manager's knowledge, skills and motivation as
29 drivers of international expansion (e.g., Dimitratos et al., 2011), as well as the international
30 experience of a firm's top management team (TMT) (Hutzschenreuter and Horstkotte, 2013).
31 Equally, the literature states that some level of consensus within the team is needed to achieve
32 such strategic expansion goals (Teece, 2007). Haapanen and his colleagues bring together
33 those insights in their study of the relationship between dynamic managerial capabilities and
34 the strategic consensus within the TMT in connection to those capabilities, on the one hand,
35 and different stages of the internationalization process, on the other hand.
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53

54 In line with the upper echelon perspective (Hambrick and Mason, 1984; Boone et al.,
55 2004), the authors recognize that within-team heterogeneity may lead to positive outcomes,
56 including various capabilities, but that it could also hamper the development of strategic
57
58
59
60

1
2
3 consensus and the implementation of a firm's strategies. They posit that "TMT strategic
4
5 consensus occurs when executives share their perception of the firm's current competitive
6
7 standing, and based on this common understanding, are capable of making strategic
8
9 decisions" (forthcoming) (Bragaw and Misangyi, 2019). As the literature remains scant with
10
11 regard to how strategic consensus over different aspects of dynamic managerial capabilities
12
13 regulates internationalization, Haapanen and his colleagues take up a set-theoretic method
14
15 (Ragin, 2014) to study those mechanisms. In line with Augier and Teece (2009), the authors
16
17 disaggregate dynamic managerial capabilities into sensing opportunities and threats, seizing
18
19 opportunities, and reconfiguring capabilities in order to reveal the configurations of varying
20
21 dimensions of those managerial capabilities and a TMT's strategic consensus in relation to a
22
23 firm's internationalization process.
24
25
26
27
28

29 In line with, for example, Woldesenbet et al. (2012), the findings based on survey data
30
31 collected from 261 TMT members within 61 firms underline that dynamic managerial
32
33 capabilities are important for firm internationalization. In contrast, they also suggest that
34
35 neither those capabilities, nor TMT diversity or strategic consensus in isolation are able to
36
37 explain internationalization. Interesting is that a lack of TMT consensus seems to prevent
38
39 firms from international stagnation when it comes with the presence of dynamic managerial
40
41 capabilities; only in combination with low reconfiguration capabilities (or when a firm is
42
43 incapable of changing its approach), not being able to agree on strategies at the team level is
44
45 likely to generate negative results.
46
47
48
49

50 The contribution of the article by Haapanen and his colleagues mainly resides in
51
52 bringing together manager- and team-level characteristics in order to explain firm-level
53
54 internationalization, doing so through a QCA configurational bundle lens, and in revealing
55
56 how nuanced the internationalization process can be, by disentangling managerial capabilities
57
58
59
60

1
2
3 and TMT composition into a number of components and bring them into configurations that
4 do work, or that do not.
5
6
7
8
9

10 **Future research directions**

11
12
13 Based on our own literature review and the contributions of the papers linked to this Special
14 Section, six future research avenue emerge, at least. First, we started this Special Section with
15 a little state-of-the-art review of the micro-foundations of small business internationalization
16 literature, and urged future researchers to further attribute attention to deeper-level
17 behavioural and psychological constructs throughout the internationalization process (e.g.,
18 Handrito et al., 2020). One way of doing so is by comparing different cultural and
19 institutional settings. Comparative cross-context studies do not only allow us to dive deeper
20 into the individual differences of internationally growing entrepreneurs, but also to better
21 understand whether and how cultural and institutional contexts impact such differences (e.g.,
22 Leung and Bond, 1989; Chudzikowski et al., 2011). The comparative cross-context approach
23 thus contributes to the clarification of how and to what extent entrepreneurs' growth
24 aspirations, ambitions and motives interact with their willingness and openness to expand in
25 and adjust to different regional or national contexts (e.g., Busenitz and Lau, 1996; Liñán and
26 Chen, 2009).
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44

45
46 Bowen and Gundlach and Sammartino both extend this idea and show that not only
47 research in different contexts, but also studies on different groups of entrepreneurs shed light
48 on the micro-foundations of small business internationalization. Bowen focused on examining
49 the motives and attitudes to internationalization across internationalizing and non-
50 internationalizing firms. As such, he challenged the idea that the internationalization of a firm
51 is a naturally occurring phenomenon. Instead, he proposes that internationalization is, at least
52 partially, determined the by entrepreneur's preferences, albeit combined with firm
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3 characteristics and environmental conditions. Gundlach and Sammartino focused on female
4 entrepreneurs. Interestingly, they did not find statistical differences between internationalizing
5 and non-internationalizing female business owners on typical “male” individual traits and
6 attributes, such as proactiveness. This seems to suggest that for this entrepreneurial segment,
7 other individual constructs lie at the basis of the decision to internationalize. Such reasoning is
8 in line with Phan and Wright (2018), who underline “that cognition and behaviour are at the
9 core of management research. Research at the individual, organization, and system levels of
10 analysis ultimately starts from theories of why and how individuals make decisions to
11 compete or cooperate to achieve their goals” (p. 179).
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22

23
24 Second, whereas individual-level constructs, without any doubt, contribute to
25 underpinning the decision to internationalize and the subsequent internationalization process,
26 studies on all three levels of analysis (that is, the entrepreneur, the firm and the environment)
27 are still needed. Gundlach and Sammartino corroborate this, in particular because they found
28 differences regarding the perceived barriers to internationalize between internationalizing and
29 non-internationalizing female business owners. Haapanen and his colleagues go one step
30 further, and show that the dynamic capabilities at the manager level, strategic consensus at the
31 team level and the performance at the firm level should be brought together into
32 configurational sets because in isolation they fail to explain firm performance (i.e.,
33 internationalization). We urge future researchers to do so, and to not only acknowledge the
34 importance of the individual, the firm and the environment, but also of the team, in so doing
35 contributing to the development of comprehensive and complex models to understand the
36 underlying psychological and behavioural aspects of small businesses internationalization.
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53

54 Third, next to studying the antecedents and behaviours of such configurations (in
55 relation to their international activities) more in depth, the interactions between TMT
56 consensus and managerial capabilities could be scrutinized in future research as well: The
57
58
59
60

1
2
3 findings of Haapanen and his colleagues already seem to suggest that dynamic managerial
4 capabilities may lead to international development when there is no consensus within the
5 team. Because this would call for statistical analyses, in-depth data collection on team
6 processes in interaction with management would certainly benefit the quality of future
7 research. Since researchers rarely have the opportunity to observe how TMTs develop
8 strategic decisions and consensus, there is a clear lack of insights on the dynamics of this
9 process, particularly during international expansion. We therefore call for future studies
10 adopting a longitudinal approach.
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21

22 Fourth, in line with this, Bowen's results echo the observation that growth motivation
23 influences actual firm growth (Baum et al., 1998; 2001; Cassar, 2007; Kolvereid and Bullvag,
24 1996; Miner et al., 1989), and that growth motivation is, at least partially, determined by the
25 entrepreneur's preferences, personal goals or expected consequences of growth (Bird, 1988;
26 Carland et al., 1984; Cooper, 1993; Davidsson, 1991; Dutta and Thonhill, 2008; Herron and
27 Robinson, 1993; Kolvereid, 1992; Wiklund et al., 2003). We urge future researchers to further
28 unravel such specificities for internationalization, and elicit how the entrepreneur's
29 preferences and / or personal goals influence internationalization motives and attitudes, and
30 subsequent performance. Combining this with insights at the firm and environmental level of
31 analysis would further bridge the three levels of analysis influencing firm growth (Felin et al.,
32 2015), as suggested in contingency theory and adopted in IE research (see, for example,
33 Keupp and Gassmann, 2009).
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49

50 Fifth, future researchers could investigate the propositions made by Evans and her
51 colleagues, and study how reciprocity can benefit social enterprises in the internationalization
52 process, as well as to what extent reciprocity leads to internationalization successes, among
53 other characteristics of the firm, the entrepreneur, and the context in which SE
54 internationalization takes place. Reciprocity, similar to trust, is a core organizing principle,
55
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3 and reciprocated contacts might enable or constrain entrepreneurship and internationalization
4
5 (Janjuha–Jivraj and Spence, 2009; Kim and Aldrich, 2005). While reciprocity as a
6
7 sociocultural dynamic in entrepreneurship has regularly been studied in family and ethnic
8
9 group contexts, bringing it into the SE domain and taking into account its various
10
11 manifestations (Verver and Koning, 2018), is therefore a fertile avenue to go.
12
13

14
15 Sixth and finally, a final future research avenue based on Evans et al.'s conceptual
16
17 reasoning is that the relationship between (international) entrepreneurship and reciprocity is
18
19 far from understood – in all types of ventures, not only SEs. This is strange, as entrepreneurs
20
21 are permanently facing exchange and decision processes in interaction with clients and
22
23 investors; whether and how the willingness to return favours (or harm, for that matter) affects
24
25 the entrepreneurial process and firm internationalization is well worth studying (cf. Cable and
26
27 Shane, 1997). In this regard, micro-foundations such as reciprocity tendencies, either as a
28
29 personality trait or a form of social cognition, could benefit from adequate measurement
30
31 instruments suited for the (international) entrepreneurship context, possibly inspired by work
32
33 in economic psychology and experimental social psychology (e.g., Berkowitz, 1968; Caliendo
34
35 et al., 2012).
36
37
38
39
40
41
42

43 **References**

- 44 Abell, P., Felin, T., and Foss, N. (2008), “Building micro-foundations for the routines,
45 capabilities, and performance links”, *Managerial and Decision Economics*, Vol. 29, pp.
46 489-502.
47
48
49 Acedo, F.J., and Florin, J. (2006), “An entrepreneurial cognition perspective on the
50 Internationalization of SMEs”, *Journal of International Entrepreneurship*, Vol. 4 No. 1,
51 pp. 49-67.
52
53
54 Acedo, F.J., and Galán, J.L. (2011), “Export stimuli revisited: the influence of the
55 characteristics of the managerial decision makers on international behaviour”,
56
57 *International Small Business Journal*, Vol. 29 No. 6, pp. 648–670.
58
59
60

- 1
2
3 Acedo, F. J., and Jones, M. V. (2007), "Speed of internationalization and entrepreneurial
4 cognition: Insights and a comparison between international new ventures, exporters and
5 domestic firms", *Journal of World Business*, Vol. 42 No. 3, pp. 236-252.
6
7
8 Amorós, J. E., Basco, R., and Romani, G. (2016), "Determinants of early internationalization
9 of new firms: The case of Chile", *International Entrepreneurship and Management
10 Journal*, Vol. 12 No. 1, pp. 283-307.
11
12
13 Augier, M., and Teece, D.J. (2009), "Dynamic capabilities and the role of managers in
14 business strategy and economic performance", *Organization Science*, Vol. 20 No. 2, pp.
15 410-421.
16
17
18 Baron, R.A. (2000), "Psychological perspectives on entrepreneurship: Cognitive and social
19 factors in entrepreneurs' success", *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, Vol. 9, pp.
20 15-18.
21
22
23 Battilana, J., and Lee, M. (2014), "Advancing research on hybrid organizing—Insights from
24 the study of social enterprises", *The Academy of Management Annals*, Vol. 8 No. 1, pp.
25 397-441.
26
27
28 Baum, J. R., Frese, M., and Baron, R.A. (Eds.) (2014), *The Psychology of Entrepreneurship*,
29 East Sussex, New York: Psychology Press.
30
31
32 Baum, R., Locke, E., and Kirkpatrick, S. (1998), "A longitudinal study of the relation of
33 vision and vision communication to venture growth in entrepreneurial firms", *Journal of
34 Applied Psychology*, Vol. 83 No. 1, pp. 43-54.
35
36
37 Baum, R., Locke, E., and Smith, K. (2001), "A multidimensional model of venture growth",
38 *Academy of Management Journal*, Vol. 44 No. 2, pp. 292-303.
39
40
41 Berkowitz, L. (1968), "Responsibility, reciprocity, and social distance in help-giving: An
42 experimental investigation of English social class differences", *Journal of Experimental
43 Social Psychology*, Vol. 4 No. 1, pp. 46-63.
44
45
46 Bird, B. (1988), "Implementing entrepreneurial ideas: The case for intention", *Academy of
47 Management Review*, Vol. 13 No. 3, pp. 442-453.
48
49
50 Bishop, J. W., and Scott, K.D. (2000), "An examination of organizational and team
51 commitment in a self-directed team environment", *Journal of Applied Psychology*, Vol. 85
52 No. 3, pp. 439.
53
54
55 Bloodgood, J.M., Sapienza, H.J., and Almeida, J.G. (1996), "The internationalization of new
56 high-potential ventures: Antecedents and outcomes", *Entrepreneurship Theory & Practice*,
57 Vol. 20 No. 4, pp. 61-76.
58
59
60

- 1
2
3 Boone, C., De Brabander, B., and van Witteloostuijn, A. (1996), "CEO locus of control and
4 small firm performance: An integrative framework and empirical test", *Journal of*
5 *Management Studies*, Vol. 33 No. 5, pp. 667-700.
6
7
8 Boone, C., Van Olfen, W., van Witteloostuijn, A., and De Brabander, B. (2004), "The
9 genesis of top management team diversity: Selective turnover among top management
10 teams in Dutch newspaper publishing, 1970–94", *Academy of Management Journal*, Vol.
11 47 No. 5, 633-656.
12
13
14 Bowen, R. (2020), "Motives to SME Internationalisation: A Comparative Study of export
15 propensity among food and drink SMEs in Wales and Brittany", *Cross Cultural &*
16 *Strategic Management*, Vol. 25 No. 1, pp 51-74
17
18
19 Bragaw, N.A., and Misangyi, V. (2019), "Disentangling strategic consensus: Strategic
20 consensus types, psychological bonds, and their effects on strategic climate", *Academy of*
21 *Management Review*, In-Press.
22
23
24 Brandstätter, H. (2011), "Personality aspects of entrepreneurship: A look at five meta-
25 analyses", *Personality and Individual Differences*, Vol. 51, pp. 222-230.
26
27
28 Bruneel, J., and De Cock, R. (2016), "Entry mode research and SMEs: A review and future
29 agenda", *Journal of Small Business Management*, Vol. 54 No. S1, pp. 135-167.
30
31
32 Busenitz, L.W., and Lau, C.M. (1996), "A cross-cultural cognitive model of new venture
33 creation", *Entrepreneurship Theory & Practice*, Vol. 20, pp. 25-40.
34
35
36 Cable, D.M., and S. Shane (1997), "A Prisoner's Dilemma Approach to Entrepreneur –
37 Venture Capitalist Relationships", *Academy of Management Review*, Vol. 22, pp. 142-176.
38
39
40 Caliendo, M., Fossen, F., and Kritikos, A. (2012), "Trust, positive reciprocity, and negative
41 reciprocity: Do these traits impact entrepreneurial dynamics?" *Journal of Economic*
42 *Psychology*, Vol. 3 No. 2, pp. 394-409.
43
44
45 Carland, J., Hoy, F., Boulton, W., and Carland, J. (1984), "Differentiating entrepreneurs from
46 small business owners: A conceptualization", *Academy of Management Journal*, Vol. 9
47 No. 2, pp. 354-359.
48
49
50 Casillas, J. C, and Acedo, F. J. (2013), "Speed in the Internationalization Process of the
51 Firm", *International Journal of Management Review*, Vol. 15, pp. 15-29.
52
53
54 Cassar, G. (2006), "Entrepreneur opportunity costs and intended venture growth", *Journal of*
55 *Business Venturing*, Vol. 21, pp. 610-632.
56
57
58 Cassar, G. (2007), "Money, money, money? A longitudinal investigation of entrepreneur
59 career, growth preferences, and achieved growth", *Entrepreneurship and Regional*
60 *Development*, Vol. 19 No. 1, pp. 89-107.

- 1
2
3 Child, J., and Hsieh, L. H. Y. (2014), "Decision mode, information and network attachment
4 in the internationalization of SMEs: A configurational and contingency analysis", *Journal*
5 *of World Business*, Vol. 49, pp. 598-610.
6
7
8 Child, J., Hsieh, L., Elbanna, S., Karmowska, J., Marinova, S., Puthusserry, P., and Zhang, Y.
9 (2017), "SME international business models: The role of context and experience", *Journal*
10 *of World Business*, Vol. 52 No. 5, pp. 664-679.
11
12 Chudzikowski, K., Fink, G., Mayrhofer, W., and Migliore, L. (2011), "Relation between big
13 five personality traits and Hofstede's cultural dimensions: Samples from the USA and
14 India", *Cross Cultural Management: An International Journal*, Vol. 18 No. 1, pp. 38-54.
15
16 Coff, R., and Kryscynski, D. (2011), "Invited editorial: Drilling for micro-foundations of
17 human capital-based competitive advantages", *Journal of Management*, Vol. 37, pp. 1429-
18 1443.
19
20
21
22
23
24 Cooper, A. (1993), "Challenges in predicting new firm performance", *Journal of Business*
25 *Venturing*, Vol. 8, pp. 241-253.
26
27 Cropanzano, R., and Mitchell, M.S. (2005), "Social exchange theory: An interdisciplinary
28 review", *Journal of Management*, Vol. 31 No. 6, pp. 874-900.
29
30 Cyert, R.M., and March, J.G. (1963), "A behavioral theory of the firm", *Englewood Cliffs, NJ*,
31 Vol. 2 No. 4, pp. 169-187.
32
33
34 Czinkota, M. R. and Ronkainen, I. (2006) *International Marketing*. 8th edn. Cengage
35 Learning.
36
37 Davidsson, P. (1991), "Continued entrepreneurship: Ability, need, and opportunity as
38 determinants of small firm growth", *Journal of Business Venturing*, Vol. 6 No. 6, pp. 405-
39 429.
40
41
42
43 Davidsson, P., Delmar, F., and Wiklund, J. (2006), *Entrepreneurship and the Growth of*
44 *Firms*. Edward Elgar, Cheltenham.
45
46 De Clercq, D., Sapienza, H. J., Yavuz, R. I., and Zhou, L. (2012), "Learning and Knowledge
47 in early internationalization research: Past accomplishments and future direction", *Journal*
48 *of Business Venturing*, Vol. 27, pp. 143-165
49
50
51 Dimitratos, P., Petrou, A., Plakoyiannaki, E., and Johnson, J.E. (2011), "Strategic decision-
52 making processes in internationalization: Does national culture of the focal firm matter?"
53 *Journal of World Business*, Vol. 46 No. 2, pp. 194-204.
54
55
56
57 Dutta, D., and Thornhill, S. (2008), "The evolution of growth intentions: Toward a cognition-
58 based model", *Journal of Business Venturing*, Vol. 23 No. 3, pp. 307-332.
59
60

- 1
2
3 El Shoubaki, A., Laguir, I., and den Besten, M. (2019), "Human capital and SME growth: The
4 mediating role of reasons to start a business", *Small Business Economics*, 2019, pp. 1-15.
- 5
6 Evans, K.M., Ermilina, V., and Salaiz, A. (2020), "The role of reciprocity in the
7 internationalization of social enterprises", *Cross Cultural & Strategic Management*, Vol.
8 27 No. 1, pp. 75-91.
- 9
10
11 Felin, T., Foss, N.J., and Ployhart, R.E (2015), "The microfoundations movement in strategy
12 and organization theory", *The Academy of Management Annals*, Vol. 9 No. 1, pp. 575-632.
- 13
14 Geh, E. (2010), "Understanding the antecedents to an entrepreneurial firm's intent to engage
15 in international strategic alliances", *Journal of Enterprising Culture*, Vol. 18 No. 4, pp.
16 419-33.
- 17
18
19 Gouldner, A.W. (1960), "The norm of reciprocity: A preliminary statement", *American*
20 *Sociological Review*, pp. 61-178.
- 21
22
23 Gundlach, S., and Sammartino, A. (2020), "Are international small business owners really
24 that different?" *Cross Cultural & Strategic Management*, Vol. 27 No.1, pp. 92-117.
- 25
26
27 Guzmán, J., and Santos, F.J. (2001), "The booster function and the entrepreneurial quality: An
28 application to the province of Seville", *Entrepreneurship & Regional Development*, Vol.
29 13, pp. 211-228.
- 30
31
32 Haapanen, L., Hurmelinna-Laukkanen, P., and Puumalainen, K. (2020), "When strategic
33 consensus matters: Dynamic managerial capabilities and firm internationalization as seen
34 by TMT", *Cross Cultural & Strategic Management*, forthcoming.
- 35
36
37 Hambrick, D.C., and Mason, P.A. (1984), "Upper echelons: The organization as a reflection
38 of its top managers", *Academy of Management Review*, Vol. 9 No. 2, pp. 193-206.
- 39
40
41 Hamelin, A. (2013), "Influence of family ownership on small business growth. Evidence from
42 French SMEs", *Small Business Economics*, Vol. 41 No. 3, pp. 563-579.
- 43
44
45 Handrito, R.P., Slabbinck, H., and Vanderstraeten, J. (2020), "Enjoying or Refraining from
46 Risk? The Impact of Implicit Need for Achievement and Risk Perception on SME
47 Internationalization", *Cross Cultural & Strategic Management*, forthcoming
- 48
49
50 Hermans, J., Slabbinck, H., Vanderstraeten, J., Brassey, J., Dejardin, M., Ramdani, D., and
51 van Witteloostuijn, A. (2017), "The power paradox: Implicit and explicit power motives,
52 and the importance attached to prosocial organizational goals in SMEs", *Sustainability*,
53 Vol. 9 No. 11, 2001.
- 54
55
56 Herron, L., and Robinson, R. (1993), "A structural model of the effects of entrepreneurial
57 characteristics on venture performance", *Journal of Business Venturing*, Vol. 8 No. 3, pp.
58 281-294.
- 59
60

- 1
2
3 Hofstede, G. (1991), *Organizations and cultures: Software of the mind*. McGrawHill, New
4 York.
5
6 Hollensen, S. (2014) *Global Marketing*. Europe: Prentice Hall.
7
8 Holmquist, C., and Carter, S. (2009), “The Diana project: pioneering women studying
9 pioneering women”, *Small Business Economics*, Vol. 32 No. 2, pp. 121-128.
10
11 Hurst, E., and Pugsley, B.W. (2011), “What do small businesses do?” *Brookings Papers on*
12 *Economic Activity, Economic Studies Program, The Brookings Institution*, Vol. 43 No. 2
13 (No. w17041), pp. 73-142.
14
15 Hutchinson, K., Quinn, B., and Alexander, N. (2006), “The role of management
16 characteristics in the internationalisation of SMEs: Evidence from the UK retail sector”,
17 *Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development*, Vol. 13 No. 4, pp. 513-534.
18
19 Hutzschenreuter, T., and Horstkotte, J. (2013), “Performance effects of international
20 expansion processes: The moderating role of top management team experiences”,
21 *International Business Review*, Vol. 22 No. 1, pp. 259-277.
22
23 Janjuha-Jivraj, S., and Spence, L.J. (2009), “The nature of reciprocity in family firm
24 succession”, *International Small Business Journal*, Vol. 27 No. 6, pp. 702-719.
25
26 Johanson, J., and Vahlne, J.E. (1977), “The internationalization process of the firm—a model
27 of knowledge development and increasing foreign market commitments”, *Journal of*
28 *International Business Studies*, Vol. 8 No. 1, pp. 23-32.
29
30 Johanson, J. and Vahlne, J.E. (2009), “The Uppsala internationalization process model
31 revisited: From liability of foreignness to liability of outsidership”, *Journal of*
32 *International Business Studies*, Vol. 40 No. 9, pp. 1411-1431.
33
34 Jones, M.V., and Coviello, N.E. (2005), “Internationalisation: Conceptualising an
35 Entrepreneurial Process of Behavior in Time”, *Journal of International Business Studies*,
36 Vol. 36 No. 3, pp. 284-303.
37
38 Jones, M. V., Coviello, N., and Tang, Y. K. (2011), “International Entrepreneurship research
39 (1989-2009): A domain ontology and thematic analysis”, *Journal of Business Venturing*,
40 Vol. 26, pp. 632-659.
41
42 Jung, D.I., Ehrlich, S.B., De Noble, A.F., and Baik, K.B. (2001), “Entrepreneurial self-
43 Efficacy and its relationship to entrepreneurial action: A comparative study between the
44 US and Korea”, *Management International*, Vol. 6 No. 1, pp. 41–54.
45
46 Kalinic, I., and Pater, M. (2013), “Explaining mechanisms of social entrepreneurs
47 internationalization: Concept of social cosmopreneur”, *Academy of Management*
48 *Proceedings*, Vol. 2013 No. 1, pp. 15625.
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

- 1
2
3 Keupp, M. M., and Gassmann, O. (2009), "The Past and Future of International
4 Entrepreneurship: A Review and Suggestions for Developing the Field", *Journal of*
5 *Management*, Vol. 35 No.3, pp. 600-633.
6
7
8 Kim, P.H., and Aldrich, H.E. (2005), "Social capital and entrepreneurship", *Foundations and*
9 *Trends in Entrepreneurship*, Vol. 1 No. 2, pp. 55-104.
10
11 Kiss, A. N., Danis, W.M., and Cavusgil, S. T. (2012), "International entrepreneurship
12 research in emerging economies: A critical review and research agenda", *Journal of*
13 *Business Venturing*, Vol. 27, pp. 266-290.
14
15
16 Kolvereid, L, and Bullvag, E. (1996), "Growth intentions and actual growth: The impact of
17 entrepreneurial choice", *Journal of Enterprising Culture*, Vol. 4 No.1, pp. 1-17.
18
19 Kolvereid, L. (2002), "Growth aspiration among Norwegian entrepreneurs", *Journal of*
20 *Business Venturing*, Vol.7 No. 3, pp. 209-222.
21
22
23 Lee, D.Y., and Tsang, E.W. (2001), "The effects of entrepreneurial personality, background
24 and network activities on venture growth", *Journal of Management Studies*, Vol. 38, pp.
25 583-602.
26
27
28 Leung, K., and Bond, M.H. (1989), "On the empirical identification of dimensions for cross-
29 cultural comparisons", *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, Vol. 20, pp. 133-151.
30
31 Liñán, F., and Chen, Y.W. (2009), "Development and Cross-Cultural application of a specific
32 instrument to measure entrepreneurial intentions", *Entrepreneurship Theory & Practice*,
33 Vol. 33, pp. 593-617.
34
35
36 Mair, J., and Marti, I. (2006), "Social entrepreneurship research: A source of explanation,
37 prediction, and delight", *Journal of World Business*, Vol. 41 No. 1, pp. 36-44.
38
39 Mejri, K., and Umemoto, K. (2010), "Small- and Medium-sized enterprise
40 internationalization: Towards the knowledge-based model", *Journal of International*
41 *Entrepreneurship*, Vol. 8, pp. 156-167.
42
43
44 Miner, J., Smith, N., and Bracker, J. (1989), "Role of entrepreneurial task motivation in the
45 growth of technologically innovative firms", *Journal of Applied Psychology*, Vol. 74 No.
46 4, pp. 554-560.
47
48
49 Oviatt, B.M., and McDougall, P.P. (1994), "Toward a theory of international new ventures",
50 *Journal of International Business Studies*, Vol. 25, pp. 45-64.
51
52
53 Oviatt, B.M., and McDougall, P.P. (2005), "Defining international entrepreneurship and
54 modeling the speed of internationalization", *Entrepreneurship Theory & Practice*, Vol. 29
55 No. 5, pp. 537-553.
56
57
58
59
60

- 1
2
3 Penrose, E. (1959). *The Theory of the Growth of the Firm*. Oxford University Press:
4
5 Blackwell.
- 6 Perksa, K.J., and Hughes, M. (2008), “Entrepreneurial decision-making in
7
8 internationalization: Propositions from mid-size firms”, *International Business Review*,
9
10 Vol. 17, pp. 310–330.
- 11 Peschken, T., Shukla, P., Lennon, J., and Rate, S. (2016), “The role of information alignment
12
13 and entrepreneurial traits on SME internationalization: A conceptual framework”,
14
15 *Management Research Review*, Vol. 39 No. 2, pp. 196-214.
- 16
17 Phan, P., and Wright, M. (2018), “Advancing the science of human cognition and behavior”,
18
19 *Academy of Management Perspectives*, Vol. 32 No. 2, pp.179-181.
- 20
21 Pinho, J. C. (2007), “The Impact of Ownership: Location-Specific Advantages and
22
23 Managerial Characteristics on SME Foreign Entry Mode Choices”, *International*
24
25 *Marketing Review*, Vol. 24 No. 6, pp. 715–734.
- 26
27 Powell, T. C., Lovallo, D., and Fox, C. R. (2011), “Behavioral strategy”, *Strategic*
28
29 *Management Journal*, Vol. 32 No. 13, pp. 1369-1386.
- 30
31 Ragin, C. (2014), *The comparative method: Moving beyond qualitative and quantitative*
32
33 *strategies*. University of California Press.
- 34
35 Reuber, A.R., and Fischer, E. (1997), “The influence of the management team’s international
36
37 experience on the internationalization behavior of SMEs”, *Journal of International*
38
39 *Business Studies*, Vol. 28, pp. 807–825.
- 40
41 Rialp, A., Rialp, J., and Knight, G.A. (2005), “The phenomenon of early internationalizing
42
43 firms: What do we know after a decade (1993–2003) of scientific inquiry?” *International*
44
45 *Business Review*, Vol. 14, pp. 147–166.
- 46
47 Ruzzier, M., Antoncic, B., Hisrich, R.D., and Konecnik, M. (2007), “Human capital and SME
48
49 internationalization: A structural equation modelling study”, *Canadian Journal of*
50
51 *Administrative Sciences*, Vol. 24 No. 1, pp. 15–29.
- 52
53 Schultheiss, O., and Brunstein, J.C. (2010), *Implicit Motives* (O.C. Schultheiss & J.C.
54
55 Brunstein Eds.). New York: Oxford.
- 56
57 Schumpeter, J. (1912/1988) *Theorie der wirtschaftlichen Entwicklung*. Berlin: Duncker and
58
59 Humblot.
- 60
61 Sharir, M., and Lerner, M. (2006), “Gauging the success of social ventures initiated by
62
63 individual social entrepreneurs”, *Journal of World Business*, Vol. 41 No. 1, pp. 6-20.
- 64
65 Shepherd, D. A. (2011), “Multi-Level Entrepreneurship Research: Opportunities for Studying
66
67 Entrepreneurial Decision Making”, *Journal of Management*, Vol. 37 No. 2, pp. 412–420.

- 1
2
3 Shrader, R.C., Oviatt, B.M., and McDougall, P.P. (2000), "How new ventures exploit trade-
4 offs among international risk factors: Lesson for the accelerated internationalization of the
5 21st century", *Academy of Management Journal*, Vol. 43 No. 6, pp. 1227-1247.
6
7
8 Siepel, J., Camerani, R., and Masucci, M. (2019), "Skills combinations and firm
9 performance", *Small Business Economics*, 2019, pp. 1-23.
10
11 Slabbinck, H., van Witteloostuijn, A., Hermans, J., Vanderstraeten, J., Dejardin, M., Brassey,
12 J., and Ramdani, D. (2018), "The added value of implicit motives for management research
13 Development and first validation of a Brief Implicit Association Test (BIAT) for the
14 measurement of implicit motives", *PloS ONE*, Vol. 13 No. 6, 2018.
15
16
17
18 Stam, E., and Wennberg, K. (2009), "The roles of R&D in new firm growth", *Small Business
19 Economics*, Vol. 33, pp. 77-89.
20
21
22 Teece, D.J. (2007), "Explicating dynamic capabilities: the nature and microfoundations of
23 (sustainable) enterprise performance", *Strategic Management Journal*, Vol. 28 No. 13, pp.
24 1319-1350.
25
26
27 Terjesen, S., and Elam, A. B. (2009), "A development and test of practice theory to explore
28 transnational entrepreneurs' venture internationalization", *Entrepreneurship Theory &
29 Practice*, Vol. 33, pp. 1093-1120.
30
31
32 Terjesen, S., Hessels, J., and Li, D. (2016), "Comparative International Entrepreneurship: A
33 Review and Research Agenda", *Journal of Management*, Vol. 42 No. 1, pp. 299-344.
34
35
36 Thomas, A.S., and Mueller, S.L. (2000), "A case for comparative entrepreneurship: Assessing
37 the relevance of culture", *Journal of International Business Studies*, Vol. 31 No. 2, pp.
38 287-301.
39
40
41 Uzzi, B. (1997), "Social structure and competition in interfirm networks: The paradox of
42 embeddedness", *Administrative Science Quarterly*, pp. 35-67.
43
44
45 Vahlne, J. E., and Johanson, J. (2013), "The Uppsala model on evolution of the multinational
46 business enterprise—from internalization to coordination of networks", *International
47 Marketing Review*, Vol. 30 No. 3, pp. 189-210.
48
49
50 Vahlne, J. E., and Johanson, J. (2017), "From internationalization to evolution: The Uppsala
51 model at 40 years", *Journal of International Business Studies*, Vol. 48 No. 9, pp. 1087-
52 1102.
53
54
55 Verheul, I., and Van Mil, L. (2011), "What determines the growth ambition of Dutch early-
56 stage entrepreneurs?" *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Venturing*, Vol. 3, pp. 183-
57 207.
58
59
60

- 1
2
3 Verver, M., and Koning, J. (2018), "Toward a kinship perspective on entrepreneurship",
4 *Entrepreneurship Theory & Practice*, Vol. 42 No. 4, pp. 631-666.
5
6 Welch, C.L., Welch, D.E., and Hewerdine, L. (2008), "Gender and export behaviour:
7 Evidence from women-owned enterprises", *Journal of Business Ethics*, Vol. 83 No. 1, pp.
8 113-126.
9
10
11 Wijbenga, F. H., and van Witteloostuijn, A. (2007), "Entrepreneurial locus of control and
12 competitive strategies–The moderating effect of environmental dynamism", *Journal of*
13 *Economic Psychology*, Vol. 28 No. 5, pp. 566-589.
14
15
16 Wiklund, J., Davidsson, P., and Delmar, F. (2003), "What do they think and feel about
17 growth? An expectancy-value approach to small business managers' attitudes toward
18 growth", *Entrepreneurship Theory & Practice*, Vol. 27 No. 3, pp. 247-270.
19
20
21 Wiklund, J., and Shepherd, D. (2003), "Aspiring for, and achieving growth: The moderating
22 role of resources and opportunities", *Journal of Management Studies*, Vol. 40, pp. 1919-
23 1941.
24
25
26 Woldesenbet, K., Ram, M., and Jones, T. (2012), "Supplying large firms: The role of
27 entrepreneurial and dynamic capabilities in small businesses", *International Small*
28 *Business Journal*, Vol. 30 No. 5, pp. 493-512.
29
30
31 Zhao, H., Seibert, S.E., and Lumpkin, G.T. (2010), "The relationship of personality to
32 entrepreneurial intentions and performance: A meta-analytic review", *Journal of*
33 *Management*, Vol. 36, pp. 381-404.
34
35
36 Zucchella, A., Palamara, G., and Denicolai, S. (2007),k "The drivers of the early
37 internationalization of the firm", *Journal of World Business*, Vol. 42, pp. 268-280.
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

Table 1: Contributions to the Special Section

Title and author(s)	Focus	Research question	Theory applied	Method	Data	Main contribution
Motives to SME Internationalization: A comparative study of export propensity among food and drink SMEs in Wales and Brittany Author: R. Bowen	Pre-internationalization: Exporting or not	How do entrepreneurial, firm and environmental characteristics influence the attitudes towards and motives to internationalize	Contingency Theory (although not explicitly positioned as such)	Mixed-method: Empirical-quantitative (logistic regressions) and Empirical-qualitative (in-depth interviews)	- Questionnaire to 169 food and drink producing SMEs in Wales and Brittany - Semi-structured follow-up interviews with 37 food and drink producing SMEs in Wales and Brittany	- Stresses that exporters' motives and attitudes to internationalize and those of non-exporters are <i>not</i> symmetrical - Acknowledges that to understand the underlying motives and attitudes to internationalization, insights into a complex web of entrepreneurial, firm and environmental antecedents is needed
The role of reciprocity in the internationalization of social enterprises Authors: Evans, K.M.; Ermilina, V., and Salaiz, A.	Internationalization behaviour (conceptual)	How does internationalization occur within social enterprises, what is the role of reciprocity?	Social Exchange Theory (Gouldner, 1960)	Conceptual	Conceptual, supported by two illustrative cases	Conceptualization of a firm's social mission as a valuable intangible asset that can enhance performance outcomes (i.e. internationalization), through reciprocity
Are international small business owners really that different? Authors: Gundlach, S. and Sammartino, A.	Pre-internationalization: Internationalizing or not	Do female small business owners have different personality traits than their decision-making employee counterparts, and do they assess their capabilities differently? Are there any differences in relation to the propensity to internationalize and the perceived barriers to internationalization?	No specific theory, but the ideas originate from Female Entrepreneurship	Empirical-quantitative (independent samples <i>t</i> -tests)	Questionnaire to 186 female entrepreneurs (business owners) and 137 female decision-making employees	- For female entrepreneurs, no statistical difference between internationalizing and non-internationalizing business owners on the typical "male" individual traits and attributes could be found. This seems to suggest that for this entrepreneur segment, other individual constructs lie at the basis of the decision to internationalize. - For female entrepreneurs, perceived political and financial barriers, but also personal barriers seem to lie at the basis of the decision to internationalize.

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46

<p>When strategic consensus matters: Dynamic managerial capabilities and firm internationalization as seen by TMT</p> <p>Authors: Haapanen, L.; Hurmelinna-Laukkanen, P., and Puumalainen, K.</p>	<p>- Internationalization behaviour: Deliberate country expansion (strategy) (yes/no)</p> <p>- Internationalization performance: Foreign customers (yes/no); recurring foreign customers (yes/no); long-term international customers (yes/no)</p>	<p>How do dynamic managerial capabilities and TMT strategic consensus jointly influence firm internationalization?</p>	<p>- Dynamic managerial capabilities (Augier and Teece, 2009)</p> <p>- Upper echelon theory (Hambrick and Mason, 1984)</p>	<p>Empirical-quantitative (Qualitative Comparative Analysis)</p>	<p>Questionnaire to 261 TMT members in 61 firms</p>	<p>Explaining firm-level internationalization by bringing together manager- and team-level characteristics in a configurational approach</p>
---	---	--	--	--	---	--