



ELSEVIER

Available online at www.sciencedirect.com

SCIENCE @ DIRECT®

International Business Review 14 (2005) 129–146

INTERNATIONAL
BUSINESS
REVIEW

www.elsevier.com/locate/ibusrev

Cognition and international entrepreneurship: implications for research on international opportunity recognition and exploitation

Shaker A. Zahra^{a,*}, Juha Santeri Korri^b, JiFeng Yu^c

^a*Arthur M. Blank Center for Entrepreneurship #112, Entrepreneurship Division, Babson College,
Babson Park, MA 02457-0310, USA*

^b*Helsinki University of Technology, Hut, Finland*

^c*Georgia State University, Atlanta, GA, USA*

Received 3 February 2003; received in revised form 27 February 2004; accepted 2 April 2004

Abstract

International entrepreneurship (IE) research has grown rapidly, encompassing many industries and world regions. Past IE research has examined the macro, industry and firm-specific variables that lead to companies' early internationalization and its financial and non-financial outcomes. Most prior IE research has been correlational in focus and static in design. Focusing on early internationalization, we propose that a significant shift can occur in IE research by applying a cognitive perspective and examining how entrepreneurs recognize and exploit opportunities in international markets. A cognitive approach will allow researchers to probe entrepreneurs' motivations to internationalize and capture their mental models. The article highlights the benefits to be gained from and the challenges associated with using a cognitive approach to IE research.

© 2004 Published by Elsevier Ltd.

Keywords: International entrepreneurship; Cognition; Opportunity

Research on international entrepreneurship (IE) has grown rapidly over the past decade, reflecting the important issues facing entrepreneurs as they internationalize their operations. Accumulating research findings have led IE researchers to revise the domain of their research territory (Zahra & George, 2002). As a result, born global

* Corresponding author. Tel.: +1-781-239-5014; fax: +1-781-239-4178.

E-mail address: szahra@babson.edu (S.A. Zahra).

(McDougall & Oviatt, 2003; Oviatt & McDougall, 1994) and established companies (Birkinshaw, 1997) alike are being analyzed in IE research. Researchers have also incorporated multiple theoretical perspectives to explain the antecedents, processes and effects of IE. Currently, research on IE is being conducted in the world's six major continents, with specialized conferences, doctoral consortia and journals devoted to diverse IE phenomena. IE articles and symposia are now routinely included in established conferences and leading academic journals (McDougall & Oviatt).

The breath-taking speed by which IE research has grown and become so accepted has led some to question the cumulative value-added of this research. Some IE research has been creative in offering rich insights into complex issues. Other research simply mirrors international business (IB) or strategy research, ignoring IE's unique territory. While we strongly favor integrative and cross-disciplinary research, we worry that the distinctive and rich IE territory is not fully exploited in theory building, research design, or analysis. This has given IE research a mechanical quality that has impoverished theory building and has limited the overall impact of prior findings. The boundaries of the phenomena being examined have also changed to the point that one has to ask: What does IE research cover? What is unique about this research? What is IE's distinctive competence? These and similar questions have already prompted Zahra and George (2002) to review the IE literature and attempt to reconcile contradictory findings.

1. Focus and objectives

In this article, we argue that research on early internationalization would benefit from giving attention to the territory being studied and the motivations for internationalization. Studying these issues requires researchers to probe and understand entrepreneurial cognition and how it influences the choices that companies make. While a cognitive approach has its shortcomings, it offers multiple advantages that can enrich the literature. We believe that the 'mechanical' quality of some early internationalization research could be overcome by using an alternative theoretical lens such as cognition that recognizes the importance of both the economic and non-economic motivations in shaping the content and process decisions relating to early internationalization. The cognitive perspective also provides important clues about how entrepreneurs might perceive and construct their industries' boundaries and opportunities at home and in host countries. A cognitive approach can be fruitful in studying born globals (i.e. companies that are created to compete internationally from inception) and established companies.

In order to set the stage for our argument, Section 2 discusses the importance and diversity of motivations that lead entrepreneurs to internationalize their operations early. These motivations have been overlooked in prior studies, creating a serious gap in IE research. Next, the article analyzes the importance of recognizing the context of IE decisions and activities. It concludes by highlighting the vital importance of connecting explanations of IE decisions to their geographic context, with all related cultural, ideological and technological complexities. Once this has been completed, the article discusses the need for a cognitive perspective on IE decisions in order to better connect the content of these decisions with the processes that generate them and the global context

متن کامل مقاله

دریافت فوری ←

ISIArticles

مرجع مقالات تخصصی ایران

- ✓ امکان دانلود نسخه تمام متن مقالات انگلیسی
- ✓ امکان دانلود نسخه ترجمه شده مقالات
- ✓ پذیرش سفارش ترجمه تخصصی
- ✓ امکان جستجو در آرشیو جامعی از صدها موضوع و هزاران مقاله
- ✓ امکان دانلود رایگان ۲ صفحه اول هر مقاله
- ✓ امکان پرداخت اینترنتی با کلیه کارت های عضو شتاب
- ✓ دانلود فوری مقاله پس از پرداخت آنلاین
- ✓ پشتیبانی کامل خرید با بهره مندی از سیستم هوشمند رهگیری سفارشات