
Preface

The *Handbook of Research on Born Globals* is the result of a book project undertaken by Mika Gabrielsson and V.H. Manek Kirpalani after discussion with Ben Booth of Edward Elgar. All three of us recognized that the born global research field had reached a growth point where definitions, parameters, and more theory needed to be developed for the field to expand. Researchers, practitioners, and policy makers were increasingly showing keen interest in such expansion. Also Mika and Manek had been working and publishing articles in this field for about a decade, and were widely known for their work.

This Handbook offers a very good coverage of the origin and evolution of born globals (BGs) and the changing history of this sector. It then discusses the various research areas still to be investigated in this field; looks at the training involved in developing international intellectual entrepreneurs who can found and/or manage BGs; studies the effects of different cultures on the origin and growth of BGs; and outlines the strategies BGs can adopt individually or as part of MNC networks. The text focuses on the different types of BGs that emerge from the general set of SMEs: ranging from the pure BG to born-again globals, born regionals and their subgroup of born-again regionals. It also differentiates these from internationalizing SMEs and international new ventures.

The text also analyses the growth paths of BGs as affected by different factors. These factors include the interactions of entrepreneurship and internationalization growth, aspects of knowledge accumulation, application and management, and the influence of the internet. Also the impact of utilization of large channels, of alliances and networks, and of large partner MNCs is covered. Further, the institutional support available in selected countries is discussed.

A chosen group of leading researchers have contributed to this book. They were invited due to their expertise and to reflect diversity of perspectives. The book comprises three parts. Each part commences with an overview synopsis of the intellectual area, written by Mika Gabrielsson and Manek Kirpalani, the two author/editors of the book.

In Part I, Chapter 1 deals with the historical origin of BGs and the development of theoretical and empirical research. Chapters 2–6 deal with whether these small firms are BGs or simply rapidly internationalizing firms (Chapter 2); the determinants of different types of BGs (Chapter 3);

the differences and commonalities between BGs and born-again globals (Chapter 4); the BG firm dilemma as to how to trade off between rapid growth and maintenance of control (Chapter 5); and lastly an inquiry into the BG firm's learning process (Chapter 6).

In Part II, Chapter 7 surveys the research areas that are still to be covered more fully with regard to BGs. This is very important information for both researchers and potential researchers. Chapters 8–12 discuss the use of networks/alliances by BGs and a social dynamic perspective on those (Chapter 8); Sourcing networks of BGs (Chapter 9); the BG use of the internet and new vehicles for internationalization (Chapter 10); the question of whether BGs reap more benefit from ICT use than other internationalizing SMEs (Chapter 11); and finally, there is a contribution from the viewpoint of an institutional perspective on the strategic behavior of Chinese new ventures by SMEs (Chapter 12).

In Part III, Chapter 13 analyzes the trends in the development of intellectual entrepreneur founders/managers, and in other research areas. This is followed by a discussion on new international pathways for software BGs (Chapter 14). Two contributions relate to the influence of culture on the formation and growth of BGs; one is from Portugal, which deals with the BG founders' linkages and the influence of that on the firms' evolution in regard to its international geographical pattern (Chapter 16), and the other concerns the growth and evolution of Chinese BGs as influenced by their culture (Chapter 18). Part III also draws attention to two other developing vectors. One is about the battleship strategy of a large MNC utilizing affiliated BGs as scouts and specialists in different research areas (Chapter 17) and the other introduces a new phenomenon of whole industries displaying the characteristics of a BG and thus could be turning into *de facto* BGs in their evolutionary globalization patterns (Chapter 15). Part III also includes an Annotated Bibliography for Researchers (Chapter 19). This comprehensive but selective bibliography contains what we with the cooperation of a number of experienced researchers have chosen as the most useful publications for BG and potential BG researchers to use. We make comments in the Bibliography as to whose publications deal with which different research subareas in order to facilitate the user. We think it will be of substantial benefit to researchers, and will help them to probe into areas more deeply.

Overall we are happy to present the book to all who are interested in the new and growing BG field. These firms confer significant knowledge, skill, and ability to the societies and economies in which they flourish.

Mika Gabrielsson and V.H. Manek Kirpalani
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