1. Introduction

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This volume was inspired by scholarly works initially presented at the 20th and 21st Annual McGill International Conferences, held at the Hanken School of Economics, Vaasa, Finland and the National University of Ireland, Galway, respectively. It is also the seventh volume in the McGill International Entrepreneurship Series published by Edward Elgar Publishing. This volume examines the challenges confronting international entrepreneurs in their normal environment, taking into account the newly imposed conditions of the global pandemic.

A BRIEF REVIEW OF THE ORIGINS OF THE SERIES

The genesis goes back to the first McGill International Entrepreneurship (MIE) Conference in 1998: the McGill International Entrepreneurship initiative. It has grown to a point where we have annual international conferences and, through scholarly efforts, many publications. It is an emerging and rapidly growing field. The inaugural MIE conference was a small, invitational, three-day research workshop. It was held in Montreal on the campus of McGill University, Canada, in September 1998, and organized by Professors Hamid Etemad, Peter Johnson, and the late Richard Wright. Some 30 scholars were invited to present their papers, or to discuss their position paper or other issues of importance. The title of the conference – Researching the New Frontiers – reflected two existential issues: whether we were on the cusp of a new field, or a subfield of others; and the difficulties of publishing. These occupied the open discussion sessions. Except for a few seminal publications, there was a paucity of literature on the ongoing practice of international activities by smaller firms. It seemed as though small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) had no international scholarly presence.

Give that general perception at the time, there seemed to be a palpable hunger for investigations and deep discussion. As a result, every single paper was discussed interactively at some length; and potential avenues for further research, expansion and publication of various topics were explored.

Initially, basic concepts, theories and topics, such as definitions, potential theories of international entrepreneurship, and possible directions in the field, were debated in some depth. Even in those earlier days there was a consensus that international entrepreneurship was entrepreneurial at its core, which distinguished international entrepreneurship (or entrepreneurial internationalization) from the traditional international business theories at the time, and this necessitated alternative theoretical developments. Etemad (2005) suggested that the difference was more due to entrepreneurial internationalization (EI) than the size of the enterprise. However, there was (and still is) an equal recognition that smaller companies were more entrepreneurial in their international efforts than the larger ones, and also that they faced more difficult challenges when entering into international markets, thereby taxing their constrained resources. That is how early international entrepreneurship became associated with smaller firms' internationalizations; however, the field has evolved far beyond differential size as a distinguishing factor.

From inception, the McGill International Entrepreneurship (MIE) Conference has been international: it has been held in Europe, the Middle East, and in North and South America. The MIE Conference is an important stage for scholars conducting research in small and medium-sized enterprises. Through the conferences we have learnt so much more about the internationalization process of small and medium-sized enterprises, their international activities, the importance of networks, and much more.

DISCUSSION OF THE PROGRESSION OF CHAPTERS IN THIS VOLUME

Part I

This Part comprises four chapters, which present more theoretically oriented content in order to set the stage, and also to address issues related to internationalization in the integrated global economy prior to the emergence of the new order of the world, characterized by trade barriers, Brexit, and the outbreak of the coronavirus (COVID-19), which have led to significant restrictions in free international trade and mobility. Globalization has dismantled barriers to trade, stimulated further expansion of organizations into new markets, and facilitated the mobility of capital, intellectual property, goods, services, and people. In such a flattened and flattening environment, further cross-border mobility has enabled further integration of the global economy, and this requires both cooperation and collaboration beyond traditional trade and investments. Similarly, globalization has increased global competition, thereby driving internationalized, and internationalizing, companies to improve their offerings to global markets by creating higher perceived consumer values.

Given the added complexities of international markets, Chapter 2, 'Management of Tension in Coopetition between Small and Medium-Sized Firms' (Henrik Virtanen and Sören Kock) sets the theoretical stage for effective global competition based on a framework of simultaneous cooperation and competition, in the form of 'coopetition'. The analysis is based on coopetition for decisions to outsource or undertake own manufacturing. These strategic decisions need to be based on the enterprises' prevailing characteristics, including the roles, and assumed responsibilities of the top management team (TMT).

Chapter 3, titled 'Top Management Teams and the Internationalization of SMEs: The Importance of Team Composition and Strategic Orientations' (Ann Elida Eide and Tage Koed Madsen), explores how top management team size, diversity and experience are associated with strategic orientations (growth, learning and international), and internationalization performance in small and medium-sized enterprises. This study provides insight into the upper echelons of SMEs in its investigation of the role of top managers and the degree to which their experience and diverse backgrounds are related to strategic orientations on firm level. Based on an exploratory clustering technique, the authors identify three groups of firms: (1) Born and Stuck Nordics; (2) Agile Exporters; and (3) Established Internationals. All firms are SME exporters, yet their approach to international markets as well as their performance are quite different. In their analysis the authors suggest that TMT size and composition seems to be important not only for international new ventures, but also for more established SME exporters. Their suggestions for future research are developed in connection to the study of: (1) evolution of growth trajectories; (2) reverse causality; and (3) aggregated effects. The chapter further identifies some practical implications for managers to increase the size, diversity and experience of their TMT if they aspire to heighten firm internationalization and growth, as well as learning and performance.

Chapter 4 of the volume, titled 'Internationalization of Location-bound Resources: Cases from Canada' (Hamid Etemad and Hamed Motaghi), discusses the challenges of internationalizing location-bound or context-specific goods, services or artistic creations. Such internationalization uses very different strategies for international success, including the ability (and mobility) of international customers to travel to the location of location-bound resources, which challenges the traditional international trade theories; but most entrepreneurial efforts are exploiting opportunities not perceived before, and even considered infeasible in some cases. At the very root of traditional internationalization theory is the immobility of customers in terms of consuming goods and services outside their home country borders.

We do not know for how long international travel will remain restricted under the COVID-19 pandemic movement restrictions. Therefore, the ques-

tion of when internationalization of location-bound resources will restart depends on the removal of mobility restrictions. The location-bound resources include, for example, world-renowned creative arts, or artistic performances (for example, Philadelphia's philharmonic performance or Vienna's symphony orchestra, Rio de Janeiro's Mardi Gras Festival, among many others) that rely intensively on international visitors as customers.

The last chapter in Part I, Chapter 5, 'Fundraising Strategies for Early Internationalizing Startups: The Dual Model Approach' (Alberta Onetti and Alessia Pisoni), examines the TMT's strategic choices on financing. Generally, growth-oriented smaller firms need resources to finance their growth through research and development (R&D) for new products and services, launching, marketing and distribution of the product and services, domestically or internationally. When the options for external traditional sources of funds – for example, borrowing from lending institutions, private sources, or raising funds from the stock market – are costly at home or unavailable, the firm may opt to seek options for fundraising outside its domestic base. By establishing a functioning or shadow headquarters at an international location, where raising funds is cheaper, accessible or strategically important to the young firm, the enterprise can take the form of a 'dual company'. However, establishing a second headquarters in another jurisdiction is neither easy nor inexpensive; but it may enable raising the required funds or accessing other needed resources to grow the venture. The costs and benefits associated with the above options require a thorough evaluation, and the firm's TMT is expected to do this before making a prudent decision. One of the outcomes of such a decision is early venture internationalization, which also enables the new venture to operate in two home markets.

Traditionally, multinational enterprises establish multiple regional headquarters after some time, when they have already entered multiple markets and attained growth, which not only enables better coordination but also gives them access to local resources. Chapter 5 concludes that internationalizing new ventures (INVs) and rapidly internationalizing enterprises (RIEs) can deploy the 'dual company' strategy much earlier for access to alternative resources, and internationalize at the same time.

Part II

Comprising five chapters, Part II presents the various functional aspects of 'born globals'. These firms represent the principal agent of international entrepreneurship, internationalizing soon after, if not at, inception.

Chapter 6, 'Born Globals: Job Creation in Young International Companies' (Irene Mandl), discusses the role of 'born global' firms as important generators of job creation in the European Union economy. This chapter emphasizes the

importance of the born global's external business environment to facilitate its growth and market readiness. Such firms need to be embedded in a favourable business environment with sufficient demand, tolerable competition, a positive image of entrepreneurship, favourable legislation and taxation, manageable labour costs, effective public administration, suitable public support, sufficient access to finance and satisfying labour supply. Drawing upon data from the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM), national data sources and 17 cases of born global firms, the author identifies the drivers and barriers for job creation in born globals. The chapter further lends insight into the recruitment processes of these companies and gives policy recommendations on how to (better) support job creation. It concludes with insightful reflections of the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic on European born globals and their supply chains.

The free mobility of services is one of the pillars of the European market economy. However, the inherent requirements of services – for example, to be produced and consumed at the same time – makes international service transactions across borders somewhat challenging, which in turn requires a rethinking of most service internationalization strategies, even before COVID-imposed challenges. Chapter 7, 'What Hinders Customers in Sourcing Services Internationally?' (Anja Geigenmüller and Norbert Bach) investigates barriers in the procurement of services across European borders. Specifically, it identifies the role of service type and uncertainty avoidance to explore barriers considered for the sourcing of capital-intensive and knowledge-intensive services transactions across European countries. The authors complete their chapter with implications and future research directions, and an epilogue on sourcing services internationally from a buyer perspective during the 2020 coronavirus lockdown in Germany.

Chapter 8, 'Women Entrepreneurs' Decisions in Domestic versus International New Ventures: A Theoretical Analysis' (Noor Azlin Ismail and Nurhaya Omar), explores two other fundamental, but somewhat ignored, differences: those related to the impact of gender, and those associated with the environment within which the top management team (TMT) operates. First, in relation to gender, and with the exception of a few examples in mostly advanced and industrial countries, women executives face additional and, at times, difficult challenges, including family responsibilities and juggling family–work balance, which can impose additional constraints on female entrepreneurs and executives. Furthermore, in emerging market economies, and especially those considered as socio-culturally conservative, greater restrictions can exist not only on female executives, but also on their social interactions with others. Such restrictions can impose challenges on inbound and outbound internationalization of firms led by women, compared to their male counterparts. The chapter draws our attention to the varying nature and

range of challenges encountered by female entrepreneurs of internationalizing enterprises in their respective home environments, including those imposed by foreign-based enterprises in their home markets.

Although the topic of assessing the competitive effectiveness of business models has not been an integral part of the traditional international business and international entrepreneurship's theoretical discussions in the past, the convincing and logical arguments of Chapter 9, 'Business Model Options: How To Deal With Them' (Petri Ahokangas, Irina Atkova, Yueqiang Xu and Marko Juntunen), make a compelling case for including them in a firm's entrepreneurial internationalization strategy. The logic behind such thinking is clear. Each international market offers opportunities, where their exploitation is intertwined with, if not embedded in, local operational challenges, risks and uncertainties. As discussed earlier, and considering the enterprise's capabilities, resources and risk tolerance, among others, the firm's TMT, or managing entrepreneurs, need to evaluate a range of such opportunities from time to time.

Furthermore, this chapter suggests that the dynamic intersections of opportunities, business model and environmental uncertainties require continuous improvement, reconfiguration and innovation of the firm's business models for gaining competitiveness and successful internationalization. Such strategic actions must be responsive to changes in the environment in which the firm's buyers, suppliers and stakeholders are embedded. In short, the above discussions point to, and are integral parts of, the firm's continuous renewal; which leads us to the next chapter.

Chapter 10, 'Corporate Renewal and Performance Outcome: Evidence from Emerging Market Located MNCs' (Huu Le Nguyen and Jorma Larimo), discusses the broad topic of corporate renewal in general, and in the relatively complex environment of Vietnam's emerging economy. Based on a longitudinal study of three Vietnamese emerging multinational corporations (EMNCs) from 2011 to 2016, this chapter draws on a dynamic capabilities perspective and suggests that an effective renewal is a continuous process of refreshing nearly every aspect of an enterprise, from operational processes to key capabilities, resources and organizational structures. The authors analyse how firms carry out corporate renewal successfully, and the linkage between corporate renewal and performance. They suggest that corporate renewal of the firm involves a re-examination of the organizational structure, strategy formulation, position in network configurations and, above all, the firm's value creation and delivery processes. The combined theoretical and empirical research supports a three-stage renewal process that renews the firm to ensure its competitive advantage, and where value offerings sustain its performance on global markets.

Part III

Part III looks at internationalization across traditional and digital contexts, and consists of three chapters. It begins with Chapter 11, which extends Chapter 9's discussion of business models. This chapter, 'Digital Business Model Internationalisation: Some Illustrative Cases of Born Global Digital Companies' (Brian Mac Cathmhaoil, Natasha Evers and Gabriela Gliga), examines the rapid evolution of firm digitization and the digital environment requiring the deployment of digital business models, some of which are highly innovative, and most of which are much more complex than their analogue counterparts. Such innovations are motivated by new, but uncertain, windows of opportunity associated with the rapidly changing external business and economic environments. Consider, for example, an early version of digital business models, such as Priceline.com, which was a relatively simple online reverse-auction program enabling passengers to bid for a ticket and to purchase relatively inexpensive, if not the cheapest, air travel tickets from one to another point; and yet typical airline customers were reluctant to buy a ticket from an online store. The innovation wheel has kept turning, and priceline.com has evolved and grown to offer a wide combination of travel-related services. It is dominating the market of similar online travel offerings such as Expedia.com and Travelocity.com, among others. Such firms have evolved and extended their value offering by delivering a range of travel and vacation services, including air, ground and marine transportation, lodging, sightseeing, complete vacation packages and other complementary services. Innovative and rapid expansion of business models, in response to emerging opportunities, have not only far surpassed their initial limited offerings in the 1980s and 1990s, that once faced consumer reluctance, but have transformed consumer behaviour to embrace more comprehensive travel online offerings to the near exclusion of traditional travel agencies.

The current state of the art is the result of continuous and rapid innovations in business models and corresponding business plans. As briefly discussed above, the early and relatively simple business models, mostly offering convenience, have come a long way to offer many features that respond to a wide variety of needs, that were viewed as opportunities to which entrepreneurial innovation has responded and disrupted others. The road to get here has not been free of challenging obstacles and barriers, including environmental, regulatory and technological obstacles. However, the present-day cutting-edge models encompass ever-larger multi-sided online platforms that offer increasingly more perceived value to all stakeholders than their previous counterparts. This chapter presents and discusses in some length the evolution and operations of four highly successful multi-sided online platform providers – Airbnb, Amazon, Netflix and Spotify – which started with much simpler ideas initially

that offered higher value. For example, Amazon offered books online that could be shipped or downloaded quickly at reasonable prices, and has incorporated more features and value continually as opportunities were presented and exploited over time.

In contrast to Chapter 11's digital born global firms, Chapter 12, 'Two Case Studies of Irish Born Globals in the Natural Cosmetics Industry' (Gabriela Gliga), examines two smaller Irish born globals and INVs, whose conception and business model was initially based on the potential needs of a particular segment of consumers looking for natural cosmetics products. Both family-run companies, *Rí Na Mara* and *VOYA* saw the wider opportunities beyond Ireland and aimed to take advantage of them. Given the size and constrained resources of both companies, online international marketing looked promising.

Ireland's seaweed is a natural resource containing a very rich combination of minerals, nutrients and vitamins to produce nourishing skincare and cosmetic products, all based on natural and biological ingredients sourced along Ireland's Atlantic coastline. The market for cosmetics produced with strictly natural resources has been expanding worldwide. The two companies saw the emerging opportunities and took the risk of conducting the necessary R&D, testing and regulatory approvals before producing the cosmetics for sale. Although the market for natural cosmetics has been growing worldwide, competing in such a highly competitive market with very large multinationals was perceived as both risky and challenging. However, both companies featured natural ingredients and resources in their products and thus developed their business models around a global niche segment, by manufacturing innovative, naturally grown skincare products for a relatively narrow luxury segment in the international marketplace. Both companies were family start-ups without prior entrepreneurial or executive experience to help them establish, scale up and grow.

Chapter 13 presents the e-version of human healthcare services. In 'International Aspects of Growth Management in eHealth Service Start-ups' (Martti Saarela, Anna-Mari Simunaniemi, Matti Muhos and Arto Ojala), the authors discuss managing business model growth in new ventures in the critically important services sector of human healthcare, and address the international aspects of growth management in eHealth service start-ups. In their analysis of five international eHealth service start-ups in Finland, Sweden and the United States, the authors propose that the stages of growth perspective could be strengthened by the integration of internationalization aspects and industry-specific characteristics of business as elementary functions of business growth management. The discussions of this chapter on the rapidly emerging area of healthcare innovation bridge across and relate to many topics discussed in previous chapters. The authors deal with both the opportunity for and the management of growth through online internationalization. They

recognize difficulties and explore challenges of cross-border services in online healthcare services, and they build on the discussion of business models, pointing to the impact of digitization and describing it in the context of eHealth systems.

In the final piece of this volume, the editors close with an ‘Afterword: The Future of International Entrepreneurship’, presenting some insights and implications for international entrepreneurship research in the context of the global digitization of economies and the crippling global pandemic of COVID-19 (coronavirus).

REFERENCE

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