
Editorial

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Biographical notes: Susanne Royer is a Professor for Business Administration and Director of the International Institute of Management at the University of Flensburg, Germany. She received her PhD from the Faculty for Business Administration and Economics of the University of Paderborn, Germany. Professor Royer's research interests include strategic alliances, succession in family businesses as well as strategic issues in e-business.

I am delighted to present the third issue of the *International Journal of Globalisation and Small Business (IJGSB)*. The goal of IJGSB is to explore opportunities and threats in globalisation for small businesses, as well as strategic options for small businesses in an increasingly global world. Further, the objectives of the journal are directed at establishing an effective channel of communication among policymakers, government agencies, academic and research institutions, and persons concerned with the complex role of the small business in society. The international dimension is emphasised in order to overcome cultural and national barriers, and to meet the needs of accelerating technological and other changes in the global economy from the perspective of small businesses.

This third issue consists of five interesting papers from the field of small business on the context of globalisation and a book review on the entrepreneurship theory. Additionally, it wants to serve as a forum for the results of a distance learning project between the Radboud University of Nijmegen (The Netherlands) and the University of Flensburg (Germany) held in the summer term of 2005. This distance learning project dealt with different aspects of innovation and cooperation of small firms. The aim of this course was the production of papers in teams consisting of German and Dutch students. The participants cooperated via video conferences and worked together via a jointly used e-platform. One resulting student paper was selected for publication in this issue of IJGSB, thus giving future practitioners with a special interest in SME the opportunity to give their insights on globalisation and small business. In future issues we want to offer this opportunity to other student groups and invite them as well to submit suitable papers. With this contribution and the other selected papers, this issue of IJGSB would once again like to provide a basis for further discussions of current problems of SMEs worldwide.

Anderson *et al.* contributed a paper on 'Internationalisation in Malaysian furniture firms' asking if gradually internationalising firms or so-called 'born globals' are dominant in this context. Their analysis of the internationalisation of Malaysian furniture firms concludes with the result that traditional stage models do not help to understand the development of firms that have not expanded in a gradual manner, and have not chosen markets that were 'psychically close' to Malaysia. The literature on 'born globals' was better able to reflect the identified behaviour. However, the authors suggest that the literature should be complemented with country-specific and industry-specific factors to achieve full understanding of the international expansion of firms in developing countries, such as Malaysia.

With their paper 'Building bridges to successful alliance formation', Simons and Royer want to extend the understanding of performance-related alliance determinants for small- and medium-sized businesses. The purpose of their study is to analyse the relationship between the self/partner reputation and alliance formation using 'real-world' competitors. The study includes considerations, such as motivation for alliance, number of potential partners available, resource wealth of potential partners, and past history with potential partners. In the dynamic environment, SMEs with their traditional resource limitations often have to bundle their resources with others to survive. It is thus argued that the study of alliance formation is particularly relevant to smaller business entities. The findings suggest considerable implications for theoretical propositions relating to the complexity of alliance formation for SMEs.

Hine and Miettinen contributed a paper with the title 'Redressing oversights: exploring informal innovation in small IT firms'. Building on a cross-national multiple-case study, the authors aim at analysing the appropriateness of existing measures of innovation to small firms. On the one hand, small firms are seen as relevant contributors to the innovative efforts of countries. However, on the other hand, the measurement techniques to gauge innovation largely focus on product innovation, patent counts, R&D data and bibliometric data, thereby stressing formalised innovation processes typical for larger firms. Building on this, Hine and Miettinen explain that less formalised innovation processes in smaller firms are not reflected in adequate data on inputs or outputs of these innovation processes. The authors suggest that there is a need for alternative measurements of informal innovation and R&D for small firms. Measures of informal innovation are proposed, which better reflect the innovation processes occurring in smaller firms.

Temtime contributed a paper with the title 'Monitoring complexities and changes: some lessons from small firms'. Practices and perceptions of SMEs from Botswana in monitoring environmental complexities and changes through the use of different scanning sources and frequency are the focus of this article. Analysing the environment happens on three levels: task environment (customer, competitor and technology), general environment (economic, regulatory and socio-cultural) and perceived strategic uncertainty of sectors (measured by three factors – perceived importance, degree of complexity and rate of change). The findings suggest that SMEs in Botswana monitor their environment using all major scanning sources with different degrees of frequency. One finding is that owner managers in Botswana rely more on impersonal (written) and internal sources as opposed to personal (informal) and external sources to analyse an increasingly uncertain sector, even though these sources seem less reliable to analyse unstable, turbulent and hard-to-measure sectors. Temtime suggests that the use of inappropriate scanning sources could be partially attributed to the fact that most SMEs in

Botswana do not have an integrated management information system designed to capture, store and analyse environmental data for use in strategic decision-making processes. Further implications for SMEs and future research are highlighted.

Çalışkan *et al.* are masteral students from the Radboud University in Nijmegen, The Netherlands and the University of Flensburg, Germany, respectively. They contributed a paper with the title 'The first steps of internationalisation for SMEs: serendipitous or intentional?'. This paper was initiated by a teaching cooperation between the Radboud University of Nijmegen and the University of Flensburg in the summer term of 2005, which dealt with different aspects of innovation and cooperation. The focus of their contribution is on cross-border networks as a means of internationalisation for small- and medium-sized enterprises. The main question addressed is whether the internationalisation process is started by serendipity or by intention. Data were collected in the German-Danish and Dutch-German border regions. The authors come to the result that pre-planned, serendipitous, as well as mixed forms of an internationalisation process exist in different situations, all of which they describe.

The last pages of this issue contain a review of an interesting book from the field. Ellen Kittel-Wegner and Ute Grabowski reviewed the book *A General Theory of Entrepreneurship – The Individual-Opportunity Nexus* written by Scott Shane.

I hope that you will enjoy this third issue of the *International Journal of Globalisation and Small Business*. We would not only be grateful for interesting papers submitted to the journal in the future, we would also welcome helpful comments and suggestions concerning our journal, *e.g.*, with regard to relevant topics for future special issues. Thanks go to the reviewers for their efforts in regard to this issue of IJGSB.