
Editorial

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We are pleased to present you the special issue of the *International Journal of Globalisation and Small Business* (IJGSB) on 'Being a small entrepreneur in a globalised economy. Traditional and innovative firms competing in an open world'.

This special issue contains six interesting and valuable papers exploring the dynamics of SMEs' entrepreneurship in the open economy. In particular, we selected the papers in order to analyse the influence of globalisation on competition among firms and the strategic and organisational changes necessary for both traditional and new entrepreneurs.

Three papers out of six can be considered as theoretical works; they deal with the long-standing debate on the liability of newness, the technology-based firms' competitiveness and an updated conceptual framework for family firms. The other three papers can be classified as empirical ones (either quantitative or case study works). They use data from Norway (1 paper), India (1 paper) and Italy (1 paper).

This issue of *IJGSB* aims at providing a basis for further discussions on the current management problems of SMEs worldwide.

Roberto Cafferata, Gianpaolo Abatecola and Sara Poggesi present a paper entitled 'Revisiting Stinchcombe's 'liability of newness': a systematic literature review'. They carried out a systematic literature review of those management studies which, over the years, focused on the identification of the main hurdles firms have to overcome in the early stages of their life cycle. Reviewing 1,093 works and deeply analysing 33 papers published between 1980 and 2009 in 23 academic journals, the authors conclude that the liability of newness theoretical underpinnings, although partially integrated, seem to be widely accepted in management literature also nowadays.

'The role of the board of directors in the internationalisation process of small and medium sized family businesses' is the title of the second paper, written by Andrea Calabrò, Donata Mussolino and Morten Huse. By adopting the resource-based view of the firm, the authors posit the question whether (and to what extent) the board of directors is a strategic resource, which contributes to the international expansion of family businesses. In particular, using 146 small and medium Norwegian family businesses and controlling for firm size, firm age, industry type, board size and CEO's tenure, the results show that, in the cases of high level of non-family board members, family businesses have a higher degree of internationalisation. Moreover, the authors find that the board's involvement in advisory tasks contributes to the export intensity of firm's affairs.

The resource-based view is also used in the third paper, 'Competitiveness in new technology-based firms: between local high-tech clusters and global technological markets', by Luca Dezi, Francesco Schiavone and Federico Gamma. The authors analyse how new technology-based firms can exploit their internal resources to achieve competitive advantages both in their local environment (i.e., within their local high-tech clusters) and in international markets (outside their local high-tech clusters). The authors try to overcome some limits of the resource-based theory and propose a 'dynamic' model which emphasises the integration of firm-specific and network-specific resources.

'International sourcing effectiveness in the fashion industry: the experience of Italian industrial districts' by Corrado Cerruti and Emanuela Delbufalo investigates the impact of supply chain governance mechanisms on international sourcing effectiveness. By focusing on the fashion districts and using a Delphi method, the authors point out that the traditional informal coordination mechanisms are supported, but not replaced by formal management practices. Two findings have been highlighted:

- 1 the emphasis on cooperation makes district firms interested in structuring and formalising interorganisational knowledge sharing practices
- 2 the value of rationalisation and formalisation of risk management processes is underestimated by district firms.

The fifth paper 'An appraisal of CSR in SMEs in a globalised context: an empirical study of a ceramic cluster in Morbi, India' by Annapurna Vancheswaran and Gautam Vinayshil examines the role of the corporate social responsibility as a strategic tool for enhancing overall commitment of SMEs to upgrade their operating efficiency. The authors studied corporate social responsibility in the Indian Morbi cluster and conclude their essay stressing the importance of adopting CSR standards and codes also in SMEs.

'Family business: institutional framework and entrepreneurial power' by Piero Mastroberardino, Claudio Nigro, Giuseppe Calabrese, Flora Cortese and Gemma Carolillo aims at proposing a different conceptual framework for family firms. By combining the assumptions of the 'political' and 'new-institutionalist' approaches to the

study of the organisations, the authors elaborate new research hypotheses based on the idea that any organisation (family firms included) is the result of two forces, 'actions' and 'institutionalisation' continuously facing one another. The steps for further empirical research efforts are clearly identified in the paper.

Acknowledgements

We are grateful to all the illustrious reviewers who have worked on this special issue of *IJGSB*. We would like to thank Prof. Susanne Royer, editor of *IJGSB*, for her support and cooperation.