

CALL FOR PAPERS

*Cross Cultural & Strategic Management*

SPECIAL ISSUE ON:

**MICRO-FOUNDATIONS OF  
SMALL BUSINESS INTERNATIONALIZATION**

Guest Editors

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Long before the upsurge of entrepreneurship research, Edith Penrose pointed to the difficulty of including ‘entrepreneurship’ into a general economic theory of firm growth, because of its close association with the personality and temperament of the individuals involved (Penrose, 1959). In this call for papers, we put central those individuals who, so we argue, are of interest to better understand small businesses’ growth and, in particular, small businesses’ international growth. Recent evidence suggests that small businesses show differences in growth patterns while appearing similar in terms of organizational and environmental characteristics, such as size, sector, governance, and access to finance (Hamelin, 2013; Hurst and Pugsley, 2011). Such findings are at the center of a longstanding discussion in the

entrepreneurship literature (Carland et al., 1984) about whether and how an entrepreneur's individual characteristics influence firm outcomes (including growth) and societal value creation.

The individual characteristics examined in studies about growth-oriented entrepreneurs include aspects such as gender, educational background and personality traits (Baum et al., 2014; Brandstätter, 2011; Zhao et al., 2010; Lee and Tsang, 2001; Baron, 2000). For example, it has been demonstrated that aspects such as gender (Verheul and Van Mil, 2011), social background, education and experience (Cassar, 2006; Guzmán and Santos, 2001) have a direct impact on an entrepreneur's growth ambitions. Interestingly, a number of empirical studies dive deeper into psychological and behavioral aspects, such as an entrepreneur's attitudes, motives and ambitions, and show, among other things, that growth attitudes and intentions are important predictors of subsequent firm growth (Davidsson et al., 2006; Stam and Wennberg, 2009). This is exactly what we want to explore further within the scope of this special issue.

More specifically, we aim to move beyond the usual suspects such as gender, education, and experience, and want to bring together studies that open up the personal lens. In this way, we aim to further develop the state-of-the-art on the psychological and behavioral drivers (e.g., motives, attitudes, ambitions and aspirations) of small businesses' international growth. Indeed, whereas the literature has established that growth aspirations influence expected firm growth (Cassar, 2006; Wiklund and Shepherd, 2003), the specificities and determinants of entrepreneurs' underlying psychological and behavioral aspects impacting small businesses' international growth are far less known. For example, it has been argued that growth-oriented entrepreneurs have higher intrinsic motivations, residing within specific needs such as that for personal development (Guzmán and Santos, 2001); whether (or not?) there is a distinction

between the intrinsic motivations of entrepreneurs oriented towards the domestic market only, and those seeking for international expansion, is still to be discovered.

Overall, this special issue aims at addressing the paucity of studies on individuals' psychological and behavioral aspects in the field of internationally growing small businesses. As such, more generally, we want to respond to the need for a deeper understanding of micro-foundations to explain small business international competitiveness and performance (Abell et al., 2008; Coff and Kryscynski, 2011). We thus explicitly put the entrepreneur (and her/his team) in the central position and try to answer the question: What makes that some entrepreneurs (want to) explore and exploit international markets while others do not, apart from the perceived business opportunities abroad?

In order to address this caveat, we encourage more systematic research that focuses on the micro-foundations of internationally growing small businesses, preferably by comparing different cultural and institutional settings. Comparative studies do not only allow us to dive deeper into the individual differences of internationally growing entrepreneurs, but also to better understand whether and how cultural and institutional contexts impact such differences (e.g., Leung and Bond, 1989; Migliore, 2011). The comparative approach thus contributes to the clarification of how and to what extent entrepreneurs' growth aspirations, ambitions and motives interact with their willingness and openness to expand in and adjust to different regional or national contexts (e.g., Busenitz and Lau, 1996; Liñán and Chen, 2009).

*Cross Cultural & Strategic Management (CCSM)* is interdisciplinary in nature and welcomes submissions from scholars from different disciplines, including international business, strategic management, economics, psychology and sociology. We invite submissions for a special issue of *CCSM* entitled '**Understanding the micro-foundations of small businesses' international growth**'. The purpose of this special issue is to publish work that will significantly enhance our theoretical and empirical understanding of the specificities

and determinants of the entrepreneur's underlying psychological and behavioral aspects impacting small businesses' international growth. Within the scope of this special issue, potential themes for submissions could include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Contributions adding to the development of comprehensive and complex models to understand the underlying psychological and behavioral aspects of international growth of small businesses. As the international growth of small businesses could be expected to be determined by a complex web of bundles of factors at the levels of the entrepreneur, firm and environment, conceptual models that include these different levels of analysis, as well as studies with a truly interdisciplinary perspective, are also welcomed.
- Contributions applying novel conceptual and empirical approaches, collecting and analyzing unique and original data. We highly welcome papers that rely on the latest developments within other disciplines, such as psychology, sociology and behavioral economics. For instance, recent insights from personality psychology, the constructs of explicit and implicit motives (e.g., Hermans et al., 2017), growth ambitions and aspirations (e.g., Cassar, 2006; Wiklund and Shepherd, 2003) could be piloted within the study of internationally growing small businesses.
- Studies of internationally growing small businesses across different cultural and institutional contexts, addressing questions such as whether or not the international growth of small businesses is associated with different antecedents and consequences in developing and emerging countries, vis-à-vis the developed world.

In line with the goal of *CCSM* to publish discerning, theoretically grounded, evidence-based and cutting-edge research on issues relevant to all aspects of global management, we invite diverse types of papers (empirical, conceptual, methodological and literature reviews), under

the condition that submissions be cross-country or comparative in nature. Submissions should be between 8,000-14,000 words, including references, figures, and tables, and follow the manuscript requirement outlined on the journal's website. All manuscripts will undergo a double-blind review process. The expected year of publication of this special issue is 2019 or 2020.

### **Additional information**

This special issue is related to the following activities:

- European Academy of Management (EURAM), which will be held in Reykjavik (Iceland), June 20-23, 2018; sub-track 3: 'Ambitious Entrepreneurship', of the track 'ST03\_04 Entrepreneurial decision making and behavior' (Entrepreneurship SIG).
- Belgian Entrepreneurship Research Day (BERD), which will be held in Antwerp (Belgium) on May 4, 2018.
- The second edition of the Workshop on Entrepreneurship: Behavioral and Cognitive Approaches (EBCA), which will be held in Bath (UK) at the School of Management, University of Bath in autumn 2018.

Guest editors will be available at the aforementioned meetings. Authors are encouraged, but not required, to submit their manuscripts to any of them to get feedback prior to final submission.

### **Timeline and submissions**

Submissions are due by January 15, 2019. Contributors should follow the directions for manuscript preparation and submission available at *Cross Cultural & Strategic Management*. All articles will be subject to the standard *CCSM* double-blind review process. For questions regarding this special issue, please contact any of the guest editors: Arjen van Witteloostuijn

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