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Contents

- 1 **Editorial**
Dafnis N. Coudounaris and Stanley Joseph Paliwoda
- 4 **Investing in reverse logistics: an explorative multi-industry study**
David Nickell, Agnieszka Chwialkowska, Minna Rollins and Cheryl O'Meara Brown
- 19 **Digital infrastructure adoption and brand development of internationalising SMEs: decision-making logic and desire for change**
Samuel Yaw Kusi
- 39 **Export learning advantages through supplying multinational enterprises in emerging markets: a conceptual model**
Dan Ayebale
- 55 **The entrepreneurial journey of a global start-up: the case of the open innovation platform GrabCAD**
Tõnis Mets
- 72 **The impact of international networking and co-marketing alliances on export performance: a global perspective**
Andreea Bujac and Thomas Schött

Editorial

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Welcome to the first issue of the fourth volume. This issue includes five papers in the field of export marketing, international business and international entrepreneurship. The five papers are summarised in the following paragraphs. The first paper investigates reverse logistics, the movement of goods from consumers back to the vendors, which is now a critical part of a sustainable logistics model. The second paper highlights digital infrastructure as a branding strategy of young internationalising firms and the decision-making of the entrepreneur concerning branding. The third paper, based on the relational embeddedness framework, resource-based view (RBV) and dynamic capability framework, develops a conceptual model of the export learning advantages of emerging market firms (EMFs) supplying multinational enterprises (MNEs). The fourth paper, based on the example of GrabCAD, tries to overcome the gap in disclosing the entrepreneurial journey and seeks to shape the features of a hi-tech start-up reaching a global open innovation (OI) platform. Finally, the fifth paper develops and empirically tests a model on how exporting is embedded in international networking around the entrepreneur and co-marketing alliances.

In the first paper, Nickell, Chwialkowska, Rollins and Brown, based on interviews with executives from nine industries, identify specific asset category characteristics in which reverse logistics is viable. The study captures four attributes that international companies must consider before investing in reverse logistics. The study leads international corporations and exporters in deciding whether to invest in reverse logistics as a means of reducing their importing and exporting costs and boosting the performance of exporters on international markets.

In the second study, Kusi, through a conceptual framework and propositions, contributes to the new field of digital entrepreneurship, branding and general entrepreneurship literature. He shows that entrepreneurial digital branding, where the entrepreneurs' branding strategies are evident in their decision-making, triggers the brand's fundamental principles and consequently shapes the entire branding activities.

In the third study, Ayebale reveals a conceptual model of export learning advantages of EMFs supplying MNEs. The duration of the supplying relationship in the inter-firm exchanges and the level of multiplexity of the ties would more likely facilitate than inhibit export learning advantages for less internationally experienced EMFs when they possess differentiation competences as opposed to low-cost competences. In addition, high levels of absorptive capacity are critical for the less internationally experienced EMFs supplying MNEs.

The study by Mets, based on one case study the GrabCAD, finds proof of theoretical journey patterns, and analyses aspects that have not yet been addressed. The case study shows the importance of the combination of different actors and features shaping the entrepreneurial journey.

Finally, the study by Bujac and Schött, based on a sample of 58,161 entrepreneurs in 76 countries, which were surveyed through the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, reveals that both networking and co-marketing alliances promote the export intensity of the firm. The analysis was performed through hierarchical linear models. In addition, the attributes of firms and entrepreneurs shape their interpersonal networking and inter-organisational relations. These findings show that networking impacts export performance, and that co-marketing alliances are important in future exporting endeavours.

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