Opening Pandora's Box:
Everything We (Do Not) Know About the Global Strategy

Pedro Veiga, Polytechnic Institute of Viseu, Higher School of Education, Portugal & NECE Research Unit in Business Sciences, University of Beira Interior, Portugal

Ronnie Figueiredo, Polytechnic Institute of Viseu, Higher School of Education, Portugal & NECE Research Unit in Business Sciences, University of Beira Interior, Portugal

Sergio Teixeira, Higher Institute of Administration and Languages, Research Center – ISAL, Portugal & NECE- Research Unit in Business Sciences, University of Beira Interior, Portugal

https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4397-6305

Cristina Isabel I. Fernandes, University of Beira Interior, Department of Management and Economics, Portugal & NECE- Research Unit in Business Sciences, University of Beira Interior, Portugal

https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8560-0758

ABSTRACT

Global strategy research is rapidly increasing in quantity but is found in divergent literature and disciplines. Now is the time to offer a comprehensive review that identifies, synthesizes, and integrates previous research and highlights knowledge gaps and the way forward. This methodical literature search helped to identify 338 articles in the Web of Science database published until 2018. Using a systematic and in-depth content analysis using bibliometric techniques, the authors reviewed the articles and identified the main theories used and the methodological guidelines in these articles. This review helps to identify significant knowledge gaps in terms of theoretical orientation and core content. The main contributions of this paper are to outline and summarize a multilevel analysis of emerging global strategy literature, integrate and extract potential theoretical contributions in this field, and indicate directions for future research.

KEYWORDS

Bibliometric Analysis, Clusters, Competitive Advantage, Global Strategy, Information

1. INTRODUCTION

Despite the growing increase in the literature on studies of global growth and globalization, there are still areas of research that reveal a remarkable gap in how this globalization and companies affect overall strategic performance (Cuervo-Cazurra, 2012; Cuervo-Cazurra, Ciravegna, Melgarejo, & Lopez, 2018; Cuervo-Cazurra, Mudambi, Pedersen, & Piscitello, 2017; Fernandes, Veiga, Peris-Ortiz, & Rueda-Armengot, 2017; Hillemann & Gestrin, 2016; Kano & Verbeke, 2019; Larsen, Manning, &

Pedersen, 2013) . For example, there is not much knowledge of how global companies are aspiring and driving various markets. One reason for the lack of studies is that there is no clear, theoretical or empirical definition of what it means to be a globally born company (Hughes, Cesinger, Cheng, Schuessler, & Kraus, 2017; Kuivalainen, Sundqvist, & Servais, 2007; Romanello & Chiarvesio, 2019).

The overall strategy is essential for companies to focus their actions on the pursuit of increasing profitability. This demand comes from cost reduction through strategic experiences of global location economies. Global strategy and strategic information have recently emerged as a popular concept among managers of multinational corporations as well as researchers and other stakeholders in the field of international strategic management (Karreman, Burger, & van Oort, 2017; Leung & Verriest, 2019; Rugman, Oh, & Lim, 2012). In fact, the relentless forces of competitiveness and globalization are forcing companies to disintegrate and seek increasingly global relationships, which in search of new markets and partners on a global scale, as a key factor for global companies as drivers of globalization and of the economy (Burgres, Hill, & Kim, 1993; Contractor, Kumar, Kundu, & Pedersen, 2010; Contractor & Kundu, 1998; Kedia & Mukherji, 1999a; D. (Don) Lee, Kirkpatrick-Husk, & Madhavan, 2017; Veiga, Ferreira, & Faria, 2017; Veiga & Franco, 2015; Ženka, Novotný, & Csank, 2014).

In this sense, the global strategic posture reflects the ability of a company to establish strategic alliances and depends on the foreign market to satisfy customers and production factors, along with their geographical dispersion. While the globalization literature emphasizes its potential benefits, it also highlights the complexity inherent in globalization. Despite this complexity, many management professionals and researchers argue that the long-term success and survival of companies increasingly depend on their strong global presence (Bartlett & Ghoshal, 1987a, 1987b; Hitt, Hoskisson, & Kim, 1997; Holzweber, Mattsson, & Standing, 2015; Prange & Verdier, 2011; Sui & Baum, 2014). It is therefore important to leverage R&D costs across countries and to respond to foreign competitors for their global domestic concessions (Bartlett & Ghoshal, 1987a, 1987b; Bowonder & Miyake, 1997; Colombo, Grilli, Murtinu, Piscitello, & Piva, 2009; Pearce & Papanastassiou, 1999; Piperopoulos, Wu, & Wang, 2018; Roberts, 2001; Zou & Ozsomer, 1999).

As regards scientific research in this field of study, there are still several gaps that are sometimes difficult to fill, because they represent weaknesses essentially for regional application and research only. Researchers often use branding, distribution or R&D as the most complex components of a network of global industries to enter the international market. The area of potential strategic alliances is a potential means of filling gaps in the study of the overall strategy area in general (Buckley, 2009; Veiga & Franco, 2015). It is indeed one of the challenges for researchers to analyze inter-organizational relationships within an industry, and it has been challenging to find a way to explain the configuration of global strategic relationships between companies. Moreover, much of the empirical research on strategic alliances at the global level has been about forming strategic alliances in industries. In this sense, because there is very little empirical research focusing on the configuration of the activity of strategic alliances between competitors within an industry, either at the global industry level, our study aims to make a modest contribution to fill this gap (Bengtsson & Raza-Ullah, 2016; Luo, 2005; Luo, Shenkar, & Gurnani, 2008; Shu, Jin, & Zhou, 2017; Zahra, 2005). We found only two systematic literature review studies on the global strategy. The first by Stanczyk et al (2017) and the second by Jia et al (2017). However none of these papers make our bibliometric approach and neither systematize the "global strategy" in study approaches. So our research aims to open the "Pandora's Box" of this field of study. A field of study that is well studied but also very well-studied.

Thus the objective of our study is to analyze the state of the art in the published international academic literature and to carry out a bibliometric study through cluster analysis, analyzing the strategy information at the global level and thus identifying new fields of research.

In this context, the present study seeks to answer the following question: what are the main research trends on the global strategy?

This article, using the bibliometric technique, identifies the least explored fields of study opening new potential areas of research. The contributions made by this study are very interrelated with the

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