

Internationalisation and technological innovation: empirical evidence on their relation

Filipescu, Diana-Andreea

Abstract

Internationalisation and innovation of the firms have been considered two of the most important factors determining business success over the last decade (Buckler and Zien, 1996; Wind and Mahajan, 1997; Zahra and George, 2002; Vila and Kuster, 2007). The purpose of this dissertation is to understand better the relation which exists between these two factors. To do so, we undertake empirical investigation which consists of three studies (an initial qualitative and two consequent quantitative ones). We first part from a general idea of the relation extracted from a combination between earlier evidence and academic literature, trying to explore it more in-depth through the application of qualitative methodology. Next, parting from the results, a large sample of manufacturing firm is analysed (data provided by the Spanish Survey of Business Strategy), employing different variables related to both the international and innovative activities of the firm. Last, we address the direction of this relation also to a special type of firms, precisely we separate our sample in family and non-family firms, having the objective to observe how much different is their behaviour in terms of the two processes of the firm discussed in this dissertation. Results outlined the existence of a reciprocal relation between internationalisation and technological advances, as it follows: 1) firms acquired different types of international knowledge and therefore behaved differently in terms of innovation advances once they choose a certain entry mode in the foreign market; 2) product and process innovations are the result of and lead to exports; 4) innovation “Granger causes” internationalisation and internationalisation “Granger causes” innovation; 3) family firms do not have a conservative attitude and are not risk adverse, taking more advantage of their presence abroad in order to reach a higher level of technological advances than non-family ones. Moreover, the dissertation offers various contributions to the literature (theoretical, empirical and methodological) as well to the managers and public policies.