A factor of speeding up internationalization behavior:

A cross national study on attitudes toward internationalization

ABSTRACT

Recent researches pointed the need for deeper understanding of the factors explaining the speed of internationalization from a behavioral perspective. Indeed, this may help to better understand the factor initiating early internationalization. This study attempts to understand the role of one determinant of the speed of internationalization which hasn't been studied yet: the attitude toward internationalization. The scenario method was used to capture behaviors and a composite scale was used to measure attitude. This methodology is original in the field of international business and is promising for futures studies. A database composed of 200 small firms responsible (French and Indian) was built and analyzed to get the results (more responses are expected). The results indicate that there is a small but significant influence of the attitude toward internationalization on the speed of internationalization. We also found that Indian have a tendency to internationalize faster than French. However, no difference was found regarding attitude toward internationalization between the two samples.

INTRODUCTION

A wide number of literature focused on the emergence of firms which started internationalizing, form their early stages since the publication of Oviatt and McDougall's seminal paper in 1994. This fad reflects in the numerous companies which started internationalizing at their inception those last three decades (Zucchella, Palamara, and Denicolai, 2007). This phenomenon of rapid internationalization had been studied through different perspectives which led to three major classifications of firms (International New Venture – INV, Early Internationalizing Firm – EIF, and Born Global – BG).

Since the emergence of this research field, many academicians have showed that firms internationalizing quickly after creation are generally led by entrepreneurs with higher levels of human capital (Bloodgood, Sapienza, and Almeida, 1996; Madsen and Servais, 1997). However, some critical analysis of existent literature in this field of research identified that there is still a need to improve our understanding of this phenomenon and its determinants (Casillas and Acedo, 2013; Jones and Coviello, 2005; Rialp, Rialp, and Knight, 2005).

Only a few recent papers have considered analyzing time as an essential element of this phenomenon (Hurmerinta-Peltomäki, 2003; Jones and Coviello, 2005;Sapienza, Autio, George, et al., 2006).

As Federico, Kantis, Rialp, et al. (2009) noticed, past empirical research suffers some redundant limitations : the use of case studies or small samples, a tendency to focus on U.S. or European countries.

Furthermore, as explained by Keupp and Gassmann (2009) there is a serious gap in research in the field of International Entrepreneurship (IE) in explaining the origin of internationalization and how it evolves. Indeed, time has seldom been analyzed in International Business studies (Ancona, Goodman, Lawrence, et al., 2001).

Trying to fill this gap in the empirical literature, we conducted a study whose primary objectives were to measure attitude toward internationalization, to measure the speed at which decision makers would internationalize an activity and to link these two elements.

By doing this we believe our research focuses on a determinant which can help to understand born global and international new venture phenomena.

As suggested by Keupp and Gassmann (2009)we shall precise the areain which this research belongs: It fits into the International Entrepreneurship (IE) field which started in 1989 (Jones, Coviello, and Tang, 2011). More specifically, it belongs toa new type of hybrid research on cross country entrepreneurial internationalization comparison initiated in 2001 (Jones, Coviello, and Tang, 2011).

Contributions are threefold. We found that SME leaders with higher attitude are more likely to expand their firms' activity abroad; that Indian and French SME responsible, have roughly the same level of attitude toward internationalization; and that in a given context Indian are more likely to expand quickly abroad than French.

This paper is organized in four parts: A review of the background will help in understanding past literature on our subject and drawing three research questions. A part on methodology will present the tool which was designed to measure our constructs and the samples we reached. This will conduct to introduce the results we obtained. Finally a discussion will comment on the results in views of previous works and recent reports.

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 *EXISTENT LITERATURE ON EARLY INTERNATIONALIZATION*

The three last decades have been characterized by an important increase in the number of companies which started internationalizing at their inception (Zucchella, Palamara, and Denicolai, 2007). This phenomenon of rapid internationalization had been studied through different perspectives which led to three major classifications of firms (International New Venture – INV, Early Internationalizing Firm – EIF, and Born Global – BG).

An EIF is defined "*as firms which become international, through export or any other entry mode, in their first three years of life*" (Zucchella, Palamara, and Denicolai, 2007: 268).

An INV is defined as "*business organization that, from inception, seeks to derive significant competitive advantage from the use of resources and the sale of outputs in multiple countries*"(Oviatt and McDougall, 1994: 31).

A BG is defined as independent SMEs with a global vision at inception whose "*products should be unique and have a global market potential*" and"*should have demonstrated the capability for accelerated internationalization*" (Gabrielsson, Kirpalani, Dimitratos, et al., 2008: 399).

From these three definitions, we conclude that EIFs include INVs and BG firms. However frontiers between the concepts are blurred and no consensus on how to define the concepts objectively have yet been written.

Authors identified that two temporal dimensions occur in early internationalization phenomena: precocity and speed (Zucchella, Palamara, and Denicolai, 2007). Speed is "*one of the most important concepts for gaining a true understanding of how internationalization processes develop*" and that it is one of the hottest topic on the research agenda (Casillas and Acedo, 2013: 16).

In common all these researches posit that premature internationalization depends upon diverse factors: firm-specific variables and environmental institutional influences (Federico, Kantis, Rialp, et al., 2009; Ibeh and Young, 2001; Kuemmerle, 2002; Westhead, Wright, and Ucbasaran, 2001), entrepreneurs' human and relational capital. More specifically, determinants of speed are found to depend on three levels:

Inter organizational level (Social network: Johanson and Vahlne, 2009; Oviatt and McDougall, 1994/ International alliances and joint ventures: Fernhaber, Mcdougall-Covin, and Shepherd, 2009; Yu, Gilbert, and Oviatt, 2011).

Firm level (Rivalry and imitation: Fuentelsaz, Gomez, and Polo, 2002; Yu and Cannella Jr., 2007/ Resources: Zahra, Ireland, and Hitt, 2000/ Age: Federico, Kantis, Rialp, et al., 2009; Reuber and Fischer, 1997 / Location: Javalgi, Griffith, and White, 2003).

Individual level (Foreign experience: Bloodgood, Sapienza, and Almeida, 1996; Oviatt and McDougall, 1994/ Education abroad: Bloodgood, Sapienza, and Almeida, 1996; Reuber and Fischer, 1997/ Global vision: Oviatt and McDougall, 1994).

Studying the individual level seems to be the most promising in IE as Alvarez and Busenitz (2001), mobilizing the resource-based view of the firm, stated that in the particular case of start-ups or young companies, entrepreneurs constitute the firm's exclusive resources.

Whereas some authors explained firmexportbehavior by entrepreneurs'educationallevel (Andersson and Wictor, 2003), we believe, like Poeschl, 2008), that education first shapes attitude toward internationalization which in turn influence behavior regarding international issues. This is why it is now time to analyze the link between the pace of internationalization and the attitude.

1.2 *LINKING ATTITUDE TO INTERNATIONALIZATION PACE*

Thomas and Znaniecki (1918) are the first to speak of attitude in social psychology. Their research links social values to psychological attitudes. Rapidly, many researches enrich their work, to the point that Allport (1935) counted16 definitions nearly 20 years later. Multiple interpretations persist, leading to a conceptual ambiguity has strongly questioned the legitimacy of this concept in the social sciences (Abelson, 1972).

We choose Doise (2003) approach who gives an operational definition of attitude. It is "*a specific position that an individual occupies a dimension or several dimensions relevant to the assessment of a given social entity*"(p 242)*.*

In the 1980s, research on this topic has embellished the concept, proving the existence of a relationship between attitudes and motivation (Breckler, 1984 ; Hoffman, 1986 ; Piaget, 1981), and a link between attitude and behavior (Fazio, 1986; Zanna, Olson, and Fazio, 1981). Later, it was found that attitudes are highly functional for individuals because they guide the perceptions, information processing, and behavior. Their major function is to set the level at which the behavior of an individual should be consistent (Greenwald, 1989) and guide decisions (Sanbonmatsu and Fazio, 1990).

This is especially true in emerging firms, as the decision-making system is embedded into the founders' minds (McDougall, Shane, and Oviatt, 2007).

Furthermore, the attitude influences the different phases of the decision process: the perception of the stimulus and the memory access to information. Attitudes also intervene when selecting alternatives is considered in the decision process. Considering that it consists of the direction given in response to the presence of the object (Crano and Prislin, 2006), attitude is strongly related to the outcome of the decision, especially when the context reinforces certain alternatives or that alternatives are readily accessible in memory (Posavac, Sanbonmatsu, and Fazio, 1997). In this particular case, the decision maker may use the context to justify his choices oriented by his attitudes.

In addition, attitudes help shaping the world of the individual, thus they facilitate decision making (Fazio, 1989). They allow the individual to make choices more quickly (Sanbonmatsu and Fazio, 1990). However, this subjective mechanism biases structuring information which the subject has access (Fazio, 1990), and the choices made.

In an international context we can expect that attitude toward internationalization will be linked to the speed with which the entrepreneur is eager to develop international activities. This point motivates us to focuson past research on attitudes toward internationalization and to introduce our first research question.

RQ1: Is attitude toward internationalization linked to a will to quickly develop international activities?

1.3 *EXISTENT LITERATURE ON ATTITUDE TOWARD INTERNATIONALIZATION*

Various aspects of attitude toward internationalization are discussed in existing literature. For example, Brady and Bearden (1979) measure the attitude with items assessing the degree of control available on marketing programs, the availability of information on foreign markets, sales costs involved, the effectiveness of sales products, the amount of documentation and paperwork involved that respondents think they have to implement in the event of a direct or indirect export.

O'Rourke (1985) found attitudinal differences between SMEs and large companies, but does not explicitly state how attitudes are measured. Gripsrud (1990) chose to measure attitudes towards future exports. Patterson (2004) focused on the perceived benefits of internationalization. Tan, Brewer, and Liesch (2007) used the proxy for the involvement abroad. Sommer and Haug (2010) measured attitudes toward international entrepreneurial behavior. Finally, Sommer (2010) simultaneously measured several facets of attitude: the attitude to risk, meet partners and international institutions in the face of international competition (the items of this scale tend to reflect attitudes toward globalization).

These studies, being conducted in the context of the business, deal all with the impact of attitude on the management of firms. The study by Brady and Bearden (1979) identify the attitudes of three groups of managers (those who are directly involved in international, thosethat are indirectly involved, and those who are not) to the methods of direct and indirect exports. O'Rourke (1985) identifies differences in attitudes among employees of large companies and SMEs. Gripsrud (1990) uses attitude as a variable dependent on the characteristics of the firm and products, as well as barriers / perceived opportunities. The research of Patterson (2004) found a link between perceptions of the benefits of exporting and non-exporting status of the firm. Sommer and Haug (2010) link attitude towards international

entrepreneurial behavior intention of going abroad. Sommer (2010) explores the relationship between various facets of attitude with the attitude toward the behavior.

Existent researches enable us to draw three observations:

First, few researchers use a composite measure of attitude toward internationalization. Only, one aspect of internationalization is measured (export benefits of internationalization, engagement abroad, etc.). Thus, the measured aspects do not allow us to draw conclusions about the general attitude of the respondents toward internationalization.

Second, works on this theme do not directly measure the relationship attitude - behavior. Either they measure attitudes toward behavior, or they measure the state of the company at the time of the study. To evaluate this link one needs to measure at the same time the decisional behavior and the entrepreneur traits. By doing this we hope to contribute to the lack of empirical demonstration observed in IE (Keupp and Gassmann, 2009).

Finally, no cross national research on the subject has yet been conducted.

1.4 *COMPARING INTERNATIONAL PRACTICES*

To enhance the results of a cross national study, it is relevant to compare countries with opposite cultures and economical development.

According to the 2010 KOF Index of Globalization[1] France's rank is 13 and India's rank is 111 out of 181 countries studied. This means that France is more advanced in their global integration than Indians. According to this figure, we would expect the French could have a favorable view of globalization and the Indian could have an unfavorable view of internationalization.

Nonetheless, India is very favorable to globalization (Chopra, 2003), and French view the world pessimistically and do not react well to globalization (Messerlin, 2004).

This is even more surprising, knowing that many authors have shown that globalization highlights negative issues such as illiteracy, poverty, and premature mortality in developed countries (Drèze and Sen, 2002; Chopra, 2003).

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[1]KOF Index of Globalization shows a ranking of the most globalized countries according to criteria such as current economic flows, economic restrictions, data on information flows, data on personal contact, and data on cultural proximity

This enlighten a paradox between the Indians who have favorable views of globalization while they are suffering from severely negative effects and the French who have quite an unfavorable perception of globalization while they reap the benefits. Can we observe the same phenomenon in the field of SME responsible? This leads to our second research question:

RQ2: Is Indian attitude toward internationalization higher than French attitude toward internationalization?

On the top of that, numerous reports pointed that French SME do not export as much as they ought to (*PME et commerce extérieur*[2], *Évolution récente du commerce extérieur français*[3]…). On the opposite, Indian SMEs are doing well (according to the report "Emerging SMEs of India 2008"[4]).This should be traducing a tendency for French to make slow decision to internationalize and for Indian to make fast decision.

A comparative analysis of the attitude of Indian and French entrepreneur will bring a new perspective to explain internationalization decision.

RQ3: Is Indian pace to internationalize faster than French one?

This ought to enhance our understanding of why French do not benefit as much as they could from the opportunities offered and miss some of the advantages of world trade (Messerlin, 2004).

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The objective of the article is to link decision pace to internationalize an activity with attitude level of small firms' responsible. Casillas and Acedo (2013) found that two items comprise speed: behavior and time. As we couldn't find any research measuring the speed of internationalization from a behavior perspective we chose to focus on this aspect. To do so, one has to measure at the same time, behaviors and the respondents' characteristics. This would limit the errors due to cognitive dissonance (Festinger, 1957).

2.1 *USING A TOOL TO MEASURE BEHAVIOR AND ATTITUDE*

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[2]http://www.cgpme.fr/telecharger2/1187951941_6204.pdf

[3]http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/fr/IMG/pdf/commercexterieur.pdf

[4]http://www.dnb.co.in/SME%20Awards/SME%20In%20India.asp

Here webriefly explain how we built the tool to measure behaviors.

With direct methods, mechanisms of defense, a posteriori rationalization and prestige bias affect the accuracy of the answers (Reynaud, 2001). In other words, the strategic decision is strongly affected by biases of direct techniques (Barnes, 1984). Therefore, a projective method seems appropriate for our study.

The Scenario Method falls into the category of projective techniques called simulation.

A scenario is a "*short description of a person or a social situation*" (Alexander and Becker, 1978 : 94). The respondent has to posit himself on how he would act in such a context.

Scenario method, as designed by Chonko, Tanner, and Weeks (1996), was initially invented to create a questionnaire measuring behaviors in the ethic field. We adapted this method to our theme and followed a procedure composed of 5 steps:

1. Identification of decision situations (phase realized on a first sample of 19 small firms holder)

2. Schematic description of these situations

3. Pre-testing scenarios and identification of behavioral responses (phase realized on a second sample of 14 small firms holder)

4. Pre-testing of the measuring instrument behavior(phase realized on a panel of two academicians, two doctoral students, two SME holder)

5. Use of the questionnaire (phase realized on a sample of 149 French small firms holder and of 45 Indian firms holder up to now)

This led to build two scenarios presenting a situation in which the decision maker may or may not internationalize one activity. We then asked whether in this situation he would rush, or not to internationalize.

Second, we had to design a tool to measure attitude toward internationalization.

We followed the procedure recommended by Churchill Jr (1979) to build this scale. We also took into account the Gerbing and Anderson (1988) recommendations. The measurement scale was first designed and validated in France. The psychometric characteristics of the scale showed very good results with respect to academics standards: the scale is uni-dimensional

according to scree plot, to map test and to the percentage of shared variance; the reliability is sufficient according to Nunnally (1967) and Nunnally and Bernstein (1994) criteria as shown in table 1.

Once the questionnaire was tested and validated in French, the questions were converted to English, and then to Hindi and Gujarati. The procedure followed was:

1. Translating the French questionnaire to English by a bilingual researcher

2. Checking the French to English translation and correct it. This step was achieved by a second multilinguistic researcher, helped by a bilingual French professor

3. Translating the questionnaire in Hindi and Guajarati

4. Administering the questionnaire with 20 Guajarati SMEs for a pilot study

5. Administering the questionnaire to about 100 SME responsible.

The following table presents the reliability analysis of the scales.

Table 1 :   Reliability of the scales of attitude toward internationalization

Attitude toward internationalization	Cronbach Alpha	Standardized Cronbach Alpha	Number of items
French scale	,860	,861	5
Indian scale	,747	,753	5

2.2 DATA COLLECTION

Data collection was realized threefold: a first data collection was realized in France in May 2012 (149 SME responsible participated in this survey). A second set of data is being collected in India (up to now we have 45 respondents and we expect about 100 respondents).

In France, data collection was mainly achieved by a mailing campaignusing two databases coming from listings from the Chamber of Commerce and Industry and directory KOMPASS.

Selected sectors were industry and services, and companies likely to go international. Participating companies were randomly selected from these lists.

It is difficult to accurately measure the rate of return of our mailings, as many e-mail addresses provided were incorrect. About 8000 mails were sent with a failure rate close to one in two. We reckon that 4000 mails arrived at their destination. Among these, a number of companies did not meet our target (bakeries, large groups, etc.). These companies have not been identified before broadcasting the questionnaire, because the information available to us was not always complete. Ultimately, we therefore consider the response rate between 5% and 7%. This result is correct if one considers that the field is very specific, consisting of respondents with very little time to devote to activities outside work and from a culture unwilling to participate in research. Indeed the French seem to be less likely to contribute to academic research (if we compare typical response rates given by various American researchers (Cook, Heath, and Thompson, 2000) and French (Cerdin and Peretti, 2001; Ganassali and Moscarola, 2004 ; Mamlouk, 2011).

We add that we have implemented several actions to improve our rate of return: a cover letter highlighting the contributions managerial accompanied the questionnaire, we have customized mails with the identity of the person responsible for the business and the name of the company was also introduced in the mail to show that the research was targeted; stimulus titled "Last Call" was made two weeks after the first mailing, we are committed to provide the results of our study (which improves the response rate as Helgeson, Voss, and Terpening (2002)showed).

In India, first we tried to get help of Industrial Commissioners office to get the contact details of SMEs and approached them for survey response. The response was very negative and SMEs were very apprehensive to get the responses. One of the authors taught in some business schools in Master in Family Business Program. The author has approached the students of this program who helped the author in data collection. The students talked to their family members, friends and relatives who owned SMEs and the author visited them and explained the purpose of the study and convinced them for filling the questionnaire. The questionnaire was translated in Gujarati (a local vernacular language of the Gujarat State) and Hindi. There is very high diversity of language, dialects and diction in India. So the author had to explain the questionnaires to the respondents if they had difficulty reading and understanding the questionnaire. For example, in Gujarat State, majority of the people speak

Gujarati but there are five major regions in Gujarat, and people of all five regions speak different Gujarati language with their local diction, dialects and vocabulary. Many SME owners were not found techno savvy and to use internet and computers effectively. They were very apprehensive to talk about their business due to the fear of stiff competition. So respondents were approached through contacts and referrals. This method is known to be very efficient to reach unattainable population (Jolibert and Jourdan, 2006; Royer and Zarlowski, 2007).

3. EMPIRICAL RESULTS

Results are organized to answer consecutively to the three research questions that we asked in the paper:

First, we have to analyze the link between attitude toward internationalization and the will to quickly develop international activities. To do so, we differentiated the respondents in three groups according to their attitude level (high, middle or low attitude, cutoff point of one standard deviation). Results are presented in figure 1 and 2.
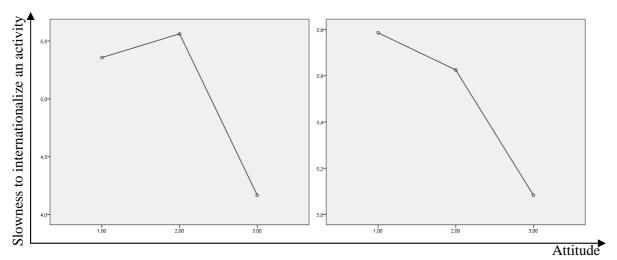
Figure 1   Attitude vs. Speed curves of the Indian sample (scenario 1 and scenario 2)
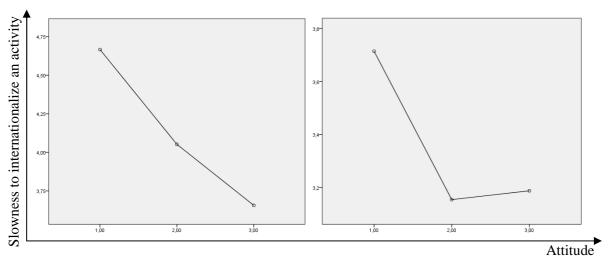

Figure 2   Attitude vs. Speed curves of the French sample (scenario 1 and scenario 2)

These figures shows that the respondents who are more in favor of internationalization tend to internationalize faster in one activity in a given context. Also we note that there is a threshold on the scenario 1 of the Indian sample and on the scenario 2 of the French sample. Behaviors are much contrasted when passing aside this threshold.

These figures have to be completed with a mean comparison to check if the observed differences are significant. We performed an ANOVA test using contrast with a weigh of 0,5 for the two attitudes extremes. This lead to tables 2 and 3.

Table 2 :   ANOVA of the attitude levels of the Indian sample (scenario 1 and scenario 2)

		t	Std. Error	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Scenario 1	Assume equal variances	11,997	,3969	39	,000
	Does not assume equal variances	11,482	,4147	22,412	,000
Scenario 2	Assume equal variances	14,849	,3660	39	,000
	Does not assume equal variances	13,729	,3958	20,513	,000

Table 3 :   ANOVA of the attitude levels of the French sample (scenario 1 and scenario 2)

		t	Std. Error	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Scenario 1	Assume equal variances	15,689	,2652	146	,000
	Does not assume equal variances	15,429	,2697	46,423	,000
Scenario 2	Assume equal variances	16,814	,2052	146	,000
	Does not assume equal variances	15,294	,2256	49,704	,000

Difference between respondents is significant on both samples and in both scenarios. This improves the interest of the results.

From these results we can answer the first research question: a respondent, very favorable to internationalization will be more likely to create an activity abroad quickly.

The second research question is about the general attitude toward internationalization of French and Indians' small firm responsible. To do so we simply need to compare the attitude mean between the two samples.

Table 4 :   Comparison of the attitude levels

	Indian small firm responsible		French small firm responsible	
	Mean	Std deviation	Mean	Std deviation
Attitude	5,5905	1,23916	5,7409	,95564

Table 4 presents that both samples show high and very closed means. The standard deviation of the Indian is higher which mean that they have stronger views.

The last research question is about comparing the speed at which Indian and French would internationalize an activity. Results are shown in table 5.

Table 5 :   Comparing speed to internationalize an activity (scenario 1 and scenario 2)

	Indian small firm responsible		French small firm responsible	
	Mean	Std deviation	Mean	Std deviation
Scenario 1	5,095	2,0578	3,946	1,8994
Scenario 2	5,524	1,8378	4,760	1,4645

On the above table we see that in both scenarios more Indiansare likely to go abroad quicker than the French.

4. DISCUSSION

Our study proposed to analyze originally the matter of the speed to internationalize an activity. We used two samples of Indian and French SMEs decision makers to compare practices. We first found that attitude toward internationalization is linked to speed to internationalize an activity. The link is significant according to ANOVA test and valid in a multicultural context. However the curves presented in figure 1 and 2 shows that there seem to have a threshold of attitude which significantly separates behaviors. This link hadn't been studied yet and our preliminary results ought to be integrated in the coming studies measuring SME top management behaviors. This point is promising for future research as it opens new empirical investigations and broadens previous search on the subject of speed of internationalization (Casillas and Acedo, 2013; Caughey and Chetty, 1994; Dichtl, Koeglmayr, and Mueller, 1990; Perlmutter, 1969; Zhang, Li, Li, et al., 2010). This suggests further research on behaviors determinants in IE.

Regarding the level of attitude, our empirical findings contradict what we expected: Indian and French small firms' responsible have roughly the same attitude level. This observation must be specific to the field of the study: SME top management. Indeed, it means that both samples are equally aware of the internationalization opportunity. Indian's higher standard deviation shows that they have stronger views which might explain different behaviors. Again, we propose to extend this result in coming research. Especially as it partially contradicts Messerlin (2004) who found that French managers were poorly in favor of globalization or Peng and Shin (2008) who found difference according to the country of origin. On the top of that, attitudes are high (around 5,5 out of 7) regarding the fact that we endure a global crisis period Scheve and Slaughter, 2001).

Finally, using the scenario method, we manage to capture the propensity of the respondent to quickly expand abroad. On both scenarios, French are more reluctant to internationalize quickly. This may be explicated by the protection behavior that the French have (Messerlin, 2004).Also, this result might explain the weakness of French SMEs to expand abroad as pointed by recent reports (*PME et commerce extérieur*[5], *Évolution récente du commerce*

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[5]http://www.cgpme.fr/telecharger2/1187951941_6204.pdf

extérieur français[6]…) whereas in India the exportations show better statistics (according to the report "Emerging SMEs of India 2008"[7]).

CONCLUSION

Our study addressed the problem of the speed of internationalization by using an original method in IE: the scenario method. This helped us to capture behaviors of SME responsible. Hence we measured the propensity of SME top management to go quickly abroad in a given situation. This was done by using a questionnaire to measure attitude and behaviors.

Another original point is that we conducted an international comparison of behavior, which is rather rare in IE (Keupp and Gassmann, 2009). Furthermore, although emerging economies are discussed quite often in the literature, they are analyzed together, without any distinction. Hence, studying India gives a fresh and detached view which is distinct from other emerging economies.

Thus, many findings came from the use of our questionnaire. The empirical part of this article showed: that SME leaders with higher attitude are more likely to expand their firms' activity abroad; that Indian and French SME responsible have roughly the same level of attitude toward internationalization; and that in a given context Indian are more likely to expand quickly abroad than French.

Despite all these interesting conclusions, this study suffers some limitations. The main limitation is that our results were drawn from a small sample in India which is increasing as we continue the data collection. A higher number of Indian respondents will reinforce the validity of the scale and of the study. Also, the scenario method is a projection technique, which means that the action hadn't yet happened. Consequently it is difficult to state about real life decision. However external validity is improved by numerous research converging (Wacheux and Rojot, 1996) and in numerous fields : marketing (Lavorata, Nillès, and Pontier, 2005), sociology (Rossi, Sampson, Bose, et al., 1974) or health (Datta Gupta, Kristensen, and Pozzoli, 2010).

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[6]http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/fr/IMG/pdf/commercexterieur.pdf

[7]http://www.dnb.co.in/SME%20Awards/SME%20In%20India.asp

To conclude, results open the way for further investigation: the linked between speed to internationalize and attitude is promising and it is now time toenrichit by adding several other determinants. The equal level of attitude between Indian and French is surprising and deserves further explanation.

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