

PHD THESIS ABSTRACTS

DIFFERENCES IN MARKET-ORIENTED BEHAVIOUR LEVELS ACROSS FIRM'S DOMESTIC AND EXPORT MARKETING OPERATIONS: A STUDY OF ANTECEDENTS AND CONSEQUENCES*

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Researchers are beginning to recognise that organisations often have different levels of market orientation across different aspects of their operations. Focusing on firms involved in export marketing, this study examines how market-oriented behaviour differs across firms' domestic and export marketing operations. In this respect, the study is the first of its kind since it investigates three main issues: (1) to what extent do differences exist in firms' levels of market-oriented behaviour in their domestic markets (i.e., their domestic market-oriented behaviour) and in their export markets (i.e., their export market-oriented behaviour), (2) what are the key drivers of such differences, and (3) what are the performance implications for firms of having different levels of domestic and export market-oriented behaviour.

To shed light on these research questions, data were collected from 225 British exporting firms using a mail questionnaire. Structural equation modelling techniques were used to develop and purify measures of all construct of interest, and to test the theoretical models developed. The results indicate that many of businesses sampled have very different levels of market orientation in their domestic and exporting operations: typically, firms tend to be more market-oriented in their domestic markets relative to their export markets.

Several key factors were identified as drivers of differences in market orientation levels across firms' domestic and export markets. In particular, it was found that differences were more pronounced when: (i) interfunctional interactions between domestic marketing and export marketing are rare, (ii) when domestic and export marketing follow asymmetric business strategies, (iii) when mutual dependence between the functions is low, (iv) when one or other of the functions dominates the firm's sales, and (v) when

there are pronounced differences in the degree to which the domestic and the export markets are experiencing environmental turbulence.

The consequences of differences in market-oriented behaviour across firms' domestic and export markets were also studied. The results indicate that overall sales performance of firms (as determined by the composite of firms' domestic sales and export sales performance) is positively related to levels of domestic market-oriented behaviour under high levels of environmental turbulence in firms' domestic markets. However, as domestic market turbulence decreases, so too does the strength of this too positive relationship. On the other hand, export market-oriented behaviour provides a positive contribution to firms' overall sales success under conditions of relatively low export market turbulence. As the turbulence in export markets increases, this positive relationship becomes weaker. These findings indicate that there are numerous situations in which it is sub-optimal for firms to have identical levels of market-oriented behaviour in their domestic and exporting operations. The theoretical and practical implications of these findings are discussed.

Keywords: *Market Orientation, Export Market Orientation, Environmental Turbulence, Performance, International Marketing.*

* The thesis was successfully accepted for a Ph.D degree at the Aston University in 2004.

CULTURE MATTERS ? : THE IMPACT OF CONTEXT ON GLOBALLY DISTRIBUTED MAKING PROCESSES DURING WSIS*

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Effective management of globally distributed collaboration has become crucial as multinational corporations increase their reliance on communication without barriers of distance and time. Several empirical studies have been conducted to understand the effect of culture on globally distributed collaboration, yet there are still deficiencies and inconsistencies in their findings, which this study partially addresses. This study explored the impact of culture on decision making processes (in the form of email) of Civil Society participants at the United Nation World Summit on Information Society (WSIS). Civil Society includes non-governmental and non-profit organizations, networks, and voluntary associations.¹ The overarching research question in this study was: Is there evidence of an influence of high context and low context cultural orientation on decision making processes in globally distributed collaboration using email?

To answer these questions, I used Edward Hall's (1976) theory as the primary lens and also drew from other cross-cultural management and intercultural communication literature in this domain. Specifically, I employed a cultural dimension called "context" which explains communicative behavioral variations in terms of high-context-versus-low context. I performed a content analysis using six months of public archival email messages (N=1760). From this source material, I derived descriptive statistical analysis and in-depth descriptions for each of the decision-making stages (problem identification, proposal making, and solution) from a cultural perspective.

The findings in this study established that culture does matter in the form of intercultural communication styles and the cultural values which participants subscribe to. There were distinctive patterns of online cultural behaviors displayed by high context and low context as evident in the strategies, approaches, and communicative mannerism in which people participated in the distributed decision making processes. Despite the

distinctive communication characteristics of the two groups, high context participants contributed almost equally with low context participants in the decision making processes. Participants from both cultural orientations demonstrated high collaborative behaviors, while strongly maintaining their communication styles and cultural values with minimal inverse effect on participation in decision making activities. Besides high vs. low context behaviors, evidence of an emerging behavioral pattern called 'switching' was also found, in which an individual's behaviors changed depending on purpose, situation and people.

¹ In this study, individuals who belong to non-governmental organizations, networks, or voluntary associations are considered members of civil society, and they can participate in WSIS as long as the UN accredits their organizations. Participation hence requires no membership fees.

* The thesis was successfully accepted for a Ph.D degree at the Syracuse University, USA in 2005.

KNOWLEDGE ACQUISITION IN INTERNATIONAL STRATEGIC ALLIANCES AMONG MALAYSIAN MANUFACTURING FIRMS*

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This thesis examines the process of knowledge acquisition by Malaysian manufacturing firms through their involvement in international strategic alliances. The strategic alliances can be with or without equity involvement. Firms involved with a foreign partner with equity involvement are joint venture firms while non-equity involvement are firms that engaged in contractual agreements. Using empirical evidence from 65 international alliances gathered through a survey conducted in high-technology manufacturing sectors, several factors that influence the process of knowledge acquisition are examined. The factors are; learning capacity, experience, goals, active involvement and accessibility to the foreign knowledge. Censored regression analysis and ordered probit analysis are used to analyse the effects of these factors on knowledge acquisition and its determinant parts, and the effects of second question and its determinants on the performance of the alliances. A knowledge transfer between the foreign and Malaysian partners in international alliances.

The key findings of the study are: knowledge acquisition in international strategic alliances is influenced by five determining factors ie learning capacity, experience, articulated goals, active involvement and accessibility and new technological knowledge. Product development knowledge and manufacturing process knowledge are influenced differently by the determining factors; knowledge acquisition and its determinant factors have a significant impact on the firm's performance; cultural differences tend to moderate the effect on the firm's performance; acquiring tacit knowledge is not only influenced by the five determinant factors but also by other factors, such as dependency, accessibility, trust, manufacturing control, learning methods and organizational systems; Malaysian firms involved in joint ventures tend to acquire more knowledge than those involved in contractual agreements, but joint ventures also exhibit higher degrees of dependency than contractual agreements; and the presence of R&D activity in the Malaysian partner

encourages knowledge acquisition, but the amount of R&D expenditure has no effect on knowledge acquisition.

Keywords: *Knowledge Acquisition, Tacit Knowledge, International Strategic Alliances, Learning, Performance.*

* The thesis was successfully accepted for a Ph.D degree at the Aston University in 2004.

**CONSULAR RELATIONS WITHIN THE
COMMONWEALTH:
FROM THE NEGOTIATION OF THE VIENNA
CONVENTION (1963)
TO THE LONDON CONFERENCE (1972)***

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When, in the middle years of the twentieth century, the British Empire was haltingly perceived as undergoing a gradual transformation into the Commonwealth, there was some doubt as to whether the resultant arrangement could properly be termed an 'organisation'. Certainly it was without a number of characteristics which were seen as typical of such bodies; and it displayed others which the latter lacked. However, from the beginning the Commonwealth was never a static body: new members, with different backgrounds and interests both to each other and to the earliest members made it less homogeneous; and all of them had to respond to changes in the wider world, some of which were of a unifying kind. One instance of this process of development concerned the sort of relations between states which were generally called consular. These had to do with the making, by agreement between the states concerned, of provisions whereby one state can attend to some urgent needs of those of its citizens who find themselves within the jurisdiction of another. It is an ancient aspect of international relations - older, indeed, than relations of a diplomatic kind. Certainly it was something which Commonwealth states could not do without. But one aspect of the Commonwealth's early singularity had to do with both the terminology and content of relations between its member states which elsewhere were designated as consular. Furthermore, in the 1950s and 1960s United Nations-sponsored negotiations were under way with a view to bringing a greater measure of uniformity to consular matters. The present thesis focuses on this area, with the aim of discovering the extent to which the members of the Commonwealth wished to maintain, and were successful in maintaining, their distinctive consular practices. The result of that quest will, in turn, give a possible indication of the strength, or of the changing strength, of the Commonwealth bond at that period. The existence and extent of that bond during the third quarter of the last century has often

been discussed in writings on the Commonwealth. But very little indeed and it is not too much to say virtually no - attention has hitherto been paid to the consular aspect of the phenomenon. Towards this end the thesis opens with a general consideration of consular relations. Chapter two examines the nature of intra-Commonwealth relations, showing how the adaptability and flexibility of such relationships contributed to the unique form of the group's consular arrangements. Chapter three scrutinizes the discussions on the codification of consular law which, starting in 1955, were held in the International Law Commission and then in the Sixth (Legal) Committee of the General Assembly of the United Nations. This international process culminated in the decision to hold a negotiating conference on the subject at Vienna in 1963. Chapter Four pays special attention to the attitudes of Commonwealth states to the possibility of such codification, as evidenced in discussions at and through Britain's Foreign Office and the Commonwealth Relations Office (CRO). The latter was then the focal point for all Commonwealth issues - and so acted as a kind of unofficial Commonwealth secretariat as well as a British Government ministry. The CRO studies the pre-conference attitudes of the 16 states which then made up the Commonwealth: Australia, Britain, Canada, Cyprus, Ghana, India, Jamaica, Malaysia, New Zealand, Nigeria, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Sierra Leone, Tanganyika, Trinidad and Tobago, and Uganda. This is, again, done by drawing on the papers of Britain's Commonwealth Relations Office, through which Britain took soundings on the concerns and options of the individual Commonwealth members. Attention is also paid to the pre-Vienna meeting of Commonwealth representatives. Chapter Five deals with the organization and conduct of the Conference, noting especially the participation of the non-United Nations members. Chapter Six examines the salient issues at the Conference, noting especially the participation of the Commonwealth members and their inclinations towards the draft convention. The final chapter considers the response of the Commonwealth's members to the outcome of the Conference - the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations - and analyses the 1972 conference on consular relations within the Commonwealth, the arrangements for which were made by the Commonwealth Secretariat which (signifying an important change in the Commonwealth) had been established in the middle of the previous decade. In this way the thesis is able to make a judgment as to the cohesiveness during these years of the members of the Commonwealth on an issue which had a specific Commonwealth aspect and, consequentially, to make a tentative observation about what this judgment suggests about the nature of the overall Commonwealth relationship.

* The thesis was successfully accepted for a Ph.D degree at the Keele University in 2004.