

THE ROLE OF INTERNATIONALIZATION IN THE FIRM'S LIFE CYCLE: A DECISIONAL MODEL FOR ESTABLISHING THE MOST SUITABLE STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

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Abstract. *The paper highlights a hypothetical decisional model built with the purpose of filtering subjective values assigned by firms through a mechanism that transposes them into objective results without influencing the choices of the potential partners. There is a critical moment when the firms must surpass it using suitable internationalization and partnership choices without affecting the choices of the partner firms involved in the model. Among the firms' internationalization options, I lay emphasis on three models of internationalization: the progressive model focusing on the Uppsala model and the product's life cycle, the dependent model known as the eclectic model and the international business network model. When the firm surpasses its condition on the domestic market, its own needs will determine it to capitalize new opportunities in other markets. If we take into consideration the costs of an international approach, firms would prefer to take their first steps on a foreign market alongside a partner. Prospecting a new market involves costs and time, therefore the guidance of a local partner could prove to be of great use especially because the partner firm is able to offer sources of information and knowledge regarding the political environment and the market conditions. If the partners' decisions are set on a common point of view, then the first step in establishing a partnership has already been made. As mentioned in the methodology of the model, the firms will assign values according to the benefits that each type of partnership can offer to them. Each firm will measure its table values through its own calculation strategies keeping into account all of the vectors that would have an impact on the development of the firm at an international level. Whether the firms are interested in forecasting the sales of a future partnership, exchanging know-how or identifying restriction barriers imposed by the host state, the values will be assigned according to the interests of the firms involved in the analysis.*

Keywords: *decisional model; strategic approach; internationalization; partnerships; progressive model; eclectic model; network mode.*

Introduction

The expansion of economic relations on the international market was developed using a range of processes that had a major impact on the world economy. Such processes had followed the worldwide trade development and the abroad investments growth.

Moreover, early internationalization of larger companies rushes the evolution process of their global activity. However, the internationalization process can take longer for companies that prefer to examine external factors and different issues on the target market very carefully. In other words, a market entry's speed is different from one company to another and most often, it is determined by its perception of risk that can

prevent the internationalization on a market. Last but not least, the internationalization strategy remains optional for the firms, but by not adopting such a strategy in time, the firm could find itself in difficulty. Overall, the internationalization has an important role in the firm's life cycle. A good decision regarding internationalization can generate profit and growth for the company, taking advantage of the opportunities provided by the new market. A bad decision or a wrong move can turn out to be dramatic for the firm and in some cases this could be fatal.

Overview

Nowadays internationalization represents the option for the companies' growth perspectives within the international transactions. Firms emphasize on knowledge, information, and experience obtained along with their life cycle and they are continuously protecting these advantages against their rivals. When they reach a stage of maximum development on their own market, the companies will aim to extend their activities to international markets in order to capitalize their opportunities, fulfilling their profit and growth objectives, getting access to resources, technological competencies and finally yet importantly reducing costs within their basic activities through scale economies (Sullivan & Sheffrin, 2003).

An overview of internationalization models

Among the firms' internationalization options, I will emphasize on three models of internationalization: *the progressive model* focusing on the Uppsala model and the product's life cycle (Raymond, 1966), *the dependent model* known as the eclectic model and the *international business network model*.

- *The progressive model* describes a "rings in the water" type of internationalization (Madson & Sevais, 1997). In other words, it is the case of a gradual and slow internationalization, which requires efforts in order to acquire knowledge regarding the geographic area's particularities, the methods for entering different markets and the product policy. According to Raymond (1966), the life cycle of a product includes four stages: "new product", "growth product", "maturity product" and "obsolescence product". In other words, developing products works gradually and progressively according to the stages defined by Raymond.

Between 2006 and 2013, Blomstermo, Sharma, and Klug have quoted Johanson and Valhne in their work. These authors are the ones that defined the Uppsala Model. Mainly, the model describes a theory based on the way that firms extend their activities on foreign markets. The authors have started from the premise of the evolutions of the activities developed by the manufacturing companies in Sweden, and based on an in-depth analysis they have concluded that "the lack of knowledge represents an important obstacle in the way of developing international transactions" (Pignatti). Therefore, the Uppsala model reminds us of knowledge achievement and learning capacity. Thus, the lack of specific market knowledge caused the Swedish production firms to develop their international transactions in a slow manner (step-by-step). In his work, Klug (2006) has analyzed 16 German firms by interviewing them about the strategies that they have applied and their motivation to enter new markets.

He talks about their operational structure and investigates different theories regarding the decision factors that determine firms to extend their activities to foreign markets.

Tan, Brewer, and Liesch (2008) have managed to improve the Uppsala model. They have completed the Uppsala model by adding the firm's pre-internationalization phase, identifying the attitude triggers, motivations, resources and different rigidities for 274 Australian export and non-export firms. Firstly, the study improves the theoretical foundation established in the stages of the traditional theories of the firm's internationalization, by identifying a transition point between pre-internationalization (the learning phase of a firm) with its four factors (exposure triggers, psychological commitment, rigidity and the firm's resources) and its first international commitment (commonly export). Secondly, using a national survey carried out in Australia, the following results suggest that the study has potential practical implications, representing an evaluation instrument for the firms as well as for the government. The weaknesses of the research reside in the fact that it is conducted only on Australian firms, and the sample of the study has relatively reduced dimensions.

Johanson and Vahlne (2009) reviewed the Uppsala model motivating that the business changed over time and that the model has not taken into consideration certain characteristics that have further developed. The argument of these two economists brings to the fore the following concept: "network research (...) markets are networks of relationships in which firms are linked to each other in various, complex and, to a considerable extent, invisible patterns" (Johanson & Vahlne, 2009). They have raised attention to concepts like "insiders" and "liability of outsiders". The initial 1977 model highlighted conditions like "market knowledge" and "market commitment" that targeted "commitment decisions" and "current activities". The improved 2009 model outlines conditions like "knowledge opportunities" and "network position" that target "relationship commitment decisions" and "learning, creating and trust-building" (Johanson & Vahlne, 2009). Starting from the idea of internationalization in a foreign market, Johanson and Vahlne (2009) have explained the concept of "liability of foreignness", that is defined by "psychic distance". In other words, an investor prefers to internationalize on a market that is closer to the domestic market from a geographic point of view. The authors considered that a pre-internationalization phase is necessary. Thus, a stage for preparing the internationalization becomes relevant for all kinds of firms. In their paper, the authors have concluded that when a firm firstly initializes the export decision, it gets out of the pre-internationalization phase.

- *The dependent model* of internationalization expresses the connection of the firm with the transaction costs using the eclectic model, where foreign direct investments and export are in the spotlight. According to Dunning (1977), a firm will start to internationalize if it holds certain advantages related to property, localization and internalization, a theory known as OLI (ownership, location, internalization). Presuming that foreign investors already possess certain competitive property advantages, being capable of internalizing transactional costs, the remaining key factor is the one related to the decision-making process for locating host countries. In her paper, Stefanović (2008) addresses this exact aspect. At this moment, the foreign direct investment is the basic mechanism of capital flows in the globalized economy and represents an important factor for the countries' economic development. For the host country, foreign direct investments (FDIs) contribute to the development of the

business environment, to increasing exports and employment growth, as well as to the acceleration of economic development.

According to the study carried out by Agarwal and Ramaswami (1992), the firms that are interested in external markets activities are experiencing the need to make a decision in order to choose the way to enter a certain market. The above-mentioned economists mention options like export, licensing, joint ventures connected to three categories of advantages: owning properties, locating markets and internalizing transactions.

-Developed by Johanson and Mattson in 1988, *the network approach* is a model, which describes the “degree of internationalization of the firm” and the “degree of internationalization of the network”. Practically, the model is based on “relationships” that “are continuously established, developed, maintained and dissolved with the aim of achieving the objectives of the firm”. Johanson and Mattson (1988) have highlighted the model by defining four internationalization stages (Figure 1).

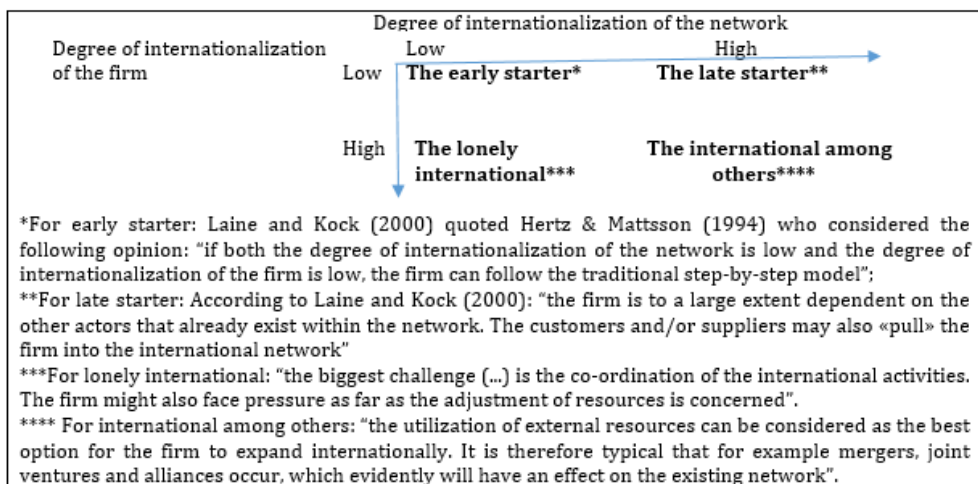


Figure 1. Internationalization approaches (Laine & Kock, 2000)

The internationalization decision

When the firm surpasses its condition on the local market, its own needs will determine it to capitalize new opportunities in other markets. If we take into consideration the costs of an international approach, firms would prefer to take their first steps on an external market alongside a partner. Prospecting a new market involves costs and time, therefore the guidance of a local partner could prove to be of great use especially because the partner firm is able to offer information and knowledge regarding the political environment and the market conditions.

Madson and Servais (1997) mentioned in their work the “born global” concept. This was illustrating the fact that since the establishment of a business, or on a short while after this, the firms start to take into consideration the adoption of international approaches. The article contributes to this concept in three ways: it lays down the empirical evidence reported by Born Globals, it emphasizes the theoretical concepts and offers a new view on the research. Their conclusion sets forth the idea that “Born

Globals grow in a way which may be in accordance with evolutionary thinking” (Laine & Kock, 2000).

In Dimitratos et al. (2011), “the cultural relativity theory” is being used in order to explain the way firms in different countries are willing to become partners. They have conducted a study on a sample of 528 small and medium enterprises in the USA, Great Britain, Greece and Cyprus using hypotheses like “relationships between hierarchical decentralization and power distance, lateral communication, and individualism, and formalization and uncertainty avoidance”. The fact that cultural differences between firms represent a barrier in the process of establishing strategic alliances must not be ignored.

Being inspired by the Uppsala model, Chetty et al. (2014), have developed “an appropriate conceptualization and a reliable and valid measure of the speed of internationalization”. Based on an empirical analysis, the authors have concluded that there is a positive correlation between performance on foreign markets and the speed of internationalization. Some economists have defined the speed of internationalization in different ways: Casillas and Moreno-Menendez (2013) state that “speed is the relation between the internationalization process and time”, Casillas and Acedo (2013) considered speed to be a “relationship between time and a company’s international events”.

According to Popa and Filip (1999), the main reasons for which firms prefer to internationalize are of two types: offensive reasons (proactive) and reactive reasons (defensive). Among the proactive reasons (offensive) they specify:

- *the access to resources* (mainly it is the case of establishing inter-firms collaborations/ long-term contracts/ strategic alliances in order to improve the inputs supply chain and intermediary products),
- *the technological advantage* (it is mainly used in order to obtain a competitive advantage in different markets),
- *scale economies, reducing total costs and creating competitive advantages* (Likewise, the taxation policy of the host country may be more relaxed in a place where taxes are lower and fewer, diminishing the chances of strangling the company’s life),
- *exclusive information* (I consider that besides the fact that daily the firms face the need to manage the life cycles of their own products, most of the time they need to gain as much information as possible in order to prolong their existence. In my opinion, at the moment, for any firm, assimilating information and transforming it into know-how contributes more or less to the extension of the activity that it performs).

Popa and Filip (1999) complete the antithesis of the abovementioned reasons with the reactive (defensive) ones:

- *market pressure* (it is the case of firms that are being strangled by the presence of local competitors, hence they will prefer to redirect their efforts towards other international markets);
- *decreasing sales on the domestic market* (when the market becomes saturated and there are powerful competitors on the market already, there will be an impact on the firm’s turnover because consumers will turn to other interchangeable products if the offer of other companies is better);

- *overproduction* (in this case, the demand on the internal market shrinks and an excess of products and stocks respectively appears, and thus the firm will resort to exports on the international market);
- *the excess of capacity* (through its resort to the foreign market, the firm can use at a maximum level its entire technological capacity at its disposal at that time and so it has the chance to test its own forces in adapting and diversifying its offer according to the market);
- *customer loyalty* (in order to be closer to customers, from a geographic point of view, the firm finds itself in a situation when it needs to move its location in the country in which its clients are more numerous in accordance to the ones present on the domestic market).

Methodology

The hypothetic decisional model presented in the current section contributes to the calculation and illustration of the best decisions that the firms can make regarding the type of internationalization and the partnership model. There is a critical moment that the firms must surpass using suitable internationalization and partnership choices without influencing the choices of the partner firms involved in the model.

We will start by assigning values between 0 and 10 to the potential partnerships (0 represents zero chance for establishing a partnership and 10 means that establishing a partnership will offer maximum satisfaction to the firm). In other words, the values will be assigned according to the benefits offered by each type of partnership. These values are classified between the three main internationalization pillars: *progressive strategic approach*, *dependent strategic approach* (eclectic model) and *international business network approach*.

The hypothetical model is based on decisional stages that need to be followed in order to establish a suitable partnership based on one of the strategic approaches mentioned above.

In the first decisional stage, the firms must take into consideration the following mathematic relation: $i_n \max S (iaS, ibS, \dots, izS)$, where i = the firm, a, b, \dots, z = the partners, S = the type of strategic approach. The model's mechanism works as following: in the first phase, "i" firms will opt for the maximum decisional value in relation to which, the minimum decisional value will be established for each firm.

If the decision of firm "i" will not be equal to the decision of one or more partners (for instance $iaS = AiS$), then the partnership will not be established. In this case, the firm "i" will pass on to its next available decision applying the same decisional process. Before passing to Decision 2, the common choices that the firms opted for will be identified. The process cycle will resume along with Decision 2 which will be conditioned by the following relation: $i_{II}: \max S (iaS, ibS, \dots, izS) = \text{Decision 1} > \text{Decision 2} \geq \min S (iaS, ibS, \dots, izS)$. The new ri_n results will be transposed into a chess table similar to the one found at the end of the section.

For Decision 2, the obtained results will firstly be compared to the "remaining" results from Decision 1, and then the newly obtained ri_2 values will be compared to each other.

Thus, the decisional process will resume in the same aforementioned conditions until “Decision N” will be equal to $[\min S (iaS, ibS, \dots, izS)]$, in other words $i_n: \max S (iaS, ibS, \dots, izS) = \text{Decision 1} > \text{Decision 2} > \dots \geq \text{Decision N} = \min S (iaS, ibS, \dots, izS)$.

The Decision N relation will look as following: $i_n: \max S (ixS, iyS, izS) > \max S (ixS, iyS, izS) - [\max S (ixS, iyS, izS) - \text{the next smaller value}] \geq \min S (ixS, iyS, idzS)$. After each decisional stage, the new values will be compared to the values of the decisions in the order of their importance (for example: firstly, the values of Decision N (r_{i_n}) will be compared to the values of Decision 1, respecting the order of the decisions).

Then we proceed to verify if the obtained values for i_n are the same as the values obtained for $i_1, i_2, \dots, i_{n-1}, i_n$ maintaining the order of their importance and respecting their classification from column S. As soon as a common value will be identified, the result will be registered in a table of results. If a result is already filled in the table, this result will be maintained even if a new result is found in another stage of the process.

Model visibility

All of the possible relations between four participating firms can be found in the table below (Table 1). These are built based on the strategic internationalization approaches mentioned in the current section.

Table 1. The “Chess” of the strategic approaches for the four firms

		P		E		I
A		A		A		A
		AbP		AbE		AbI
B	BaP		BaD		BaI	
		AcP		AcE		AcI
C	CaP		CaD		CaI	
		AdP		AdE		AdI
D	DaP		DaD		DaI	

		P		E		I
B		B		B		B
		BaP		BaE		BaI
A	AbP		AbD		AbI	
		BcP		BcE		BcI
C	CbP		CbD		CbI	
		BdP		BdE		BdI
D	DbP		DbD		DbI	

		P		E		I
C		C		C		C
		CaP		CaE		CaI
A	AcP		AcD		AcI	
		CbP		CbE		CbI
B	BcP		BcD		BcI	
		CdP		CdE		AdI
D	DcP		DcD		DcI	

		P		E		I
D		D		D		D
		DaP		DaE		DaI
A	AdP		AdD		AdI	
		DbP		DbE		DbI
B	BdP		BdD		BdI	
		DcP		DcE		DcI
C	CdP		CdD		CdI	

*A, B, C, D – firms,

**P = progressive strategic approach, E = dependent strategic approach; I = international business network approach

According to the methodology, for columns P, E, I the maximum values will be chosen, keeping in mind that the biggest value will be equivalent to the best decision for the

firm, and the smallest value will represent the worst decision for the firm. We will use firm A as a reference element, in order to highlight the formulas.

Decision 1 for firm A will be:

$$rA_1: \max P (AbP, AcP, AdP); \max E (AbE, AcE, AdE); \max I (AbI, AcI, AdI);$$

For example, if the best decision for firm A is also the best decision for firm C, then the registered result will represent the establishment of the partnership. In other words, if $rA_{1(\text{value})} = rC_{1(\text{corresponding value})}$ then the firms' share similar opinions and are heading towards the same decision. This represents the best choice for both firms, and their chances of establishing a partnership reach a maximum peak for the analyzed values.

Decision 2 for firm A will be chosen only if the following relations are being respected:

$$rA_2: \max P (AbP, AcP, AdP) > \max P (AbP, AcP, AdP) - [\max P (AbP, AcP, AdP) - \text{the next smaller value}] \geq \min P (AbP, AcP, AdP);$$

$$\max E (AbE, AcE, AdE) > \max E (AbE, AcE, AdE) - [\max E (AbE, AcE, AdE) - \text{the next smaller value}] \geq \min (AbP, AcP, AdP);$$

$$\max I (AbI, AcI, AdI) > \max I (AbI, AcI, AdI) - [\max I (AbI, AcI, AdI) - \text{the next smaller value}] \geq \min I (AbI, AcI, AdI);$$

We need to check if the obtained values for rA_2 are the same as the values obtained for rA_1 and afterward these values will be compared to each other (the values obtained for A_2). The decision process will resume under the same conditions presented above until the rA_n for firm A will be equal to $[\min S (ibS, icS, idS)]$, where $rA_n: \max S (ibS, icS, idS) = \text{Decision 1} > \text{Decision 2} > \dots \geq \text{Decision N} = \min S (ibS, icS, idS)$.

$$A_n: \max P (AbP, AcP, AdP) = \text{Decision 1} > \text{Decision 2} > \dots > \text{Decision N} \geq \min P (AbP, AcS, AdS)$$

$$\max E (AbE, AcE, AdE) = \text{Decision 1} > \text{Decision 2} > \dots > \text{Decision N} \geq \min E (AbE, AcE, AdE)$$

$$\max I (AbI, AcI, AdI) = \text{Decision 1} > \text{Decision 2} > \dots > \text{Decision N} \geq \min I (AbI, AcI, AdI)$$

We proceed to verify if the values obtained for A_n are the same as the values obtained for $A_1, A_2, \dots, A_{n-1}, A_n$. maintaining the order of their importance and respecting their classification from column S, in our case: P, E, I.

Model simulation

Firms A, B, C, D establish their own values for potential partnerships. After setting their values, they will be assigned in the tables bellow (Table 2).

Table 2. Assigned values for firms A, B, C, D

	P	E	I
	A	A	A
	7	5	4
B	9	4	3
	8	7	5
C	8	2	4
	6	4	9
D	10	4	5

	P	E	I
	C	C	C
	8	2	4
A	8	7	5
	4	5	8
B	10	3	2
	6	8	5
D	5	7	10

	P	E	I
	B	B	B
	9	4	3
A	7	5	4
	10	3	2
C	4	5	8
	9	8	3
D	7	6	4

	P	E	I
	D	D	D
	10	2	5
A	6	4	9
	7	6	4
B	9	8	3
	5	7	10
C	6	8	5

For Decision 1 we obtain:

- A₁: max P (AbP, AcP, AdP) = 8; max E (AbE, AcE, AdE) = 7; max I (AbI, AcI, AdI) = 9.
- B₁: max P (BaP, BcP, BdP) = 10; max E (BaE, BcE, BdE) = 8; max I (BaI, BcI, BdI) = 3.
- C₁: max P (CaP, CbP, CdP) = 8; max E (CaE, CbE, CdE) = 8; max I (CaI, CbI, CdI) = 8.
- D₁: max P (DaP, DbP, DcP) = 10; max E (DaE, DbE, DcE) = 7; max I (DaI, DbI, DcI) = 10.

- P₁: rA₁ = AC; rB₁ = BC; rC₁ = CA; rD₁ = DA; => rA₁ = rC₁ => **(AC,CA) = (8,8)**
- E₁: rA₁ = AC; rB₁ = BD; rC₁ = CD; rD₁ = DC; => rC₁ = rD₁ => **(CD,DC) = (8,7)**
- I₁: rA₁ = AD ; rB₁ = BA,BD; rC₁ = CB; rD₁ = DC;

For Decision 2 we obtain:

- If 8 = Decision 1 > 8- (8-7) ≧ 6 then A₂: max P (AbP, AcP, AdP) = 7
- If 10 = Decision 1 > 10- (10-9) ≧ 9 then B₂: max P (BaP, BcP, BdP) = 9
- If 8 = Decision 1 > 8- (8-6) ≧ 4 then C₂: max P (CaP, CbP, CdP) = 6
- If 10 = Decision 1 > 10- (10-7) ≧ 5 then D₂: max P (DaP, DbP, DcP) = 7

- If 7 = Decision 1 > 7- (7-5) ≧ 4 then A₂: max E (AbE, AcE, AdE) = 5
- If 8 = Decision 1 > 8- (8-4) ≧ 3 then B₂: max E (BaE, BcE, BdE) = 4
- If 8 = Decision 1 > 8- (8-5) ≧ 2 then C₂: max E (CaE, CbE, CdE) = 2
- If 7 = Decision 1 > 7- (7-6) ≧ 2 then D₂: max E (DaE, DbE, DcE) = 6

- If 9 = Decision 1 > 9- (9-5) ≧ 4 then A₂: max I (AbI, AcI, AdI) = 5
- If 3 = Decision 1 > 3- (3-2) ≧ 2 then B₂: max I (BaI, BcI, BdI) = 2
- If 8 = Decision 1 > 8- (8-5) ≧ 4 then C₂: max I (CaI, CbI, CdI) = 5
- If 10 = Decision 1 > 10- (10-5) ≧ 4 then D₂: max I (DaI, DbI, DcI) = 5

- P₂: rA₂ = AB; rB₂ = BA; rC₂ = CD; rD₂ = DB; =>
- The remaining values P₁: rB₁ = BC; rD₁ = DA;

$$rA_2 = rB_2 \Rightarrow (AB,BA) = (7,9)$$

E₂: rA₂ = AB; rB₂ = BA; rC₂ = CB; rD₂ = DB;
 The remaining values E₁: rA₁ = AC; rB₁ = BD; =>

$$rA_2 = rB_2 \Rightarrow (AB,BA) = (7,9)$$

$$rD_2 = rB_1 \Rightarrow (DB,BD) = (6,8)$$

I₂: rA₂ = AC; rB₂ = BC; rC₂ = CD; rD₂ = DA;
 The remaining values I₁: rA₁ = AD; rB₁ = BA,BD; rC₁ = CB; rD₁ = DC; =>

$$rD_2 = rA_1 \Rightarrow (DA,AD) = (5,9)$$

$$rB_2 = rC_1 \Rightarrow (BC,CB) = (2,8)$$

The results of the decisions are presented in the table below (Table 3):

Table 3. Simulation model results

		A		B		C		D
			P2	9	P1	8	I1	5
A			7	P2	8	P1	9	I2
	P2	7			I2	8	E1	6
B	9	P2			2	I1	8	E2
	P1	8	I1	2			E1	7
C	8	P1	8	I2			8	E1
	I2	9	E2	8	E1	8		
D	5	I1	6	E1	7	E1		

Results interpretation

After the firms chose their values in the first decisional stage, two partnerships were established. One of the partnership was established between firms A and C with the value (AC, CA) = (8,8) within the model P and the second partnership was established between C and D with the value (CD,DC) = (8,7) within the model E.

In the second decisional stage, four partnerships were established. For the partnership between A and B, their best common values (7,9) originating in the same stage (Decision 2) determined the partners to opt for the model P. Likewise, all of the four firms opted for the model I and established partnerships in distinct decisional stages (BC,CB) = (2,8) and (AD,DA) = (9,5). The only firms that have opted for the model E were B and D, and their values (8,6) were registered in distinct stages.

Conclusions and implications

The decisional model is purely theoretical and hypothetical being built with the purpose of filtering subjective values given by firms through a mechanism that transposes them into objective results without influencing the choices of the potential partners.

When a firm finds itself in a situation in which it surpasses its own condition on the domestic market, it will face the need to explore new opportunities in other markets using different strategic approaches. In my opinion, a firm faces its crucial moment in its development when it needs to establish a new strategic approach by choosing a type of partnership in the context of internationalization. A right decision at such a critical moment offers the firm trust in its own powers and the much-desired comfort in this kind of situation. A wrong choice could create substantial losses in terms of financial efforts, time and opportunity cost.

We stress that the solution should not be confused with the decision. There may be multiple solutions, more or less appropriate, for a need/problem, while the best decision can only be one. According to the general formula, the opportunity cost represents the value in any major choice between two possibilities.

I believe that the classification of all possible solutions transposed into decisions and the establishment of common decisions for potential partnerships remain key elements for choosing an appropriate strategic international partner.

If their decisions are set on a common point of view, then the first step in establishing a partnership has already been made. As mentioned in the methodology of the model, the firms will assign values according to the benefits that each type of partnership can offer to them. Each firm will measure its table values through its own calculation strategies keeping into account all of the vectors that will have an impact on the development of the firm at an international level. Whether the firms are interested in forecasting the sales of a future partnership, exchanging know-how or identifying restriction barriers imposed by the host state, the values will be assigned according to the interests of the firms involved in the analysis.

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