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Perspectivas
Teóricas,
Metodológicas
e de
Investigação

Luis Fernando González-Beltrán
(organizador)



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PRÓLOGO

En este tercer volumen de Humanidades y Ciencias Sociales: Perspectiva teóricas, Metodológicas y de Investigación, seguimos en la línea de ofrecer trabajos de diferentes disciplinas que, desde sus propias trincheras, intentan el análisis de diferentes aspectos del ser humano, desde el enfoque en el propio individuo, hasta su contexto tanto inmediato como a gran escala, de la escuela que lo forma hasta la ciudad que lo cobija. Pretendiendo, como ya es usual, que el lector curioso encuentre en un solo lugar, lo que le llevaría una enorme labor en los buscadores de temas científicos. Sin perder el foco sobre lo que es inherente al humano, la variedad de autores, de metodologías, de idiomas, de países representados aquí, le dan un mayor valor a la síntesis que intentamos lograr.

La obra presenta 17 investigaciones agrupadas en 4 secciones: iniciamos con el tema A) Alumnos en su contexto escolar. La escuela tiene una importancia innegable en la socialización de los alumnos, por ello se tratan los distintos Procesos educativos, en sus diferentes entornos, tanto físicos como situacionales, así se analizan los problemas del trabajo infantil, los contextos rurales, la autorregulación en el aprendizaje, las habilidades intrapersonales, las competencias investigativas, el Aprendizaje Basado en Proyectos, el pensamiento crítico y alumnos con discapacidades. Es la sección que agrupa más capítulos, con 7.

Continuando con la escuela, vemos también la otra cara de la moneda, con el tema B) Docentes en formación, con dos estudios. También aquí vemos como los profesores se enfrentan a varios retos, por lo que aquí se trata la Planeación estratégica, la situación de docentes con estrés, su entrenamiento, y su ejecución cuando dedican su trabajo a los adultos, en situaciones de Formación a lo largo de la vida.

La tercera sección C) Empresas: Presente, pasado y futuro, revisa el siguiente contexto al que se enfrentan los estudiantes: el trabajo. Iniciamos con un vistazo al pasado, revisando la política de las empresas en el siglo de oro español; el presente con la internalización de empresas; y el futuro tratando cuestiones como, en primer lugar, los intangibles en la sociedad del conocimiento, y en segundo lugar, el diseño estratégico y la ejecución en manejo de proyectos a nivel empresarial.

Finalizamos con una sección D) Ciudades: Arquitectura, diseño, construcción y política. Un contexto físico macro, pero también un entorno Social y Cultural. Iniciamos con la utopía del momento, cómo diseñar ciudades verdes, la infraestructura para vivir bien. Seguimos con lo más concreto, tanto en términos verbales como en términos literales, cómo reforzar el concreto de los edificios que nos alojan. Le sigue otro tópico de urbanismo: recursos humanos en la construcción. Y para cerrar, un poco de política,

cómo en Europa se está manejando la Migración, la crisis de refugiados, un problema que se está agudizando en todos los continentes.

Intentamos haber representado lo más actual de las Humanidades y las Ciencias Sociales, y esperamos seguirlo haciendo en el futuro inmediato.

¡Les deseamos a todos una agradable lectura!

Luis Fernando González-Beltrán
Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM)

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SCRUTINISING SPANISH WINE FIRMS: AN INTEGRATED VIEW OF THEIR INTERNATIONALISATION PROCESS

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Noelia Jiménez-Asenjo de Pedro

Dpto. Gestión Empresarial
IQS School of Management
Universitat Ramón Llull
Barcelona, España
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7682-4271>

Diana A. Filipescu

Department: Strategy
Entrepreneurship and Innovation
TBS Business School
Barcelona, España
<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3523-1928>

ABSTRACT: The last decades have provided exhaustive evidence on firms' internationalisation process with rich debates concerning specific theories, models and approaches that better explain the factors that impact such a complex process. The purpose of this paper is to analyse in-depth this process, elaborate upon an integrative model given the gradual, network, foreign direct investment and born global approaches and provide a comparison between small and medium-sized enterprises and multinational ones. To do so, we selected six Spanish

wine firms, from the DO cava, using the case study methodology. The analysis reveals that firms' internationalisation follows different paths depending on firms' size, that lead to a successful internationalisation, where social networks and top management attitude are key determinants of international activities while psychic distance loses explanatory power in a network-driven and highly globalised sector. In addition, this study allows us to determine the best comparative indicators and contrast them with previous findings.

KEYWORDS: Internationalisation process. Gradual theory. Network theory. Born-global. Wine sector.

1 INTRODUCTION

The globalisation phenomenon and the emergence of a global market influence the realities that companies experience, stimulating the process of business internationalisation and increasing exports worldwide.

The International Business (IB) discipline has been studying the internationalisation processes for decades, and using different approaches and points of view, that have witnessed rich debates concerning specific theories, models and approaches. Therefore, the current interest for studying the internationalisation process is alive, proof

of this are the several articles that revise the internationalisation theories of SMEs and MNEs (Miravittles & Zhang, 2016; Ribau et al., 2015). Moreover, current phenomena, such as COVID'19 or Brexit, to name a few, motivate researchers to understand their impact on firms' internationalisation (Curran et al., 2021).

The analysis of the internationalisation processes, mainly of SMEs, is based on gradual theories that define the internationalisation process as an evolutionary process where companies increase their international involvement based on the knowledge and growing commitment assumed in the foreign market (Bilkey & Tesar, 1977; Cavusgil, 1980, 1982; Czincota, 1982).

These gradual theories and models are later extended with the network approach (Amal & Rocha, 2010; Bell, 1995; Collinson & Houlden, 2005; Johanson & Mattsson, 1986) that explain how companies can take advantage of the personal, business or institutional network in order to internationalize (Johanson & Vahlne, 2003; Johanson et al., 1988; Ruzzier et al., 2006). On the other hand, the "born global" phenomenon contrasts with the gradualist approach as it states that some companies are able to become global players in less than two years (Chetty & Campbell-Hunt, 2004; Madsen & Servais, 1997; Rialp et al., 2005).

A second stream of research is focused on the economic perspective that analyses the activities of MNEs abroad, framed within different explanatory theories of foreign direct investments (FDI). In this sense, while SMEs consider exporting as the most favourable form of entry (Bell, 1995; Czinkota, 1982; Rao & Naidu, 1992), the expansion processes of MNEs tend to evolve towards FDI or contractual agreements that can bring greater benefits and control over the operations they establish internationally (Cavusgil, 1980, 1982; Johanson & Wiedersheim-Paul, 1975; Melin, 1992; Rialp & Rialp, 2005).

Considering the above-mentioned and also academicians' call to use different approaches that explain such a complex phenomenon (Miravittles & Zhang, 2016), the **first objective** of this research is to understand firms' internationalisation process, with an in-depth look at different existent theories.

According to gradual theories, the internationalisation process is developed in several phases, that vary from minimum or null commitment to export activity, to a high or total commitment, where different indicators are used to know the degree of commitment that a company has towards its international markets (Alvarez, 2004; Bilkey & Tesar, 1977; Cavusgil, 1980, 1982; Welch & Wiedersheim-Paul, 1980; Rao & Naidu, 1992). Therefore, the **second objective** is to determine the best comparative indicators in order to understand firms' commitment to international activity in relation to other companies from the sector.

In addition, one outstanding contribution of gradual models to the scientific literature is to determine the factors - managerial, organizational and environmental - that influence the internationalisation decisions of companies as a whole or the specific factors that allow firms to evolve from one stage to the next one (Bilkey & Tesar, 1977; Cavusgil, 1982; Collinson & Houlden, 2005; Wiedersheim-Paul et al., 1978). Therefore, our **third objective** is to identify the key factors that allow companies to successfully internationalise.

In order to deeply understand the internationalisation process, and enrich our research, we select companies with different sizes - four SMEs and two big MNEs from the sector. This is because the scientific literature emphasises that the internationalisation processes of MNEs and SMEs show different opportunities, challenges and internal and external restrictions (Melin, 1992; Rialp & Rialp, 2001), which causes notable differences in the internationalisation processes, in their analysis and in the theories used (Coviello & McAuley, 1999; Melin, 1992; Ruzzier et al., 2006). Thus, the **fourth objective** is to disentangle the similarities and differences between SMEs' and MNEs' internationalisation process.

Finally, in order to analyse the internationalisation process and compare SMEs & MNEs processes considering the gradual, network, FDI and born-global perspectives, we develop a gradual model that includes the gradual exporting stages and the FDI expansion mechanism.

To conduct this study, the wine sector was selected as it is a highly globalized and strongly atomized sector. In addition, the Spanish wine sector is a key sector in the Spanish economy, culture and gastronomy, and has a great tradition and international prestige.

In this study we select companies that belong to the designation of origin (DO) Cava, as it is the most exported DO abroad the 96 Spanish DOs. The DO Cava was born in Catalonia, with the aim of naming the sparkling wine made with the champenoise method.

The most remarkable phenomenon in the evolution of DO cava in the last 50 years has been the high degree of internationalisation achieved (Junyent, 2007). This international dynamism is reflected in the increase in annual exports, where in 2019, 66.1% of the cava produced was exported and in the last 10 years exports have grown by 25% (Consejo Regulador del Cava, 2019). Likewise, it is necessary to highlight the export leadership of Freixenet and Codorníu, companies that, in 1986, concentrated 90% of cava production and 100% of exports (Ferrer, 1989). Both companies, chosen in our study, made the Catalan sparkling wine known and are fighting to position the DO cava worldwide. During the 80s, SMEs wineries also began the exporting activity, which

became more dynamic in 2008, largely caused by the economic crisis suffered in Spain and Catalonia, where many SMEs saw internationalisation as an option to grow, increase sales and release their productive surplus.

2 INTERNATIONALISATION PROCESS

MNEs and SMEs are very different from each other as they show different opportunities, challenges and internal and external restrictions (Melin, 1992; Rialp & Rialp, 2001). This is due to the different resources' availability, both capital, human and financial resources; experience, time and access to information; management team, capabilities, hierarchical structures, scale of operations and internal processes, among other factors (Alvarez, 2004; Rialp & Rialp, 2001, 2005).

Thus, the characteristics of MNEs and SMEs differ, as well as the behaviours that SMEs must adopt to overcome the limitations posed by its size (Cavusgil, 1980, 1982; Rao & Naidu, 1992) given their lower capacity to assume risks, of withstanding temporary crises or the greater need for assistance (Crick, 1995), which causes notable differences in the internationalisation processes, in their analysis and in the theories used in said analyses (Rialp & Rialp, 2001, 2005; Ruzzier et al., 2006, Miravittles & Zhang, 2016; Ribau et al., 2015).

International business literature has been studying the internationalisation process of SMEs and MNEs for decades. This is how several theories and different approaches have arisen in order to explain firm's internationalisation.

2.1 FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT (FDI) THEORY

The FDI used by MNEs has been studied through the internalization theory (Caves, 1971; Porter, 1985) and the eclectic paradigm (Dunning, 1977, 2001) that, respectively, try to answer the questions: Why do firms practice FDI? and, why, how and where do firms make FDI (Miravittles & Zhang, 2016). Furthermore, it wants to respond why firms, based in one country, exploit their competitive advantages by locating their production in other countries despite the high internal costs associated with the geographical and cultural distance, as well as lack of market knowledge. The explanation given is based on the transaction cost approach that explain that firms internationalize in markets where transactions costs are lower.

These theories explain the reasons that impel firms to internationalize and how they organise activities to successful internationalise. However, none of them seem to "fully explain the essence of firm's FDI" (Ribau et al., 2015). Dunning (1979), through

the eclectic paradigm, explains that firms entering a new country have to overcome the liability of foreignness and they do so with the ownership of some competitive advantages (O), or with tangible and intangible assets, like technology, physical structure or brand name and management skills. In addition, the firm needs to achieve advantages from location (L) in a host country to add value to the MNEs activity, and, lastly, the company will exploit these competitive advantages in a foreign market by internalising (I) those operations.

2.2 GRADUAL THEORY AND MODELS

During the 1970s and 1980s, numerous empirical studies analysed internationalisation processes, giving rise to the gradualist theories and models. The pioneers of the gradual theories (Bilkey & Tesar, 1977; Cavusgil, 1980; Johanson & Vahlne, 1977) define internationalisation as an “evolutionary process where companies increase their international involvement based on the knowledge and growing commitment assumed in the market”.

2.2.1 Gradual models

Among the gradualist models, the scientific literature highlights the Uppsala model (Johanson & Vahlne, 1977), which is considered the pioneer model in the interpretation of the phenomenon of internationalisation and highlights the dynamic nature of the internationalisation processes of companies. Hence, companies, as they increase their knowledge and experiences in foreign markets, their commitment gradually increases too. This influences the perception of opportunities and risks in the foreign market, which in turn affects the decision of which resources should be committed and activities carried out, giving rise to a dynamic and gradual process where learning about opportunities interact with the commitment to international activities.

Other empirical studies, that analyse the internationalisation processes of SMEs, give rise to different gradualist models of internationalisation, that agree in arranging the internationalisation processes in different stages from little or no commitment towards the foreign market to a greater or total one. This evolution reflects the changes in attitude and behaviour of the managers, in favour of a greater international orientation and a greater commitment of resources to the foreign market (Bilkey & Tesar, 1977; Cavusgil, 1982; Czinkota, 1982; Johanson & Wiedersheim-Paul, 1975; Rao & Naidu, 1992).

The differences in the number of stages and names they receive is because the models emerge after analysing internationalisation from different perspectives (Leonidou

& Katsikeas, 1996), and taking into account different indicators, such as the forms of entry and expansion mechanisms (Johanson & Wiedersheim-Paul, 1975), the psychic distance from foreign markets and the attitude of the management team (Bilkey & Tesar, 1977), the managerial commitment (Rao & Naidu, 1992), the managerial and organizational profiles of the company (Cavusgil, 1980, 1982) or the export assistance policies that American companies need from government institutions (Czinkota, 1982).

2.2.2 Degree of commitment indicators

Gradualist models use different indicators to determine the degree of commitment that companies assume with the internationalisation process and to be able to identify the stage where the company is at a given moment. Table 1 shows the different indicators used in the scientific literature to segment the internationalisation processes. Likewise, where, according to Leonidou & Katsikeas (1996, p.6), the three most relevant indicators used are: export intensity, export experience and modes of entry.

Table 1: Indicators to segment the internationalisation processes. Own elaboration.

Most relevant indicators	Authors	Other indicators	Authors
Export Intensity	Bilkey and Tesar (1977) Cavusgil (1980, 1982) Crick (1995) Czinkota (1982) Diamantoulos and Inglis (1988) Moon and Lee (1990)	Number of foreign markets	Crick (1995) Czinkota (1982) Diamantoulos and Inglis (1988) Johanson and Wiedersheim-Paul (1975)
		Foreign clients	Crick (1995) Czinkota (1982)
Export Experience	Bilkey (1978) Bilkey and Tesar (1977) Cavusgil (1980, 1982) Czinkota (1982) Christiansen et al. (1987) Johanson and Vahlne (1977) Johanson and Wiedersheim-Paul (1975) Rao and Naidu (1992)	Sales transactions in a foreign market	Czinkota (1982)
		Export department	Diamantoulos and Inglis (1988)
		Full time and part time employees	Czinkota (1982) Diamantoulos and Inglis (1988) Rao and Naidu (1992)
		Manager's attitude	Barrett and Wilkinson (1986) Bilkey and Tesar (1977) Czinkota (1982)
Modes of Entry	Bilkey and Tesar (1977) Cavusgil (1980) Crick (1995) Czinkota (1982) Johanson and Wiedersheim-Paul (1975) Moon and Lee (1990) Rao and Naidu (1992)	% of exported production	Cavusgil (1980)
		Size of the company	Crick (1995)
		Sales Volume	Czinkota (1982)
		Number of employees	Rao and Naidu (1992)
		Export Volume	Crick (1995) Czinkota (1982)
		Export Planification	Barrett and Wilkinson (1986) Bilkey and Tesar (1977) Cavusgil (1980) Rao and Naidu (1992)
		Management characteristics	Barrett and Wilkinson (1986) Stoian, Rialp and Rialp (2011)
		Initial and current stimuli	Rao and Naidu (1992)
Product orientation	Czinkota (1982)		

2.2.3 The psychic distance indicator

Distance is a core concept in the international business (IB) field. It relates to the extent of cultural, institutional, geographical and economic differences between country

pairs (Johanson & Vahlne, 1977; Ghemawat, 2001). Existing research tends to assume that distance has negative consequences for multinational enterprises (MNEs) as it introduces friction (Shenkar et al. 2012) and complexity (Vermeulen & Barkema 2002) into IB activities. For example, it can increase the costs of transportation, communication, coordination, integration and monitoring associated with international business (Tan and Mahoney 2006). It can interfere with the flow of information and prevents managers from learning about foreign countries (Johanson & Vahlne 1977). It can also impede the capacity of multinational enterprises (MNEs) to absorb new and apply already existing knowledge (Szulanski, 1996).

Prior research elucidates the distinct effects of distance on a variety of IB-related issues such as firms' market selection, their international performance, the relationships they maintain between headquarters and subsidiaries, and how they manage the intra-organizational exchange of knowledge (Kirkman et al. 2006; Tihanyi et al. 2005).

Studies examining the effects of distance on firms' choices of entry modes focus their attention primarily on cultural distance. Some scholars suggest that, as cultural distance increases, firms will favour non-equity modes over equity modes (Arora & Fosfuri 2000; Driscoll & Paliwoda 1997), joint ventures over wholly owned subsidiaries (Dow & Ferencikova 2010; Hennart & Larimo 1998), and low-equity modes over high-equity modes (Magnusson et al. 2008; Yamin & Golesorkhi 2010). Others find a positive relationship (Cho & Padmanabhan 2005; Gooris & Peeters 2014), an inverted U-shaped one (Wang & Schaan 2008) or no relationship between cultural distance and degree of equity (Demirbag et al. 2009; Slangen & van Tulder 2009). Studies focused on other dimensions of distance are less common and reach similarly inconsistent findings. For example, Xu et al. (2004) and Castellani et al. (2013) find that high levels of institutional distance incite firms to choose non-equity-based entry modes whilst Schwens et al. (2011) and Contractor et al. (2014) demonstrate that they encourage firms to choose equity-based modes. Fladmoe-Lindquist and Jacque (1995) and Quer et al. (2007) find a negative relationship between geographical distance and the degree of equity that firms invest in entry modes, but no relationship between economic distance and the degree of equity.

Interpretations of what might appear to be the same distance (geographic, linguistic, cultural, institutional or otherwise) can differ across firms (Zaheer, 2012). Accordingly, scholars have an interest in examining managerial or firm sensitivity to distance rather than examining its direct effects on IB activities (Dikova, 2009). However, there exist only a limited number of studies addressing the factors that potentially

moderate the effects of distance on entry-mode choices. Those that do exist are primarily concerned with cultural distance (Agarwal, 1994; Cho & Padmanabhan, 2005; Dikova & Rao Sahib, 2013; Dow & Larimo, 2009).

2.2.4 Factors that impact the internationalisation process

Other great contribution of gradual models is the capacity to analyse the managerial, organizational and environmental factors that impact the internationalisation decisions and that allow companies to evolve from one stage to the next one (Bilkey & Tesar, 1977; Cavusgil, 1982; Collinson & Houlden, 2005; Wiedersheim-Paul et al., 1978). Most empirical studies affirms that those factors vary significantly depending on the phase where the company is and this is because each phase has its own characteristics (Barrett & Wilkinson, 1986; Bilkey & Tesar, 1977; Cavusgil, 1980; Crick, 1995; Wiedersheim-Paul et al., 1978; Wortzel & Wortzel, 1982), even if there are some factors that impact the whole process, independently of the stage where the company is.

In order to explain both the factors and firm consequences of being in a specific phase, we split the internationalisation process in six stages (see Table 2). The phases are: 1) No exporting; 2) Pre-exporting: passive attitude; 3) Pre-exporting: active attitude; 4) Experimental export in psychic close countries; 5) Experimental exporter reaching psychic distant countries; and 6) International expansion via FDI. These are defined according to four specific factors: 1) the psychic distance; 2) the manager's attitude; 3) the manager's ability to engage and commit with foreign markets; and 4) the modes of entry and expansion mechanisms, factors which are selected because they are used in the most used gradual models such as the Johanson & Wiedersheim-Paul (1975), Bilkey & Tesar (1977), Cavusgil (1980, 1982) and Rao and Naidou (1992), among others.

As it has been analysed, the scientific literature confirms that certain factors impact differently the different stages of the gradual internationalisation process. From here, various studies (Erikson et al., 1997; Wortzel & Wortzel, 1982) conclude that there is no particular strategy or optimal phase for all companies in an industry or sector, or for a company with a presence in different countries. This is how each company, depending on its resources, capacities, limitations and the characteristics of the environments, must adapt its structures and processes, and decide the optimal degree of commitment to assume in each of the foreign markets where it is present.

Table 2: Internationalization stages characteristics. Own source.

Nº	Stages	Factors	Consequences	Authors
1	No exporting	Limited resources Management lack of commitment Previous failures or other circumstances	Management team not interested in exporting Company exported before but currently is not exporting	Barrett and Wilkinson, 1986 Cavusgil, 1980, 1982 Crick, 1995 Rao and Naidu, 1992
2	Pre-exporting: Passive attitude	Management passive attitude: - Lack of managerial commitment - Lack of internal flexibility to adjust to international requirements - Little or no preparation to export activity	Unsolicited orders are crucial to start exporting Greater risk of failure in their export activity	Welch and Wiedersheim-Paul, 1980 Wiedersheim-Paul et al., 1978, p.53
3	Pre-exporting: Active exploration	Company manager - Active attitude - Personal preparation - International experience - Expectations about opportunities & risks - Perception of stimuli & barriers - Personal contacts Environment characteristics: home & host stimuli & barriers Company factors - Possession of certain competitive advantages: . Company's ability to develop new products, . Superior quality products - Company capacity to: . Respond to challenges . Act according its internal limitation . Learn from its extra-regional expansion process	Company prepares itself for the internationalization process Increases the possibility of success Crucial and fragile phase: - Minimum commitment with the export activity - Risk and uncertainty perceived by management	Alvarez, 2004 Barrett and Wilkinson, 1986 Bilkey and Tesar, 1977 Cavusgil, 1980, 1982 Moon and Lee, 1990 Leonidou et al., 2007 Lim et al., 1991 Welch and Wiedersheim-Paul, 1980 Wiedersheim-Paul et al., 1978
4	Experimental export in psychologically close countries	Psychic distance: psychologically close countries Company acquires knowledge and export experience in close foreign markets	Company acquisition of knowledge and experience about: - The market - The internationalization process	Bilkey and Tesar, 1977
5	Experienced exporter reaching psychologically distant countries	Company develops their own intelligence systems Technological intensity of the product Management perception of opportunities and risks Financial and human resources committed to export activity Great experience with foreign markets High degree of commitment to international activity	Company capacity to adjust optimally activities to the foreign market Company ability to collect and analyze information in a systematic way Exporting to psychologically distant countries	Bilkey and Tesar, 1977 Cavusgil, 1980, 1982 Czinkota, 1982 Rao and Naidu, 1992 Wortzel and Wortzel, 1982
6	Expansion via FDI	Overcoming tariff barriers & cost of transport Capacity of offshoring and use the competitive advantages that a foreign market can offer To obtain a greater benefit and control over international activity	Increase benefits and control on international activities	Cavusgil, 1980 Johanson and Wiedersheim-Paul, 1975 Rialp and Rialp, 2005 Root, 1998

2.2.5 Factors that impact the entire internationalisation process

Although the factors that impact on the internationalisation process vary depending on the phase where the company is, the scientific literature also highlights a series of factors that influence the entire process. These are: the attitude of the manager and the size of the company.

- **Attitude of the manager**

There is a consensual factor that influences all phases of the internationalisation process and that moves the company forward in said process. This factor is the manager's favourable attitude towards exports, which positively influences the company's commitment to foreign markets (Bilkey & Tesar, 1977; Welch & Wiedersheim-Paul, 1980; Wiedersheim-Paul et al., 1978). This favourable attitude is directly influenced by personal characteristics such as age, country of birth, value system, proficiency of a foreign

language, international experience, level of education, living or traveling abroad, together with the manager's own skills (Barrett & Wilkinson, 1986; Bilkey & Tesar, 1977; Lim et al., 1991; Wiedersheim-Paul et al., 1978; Stoian et al., 2011).

- **Company size**

The size of the company is, on the other hand, a controversial factor as it produces conflicting results. The conclusions of different studies suggest, on the one hand, that large companies, given their greater availability of capital, resources, management team, time, experience and access to information (Crick, 1995; Rialp & Rialp, 2001) seem to be more oriented to export planning (Barrett & Wilkinson, 1986), they are more likely to export (Czinkota, 1982; Suárez-Ortega & Álamo-Vera, 2005) and have a more active behaviour (Coviello & McAuley, 1999; Crick, 1995; Rao & Naidu, 1992). These studies also confirm that SMEs encounter more significant obstacles to advance from one phase to another given the limitations of their resources (Cavusgil, 1980, 1982; Rao & Naidu, 1992), so they need more export aid and are less aware of the growth potential offered by business internationalisation and have less confidence in the exporting ability of the company (Czinkota, 1982, p.37). However, conclusions from other studies suggest that the size of the company does not impact the internationalisation process (Bilkey & Tesar, 1977; Moon & Lee, 1990), although they recognize that one must be cautious with this statement, given that the size of the company it is normally correlated with the availability of resources and with the quality and dynamism of the management team (Czinkota, 1982) and can have an indirect effect on the behaviour of companies, which can be reflected in the speed of progress from one stage to another, speed that will be greater in MNEs than in SMEs.

Gradualist theories admit that internationalisation is not a process limited to MNEs and that SMEs can successfully engage in export activity. This is how each company must decide the optimal degree of commitment to assume in the market where it is internationalized (Wortzel & Wortzel, 1982).

2.2.6 Entry forms and expansion mechanisms

The decision of the generic forms of entry into international markets is a key decision in internationalisation processes since it conditions practically all future actions and decisions of the company abroad (Andersen, 1997; Root, 1998). There are different forms of entry and expansion mechanisms that a company can select to enter and expand in a market, that can be grouped into three mechanisms: exporting, contractual agreements and FDI (Pla & León, 2004; Root, 1998).

The gradualist models confirm that export is the most common mechanism for entering a foreign market, especially for SMEs (Bell, 1995; Czinkota, 1982; Rao & Naidu, 1992). This is due to the low risk to assume, the lack of knowledge and experience in the international market and the ability to adjust the internal effort made, depending on the results obtained (Cavusgil, 1980; Rialp & Rialp, 2001). For this reason, As companies expand into an international market, they can change and evolve their form of entry within the export mechanism (Bilkey & Tesar, 1977; Czinkota, 1982; Rao & Naidu, 1992), adapting it to the needs of the company and the environments (Cavusgil, 1980, 1982; Johanson & Wiedersheim-Paul, 1975; Rialp & Rialp, 2005).

However, the expansion processes of MNEs tend to evolve towards direct investments or contractual agreements, mechanisms that, in general, will bring greater benefits and greater control over the operations that MNEs establish in their foreign markets (Cavusgil, 1980, 1982; Johanson & Wiedersheim-Paul, 1975; Melin, 1992; Rialp & Rialp, 2005).

2.2.7 Proposed gradual model

After reviewing various gradual models of internationalisation and taking into account that we are going to analyse the internationalisation process of wine companies that started their international activity decades, even centuries ago, we are taking into account the psychic distance, the management attitude and commitment, and the modes of entry and expansion mechanisms to propose an integrative gradual model that analyses the internationalisation process from a wider perspective.

This model integrates the previous proposed stages that analyse the factors and firm consequences of being in a specific stage (see table 2) and adds two more stages - the sales subsidiary and production subsidiary - that are also divided in two categories, according to the way the company opens the subsidiary. In addition, the figure 1 shows the proposed gradual model, comparing it with the other gradual models.

for SMEs, it can mean increasing their propensity to expand internationally, by being able to take advantage of the resources and capacities of their partners in the network, and thus reduce dependence on the availability of their own internal resources (Johanson & Vahlne, 1990; Rialp & Rialp, 2001).

This is how the network motivates companies to internationalize, influences market selection and entry decisions, initially helps to gain credibility in the foreign market, allows the company to interact with other members of the network, give access to distribution channels, reduce costs and perceived risk, and influence the internationalisation process, both in the pattern followed and, in the times, spent to advance from one stage to the next (Zain and Ng, 2006).

On the other hand, access to key resources of network partners is obtained through exchange relationships, through which the company is positioned in the network (Johanson & Mattsson, 1986).

The micro perspective refers to the role that one company has with another one, as well as the strength of the relationship. On the other hand, the macro-position is characterized by the identity of the network with which a company is directly or indirectly related, as well as by the role and importance of the company in the network and the strength of the relationships with other companies.

In addition, Oparaochoa (2015) classifies the network's relationships in three types: 1) social, 2) business, and 3) institutional relationships. Social networks study the social relationships between people or organizations that impact the creation and development of social capital and business knowledge. Business networks study the relationships between companies and the rest of the agents that form them, while institutional networks focus on analysing the interaction between companies and institutions or organizations, and how these institutions try to create opportunities for companies to access resources that allow them to develop both nationally and internationally.

Based on the network approach, Johanson and Mattsson (1986) create a model in which they distinguish four situations in which companies that internationalize can be found, alternatives that are determined by the degree of internationalisation of the company and the network.

In addition, Johanson and Vahlne (2009) understood the important contribution of the network approach and incorporate it in their gradual model. This revisited Uppsala model assumes that internationalisation is the result of the efforts made by a company to strengthen its situation in the network to which it belongs. Thus, knowledge grows over time and with the development of trust and commitment with network partners (Johanson et al., 1988), and trust is acquired gradually (Johanson & Vahlne, 2009).

The only factor that influences the internationalisation process in the network approach is the membership in a business networks and the ability of the management team to create, develop and strengthen these networks (Johanson & Mattson, 1988). This scientific contribution is also its great limitation as it does not recognize any other factor that influences this process (Chetty & Holm, 2000).

2.4 “BORN GLOBAL” PHENOMENON

The “born global” phenomenon refers to all those companies that, since their creation, or in a relatively short period after their creation, less than two years, adopt an international, even global approach (Chetty & Campbell-Hunt, 2004; Madsen & Servais, 1997; Rialp et al., 2005). This phenomenon, which can be partially explained through the network approach (Chetty & Campbell-Hunt, 2004; Madsen & Servais, 1997), contrasts with the gradualist theories.

The factors that are attributed the greatest influence favouring the growth of “born global” companies are: 1) the new market conditions, such as the specialization of certain companies in certain market niches, which must sell their products internationally because domestic demand is too small; 2) technological development in the areas of production, transportation and communication; 3) the increasing importance of strategic alliances and global business networks, and finally 4) the fact that managers have more developed capacities, in terms of their international vision present from the beginning of the business activity, high degree of international experience, high commitment to export activity, great market knowledge, strategy adopted, contacts in international networks and, finally, the flexibility to adapt to changing market conditions (Madsen & Servais, 1997; Rialp et al., 2005). These factors reduce the risk associated with international activity, encouraging it (Madsen & Servais, 1997, p.567).

At the beginning of the 21st century, it is documented that there are companies established in their respective domestic markets that apparently have no motivation to internationalize, however, after an event occurs, such as a business acquisition or a change in the company management or ownership, these companies begin an astonishingly fast internationalisation process. They are the so-called “born-again global” companies (Bell et al., 2001).

3 METHODOLOGY

In order to accomplish the objectives of this research, we undertake a qualitative analysis through the use of the case study method as, according to Ghauri (2013), it provides

excellent opportunities for respondents and researchers to check their understanding and keep on asking questions until they obtain sufficient answers and interpretations.

Understanding the internationalisation process of the firms as well as identifying and interpreting the differences between the internationalisation stages and between the different types of companies are objectives that require an exhaustive and flexible analysis (Liu & Zhang, 2014) which is accomplished with in-depth interviews. The sample of this research is formed by six Spanish exporters of wine from DO cava, which accounts for the highest volume of foreign exports in the Spanish wine industry. Due to the focus of our research questions, we select companies with different sizes and different degree of commitment with the international activity, what was initially established by the firm's international structure (see table 3).

Meanwhile, an operational protocol was established, as well as a pilot case, helping to redefine and enhance the aggregation of data, both in terms of the data content and the procedures followed.

To conduct the case study methodology, we assessed the steps established in the methodology proposed by Yin (2009; 2014) and by Larrinaga & Rodríguez (2010), in an attempt to guarantee the quality of the scientific research and demonstrate reliability, constructive validity, external validity and internal validity.

Table 3: Information regarding companies and their internationalisation processes.

Companies	Company data			General Internationalization Data of Companies							
	Year Founded	Size		Firm Export Experience		International Firm Turnover		More advanced Mode of Entry	International Structure		
		Number of Employees	Sales 2013	Starting year of Internationalization (reason)	Number of International Markets	Export Intensity (2013)	Export Volume (Net Sales)		Export Department	Subsidiaries	International
<i>Mestres</i>	1312	6 full time 6 freelancers	<1M€	2000 (Unsolicited orders)		25%	<250.000€	Direct export via Importers	No	No	CEO & International Freelance: 8h/month
<i>Raventós Rosell</i>	1985	6	700.000 €	1985 (Previous contacts)		50% (anterior 70%)	350.000€	Direct export via Importers	No	No	International Responsible
<i>Sumarroca</i>	1983	40	7M€-10M€	1995 (Active exploration)	+ 40 markets	28%	>2M€	Direct export via Importers	Yes	No	2 export area managers + 1 Administrative
<i>Juvé y Camps</i>	1921	135	21,5M€	1984 (Unsolicited orders)	+ 50 markets	15%	3,2M€	Direct export via Importers	Yes	No	Export Director + Domestic sales employees
<i>Cadorniu</i>	1551	800	<200M€	1940 (Family contacts)	+ 90 markets	50%	<100M€	FDI: Production Subsidiaries	Yes	Yes	Sales offices 8 commercial subsidiaries 2 production subsidiaries
<i>Freixenet</i>	1861	1250	530M€	End of 19th century (Founder trips and contacts)	+ 140 markets	80%	424M€	FDI: Production Subsidiaries	Yes	Yes	Sales offices 20 commercial subsidiaries 7 production subsidiaries

We also carefully follow the case study methodology proposed by Yin (2014) and Larrinaga & Rodríguez (2010), in order to guarantee the quality of the scientific research and hence demonstrate reliability, and constructive, external and internal validity. This involved: 1) use of a protocol that contains not only the instrument, but also the procedures and general rules to be followed in order to guide data collection; 2) development of a case-specific database that contains a transcription of the interviews and information found in

different media about the internationalisation of the selected companies (see table 4); 3) use of multiple sources of evidence; 4) establishment of the chain of evidence to support the derivation of any evidence; 5) interviews with key informants of the internationalisation process of companies; 6) review of individual results from the aforesaid informants (every analysed and written individual case was sent back by mail to all the interviewees, and all approved the accuracy of the information); 7) use of the Atlas.ti qualitative analysis software to codify and categorize data, programmed by two independent researchers; 8) search for behavioural patterns by examining, categorizing, tabulating and recombining evidence to draw empirical conclusions; 9) generation of explanations and time-series analysis; and 10) use of rival theories.

Table 4: Position of people interviewed by company.

Company	Position of People Interviewed
Mestres	CEO <i>Freelance in charge of export activity: 8h/month</i>
Raventós Rosell	Managing Director Commercial Manager (both in charge of international markets)
Sumarroca	<i>Export area manager I</i> <i>Export area manager II (America, Asia & Africa)</i>
Juvé y Camps	Export manager Director Management Team Director
Codorníu	Strategic Managing Director CEO Asia
Freixenet	International Business Director International Vice-Business Director Manager Chinese subsidiary International Marketing Manager

4 DISCUSSION OF COMPARATIVE RESULTS

The first objective wants to understand the internationalisation process of Spanish wine DO cava firms in the light and combination of the gradual theories, network perspectives, FDI and born-global approaches. To do so, we are going to represent graphically the internationalisation process of the companies, using the proposed gradual model, and to do so, we are going to analyse the four different factors where our model is based: 1) psychic distance; 2) manager's attitude; 3) manager's commitment; and 4) modes of entry and expansion mechanisms.

4.1 PSYCHIC DISTANCE INDICATOR

Regarding the psychic distance, the managers interviewed consider that the close countries are countries geographically close to Spain, as it is the case of France,

Italy, Portugal and Centre Europe, and also the cultural close countries as they are the countries located from Latino America, due to language and cultural similarities for historical reasons.

4.2 THE MANAGEMENT ATTITUDE INDICATOR

The management attitude is a key aspect in the early internationalisation steps of the company, specifically in the stages: 1) no exporting; 2) pre-exporting: passive attitude, and 3) pre-exporting: active exploration, as it determines the starting of the export activity. Therefore, managers can have two different attitudes in front of the internationalisation process, a passive one (stage 1 and 2), as this is the case of Juvé y Camps and Mestres, or an active attitude (stage 3) that is the case of the rest of the companies. In all cases, the attitude of the company management is key in business internationalisation, confirming previous contributions (Barrett & Wilkinson, 1986; Bilkey & Tesar, 1977; Czinkota, 1982). This is how the proactivity of Raventós Rosell, Sumarroca, Codorníu and Freixenet allowed these companies to prepare for the internationalisation process, dedicating time and effort to actively explore foreign markets to achieve a successfully internationalisation process, in line with previous claims (Bilkey & Tesar, 1977; Cavusgil, 1980, 1982; Welch & Wiedersheim-Paul, 1980; Wiedersheim-Paul et al., 1978). This proactivity contrasts with the passive attitude of the management of Mestres y Juvé y Camps, which start international activity thanks to the receipt of unsolicited orders delaying the international activity and the investment of resources in said activity (Welch & Wiedersheim-Paul, 1980).

4.3 MANAGEMENT COMMITMENT TO INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITY

There are many indicators used in the scientific literature to determine the degree of commitment of a company to international activity. In this work, we select the indicators: export experience, export intensity and entry forms, since they are the three most relevant indicators used in the scientific literature (Leonidou & Katsikeas, 1996) and we added the indicators of: international structure, which wants to know the human resources that companies commit to international activity; export volume; and scale of operation, that is the number of international markets.

4.3.1 Export volume, international experience & structure, number of foreign markets and modes of entry indicators

According to the five indicators: export volume, international experience, international structure, number of foreign markets and modes of entry, it can be seen that

the two multinational companies in the sector, Freixenet and Codorníu, are the companies that present a greater commitment to international activity, followed by Juvé y Camps and Sumarroca, and finally, with a comparatively lower commitment, Raventós Rosell and Mestres (see table 5).

Taken into account the export volume, here measured by the net sales obtained in foreign markets (see table 5), large differences are perceived between companies. Micro-companies, Mestres and Raventós Rosell, invoice between € 250,000 and € 350,000 in foreign markets, a figure that increases to € 2M and € 3.2M in SMEs, Sumarroca and Juvé y Camps, while Codorníu exceeds € 100M and Freixenet reaches € 424M. Thus, it is suggested that export volume is an indicator that comparatively determines the magnitude of the international activity among companies.

This progression of business commitment to international activity is also reflected in the international structure of the company and in the number of international markets. Table 5 shows how only two SMEs has an export department, Sumarroca and Juvé y Camps, companies that are present in more than 40 countries, while in the case of Mestres and Raventós Rosell is the manager, or an export responsible, who is in charge of the international activity. Furthermore, SMEs have a lower capacity to take risks or to withstand temporary crises, such as the Spanish economic crisis that began in 2007, which prompted them to go abroad (Crick, 1995). However, MNEs have an extensive international team, distributed in commercial and production subsidiaries, where Codorníu is present in more than 90 countries and Freixenet in more than 140 markets.

Table 5: Degree of commitment assumed by firms with the general internationalisation process.

Companies	Degree of Commitment	International Sales Turnover		International experience (Starting year of Internationalization)	International Structure		Number of International Markets	More advanced Mode of Entry
		Export Volume (Net Sales)	Export Intensity (2013)		Export Department	Subsidiaries		
<i>Mestres</i>	Lower ↑	<250.000€	25%	2000	No	No		Direct export via importers
<i>Raventós Rosell</i>		350.000€	50% (anterior 70%)	1985	No	No		Direct export via importers
<i>Sumarroca</i>		>2M€	28%	1995	Yes	No	+ 40 markets	Direct export via importers
<i>Juvé y Camps</i>		3,2M€	15%	1984	Yes	No	+ 50 markets	Direct export via importers
<i>Codorníu</i>	↓ Higher	<100M€	50%	1940	Yes	Yes	+ 90 markets	FDI: Production subsidiaries
<i>Freixenet</i>		424M€	80%	End of 19th century	Yes	Yes	+ 140 markets	FDI: Production subsidiaries

The indicators of the international experience, measured by the year in which the international activity began, and the form of entry clearly differentiate the

internationalisation of MNEs and SMEs, where the former are characterized by long internationalisation processes, more than 70 years, and entry forms that reflect a total commitment to international activity.

4.3.2 Export intensity indicator

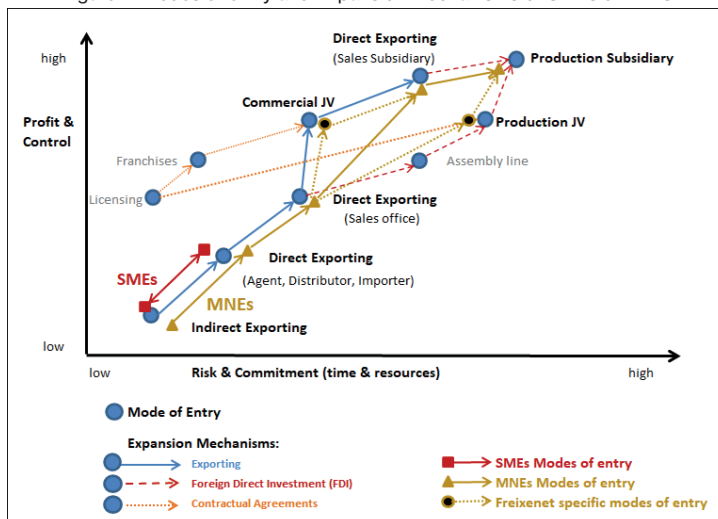
Regarding the export intensity indicator, this study has found that it is a good indicator at an individual level, since it shows the effort that each company dedicates internally to the international activity. According to this indicator (see table 5) Freixenet, with 80% export intensity, is the company most committed to international activity, followed by Raventós Rosell, which in the past had a turnover of 70% of its sales in international markets, although currently this percentage has decreased and is similar to that of Codorníu, standing at around 50%, followed by Sumarroca (28%), Mestres (25%) and Juvé y Camps (15%).

This indicator gives different results to those found in most sectors, where from a certain company size, the percentage of export intensity tends to decrease (Pla-Barber & Alegre, 2007). A possible reason that explains this behaviour is that the growth of both the production and the sale of wine by MNEs is destined to foreign markets, since the growth of wine at domestic level is lower than the growth of the sales of these companies.

4.3.3 Entry forms and expansion mechanisms

Regarding the forms of entry, there are two highly differentiated patterns of behaviour between SMEs and MNEs. SMEs manage to internationalize only through the export mechanism and using exclusively two forms of entry: 1) indirect export carried out through national agents or intermediaries; and 2) direct export via agents, distributors, importers or other intermediaries located in foreign markets (see figure 2). In addition, it is important to point out that those companies have limited human and financial resources that don't allow them to change the mode of entry towards a more committed entry form. Therefore, the evidence found confirms that exporting is the most common entry mechanism for SMEs (Bell, 1995; Czincota, 1982; Rao & Naidu, 1992), due to the low risk and low cost to assume and the ability to adjust the resources and the internal effort made to the results obtained (Cavusgil, 1980; Jansson & Sandbert, 2008; Rialp & Rialp, 2001). In addition, SMEs internal restrictions associated with their size and lower availability of resources are reflected in their smaller scale of operations, international experience and exported volume (Alvarez, 2004; Rialp & Rialp, 2001, 2005).

Figure 2: Modes of entry and Expansion mechanisms of SMEs & MNEs.



MNEs analysed are internationalising by advancing progressively through the different forms of entry within the export mechanism, which includes indirect export and direct export via agents, sales offices and commercial subsidiaries. Likewise, to continue advancing their international activity, these companies change their export mechanism to the FDI mechanism, opening production subsidiaries, where Freixenet also uses more diversified forms of entry by including strategic alliances and joint ventures, both commercial and productive (see figure 2). The FDI mechanism allow large firms to increase their international commitment (Cavusgil, 1980, 1982; Johanson & Wiedersheim-Paul, 1975; Melin, 1992; Rialp & Rialp, 2005), what provides them with greater control over operations carried out abroad (Jiménez-Asenjo & Filipescu, 2019), as well as greater risk and expected benefit (Rialp & Rialp, 2005; Root, 1998).

4.3.4 Comparative indicators

For the sample of selected companies, made up of MNEs and SMEs, the best indicators comparatively capturing the magnitude and the degree of commitment to international activity are the volume exported, the international structure and the number of international markets, what contrast with Leonidou & Katsikeas (1996) findings. For their part, the export experience and the mode of entry clearly differentiate the international commitment assumed by MNEs and SMEs. Finally, the export intensity is a good individual indicator to determine the internal effort devoted to internationalisation, although it fails to reflect comparatively the magnitude of international activity.

As stated by Melin (1992) and Rialp & Rialp (2001), we can conclude that the internationalisation processes of SMEs and MNEs analysed are very different, and these differences are reflected in the greater international experience, export volume and scale of operations of MNEs, as well as in their long-term orientation and greater availability of human and financial resources, which allows them to create and developed complex structures as commercial and production subsidiaries, that help them to advance in their internationalisation processes (Alvarez, 2004; Claver et al., 2008; Rialp & Rialp, 2001, 2005), since both companies have learned that, to sell a highly cultural product, such as cava, they need to have a physical presence in the countries where they want to operate.

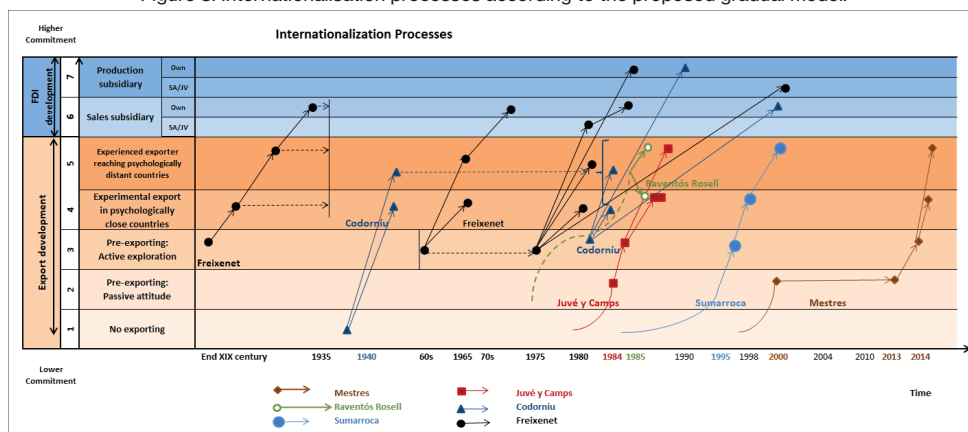
4.4 GRADUAL INTERNATIONALISATION PROCESSES

In order to analyse the internationalisation process of selected companies and know if they followed, or not, a gradual process, we analyse the international activity along time using the proposed gradual model, that is based in both the psychic distance, the management attitude and commitment, and the modes of entry and expansion mechanisms, indicators already analysed. Figure 3 shows the internationalisation process of each firm where it can be easily appreciated the differences between MNEs & SMEs processes.

4.4.1 MNEs internationalisation process

Despite the differences in the size of both MNEs, in which Freixenet more than doubled the sales of Codorniu and almost quadrupled the sales made abroad, both companies present similar internationalisation process (see Figure 3).

Figure 3: Internationalisation processes according to the proposed gradual model.



Both Freixenet and Codorniu have long internationalisation processes (Freixenet more than 130 years and Codorniu more than 80 years) and have sales and production

subsidiaries abroad, where Freixenet opened its first production subsidiary in 1980 and Codorníu in 1988.

The founders and owners, characterized by their proactivity in the export activity, started their exports thanks to their contacts, so the network approach is present from the beginning of the international activity in both companies. In the case of Freixenet, it was the personal contacts of the founders that initiated the export to markets with Spanish influence, and even if the company had to stop the internationalisation due to different reasons, as wars, it developed the capacity to overcome those difficulties and start the company and the internationalisation process again. For Codorníu it was the family contacts that facilitated the export to the foreign markets where they had settled down. This is how both companies achieved an export experience that was key in their subsequent internationalisation steps.

In addition, both companies institutionalized the international activity in the 1970s, creating the export department, that allowed them to actively explore and enter into new foreign markets and boosted the international activity of both companies (Bilkey & Tesar, 1977; Cavusgil, 1980, 1982; Czinkota, 1982; Rao & Naidu, 1992). Lastly, all the indicators show the total commitment that the two companies have with the international activity.

4.4.2 SMEs Internationalisation process

Regarding the internationalisation process of selected SMEs, figure 3 reflects how SMEs show a more recent internationalisation process than MNEs, as they start it in the 80s, with Mestres being the last company to go international in the year 2000.

The internationalisation processes of SMEs present significant similarities and differences in terms of the initial attitude and gradual entry into foreign markets. On the one hand, we find two companies, Sumarroca and Raventós Rosell, which show an active attitude towards business internationalisation, actively exploring foreign markets, which contrasts with the initially passive attitude of Juvé y Camps and Mestres management, which started its export activity with the receipt of unsolicited orders (Welch & Wiedersheim-Paul, 1980).

Regarding the internationalisation process, it is observed how three companies: Sumarroca, Juvé y Camps and Mestres follow gradual processes, while Raventós Rosell does not follow a gradual pattern and access to foreign markets is due to its prior owner international experience and contacts in networks, which allows the company to internationalize simultaneously in nearby and distant markets.

Of the three companies that follow a gradual process of internationalisation, it can be seen how Sumarroca follows perfectly the step-by-step gradual pattern of

internationalisation, characterized by its proactivity in the search of foreign markets and by the progressive internationalisation initiated in geographically close markets, where it obtains the knowledge and export experience that allow them to expand into distant markets.

For their part, Juvé y Camps and Mestres, given the passive attitude of the management, initiate international activity by receiving unsolicited orders. Juvé y Camps reacts quickly by hiring an export director who has a significant previous international experience, which allowed the company to successfully internationalize in a short period of time. However, the initially passive attitude and the weak commitment of the management would explain why, since 1984, the company only has one professional in the export department, and this professional, the export director, has to rely on the national sales team that help him manage the international activity.

Mestres, after receiving unsolicited orders in 2000, took advantage of the opportunity offered by different national companies, which acted as its export department and internationalize Mestres cava as part of their portfolio of Viti-vinicultural products. In 2013, the company decided to hire an international responsible to manage the relationship with foreign intermediaries and actively explore new markets.

Finally, it should be noted that both companies, Juvé y Camps and Mestres, after hiring internationalisation managers, who carried out an active exploration of foreign markets, were capable of simultaneously internationalize in nearby and distant countries, even if Mestres presents a slower internationalisation process.

4.4.3 Psychic distance

Gradual models rely on the concept of psychic distance to explain how the geographically and cultural distance explain the step-by-step process of business internationalisation through the export mechanism. This process can be seen in the internationalisation of Sumarroca, which, due to cost and complexity, decides to attend geographically close international fairs. However, Mestres, Raventós Rosell and Juvé y Camps are capable of simultaneously internationalising in psychically close and distant markets, given its contacts in networks (Raventós Rosell), the previous international experience of the export manager (Juvé y Camps) or their ability to establish contacts (Mestres and Juvé y Camps). Both MNEs, Codorníu and Freixenet, despite initially internationalize in nearby countries such as Latin America and distant markets of Spanish influence, the selection of these markets is due to the use of contacts and not to the geographical or cultural proximity or distance of these countries.

These results demonstrate how the concept of psychic distance loses strength in a globalized world, confirming previous contributions (Johanson & Vahlne, 2003; Nordstrom, 1991; Schmid & Kotulla, 2011) and partially contradicting Johanson & Wiedersheim-Paul (1975).

4.5 NETWORK AND BORN GLOBAL APPROACHES

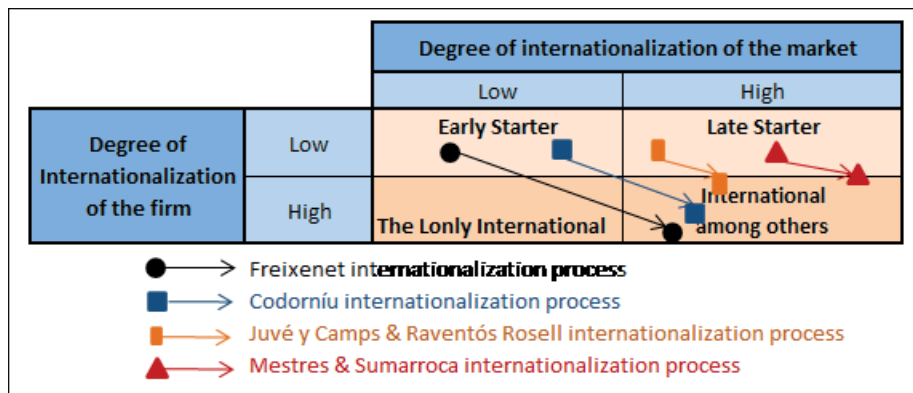
As already point out, this study shows the importance of contacts in the internationalisation of each one of the companies not only in the initial access to international markets, but also throughout the whole internationalisation process, validating the utility of the network approach in the internationalisation processes of Catalan cava companies (Johanson et al., 1988; Johanson & Vahlne, 2003; Ruzzier et al., 2006) and the need to create, belong or develop business networks to internationalize. It is also found that all companies require time and effort to create and develop trusting relationships with network partners, which validates the applicability of the revised Uppsala model (Johanson & Vahlne, 2009).

This phenomenon is exceptionally important in the export process of Raventós Rosell, since it is the only company that does not follow a gradual process of internationalisation and the initial access to foreign markets is due solely and exclusively to the international experience and previous contacts of the owner developed in other business ventures, being able to internationalize his winery shortly after its acquisition, what suggests we are facing a “born-again global” phenomenon (Bell et al., 2001). The internationalisation of this company shows that network contacts and previous international experience favor the growth of “born-global” companies (Chetty & Campbell-Hunt, 2004; Madsen & Servais, 1997; Rialp & Rialp, 2005), as well as reduce the risk associated with international activity (Madsen & Servais, 1997, p.567).

As has been said, network contacts are key for all companies, especially at the beginning of the internationalisation activity in foreign markets. This is how Freixenet, at the end of the 19th century, accessed international markets through the contacts and trips of the founders. In 1940, Codorniu did the same through family contacts and both companies are positioned as “early entrants” in the network model of Johanson & Mattsson (1986) (see figure 4). Sumarroca attends international fairs where it contacts foreign intermediaries that allow it to start its export activity. Both Juvé y Camps and Mestres are contacted by different international intermediaries and, in the case of Mestres, also by domestic companies, and these intermediaries ask both wineries to distribute and sell their wines in different foreign markets, initiating the export activity of said companies. Finally, it is also

verified how the four SMEs started international activity in the 80s, when the sector and the networks were internationalized, which facilitates their entry into foreign markets and places them in the “late starter” quadrant on the model of Johanson & Mattsson (1986).

Figure 4: Internationalisation processes of firms from our sample according to the Johanson and Mattsson (1986) network model.



Regarding the position that companies occupy in the network, the international managers of SMEs refer to the micro-position achieved through “social networks” (Oparaocha, 2015), based on personal relationships with agents, representatives or other intermediaries, developed by the company managers or employees’ personal contacts.

Freixenet’s export director also makes a reference about the micro position they have with specific network members, explaining the importance and strength of this relationships, but also refers about the macro-position that it occupies in the network, explaining the identity, size and importance of companies that make up its “business network”, highlighting the relation with large distribution companies in the sector, such as ASC, Suntory, Allied Domeneq or Henkell. This evidence allows us to affirm that the business group belongs to a large and well-established network in the sector which the company uses in its international expansion (Johanson & Vahlne, 2003; Johanson & Mattsson, 1986; Ruzzier et al., 2006).

Currently, the high degree of internationalisation of the markets and sector make the companies be established in the “international among other” quadrant of Johanson & Mattsson (1986) model.

To conclude this section that wants to know the importance of the network approach in internationalisation processes, it is stated that network contacts are key both at the beginning and throughout the internationalisation process of the companies analysed, thus confirming the revised Uppsala model (Johanson & Vahlne, 2009), which

states that business internationalisation depends on the position of the company in the network and its ability to access and relate to network partners.

After analysing the general internationalisation processes, it can be seen how all companies, except Raventós Rosell, present gradual internationalisation processes, which is why these companies validate the applicability of gradual theories and models (Bilkey & Tesar, 1977; Cavusgil, 1980, 1982; Czinkota, 1982; Johanson & Vahlne, 1977; Johanson & Wiedersheim-Paul, 1975; Rao & Naidu, 1992). We can affirm that according to Bell (1995) and Melin (1992) the gradualist theories and models are significant to explain the internationalisation processes of SMEs and the first phases of the internationalisation of MNEs, however, they fail to explain the internationalisation of large companies in their most advanced stages.

In addition, it should be noted that in order to understand the internationalisation process it seems necessary to combine approaches (Miravittles & Zhang, 2016; Ribau et al., 2015), where in this specific case we apply the gradual, network, FDI and born-global approaches, in order to explain the internationalisation process of Spanish wine, from DO cava, firms.

Finally, and as stated by Melin (1992) and Rialp & Rialp (2001), we can conclude that the internationalisation processes of SMEs and MNEs analysed show very different opportunities, challenges and external and internal restrictions that impact the internationalisation process.

4.6 KEY SUCCESSFUL INTERNATIONALISATION FACTORS

Finally, it can be stated that all the companies studied have been able to successfully internationalize in foreign markets and that they have achieved this through different mechanisms.

Mestres: despite the passive attitude of the company management, which has led to a late and slow internationalisation process, compared to the rest of the companies analysed, Mestres has been able to use local companies to internationalize and invoice 25% of its sales in foreign markets.

Raventós Rosell: the international success of Raventós Rosell are the international experience, knowledge and previous network contacts of the owner, which allowed the company to access information about foreign markets opportunities and to become international in an astonishingly short time of period after acquiring the winery.

Sumarroca: the key factor in Sumarroca's international success is the active attitude of the company management, which gradually increases its commitment to the

international activity. This is reflected in the internal preparation for the internationalisation process, in the gradual incorporation of professionals in the export team and in the favorable and positive attitude of said team.

Juvé y Camps: despite the initial passive attitude towards international activity, this company has managed to go international successfully thanks to the hiring, in 1984, of an export director who had extensive international experience, which has allowed the company to start its exporting activity simultaneously in psychically close and distant countries.

Codorníu: there are many reasons that explain the success of Codorníu's internationalisation process. We highlight the high commitment of the company management to international activity, together with its great export experience, that started more than 80 years ago, thanks to the family contacts, and later to the business network developed. The result of all this is a gradual process of internationalisation, supported by their business network, where the company currently has 8 commercial subsidiaries and 2 production subsidiaries abroad, demonstrating a total commitment to the international activity.

Freixenet: this brand is the leader in the production and sales of cava at an international level, and there are many factors that explain the international success of the company. Initially, it was the proactive attitude of the founders that led the company to internationalize at the end of the 19th century following a gradual process. In this process, the company shows a total commitment since it currently has 20 commercial and 7 production subsidiaries abroad. The company has also demonstrated a great historical capacity to respond to internal and external challenges, such as the wars that stopped production and commercial activity at a national and international level. Finally, it is worth to highlight the macro-position that Freixenet occupies in the international wine sector network, with large-scale contacts and well-established relationships.

As a conclusion to the analysis of the general internationalisation processes, it can be affirmed that all the companies analysed have been able to successfully internationalize in close and distant foreign markets, although each one of them has achieved it in different ways.

5 CONCLUSIONS

This study confirms that companies, as they increase their knowledge and experience in foreign markets, their business commitment to them increases. This is how the applicability of gradualist theories and models is confirmed (Bilkey & Tesar, 1977;

Cavusgil, 1980, 1982; Czinkota, 1982; Johanson & Vahlne, 1977; Johanson & Wiedersheim-Paul, 1975; Rao & Naidu, 1992).

In these gradual processes, it can be seen that the attitude of the management team is key at the beginning of the international activity of a company. This is how the proactive attitude leads companies to prepare for the internationalisation process (Barrett & Wilkinson, 1986; Bilkey & Tesar, 1977; Czinkota, 1982), while the passive attitude entails a greater risk of failure of the export activity (Welch & Wiedersheim-Paul, 1980), and makes companies to initiate business internationalisation thanks to the reception of unsolicited orders (Welch & Wiedersheim-Paul, 1980; Wiedersheim-Paul et al., 1978, p.53), as it occurs in the case of Mestres and Juvé y Camps.

On the other hand, the proactive attitude of Sumarroca, Codorníu and Freixenet, and the existence of contacts and previous experience of the owner of Raventós Rosell, motivate the start of the international activity.

In addition, the high degree of internationalisation of the sector facilitates business internationalisation and allows companies to internationalize simultaneously in nearby and distant markets, so it seems that the concept of psychic distance loses strength in a globalized world (Johanson & Vahlne, 2003; Nordstrom, 1991; Schmid & Kotulla, 2011; Virvilaite et al., 2007).

The analysis also verifies the importance of business networks when starting, entering or expanding international activity in foreign markets, validating the network approach (Johanson et al., 1988; Johanson & Vahlne, 2003; Ruzzier et al., 2006) and the revisited Uppsala model (Johanson & Vahlne, 2009).

It has also been possible to know the importance of certain micro-positions achieved by companies, as well as the macro-position of Freixenet, a firm that belongs to a large and global business network in the sector where it has strong relationships with its members, which help it to internationalize.

It also has been found a firm, Raventós Rosell, whose internationalisation process does not follow a gradual pattern and seem to follow a born-again global phenomenon (Bell et al., 2001).

The study also verifies that SMEs and MNEs face highly differentiated internal and external opportunities, challenges and restrictions (Alvarez, 2004; Rialp & Rialp, 2001, 2005). These differences are reflected in the international experience, the volume exported, the scale of operations and the size and the availability of resources, what allow MNEs to advance through the export and FDI mechanism, increasing their business commitment, as well as control, risk and expected benefit (Rialp & Rialp, 2005; Root, 1998).

On the other hand, the internal restrictions of SMEs seem to be responsible for these companies using indirect export and direct export via intermediaries to internationalize, not being able to move towards forms of entry that require greater financial investment and business commitment.

By analysing the general internationalisation processes, the best indicators have been determined, comparatively capturing the magnitude and degree of commitment to international activity, as well as the key factors that have allowed the analysed companies to successfully internationalize in nearby and distant markets.

6 CONTRIBUTIONS

6.1 ACADEMIC CONTRIBUTIONS

The first contribution to academia is that this study has been able to confirm and validate previous academic findings related to the internationalisation process in the IB field. This is how this paper contribute as it has been able to study the internationalisation process by applying the gradual theories, the network approach, the FDI and the “born-global” phenomenon, validating the need to theoretical integrate all of them to capture valuable knowledge of the internationalisation process.

We also confirm that the initial attitude of the company management and network contacts are key in the internationalisation process and on the commitment assumed with international activity (Rao & Naidu, 1992; Welch & Wiedersheim -Paul, 1980; Wiedersheim-Paul et al., 1978), where social contacts help all analysed companies in their international activity (Johanson & Vahlne, 2009; Rialp & Rialp, 2001) and the study also shows how Freixenet business contacts, as well as the macro-position that it occupies, and the solid relationships with partners in the sector, help the firm to internationalize.

The selection of companies made, four SMEs and two MNEs, allow us to confirm that the internationalisation process of SMEs and MNEs show important differences where size, available resources and international experience influence the internationalisation processes (Alvarez, 2004; Barrett & Wilkinson, 1986; Coviello & McAuley, 1999; Crick, 1995; Rialp & Rialp, 2001). This conclusion is clearly reflected as those companies are able to achieve a high commitment with the international activity, reflected in the export volume, the international structure and experience, the scale of operations and the entry modes and expansion mechanisms, establishing commercial and production subsidiaries, allowing them to control all marketing activities carried out aboard (Jiménez-Asenjo & Filipescu, 2019).

The second contribution is that it has proposed a gradual model that allows analysing business internationalisation taking into account the psychic distance, the attitude and commitment of the manager and the modes of entry and FDI expansion mechanism. This is how we have capture and have graphically represent the internationalisation process of the selected companies, and it has been possible to verify that all the companies, except one of them (Raventós Rosell), follow gradual internationalisation processes. Raventós Rosell' evidence show that their previous international experience and contacts allowed a quick internationalisation, what suggest we have found a born-again global firm. In addition, certain companies manage to internationalize simultaneously in nearby and distant countries, and it has been possible thanks to three factors: 1) previous international experience; 2) contacts in networks; and 3) the high degree of internationalisation of the sector, what confirms that the psychic distance lose explanatory power in a global sector like wine.

In addition, the third contribution is that this study allowed to find the most appropriate indicators to compare and measure the magnitude and degree of business commitment to the international activity that are: the export volume, the international structure and the scale of operations. Those indicators are different to the ones highlighted by Leonidou & Katsikeas (1996): export experience, modes of entry and export intensity. However, our findings show that the that the first two indicators, export experience and modes of entry, clearly differentiate the internationalisation processes of MNEs and SMEs, while a positive relationship of the exporting intensity indicator is found, where MNEs, as they internationalize, their intensity grows, finding that contrast with previous studies (Pla-Barber & Alegre, 2007), contribution that shades light to this controversial indicator.

Our fourth contribution is that it has also been possible to identify the key managerial, organizational and environmental factors for each of the companies that have allowed them to successfully internationalise, and it has been proved how, despite the limitations inherent to SMEs, these companies have found different formulas and mechanisms to successfully internationalize.

6.2 CONTRIBUTIONS FOR BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

The first contribution for professionals in the sector and especially to wine company managers is to highlight that the globalization of the sector favours the international activity and is a great opportunity to grow in sales and profits and reduce the risk of working only in the domestic market. Also, attending international fairs in the sector can be crucial, especially for SMEs, to make contacts with intermediaries or develop network contacts that will allow the distribution of their product in foreign markets.

For those companies that have not developed their international activity, we propose different mechanisms, found in this study, that can help them to start the internationalisation process. These are: 1) take advantage of the opportunity offered by different national or foreign companies to export a wine product by incorporating it into the portfolio of products they export; 2) hire professionals from the sector who have significant previous international experience; 3) access to networks with international contacts; and, finally, 4) attend international fairs where to get in contact with foreign intermediaries. However, managers must know that their attitude is key, since it is one of the main determinants of the success or failure of international business activity. This is due to the fact that the attitude is decisive in the beginning of the international activity.

6.3 CONTRIBUTIONS TO PUBLIC BODIES

The first proposal to public organizations or private institutions related to the sector is that they should continue working to improve or create mechanisms that help companies in the sector to successfully internationalize, promoting training in export issues and languages or facilitating the attendance at international fairs in the sector or supporting and promote those made in our country.

7 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS: LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE LINES OF INVESTIGATION

Despite all the contributions of this research, this study shows certain limitations, which, in turn, point to future lines of research.

The main limitation of this study comes from the chosen theories and models used to explain the internationalisation process of Catalan wineries, as multiple approaches can be used, such as the resourced-based view, dynamic capabilities or entrepreneurship approach, to name a few. However, we have decided to focus strictly on internationalisation-related theory due to the focus of our research. In addition, other studies could be aimed at deepening knowledge about the network approach and measuring the magnitude of the network and the links of the companies that make it up, or work deepening the knowledge of “born-again-global” companies.

A second serious limitation comes from the chosen case study methodology. Therefore, the internationalisation processes, the degree of commitment assumed by companies with international activity and the key factors of international success cannot be generalized to other companies in the sector, since they refer solely and exclusively to the cases analysed, and the evidences founded cannot be generalized to other Spanish or European wineries.

Another risk inherent in choosing the qualitative methodology of the case study is the possible lack of objectivity when analysing the information obtained, despite the fact that three main actions have been carried out to try to reduce this risk. The first action has been to scrupulously follow all the steps of the case study method proposed by Yin (2009) and by Larrinaga & Rodríguez (2010) with the aim of obtaining a quality study and being able to demonstrate the reliability, constructive validity, and internal and external validity. The second action was to use the qualitative analysis software Atlas.ti for individual and comparative analysis, which was programmed by two independent researchers. The third main action to ensure the quality of the investigation was to send the description of their company to all the managers interviewed and to obtain from all the companies, except Raventós Rosell, the confirmation by, at least, from the main person in charge of internationalisation.

Another limitation of the case study methodology comes from the selection of cases themselves, where the criterion of choosing companies of different sizes and different degrees of commitment to international activity was followed, which was done knowing the international structure of the company. A future proposal would be to analyse the internationalisation processes of wine companies in certain foreign markets of interest to the sector and learn how the internationalisation process and key factors of international success indicate in said process.

Also, we can be focused on analysing the internationalisation process of selected companies in a specific and attractive market to learn how previous experience and network contacts impact the entry.

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SOBRE O ORGANIZADOR

Luis Fernando González-Beltrán- Doctorado en Psicología. Profesor Asociado de la Facultad de Estudios Superiores Iztacala (FESI) UNAM, Miembro de la Asociación Internacional de Análisis Conductual. (ABAI). de la Sociedad Mexicana de Análisis de la Conducta, del Sistema Mexicano de Investigación en Psicología, y de La Asociación Mexicana de Comportamiento y Salud. Consejero Propietario perteneciente al Consejo Interno de Posgrado para el programa de Psicología 1994-1999. Jefe de Sección Académica de la Carrera de Psicología. ENEPI, UNAM, de 9 de Marzo de 1999 a Febrero 2003. Secretario Académico de la Secretaría General de la Facultad de Psicología 2012. Con 40 años de Docencia en licenciatura en Psicología, en 4 diferentes Planes de estudios, con 18 asignaturas diferentes, y 10 asignaturas diferentes en el Posgrado, en la FESI y la Facultad de Psicología. Cursos en Especialidad en Psicología de la Salud y de Maestría en Psicología de la Salud en CENHIES Pachuca, Hidalgo. Con Tutorías en el Programa Alta Exigencia Académica, PRONABES, Sistema Institucional de Tutorías. Comité Tutorial en el Programa de Maestría en Psicología, Universidad Autónoma del Estado de Morelos. En investigación 28 Artículos en revistas especializadas, Coautor de un libro especializado, 12 Capítulos de Libro especializado, Dictaminador de libros y artículos especializados, evaluador de proyectos del CONACYT, con más de 100 Ponencias en Eventos Especializados Nacionales, y más de 20 en Eventos Internacionales, 13 Conferencia en Eventos Académicos, Organizador de 17 eventos y congresos, con Participación en elaboración de planes de estudio, Responsable de Proyectos de Investigación apoyados por DGAPA de la UNAM y por CONACYT. Evaluador de ponencias en el Congreso Internacional de Innovación Educativa del Tecnológico de Monterrey; Revisor de libros del Comité Editorial FESI, UNAM; del Comité editorial Facultad de Psicología, UNAM y del Cuerpo Editorial Artemis Editora. Revisor de las revistas "Itinerario de las miradas: Serie de divulgación de Avances de Investigación". FES Acatlán; "Lecturas de Economía", Universidad de Antioquía, Medellín, Colombia, Revista Latinoamericana de Ciencia Psicológica (PSIENCIA). Buenos Aires, Revista "Advances in Research"; Revista "Current Journal of Applied Science and Technology"; Revista "Asian Journal of Education and Social Studies"; y Revista "Journal of Pharmaceutical Research International".

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3492-1145>

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