GLOBAL INTEGRATOR: HOW AN ENTREPRENURIAL FIRM BRIDGES A NETWORK OF GLOBAL SUPPLIERS AND CUSTOMERS

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ABSTRACT ONLY

Principal Topic

There has been an increasing interest in international entrepreneurship since the research field has been seen as the intersection of two research traditions: international business and entrepreneurship (McDougall and Oviatt 2000). The aim of this paper is to investigate a global integrator - a specific type of subcontractor. The global integrator concept originates from the network research approach to international business (Andersen and Christensen 2005).

The specific aim of this paper is to investigate to which degree the characteristics of a global integrator apply also to a certain entrepreneurial case of a global subcontractor. So the aim is not theory testing, but the use of a paradigmatic case to translate and extend the concept of global integrator from the international business research path to the international entrepreneurship path.

Methodology/Key Propositions

This study makes use of an approach to case-studies which can be labelled paradigmatic case study, where the aim is to "develop a metaphor or establish a school for the domain the case concerns" (Flyvbjerg 2006:230). The global integrator is a hybrid of three other subcontractor types. A case based metaphor will contribute to understand and link entrepreneurship to an international business perspective on various types of subcontracting.

One of the authors is Co-owner of Back11Basics A/S. So the methodology used can be described as action research (Coughlan and Brannick 2005; Carson, Gilmore, Perry and Gronhaug 2001).

Results and Implications

The paper contributes by developing and documenting a more clarified understanding of a global integrator entrepreneurial firm by extending and adding dimensions to the characteristics of the global integrator from an international entrepreneurship perspective. The paper does this by using a single case about the firm Back11basics A/S and describes how the entrepreneurial company adds value to suppliers and customers. Furthermore, the paper contributes to the theoretical definition of what constitutes international entrepreneurship.