

"An Extended Abstract of"

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Abstract

This paper aims at researching through a configurational and bidimensional approach the nature of the relationship between intra-regionalization, inter-regionalization, degree of internationalization and firm growth. To achieve this, we have built a two-stage configurational analysis: comparative and interactive. In the first one, we focus on the configuration of internationalization, and compare the impact of intra-regionalization on growth with the impact of inter-regionalization on growth. In the second stage, the focus is on the interactive impact of configuration and degree of internationalization on growth to demonstrate the dynamic and configurational nature of this relationship. This research, based on a sample of 40 large international companies of grocery retail in the period 2002-2011, shows that the relationship between firm international growth and the two configurations of internationalization (intra-regionalization vs inter-regionalization) is of a configurational nature, and contingent on the degree of international commitments, which could significantly affect the magnitude and the sign of this relationship. Our results also specify, for the first time, the investment conditions under which intra-regional strategies or inter-regional strategies could be or not be an optimal growth choice.

Key-words: Intra-regionalization, Inter-regionalization, Degree of internationalization, International growth