



## Discussions on Internationalization in Brazilian Scientific Publications of Administration: a Bibliometric Study

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### Abstract

This research intended to draw the current reality of Brazilian scientific research on organization studies which discuss about internationalization. The intention was emphasizing the thematic trends, the authors who contributed the most to the discussion about internationalization, as well as verifying the distribution and obsolescence of the scientific literature. For this purpose, it was developed a bibliometric study of one hundred and ninety-nine papers written by three hundred and sixty-nine authors, which, in a space of thirty-four years of publications were affixed to one hundred and twenty-five different institutions, and published in thirty-eight journals. The results demonstrated the lack of theoretical studies which discuss about internationalization, considering that research strategy of case study is predominant. The results also demonstrated that the Uppsala Model, one of the six main internationalization theoretical models, is the most used by organizations which wish to enter in the foreign market.

**Keywords:** Internationalization. Internationalization Models. Bibliometrics.

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### Introduction

This research intended to evaluate the Brazilian papers that were written in a period of thirty-four years and approach discussions about internationalization in organizational studies. The internationalization subject was at first analyzed theoretically aiming a better understanding and prior contributions of other authors. One of the firsts concepts about internationalization referred to the organizations desire of

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commercializing their products in different countries, although, authors as Bianchi (2012) affirm that this process doesn't mean only commercial and business exchanges, but also cultural.

Internationalization is an extremely old process which has begun with trades between continents, in Century III (ELISSEEFF 2001). This process, understood as product selling and logistic, remained during many years. The internationalization concept changed only on XIX Century with the increase of organization's relations from different countries. Although, the main goal was yet doing business with countries that are nearly in cultural characteristics and also on territorial border. (FLAHERTY, 1996 apud FLEURY, FLEURY, 2007).

The internationalization assumed the actual characteristics only after the Second World War (1939-1945), when the European countries needed help from distant lands and their companies, considering that would be the faster way that they could return to their normal growth. This was the beginning of globalization (MARIOTTO, 2007). At the end of Century XX, the internationalization was defined as "[...] the process of designing strategic planning and its respective implementation, for a company start operating in other different countries than the one it is originally installed"(CINTA; MOURA, 2005 apud REZENDE; CAMPOS, 2010, p. 3).

The process that was seen before, exclusively as a method for increasing the organization profit, started to be justified by four other fundamental reasons. As Dunning argued (1994), an organization tries to act in a different country when this one has the interest in finding new resources or resources that can't be found in its original country anymore (Resource Seeking). Another reason for internationalization is the searching for efficiency, this is, the organization looks for a country where it could find skilled labor in some specific product that it is interested about (Efficiency Seeking). The third reason cited by Dunning (1994), argued about the capability of attracting national consumers because of company's internationalization (Market Seeking). The fourth reason is related to the needs of intellectual capital skilled and competence development (Strategic Assets Seeking).

Some authors contributed with steps and stages, which should be followed by organizations that intend to achieve their goals related to internationalization and according to their particular demands. These stages and steps are models called as internationalization theories, which will be presented individually. In this research, specifically, six models were highlighted, once that they have been mentioned several times in the researched literature, these are: Eclectic Paradigm, Market Power Theory, Internalization Theory, Uppsala Model, Networks Perspective and Entrepreneurship. Suddenly, the methodology used in this bibliometric research will be presented, likewise its quantitative and qualitative analyses from the selected papers. Along these lines, it will be possible to present since when, how and for whom the organizational studies have included internationalization in its discussions.

## **Internationalization Theories**

The scientifically explored subjects emerged, most of the time, from human behaviors or even from events. In the course of its evolution, theories were developed with the intention of explaining easily and in a way, that permit future and deeper stud-

ies about this subject. Internationalization follows the same criterion, that is, emerged from habits and changes which arises in business environment and, in a space of time, explaining theories about this theme emerged. Some authors argue about some particular theories only, according to their research line, or according to what they judge as right. Other authors name theories differently, but talk about the same subjects.

Amatucci (2009), arranged the ideas of different authors and cited six internationalization theories: Market Power, Product Cycle, Internalization, Eclectic Paradigm, Uppsala School, Knowledge Flow. According to Dib and Carneiro (2008), the six theories which they exposed, present the same or similar names of the ones mentioned by Amatucci (2009). The Market Power Theory, Internalization Theory, Eclectic Paradigm and Uppsala Model, for example. Notwithstanding, Dib and Carneiro (2008) complete the group naming the Network Perspective and Entrepreneurship.

Dib and Carneiro (2008) divide the theories previously cited by economic criteria and behavioral evolution. In the first group, there are the rational theories, the theories which have as their principal goal the profit growth. On the behavioral evolution group, are the theories which deal with the managerial behavior for explaining the internationalization process. Obeying this segmentation, it is possible to present this organization of the internationalization theories: The Eclectic Paradigm, the Market Power Theory and the Internalization Theory, belong to the economic theories, and consequently, the Uppsala Model, the Network Perspective and the Entrepreneurship, compose the behavioral evolution group. Discussing each of them in a specific way is possible to find the affinities from the ones that are in the same group.

**Table 1** - Internationalization Theories

| <b>Economic(Rational) Theories</b> | <b>Behavioral evolution Theories</b> |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Eclectic Paradigm                  | Uppsala Model                        |
| Power Market Theory                | Networks Perspective                 |
| Internalization Theory             | Entrepreneurship                     |

Source: Elaborated by the author

## Market Power Theory

Hymer in 1960, developed the Power Market Theory after a work in which he questioned if the Foreign Direct Investment follows the classic capital flow model, this is, from the country with the lowest to the country with the higher interest rate.

The Hymer's answer is no. Considering that he exposed a simpler example: an organization from a developed country builds a subsidiary in a less developed country, and for making investments there, the organization search for local loans sources, for example, in this situation, the capital flow suffers an inversion (AMATUCCI, 2009).

The Market Power Theory, signalize a classic situation, in which the developed countries use the resources from the less developed ones, and when they get a higher profit, the new investments don't happen in the subsidiary's countries anymore, but in headquarters' countries, continuing the weakness of the poor lands. (DIB; CARNEIRO, 2008).

## Internalization Theory

Buckley e Casson in 1992, were the authors which discussed, for the first time, about Internalization Theory, and broke up with the ideas of many theories which understood internationalization only as a Foreign Direct Investment, as the Market Power Theory. According to Dib and Carneiro (2008), the Internalization searches for alternatives as subsidiaries installation or subcontracts in the new acting country. Although according Williamson (1975), the focus is not in the acting place, but in the transitions costs.

The organization, in this model, starts to attempt about internal facts which happen during the internationalization process. However, there are some evaluations which could help organizations judging the internationalization of products, technologies or services as feasible or not, with the goal of achieving production's verticalization. There is also in this theory a constant pursuit of maximizing profits through market imperfections (DIB; CARNEIRO, 2008).

## Eclectic Paradigm

The theories explained above, as the Eclectic Paradigm, compose the economic theory about internationalization, notwithstanding, among the three, the one which holds an outstanding position in several books and papers by renowned authors is the Eclectic Paradigm.

Dunning, in 1980, tried justifying through economic theories the strategy decisions from organizations when the principal goal is the Foreign Direct Investments. The Eclectic Paradigm exists, according to Dib and Carneiro (2008), with two principal goals: the first is increasing the income, searching for competitive advantage, and the second is searching for efficiency, what is, focus on costs reduction. The Eclectic Paradigm is composed by three variables which should be evaluated in an internationalization process: ownership, localization and internalization (DUNNING, 2000).

Ownership is the variable explained as a property or competitive advantage, where the organization needs to be ahead of competitors in the new market of action, specifically in technology, human capital, and information areas, among others (JOHANSON; VAHLE, 1990).

The second variable, "localization", was developed by Dunning (1980apud AMATUCCI, 2009) to explain the organization local advantage. Choosing the new market, the company must verify if it will be an "early mover", which represent one of or the first organization to join a specific region (BIANCHI, 2012). An evaluation of distribution channels, government incentives, available labor, and many other factors that impact the new organization constructing area, must be done (AMATUCCI, 2009).

Internalization, according to Dunning (2000) follows the same pattern of Internalization Theory. Considering that it should be explained at the moment in which the organization verify if the transition costs will be higher than the incorporation in the new country. In several times, it becomes much more viable for it to act as a manufacturer (JOHANSON; VAHLE, 1990). The combination of the first letter from

the tree explained concepts, composed the acronym "OLI", which refers to the theory developed by Dunning known as Eclectic Paradigm.

## Uppsala Model

The Uppsala Model, starts a new stage about internationalization theories: the behavioral theories. Among the three that will be approached, Uppsala is one of the most discussed in internationalization subject. This will be noticed because the development of the theory leads to many of the concepts mentioned at the beginning. Developed by Johanson, that studied at Uppsala University, and Vahle that studied at the Economics School of Stocolm, in 1977, the Uppsala Model, was also known as the Nordic School of International Business.

According to their theory, the internationalization is seen as a process which happens step by step, increasing the acting degree as the knowledge about the external market increase (JOHANSON; VAHLE, 1990). Considering that, the organization should export to countries which has an interest in acting in the future, after it should establish a selling subsidiary, and if its consider it viable, a bigger step to be taken is producing in this other country. Considering the Uppsala Model, Amatucci (2009) affirmed that authors focus their attention in the fact that organizations should know the market which they have an interest in acting, seeing that many times there is no alignment of language, culture and customs, what contributes to barrier formation.

"[...] The basic assumptions of the model are that lack of such knowledge is an important obstacle to the development of international operations and that the necessary knowledge can be acquired mainly through operations abroad" (JOHANSON; VAHLE, 1977, p.23).

Johanson e Vahle (1990), declared that if the market or the sector in which organization intends acting is relatively stable, it can learn a lot through its own experience, without fear to risk. The same happens with big companies that have a lot of resources, these ones can give a big step in the direction of internationalization without putting the organization at risk. According to Amatucci (2009), the Uppsala Model is considered the most normal among the internationalization theories, considering that in practice, it is the way that most of the organizations developed this process.

## Networks Perspective

The theory which explains internationalization through Networks Perspective, is seen by Hilal e Hemais (2003 p. 113), as "[...] natural evolution of Nordic School thoughts", considering that when the network between organizations increase, one know more about the other, as well as their respective countries, making easier future negotiations, mergers and partnerships. According to Johanson and Vahle (1990), in many cases, organizations try to get in some external market, which is already composed by others, and has no opening, considering that the organizations which are already there are not friendly and want no interaction. For this reason, the authors highlighted the importance of good networks.

Johanson and Sharma (1987), argued about the fact that many organizations which have interest in the internationalization process, try to find contacts in countries that they want to do business with, however, Johanson and Sharma (1987) affirmed that a prudent step is strengthens the local networks, that is, of their origin's country, and then expand and reach the country or countries of interest.

## Entrepreneurship

Considering that this is one of the three behavioral theories about internationalization, Entrepreneurship, is based on acts and decisions of the person that guides the organization. McDougall and Oviatt (2003, apud TEIXEIRA et.al., 2010, p. 6) conceptualized the theory of international entrepreneurship as "[...] a commercial organization that, since its creation, gets significant competitive advantage in using resources and selling the final products in many countries".

This theory highlighted the manager or the director of the organization as the most important point in an internationalization process, considering that, according to Dib and Carneiro (2008), the one that guide the organization is the one that can see if the entering in some market is viable or not. According to the authors, the mental state of the decision influences the organization's future. In making the decision to internationalize, the manager must have the control of the strategic, resources and abilities which compose the organization, including workers, for, in this way, explore the best alternatives and opportunities which exist in the country that it intend to act (YEUNG, 2002).

In Table 2 the internationalization theories are summarized according to their respective schools and concepts.

**Table 2 - Summary of Internationalization Theories**

|                               | Theory                 | Resume  |
|-------------------------------|------------------------|---|
| Economic (Rational) Theories  | Eclectic Paradigm      | Developed by Dunning in 1980, the theory has as its principal goal, increasing the recipe and efficiency, combined with cost reduction, this happens when the organization's intention is entering in new markets, this model can prove if it is viable or not. The advantages of technology, human capital and location of the organization are also valued.   |
|                               | Power Market Theory    | The Power Market Theory, came from Hymer works in 1960, and demonstrated the exploitation that exists from the developed countries to the sub developed ones. There is the installation of a big organization in a poor country, in which the interest rates for loans are lower, the laws are less strict, and consequently, the profit is bigger and goes to the host countries.                                |
|                               | Internalization Theory | The Internalization Theory authors, Buckley e Casson, affirmed that the internationalization process of a company, involve more than construct a subsidiary in another country, because it involves contracting, new purchases of equipment, which in a way, affects the pattern part of the company. The proposal is that before the process conclusion, a comparison of benefits and costs should be performed. |
| Behavioral evolution Theories | Uppsala Model          | The Uppsala Model or Nordic School of Business, discussed the theory developed by Johanson and Vahle in 1977. The proposed model explains internationalization as a gradual process, where the organization should have as goal learning about the culture, the customs, the market barriers, and many other factors. The authors say that the organizations should begin this whole process through exportation. |
|                               | Networks Perspective   | This theory is seen as the Uppsala Model evolution, where the authors believe that when the country in which the organization wants to act is known, the internationalization process is easier and the success is more likely. This theory defends that the networks between companies   |

|  |                  |   |
|--|------------------|---|
|  |                  | make this process easier and can be started with local companies, considering that, this one could have other contacts, making a real network.  |
|  | Entrepreneurship | McDougall in 1989, affirms through the Entrepreneurship Theory, that one of the most influential factors in the internationalization decision process come from the mental state of the one that guides the organization. In this way, decisions about internationalization involve having the control of resources and know how to use them for making this process a success. |

Source: Elaborated by the authors based on: AMATUCCI (2009); BIANCHI (2012); DIB; CARNEIRO (2006); DUNNING (2000); JOHANSON; VAHLE (1990) e TEIXEIRA et al. (2010).

## Methodological Procedures

The research was characterized as descriptive and exploratory, because it seems to describe a phenomenon characteristic (RICHARDSON et al., 2014). The operationalization involved quantitative and qualitative stages, quantitative by using quantifications in information collection and interpretation of the same through statistical techniques. The research intention is to ensure the accuracy of results, avoiding distortions of analysis and interpretation, and allowing a safety margin for inferences (RICHARDSON, 2014).

Qualitative for not having as a single goal to measure homogeneous units or categories, and for being, according to Richardson et al. (2014), a suitable alternative to understand the nature of a social phenomenon. For this reason, the qualitative research can be characterized as a situational evaluation and as meanings comprehension. In this case, there is the objective of exploring the data in a way that it won't be limited by numerical results, but will have their characteristic and dominant subjects and theories.

The population of this research is composed by Brazilian scientific journals of Administration area. According to Qualis Scientific Journals evaluation, realized by CAPES, in 2014, in Administration, Accountability and Tourism area, there are 611 Brazilian scientific journals. From this population were considered only the scientific journals of Administration, Accountability and Tourism areas classified as A1, A2, B1 and B2, totalizing 164 scientific journals. After analyzing which papers had the word "internationalization" in their summaries, titles or key words, 411 papers were found. From these, 199 met the criteria needed to conduct the research. In this way, these papers compose the sample of this research, which was defined through the application of non-probabilistic sampling by judgment.

The bibliometric analysis of this research can be defined as a methodological strategy capable of exploring the characteristics of published information. Rostaing (1996) describe the bibliometry as a statistical and mathematical method based on bibliographies. Leta (2013) affirmed that the bibliometric research includes the study of the dispersion and evolution of a given topic in periodicals and papers. The bibliometric research realized, accepted certain scores to be made, for example, to identify the main thematic trends and the possible growth of the topic in the organizational discussions, to identify also the years, periodicals, authors and institutions that contributed the most to the theme. In the results presentation of this research it was pos-

sible to notice, through the qualitative analysis, an arrange of the most cited internationalization theories.

## Results

The scientific Brazilian production about internationalization were evaluated through a bibliometric study from the inaugural number of the selected scientific journals until their last number of 2015, totalizing one hundred and ninety-nine papers published in thirty-four years. From the data collection performed, an increase steadily constant in the volume of papers over the years was perceived. It was also possible to analyze in which year the greatest number of papers were published, and it was concluded that this year is 2012, when twenty-six papers were found, representing approximately 13% of all papers.

The second stage of the bibliometric research was to analyze how these papers were organized in a period of thirty-four years, which was the most outstanding journal in relation to the number of publications and which was highlighted in relation to productivity. The data collected through the research allowed to conclude that RAC- Revista de Administração Contemporânea published more papers related to internationalization, totalizing sixteen papers and representing approximately 8% of the total of papers. RAE- Revista de Administração de Empresas, REAd- Revista Eletrônica de Administração and Revista Iberoamericana de Estratégia have also a very relevant quantity of published papers, that is, each of them published fourteen papers related to internationalization during the years analyzed.

The research about the journals was deeper, as long as it analyzed the productivity of each one, crossing the data of quantity of papers published and time of existence of the journal. Analyzing in an individual way, it was possible to notice that RAC - Revista de Administração Contemporânea, had the biggest volume of papers, but can't be considered the most productive, belatedly this journal published sixteen papers during the eighteen year of its existence, while the newer journal of all the one researched, Revista Brasileira de Desenvolvimento Regional, published two papers related to internationalization during it's one year of existence.

Another point analyzed in the bibliometric research refers to the authors, and some conclusions were achieved. Among all the papers selected, for example, it was possible to identify seventy-nine of them with two authors, representing approximately 40% of the one hundred and ninety-nine papers analyzed; forty-eight with three authors, representing approximately 24% of the total; and thirty-seven with only one author, representing approximately, 18% of all the papers analyzed in this research.

On this stage, it was highlighted the author that wrote more papers related to internationalization, which was Sérgio Fernando Loureiro Rezende. This author wrote nine papers about internationalization, and in only two of them Rezende was co-author. Rezende's publications were dispersed between the years of 2002 and 2014, in five different journals: RAUSP - Revista de Administração, Revista de Administração Contemporânea, Brazilian Administration Review, RAE - Revista de Administração de Empresas, e Revista de Administração (FEA-USP). Other authors as Fernando Antonio Ribeiro Serra, Flavia Luciane Scherer, Manuel Aníbal Silva Portugal Vasconcelos Pereira e Mohamed Amal, have also written many papers related to internationalization,



each of them wrote six papers, and together they represent 12% of the total researched.

The last point analyzed was the graduation of the authors. Overlooking, for the survey of these data, the authors graduated in the areas of Administration and Management. It was noticed that many of those who wrote about internationalization are graduated in courses not related to the subject. Twenty-nine authors are graduated in Engineering, twenty-seven in Economy, and many others in Agronomy, Accounting, Psychology, Sociology, and more.

The qualitative analysis was made by the reading of the one hundred ninety-nine selected papers, from those, information about how the subject of internationalization has been explored by the authors in their scientific predictions were explored. The thematic representation of each article was identified, that is, what theory or model of internationalization previously mentioned, were cited by the authors which wrote about internationalization in the Brazilian journals.

Starting with the reading, it was possible to notice that between 1981 and 2003, the authors which published papers related to internationalization, approached subjects as the changes caused by this process, comparing the classic theories and interpreting internationalization only as an exporting process. Although the authors that published their papers in 2004 interpreted internationalization as a way of strategic. In 2005 the author's ideas were complementary, considering that, they discussed about internationalization as a way of market expansion. The authors in 2006, started questioning, and asking for reasons that exist for an organization to internationalize itself.

The papers published in 2007, were the ones which present an economic view, so, the authors from this year, looked for the internationalization process as an opportunity of technology innovation, affirming that the organizations which act in countries with greater regulatory rigor, or even with more demanding customers, would naturally improve their production processes, sales, among others, including internal benefits.

In 2008, the authors highlighted the internationalization theories, mainly the Uppsala Model, considering that, the subject was deepened explored and the organization's example was not so used as in the other years. In 2009, in the publications that discussed about internationalization, the authors interpreted the subject as an alternative for companies having a competitive advantage. In 2010, the internationalization were, in most of the times, explored by the authors by less economic aspects when compared to the others years, so, the social and environmental impacts of internationalization process get some importance, opening space for the relation between sustainability and internationalization.

In 2011, the advantages of resource, localization and others which bring competitive advantage for a company, return as one of the most mentioned subject of the papers. In 2012, the year with the biggest number of published papers related to this research theme, was the period that the authors, major, tried to evaluate cultural aspects related to the internationalization process, and discussed also about the internal impacts which this process makes in organizations. In 2013, the published papers, generally, discussed about internationalization associating to entrepreneurship, considering that acting in a country different than the one of origin was seen as a way of undertaking.

The authors which have their papers published in 2014, approached the subject internationalization discussing about the external and internal impacts caused on organizations. In addition, some points related to the reasons and decisions of the manager for this process happening, were also addressed. Finally, the last year of this analysis, 2015, was the year with the most diversity of themes discussed by the authors, although, in a discreet way, the governmental support to organizations that act internationally was the subject with greater prominence.

Considering the internationalization theories proposed (Eclectic Paradigm, Market Power Theory, Internalization Theory, Uppsala Model, Network Perspectives and Entrepreneurship), it is possible to affirm that among the one hundred ninety-nine papers, in all of them a theory could be identified, but, two of the theories were specifically highlighted: the Uppsala Model and the Eclectic Paradigm. The information segmented in year of publications is presented in the Table 3.

**Table 3 - Synthesis of Thematic Representations**

| <b>Year</b> | <b>Principal Internationalization Theory</b>            |
|-------------|---|
| 1981        | Eclectic Paradigm                                       |
| 1991        | Uppsala Model   |
| 1998        | Eclectic Paradigm                                       |
| 1999        | Uppsala Model   |
| 2000        | Eclectic Paradigm / Market Power Theory                 |
| 2001        | Eclectic Paradigm                                       |
| 2002        | Eclectic Paradigm / Network                             |
| 2003        | Uppsala Model   |
| 2004        | Uppsala Model / Eclectic Paradigm                       |
| 2005        | Eclectic Paradigm                                       |
| 2006        | Eclectic Paradigm / Uppsala Model / Market Power Theory |
| 2007        | Uppsala Model   |
| 2008        | Uppsala Model   |
| 2009        | Uppsala Model   |
| 2010        | Uppsala Model   |
| 2011        | Eclectic Paradigm                                       |
| 2012        | Eclectic Paradigm                                       |
| 2013        | Uppsala Model   |
| 2014        | Uppsala Model   |
| 2015        | Uppsala Model   |

Source: Elaborated by the authors

Interpreting Table 3, it can be seen that the papers were grouped by year, so there was a synthesized evaluation of the models that obtained prominence. It is known that in the space of time evaluated, the Uppsala Model was dominant in thirteen years of thirty-four evaluated, and the Eclectic Paradigm was the most cited by the authors in ten years of the whole time evaluated. Clearly, even with the development of new theories and internationalization models, the ones considered classics, or even sometimes classified as "the oldest", are yet the most used by companies which want to internationalize.

## Final considerations

This research was developed with the general objective of mapping through a bibliometric study in the Brazilian scientific journals of the Administration area, organizational studies that approach internationalization in its discussions, this, to be achieved depended on some specific objectives. These objectives were achieved because Brazilian scientific production about organizational studies which approach internationalization were mapped, since 1981, the first year that present papers related to the theme, until 2015. This research permitted a broad view of the actual scenario of Brazilian scientific research, especially the studies related to internationalization, discussing not only about institutions, authors and year of publication, but also highlighting the most used methods by the companies entering the international market.

The theoretical contribution of this research is relevant because it discusses the six most cited theories of internationalization among the bibliography analyzed, and does not stand in favor or against anyone, but impartially exposes the contributions and difficulties they provide to organizations. The research contributed because even with the evaluation of the internationalization process, the classic models of entering into international market still are the most used by organizations, or interpreted by some authors as the most viable way of internationalize.

However, the research presents some weaknesses, and this is about the predominance of case studies. There are many theoretical gaps within the theme of internationalization, because only few authors tried to explain the models and theories before talk about an organizational problem or case. A small number were responsible for writing papers which discuss only about internationalization in a theoretical way, talking about its history, benefits and models. Considering that, the area is more analytical and less theoretical, damaging to a certain extent its image in the scientific field.

It is possible to say that the theme internationalization passed by some evaluation in this research, specially this theme in the Brazilian scientific scenario, after all, the national journals classified as A1, A2, B1 and B2, were chosen to compose the database of bibliometric research. In order to bring even more information about this scenario, through information previously not presented in this way, a synthesis of thematic representation was made, this classification showed the internationalization models most cited or valued by authors of national papers.

The mapping of the national papers on organizational studies which approach internationalization was made. Future studies can extract from this research, discussions related to each internationalization model in a specific way. Another proposition would be to expand the area evaluated, that is, to also analyze international papers, and possibly compare the dominant theories and models with those found in this research.

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Received: 05/12/2017

Approved: 03/25/2018