

**„Dunărea de Jos” University of Galați**  
**Doctoral School of Social Sciences and Humanities**  
**Doctoral field: Management**



# **DOCTORAL THESIS ABSTRACT**

**Exploring the driving forces related to international  
business management – the case of Jordan  
companies**

**PhD Candidate: SUFYAN QUDAH**

**Scientific Supervisor: Professor ALEXANDRU CĂPĂȚÎNĂ**

**Series E2: Management no. 22**

<b>President</b>	<b>Professor Nicoleta CRISTACHE</b> „Dunărea de Jos” University of Galați
<b>Scientific Supervisor</b>	<b>Professor Alexandru CĂPĂȚÎNĂ</b> „Dunărea de Jos” University of Galați
<b>Scientific Reviewers</b>	<b>Professor Ion POPA</b> Bucharest University of Economic Studies <b>Professor Cosmin DOBRIN</b> Bucharest University of Economic Studies <b>Professor Mohammad JARADAT</b> „Bogdan Vodă” University of Cluj-Napoca

**Galați, 2023**

The series of doctoral theses defended publicly in UDJG starting with October 1, 2013 are:

Field **ENGINEERING SCIENCES INGINEREȘTI**

Series I 1: **Biotechnologies**

Series I 2: **Computers and information technology**

Series I 3: **Electrical engineering**

Series I 4: **Industrial engineering**

Series I 5: **Material engineering**

Series I 6: **Mechanical engineering**

Series I 7: **Food Engineering**

Series I 8: **Systems Engineering**

Series I 9: **Engineering and management in agriculture  
and rural development**

Field **ECONOMICS**

Series E 1: **Economics**

Series E 2: **Management**

Field **HUMANITIES**

Series U 1: **Philology-English**

Series U 2: **Philology-Romanian**

Series U 3: **History**

Series U 4: **Philology-French**

Field **MATHEMATICS AND NATURE SCIENCES**

Series C: **Chemistry**

## Table of contents

<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Chapter 1. State-of-the-art on Jordan companies' involvement in the international business.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Chapter 2. Theoretical background on International Business Relationship Management .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Chapter 3. Exploring Jordanian companies' interest for international business expansion .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Chapter 4. Empirical evidence on the perception of Jordan companies' strategic behaviour in international business from foreign partners' perspective .....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Chapter 5. Conclusions, contributions and implications, limitations, and future research .....</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Selected References .....</b>	<b>29</b>



## Introduction

Jordan, a country in the Middle East, is actively seeking foreign direct investment and exports to stimulate its economic growth. Business, IT and Professional Services, Healthcare Services, Tourism, Transportation and Logistics, Construction Materials and Services, Agriculture and Food Processing, and Creative Industries are among the country's strategic sectors.

Through infrastructure, investor-friendly conditions, dependable economic practices, stability and safety, free zones, tax exemptions, Investment Incentive Programs, and powerful financial and banking institutions, Jordan's ecosystem provides a compelling value proposition for investors, employees, and customers. To achieve excellence in the services industry, develop local talent, position Jordan as a top tourism destination, ensure equitable sectoral growth, encourage domestic and international investment, support sustainable business practices, and stimulate entrepreneurship, Jordan must be transformed into a regional industrial hub.

Exploring the interest in international business among companies from Jordan and assessing their perceived trustworthiness in the eyes of foreign business partners is compelling research topic, aiming to understand the level of interest that companies from this country have in international business. The findings from this thesis provide valuable insights into the potential for economic growth, export opportunities for Jordanian firms.

Trustworthiness in international business interactions is a multidimensional term influenced by all antecedent variables, such as cultural considerations, complementary skills, business partner reliability, safeguards, access to global markets, and delivery on promises.

This thesis provides insights that can help decision makers establish strategies for building trustworthiness, assisting Jordanian businesses in developing their approaches to international business connections.

## Chapter 1

### **State-of-the-art on Jordan companies' involvement in international business**

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan has worked diligently in recent years to lessen the negative effects of numerous regional crises on social stability and employment in the country. The Economic Priorities Program of the Jordan Government has three primary goals:

- Creating attractive jobs in the private sector;
- Offering incentives for domestic and international investments;
- Increasing exports of goods and services.

The economic priorities of Jordan for the period 2021- 2023 are built around three strategic pillars:

- Pillar 1: Improving the conditions for business environment;
- Pillar 2: Leveraging competitive sectors and increasing employment;
- Pillar 3: Supporting both priority sectors (Tourism, IT, Agriculture and Industry) and emerging sectors of the economy.

Regarding the competitiveness of sectors from Jordan in the international business, it worth to mention pharmaceutical industry, tourism, renewable energy, food processing, logistics and trade services and water management technologies.

Jordan has a long-standing pharmaceutical industry that is renowned for creating top-notch generic medications. The country is positioned as a center for pharmaceutical manufacture and healthcare services because of its regulatory structure and commitment to international standards. Due to Jordan's desire to diversify its energy supply, solar and wind energy projects are being prioritized. Opportunities for investment and cooperation in this industry are created by the country's favorable climate and government incentives for the development of renewable energy sources.

Jordan has invested in creating water-efficient technology and solutions in response to its issues with water scarcity. Opportunities for cooperation and knowledge transfer in the water technology industry are presented by the country's proven competence in water management innovative technologies.

Jordan has created an ecosystem that offers a compelling value proposition for investors, employees, and customers by ensuring that the following crucial components are present and vigorously improved: infrastructure, market entry investor-friendly conditions, dependable economic practices, stability and safety, free zones and development, tax exemptions and Investment Incentive Programs, powerful financial and banking institutions.

The main strategic drivers of Jordan Economic Modernization Vision (covering the period 2023 – 2025) are emphasized in Figure 1.1.

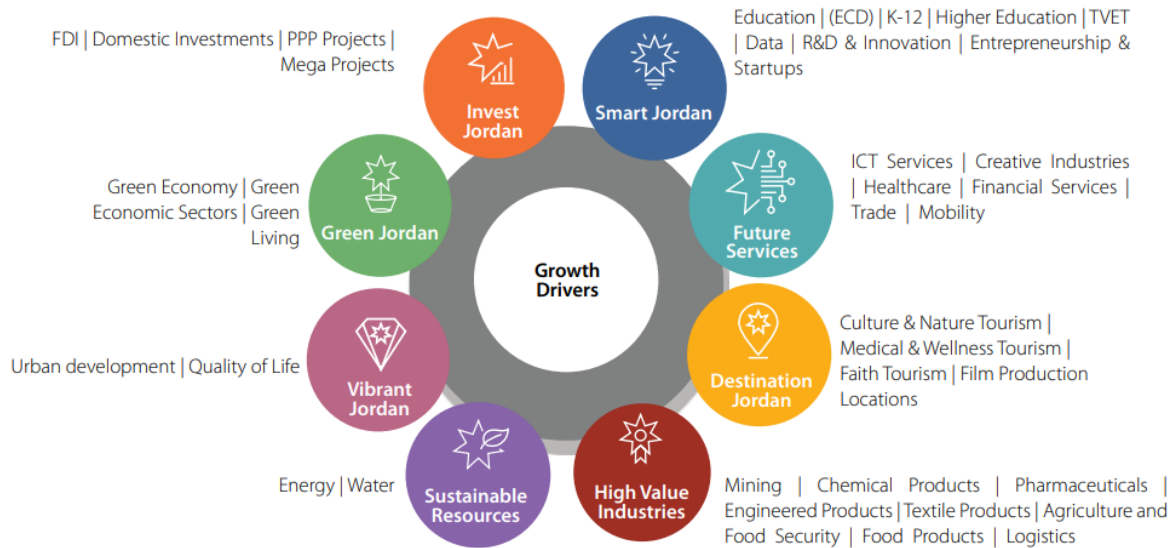


Figure 1.1 - Drivers of the Jordan Economic Modernization Vision

Source:

[https://mop.gov.jo/EBV4.0/Root\\_Storage/AR/EB\\_HomePage/Executive\\_Program\\_for\\_the\\_Economic\\_Modernisation\\_Vision\\_-\\_Foe\\_Web.pdf](https://mop.gov.jo/EBV4.0/Root_Storage/AR/EB_HomePage/Executive_Program_for_the_Economic_Modernisation_Vision_-_Foe_Web.pdf)

These pillars refer to the following insights:

- Transform Jordan into a regional industrial hub by offering companies the opportunity to co-create innovations within strategic partnerships;
- Achieve excellence in the services industry to advance national development and boost regional and international service exports;
- Develop and train local talent to meet the demands of future skills, necessary resources, and institutions to accelerate economic growth and improve quality of life;
- Position Jordan as a top tourism destination;
- Ensure equitable sectoral growth, and improve quality of life by using natural resources as efficiently as possible;
- Encourage both domestic and international investment by creating a welcoming and effective business environment;

Bibliometric analysis has been used in this chapter to study patterns, trends, and relationships within scientific literature on international business in Jordan.

The bibliometric map, based on the query: International Business and Jordan, outlines four clusters, each of them revealing keywords, occurrences, links and link strengths (Figure 1.2).

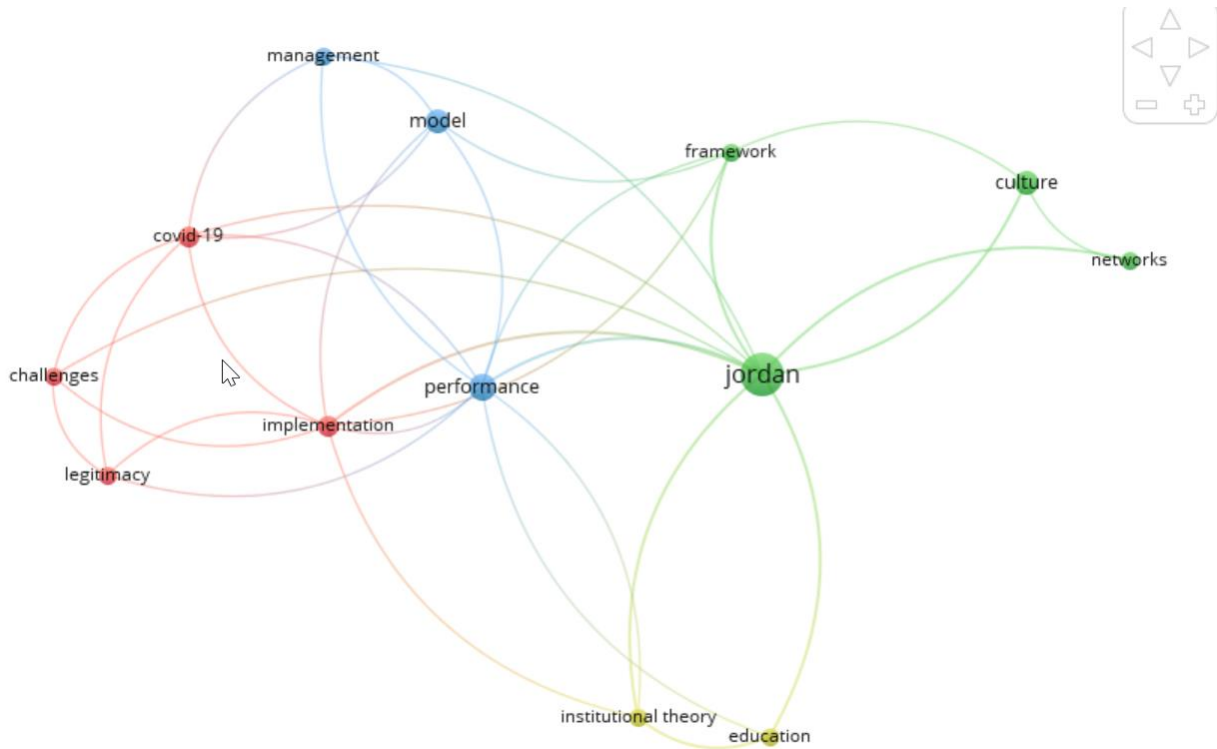


Figure 1.2 – Bibliometric map associated to the query: International Business and Jordan

Source: VOS Viewer 1.6.19 output

The first cluster gravitates around the keywords: implementation, legitimacy, COVID-19 and challenges. The second cluster is organized around keywords such as: Jordan, cultural, framework and networks. It is obvious that cultural frameworks play a pivotal role in supporting Jordan international business relationship management. The third cluster is built around performance, model, and management. The fourth cluster highlights only two keywords: institutional theory and education. Bibliometric analysis is valuable for highlighting international business research in a country as it provides a data-driven perspective on research productivity, impact, trends, collaborations, and areas for improvement. It offers insights that can be utilized by researchers, policymakers, institutions, and other stakeholders to strengthen a country's position in the international business landscape.



## Chapter 2

### Theoretical background on International Business Relationship Management

International Business Relationship Management (IRBM) requires a theoretical framework that will be further tested and validated in an empirical study within this PhD thesis. Based on targeted discussion with international business managers, I propose the following ten strategic pillars for International Business Relationship Management theoretical framework: communication and negotiation skills; shared collaboration on the benefit of partnership; business partners' complementary skill sets; capability of delivering results on promises; agreements based on contractual safeguards; business value co-creation within the strategic partnership; reliability of the foreign business partner; awareness and appreciation of partners' cultural values; favorable reputation in the eyes of foreign business partners; competency proved within the business partnership (Figure 2.1).

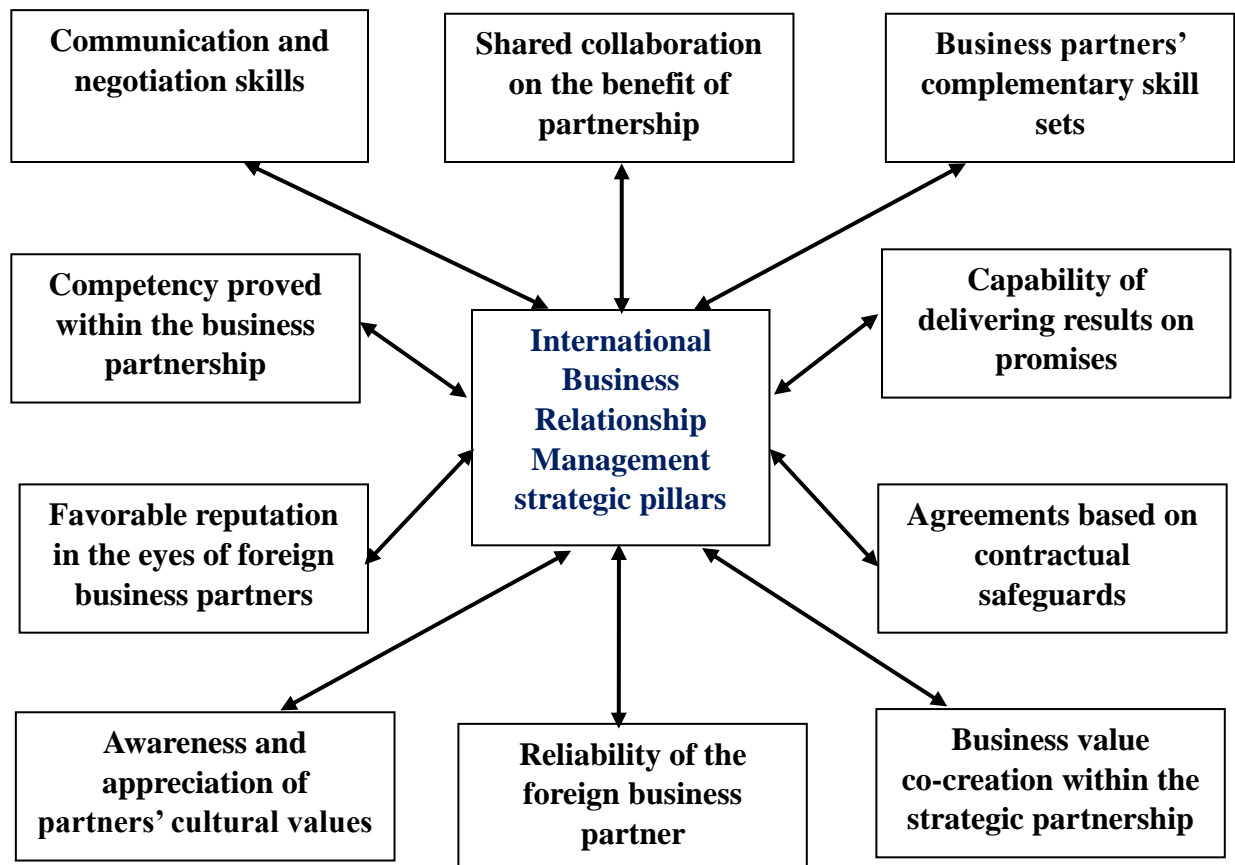


Figure 2.1 - International Business Relationship Management strategic pillars

Source: PhD thesis author

Communication and negotiation skills are crucial for the effectiveness of international business relationship development, as they facilitate the coordination of exchange activities and development of strong relationships.

Shared collaboration on the benefit of partnership is a key success factor that drives effective international business relationships. It involves both foreign partners working together to co-create business growth opportunities, achieve common business goals, and leverage each other's strengths.

Business partners' complementary skill sets play a pivotal role in managing effective international business relationships. When partners bring their own capabilities and expertise to their strategic international adventure, they collaborate more efficiently, overcome barriers and challenges, and capitalize on capturable opportunities in the global market.

The capability of delivering results on promises contributes to the effectiveness of international business relationships. Only when companies involved in international business consistently fulfill their commitments and deliver on what they promise, they are able to build trust and credibility in the eyes of their business partners.

The agreements based on contractual safeguards are essential in ensuring the conditions for successful international business relationships. These safeguards clarify expectations, manage risks, and provide a framework for solving disputes among foreign business partners.

Business value co-creation within the strategic partnership is a powerful strategic approach to enhance the effectiveness of international business relationships. Co-creation involves collaboration of foreign business partners to jointly develop and deliver value that goes beyond than each partner could achieve individually.

The reliability of the foreign business partner significantly contributes to the effectiveness of international business relationships. Reliability refers to the trustworthiness of a foreign business partner in fulfilling their commitments, meeting obligations, and maintaining transparent communication.

The awareness and appreciation of partners' cultural values are essential for the effectiveness of international business relationships. Culture has a significant role in shaping business practices, communication styles, and decision-making processes in international business.

A favorable reputation in the eyes of foreign business partners is a critical asset that significantly increases the effectiveness of international business relationships. A positive

reputation reflects a company's credibility, reliability, and trustworthiness, influencing how foreign business partners perceive the respective organization.

The competency proved within the business partnership is a key success factor that improves the effectiveness of international business relationships. Overall competency refers to the demonstrated ability to deliver high-quality products, services, and solutions that meet or exceed both foreign partners and customers' expectations.

We conducted a bibliometric analysis based on two main keywords: International Business and Reputation Management. The bibliometric map in this context outlines four clusters, each of them revealing keywords, occurrences, links and link strengths (Figure 2.2).

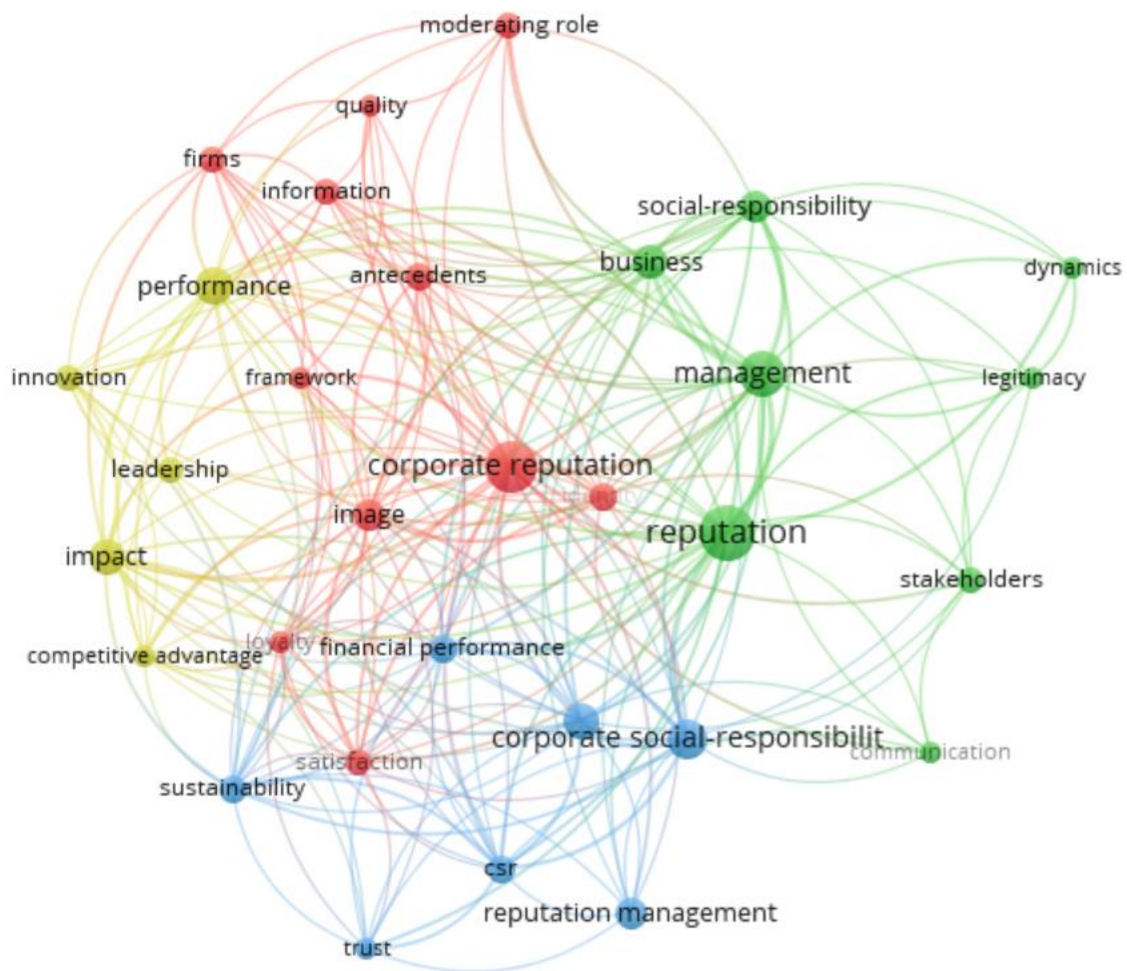


Figure 2.2 – Bibliometric map associated to the query: International Business and Reputation Management

Source: VOS Viewer 1.6.19 output

It can be observed that the first cluster gravitates around corporate reputation, image and antecedents for international relationship management, such as satisfaction, loyalty or quality of offerings.

The second cluster illustrates concepts related to reputation, social responsibility, dynamics of international business and relationships with foreign partners perceived as most important stakeholders.

The third cluster from the bibliometric map focuses on key concepts such as corporate social responsibility (CSR), financial performance, sustainability, reputation management and trust.

The fourth cluster is built around key concepts such as performance, innovation, impact, leadership, and competitive advantage.

The interconnections between reputation, social responsibility, performance, innovation, leadership, and competitive advantage are intricate and mutually reinforcing. Companies that effectively manage these strategic issues in their international business relationships achieve the desired success, adapt to fast changing conditions in external markets, create and deliver value for stakeholders across the globe.

## Chapter 3

### Exploring Jordanian companies' interest for international business expansion

For Jordanian businesses, the creation of international commercial partnerships is crucial to their internationalization efforts. To explore their representatives' opinions on various insights related to their interest in international expansion, their experience in international business, the development of their capabilities to approach foreign markets, their readiness for international expansion, and the governmental support for international business, I conducted a survey based on a mixed research design on 100 Jordanian companies in different stages of their internationalization process.

A questionnaire based on 18 items analysed on 5-points Likert scale and 3 items reflecting the profiles of companies included in the sample has been posted online (<https://forms.gle/1zjQnPQuQm8whTJf7>) and sent to the representatives of Jordan companies. We invited more than 150 companies' representatives from top and middle management positions to achieve a convenience sample of 100 validated responses. The invitations to fill in the online questionnaire has been sent in the period May 2022 – February 2023.

The objectives of the research are listed below:

- to determine respondents' views on the government's support for international business;
- to analyse Jordan companies' interest in expanding abroad;
- to learn about their expectations in this regard;
- to locate and seize Jordan companies' opportunities to enter foreign markets;
- to investigate Jordan companies' preparedness for international expansion;
- to ascertain Jordan companies' prior experience with international business.

Jordanian businesses can improve their chances of successfully entering foreign markets by utilizing these elements in conjunction with in-depth market analysis, strategic planning, a dedication to quality, and innovation. It's critical that businesses modify their strategy in response to the unique traits and opportunities of the target markets they wish to reach.

Most of respondents anticipate that new strategic avenues for their international growth will be open, while only few of them are cautious in this strategic matter. Most responses lead to the idea that Jordanian companies are highly interested to prioritize their international development in their strategic agenda. Most of responses are in accordance with the strategic intention to expand the company's global alliances.

Jordanian businesses that are expanding internationally place a strong emphasis on the necessity to gain experience and seize sources of expertise. These findings highlight the difficulties Jordanian businesses have learning about internationalization. The only way to implement a comprehensive knowledge management plan is to strengthen their management of their international business relationships.

To grasp the complexities of the new global markets, Jordanian managers use their skills in doing thorough market research. Other Jordanian managers draw on their expertise to customize your brand's offers while upholding its key principles. They do this by customizing their offerings to local preferences and demands. Others embrace cultural diversity while conducting international business, applying their knowledge of cultural subtleties and sensitivities from the home market to the new market.

Jordanian authorities' efforts to boost companies' international presence are mainly focused on the following aspects: launching strategic programs to actively promote Jordanian products and services in international markets. Jordanian leaders believe that expanding internationally resulted in more sales and revenue streams from new markets, which raised overall revenue in their business models.

The main goal of the correlational research based on Structural Equation Modelling - Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) is to outline the correlations among six constructs, namely: interest for international expansion (IIE), experience in international business (EIB), development of capabilities to approach foreign markets (DCAF), readiness for international expansion (RIE), governmental support for international business (GSIB) and expectations related to international expansion (ERIE).

The hypotheses have been graphically developed through the arrows from the independent variable to the dependent one, as it follows:

H<sub>1</sub>: The experience in international business (EIB) has a positive and significant effect on the interest for international expansion (IEE)

H<sub>2</sub>: The experience in international business (EIB) has a positive and significant effect on the readiness for international expansion (RIE)

H<sub>3</sub>: The experience in international business (EIB) has a positive and significant effect on the expectations related to international expansion (ERIE)

H<sub>4</sub>: The governmental support for international business (GSIB) has a positive and significant effect on the interest for international expansion (IEE)

H<sub>5</sub>: The readiness for international expansion (RIE) has a positive and significant effect on the interest for international expansion (IIE)

H<sub>6</sub>: The development of capabilities to approach foreign markets (DCAFM) has a positive and significant effect on expectations related to international expansion (ERIE)

H<sub>7</sub>: The development of capabilities to approach foreign markets (DCAFM) has a positive and significant effect on the interest for international expansion (IIE)

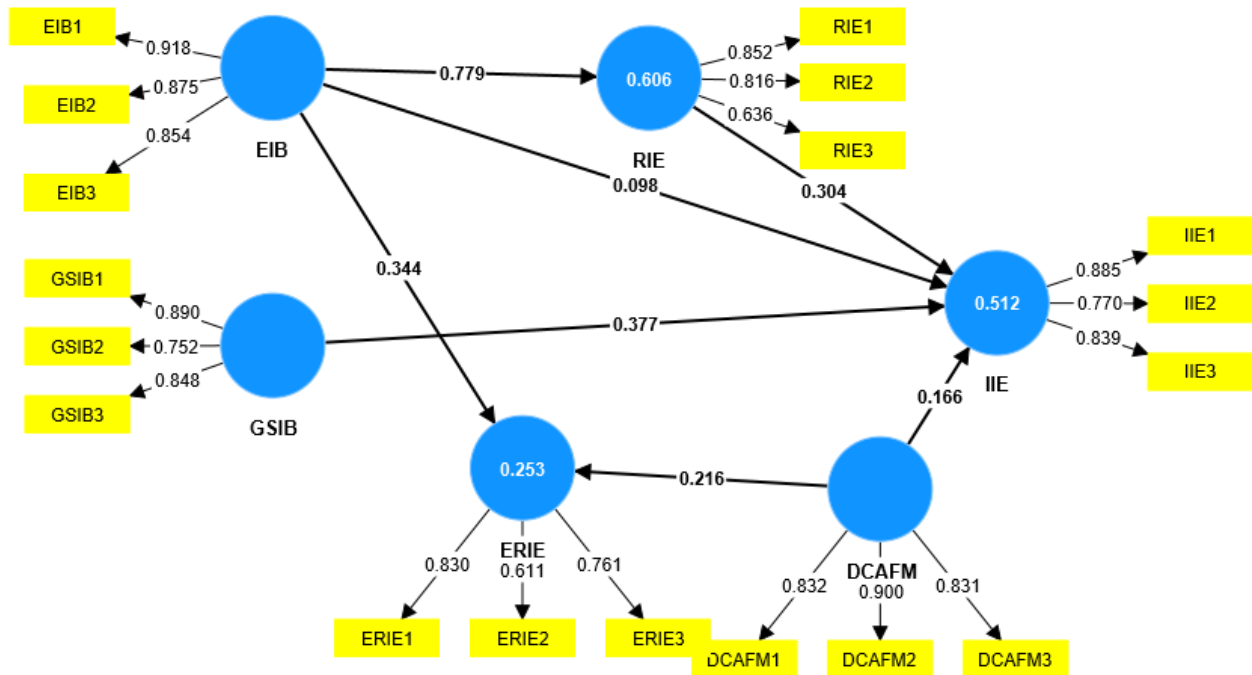


Figure 3.1 – Path coefficients in the structural model

Source: Smart PLS 4 software output

The experience in international business (EIB) has *the strongest effect* on the readiness for international expansion (RIE) (path coefficient = 0.779), followed by the effect of governmental support for international business (GSIB) on the interest for international expansion (IIE) (path coefficient = 0.377). The *weakest effect* can be observed between the experience in international business (EIB) and the interest for international expansion (IIE) (path coefficient = 0.098). The other relationships are characterised by moderate effects generated by the independent constructs on dependent ones.

Based on their related p-values, the data shown in Table 3.1 can be used to support or reject the structural model's hypotheses. Since the p values are below the 0.05 upper limit for significance, hypotheses are supported. The magnitude of the correlation between the latent variables in this structural model is also revealed by the T-test.

Table 3.1 - Asymptotic significance p and T-test values for the seven hypotheses from the structural model

Hypothesis	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics ( O/STDEV )	P values	Hypothesis test result
DCAFM -> ERIE	0.216	0.237	0.149	1.451	0.147	Rejected
DCAFM -> IIE	0.166	0.197	0.153	1.08	0.28	Rejected
EIB -> ERIE	0.344	0.328	0.165	2.088	0.037	Supported
EIB -> IIE	0.334	0.305	0.169	0.753	0.451	Rejected
EIB -> RIE	0.779	0.778	0.043	18.164	0	Supported
GSIB -> IIE	0.377	0.381	0.074	5.089	0	Supported
RIE -> IIE	0.304	0.286	0.157	1.933	0.053	Partially supported

Source: Smart PLS 4 software output

Three hypotheses are supported:

H<sub>2</sub>: The experience in international business (EIB) has a positive and significant effect on the readiness for international expansion (RIE) (p-value = 0)

H<sub>3</sub>: The experience in international business (EIB) has a positive and significant effect on the expectations related to international expansion (ERIE) (p-value = 0.037)

H<sub>4</sub>: The governmental support for international business (GSIB) has a positive and significant effect on the interest for international expansion (IEE) (p-value = 0)

One hypothesis is partially supported:

H<sub>5</sub>: The readiness for international expansion (RIE) has a positive and significant effect on the interest for international expansion (IIE) (p-value = 0.053)

Three hypotheses are rejected:

H<sub>1</sub>: The experience in international business (EIB) has a positive and significant effect on the interest for international expansion (IEE) (p-value = 0.451)

H<sub>6</sub>: The development of capabilities to approach foreign markets (DCAFM) has a positive and significant effect on expectations related to international expansion (ERIE) (p-value = 0.147)

H<sub>7</sub>: The development of capabilities to approach foreign markets (DCAFM) has a positive and significant effect on the interest for international expansion (IIE) (p-value = 0.28).



The highest magnitude of the correlation can be found in the relationship between EIB -> RIE (T value = 18.164), while the weakest magnitude of correlation can be found in the relationship between EIB -> IIE (T value = 0.753).

This structural model supports the need for Jordanian businesses to strengthen their international business ties through the efficient use of domestic resources, exposure to foreign markets, and participation in global value chains. Different Jordanian businesses display various behaviours, which resulted in the acceptance or rejection of theories.

Path analysis is made easier by PLS-SEM, which makes it easier to find both direct and indirect associations between variables. This is crucial when considering the complex mechanisms by which tactical choices affect the results of global expansion. PLS-SEM is an effective method for conducting international management research because it can manage the complexity of models for global expansion, allow for different theoretical viewpoints, perform well with small sample sizes, and offer insights that are both academically significant and useful for companies doing business internationally. It makes it possible to comprehend the strategic actions taken by Jordanian businesses to support their successful international expansion plans.

## Chapter 4

### Empirical evidence on the perception of Jordan companies' strategic behaviour in international business from foreign partners' perspective

The main objective of the correlational study is to identify the perceptions of Jordan business partners' perceptions on the trustworthiness of Jordan firms. In this regard, I conducted a correlational survey on 100 foreign companies partnering with Jordan companies, whose aim is to explore in-depth their perceptions on ten relevant strategic pillars of international relationship business management (Figure 4.1), considered in the theoretical framework presented in Chapter 2 of the thesis.

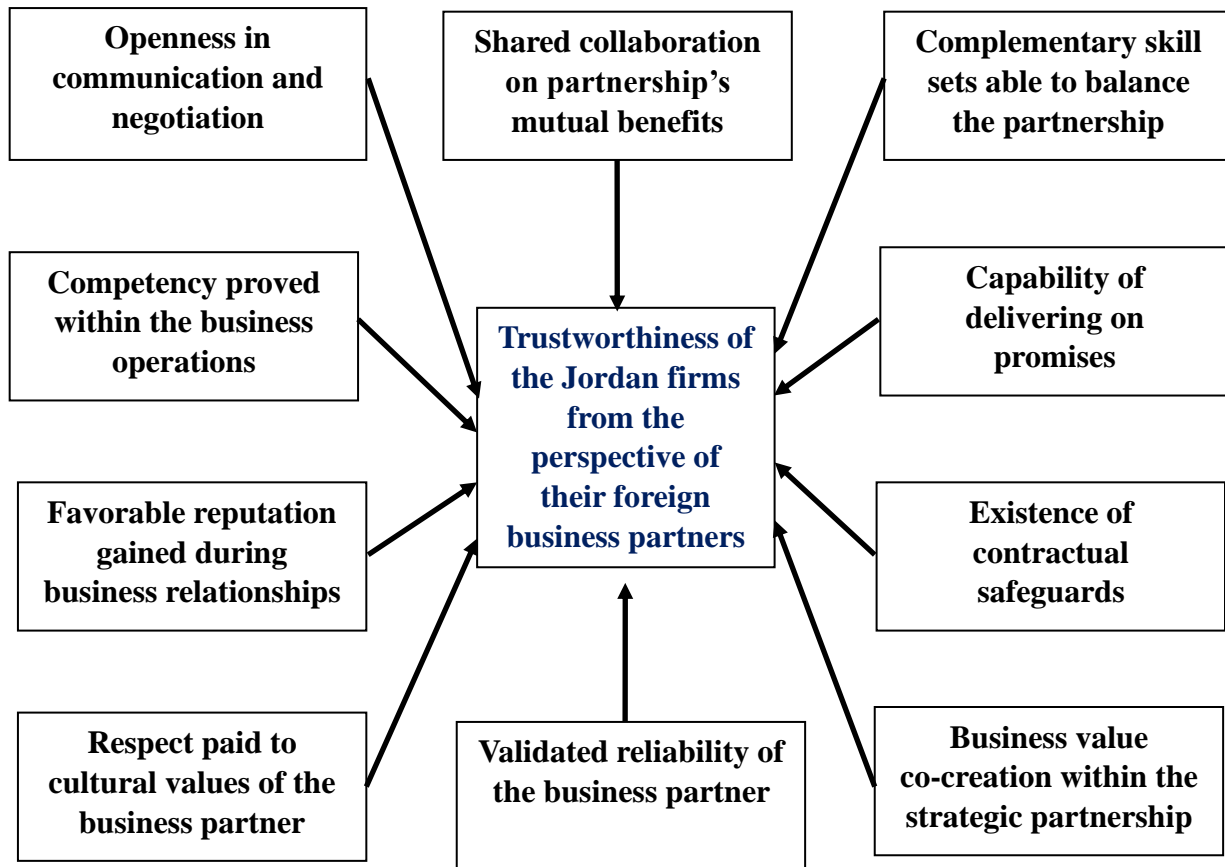


Figure 4.1 – Correlational research conceptual model

Source: original contribution of the PhD Student

A questionnaire has been posted online (<https://forms.gle/3pfZi3DZ4F38Tweu5>) and sent as an invitation via personalized e-mails to the representatives of Chambers of Commerce from different countries, known as developing trade relations with Jordan.

The specific objectives of this correlational research are mainly focused on the assessment of the correlations among the ten key pillars that support international business management in the case of Jordan firms and the trustworthiness of Jordan firms from the lens of their foreign partners, using appropriate statistical methods. Ten hypotheses emerged.

**First hypothesis: H1**

The openness in communication and negotiation, manifested by Jordan partners, has a positive effect on their trustworthiness from the perspective of their foreign business partners.

**(Openness -> Trustworthiness)**

**Second hypothesis: H2**

The business collaboration, built on a shared collaboration of the partnership's mutual benefits, has a positive effect on foreign business partners' trustworthiness in Jordan companies.

**(Collaboration -> Trustworthiness)**

**Third hypothesis: H3**

The complementary skill sets, able to balance the partnership has a positive effect on foreign business partners' trustworthiness in Jordan companies.

**(Complementariness -> Trustworthiness)**

**Fourth hypothesis: H4**

The capability of delivering on promises has a positive effect on foreign business partners' trustworthiness in Jordan companies.

**(Promises -> Trustworthiness)**

**Fifth hypothesis: H5**

The existence of contractual safeguards in the business agreements has a positive effect on foreign business partners' trustworthiness in Jordan companies.

**(Safeguards -> Trustworthiness)**

**Sixth hypothesis: H6**

The engagement in business value co-creation within the strategic partnership has a positive effect on foreign business partners' trustworthiness in Jordan companies.

**(Partnership -> Trustworthiness)**

**Seventh hypothesis: H7**

The validation of Jordan companies' reliability has a positive effect on foreign business partners' trustworthiness in Jordan companies.

**(Reliability -> Trustworthiness)**

**Eighth hypothesis: H8**

Jordan companies' behaviour demonstrating respect for cultural values of their business partners has a positive effect on their trustworthiness in Jordan companies.

**(Culture-> Trustworthiness)**

**Ninth hypothesis: H9**

Foreign companies' favourable reputation gained during the development of the business relationships has a positive effect on their trustworthiness in Jordan companies.

**(Reputation-> Trustworthiness)**

**Tenth hypothesis: H10**

Foreign companies' favourable perception on the competencies proved by their Jordan business partners has a positive effect on their trustworthiness in Jordan companies.

**(Competencies-> Trustworthiness)**

An overview of the hypotheses tested reveals that the correlations between the ten pillars of international business relationship management and trustworthiness in Jordan firms have been validated, while the demographics of firms has no significant influence on the same dependent variable.

Table 4.1 - Synthesis of hypotheses

<b>Hypothesis</b>	<b>Pearson R value</b>	<b>F value</b>	<b>Result</b>
Openness -> Trustworthiness	.670	79.769	Supported
Collaboration -> Trustworthiness	.451	25.050	Supported
Complementariness -> Trustworthiness	.587	51.533	Supported
Promises -> Trustworthiness	.697	92.818	Supported
Safeguards -> Trustworthiness	.311	10.520	Supported
Partnership -> Trustworthiness	.596	53.914	Supported
Reliability -> Trustworthiness	.753	128.297	Supported
Culture-> Trustworthiness	.493	31.550	Supported
Reputation-> Trustworthiness	.744	121.197	Supported
Competencies-> Trustworthiness	.638	67.182	Supported

Source: author

We observe that the predictor with highest impact on trustworthiness in Jordan companies is represented by reliability (having the highest Pearson R value and highest magnitude of correlation given by F value), followed by reputation, while the predictor with the smallest impact on trustworthiness in Jordan companies is safeguards (characterized by the smallest Pearson R value and smallest magnitude of correlation given by F value).

Reliability of business partners and reputation are the most influential predictors of trust in international business settings, in the context of this correlational study, due to their pivotal role in setting a sense of security, confidence, and predictability in complex cross-border interactions.

In international business, reliability refers to the ability of foreign business partners to fulfil their commitments, meet project deadlines, and deliver as promised. This consistency builds a track record of dependability, which is crucial for building trust. Reliable business partners minimize disruptions, ensuring smoother operations and less unexpected setbacks.

On the other hand, positive reputations convey credibility and provide evidence that business partners can be trusted to act as expected. A well-established reputation is endorsed by stakeholders from international business such as customers, industry experts, and previous partners. These endorsements act as external validations of a company's trustworthiness, influencing partners' perceptions. Companies with strong reputations are associated with lower risks. Partners prefer collaborating with organizations that have demonstrated ethical behaviour, qualitative offerings, and reliable business practices, which are highly correlated with a positive reputation.

In the correlational survey, the aim was to understand the degree and direction of the relationship between two or more variables included in the conceptual framework. These relationships are symmetric, meaning that the relationship is similar regardless the types of variables.

In the configurational research design, the aim is to explore complex relationships that go beyond simple correlations to uncover patterns or configurations of variables that lead to specific outcomes. Asymmetric relationships in the configurational research design refer to situations where the influence of one strategic pillar of international relationship business management on trustworthiness is not equivalent. The relationships are context-dependent to different cross-cultural settings.

The main objective of the configurational survey is to identify specific combinations of conditions, that together lead to an outcome, in this case, the trustworthiness of foreign business partners in Jordan companies. The specific objectives refer to the analysis of sufficient and necessary conditions to achieve the outcome through different combinations of antecedent conditions. The method employed is fuzzy-sets qualitative comparative analysis (fsQCA) to explore these asymmetric relationships. This method allows to identify different pathways to the outcome that involve unique combinations of the ten antecedent conditions, namely the strategic drivers of international relationship business management. The configurational conceptual framework is outlined in Figure 4.2.

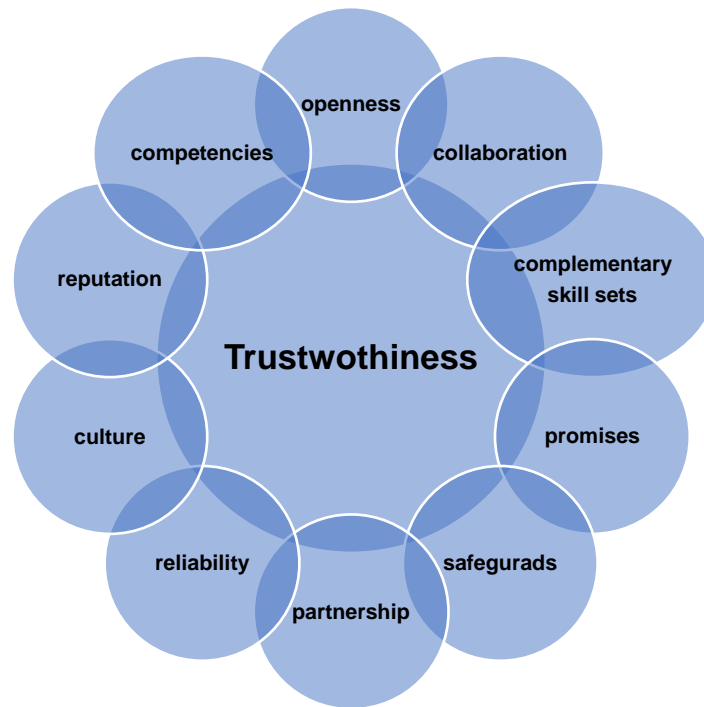


Figure 4.2 - Configurational research conceptual model  
 Source: original contribution of the PhD Student

The fsQCA analyses were performed on four clusters of companies, considered the most representative for the international trade with Jordan. The first cluster is represented by three countries from Gulf Cooperation Council, the second cluster by nine European countries, the third cluster by United States of America and finally, the four cluster by China.

Table 4.2 reveals five combinations of conditions tested, as well as the combination of collaboration, partnership, safeguards, reputation, leading to trustworthiness of Jordan companies as a perception of their business partners from Gulf Cooperation Council.

Table 4.2 - Analysis of necessary conditions in the case of Jordan business partners from GCC countries

Condition tested	Consistency	Coverage
openness+collaboration+partnership+reputation	1.0000	0.9424
complementariness+promises+safeguards+culture	0.9863	0.9454
openness+partnership+culture+reliability	0.9863	0.9502
<b>collaboration+partnership+safeguards+reputation</b>	<b>1.0000</b>	<b>0.9461</b>
collaboration+promises+partnership+safeguards	0.9863	0.9454

Source: fsQCA software, data processed by PhD Student

The analysis of necessary conditions reflects five combinations, as well as the condition which provide the maximum consistency score and coverage score, namely the combination of openness, partnership, culture, and reliability, leading to trustworthiness of Jordan companies as a perception of their business partners from European countries (Table 4.3).

Table 4.3 - Analysis of necessary conditions in the case of Jordan business partners from European countries

<b>Condition tested</b>	<b>Consistency</b>	<b>Coverage</b>
openness+collaboration+partnership+reputation	1.0000	0.9147
complementariness+promises+safeguards+culture	0.9863	0.9239
<b>openness+partnership+culture+reliability</b>	<b>1.0000</b>	<b>0.9293</b>
collaboration+partnership+safeguards+reputation	1.0000	0.9191
collaboration+promises+partnership+safeguards	0.9962	0.9204

Source: fsQCA software, data processed by PhD Student

The analysis of necessary conditions reflects five combinations, as well as the condition which provide the maximum consistency score and coverage score, namely the combination of complementariness, promises, safeguards, culture, leading to trustworthiness of Jordan companies as a perception of their business partners from USA (Table 4.4). This optimal condition is different from those found in the countries from GCC or Europe.

Table 4.4 - Analysis of necessary conditions in the case of Jordan business partners from United States of America

<b>Condition tested</b>	<b>Consistency</b>	<b>Coverage</b>
openness+collaboration+partnership+reputation	1.0000	0.9222
<b>complementariness+promises+safeguards+culture</b>	<b>1.0000</b>	<b>0.9339</b>
openness+partnership+culture+reliability	1.0000	0.9319
collaboration+partnership+safeguards+reputation	1.0000	0.9222
collaboration+promises+partnership+safeguards	1.0000	0.9280

Source: fsQCA software, data processed by PhD Student

The combination of openness, partnership, culture, and reliability, leading to trustworthiness of Jordan companies as a perception of their business partners from China is the optimal one, the same as observed in the case of European countries (Table 4.5).



Table 4.5 - Analysis of necessary conditions in the case of Jordan business partners from China

<b>Condition tested</b>	<b>Consistency</b>	<b>Coverage</b>
openness+collaboration+partnership+reputation	1.0000	0.9770
complementariness+promises+safeguards+culture	1.0000	0.9827
<b>openness+partnership+culture+reliability</b>	<b>1.0000</b>	<b>0.9884</b>
collaboration+partnership+safeguards+reputation	1.0000	0.9721
collaboration+promises+partnership+safeguards	1.0000	0.9770

Source: fsQCA software, data processed by PhD Student

Each study revealed specific necessary combinations of antecedent conditions that consistently led to trustworthiness in international business relationships. These combinations are identified as relevant patterns in the data. The studies demonstrated that trustworthiness in international business relationships is a multi-dimensional concept influenced by all antecedent conditions – the ten strategic divers of international business relationship management. This complexity highlights the need for a strategic approach to better understanding trustworthiness in international business settings. Cultural factors are identified as influential conditions for trustworthiness. The studies outlined the importance of aligning cultural values and practices between business partners to enhance trustworthiness. The combination of complementariness of competences and reliability of business partners emerged as a key pattern. This suggests that trustworthiness is often built when partners bring unique strengths and consistently deliver on promises. The presence of safeguards, along with other conditions, contributes to trustworthiness. Safeguards are identified as a strategy for mitigating risks and building trust. Openness to external markets and delivery on promises are associated with trustworthiness. This emphasizes the significance of transparent and reliable communication in fostering trust.

The studies revealed that only one path or combination of conditions led to trustworthiness. This implies that different international business relationships might achieve trustworthiness through diverse combinations of antecedent conditions. The analysis also reflected the diversity of factors that contribute to trust in international business relationships.

The fsQCA findings offer insights that can guide decision makers involved in international businesses in developing strategies for building trustworthiness. Understanding the specific conditions that lead to trust can help Jordan companies craft their approaches to international business relationships.

## Chapter 5

### Conclusions, contributions and implications, limitations, and future research

The experience in international business aids Jordanian businesses in better understanding and reducing the risks involved in going global. This encompasses market risks, legal risks, political risks, and financial risks. International companies with more experience are frequently better equipped to foresee and efficiently handle these risks. Jordanian companies that engage in international commerce over time establish solid networks and connections with regional partners, suppliers, clients, and government representatives in foreign markets. These connections help companies expand internationally by giving them access to resources, market knowledge, and local support.

Jordanian businesses are equipped to perform in-depth market research and analysis thanks to their experience in foreign markets. This research assists in spotting business expansion chances, comprehending customer behaviour, and developing goods and services that are tailored to the particular requirements of target markets. International companies frequently acquire a high level of flexibility and adaptation. They learn how to modify their operations, products, and strategies to accommodate various market conditions and client preferences.

Expanding internationally frequently boosts innovation and competitiveness. Jordanian businesses are encouraged to innovate, enhance product quality, and implement best practices by exposure to foreign markets, which can help the sector as a whole and the country's standing in the world. Jordan's geopolitical influence can be increased by having a significant presence in international markets. Businesses that are successful on a global scale might positively represent their home nation on that stage and possibly contribute to diplomatic efforts.

Businesses in Jordan are willing to take advice from their evaluations regarding preparedness for international expansion. If preparation has a moderate impact, Jordanian firms might be open to modifying and enhancing their global capabilities in response to feedback and lessons learned from their business journeys into foreign markets.

Findings assist in determining whether Jordanian businesses are adapting to and benefiting from the increasingly interconnected global marketplace. Analysing the interest in foreign business reveals how competitive Jordanian firms are on the world stage. Research provides insights regarding the trustworthiness of Jordanian companies from the lens of their business counterparts. Understanding trustworthiness is critical for risk management in international business. Jordanian businesses and investors can use research findings to

analyse the dependability of possible overseas partners, lowering the risks involved with international business transactions.

Jordan's government and officials should be interested in empirical research that informs them about domestic companies' internationalization initiatives. This data can be used to design policies that promote or restrict international trade. Understanding Jordanian firms' interest in worldwide commerce led to research on cultural elements that influence companies' decisions to enter global markets. It may also entail studying market conditions in overseas countries, such as demand for specific products or services.

This new framework leads to better business practices in terms of foreign business partner selection, negotiation, conflict resolution, communication and collaboration strategies. Thus, it leads to more successful international business ventures. The framework's implications can be included into training programs for international business professionals, providing them with the knowledge and abilities needed to effectively manage relationships across borders. Governments and regulatory organizations are invited to use this theoretical framework's insights to establish laws and regulations that facilitate international business ties, ensure fair competition, and reduce trade obstacles.

A new theoretical framework for international corporate relationship management has the potential to make significant theoretical contributions by improving our knowledge of relationship dynamics and cross-cultural aspects. Its consequences extend across business practices, education, policy creation, technology innovation, and academic developments, ultimately benefiting enterprises, governments, and international business researchers.

Findings from research studies provide actionable insights for Jordanian managers who are interested in international businesses. By understanding the relationships between strategic behaviours and outcomes, organizations can make more informed decisions about their international expansion strategies.

In academic research, findings contribute to the body of knowledge on international business and expansion. It underscores the significance of experience as a factor influencing strategic decision-making in international expansion, encouraging further investigation into the mechanisms and contextual factors at play. Jordanian policymakers and business support organizations can use this information to design programs that promote international experience and education.

The research provides useful insights into how Jordanian managers perceive government support for international expansion and highlight actionable areas where government public policies and legislative initiatives are effective or lacking. Based on the

findings, entrepreneurs and policymakers may work together to develop and modify government assistance programs to better match the requirements and expectations of Jordanian enterprises looking to expand internationally. This could include giving financial incentives, easing regulatory processes, or supplying market data. The findings highlight Jordanian enterprises' level of interest in expanding abroad, offering light on which industries or sectors are more inclined toward internationalization.

The findings identify specific opportunities and target markets in which Jordanian businesses are interested. Based on the business guidance revealed in the study, companies are invited to craft their own market entrance strategies and alliances. This can lead to more concentrated and successful efforts at worldwide expansion.

Companies should use the data on international expansion preparedness to discover gaps in their competencies, such as language skills, cultural awareness, or knowledge of international regulations. Furthermore, Jordanian businesses can benefit from the experiences of their colleagues when navigating overseas marketplaces. Sharing best practices and lessons learned can help the corporate community better its internationalization efforts collectively.

Overall, this research contributes to a more informed and strategic approach to international expansion for Jordanian companies. It guides government policies, inform businesses about the expectations and readiness of their peers, and ultimately enhance the success of international business endeavors in Jordan.

The main limitation resides in the convenience samples used in both studies, presented in Chapter 3, respectively Chapter 4. Participants in both studies, 100 Jordanian companies' representatives, on the one hand, and 100 representatives of foreign companies partnering with Jordanian companies, on the other hand, were chosen for convenience sampling based on their accessibility and motivation to participate. This can lead to sampling bias because individuals who are easily reached or ready to participate may not be representative of the whole population interested in international business management.

By incorporating a temporal dimension, the conceptual frameworks designed in this thesis can contribute to the understanding of how relationships change and adapt over time, if the same questionnaires will be administrated in the forthcoming years. This longitudinal approach can reveal critical insights into international business relationship sustainability and development of foresight tools to anticipate international business evolution and detect trends in companies' motivations for international expansion.

## Selected References

1. Abou-Moghli, A. (2012). Impact of entrepreneurial networks in the success of business on-going stage in Jordanian manufacturing companies. *American Academic & Scholarly Research Journal*, 4(2), 31-40.
2. Abuhussein, T., Barham, H., & Al-Jaghoub, S. (2023). The effects of COVID-19 on small and medium-sized enterprises: Empirical evidence from Jordan. *Journal of Enterprising Communities: People and Places in the Global Economy*, 17(2), 334-357.
3. Al-Assaf, G., & Al-Abdulrazag, B. (2015). The validity of export-led growth hypothesis for Jordan: A bounds testing approach. *International Journal of Economics and Financial Issues*, 5(1), 199-211.
4. Al-Faleh, M. (1987). Cultural influences on Arab management development: a case study of Jordan. *Journal of management development*, 6(3), 19-33.
5. Alghizzawi, M. A., Youssef, M. A., Abu Zraiq, M., & Elmassri, M. (2022). The relationship between corporate social responsibility and firm performance: evidence from Jordan. *Cogent Business & Management*, 9(1), 2088637.
6. Al-Hyari, K. (2020). Initial empirical evidence on how Jordanian manufacturing SMEs cope with the covid-19 pandemic. *Academy of Strategic Management Journal*, 19, 1-12.
7. Al-Hyari, K., Al-Weshah, G., & Alnsour, M. (2012). Barriers to internationalisation in SMEs: evidence from Jordan. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*.
8. Alkailani, M., Azzam, I. A., & Athamneh, A. B. (2012). Replicating Hofstede in Jordan: ungeneralized, reevaluating the Jordanian culture. *International Business Research*, 5(4), 71-80.
9. Al-kasasbeh, O. (2022). COVID-19 pandemic: macroeconomic impacts and understanding its implications for Jordan. *Journal of Environmental Science and Economics*, 1(2), 51-57.
10. Al-Shaikh, F. N. (2013). Opportunities and challenges of entrepreneurship in developing countries: the case of Jordan. *Journal for International Business and Entrepreneurship Development*, 7(2), 163-178.
11. Al-Shattarat, B., Al-Shattarat, H., & Dannoun, Z. (2021). The Impact of the Standard Costing System on the Performance of Industrial Companies in Jordan. *Academy of Strategic Management Journal*, 20(1), 1-10.
12. Al-Shatti, A. S. (2014). The effect of fiscal policy on economic development in Jordan. *International business research*, 7(12), 67-76.

13. Bekhet, H. A., & Al-Smadi, R. W. (2015). Determinants of Jordanian foreign direct investment inflows: Bounds testing approach. *Economic Modelling*, 46, 27-35.
14. Cicea, C., Popa, I., Marinescu, C., & Ștefan, S. C. (2019). Determinants of SMEs' performance: evidence from European countries. *Economic research-Ekonomska istraživanja*, 32(1), 1602-1620.
15. Dang, Q. T., Jasovska, P., & Rammal, H. G. (2020). International business-government relations: The risk management strategies of MNEs in emerging economies. *Journal of World Business*, 55(1), 101042.
16. Fainshmidt, S., Witt, M. A., Aguilera, R. V., & Verbeke, A. (2020). The contributions of qualitative comparative analysis (QCA) to international business research. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 51, 455-466.
17. Fombrun, C. J., Gardberg, N. A., & Sever, J. M. (2000). The Reputation Quotient SM: A multi-stakeholder measure of corporate reputation. *Journal of brand management*, 7, 241-255.
18. Griffith, D. A. (2002). The role of communication competencies in international business relationship development. *Journal of World Business*, 37(4), 256-265.
19. Istaiteyeh, R., Najem, F., & Saqfalhait, N. (2023). Exports-and Imports-Led Growth: Evidence from a Time Series Analysis, Case of Jordan. *Economies*, 11(5), 135.
20. Jarrar, A. S. (2021). The Impact of Managerial Dynamic Capabilities on the Internationalization Readiness Decision: Evidence from Jordan. *Journal of Critical Reviews*, 8(1), 868-879
21. Manga, C., Qudah, S., & Capatina, A. (2022). Comparative Approach of Economic Growth Engines (Senegal vs. Jordan) using Granger Causality Test. *International Comparative Management Review*, 23(1), 189-201.
22. Masa'deh, R. E., Al-Henzab, J., Tarhini, A., & Obeidat, B. Y. (2018). The associations among market orientation, technology orientation, entrepreneurial orientation and organizational performance. *Benchmarking: An International Journal*, 25(8), 3117-3142.
23. Mdanat, M. F., Warrad, T. A., Salhieh, L. M., & Arabiyat, T. S. (2018). A Gravity Approach to Determinants of Export in a Small Open Economy: Evidence from Jordan. *International Journal of Economics and Financial Issues*, 8(2), 40.
24. Mishal, Z., & Abulaila, Z. (2007). The impact of foreign direct investment and imports on economic growth: The case of Jordan. *Journal of Economic and Administrative Sciences*, 23(1), 1-31.

25. Mukhtarov, S., Alalawneh, M. M., Ibadov, E., & Huseynli, A. (2019). The impact of foreign direct investment on exports in Jordan: An empirical analysis. *Journal of International Studies*, 12(3).
26. Pillmayer, M., & Scherle, N. (2014). The tourism industry and the process of internationalization in the Middle East: The example of Jordan. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 16(4), 329-339.
27. Porter, M. E., & Kramer, M. R. (2018). Creating shared value: How to reinvent capitalism—And unleash a wave of innovation and growth. In *Managing sustainable business: An executive education case and textbook* (pp. 323-346). Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands.
28. Qudah, S. (2022). Empirical Evidence on the International Business Approach: The Case of Jordan Companies. *Annals of the University Dunarea de Jos of Galati: Fascicle: I, Economics & Applied Informatics*, 28(2).
29. Qudah, S., Capatina, A., Capatina, M. (2023). Jordan Companies' Trustworthiness through Foreign Business Partners' Lens, *Annals of the University Dunarea de Jos of Galati: Fascicle: I, Economics & Applied Informatics*, 29(2).
30. Sabri, H. A. (2012). Re-examination of Hofstede's work value orientations on perceived leadership styles in Jordan. *International Journal of Commerce and Management*, 22(3), 202-218.
31. Sarstedt, M., Ringle, C. M., & Hair, J. F. (2021). *Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling*. Springer.
32. Shammout, E., D'Alessandro, S., Small, F., & Nayeem, T. (2022). Lifting the curtain on cultural values, materialism and luxury consumption: Evidence from Jordan. *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, 21(5), 987-1001.
33. Shams, R., Vrontis, D., Belyaeva, Z., Ferraris, A., & Czinkota, M. R. (2021). Strategic agility in international business: A conceptual framework for “agile” multinationals. *Journal of International Management*, 27(1), 100737.
34. Shehadeh, R., Al-Zu'bi, Z. M. F., Abdallah, A. B., & Maqableh, M. (2016). Investigating critical factors affecting the operational excellence of service firms in Jordan. *Journal of Management Research*, 8(1), 18-49.
35. Sriussadaporn, R. (2006). Managing international business communication problems at work: A pilot study in foreign companies in Thailand. *Cross Cultural Management: An International Journal*, 13(4), 330-344.

36. Vahlne, J. E., & Bhatti, W. A. (2019). Relationship development: A micro-foundation for the internationalization process of the multinational business enterprise. *Management International Review*, 59, 203-228.
37. Van Zanten, J. A., & Van Tulder, R. (2018). Multinational enterprises and the Sustainable Development Goals: An institutional approach to corporate engagement. *Journal of International Business Policy*, 1, 208-233.
38. Wedlin, L. (2011). Going global: Rankings as rhetorical devices to construct an international field of management education. *Management Learning*, 42(2), 199-218.
39. Wu, F., Sinkovics, R. R., Cavusgil, S. T., & Roath, A. S. (2007). Overcoming export manufacturers' dilemma in international expansion. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 38, 283-302.
40. Kraus, S., Ribeiro-Soriano, D., & Schüssler, M. (2018). Fuzzy-set qualitative comparative analysis (fsQCA) in entrepreneurship and innovation research—the rise of a method. *International Entrepreneurship and Management Journal*, 14, 15-33.