Abstract

The professional services sector is an increasingly important component of the economy in developed and newly emerging markets (NEMs) with many such companies becoming active in international markets. Network relationships are often critical to their foreign market entry (FME) process. In this exploratory, multiple case study we identify the key barriers to FME in NEMs for professional service firms from developed markets and how they participate within NEMs of Asia. We provide a conceptual framework of key barriers and theoretical underpinnings to this process, highlighting the importance of networks. Distinct barriers include cultural work practices, existing technology, regulatory barriers, and communication style. To overcome these barriers, firm networks were used to secure market knowledge and to act as a basis for strategic decision-making, with foreign network actors a key influence in the FME process. Finally, the elements of orientating, positioning and timing were critical in the context of FME, and Network Perspective provides a useful theoretical explanation of this process.