

Internationalisation of Retail Firms: State of the Art after 20 Years of Research

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Most leading retailers in different retail sectors have multiplied their foreign sales in the last two decades. These dynamics are accompanied by challenges for international retail firms in such fields as internationalisation strategy, market selection and operations, as well as performance factors in specific countries, cultures, or in an inter-country environment. The practical relevance resulted in extensive research activities. Therefore, the objective of this paper is to provide a systemic overview of studies in the field of international retail research published since 1990, focussing on research question, theory, methodology, and core findings. Conceptual and case study-based papers are analysed, as well as the somewhat underrepresented empirical papers. The research fields addressed are motives, internationalisation strategies, market selection and entry strategies, market operations, and performance/failure. Most of the papers examined are published in retail-specific journals and contain ambiguous results in some cases. Thus, further research that is empirical and makes more use of findings from general international business literature is needed. Research questions are addressed in each of the fields analysed.

Keywords

Retail Internationalisation, Internationalisation Strategy, Market Selection, Market Entry Strategy, Market Operations, Performance, Failure

1. Introduction

Retail internationalisation has taken place in all retail sectors with increasing dynamics since the nineties. Thus, the change from emergent to planned activities (Dawson 2006), complex decisions (Goldman 2001; Sternquist 1997) and culturally influenced performance (Evans/Mavondo 2002) is particularly relevant in firms' practice. The reasons for increasing retail internationalisation can be seen in (1) the attractiveness of foreign markets, (2) entrepreneurial ambitions, and (3) the limited growth opportunities in the home country markets (Alexander 1995a; McGoldrick 2002). In general, retail internationalisation entails many advantages, but also some challenges. Evidence on the thirty largest retailers, for example, shows that one in two retailers has already suffered failures abroad (Alexander/Quinn/Cairns 2005; Burt/Dawson/Sparks 2004b).

With regard to the practical relevance of retail internationalisation, many researchers examine in detail how retail internationalisation can be managed successfully. These



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studies emphasise the development of explanatory concepts for the internationalisation of retail firms. The majority of them analyse retail internationalisation on a conceptual basis. Thus, they develop explanatory concepts on a theoretical and often on a case study-oriented basis in order to analyse the mechanisms of retail internationalisation. Fewer studies are empirical, understood as being based on large sample sizes. According to *Snow/Hambrick* (1980), these empirical studies are mainly based on objective indicators, and less on face-to-face interviews. This can be explained partly by the unwillingness of retail managers to provide information, which eliminates the possibility of focusing on empirical research only.

In this literature review, a broad definition of internationalisation is used (*Caloff/Beamish* 1995) and only research fields that are linked to marketing issues are taken into account (*Cavusgil/Deligonul/ Yaprak* 2005). Furthermore, we also consider institutional and functional retailers, which is common practice in international retailing research. In order to provide an appropriate overview, more than 200 papers, published in international scientific journals between 1990 and 2008, were examined and 105 of them are discussed. The literature search has been conducted by the commonly used electronic databases, followed by the revision of the reference list of each paper for further literature. The literature review focuses on empirical studies as well as those conceptual papers, which are of eminent relevance for future research. Both kinds of studies are valuable for the young research field of international retailing. We therefore give a broad overview in each research field and discuss consequences for future, empirical research. The framework in the following section contains a structure for five research fields and serves as the basic principle for analysis of the individual research papers in Chapter 3 with regard to research question, theory, methodology, and core findings. Areas for further research are addressed in the final section.

2. Framework of the literature review

Researchers identified specific characteristics of retail firms' internationalisation in contrast to that of manufacturing firms that underline the need for retail-specific views. *Currah/Wrigley* (2004), *Dawson* (1994) and *Sparks* (1995) mention marketing, management, and financial differences:

- Retailers in general have direct consumer contacts, high transaction frequencies, and a wide scope of marketing instruments to address customer needs (e.g. location, store layout)
- Markets for retailers are local, restricted by market barriers (e.g. local rules on store location, opening hours), and store design as well as retail knowledge cannot be trademarked

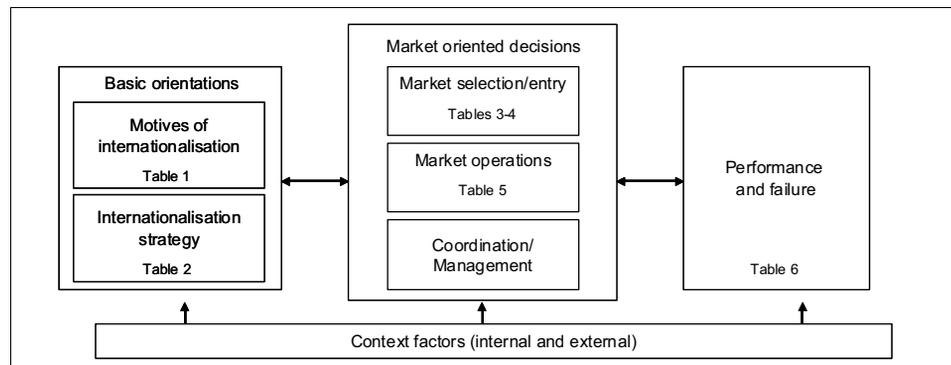
- International retail store networks sometimes encompass 500 and more stores, resulting in some degree of geographical dispersion in the multinational corporation and requiring a balance between centralised and decentralised decision-making
- Retail stores combine tangible (e.g. assortment) and intangible offers (e.g. store layout) as only the visible parts of the internationalisation process. Local assortments and a large number of suppliers enhance the value of stock and hence, the importance of sourcing and supply chain activities
- Retailers have a specific cost structure. The share of purchase costs constitutes a major part of the total costs. Thus, it is important to make economies of scale
- In retailing, the income stream generated after an investment decision is different to that of manufacturers, as are the cash flow characteristics. Due to the high level of direct investments normally made, the related exit costs are enormous

On the one hand, these characteristics are important in the domain of international business research and constitute a major concern in discussions. For example, international strategy typologies have greater explanatory power if they are applied in a sector-specific context (*Harzing* 2000). On the other hand, the retail sector itself may also only act as a moderator in international business frameworks. Consequently, some researchers make intensive use of general international business research findings, while others claim retail-specific conceptualisations.

The conceptualisations of retail internationalisation processes form the basis of this paper. *Burt et al.* (2008) mention elementary decisions regarding market selection, market entry strategies, standardisation/adaptation of marketing instruments, and culture/management in their conceptual paper. *Swoboda/Foscht/Cliquet* (2008) analyse the configuration and coordination of value chain activities in a wider scope while *Colla/Dupuis* (2002) and *Palmer/Quinn* (2005) mention alternative dimensions. *Dawson* (2007) structures the retail internationalisation process according to business model, ability to adapt to the market, operational techniques of retailing, and consumer values and expectations. Empirical approaches can be found by *Hutchinson/Quinn/Alexander* (2006), *Moore/Fernie* (2005) and *Pederzoli* (2006), who consider motives, strategies, market selection, market entry strategy, adaptation, and other aspects in fashion retailing. On this basis, the framework illustrated in *Fig. 1* serves to identify studies that deal with the market-oriented phenomena of retail internationalisation.

Category 1 encompasses studies dealing with motives for going abroad (*Tab. 1*). The second category of studies addresses the retailers' internationalisation strategies, e.g. multinational or global (*Tab. 2*). They can be seen as the retailers' basic orientations, determining further decisions. Category 3 consists of studies investigating market

Figure 1: Framework of the literature review of retailing internationalisation



selection (Tab. 3), as well as studies regarding the choice of market entry strategy (Tab. 4). Both, in turn, could determine the form of market operations, meaning standardisation or adaptation of formats or single marketing instruments, which is summarised in Tab. 5. The final category contains studies on performance and failure by retail firms (Tab. 6). Performance is used as an outcome variable in studies analysing the impact of the degree of adaptation on performance. International failures and divestments are considered explicitly in terms of their item characteristics, determinants, and consequences. The context factors illustrated in the framework (external, e.g. host, home country, or inter-country context, and internal, e.g. resource, knowledge) are mentioned in the context of each research field, while studies are excluded that are not related to marketing issues, such as studies addressing supply chain management (e.g. *Coe/Hess* 2005; *Johansson/Burt* 2004) and coordination issues (e.g. *Palmer* 2005a; 2005b; *Swoboda/Anderer* 2008), as well as descriptive studies regarding changes in retail structures according to:

- the inter-country relevance of formats (e.g. *Colla* 2004 and *Dawson* 2000 in Europe)
- single formats (e.g. *Aggarwal* 2003; *Bennison/Gardner* 1995; *Colla* 2003 on discounters; *Davies/Sanghavi* 1995 on category killers; *Fernie/Fernie* 1997 on factory outlet centres or *Reynolds* 1992 on shopping centres), as well as some firm-specific papers (e.g. *Arnold* 1999 on Wal-Mart's performance in Europe; *Fernie/Arnold* 2002)
- a single country (e.g. *Alexander/Myers* 1999 on Southeast Asia; *Burt/Sparks* 1995 on the UK; *Davies/Fergusson* 1995 on Japan; *Flavián/Polo* 1998 on Spain; *Samiee/Yip/Luk* 2004 on China and *Simova/Clarke-Hill/Robinson* 2003 on the Czech Republic)
- countries/regions (e.g. *Bennett* 2003 on Central Europe; *Dibb* 1996 on the Pacific region; *Flavián/Haberberg/Polo* 2002 on UK vs. Spain; *Tordjman* 1995; *Myers* 2003 on Western Europe)

3. Review of the academic literature

3.1. Studies analysing basic orientation of international retailers

3.1.1. Motives and goals of going abroad

Firms' motives for expanding abroad are the oldest field of international retail research (*Hollander* 1970; *Kacker* 1985). Many studies date from the nineties, the time of liberalisation in Central/Eastern Europe and Southern/Eastern Asia. The fairly large number of empirical studies in this area corresponds to the vast number of possible motives (Tab. 1). Differentiations between home market-related motives or push factors and host market-related motives or pull factors, as well as reactive and proactive motives, are common.

The first empirical studies by *Alexander* (1990; 1995a; 1995b) focus on the role of proactive motives and pull motives (especially niche opportunities for retailers), while *Williams* (1991; 1992a; 1992b) shows three motive groups: push, pull, and firm-specific motives. Furthermore, *Alexander* (1996) addresses motive changes at two different points in time.

Context factors are addressed by *Quinn* (1999), who states that the relevance of motives differs depending on how much experience a firm has in international expansion. *Tatoglu/Demirbag/ Kaplan* (2003) compare the motives of fashion retailers, who rate the firm's brand highly, and food retailers, who give deeper consideration to external factors in the foreign market, most notably market size, economic and population growth, geographical proximity, and infrastructure aspects. *Hutchinson et al.* (2007) examine the motives and their determinants of smaller specialist retailers. Finally, *Evans et al.* (2008) deal with barriers to internationalisation. *Chen/Sternquist* (1995) address the advantages and characteristics of retail firms operating internationally in general, similar to *Vida/Reardon/Fairhurst* (2000).

The studies are mostly descriptive even though a large number of non-internationalised retailers permit empirical data analysis. Furthermore, they estimate motives according to retail sectors (food and fashion), changes to more proactive motives over time, as well as changing motives affected by growing international experience.

Author(s) and year	Research question	Theory/framework	Empirical basis/sector/method	Core findings
Empirical Studies				
Evans <i>et al.</i> (2008)	To survey motives for internationalisation and attitudes/intentions, also standardisation vs. differentiation	Motives for <i>RI</i> processes	Primary data (<i>n</i> = 12)/UK+US, non-specific/qualitative	- At least two motives are crucial for <i>RI</i> - Ad hoc decisions in the past, today knowledge transfer - Internal barriers: lack of management - and resource commitment, lack of international experience - External barriers: regulatory circumstances
Hutchinson <i>et al.</i> (2007)	Explore internationalisation motives of small specialist retailers and their determinants in the decision-making processes	None; development of a framework for the decision to internationalise	Primary data (<i>n</i> = 9)/UK, emphasis on luxury retailers/exploratory case studies	- Company brand identity as significant motive for expansion; understood as pull factor by foreign markets - Sources of facilitating factors: internal (mind-set, entrepreneurial personality, foreign personal relationships), external (contacts, government/consultancy assistance) and parent advantage (financial capital, know-how, expertise)
Tatoglu/Demirbag/Kaplan (2003)	Importance of motives for market engagement in Eastern Europe; referring to food vs. fashion	Mention concepts of internationalisation in retailing without using them	Primary data (<i>n</i> = 11)/European, fashion/factors, means, standard deviation	- Relevance of pull (host country), firm, and push (home country) specific motives; dominance of host/proactive motives - Pull motives show significant differences; food: stronger economies of scale and legal environment; fashion: stronger company ethos
Vida/Reardon/Fairhurst (2000)	Explanatory variables for international engagement of <i>RFs</i> (internationalisation as a growth strategy)	Phase model of internationalisation of <i>RF</i>	Primary data (<i>n</i> = 80; only 50 % international)/overall, USA/factors, regressions	- Strategic management characteristics and retail specific-competitive advantages mostly influencing the decision of an <i>RF</i> to choose internationalisation as a growth strategy - Weaker influence due to size of <i>RFs</i> - No significant influence from international experience
Vida (2000)	Empirical test of the model of Vida/Fairhurst (1998)	Phase models of internationalisation of <i>RF</i> and model of Vida/Fairhurst (1998)	Primary data (<i>n</i> = 80); 50 % international/overall, USA/frequencies, analysis of variance	- Antecedents: dominant motives for internationalisation are pull/proactive factors rather than limits in home market - Process: format does not influence the internationalisation effort; tendency to a stronger <i>RI</i> - Outcomes: Preference for <i>MES</i> that can be controlled easily; preference for Canada and Europe
Quinn (1999)	Analysis of motives for internationalisation referring to the first foreign market entry and international experience	None; referring to processes of internationalisation and Alexander (1990); push/pull motives	Primary data (<i>n</i> = 41)/UK, overall/frequencies, means, analysis of variance	- Dominating growth and proactive factors - Initial expansion abroad is not influenced by home market - No significant differences regarding motives between the three groups (new, developing, experienced; classified according to international experience); only small weighting differences
Alexander (1995a; 1996)	Exploring motives for internationalisation; influence by establishment of the EU and NAFTA	None; evolutionary changes in the environment and referring to dichotomy of reactive and proactive motives	Primary data, two points in time (<i>n</i> = 80, 46)/UK, overall, mostly national <i>RFs</i> /means	- Caused by establishment of the EU, <i>RFs</i> from the UK focus more strongly on the EU market instead of the US market - The size and economic prospects of the EU market are particularly significant motives - Matrix used to structure motives: "autochthonic", reactive, expansive and proactive motives; motives are not dichotomous and will shift in the course of internationalisation
Chen/Sternquist (1995)	Analysis of determinants causing some Japanese <i>RFs</i> to start international activities and others not	None; referring to Dunning's eclectic paradigm, motives, geographical and cultural distance	Secondary data (<i>n</i> = 45)/J, overall, 50 % international/discriminant analysis	- International <i>RFs</i> are characterised by higher sales, longer existence, larger sales areas in the home market, higher number of employees, as well as higher bank liabilities - No differences between sales productivity, profitability, and growth rates
Williams (1992a; 1992b)	Range of motives that are transferable to factor or motive bundles	None; referring to previous motive-dichotomy	Primary data (<i>n</i> = 42)/UK, overall/factors, frequencies	- Identification of factors as dichotomy is not sufficient - Proactive and growth-oriented motives, as well as the innovativeness of the format/offer are most important - Passive growth barriers in home market are less relevant
Williams (1991)	Conditions for internationalisation	Different company advantages (based on Alderson 1957, Porter 1985, Madsen 1988)	Primary data (<i>n</i> = 42)/UK, overall/factors, frequencies	- Identification of conditions for <i>RI</i> (check list): 1) existence and application of marketing skills; 2) exploitation of economies of scale; 3) development of a unique, internationally applicable and innovative concept; 4) development of a strong retail brand
Alexander (1990)	Exploring motives supporting and hindering internationalisation of <i>RFs</i>	None; referring especially to Kacker (1985) and push/pull motives	Primary data (<i>n</i> = 26)/UK, overall/frequencies, means	- Proactive motives are dominant, especially niche opportunities, size and economic prospects of the market - Contradicting White (1984) and de Somogyi (1986) - Restraints: finding of appropriate locations, differences in competition, format/customer preferences
Conceptual studies				
McGoldrick (2002)	Systematisation of <i>RI</i> motives	None	Conceptual	- Proposal to categorise into push, pull and enabling factors; enabling factors strengthen the others
Alexander (1995b)	Exploring the motives of internationalisation in the long term	None; referring to various dichotomies	Conceptual	- Motive dichotomy is not enough to explain internationalisation - Studies on internationalisation of <i>RFs</i> have to take a (management) process perspective
Hallsworth (1992)	Analysis of <i>RI</i> between context and contingency Kacker (1985)	None; referring to Kacker (1985)	Conceptual	- Contingency: EU deregulation, adjustment, establishment - Context: conditions specific to country and firm; future development of internationalisation in retailing is not specified

MES = market entry strategy, *RF* = retail firm, *RI* = retail internationalisation

Table 1: Studies examining the motives for going international

3.1.2. Internationalisation strategy

In international business research, internationalisation strategies are classified into multinational, global and transnational strategies, based on the degree of adaptation and integration of foreign activities (Bartlett/Ghoshal/Beamish 2008). Retail researchers have reflected on internationalisation strategies since the initial work by Salmon/Tordjman (1989) and Treadgold (1988). Conceptual studies relating to the occurrence of different strategy types are prevalent (Tab. 2). However, the current research status does not state whether researchers should seek

- a differentiation between multinational and global strategies (Salmon/Tordjman 1989; Sternquist 1997; Pederzoli 2006)
- a third transnational strategy (Treadgold 1990/91), or a fourth international strategy (Alexander/Myers 2000; Helfferich/Hinfelaar/Kasper 1997)
- or even further typologies (Goldman 2001; Hutchinson/Quinn/Alexander 2005; Leknes/Carr 2004; Rugman/Girod 2003)

Author(s) and year	Research question	Theory/framework	Empirical basis/sector/method	Core findings
Empirical Studies				
<i>Pederzoli</i> (2006)	Explanation of <i>RI</i> process	Literature on internationalisation, strategic models and <i>RI</i> process; <i>Sternquist</i> (1997)	Expert interviews (<i>n</i> = 37)/Food/Non-Food/Correlations	- Global and multinational strategy as "orientation of marketing" - 20 variables of <i>RI</i> processes are identified; bivariate values are formed, and experts asked to evaluate <i>RF</i> : location/management (format, control, organisation, competition), culture (strategy, positioning, adaptation, cultural distance, country of origin of management); growth (<i>MES</i> , growth strategies) - Strategic orientation as the most important variable in the <i>RI</i> process; dominated by "global" orientation
<i>Leknes/Carr</i> (2004)	Applying the framework of <i>Calori/Atamer/Nunes</i> (2000) for strategic configurations in the retail sector	<i>Calori/Atamer/Nunes</i> (2000) typology	Secondary data (<i>n</i> = 64)/worldwide, overall/qualitative, regressions	- nine strategic configurations characterised by six dimensions: geographical diffusion, covering the segments <i>MES</i> , standardisation, international integration of value chain activities - Aligned to all <i>RFs</i> , e.g. fashion, food, and others - Fashion retailers are significantly more successful in contrast to all other retail sectors; four configurations are significantly less successful than the others
<i>Rugman/Girod</i> (2003)	Analysis of the degree of internationalisation of <i>RFs</i>	<i>Rugman</i> (2000), <i>MNCs</i> as flagships and value chain activities of <i>MNCs</i>	Secondary data (<i>n</i> = 49)/overall, worldwide/descriptive	- <i>RFs</i> do not operate on a "global" basis (in the worldwide sense), but only in two or three clearly distinguished regions, measured by share of foreign sales, divided into regions: domestic, home-based, bi-regional, and global - Only one globally oriented <i>RF</i> identified: <i>LVMH</i>
<i>Goldman</i> (2001)	Process of business format transfer by foreign <i>RF</i> to China, dependent on motivation to adapt the business format	Inductive, "grounded theory", concept of a "retail format" according to <i>Hollander</i> (1970), <i>Kacker</i> (1985, 1988)	Primary data (<i>n</i> = 27)/overall/qualitative, frequencies, "classification"	- Counts 40 external (visible) and internal (know-how related) variables as basis for adaptation/standardisation of formats - Four patterns of format adaptation (none to substantial) - Six format transfer strategies, depending on conditions in China - Characterised by no. of changed elements, int. orientation and scope of int. operations: global niche protection, opportunism, format pioneering opportunism, format extension, portfolio-based transfer, competitive position-oriented
Conceptual Studies				
<i>Swoboda/Foscht/Cliquet</i> (2008)	Framework of <i>RI</i> process, oriented towards value-chain process	Value-added process concept	Conceptual, three case studies	- Country axis (degree of adaptation) and coordination axis (degree of centralised/formalised management) - Coordination, configuration, externalisation as management dimensions for each value-added process; in a dynamic process
<i>Rugman/Girod</i> (2003); <i>Girod/Rugman</i> (2005)	<i>RI</i> and illustrating its success by means of flagship network strategies	Flagship network strategy, based on firms' and country-specific advantages (<i>FSA</i> and <i>CSA</i>)	Case study (<i>n</i> = 3)/unspecified (<i>Tesco</i> , <i>LVMH</i> , <i>Body Shop</i>)/qualitative	- Matrix: alignment of the <i>RFs</i> is postulated by the <i>CSA</i> dimension and the geographical scale <i>FSA</i> (for three firms, between low and high in numbered quadrants) - The flagship relations a retailing firm has established depending on its position in the <i>FSA/CSA</i> matrix
<i>Hutchinson/Quinn/Alexander</i> (2005)	Develop a conceptual framework for the <i>RI</i> process, specially tailored to small and medium-sized retailers	Literature: motives, management factors, networks, environment, process, <i>MES</i> , strategy	Conceptual	- Consider international market strategies in their model ("global skimming or multinational") that interact with the choice of <i>MES</i> and the development process - Firms specialised in global skimming: in luxury markets, multinational: firms in the mid-range segment required local adaptation
<i>Alexander/Myers</i> 2000	Modelling of the <i>RI</i> process	<i>Treadgold</i> (1988)	Conceptual	- Strategy in foreign markets as a decision between global, transnational, multinational, investment and mixed variants - Synthesis: <i>RI</i> process as matrix that combines company (ethno/geocentric) and host country-related (low/high expansion) axes - proximal (ethnocentric/low exp.), transnational (geocentric/low), multinational (ethnocentric/high), global (geocentric/high)
<i>Helffferich/Hinfelaar/Kasper</i> (1997)	Development of a classification model for <i>RFs</i> operating internationally because previous studies are inadequate	Review concerning <i>RI</i> process; <i>Bartlett/Ghoshal</i> (1989) and <i>Keegan</i> (1995); Culture (as predictor variable)	Conceptual	- Four types are applied according to <i>Bartlett/Ghoshal</i> : international, global, multinational and transnational - Development of five parameters/dimensions: 1) geographical scope (continents), 2) cultural diffusion (cultural zones), 3) cultural orientation (ethno-, geo-, polycentric, mixed), 4) marketing dimension (adaptation), 5) management (central/decentral.)
<i>Sternquist</i> (1997)	Prediction of internationalisation steps in the future	<i>OLI</i> paradigm; process models; risks; <i>Salmon/Tordjman</i> (1989)	Conceptual and short case studies	- Referring to <i>Salmon/Tordjman</i> 1989, global/multinational - Mentions specific firms that are supposedly related to the respective category, without analysis (global: Toys 'R' Us, Gap, IKEA, Benetton; multinational: Sears, Wal-Mart)
<i>Treadgold</i> (1990/91)	Develops a stage model for <i>RI</i> by reviewing the increasing international operations of <i>RFs</i>	None	None (sporadic secondary data to evidence the increasing international operations of <i>RFs</i>)	- Three-stage internationalisation model, including dimensions of geographical presence (no. of countries) and time (e.g. applied to Marks & Spencer); three phases: reluctance, caution, ambition - multinational, global and transnational <i>RFs</i> in adopted <i>IR</i> framework classified at their own discretion (multinational: BAT, Vindex; global: Benetton, IKEA; transnational: C&A, Carrefour)
<i>Salmon/Tordjman</i> (1989)	Show different strategies of <i>RFs</i> according to the <i>OLI</i> paradigm	None (mention some internationalisation barriers implicitly without mentioning the theory of <i>Bartlett/Ghoshal</i> (1989))	None (use some macroeconomic data)	- Previously two dominating investment strategies, now two internationalisation strategies: global and multinational - Global: replication of the same format worldwide, standardisation of marketing, centralised management - Multinational: adaptation of formats and marketing to local needs, decentralised management
<i>Treadgold</i> (1988)	Uses typology of <i>RFs</i> to show different strategies	None	Non-specific, secondary data on <i>MES</i> and no. of countries of <i>RF</i>	- Dimensions of typology: geographical presence (countries, divided in concentrated, dispersed, multinational, global) and <i>MES</i> - Cluster 1: "Cautious internationalists", C2: "Emboldened internationalists", C3: "Aggressive internationalists", C4: "World powers"

Table 2: Studies examining internationalisation strategies

The studies are based on objective indicators, expert opinions or in-depth interviews, which makes them hard to compare. Furthermore, the studies do not use a consistent theory, so the understanding of strategy types differs. For instance, *Rugman/Girod* (2003) estimate only one (geographically) global retail firm, and *Pederzoli* (2006) acknowledges that a global strategy is the most popular among retailing firms. In contrast, *Helffferich/Hinfelaar/Kasper* (1997) and *Salmon/Tordjman* (1989) find evi-

dence for four strategy types. Both studies use the integration responsiveness (*IR*) framework as a theoretical basis and refer directly to the two axes of the framework. Furthermore, *Goldman* (2001) identifies six possible format transfer strategies for retail firms. The author examines a large number of retailers' attributes as a basis for a descriptive categorisation like *Pederzoli's* (2006). On the other hand, *Goldman* interviews the subsidiaries of foreign retailers in China, while *Pederzoli* interviews

Author(s) and year	Research question	Theory/framework	Empirical basis/sector/method	Core findings
Empirical Studies				
Alexander/Rhodes/Myers (2007), Myers/Alexander (2007)	Determining market selection and providing an overview of the expansion of international retailing in Europe, influence on retail structures	Psychic distance and internationalisation process theories, direction of the <i>RI</i> process	Secondary data (n = 240 entries) Western Europe, unspecified/correlations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>RFs</i> tend to expand into psychically close markets; into markets less developed than the home market; <i>RFs</i> operating internationally tend to come from large home markets - Geographical and cultural proximity as guiding criteria of international activities - High importance of market size - Mutual influence of European markets
Gripsrud/Benito (2005)	Development of a market selection model, "spatial interaction model"	Dunning's eclectic paradigm and the behaviourist theory/internationalisation process models	Secondary data (n = 86) UK, overall/correlation, regressions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Market choice based on attractiveness and market distance (geographical and cultural) - Geographical distance more important than cultural distance - Measures of attractiveness are especially important in early and intermediate phases of internationalisation; this is not the case for internationally experienced firms
Maharajh/Heitmeyer (2005)	Analysis of the importance of certain factors determining decisions on market selection	Behaviorist paradigm of <i>Vida/Fairhurst</i> 1998 (model of factors influencing <i>RI</i> processes)	Primary data (n = 22) USA, non-food, mostly national- <i>RFs</i> /frequencies, means, ranking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Most important criteria for market selection are political and economic stability, as well as market size - Intention to enter a certain foreign market does not influence the importance of the factors
Bordier (2003)	Evaluation of reasons for China being the preferred market choice for international <i>RFs</i>	None	Secondary data (IGD ranking of attractiveness of 75 countries) overall, world-wide/descriptive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Criteria of attractiveness of China: market size and future consumer spending; less "modern retailing"; so far no concentration - Barriers: insufficient infrastructure, geographical and cultural differences, customers' price sensitivity, aggressive local <i>RFs</i>, strong competition with Asian <i>RFs</i>
Alexander/Silva (2002)	Demonstration of retailing structure for international <i>RFs</i> in South America, especially Brazil	Concept of geographical and cultural distance	In-depth interviews (n = 29) <i>RFs</i> and service providers in the Brazilian market/qualitative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Demonstration of the market structure in Brazil, foreign <i>RFs</i>, largest <i>RFs</i>, wholesalers, shopping centres, etc. - Increasing purchasing power seems to be a criterion for entry of foreign <i>RFs</i>; supported by <i>Godley/Fletcher</i> 2000 - Concept of psychic distance supported by <i>Evans/Treadgold/Mavondo</i> 2000
Myers/Alexander (1997)	Description of the relevance of Eastern European markets for Western European <i>RFs</i>	None	Primary data (n = 92) European food/frequencies, means	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Geographical proximity as fundamental variable for market selection - Especially economic and structural development as criteria of attractiveness for Eastern Europe - Intensity of competition as a further key criterion
Danneels (1996)	Comparison between normative models in market segmentation and reality	Concepts of market segmentation	Primary data (n = 25) Belgium, Fashion/qualitative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No <i>RF</i> had conducted segmentation before market entry - Entry with unchanged concept, then adaptation of marketing mix to country; competitors are observed; target group in new market not defined in advance, but develops over time - Normative models can only be used to a limited extent
Myers/Alexander (1996)	Evaluation of direction of <i>RI</i> depending on geographical and cultural distance and economic development	Refers to <i>Treadgold</i> (1990/91)	Primary data (n = 92) EU Food/frequencies, means	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Geographical proximity confirmed as fundamental variable of market selection - <i>Treadgold's</i> model (international expansion depends on the retailer's experience abroad) confirmed, but direction/pattern of <i>RI</i> based on complex interaction of factors, economic development in the home country also important
Alexander (1995c)	Effects of establishment of the EU on the expansion of UK <i>RFs</i> in sense of increased attractiveness	None; mention of perceived cultural, psychic and geographical distance	Primary data (n = 46) national and international <i>RF</i> /descriptive/frequencies/means	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Despite psychic distance, establishment of the EU led to these markets becoming attractive; this distance however remains an obstacle to market entry intentions for the coming years - EU area is perceived as the most attractive foreign market (from the perspective of UK <i>RFs</i>)
Gable et al. (1995)	Comparison of effectiveness of endogenous and exogenous market entry barriers	Referring to <i>Porter</i> (1985) (exogenous barriers) and <i>Shepherd</i> (1979); <i>Yip</i> (1982) (endogenous barriers)	Primary data (n = 203) USA, overall, but <i>RFs</i> operating nationally/means, analysis of variance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Exogenous barriers have the strongest effect - Most effective barriers are capital requirements, availability of locations and qualified employees, as well as a clearly defined image toward competitors - Barriers are perceived as more effective when it comes to entry into a new market (compared to entry into own market) - Advertising campaigns and sales promotion activities as reaction toward new competitors, which means emphasising endogenous barriers to strengthen the exogenous ones
Burt (1995)	Summary of <i>RI</i> process research and time of previous ap-series analysis of chosen country markets and <i>MES</i> of non-food <i>RFs</i>	Nonspecific, summary	Secondary data (n = 918, in the sense of "actions" 1960-1993) non-food, UK/frequencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Demonstrates research development from a geographic focus (who is moving where) toward process dimensions - Increased/different <i>MES</i> over time; fashion: predominantly internal growth; body care: dominated by franchising - Market selection: preferred entry of UK <i>RFs</i> to the US market, followed by France, Netherlands and Germany
Laulajainen/Abe/Laulajainen (1993)	Analysis of the extent of internationalisation of <i>RF</i> , development of <i>Treadgold</i> (1988) a "geographical index"	Control and risk as central dimensions, <i>Treadgold</i> (1988)	Secondary data (n = 20) retailer and fast food, overall/means, variances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Data regarding the number of foreign markets and domestic turnover, interval scale; demonstration of geographical fields of activities (world map) - By combining variables, several geographical distributions are shown, also according to the market of origin
Burt (1993)	Ex-post observation of the chosen country markets of European <i>RFs</i> and their <i>MES</i> (market entries in the years 1960-1990)	Context factors, <i>Treadgold</i> (1990/91), <i>Salmon/Tordjman</i> (1989), cultural and geographical distance, risk	Secondary data (n = 726) EU, overall/frequencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - International direction of expansion "pattern" can be explained by considering the risk (cultural and geographical proximity, level of development of the market) - Link market selection and <i>MES</i>: acquisitions/internal growth in the less risky markets, franchising in risky markets - The chosen expansion strategy and the retail sector could be used to explain <i>RI</i>
Li/Guisinger (1992)	Investigation of determinants of foreign direct investments (FDI)	Theory of FDI, eclectic paradigm, internationalisation theory, oligopolistic reaction, cultural distance, competition theory	Secondary data (n = 168) nine service industries in Japan, Europe and North America/logistic regression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - FDI are influenced positively by host country market size, openness of the host country to the inward FDI, international competitiveness of the service industry in the home country, global oligopolistic reaction and firm size - FDI are influenced negatively by the cultural distance - FDI can be explained simultaneously by different theories
Burt (1991)	Ex-post observation of the chosen country markets of European food <i>RFs</i> (+ <i>MES</i>) by means of "actions" (=market entries in the years 1960-1990)	Mentions areas of literature within <i>RI</i> (motives: push/pull and "pattern"); phase model of internationalisation	Secondary data (n = 210) EU, food/frequencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Country preferences depending on the country of origin - Legal restrictions in the home markets since the mid-70s as reason for internationalisation - Some <i>RFs</i> that go international at an early stage are main actors in home market searching for potential ways of making profits; some were specialised <i>RFs</i> multiplying their concepts - Initial steps into geographically close markets

Table 3: Studies examining market selection and (past) entries

Conceptual Studies				
Swoboda/Schwarz/Hälsig (2007)	Development of a market selection model with regard to basic decisions (strategy, resources, etc.)	Decision model for market selection as part of further areas of decision in internationalisation	Conceptual and case study analysis (n = 1), supported by primary data/C&C, Germany/qualitative	- Step-by-step decision-making process: 1. International market selection (funnel attachment: preliminary research, scoring models, ranking, management decision); 2. Country-specific market selection (three-step feasibility-study) - The model shows pre-decisions for market selection (policies, strategies, resources, etc., as well as interacting decisions)
Sakarya/Eckman/Hyllegard (2007)	Development of a tool composed of four criteria to respond to the issue of market selection of emerging markets	None/consider long-term market potential, cultural distance, competitive strength of industry, customer receptiveness	Conceptual and case study analysis (n = 1) US fashion retailer, Turkey as emerging market/descriptive	- The four criteria of the conceptual framework can be applied for market selection of an emerging country - Strong future market potential, manageable level of cultural distance, supportive and developing industry and positive customer receptiveness in the case of Turkey as a selected market for a US fashion retailer
Waarts/van Everdingen (2006)	Role of cultural influencing factors as part of the expansion patterns in European (fashion) retailing	Hofstede and Hall regarding cultural clusters; Mitra/Golder (2002)	Secondary data (n = 9), conceptual/EU, fashion/list of market entries (country and year respectively)	- Role of geographical and cultural factors in the course of expansion of RFs in new countries; importance of geographical proximity especially during the first stage of expansion; importance of cultural proximity in the following stages - Identification of three cultural country clusters - RFs follow a step-by-step cluster-approach (successive entry to countries in a distant cluster)
Jones (2003)	Internationalisation of Debenhams in the Middle East	None	Case study (n = 1) Debenhams/descriptive	- Examination of market selection (especially economic and political environment, market structures), MES: franchising - Marketing activities: several country-specific adjustments
Alexander (1997)	"Periodisation" of internationalisation activities	None	Non-specific	- Six phases: 1. 1880-1945: limited internationalisation through US and EU luxury goods RFs; 2. 1945-1960: US format to EU; 3. 1960-1974: EU RFs to USA and other European countries; 4. 1974-1983: few further steps due to depression; 5. 1983-1989: EU and US RFs strengthened again and Japanese RFs present in EU and USA; 6. 1989-2000: development of focus areas for target countries through NAFTA/EU, as well as the opening of Eastern Europe and East Asia
Fulop (1991)	Change in structure in Hungarian retailing due to the beginnings of liberalisation	None	Secondary data/Hungarian macro data/descriptive	- At present, governmental planning and currency risks hinder market entries, also lack of infrastructure and of marketing/promotion opportunities - Different modes of entry by foreign RFs
Finn (1987)	Theoretical perspective and criteria of market attractiveness; demonstrating differences	Theory of the firm, behaviourist, portfolio, financial and evolutionary theories	Secondary data (macroecon.)/Canada, overall/means/variances/factor analysis	- Attractiveness of the market is dependent on the chosen theoretical point of view - Certain market segments in Canada are attractive from various theoretical perspectives, some are just attractive from only one

MES = market entry format, RF = retail firm, RI = retail internationalisation

Table 3: Studies examining market selection and (past) entries

the head office managers. *Leknes/Carr* (2004) identified nine retail strategies.

3.2. Studies analysing market selection and entry strategy of international retailers

3.2.1. Market selection

Most studies address country market selections (international segmentation) and a few look at customer selection (integral segmentation). We focus on country market selection, where normative approaches include one-stage models, which mainly screen a country's macroeconomic indices, and multi-stage models, which refer to decision steps of market evaluation and selection (e.g. *Andersen/Buvik* 2002; *Papadopoulos/Chen/Thomas* 2002). In retail research, the work of *Laulajainen/Abe/Laulajainen* (1993) is an example of index building. The authors consider the number of foreign markets, the level of foreign sales, and the geographical areas. A normative research question is asked by *Gripsrud/Benito* (2005), but they only analyse the attractiveness and the perceived distance of markets in a descriptive way. *Danneels* (1996) compares normative approaches with ad-hoc procedures in retail practice. In normative multistage models, it makes sense to distinguish between an inter-country and a country-specific selection, the whole value chain including feasibility stage (*Swoboda/Schwarz/Hälsig* 2007), and determining factors (*Li/Guisinger* 1992).

Descriptive studies address the way in which firms enter foreign markets. This supports early theories that see country selection as a function of geographical proximity

and cultural distance, while geographical distance is relevant in the first steps of internationalisation (*Myers/Alexander* 1996; 1997 for Western European retailers, and *Vida* 2000 for US retailers, see *Tab. 2*). Further factors are shown by *Maharajh/Heitmeyer* (2005), e.g. economic/structural development, intensity of competition, political stability, while *Sakarya/Eckman/Hyllegard* (2007) look at cultural distance and customer receptiveness. *Gable et al.* (1995) analyse the impact of various barriers on market selection. Studies focus on entries to specific countries (*Alexander/Silva* 2002 Brazil, *Bordier* 2003 China, *Fulop* 1991 Hungary) while *Alexander/Rhodes/Myers* (2007; *Alexander* 1995c) analyse the interdependencies between the EU markets, among other things.

Specific international stage approaches consider the development of international retailers across country markets over time. A basis was established by *Alexander* (1997), who describes historical stages within the expansion process, which is similar to recent studies. *Waarts/van Everdingen* (2006) consider various foreign distance concepts and constitute country clusters on this basis. *Burt* (1995) extracts retail sector-specific expansion patterns, and *Burt* (1993) links country expansion to risk considerations and market entry mode.

The three research streams – normative, descriptive and process studies – are not closely connected. Particularly the last two, are empirically based, mostly using secondary and ex-post data, and combine a review of entry markets and strategies. Their theoretical basis is relatively broad and not different from early studies in general

international business research (where a broad basis was already used by *Finn* 1987), especially regarding the distance concepts.

3.2.2. Market entry strategy

Some empirical studies deal with the choice of market entry modes, a core research field in international business research. Studies dealing with specific operational modes of retailers (e.g. international franchising) are only mentioned on the basis of examples.

First, in addition to *Tab. 4*, some further studies should be pointed out. *Burt's* (1991; 1993; see *Tab. 3*) analyses switches in the chosen market entry strategy over time for grocery retailers. Acquisitions were the most important market entry mode up to the late eighties, before a switch was noted to wholly owned subsidiaries. *Gielens/*

Dekimpe (2001; see *Tab. 5*) identify subsidiaries as the prevalent market entry strategy for grocery retailers in the period from 1988 to 1998, as well as observing significantly better long-term sales performance compared to acquisitions and joint ventures (JV). In contrast, *Vida* (2000; see *Tab. 1*) describes preferences by non-food retailers, as do *Fernie/Moore/Lawrie* (1998) by showing a broader portfolio of market entry modes than for fashion retailers (e.g. own stores, franchising, distributors). In a mixed retail sector sample, *Alexander* (1990; see *Tab. 1*) underlines that some retailers prefer only one entry mode, meaning that half of the retailers surveyed use one market entry strategy and only 12.5 % use three strategies. *Swoboda/Jager/Schwarz* (2007) confirm the presence of a preferred strategy for the largest grocery retailers.

Author(s) and year	Research question	Theory/framework	Empirical basis/sector/method	Core findings
Empirical Studies				
<i>Gielens/Dekimpe</i> (2007)	Factors influencing speed and size of market entry	None/consists of inter- and intra-retailer information	Secondary data (n = 825)/European grocery retailers, 11 countries, 1982-2002/regressions	- Inter-retailer information: home players present in the host market and same-format players influence the speed of entry by a curvilinear relationship and linear by the proportion of different-format players; size of entry is influenced by the presence of home-based rivals and foreign players - Intra-retailer information: cultural knowledge, market size, and international experience influence positively the speed and size of market entry and negatively by global diversity
<i>Swoboda/Jager/Schwarz</i> (2007)	Factors influencing the choice of MES	Resource- and market-based view	Secondary data (n = 280, entries)/food, Europe/crosstabulation	- Firms favour specific modes of entry and any deviation from them is purely situational (forced by the environment) - Influence of internal (experience, size, culture) and external factors (country of origin, region of entry, GDP, status)
<i>Ahmed et al.</i> (2002)	Relationship between risk perception and choice of MES	Integrated, international risk perspective according to <i>Miller</i> (1992)	Primary data (n = 69)/Malaysian MNE, 22 % RF (discriminant, factor analysis)	- Significant relationship between risk perception and choice of MES - Low risk perceptions leads to MES with high control potential (own subsidiary) - High risk perception leads to MES with low control potential
<i>Lessassy/Jolibert</i> (2002)	Identification of MES depending on countries/regions	Geographical and cultural distance; standardised vs. adapted international strategies	Primary data (n = 25)/European food RF/factor analysis, PCA	- Identification of three generic MES characterised by different consumption of resources - RFs use various MES simultaneously depending on geographical/cultural distance of the foreign market
<i>Godley/Fletcher</i> (2000); <i>Godley</i> (2002)	Demonstration and explanation of FDI in the British retail market	None (micro- and macro-economic size as determinants of RI)	Secondary data (market sizes)/UK, overall/regressions	- Private purchasing power is the strongest factor contributing to investments in foreign countries - Compare four retail sectors, each shows specific processes - Relevance of DI: four foreign RFs, which played a dominant role in the British market for over 30 years, vanished in 1991
<i>Fernie/Moore/Lawrie</i> (1998)	Growth strategies, MES, their changes in the fashion industry as well as impact on cities	None	Secondary data (n = 105)/EU and USA fashion designer/frequencies	- Frequent change from private property to quotation, sale of shares to investors or creation of luxury goods conglomerates in order to finance the international business - Diversification into less expensive and less fashionable markets with other brands in order to secure growth - Selling via wholesalers, franchising, concessions, own stores - Occupation of prime locations by large corporations
Conceptual Studies				
<i>Park/Stemquist</i> (2008)	Conceptual explanation of market entry of RFs	<i>Dunning's</i> eclectic framework	Conceptual	- Framework to explain determinants of the RFs market entry strategy: wholly-owned vs. franchise - Main determinants are ownership, internalisation and pioneering advantages
<i>Huang/Stemquist</i> (2007)	Conceptual explanation of market entry of RFs	Institutional theory	Conceptual	- Framework explains whether RF will enter a market, to determine time of entry point, and to explain the choice of MES - Thus, consideration of a regulative, a normative and a cognitive dimension
<i>Picot-Coupey</i> (2006)	Determinants of choice of MES	Systematic perspective of planning; combination of Nordic internationalisation model, network theory and born-global approach	Conceptual, six case studies/France, fashion and accessories/qualitative	- Firm's characteristics, marketing policy and characteristics of the foreign markets act as explanatory variables and motives for internationalisation; networks act as moderating variables on four factors that lie behind the decision process on MES - These four factors are: flexibility, unintentional transmission of knowledge, restrictions on resources and control; and choice of MES as a result of the decision process
<i>Alexander/Doherty</i> (2004)	Determinants of choice of MES	None, mention management and environmental conditions, firm-related factors	Conceptual	- Postulation of market and environmental conditions, as well as management ability as basis for the choice of MES - The local market conditions are not the only deciding factors, but also the perspective of the headquarters
<i>Doherty</i> (2000)	Factors influencing choice of MES	Based on common management literature referring to factors influencing market entry decisions	Case study analysis, primary data (n = 7)/UK, fashion/descriptive	- Opportunistic and proactive choice of MES initially - Firms use various MES over time - Financial advantage over time from franchising and support of the spread of image by franchising - Change in MES over time due to changes in the management or individuals
<i>Doherty</i> (1999)	Explanation of the choice of MES by means of information asymmetry	Transaction cost theory/internationalisation theory and agency theory	Case studies, secondary data (n = 7)/UK, US, overall/qualitative	- Organic growth or acquisition as internationalised MES to avoid opportunistic risk (even by high transaction costs) - Franchising or licenses as soon as opportunistic risk can be regulated by contracts

DI = direct investment, MES = market entry strategy, PCA = principal component analysis, RF = retail firm, RI = retail internationalisation

Table 4: Studies on choices of market entry strategy

Determinants of strategy choice are linked by *Ahmed et al.* (2002) to the perceived risk, with results in accordance with that of general international business research, but only one quarter of his sample covers retailers. *Lessassy/Jolibert* (2002) show evidence that food retailers use different market entry strategies simultaneously, depending on the geographical/cultural distance of the host country. *Godley* (2002) and *Godley/Fletcher* (2000) investigate in particular the importance of the macroeconomic factors as determinants of foreign direct investments, but only in one country and not regarding the choice of market entry strategy. *Gielens/Dekimpe* (2007) examine the determinants of entry speed and size based on inter- and intra-retailer information.

The conceptual studies are more differentiated. This can be shown by the institutional economic framework of *Huang/Sternquist* (2007), who argued that the choice of market entry strategy is influenced by regulative, normative and cognitive dimensions. *Picot-Coupey* (2006) identifies the desires for flexibility, knowledge transfer, resource commitment and control as central determinants of the choice of market entry strategy. The models provided by *Alexander/Doherty* (2004), *Doherty* (1999; 2000) relate to fashion retailers.

In conclusion, most of the empirical studies in this research field are descriptive and based on secondary data. The conceptual studies are not confirmed empirically, but consider characteristics of retail firms, e.g. networks of outlets.

In addition, studies dealing with a specific market entry mode are only mentioned by way of example. Thus, studies focusing on international franchising type arrangements investigate

- potentials of franchising in a specific country (*Goncalves/Duarte* 1994; *Sinclair/Xiong* 2006; *Welsh/Alon/Falbe* 2006), in a specific retail firm (*Whitehead* 1991), determinants of strategy choice (*Doherty* 2007), or in general (*Petersen/Welch* 2000; *Sanghavi* 1991; *Welch* 1992)
- conceptual frameworks for franchising types (*Doherty/Quinn* 1999; *Quinn* 1998; *Quinn/Alexander* 2002), standardisation (*Thompson* 2000), early internationalisation (*Perrigot/Cliquet/Mes-bah* 2004), and internal coordination (*Doherty/Alexander* 2006)

Issues regarding JV in retailing are analysed on the basis of case studies by *Palmer/ Owens* (2006) and *Palmer* (2006). Similar studies dealing with strategic alliances are conducted by *Bailey/Clarke-Hill/Robinson* (1995), *Clarke-Hill/Robinson/Bailey* (1998), *Elg/Ghauri/Tarnovskaya* (2008) and *Hawkesworth* (1998). *Lindblom/Rimstedt* (2004) examine mergers and acquisitions (M&A), as well as JV. Regarding M&A, the studies by *Dragun* (2002) and *Dragun/Howard* (2003) analyse the impact of acquisitions in the European retail sector on value generating. *Poole/Clarke/ Clarke* (2003), and *Wrigley* (1997a; 1997b) investigate the item characteristics and consequences of M&A. However, it should be

mentioned that all studies do not come up to the standards of general international business research, neither theoretically or methodologically.

3.3. Studies analysing market operations of international retailers

The analysis of international market operations focuses on firms' strategies by analysing format transfer strategies and adaptation decisions (*Tab. 5*).

One prominent paper in *Tab. 5* is provided by *Evans/Bridson* (2005), who analyse the impact of culture on the market operations of international retailers, as well as the impact of culture on retail performance (*Evans/Mavondo* 2002; see *Tab. 6a*). The work provided by *Goldman* (2000; 2001) has already been mentioned in the context of internationalisation strategy. The author conceptualises formats into 40 external (visible and offer-related) and internal (non-visible and related to know-how) elements. Adaptation or standardisation was evaluated in a binary system and classified into several strategy types according to the level of adaptation. *Gielens/Dekimpe* (2001) show that retail formats that are innovative in the host country and, at the same time, familiar to the international retail firm hold greater prospects of success (considering market entry strategy and timing of entry simultaneously, see also *Gielens/Dekimpe* 2001 in *Tab. 4*). Finally, *Hadjimarcou/Barnes* (1998) examine the impact of currency depreciation and intensity of competition on the marketing instruments in a border region. A basis for a more frequently used conceptualisation is provided by *Goldman* (1981; 2000; 2001). These studies dominate the current empirical findings because other conceptual studies only try to find mechanisms in market operations, mainly on a case study basis.

The first group contains studies dealing with adaptation levels and the role of environmental factors. Different approaches are applied. *Bianchi/Arnold* (2004) and *Bianchi/Ostale* (2006) choose an institutional approach, highlighting local norms and rules, for example, as determining factors, and focusing, like *Goldman*, on internal and external elements of market operations. Also *Currah/Wrigley* (2004) comply with the content of *Goldman's* research, but choose the network theory and competence-based view as theoretical bases. All these studies conclude that retailers operating internationally tend to adapt their international operations. Retailers use back-end processes in order to adapt their front-end processes to the consumer culture abroad. Earlier studies can also be assigned to the issue regarding standardisation or adaptation of retail formats. *Goldman* (1981), for example, conceptualised the supply side (internal elements) and the demand side (customer-oriented/external elements), as did *Martenson* (1987). *Kacker* (1988), to whom *Goldman* refers, conceptualises retail know-how as a central determinant of retail internationalisation and understands this to be a technical dimension (e.g. location choice, store layout, atmosphere) and a management

Author(s) and year	Research question	Theory/framework	Empirical basis/sector/method	Core findings
Empirical Studies				
Evans/Bridson (2005)	Explanation of the degree of adaptation of retail marketing instruments by psychic distance	Concept of psychic distance	Primary data (n = 102)/non-food, worldwide/regressions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Psychic distance = cultural + business-related distance - (Perceived) psychic distance leads to stronger adaptation of the marketing mix - Particularly market structure, business practices and language (business-related distance) enhance the degree of adaptation - No significant influence by cultural distance
Gielens/Dekimpe (2001)	Demonstration of effects of strategic time-of-entry decisions on long-term performance	None	Secondary data (n = 169 entries)/West-EU, food, grocery/descriptive, correlations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Five strategic time-of-entry decisions: extensiveness of entry, MES, sequence (which other foreign RFs were in the country before; what place in the sequence), format (new or known in the country), familiarity with the format (in terms of new or known to RF, exported) - Positive performance effects: size (larger is better in the beginning), greenfield investments (better than acquisitions and joint ventures), order of entry (the earlier the better), new format (better in host country) and familiar format (better)
Goldman (2000)	Analysis of success factors in the super-market format in China	"Food retail modernisation theory"	Secondary data on consumer behaviour + analysis of primary data (n = approx. 80)/China, food (supermarkets)/qualitative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Comparison of traditional/new formats in China in terms of external (visible to customer, assortment, store design, service, location, price) and internal factors (a) repertoire in terms of norms, experience, strategies, b) technology in terms of systems, methods, techniques, organisational structures - Conclusion: modernisation of retail structures of local chains essential, but not for foreign chains; when establishing format, supply chain factors are a problem, but not consumer behaviour, government, or traditional retailers
Hadjimarcou/Barnes (1998)	Adaptation of the marketing mix of retailers in border zones (especially USA/Mexico)	None	Primary data (n = 176)/USA/Mexico, non-specific/frequencies, means	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Marketing mix selected: store atmosphere, promotion, merchandising, price, service, convenience; these were surveyed regarding the influence of currency depreciation and competition - Cross-border competition within the marketing mix is usually not considered, but currency depreciation; thus, instruments that are not price-related should be considered more seriously
Conceptual Studies				
Bianchi/Ostale (2006); Bianchi/Arnold (2004)	Test whether RFs that are more adapted to market conditions are more successful; on the basis of divestments and Home Depot in Chile	Institution-related perspective and concept of Goldman (2001)	Case study analysis (n = 4), based on primary data/Chile, overall/qualitative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Theory that RFs are successful abroad if they stick to the local institutional norms, regulations etc; this can be achieved by adapting internal and external instruments (similar to Goldman 2001) - Negative examples: all four RFs fail on the market as they have not acquired legitimacy in society - RFs are successful when they act according to institutional norms and hence receive legitimacy from society; supply mix adapted to social habits, managers integrated into social networks and also relevant to success: behaviour by competitors, market share
Burt et al. (2005)	Demonstration of internationalisation instead of traditional formats with assortment (retail brand)	Different areas of RI processes, motives, MES, cultural/psychic distance, etc.	Case study analysis (n = 1), secondary data /Drugstore (Boots), UK/descriptive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "Drugstore" format does not work in some countries due to the competitive environment - Retail brand assortment internationalised (in the export sense) through sale of this part of the assortment to foreign RF; this is more successful than own stores
Elg/Ghauri/Sinkovics (2004); Ghauri/Elg/Sinkovics (2004)	Development of a model for market selection and orientation that lives up to the complexity of retailing	Networks and market orientation; export and FDI literature, resource-based view	Conceptual and cases, secondary data (n = 2)/US-RF, overall/qualitative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Positioning in host country is dependent on general matching as well as matching of the host country's actors, activities and resources on macro and micro level - Strategic customer orientation and commitment in the host country affects inter- and intra-market orientation in the host country and, ultimately, the firm's position there
Currah/Wrigley (2004)	Explanation of adaptation of RFs (according to Goldman 2001) by learning	Networks and competence-based view, in the sense of learning	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Description of international RFs as "Retail TNCs" with own network structure; learning should take place in the whole network through top-down or bottom-up mechanisms - According to Goldman 2001, know-how (internal) and offerings (external), inter-relations in between - Retail TNCs prefer to adapt within international activities; they use innovations in back-end processes to adapt front-end processes of the format to the foreign culture
Burt/Sparks (2002)	Analysis of the relevance of corporate branding (CB) within RI	Corporate branding approaches	Short case studies (n = 3), secondary data/GMS, UK (Tesco, Marks & Spencer, Sainsbury)/qualitative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Internationalisation makes standardised CB difficult as positioning and image are hard to standardise, dependency on employees, local relationship networks - International brands in retailing are often to be found in niche markets, and even there adaptations (in terms of assortment, communication policies, service) are necessary, i.e. fashion - Strategic decision on whether international attitude emphasises standardised approach or local adaptation
McGauran (2001)	Explanation of differences in marketing design in France and the UK	Intermediary society affects theories, approaches by Rubery (1994)	Primary data (n = 27)/fashion, UK, France/qualitative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Economic and cultural factors explain different cross-national designs (i.e. retail system/structure, labour law, level of fashion) - RFs have to pay attention to these factors to be successful
M+M Planet Retail (2001)	Design of phase model of format diversification	None	Non-specific; some examples mentioned briefly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In emerging countries, wholesalers enter first, price-sensitive formats, such as discounters and hypermarkets, in the 2nd phase, supermarkets in the 3rd phase (dominated by localisation), "gap closure" in saturated markets in the 4th phase with convenience stores, and finally service orientation and home shopping in the 5th phase
Davies/Sanghavi (1995)	Analysis of category killer format through comparison of assortment and price; competitive advantages for internationalisation	None	Case study analysis (n = 12), field study/toys, USA/frequencies, means	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identification of two central elements of the new category killer format for potential to internationalise: 1. in toy store retailing, brand penetration is low and thus allows all brands to survive; 2. cost structure allows category killers to offer marginally lower prices
Brown/Burt (1992)	Summary of different studies on RI processes	Mention several concepts, i.e. OLI paradigm by Dunning, Pellegrini 1991	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Standardisation/adaptation debate can be conducted on different levels within RFs - Level of standardisation at brand/image level; level of concept/format and marketing instruments; level of management systems

Table 5: Studies on market operations (standardisation vs. adaptation)

Segal-Horn/ Davison (1992)	Lead standardisation/adaptation debate within retail sector (for the first time, was neglected before)	Globalisation/standardisation debate according to Levitt (1983)	None; sporadic short case studies based on secondary data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Some instruments are easier to standardise than others; three management components considered: role and management of employees, role of intermediaries - Three conditions of a global strategy: presence of international customer segments, economies of scale from global activity, formation of international trade zones
Kacker (1988)	Conceptualisation of conditions, effects and transfer processes of retail know-how across country borders	None (criticises different evolutionary and growth theories, which do not explain transfer of retail concepts between two locations)	Conceptual, secondary data for some RFs operating internationally and three case studies/descriptive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conceptualisation of "retail know-how": subdivided into technical dimension (location selection, store design and atmosphere, etc.) and management dimension (retail concept, systems, control, strategies) - Transfer of retail concepts planned/not planned - Successful internationalisation is dependent on certain conditions in the host country (i.e. economic growth), also on compromises/adaptation regarding price level, assortment, etc., and finally on creation of the appropriate infrastructure
Martenson (1987)	Coordination of marketing activities between standardisation and adaptation, as well as factors influencing standardisation	Concept of standardisation/adaptation in marketing	Case study analysis ($n = 1$), primary data/furniture (IKEA), Sweden/qualitative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Factors of standardisation: internal (behaviour of management, organisation structure, level of decentralisation) and external (consumer-oriented behaviour) - As the targeted customer group is likely to adopt new trends, it is possible to exist with a standardised marketing concept in an otherwise locally shaped business; supported by a highly coordinated supply
Goldman (1981)	Establishment of a framework to explain transfer of formats (especially supermarkets)	Innovation-diffusion theory	None; conceptual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Two areas postulated for research: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Supply side: dependency on technologies, infrastructure, etc., are needed for a format 2. Demand side: foreign consumer behaviour - Result: as there are different conditions on both sides, supermarkets do not yet fit into China

Table 5: Studies on market operations (standardisation vs. adaptation)

MES = market entry strategy, RF = retail firm, RI = retail internationalisation

dimension (e.g. retail concept, systems, control, strategy). However, *Brown/Burt* (1992) already pointed out that the standardisation versus adaptation debate in international retailing has to be conducted at different levels: the level of brand/image, the level of concept/format, the level of marketing instruments, and the level of management systems. They conclude different consequences from each of the levels for the market operations by international retail firms. *Segal-Horn/Davison* (1992) underline this and mention some instruments that could be standardised more easily than others.

Further studies by *Elg/Ghauri/Sinkovics* (2004) and *Ghauri/Elg/Sinkovics* (2004) analyse a specific aspect, namely the consumer orientation of the international retail firm. They postulate a match between internal and external elements in foreign markets and conceptualise the impact of strategic customer orientation and of commitment in the host country on inter- and intra-country market orientation, as well as on the position of the retail firm in the host country (see also papers on success in *Tab. 6a*).

Some papers deal with specific marketing instruments in a general or country-related context, or related to specific retail formats. *Burt/Sparks* (2002) consider the standardisation opportunities of the corporate brand. The authors see this as a strategic decision because standardisation is restrained by internationalisation, and the marketing mix requires adaptation, even for standardised corporate brands. *Burt et al.* (2005) consider strategies relating to international expansion of private labels. Not listed in *Tab. 5* are studies dealing mainly with international comparisons of marketing instruments. One example is *Fam/Yang* (2006), with a primary data analysis on promotions by national fashion retailers in Portugal and New Zealand. *Corstjens/Corstjens/Lal* (1995) compare price and private labels of grocery retailers in France and the UK.

Studies that analyse customer perceptions differ with regard to theory and methodology from the studies mentioned. They share the view that there is a need for adap-

tation and thus, for analysis of consumer expectations and perceptions, mostly in a country, format or cross-country analysis. Customer expectations in Eastern Europe are addressed by *White/Absher* (2007), analysing 22 expectation dimensions. *McGoldrick/Ho* (1992) consider 14 attributes of retail image of department stores in Hong Kong. *Swoboda et al.* (2008) analyse the impact of the perceived marketing mix factors on store image by simultaneously comparing five western retailer formats in an Eastern European country. With regard to the country-of-origin effect, *Chaney/Gamble* (2008) analyse the store choice of domestic and foreign retailers by Chinese consumers. On a comparative basis, *Burt/Mavrommatis* (2006) consider the store brand image of discounters in Spain and Greece. With regard to Marks & Spencer, *Burt/Carralero-Encinas* (2000) examine the customer perception of this retailer in two countries. A further international alternative for analysis is demonstrated by *Newman/Patel* (2004), who analyse the positioning of a national and a foreign fashion retailer in the UK. This is linked implicitly to country of origin research, which is not very distinctive in international retailing research. The study by *Denstadli/Lines/Grønhaug* (2005) is similar, but deals with the timing of market entry. The authors analyse the image and the reasons for the consumer choice of foreign discounters that entered Norway at different times.

3.4. Studies analysing performance and failures by international retailers

3.4.1. Studies on performance

Many studies focus on performance (*Tab. 6a*) and on failure (*Tab. 6b*) by international retail firms. Performance is usually seen as the final outcome variable, while failures are analysed more deeply with regard to their characteristics, determinants and consequences.

Evans/Mavondo (2002) highlight the importance of psychic distance as a predictor of the strategic effectiveness

of international retailers. The impact of business distance on financial performance is particularly significant. Moreover, *Evans/Mavondo/Bridson* (2008) show a positive impact of a highly controlled market entry strategy, as well as of retail strategy adaptation, on performance. The work by *Goldman* (2000; *Tab. 5*) shows the performance factors of the supermarket format. In particular, conclusions are drawn on retail structures. A final example is provided by *Gielens/Dekimpe* (2001; *Tab. 5*), who analyse a combination of determinants on performance, i.e. extent of foreign operations, operational modes, and format transfer, based on secondary data.

Some conceptual studies address performance in the same way as the studies that were initially excluded, for example on the performance of Wal-Mart in Europe (*Arnold* 1999) and on profitable growth strategies (*Werner/McDermott/Rotz* 2004). Two conceptual papers identify the impact of market orientation on performance. *Leelapanyalert/Ghauri* (2007) conceptualise the impact of firms' internal factors on external host country factors (defined as matching with players, resources, and market orientation) and their impact on performance. *Rogers/Ghauri/George* (2005) also show on the basis of case studies that greater market orientation leads to better performance, although retailers in general tend to multiply only their processes from their home country.

Some conceptual studies link the retail internationalisation process to performance. Based on learning theory, *Jonsson/Elg* (2006) consider the different knowledge levels in different internationalisation phases which, as concluded by the authors, are a central performance factor. *Dupuis/Prime* (1996) mention performance steps in internationalisation: (1) innovativeness of the concept (adapted or globalised), (2) harmonious relationships (to investors, suppliers, etc.), and (3) ability to adapt to the cultural environment. These results are reminiscent of the early study by *Tordjman* (1988). The author mentions two substantial requirements for performance: (1) favourable environment (market growth, consumers seeking affordable price and convenience, weak competition, unrestrictive legislation), and (2) format-specific knowledge (concept of discount, purchasing power, good logistic, financial and human resources). *Wigley/Moore/Birtwistle* (2005) refer to the retail internationalisation content provided by *Akehurst/Alexander* (1995) and consider the performance and differences between UK and US fashion retailers regarding motives (push/pull), markets (geographical/cultural distance), requirements (resources), and market entry strategy (control/ownership). *Arnold* (2002) sees similarities between retailers with the best performance worldwide in (1) inspirational leadership; (2) motivating organisational culture, (3) innovative, adaptable, entrepreneurial and opportunistic behaviour, (4) customer relevance, and (5) community relevance.

3.4.2. Studies on market failures/divestments

Studies concerning market failures/divestments analyse the determinants in particular, but look less at the consequences of international failures/divestments (*Tab. 6b*).

The study by *Burt/Dawson/Sparks* (2004a; 2004b) links divestments (structured by exits, closures, and restructuring) in a descriptive manner to countries/regions, market entry strategies (e.g. less often for organic growth and most often for alliances/franchising) and formats (e.g. less often for discounters and most often for supermarkets). *Alexander/Quinn/Cairns* (2005) consider the following determinants: duration of presence in the market (e.g. the longer the presence, the fewer divestments), firm's size, and environmental influences (e.g. market crises). Furthermore, the authors show more divestments in the fashion retail sector than in the food retail sector. From a methodological point of view, both studies are descriptive. In terms of the theory applied, both studies refer to their own conceptual papers, as well as to theoretical approaches from industrial organisation and organisational studies. With regard to one country market, *Etgar/Rachman-Moore* (2007) identify strategic decision-making, decision-making by the local entity, and cooperation between retailers operating internationally and the local entity as the main determinants of failures.

The conceptual studies are based on different theories. In *Tab. 5*, the papers based on institutional theory by *Bianchi* (2006), *Bianchi/Arnold* (2004) and *Bianchi/Ostale* (2006) are mentioned. All studies argue that failures result from a lack of adaptation to institutional norms, rules, etc., and therefore suggest adapting internal and external format elements (conceptualised according to *Goldman* 2001). The systematisation of divestments and their determinants (market-related, competition-related, organisational, and business-specific) are analysed by *Burt/Dawson/Sparks* (2003), *Burt et al.* (2002) and *Melahi/Jackson/Sparks* (2002). The authors state that internal factors are the main reasons for the international retailer crisis, especially lack of management capability (e.g. doing nothing, underestimating situations, inappropriate reactions). Similar structuring can be found in *Lane/Hunter/Hildebrand* (1990), while *Godley/Fletcher* (2001) provide an overview of the number of divestments by British retail firms. *Palmer* (2004) and *Palmer/Quinn* (2007) use the entire internationalisation process as the basis for analysis of divestments. The authors criticise that divestments are generally not integrated into internationalisation process models (see also *Wrigley/Currah* 2003) and consider them as a strategic learning option for international retailers. The divestment process, including the decision phase, the realisation phase and the phase of financial consequences, is analysed by *Alexander/Quinn* (2002).

Author(s) and year	Research question	Theory/framework	Empirical basis/sector/method	Core findings
Empirical Studies				
Evans/Mavondo/Bridson (2008)	Analysis of the several determinants of retail organisational performance	Concept of psychic distance, retail strategy and market entry strategy	Primary data (n = 102)/non-food, worldwide/regressions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - High level of control of entry strategies influences strategic effectiveness positively (organisational performance) - Retail strategy adaptation influence financial performance positively (organisational performance) - Psychic distance correlates positively with financial performance, as well as strategic effectiveness
Evans/Mavondo (2002)	Empirical test of the concept of psychic distance in order to explain differences in performance in retailing	Concept of psychic distance and conceptualisation by Evans/Treadgold/Mavondo (2000)	Primary data (n = 102)/non-food, worldwide/regressions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Two countries: psychically close and distant markets - Consideration of cultural and business-related distance enhances quality of explanation - Cultural distance itself is not a significant predictor of performance, but there is a negative relationship between business distance and financial performance (subjective measure)
Conceptual Studies				
Leelapan-yaleri/Ghauri (2007)	Analysis of influencing factors and the role of MO within the market entry process	Internationalisation process theory, matching, MO, network theory	Case studies (n = 2), based on primary data/keas, Marks & Spencer/qualitative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Firms' characteristics (commitment, learning) have an impact on host country factors, i.e. matching (of actors, resources) and MO (generating and distributing intelligence, adaptation) - Performance abroad determined through host country factors - Result: matching facilitates market entry, efficiency; market-oriented RFs understand the foreign market and adapt
Jonsson/Elg (2006)	Analysis of the role of knowledge (exchangeable) within RI internationalisation processes	Learning theory and process models of internationalisation	Case study (n = 1), based on primary data/keas, Sweden, Russia/qualitative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Different knowledge is needed within the internationalisation process depending on the phase - Internationalisation process models have to be expanded in terms of the form of knowledge exchange as this is a central performance determinant within RI processes
Wigley/Moore/Birtwistle (2005)	Performance factors in internationalisation of fashion RFs	Based on six topics of RI according to Akehurst/Alexander 1995	Case studies (n = 2), primary data/UK and US, fashion/qualitative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Akehurst/Alexander 1995 use six topics of RI as a framework, differences between UK and US fashion RFs demonstrated in four areas - Motives (push/pull); markets (geographical/cultural distance); requirements (resources); MES (control/property)
Rogers/Ghauri/George (2005)	Effects of MO on performance in the international context	Concept of MO, partly matching	Case study (n = 1)/Tesco/qualitative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stronger MO leads to higher performance - European RFs tend to transfer processes developed in the home market to foreign markets, which leads to reduced MO (as processes do not match)
Moon (2005)	Demonstrate growth strategies of US RFs	None (traditionally four growth strategies according to Aaker)	Short case studies (n = 5)/US, overall/qualitative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reasons for international expansion: growth strategies and competition in the home market - Internationalisation is not necessary for all RFs and not necessarily needed for future performance
Carr (2004)	IT as performance factor	Industry- and resource-based view (mentioned)	Case studies (n = 2), secondary data/overall/qualitative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - IT application itself does not lead to competitive advantage for Dell and Wal-Mart, it is only an instrument - Competitive advantages result from the execution of a clearly defined strategy
Hernandez (2003)	Effects of entry by a RF or format on the market structure (DIY sector)	None	Case study (n = 1), secondary data/Home Depot, USA, Canada/qualitative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The introduction of Home Depot in Canada was a success resulting in many closures of former competitors' stores; DIY is now common in society - US RFs go preferably to Canada; mostly organic MES; special, adapted retail offer as performance factor
Arnold (2002)	Demonstration of similarities/performance factors of successful RFs, which are relevant inter-sectorally	None	Case studies (n = 5), based on secondary data/overall/qualitative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Similarities of the best RFs worldwide: 1) inspirational leadership; 2) motivating organisational culture; 3) innovation, adaptability, leadership, opportunistic behaviour (culture); 4) relevance to customers; 5) and to community - "Performance" measured by sales volume, growth, number of stores, number of countries, and stability
Shackleton (1998)	Influence of firms' strategy and culture on international performance; especially transfer, adaptation and implementation	Concepts of firms' culture	Case study (n = 1), analyst interviews/Sainsbury, UK, USA/qualitative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Performance of Sainsbury in the USA is based on successful transfer of firm's ideologies and strategies, and thus of management principles - At the same time, failure in the home market is attributed to sticking to these principles instead of facilitating change and adaptation to new environment, change in organisational structures/decision-makers as solution
Dupuis/Prime (1996)	Development of a model to explain performance factors within RI processes	Business-related distance, elements of format	Conceptual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Performance factors within format internationalisation: 1. degree of innovation, keep marketing mix, either adaptation or globalisation; 2. harmonic relationships (investors, suppliers etc.); 3. develop cultural adaptability
Tordjiman (1988)	Explanation of the development of hypermarkets in France and whether they could be successful in the USA	None	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Two development conditions are crucial to good performance: 1. appropriate environment; market growth, price orientation of customers, weak competition, and legislation 2. format-specific know-how; concept, purchasing power, logistic techniques, financial/personnel resources - Difficulties because of decentralised management

Table 6a: Studies dealing with international performance

4. Conclusions and research implications

4.1. Overall review

One contribution from this state-of-the-art article is that current findings within the research field of international retailing are merged into one paper in order to show that there are a large number of conceptual and empirical studies. Even if we only focus sporadically on studies that covered interdependencies between two or more research fields, the studies in each research field differ with regard to content, theoretical and methodological emphases.

In order to assess the emphases of research, the number of studies in one research field could be compared to those of other research fields. Thus, the emphasis is mainly on research covering motives for going abroad and market selection, with approximately 40 papers. This underlines the early stage of retail research, compared to general international business research. Both research fields are linked to each other. The first analyses the item characteristics of motives (host, home country and internal) ex-ante, while the second analyses the markets entered and the determinants (macro, micro and internal) ex-post. In contrast, there are fewer findings concerning

Author(s) and year	Research question	Theory/framework	Empirical basis/sector/method	Core findings
Empirical Studies				
<i>Etgar/Rachman-Moore</i> (2007)	Analyse the quality of managerial decision-making as a central cause of failure	Mention implicitly the resource-based view/internal factors	Primary data (n = 140) experts, Israeli retail sector/mean comparisons	- Determinants of market failures: quality of strategic decision-making, quality of the decision-making by the management of the local entity, and the quality of cooperation between the international retail chain and its local entity - The quality of tactical decision-making is less important
<i>Alexander/Quinn/Cairns</i> (2005)	Analysis of degree of history, volume and patterns of <i>DI</i> instead of level of individual businesses	<i>Palmer</i> (2004) (corporate restructuring) and <i>Burt/Dawson/Sparks</i> (2003) <i>IO</i> and <i>OS</i> perspective) mentioned	Secondary data (n = 153 <i>DI</i> ; 1987-2003)/overall, focus on UK/frequencies	- Industry-specific: most <i>DI</i> in fashion industry; <i>DI</i> in food industry mostly after being present abroad for 10 years - No influence by country of origin on promptness of the <i>DI</i> ; <i>DI</i> in Europe show short-term border-hopping within the first three years; less <i>DI</i> at larger firms (number of outlets) - Environmental influences (e.g. economic crisis) affect <i>DI</i>
<i>Burt/Dawson/Sparks</i> (2004a; 2004b)	Analysis of geographical and <i>MES</i> -based form of <i>DI</i> in European food retailing	<i>Burt/Dawson/Sparks</i> (2003); <i>Benito/Welch</i> (1997)	Secondary data (n = 271 <i>DI</i> ; 1970-2003)/food, Europe/frequencies	- Distinctive rise in <i>DIs</i> (difference between exit and complete exit), closure (partial closure) and organisational restructuring since 1994; most <i>DIs</i> by EU food <i>RFs</i> in USA or Spain - Influence of <i>MES</i> : <i>DIs</i> less frequent if growth is organic, <i>DI</i> most common in alliances/franchising - Influence of format: supermarkets most affected by <i>DI</i> , followed by hypermarkets
Conceptual Studies				
<i>Palmer/Quinn</i> (2007)	Analysis of <i>DI</i> within the scope of the whole internationalisation process	None, process perspective mentioned	Case study (n = 1), primary data/food Ahold, NL/qualitative	- Operational and non-operational forms of <i>DI</i> - Observation of external and internal influencing factors - <i>DI</i> not always sign of conflicts, but as strategic option in internationalisation processes
<i>Bianchi</i> (2006)	Systematic composition of reasons for failure of Home Depot in Chile	Institutional perspective	Case study (n = 1), expert interviews and secondary data/ <i>DIY</i> , Chile/qualitative	- Little examination of the market in terms of cultural habits and inadequate behaviour of the management - Customers have other living habits: <i>DIY</i> is just starting due to cheap labour and customers do less repairs by themselves - Behaviour by suppliers/competitors not adjusted to country-specific habits, which leads to loss of partners
<i>Jackson/Mellahi/Sparks</i> (2005)	Analysis of the exit process based on Marks & Spencer in France	Process perspective; rational economic perspective according to <i>Shapiro</i> mentioned 1993, decision perspective and context factors	Case study (n = 1) Department Stores (Marks & Spencer), UK/qualitative	- From an economic point of view, exit is a good decision and rewarded with a rise in share prices - Sustainable damage to reputation through poor management of processes; this leads to the importance of social and other environmental factors influencing exit processes - Relevance of topics related to management and organisation, as well as economy-oriented topics for exit process
<i>Palmer</i> (2004)	Importance of <i>DI</i> in internationalisation process and learning from <i>DI</i> , based on the example of Tesco	None; five types of restructuring according to <i>Bowman/Singh</i> (1993) and <i>Young/Hood/Firm</i> (2001)	Case study analysis (n = 1)/food (Tesco), UK/qualitative	- <i>DIs</i> are not considered as options during internationalisation process and have a negative association - Opportunities for learning during <i>DI</i> , e.g. regarding appropriate exit strategies, management commitment, reputation of the firm
<i>Burt/Dawson/Sparks</i> (2003)	Definition and conceptualisation of a framework for "failures" in retailing	<i>Mellahi/Jackson/Sparks</i> (2002), industrial organisations (<i>IO</i>) and organisational studies (<i>OS</i>) perspective, as well as <i>Benito</i> (1997)	Conceptual	- Failure in a country leads to the following options for actions: <i>DI</i> (reduction of investments), closure (closure of outlets/distribution channels), restructuring (change in organisational structures) and exit (complete exit), but also persistence as well as increased investments are possible - Reasons for failure: market-related, competition-related, organisation-based, company-specific
<i>Wrigley/Currah</i> (2003)	Organisational challenges during internationalisation in countries with different environments	"Comparative study of forms of industrial capitalism", especially <i>Whitley</i> (2001)	Case study analysis (n = 1), primary data/food (Ahold), Netherlands/qualitative	- Little conceptualisation of the process of <i>DI</i> - Internationalisation process is "dialectical" in the sense of the influence of institutions specific to home and host country - Relationship between <i>RF</i> and financial situation as critical factor of internationalisation that is very rarely considered
<i>Alexander/Quinn</i> (2002)	Analysis of <i>DI</i> of Marks & Spencer and Arcadia	Perspective of the decision process according to <i>Godar</i> (1997)	Case studies (n = 2), secondary data/fashion and department stores, UK/qualitative	- Phases of <i>DI</i> processes: 1. decision-making phase; 2. process of <i>DI</i> ; 3. (financial) effects according to <i>Godar</i> 1997 - Revealing reasons for failure is simple, but whole process is yet to be understood - Option of changeover from an organic <i>MES</i> to franchising
<i>Mellahi/Jackson/Sparks</i> (2002); <i>Burt et al.</i> (2002)	Analysis of external and internal factors influencing the crisis of Marks & Spencer	Combination of <i>IO</i> and <i>OS</i> perspective, internal and external influencing factors	Case studies, primary data/department Stores, UK/qualitative	- Internal factors as main reason for the crisis of the firm, especially management failures by doing nothing, underestimating the situation and inappropriate reaction - External factors act as accelerators of the crisis (i.e. rapidly changing market conditions)
<i>Godley/Fletcher</i> (2001)	Demonstration of FDI in British retailing (1850-1994)	None	Secondary data/UK, overall/(descriptive)	- Increasing number of <i>DIs</i> - No implications – illustrating of previous retail FDI in order to stimulate further research
<i>Lane/Hunter/Hildebrand</i> (1990)	Analysis of reasons for <i>DI</i>	None	Case study, primary data (n = 4) CAN, overall	- Customer-oriented reasons: customer preference - Firm-oriented reasons: retailing structure, access to suppliers and conditions; management knowledge - <i>MES</i> -related reasons: greenfield investments vs. acquisition

DI = divestment, *DIY* = do-it-yourself, *IO* = industrial organisation, *OS* = organisational studies, *RF* = retail firm, *MES* = market entry strategy

Table 6b: Studies dealing with failures and foreign divestments (*DI*)

international retail performance or market operations, as well as market entry strategies.

With regard to empirical studies, a relatively large number of studies based on secondary and ex-post data have been conducted in the fields of motives and market selection, while there are only five empirical studies in the research fields relating to performance/failures, four on market operations, and four on internationalisation strategies. Conceptual and case study-based papers are valuable, but the need for empirical studies and studies

based on a large sample is evident in order to support and generalise findings. As pointed out initially, however, there is some unwillingness by firms to provide primary data. Thus, the number of empirical studies based on secondary data is much larger than the number of studies based on primary data. For instance, in the three research fields mentioned where empirical research is low, six empirical studies are based on secondary data and two on expert opinions. Hence, only five empirical studies are identified that are based on primary data, meaning that a

large number are based on interviews from retail managers, whereas three of these studies actually use the same data sample (Evans/Bridson 2005; Evans/Mavondo 2002; Evans/Mavondo/Bridson 2008).

The theoretical emphases applied can only reasonably be estimated in each research field. The characteristic of retail research is that scientists often refer to retail-specific literature only for their conceptualisations. Of course, the characteristics of retailer internationalisation affect the adaptation of theories and measurements, but not the application of theories in general. For instance, Ekeledo/Sivakumar (1998; 2004) show that findings regarding the market entry strategies of manufacturing firms can be transposed to retail firms to a certain extent. Thus, well-known theories from international business research should be adapted in order to conceptualise retail-specific frameworks and to formulate hypotheses that allow generalising research results.

4.2. Implications for further research

In spite of the fact that the studies available stimulate the progress of knowledge in the relatively young research field of retail internationalisation, some limitations can be determined in terms of content, theory and methodology. This should be considered in contrast to the general, international marketing and management research. With regard to this, research proposals will be elaborated in the following for future empirical studies in international retailing research, focussing on the leading empirical studies in each research field. Empirical studies in each research field could address item characteristics, determinants and consequences.

Implications for research on motives

Comprehensive studies on motives for going abroad (particularly Alexander 1990; Evans *et al.* 2008; Hutchinson *et al.* 2007;) show that the characteristics of country-specific motives have not yet been analysed to a large extent. Thus, future research could address these country-specific motives from three different perspectives. Firstly, item characteristics, determinants and consequences of different motives for entry into a specific country show challenges for future analysis. Established concepts, for example dealing with the roles of different countries (e.g. core or peripheral country markets) or their role in a firm's country portfolio (e.g. Harrell/Kiefer 1993), have not yet been investigated empirically in retailing research. Secondly, the way in which different motives influence marketing operations in a specific country are subject to question. One research objective may be to establish whether and how retailers adapt and decentralise activities in core country markets, where the goal is maximisation of sales and gross profit, or whether and how they achieve this in peripheral markets. Thirdly, it would be useful to compare goals at the time of market entry with achievement of the set targets in order to gauge performance (e.g. Cavusgil/Zou 1994). From a methodo-

logical point of view, it is important to point out that the widely used interviews with managers of firms not operating internationally yield different results to those with managers that do have international experience. The same can be stated for ex-post and ex-ante surveys.

Implications for research on internationalisation strategies

Comprehensive papers (particularly Goldman 2001; Leknes/Carr 2004; Rugman/Girod 2003) provide retail-specific strategy typologies. In this research field, in particular, the controversy on the researchers that use well-known theories from international business research comes to the fore (particularly Pederzoli 2006). In future research, the established integration-responsiveness (IR) framework should be used as a basis. Thus, item characteristics of strategy types (e.g. in different retail sectors) and consequences of strategies (e.g. structures, performance) can be analysed, similar to the wide body of research on manufacturing firms (Harzing 2000). Without a doubt, typologies are useful because they can reduce the complexity of international organisations to a manageable volume of interrelated characteristics, which in turn facilitates the understanding and explanation of firms' foreign activities. Furthermore, it could be argued according to Pederzoli (2006) that an analysis from the viewpoint of a firm's headquarters is more meaningful because corporate strategies guide host country decisions. The opposite view (e.g. Goldman 2001) implies that country-specific internationalisation strategies are analysed. In this case, the categorisations of units and country-specific motives are relevant.

Implications for market selection research

The literature review concerning studies on market selection has shown that there is a widespread lack of normative approaches to international market selection, whereas ex-post evaluations dominate the empirical studies in Tab. 3. Known normative models can also be applied to retail firms if they only relate to the macro- and meso-level of market selection (e.g. Anderson/Buvik 2002). Feasibility studies and country-specific selection steps as characteristics of retail firms can be linked to studies concerning location choice (e.g. González-Benito/González-Benito 2005; Swoboda/Schwarz/Hälsig 2007; Thompson 2003). Furthermore, real option approaches, for example, have not yet been discussed in international retailing research. The process approaches, describing international retail development across country markets over time, could be developed if they refer to general international business literature, which offers a huge body of knowledge on internationalisation dynamics, stages, and patterns over time.

Implications for research on market entry strategies

With regard to only six empirical papers published during the literature review, some items were indicated

for further research. Further empirical studies concerning the determining factors could investigate the systematised relevance of external and internal factors, or even their moderating role. Resource-based conceptualisation could consider the impact of a preferred entry strategy on mode choice (e.g. cooperative or fully controlled modes), with external environmental variables as moderators. An alternative framework could also consider the impact of environmental factors on mode choice and the moderating role of a preferred strategy. An empirical examination of the wide frameworks provided by *Huang/Sternquist* (2007), *Picot-Coupey* (2006) or *Park/Sternquist* (2008) has not yet been conducted. The analysis of grocery versus non-food retailers or a glance at small retailers' preferences in market entry strategies is an interesting approach (e.g. *Alexander/Doherty* 2004; *Doherty* 2000). A very promising approach in order to estimate the speed and size of market entries is provided by *Gielens/Dekimpe* (2007). Furthermore, switches in entry strategy, e.g. from alliance to fully controlled modes, would be an interesting point of contact for further research, also in the context of manufacturers (*Caloff/Beamish* 1995).

Implications for research on marketing operations

The review of marketing mix operations in international retail firms shows that the link between visible offers (e.g. store location, assortment, price, store layout) and internal elements (e.g. repertoire as norms (experience, strategies, technologies) and systems (methods, techniques, organisational structures)) is essential (see *Goldman* 2000; 2001 as the possibly most influential researcher on this topic). Nevertheless, further research could be addressed in several ways in terms of definition, conceptualisation and empirical investigation.

Fundamental conceptualisation and measurement concepts are needed for the internal processes. Thus, value chain research serves as a possible basis for conceptualisation of marketing processes (e.g. location, category planning), supply chain processes (e.g. purchasing, logistics), and management processes (e.g. structures, systems, culture) (see *Coe/Lee* 2005).

Secondly, insights on the relationship between visible marketing offers and internal marketing processes are limited. The adaptation or standardisation of retail marketing instruments does not need to be in accordance with the adaptation or standardisation of marketing and supply chain processes, and vice versa. While *Goldman* (2001) examines both as emancipated domains, it would be interesting to investigate whether and how retailers see the relationship between both, perhaps with regard to culturally close and culturally distant markets

Thirdly, the standardisation of structures or cultures takes place at a different level to the standardisation of visible marketing instruments. The question of integration or even centralisation on the one hand and the adaptation of visible marketing instruments on the other leads

once more to the axes of the *IR* framework (e.g. *Harzing* 2000 as an overview)

Differentiation between a country-specific and an inter-country view would be interesting. Item characteristics, determinants and consequences of marketing instruments and processes are determined or even moderated by the local environment (specific to one country or one culture). This need not be in accordance with an inter-country view of instruments and processes

The customer-based studies on perceptions, store choice and image mentioned by way of example should be extended substantially, for example in terms of methodology.

Implications for research on performance/failures: The very few empirical studies on performance only address the cultural determinants (*Evens/Mavondo* 2002; *Evans/Mavondo/Bridson* 2008), but not the item characteristics and consequences of performance. With regard to the consequences, *Jain* (1989) already provided evidence that adaptation in foreign markets depends on environmental variables and on performance. As retailers tend to multiply their standardised home market processes (e.g. *Rogers/Ghauri/George* 2005), this would be a challenging framework for empirical studies in international retail research, whereas performance is used in previous studies as a resulting variable only. Furthermore, the context of performance studies is always questionable internationally as to whether it is country-specific or across countries. Failures are analysed empirically in a more targeted manner than performance (particularly *Alexander/Quinn/Cairns* 2005; *Burt/Dawson/Sparks* 2004a; 2004b; *Etgar/Rachmann-Moore* 2007). Compared to international business research, there is no investigation of the determining factors of success/failure. Furthermore, well-known conceptualisations cover the impact of strategy, processes and structures on performance. Nevertheless, the impact may not necessarily be direct, as is already known from configurational fit research. Moderating, mediating, co-alignment and other relationships are conceivable (see *Venkatraman* 1989). This can also be applied to divestment research. With regard to performance, country-specific and inter-country perspectives should also be taken into consideration. Performance in one country may be the same as a retail firm's performance across other countries or as a whole.

5. Final remarks

Retail internationalisation is becoming more and more important nowadays. In spite of the fact that this is a fairly recent field of research, this state-of-the-art article shows that the issues relating to the decision to going abroad are already well researched. This is not so much the case, however, for questions relating to the perspective of being abroad, such as marketing operations and performance. Thus, the current findings of international retail research are presented in a structured manner. Based on existing studies, some implications for further research have been

elaborated with regard to content, theory and methodology. We hope that the overview of the research in the last two decades and the implications will stimulate further research in the field of international retailing.

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