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Institute of  
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# PROCEEDINGS OF THE SYMPOSIUM ON INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS RESEARCH

**27-29 July 2022 | Leipzig, Germany**

**Project IB Pakistan**

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DAAD

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## 1. About the IB Pakistan project

The IB Pakistan project is founded by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) program “German–Pakistani Research Cooperation 2021–2022 and extensions 2021” and led by the Small Enterprise Promotion and Training (SEPT) Competence Center at Leipzig University together with the Institute of Business Administration (IBA) Karachi.

The two-year project aims to initiate a knowledge-sharing network to understand and analyze the internationalization process and challenges of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Pakistan and Germany. Its specific objectives focused on 1. Improving teaching and research in the partner country; 2. Addressing current issues relating to the economic, environmental, social, and socio-economic development of Pakistan; and 3. Offering further qualifications to young academics.

As one of its main pillars, the project supported the creation of knowledge, through the development of practically oriented research on SMEs’ internationalization. These scientific contributions were developed by young and experienced academics from Leipzig University and IBA Karachi, such as MBA students and Ph.D. candidates, with the support of post-docs, advisors, and lecturers.

The project started in 2021 when the first summer school took place in Karachi-Pakistan. Here MBA students and Ph.D. candidates from both universities presented their research proposals receiving valuable feedback from more experienced academics and lecturers. Complementary, as part of the project, they participated in seminars to improve their research proposals and prepare them for the development stage.

In July 2022, after one year of scientific work and advisory from lecturers from both universities, all ten researchers meet in Leipzig (Germany) to present their findings during the “Symposium on International Business Research”. This document presents the abstracts of their research delivered during this three-day event.

Leipzig, 17. September 2022

## 2. Symposium structure

The symposium on International Business Research took place from July 27 to July 29, 2022, at Leipzig University. This was an open event to present the research findings of ten researchers from Pakistan and Germany. Six students were from IBA Karachi and four international students from the SEPT Program at Leipzig University. Among this group, two speakers were Ph.D. candidates, while eight were MBA students.

After the presentations, the floor was open for discussion, enriched by comments and questions from professors and experienced academics from both universities. Moreover, international Ph.D. candidates and MBA students from the SEPT Program joined the symposium contributing to the knowledge exchange and building networks. Complementary, all participants attended two workshops on how to publish in academic journals delivered by researchers from both institutions.

After the symposium, the researchers participated in expeditions in Leipzig, Berlin, Halle, and Dresden to know emblematic enterprises and the business scenario in Germany. An agenda of the three-day event follows:

### Day 1: Wednesday 27.07

Welcome	<b>Opening remarks</b> Gunnar Kaßberg, Leipzig University	9:20 – 9:40
Speaker 1	<b>Is intra industry trade involved in the trade of Pakistan?</b> Afshan Uroos, Ph.D. candidate, IBA Karachi	9:40 – 10:20
Speaker 2	<b>Building an inclusive entrepreneurial ecosystem for entrepreneurs with disabilities</b> Isabela Agyekum, MBA candidate, Leipzig University	10:20 – 11:00
Break	Coffee Break	11:00– 11:20
Speaker 3	<b>Ethical (islamic) finance, an answer to create a development wonder?</b> Muhammad Ahtesham, MBA candidate, IBA Karachi	11:20 – 12:00
Workshop	<b>Scientific publication hints &amp; tricks</b> Christopher Boafu, Ph.D. candidate, Leipzig University	13:15 – 15:00

## Day 2: Thursday 28.07

Welcome	Dr. Najam Akber Anjum, IBA Karachi	9:20 – 9:30
Speaker 4	<b>Effects of intimate partner violence against women in international micro and small enterprises relationships: the mediator role of capabilities</b> Jazmín Ponce Gómez, Ph.D. candidate, Leipzig University	9:30 – 10:10
Speaker 5	<b>Role of government export assistance programs in overcoming internationalization barriers for SMEs</b> Shahoor Ahmed, MBA candidate, IBA Karachi	10:10– 10:50
Break	Coffee Break	10:50 – 11:10
Speaker 6	<b>Exploring the culture distance as a barrier and cultural intelligence as a predicting tool for SMEs' internationalization (evidence from Pakistani SMEs)</b> Kehkashan Ishrat, MBA candidate, IBA Karachi	11:10 – 11:50
Workshop	<b>How to publish qualitative research in academic journals?</b> Dr. Amer Iqbal Awan, IBA Karachi	13:15 – 15:00

## Day 3: Friday 29.07

Welcome	Gunnar Kaßberg, Leipzig University	9:20 – 9:30
Speaker 7	<b>The role of interfunctional coordination in the brand corporate identity management process of B2B SMEs through the mediation of social media.</b> Isra Imtiaz Ali, MBA candidate, IBA Karachi	9:30 – 10:10
Speaker 8	<b>Analyzing the factors influencing the competitiveness of the Tunisian automotive suppliers in the global automotive value chain</b> Rihem Hssan , MBA candidate, Leipzig University	10:10– 10:50
Break	Coffee Break	10:50 – 11:10
Speaker 9	<b>International supply chain and external environment impacts on meat markets</b> Mazhar Hussain, MBA candidate, IBA Karachi	11:10 – 11:50
Speaker 10	<b>Analyzes of factors influencing the growth of Mexican owned business-related services companies in Germany</b> Mariela Tellez Montaña, MBA candidate, Leipzig University	11:50 – 12:30



### 3. Abstracts of Presented Work

The research findings presented in the symposium contributed to the creation of knowledge on Pakistani SMEs' internationalization. Additionally, the project included two research on the internationalization of Mexican and Tunisian SMEs and entrepreneurs towards the European and German markets. These enriched the knowledge-sharing network by displaying competencies and strategies employed by foreign SMEs to internationalize in Europe while interacting with different realities and ways of conceiving business. Finally, two research focused on international female entrepreneurship and entrepreneurs with disabilities in global-south countries were included, as these are also relevant issues in Pakistan.

The professional background of the authors and the multidisciplinary nature of their research topics benefited the exchange of knowledge and expertise between both universities. As the following steps, all academics continue working on their research articles to publish them in academic journals by 2023.

The following section records the abstracts of the research presented at the symposium.

### 3.1. Is intra industry trade involved in the trade of Pakistan?

*Author: Afshan Uroos*

*Ph.D. candidate, Institute of Business Administration Karachi, Pakistan*

This study examines the evolution of Pakistan's intra-industry trade from 2003-2020. This study quantifies and describes the intra- industry trade (IIT) in Pakistan's economy, separating horizontal intra-industry trade (HIIT) and vertical intra-industry trade (VIIT). The paper adopts the methodology proposed by Grubel-Lloyd & Fontangé and Freudenberg and compares the result of both methodologies. As per empirical literature, HIIT & VIIT are the main indicators in the analysis of intra-industry trade. This study computed IIT for the 2003-2020 period with a detailed product breakdown. As per data analysis, Inter-industry trade is majorly involved in Pakistan's trade.

The empirical result shows that all textile products are involved in inter-industry trade. The sectors having a lower export share in total trade are involved in intra-industry trade. Vertical intra-industry trade in Pakistan is mainly composed of those products having a minimum level of export prices as compared to the import prices of the country. This has the same results as the "quality ladder" which highlighted that less advanced economies tend to export products having lower-priced quality. On the other hand, the empirical result shows that the engineering and manufacturing sectors -like machinery, cutlery, gemstones, livestock, man-made staple fiber, minerals, etc.- registered the lowest share in IIT of Pakistan. this shows that intra-industry trade in the Engineering and manufacturing sector of Pakistan is coupled with the import of the same products required for production processes. Moreover, a large and significant share of vertical Intra industry trade is found in the industries of Pakistan, mostly vertical, are found in the industries of non-textile sectors including furniture, agroproducts, horticulture, natural pearls, etc.

### 3.2. Building an inclusive entrepreneurial ecosystem for entrepreneurs with disabilities

*Author: Isabela Agyekum*

*MBA candidate, Small Enterprise Promotion and Training, Leipzig University, Germany*

In a world where society is opening on issues of social minorities, disadvantaged groups such as persons with disabilities (PWDs) need equal attention for their contributions to social and economic growth. This research explores the motivations, barriers, and coping strategies of entrepreneurs with disabilities (EWDs) in Ghana. The study used an explorative qualitative multiple-case study approach. A total of 31 EWDs and 11 ecosystem actors were involved in the study. Furthermore, thematic content analysis was employed using MAXQDA software. The thematic content analysis was used to explore the possible themes guided by the theoretical model.

The findings are described under nine dimensions (motivations, barriers, coping strategies, human capital, business support, markets, finance, culture, and policies). The major findings from the research include apprenticeship training skills, replacing formal education with business ownership, stigma, keeping focus, and operating a business fit for disability. Further, the emerged conceptual model illustrates a bidirectional relationship between the motivations, barriers, and coping strategies of EDWs. In this vein, EDWs relied on their motivations to initiate new or strengthen existing businesses by adopting a coping strategy to lessen entrepreneurial obstacles posed by the business environment. On the other hand, the entrepreneurial ecosystem, as managed by actors, provides 10 initiatives to strengthen the entrepreneurial motivations of PWDs while lessening or eradicating entrepreneurial barriers. Additionally, while business barriers are impossible to eradicate, the ecosystem players are now considering solidifying the motivations and coping strategies of PWDs to face the mounting business challenges.

The research findings serve as a gateway for future research. Development cooperation, universities, and academic research institutions may have to expand their influence and thinking on the explored subject due to the interesting findings obtained from this study.

### 3.3. Ethical (Islamic) finance, an answer to create a development wonder?

*Author: Muhammad Ahtesham*

*MS Islamic Banking & Finance candidate, Institute of Business Administration  
Karachi, Pakistan*

With every tenth person on the planet living under extreme poverty and the Covid-19 pandemic has further exacerbated the situation due to the deteriorating economic conditions resulting in increased layoffs and joblessness. On the other hand, the concentration of global wealth continuously converged into the hands of a few of the elitist segment due to the inherent impediments that the capitalistic economic model offers. Can this system sustain or it's high time to find better alternatives?

This study is an attempt to find better economic approaches stemming from high ethical grounds and which are more sustainable. For the said purpose this explorative study closely examines the microfinance model, its various interventions over the last few decades, and the impact it brings to society in achieving shared prosperity for all. More particularly the role of Interest-Free Islamic (often referred to as ethical) microfinance and see whether the model of micro-lending works or not as a vehicle to generate economic activity in the form of small/micro/ nano enterprises that not only is ethically enriched but equally sustainable.

### 3.4. Effects of intimate partner violence against women in international micro and small enterprises relationships: the mediator role of capabilities

*Author: Jazmín Ponce Gómez*

*Ph.D. candidate, Small Enterprise Promotion and Training, Leipzig University, Germany*

While previous studies have explored multiple constraints affecting women exporters, the effects of intimate partner violence against women (IPVAW) are still unexplored in the literature. Thus, this study aims to probe first whether women owners of micro and small enterprises (MSEs) in export markets experience IPVAW. Secondly, it aims to explore the effect of IPVAW on their relationship quality with business partners, mediated by the performance of export capabilities. Using a structured questionnaire applied through personal interviews, we surveyed 57 female owners of exporting MSEs in Peru. Partial least squares structural equation modeling was used to analyze the data and test the model.

The preliminary findings indicate that women exporters who experience IPVAW are more likely to face problems performing export capabilities. In turn, these performance problems seem to affect the quality of their relationships with importers and suppliers. Moreover, there is a direct relationship between IPVAW and problems in performing export capabilities and between issues performing capabilities and the relationship quality. Our theoretical contribution is a conceptual model that proposes the variable “Problems Performing Capabilities” as a mediator to measure the effects of IPVAW on exporting MSEs owned by women. Our findings urge policymakers and trade organizations boosting women-owned export enterprises to include initiatives that address and prevent IPVAW in their export promotion programs.

*The **final version** of this research was published after the symposium on 04 October 2022 in the journal *Frontiers in Psychology*, research topic: *Social Sustainability at Work: A Key to Sustainable Development in Business*. Open access: <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.950807/full>*

Citation: Ponce-Gómez JE, Vara-Horna A, Valenciano-Mañé A and Dornberger U (2022). Effects of intimate partner violence against women in international micro and small enterprises relationships: The mediator role of capabilities. *Front. Psychol.* 13:950807. doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2022.950807

### 3.5. Role of government export assistance programs in overcoming internationalization barriers for SMEs

*Author: Shahoor Ahmed*

*MBA candidate, Institute of Business Administration Karachi, Pakistan*

The study performs linear regression on survey responses from 211 manufacturing-oriented SMEs operating in Pakistan. The study aims at improving our understanding of the effects of Government Export Assistance Programs (GEAPs). More specifically, it attempts to answer if these GEAPs are effective in overcoming internationalization barriers faced by SMEs operating in emerging economies. It has been found that finance-related GEAPs show strong significance in overcoming internationalization barriers but marketing-related GEAPs were not found to be very significant in this regard. The theoretical implications of this research lie in its novel approach to connecting GEAPs with internationalization barriers.

Although this research helps discover the association between GEAPs and internationalization barriers, it has its limitations in further dissecting those aspects of finance related programs that make it effective while marketing-related programs are ineffective. Thus, future research may perform a more micro-level analysis of certain aspects that may be effective or ineffective in overcoming internationalization barriers. Managerial implications include lessons in being more precise in determining the needs that fulfill marketing related GEAPs of SMEs of a certain region. It also gets inferred from the findings that program designers of marketing related GEAPs in Pakistan in specific, and in other emerging economies in general, need to reconsider the existing practices and work to evolve the training contents and other interventions in this regard. This research differs in its approach from other similar studies that focus either on internationalization barriers or use export performance as an indicator of the usefulness of Government Export Assistance Programs (GEAPs). Here, the relationship of GEAPs has been tested with internationalization barriers to get a better understanding of the adequacy and precision of these assistance programs.

### 3.6. Exploring the culture distance as a barrier and cultural intelligence as a predicting tool for SMEs' internationalization (evidence from Pakistani SMEs)

*Author: Kehkashan Ishrat*

*MBA candidate, Institute of Business Administration Karachi, Pakistan*

The present study aims to add knowledge to existing conflicting cultural studies in the field of SME internationalization. The paper overall reflects on critical key factors which are pertinent to cultural distance and experienced by SME founders/decision-makers during the process of international business expansion. The study also explores the role of cultural quotient in addressing such obstacles. Based on a qualitative research design, the study conducted in-depth semi-structured interviews with founders/decision-makers in 11 Pakistan-based SMEs.

The findings reveal that the sampled SMEs highlighted that during the first internationalization, they faced discrimination due to country-of-origin image which created a negative perception in the mind of the host country people. The findings of the study also indicate that the market selection of SMEs was based on opportunities, thus, not supporting the idea that internationalization was based on cultural similarities. In addition, the findings showcase the perception of founders that cultural intelligence is not much needed as it is emphasized in the literature, but the underlying themes indicate that they are adopting managerial cultural intelligence traits, however, the lack of knowledge blocks the recognition of the process they are adopting and have adopted in the past cases. Additionally, past international experiences of managers already built cultural competencies to manage cross-cultural situations effectively and efficiently.

### **3.7. The role of interfunctional coordination in the brand corporate identity management process of B2B SMEs through the mediation of social media**

*Author: Isra Imtiaz Ali*

*MBA candidate, Institute of Business Administration Karachi, Pakistan*

The study examines the underlying mechanisms that coordinate the relationship between corporate identity management and market orientation dimensions in the web 2.0 era. As the inception of social media has disrupted the management of brands, the paper analyzes the significance of inter-functional coordination and customer orientation in B2B SMEs, particularly concerning the conversations and posts shared on their social media page. Likewise, the extent to which this significantly influences their corporate identity management. The paper also examines the relationship and potential influence of one strategic orientation (market orientation) on the focus (CIM) of another (brand orientation).

Lastly, it uncovers the prospective managerial implications for B2B SMEs to manage their corporate identity along with responding to market trends. The author's approach is empirical with quantitative measures. The constructs scale used in this study for the questionnaire is valid and empirically tested in previous research studies. The population criteria for this research are Pakistan-based small and medium-sized enterprises in the business-to-business domain with international clients and social media presence. The sampling method is convenience sampling with 110 SMEs as total respondents. The tool to test the hypothesis is linear regression for causal relationships and mediation analysis.

The findings show that market orientation affects the management of corporate identity in B2B SMEs through customer-orientated strategies and inter-functional coordination. This influence is positive and has both direct and indirect effects. The indirect effect is caused by the usage of conversation and sharing functionalities of social media. The evidence of underlying mechanisms shows that corporate identity management can be positively influenced through internal and external interactions. SMEs in the B2B domain can manage their corporate identity while remaining flexible to market trends. Moreover, the culture of the organization impacts the external communications of the organization. The alignment of goals, responsiveness toward customer needs, and social media activities impact corporate identity management.

### **3.8. Analyzing the factors influencing the competitiveness of the Tunisian automotive suppliers in the global automotive value chain**

*Author: Rihem Hssan*

*MBA candidate, Small Enterprise Promotion and Training, Leipzig University, Germany*

The global automotive value chain is a highly demanding and competitive environment, characterized by an increasing variety of products, highly strict environmental requirements (lower CO<sub>2</sub> emissions) and new MADE trends, including mobility concepts, autonomous driving, digital technologies, and electrification. This research analyzes the Tunisian automotive industry from the firms' point of view and the intermediate institutions. It also investigates the key factors that helped the Tunisian domestic suppliers enhance their competitiveness within the global value chain (GVC), their internationalization, and their integration into the automotive global value chain.

This study collects data from 10 semi-structured interviews with entrepreneurs, experienced CEOs, and intermediate institutions experts that are involved with the decision-making process in the different phases of the firms and sector growth. From eight competitiveness dimensions, a total of 25 sub-dimensions are identified as relevant to the competitiveness of Tunisian automotive companies in the GVC. The most significant success factors that have contributed to the competitiveness of Tunisian companies in the GVC are companies' strategies, market entry, financial performance, supply chain management, technology upgrading, customer perspective, skilled labor, and government initiatives. These success factors are emphasized from three points of view: Tunisian automotive pioneers, newcomers, and Tunisian automotive intermediate institutions.

This study encourages Tunisian automotive newcomers to follow the proposed competitiveness roadmap based on the recommendations from Tunisian key players in the automotive scene. These golden tips are focused on a strong financial situation, good management, good company performance, supply chain management, client perspective, sustainability aspects, and the government's role. Newcomers are advised to follow their steps and take the lessons learned from the role models of the Tunisian automotive industry to enhance their competitiveness in the automotive global value chain.



### **3.9. International supply chain and external environment impacts on meat markets**

*Author: Mazhar Hussain*

*MBA candidate, Institute of Business Administration Karachi, Pakistan*

Supply chains of edible and perishable goods have been found extremely sensitive to changing market dynamics. Meat is one of these goods and is highly dependent on its Supply Chain Model (from breeding to Shelf) specifically in current times, its supply chain is going through a transition due to a recently altered buying behavior resulting from the Covid pandemic. This phenomenon, however, needs a more structured explanation and for that EBM model could provide a good start. This research, therefore, focuses on studying how changing buying behavior is affected by external factors, and the supply chain of perishable goods and the meat supply chain of Pakistan are being researched for this purpose.



### **3.10. Analyzes of factors influencing the growth of Mexican owned business-related services companies in Germany**

*Author: Mariela Paulina, Tellez Montaña*

*MBA candidate, Small Enterprise Promotion and Training, Leipzig University, Germany*

This research aims to understand the barriers to growth that Mexican migrants have encountered in their knowledge-intensive service businesses in Germany. The study analyzes the entire venture from various points of view of Mexican migrants arriving in Germany, as explained by them in personal interviews. First, it explores their main motivations for starting a business. Then, it covers their execution, including how they perceive the entrepreneurial ecosystem and business culture in Germany and how their professional and cultural background influenced their decision to become entrepreneurs. In addition, it contains their definitions of success and growth. And the relationship between remittances and the development of their businesses.

This exploratory research results from a study conducted using the qualitative research method through semi-structured interviews. The two most important growth barriers faced by Mexican migrant entrepreneurs in knowledge-intensive service firms are their perceived lack of hard and soft skills and their mindset. The identification of growth barriers, mostly related to the person but also to the culture in which they were raised, can be used for future research by academics and migrant organizations for training and development, contributing to the growth of migrant enterprises in countries like Germany.

