

# COOPETITION IN INTERNATIONALIZATION OF WINERIES IN SOUTHERN BRAZIL WITH THE SUPPORT OF FORMAL INSTITUTIONS

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Jefferson Marlon Monticelli<sup>1</sup>

Ivan Lapuente Garrido<sup>2</sup>

Silvio Luís de Vasconcellos<sup>3</sup>

## ABSTRACT

This study analyses the coopetition strategy adopted by wineries in Southern Brazil with the support of local formal institutions to promote their internationalization. A multiple case study with 21 interviews with wineries and formal institutions of the industry was carried out. We used the discourse analysis based on the following categories: industry characterization, national and international markets, internationalization process, and institutional environment. The interpretations regarding the Integrated Sectorial Project (ISP) Wines of Brasil are shown. Despite its relevance, not all those involved have joined the project, because it promotes the internationalization unevenly through the competitive advantage while enhancing the differences between the wineries. The main contributions are expanding the knowledge about coopetition by understanding the role of formal institutions and promoting the international competitiveness of firms in the wine industry.

**Keywords:** Competition. Internationalization. Formal institutions. Wine industry. Wines of Brasil.

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1 Post-Doctoral Student at FGV São Paulo School of Business Administration. Assistant Professor at Unilasalle University. Porto Alegre. Rio Grando do Sul. Brazil. E-mail: jeffmarlon@hotmail.com. ORCID: 0000-0002-1605-7090

2 Full Professor at Universidade do Vale do Rio dos Sinos (Unisinos). Porto Alegre. Rio Grando do Sul. Brazil. E-mail: igarrido@unisinos.br. ORCID: 0000-0003-3741-7961

3 Ph.D. at Universidade do Vale do Rio dos Sinos (Unisinos). Assistant Professor at Universidade Regional de Blumenau (FURB). Ph.D. at Universidade do Vale do Rio dos Sinos (Unisinos). Porto Alegre. Rio Grande do Sul. Brazil. E-mail: slvasconcellos@furb.br ORCID: 0000-0002-9986-679x

## RESUMO

*Este estudo analisa a estratégia de coopetição adotada pelas vinícolas gaúchas com o apoio das instituições formais locais, para promover a sua internacionalização. Foi realizado um estudo de caso múltiplo com 21 entrevistas com vinícolas e instituições formais da indústria. Foi utilizada a análise de discurso baseada na categorização em: caracterização da indústria, mercados nacional e internacional, processo de internacionalização e ambiente institucional. Transpareceram as interpretações a respeito do Projeto Setorial Integrado (PSI) Wines of Brasil. Apesar da sua relevância, o projeto ainda não possui aderência de todos os envolvidos, pois promove a internacionalização de maneira heterogênea por meio da vantagem cooperativa, ampliando as diferenças entre vinícolas. As principais contribuições remetem à ampliação do conhecimento sobre coopetição por meio da compreensão do papel das instituições formais, promovendo a competitividade internacional das firmas na indústria vinícola.*

**Palavras-chave:** Coopetição. Internacionalização. Instituições formais. Indústria vinícola. Wines of Brasil.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

The intensification of competition in the globalized business context has influenced the management of organizations. In response, the search for sustainable competitive advantages has encouraged organizations to explore new business grouping alternatives. Within an environment characterized by volatility, by the requirement of innovative and dynamic organizations, constrained by institutional structures that may limit the firm's sustainability, new inter-organizational arrangements are preponderant to the perpetuity in the environment.

However, competition is no longer the only relationship strategy that prevails in the business environment. Cooperation and coopetition strategies complement the competitive paradigm by creating new forms of intra-organizational governance and expanding the alternatives of business grouping between firms (BENGTSSON; KOCK, 1999, 2000; BRANDENBURGER; NALEBUFF, 1995; PADULA; DAGNINO, 2007). In the coopetition relationship, the agents have mutual interaction through the aggregation of value in certain activities and, simultaneously, the competition for the same resources in other activities (BRANDENBURGER; NALEBUFF, 1995).

These competitive cooperation strategies have been diffused both in the domestic market and in the international market, aiming not only to increase the competitiveness of firms but also to guarantee their survival (LADO; BOYD; HANLON, 1997). The prevalence of coopetition is more noticeable – and likely to succeed – in business networks and local productive arrangements with firms with collaborative cultures, complementary skills, convergent objectives, and measurable risks (BROUTHERS; BROUTHERS; WILKINSON, 1995).

From the theoretical perspective, this article aims to analyze the coopetition in the internationalization of the wine industry of Rio Grande do Sul with the support of formal institutions. It has as the empirical field of study the Brazilian wine industry – specifically wineries and formal institutions located in the region of Serra Gaúcha – the largest producer and exporter of Brazil. This industry fits the study because, although it does not represent a traditionally internationalized industry, it includes firms of different sizes and experiences, and has formal institutional support to search for external markets, from the Brazilian Agency of Promotion of Exports and Investments (Apex-Brasil) and the Brazilian Wine Institute (Ibravin), creating an important link to foster cooperative strategies in this industry.

Also, this choice is justified by the relevance of the industry. According to the representative of the Brazilian Agency of Promotion of Exports and Investments – Apex-Brasil –, it has grown because of the project *Wines of Brasil*, one of the most successful projects of this institu-

tion. Moreover, the visibility of this project has furthered the socio-economic development of the region on which it is based. Therefore, it uses a case study carried out through semi-structured interviews with representatives of wineries and formal institutions. As the main findings, different interpretations regarding the ISP Wines of Brasil were identified. Despite its relevance, not all those involved joined the project yet, because it promotes the internationalization uniformly through the competitive advantage, but also widens the differences between the wineries. The main contributions are expanding the knowledge about coopepetition by understanding the role of formal institutions and promoting the international competitiveness of firms in the wine industry.

This article is organized into six sections. After the introduction, the theoretical reference describes the concepts that guide the definitions, limitations and understanding about the cooperative perspective. Afterwards, are presented the main strategies of internationalization and how they are influenced by the formal institutions, introducing a variation of the model of Chin, Chan and Lam (2008) and discussing coopepetition associated with internationalization and formal institutions. In continuity, this is the method used to support the empirical study, identifying evidence that certifies the coopepetition relationship. In the following sections, are presented the wine industry in the State of Rio Grande do Sul, the Wines of Brasil Project and the analyses of the internationalization project of the Rio Grande do Sul wine industry, supported by local formal institutions. Finally, the final considerations on the topic are drawn, while conjecturing cooperative view in the industry researched with the study restrictions, as well as suggestions for future research.

## 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 The cooperative perspective

Cooperation has been studied under various views such as game theory, transaction cost theory (TCT), resource-based view (RBV) (LADO; BOYD; HANLON, 1997; QUINTANA-GARCÍA; BENAVIDES-VELASCO, 2004) and networks (GNYAWALI; PARK, 2009; BENGTSSON; KOCK, 2014). From the perspective of game theory, researchers analyze cooperation as a win-win game, discussing the balance between value creation (common benefits), value appropriation (private benefits), and creation of value for all participants (BRANDENBURGER; NALEBUFF, 1996; GNYAWALI; JINYU; MADHAVAN, 2008; RITALA; TIDSTRÖM, 2014). Few studies have applied the TCT to analyze cooperation, which focuses on extremely risky businesses, with competitors who may be encouraged to have an opportunistic behavior (QUINTANA-GARCÍA; BENAVIDES-VELASCO, 2004; ERIKSSON, 2008). RBV has been used mainly to mobilize resources and technologies (LADO; BOYD; HANLON, 1997; QUINTANA-GARCÍA; BENAVIDES-VELASCO, 2004). Finally, the last group of researchers emphasizes the relevance of the characteristics and positions of networks. Networks are the basis to develop competitive advantages, with cooperative relationships explaining how to access and extend knowledge and resources outside the firm (BENGTSSON; KOCK, 1999; 2000; GNYAWALI; MADHAVAN, 2001; RUSKO, 2014). However, this perspective remains incomplete, since the definition of networks is still fuzzy (CHIAMBARETTO; DUMEZ, 2016).

Cooperation can also be analyzed through two perspectives: as a context and as a process (BENGTSSON *et al.*, 2010). On the one hand, as a context, cooperation is seen as a chain that adds value to the firm through interaction with the environment (BRANDENBURGER; NALEBUFF, 1996; SIDE; BOYD; HANLON, 1997). This chain – called “The Value Net” – refers to customers, suppliers, substitutes (or competitors). In this relationship, cooperation takes place between the firm and these parts, in any direction, based on the game theory (NASH, 1950). A market analogy can

also be made with a pie. Players cooperate, create value and developing the market as if cooking a pie. Thus, they compete to capture the value obtained from the market growth, that is, the largest slice of the pie (BRANDENBURGER; NALEBUFF, 1996; GNYAWALI; JINYU; MADHAVAN, 2006).

On the other hand, when seen as a process, coopetition involves simultaneous strategies of cooperation and competition between competing firms, but in different areas and under different levels of interaction (BENGTSSON; KOCK, 1999; 2000). Process, in this case, is defined as an evolution of the changes that balance and strengthen cooperative and competitive interactions (DAHL, 2014), taking place in one or two separate continua (PADULA; DAGNINO, 2007). More recently, coopetition has been considered as a paradoxical relationship between two or more actors, which are simultaneously involved in cooperative and competitive interaction, whether they are horizontal or vertical (BENGTSSON; KOCK, 2014). The challenge is to keep the balance in the face of the dynamism of this relationship, since it will rarely be static (BENGTSSON; KOCK, 2000; ROY; YAMI, 2009).

Coopetition is based on the interdependence between firms, with the convergence of interests and objectives through disparate relationships. Its foundation is in aligning different interests towards a common goal. It is based on creating opportunities to generate competitive advantages while removing external obstacles and neutralizing threats (CHIN; CHAN; LAM, 2008). However, the participants cooperate in areas different from the ones where they are competing (LUO, 2005). This is a paradoxical relationship, as it combines cooperation and competition and, consequently, their advantages and risks (CHEN, 2008). Moreover, it is also dynamic due to the objectives, market conditions, and continuous change of the roles (LUO; TUNG, 2007; HUNG; CHANG, 2012).

That said, coopetition is understood as having the same origin as collaboration does since both arise from common interests that replace the maximization of individual gain. However, this will not necessarily be divided equally between the parties (PADULA; DAGNINO, 2007). Though existing an alignment of interest, at some point a discord point will lead to a dispute over the division of the outcomes. The earnings of the relationship will be proportional not only to what was invested by the participants, but what was obtained by learning and individual power in the relationship strategy (ABDALLAH; WADWA, 2009). The coopetitive relationship is due to maximizing the results achieved by targeting efforts in the same direction, as transcribed by formal or tacit agreements. In the distant activities of the target market, firms cooperate; in the activities similar to the targeted market, firms compete (BENGTSSON; KOCK, 1999, 2000).

Coopetitive and collaborative relationships are based on trust, reciprocity, and altruism (KANTER, 1994). Thus, reduction of transaction costs, periods of product and innovation development, and contractual mechanisms to neutralize opportunistic risks are gained. Nevertheless, strategic options enable assuming flexible postures (LADO; BOYD; HANLON, 1997).

However, despite coopetition being based on convergent interests, its model is criticized mainly for the risks posed by opportunism and environmental dynamism (GULATI; NOHRIA; ZAHHEER, 2000; HAMEL, 1991). Moreover, the relationship fails when the agents fail to recognize the asymmetry of benefits and have the perception of injustice (KHANNA; GULATI; NOHRIA, 1998). A coherent and positively interdependent dyadic relationship between participants is created. Therefore, coopetition is not a dichotomous construct on a continuum between competition and cooperation. Its concept is multidimensional, complex and dynamic (PADULA; DAGNINO, 2007). Thus, coopetition implies sharing goals that induce agents to cooperate and compete with each other to reduce risks, losses and uncertainties, to expand their set of strategic options, to leverage their earnings and to have a performance that is better than through strategies based only on competition or cooperation.

## 2.2 Interactions between competition and cooperation

Chin, Chan and Lam (2008) developed a model to detect the competition and cooperation relationships according to the level of interaction between their agents (Figure 1). The model presents four typologies resulting from the interaction and intensity of the competition and cooperation between the firms. The authors suggest that the behavior of the agents aims at raising funds to develop strategies that generate value and economic returns above the market average to the organization. Moreover, Luo (2005) points out that the similarities of the markets contribute to competitive behavior and that the asymmetry of resources favors the establishment of cooperation between agents. It is justified competition for the dispute of the same resources and the collaboration of the agents for their complementarity, in order to internalize acquired knowledge of the related competitor.

**Figure 1** – Intensity degree of relationship between competition and cooperation.

<b>Competitive Orientation</b>	High	Competitive (i)	Adaptative (iv)
	Low	Isolated (ii)	Partner (iii)
		<b>Collaborative Orientation</b>	

**Source:** Adapted from Chin, Chan and Lam (2008).

The first quadrant presents the prevalence of competitive relationships, mainly based on oligopolies characterized by a high level of competition, industry deregulation, and sophisticated customer demand. There is a greater incidence of similarity of products, resources and markets, showing a lesser intention of cooperation.

The second situation consists of agents that do not interact significantly with other rivals while maintaining low levels of competition and cooperation. They are firms with a limited scope of products or markets that sustain a competitive position, by using regulatory, technological, and financial barriers against new entrants (HITT; IRELAND; HOSKISSON, 2008; LUO, 2005). The third quadrant shows the status of high cooperation and low competition, taking advantage of the synergies created from the agents. Moreover, the necessary conditions for this relationship to occur are the high complementarity of resources and skills and low level of sharing of similar characteristics within the same market. Finally, the last quadrant contains the adaptive relationship where cooperation and competition interact by reducing costs and risks, exploration of skills and efficiency gain. Moreover, rarely rivals compete in all businesses, products, or markets, providing opportunities to cooperate (LUO, 2005).

## 2.3 Internationalization strategies

Internationalization is the process of firms joining or expanding their activities to a transnational dimension through goods and services trade, usually through export and import. This action must systematically take place while involving supply, manufacturing, and commercialization activities, to acquire resources, conduct negotiations, penetrate new markets, and achieve efficiency gains

(CAVUSGIL; KNIGHT; RIESENBERG, 2010; DUNNING, 1988). Corroborating this view, Hitt, Ireland and Hoskisson (2008) state that international markets make it possible to create additional opportunities concerning the domestic market. In emerging countries, the internationalization movement occurred on a late, timid and incipient shape when compared to developed countries (FLEURY; FLEURY, 2007).

For Dunning and Lundan (2008), classical and neoclassical theories of the economy were models of commerce that focused on explaining where production was located. The international market was assumed to be a cost mechanism. These theories presented some specific characteristics (that ended up creating gaps), such as the particularities of each organization (resources, capabilities and properties) were ignored; resources were immobile across borders and mobile within borders; firms had limited rationality and engaged in only one activity; the search for maximization of results; prices determined the allocation of resources. These elements represented the characteristics of perfect markets. International business studies, in general, are responses to these gaps and are usually divided into two major approaches: economic and behavioral.

The internationalization process, under the economic approach, is analyzed by the internationalization theories with a bias directed to the rationalization and control of the costs and economic factors involved (BUCKLEY; CASSON, 2009; DUNNING, 1980; 1988; VERNON, 1966; ANDERSON; GATIGNON, 1986). On the other hand, under the behavioral approach, the internationalization of a firm presents gradual stages of involvement with the external market: (i) non-regular export activities; (ii) export via independent agents; (iii) establishment of international sales through a subsidiary abroad; and (iv) installation units of production and manufacturing abroad (JOHANSON; WIEDERSHEIM-PAUL, 1975; JOHANSON; VAHLNE, 1977; 1990; 2009).

Vahlne and Johansen (2013), in turn, value the international expansion of the firm, the importance of dynamic capacities, aiming to mobilize resources and identify opportunities in different markets. Recently, studies such as Hohenthal, Johanson and Johanson (2014) advanced in trying to understand the relationships between business networks, international experience, and knowledge of consumers and competitors. Finally, there are also the *born globals*, which are international firms that have been internationalized since or just after their founding, focused on a niche market, and more active in the negotiations outside their domestic market (OVIATT; MCDUGALL, 1994).

## **2.4 The role of the formal institutions in the internationalization of the firms**

The role of the institutions is more pronounced in emerging countries because the rules are susceptible to changes (PENG, 2002). Thus, the institutions in these countries play a relevant role in the strategy and performance of domestic and foreign investments of firms competing internationally (GAO *et al.*, 2010). North (1991) summarizes that institutions are the rules of the game and organizations are the players. These rules, be they objective or subjective, conscious or unconscious, of political, economic, social, juridical or cultural, create the domain that validates those that are part of it (DIMAGGIO; POWELL, 1983; SCOTT, 1995).

In this context, the institution-based view has two different propositions (Table 1): (i) formal institutions (political regulations, court decisions, economic contracts), which seem to converge as legal or governance systems; and (ii) informal institutions (behavioral, cultural, ethnic, ideological norms, conventions, conduct codes) can sustain this convergence, but not necessarily (KHANNA; KOGAN; PALEPU, 2006). On the other hand, when there is a lack or limitation in the formal mechanisms, informal devices to intervene to mitigate the uncertainty (PENG; KHOURY, 2008). Formal institutions focus on the aspects regulating the individual and the firm's behavior, while the informal institutions focus on the aspects related to the political and the institutional economy (PENG; WANG; JIANG, 2009).

Degree of formality (NORTH, 1990)	Examples	Supporting pillars (SCOTT, 1995)
Formal Institutions	Laws Regulations Rules	Regulatory (coercive)
Informal institutions	Norms Cultures Ethics	Normative Cognitive

**Table 1** – Dimensions of the institutions.

Source: Peng, Wang and Jiang (2009, p. 64).

An institutional system will be complete only through the interaction between formal and informal institutions (DUNNING; LUNDAN, 2008, 2010). Therefore, the institutions will work through their formal or informal structures in order to perform economic and social transactions, which, in turn, will affect any strategic decision adopted by the firm (NORTH, 1990). Also, firms that share the same environment can relate to the same institutions. However, the combination of formal and informal institutions, with different levels between them, will produce different outcomes (ALSTON; EGGERTSSON; NORTH, 1996). Also, two institutions can be said to be “complementary if the presence (or efficiency) of one increases the returns (or efficiency) of the other” (HALL; SOSKICE, 2001, p. 17). Thus, for internationalization purposes, institutions are formal structures responsible for guiding or restricting the choices of agents, working in a positive, negative or even indifferent way, to promote their international insertion.

## 2.5 Summary of the theoretical background and theoretical model

Based on the literature review and the understanding that guides the study, Table 2 was developed, which briefly presents the definition of the topics covered in this section, aiming to present the main topics addressed in the research.

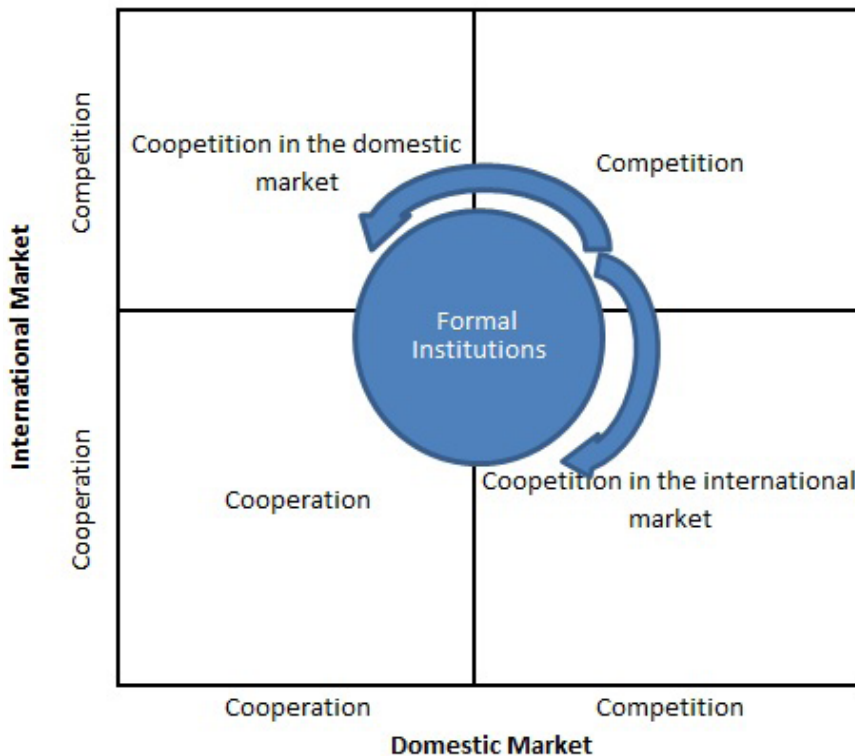
Constructs	Concepts	Focus	References
Cooperation	Perspective as context Perspective as process Intensity degree of competition and cooperation	Value chain (creation and dispute of value between agents) Paradoxical relationship of competition and cooperation between agents Opportunities, barriers Maximizing joint results through common goals Trust, reciprocity, altruism	Bengtsson <i>et al.</i> (2010); Brandenburger and Nalebuff (1996); Lado <i>et al.</i> (1997); Gnyawali <i>et al.</i> (2006); Bengtsson and Kock (1999; 2000; 2014); Dahl (2014); Padula and Dagnino (2007); Roy and Yami (2009); Chin <i>et al.</i> (2008); Kanter (1994); Luo and Tung (2007); Luo (2005); Doh <i>et al.</i> (2017)
Institutions	Formal institutions Informal institutions Institutional strategies	Political rules Judicial decisions Economic agreements Behavioral, cultural, ethnic, ideological norms Conventions Conduct codes Institutional leadership	DiMaggio and Powell (1983); Scott (1995); North (1990); Peng (2002); Khana <i>et al.</i> (2006); Peng and Khoury (2008); Peng, Wang and Jiang (2009); Dunning and Lundan (2008; 2010); Lawrence (1999)

<b>Internationalization strategies</b>	Definition of internationalization Economic approach Behavioral approach Reasons for internationalization	Profit increase, sales increase, and cost reduction Expanding markets and increasing competitiveness Attractive profits, growth opportunities, an easy adaptation of products to the external market, scale economies, management support for international business, public incentives for export promotion Adversities in the domestic market, overstocking, idle production, favorable exchange rate, opportunity to increase the number of markets, risk reduction or unexpected requests from external customers Level of the commitment of resources, control over marketing activities and risk involved in operations	Hitt <i>et al.</i> (2008); Cavusgil <i>et al.</i> (2010); Fleury and Fleury (2007), Dunning and Lundan (2008); Vernon (1966; 1979); Buckley and Casson (2009); Dunning (1980, 1988); Anderson and Gatignon (1986); Johansson and Wiedersheim-Paul (1975); Johanson and Vahlne (1977; 1990; 2009); Vahlne and Johansson (2013); Hohenthal, Johanson and Johanson (2014); Oviatt and McDougall (1994)
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**Table 2** – Definition of the topics covered.

**Source:** Created by the authors.

From the model proposed by Chin, Chan and Lam (2008), a variation was proposed associating the level of internationalization and the influence of the formal institutions to the different behaviors of the firms. In Figure 2, it is observed that the influence of formal institutions for firms to adopt cooperative behaviors, be they in the domestic market or the international market. Thus, the migration of competition strategies to cooperation strategies can result in scale economies, risk diversification, complementarity and access to new resources, and entry into new markets (TOMASZEWSKI, 2014).



**Figure 2** – Influence of the formal institutions.

**Source:** Created by the authors.

Institutions play a relevant role in developing cooperation strategies through *networks* in more mature industries (BRITO, 2001). In this case, institutions are responsible for promoting learn-



ing, reducing transaction costs, and fostering the internationalization of the firms, besides creating barriers to the new members. In the international market, the dynamic of coope-tition is intensified due to the alignment with the reasons for the internationalization of firms (VANYUSHYN; HOLMLUND; KOCK, 2009). Therefore, this theoretical model clarifies the discussion about internationaliza-tion and formal institutions in the different relationship strategies, mainly in coope-tition.

### 3 METHOD

As a qualitative study, this study used descriptive research, which describes situations, facts, opinions or behaviors, to map the distribution of a phenomenon in the population or context studied (FLICK, 2009). A multiple or comparative case study was also used, due to its adequacy to the objectives and the complexity of the proposed topic, to better understand the phenomenon to be studied. The choice for comparative cases in this research is due to the evidence presented by this type of project being more compelling, with the study itself being considered more robust when based on the replication logic (YIN, 2010).

The collection was carried out through 21 semi-structured interviews (Table 3). Moreover, secondary data from websites of the institutions and wineries were also collected to complement and contrast information from interviews and bibliographical material. Thus, a data triangulation is made possible, as it helps in a more comprehensive analysis since it takes into account more than one source of information (FLICK, 2009). While dealing both with primary data and secondary data, I aimed with the data triangulation to obtain more validity and reliability when collecting data at different times, from different sources or instruments in the study of one same phenomenon (COLLIS; HUSSEY, 2005; STAKE, 1998).

The wineries were not randomly chosen considering: i) entry strategy in foreign markets: direct and indirect export; contractual modes; foreign direct investment; and ii) stage according to the work with Wines of Brasil: wineries that have not internationalized yet; wineries with some international experience; wineries with a history of international operations and an advanced level compared with other project participants. However, in order to better understand the phenomenon, were also interviewed wineries managers who did not join Wines of Brasil and who, even with all the advantages afforded by this, also did not start their internationalization process.

Inter-viewee	Firm/Institution	Position	Date	Duration
1	Ibravin	Technical Director	18 June 2012	44min
2	Wines of Brasil	Exportation Manager	18 June 2012	48min
3	Wine Cooperative Aurora	Exportation Supervisor	18 June 2012	35min
4	Salton Winery	Exportation Coordinator	26 June 2012	52min
5	Miolo Winery	International Relationships Manager	07 June 2012	1h03min
6	Basso Winery	Exportation Manager	07 June 2012	37min
7	Embrapa Uva e Vinho	Socio-economy Researcher	11 May 2013	1h23min
8	Miolo Winery	International Relationships Manager	17 June 2013	1h10min
9	Don Giovanni Winery	Commercial Manager	17 June 2013	34min
10	Dal Pizzol Winery	Commercial Manager	21 June 2013	1h05min
11	SDPI	Business Promotion Director and Commercial Intelligence Coordinator	21 June 2013	43min
12	Apex-Brasil	Manager of Relationships with Brazilian Firms	25 June 2013	55min

13	Sindivinho RS	Administrative Executive	31 June 2013	Questionnaire
14	Wines of Brasil	Exportation Manager	14 June 2013	35min
15	FIERGS	International Relationships and International Trade Manager	19 June 2013	56min
16	Salton Winery	Exportation Coordinator	23 June 2013	1h18min
17	Casa Venturini Winery	Oenologist	18 June 2013	39min
18	Specialist	Wine Industry Specialist	18 June 2013	1h35min
19	Larentis Winery	Oenologist	28 June 2013	28min
20	Casa Valduga Winery	Foreign Trade Analyst	28 June 2013	55min
21	Aprovale	Consultant	04 June 2013.	1h02min

**Table 3** – General information about the interviews.

**Source:** Created by the authors.

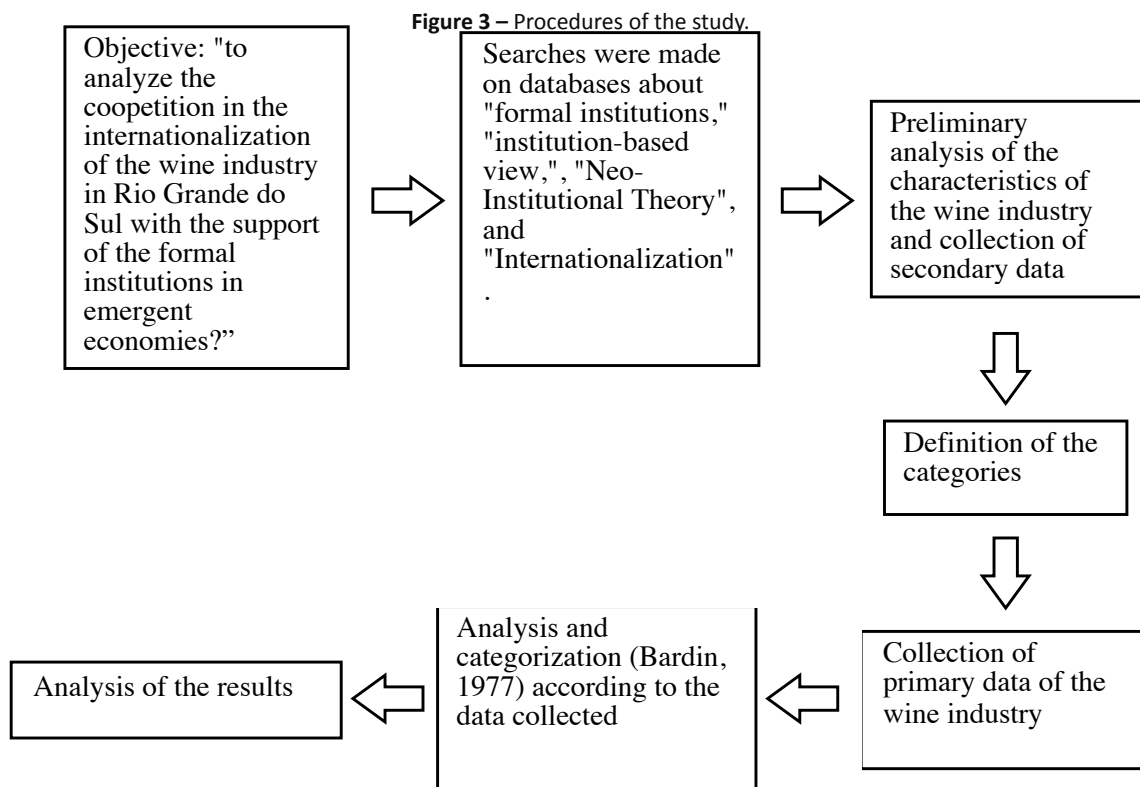
For data analysis purposes, the content analysis technique was used (Table 4) (FLICK, 2009), to infer knowledge through the generation or not of quantitative indicators (BARDIN, 2011). There are steps to be followed in the content analysis technique: i) coding of the interviews for later analysis; ii) definition of the analysis units; iii) categorization (RICHARDSON, 1989). As semi-structured interviews were used, there were pre-defined topics already to be addressed with the interviewees. Following these steps, the categorization based on classifying elements through differentiation, with previously defined criteria, was consolidated. Finally, data were analyzed (BARDIN, 2011) with the software NVivo, version 10.

Categories	Subcategories	References
Characterization	History; role and influence of the formal institution; relevance of the formal institution in the industry.	Farias, 2011; Fensterseifer, 2007; Zen, Dalmoro and Fensterseifer, 2009; Zen <i>et al.</i> , 2013
Domestic and International market	Grouping and relationship strategies, entry barriers, limitations; Brazil's position in the world wine market; positioning of foreign wines in the domestic and international market; image of Brazilian wine.	Zen, Fensterseifer and Prévot, 2011; Zen <i>et al.</i> , 2013; Ibravin, 2013; Uvibra, 2014; Wines of Brasil, 2014; OIV, 2012
Internationalization processes	Motives, benefits, results, difficulties, adaptations for internationalization; international <i>marketing</i> strategies; entry modes; selection criteria of target markets; Wines of Brasil	Brouthers, 2002; Contractor, 1990; Dunning and Lundan, 2010; Mais and Amal, 2009
Relationship strategies	Cooperation, competition, and cooptation	Brandenburger and Nalebuff, 1995; Bengtsson and Kock, 1999, 2000; Bengtsson, Eriksson and Wincent, 2010; Chin, Chan and Lam, 2008
Institutional environment	Relationship with the Wines of Brasil; perception and influence of the other formal institutions.	Gao <i>et al.</i> , 2010; Peng, 2002; Peng and Khoury, 2008

**Table 4** – Analysis categories used for the interview script.

**Source:** Created by the authors.

Starting from the research question, the literature on institutions and internationalization started to be analyzed. It is believed that the Brazilian wine industry has particular characteristics that make it a topic that fits the studies about the relationship between internationalization and institutional environment, as it recently witnessed the internationalization of firms under the influence of formal institutions. Thus, this industry was mapped based on the data collected. The results will be presented in the following section. Figure 3 summarizes the study procedures, from the initial research question to the analysis of the results.



Source: Created by the authors.

## 4 THE WINE INDUSTRY IN THE STATE OF RIO GRANDE DO SUL, THE WINES OF BRASIL PROJECT

The Brazilian wine industry has faced strong competition in the domestic market, especially in countries with traditional international wine production and marketing. In order to deal with this threat, the internationalization of the Brazilian wineries prevails (FENSTERSEIFER, 2007). The representative of Wines of Brasil states that, in the present scenario, either the Brazilian winery internationalizes or it will lose competitiveness, including in the domestic market, for the international market generates an immeasurable learning.

By hosting international sporting events, such as the Olympic Games and the Football World Cup, in addition to the economic development of recent years, Brazil has drawn attention from the main world exponents. The ISP Wines of Brasil favored this scenario and carried out several commercial promotion actions abroad (VOLTOLINI, 2013). According to the interviewees, the difficulties faced by Brazilian wine in the international market are not related to quality, but the so-called Brazil cost, with high taxes, poor infrastructure, absence or existence of bilateral treaties, excessive intermediaries in the marketing of a product, phytosanitary barriers, and limited or poor performance of government institutions.

The ISP Wines of Brasil was designed in 2002 as an export consortium organized by the Federation of Industries of Rio Grande do Sul (in Portuguese, Federação das Indústrias do Estado do Rio Grande do Sul (FIERGS)). At that moment, it was composed by six wineries (Casa Valduga, Aurora, Lovara, Salton, Miolo, and De Lantier) that were grouped together, through FIERGS, to start the internationalization process through planning, with market research and developing initial experi-

ences in the external market, mainly with international courses, meetings, fairs and events. Starting in 2004, with the support of the Brazilian Trade and Investment Promotion Agency (Apex-Brazil), the export consortium became an ISP through an agreement with Ibravin, aiming to promote the Brazilian wine abroad. According to the representative of Apex, this change aimed to give national visibility to the project and to avoid competition for the same source of resources in the same industry that is dispersed in several regional or local export consortia across the country.

Apex-Brasil periodically conducts market research to identify attractive countries to promote and commercialize the Brazilian wine. However, it is up to each winery to determine the countries with which it has an interest in developing business. All the wineries interviewed stated that, due to the financial support of Wines of Brasil (rental and assembly of the structure at the fairs) only for previously selected markets, many wineries prefer working where there is such a benefit.

The strategy adopted is consistent with the view of Bengtsson and Kock (2000) in which coopetition can be established in different degrees and places. In general, wineries aim to compete in the actions closest to the customers (commercial area) and cooperate in processes farthest from them (production). According to the representative of Aurora winery, especially on trips abroad, the confidentiality of information does not predominate; but in the domestic market, the attitude is different. It is also highlighted: "Abroad, we help each other; here, we kill each other."

With this orientation, the strengthened coopetition relationships must have motivations, strategies, and benefits that are easily identifiable, in addition to conflict-solving mechanisms and definition of responsibilities (ZINELDIN, 2004). Nevertheless, the maintenance of the relationship will only occur after higher earnings are given to the agent that does not adhere to any coooperative interaction and as long as a fair division of the outcomes is provided (JARILLO, 1988).

For smaller wineries, referred to as "boutique wineries" by the interviewee from Apex, the position adopted should be based on differentiation. The interviewee from Dal Pizzol ratifies this strategy, which associates the production of exotic wines with the history and tradition of the entrepreneurial family, besides seeking to obtain the potential of each type of grape, but preserving its original identity. The representative of Apex-Brasil supports this intention by mentioning that the search for the identity of the national wine, with its specific characteristics, must prevail, differentiating itself from the European wines through the process called *branding*.

Regardless of the position of the winery, Wines of Brasil offers institutional support with financial subsidy to the firm's exposition in international events, studies on the target markets, training related to the external international market, and access to partnerships with service providers to sample shipment, customs clearance, air tickets, among other activities related to the external market (WINES OF BRASIL, 2014). In 2013, Wines of Brasil had 40 wineries. As goals, the project is in search of a greater acknowledgement of the Brazilian wine in the international market, as well as a rise in the export volume and the number of exporters. Other formal institutions work as trainers, such as Brazilian Micro and Small Enterprises' Support Service (SEBRAE), Secretariat for Development and Promotion of Investment of the State of Rio Grande do Sul (SDPI-RS), the wine industry (Brazilian Winemaking Union [União Brasileira de Vitivinicultura] – UVIBRA), and the Brazilian Association of Oenology (in Portuguese, Associação Brasileira de Enologia (ABE)), in addition to the Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation (in Portuguese, Empresa Brasileira de Pesquisa Agropecuária (Embrapa)) and universities in Southern Brazil.

In general, the presence of Brazilian wines in foreign markets generates various types of gain for the participants in the industry. There are exchange of experiences, learning gains and expansion of the relationships network by contacting wineries, institutions, and events with more tradition and history; it creates a greater number of strategic options, reducing the dependence on the domestic market; the Brazilian consumer is thus introduced to the national wine,

which starts to be valued in the domestic market. In addition, it makes it possible to establish new relationship strategies, emphasizing cooperation, mainly due to the influence and synergy of the formal institutions over the wineries (MONTICELLI; CALIXTO; GARRIDO, 2012; CALIXTO *et al.*, 2012). Finally, the more firms become internationalized, the greater their value creation for shareholders or investors are, demonstrating that there is a possibility of increasing profitability through international expansion (PETRY *et al.*, 2014).

According to the representative of Salton Winery, the project allows small wineries to reach foreign markets that would otherwise be unattainable, primarily through the First Exportation Program (in Portuguese, Programa Primeira Exportação) as well as provides an expansion of their products' sale to the largest wineries. The interviewee from Miolo winery says that the greatest support is provided in the exchange of commercial information – mainly on fairs and on bureaucratic issues –, legislation, label requirements, etc. However, for the interviewee from Don Giovanni winery, it is not enough just the wineries to be integrated into the project, since it is fundamental that they are prepared to be internationalized. This approach reinforces the view of cooperation in which larger and smaller wineries (both agents) cooperate in different areas (*marketing*, foreign trade, and commercialization) and compete (production) simultaneously to generate benefits to those involved (creating and promoting an identity of the domestic wine) by sharing resources and knowledge for a later division of results that is higher than the gain seen isolated (acknowledgement of the Brazilian wine in the international market and regain of the market share in the domestic market). (MONTICELLI; CALIXTO; GARRIDO, 2012). However, according to the interviewee from Dal Pizzol winery, cooperation could be greater through the acquisition of inputs, such as cork stoppers and bottles on a large scale, in addition to the joint litigation for tax reduction and uniformity.

For the general manager of Wines of Brasil, the greatest difficulty of the project is the lack of knowledge of foreign consumers regarding the Brazilian wine. Therefore, the international recognition creates an expectation that this image made by the consumer changes up until the per capita consumption of wine is enhanced, since this is another obstacle to the industry, according to the representative of Ibravin. Therefore, Wines of Brasil aims to create visible benefits not only to the external market but also to the domestic market, because the Brazilian consumer prefers the imported wines as being better than the ones produced in Brazil.

By analyzing the reports, it is observed that Wines of Brasil provided reach to all participating wineries, regardless of their size. Some of those that started their activities in 2002 already enjoy a more advanced stage of internationalization. Even for late-onset cases, Wines of Brasil made it possible to reach markets previously unexplored by firms by participating in international fairs and events that have high costs and require a high degree of technical preparation, which would not be feasible for firms independently. In this regard, the exchange of information and integration among the participants are the drivers of the process, creating a synergistic relationship for the external market. According to the interviewee from the Basso winery, the Wines of Brasil project assists the wineries by organizing business rounds aimed at the objectives of each firm and marketing events, such as wine tasting for the press.

According to the participants in Wines of Brasil, both larger and smaller wineries, as well as institutions understand that, if it is not common, at least, is tangent: it is essential to selling the brand of Brazil wine abroad, before selling the wine from any winery. The representative of the Dal Pizzol winery reinforces the idea of cooperation within the industry: “the market does not only survive with the great wineries because small firms add novelties, quality, niche wines (...) First, it has to sell the brand of Brazilian wine abroad, overcoming the prejudice, but it cannot be done separately. “

Thus, it is noticed that coopetition provides resources to firms with strong limitations and provides entry into markets that otherwise they would not have access. However, according to Zineldin (2004), smaller firms may have little to contribute to a coooperative relationship, because of their organizational incipience in terms of learning and knowledge. Moreover, they have a greater risk of depending solely on the benefits generated by the relationship (OSARENKHOE, 2010).

## 5 DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES ON COOPETITION IN THE WINE INDUSTRY IN SOUTHERN BRAZIL

From the evolution of the model of Chin, Chan and Lam (2008) in the wine industry, the following participants were identified: i) competitive: larger internationalized wineries, but they do not use collaborative strategies, such as the only two export wineries that are not part of Wines of Brasil; ii) isolate: smaller wineries, which are not participating in Wines of Brasil and have a passive behavior with the others, both in competition and in cooperation; iii) partnership: smaller wineries, integrated with Wines of Brasil, which aim synergy and learning gains in niches to avoid competition with larger wineries; and iv) coooperative: winners with the highest level of development, that are internationalized and participants in Wines of Brasil, who aim to improve their performance through coooperation.

Although Wines of Brasil has provided the congregation of wineries and formal institutions in pursuit of a common goal – to promote Brazilian wine abroad – a uniform and total adherence of the wineries belonging to the project is not perceived. All reports show the highly competitive industry and the difficulty of establishing joint efforts, motivated mainly by family management and cultural aspects of the region. According to Lawrence (1999), the nature of the institutions and their environment influences the institutional strategies, which, in turn, redesign their competitive positions according to the social structures that legitimize or challenge them to the group. Under a more limited scope, institutions can be understood as governmental structures or agencies that pressure and are pressured by other institutions and other sources (VIEIRA; MACHADO, 2012). For this study, it is understood that formal institutions include wineries and governmental, class, public or private entities. Therefore, legitimacy becomes a preponderant factor for the acceptance of an institution by its group (JACOMETTI; SANCHES; GONÇALVES, 2013).

In these cases, some smaller wineries do not have the organizational resources to commit to the project, choosing to work only in the domestic market; others, despite the resource constraints, face the challenges posed by the internationalization process while denying the standards of practice within the institutional arrangement. Those firms that opt to become internationalized aim to specialize in products or markets in order to emphasize the acquired knowledge (LUO, 2005).

For other formal institutions, the effort and investment in participating in the internationalization process are considered innocuous. Thus, Wines of Brasil is interpreted as an elitist project, which prioritizes only the demands of a few large wineries while ignoring the needs of small firms that need more support. Thus, the competitive differences are enhanced, besides excluding most of the producer market and discouraging the family enterprise.

An intermediate view is that wineries must own the benefits of the project, but as they reach a stage of maturity in their internationalization process, they must disassociate themselves from it. In this case, wineries that are part of a list of internal competencies through the strategic options and the relationships network provided by Wines of Brasil should be emancipated without undermining smaller wineries, which are still at the beginning of a learning curve in the internationalization process. To that end, a firm's specific capabilities and its power to promote them to

generate new competencies are key to maintain its sustainability (TEECE; PISANO, 1994). However, for Zen *et al.* (2013), the appropriation of resources generated by Wines of Brasil occurs in a heterogeneous and asymmetric way among the participants. Consequently, firms from this perspective can enjoy the following: (a) an extension of synergies through the complementarity of resources, compatibility of objectives and cooperative culture; (b) a division of values by trying to accommodate their respective cultures, philosophies and organizational values; and (c) an improvement of interaction among firms through familiarity, socialization and knowledge sharing (LUO, 2005).

At the other end, Wines of Brasil is seen as a learning concept, in which there is an opportunity both for wineries without any international experience (through the First Export Program) and wineries already in advanced stages of internationalization. Also, it is planned to create an intermediate segment for wineries that have already exported, but not regularly. Currently, wineries rely more on resources and commitment to achieve their objectives, in addition to providing space for new firms in the international market. However, these same wineries that wish to be internationalized face the dilemma of choosing to initially strengthen themselves in the domestic market or seek new customers in the foreign market. Thus, for the firms, it is imperative to analyze the boundaries of the areas where they can cooperate and compete with each other, as well as establish a strategic balance between competition and cooperation (LUO, 2005).

Finally, the insertion of the project in a heterogeneous industry, with a high unevenness of human, financial and logistical resources, makes it difficult for potential participants to adhere to it. In order to reduce this imbalance, the participation of the formal institutions becomes essential, since it can directly influence the business of a firm within a particular environment (DOH *et al.*, 2017). Lastly, coopetition itself is dynamic as its goals involve the inter-dependency between firms and institutions (DELIGONUL *et al.*, 2013).

## 6 CONCLUSIONS AND LIMITATIONS

In order to analyze the coopetition relationships in the wine industry in Rio Grande do Sul, the present study used a variety of information from formal and winery institutions of different sizes and in different stages of internationalization. Throughout the literature review and the interviews, the study showed evidence of coopetition relationships among firms, even in an industry fragmented in numerous formal institutions and characterized by intense competitiveness, both in the domestic market and in the international scenario.

Just as the Serra Gaúcha wineries had to change their relationship strategies to compete in the external market, they also encouraged adaptations in their international *marketing* strategies influenced by formal institutions. Reformulating this concept in an incipient export industry required great efforts of the formal institutions involved. This joint effort – to promote Brazilian wine in the international market – plays a very important role within the wine industry, that is, the product is valued according to its country of origin. Thus, the internationalization no longer only provides objectives, such as expanding markets, increasing revenues or increasing profits, and starts to build a network of relationships and learning. From this evolution of the wineries, sources of competition are generated to reach new, more ambitious goals, in order to make Brazilian wineries active and representative in the international market.

Imbued with this legitimacy within the industry, firms use social structures to have institutional leadership and to redesign their competitive positions (LAWRENCE, 1999). Just as Ibravin played the role of proposing institution in the industry, bringing together all formal institutions, mainly through Wines of Brasil, the largest wineries were successful after an identical strategy.

It must be considered that not all wineries that were present at the first meeting still exist independently (Lovara and De Lantier have been incorporated), that is, having started together with Wines of Brasil was not a guarantee of success. In addition, Wines of Brasil is focused on the internationalization of Brazilian wine. Moreover, participation in the international market has little representativeness for national firms.

Having said that, it is understood that participating in Wines of Brasil is no guarantee of success. On the other hand, not being present is being farther from success because there is less ownership of knowledge, learning and the relationships network offered. In return, the acquisition of these benefits requires investment and commitment on the part of the firms. This idea is in line with Teece and Pisano (1994) when they claim that a resource becomes valuable depending on how it is used. Regarding the interviewees, it is seen that wineries already benefited while participating in the project, since many of them only had access to the international fairs and business rounds because of the articulation provided by IBRAVIN together with funding agencies and representatives of the federal government abroad.

Although the initiative was created by formal institutions, the cooperative interactions between the participants have created the so-called co-competitive advantage (PADULA; DAGNINO, 2007). This is different from the orientation focused on the competitive advantage that aims at individual gains and selfish behavior on the part of the agents (PORTER, 1985). Firms cooperate to create value but compete to share the results in a new context in which the agents have to cooperate and compete to survive. In the case of the wine industry, this situation only applies to the external market. Thus, cooperation does not exclude the existence of competitive pressures (PADULA; DAGNINO, 2007).

Competitive collaboration reduces costs, risks and uncertainties associated with the development of new products during the internationalization process. Most often, it is very costly for a firm to develop and penetrate a market in isolation (LUO; SLOTEGRAAF; PAN, 2006). For industry firms, technology is not a restrictive factor, but collaboration gives access to markets and increases knowledge in the commercial range. Moreover, cooperation enables firms to face institutional threats and difficulties, especially those caused by differences between domestic and foreign environments (LUO, 2005). Verschoore (2004) stresses the difficulty in dealing with a heterogeneous network that develops different expectations, goals and management styles. Among the wineries, it is observed the fierce competition in the industry, which does not distinguish the difference between the firms.

Few attempts have been made to understand the dynamics of cooperation, considering simultaneously the influence of internal and external environment of the firm. In addition, rarely institutions and internationalization of firms have been associated with cooperation strategies. Thus, integrating these different perspectives through the development of an analytical model can be an advance in the studies on cooperation. In the wine industry in the state of Rio Grande do Sul, specifically, this study can contribute by bringing a new look at the different relationship strategies that firms adopt, impacting on different outcomes for the internationalization process.

Although the cases presented were discussed in the light of the theory, this study has limitations: (a) 21 representatives of wineries and formal institutions of a single industry were interviewed, not including all those involved in the institutional environment. Therefore, the results should be limited to this case; (b) from a methodological perspective, a cross-sectional data collection was used, making it impossible to analyze the facts historically and being subject to the interviewees' perception. As a suggestion for future research, it could be said focusing on other wine regions as well as other industries, besides exploring how decisions of political nature influence formal institutions that coordinate the wine industry, providing a new view to the internationalization of these firms.



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<b>Contribution</b>	<b>[Author 1]</b>	<b>[Author 2]</b>	<b>[Author 3]</b>
1. Definition of research problem	√	√	√
2. Development of hypotheses or research questions (empirical studies)	√	√	
3. Development of theoretical propositions (theoretical work)	√	√	√
4. Theoretical foundation / Literature review	√		
5. Definition of methodological procedures	√	√	
6. Data collection	√		
7. Statistical analysis	-	-	-
8. Analysis and interpretation of data	√	√	
9. Critical revision of the manuscript		√	√
10. Manuscript writing	√		
11. Other (please specify)			