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Title	REGIONAL DIFFERENCES IN STRATEGIC CROSS-BORDER ACQUISITIONS: Pre-acquisition process, motives and ownership structure		
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Abstract

For the past decades, the world economy has been dominated by giant multinational enterprises (MNEs), originating mainly from the “Western” countries. However, recent studies have called into question the true global extent of these corporate giants by claiming that MNEs are, in fact, more regional than global. Thus, academics in the field of strategic management have suggested that MNEs should develop more regionally planned strategies, rather than global ones, in order to prosper. The need for a regional perspective is explained through increased regional economic integration of countries, visible in trading blocs, free trade areas and intra-region production networks. MNEs should seize opportunities created by these integrating regions and their market potential - and this is often done by an acquisitive entry into the market. The purpose of this research is to deepen the understanding of the relationship between regionalization and cross-border acquisitions, where previous research is limited. The regional perspective is applied to cross-border acquisitions and therefore, *the aim of this research is to analyze the regional differences in pre-acquisition phase process, motives and ownership structure of strategic cross-border acquisitions*, which is further divided into three sub-questions.

This research was conducted as a qualitative, explanatory single-case study, where the research aim was fulfilled through reflecting the theoretical background with the case company example. The empirical data was gathered through 7 semi-structured interviews and organizational documentation was used as supporting information. The main empirical findings suggested that there are regional differences in pre-acquisition process, motives and ownership structure. The region that proved its uniqueness was Asia: It is a region where the pre-acquisition process takes longer to complete, the motives for acquisitions are based on market entry and partial acquisitions are favored. Europe and North America proved to be rather similar, where the process was fast to execute, acquisitions were motivated by increase in economies of scale and mostly full acquisitions were preferred.

Based on the key findings of this study, a framework of regional acquisition activity development was formulated. According to it, the number and nature of acquisitions are dependent on the economic development of the region as well as on the development of the particular industry in the region. Along with industry and market development, transaction cost theory factors and institutional factors affect the company's decision to engage in acquisition activity on the region. This research filled its aim at deepening the understanding of the relationship between regionalization and cross-border acquisitions by constructing one of the first analytical frameworks portraying what factors contribute to the regional differences in cross-border acquisitions.

Key words	Cross-border acquisitions, regionalization, acquisitions process, ownership structure
Further information	