

## **Research Project**

### **Integrative Execution of Strategy in a Multinational Context**

Research on strategy execution has been based on eclectic roots, as noted by Noble (1999) more than 20 years ago, and recently highlighted by Weiser, Jarzabkowski and Laamanen (2020) who identified two rather distinct approaches, which have been assumed, albeit implicitly, as irreconcilable: a structural control view and an adaptive view. The former is strongly grounded on systematic top-down mechanisms that aim at controlling how the formulated strategy is cascaded down to lower levels of the organization, whereas the latter is based on a more fluid view that combines top-down, bottom-up and horizontal linkages across organizational levels and respective actors. Neither of the two alone is sufficient to explain complex processes of strategy implementation (Silenskytê & Smale, 2020), and therefore an integrative view that combines both perspectives is necessary (Weiser et al., 2020).

This inductive study adopts a phenomenon-based approach (Doh, 2015; Hambrick, 2007) in order to delve into a relatively not well-understood phenomenon – strategy execution – in its occurrence in a thus far under-researched context – multinational companies – and in particular as regards the companies' efforts towards the pursuit of particularly relevant objectives – those related to the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (United Nations Foundation, 2021), UN's SDGs.

The contribution of this study lies in examining how the international

context modifies the ways in which strategy execution is undertaken, both by means of a structural control approach and of an adaptive approach. This study supports development of an integrative, more balanced, approach, which is expected to shed light on the strategy execution processes and related relationships between and among the headquarters and far-flung subsidiaries. The study shall also contribute to understanding how the ways in which multinational companies implement their strategies help them attain the intended SDGs.