



**Opportunity Identification and Evaluation for Global Brands to
Expand through Local Leisure-Related Business Operations**

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Abstract

The changing market dynamics have made global branding an integral consideration for business success. A strategic approach often adopted by international brands is venturing into new markets through strategic partnerships, franchising, mergers and acquisitions, among other strategies. Multi-site operations present numerous advantages, including business expansion by accessing a more extensive customer base and enhancing brand awareness. Despite this, there is a lack of adequate insights demonstrating how brands can standardize and systematically identify opportunities for multi-site ventures in local businesses. The current study aimed at developing a framework that could foster such an approach focusing on local hobby-driven enterprises. Following the Hevner diagram, the study adopted a qualitative approach involving the Design Science Approach (DSA). The investigation involved a critical and comprehensive literature review to establish previous findings, concepts, theories, and models that could contribute to developing the proposed framework. Constructive interviews to six respondents from local businesses and global brands were conducted to create an applicable framework reflecting the experiences of pursuing multi-site ventures. Integrating insights emerging from the different sources resulted in designing and developing an integrated framework for market, company, and site analysis to identify opportunities for multi-site businesses. The framework comprises various components that comprise an analysis of the market, companies, customers, sites, and other integral factors to the mutual benefit of both the local businesses and the global brands.

Keywords: Multi-site; Expansion; Management; Scalability; Entrepreneurship.

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1 INTRODUCTION

This research comes from an interest in the future's innovative opportunities concerning disruptive ideas and businesses and what concerns traditional business activities. Exploring the potential of a system or business framework to allow me to operate a multi-site business with a unique and global brand. This dissertation investigates and analyses such a model's feasibility and potential success, with a particular interest in the hobby-driven industry and lifestyle sports.

Boella and Goss-Turner (2019) and Boulay et al. (2020) describe multi-site businesses as those in multiple locations. These locations may be in different cities, states, or even countries. Each location may have its staff and management, but they all operate under the same company and brand (Reynolds, 2005). Examples of multi-site businesses include retail chains, fast food chains, and franchises. While some businesses operate from a single location, others expand their operations by opening multiple sites. Insights from Boulay et al. (2020), Chen and Wang (2011), and Davies et al. (2018) show that such expansions take different forms, such as a retailer launching the same store format in various places, a manufacturer establishing regional distribution centres, a franchisor selling geographical territories to franchisees, or a financial services business opening a call centre overseas. Operating from multiple sites presents both advantages and disadvantages across various functional areas. Here is a summary of the key points:

Advantages of multi-site businesses are the enhanced proximity to customers, resources, and labour, allowing the company to compete effectively in different geographical markets, the increased number of opportunities for promotion among junior management, easier recruitment, especially when hiring locally and the apparent economies of scale in marketing and management as resources can be distributed across multiple locations, customers, and revenue streams (Brickley & Dark, 1987; Boella & Goss-Turner, 2019; Chen & Wang, 2011). Another advantage of having a business running

in numerous areas is the flexibility in adjusting capacity by adding or removing sites, the reduced risk of disruption to the company from particular issues at a single location, and a better understanding of local market cultures and conditions (Davies et al., 2018; Edger, 2013).

Also, some disadvantages arise from this multi-site business model, like the potential duplication of activities if an adequate evaluation of a location is not conducted correctly, leading to inefficiencies in scale. Of course, more significant challenges in controlling operations arise, although IT systems can facilitate management. The communication becomes more complex across the whole business, and that may lead to an increased strategic risk, as there is a possibility that the company may lack a deep understanding of the local markets it enters (Bruhn et al., 2012; Chalip & Leyns, 2002).

A hobby-driven business, also known as a passion-based or hobby-inspired business, is a business that is built around the owner's interests and passions. According to Discua Cruz and Halliday (2020) and Bordelon and Ferreira (2019), these enterprises are established by entrepreneurs on a small scale to turn their passion into an economically viable venture. Therefore, individuals turn a hobby or interest into a career that is not solely focused on making a profit but also on living a lifestyle that aligns with the owner's interests and values. Another term often used to describe this type of business is "lifestyle business," as it emphasises the connection between the company and the owner's overall lifestyle and personal fulfilment.

As mentioned by Discua Cruz and Halliday (2020), many times, we can often find that the love of a hobby drives successful businesses, and when that happens, there is such a valuable asset in place that deserves attention, and some system or specific business framework could amplify that. Some hobbies like lifestyle sports start as that exactly, lifestyle and leisure. Until recently, lifestyle sports were considered by academics as more relaxed than traditional sports, but when the time and energy spent preparing and participating in such activities resembles work, the actors become engaged in the so-called serious leisure (Bordelon & Ferreira, 2019). Having this kind of hobby is becoming an

essential part of the life of several enthusiastic individuals and sometimes their primary purpose, it is natural that some business opportunities are awakened. Also, due to the development of information and communication technology (ICT), the global positioning of working people has changed tremendously over the past few decades, enabling individuals to follow what pleasure dictates, travel and seek hobbies as a lifestyle. As a result of digitisation and the desire to travel the world and have greater freedom, which allows for more leisure time, the concept of the "digital nomad" evolved, opening the horizon for big and successful lifestyle businesses that would seem completely utopic twenty-five years ago (Wang et al., 2018).

Looking at the potential of partnering with such passionate entrepreneurs of local lifestyle businesses, the idea of building a multi-site company with a global brand that aggregates value to the local operations, promoting and controlling the demand, is exciting. It has been practised for many years (Wiklund et al., 2019). Unlike most conventional workers, entrepreneurs have a degree of flexibility and control that allows them to find greater meaning in their job, use their natural talents and abilities, and participate in meaningful activities through self-directed tasks (Shir et al., 2019; Tucker et al., 2021)).

An important aspect of a multi-site business is that it should be strong at delivering to the local operations for enhanced marketing power and strong branding. This opens the way to recognition and presence in customers' mind-share. The relevant impact of global branding attached to local businesses operated by passionate entrepreneurs can create a "halo effect" that spills over to those local businesses, increasing their perceived value and credibility (Aaker & Joachimsthaler, 2012). Embracing the topics of hobby-driven and lifestyle business entrepreneurship and mixing that with a broad vision of a multi-site aggregation business model, this research falls into the study of organisational routines and, as mentioned by Davies et al. (2018), on how organisations create and replicate systems during a phase of exploitation.

The main concepts that serve the path of this research are explored in the literature and brought to discussion to provide an informed understanding and direction for identifying a knowledge gap. Subsequently, a framework for multi-site business opportunities in the sports/lifestyle sector was developed based on insights from literature review, theories, concepts, and interviews with industry experts.

The structure of the dissertation is as follows:

Chapter two is the literature review, which offers comprehensive critical thinking and a background account of the concepts under investigation.

Chapter three presents the methodology used, including the research question and design, which includes the critical ideas adopted to propose a framework that resonates with the research problem.

Chapter four details the proposed model, including the systematic process used in its development and a justification for application in the real-world setting.

Chapter five is the conclusion, which summarises the key insights and considerations made in the study.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The literature review summarises and evaluates existing research on a specific topic (Snyder, 2019). Ebrahim (2016) explains that it helps identify gaps in current knowledge and determine how previous research has contributed to understanding the topic. This literature review aimed to identify areas where further research is needed.

2.2 Structure and Methodology of the Literature Review

Regarding methodology, this research started with exploring and searching for potentially relevant articles, sorting through plenty of them, and using the abstract as a guide to refinement. Then reading and summarising the articles add content and value to this review and trying to understand the opportunity relying on finding a knowledge gap and the concepts surrounding it.

The same search queries were introduced in scientific databases, SCOPUS and Web of Science, accumulating 3582 articles. The search and refinement that is further explained using the PRISMA methodology (Liberati et al., 2009), as seen in Figure 1, was conducted between 27 December 2022 and 21 January 2023. The keywords combinations and number of articles found are detailed in Table 1.

Table 1. Scopus and Web of Science searches

ID	Source	File	Reproducible Query	Documents	Date
1	SCOPUS	SCOPUS.1	Multi-site AND business	369	27.12.2022
	WOS	WOS.1		398	
2	SCOPUS	SCOPUS.2	Lifestyle AND business AND hobby	16	27.12.2022
	WOS	WOS.2		23	
3	SCOPUS	SCOPUS.3	Lifestyle AND business AND leisure	141	27.12.2022
	WOS	WOS.3		190	
4	SCOPUS	SCOPUS.4	Business AND leisure AND sports	268	27.12.2022
	WOS	WOS.4		229	
5	SCOPUS	SCOPUS.5	Business AND lifestyle AND expansion AND nomads	9	27.12.2022
	WOS	WOS.5		11	
6	SCOPUS	SCOPUS.6	Multi AND locations AND expansion	14	27.12.2022
	WOS	WOS.6		29	
7	SCOPUS	SCOPUS.7	Multisite AND multi-site AND business AND chain	4	10-01-2023
	WOS	WOS.7		7	
8	SCOPUS	SCOPUS.8	Business AND chain AND hobby	7	10-01-2023
	WOS	WOS.8		13	
9	SCOPUS	SCOPUS.9	Expansion AND global AND branding	1	10-01-2023
	WOS	WOS.9		3	
10	SCOPUS	SCOPUS.10	Brand AND communication AND platform	908	10-01-2023
	WOS	WOS.10		727	
11	SCOPUS	SCOPUS.11	Management AND multi-site AND expansion	6	10-01-2023
	WOS	WOS.11		10	
12	SCOPUS	SCOPUS.12	Management AND multi-site AND hobby	6	21-01-2023
	WOS	WOS.12		5	
13	SCOPUS	SCOPUS.13	Management AND multi-site AND market	81	21-01-2023
	WOS	WOS.13		93	
14	SCOPUS	SCOPUS.14	Brand AND multi-site, AND market	5	21-01-2023
	WOS	WOS.14		9	

After collecting a series of articles, selecting the relevant ones started with duplicate detection. For this duplicate identification, the tool used was Excel; as a result, almost half of the articles were excluded (from 3582 to 1997). Then an effort was made to find which authors provide the best research in the field under investigation. After eliminating the duplicates, the whole list of articles was subjected to a co-citation analysis of references using the VOS viewer tool with the criteria of at least five citations. At this stage, 324 articles were left to overview, and further refinement was made by checking the title of all and reading the abstract of 50 papers. By checking references and bibliographies, 11 more articles were screened. The screening stage, in which an abstract analysis was conducted, left the literature review focused on 31 eligible articles, 12 of those selected to be included in this research.

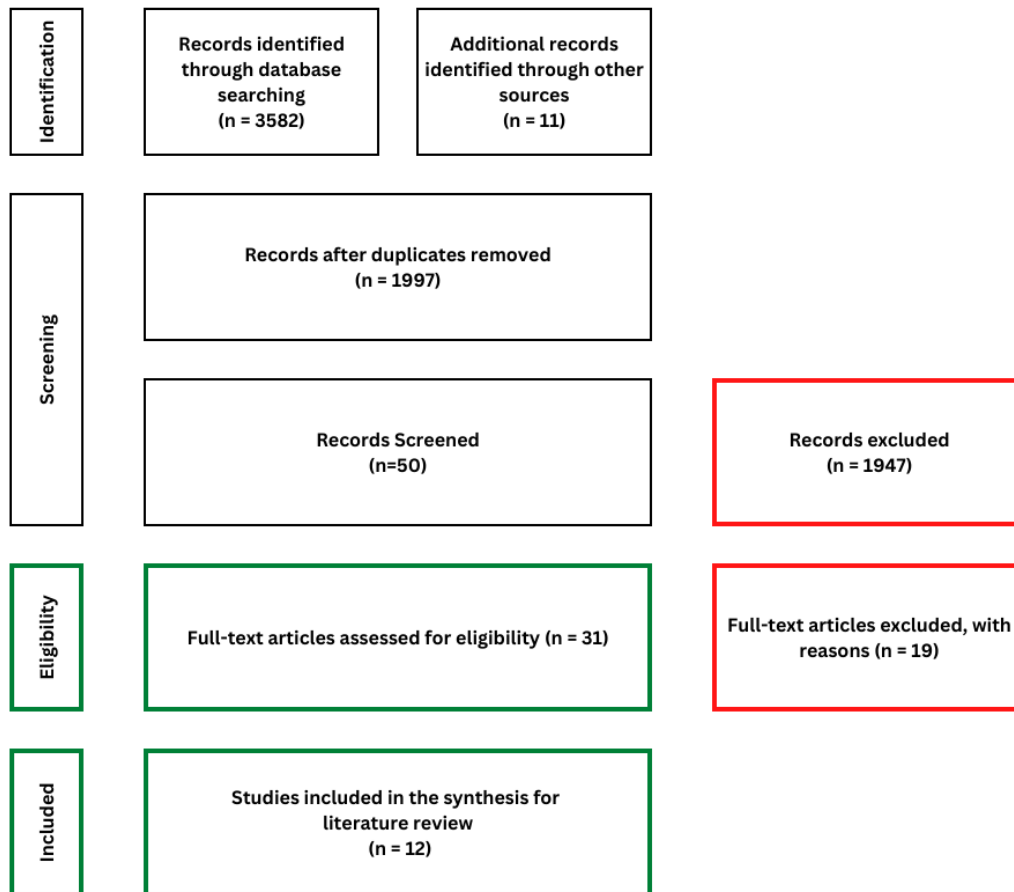


Figure 1. PRISMA Diagram (Liberati et al., 2009)

The selection of articles and papers, described in more detail in Table 2, aimed at those that provide the framework for further literature review. The main criteria for this selection were the suitability and relevance to the research question raised according to the identified knowledge gap. This particular collection of publications served as the basis for the literature review development of the future dissertation. To formulate an argument and comprehend the concepts necessary to carry out the current research, their relevant facts were scrutinised with attention to shared ideas and potential knowledge gaps.

Table 2. Selected Papers

N°	Authors / Year	Concepts covered	Future research and Limitations
1	Coviello (2006) SEMINAL	This study uses multi-site case research to promote theories on the network dynamics of early-stage international new ventures. The investigative strategy is based on claims that network theory and analysis are crucial to global entrepreneurship.	This study does not entirely explain how to identify opportunities in the context of multi-site businesses. It focuses on the network dynamics of early-stage international new ventures and the use of multi-site case research, but it does not delve into the specific strategies or methods that can be used to identify opportunities in this type of business structure. This is an important aspect that should be considered in future research with the same author on multi-site businesses to provide practical insights for practitioners in this field.
2	Davies et al. (2018)	The paper contributes to capabilities research by showing how organizational levels, capabilities, and logics shape the development of new routines and identifying possible patterns in multi-site business objectives. The study also differs from prior research by focusing on replicating an entirely new routine adapted to local conditions rather than an exact copy of a template or existing routine.	This study primarily focuses on creating and replicating new business routines in expanding operations rather than identifying specific opportunities for multi-site businesses.
3	Discua Cruz and Halliday (2020)	This paper presents the concept of consumer-entrepreneurship as individuals turning their interests or hobbies into a business. It differs from traditional definitions and draws from literature on consumption, meaning-making, and entrepreneurship to understand this concept. Using qualitative data from four businesses in a developing country, the study finds that consumer-entrepreneurship is driven by a love of a hobby, supported by a network of resources, resulting in blurred boundaries between work, leisure, and life.	This paper lacks a larger vision of the scale of multi-site businesses. It provides insight into the concept of consumer-entrepreneurship and the results of qualitative data from a small sample of companies in a developing country, but it does not give a clear understanding of the potential growth and expansion opportunities for multi-site companies. A more comprehensive analysis of the scale of multi-site companies and their growth potential would be beneficial in understanding the overall potential of consumer-entrepreneurship as a business model.

Nº	Authors / Year	Concepts covered	Future research and Limitations
4	Bordelon and Ferreira (2019)	<p>This paper contributes to a better understanding of leisure and team participation in lifestyle sports, particularly in hobby-driven businesses such as the Cape Epic. Also refers to the importance of passion and serious leisure in entrepreneurship.</p>	<p>The study's limitation is that it is based on data collected from the 2017 Cape Epic, a specific event that may not be generalizable to other lifestyle sports or hobby-driven businesses. Additionally, the study focuses primarily on the participants' demographic information and motivations. It does not clearly show how this business could be scaled or grown. A more comprehensive analysis of the scalability and growth potential of hobby-driven companies would be beneficial in understanding the overall potential of this kind of entrepreneurship.</p>
5	Bruhn et al. (2012)	<p>This paper aims to investigate the impact of brand communication on brand equity through social media compared to traditional media in multi-site businesses. It examines whether both communication instruments impact consumer-based brand equity and compares the effect sizes of these two communication instruments across different industries. Additionally, it separates the effects of firm-created and user-generated social media communication to understand the relative impact of brand communication on brand equity in multi-site businesses.</p>	<p>The study focuses on the impact of brand communication on brand equity in multi-site businesses through social media compared to traditional media. It lacks an overall analysis of the effect of brand communication on multi-site businesses' performance. Also, the study doesn't provide an understanding of the scalability of brand communication strategies in multi-site businesses.</p>
6	Chernev (2023)	<p>This is a comprehensive guide on the principles and practices of brand management that can be transferred to the case of multi-site businesses. It covers brand strategy, consumer behavior, marketing communication, and digital branding. The book provides a thorough understanding of the key concepts, methodologies, and tools used in managing and building successful brands in multi-site businesses, making it an essential resource for professionals and students in brand management.</p>	<p>It doesn't provide any specific case studies or examples of how these principles and practices have been implemented in multi-site businesses, which could be a limitation for readers looking for practical insights on applying the concepts in a real-world context. Additionally, the author's strategies for multi-site companies lack insights into their specific challenges and how to overcome them. A more detailed examination of these issues and how they relate to multi-site companies would benefit readers looking to apply the principles in a real-world context.</p>

N ^o	Authors / Year	Concepts covered	Future research and Limitations
7	Coviello (2006) SEMINAL	This study uses multi-site case research to investigate the network dynamics of early-stage international new ventures. The research is based on the idea that network theory and analysis are fundamental to global entrepreneurship and draws from perspectives in the entrepreneurship literature to understand international new venture networks. The study advances a set of propositions about these networks.	It lacks a general overview of what promotes those ventures. Which factors are determinant to the jump forward in the direction of entrepreneurship?
8	Shane and Venkataraman (2000) SEMINAL	This article aims to create a conceptual framework for entrepreneurship to improve understanding of the phenomenon. It draws on previous research from various social science disciplines and business fields to develop a framework that explains empirical phenomena and predicts outcomes that existing frameworks have not explained or predicted. The goal is to provide a better understanding of entrepreneurship and its dynamics.	Although an interesting article on the work towards the conception of an entrepreneur framework, it doesn't cover the research question topics on identifying opportunities and evaluating potential. The research offered interesting information on concepts pursued in the current study.
9	Wang et al. (2018)	This paper reviews the literature on digital nomadism, focusing on how they engage with leisure-driven businesses. It examines how digital nomads' lifestyle, economy, culture, and technology intersect and how it affects leisure-driven businesses. The paper aims to develop a research agenda to understand the field's current knowledge and research gaps.	The paper goes in a good direction towards one of the aspects of this research, which promotes the launch of several hobby-driven businesses, like the ability to work remotely, enabling individuals to try new things and enhance their passion for their hobbies, sometimes expressing themselves with a development of a new venture. But it's too focused on nomadism and less on what promotes this kind of entrepreneurship.

Nº	Authors / Year	Concepts covered	Future research and Limitations
10	Wiklund et al. (2019)	<p>This paper defines entrepreneurial well-being as the experience of satisfaction, positive affect, infrequent negative affect and psychological functioning related to developing, starting, growing and running an entrepreneurial venture. The paper reviews developments in the field and highlights critical areas for future research, specifically how it relates to branding, entrepreneurship, and multi-site businesses. It also discusses eight papers in a special issue focusing on entrepreneurial well-being and its relationship with branding, entrepreneurship, and multi-site businesses.</p>	<p>It is recommended to launch further research on the theme of well-being related to entrepreneurship. Also, the branding effect on well-being is curious.</p>
11	Edger (2013)	<p>Using contemporaneous case studies, Chris Edger examines leading from the middle in international subsidiaries. He addresses internationalising organisations' challenges concerning technology, culture, and competition and how subsidiary leaders generate commitment and navigate firm-level control and change agendas.</p>	<p>It expresses many of the challenges but a few motivations behind the processes. Further readings are planned for the same author.</p>
12	<p>Kimes and Sasser (2000)</p> <p>SEMINAL</p>	<p>The study highlights that franchising has substantial economic and social contributions, and multiple-unit franchising has emerged as a popular strategy worldwide. The research conducted an empirical study that focused on unit growth, system uniformity, local responsiveness and system-wide adaptation in the context of governance structures that include master franchising, area development franchising, area representative franchising and incremental franchising in Australia. The study established significant variations in how unit growth, system uniformity and system-wide adaptation influence the governing structures in franchising.</p>	<p>The researchers suggested a need for further research on multiple-unit franchising that focuses on moderating factors, the validation of scale instruments, geographical locations, and franchisee/customer perspective.</p>

Through the academic search databases WOS and Scopus, a considerable amount of relevant literature was found and selected. Some articles were read in-depth, while others were quickly rejected for not being related to the core research topics. The study was high quality because it resulted in an organised literature review. Additionally, this review's legitimacy is enhanced by the usage of solely scholarly publications. Papers 1, 7, and 12 were identified as seminal through keyword filters and co-citation analysis. Those articles establish and cover fundamental concepts. These seminal papers greatly aid the theoretical underpinning and advancement in understanding the concerns raised. Because they were widely cited in subsequent pieces, it was intriguing to look at those essential works. As a result, it may be claimed that relevance is supplied since several articles included in those bibliographies are extremely important to the subject.

2.3 Background Key Concepts

2.3.1 Business Model

The business model concept, which has evolved significantly over time, can be traced back to the influential contributions of Peter Drucker, who has been exploring the topic since 1954 (Drucker, 1986). Drucker (1998) emphasised the importance of understanding the structure and logic of a business and how it creates value for customers and stakeholders. His insights laid the foundation for comprehending the essence of business models and their role in achieving sustainable success (Drucker, 2002; Webster, 2009). The era of the dot-com boom and subsequent bust in the late 1990s and early 2000s further propelled the development of business models. This period shed light on the significance of innovative and viable business models in the digital age, as numerous internet-based companies experienced rapid growth and, in some cases, rapid decline (Kroll et al., 2010). The dot-

com era highlighted the importance of formulating sound business models to effectively leverage technological advancements and capitalise on emerging opportunities (Magretta, 2002). Building upon these foundations, Osterwalder et al. (2005) made notable contributions to the understanding and visualisation of business models by introducing the Business Model Canvas. This widely adopted framework provides a systematic approach to defining and analysing the critical components of a business model, facilitating strategic decision-making and innovation. Scholars have recently emphasised the need for transformative business models that enable organisations to adapt and thrive in an ever-changing business landscape (Kavadias et al., 2016). The concept of reinventing business models has gained prominence, allowing companies to continuously reassess and refine their value proposition and operations in response to shifting market dynamics and customer needs (Johnson et al., 2008).

In summary, the concept of the business model, with roots dating back to Peter Drucker's seminal work in the 1950s, has been shaped by various influential contributors. It has been influenced by the dot-com era, which highlighted the importance of innovative business models, and was further refined by scholars such as Osterwalder et al. (2005). The contemporary focus is on transformative business models that empower organisations to navigate disruptions and seize new opportunities in an increasingly dynamic business environment (Zott et al., 2011).

2.3.2 Multi-site businesses

Multi-site or multi-unit or multi-location businesses operate multiple locations or franchises. These types of businesses are becoming increasingly prevalent, with many companies choosing to expand their operations through numerous sites. One of the main benefits of multi-site businesses is increased economic efficiency. A study published in the Journal of Business Research states that "multi-unit firms can achieve economies of scale and scope, which result in lower costs and higher

profits (Kimes & Sasser, 2000, p.)." The authors add that multi-site businesses can spread their marketing and advertising costs over multiple locations, increasing brand awareness and customer loyalty. Another benefit of multi-site companies is that they can improve their resilience to economic downturns. A study published in the *Journal of Small Business Management* states, "Multi-unit firms can spread the risk associated with operating a single location across multiple locations (Hanks & Chua, 2009, p.)". This can help to mitigate the impact of any potential unfavourable economic conditions on the overall business.

However, there are also some challenges associated with multi-site businesses. One of the main challenges is managing the operations of multiple locations. According to a study published in the *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, "Multi-unit firms face the challenge of coordinating and controlling the activities of multiple locations (Chen & Wang, 2011, p.)." This can be difficult, and time leads to consistency and quality control issues. Another challenge associated with multi-site businesses, especially in the franchising model, is the potential for increased competition among franchisees. A study published in the *Journal of Small Business Management* states that "multi-unit firms may face increased competition among franchisees, which can lead to reduced profitability (Hanks & Chua, 2009, p.)." This can be a particular issue if franchisees are not properly incentivised or the franchisor does not provide adequate support and resources.

In conclusion, multi-site businesses can offer several benefits, such as increased economic efficiency and resilience to economic downturns. However, managing the operations of multiple locations and dealing with increased competition among franchisees can also be challenging. Therefore, multi-site businesses must develop effective strategies for addressing these challenges to maximise their potential for success.

2.3.3 Hobby-related Entrepreneurship

Hobby-related businesses, which are enterprises initiated and operated based on the interests and passions of the entrepreneur, have gained significant popularity as individuals increasingly choose to transform their hobbies and interests into income-generating ventures (Milanesi, 2018). These businesses offer several advantages, including higher job satisfaction and entrepreneurial motivation. Research conducted by Chen and Wong (2010) indicates that individuals who start and operate hobby-related businesses report higher job satisfaction and motivation than those engaged in traditional companies. Pursuing passions and interests within hobby-related industries fosters a greater sense of purpose and fulfillment (Milanesi, 2018). Furthermore, these businesses have been found to exhibit increased innovation and creativity. Baron and Shane (2004) suggest that hobby-related enterprises are likelier to introduce new and innovative products and services than traditional businesses. This can be attributed to the industry's deep understanding and hobby-related entrepreneurs' willingness to take risks and explore novel approaches.

However, hobby-related entrepreneurship also faces particular challenges. Financial stability is one significant challenge, as these businesses may experience greater financial difficulties than traditional businesses (Chen & Wong, 2010). The limited business acumen and experience of hobby-related entrepreneurs contribute to this challenge. Additionally, scalability can be an issue for hobby-related businesses. Baron and Shane (2004) state that these businesses may struggle to expand and grow as rapidly as traditional businesses due to limited resources and access to capital. Despite these challenges, hobby-related companies offer numerous benefits, including higher job satisfaction and increased innovation. Therefore, hobby-related entrepreneurs need to comprehend potential difficulties and develop effective strategies to address them, enhancing their chances of success (McMullen et al., 2021).

2.3.4 Leisure-based Entrepreneurship

Leisure-based entrepreneurship, which involves businesses centred around leisure activities and hobbies, is influenced by various factors contributing to its formation and success (Cruz & Halliday, 2020). Entrepreneurs in this context are driven by their passion for specific leisure activities and desire to turn their hobbies into viable businesses (Douglas & Shepherd, 2002). The decision to engage in leisure-based entrepreneurship is often influenced by personal interests, lifestyle preferences, and the pursuit of autonomy and fulfilment (Kadile & Biraglia, 2020; Blanchflower & Oswald, 1998). Understanding the motivations and characteristics of entrepreneurs in the leisure-based entrepreneurship sector is crucial for developing and managing such businesses. Research has shown that entrepreneurs in this context demonstrate high levels of passion and enthusiasm for their chosen leisure activity, which fuels their entrepreneurial endeavours (Robertson, 2014; Spivack & McKelvie, 2021). They are driven to "live the dream" and combine their interests with their professional pursuits (Cruz & Halliday, 2020).

Leisure-based entrepreneurship often involves collaboration and team dynamics. Entrepreneurs in this context may form teams with individuals who share their passion and expertise, leveraging diverse skills and knowledge to create innovative leisure experiences. Team aspects play a vital role in leisure-based entrepreneurship, enabling entrepreneurs to effectively manage and deliver high-quality leisure experiences to their target audience (Kwapisz, 2021).

In summary, leisure-based entrepreneurship is influenced by various factors, including personal interests, lifestyle preferences, and the pursuit of autonomy and fulfilment (Kadile & Biraglia, 2020). Entrepreneurs in this sector are driven by their passion for specific leisure activities and the desire to turn their hobbies into viable businesses (Douglas & Shepherd, 2002). Understanding the motivations and characteristics of leisure-based entrepreneurs is essential for successfully developing and managing these businesses (Cruz & Halliday, 2020).

2.3.5 Business Expansion

Multi-site businesses entail expanding operations in multiple physical locations, which creates an opportunity to enter new markets and increase the customer base and the company's overall presence. According to Jackson (2008), adopting the multi-site approach facilitates the geographical expansion of business within a country, region, or internationally. Such development can foster business expansion by targeting specific customer segments and maximising organisational operations to meet the demand in the target markets. Similar insights are presented by Leung et al. (2017) and Kaufmann et al. (2007), who note that multi-site operations imply that the business can capture a larger market share through a strategic approach that enhances convenience and customer reach. Through multi-site initiatives, the business can expand through diversification, which reduces dependency on a single market. In this context, Teece (2018) suggests that operating in multiple sites allows companies to adjust to the changing market dynamics and reduce the impact of local economic factors on financial stability. The business expansion also emerges with improved brand presence and visibility, which enhance awareness of the products or services offered, strengthen connections with the communities, and promote company-customer relationships. The company's fact in multiple locations reinforces the credibility and trust among consumers.

2.3.6 Scalability

Expansion in different sites can contribute to the scalability of organisational operations that can drive growth. Teece (2018) highlights that operations in multiple locations can increase the production capacity and services offered and enhance the company's potential to meet dynamic consumer demands. Multi-sites improve operational efficiency by effectively managing and coordinating activities, leveraging economies of scale and strategically deploying resources. For

instance, in franchising, Picken (2017) notes that companies can integrate standardised processes that can increase scalability with effective management of risks and exploitation of opportunities in different markets. Improved scalability is also realised with integrated communication that can entail using ICT solutions, information and knowledge sharing, and improved budgeting. Therefore, the scalability achieved through multi-site operations can lead to consistent quality products and services and alignment with standards and regulations that customers can recognise across all markets (Bleicher & Stanley, 2017). Finnerty et al. (2017a) review that scalability in multi-site businesses requires effective communication and collaboration, which might require investments in appropriate technologies and the training of teams for effective engagement with different stakeholders. Technology also plays a vital role in monitoring and performance measurements that can foster the implementation of data-driven management strategies for enhanced scalability. Successful scalability also requires multi-site businesses to be highly flexible and adaptable for an agile response to changes, new opportunities or challenges critical to achieving sustainable growth (Badakhshan et al., 2020).

2.3.7 Global Branding

Multi-site businesses operate in multiple physical locations while preserving a consistent global brand image. According to Boella and Goss-Turner (2019), such companies are characterised by a centralised management strategy and identity implemented worldwide. Notably, a multi-site business approach encourages consistent branding across all markets, including how the brand is presented using logos, colours, values, and marketing, among other aspects that add value. Therefore, consumers across the world can recognise and engage with the brand. Nevertheless, De Mooij (2019) established that global branding requires comprehensive guidelines and standardisation for consistency to ensure that all organisational aspects are uniform. Operations in multi-sites facilitate the localisation of businesses, which can enhance organisational performance by strengthening cultural sensitivity,

corporate social responsibility (CSR) and designing products and services that meet the target customers. The global branding strategy for the multi-site business requires a centralised management approach, which can be challenging with the diversity that emerges among people and places (Young & Faulk, 2018). Resultantly, strategic management and marketing are critical in pursuing the internationalisation of brands or enhancing the company operations in different locations. Therefore, maintaining a global brand with the company operating in other areas can challenge businesses in coordinated marketing to support the core brand message and identity. Furthermore, using local resources implies that the company's products and services might vary across locations as the business pursues customer satisfaction.

2.3.8 Discussion of key concepts

Multi-site business models can positively and negatively impact local hobby-driven businesses. On the one hand, the increased economic efficiency and resilience to economic downturns that can come with multi-site companies can lead to increased competition for local hobby-driven businesses. According to Coviello (2006), networked enterprises with other players that can transfer value, such as brand awareness and a loyal customer base, have a higher potential for success in a competitive work environment. Nevertheless, networking and collaboration with other businesses be challenging for small, independent hobby-driven companies that may not have the same resources and access to capital as more significant, multi-site companies. Furthermore, hobby-driven companies that focus on specific products or services and niche markets can face limitations in resources necessary to meet the needs of a broader customer base (Discua Cruz and Halliday, 2020). On the other hand, multi-site businesses can also provide opportunities for local hobby-driven businesses through franchising or partnership models. For example, a local hobby-driven company may be able to expand and grow through partnering with a global brand, a multi-site enterprise. Davies et al. (2018) suggest that

adopting a standardized approach to global branding that includes venturing to multiple sites can substantially benefit the business. Such strategies can provide access to resources, capital, and increased brand awareness to help the local hobby-driven business thrive.

Multi-site business models can also positively impact the local economy by creating jobs and stimulating economic activity. According to a study published in the *Journal of Small Business Management* by Hanks and Chua (2009), multi-unit firms can positively influence the economy by creating jobs and stimulating other economic activities in the target local markets. This can also benefit local hobby-driven businesses, as a thriving local economy can lead to increased customer demand and sales. This can foster a sense of satisfaction for local entrepreneurs because of their enhanced potential to transform their passion into viable businesses (Bordelon and Ferreira, 2019). While multi-site business models can present challenges for local hobby-driven companies, they also have the potential to provide opportunities and have positive impacts on the local economy. Therefore, local hobby-driven businesses need to be aware of the potential challenges and opportunities presented by multi-site companies and develop strategies to address them to increase their chances of success.

Cognitive theorists suggest that experienced entrepreneurs can leverage their prior experience and knowledge to process information more efficiently (Chesbrough, 2010). By drawing on their cognitive capabilities, experienced entrepreneurs can effectively analyse and interpret data, allowing them to concentrate on more novel material (Ucbasaran et al., 2009). This cognitive advantage becomes particularly valuable when expanding multi-site business chains and collaborating with experienced local entrepreneurs. Shane and Venkataraman (2000) suggest that entrepreneurs often engaged in small businesses are best positioned to benefit from effective branding and collaboration with critical players in the supply chains. When multi-site business chains collaborate with local entrepreneurs, they can tap into their extensive knowledge and expertise, who deeply understand the local market dynamics (Vermeulen & Barkema, 2001). Through such collaborations, multi-site

businesses gain insights into the local cultural nuances, consumer preferences, and market trends, enabling them to tailor their strategies accordingly. This localised knowledge, combined with the cognitive resources of experienced entrepreneurs, contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of the target market and enhances the overall decision-making process. Moreover, the collaborative exchange between multi-site businesses and local entrepreneurs facilitates the transfer of knowledge and expertise. Bruhn et al. (2012) note that such strategies foster the integration of new technologies and access to resources that can enhance business operations, profitability, and sustainability. Wang et al. (2018) show that functions in different sites also include adopting digital strategies that transverse the limitations associated with physical borders. Multi-site businesses can learn from the experiences and successes of local entrepreneurs, gaining valuable insights into effective business practices and market entry strategies (Vermeulen & Barkema, 2001). This learning process allows multi-site businesses to adapt and refine their operations based on the knowledge acquired from collaborating entrepreneurs. As a result, they become more equipped to navigate the challenges and opportunities associated with expanding into new locations.

Collaboration with experienced entrepreneurs also opens up opportunities for joint innovation and creativity (Ucbasaran et al., 2009). Insights from Wiklund et al. (2019) suggest that the experience of entrepreneurs in a particular sector can make them influential leaders that can be open to new ideas and adopt them to pursue organizational success. For instance, businesses can develop new and more effective branding strategies that appeal to a more extensive customer base (Chernev, 2023). Combining the multi-site businesses' resources and infrastructure with local entrepreneurs' entrepreneurial mindset and expertise can spark innovative ideas and business models (Ucbasaran et al., 2009; Chesbrough, 2010). This collaborative innovation can develop unique value propositions and competitive advantages for multi-site business chains. Furthermore, the collaboration between multi-site businesses and experienced entrepreneurs creates a mutually beneficial relationship. Multi-

site businesses provide resources, scale, and market access, while experienced entrepreneurs contribute their domain-specific knowledge and entrepreneurial skills. This symbiotic collaboration allows both parties to maximise their strengths and overcome individual limitations, resulting in improved business performance and growth (Dunning & Lundan, 2008). However, Edger (2013) shows that the success of global branding and internationalisation relies on effective management and leadership from all parties involved in strategic partnerships.

The collaboration between multi-site business chains and locally experienced hobby-driven entrepreneurs harnesses cognitive capabilities, localised knowledge, and entrepreneurial expertise to drive growth and success. By leveraging the cognitive resources of experienced entrepreneurs, multi-site businesses can process information efficiently and focus on novel opportunities (Chesbrough, 2010). The collaborative exchange of knowledge and expertise enables multi-site enterprises to gain deeper insights into the local market and adapt their strategies accordingly (Vermeulen & Barkema, 2001). This collaboration fosters joint innovation and creativity, creating unique value propositions (Ucbasaran et al., 2009). Ultimately, the partnership between multi-site businesses and experienced entrepreneurs creates a mutually beneficial environment that enhances business performance and facilitates expansion (Lumpkin & Dess, 1996; Dunning & Lundan, 2008). According to Kimes and Sasser (2000), the strategies adopted in multi-site operations should also consider the inherent characteristics of the geographic locations where the business operates. These include consumer demographics, environmental factors, laws and regulations, economic factors, and social-cultural factors. Appropriating the business's strategies to the specific characteristics of the location a company is willing to expand to can enhance the potential of identifying opportunities and establishing successful ventures in collaboration with local businesses.

2.4 Summary and knowledge gap

The literature on multi-unit businesses has highlighted several benefits and challenges associated with this business model, including increased economic efficiency and resilience to economic downturns and challenges related to managing the operations of multiple locations and dealing with increased competition among franchisees. However, there is a knowledge gap in the literature when choosing a framework to facilitate and promote clear opportunity identification and potential business evaluation for expansion to multiple locations using the already existing potential in established local businesses operated by hobby-driven entrepreneurs.

The lack of a framework for opportunity identification and potential business evaluation can make it difficult for entrepreneurs and companies to identify and evaluate potential opportunities for expansion and growth in the multi-site business model. This can lead to missed opportunities or investments in ventures that are unlikely to be successful. Additionally, without a clear framework for evaluating business potential, it can be challenging to predict the long-term success of a multi-site business venture and make informed decisions about expansion and growth.

Some authors suggested many years ago that a structured approach to opportunity identification and evaluation can increase the chances of success for new ventures. For example, in a study published in the *Journal of Business Venturing* Shane and Venkataraman (2000) suggests that a systematic and structured approach to opportunity identification and evaluation can increase the chances of success for new ventures. However, the literature has no widely accepted framework for opportunity identification and business potential evaluation for multi-site businesses.

In conclusion, the literature has a knowledge gap about a framework to facilitate and promote clear opportunity identification and potential business evaluation for new multi-site businesses. Without a structured approach, entrepreneurs and companies may find it challenging to identify and

evaluate potential opportunities and predict the long-term success of multi-site business ventures. Future research should focus on developing this artefact, a framework that can be used to identify and evaluate opportunities and predict the potential success of multi-site business ventures.

3 Methodology

3.1 Research Question

The literature review showed many established procedures for replicating methods and systems for successful businesses to expand to new locations in a multi-site model. Although the lifestyle, local business model, and global capitalist multi-site vision are well documented, a gap was identified. No framework facilitates and promotes a clear opportunity identification and potential business evaluation, with a guideline of items that shall be met for such expansion. Premised on this knowledge gap, the research problem pursued is:

How to adequately identify expansion opportunities for multi-site businesses within local hobby-driven business operations?

3.2 Research Design

Given the benefits and challenges associated with hobby-driven businesses, it is proposed that a framework for identifying opportunities in those local hobby-driven operations is built. This framework would help multi-site business managers evaluate these local ventures' potential and make informed decisions about expansion and growth. Such a framework for opportunity identification and potential business evaluation should consider the unique characteristics of hobby-driven businesses and guide how to identify and evaluate potential opportunities. This could include factors such as market demand, competition, and the scalability of the business model, as well as the interests and passions of the entrepreneur. It is also important to note that the framework should be user-centred, considering the needs and wants of the intended customers and stakeholders and providing a clear understanding of the target market. It should also consider the local economic conditions, trends, and government regulations or policies that may impact the business. The proposed framework for

opportunity identification and potential business evaluation for hobby-driven companies would provide a structured approach for multi-site business managers to evaluate the potential of these businesses and make informed decisions about expansion and growth.

The proposed framework for opportunity identification and potential business evaluation for hobby-driven businesses is developed and tested for effectiveness through case studies. Testing the framework in real-world scenarios made it possible to assess its effectiveness in identifying and evaluating potential opportunities for hobby-driven businesses. The case studies were purposefully chosen based on expansion through a multi-site business model and success in their industry. Evaluating the framework with the case studies made it possible to assess how well it works to identify and evaluate potential opportunities in different hobby-driven businesses. This provided valuable insights into the framework's effectiveness in real-world scenarios and helped refine and improve the framework for future use in hobby-driven businesses.

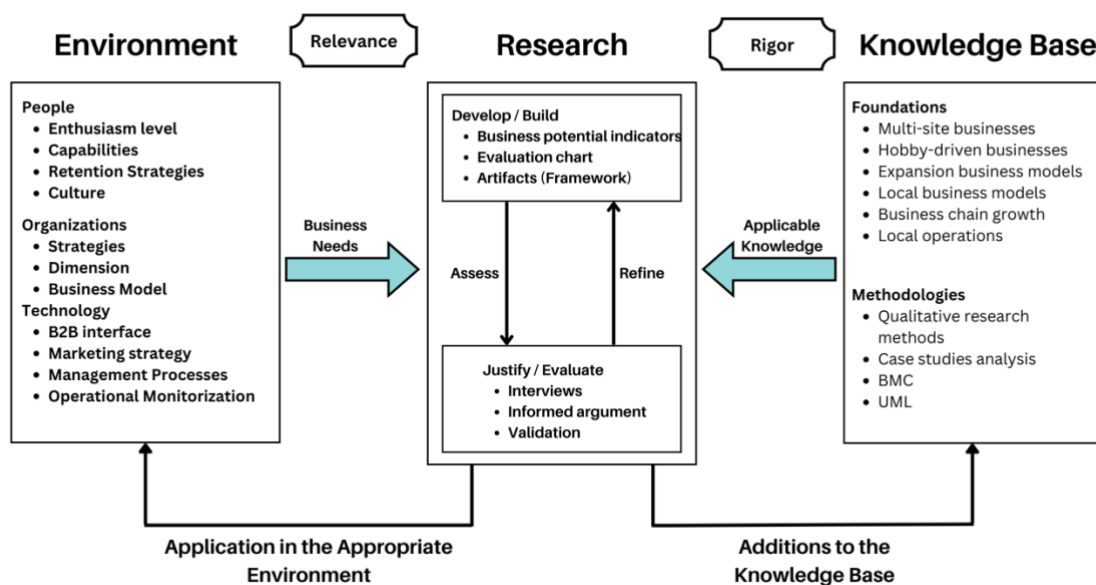


Figure 2. Design Science Approach (Hevner et al., 2004)

Developing the framework involved the adoption of the Design Science Research (DSR) framework, which fosters the development of a systematic and iterative process that can enhance the understanding and develop practical solutions (Mettler et al., 2014). Therefore, the DSR framework can contribute to both theory and practice. It is characterised by a strategic process involving problem identification, setting the objectives and requirements of the artefact, designing and developing the artefact, evaluation, communication, reflection, and iterative refinements. According to Gregor and Hevner (2013), the strengths of this approach are reflected in the development of solutions that can address real-world problems while enhancing knowledge in a particular field. Through iteration and evaluation, researchers and practitioners can engage in continuous improvements that result in better outcomes. The Hevner diagram (figure 2) was adopted in the current study.

The Hevner diagram has been adopted in various fields and contexts to develop models based on the iterative process of the DSR framework. According to Apiola and Sutinen (2021), the DSR framework connects the environment and knowledge base using the relevance and rigour cycles. In the diagram, the environment alludes to the context of the current research and the applicability of the insights gathered. The Knowledge base refers to the foundations associated with the issues under investigation. The relevance cycle highlights the link between the characteristics of the environment by identifying the requirements for the artefact design and how it can be tested. The rigour cycle integrates the knowledge base and the other elements of the DSR. The design cycle entails creating and evaluating the framework through an iterative approach.

The Hevner diagram demonstrates a strategic approach that can be tailored to address the issues under research. In the current study, two considerations can be made in its application. The first is the relevance cycle, which entails problem identification, a review of the literature and existing models, setting the theoretical foundation, and a relevance proposition, which reflects on the purpose and value of the proposed framework (Winter & Albani, 2013). The second step is the design cycle,

which focuses on structure, components, and existing relationships within the model. Constructive research on the necessary aspects for the implementation of the framework is carried out, followed by an evaluation to establish its validity, utility, and feasibility. Subsequently, implementers can learn from the results and feedback gathered and communicate with the relevant stakeholders. The development process should consider iterative refinement, which entails evaluating feedback and insights gained to improve the framework by repeating the design cycle and making appropriate adjustments (Hevner et al., 2004). The effectiveness of the Hevner diagram is that it allows continuous improvement and refinement of the proposed model, which guarantees that it is relevant and applicable. Additionally, gathering feedback and communicating with the stakeholders enhances the quality and usefulness of the proposed framework in the real-world context.

In the current case, the Hevner diagram developed a framework that effectively identifies opportunities for multi-business operations within local hobby-driven businesses. Subsequently, critical aspects are considered in the iterative process of the two cycles that include the stakeholders involved, including the brand and localised hobby-driven businesses, and the processes that facilitate the discovery of opportunities.

In developing the framework proposed in the current research, the two significant steps of the Hevner diagram were considered. These are the relevance and design cycles. According to Hevner et al. (2004), the cycles facilitate an iterative process that can reduce the development and evaluation of new theories. The key objectives considered in developing the framework are as follows:

- The framework should clearly understand multi-site business opportunities and how they are identified, including the factors and conditions that might influence such undertakings.
- The framework integrates different points of view in identifying multi-site business opportunities and the relevance of the different perspectives in meeting the companies' corporate objectives.

- The framework is evidence-based, drawing from existing literature and insights from interviews conducted with respondents in real-world contexts.

These objectives were achieved through the systematic approach fostered by the Henver diagram that included conducting in-depth research from previous studies and gathering primary data to reflect on experiences emerging in hobby-driven enterprises. Therefore, secondary research was conducted highlighting the key theories, frameworks, and concepts that inform the model. These insights were substantiated by conducting semi-structured interviews with respondents representing case studies of hobby-driven businesses and businesses seeking multisite expansion. The interviews were instrumental in understanding the key elements practitioners should consider and improving the framework elements created through the evaluation and validation process.

The development of the framework was accomplished using the Unified Modeling Language (UML), which offers a standardised and widely accepted approach to the visualisation and communication of designs. According to Kaur and Singh (2011), adopting the UML allows researchers to adopt appropriate guidelines in creating models that address different aspects of the intended concept, including behaviours, structures, and interactions. Therefore, developing the framework entailed the following undertakings:

- **Establishing the key constructs and developing the model.** The development process involved following the UML guidelines. These considerations were premised on the notion that the approach is simple and systematic, which made it possible to address complex issues and engage in an evidence-based strategy.
- **Evaluation and validation.** The evidence-based approach entailed engaging respondents and a critical literature review. Subsequently, the model's objectives were upheld to ensure it applies in the real world.

3.3 Summary

The strategic approach in developing the framework includes an evaluation based on the DSR framework, Hevner diagram, and the UML guidelines, allowing the integration of literature review, case studies, and insights from interviews to gain an in-depth understanding of theories and the real-world context where the opportunities for multi-site businesses are identified. Resultantly, the development and assessment of the framework were carried out simultaneously, as described in the following section.

4 PROPOSING A FRAMEWORK FOR MULTI-SITE BUSINESSES

4.1 Background of the Proposed Framework

This chapter describes how the proposed framework was developed to identify opportunities for multi-site businesses in hobby-driven businesses by implementing the Hevner diagram. The strategic approach facilitated a process of discovery and creation, drawing from insights emerging from different sources. The key insights from the literature review are sampled to highlight the interacting factors that should be considered by companies seeking to participate in multi-site businesses and the contribution of other parties, such as owners and entrepreneurs, in the hobby-driven businesses. Theories associated with multi-site business processes were reviewed to establish the foundation for conceptualising the proposed framework. These theories present the models that have been adopted in the past and are critical in establishing the key elements that should be considered in identifying opportunities. The UML was used to build the proposed framework

and to develop the relationships between different factors, as presented in (Annex I). Therefore, the development and assessment of the proposed framework occurred simultaneously through a systematic and iterative process that allowed continuous improvements based on the insights gathered from different sources. In this context, the provisions of the Hevner diagram set the basis for establishing the key constructs and developing the framework and subsequent evaluation and validation.

4.2 Relevance Cycle

The relevance cycle of the Hevner diagram is the initial step of the research process that can lead to the development of new theories and models. This step's undertaking helps define the problem domain, review the literature, and develop relevant propositions (Hevner et al., 2004). Therefore, the

relevance cycle sets the foundations for designing the proposed framework and how it can be evaluated. The following sections present the key components of the relevance cycle and how they contributed to the development of the proposed framework:

4.2.1 Problem identification

Recently, there has been a surge in companies operating in the hobby-driven, lifestyle, and sports sectors. According to Byers and Slack (2001), many businesses focusing on hobby-driven and lifestyle products or services tend to be small-medium enterprises (SMEs) targeting a small and localised market. However, many multinational companies operating in the sector have gained a substantial market share (Jones et al., 2020). With global companies and many SMEs, businesses need to adopt strategic measures that can contribute to enhanced competitive advantage and a larger market share that can guarantee profitability and business sustainability. According to Jenkins (2009), partnering with successful brands offers a chance for SMEs to benefit from the image and reputation such businesses have established. Phillipson et al. (2006) and Kotabe and Kothari (2016) note that large companies that partner with localised businesses can experience numerous advantages because it is easy to enter new markets, and the business can expand strategically. Despite the multiple benefits that emerge in multi-site business partnerships, there is a lack of adequate models that standardise how hobby-driven, lifestyle, and sports sector businesses identify such opportunities.

The problem in this context emerges from the lack of a systematic approach demonstrating how companies identify and evaluate opportunities for multi-site ventures. According to Alvarez and Barney (2017), such limitations lead to an ad-hoc process in decision-making, inefficient distribution of resources, and missed opportunities. Challenges in identifying opportunities are also linked to inadequate market analysis, especially among SMEs that lack adequate resources to adopt technological solutions such as big data analytics (Maroufkhani et al., 2020). Additionally, the diversity

and dynamic behavioural changes among customers are challenging to track, which increases the difficulty of how companies achieve customer satisfaction and loyalty in a competitive business landscape. Teece (2007) stresses that understanding market dynamics and customer needs is critical in avoiding expansion options that are not economically viable. Other factors affecting the identification of opportunities for companies that have an established brand include limited local insights, such as cultural nuances and regulatory frameworks (Wirtz et al., 2013); inefficient sharing of knowledge among teams and industry players (London & Hart, 2004); lack of effective alignment of identification of multi-site opportunities with the overall business strategy (Finnerty et al., 2017b); inefficiency in the evaluation of financial feasibility and risks in the business expansion (Giménez-García et al., 2007); inadequate planning for scalability and operations that include staffing requirements, supply chain management and logistics, and management of quality standards in different markets (Doz & Kosonen, 2010; Emami et al., 2023; Fitter & Kaplinsky, 2001). Based on these insights, a framework must be developed to enhance how businesses identify opportunities for multi-site business ventures to standardise and increase agility in how companies pursue interests in different markets.

4.2.2 Literature review

Various studies demonstrate that a strategic approach in identifying opportunities for business expansion presents numerous benefits for all stakeholders involved, such as the established brand, partner businesses, and customers. Barringer and Greening (1998) conducted a study focusing on the small business sector to identify the challenges and success factors that contribute to the prudent growth of firms through expansion in different geographical sites. The scholars suggest that expansion should be premised on the notion that the products and services offered by the company can be appealing to customers in other markets. According to the researchers, there was a lack of adequate insights into small firms' challenges in geographic expansion. Employing a comparative case study,

the researchers developed a framework focusing on the antecedents of effective geographic expansion for small businesses, followed by an analytic induction in five case studies. The insights emerging from the framework demonstrated that the geographic expansion of small businesses was affected by various managerial challenges that include planning for growth, managing the growth, reasons for the growth, the characteristics of the expansion sites, performance outcomes in the expansion, and different moderating factors. The researchers concluded that businesses engaging in geographic expansion should consider effective planning, recruitment and selection of qualified staff, enhance networking in the expansion sites to create organisational legitimacy and enhance learning and flexibility to adequately respond to factors emerging in the new market environment.

The insights emerging from Barringer and Greening's (1998) research are consistent with recent studies addressing how businesses pursue opportunities in different industries. A review by Kroll et al. (2010) shows that smaller and younger companies tend to be more mobile, but exploiting opportunities in new sites can be limited by barriers such as financial constraints. Findings by Kroll et al. (2010) from an assessment of firms in San Francisco demonstrated that although older firms were less likely to go out of business, their branches in other locations were more likely to close. In line with the lifestyle industry, the findings show that nonprofits and social assistance businesses are less likely to fail. In this light, exploiting opportunities includes increasing wages and interest rates. Therefore, planning and assessing the market environment is imperative in using new opportunities when expanding to new sites. Gómez et al. (2010), investigating the factors influencing franchisors' choice of organisational form when adding new units to their network, shows that they can adopt a multi-unit franchising or single-unit franchising approach. The researchers established that contractual issues and network characteristics influence the strategy employed. The investigation concluded a positive relationship between the multi-unit franchising application and the franchise network's size, geographical concentration of the units, and sectors where consumers tend to be non-repetitive. These

findings highlight that a multi-unit approach is viable for business expansion but requires a strategic approach that requires adequate planning to identify the opportunities in a particular market. For instance, a high concentration of competitors in a specific geographical zone can discourage expansion by franchisors (Kaufmann et al., 2000; Kaufmann et al., 2007). Furthermore, Boulay et al. (2020) found no linear link between multi-unit franchising and franchisor and franchisee outcomes, implying that such an approach does not always result in a win-win situation. These insights affirm the notion that although there are numerous benefits associated with multi-site business ventures, the success of such strategies requires effectiveness in identifying and pursuing such opportunities for all stakeholders to benefit.

4.2.3 Theoretical foundation

Developing an effective framework for identifying opportunities for multi-site business ventures requires establishing the theoretical foundations using relevant theories and concepts from literature. Table 3 presents these models and concepts and how they contribute to the proposed framework:

Table 3. Theoretical concepts that set the foundation for the proposed framework

Reference	Model	Contribution
Coviello (2006)	Network theory	This study uses multi-site case research to promote theories on the network dynamics of early-stage international new ventures. The investigative strategy is based on claims that network theory and analysis are crucial to global entrepreneurship.
Discua Cruz and Halliday (2020)	Consumer-entrepreneurship	This paper presents the concept of consumer entrepreneurship as individuals turning their interests or hobbies into a business. It differs from traditional definitions and draws from literature on consumption, meaning-making, and entrepreneurship to understand this concept. Using qualitative data from four businesses in a developing country, the

Reference	Model	Contribution
		study finds that consumer entrepreneurship is driven by a love of a hobby, supported by a network of resources, and results in blurred boundaries between work, leisure, and life.
Gillis and Castrogiovanni (2012)	Franchising Model	The qualitative study demonstrates that the franchising business model is substantially preferred by entrepreneurs seeking to expand their businesses geographically. Franchising allows a company (franchisor) to expand its operations by granting independent operators (franchisees) rights to operate under its established brand and business model. Franchisees open and manage their locations while adhering to the franchisor's standards, systems, and branding guidelines. The theory helped establish the key factors entrepreneurs consider when determining if the franchising model is appropriate for the undertaking.
Kammaing and Van der Meer-Kooistra (2007)	Joint Venture Model	In a joint venture, two or more entities form a new business entity, sharing resources, risks, and rewards. This model allows businesses to pool their expertise, market knowledge, and capital to establish and operate multi-site operations jointly. The model was instrumental in assessing these factors and how their influence partnerships in multi-site businesses.
Kalnins (2004)	Company-Owned Model	In this model, the business owns and operates all its locations directly. This approach provides greater control over operations, branding consistency, and quality standards. It requires significant investment and management resources but allows for direct oversight and alignment of the business's vision and objectives across all sites. Premised on these insights, the proposed model took to account efforts by firms to pursue interests with significant control over all operations.
Koza and Lewin (2000)	Strategic Partnerships and Alliances	Businesses can form strategic partnerships or alliances with other organisations to operate multi-site operations jointly. These partnerships can involve sharing resources, distribution networks, or market access to expand operations across different locations while leveraging the strengths of each partner. This theory helped establish how hobby-driven businesses prioritise their needs and those of their customers when engaging with partners in multi-site ventures.
Zemla (2012)	Licensing Model	Licensing involves granting another party (licensee) permission to use intellectual property, such as trademarks, patents, or copyrights, in

Reference	Model	Contribution
		exchange for royalties or fees. This model enables businesses to expand their operations to multiple locations through licensing agreements with local partners. Based on this theory, the proposed model assessed the requirements for licenses, and the implications such relationships have on the operations of hobby-driven businesses.
Savrul et al. (2014)	Online Platforms and E-commerce	Digital platforms and e-commerce enable businesses to engage in multi-site operations without physical brick-and-mortar locations. Through online platforms, companies can reach customers globally, establish virtual storefronts, and manage operations across multiple locations cost-effectively and scalable. These concepts helped to pursue the current trends with the increased adoption of technological solutions that foster cooperation between businesses across borders. They were also instrumental in linking the engagement of hobby-driven companies as the physical stores and agents of global brands.
Pan et al. (2019)	Pestel analysis	PESTEL analysis is a strategic management approach employed in assessing and analyzing factors impacting organizational performance and decision-making. PESTEL analysis is an acronym for Political, Economic, Sociocultural, Technological, Environmental, and Legal factors. It provides a framework for understanding the external macro-environmental factors affecting an organization or industry. This framework highlights the strategic considerations a business should take when deciding to engage in a particular market.
Benzaghta et al. (2021)	Swot analysis/situational analysis	SWOT analysis helps organizations identify their strengths and weaknesses, explore opportunities for growth and improvement, and anticipate and mitigate potential threats in the external environment. It is commonly used for strategic planning, decision-making, and identifying focus areas for organizational development. The situational analysis helps in understanding the current state of the organization and its competitive environment. It provides insights into the organization's strengths and weaknesses relative to its opportunities and threats, which can inform strategic decision-making and planning. The analysis can be conducted at various levels, including the overall organization, specific departments, or a particular project or initiative. These strategies were

Reference	Model	Contribution
		employed to understand the internal and external factors that might impact an organization's performance. The insights gathered help in formulating strategies and making informed decisions about companies that can be engaged in multi-site initiatives.

4.2.4 Relevance proposition

The insights from the literature review, theories and concepts show that there are strategic measures that can be adopted by companies seeking to expand in new markets to increase their effectiveness in identifying multi-site business opportunities. Therefore, the proposed framework for identifying opportunities for multi-site businesses aims to enable companies to address the significant challenge of identifying strategic opportunities for multi-site firms in the complex hobby-driven business environment. By leveraging comprehensive data analysis, market segmentation, and location intelligence, this framework will enable businesses to assess potential markets systematically, evaluate site feasibility, and make informed expansion decisions on the approach that can be adopted for success in multi-site businesses. Additionally, it will enhance the decision-making process, including how the companies plan and implement strategies for successful multi-site operations. The relevance of this framework lies in its potential to provide a systematic and data-driven approach to identify untapped markets, target specific customer segments, and optimise resource allocation for multi-site businesses. It will contribute to advancing how hobby-driven companies and others in the lifestyle and sports sector expand strategically, increase market share, and achieve sustainable growth in an increasingly competitive landscape.

4.3 The Design Cycle

The design cycle of the Hevner diagram alludes to the research process where the proposed framework is designed, developed and implemented. This section presents the relevant structures and components of the framework, followed by an evaluation and documentation of the design process. This was achieved through the following steps:

4.3.1 Design and development

Although overwhelming insights are emerging from previous studies, theories, frameworks, and concepts, designing and developing a framework that could help businesses identify opportunities for multisite ventures requires input from lived experiences in the hobby-driven enterprises and companies seeking such opportunities. Therefore, gathering primary data was critical in understanding the key considerations that should be made in developing the framework. According to Horgan (2012), interviews are essential in designing and developing frameworks because they offer first-hand information that reflects on the needs, goals, challenges, and potential implications of change or decisions made in an organization. The interviews were conducted with six purposefully selected respondents due to their experience in the issues of interest. The researcher contacted the respondents and requested to engage in a 15-to-20-minute purposeful discussion guided by semi-structured interviews presented in Annex II and Annex III. Ethical considerations that include anonymity for privacy and confidentiality were upheld. The research focused on gathering information that was instrumental for the current study. The interview administered to local businesses sought to establish the perceptions and motivations of engaging with global brands. The discussions focused on the nature of the industry, the benefits or challenges that might emerge when engaging with a powerful brand, their willingness to engage large brands, and the desired approach for such engagements. Tables

4 and 5 present a summary of the key findings emerging from these interviews that contributed to developing the proposed framework:

Table 4. Contributions from interviews with participants from local businesses

ID	Demographics	Description of local business	Contribution
Participant 1	<p>Position in the organisation: Business owner</p> <p>Academic and Professional background: High school</p> <p>Years of experience:12</p>	<p>The participant operates a sportswear boutique in an urban setting</p>	<p>Market research. Understanding the local industry dynamics, including the key players, the supply chains, and customer interest, is essential.</p> <p>Communication and complementary capabilities. The partnering businesses must demonstrate the capacity to specialize the products and services to those currently offered by the small business.</p>
Participant 2	<p>Position in the organisation: Manager</p> <p>Academic and Professional background: Master's Degree</p> <p>Years of experience: 5</p>	<p>The participant manages a social enterprise focused on increasing the accessibility of sporting products for disabled persons at low cost.</p>	<p>Building healthy relationships and trust. The respondent suggested that global businesses must engage with local companies and demonstrate a willingness to advance their interests, including objectives that might not lead to profitability but are essential for the community where it operates.</p> <p>Communication. Adequate flow of information and data sharing is critical to build trust and assess the relationship's viability.</p>
Participant 3	<p>Position in the organisation: Owner</p> <p>Academic and Professional background: Bachelor</p> <p>Years of experience: 13</p>	<p>The participant runs a gym that includes a service that connects clients with gym trainers for personalized assistance, such as weight loss programs.</p>	<p>Align objectives and culture. Global brands need to reflect on the value business owners, employees, and customers have for the business. Subsequently, approaching the business for partnership should be premised on the value it can add and the preservation of the culture and intentions for starting the company in the first place.</p> <p>Stakeholder engagement. Local businesses might be interested in collaborating with companies that engage with</p>

ID	Demographics	Description of local business	Contribution
			the target customers and establish a link that can benefit the local industry. Also, the processes should be transparent and consider the interests of different people in the business.

The summary presented in Table 4 shows that the participants were appropriate to inform the objectives of the current study. Their educational backgrounds and experience in hobby-driven businesses were adequate to highlight the key considerations that should be made by global brands seeking to engage with local businesses.

Table 5. Contributions from interviews with participants from large businesses

ID	Demographics	Description of larger businesses	Contribution
Participant 4	Position in the organisation: Head of Marketing Academic and Professional background: Bachelor Years of experience: 3	The participants work in German-based sporting goods multinational.	Strategic alignment. Identifying opportunities requires establishing that the local businesses share the same interests as the global brand in the target customers, objectives, and ethics. This also includes selecting the shared values and culture to make the businesses compatible. Appropriate partnership strategies. Effective negotiations, understanding how the business operates, and the market characteristics can lead to a partnership that maximizes the mutual benefits.

ID	Demographics	Description of larger businesses	Contribution
			<p>Market knowledge. The managers or owners should demonstrate adequate knowledge about the market, including customer demands, needs, expectations, and competition.</p> <p>Long-term objectives. Opportunities emerge among businesses with strategic objectives demonstrating their potential for sustainability and scalability with emerging opportunities. This also includes the importance of effective leadership that can foster focus on a shared objective by the businesses in the local setting.</p>
Participant 5	<p>Position in the organisation: Human Resource Manager</p> <p>Academic and Professional background: Masters</p> <p>Years of experience: 9</p>	The participant works for a football academy with branches across Europe	<p>Market research. A global brand is better positioned to venture into local markets with an adequate understanding of the local market, which can be facilitated by the business they are interested in. Observing the strengths and weaknesses of the local industry as a single unit can inform on opportunities.</p> <p>Technology and skills. Analyzing the technologies used and the expertise of people in the local business can highlight the basis for partnership and advantages all parties can benefit from.</p> <p>Assessing risks. Gathering adequate information about the local business and their markets can help determine if it is worth taking risks through a partnership agreement.</p> <p>Roles and responsibilities. Local businesses must have accountable leadership and human resource strategies to enhance the potential for integration of business operations.</p> <p>Legal requirements. The local business should comply with the laws, and the regulations and standards should be reasonable for the business venturing into the local market.</p>
Participant 6	Position in the organisation: Sports journalist	The participants work in an international	Establish mutual benefits and synergies. Collaborating with local businesses requires global brands to assess if the local players have the potential to meet the standards set by

ID	Demographics	Description of larger businesses	Contribution
	Academic and Professional background: Masters Years of experience: 7	news agency that reports on sports.	the company and the commonalities that can form a basis for collaboration. Leadership. The leaders of local teams should be welcoming to change and have the ability to align their followers with the core objectives of the collaboration. Transfer of skills, knowledge, and technology. Opportunities emerge in local businesses that are flexible and willing to align with the industry. It also relates to the reputation and credibility the local businesses have developed among their consumers.

The summaries presented in Table 5 were gathered from respondents working in global brands who had adequate experience to contribute to the study's objectives. Their responses were instrumental in establishing the key factors considered in identifying local businesses that their global brands can engage in their expansion.

4.3.1.1 Opportunity identification

In the context of the proposed framework, opportunity identification alludes to the successful assessment of the factors contributing to effective decision-making for a company seeking to operate in new sites. It is a systematic process that can enable a company to identify favourable conditions and potential growth areas for multi-site businesses. This approach combines site selection and market analysis to assess various factors and determine the viability of expanding into new locations. These considerations align with recommendations by Doz and Kosonen (2010) and Teece (2007), who highlight the importance of planning, including articulating the multi-site business's objectives and goals. This could include increasing market share, expanding the customer base, diversifying geographically, or optimising operational efficiency, as highlighted in the benefits of multi-site

businesses. Therefore, success is realised with practical market analysis to determine geographical suitability, accessibility, proximity to target customers, availability of resources, local regulations, infrastructure, and competition. It further highlights how the company can gain a competitive advantage by considering factors such as brand recognition and operational efficiency. The elements of opportunity identification additionally include assessing the financial and human resource requirements and the risks that might emerge due to geographical concentration, local market saturation, regulatory hurdles, cultural differences, labour availability, supply chain logistics, and potential disruptions (Kroll et al., 2010; Gillis & Castrogiovanni, 2012; Boella & Goss-Turner, 2019). With these insights, the company can prioritise potential opportunities based on the business objectives and economic viability. Subsequently, the company can decide on venturing into a particular site and strategise on continuous monitoring and evaluation for sustained improvements.

4.3.1.2 Data collection and integration

This component involves gathering relevant data from various sources, such as demographic data, economic indicators, market reports, competitor information, and consumer behaviour data (Maroufkhani et al., 2020). The effective use of the data collected can entail integrating it into a centralised database or data repository for easy access and analysis when selecting between more than one potential location. The findings from the interviews demonstrated that data collection and integration were critical in identifying opportunities for both businesses involved in the multisite venture. Establishing effective communication channels between the parties fosters access to first-hand information that can highlight the businesses' needs, challenges, goals, and compatibility. Fundamentally, effective communication can enable large enterprises to understand the specific context and dynamics of the local market. The data collection and integration process offers an opportunity for increased stakeholder engagement as different parties associated with the business,

including customers and workers of local businesses, can be engaged in investigations on the viability of a multisite business. Bruhn et al. (2012) imply that it is through effective communication that companies can negotiate and engage in appropriate and satisfactory contractual relationships. Therefore, opportunity identification requires the implementation of effective communication channels between businesses. Gathering data from companies and industries through market research is also integral in understanding the local industry dynamics, such as the competitive landscape, market trends and customer preferences, which can be used to establish the potential for success for the multisite venture.

The insights gathered in this context further enhance an understanding of the strategic alignment between the corporate objectives of the local business and the global brands. Subsequently, the stakeholders involved can agree on how the partnership can align with the individual businesses' specific vision, mission, and long-term objectives. The data collection and integration help identify opportunities by highlighting businesses' complementary capabilities. These might include expertise in human resources, technology, distribution networks, and access to a niche market. Furthermore, the respondents from the large businesses stressed the need for potential companies to have a niche market that might be difficult for their businesses to capture without engaging the hobby-driven enterprises. Subsequently, the companies can determine the appropriate mutual benefits and value-creation strategies to meet customer needs. This is reflected in opportunities for technology transfer, skill development, and enhanced brand visibility, which are advantageous for all parties.

4.3.1.3 Market segmentation

The market segmentation component divides the target market into distinct groups based on relevant criteria such as geographical regions, customer demographics, market characteristics, or customer preferences (Gillis & Castrogiovanni, 2012). Subsequently, the decision made when selecting

partners in the franchising, joint venture, strategic partnerships and alliances, and licensing models can be aligned with the needs of the specific market segment. Alternatively, the company can understand the customers' unique needs and preferences when pursuing a company-owned model. According to Yankelovich and Meer (2006), market segmentation is an outcome of effective market research considering the company's potential to meet the needs and expectations of the target customers with the products or services offered. Insights from the interviews show that opportunity identification relies on understanding the businesses' target customer base. This is important in assessing the long-term viability and existing strategies that global brands can adopt. Understanding the customer base of the hobby-driven enterprise of interest offers an opportunity to quantify the scalability, sustainability, and potential solutions that might be adopted in case of failure. Suggestively, focusing on market segmentation can help establish how the partnership of the two businesses can adapt and evolve for long-term success. According to Goyat (2011), market segmentation entails establishing distinct groups of enterprises based on shared characteristics such as needs and behaviours. Therefore, market segmentation can facilitate opportunity identification for global brands by focusing on the common traits that emerge between their target and potential customers in a local market.

After market segmentation, there is a need for consumer segmentation, which entails dividing the identified market based on customer characteristics and behaviours. Therefore, the opportunities in a target local business can be identified by determining the customer demographics, purchasing behaviours, and psychographics, among other factors.

Consumer segmentation, on the other hand, is a subset of market segmentation that focuses explicitly on dividing the market based on consumer characteristics and behaviours. It involves grouping consumers with similar demographics, psychographics, purchasing behaviours, or other relevant factors. In this context, market and consumer segmentation are essential to narrow down and focus on consumer-related aspects in identifying opportunities. According to Füller and Matzler

(2008), market and consumer segmentation can take to account an array of customer factors that are relevant to the marketing initiatives, such as age, gender, residency, educational levels, occupation, economic status, lifestyle, attitude, values, and motivations to buy products or services. Subsequently, the company can also tailor marketing strategies and products or services when engaging with the local market to maximize particular customer characteristics.

The insights from the interviews show that changing how the business operates and introducing new products or services from global brands might impact consumers' perceptions and attitudes. Therefore, identifying opportunities requires understanding the factors that might promote the customers' intent to buy the brand products from the local business. Such insights highlight how companies can alter their offering to meet customer expectations. This can be achieved by assessing the purchasing behaviours that entail focusing on the distribution channels, payment methods, when the customer needs the products or services, and where they are likely to purchase (Gordini & Veglio, 2016). Subsequently, large businesses can position their products or services towards the customer interests by targeting a local company that has the potential to satisfy such needs adequately. Therefore, opportunity identification entails determining which local hobby-driven business customers are most likely to purchase the branded products or services.

4.3.1.4 Analytical models and techniques

These allude to the strategies adopted to analyse the collected data and gain insights into market trends, opportunities, and site suitability. Various approaches can be adopted based on the organisational capabilities, including outsourcing services from experts (Agarwal & Audretsch, 2001; Maroufkhani et al., 2020). These include conducting statistical analysis, regression models, clustering algorithms, predictive modelling, and data mining techniques that can uncover patterns, correlations, and relationships within the data to highlight the best course of action.

The insights from the interviews demonstrated that businesses value strategic approaches that can lead to better outcomes for all parties. Responses from participants from global brands highlighted that the managerial and leadership styles adopted in the local business are critical consideration. The responses demonstrated a high preference for charismatic leaders who can effectively influence the desired change among the internal and external stakeholders. According to Antonakis (2012), charismatic leaders embrace transformational strategies, inspire vision, have an emotional appeal, and attract committed and loyal followers. Nevertheless, charismatic leadership can have an excessively detrimental influence on followers and their influence can diminish if their charisma deteriorates (Levine et al., 2010). Therefore, opportunity identification is premised on the ability of global brands to engage with charismatic individuals in local businesses that can influence the growth of new initiatives. The interviews highlighted the need to build healthy relationships and trust among the companies. Such achievements are aligned with the leadership styles adopted in businesses. This implies that leaders should have the potential to engage in meaningful discussions and negotiations, listen to different perspectives and opinions, and develop a genuine interest in pursuing contractual relationships. Considering that the local businesses might have many interested parties, such as more than one owner or family members, there should be clear roles and responsibilities for all individuals involved. This helps to understand the organizational structure, demonstrates accountability, and fosters effective collaboration and coordination of activities. The interviews also highlighted that reputation and credibility could be determined by assessing the leadership and managerial strategies adopted by the businesses.

The analytical component also highlights the need for risk assessment to identify opportunities. Risk management emerged as an issue of concern among the participants from the large business case studies. Evaluating the potential risks highlights the considerations that should be made in the legal and regulatory contexts, operational risks, financial risks, and reputational risks. In the

same context, the respondents highlighted the need to establish critical legal and contractual considerations instrumental in enhancing the business relationship. With such insights, identifying opportunities can be guided by the extent of mitigation strategies that should be developed to address these risks and protect the interests of all parties involved. Additionally, this can help draft a well-defined partnership agreement that addresses key aspects such as intellectual property rights, confidentiality, dispute resolution, and termination conditions. Research by Meja (2014) demonstrates that such issues can be informed by situational analysis that details the internal and external factors that might impact the business. This entails integrating Pestel and Swot analysis in the identification of opportunities.

Table 6. Pestel Analysis

Factor	Description
Political	This factor assesses the influence of political systems, government policies, regulations, and stability on the organization or industry, demonstrating the risks that might emerge when operating in a particular market.
Economic	This factor assesses the influence of political systems, government policies, regulations, and stability on the organization or industry, demonstrating the risks that might emerge when operating in a particular market.
Sociocultural.	This factor alludes to the social and cultural factors, including demographics, lifestyle trends, consumer attitudes, values, and preferences, and their influence on the organization's products, services, and target market. These insights can shape how the two businesses integrate their organizational cultures.

Technological	This factor evaluates technological advancements, innovation, research and development, automation, and the impact of emerging technologies on the organization's operations, products, and industry. It can help identify the opportunity for collaboration and potential mutual growth by integrating or sharing technologies.
Environmental	This factor considers ecological and environmental factors, such as sustainability, climate change, natural disasters, and environmental regulations, and how they can affect the organization's practices and reputation. Therefore, it is vital to assess the risks that might emerge with opportunity identification. It is also essential with the increased focus on sustainability-oriented businesses among consumers and industry players. For instance, a hobby-driven company can substantially value its sustainability approach.
Legal	This factor addresses the legal and regulatory aspects, including labour laws, intellectual property rights, consumer protection laws, and industry-specific regulations that may affect the organization's operations and strategies. Therefore, local businesses compliant with the relevant laws, regulations, and standards can be more desirable partners.

Table 7. SWOT Analysis

Factor	Description
Strengths	These internal factors give the organization a competitive advantage or unique capabilities. It could include a strong brand, skilled workforce, advanced technology, or efficient processes. Therefore, the business's

	strengths should be the critical consideration in identifying opportunities concerning the business needs
Weaknesses	These internal factors place the company at a disadvantage or limit its capabilities. It could include outdated infrastructure, lack of resources, poor financial health, or inadequate market presence. Such factors can highlight the opportunities the strengths of the global brands can help address.
Opportunities	These are external factors in the environment that can be leveraged to the advantage of the business. It could include emerging market trends, new customer segments, technological advancements, or favourable regulatory changes. Introducing these factors can support the negotiations for partnerships and offer new business ventures that the two businesses can pursue.
Threats	These are external factors that pose challenges or risks to the company. They include intense competition, changing consumer preferences, economic downturns, or disruptive technologies. Identifying opportunities can be aligned with the contribution of global brands to eliminate such threats for local businesses.

The analytic models and techniques in opportunity identification that include the Pestel and Swot analysis are critical in highlighting the complementary capabilities of the businesses. Such strategies are essential in establishing the strengths, expertise, and resources available in the potential

local business. A practical analysis can highlight the areas of specialization and business operations that can be more profitable under the partnership. Fundamentally, understanding the challenges and weaknesses of the local business can help establish where the partnership can be mutually beneficial and where the businesses can leverage each other's strengths. Assessing the local companies is also critical in determining the shared values and culture, which can establish if the enterprises are adequately compatible in operations, human resource management, communication, teamwork, and sustainability, among other aspects.

4.3.1.5 Site evaluation and selection

Upon understanding the market dynamics and organisational capabilities, the company will evaluate potential sites for expansion and select the most suitable ones based on predefined criteria. These approaches include developing a network, franchising, joint ventures, company-owned, strategic partnerships and alliances, licensing, a consumer-entrepreneurship approach, or engaging with partners through online platforms and e-commerce. The factors to consider in site evaluation may include demographics, economic factors, infrastructure availability, proximity to target customers, competition analysis, and legal and regulatory considerations. The responses from the interviews show that identifying the opportunities requires focusing on businesses that demonstrate adequate knowledge and market access. Considering that factors such as culture, customer preferences, and regulations in the target market are captured in other components, the site evaluation and selection can be operationalized to focus on the following elements:

Competitors. Businesses face direct and indirect competitors. An analysis of the geographical position can offer insights into the concentration of competitors. For instance, a hobby-driven company focused on surfing products and services is likely to face competition from similar companies in the location. Direct competitors allude to companies that offer similar products or

services as the intended partners. Analyzing other businesses in the market based on the proposed framework's other components can help identify the best potential partner. Indirect competitors target a similar audience but offer different products that meet customer needs (Downing et al., 2019). Therefore, partnership opportunities can be identified by establishing what the indirect competitors are doing with the substitute products or services and how the partnership with the local business can help build a competitive advantage for all parties.

Complementary products or services. The location of the local business can be characterized by complementary products and services that create an opportunity to enhance the business outcomes of the partnering companies.

Diversification. The raw materials and other resources, such as skills and knowledge, available in a particular location can be an opportunity for collaboration with local businesses. This implies that global brands should assess the potential for diversification to maximize the potential of all relevant resources in the area.

Physical environment factors. The natural environment where the business operates determines the potential risks that might emerge in climate change and the opportunities in developing sustainability-oriented companies that tend to have a competitive advantage (Wassmer et al., 2017; Acciarini et al., 2022). Partnership opportunities can also emerge in the environment because it determines the sustainability of raw materials, such as locally sourced food products, and seasons in the context of sports such as skiing.

4.3.1.6 Visualisation and reporting

The large volumes of data collected and analyzed must be adopted appropriately. The visualisation and reporting component addresses how the data is present in a clear and understandable format for all stakeholders, including potential partners in a target market. This can be achieved using

interactive dashboards, maps, charts, graphs, and heatmaps that visualise market data, site analysis results, and other relevant information. The presentation can include reports that offer comprehensive insights and recommendations for decision-making.

4.3.1.7 Decision support system

The decision support system component will assist the company in making informed decisions by providing tools, algorithms, and scenarios for evaluating different expansion options. It is coupled with the visualisation and reporting component to foster centralised access to information and communication with relevant parties. The users can use this tool to compare potential sites, assess their financial feasibility, simulate different scenarios, and evaluate the potential impact of their decisions. Subsequently, adopting technologies for enhanced decision-making can minimise the risks in multi-site ventures. Based on the accounts from the interviews, the decision support systems can integrate large volumes of data and concepts, making it easy for the businesses seeking multisite business operations to standardize how the framework is applied and customize it to effectively align with the local business ecosystem, which increases the relevance and effectiveness of the framework.

4.3.1.8 Integration with external data sources

Assessing the opportunities in multi-site businesses requires gathering substantial information that transcends what is available in the organisations or offered by potential partners. Therefore, this component helps to enrich the analysis and decision-making process by integrating the company data resources with external data sources such as real-time market data, industry reports, and social media sentiment analysis. This component ensures that the framework leverages up-to-date information and incorporates external factors that may impact market opportunities.

4.3.1.9 Documentation and knowledge management

The successes and failures of the business can be critical sources of insights in strategic decision-making when identifying opportunities for multi-site ventures. The company can capture the framework's design, implementation, and usage through the documentation for improvement or replication in other experiences. The company can achieve a sense of standardisation in identifying opportunities and implementing business objectives.

4.3.2 Constructive research

Further improvements to the proposed framework were accomplished by engaging the respondents in a follow-up interview that presented the proposed framework. The respondents were requested to review and make recommendations on its applicability in the real-life context. The key insights from the respondents that contributed to improvements are presented in tables 6 and 7.

Table 8. The key improvement suggestions from interviews with participants from local businesses

ID	Contribution
Participant 1	Simplification. The various data sources required should be integrated to make it easy to understand the framework.
Participant 2	Engagement. The communication processes should be transparent, and the sources of data used in decision making understood by all parties involved.
Participant 3	Ethical practices. The framework should align the interests of all parties to ensure the decisions made are fair.

Table 9. The key improvement suggestions from interviews with participants from large businesses

ID	Contribution
Participant 4	Data-driven processes. The strength of the framework lies in assessing and integrating insights from as many sources as possible to increase the effectiveness of subsequent decisions and actions.
Participant 5	Inclusion of technology. The process can be more viable by adopting technological solutions that integrate various analyses such as market, customer, and site analysis.
Participant 6	Collaboration in a competitive process. The global brands should engage different local players to establish the best option and demonstrate the potential value that can be added to meeting customer expectations.

4.3.3 Evaluation

The validation and evaluation of the proposed framework were accomplished based on the insights emerging from the interviews in the case studies. The information gathered from each study was integrated into the framework to enhance its applicability and reliability in businesses. The accounts presented by the interviews demonstrate that the framework has high validity, feasibility, and utility premised on their experiences. The validity of the proposed framework was reflected in the sentiments of the interviewees, who demonstrated that focus on data-driven decision-making offered a reliable and meaningful approach to identifying opportunities. The feasibility emerges in statements that integrating technological components that help in data management is aligned with the increased adoption of digital technologies. Therefore, it can be a cost-effective approach that is achievable and sustainable. The respondents reflect the framework's utility in accounts that demonstrate the

systematic approach fostered by it was adequate for decision-making and could contribute to enhanced organisational outcomes in the long run. Additionally, the respondents confirmed that the proposed framework could be tailored to meet the desired strategies in different organisations. The systematic improvements led to a final framework named “Integrated framework for market, company, and site analysis for identifying opportunities for multisite businesses”.

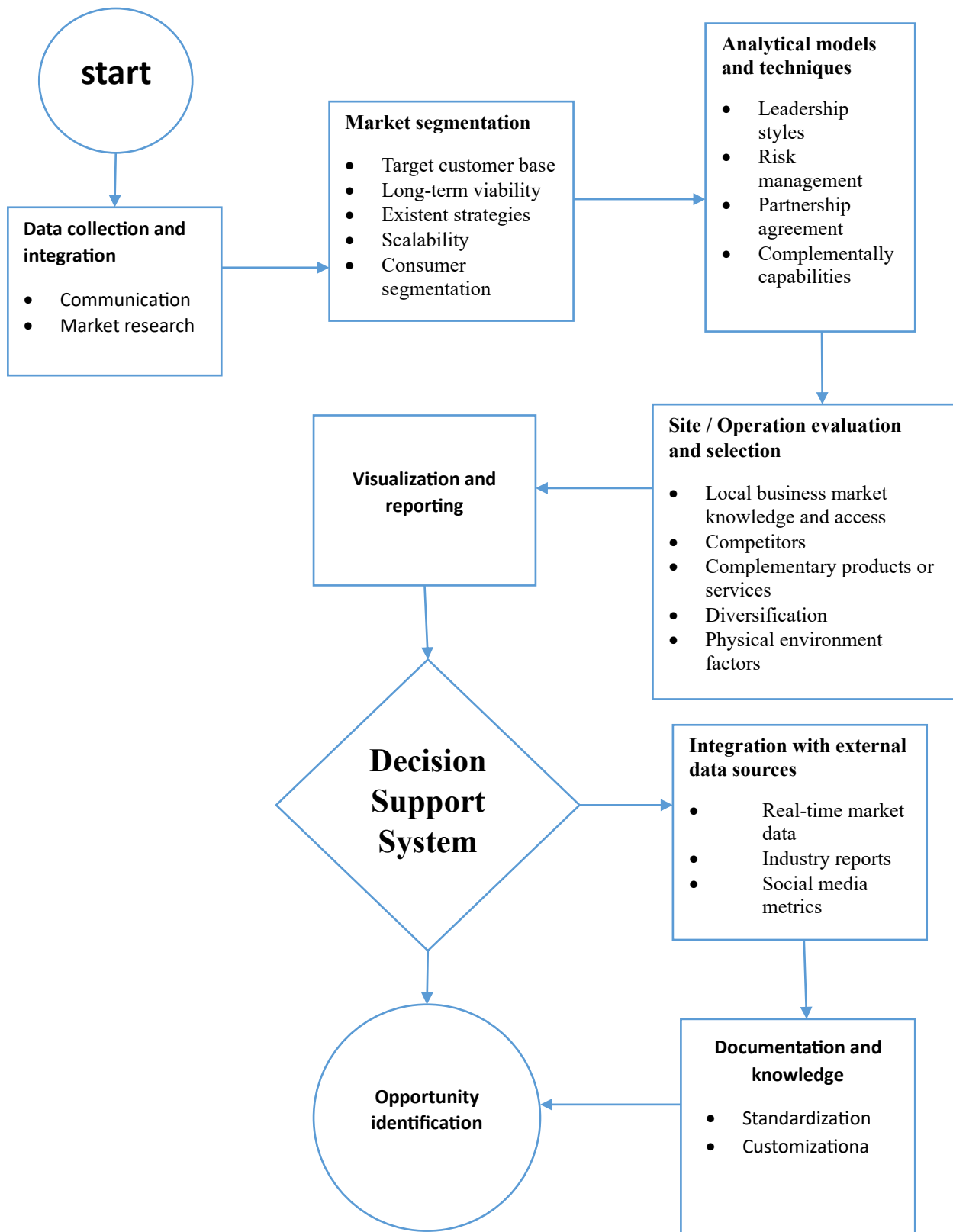


Figure 3. Integrated framework for market, company, and site analysis for identifying opportunities for multisite businesses

4.3.4 *Learning*

The learning process entailed using the insights from the evaluation to rework the proposed framework. Additionally, the modifications included were aligned with existing theory, concepts, and research to ensure that it was founded on an evidence-based approach. However, the recommendations made by the interviewees might have been biased, considering they might have offered information that created a false image of their organisation.

4.3.5 *Communication*

The insights from the different sources were triangulated to develop an integrated market, company, and site analysis framework for identifying opportunities for multisite businesses. The systematic approach based on the Hevner diagram implies that other parties can replicate the theory, design, and evaluation processes. This fosters credibility and reliability in its application. The integration of the proposed framework in businesses should consider the need for technological solutions that facilitate data collection and analysis from different sources. Engaging external sources can also enhance how a data-driven approach identifies and pursues new opportunities.

5 CONCLUSIONS

5.1 The research Problem

The modern business environment is characterized by increased competition across all sectors, which has increased the need for innovative and strategic measures to guarantee survival and profitability. Studies show that business operations in multiple sites offer numerous advantages for businesses in increasing their market share, brand awareness, and global branding. There are various strategies that companies can adopt when venturing into new markets. One of these is developing strategic partnerships with local businesses that have already established themselves in a particular market. Despite this, there is a lack of a comprehensive framework that firms can adopt to identify opportunities for multisite ventures when cooperating with local companies. The current study aimed at developing a framework that can be effectively used in determining the feasibility and potential success in the identification of opportunities for multisite operations with a particular interest in the hobby-driven industry and lifestyle and sports businesses.

5.2 Theoretical and Managerial Contributions

The study involved a critical and comprehensive review of the literature to establish the knowledge gap, the concepts, models, and frameworks that are appropriate in addressing the study's objectives. Therefore, the study adopted a qualitative research methodology that included secondary and primary data. The research design was formulated based on DSA, which entailed adopting the Hevner diagram as the guide for developing the proposed framework. The UML guidelines were used to design and develop the proposed framework using insights gathered from secondary sources and

interviews. Following the Hevner diagram, there was a simultaneous development and assessment of the proposed framework through a systematic and iterative process.

The insights gathered from the different sources resulted in the development of an integrated framework for market, company, and site analysis for identifying opportunities for multisite businesses. The framework was developed through continuous improvements facilitated by the research design. The critical components for opportunity identification include data collection and integration; market segmentation; analytical models and techniques; site evaluation and selection; visualisation and reporting; decision support system; integration with external data sources; documentation, and knowledge management. Each component was strategically established to establish a logical, standardized, and flexible approach to how large businesses can pursue interests in multisite operations. In this context, the objectives of the framework by highlighting the factors and conditions that should be considered, including effective communication, conducting market research, assessing the condition of the target local businesses and the markets they operate, and how these insights can be integrated to enhance decision making. Fundamentally, adopting the framework offers an opportunity to engage in a data-driven approach in decision-making premised on evidence-based considerations from secondary and primary data. The engagement of participants from the case studies on local and global brands increased the credibility and reliability of the framework and guaranteed its application in the real-world setting.

5.3 Limitations and Future Research

The limitation emerging from the research process is that only a few marketing and business expansion models were considered in the current study. The information gathered from a small sample might have been biased, and the use of case studies implies that it might be difficult to generalize the

proposed framework for application in different business contexts. However, these limitations are addressed through data triangulation from other sources and a strategic approach in developing the framework involving continuous improvements. Future studies should seek to compress the various components and features of the proposed framework using adequate data that includes quantitative analysis to establish the relationships and correlations among different variables. Subsequently, such studies can develop a more straightforward approach that can be used by individuals who lack technical knowledge in marketing and management.

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ANNEXES

Annex I: Unified Modelling Language Elements

Visual element	Relationship between concepts
	Process
	Action box
	Decision box

Annexe II: Interview Guide for Participants from Local Business

- Describe your position in the company.
- Describe your educational and professional background.
- How long have you been in your current line of business?
- What makes your company a hobby-driven business?
- Does the business have more than one outlet?
- Do you think the business is replicable in another market?
- What are the challenges/barriers to such an expansion strategy?
- Have you created a brand name and image that is locally popular and sustainable?
- Would you consider partnering/collaborating with another more prominent brand that is seeking to enter your current market?
- Do you think such an approach is viable for the growth and sustainability of your business?
- How can such a strategy affect your interests as a hobby-driven business?
- Which approach is more disabled, given franchising or licensing?
- Describe a strategy that would interest you if you were to cooperate with another brand to to engage in a multisite business.

Annexe III: Interview Guide for Participants from Global Brands

- Describe your position in the company.
- Describe your educational and professional background.
- How long have you been in your current line of business?
- Describe the company's interests in hobby-driven businesses.
- Describe existing expansion strategy in new markets.
- What considerations are made when pursuing a new market?
- What characteristics do you consider when seeking collaboration with other businesses in a new market?
- What benefits emerge for your company and the partnering business in new markets?
- What barriers limit collaboration?
- What is the most strategic approach that can balance the interests of small businesses and more prominent brands when collaborating in local markets?
- Has your company adopted a standard approach when identifying the best partners entering a new market?