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INSTITUTO COPPEAD DE ADMINISTRAÇÃO

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**HOW CAN INTERNATIONALIZATION BENEFIT BRAZILIAN  
MULTINATIONALS IN THEIR DOMESTIC MARKET: a study on  
reverse knowledge transfer**

Rio de Janeiro  
2018

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A thesis presented to the Instituto COPPEAD de Administração, Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro, as part of the mandatory requirements for the degree of Doctor of Sciences in Business Administration (D.Sc.)

Advisor: Prof. Renato D. Cotta de Mello

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## **ABSTRACT**

KOGUT, Clarice Secches. **How can internationalization benefit Brazilian multinationals in their domestic market:** a study on reverse knowledge transfer. Rio de Janeiro, 2018. Tese (Doutorado em Administração) - Instituto COPPEAD de Administração, Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro, 2018.

Knowledge transfer between headquarters and subsidiaries and the study of emerging market multinationals (EM MNE) are two important and rapidly growing research topics in International Business (IB) studies. This doctoral dissertation aims to understand how internationalization can benefit emerging market multinationals (EM MNE) - and Brazilians in particular, as the unit of analysis of this study - in their domestic market through processes of reverse transfer of knowledge (RKT).

This dissertation is composed of three academic papers: (i) a systematic literature review that compiles and synthesizes what has been written in the past 15 years (2001-2017) regarding RKT in top-tier IB journals, points some missing gaps and proposes a theoretical framework for analyzing and understanding RKT; (ii) an in-depth case study on the leading bank in Brazil and LATAM Banco Itaú Unibanco; and (iii) other in-depth case study on the leading electric motor producer in Brazil, and third largest globally, WEG S.A. Both case studies seek to fill some of these found gaps and use the proposed theoretical framework. In addition to these three papers, there is an initial introduction chapter, a research design chapter, a comparative analysis of the two cases presented, and a final conclusion of the doctoral dissertation, which also points out its overall practical and academic contributions, limitations and future research suggestions.

**Keywords:** Reverse Knowledge Transfer, Organizational Learning, Internationalization, international competitive advantage, Brazilian multinationals

## RESUMO

KOGUT, Clarice Secches. **Como a internacionalização pode beneficiar as multinacionais brasileiras em seu mercado nacional:** um estudo sobre transferência reversa de conhecimento. Rio de Janeiro, 2018. Tese (Doutorado em Administração) - Instituto COPPEAD de Administração, Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro, 2018.

A transferência de conhecimento entre matriz e subsidiárias e o estudo de multinacionais de mercados emergentes são dois tópicos de pesquisa importantes e de rápido crescimento no campo de negócios internacionais. Esta tese de doutorado visa entender como a internacionalização pode beneficiar as multinacionais de mercados emergentes – e as brasileiras em especial, como unidade de análise desse estudo - em seu mercado doméstico, através de processos de transferência reversa de conhecimento (RKT, do inglês *Reverse Knowledge Transfer*). Esta tese é composta por três artigos acadêmicos: (i) uma revisão sistemática de literatura que compila e sintetiza o que foi escrito nos últimos 15 anos (2001-2017) sobre RKT em periódicos de alto nível no campo de NI, aponta algumas lacunas teóricas e propõe uma estrutura teórica para analisar e compreender o RKT; (ii) um estudo de caso em profundidade sobre o banco líder no Brasil e LATAM Banco Itaú Unibanco; e (iii) outro estudo de caso em profundidade sobre principal produtor de motores elétricos no Brasil, LATAM e terceiro maior do mundo, WEG S.A. Estes estudos de caso buscam preencher algumas das lacunas teóricas identificadas e usam a estrutura teórica proposta. Além desses três artigos, este trabalho é composto por um capítulo de introdução, um capítulo detalhando o desenho do projeto de pesquisa, uma análise comparativa dos dois casos apresentados e uma conclusão final da tese, que também destaca suas contribuições práticas e acadêmicas, limitações e sugestões de pesquisa futuras.

**Palavras-chave:** transferência reversa de conhecimento, aprendizado organizacional, Internacionalização de empresas, vantagens competitivas internacionais, multinacionais brasileiras.



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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

**CEO:** Chief Executive Officer

**CFO:** Chief Financial Officer

**CoE:** Center of Excellence

**EM:** Emerging Market

**EM MNE:** Emerging Market Multinational Enterprise

**FDI:** Foreign Direct Investments

**HR:** Human Resources

**HQ:** Headquarters

**IB:** International Business

**KBV:** Knowledge Based View

**KT:** Knowledge Transfer

**LATAM:** Latin America

**M&A:** Mergers and Acquisitions

**MNE:** Multinational Enterprise

**OC:** Organizational Capabilities

**RBV:** Resource-based view

**R&D:** Research and Development

**RKT:** Reverse Knowledge Transfer

**UM:** Uppsala Model

**USA:** United States of America

**VP:** Vice President

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