**ABSTRACT**

Does the family involvement affect exports in the family firm? The literature seems to support this view even if the direction and magnitude of this impact remains controversial. Drawing on the perspectives of agency [Chrisman et al. 2004; Schulze et al. 2001] and stewardship as applied to family firms [Davis, Schoorman and Donaldson 1997] and also on socio-emotional wealth perspective [Gómez-Mejía et al. 2007], this study seeks to contribute to this debate by studying the influence of family involvement on the SME exports intensity. To reconcile the divergent views, our research attempts to assess the role of the manager’s international orientation as a variable moderating the relationship between family involvement and exports in SMEs. Based on a hypotheticaldeductive approach, the study uses a sample data of 125 family SMEs obtained through a questionnaire. The results show that even if the positive influence of the manager’s international orientation is corroborated, its moderating role seems to be limited to only one facet of the construct of family involvement i.e. involvement in management. Moreover, owning-family involvement in management seems to negatively influence exports while some results argue for a positive effect of the family involvement in ownership on exports.