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Environmental Scanning and Global Marketing Strategy: A Multitheoretical Normative Conceptual Framework

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Keywords: *global marketing strategy, environmental scanning, industrial organization theory, resource-based view, strategy fit paradigm*

Description: *This research paper involves the development of a normative conceptual framework of global or international marketing strategy for academic researchers and practitioners that is informed by multiple literature streams and theoretical foundations, including environmental scanning, the strategy fit paradigm (environment-strategy coalignment), industrial organization theory, the resource-based view, and perceived environmental uncertainty.*

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question

Despite the attention paid to *environmental scanning* (ES) and its conceptualization as an activity that can inform organizational strategies, little research in the extant marketing literature, including on global or international marketing strategy, has incorporated ES as a separate construct. A search of research contributions published in “Scholarly (Peer Reviewed) Journals” or the “Academic Journals” Publication type in the *Business Source Complete* database in August 2016 using broad combinations of relevant search terms provided evidence for how few research contributions in the broad area of marketing and the more specific area of international marketing strategy have incorporated the ES construct in any form. The results provide evidence of the gap that exists in the body of knowledge for the use of ES in the marketing research discipline and global or international marketing area. Therefore, this paper argues that ES should be included as a separate construct in conceptual models explaining global or international marketing strategies by organizations based on the evidence from the extant literature indicating the importance of ES to organizational strategy formulation, implementation, and performance. Overall, the purpose of this research paper is to develop and propose a normative conceptual framework of global or international marketing strategy for academic researchers and practitioners that is comprehensive yet parsimonious and informed by multiple literature streams and theoretical foundations.

Summary of Findings

The proposed multitheoretical normative conceptual framework created is primarily based on: (1) the *strategy fit paradigm (environment-strategy coalignment)* (e.g., Aldrich, 1979; Chakravarthy, 1982; Jauch and Osborn, 1981; Miles and Snow, 1978; Porter, 1980; Venkatraman and Prescott, 1990); (2) various theories, frameworks, and models, including *industrial organization theory* (e.g., Bain, 1956, 1959; Chamberlin, 1933; Mason, 1939) and the *resource-based view* (e.g., Barney, 1991; Penrose, 1959; Wernerfelt, 1984); and (3) various concepts and research streams in the extant literature, including *perceived environmental uncertainty* (e.g., Galbraith, 1973; Boyd and Fulk, 1996) and *environmental scanning* (e.g., Aguilar, 1967; Coulter, 2005). Research propositions include:

- P1: Organizational characteristics (i.e., internal forces) will impact organizations’ (a) formulation and implementation of their global marketing strategy, and (b) the performance of their global marketing strategy.
- P2: External environment characteristics (i.e., external forces) will impact organizations’ formulation and implementation of their global marketing strategy
- P3: The level of environmental scanning by an organization will impact the relationship that exists between various

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organizational characteristics (i.e., internal forces) and organizations' formulation and implementation of their global marketing strategy.

P4: The level of environmental scanning by an organization will impact the relationship that exists between various external environment characteristics (i.e., external forces) and organizations' formulation and implementation of their global marketing strategy.

P5: (a) The level of environmental scanning by an organization will impact the level of perceived environmental uncertainty, and (b) the level of perceived environmental uncertainty by an organization will impact the level of environmental scanning.

P6: The level of perceived environmental uncertainty will impact organizations' formulation and implementation of their global marketing strategy.

P7: Organizations' formulation and implementation of their global marketing strategy will impact the performance of their global marketing strategy.

Key Contributions

The result of this conceptual research contribution was the creation of a proposed multitheoretical normative conceptual framework for global marketing strategy that is comprehensive yet parsimonious and, as a contingency framework, can be leveraged by academic researchers and practitioners for their respective activities in a myriad of contexts. It was also to call attention to the lack of consideration on the part of academic researchers to organizational environmental scanning activities as part of the conceptual and empirical research they conduct on global marketing strategy. Overall, the hope is that this contribution can help generate more attention to the topic from researchers and practitioners.

References are available on request.