

The Utilization Of International Information For Global Marketing Competitiveness: An Empirical Investigation

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Abstract

Using samples of academic researchers, business executives, and government policy makers, this study empirically examined the utilization of international information (economic and business data) for global marketing competitiveness. In addition, the study examined the form of data used by each sample. The importance and form of the international data are analyzed across the samples, and implications for the results of this study are explored. Finally, conclusions are drawn.

Introduction

The competitive environment in today's business world makes the search for attractive market opportunities more pervasive than ever. Yet, the number of firms that investigate foreign markets is still relatively low (Woodward, 1986). Consequently, some companies enter and compete in the international markets, while others do not.

Academic researchers and international trade analysts have asked such questions for a long time. Although many answers have been provided, one answer has been put forth more consistently than others. This being the lack of foreign environmental knowledge. Several researchers have indicated that this lack of foreign environmental knowledge is the most important obstacle in the development of international economic and business data (Johanson and Vahlne, 1977).

More support to this observation came from other researchers. Davidson (1983) stated that the ultimate challenge today in international market opportunities is the lack of international information which includes economic and business data. Without such information, global managers cannot assess such opportunities. Likewise, Walters (1985) demonstrated that successful competitiveness in the international arena hinges upon the international economic and business information, and the firm's ability to scrutinize the relevant environmental and competitive characteristics in the world.

While works such as these provide the need for the

aforementioned information about foreign markets, this need has to be empirically examined by using samples of academic researchers, business executives, and government policy makers. Results are expected to reveal the importance and the form of international information required for global marketing competitiveness.

Literature Review

Past literature indicates that information is a substantial strategic resource for businesses, exporters, researchers, and governments. Information is important in the international setting, where entirely new environment parameters are encountered. Business executives, researchers, and policy makers need to know about the economic environment, the technological level, and the cultural and social dimensions of foreign countries. It is also important to understand foreign political systems, determine their stability, comprehend pertinent legal issues, and identify differences in societal structures. In essence, international information concerning economic and business data is extremely important for business executives to be successful in a global market, for researchers to obtain in-depth insight, and for policy makers to set good policy and negotiation goals (Czinkota 1991).

In business organizations, management has come to realize that managing a business well is managing its future, and managing its future is managing information (Daser 1984). Research analyzing international market

failures found that most mistakes could have been avoided if the business organization and its management had obtained adequate information about the business environment (Ricks 1983). The international business literature provides several examples of the linkage between the importance of international information and international competitiveness. Johanson and Vahlne (1978) indicated that a lack of foreign environmental knowledge about issues such as language and culture can be a considerable impediment to the internationalization of the business organizations. However, Kedia and Chhokar (1986) believe that the lack of the required information is a measure deterrent for the global marketing competitiveness of small and medium-sized business organizations.

With respect to exporters, research reveals that exporters conduct a more intensive search for information than non-exporters, attach more importance to market knowledge, and are more likely to conduct their own market research (Burton, and Schlegelmilch 1987). Czinkota and Ricks (1981) reported that exporters believe increased market information gathering and information on business practices are key variables in improving their foreign trade performance. Czinkota and Ronkainen (1990), in turn, reported that exclusive information can be a key motivation in providing the organization with strategic competitive advantage and global marketing success.

It appears that the realities of today's business environment require that foreign markets be sought systematically and continuously. However, most reference literature on this subject ignores approaches that companies have developed to assess their export market opportunities. For this reason, Cavusgil (1985) offered practical guidelines based on in-depth interviews with executives of seventy Midwestern exporting companies. Finally, Czinkota (1991) concluded that more types of data must be collected so all those involved in international business, such as exporters and importers can benefit.

With regards to academic researchers, several approaches have been taken to incorporate this international dimension into the business school curriculum. To ensure that the teaching of international trade and business is relevant to the real world, studies have resulted which surveyed executives of international business organizations (Ricks and Czinkota 1979), or personnel directors of companies (Patrick 1978). In addition, Peters (1984) developed an international marketing course for the future to be taught at business schools. Similar efforts have been undertaken to stimulate the focus of research activities. A particular visible effort consisted in the publication of research needs and implicit publication opportunities by the section editors of *The Journal of International Business*

Studies. Other efforts resulted from the conduct and conclusions of international symposia. For researchers, information is critical in theory information and hypothesis testing, and for gaining insights into the phenomena (Czinkota 1991).

Similar to business executives, exporters and importers, and academic researchers, governments have learned about and shared this concern over international information needs (Seward 1867). Comprehensive studies of export promotion programs around the world found that virtually all industrialized countries collect many forms of trade information and disseminate it. A report by the U.S. and foreign commercial service indicated that government expenditures, in 1985, for advisory and research activities in the export field ranged from \$23.6 million in West Germany to \$206 million in the United Kingdom.

In spite of the common acceptance of the need for accumulated and disseminated trade information, little knowledge exists about what types of international data are most crucial. Neither the research literature nor the government have presented a hierarchical rank order of data importance, which would help identify the relevance of international information. Given the importance of information stressed by so many authors, the question then becomes what type of information is needed for international business competitiveness. The literature provides a number of suggestions about such information requirements.

Davidson (1983) stated that macro data need to allow firms to focus in the general relationship among market characteristics, marketing mix strategies, and consumer response. In their seminal book of international marketing research, Douglas and Craig (1983) suggested that macro data helps companies select countries or markets that merit depth investigations, make an in-depth initial estimate of demand potential in a given country, or monitor environmental change. Cavusgil (1984) proposed the usefulness of the macro-level information on industries in foreign markets, broad economic and demographic variables, political indicators, and cultural indicators. Cavusgil (1985) also suggested that when analyzing industry market potential, market access information such as limitations on trade, tariff levels and quotas, legal restrictions, local production, imports, consumption, and conditions for local manufacture is necessary. For the analysis of company sales potential, he recommends that information about size and concentration of customer segments, projected consumption statistics, competitive pressure, and costing methods be available. On the other hand, Walters (1983) found that useful background knowledge is provided by information on export and import shipments, trade barriers, and data on international markets. A detailed analysis by Wood and Goolsby (1987) reported that key information

should consist of knowledge about market potential trade restrictions (tariff and non-tariff barriers and transportation barriers), politics and their effect on trade, and economic and legal factors.

All the literature points toward two different types of data needs: macro information, providing mostly knowledge about different environments; and micro information, providing details about markets, activities within those markets, and the changes taking place in them. The unifying conclusion, however, remains: data and the knowledge derived from them are crucial for global competitiveness success (Czinkota 1991).

Purpose Of The Study

The first purpose of this study is to identify, analyze, and compare the rank ordering of international information by business executives, researchers, and policy makers. This part of the study addresses the question of the utilization of international information types required for global marketing competitiveness. The second purpose of this study is to identify, analyze, and compare the forms of data used by the aforementioned groups. This part will differentiate among three types of potential users of international information: business executives, academic researchers, and policy makers. This differentiation is introduced to trace possible differences among these three groups based on different activities for which information is used.

Based upon the purpose of this study, the following hypotheses have been formulated:

- H₁:** There is a significant difference in the importance of the utilization of international information concerning economic data for global marketing competitiveness among academic researchers, business executives, and governmental policy makers.
- H₂:** There is a significant difference in the importance of the utilization of international information concerning business data for global marketing competitiveness among academic researchers, business executives, and governmental policy makers.
- H₃:** There is a significant difference in the form of the utilization of international information concerning economic data for global marketing competitiveness among academic researchers, business executives, and governmental policy makers.
- H₄:** There is a significant difference in the form of the utilization of international information concerning business data for global marketing competitiveness among academic researchers, business executives,

and governmental policy makers.

The rationale behind the first and the second hypotheses is to identify differences, if any, in the importance of international information concerning economic and business data for global competitiveness among the three groups. Which economic and business factors in international information required for global competitiveness are more important than the others? As soon as the first and the second hypotheses are tested, the answer to this question would be provided.

The rationale behind the third and fourth hypotheses is to identify differences, if any, in the form of international information concerning economic and business data for global competitiveness among the three groups. Which form of international information (economic and business data) has been used more than others by the three groups? As soon as the third and fourth hypotheses are tested, the answer to this question would also be provided.

Methods

Methods include samples, data collection, and statistical analysis. Each method has been carried out by the following procedure.

Samples and Data Collection

International trade research is not a subject of broad appeal, although it can be exciting to those involved. As people often judge the quality of research by its data quantity, it is tempting to send questionnaires to many academic researchers, business executives, and government policy makers. However, it is better to obtain selected in-depth responses of a few experts who know and do, rather than to seek average responses of many with limited knowledge. It was decided to seek responses from those who deal with trade data on a daily basis: academics and researchers in international business and marketing fields, executives in international business, and government executives in the international trade area. The questionnaire was designed so that it differentiated data needs into international economic (macro) data and international business (micro) data.

The questionnaire used in this study was developed by Czinkota (1991). He has drawn the initial pool of items from the literature and through discussion. The questionnaire was pretested by four policy makers, three researchers, and four business executives, who clarified terms of ambiguity. The initial step was to send some copies of the questionnaire to a panel of experts to be translated into Arabic language and to be pretested. Confidentiality was assured to executives and participating organizations in this study. After the questionnaire was translated, it was pretested by five business execu-

tives, five academic researchers, and five government policy makers. The three groups participated in clarifying ambiguity. To assure that the translation from English to Arabic did not distort the meaning, thirty questionnaires in both languages were given to thirty individuals from the three groups (10 people from each group) who possessed proficient knowledge of the English language. The correlation between the answers in both languages was highly significant (0.99). To assure the reliability of this research instrument, the split-half procedure was used and alpha was significant (0.86).

The first and the second parts of the questionnaire requested information concerning economic and business data. The participating academics and researchers, executives, and policy makers were asked to rank the importance of each type in economic and business data. Each academic and researcher, executive, and policy maker had to assign the letter X under little value, useful, or critical across each type of information concerning economic and business data. Of course, the ranking order for each factor by each of the three groups depends on how they perceive the importance of each factor regarding international information required for global marketing competitiveness. To facilitate data analysis, the numbers 1, 2, and 3 were assigned to little value, useful, and critical, respectively. The third part of the questionnaire requested academics and researchers, executives, and policy makers to state what form of data they used in such international information. Each academic and researcher, executive, and policy maker was to put the letter X under automated, printed, or automated and printed across each type of international information.

In the Summer of 1991, one of the researchers was in Cairo, Egypt, where some of the faculty members at Cairo University and Iyn Shamis University in Cairo pledged to distribute and collect the questionnaires. These faculty members, who graduated from the U.S. universities, helped in selecting 35 academics and researchers, 35 business executives, and 35 government policy makers in Egypt. Academics were selected based on their teaching of international business. Researchers were selected based on their leadership of members in the academic community who use trade data in their research and teaching activities, and their use of trade data in their past publications.

To obtain business input, business executives were selected based on their experiences in their organizations which deal with export and import activities from several foreign countries in Europe, America (North and South), the Middle East, and the Far East. This sample was stratified by a variety of manufacturing industries which export to Egypt. Similarly, Egyptian policy makers were identified who would need to use trade

data in fulfilling their policy objectives. To reflect the diversity of government policy makers in the trade field, the policy makers were stratified to reflect regional concerns, international negotiations, and industry-specific concerns. The selected individual ranged in title from Deputy Assistant Secretary to Division Director, and represented several countries in Europe, North and South America, the Middle East, and the Far East. In addition, they represented several manufacturing industries and services.

Participants were mailed questionnaires to fill out and return to the aforementioned faculty members. Three faculty members volunteered to do this job; each group was then contacted by one faculty member. Personal contacts were also used, either by phone calls or by visits to hasten the process by mailing back the questionnaires. Consequently, data analysis was carried out in the same summer, in that country, by one of the researchers.

Statistical Analysis

Statistical analysis in this study utilized the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS-X) to compute the grand means and the means for each information issue or type. Subsequently, a comparison of means was carried out with occupation as the dependent variable. Respondents fell into the following groups: academics and researchers, executives, and policy makers. Group mean differences were then tested using analysis of variance (ANOVA). The tests compared the occupational group means with total sample grand means. A 90 percent confidence level was chosen for the statistical significance purposes.

Results

Results of this study are based on data obtained from a total of 105 respondents: 35 academics and researchers, 35 business executives, dealing with international business, and 35 government policy makers as experts in international trade. While the academics and researchers included 4 women (11 percent), the business executives included 2 women (6 percent), and government policy makers included 2 women (6 percent). The average age of the academics and researchers was 36.4 years, the average age of the business executive was 42.8 years, and the average age of the policy maker was 45.6 years. The average length of the service differed among the three samples; it averaged 8.2 years for the researchers, 11.7 years for the business executives, and 14.9 years for the government policy makers.

Table 1 presents a summary of the responses for the respondents who answered the first part of the questionnaire to determine the importance of specific trade data to their work. Table 1 also shows the type of data and their overall importance ranking. Three major clusters

Table 1				
<i>Importance Rankings of International Information</i>				
	Grand Means	Academics & Researchers	Business Executives	Government Policy makers
INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC DATA				
<i>Cluster 1</i>				
Foreign Import/Export Data	2.8	2.9	2.8	2.6
Local Import/Export Data	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.6
Tariffs	2.8	2.8	2.9	2.6
Non-Tariff Measures	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8
Government Trade Policy	2.7	2.8	2.6	2.6
<i>Cluster 2</i>				
International Interest Rates*	2.5	2.4	2.5	2.3
Exchange Rates*	2.5	2.4	2.5	2.1
Foreign Production Data*	2.4	2.4	2.3	2.0
Local Production Data	2.3	2.6	2.0	2.2
Foreign Direct Investment	2.3	2.6	2.0	2.3
International Service Transactions	2.2	2.6	2.1	1.8
Government Trade Data*	2.2	2.1	2.1	1.6
<i>Cluster 3</i>				
Labor Productivity*	2.1	2.3	2.1	1.7
Unemployment Rates	2.0	2.0	1.9	1.9
Wage Rates Abroad*	1.9	2.1	1.6	1.6
*Significant difference among groups at 0.10 level. 3 = Critical; 2 = Useful; 1 = Of little value;				

of importance have emerged. For international economic data, *cluster 1* includes the most critical information (3=critical) consists of data on foreign and local import and export data, tariff and non-tariff measures, and data on government trade and policy. *Cluster 2* ranging between critical and useful information (2=useful) consists of data on international interest rates, exchange rates, foreign and local production, foreign direct investment, international service transaction, and government data. *Cluster 3* consists of data of little value (1 = of little value) and includes data on labor productivity, unemployment rates, and wage rates abroad. Data analysis in Table 1 provided a partial support to Hypothesis 1; six of fifteen (40%) information types on economic have significant differences.

In comparing the evaluation of information importance concerning economic data by the three groups, some major differences emerged. For example, academics and researchers considered information issue or types critical while business executives considered this issue as useful data, and the government policy makers consid-

ered the same information issue as data of little value. However, such differences will be discussed in the discussion section.

Table 2 presents another summary of responses for the respondents who answered the second part of the questionnaire to determine the importance of specific data to their work. Table 2 shows the type of data concerning business data and their overall importance ranking. Three major clusters of importance have also emerged.

For international business data, the spread of importance ratings was not as wide as was the case for economic data. It appears that the *first cluster* consists of the most critical data (3=critical) on local laws and regulations, local standards, size of market, distribution system, and competition abroad. The *second cluster* consists of useful data (2=useful) on specific business operations, licensing, export financing, common business practices, and general economic conditions. The *third cluster* consists of information of little value (1=little

Table 2				
<i>Importance Rankings of International Information</i>				
	Grand Means	Academics & Researchers	Business Executives	Government Policy makers
INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS DATA				
<i>Cluster 1</i>				
Local Laws and Regulations	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7
Local Standards	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.8
Size of Market	2.6	2.5	2.7	2.4
Distribution System*	2.5	2.6	2.5	2.4
Competition Abroad	2.5	2.6	2.5	2.5
<i>Cluster 2</i>				
Specific Business Operations*	2.4	2.4	2.1	2.5
Licensing	2.4	2.3	2.6	2.4
Export Financing*	2.4	2.3	2.7	2.3
Common Business Practices*	3.3	2.2	2.4	2.8
General Economic Conditions	2.2	2.4	2.1	2.3
<i>Cluster 3</i>				
Trade Officials	2.1	2.1	2.1	1.2
Government Officials	2.1	2.4	1.8	2.1
Barter & Counter-trade*	2.0	2.1	1.9	2.1
*Significant difference among groups at 0.10 level. 3 = Critical; 2 = Useful; 1 = Of little value;				

value) on trade officials, government officials, and barter counter-trade. The information on business data has been evaluated as the most critical and was given a lower rating than was the case of information on economic data. However, the business data in the third cluster was rated as somewhat more important than were the economic data. Table 2 also provided a partial support to the second hypothesis; five of thirteen information types on business data have significant differences.

In comparing the evaluation of information importance concerning business data by the three groups, some major differences also emerged. Again, such differences will be discussed later.

Table 3 presents a third summary of responses for the same respondents who answered the third part of the questionnaire to determine the form of data concerning economic and business they used in their work. With respect to form of data, respondents were asked whether data were used in automated, or printed form, or in both automated and printed forms. Apparently, current usage patterns will have a major impact on how data should be distributed. For economic data, Table 3

shows that some automated data are being used. This is clear through several information issues which will be discussed later. In most cases, the vast majority of respondents indicated that they were using data primarily in printed forms. Similar cases are in the international business data, but to an even greater degree. However, no major difference among the groups emerged according to data analysis Table 2.

Table 3 did not support the third and fourth hypotheses. There have been no significant differences among the three groups in terms of the form of data used by each group.

Conclusions

Data analysis in Table 1 indicates that respondents revealed major priorities among data sets and clearly some data are more important than others, and respondents were able to rank them. If one intends to provide international information to enhance marketing competitiveness under circumstances of scarce resources, it seems useful to concentrate on the most important data priority first to satisfy data users' needs best.

Table 3				
<i>Form of Data: Automated or Printed?</i>				
	Grand Means	Academics & Researchers	Business Executives	Government Policy makers
INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC DATA				
International Interest Rates	1.9	1.8	1.9	1.9
Exchange Rates	1.9	1.8	1.9	1.9
Foreign Import/Export Data	1.9	1.8	1.9	1.9
Local Import/Export Data	1.8	1.7	1.8	1.8
International Service Transactions	1.7	1.6	1.5	1.9
Tariffs	1.6	1.9	1.5	1.6
Non-Tariff Measures	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.4
Unemployment Rates	1.4	1.6	1.3	1.1
Local Production Data	1.4	1.5	1.5	1.3
Foreign Production Data	1.4	1.4	1.2	1.3
Foreign Direct Investment	1.4	1.3	1.4	1.4
Government Trade Data	1.3	1.3	1.1	1.4
Government Trade Policy	1.2	1.2	1.0	1.2
Labor Productivity	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2
Wage Rates Abroad	1.2	1.1	1.1	1.4
INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS DATA				
Specific Business Operations	1.4	1.5	1.4	1.4
General Economic Conditions	1.4	1.5	1.5	1.2
Export Financing	1.3	1.3	1.1	1.2
Licensing	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.1
Distribution System	1.2	1.4	1.0	1.0
Size of Market	1.2	1.3	1.0	1.0
Competition Abroad	1.2	1.2	1.0	1.0
Local Laws and Regulations	1.1	1.0	1.2	1.0
Local Standards	1.1	1.0	1.2	1.0
Common Business Practices	1.1	1.1	1.0	1.0
Government Officials	1.1	1.0	1.1	1.0
Trade Officials	1.1	1.1	1.2	1.0
Barter & Counter-trade	1.1	1.1	1.0	1.0
3 = Automated; 2 = Both; 1 = Printed;				

Although all types of international economic data in *Cluster 1* of Table 1 were considered by the three groups as critical data, there have been some variations in the importance of such types of data due to their priorities and to the different needs of the groups. Consequently, academics and researchers, as well as business executives ranked foreign and local import/export data higher than policy makers. In addition, academics and researchers ranked international economic data of foreign government trade policy higher than business executives and government policy makers. On the other hand, business executives ranked data on tariffs higher than academics and researchers and government policy makers. A possible explanation for such variations in the importance of such types of international economic data is that different data users have different needs. Depending on whether the academic and research community, industry, or government is to be the user of trade information, different priorities emerged.

The data priorities also reflected changes in the global environment. Practical evidence is the consensus of the three groups on the high ranking of non-tariff measures reveals the importance of these issues, reaffirmed by the clear high ranking of other data types such as foreign production data. The major emphasis on local import and export data indicates the importance of this data type to show its importance to the international business community.

Similar data priorities for other types of international economic data in *Cluster 2* of Table 1 are also clear. Business executives emphasized the importance of data on the international interest rates and the exchange rates more than academics and researchers and policy makers. This emphasis could be justified by the profit versus non-profit orientation. So, Egyptian industry is interested in these financial dimensions. In contrast, academics and researchers emphasized the importance

of foreign and local production economic data, and international service transactions more than business executives and policy makers did. However, academics and researchers and business executives shared the emphasis of data on government trade more than policy makers did.

Data priorities in this cluster also reflected global environmental changes. This represented by the relatively high ranking of foreign production data to show its importance. Similarly, the relatively major emphasis on local production data sheds the light on the importance of this type of data as an important dimension to the international business community. The low ranking of services data in light of the fact that Egypt's major industry is a service-based economy was unexpected. This might be attributable to a lack of respondents' reliability when using current data from international service transactions or to their lack of knowledge of such data. The same is true by policy makers in the area of direct foreign investments. Moreover, the low ranking assigned by respondents to government trade data indicates that business in Egypt cannot influence foreign governments.

Finally, other data priorities seem to be in *Cluster 3* of Table 1. Academics and researchers put more emphasis on the three types of international economic data than business executives and policy makers did. The low ranking assigned to labor productivity, unemployment rates, and wage rates reflect the lack of financial funds in the Egyptian government budget to cover such issues. The other two groups also consider such international information as useful information and not substantial.

Similar data priorities appear in the emerged three clusters in Table 2. The first cluster in Table 2 shows a major emphasis on local laws and regulations. This reveals the importance of this dimension to the international business community. The same applies to local standards where international variations are highly important. The major emphasis on market size by business executives indicates higher attention to this type of information than the other two groups had. This could be attributable to the desire of the private sector to value the market size. The same does not apply to competition abroad. The low emphasis by policy makers and business executives reveals that government does not care about the distribution system abroad, and business conduct their own investigation.

The second cluster in Table 2 indicates that while government policy makers put major emphasis on common business practices, business executives favored that on licensing and export financing information. On the other hand, the low emphasis on general economic conditions, and specific business operations probably indicates these two types of information are the respon-

sibility of businesses which like to conduct their investigation into these crucial business specifics. Finally, the third cluster in this table shows a low ranking assigned to trade and government officials. This indicates that the Egyptians business organizations are far less successful in their interaction with foreign governments. The lower emphasis on barter and counter-trade by business executives than the other two groups indicates that businesses are interested in imports more than exports. This means that the needs of the country exceed its supplies, so they have not much to counter.

Data analysis in Table 3 indicates that most respondents are still mainly using hard copies of international economic and business data than information in electronic forms. Consequently, any group interested in data dissemination must therefore look for means of providing data in printed form.

Finally, the results of this study led to two major conclusions. First, it is clear that not all data are created equal. Respondents indicated major priority differences among data sets. Second, despite the advanced technology in electronic information, major demand continues to exist for printed information in the examined country (EGYPT).

Suggestions For Future Research

The results of this study have several important implications. Business organizations appeared to have a clear idea about their international information needs. The clusters in Table 1 and Table 2 can help newcomers to international markets in identifying the types of information they should examine. Companies can compete in global marketplaces if they continue to figure out substantial and crucial macro and micro information concerning economic and business data. The ratings of data importance in Table 1 and Table 2 indicate that the Egyptian government should focus on the most important types of international information in terms of its gathering and dissemination. Due to the constraints of government budgets, it may be better for the Egyptian government to do fewer things right rather than to cover every perceived need in sight. On the other hand, academic researchers must understand that their data needs often differ significantly from those of business executives and policy makers. This implies that researchers have to make themselves heard when it comes to data collection and dissemination decisions. This requires academic researchers to demonstrate clearly how the fulfillment of their data needs is likely to benefit the business and community. Finally, data analysis in Table 3 indicated that the preferable electronic data usage has not yet arrived. This implies that any group interested in data dissemination must search for ways of making data available in printed form. Researchers should continue their efforts to investigate

the importance of international information for global marketing competitiveness. A comparative study to examine the results of other developing/developed nations and compare it with the findings of this study may provide a new direction over the use of international information in global environment. The instrument of Czinkota (1991) represent an outstanding base for further investigations into the importance of international information for global marketing competitiveness. However, this base needs expansion by the use of new factors which may effect the process of obtaining and transforming international information among different nations. For example, the degree of international relation, current trade balance (deficit vs. surplus), the government system (democratic vs. non-democratic), the economic system (free market economy vs. centralized economy), regional economic integration (European Economic Community, the North American Trade Agreement, etc.). The impact of these factors may provide some answers to one very important question: why some firms enter and compete in the international markets, while others do not!

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