

EXPLORING THE IMPACT OF GLOBALIZATION ON MARKETING STRATEGY IN A DEVELOPING COUNTRY

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Abstract

This paper explores the implications of globalization on Zimbabwe's clothing and textile (C&T) sector so as to close the 'gap' between the general understating of globalization and the crafting of appropriate marketing strategies to assist businesses in the sector to manage the impact of globalization. A two-stage cluster sampling technique was used to collect data from 127 respondents drawn from stakeholders in the clothing and textile sector. The results from a Categorical Critical Component Analysis using SPSS positively support the research hypotheses and the confirmed results were supported at 5% level of significance. Based on the results of this research, it is clear that moving marketing and marketers towards sustainability requires a range of new ideas and new tools based on a critical understanding of the broader market.

Key Words: marketing strategy, developing country, clothing and textile industry

Introduction

The highly dynamic global business environment no longer requires complacency but concerted efforts on the part of management to reconfigure and align business strategy to the new realities of globalization (Fischer et al., 2010), and this often requires breaking the embedded path dependencies which retard strategy implementation (Kindström, 2010). Organizations are encouraged to coordinate and configure strategy in response to the new business environment created by globalization, since the ability to coordinate is made possible through the direct involvement and commitment of top management as the entire organization works towards achieving a common objective of sustaining operations in the face of globalization (Chimhanzi, 2004). When marketing strategies are aligned to the existing resources, the resultant synergy created comes as a major benefit to the company (Chimhanzi & Morgans, 2005). Clearly, the internal processes of the company must be consciously ready to facilitate the process of seizing and exploitation thereof (e.g. Chesbrough, 2010; Teece, 2010).

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Since globalization is a permanent feature in the business discourse, Giddens (2000, p. 25) notes that “our runaway world does not need less, but more government.” In close support, Stiglitz (2002, p. 57) asserts that “an important task of a government is to protect jobs and vulnerable sectors of the economy such as the clothing and textile industry.” While many company executives would wish that the State assumes a minimum role (often restricted to regulatory) in trade and commerce, the new reality demands that the State actively participates in creating an enabling business environment particularly so for companies in developing economies (Weller, 2014). Governments are expected to provide a vision, strategy and an enabling environment by establishing a framework and mechanism that ensures the participation of all sectors of the economy, and the role of national policy is to provide a national vision which guides the conduct of business (Moyo, 2014).

Within the globalization discourse, policy-makers should be highly critical of the market conditions in order to save the industry from total collapse (Moyo, 2014; Chirisa & Dumba, 2012). Such sustainable policies are critical as companies seek to spread their business exploits across the globe (Moyo, 2014). The negative global economic outlook continues to create ‘knock-on’ effects on emerging and developing economies (Manzungu, 2012), and the impact of these turbulences on global markets are currently being transmitted to developing countries such as Zimbabwe, amplified by increased globalization and regionalism (Mpfu, 2013). In essence, the lack of effective policy instruments to absorb both the domestic and external shocks, relegates Zimbabwean policy makers to mere observers who pray that global developments remain favourable (Mpfu, 2013). Therefore, in this context, instances of policy emulation is encouraged; especially by all policy makers in the developing world (Chirisa & Dumba, 2012).

Over the past ten years, Zimbabwe has opened itself up considerably to the influences of the global economy through a process of liberalization (Zindiye et al., 2012), in an attempt to raise its growth rate by stimulating investment (Zindiye et al., 2012). However, due to the poor performance of its economy it did not reap the anticipated benefits (Ndlovu & Heath, 2013). With respect to the globalized market in a developing country, company competitiveness can no longer be defined

only by the “Five Forces,” but also through extending Porter’s (1985) model and incorporating government as a key force to consider.

In the light of the above, the aim of this study is to explore the implications of globalization on marketing strategy with respect to Zimbabwe’s clothing and textile (C&T) sector and the main question is: “What sustainable competitive strategies can Zimbabwean clothing and textile companies employ to mitigate the impact of globalization on the sector?” More specifically, we explored the impact of a standardized marketing strategy; coordination of marketing activities; integration; the role of technology, and the impact of government policies on the sustainability of clothing and textile (C & T) businesses in a developing country, namely, Zimbabwe.

Literature Review

Responding to Global Trends

While globalization seeks to terminate the concept of protectionism through creating a flat world, a new breed of protectionist measures have emerged, commonly referred to as “policy slippage” by the World Trade Organization (Hillebrand et al., 2010). These measures are deliberately designed to protect local industries from undue competition from companies originating from developed countries (Erixon, & Sally, 2010). Protection against cotton and clothing import has been cited in the literature as a common phenomenon across the globe, mainly due to the vulnerable nature of the sector which employs low skilled labour (Erixon & Sally, 2010). Such moves to protect markets are not without justification particularly so in developing countries (Garmann, 2014). These protectionist measures are often meant to boost domestic output and/or prevent the collapse of domestic companies in the face of globalization are indeed rampant (Everett, 2015). For example, the rapid growth and development of the South African C & T industry was largely due to State support through a number of policy frameworks (Bonnin, 2011; Kaplinsky, 2013). The support primarily came in two forms (Morris & Barnes 2014), financial support provided through the Industrial Development Corporation; and the state provided support through direct protection of the sector through stringent tariffs which discouraged importing of finished clothing products (Morris & Barnes 2014). Under such circumstances, the active role of national policy in influencing business strategy becomes more evident and beneficial to

companies and the nation at large (Moyo, 2014; Chirisa & Dumba, 2012).

A strong marketing leadership positioned to drive the strategy is also needed (Kapferer, 2012). Several research studies link marketing strategy and the overall performance of an organization (Wang & Verma, 2012; Zou & Cavusgil, 2002; Patel & Chavda, 2013). Zou and Cavusgil (2002, p. 53) argued that “global marketing strategy (GMS) is affected by external globalization drivers and internal drivers such as international experience and global orientation of the firm, and that GMS in turn affects financial and strategic performance in a sample of companies competing in global industries.” Through combining a number of factors, Zou and Cavusgil (2002) call for the radical adaptation of the marketing mix elements in pursuance of the marketing strategy which guarantees success in the global market place. The authors extend this notion by developing what they term “the global marketing strategy (GMS) which includes factors such as configuration, coordination, and integration of activities” (Zou & Cavusgil, 2002, p. 45).

Through aligning strategy to the broader context, the firm is able to develop marketing plans which allows it to offer the right product to the right market and thus gain a competitive advantage (Morgan, 2012). “These specialized combinations of capabilities and assets create competences which lead to organizational competitiveness” (Madhavaram & Hunt, 2008, p. 69). Global competitiveness in terms of quality, price and supply chain management are critical in order to create viability in the clothing and textiles industry (Kruger & Ramdass, 2011). “To survive the impact of the globalization of markets and maintain their current status, the clothing and textile industry around the world needs to be aware of changes in the market place and respond by implementing innovative strategies that improve their competitive status” (Kohnert, 2010, p. 57).

Marketing strategy development is thus a complex feat composed of processes, routines and activities as marketing plans are designed and executed in order to achieve organizational objectives (Baker, 2014). The key to strategy making is a thorough understanding of the business environment in which one is operating (Porter, 2010). This is achieved through a systematic analysis of the business environment in which the company operates in order to prepare it for competition (Baker, 2014).

The firm's internal resource endowments are some of the key characteristics which may enable or disable strategy making as a company pursues international marketing (Tantong et al., 2010). Ethnocentrically oriented firms use a similar marketing strategy across all the countries as the home market while polycentrically oriented companies take the differences across markets into consideration (Calantone et al., 2006). As pointed out by Tantong et al. (2010, p. 159), "companies with geocentric orientation see the world as potential market, recognizing regional differences without taking into consideration national boundaries, normally they offer their product universally with only some superficial adaptations."

Besides the firm's internal environment, external variables also have to be considered since they help define the degree of company competitiveness and the nature and potential of the business environment in which the company operates (Kim & Mauborgne, 2015). The need to study the influence of the external environment on strategy has huge support in literature (e.g. Gabrielsson et al., 2012; Nasir & Altinbasak, 2009). Anecdotal evidence suggests that favourable regulations and consumer stability generally give more opportunity for growth (O'Cass & Weerawardena, 2010). This is primarily so in view of the ever changing consumer tastes and cultural traits fuelled by the globalization wave (López-Duarte & Vidal-Suárez, 2010). The divergent tastes and habits of consumers which vary among the different local cultures are among some of the main obstacles for marketing and the quest for a standardized global product (Nasir & Altinbasak, 2009). As a result of globalization, companies are expected to consider similarities across the cultural convergence gap in order to promote the use of a standardized marketing strategy which help reduce marketing cost and increase overall competitiveness (Schilke et al., 2009). Therefore, the question of strategic fit comes into play (Carpenter et al., 2012). There is still no single universal strategy that can fit all companies as each company has to consider both internal and external forces which affect its own activities and align its strategy accordingly (Virvilaite et al., 2011; Gabrielsson et al., 2012). The industry-based view, further stresses the need to align company strategy and its broader environment (Gabrielsson et al., 2012), and pressures exerted by the external environment must be

dealt with in order for a firm to survive and prosper (Kim & Mauborgne, 2015).

Globalization has unfortunately created a new and challenging situation where companies from developing countries now find it difficult to compete with companies from the highly industrialized countries (Gereffi & Frederick, 2010). Firms from low-wage industrialized countries have distorted competition in the clothing and textile industry thus threatening the survival of companies from third world countries (Roberts & Thoburn, 2002). In order to mitigate these challenges, effective marketing strategies which focus on cost reduction, quality and efficiency must be adopted (Goworek, 2011). A number of studies suggest that proponents of globalization (often called “born globals”) are more willing to adopt standardization as a strategy than some traditional companies who are yet to accept the realities of globalization (Gabrielsson et al., 2012). Besides addressing costs and customer considerations, companies need to pursue collaboration with competition (Hawkins, 2010). This is important particularly with respect to clothing and textiles firms in developing countries which need to pursue horizontal integration (Morris & Barnes, 2014). These horizontal marketing structures should be seen “rapidly displacing these conventional marketing channels as companies seek more cooperation than competition” (Hawkins, 2010, p. 257). “Collaboration is one of these alternative strategies and is defined literally as working together for a common interest or voluntary cooperation between firms involving exchange, sharing of resources, or joint development of products, technologies or services” (Hawkins, 2010, p. 258). “Firms must respond to globalization by making marketing and operational changes which are designed to create more value to the consumer though at a reduced cost to the company” (Taplin et al., 2003, p. 1033). This change in focus can be made possible by investing heavily in technology which creates improved quality and added value to the consumer (Buch-Hansen & Wigger, 2010). In light of the brief literature review, this study on which this paper is written will explore the views of various stakeholders in the C & T industry in Zimbabwe using the methodology described below.

Methodology

A survey was conducted among C&T stakeholders as well as government officials responsible for trade policy pertaining to the C&T industry. The study was designed in two stages. The first stage of the study was exploratory to determine the effects of globalization on the C&T industry in general with the main aim of isolating any possible pointers attributable to the demise of the clothing and textile industry. In-depth interviews with policy makers, management, staff and a selected few customers were used for this purpose. In the second stage, a descriptive research design was used to identify the detailed underlying dimensions of globalization through in-depth interaction with informants for the purposes of generating relevant theories relating to globalization as a phenomenon. The study was designed in such a way that both qualitative and quantitative data could be obtained from relevant stakeholders in the clothing and textile industry. The use of multiple research methods (methodological triangulation) is gaining massive momentum in modern research studies in order to validate research data by offsetting the weaknesses of one method through the strengths of the other. Qualitative research data obtained through the use of in-depth interviews was later analyzed through simple statistical methods after themes were generated in order to bring clarity and meaning to research findings. In addition, secondary data from both internal and external publications was extensively used. The researcher had unhindered access to most of the companies' internal records which showed a remarkable decline in business within the sector; largely attributed to the invasion of the local market by traders of Asian origin.

The sample for this research was drawn from companies in the C & T industry, industry association representatives, consumers and government officials. Detailed interview guides and well-designed questionnaires were designed, tested and applied to gather data. The final analysis of data was done through a combination of both qualitative and quantitative methods.

Findings

While 148 questionnaires were sent out to the sampled companies, consumers and policy makers from the key government Ministries, 127 usable questionnaires were returned, which translated into a satisfactory overall response rate of 85.8%. Of the 127 participants, 21.3% were from

clothing manufacturing companies, 19.7% from textile manufacturers, 10.2% from clothing retailers, 7.9% from textile retailers; while 40.9% collectively represented industry associations, consumers and policy makers of key government departments, as these participants were considered key stakeholders in the clothing and textile sector. The majority (22%) of the respondents were marketing managers, followed by general managers (16.5%), and the majority (75.6%) of the businesses had been in existence for at least 5 years, which implies that most of the companies sampled had survived the hyperinflationary decade that affected Zimbabwe from the year 2000 to 2008. These companies also managed to survive the multicurrency period of 2009-2013, in which period, the negative impact of globalization on the clothing and textile sector was at its peak, since international competition was attracted by the use of stable currencies such as the US Dollar, South African Rand and Botswana Pula among others. Given the significant differences in the operating environments (hyperinflationary decade vs multicurrency period), it naturally follows that these companies were able to adjust their marketing strategies, albeit the challenging operating landscape. Therefore, this study benefited from tapping into the knowledge on specific marketing strategies which were employed by the companies which continued to survive in the face of globalization.

Instrument Reliability and Validity

The Cronbach's coefficient alpha was calculated to determine the validity of the questionnaire, and the outcome using SPSS are reflected in Table 1. All the measures were found to be reliable (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011).

Table 1: Instrument Reliability

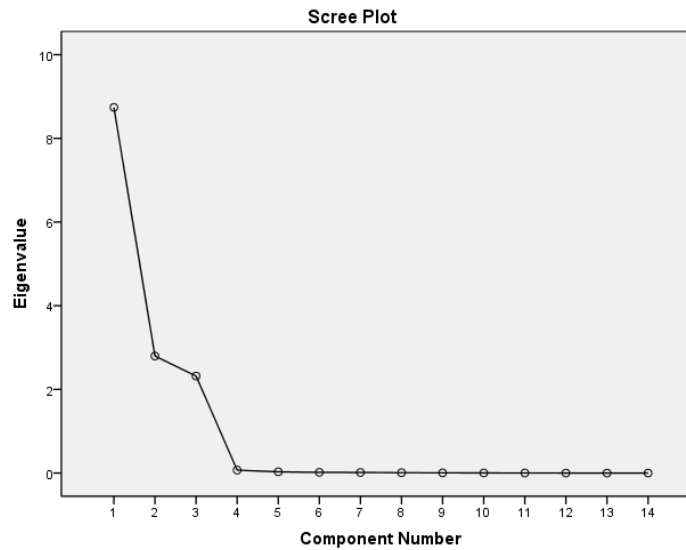
Theme	Cronbach's Alpha	No. of Items
Standardized marketing strategy	0.732	18
Coordination	0.816	8
Competitive integration	0.764	7
Role of advanced technology	0.788	6
Impact of government policies	0.784	18

With reference to validity, the Principal Component Analysis (PCA) extraction method and varimax rotation with Kaiser Normalization was used, with the extraction criterion being that only components with eigenvalues above the Kaiser' default of 1 were extracted.¹ The outcome of this process for each of the measurements is explained below.

Sustainability

Figure 1 clearly shows that of the 14 components/items which were developed to measure the sustainability of the C&T industry, only 3 which cumulatively accounted for over 99% of the variance among the factors, had eigenvalues exceeding 1. This implies that all the other components from the 4th onwards had eigen values below 1 and could therefore not qualify for analysis.

Figure 1: Sustainable Marketing Strategies



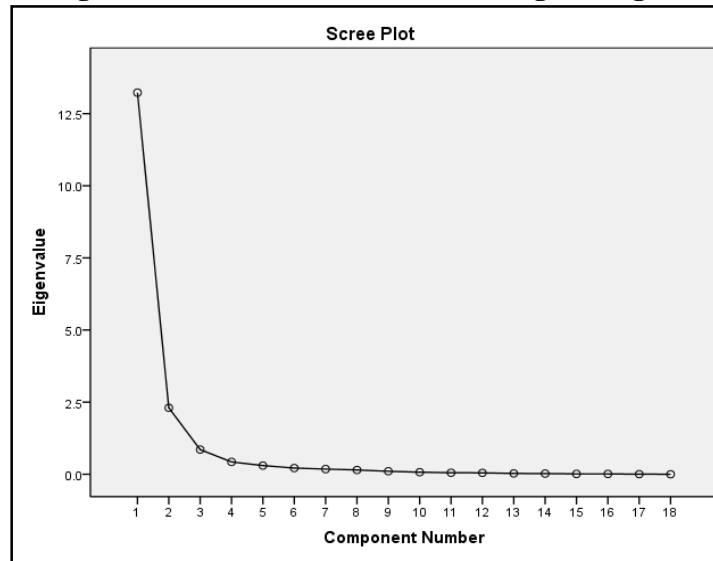
Standardized Marketing Strategies

The scree plot shown in Figure 2 confirms the extraction of the two principal components as the graph starts to flatten after the second principal component, which also confirms the extraction criterion in which only components with eigenvalues of 1 and above were considered significant. These benefits were collectively referred to as the development of competitive advantages either in cost or quality. Two

¹ Due to the length of this paper the various tables have not been reported but are available, should it be requested; thus only the scree plots are reported.

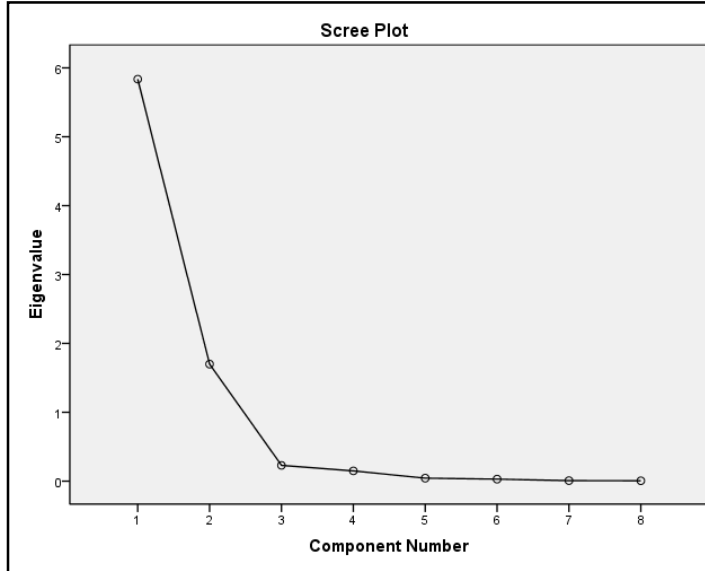
principal components with initial eigenvalues of 13.228 and 2.303 and rotated eigenvalues of 8.294 and 7.237 respectively were extracted. The rotation sums of the squared loadings show that the first component accounted for 46.08% of the variation in the benefits of standardized marketing strategy, while the second component accounted for 40.2% of the variation in the benefits of a standardized marketing strategy to the clothing sector. What this implies is that these two components were very significant in explaining the benefits of standardizing the marketing strategy.

Figure 2: Standardization of Marketing Strategies.

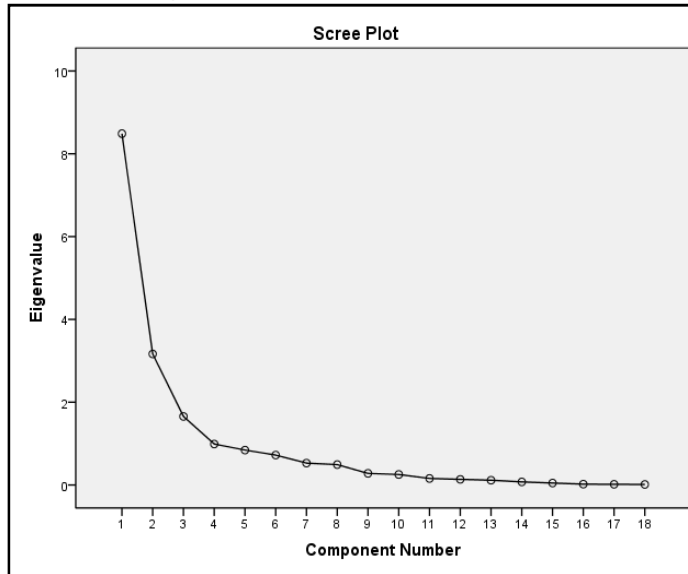


Coordination of Marketing Strategies

Figure 3 illustrates that only two components met the extraction criterion, with all other components from the third having eigenvalues less than 1. The scree plot confirms that only two components met the criterion with all other components from the third having eigenvalues less than 1. To summarise the broad benefits that arise from coordinating organizational activities as a strategy to survive in the globalized clothing and textile sector, component 1 and 2 were further analyzed and accounted for 57.6% and 36.5% respectively of the variation in marketing strategy.

Figure 3: Coordination of Marketing Strategies**National Policy**

With respect to the 18 items developed to measure the impact of national policy on marketing strategy, it was ascertained (Figure 4) that only 3 principal components were extracted and these cumulatively accounted for 73.95% of the variance among the factors.

Figure 4: Effect of National Policy

Generally, the higher the absolute value of the loading, the more the item contributes to the principal component. It was therefore set in SPSS that factor loading less than 0.7 be suppressed so that the 18 items could be easily associated with the extracted components where they had the greatest association.

Role of Technology

An analysis of these results shows that the least Spearman's Rho value is 0.272 and the maximum value is 0. Squaring these correlation coefficients gives an indication of the percentage of variance that could be accounted for by the improvement or deterioration of the predictor on the outcome variable. At least 7.4% up to 29.3% of the variation between the marketing strategy items could be explained using the variations in the items themselves. The implication of this was that the adoption of technology in the clothing sector in any one dimension of the marketing strategy as determined by the items analyzed had a ripple effect on the other elements of the marketing strategy given the existence of statistically significant linear relationship as confirmed by the Spearman's Rho test.

Challenges of Globalization

The respondents were provided with brief statements that described some of the challenges of globalization and were requested to show the extent of their agreement or disagreement with each statement on a Likert scale that ranged from strongly agree (5) to strongly disagree (1). The results of this exercise are reflected in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Challenges of Globalization

Challenge	Strongly Agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Causes prices of local products to increase	5.5%	13.4%	7.1%	46.5%	27.6%
Reduces employees' disposal incomes	30.7%	34.6%	8.7%	14.2%	11.8%
Results in unfair competition	47.2%	36.2%	8.7%	5.5%	2.4%
Forces the closure	35.4%	37.8%	7.1%	12.6%	7.1%

of local companies						
Only benefits developed economies	33.1%	27.6%	16.5%	14.2%	8.7%	
Results in the influx of cheap commodities	40.2%	26.8%	6.3%	11.8%	15.0%	
There are no visible benefits to local companies	15.0%	20.5%	25.2%	22.0%	17.3%	

Table 2 reveals that the overwhelming majority (74.1%) of respondents disagreed that globalization causes prices of local products to increase. This can be explained by the fact that globalization in the clothing and textile sector is normally associated with the dumping of poor quality and second hand clothes from developed countries. It was also ascertained that the vast majority (83.4%) of the respondents agreed that globalization of the markets resulted in unfair competition for the local clothing and textile companies. Furthermore, a cumulative majority (73.2%) of the participants 'agreed' that globalization forced the closure of local clothing and textile businesses. This was closely linked to the argument that globalization only benefits the developed countries particularly when viewed in the context of variations in the levels of technology and other cost structures. The general explanation was that the clothing and textile sector faced challenges which invariably resulted in the closure of companies especially on account of stiff competition from cheap imports that continued to flood the markets in developing countries, and in the process making locally manufactured clothing and textile products uncompetitive.

Globalization Strategies

Interconnectedness of Markets

The respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement with respect to pre-established benefits that related to the globalization of the clothing and textile markets. The results are reflected in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Benefits of Increasing Interconnectedness of Markets

Benefit	Strongly Agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Has assisted in increased participation in international markets	29.1%	32.3%	10.2%	15.0%	13.4%
Helps in the transfer of technology	33.9%	37.8%	7.1%	11.0%	10.2%
Helps in creating employment	6.3%	10.2%	8.7%	33.1%	41.7%
Has resulted in the improvement of living standards of people	13.4%	16.5%	7.9%	33.1%	29.1%
Has resulted in access to foreign markets	33.1%	27.6%	16.5%	14.2%	8.7%
Has resulted in increased foreign direct investment (FDI).	11.8%	7.9%	18.1%	28.3%	33.9%
Has helped to improve product quality	19.7%	18.9%	19.7%	20.5%	21.3%

It is evident from Table 3 that the majority (61.4%) of the respondents agreed that globalization assisted in increased participation in international markets. Furthermore, an almost equal majority (60.7%) of respondents also indicated that globalization has the effect of facilitating access to foreign markets. The aforementioned findings imply that one of the major benefits of globalization is “the ability of companies in the

clothing and textile sector to explore market initiatives that can improve their revenue streams.” It follows that although globalization of the markets could ordinarily be associated with constrained growth of the local clothing and textile sector, it also presents an opportunity for companies to shift focus to the export market by revising their marketing strategies appropriately.

The overwhelming majority (74.8%) of the respondents did not agree that increasing interconnectedness of the clothing and textile markets had the benefit of creating employment. This can most probably be explained by the fact that the involvement of foreign companies in the clothing and textile sector in Zimbabwe has been restricted to exporting rather than manufacturing, which does not create sustainable employment. This development can be explained by the relatively harsh business environment that prevails in Zimbabwe.

Sustainable Marketing Strategies

The respondents were requested to indicate their agreement or disagreement on a scale of 1-5, with respect to 14 pre-established marketing strategies that the clothing and textile companies could adopt to mitigate the effects of globalization. The results reflected in Table 4 reveal that all 14 marketing strategies had minimum and maximum scores between 1 and 5 respectively, except for advocacy, lobbying, and relationship marketing, which each had a minimum score of 2. By using the mean to rank the marketing strategies that clothing and textile companies could adopt to withstand the adverse effects of globalization, it became evident that the five most preferred marketing strategies were: improved internal working systems, reduced costs through cost leadership, use of, or investment in advanced technology, exploiting the value chain through collaboration, and improved product quality. Regarding improved internal working systems, the clothing and textile companies would be able to enhance productivity which would ensure that more products would be produced using the same level of resources (financial, human and technology).

The positive effects of such a development would be a potential reduction in production costs that enhances the capacity to adopt cost leadership strategies necessary in order to compete in the price elastic clothing and textile markets. This is because the ability of companies to

improve the utilization of human resources, financial resources, as well as the existing technology can improve their operational efficiencies.

Table 4: Marketing Strategies

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Improved internal working systems	127	1.00	5.00	3.6299	1.25864
Reduce costs through cost leadership	127	1.00	5.00	3.6299	1.25864
Use of investment in advanced technology	127	1.00	5.00	3.6220	1.27198
Exploit value chains through collaboration	127	1.00	5.00	3.6220	1.27198
Improve product quality	127	1.00	5.00	3.6063	1.29809
Advocacy and lobbying	127	2.00	5.00	2.6535	.87630
Relationship marketing	127	2.00	5.00	2.6299	.88014
Aggressive marketing and selling	127	1.00	5.00	2.6063	.90989
Standardise marketing strategies	127	1.00	5.00	2.6063	.90989
Effective product positioning strategies	127	1.00	5.00	2.0630	1.20678
Differentiating	127	1.00	5.00	2.0551	1.21045
Emphasise customer personal tastes and customisation	127	1.00	5.00	2.0551	1.21045
Niche marketing	127	1.00	5.00	2.0472	1.21406
Promote the consumption of brands through brand building strategies	127	1.00	5.00	2.0315	1.22109
Valid N (listwise)	127				

Standardized Marketing Strategy

The participants were asked to indicate the extent of their agreement or disagreement with a set of 18 predefined benefits that the clothing sector companies could enjoy through adoption of a standardised marketing strategy; which benefits were on a five-point Likert scale, where 1 = 'strongly disagree' and 5 = 'strongly agree'. The results in Table 5 show that the respondents were convinced that the use of a standardized marketing strategy was one sure way of overcoming the effects of globalization. The explanation is that, the adoption of a well-considered marketing mix characterized by uniform product features and qualities, pricing strategies, distribution systems, as well as promotional campaigns would be advantageous to the local clothing and textile companies as this helps them to create a distinct identity relative to competition brought about by globalization. Adding to the same understanding, the respondents noted that the adoption of a standardized marketing strategy results in the creation of sustainable competitive advantages.

Table 5: Effects of Standardization of Marketing Strategy

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Improves resource utilisation	127	1.00	5.00	1.9843	1.24712
Results in a uniform corporate identity which simplifies the marketing and promotion of products	127	1.00	5.00	2.0630	1.25197
Promotes rapid company growth	127	1.00	5.00	2.1339	1.24952
Promotes strategy alignment	127	1.00	5.00	2.1575	1.24356
Allows for greater control across national borders	127	1.00	5.00	2.1969	1.33357
Promotes improved planning and distribution	127	1.00	5.00	2.1969	1.39750
Vital in mitigating the effects of globalisation	127	1.00	5.00	2.2598	1.33460
It allows for the consistency with customers tastes and preferences	127	1.00	5.00	3.4331	1.30682
Results in increased productivity	127	1.00	5.00	3.6378	1.34323
Improved product quality and customer loyalty	127	1.00	5.00	3.7008	1.11494
It helps to reduce product cost	127	1.00	5.00	3.7323	1.11589
Promotes the marketing of quality products	127	1.00	5.00	3.8425	1.35357
Results in significant cost savings	127	1.00	5.00	3.8819	1.16574
Assists in the creation of competitive advantages	127	1.00	5.00	3.8898	1.33469
Increases the company's ability to produce high quality products at a low cost	127	1.00	5.00	3.8898	1.30462
Results in the creation of sustainable competitive advantages	127	1.00	5.00	3.9370	1.32586
Allows companies to focus	127	1.00	5.00	3.9843	1.34509
One sure way of overcoming the effects of globalisation	127	1.00	5.00	4.0787	1.23189
Valid N (listwise)	127				

The results in Table 5 also show that the participants perceived that standardization results in significant cost savings, helps to reduce product costs, promotes the marketing of quality products, and generally improves productivity, since all means exceeded a score of 3. Considering that globalization invariably results in intensification of competition particularly through pricing, these benefits would be a welcome development for the local clothing and textile companies, as they try to improve their survival strategies through marketing.

Considering that only two broad categories of benefits emerged, the results in Table 6 show that the benefits of a standardized marketing strategy were highly related to each other.

Role of Coordination

A total of eight (8) statements describing the benefits that coordination could bring through the creation of sustainable marketing strategies were provided to the study participants, and they were asked to indicate the extent of their agreement or disagreement on a Likert scale that ranged

from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5), and the results were captured in Table 6.

Table 6: Benefits of Coordinating Marketing Strategies

Descriptive Statistics			
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Promotes the achievement of company objectives	127	4.2756	.98139
Improves productivity	127	4.2598	.97763
Strengthens the organisation and improves its capacity to deal with the effects of globalisation	127	4.0079	1.20512
Results in the creation of synergies	127	3.9843	1.23433
Can be used as a competitive advantage	127	3.9370	1.31383
Improves employee morale	127	2.2126	1.33708
Promotes team work and the achievement of organisational goals	127	2.0945	1.26261
Promotes and encourages team building	127	2.0000	1.26617
Valid N (listwise)	127		

The results in Table 6 show that based on the mean score of 4.2756, it may be deduced that the respondents 'agreed' that the coordination of marketing strategies promotes the achievement of company objectives. It can therefore be concluded that it is important for organizations to ensure that the marketing objectives of the clothing and textile companies are in sync with the overall strategic objectives by being supported by the other key functions of the business namely, production, finance, and human resources. Coordination of marketing strategies can also be ensured by the harmonization of such activities as branding, advertising, sales, public relations and other sections. In this way, an end-to-end connection of activities within the marketing department and with other departments in the clothing and textile companies would facilitate the achievement of company objectives.

The results show that other benefits that were highly rated were that coordination improves productivity, strengthens the organization and improves its capacity to deal with the effects of globalisation, results in the creation of synergies and can be used as a competitive advantage. These benefits seem to add to the realization that the coordinated efforts of the different sections of the business can create critical mass necessary to withstand the effects of globalization. On the other hand, there was general disagreement that the coordination of marketing strategies

improves employee morale, promotes teamwork and the achievement of organisational goals, and promotes and encourages team building.

Role of Technology

Due to the limited number of items in the questionnaire which measured the effect of technology on marketing strategy, Categorical Critical component could not be conducted. However, a correlation analysis was conducted and the results are as shown on Table 7.

Table 7: Spearman's Rho Correlations – Effect of Technology

			Correlations					
Spearman's rho			Improving product quality	Reducing product costs	Increasing product availability	Building strong brands	Creating brand equity	Generating employment
Improving product quality	Correlation Coefficient		1.000	.357**	-.084	.272*	.500**	.237*
	Sig. (2-tailed)			.000	.348	.002	.000	.007
	N		127	127	127	127	127	127
Reducing product costs	Correlation Coefficient		.357**	1.000	-.457**	-.137	.541**	.500**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000		.000	.124	.000	.000
	N		127	127	127	127	127	127
Increasing product availability	Correlation Coefficient		-.084	-.457**	1.000	-.094	-.084	-.223*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.348	.000		.292	.347	.012
	N		127	127	127	127	127	127
Building strong brands	Correlation Coefficient		.272*	-.137	-.094	1.000	-.208*	-.354**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.002	.124	.292		.019	.000
	N		127	127	127	127	127	127
Creating brand equity	Correlation Coefficient		.500**	.541**	-.084	-.208*	1.000	.422**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.347	.019		.000
	N		127	127	127	127	127	127
Generating employment	Correlation Coefficient		.237*	.500**	-.223*	-.354**	.422**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.007	.000	.012	.000	.000	
	N		127	127	127	127	127	127

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The results in Table 7 above clearly show that all the marketing strategy items had statistically significant positive relationships with generating employment. Concerning the linear relationships between the marketing strategy items affected by the adoption of technology, the results show statistically significant positive correlations between improving product quality and reducing products costs ($R = 0.357$, $p < 0.001$), improving product quality and building strong brands ($R = 0.272$, $p = 0.002$), improving product quality and creating brand equity ($R = 0.500$, $p < 0.001$). Reducing product costs had statistically significant positive relationships with increasing product availability ($R = 0.457$, $p < 0.001$) and creating brand equity ($R = 0.541$, $p < 0.001$) while building strong brands had a significant positive correlation with creating brand equity ($R = 0.208$, $p = 0.019$).

Discussion of the Findings

Standardized Marketing Strategies

The analysis of findings using Categorical Principal Component Analysis (CATPCA), revealed that the major benefits of standardized marketing strategies relate to assistance in the creation of competitive advantages, allowing for consistency with customer tastes and preferences and resulting in increased productivity. This implies for example, not differentiating the quality products for the domestic market and those for the international market as both markets should be considered as one. The findings also reveal that the moderate success of certain companies is largely attributed to standardization as the companies are not differentiating product characteristics for the domestic market from those for international markets.

The findings of this study support Roberts and Thoburn, (2002, p. 7) who note that “companies are competing and constantly confront the competitive challenge from firms in low-wage, industrialized economies that are able to produce more cheaply.” In case of developing countries, in order to mitigate these challenges, effective marketing strategies which focus on cost reduction, quality and efficiency must be adopted (Flanagan, 2003; Kolinsky, 2005). The low cost leadership strategy must therefore be applied as consumers seek to maximize value (Lechner & Gudmundsson, 2014). However, companies must still consider the differences in tastes across the countries in line with the responses from some participants. Those in favour of adaptation argue that since markets are not exactly alike, it is necessary to adapt a marketing mix which recognizes differences across the geographical markets served (Lechner & Gudmundsson, 2014).

Keegan and Green (2000, p. 35) assert that “the strategy of standardization has the ability to combine other activities and strategies with universal marketing solutions that help to achieve global success of activities.” In addition, if the same company aims to achieve bigger profitability, it should use competitive pricing strategy. In order for the standardized marketing strategy to be effective, changes to the marketing strategy must be instituted in the face of globalization. Svensson (2001, p. 8) suggests that “the most viable standardization option is achieved through using an approach that combines elements of standardization and adaptation to create a glocal marketing strategy.” Since standardization of

products and international marketing strategy facilitates the realization of economies of scale in production and marketing, firms must pursue a standardized product and international marketing strategy to be successful in the global market. Through following a standardized marketing strategy, huge cost reductions will be achieved and this should stand as a major benefit for companies in developing countries if they are to remain relevant (Ghantous, 2008).

Coordination of Marketing Strategies

The presence of a marketing strategy alone without coordinating the effort does not assist a company in the face of globalization, and four key results (Table 6) were singled out for their contribution towards the creation of sustainable marketing strategies through an effective coordination of the marketing effort. These four were coordinating the marketing effort helps to promote team work and the achievement of organizational goals, strengthens the organization and improves its capacity to deal with the effects of globalization, improves employee morale, and improves productivity.

These results are well supported by previous studies which show that when internal elements of an organization are closely linked to one another, it enables it to coordinate its strategies with much ease and success (Fischer et al., 2010). The literature suggests that “lack of congruence and unity of purpose results in discord and subsequent failure to capture existing opportunities or deal with the current challenges of globalization” (Gabrielsson et al., 2012, p. 28). An integrated pattern of organizational behaviour which seeks to create synergistic benefits across the length and breadth of the company must be put in place as a company looks for global marketing opportunities (Hoegl et al., 2004).

Integration of Marketing Activities

The need for companies in the sector to integrate and coordinate strategies was highlighted in an interview with the Government officials, and this was confirmed by over 75% of the interviewed company representatives. This is in line with previous studies which posit that in today’s dynamic environment, the need for collaboration has grown even bigger than before as a single company may not be better positioned to respond to existing market opportunities (Mentzer & Zacharia, 2000). Some previous studies (Peng 2009) consider strategic alliances as “long-term collaborative arrangements between two or more firms to execute

specific transactions for mutual gain and to maximize performance through cost reduction, knowledge acquisition, and/or market expansion.” The aforementioned study concludes that while companies need to compete with others, they also need to cooperate through alliances and integrative strategies so as to remain sustainable.

The Role of Technology

It became apparent that the survival of companies is firmly attached to how well they embrace modern technology for efficient adaptation while they also seek to improve the efficiency of their operations and thus gain competitive advantage. This view is also shared by Karlicek et al., (2013) who note that the extent of technological adoption and usage of a company directly corresponds with its success and chances to capture existing opportunities in the global marketplace and be able to adapt strategy at low costs. The decrease in operating costs creates a huge saving which should be translated into customer value thus improving the company’s competitive position in the global market place (Madar & Neacsu, 2010). Cunningham and Ferrell (2015) support the use of standardized marketing strategies as companies expand their market bases through the process of market development. It is quite evident that the current processes of globalization are made possible because of technology (Blázquez, 2014). Nayak et al. (2015, p. 4) assert that “the survival of companies is firmly attached to how well they embrace modern technology to improve the efficiency of their operations and thus gain competitive advantage.” A number of respondents expressed this opinion citing lack of modern technology as one the major challenges which has affected their growth.

These views are also shared by Ngai et al., (2013) who note that the extent of technological usage of a company directly corresponds with its success and chances to capture existing opportunities on the global marketplace. As the goal of competitiveness through technology is pursued, it must be noted that technology is not the only variable which matter but also the quality of entrepreneurial posture (Ali & Habib, 2012). Therefore, technological and marketing capabilities of a company must be evaluated simultaneously as the firm seeks to build new dynamic capabilities which create future value. Clearly, the clothing and textile companies and indeed other industries may need to take advantage of this knowledge and adopt advanced technology for adaptation if they are

to enjoy the moderate success enjoyed by other companies. However, because of the diversity of consumer capacity to purchase, the results show that adaptation must also form part of the grand strategy as companies operate on the global market place.

Government Policies and Marketing Strategy

The key findings show that policy makers should enact stringent regulations to prevent the entry of cheap commodities. The role of the state in this instance is not to stifle competition but to allow fair competition while protecting the interests of the consumer. The results from interviews with government officials supported the protection of the industry through effective regulatory frameworks citing the example of how South Africa has managed to serve its clothing and textile sector from total collapse through regulation and national support. These results further strengthen the strategic role played by the State in infrastructure development or direct support to corporate bodies in support of their internal marketing strategies. Cling et al. (2007) noted that one of the key reasons for the success of the clothing and textile sector in Madagascar was the strong push for outward orientation led by the government, generous tax breaks, combined with low wages and trade preferences while riding on its Export Processing Zones (EPZs). Some respondents advocated for economic policies for upgrading and diversification citing examples of several Asian countries whose companies have remained competitive through upgrading their global textiles value chains and move into other higher value added activities.

Managerial Implications

The current dynamic business environment driven by forces of globalization challenges how managers conceptualize their businesses and realign marketing strategy. In the contemporary context of marketing, unlike in the past, companies now have no choice of either operating as 'big' or 'small' since globalization has created one big pond in which all companies of different sizes have to 'swim'. Thus, the survival challenge is to devise a competitive strategy which takes a global stance, and to recognize threats and opportunities on that level. To recognize and exploit such opportunities, firms need new organizational structures and capabilities that make interaction across borders a way of life for individuals in many functional departments, not only those in top management. Thus, the leadership challenge is to create corporate

capabilities, especially human capital and communications infrastructure that can create and exploit global linkages. This requires managers with a global mindset and cross-cultural competences to operate across large distances. Therefore five critical issues have to be addressed by management:

The use of generic competitive strategies remains one viable option in the face of globalization. In this regard, in order to remain competitive, product costs must be kept low while quality must be raised high. This delicate balancing act requires that companies effectively utilize their dynamic capabilities. The literature on how to achieve competitiveness in an industry should now move away from the static Porter's 5 Forces model. The model, though useful, was created in the period when globalization was still in its formative stages and thus current models need to incorporate internal company capabilities, technology and the role of policy. This new model (which was conceptualized in this research) takes a more contemporary stance towards strategy and the competitiveness of companies by building and extending the traditional Porter's 5 Forces Model.

Coordination of marketing activities must not only be considered as an internal process, but rather a combination of both the internal and external environments. The presence of a marketing strategy alone without a robust coordination of the marketing effort does not assist a company in the face of globalization anymore. In this regard, organizations must be structured in a way which promotes the swift identification and capitalization of existing market opportunities in the highly dynamic global market place.

While companies need to compete with others, they also need to cooperate through alliances and integrative strategies so as to remain sustainable. Strategic alliances are long-term collaborative arrangements between two or more firms designed to execute specific transactions for mutual gain and to maximize performance through cost reduction, knowledge acquisition, and/or market. The current market situation calls for companies to cooperate as much as possible and compete where necessary.

Technology is one of the key drivers of globalization and as such, must be embraced by all organizations in the clothing and textile sector. The internet age calls for companies to effectively utilize e-platforms for

trade and commerce. A narrow line now exists between the domestic consumer and the international consumer. Gone are the days when product quality would be deliberately varied according to the market served, with the international markets being provided with better quality products at the expense of the domestic consumer. Technology has broken that barrier and now require that companies consider the market as a common village. Effective utilization of the available technology is thus encouraged as there are so many benefits associated with such a move. Modern technology enhances brand equity and also helps in the improvement of product quality; a key product attribute for success in the global market place. Thus, the implications for management are that one has to either “adapt or die” in the face of globalization.

The success of firms in the clothing and textile sector cannot be attributed to the marketing strategy alone, without mentioning the role of government policy. The implications are that, left alone without the positive intervention of the State, marketing strategies will not be effective. A review of the literature shows that the success story of Madagascar as the number two African clothing exporter in sub-Saharan Africa behind Mauritius, is partly because of the strong push for outward orientation led by the government, generous tax breaks, and combined with low wages and trade preferences. Politics should be taken in normative, creative and problem solving terms. There is necessity to overhaul the rules and processes by which the government conducts its policy and decision making functions. Along with liberalization, government should maintain a certain balance between foreign investment and state regulation to maintain its influence for national capability building. Clothing and textile companies in Zimbabwe must therefore continue to lobby the government to create an enabling operating environment through policy pronouncements which favour the growth of the once vibrant clothing and textile sector.

Conclusion

The need for advocacy and lobbying seems to support the call for the adoption of protectionist measures by the government in an attempt to lessen regional and international competition. Relationship marketing, if appropriately applied to corporate customers has the effect of improving loyalty to the clothing and textile companies so that the foreign companies may not have the market space to compete on. Given the

increased product similarity in the market due to globalization, the adoption of aggressive marketing and selling skills would be appropriate to push the products and services in the distribution chain. Generally, standardized marketing affects the international appeal for the product to the different markets, as consumers are provided with a uniform product worldwide.

Considering that Zimbabwe is a developing country, the increased use of and greater investment in technology could contribute to reducing the technological gap. From a production point of view, the use of technology has the positive effect of helping to contain the costs of production, increase levels of output, as well as improve general product quality. If the local clothing and textile sector was to acquire such technological benefits, they would be better placed to deal with the negative impact of globalization, due to better product availability, improved product quality and general reduction in the cost of production in the long run. The exploitation of the value chain through collaboration was also highly rated by the study participants in view of the fact that such a development has the potential to create synergies both upstream and downstream. For example, the clothing and textile companies could develop 'win-win' strategic alliances with suppliers, resulting in reduced input costs and a subsequent reduction in the final price of the product, in order to be competitive.

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