

Enabling Exporting in Cameroon Using Export Promotion Programs

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Abstract : The contribution of exporting and small businesses to an economy cannot be overemphasized. However, small firms in developing economies are characterized by resource deficiencies, which hinders their exporting abilities. As a result, export promotion programs are designed by the government as external resources that small firms can access to overcome export barriers and improve their exporting. Nevertheless, doubts still exist as to whether firms are aware of these programs and the extent to which they are utilizing it. To analyse the level of awareness and usage of these programs, the questionnaire was developed from the review of the literature. A pilot study was conducted to determine the ease of completing the questionnaire by respondent before incorporating feedback to produce the final questionnaire. Data were collected from 200 small businesses in Cameroon in the manufacturing and agricultural sector through random sampling and analysed using regression analysis. The results indicated that different programs had different levels of awareness than others. Programs to provide training to improve product quality was found to have the highest level of awareness while those providing findings had low levels of awareness. Despite these different levels of awareness, usage was very low, as firms do not want to open up to government scrutiny of their business. Implications to policy, practice, and direction for further research are also discussed.

Keywords : export promotion programs, exporting, small businesses, Cameroon

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