

Decision Quality as an Antecedent to Export Performance. Empirical Evidence under a Contingency Theory Lens

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Abstract : The constantly increasing tendency towards a global economy and the subsequent increase in exporting, as a result, has inevitably led to a growing interest in the topic of export success as well. Numerous studies, particularly in the past three decades, have examined a plethora of determinants to export performance. However, to the authors' best knowledge, no study up to date has ever considered decision quality as a potential antecedent to export success by attempting to test the relationship between decision quality and export performance. This is a surprising deficiency given that the export marketing literature has long ago suggested that quality decisions are regarded as the crucial intervening variable between sound decision-making and export performance. This study integrates the different definitions of decision quality proposed in the literature and the key themes incorporated therein and adapts it to an export context. Apart from laying the conceptual foundations for the delineation of this elusive but very important construct, this study is the first ever to test the relationship between decision quality and export performance. Based on survey data from a sample of 189 British export decision-makers and within a contingency theory framework, the results reveal that there is a direct, positive link between decision quality and export performance. This finding opens significant future research avenues and has very important implications for both theory and practice.

Keywords : export performance, decision quality, mixed methods, contingency theory

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