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Keywords: *export, marketing, performance, marketing mix, strategy, leather, textiles ethiopia.*

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I. Introduction

The study report is organized into seven sections. Firstly, statement of the problem is briefly highlighted. Secondly; Research questions are articulated; thirdly, literature review related to key areas in which the present study extends to the previous literature on the export marketing strategy-performance relationship are highlighted; fourthly, a broad conceptual framework of export marketing strategy and performance is proposed; fifthly, the design of the study and the methodological procedures are described; sixthly, the findings of the study are presented and discussed; finally, a statement of conclusion, recommendation and further area of investigation are proposed.

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II. Statement of the Problem

In the international marketing context, a handful of studies (e.g., Bilkey 1982; Christensen, da Rocha, and Gertner 1987; Cooper and Kleinschmidt 1985; McGuinness and Little 1981; Rosson and Ford 1982) have suggested that export performance is influenced by export marketing strategy. Because of conceptual and methodological problems associated with these studies, however, their results are fragmented and the relationship between export marketing strategy and export performance remains an unresolved issue (Aaby and Slater 1989; Madsen 1987).

Trade is positively associated with growth performance. Therefore, exporting could be considered as a strategic activity at firm, industry and country levels (Kaimakoudi, 2014). Companies have to seek new opportunities in the market. Firms can be proactive by anticipating future demands and opportunities in the market, participating in emerging markets, shaping the environment, and introducing new products and brands before their rivals (Venkatraman, 1989). Therefore, proactiveness can provide companies to be a financial leader (Zou et al, 1998). The multiplicity of measures used and the fragmented nature of the findings bring additional need for a fresh look into the construct of export performance from both scholars' and practitioners' perspectives. In their qualitative study, Carneiro and colleagues (2016) found that, there are similarities on practitioners' and scholars' views of export performance, ranging from multi-dimensional conceptualization, preference for economic measures and market measures to infrequent use of learning and behavioural measures. Ethiopia is the 91st largest export economy in the world and the 80th most complex economy according to the Economic Complexity Index (ECI). In 2016, Ethiopia exported $1.71B and imported $19.1B, resulting in a negative trade balance of $17.3B. In 2016 the GDP of Ethiopia was $72.4B and its GDP per capita was $1.73k atlas (2017). Until 2013, the major agricultural export crop was coffee, providing about 26.4% of Ethiopia's foreign exchange earnings. In the beginning of 2014, oilseeds

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exports have been more important. Coffee is critical to the Ethiopian economy. More than 15 million people (25% of the population) derive their livelihood from the coffee sector.

Other exports include live animals, leather and leather products, chemicals, gold, pulses, oilseeds, flowers, fruits and vegetables and khat (or qat). Cross-border trade by pastoralists is often informal and beyond state control and regulation. In East Africa, over 95% of cross-border trade is through unofficial channels and the unofficial trade of live cattle, camels, sheep and goats from Ethiopia sold to Somalia, Kenya and Djibouti generates an estimated total value of between US$250 and US$300 million annually (100 times more than the official figure). Recent initiatives have sought to document and regulate this trade. Dependent on a few vulnerable crops for its foreign exchange earnings and reliant on imported oil, Ethiopia lacks sufficient foreign exchange.

According to the World Bank news report, the newly completed Addis Ababa-Djibouti railway line significantly eases trade logistics related constraints. The Group's report also lauded Addis Ababa in the area of developing industrial parks and power generation efforts which they say is expected to improve export performance and stimulate growth in the short to medium-term world bank (2017). Over the longer term, countries highly dependent on one or a few commodity products should work to diversify their export bases.

The major export products of Ethiopia include coffee, livestock products (leather, live animals and meat), oil seeds and pulses, fruits, vegetables and flowers, textiles, natural gum, spices and mineral products. In addition to the efforts underway to increase the export supply of these products and to improve their quality, investments in other currently unexploited, higher value-added, export sectors is highly encouraged. Recognizing that large capital investments are needed to exploit these resources; various incentives are currently provided to encourage foreign investments (including joint ventures and marketing arrangements) so that the sector provides meaningful contribution to the Country's development. In Ethiopia there are around 914 exporters engaged in the following product categories: leather and leather products, textile and garments, in oil seeds, coffee/roasted coffee General export, pulses or cereals, spices, live animals, flower, textiles etc.; Most of the exporting companies are established for the last 26 years since the government liberalized the economy after the command economy of the military government steeped down. The exporters of Ethiopia can be classified into 34 product categories.

III. Research Questions

With globalization of markets and competition, foreign markets have become increasingly viable and natural opportunities for growth -oriented domestic firms the following questions were raised in this study.

- Can the marketing strategy-performance relationship be empirically verified by internal forces such as firm and product characteristics and external forces such as industry and export market characteristics?
- To what extent is export performance mediated by export marketing strategy?

IV. Scope of the Study

This study is delimited to three major Ethiopian exporting companies engaged leather and leather products, textile and Garment products. The study units are all employees participating in formulating, implementing and monitoring, evaluating and control export marketing strategies. The major cities included Addis Ababa, Bahir Dar, Gondar, Hawassa, Nathreth and Dire Dawa. The variables under this study are delimited to firm characteristics, product characteristics, industry characteristics, export market characteristics, Elements of Marketing Strategy (product adaptation, price competitiveness, support to foreign distributer and promotion adaptation) and export marketing performance. Methodologically, it is delimited to three major chain retail stores.

V. Literature Review

In this study three distinctive features should be noted at the outset.

- Firstly, the unit of analysis is an individual exporting company which is defined as marketing of a specific product in a specific export market.
- Secondly, export performance is determined by export marketing strategy and marketing strategy is influenced by internal and external environments of the firm. Furthermore, export performance is conceived as the accomplishment of strategic as well as economic objectives.
- Thirdly, data have been collected through structured research questions with marketing managers directly involved in the export ventures studied.

Firms at different stages (initial foreign market entry, expansion of national markets, and global rationalization) differ in their international experience, extent of international involvement, strategic thrust, international levers, and strategic decisions (Douglas and Craig 1989).

a) Internal forces

Internal forces contain firm and product characteristics.

i. *Firm Characteristics*

Firm's capabilities and constraints profoundly influence their choice of marketing strategy and ability to

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execute the chosen strategy (Aaker 1988, porter 1980). Key assets and skills of a firm constitute its sources of sustainable competitive advantage (day and Wensley 1988; porter 1985). Possession of assets such as international experience, extent of international business involvement, and resources available for export development affect export marketing strategy and performance.

ii. *Product Characteristics*

The specific marketing strategy in an export venture is influenced by product characteristics (Cavusgil, Zou, and Naidu 1993; Cooper and Kleinschmidt 1985; McGuinness and Little 1981). Product attributes can affect the positional competitive advantage (Day and Wensley 1988), which influences the choice of an offensive or defensive strategy (Cook 1983). Relevant product characteristics that influence export marketing strategy include culture specificity, strength of patent, unit value, uniqueness, age, and service/maintenance requirements of product.

b) Industry forces

Industry forces includes industry characteristics and export market characteristics.

i. *Industry Characteristics*

The intensity of exporting activity and the nature of export marketing strategy vary considerably across industries. This is largely a result of the varying nature of industries (Porter 1980). Industry structure has been considered a key determinant of firms' strategy in domestic market context (Kerin, Mahajan, and Varadarajan 1990; Porter 1980). In export marketing, analysis of the relationship between industry structure and marketing strategy must incorporate the significant variations in the market systems, government interventions, and presence of foreign competitors across markets. In addition, technology intensiveness and intensity of price competition in the industry also must be considered as the relevant correlates of adaptation of marketing strategy (Jain 1989).

ii. *Export Market Characteristics*

Conditions in foreign markets pose both opportunities and threats for exporters. Export marketing strategy must be formulated in such a way to match a firm's strengths with market opportunities and neutralize the firm's strategic weaknesses, or to overcome market threats (Aaker 1988; Terostra 1987). Consequently, export marketing strategy tends to be conditioned by export market characteristics (Cavusgil, Zou, and Naidu 1993; Cooper and Kleinschmidt 1985; Rosson and Ford 1982). The key characteristics of the export market that can affect the choice of export marketing strategy include demand potential, cultural similarity to home market, familiarity with the product, brand familiarity of export customers, and similarity of legal and regulatory frameworks.

iii. *Export Marketing Performance*

Export performance is defined as the extent to which a firm's objectives, both economic and strategic, with respect to exporting a product into a foreign market, are achieved through planning and execution of export marketing strategy. A firm usually initiates an export venture with a number of objectives, which can be economic (i.e. profits, sales, or costs) and/or strategic (i.e. market expansion, competitive response, gaining a foothold in foreign market, or increasing the awareness of the product/firm). Subsequent to formulation and implementation of export marketing strategy, some objectives can be achieved fully, others only marginally. The extent to which a venture's strategic and economic objectives are achieved is therefore a gauge of the performance in the export venture.

Table 1: Dimensions of export performance reviewed in the previous literature

Authors	Year	Performance	Dimensions or Indicators
Gracia et al	2015	Export activity and export performance	Resource commitment, experience, Firm size, export barriers, export performance
Spyropoulou et al	2015	Brand advantages on export ventures	Resources, competitive intensity, market distance and export entrepreneurship
Kaimakoudi	2014	Investigating export performance and competitiveness	Strategies, competitiveness and export marketing
Adu-Gyamfi, Komeliussen	2013	Antecedents of export performance in emerging markets	Resource commitment, experience, Firm size, export barriers, export performance
Papadopoulos and Martin	2010	The influence of internationalization on export performance	Institutional commitment, international experience and export performance
Lages et al	2009	Annual performance of an export venture	Overall performance, product quality, importers satisfaction, relationship performance with importers and suppliers.
Leonidou et al	2002	Marketing strategy determinants of export performance	Export performance, managerial, organization and environmental factors
O'class and weerawardena	2001	The influences of firm and environment characteristics on marketing performance	Uniqueness, performance, experience, marketing capabilities, environment and competitive intensity
Zou et al.	1998	Financial export performance	Financial, strategic and satisfaction with export venture
Kats keas et al	1997	The influence of firm characteristics and export commitment on export performance	Experience, firm size, competitive advantages and export commitment

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c) Export Marketing Strategy

Export marketing strategy is the means by which a firm respond to the interplay of internal and external forces to meet the objectives of the export venture. It involves all aspects of the conventional marketing plan, including product, promotion, pricing, and distribution. In international marketing, the key consideration is whether the marketing strategy should be standardized or adapted to the conditions of the foreign market (Douglas and Craig 1989). The degree of marketing adaptation versus standardization is a function of product, industry, market, organization, and environmental characteristics (Buzzell 1968; Cavusgil, Zou, and Naidu 1993; Jain 1989; Wakters 1986). Therefore, we evaluate export marketing strategy along the standardization adaptation continuum.

d) Relationship between Export Marketing Strategy and Export Performance

The relationship between export marketing strategy and performance has been investigated as part of a stream of exporting literature involved with explaining the success or failure of a firm's exporting activities. These studies typically attempt to identify key factors that contribute to successful export marketing. Among the key success factors highlighted are export marketing strategy; management attitudes; and other firm, industry, product and export market factors (Aaby and Slater 1989; Bilkey 1982; Cavusgil 1983; Christense, da Rocha, and Gertner 1987; Cooper and Kleinschmidt 1985; McGuinness and Little 1981; Rosson and Ford 1982). In their review article, Aaby and Slater (1989) suggest that export performance is direct influenced by a firm's business strategy.

With few exceptions, previous studies have been conducted at the overall firm level. As a result, export marketing strategy and performance were conceptualized as firm specific characteristics. An underlying theoretical justification for firm level studies is the theory of internalization (Buckley and Casson 1985; Rugman 1981), which states that, in an imperfect market, firms should internalize the firm specific advantages, both tangible and intangible, to extract maximum economic rent. Because firm specific advantages are derived not only from the development and marketing of a particular product but also from the total learning process of the firm, export performance could be investigated at the firm level.

Though these studies have contributed to our knowledge of export behaviour, there are notable limitations associated with firm level investigations of export marketing strategy and performance. Considerable variations in export marketing strategy and performance often exist across various product market export ventures of the same firm. It is unrealistic to expect that the same marketing strategy can lead to the same results in all export market ventures (Douglas and Wind 1987). Consequently, if the export marketing strategy performance relationship is investigated at the overall firm level, aggregating all product market export ventures, confounded findings are likely to result (Madsen 1987). Therefore, the position taken in this research is that the individual product market export venture must be taken as the unit of study to obtain a more precise measurement of the export marketing strategy performance relationship.

Previous studies have viewed exporting simply as a means of realizing the economic goals of the firm. Performance has been measured in terms of sales or profits, with no deliberate attempt to relate it to a firm's strategic and competitive goals, such as gaining a foothold in foreign markets or neutralizing competitive pressure the firm faces in the domestic market. Furthermore, these studies have posited that firm, product, industry, and export market factors determine export performance directly. The central role of proactive marketing strategy in determining export performance has not been emphasized. As a result, research on exporting is becoming increasingly isolated, with inquiries consisting of a "mosaic" of autonomous endeavours (Aaby and Slater 1989).

The need for strategic considerations in marketing theory has been emphasized by Day and Wensley (1983), Lambkin and Day (1989), and Wind and Robertson (1983). Increasingly, firms have treated export markets as strategic as well as economic opportunities. Given intense international competition, it is believed that export marketing research can be enriched if exporting inquiries incorporate strategic considerations. This implies that exporting should be viewed as a firm's strategic response to the interplay of internal and external forces, export marketing strategy should be emphasized as a key determinant of export performance, and the strategic dimensions of export performance must be tapped.

The other issue is related to the diversity of conceptualization and measurement of export marketing strategy and performance and the simplistic nature of research approaches employed in some previous studies. Both Madsen (1987) and Aaby and Slater (1989) observe that export marketing strategy and performance were conceptualized and operationalized in many different ways by different researchers. They point out that researchers previously have made little effort to identify measurement difficulties, sampling, validity, or particular technical problems. Data collection methods have ranged from unstructured personal discussions to structured mail surveys to in depth interviews, and analytical approaches have ranged from simple frequencies to sophisticated multivariate techniques. As a result, confusing and even contradictory findings have surfaced in the literature (e.g., the effect of firm size on export performance). These discrepant findings hinder not only practice, but

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also theory development in export marketing. Hence, there is an urgent need for an integrated approach to export marketing inquiry. Such an approach must explicitly deal with the measurement as well as conceptualization of export marketing strategy, export performance, and factors internal and external to the firm using a structured questionnaire.

VI. Conceptual Framework and Hypothesis of the Study

In this research; Internal forces (Firm characteristics and product characteristics) & Industry forces (industry characteristics and export market characteristics) are proposed to be related to marketing mix strategy and export performance.

a) Conceptual Framework of the study

Exporting can be conceptualized as a strategic response by management to the interplay of internal and external forces. The particular theoretical perspective adopted here is the principle of strategy environment coalignment (Aldrich 1979; Porter 1980; Venkatraman and Prescott 1990), which states that the "fit" between strategy and its context whether it is the external environment (Anderson and Zeithaml 1984; Hofer 1975) or organizational characteristics (Chandler 1962; Gupta and Govindarajan 1984) has significant positive implications for firm performance framework of industrial organization (cf. Scherer and Ross 1990) and rests on two premises: (1) Organizations are dependent on their environments for resources (Pfeffer and Salancik 1978) and (2) Organizations can manage this dependence by developing and maintaining strategies (Hofer and Schendel 1978).

The framework postulates that marketing strategy in an exporting company is determined by internal forces such as firm and product characteristics and external forces such as industry and export market characteristics. The performance of the export venture, in turn, is determined by export marketing strategy and firm Characteristics (e.g., a firm's capability.)

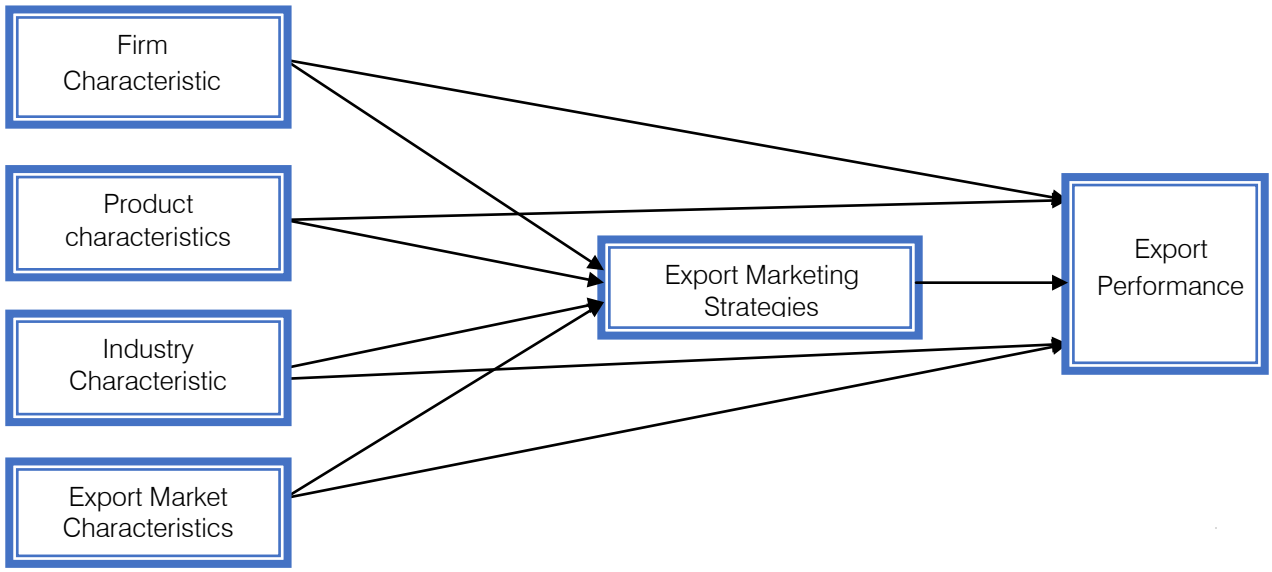

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of Export Marketing Strategy and Performance

b) Hypothesis of the Study

In line with the objectives of the study the following hypothesis were set and tested.

H1: Firm characteristics have a positive influence on the export marketing strategy,

H2: Product characteristics have a positive influence on the export marketing strategy,

H3: Industry characteristics have a positive influence on the export marketing strategy,

H4: Export market characteristics have a positive influence on the export marketing strategy,

H5: Product adaptation has a positive and significant effect on export performance,

H6: Price competitiveness has a positive and significant effect on export performance,

H7: Promotion adaptation has a positive and significant effect on export performance,

H8: Support to Foreign Distributer/ Subsidiary has a positive effect on export performance,

H9: Product adaptation mediates the effect of Firm Characteristic on export performance,

H10: Export marketing strategies mediates the effect of product characteristic on export performance,

H11: Export marketing strategies mediates the effect of industry characteristic on export performance,

H12: Export marketing strategies mediates the effect of export market characteristic on export performance.

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VII. Research Design

a) Sampling Design

A survey was designed to obtain the effects of antecedent variables and marketing mix strategy on export performance of leather and textile companies. The population of the study was all exporters operating in Ethiopia. The data for the analysis was developed and applied to a sample of members of major two exporters product categories (leather and leather products and textile and garment products which has been operating since 1986.

b) Research Instrument

The questionnaire was prepared following an exhaustive literature review and all constructs were measured with existing scales. The questionnaire consisted of questions related to the constructs and measures needed in the study. The final, refined instrument contained six groups of variables intended to measure firm, product, industry, and export market characteristics, as well as export marketing strategy and performance. The five groups of explanatory variables were measured primarily by five-point Likert scales. All items were measured on a five-point Likert-type scale where 1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree. 278 Questionnaires were distributed to exporters. All of the participants were either the corporate strategist or marketing strategists of the case companies. In order to test the proposed hypotheses, 253 responses were obtained from exporters.

VIII. Measures and Model

All measures were adopted from different existing literature in the field. Firm Characteristics were measured using eleven items. Product Characteristics were measured using seven items; industry characteristic was measured from two items; export market characteristic was measured from seven items. In addition, export marketing strategy were considered as a mediating role such as product adaptation were measured using six items, price competitiveness three items, promotion adaptation six items and support to foreign distributors three items.

IX. Result and Discussion

a) Demographic Profile

Although a total of 278 questionnaires were distributed to a sample of exporter from total exporter of 914 in the country. Only 253 questionnaires were returned at the end of the data collection process, which gave the response rate of 91 per cent. The demographic profile of the respondents is shown in Table 1.

Table 2: Profile of Respondents

Item	Description	Frequency	%
Firm Size	less than 50	82	32.4
	50-499	106	41.9
	500-4,999	65	25.7
Annual Sales	less than 1000	7	2.8
	1000-9,999	38	15.0
	10,000-99,000	22	8.7
	100,000-1,999,000	82	32.4
	2,000,000 or more	104	41.1
Year of experience in international market	less than 5 years	17	6.7
	5-10	76	30.0
	11-20	99	39.1
	21-30	50	19.8
	31 or more	11	4.3
Number of market the firm operates	1-5	43	17.0
	6-10	86	34.0
	11-20	79	31.2
	21 or more	31	12.3
Type of Products	Consumer Products	198	78.3
	Industrial Products	55	21.7

b) Reliability Analysis

Reliability analysis were conducted prior to the regression analysis in order to identify the appropriate items for the analysis. The consistency reliability and the value of Cronbach's alpha will determine the variables' reliability and measure the consistency of a multiple item scale (Sekaran, 2003). Table 2 shows the summary of the reliability analysis and factor loadings for all the measurement items used in multiple regression analysis. Therefore, Cronbach alpha coefficients (0.915) which are by far above0.70 which demonstrates an excellent internal consistency.

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Model

$Y_1 = a + b_1X_1 + b_2X_2 + b_3X_3 + b_4X_4 + e$

$Y_2 = a + b_5X_5 + b_6X_6 + b_7X_7 + b_8X_{8+} + e$

Where,
Y1 is Export Marketing Strategy
Y2 is Export Performance
X1 is Firm Characteristics
X2 is Product Characteristics
X3 is Industry Characteristics
X4 is Export Market Characteristics
X5 is Product Adaptation
X6 is Price Competitiveness
X7 is Promotion Adaptation
X8 is Support to Foreign Distributors

c) Over all Mean Score of the Effect of Marketing Strategy and Export Performance

To perform correlation and linear regression analysis on the data, the researcher has created an index for each of the constructs or variables that represent the value of the construct by averaging the subject responses to items.

Table 3: Mean and standard deviation for Effect of Marketing Strategy on Export Performance

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Consumer buying decision	253	1.64	4.82	3.5305	.80449
Packaging color	253	1.71	4.83	3.4546	.79158
Background image	253	1.00	5.00	3.5692	.87636
Packaging Material	253	2.29	4.43	3.6863	.47175
Font Size	253	2.67	5.00	3.6319	.62828
Printed Information	253	2.00	5.00	3.9381	.77672
Innovation	253	2.00	5.00	3.5823	.73352

d) Correlation Analysis

A correlation is a measure of how strongly two variables relate to each other. Correlation coefficients are frequently used to describe data because they are relatively easy to use and provide a great deal of information in just a single value (Mooi &Sarstedt, 2011).

Karl Pearson's coefficient of correlation or simple correlation is the most widely used Method of measuring the degree of relationship between two variables (Kotari, 2004).

The calculated value of the correlation coefficient ranges from -1 to 1, where -1 indicates a perfect negative relation (the relationship is perfectly linear) and 1 indicates a perfectly positive relationship. A correlation coefficient of 0 indicates that there is no correlation (Mooi & Sarstedt, 2011).

The below table shows the Pearson correlation result with its significant level. When we see the correlation of Firm characteristics with Export performance it has a significant positive Pearson correlation of 0.334 at 0.01 confidence interval. With regard to Industry characteristics it has a significant negative Pearson correlation of -0.177 at 0.01 confidence interval. But, when we see the correlation of product characteristics and export market characteristics the correlation is not significant.

Table 4: Correlations of independent and dependent variables

Correlations of Independent and Dependent Variables						
		Export performance	Firm characteristics	Product characteristics	Industry characteristics	Export market characteristics
Export performance	Pearson Correlation	1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)					
Firm characteristics	Pearson Correlation	.334**	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000				
Product characteristics	Pearson Correlation	.082	.708**	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.192	.000			
Industry characteristics	Pearson Correlation	-.177**	.519**	.669**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.005	.000	.000		
Export market characteristics	Pearson Correlation	.110	.136*	.162*	.349**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.080	.030	.010	.000	
	N	253	253	253	253	253

*** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed), * Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)*

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The table below shows the correlation of independent variables with the mediator variables. As it is shown in the table 5 the correlation of export performance, production adaptation, and price competitiveness with export performance they have a significant Person correlation of 0.263, 0.274, and 0.194 respectively at 0.01 confidence interval.

Table 5: Correlations of Independent and Mediator Variables

		Export performance	Production adaptation	Price competitiveness	Promotion Adaptation	Support to foreign distributors
Export performance	Pearson Correlation	1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)					
Production adaptation	Pearson Correlation	.263**	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000				
Price competitiveness	Pearson Correlation	.274**	.304**	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000			
Promotion Adaptation	Pearson Correlation	.194**	.544**	.338**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	.000	.000		
Support to foreign distributors	Pearson Correlation	.085	.284**	.081	.397**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.180	.000	.197	.000	
N		253	253	253	253	253

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

Table 6 below shows the correlation of independent, dependent, and mediator variables together.

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Table 6: Correlation of independent, dependent, and mediator variables

Correlations										
		Export performance	Firm characteristics	Product characteristics	Industry characteristics	Export market characteristics	Production adaptation	Price competitiveness	Promotion Adaptation	Support to foreign distributors
Export performance	Pearson	1								
	Sig. (2)									
Firm characteristics	Pearson	.334**	1							
	Sig. (2)	.000								
Product characteristics	Pearson	.082	.708**	1						
	Sig. (2)	.192	.000							
Industry characteristics	Pearson	-.177**	.519**	.669**	1					
	Sig. (2)	.005	.000	.000						
Export market characteristics	Pearson	.110	.136*	.162*	.349**	1				
	Sig. (2)	.080	.030	.010	.000					
Production adaptation	Pearson	.263**	.309**	.352**	.308**	.582**	1			
	Sig. (2)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000				
Price competitiveness	Pearson	.274**	.403**	.230**	.159*	.182**	.304**	1		
	Sig. (2)	.000	.000	.000	.011	.004	.000			
Promotion Adaptation	Pearson	.194**	.206**	.024	.120	.540**	.544**	.338**	1	
	Sig. (2)	.002	.001	.700	.056	.000	.000	.000		
Support to foreign distributors	Pearson	.085	.020	-.243**	-.092	.359**	.284**	.081	.397**	1
	Sig. (2)	.180	.752	.000	.144	.000	.000	.197	.000	
N		253	253	253	253	253	253	253	253	253

***. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2 tailed), *. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2 tailed)*

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e) Regression Analysis

In its simplest form, regression analysis allows market researchers to analyze relationships between one independent and one dependent variable. In marketing applications, the dependent variable is usually the outcome we care about, while the independent variables are the instruments we have to achieve those outcomes with. It can also help make predictions (Mooi and Sarstedt, 2011).

i. *Antecedent Forces on Export Market Strategy*

The following tables are extracted from SPSS in order to perform a regression analysis between independent variables and dependent variable.

Table 7: Model Summary

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.697[a]	.486	.477	.382

a. Predictors: (Constant), Expmachx, Firmchx, Indtychx, Prodtchx

The model for this regression was: $Y_1 = a + b_1X_1 + b_2X_2 + b_3X_3 + b_4X_4 +$ e. From the model summary result we can see that independent variables explain the dependent variable with a percentage of 48.6. In cross-sectional designs, values of around 0.30 are common while for exploratory research, using cross-sectional data; values of 0.10 are typical (Mooi & Sarstedt, 2011).

Table 8: ANOVA

ANOVA[a]						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	34.169	4	8.542	58.534	.000[b]
	Residual	36.192	248	.146		
	Total	70.361	252			

a. Dependent Variable: Expmarkstra, b. Predictors: (Constant), Expmachx, Firmchx, Indtychx, Prodtchx

In table 9 below the constant, beta, and significance level of each variable is addressed. The table indicates that the four variables which are Firm characteristics, Product characteristics, Industry characteristics, and Export market characteristics influence Export market strategy significantly at 95% confidence interval with a sig. level of 0.000, 0.037, 0.024, 0.000, and 0.000 respectively. As the constant and B values are known the model will be: $Y_1 = 0.746 + 0.279X_1 - 0.104X_2 - 0.089X_3 + 0.719X_4 + 0.05$

Table 9: Regression Model

Coefficients [a]					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	.746	.209		3.565	.000
Firm characteristics	.279	.042	.425	6.567	.000
Product characteristics	-.104	.050	-.157	-2.096	.037
Industry characteristics	-.089	.039	-.148	-2.278	.024
Export market characteristics	.719	.055	.642	13.133	.000
R	0.697				
R square	0.486				
Adjusted R-Square	0.477				
F-Value	58.534				

a. Dependent Variable: Export market strategy

ii. *Antecedent Forces and Mediators on export performance*

The following tables are extracted from SPSS in order to perform a regression analysis between independent variables and dependent variable.

Table 10: Model Summary

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.333[a]	.111	.097	.522

a. Predictors: (Constant), Supptdis, pricompt, Prodadtn, PromAdtn

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The model for this regression was: $Y_2 = a + b_5X_5 + b_6X_6 + b_7X_7 + b_8X_8 +$ e. From the model summary result we can see that independent variables explain the dependent variable with a percentage of 11.1. In cross-sectional designs, values of around 0.30 are common while for exploratory research, using cross-sectional data; values of 0.10 are typical (Mooi & Sarstedt, 2011).

Table 11: ANOVA

ANOVA[a]						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	8.445	4	2.111	7.738	.000[b]
	Residual	67.660	248	.273		
	Total	76.104	252			

a. Dependent Variable: Exmarper, b. Predictors: (Constant), Supptdis, pricompt, Prodadtn, PromAdtn

The table below shows the constant, beta, and significance level of each variable. It indicates that two variables which are Product adaptation and Price competitiveness influence Export market performance significantly at 95% confidence interval with a sig. level of 0.010, and 0.001 respectively. The other two variables which are Promotion Adaptation and Support to foreign distributors is not influence Export market performance significantly. As the constant and B values are known the model will be: $Y_1 = 1.198 + 0.522X_1 - 0.168X_2 + 0.243X_3 + 0.056X_4 +$ 0.05

Table 12: Regression Model

Coefficients[a]						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.656	.249		10.662	.000
	Product adaptation	.164	.063	.188	2.588	.010
	Price competitiveness	.149	.046	.210	3.255	.001
	Promotion Adaptation	.013	.058	.018	.230	.818
	Support to foreign distributors	.005	.045	.007	.109	.913

a. Dependent Variable: Exmarp

The above table shows the constant, beta, and significance level of each variable. It indicates that four variables which are; Firm characteristics, Industry characteristics, Export market characteristics, and Product adaptation influence Export performance significantly at 95% confidence interval with a sig. level of 0.000,0.000, 0.029, and 0.001respectively.Among these variables the first three are antecedent forces and the last one is mediator variable.

iii. *AMOS Analysis for Mediation*

To identify the existence of mediation, a path diagram is drawn as a model for depicting a causal chain by using AMOS. The values associated with each path are standardized regression coefficients. These values represent the amount of change in Y given a standard deviation unit change in X.



Figure 2: Relationship between firm characteristics & export performance

Table 13: Regression Weight without Mediator

			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
Exmarper	<---	Firmchx	0.228	0.041	5.630	***

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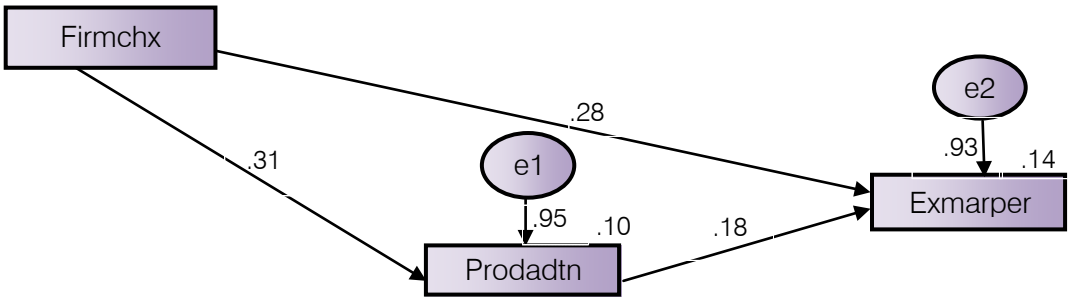

Figure 3: Firm characteristics and product adaptation on Export performance

Table 14: Regression Weights with Mediator

			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
Prodadtn	<---	Firmchx	0.241	0.047	5.153	***
Exmarper	<---	Firmchx	0.191	0.042	4.553	***
Exmarper	<---	Prodadtn	0.155	0.054	2.881	0.004

Table 15: Direct and Indirect Effect of Variables

			Indirect Effect	Direct Effect	Result
Exmarper	<---	Firmchx	0.0868	0.18	Significant

From a theoretical perspective, a significant reduction on the path demonstrates that a given mediator is indeed potent. Perfect mediation holds if the independent variable has no effect when the mediator is controlled (Reuben and David, 1986).

If indirect effect is lower than direct effect even the mediator variables devouring significant path, the mediator variable should be excluding first to gain the result of direct effect. Subsequently, include the mediator variable in a model to gain the outcome. Once the direct effect is drop presented, one can be concluded that the mediation effect is occurs. (Afthanorhan W.M. etal, 2014).

If the result of direct effect is suddenly increase once includes a mediator variable when all path coefficient is significant, calculate the result of indirect effect. If value of direct effect is higher than indirect effect, the non-mediation effect is not occurring. (Afthanorhan W.M. etal, 2014).

The variable firm characteristics significantly affect export performance and partially mediated by product adaption since when the mediator variable removed from the model its direct value dropped from 0.31 to 0.18 and the direct effect is still significant after mediator enters the model.

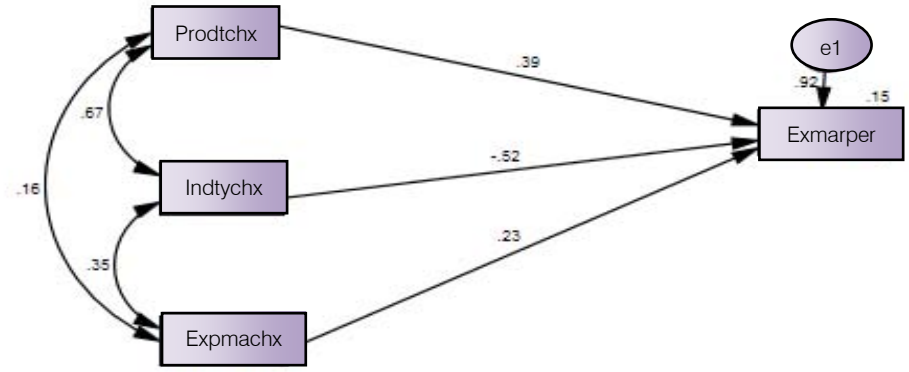

Figure 4: Antecedent variables on export performance

Table 16: Regression Weights without Mediator

			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
Exmarper	<---	Prodtchx	0.273	0.055	4.997	***
Exmarper	<---	Expmachx	0.265	0.073	3.657	***
Exmarper	<---	Indtychx	-0.325	0.052	-6.275	***

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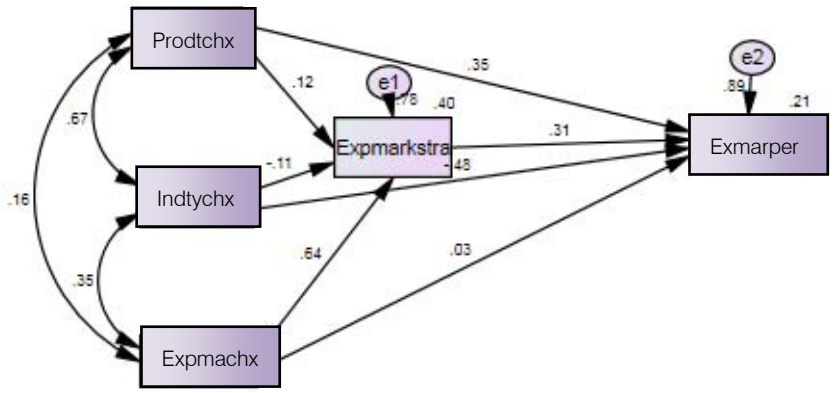

Figure 5: Effect of antecedents on export market performance mediated by marketing strategy

Table 17: Regression Weights with Mediator

			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
Expmarkstra	<---	Expmachx	0.720	0.059	12.237	***
Expmarkstra	<---	Indtychx	-0.068	0.042	-1.629	0.103
Expmarkstra	<---	Prodtchx	0.081	0.044	1.826	0.068
Exmarper	<---	Prodtchx	0.246	0.053	4.652	***
Exmarper	<---	Expmachx	0.032	0.088	0.362	0.717
Exmarper	<---	Indtychx	-0.303	0.050	-6.028	***
Exmarper	<---	Expmarkstra	0.324	0.075	4.324	***

Table 18: Direct and Indirect Effect of Variables

			Indirect Effect	Direct Effect	Result
Exmarper	<---	Prodtchx	0.042	0.31	Significant
Exmarper	<---	Expmachx	0.0528	0.31	Significant
Exmarper	<---	Indtychx	0.0192	0.31	Significant

All the three variables which are product characteristics, export market characteristics and industry characteristics significantly affect export market performance. Among these variables product characteristics and industry characteristics partially mediated by export market strategy. Regarding to product characteristics; when the mediator variable removed from the model its direct value dropped from 0.39 to 0.31 and the direct effect is still significant after mediator enters the model. When we see industry characteristics the result of direct effect is suddenly increase once includes a mediator variable when all path coefficients are significant, and the value of direct effect is higher than indirect effect, in this case mediation effect is occurring.

Table 19: Hypothesis Test Results

Hypothesis Test Results		
1.	H1: Firm characteristics have a positive influence on the export marketing strategy,	Accepted
2.	H2: Product characteristics have a positive influence on the export marketing strategy. - Product characteristics have a significant effect on export marketing strategy but the effect is negative.	Rejected
3.	H3: Industry characteristics have a positive influence on the export marketing strategy. - Industry characteristics have a significant effect on export marketing strategy but the effect is negative.	Rejected
4.	H4: Export market characteristics have a positive influence on the export marketing strategy	Accepted
5.	H5: Product adaptation has a positive and significant effect on export performance,	Accepted
6.	H6: Price competitiveness has a positive and significant effect on export performance,	Accepted
7.	H7: Promotion adaptation has a positive and significant effect on export performance.	Rejected
8.	H8: Support to Foreign Distributer/ Subsidiary has a positive effect on export performance.	Rejected
9.	H9: Product adaptation mediates the effect of Firm Characteristic on export performance,	Accepted
10.	H10: Export marketing strategies mediates the effect of product characteristic on export performance,	Accepted
11.	H11: Export marketing strategies mediates the effect of industry characteristic on export performance,	Accepted
12.	H12: Export marketing strategies mediates the effect of export market characteristic on export performance.	Rejected

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X. Conclusion

The correlation of Firm characteristics with Export performance has a significant positive Pearson correlation of 0.334 at 0.01 confidence interval. With regard to Industry characteristics it has a significant negative Pearson correlation of -0.177 at 0.01 confidence interval. But, when we see the correlation of product characteristics and export market characteristics the correlation is not significant. The correlation of export performance, production adaptation, and price competitiveness with export performance have a significant Person correlation of 0.263, 0.274, and 0.194 respectively at 0.01 confidence interval.

The four variables which are Firm characteristics, Product characteristics, Industry characteristics, and Export market characteristics influence Export market strategy significantly at 95% confidence interval with a sig. Level of 0.000, 0.037, 0.024, 0.000, and 0.000 respectively. Firm characteristics, Industry characteristics, Export market characteristics, and Product adaptation influence Export performance significantly at 95% confidence interval with a sig. level of 0.000, 0.000, 0.029, and 0.001respectively.

The variable firm characteristics significantly affect export performance and partially mediated by product adaption since when the mediator variable removed from the model its direct value dropped from 0.31 to 0.18 and the direct effect is still significant after mediator enters the model. product characteristics, export market characteristics and industry characteristics significantly affect export market performance. Among these variables product characteristics and industry characteristics partially mediated by export market strategy.

XI. Limitation and Direction for Future Research

This study has some shortcomings and limitations. The survey was conducted on leather and textile products -sectors given higher priority by the Ethiopian Government. The calibre possessed by some companies on the selected sectors for the study strategists have a low level of strategy formulation, implementation and controlling cultures. The findings can be generalized for other product categories in addition to reflecting sector specific results. For future research, another set of antecedents of export performance can be included in the research model. Moreover, Future researchers can use a minimum cut of point of income to be generated by exporting companies in order to show the role of the mediating variable on export performance across a wider range of exporting sector. Research in different sectors may still produce contribution to the field.

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