

Abstract:

Does marketing strategy matter in international markets? With a growing level of globalization over the last several decades, the performance implications of international marketing strategy have received significant academic attention from marketing and international business scholars. Indeed, marketing standardization is considered one of the most important research topics in the international marketing area. While numerous studies have been conducted on this focal phenomenon, little consensus appears to exist concerning whether or not marketing standardization will lead to superior performance in international markets.

The objective of this study is to explore the nature of the relationship between marketing standardization and organizational performance. Previous studies have shown inconsistent findings regarding the relationship – either positive, negative or no relationship between the two variables. We argue, however, that all of the studies have built upon a rather simplistic assumption regarding the role of marketing standardization – i.e., linear relationship. Without exception, prior research has assumed a linear influence of marketing standardization on performance. Based on a broad-based review of the literature, we argue marketing standardization can be viewed as a double-edged sword, primarily owing to its inherent costs and benefits in planning and implementing the standardization strategy.