International Academic Journal of Business School Research
ISSN: 5280-481X | Volume 8, Issue 7 | Pages 13-31 | May, 2023
Double Blind Peer Reviewed International Research Journal
DOI: 222394283425277872
www.accexgate.com
journalsaccexgate@gmail.com

Dynamics of the Global Economy and the Competitiveness of Africa's Local Enterprises: A Resource-Based View Interpretation

IYAMABHOR Martins
Department of Business Administration,
Faculty of Management and social Sciences,
Dennis Osadebay University, Asaba, Delta State, Nigerian
Tel: 09062188533
Email: iyamabhor47@gmail.com

OGBOR, John O.
Department of Business Administration
Faculty of Management and Social Sciences
Dennis Osadebay University, Asaba, Delta State, Nigeria
Tel: 234(0)8032843333
Email: johnogbor@aol.com

Ogundare Taiwo Justice
Department of Marketing,
Faculty of Management and social Sciences,
Dennis Osadebay University, Asaba, Delta State, Nigerian
Email: kentromaster@Yahoo.com

Abstract: *As a result of the dynamics of globalization, the variegated economies of the world have become more homogenous, integrated, interrelated and interdependent. However, rather than becoming a veritable player in a network of interrelationship and interdependency, the African economy has increasingly become a powerless spectator in the theatre of globalization. Although there is a great deal of literature and research in this area of international business, most of it has concentrated on the multinational corporations and their effects on the host country's economy. Research and literature in this field have mainly looked at protective measures and subsidies as the way out of foreign competition; it has rarely addressed competitive strategic responses of local firms to foreign multinational corporations operating in the local economies. Anchored on the resource-based view of the firm theory, the paper provides an alternative framework or a paradigm shift for analyzing the competitive options available to Africa's local firms in a global market. From this framework, the competitive advantages of Africa's local firms are conceptualized to be a function of firm specific assets, prevailing home market conditions and the firm's respective global industry structure. The method of inquiry adopted in this paper is textual deconstruction. The major contribution of this study to the existing globalization discourse is its shift of focus from the multinational corporation to the analysis of global competition from the perspective of the competitiveness of enterprises in less developed economies such as Africa. The suggested framework can also be used by scholars to map strategic options for local enterprises in selected markets. Future research can subject the suggested framework to empirical scrutiny to see how well the arguments hold.*

Keywords: *Global economy, Globalization, MNCs, Competitive Advantage, Africa's Enterprises, Firm Specific Assets, Home Market Conditions and Global Industry Structure.*

INTRODUCTION: THE COMPETITIVENESS OF AFRICA'S ENTERPRISES IN THE GLOBAL ECONOMY – A SITUATION REPORT

The discourse on the global economy and the competitiveness of Africa's competitiveness has been a subject of intense discussion within the context of globalization's effect or impact on Africa's economy (Adeleye, Amankwah-Amoah, Boso & Esposito, 2018; Alimi & Atanda, 2011; Ezika & Ogege, as cited in Ajudua, & Okonkwo, 2014). A situation report to this effect casts Africa's economy in a very gloomy picture – ranging from "globalization of poverty" (Letswana, Raji & Edita, 2018; Yusuf, as cited in Ajudua, & Okonkwo, 2014) to "the subordination of Africa's economy to global market conditions" (Emmanuel & Agatha, 2007). Now, it has been noted by several authors that the purpose of the globalization process is the attempt of Western economies to create an economic space where everything should converge in the direction of the dictates of Western economic needs (Obadan, as cited in Ajudua, & Okonkwo, 2014). The project is to be carried out mostly by large Western-based organizations. For instance in his work, *From Spectacle to Surveillance and the Making of the Global Subject*, Ogbor and Iyamabhor , (2020) makes the case that the globalization process culminating in the global economy requires large-scale organizations to deliver mass products to mass markets, consumers, and publics. He argues that one of the reasons for globalization's expansion lies in the functional necessity for large-scale organizations to ensure their own survivability. The global economy and the globalization process thus imply what Marcus as cited in Armelle, and Olivier, (2019) calls the "conquest and unification of opposites". In this attempt to unify the opposites by the "Goliaths" of the global economy, the weaker "opposites" (i.e., African economies), argues Ogbor as cited in Ogbor and Orishede, (2015) "become mere spectator in the theatre of the global economy."

The much smaller local firms in Africa are often described in terms of powerlessness and as passive on-lookers in the forces or dynamics shaping the global economy (Letswana, Raji & Edita, 2018; Yusuf, as cited in Ajudua, & Okonkwo, 2014); they, have a weak economic and financial base to compete in the global economy with the giant multinational enterprises; their firms are small and will remain small due to insufficient resources (human, financial, labor, infrastructure, technology, etc.). Hitherto African economies were known as producers of commodity products or raw materials, while the economic giants in the US, Europe and Southeast Asia are manufacturers of finished products. With the notable exception of very few companies (e.g., the Dangote Group and owners of South African power houses such as MTN, Shoprite, PEP stores and Multichoice DSTv.), African local enterprises have been incapable in facing the competitive forces of the Western multinational giants. The question that comes to mind in this scenario is "What competitive options as strategies, do Africa's enterprises have to compete in this highly competitive global economy?"

Our position in this paper is that the current discussion should move beyond this pessimistic view to one that repositions Africa as a veritable player in the global competitive environment by utilizing its available resources.

In one way or the other, globalization has always affected Africa. Although, the ubiquitous global economy is seen as beneficial to the economies of many parts of the world, African countries have palpably failed to take advantage of the opportunities offered by the globalized economy of the twenty first century: they receive little foreign investment, fail to produce many processed goods for export, and are less "wired" than almost any other region of the world (Jensen, as cited in Bachas, Fisher-Post, Jensen & Zucman, 2022; Ogbor, 2020a, b).

But not all scholars or observers of the African economy in the context of global competitiveness are comfortable with that type of explanation. Scholars sharing an optimistic view argue that despite their overall poor performance, a few African nations are now poised to take advantage of the new global economy (Adeleye et al., 2018; Amankwah-Amoah, 2015). Researcher bent on this line of argumentation suggest that the focus of studies should be directed at what Africa's enterprises have to offer in the global economy (i.e., the resources at their disposal) in order to counter what they do not have (their resource deficiencies). This line of research draws its inspiration from the resource-based view of the firm, a theoretical framework that looks at the bundle of resources at the disposal of firms (Fahy, as cited in Flinck, 2022; Ogbor, 2020; Vladimirov, Simeonova-Ganeva, & Ganev, 2013; Xie, 2021).

Behind this call is an optimism that an understanding of the forces shaping the competitiveness of Africa's local enterprises in the global economy should yield a whole lot of data capable of understanding why African economies are subjected to the darker side of globalization. And there is more to it than that. By analyzing the processes and structures of the global economy, scholars and policy makers will be moved from the tradition of seeing Africa's local firms as mere spectators in the globalization project towards a position which digs into the deeper intricacies of how local firms can mobilize the resources at their disposal to achieve competitive advantage.

AFRICA'S COMPETITIVE POSITION IN THE GLOBAL ECONOMY

As it is well known in the discourse and praxis of globalization and the global economy, scholars and practitioners are by now familiar with the general African economic situation that a comprehensive exposition is unnecessary here. The continental performance has been poor: Africa overall has generally not even returned to the economic peak of the late 1970's when all natural resource prices were relatively high. While the continent was experiencing the "lost decades" of the 1980's and 1990's, other regions were, of course, making spectacular gains.

From a comparative perspective, the differences in economic performance, according to Court and Yanagihara as cited in Popoola, (2020), can be found in manufactured export performance between Southeast Asia and countries in Africa. According to the researchers, "the proportion of manufactures in exports was relatively similar in Southeast Asia and Africa in 1970, in some cases African countries were markedly better off. However, since then there has been a rapid and sustained increase in the proportion of manufactured exports in all three countries in Southeast Asia. In Africa, there has not been much increase except for Mauritius, where it was even more pronounced than in SE Asia" (Court & Yanagihara, as cited in Popoola, 2020).

The poor overall economic performance of Africa in the global economy inevitably affects how Africa integrates into the global economy. For the most part, the continent remains a producer of relatively unprocessed raw materials. In the meantime, Asian countries have totally transformed their industrial production.

There are many reasons for Africa's poverty vis-à-vis other regions: the poor colonial inheritance, especially in the area of dependence on the exportation of raw materials (Pallaver, 2022; Girma, 2018); crisis of governance and administrative incompetence (Lilleker, & Stoeckle, 2021); poor policy implementation such as the implementation of structural adjustment programs (Thomson, Kentikelenis, & Stubbs, 2017); political instability and civil conflicts (Lukongo, 2021); poor debt management and misallocation of financial resources (Alozie, 2018); ethnic bias, favoritism and development in Africa (Alozie, 2018); external circumstances (Obomeghie, & Ugbomhe, 2021).

According to some analysts, the most important barriers to Africa participating in the global economy are (i) the dependency syndrome in raw material exportation and dependency in the importation of Western/Asian processed goods and (ii) the crisis of governance. To be sure, "import and aid dependency syndrome" is an attitude and belief that a group (e.g., a country or an economy) cannot solve its own problems without the importation of goods and services or outside help such as financial aids and grant. It is a weakness that is made worse by charity, grants and loans.

For example, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has a tradition/practice in which poor and developing countries are recommended to adopt the policy instrument of export promotion in which poor and developing countries are required to export more of their primary products that would help them raise foreign exchange which is necessary for the repayment of their debts. However, some observers have argued that this policy has worsened the competitive position of developing and poor nations and deepened their dependency on the Western economies. Muthu, (2008) explains the logic of this dependence in the following words:

> "If a society spends one hundred dollars to manufacture a product within its borders, the money that is used to pay for materials, labor and, other costs moves through the economy as each recipient spends it. Due to this multiplier effect, a hundred dollars' worth of primary production can add several hundred dollars to the Gross National Product (GNP) of that country. If money is spent in another country, circulation of that money is within the exporting country. This is the reason ***an industrialized product-exporting/commodity-importing country is wealthy and an undeveloped product-importing/commodity-exporting country is poor***" [Emphasis Added].

Smith as cited in Muthu, (2008) suggests that developed countries grow rich by selling capital-intensive products for a high price and buying labor-intensive products for a low price. This imbalance of trade expands the gap between rich and poor. The wealthy sell products to be consumed, not tools to produce. This maintains the monopolization of the tools of production, and assures a continued market for the product.

Thus, one of the effects of structural adjustment is that developing countries must increase their exports. Usually, commodities and raw materials are exported to Western developed nations. But as Smith noted above, developing countries lose out when they export commodities (which are cheaper than finished products) and are denied or effectively blocked from industrial capital and real technology transfer, and import finished products (which are more expensive due to the added labor to make the product from those commodities and other resources). This leads to less circulation of money in developing and poor economies, resulting in a smaller multiplier effect.

Robbins (1999, p. 95) describes this relationship as a form of *unequal trade:*

> "At first glance it may seem that the growth in development of export goods such as coffee, cotton, sugar, and lumber, would be beneficial to the exporting country, since it brings in revenue. In fact, it represents a type of exploitation called *unequal exchange.* A country that exports raw or unprocessed materials may gain currency for their sale, but they lose it if they import processed goods. The reason is that processed goods—goods that require additional labor—are more costly. Thus a country that exports lumber but does not have the capacity to process it must then re-import it in the form of finished lumber products, at a cost that is greater than the price it received for the raw product. The country that processes the materials gets the added revenue contributed by its labors."

The economic assumptions of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund had been premised on the logic that exporting commodities and resources would favorably help developing countries earn foreign exchange with which to pay off debts and keep currencies stable. However, partly due to the price war, which can induce a situation where developing countries produce more of raw materials, commodity prices have always dropped in the world market relative to prices paid for manufactured products. Secondly, the country that exports commodities is unable to generate enough income for the implementation of sustainable development programs. A vast majority of Sub-Sahara African countries depend on commodities as a main source of revenue. Several studies have shown that primary commodities account for about half of the export revenues of developing countries and many developing countries, mainly African countries, continue to rely heavily on one or two primary commodities for the bulk of their export earnings (Badiane & Makombe, 2015). Furthermore, a fall in commodity prices has also led to a build-up of unsustainable debt. The consequence of all these is that Africa, for the most part, has remained a consumer of manufactured products in the West. An economic environment that encourages commodity export rather than manufactured goods is hardly an environment for the growth of the local economy in the context of industrialization (Ogbor, Iyamabhor & Awosigho, 2021).

In a nutshell, the above stream of research seems to suggest that what the IMF, the World Bank and the developed countries recommended as solutions to the problems of developing countries is contrary to what they had adopted in the process of their economic development. As Smith (1994, p. 141) notes, every rich nation today has developed because in the past their governments took major responsibility to promote economic growth. There was also a lot of protectionism and intervention in technology transfer. There was an attempt to provide some sort of equality, education, health, and other services to help enhance the nation. Smith (1994) argues that the industrialized nations have understood that some forms of protection allows capital to remain within the economy, and hence via a multiplier effect, help enhance the economy. Yet, in the global economy and in the policies enshrined in the globalization process, **the developing nations are effectively being forced to cut back these very same provisions that have helped the developed countries to prosper in the past.**

As earlier pointed out, crisis of governance is seen as one of the obstacles working against Africa's economic development in the context of the global economy. In general, African countries lack the policy and legal frameworks to achieve sustainable economic development and growth, although there are significant variations across the continent. It has been argued by many observers that unless the governance issues are solved, Africa will not be able to overcome all of the other problems that keep it from growing (Magbadelo, 2018)

There are many ways to measure governance, none perfect, although given how closely related different measures are to each other, most tend to tell the same general story, even if ranking countries somewhat differently. In essence, the discourse on governance proposed eight principles or characteristics: (i) rule of law, (ii) transparency, (iii) responsiveness, (iv) consensus oriented, (v) equity and inclusiveness, (vi) effectiveness and efficiency, (vii) accountability and (viii) participation.

The summation of all the above factors, import dependence, governance or not, Africa's local enterprises have been gravely incapable of taking advantage of its local resources in order to gain competitive advantage in the global economy. In fact, there is a ray of hope if and when African governments or nations are able to transform their resources into competencies. The purpose of this paper then is to see how this herculean task can be achieved. To do this, we have to look unto the theory of *Resource-based view* of the firm.

THEORETICAL OVERVIEW

The chosen framework for analyzing the competitiveness of Africa's local enterprises in this paper is an integration of contributions from the resource-based view of the firm (RBV) (Barney & Clark, 2002; Foss, 1997; Peteraf, 1993). The RBV's major point of departure is the assumption that the competitive advantage of firms is based on the firm's resource portfolio rather than the firm's product market. It is based on four basic assumptions. First, it assumes that there are systematic differences across firms in the extent to which they control resources that are necessary for implementing strategies. Secondly, these differences are relatively stable. Thirdly, differences in firms' resource endowments cause performance differences. Lastly, firms seek to increase (maximize) their economic performance. This framework suggests that firms may secure a strong performance by building or otherwise acquiring certain endowments of resource: It draws attention to the creation, maintenance and renewal of competitive advantage in terms of the resource side of the firm.

For a firm's resources to yield competitive advantage they should meet four basic criteria heterogeneity, ex ante limits to competition, ex post limits to competition and imperfect mobility (Peteraf, 1993). Heterogeneity means the resource must be rare for it to have competitive advantage leading to efficiency differences and therefore rents. Ex ante limits to competition suggest that resources have to be acquired at a price below their discounted net present value in order to yield rents. Otherwise future rents will be fully absorbed in the price for the resource. Ex post limits to competition suggest that it would be difficult or impossible for competitors to imitate or substitute rent-yielding resources. Imperfect mobility suggests that the resource should be relatively specific to the firm. Otherwise the superior bargaining position that is obtained from not being tied to a firm can be utilized by the resource to appropriate the rent that the resource helps create.

The resource based view theory of the firm predicts that resources at the disposal of the firm are key determinant of firm performance. According to this view, such resources include the firm's core competencies in its marketing strategies, its production strategy, the uniqueness of its location, distinctive human resource policies and practices, brand name/image, etc. In the context of the global market or economy, local knowledge of societal norms, consumption patterns, political culture, etc become resources within the array of resources at the disposal of the firm. Properly utilized and managed, access to information, "right connections", as firm's distinctive competence can provide the firm the basis upon which to achieve competitive advantage in its industry.

The resource based view of the firm assumes sustainable competitive advantage as the desired outcome of management effort (Fahy & Smithee, as cited in Ishtiaq, 2016). The nature of a firm's sustainable advantage, according to this theory, is obtained through accumulation and utilization of valuable resources that are difficult to duplicate by competitors (i.e., imitability). Collis and Montgomery (1995) suggest that sustainable competitive advantage can be created on condition that resources have the attributes of inimitability, durability, appropriability, substitutability, and competitive superiority. In essence, the theory suggests that unique, high value and rare organizational resources lead to superior performance through enhanced competitive advantage.

The Resource-based view of the firm is an appropriate theoretical consideration in terms of its applicability to competition in the global marketplace as a firm's resource which can provide it with sustainable competitive advantage. For example, in the context of global competitiveness, not only is technology or production processes (global resources) that enhance firm's sustainable competitiveness, knowledge of the local business culture (local resource) is also a valuable resource; hence the normative appeal from proponents of competitiveness of local firms to go *global*. By paying attention to the particular attributes in regions or countries while using global competitive strategies, the term, "*global",* was formulated to encompass the global attributes of a firm (such as technology) and the localized idiosyncrasies in the markets where firms operate. (Menon, 2014).

The process by which firms compete with uniform global strategies while paying attention to local sensibilities is known as "Globalization" which encourages companies to "think global, act local". As pointed out by Tashakova (2015), while globalization was coined to describe how multinational corporations can tap into local markets, it can also be used to describe how local businesses can grab market share in their regional economies, and potentially, end up going global themselves.

Resource based view theory suggests that firms possess heterogeneous resources that allow managers to execute value creating strategies. Even though it provides managers with a decision making framework, the theory has been criticized for failing to consider the impact of dynamic marketing environment (Odhiambo, Kibera & Musyoka, 2015) in which many firms operate. Besides, the theory fails to explain how resources are developed and deployed to achieve competitive advantage (Bowman & Toms, 2010). This criticism emanated from the dynamic capabilities theory.

STRATEGIC COMPETITIVE OPTIONS AVAILABLE TO AFRICA'S FIRMS IN GLOBAL COMPPETITION

Having examined the theoretical perspective upon which this study is based, we now turn to a discussion of the strategic options available to Africa's firms in the global economy and global competition. The main argument here is based on the premises that strategic options available to Africa's local enterprise in the global market will be based on its firm specific assets, its prevailing global industry structure, as well as its prevailing home market condition. The strategic competitive options available to Africa's enterprises in global competition can be summed up into three main options:

- To compete directly against global multinational companies, that is direct competition.
- To compete indirectly by identifying a niche market, that is, indirect competition.
- To co-operate with global firms by forming strategic alliances, that is, co-operation with global multinational companies.

Direct Competition: The first strategic option suggests that Africa's local enterprise (ALEs) facing global competition can choose to compete face to face with multinational companies entering their domestic market. Rather than give way to the new foreign entrant, the local enterprise can choose to stay independent and fortify its existing competitive assets to outplay the foreign multinational company (Thompson, Strickland and Gamble, 2010). This strategy requires the company to compete on production cost basis by selling at prices lower than the global multinational enterprises or to compete on the basis of product quality. The ability of African enterprises to compete and win against foreign multinational enterprises will depend on their capabilities in either producing at prices lower than global competitors or their capabilities in producing unique quality products that appeal to the taste of the major market segment.

The option of direct competition is more feasible in global markets where the multinational enterprises cannot utilize their global advantages or in areas where the local (African) enterprise has superiority in particular firm specific assets (networks with important local distribution firms, institutions and government agencies), which are accompanied with domestic market conditions.

Indirect Competition: For many local enterprises in Africa to compete against global companies may not be feasible especially when considering the multinational companies' superiority in technology and size advantages. An alternative option for many African enterprises, especially the small and medium ones is to avoid direct competition with global companies. Indirect competition can take place in several ways (Dawar & Frost, as cited in Huaichuan, Alvaro, & Annique, 2016). First, African enterprises can avoid competing with global companies by concentrating activities in fragmented industries. In fragmented industries, large global companies cannot utilize their scale advantages and therefore find it less economical to operate in such markets, thus leaving a gap that African enterprises can fill. For the Africa's local enterprises to succeed, the chosen niche should be based on the firm's capabilities especially its firm specific assets.

Secondly, local enterprises can avoid direct competition against global multinational enterprises by concentrating in those niches that are of little or no interest to the multinational enterprises, such as customizing to individual users who are willing and able to pay a premium rather than accept the standard version. Most global companies have built their operations around the demands of affluent customers looking for a wide range of choices. Their expatriate managers are used to air-conditioned offices and expensive residences that altogether raise the costs of the multinational company's operations in an African country and make it not feasible for them to target the lower end of the market. Since African companies are capable of operating at relatively low costs they can target this lower-end market which in most cases covers the majority and avoid direct clash with global companies.

Thirdly, Africa's local enterprises can take the advantage of having the presence of multinational enterprises by supplying products that complement the multinationals offerings or adapt them to local tastes. In fact, many oil and gas multinational corporations in Nigeria are shortening their value chain through outsourcing services to domestic oil companies. In the Nigerian oil and gas industry, domestic companies are taking advantage of assets left behind by foreign operators and using their experience to grow into local giants. Nigerian glass manufacturing companies, for example, are able to capitalize on the presence of global bottling companies such as Coca-Cola by supplying them with glass bottles.

Fourthly, local enterprises can choose to avoid direct competition with global companies by exporting to markets not tapped by global players. African enterprises can go beyond their domestic markets and export to markets where their firm specific assets can reap added revenue, scale economies and valuable learning experiences. Seeking markets that are similar to their home base in terms of consumer preference, geographic proximity, distribution channels, or government regulations can do this. Africa's small and medium size enterprises, for example, can export to the United Kingdom by targeting their products to the African population in the United Kingdom. In the same manner Nigeria's local enterprises can export to markets with common cultural or linguistic heritage, such as the African American population in the USA.

Cooperative strategies: Rather than compete with the large global companies, local enterprises can choose to co-operate with global multinational companies. This could be in the form of long-term contracts, joint venture, collaboration agreement, licensing, franchising, subcontracting, or even management contract or counter trade agreement. The African enterprise can choose to co-operate with global companies by establishing long-term contracts with them for the supply of material inputs or components to the global firms. These long-term contracts have a number of benefits to the local firm. First, they shelter the firm from risks. Secondly, they significantly reduce its marketing costs. Thirdly, if the global company has high demands, as the local firm struggles to meet those demands it will improve its knowledge assets and hence overall competence.

Apart from contractual agreements, the local enterprise can merge with a global company to form a new venture/company that is jointly owned by both parties. In this case the global company will accept this option only if it finds that there is something to gain from the joint venture (examples of such joint ventures include, Hilton and Sheraton hotels operating in Nigeria). It is, therefore, important that the local enterprise first understand the global company's motives for accepting to form the joint venture by reading between the lines. If the motive of local enterprise is to acquire knowledge from the global firm, it should prepare a mechanism for acquiring that knowledge, that is, it should carry out a systematic investigation of inter-partner learning (Hamel, 1991). Failure to outlearn the global partner could render the local African enterprise first dependent and then redundant within the partnership and competitively vulnerable outside it. When entering into joint ventures the local African enterprise should be careful not to give away their firm specific assets because by doing so the global partner will quickly abandon the joint venture once it gains what it was looking for in the joint venture.

Local African firms can enter into a joint venture with the global company for the purpose of developing risk-sharing mechanisms on new products and markets. By joining a global company it can gain access to the global company's international market network. This will enable it to gain international experience and greater exposure to foreign markets and other advantages of large corporation without losing identity and flexibility.

Other forms of co-operation such as licensing and franchising may the fastest ways for African local enterprises become global players (Tallman & Yin, 2002). These arrangements are useful for African enterprises that lack knowledge assets. By entering into a licensing agreement with a global firm with superior technology, for example, it can have access to that technology at a fee. Franchising on the other hand is a very useful method of gaining knowledge assets especially in the area of production, management and marketing skills. By becoming a franchisee, the African firm gets access to the knowledge assets that have taken the franchiser a very long time to build. Although franchising is a very useful means for technology transfer from global multinationals to the local firm, its growth in Africa has been very slow compared to Europe, USA and Asia.

FIRM SPECIFIC ASSETS AND THE COMPETITIVENESS OF AFRICA'S ENTERPRISES

There are several sources of sustainable competitive advantage. Competitive advantages that are most significant are those that are specific to the enterprise's unique bundle of tangible and intangible resources. These resources can be distinguished as market assets, knowledge assets, social assets and physical assets.

Market assets are mainly based on the enterprise's established relationships with customers and distributors through different kinds of interactions. The enterprise's relationship with customers and distributors becomes a strategic market asset only when the relationship has a specific tie to that particular enterprise. These special relationships with different actors in the market facilitate the enterprise's product to reach customers in a unique way that adds more value to the customer. A local enterprise's long term interaction with local customers, for example, creates customer loyalty (e.g. Nestlé's Nescafe, Unilever's Lipton, Nestlé's Milo). Customer loyalty generates resource position barriers against incoming competitors. Foreign competitors entering the market will therefore have to pay a much higher price to win customer loyalty. Just by the possession of these market assets the local enterprise therefore gains a competitive advantage over any new company entering its domestic market.

Access to efficient distribution networks is often critical for any company to succeed in less developed country markets. Market assets are path dependent, they are not easily achieved but when established they are not easy for competitors to break or replicate. Some Nigeria's local enterprises such as the Dangote Group, that have developed strong market assets are in a much better position to compete directly against global competitors. One of the key firm specific assets that are likely to determine the success of local enterprises competing directly with the global company is their existing stock of market assets. More importantly, there are the established networks that a company has with distributors and agents that are crucial for the product's success in the domestic market.

African domestic enterprises with well-established network across the nation may be able to frustrate global multinational companies by making it difficult for them to reach target customers. This is more valid in African countries where most markets are characterized by having very few distributors who are capable of handling large stocks in an efficient manner. If the enterprise has succeeded in tying these distributors in a way that competitors do not have access to them; new foreign firms entering these markets may not be able to utilize the same channels and thus prevented from reaching target customers. In Nigeria, for example, Nigerian Breweries Limited has succeeded in competing directly against foreign firms (e.g., Budweiser) by building a network of distributors and having exclusive agreements with a wide range of key retailers across the country. Since there are very few reliable distributors in the market, new foreign firms entering the market have had difficulty in getting access to consumers.

A strong local brand name (e.g., Glo, Maggi brand and OMO brand in Nigeria) is another market asset that could enable the local enterprises competes directly against global competitors in the domestic market, since brand names take time to build and once accepted customers become loyal to that particular brand. For a foreign firm to overcome this, it may have to incur costs that may not be sustainable, especially when considering the market size of the most African countries. Most African countries have very low purchasing power suggesting that multinational companies may not be able to sustain their operations if the cost of building brand names is too high. African enterprises can also use their market assets and networks of interrelationships to negotiate strategic alliances with multinational enterprises with the aim of gaining access to global markets or technological know-how.

Knowledge assets are based on the enterprise's accumulated information, skills and know-how. That is, to what extent is the African enterprise informed and knows how to exploit opportunities and solve problems. Know-how is mainly embedded in individuals working for the enterprise. Knowledge that is of relevance to strategic advantage is tacit knowledge; it is normally accumulated after a period of learning. The question of how a company responds to a particular problem or opportunity largely depends upon its combined competence of the individuals (personalized knowledge) in the organization and or the knowledge stored (codified knowledge) in the organization such as working manuals, structures, systems, processes, drawings, prescriptions, culture, etc. Knowledge assets are the most important assets that are likely to determine the African enterprises' competitive strength.

Home country specific knowledge is one of the knowledge assets that Africa's local enterprises likely to have an advantage over incoming foreign competitors. Such edge gives the local African enterprise an advantage over foreign competitors because it cannot be easily acquired by the foreign company due to compression diseconomies (Dierickx & Cool, as cited in Jianwen, 2018). Home country specific knowledge puts the foreign firm at an intrinsic disadvantage due to its foreignness (Hymer, as cited in Marta & Encarnación, 2014).

Successful local enterprises in Africa (such as Multi Choice of South Africa, Dangote of Nigeria, Zenith Bank of Nigeria, Standard Chartered Bank of South Africa) that have succeeded in operating in their home markets may have developed special knowledge assets, which are specific to that particular home market. Such skills may be in the form of product technologies or marketing knowhow uniquely developed to fit well with specific consumer tastes, customs and demands of the local consumer. Enterprises with such knowledge assets can use them to compete directly against global multinational enterprises in those specific products or services. Familiarity with the local tastes, for example, enabled Nigeria's oldest brewer, Nigerian Breweries Ltd., to maintain its presence in the Nigerian market despite the flow of global brands (Budweiser) in the markets. The company's specific knowledge of the local beer market, modern managerial practices accompanied with in-house training of its sales force, enabled it to develop low-cost, mass-market brands which managed to overcome rising competition from imported beers.

Social assets of a firm are defined here as direct and indirect relationships that a firm has with actors located in the non-market environment. This conceptualization of social assets is similar to that of social capital (Paxton, as cited in Tengfei, 2019) and political behavior (Boddewyn & Brewery, as cited in Herbert, 2011). Social assets are specific ties that an enterprise has with individual members or groups within the society. These ties may be reciprocal, trusting, and involving positive emotion. The nature and context of these ties provide a basis upon which the enterprise can achieve strategic objectives. A company's special relationships with board members of a tendering company, for example, are likely to enhance the company's chance of winning the tender. Through social interaction between the enterprise's staff members and the tendering company's board member, can reveal additional clues and information that may be critical for the bidding enterprise winning the tender.

Social assets become a source of competitive advantage for local enterprises against global companies in their domestic markets in a number of ways: First, acts of government, such as industrial policy, can provide a conducive environment to the local enterprise's competitive advantage. Government policies may provide certain conditions that favor local companies or restrict foreign owned companies in carrying out certain operations or access to certain resources. Examples include ownership structure which is skewed against foreign ownership and legislations requiring certain amount of local content in an industry's value chain. Such protection measures provide a competitive advantage over foreign firms that do not have access to such resources or may have access to them at a higher cost.

Secondly, social assets do not necessarily require wealth. Protection measures that discriminate foreign firms give the local firm a competitive advantage over foreign firms without any cost. The fact that members of a society are ready to support a particular company just because it is run by or employs members of their own ethnic group requires no prior financial investment. This is the case of Globacom, a Nigerian-owned telephone service providers competing against foreign-owned MTN, Airtel and Etisalat/9Mobile in the Nigerian market. Globacom's message that "it is owner own" resonates well among Nigerians who consider themselves patriotic.

Thirdly, social assets are not easily accessible to a new foreign firm. Social assets are a result of social interaction that takes time to build. The fact that a firm is local can encourage members of a community to be more loyal to that company, just because they trust their local company is more committed than a foreign firm that is likely to leave any time. Local enterprises can build on their social assets to compete directly with global multinational enterprises. By establishing relationships with various stake holders in the country, local firms can have access to permits and exclusive rights that can be used to pre-empt foreign competitors entering their domestic market. Multinational enterprises may enter the market but may be required to operate at a higher cost relative to the local enterprises already established social assets. For example, the multinational enterprise may have to spend more than average on advertising and publicity just to match the competing local enterprise's social assets.

Multinational companies that are willing to succeed in such markets where their domestic rival has developed social assets may have to enter into collaborative arrangements so as to guarantee access to the market This therefore puts the domestic enterprise at a competitive position for bargaining a favorable deal in such collaborative arrangements. The question of social assets was the main reason that led to the entering into a joint venture between local Nigerian entrepreneurs and many foreign multinational companies. Such partnership arrangements are mostly found in the oil and gas sector (NNPC and other multinational oil and gas companies), accounting profession (Delloite & Touche, Horwath Dafinone, Accenture, KPMG, PwC), and in the pharmaceutical industry (May & Baker, GlaxoSmithKline, Procter & Gamble).

Physical assets refer to the tangible resources that a company has and can be used to generate additional revenue. Such resources may include capital equipment, manufacturing plant, materials, land, building premises, financial resources etc. A firm's access to physical resources such as unique source of raw materials, high capacity plants can enable the firm to earn economic rents based on those assets provided that they are not easily available to competitors and they are not easy to substitute.

Local enterprises, especially those that were formerly state owned had exclusive physical assets and are in a better position to compete directly against foreign competitors entering their domestic markets. Some of these companies had capacities to produce large quantities enough to meet the demand of an entire nation. Enterprises with such plants are capable of creating entry barriers against foreign firms since it would be irrational for foreign firms to enter a market where excess capacity would lead to intensive competition and low returns. These local enterprises with such physical resources that require substantial amount of investments may pre-empt foreign firms from incurring such investments.

GLOBAL INDUSTRY STRUCTURE AND THE COMPETITIVENESS OF AFRICA'S LOCAL ENTERPRISES

Global industry structure refers to the pattern and extent of interaction among suppliers, competitors and customers across national borders. Africa's enterprise's global industry structure has a substantial impact on its strategic options against foreign firms. For local enterprises to compete in the global market they should understand their global industry structure and see how their firm specific assets match the pressures for globalization. Depending on the characteristic of the global industry, Porter (1990) makes a distinction between two dimensions of a firm's global industry, i.e., global industry structure and a multi-domestic industry structure.

A *global industry* refers to an international industry in which firms compete on a world-wide basis. In a global industry, what happens in a similar industry in a particular country has implications for similar industries in other countries. A firm's competitive position in one country is affected by competition in other countries. This implies that Africa's enterprises in global industries face more global competition than those in multi-domestic industries. In the former, suppliers have to link different national markets, in order to reap above marginal returns. Such industries also require the use of globally integrated strategies, in order to benefit from cost reductions due to global scale economies. The fact that global companies have operations across the globe and have the global infrastructure for sourcing from cheaper sources of quality inputs around the globe makes it very difficult for enterprises in such industries to be able to compete face to face with global multinational companies. It is here where the global multinational company has its competitive advantage over local firms especially when one considers the multinational company's economies of scale and scope.

The option of competing directly against global multinationals in global industries is therefore not a likely option for most enterprises. In such industries the only options available to the local enterprises is to either co-operate with a global multinational company or avoid direct competition by choosing niches that are not occupied by multinational companies. In global industries where the multinational's value chain is spread across different parts of the globe the local enterprise can benefit by focusing on being a part of the multinational's global network by entering into collaborative arrangements with the global company.

By participating in the global multinational's supply network, the local enterprise not only finds a market for its products, it also becomes a player in the global market by supplying components to other subsidiaries of the multinational enterprise. This, strategy also develops the enterprise's capabilities and learning about emerging technical standards and evolving customer needs. African enterprises in global industries can avoid direct competition by identifying a distinct and defendable niche market. This can be done by focusing on very narrow market segments that global competitors have not tapped. This strategy will therefore require those large local enterprises to restructure their business to focus on this particular niche by shedding down businesses, outsourcing components previously made in-house, and investing in new products and processes.

A *multi-domestic global industry structure* refers to international industries in which competition among firms is confined to national markets. The industry is present in each nation, but competition takes place on a country-by-country basis. In such industries, what happens in one nation does not affect similar industries in other nations. Since competition is confined within nations, in order to earn economic rents, firms have to achieve resource superiority over other national suppliers or competitors. In such industries, economic rents arise from producing above national marginal cost. The tendency is to meet a nation's specific needs or local requirements.

Local enterprises belonging in multi-domestic industries are in a much better competitive position compared to foreign firms entering that market. In multi-domestic industries pressures for fragmentation are very high requiring the foreign entrant to submit and adapt to local conditions. This will require the foreign firm a great deal of time and resources before it can capture the local market. On the other hand, the local firm does not have to undergo that process since it already has experience of local tastes and requirements of the market.

The strategic option of Africa's enterprises competing directly with global multinational enterprises is more feasible in multi-domestic global industries. Since consumer tastes and preferences in multi-domestic industries are local rather than global, the local enterprise is in a much better position to offer the right taste because it is much more familiar with the local culture and market specific taste. However, for Africa's enterprises to be able to compete directly with global companies they must find the means of competing by taking stock of their available firm specific assets.

Since a multi-domestic industry structure favors local enterprises than multinational enterprises, the strategic option of indirect competition and cooperation should only be considered when they find that they lack the necessary firm specific assets to compete. For Africa's enterprises, a niche strategy in the domestic market can be the best option especially if the niche complements the market for major domestic players. For example, in the food industry, some small local enterprises have specialized in the supply of mushrooms to the multinational restaurants/hotels serving in the domestic markets.

HOME MARKET CONDITIONS AND THE COMPETITIVENESS OF LOCAL SMALL AND MEDIUM SIZE FIRMS

The factor endowment theory of Hecksher; Ohlin; as cited Negishi, (2001) ascribes differences in the comparative advantage of countries in international trade to differences in factor endowment. The fact that different countries have different factor endowments becomes a source of competitive advantage for firms located in countries having lower cost factors to earn above average economic rents. Resource rents arise due to differences of the cost of resources in a particular country relative to other alternative sources. In areas where African countries have relatively plentiful natural resources or low cost labor they are in a better position to provide local enterprises with low-cost advantage against foreign companies. By their enterprises having access to low cost resources, they will be able to produce at lower cost than the global industry and sell at international market prices.

In some countries, natural resources may be available at one particular location and therefore giving a monopoly to the only one sole supplier. This is true in such industries as oil, mining and power generation where the first mover advantage plays a crucial role. Small and medium size companies in LDC having access to such resources can maintain their monopoly position regardless of global competition. Local enterprises having access to such unique resources are in a much better position to compete directly with global multinational enterprises.

These companies are also in a better bargaining position if they choose to cooperate with global multinational enterprises as strategic partners. Due to their monopoly position they can choose to co-operate with any multinational enterprise in exchange of market access or/and unique technology that the multinational enterprises possess.

Local enterprises having access to low cost input sources are also in a better position in competing directly with foreign firms entering their markets. They can capitalize on these cost advantages by offering products at prices lower than the global multinational company. Since most consumers in most countries in Africa are cost conscious, the African enterprise therefore has a competitive advantage over the foreign firm that in most cases has additional cost to bear.

Most of the LDC does not have a very well developed infrastructure that allows easy access to the whole national market. The infrastructure is characterized with inefficient distribution systems, poor banking facilities, inadequate logistics; poor road networks, inefficient telecommunication networks, and frequent power failures. This is far different from the commercial infrastructure as is known in the West where the commercial infrastructure of mails, dealers, distributors, multiple stores, credit cards, supermarkets and shopping malls is normally taken for granted. Although the potential market may be large, access may require a great deal of investment for a foreign firm from developed economies to be able to operate efficiently in such markets. On the other hand, since the local firm has always been in this environment it has already learnt to deal with it and is therefore compatible with such infrastructural problems.

In such conditions local firms are likely to have a better competitive position than foreign firms entering such markets. In several developing countries (e.g., Nigeria), producers and distributors have worked for a substantial time, they develop trust to an extent that the manufacturing enterprise keeps a supply of open cheques from their distributors. When the manufacturing enterprise sends the order it simply fills in the respective amount based on the shipment in the blank signed cheque. Thus, the absence of a viable financial infrastructure and the lack of working capital have been overcome by trust built by the different actors in the market after a long time of business interaction. Local firms that have learnt to overcome such infrastructural impediments can therefore use this experience to compete directly with global multinational enterprises entering their domestic markets with no prior experience in operating in such environments.

African enterprises with such experiences can also use these experiences to enter other developing countries with similar infrastructures, especially those markets where cultures are similar to those of the home market. Due to the fact that the majority of the population in Africa has very low income, domestic demand is constrained by very low purchasing power. The middle class that can afford higher prices is very small. The majority of the population is concerned with meeting the basic necessities. Most African consumers look for products that are durable, have lower prices and lower maintenance costs. As a result of this, consumers in African countries are far more focused on the price-performance equation than their counterparts in developed economies.

These demand conditions tend to give local low-cost African enterprises a much better competitive position in hotly contested markets. Foreign firms will either have to target the very small middle class or sell at the lower prices on a cash basis, an option that may not be feasible to foreign firms. Many foreign firms have rushed into developing countries being attracted by the market size, only to realize that the costs are much higher than the profits that they are likely to get from operations in such markets. Africa's small and medium size enterprises can capitalize on local demand conditions and compete directly with global multi-national enterprises by targeting the lower end of the market where the majority of consumers are located. Nigerian Breweries Limited, for example, has managed to capitalize on domestic demand conditions in Nigeria by pursuing aggressive marketing strategies by offering products to all market segments thus leaving very little room for any foreign company to dominate the market. Nigerian Breweries Limited offers low priced quality beer to the mass- market segment of low-income earners. At the same time, it offers other brands at premium prices targeting the small upper niche where it competes with other global brands such as Heineken and Guinness.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As a result of globalization, the world market has become more and more integrated and African enterprises are increasingly being exposed to the vagaries of global competition. The growing literature in international business has assumed that globalization has put African enterprises at a disadvantage vis-a-vis the large global companies. Based on the resource-based view of the firm, this paper has provided an alternative framework for analyzing the competitive options available to African local enterprises in a global market. The framework suggests that firm specific assets, global industry conditions and the local enterprise's home market will influence competitive options for African enterprises.

Through a meta-synthesis of the available discourse and counter discourse of Africa's competitiveness in the context of the global economy, this paper has argued that by drawing strength from their firm specific assets, Africa's local enterprises can stand up and compete against global companies entering their domestic markets, particularly in multi-domestic industry structures where pressures for globalization are low. African local enterprises can also avoid direct confrontation with large global companies by choosing to serve niche markets that require firm specific assets or in fragmented markets that are not attractive to global companies. The option of collaborative arrangements with global companies will enable them to gain market access and learn from global companies.

To the field of international business management this study has started the shift of focus from the multinational enterprise to the analysis of global competition from the perspective of the competitiveness of enterprises in less developed countries such as African countries. The suggested framework can also be used by scholars to map strategic options for local enterprises in selected markets. Future research can empirically test the framework to see how well the arguments hold.

To policy makers, the discussion provided in this paper goes beyond protectionism and opens up alternative views of the role that local companies can play in the global market. It encourages policy makers to provide incentives for the empowerment of their national enterprises without necessary going against the World Trade Organization (WTO) rules. Both foreign as well as local enterprises can grow for mutual benefit of all parties.

For managers of local enterprises, this work provides a useful contribution to changing their mindset from that of weak players to that of veritable competitive players in the global markets.

This study has highlighted areas of strength which local firms can capitalize on to build their competitive advantages in global markets.

REFERENCES

Adeleye I., Amankwah-Amoah J., Boso N. & Esposito M. (2018) Africa's Competitiveness in the Global Economy: Past, Present and Future. In: I. Adeleye, M, Esposito (eds) *Africa's Competitiveness in the Global Economy.* AIB Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) Series. Palgrave Macmillan, Cham.

Ajudua, E. I. & Okonkwo, O. N. (2014). Empirical Review of Globalization and Nigerian Economic Performance. *European Journal of Business and Management*, 6(33), 36-45

Alozie, C. E. (2018). Sovereign treasury solvency and financial performance management in Nigeria. *Journal of Economics and International Finance*, 10(7), 77-88

Amankwah-Amoah, J. (2015). Explaining Declining Industries in Developing Countries: The Case of Textiles and Apparel in Ghana. *Competition & Change, 19*(1), 19–35

Armelle, C. & Olivier, P. (2019). *The Globalization of the Poor*: Far from Wall Street and Davos.

Bachas, P. J., Fisher-Post, M., Jensen, A. & Zucman, G. (2022). "*Globalization and Factor Income Taxation,*" Policy Research Working Paper Series 9973, The World Bank.

Badiane, O., & Makombe, T. (2015). "Agriculture, Growth, and Development in Africa: Theory and Practice." In *Oxford Handbook of Africa and Economics,* Vol. 2, edited by C. Monga and J. Lin. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Barney, J. B., & Clark, D. N. (2007). *Resource-Based Theory: Creating and Sustaining Competitive Advantage*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bowman, C. & Toms, S. (2010). Accounting for competitive advantage: The resource-based view of the firm and the labour theory of value. *Critical Perspectives on Accounting*, 21(3), 183-194

Collis, D. J., & Montgomery, C. A. (1995). Competing on resources: Strategy in the 1990s, *Harvard Business Review,* July-August, 118-128.

Flinck, K. (2022). Globalizing the DPRK? Domestic Developments and Cultural Globalization in North Korean Cuisine. *North Korean Review*, 18(1), 28-47

Foss, N. J. (1997). Resources, firms and strategies: a reader in the resource-based perspective. London: Oxford University Press.

Girma, B. (2018). Global networking and the fate of family in Ethiopia. *African Journal of History and Culture*, 10(2), 25-33

Hamel, G. (1991). Competition for competence and inter-partner learning within international strategic alliances. *Strategic Management Journal*, 12, 83-103

Herbert, J. R. (2011). Confusions, Contexts, and Foundations for Understanding Advertising Regulation as Related to the Research of Jean J. Boddewyn. *International Studies of Management & Organization*, 40(4), 94-111

Huaichuan, R., Alvaro, C. & Annique, C. U. (2016). Learning-by-doing in emerging market multinationals: Integration, trial and error, repetition, and extension. *Journal of World Business*, 51(5), 686-699

Ishtiaq, H. Q. (2016). Resource Based View of Firm: An Effective Business Game Plan. *International Journal of Business Quantitative Economics and Applied Management Research*, 2(1), 96-105

Jianwen, X. (2018). A Preliminary Study on the New Generation Employees' Human Resource Management and Enterprise Sustained Competitive Advantage—From the Perspective of Resource-Based View. *American Journal of Industrial and Business Management*, 8(12)

Letswana, A. M., Raji, S. A. & Edita, M. N. (2018). The Effect of Globalization on African

Economic Development: The Nigerian Experience. *AFRREV IJAH: An International Journal of Arts and Humanities, 7*(2), 94-104.

Lilleker, D. G. & Stoeckle, T. (2021). The challenges of providing certainty in the face of wicked problems: Analysing the UK government's handling of the COVID-19 pandemic. *J Public Aff,* 21(4): e2733

Lukongo, O. E. B. (2021). Assessing the Effects of Armed Conflict on Agricultural Output in Africa. *Global Journal of Economics and Finance*, 5(1), ISSN 2578-8795

Marta, M, & Encarnación, M. P. (2014). Determinant Factors in the Internationalization of Knowledge-Intensive Services in a Peripheral Area. *Journal of Service Science and Management,* 7(2)

Magbadelo, J. O. (2018). Governance and the crisis of rule in Africa: Leadership in

transformation. *African Affairs*, *117*(469), 711–732.

Menon, R. (2014). Global or Glocal: The Future Course of Strategy: *Global Journal of Finance and Management, 6*(5), 427-432.

Muthu, S. (2008). Adam Smith's Critique of International Trading Companies: Theorizing "Globalization" in the Age of Enlightenment. *Political Theory*, 36(2), 185-212

Negishi, T. (2001). Heckscher-Ohlin Theory (1). In: Developments of International Trade Theory. Research Monographs in Japan-U.S. *Business & Economics*, 6. Springer, Boston, MA. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4757-4959-5_10

Obomeghie, M. A. & Ugbomhe, O. U. (2021). Globalization and Its Brunt on Nigeria Global Economic Competitiveness: The Need for Holistic and Dynamic Strategies. International *Journal of Social Sciences & Economic Review*, 3(1), https://doi.org/10.36923/ijsser.v3i1.77

Odhiambo, O. J., Kibera, F. & Musyoka, R. (2015). The Influence of Organizational Culture and Marketing Capabilities on Performance of Microfinance Institutions in Kenya. *Journal of Marketing Management, 3*(1), 91-99.

Ogbor, J. O. (2020). The Making of the Global Subject: Discourse, Power and Subjection. *The International Journal of Business and Management, 8*(3), 24-38.

Ogbor, J. O., Iyamabhor, M., & Awosigho, O. P. (2021). David Versus Goliath: The Competitiveness of Africa's Local Enterprises in The Global Economy. Archives of Business Research (ABR), 9 (4), 160-179. DOI:https://DOII.org/10.14738/abr.94.9521

Pallaver, K. (2022). *Monetary Transitions Currencies, Colonialism and African Societies*. Springer Nature, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillian.

Peteraf, M. A. (1993). The cornerstone of competitive advantage: a resource- based view. *Strategic Management Journal, 14*, 179-191.

Popoola, J. (2020). Globalization and Nigeria's Economic Development—A Study of the Interconnectedness. *Open Journal of Political Science*, 10, 460-480. doi: 10.4236/ojps.2020.103028.

Porter, M. E. (1990). *Competitive advantage of nations.* London: Macmillan Press.

Robbins, R. (1999). *Global Problems and the Culture of Capitalism*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Smith, J. W. (1994). *The World's Wasted Wealth 2*. Cambria, CA: Institute for Economic Democracy.

Tallman, S. & Yip, G. S (2002). Strategy and the Multinational Enterprise. *The Oxford Handbook of International Business*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Tashakova, O. (2015). Going Global: Home Grown Brands Have Distinctive Advantage Over its Competitors in the Market. Retrieved from https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/251609 (May 23, 2020).

Tengfei, W. (2019). A Review of the Impact of Traditional Culture on Auditing. *American Journal of Industrial and Business Management*, 9(3)

Thomson, M., Kentikelenis, A., & Stubbs, T. (2017). Structural adjustment programmes adversely affect vulnerable populations: a systematic-narrative review of their effect on child and maternal health. *Public Health Reviews*, 38(13) https://doi.org/10.1186/s40985-017-0059-2

Thompson, A. A., Strickland, A. J & Gamble, J. E. (2010). *Crafting and Executing Strategy: The Quest for Competitive Advantage.* New York: McGraw-Hill

Vladimirov, Z., Simeonova-Ganeva, R. & Ganev, K. (2013). Significance of globalization-

specific factors for SME competitiveness: a conceptual model and an empirical test. *Business Systems Review*, 3(3), 1-25.

Xie, C. C. (2021). The Source of the Enterprise Competitiveness: Theoretical Review with Four

View-points. *Open Journal of Business and Management*, 9, 2513-2521.