



Topics, Trends and Methodological Practices: The Last Twenty-Five Years of International Marketing Literature

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ABSTRACT

A considerable body of literature has evolved on the topics involving methodologies for the subject of international marketing. This article is a systematic review on articles published in academic journals between 1990 and 2014. The purposes of this article is to determine the use of research designs and analytical techniques in literature related to international marketing. In order to assess the topics and their methodological trends, the authors attempted to collect research articles from 57 configurational content under seven research streams pertaining to the subject, starting from the conceptual issues and steps to the conclusion of the topics and methodological trends. From this, the authors were able to identify that the body of international marketing knowledge is growing, and theoretical integration was evident. However, on the whole, preference was skewed towards mixed methods. Authors have observed mixed methods are the most appropriate for conducting research on the subject of international marketing.

Key Words: *International Marketing, Methodological Domain, Research Designs, Analytical Techniques*

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1. INTRODUCTION

It is apparent in several articles that international marketing has made tremendous improvements from 1960 onward and has gained credibility as an independent discipline. It is widely acknowledged that conducting international marketing research is more complex than collecting data from one country and conducting research. Since international marketing is recognized as an independent subject, numerous authors have invested their efforts to assess topics and trends more comprehensively. Development of the subject has been obvious in international marketing activities all over the world. Therefore, skimming all the information from selected, important articles on the subject and presenting conclusive remarks from those in a significant way under one umbrella, can be a subject of interest for researchers and academicians. Topics and research methodologies utilised in international marketing have been also the subject of discussion for a long time (Rana and Sharma, 2015). This study explores topics and trends threefold: (a) delineate and classify configurational contents and research streams; (b) assess the progress within each configurational content; and (c) evaluate methodologies that have been used by these research streams as a whole. Authors have identified that the theoretical ground for international marketing methodologies is lagging in the absence of integrative facets and process to assess the methodological state in published literature. Past reviews on international marketing have focused mainly on two aspects of the theoretical and methodological domain of international marketing. But there were few limitations noticed while reviewing prior review articles, such as: most of those have not linked the theoretical base for conducting reviews and did not link the configured research stream into the IM subject. Also have evaluated the methodological state mostly by considering empirical studies rather than by taking all the studies together to propound a comprehensive conceptualisation and integration of all the relevant facets of the methodological domain of the subject. Numerous efforts have been made to address various issues of both theoretical and methodological domain, such as: Streams identified by different authors are: Album and Peterson (1982) – 7, Aulakh and Kotabe (1993) – 6, Li and Cavusgil (1995) – 8, Cavusgil (1998, 2003) – 10, and Nakata and Huang (2005) – 9. Most of the reviews are presented on a combined view of both the theoretical and methodological aspects of international marketing. The international marketing domain is delineated keeping both theoretical and methodological portions in mind by the authors, (Album and Peterson 1982; Bradley 1987; Aulakh and Kotabe 1993; Li and Cavusgil 1995; Nakata and Huang 2005; Rana and Sharma 2015). Attempts are made to explore methodological problems too i.e. in comparative analysis of the international marketing system (Winter and Prohaska, 1983), confirmatory factor analysis (Madsen, 1987, and Douglas and Craig, 1983), research design, data collection and analysis of data (Nasif et al., 1991; Haris, 2000, and Samiee and Jeong, 1994), conjoint analysis (Baalbaki and Malhotra, 1995), methodological issues in empirical cross-cultural research (Cavusgil and Das, 1997), sampling choice (Reynolds et al., 2003), textual data (Sinkovics et al. 2005), measurement equivalence (Mullen, 1995, Herk et al., 2005, and Salzberger and Sinkovics, 2006) and qualitative research (Sinkovics et al., 2008 and Brecic et al., 2013). Other issues include application of different methodologies suited for an international marketing research, such as transaction cost analysis (Klein et al., 1990 and Seggie, 2002), outlier analysis and structural equations (Mullen et al., 1995 and Mostafa, 2010), partial least squares path modelling (Henseler et al., 2009) and bibliometric analysis (Saimee and Chabowski, 2012).

In recent years, research in international marketing has gained greater acceptance and credibility in both the academic and corporate world, thus making it an independent subject of research. Despite the burgeoning growth of international marketing in recent years, further expansion and development is hampered by the absence of suitable methodological grounds (Malhotra et al., 1996). In particular, the growth of theoretical development has exceeded the advancement and application of suitable research methodology (Aulakh and Kotabe, 1993). While numerous research papers have been published in recent years, they lack adequate focus on the theoretical base of the theoretical domain as well as the methodological domain. Hence, the focus of this paper is to advocate the provision of a valid theoretical ground to access the latest topics and their methodological state of the subject of international marketing in the recent 25 years. More precisely, the objectives of this paper are:

- (1) How the subject of international marketing has progressed in the past 25 years? How the subject has been configured during this time?
- (2) To note down the latest trends of the topics and employed methodologies.
- (3) To construct a general conceptual step for conducting research and classifying methodologies appearing in international marketing literature.
- (4) To assess the different methodological trends in the various research streams of international marketing.

In assessing the theoretical and methodological domain, the authors have considered the more recent literature to distinguish the primary methodological trends for each research stream and for international marketing as a whole. In this paper, authors first examine previous review papers belonging to the methodological domain of international marketing. And then develop a strong theoretical background in section 2. In section 3, they present the method of review and section 4, discuss the theoretical background that led to a conceptual framework highlighting steps to perform and delineate the methodological domain. Section 5 identifies the conceptual progress and classification of the subject, section 6 and 7 contains a process to evaluate the methodological trends and state in the literature. Last section discusses the findings and draws conclusions.

2. Literature Review

Several researchers have conducted reviews of topics and employed methodological trends in international marketing literature. Most of the reviews have focused on the overall developments and trends in the research methodology related to international marketing. However, researchers have noticed several appropriate attributes and procedures for evaluating methodologies published in international marketing literature, including literature trends, research designs and research techniques (Aulakh and Kotabe, 1993, and Nakta and Huang, 2005), international marketing projects (Javalgi et al., 2007) and textual data in international marketing research (Sinkovics et al., 2005). Uncertainty in business occurs when changes intervene the shape of business activities with the passage of time. This intervention leads to a more refined and updated path to perform business activities, which the authors believe is relevant to the current scenario. As a consequence, established trends must be re-evaluated and updated with the acquisition of new knowledge. In previous literature, researchers have invested efforts to add

knowledge in international marketing research methods, Such as: Malhotra (1991) discussed the various methods of questionnaire administration for collecting quantitative survey data in international marketing research. Sarkees and Luchs (2011) explored the basic characteristics of stochastic frontier estimation, discusses advantages of the method that makes it conducive to research in international marketing. Loane and Mcnaughton (2006) described and evaluated the application of information communication technologies (ICT) to enhance qualitative international marketing enquiry. Chetty et. al. (2014) explained conducting a longitudinal cross-country case study. The issues of the research methods in previous literature were assessed as a function of a particular problem. Only few Researchers have thoroughly examined the issues found within the research methodologies used in international marketing studies, Craig and Douglas (2005) and Taylor (2002). Even a somewhat generalised view of the methodological state can be seen in the study of Taylor et al. (2011). However, previous review articles on the methodological domain reveal that much of the attention was given to the methodology, but their focus on procedure and compliance of methodological state was meagre. The results of previous reviews of research methodologies used in international marketing are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Literature Review Studies focusing upon combined domains: Conceptual and Methodological

Authors (Year of Publication)	Period Covered	Years Covered	Number of Papers Analysed	Focus on
Albaum and Peterson (1984)	1976-1982	7	111	What has been researched and how the research has been conducted
Aulakh and Kotabe (1993)	1980-1990	11	720	An assessment of changes in both substance theoretical and methodologies employed in international marketing
Li and Cavusgil (1995)	1982-1990	9	757	Research stream development, research designs and data-collection techniques employed in international marketing
Nakta and Huang (2005)	1990-2000	10	587	Development of the theoretical and research methods in international marketing
Cavusgil et al. (2005)	NA	NA	NA	Critically evaluating the progress in international marketing through ontological, thematic and methodological lenses
Rana and Sharma (2015)	1990-2012	23	1787	Noted the progress of Conceptual domain of international marketing, provided conceptual domain classification under 57 configurational contents and seven research streams.

Most of the reviews on the methodological domain of international marketing have provided a consolidated and general investigation on the methodological state (Malhotra et al., 1996, Cavusgil and Das, 1997, Young and Javalgi 2007 and Taylor et al., 2011) and methodological focus of research papers published in specific publication outlets (Malhotra et al., 2013), or studies have been based on a particular nature/research design (Andriopoulos and Slater, 2013) also on a specific domain of the subject i.e. conceptual domain i.e. Cavusgil and Das, 1997; Craig and Douglas, 2001; Young and Javalgi, 2007. It is important for researchers to know what configures a research stream and also the reasons for choosing specific attributes of the methodological domain to be considered in the evaluation of the methodological state in the existing literature. Researchers should focus on the importance of assessment steps and investigate how and why specific assessment steps are formed and included. Thus, the criteria chosen for assessment should match the theoretical bases. Moreover, previous studies have explored the methodological state for international marketing as a whole. So, it becomes difficult to measure and identify the exact trend of the methodology followed by the authors for specific research streams of international marketing. Therefore, this paper is an effort to bridge these gaps and provide the relevant information related to the methodological domain of international marketing under one umbrella. The study seeks to add value to the body of existing knowledge through an intensive study of the methodological domain. As a first step towards attaining this objective, the authors put together a general conceptual framework on the research process in international marketing. This framework helped them in delineating parameters that are important to be assessed when exploring the methodological domain.

This paper follows a systematic review process. Assessment of the methodological domain is restricted to the research articles published in journals with the belief that academicians and practitioners prefer to publish articles most often and contribute a high level of research in journals. For this study, the authors have taken into consideration all the high-impact factors and reputed journals suggested and considered in previous reviews.

3. Method of Carrying Out this Study

3.1. Extension of the Review

Many researchers have performed reviews reflecting the methodological state in international marketing literature from time to time. Rana and Sharma, 2015 have classified the conceptual domain of international marketing and noted the progress of literature published between 1990 and 2012. This is an effort to extend the previous research work on conceptual domain.

Therefore, the authors believe the time is ripe to undertake updated review of the literature and provide theoretical and methodological trends preferred by international marketing authors in the two and half decades as the most recent past i.e. 1990 - 2014

3.2. Conceptual Framework of the International Marketing Research Process

The preliminary step in assessing the methodological state is to understand how research has been conducted. Therefore, the authors have adopted and modified the conceptual framework developed earlier (Craig and Douglas, 2000, and Young and Javalgi, 2007). The adoption of the conceptual framework has played a vital role in helping them in understanding the important

steps in the methodological domain that offer guidelines for undertaking an international study. It also sheds light on the assessment of methodological trends in the existing literature. Figure 1 illustrates the international marketing research process within the context of four general and familiar stages.

3.4. Assessment of the Methodological State

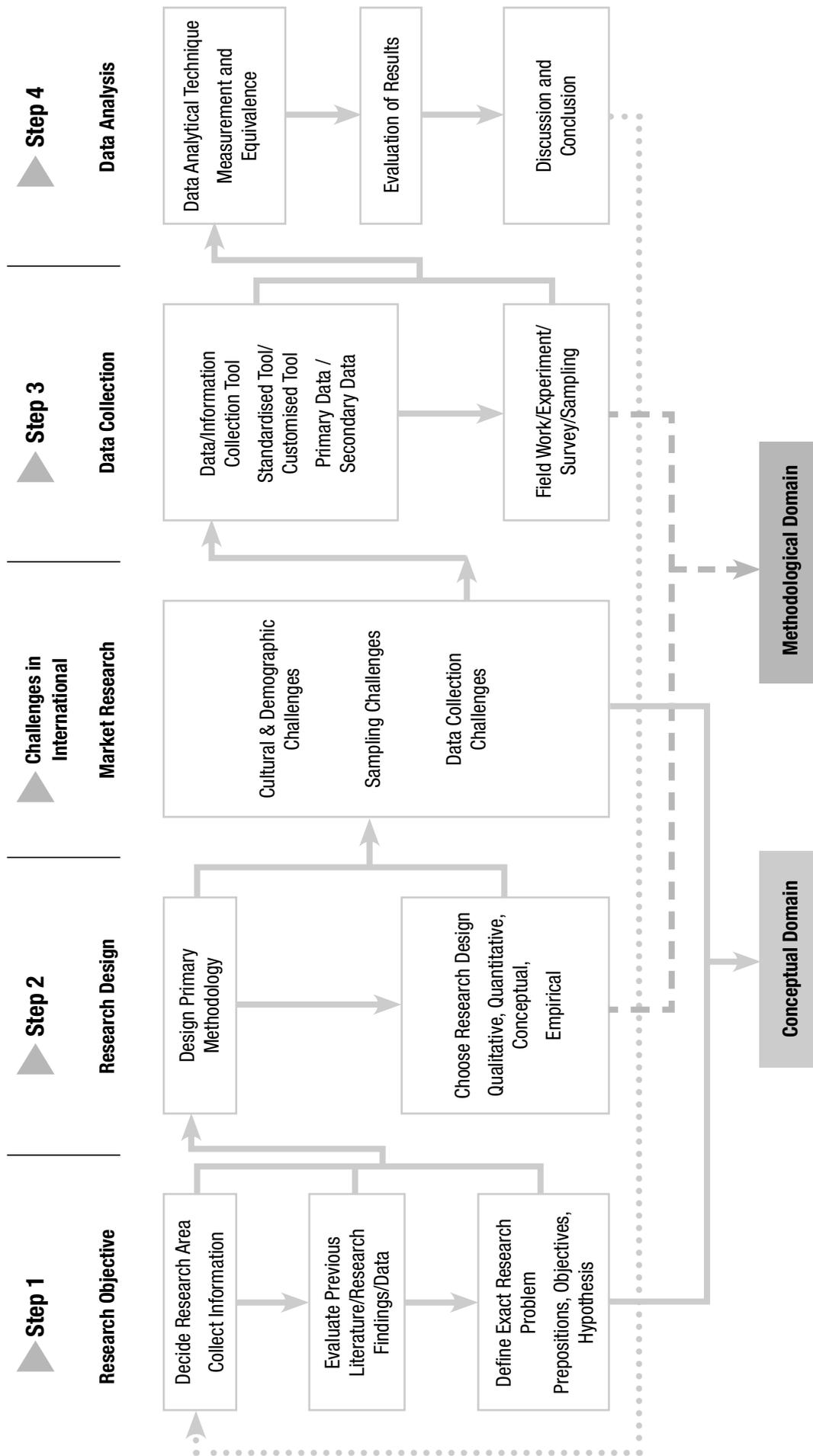
After taking into consideration the stages involved in the conceptual framework of the international marketing research process and previous reviews, the authors have evaluated the methodological state within the following parameters: nature of the research study, research designs, methods of data collection and analytical techniques. Figure 2 illustrates the substantial methodological domain. While assessing the methodological state, the following points have been taken into consideration:

- (1) Selection of Research Papers: With the objective to collect all the possible literature published on international marketing, authors have included research articles under 57 configurational contents of international marketing which are latterly categorised under seven research streams. All the key database and publishers, such as: Emerald, Science Direct, Springer, Taylor & Frances, EBSCO, Proquest, Inderscience, Sage and other common interfaces of journals have been investigated with these keywords. Special attention was given to the highly preferred journals of international marketing literature suggested and considered in previous reviews, such as Cavusgil and Naveen (1981), Luke and Doke (1987), Li and Cavusgil (1995) and Leondiou et al. (2010).
- (2) Time Frame: To identify the recent trends, they have assessed the relevant literature published between 1990 and 2014.
- (3) Domain Focus: The authors have carried out this assessment on the basis of the conceptual as well as methodological context opted by the respective authors under each research stream of international marketing.

4. International Marketing Research Process:

Organisations are increasingly forming international R&D alliances to acquire and leverage technological capabilities across markets. However, a considerable volume of research has shown that such alliances are often not an effective and efficient mechanism for internationalising R&D activities (Robson et al., 2012). Therefore, the use of an effective research process contributes to and yields the effective results of a study. A conceptual framework of the general research process of international marketing is shown in Figure 1. It illustrates the research process in the context of four general phases: research objective, research design, data collection and analysis of results. Although these steps are not customised to highlight international challenges, they do provide a backdrop for the international marketing research process.

Figure 1. International Marketing Research Process Framework



As Figure 1 elaborates, the first step in the research process is to decide the area of research, collect the relevant information, evaluate previous findings, and develop propositions and questions. Once the preliminary step of identifying the research problem and research objective has been completed, the second step of adopting an appropriate research design starts. To adopt the most suitable and effective research design, the researcher must have knowledge of the available options and their usefulness. The researcher should also be aware of the range and functionality of conceptual, empirical, qualitative and quantitative research. Research design entails specification of the data to be collected as well as tools and instruments used to collect it. Based on the research design chosen by the researcher in the second step, further decisions, such as the nature of data to be collected and tools through which data can be collected, effectively and efficiently, can be made. Other decisions, such as those regarding the appropriate sample size, the sampling technique, field survey and experimental setup, are then executed in the third step of the research process. The last step involves an analysis of data and evaluation of results. Researchers generally analyse the data using different analytical techniques and validate the results using the various validation standards to establish the authenticity of the results. Sometimes researchers use more than one analytical technique to evaluate the authenticity of results, to make comparisons or to better explain the results. After an analysis of data, findings are examined and conclusions made to make the study useful as well as relevant for future use.

If the findings do not confirm the expected result, then this process will have to repeat itself. The conceptual framework provides a clear idea about how research should be conducted and where researchers take major decisions.

5. Assessment of Focus in Literature

This is an effort to first delineate the conceptual domain of international marketing which classify dimensions under the research streams that represents the integrated view of international marketing. It is observed in the literature that facets of international marketing covered a wide range. To explore this observation, exhaustive literature review is performed to re-arrange and organize the published articles. In this article, all the possible dimensions are identified and updated with their current status, which brought a clear view of research trend & publication volume.

Classification based upon the conceptual domain of International Marketing

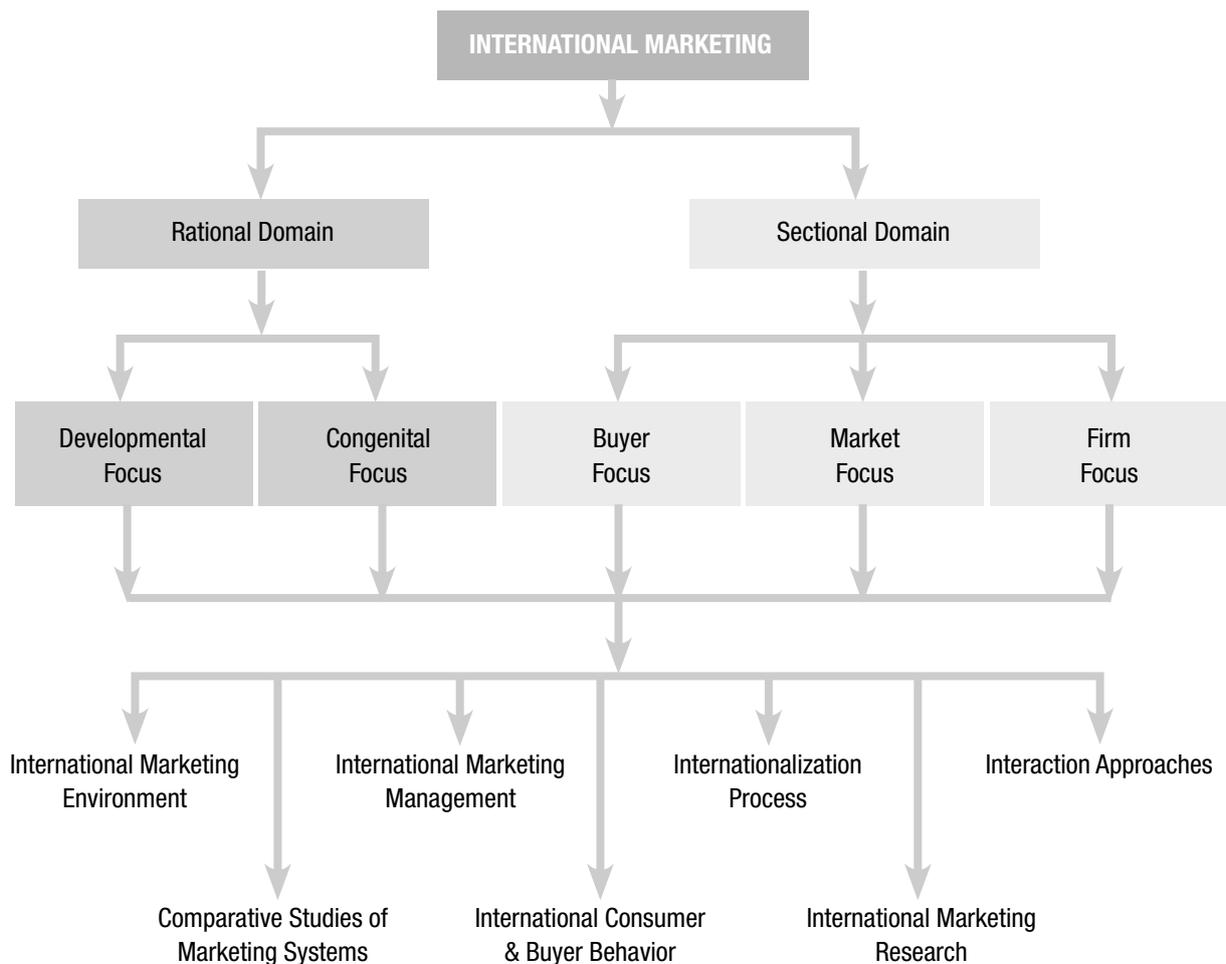
Considering and after evaluation of all the worthy literature and review articles performed by previous experts, the conceptual domain of international marketing can be delineated under seven major streams. To evolve these research streams international marketing is classified under rational domain and sectional domain as portrayed in figure 1. The rational domain section represents the existence of international marketing in a fundamental nature as an independent domain.

Researchers have explored that firms are more profit conscious and want to achieve and sustain competitive advantage. To achieve this objective they need to cope-up with the changing scenario and complexities. In the domain enquiry of rational domain, the developmental focus

area aims to advocate and promote market-based solutions to development and environment challenges and congenital focus refers to the existence and essence of the field at the time of its birth. Whereas, segments of sectional domain evolves under the buyer focus segment of rational domain, where behavior and perceptions of international consumers towards international firms are considered. In the market focus segment, the changing global marketing environment is taken into consideration and the firm focus segment refers to distinct capabilities of business firms.

It concludes that the subject of ‘International Marketing’ has been updating and nourishing itself with the addition of new content but never discarded any content by declaring it outdated. Procedurals, the rational domain of international marketing tries to explain the earlier developments of international marketing, whereas sectional domain is an effort to identify recent development in international marketing discipline (Cavusgil et al. 2005).

Figure 2: Assessment of Conceptual Domain in International Marketing Literature



Distribution of research articles to conceptual domain of international marketing

The classification of configuration contents lead to the development and representation of different clusters derived from research streams (narrated by Li and Cavusgil, 1995). But Li and Cavusgil (1995) have considered 757 research articles focusing on major research streams, but in this article results are interpreted in the context of individual contents, which finally lead to represent the research stream. To the least of our knowledge, meagre research are available that considered the volume of contents as this research has carried. With other reviews (Albaum and Peterson 1984; Aulakh and Kotabe 1993; Li and Cavusgil 1995; Javalgi et al. 1997; Nakata and Huang 2005), this study contains evaluation and categorization of high volume of research articles, which categorized under individual configurational contents listed in Table 2. (Aulakh and Kotabe 1993) has presented the review till 1990 with the contents emerged till 1990. This research expands further attempts to update international marketing subject with latest contents till 2012.

Table 2. Development and Categorizing the International Marketing Configurational Contents

International Culture		39
International Economic Environment		37
International Demographics		26
International Political & Legal Environment		38
International Social Aspects	International Marketing Environment	19
International Marketing Policies		19
International Commerce		9
Technical Developments		26
International Marketing Ethics		63
International Marketing Environment (Basic)		4
Comparative Assessment		27
International Competitiveness		40
Globalization		56
Assessment of Market Capabilities		22
Characteristics of International Markets		12
International Marketing Performance & Engineering	Comparative Studies of Marketing Systems	17
International Marketing Structure		15
International Marketing Behaviour		11
International Marketing Operations		16
International Marketing System		14

International Marketing Segmentation		56
International Market Selection		44
International Marketing Mix		65
International Advertising & Communication		57
International Brand Management	International Marketing Management	52
International Marketing Channels		17
International Marketing Strategy		58
International Marketing Planning		15
Country of Origin		56
International Buyer and Supplier Relationship		35
Consumer Choice, Knowledge and Attitude		37
International Brand Preferences		36
Family Decision Making	Consumer and Buyer Behaviour	17
Information Search Behaviour		19
International Customer Loyalty		23
International Customer Satisfaction		28
Perceived Risk		15
Internationalization Orientation & Communication		117
International Entrepreneurship		57
International Positioning	Internationalization Process	25
International Retailing		38
Domestic Vs. International Marketing		27
Evaluation, Investigation and Assessment		17
Measurement and Comparable Scales		25
Methodological Aspects		13
Data Analysis		14
International Product/Service Development	International Marketing Research	8
International Innovation and Diffusion		39
Research Trends in International Marketing		28
International Marketing Research (Basic)		14
Exporting		136
Importing		58
Foreign Direct Investment		121
International Joint Venture		60
International Direct Marketing	Interaction Approaches	12
International Franchising		33
International Subsidiaries		32
International Strategic Alliance		63
Market Entry Mode (Miscellaneous)		101
International Marketing Miscellaneous (Basic and Reviews)		32

The study categorizes configurational contents into main research streams of international marketing which are summed up as: nine contents are evolved under the International Marketing Environment, 11 contents evolved under Comparative Studies of Marketing Systems, eight contents were summed up under International Marketing Management, nine were summed up under International Consumer & Buyer Behavior, seven were summed up under International Marketing Research, and eight contents were summed up under Interaction Approaches. As interpreted by Table 2 international marketing from 1990-2014 is governed by 57 configurational contents, which are consolidated into seven major research streams. The publishing space occupied by these research streams differ stream wise and are mentioned ahead against each research stream: International Marketing Environment - 280, Comparative Studies of Marketing Systems - 230, International Marketing Management - 364, International Consumer and Buyer Behaviour - 266, International Marketing Research - 264, Internationalization Process - 158, and Interaction Approaches – 616, Whereas, research is at meagre stage on International Marketing Research - 158. It simply concludes that researchers pay maximum attention to interactional approaches (616 research articles) whereas; research is at comparatively meagre stage on international marketing research (121 research articles). Adding to these findings, very limited articles (32) are available that focus on basics and reviews of international marketing.

Distribution of research articles based on Research Streams

Under this section of simple meta-analysis, all the configuration contents are consolidated under research streams to which they govern. Prime objective of this section is to identify publication space covered by each research stream in publication outlets and review up to what extent individual research streams are preferred by international marketing researchers.

It can be observed from the table – 3 that all the research streams cover almost an equal space in publication outlets except interaction approaches which cover the highest space with 616 research articles - 28.28% of the total space, and international marketing research which covers the lowest space with only 158 research articles and only 7.25% of the total publishing space. It concludes that articles published under the interaction approach theme is most preferred by the researchers and captured the highest volume of articles, whereas international marketing research has captured minimum attention and captured the least volume and all other areas are

Table – 3: Contribution of research articles against research streams.

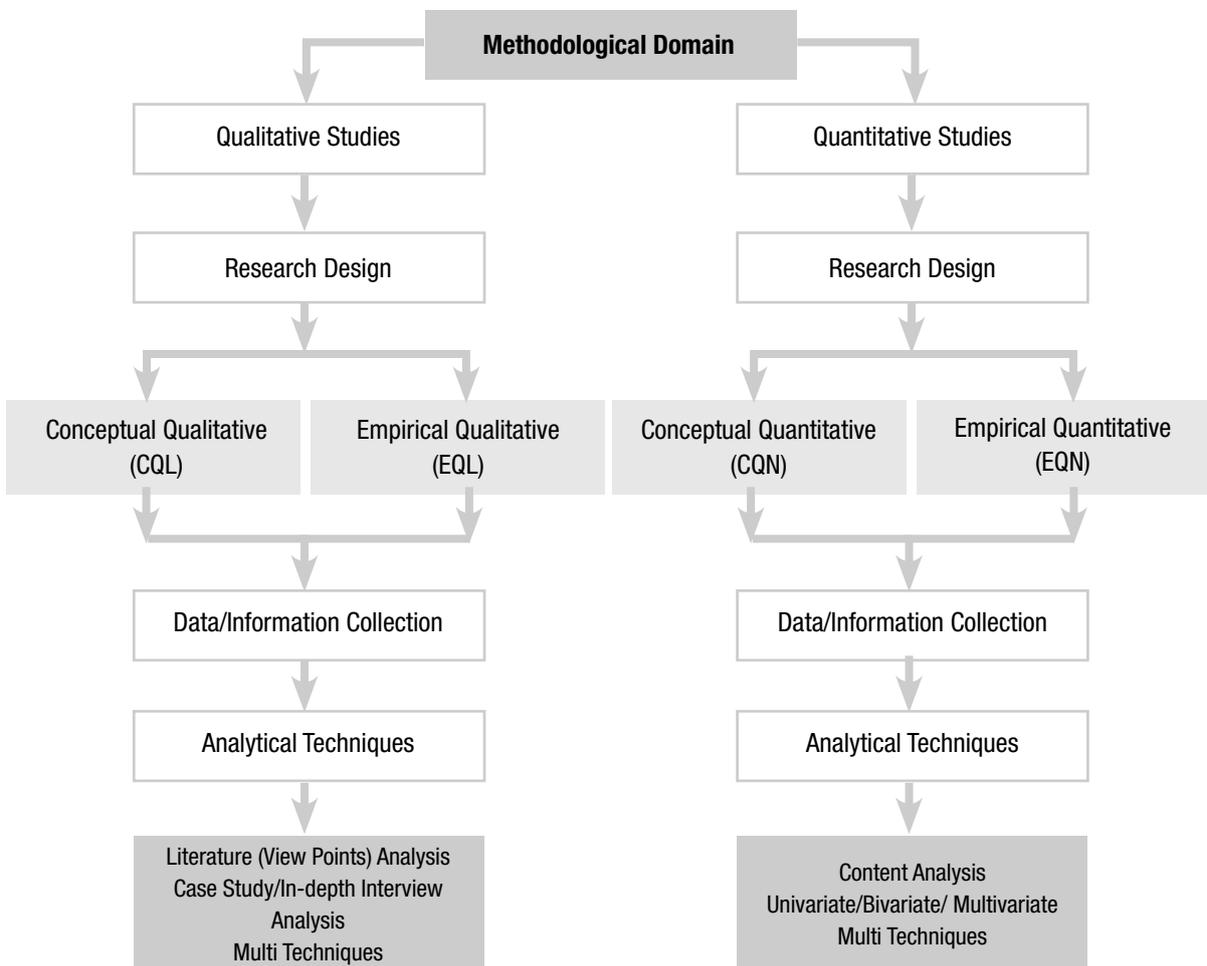
Configurational Clusters	No. of Studies	Percentage of studies
International Marketing Environment	280	12.86
Comparative Studies of Marketing Systems	230	10.56
International Marketing Management	364	16.71
Consumer and Buyer Behaviour	266	12.21
Internationalization Process	264	12.12
International Marketing Research	158	7.25
Interaction Approaches	616	28.28
Total No. of Studies	2178	100

growing areas of research in international marketing that leave the scope for serious attention of researchers.

6. Methodological State of International Marketing Literature

Many studies have investigated the issues related to research designs and analytical techniques in international marketing. Some of the studies have focused on the involvement of the best research designs and analytical techniques (Nasif et al., 1991, Saimee and Jeng, 1994 and Harris, 2000). Based on the issues undertaken in the previous studies, it is clear that knowledge of research designs, methods of data collection for specific research designs and analytical techniques play a vital role in the international marketing research process. However, researchers have not only addressed issues of methodologies, but also invested efforts in investigating qualitative and quantitative research designs (Albaum and Peterson, 1984), conceptual and empirical research techniques (Li and Cavusgil, 1995), univariate/bivariate and multivariate analytical techniques (Aulakh and Kotabe, 1993), and research designs and analytical techniques (Nakta and Huang, 2005). The authors have noticed that the body of international marketing literature as a whole and the assessment of the methodological state in particular have been carried out without a sophisticated theoretical base. Therefore, taking the previous reviews into consideration, they have framed a classification of the methodological domain. Figure 2 illustrates the methodological domain and classifies research design and analytical technique under the relevant categories.

Figure 3. Assessment of the Methodological State in International Marketing



In simple words, the methodological state refers to the trends in the solution-based methodologies opted by authors in previously published literature. An examination of the existing literature shows that researchers have been using different research designs and analytical techniques to solve the problems related to international marketing. Figure 2 identifies two types of studies in international marketing literature, namely qualitative and quantitative studies. Qualitative studies are based on qualitative methodologies and a formalised procedure of gathering, analysing and interpreting qualitative data, such as concept evolution, research questions, proposing hypothesis, presenting viewpoints, analysing and developing theories, reviewing literature, making observations of a phenomena and expert opinion. Scholars perform qualitative studies using primary as well as secondary data. Based on the nature of data used, qualitative studies are segregated into two segments, namely conceptual qualitative studies and empirical qualitative studies. Examples of conceptual qualitative studies include literature review studies, viewpoints, identifying research gaps from theories, research propositions and hypothesis, and general observations of the subject based on the experience of the researchers. Studies based on first-hand qualitative data, such as observations, expert opinion, interviews, case development and analysis, are considered under empirical qualitative studies.

The second segment of the methodological domain refers to quantitative studies. Quantitative studies emphasise more on quantifying results by using different analytical techniques, mathematical and numerical analysis, and calculations/modelling using assorted software. Researchers use different quantitative methods and techniques to perform quantitative studies. Like qualitative studies, quantitative studies are also classified into micro segments based on the data incorporated to perform the study. These are conceptual quantitative studies and empirical quantitative studies. For quantitative studies, analytical techniques are common for quantifying and analysing data. The content analysis technique however falls under conceptual quantitative studies. In conceptual quantitative studies, the researcher applies these analytical techniques on secondary data, whereas in empirical quantitative studies, the researcher first collects the data from a primary source and then applies these analytical techniques. The analytical techniques often used to perform quantitative studies are univariate/bivariate and multivariate techniques. Univariate/bivariate techniques include cross tabulation, t-test, ANOVA, correlation and simple regression methods. Multivariate techniques include ANCOVA, MANOVA/MANCOVA, multiple/OLS/stepwise/logistic regression, discriminant analysis, conjoint analysis, cluster analysis, factor analysis, and path structured analysis/structural equation modelling and econometrics methods.

An important observation from an investigation of analytical techniques is that researchers prefer representing all the research papers under a single analytical technique. For example, in the univariate/bivariate and multivariate segmentation performed by Aulakh and Kotabe (1993), and Nakta and Huang (2005), they have considered all the research papers in one of the segments and left other studies uncategorised/unnamed. In contrast, the authors of this study have adjudged from the literature that researchers have used more than one analytical technique to validate their studies. In research papers, authors have used either

a single analytical technique (such as univariate/bivariate or multivariate) or a combination of techniques (such as univariate/bivariate and univariate/bivariate and univariate/bivariate and multivariate or multivariate and multivariate). Papers based on research using more than one analytical technique are considered in the multi-technique category. Moreover, authors have noted that researchers have explored analytical techniques falling under empirical studies, while conceptual studies were not taken into consideration. To bring a clear picture of the methodological state to the surface, the authors have considered all the studies for review. They have identified the methodological domain of international marketing under two broad categories of studies – qualitative and quantitative. They govern four types of research designs – conceptual qualitative, conceptual quantitative, empirical qualitative and empirical quantitative. A review based on this general classification of methodological domain reveals that solution-based methodologies are being used by following the various analytical techniques. All the seven research streams of international marketing are assessed on the research design, method of data collection and analytical techniques followed.

7. Assessment of Methodological Trends in International Marketing Literature

The authors started their assessment of the methodological state of international marketing literature by identifying the international marketing research process (as detailed in section 4). This exercise produced the basic constituents of the methodological domain. They then combined the typologies of the methodological domain performed by researchers in the past and classified them in a sequential manner (as described in section 5). After performing the basic exercises in sections 4 and 5, they reviewed the methodological domain used in 2178 research papers related to international marketing and published between 1990 and 2014. First, they assessed the research designs, then discussed methods of data collection and lastly assessed the analytical techniques used in research papers. The authors assessed research designs individually for each research stream and collectively for the whole international marketing literature.

7.1 Assessment of Research Designs

Research designs in international marketing literature are segmented as conceptual qualitative, empirical qualitative, conceptual quantitative and empirical quantitative. After the authors identified the research designs (discussed in sections 4 and 5 in detail), they reviewed all the research papers individually on the bases of the research designs they use and research streams they belong to. Table 4 represents the research designs under all the seven research streams of international marketing.

Table 4: The State of Research Designs in International Marketing Literature

RESEARCH STREAMS	RESEARCH DESIGNS					
	Qualitative Studies			Quantitative Studies		
	Conceptual Qualitative (CQL)	Empirical Qualitative (EQL)	Total Qualitative Studies	Conceptual Qualitative (CQL)	Empirical Qualitative (EQL)	Total Qualitative Studies
International Marketing Environment	95	42	137	27	77	143
Comparative Studies of Marketing Systems	44	21	65	45	120	165
International Marketing Management	69	44	113	83	168	251
International Consumer & Buyer Behaviour	24	19	43	29	194	223
Internationalisation Process	70	64	134	33	97	130
International Marketing Research	36	19	55	41	62	103
Interaction Approaches	77	79	156	231	229	460
Total	414	288	703	489	948	1475

The greater use of quantitative as compared to qualitative studies confirms the significant role that software tools, statistical methods and mathematical calculations have played in the research published until now. The authors also notice that empirical quantitative studies are the most preferred research design, which confirms the observations of the previous researchers (Aulakh and Kotabe, 1993, Li and Cavusgil, 1995, and Nakta and Huang, 2005).

7.2 Assessment of Analytical Techniques

The authors have noticed that both qualitative and quantitative studies employ analytical techniques. The analytical techniques used in the 1,787 research papers perused by the authors are listed in Table 3. They were performed differently than previous researchers in reporting analytical techniques. In previous reviews analytical techniques are reviewed only for empirical studies (Albaum and Peterson, 1984, Aulakh and Kotabe, 1993, and Nakta and Huang, 2005). It was adjudged in literature that researchers in the past have used one or multiple combinations of techniques for their studies. The authors of the present study have classified analytical techniques based on the nature of research study.

Table 5: The State of Analytical Techniques Being Used in International Marketing Literature

ANALYTICAL TECHNIQUES	RESEARCH STREAMS IN INTERNATIONAL MARKETING							
	International Marketing Environment	Comparative Studies of Marketing Systems	International Marketing Management	Consumer & Buyer Behaviour	Internationalization Process	Comparative Studies of Marketing Systems	Interaction Approaches	Total
Quantitative Studies								
Literature (Viewpoint) Analysis	95	45	72	24	69	32	86	423
Case Study/In-depth Interview Analysis	34	15	28	9	48	14	52	200
Qualitative Mix	8	5	13	10	17	9	18	80
Quantitative Studies								
Content Analysis	2	1	-	5	1	2	3	14
Univariate/Bivariate								
ANOVA	11	16	12	26	5	5	8	83
Correlation	16	14	15	15	6	7	25	98
Regression	11	13	21	8	9	1	40	103
T-test	9	9	2	7	3	2	6	38
Multivariate								
ANCOVA	-	-	2	3	1	-	1	7
MANOVA	3	2	6	9	-	4	8	32
Cluster	3	-	4	-	3	3	3	16
Discriminant	2	3	2	4	4	-	3	18
Regression (Multiple)	3	5	19	10	9	3	25	74
Factor Analysis	2	2	1	1	3	2	9	20
Path Structured Modelling	8	10	25	11	5	7	27	93
Multi Techniques	73	90	142	124	81	67	302	879
Total	280	230	364	266	264	158	616	2178

From Table 5, it can be seen that a large number of studies fall in the multi-technique category. It indicates that the authors have used more than one analytical technique while performing their studies. Under qualitative studies, literature reviews analysis is most popular among researchers (423 studies). Techniques falling under univariate and bivariate techniques are also widely used, a large number of studies have employed multivariate techniques. The use of multiple techniques in the various states of research shows the advancement in the rigour of research (Aulakh and Kotabe, 1993).

8 Findings and Conclusion

Beginning from the evaluation of the conceptual domain of international marketing, it has been identified from literature that international marketing has gained acceptance in and after 1960 as a distinct field of study and after that researchers are continuously investing their efforts to explore dimensions and methodology of international marketing. Rational domain refers to those contented facets, which shape or reshape international marketing at its origin and development. Under the rational domain developmental focus and congenital focus are segmented. Under the sectional domain, benefits and consequences associated with international marketing practices that yield relationship between customers, suppliers, channels of distribution, middleman, market structure and environment, were considered as essential key elements for the success of international marketing.

While assessing the state of the methodological domain, literature synthesis concludes what is the current position of research methods in international marketing subject. Review articles available in this area have considered the methodological domain as an isolated phenomenon without linking the different possible constituents of the domain that could bring home comprehensive information. The findings of this study have been aimed at drawing an objective view as to the theoretical gaps existing in the previous literature, and however do not pour scorn on efforts invested by previous researchers on this subject. It could be a valuable resource for potential researchers of international marketing if they opt for a decisive methodology while appreciating and taking into consideration the different approaches and efforts of the earlier researchers on the subject. Thus, the review and assessment presented here may be considered as a theoretical base for assessing the methodological domain of international marketing.

Through this study, the authors also endeavour to encourage researchers by providing information regarding the relevant research processes. Therefore, they have represented research designs, methods of data collection and analytical techniques in a comprehensive manner along with the framework. This study traces the methodological state for the seven established research streams of international marketing. The research methodologies adopted in the seven streams have been evaluated in the context of research designs, methods of data collection and analytical techniques. The results of the review of the methodological domain show that international marketing has attained a scientific degree in literature because the work done so far has swung towards empirical quantitative studies. It is also clear that researchers are also investing efforts in applying burly research designs. Notably, a broader array of qualitative methods is also being used. The results of the assessment also indicated that previous works

employed a wider range of analytical techniques and most of the authors have used more than one analytical technique to arrive at the results for their studies. The authors also conclude that multiple techniques and mixed methods also exist in the international marketing literature. Owing to the nature of the subject, there is always room for improvement on the theoretical base in this study. Nonetheless, the authors believe that the scope of this study may function as a formidable basis or reference on which potential areas can be further explored.

Managerial Implications and Prospects of Future Research

This study augments the existing body of knowledge by adding theoretical insights to the methodological domain. It spells out research streams and topics available in the subject, research designs and analytical techniques of various research streams, as well as to derive the exact relationship between a particular research stream and its methodologies as the basis for future research. One of the questions before international marketing researchers and practitioners is what should be the right method to conduct feasibility study while going global. Whether, the qualitative and quantitative research designs will continue to dominate the research methodology. This study explores Mixed methods (combinations of qualitative and quantitative research designs) have begun to receive attention in latest studies. It is also clear from an assessment of the methodological trends that international marketing researchers prefer more than one analytical technique and not just single univariate/bivariate or multivariate technique. Therefore, the authors believe this topic is evolving in interesting ways and there will certainly be ample scope for further assessments in future. This study also provides a list of facets that should be given due consideration while performing international marketing projects.

Research Implications

This study provides information to researchers and practitioners of international marketing in identifying how concept of international marketing subject is being shaped into research streams. What types of research designs and analytical techniques for the various rations and research streams that have been published on international marketing. In addition, this article provides information on process and facets for designing preliminary research theme and involved methodology in conducting international marketing studies. From this extensive analysis of previous studies we suggest that researchers' of this subject must first develop a strong research question by analyzing available theories and concept than test them empirically.

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