

QUALITATIVE STUDY

Navigating Global Markets

A Qualitative Framework for Ghanaian Indigenous Product Marketing

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ABSTRACT

The global marketplace presents significant opportunities for indigenous products from developing economies, yet producers often face substantial challenges in crafting effective international marketing strategies. Existing frameworks frequently fail to account for the unique socio-cultural and resource contexts of small and medium-sized enterprises in these regions. This study aimed to develop a contextually grounded qualitative framework to elucidate the strategic marketing processes used by Ghanaian businesses to successfully introduce indigenous products to global markets. A multiple case study design was employed, utilising purposive sampling to select twelve successful export-oriented Ghanaian businesses. Data were collected through in-depth, semi-structured interviews with founders and senior marketing executives, supplemented by analysis of company documents. A thematic analysis was conducted using iterative coding. Analysis identified a core three-phase iterative process: cultural authentication, strategic channel symbiosis, and narrative-driven engagement. A predominant theme was the critical repackaging of cultural narratives for foreign consumers, with over two-thirds of participants emphasising the need to balance authenticity with commercial appeal. One concrete result was the identification of 'strategic heritage dilution' as a deliberate tactic to enhance product acceptability. Successful global marketing for indigenous Ghanaian products is not a linear application of Western models but a nuanced, culturally-embedded process that strategically adapts core product narratives and forges symbiotic distribution partnerships. Policymakers should develop support programmes focused on narrative-building and export channel negotiation skills. Business support organisations must facilitate peer-learning networks among indigenous exporters. Future research should quantitatively test the proposed framework across other product categories and national contexts. Indigenous products, international marketing, qualitative framework, export strategy, Ghana, globalisation, SME This paper provides a novel, empirically-derived process framework that captures the strategic adaptation and channel symbiosis essential for marketing indigenous products globally, moving beyond generic export models to offer context-specific guidance.

Keywords: *Qualitative research, Marketing strategies, Indigenous products, Sub-Saharan Africa, Internationalisation, Ghana, Grounded theory*

Article Highlights

Core Finding

- Identifies a three-phase iterative process: cultural authentication, strategic channel symbiosis, and narrative-driven engagement.
- Reveals 'strategic heritage dilution' as a deliberate tactic to enhance product acceptability in foreign markets.
- Emphasizes repackaging cultural narratives to balance authenticity with commercial appeal for global consumers.
- Proposes a context-specific framework derived from successful Ghanaian export-oriented SMEs.

The study develops a qualitative framework showing global marketing success hinges on culturally-embedded adaptation and symbiotic distribution partnerships, not generic export models.

This paper offers a novel, empirically-derived process framework for indigenous product internationalization.

ABSTRACT-ONLY PUBLICATION

This is an abstract-only publication. The complete research paper with full methodology, results, discussion, and references is available upon request.

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