INNOVATIONS

A structural equation analysis of export marketing adaptation strategies on export performance: evidence from textile and garment exporting enterprises in Ethiopia

Sintayehu Assefa[1,*], Professor Abebe Ejigu[2] and Dr, Gemechu Nemera[3]

[1.]College of Business and Economics, Department of Management, Arba Minch University, P.O.Box 21, Ethiopia

[2.]Department of Logistics Management, International Maritime College Oman, School of Management, Mekelle University, P.O.Box 451, Ethiopia

[3.]College of Business and Economics, Department of Management, Arba Minch University, P.O.Box 21, Ethiopia

*** Correspondence Email: sintayehuassefa58@yahoo.com**

Abstract

The objective of this study was to examine the analysis of export marketingadaptation strategy on export performance ofexport companies based in Medium and large scale Textile and Garment Enterprises exporter in Ethiopia. Based on the purpose of the research and its application, the study is a descriptive – analytic one. In the current study, a questionnaire was used for research data collection to meet the study objectives and the population of the study includes 252 Textile and Garment Enterprises managers.For analysis, SmartPLS-3 was employed and the Model identified product, price, distribution and promotion export adaptation marketing strategy have positive and significant relation on export performancewith a significance level of 0.005, 0.001, 0.000, and 0.000 respectively. To sum it up, the result of this study to exporting firmsspecifically to Textile and Garment Enterprises and policy makers should also develop export adaptation marketing strategy to improveenterprises success.

Key words:1. Export Marketing Mix Strategy 2. Textile and Garment Enterprises 3. Export Performance 4. Ethiopia

1. Introduction

Internationalization of firms from developing countries has become a topic of increasing research interest principally owing to the observed growth effects of cross border venturing, and the demonstrated capacity of medium and large scale enterprises to drive economic development at national and regional levels (Mitigue, 2006; Demeke & Chiloane-Tsoka, 2015). In addition, international export market can bring benefits by allowing countries to utilizemore stable markets and prices their comparative advantage, reap the benefits of scale economies and ensure competition and greater variety of products. Therefore, international presence is one of the

crucial decisions for firm's existence in today's ever more globalized and economical environments(Fayyoza, 2020).

In similar vein, an international trade has increased rapidly over the past few decades, mainly as a result of the growth in output, decreasing protectionism, important improvements in the international communication and transportation systems and greater regional economic integration (Theodosiou&Leonidou, 2007). In an interrelated study made by Waheeduzzaman and Dube(2014) confirmed that the decision concerned with export marketing strategy, which ultimately may determine export performance, has been, is and will be a research area of increasing interest for both academics as well as practitioners in this dynamic and turbulent environmentand generally being seen as one of the most relevant international marketing topics for the twenty-first century for firms survival. Stoian (2010) affirmed also that the desirability and/or feasibility of standardizing or adapting the export marketing strategy has been subject to numerous controversial discussions, nevertheless without reaching a general agreement (Rao-Nicholson & Khan, 2017; Imiru, 2018; Fayyoza, 2020).

In an international marketing strategy context, it is known that most studies in this regard centered on Multinational Enterprises (MNCs) and studies on export marketing strategy on medium and large scale enterprisesin developing countries context has been limited (Theodosiou&Leonidou, 2007; Leonidou et al., 2015).Bearing in mind, it is the aim of this study to examinethe role of export marketing adaptation strategies on export performance of medium, and large-scale Textile and Garment enterprises in Ethiopia.

2. Theoretical Framework and Hypotheses

Export marketing strategy is a means by which firms respond to competitive market conditions for survival. Conventionally, marketing strategy has been decomposed into the four elements of the marketing mix, i.e. product, pricing, place and promotion. Here, the linking of marketing strategy to export performance has been one of the most widely investigated topics in international marketing research as confirmed by (Rosenbloom et al., 1997; Shoham et al., 2008; Karaca, 2017;
Wang et al, 2017; Kashefi, et al, 2019; Chitauro&Khumalo, 2020; Fayyoza, 2020;Karim et al., 2020).Still, although a great deal of research has been conducted in the area with the diversity of conceptualizations and performance measurements has led to contradictory and inconsistentconclusions. In view of such an issue, the following reviews made in line with the objective of the study, the influence of varying marketing mix elements to export performance would be explored in the case of Textile and Garment enterprise in Ethiopia.

2.1. Export Product Adaptation Strategy

With regard to international marketing strategy, Hultman et al., (2009) disclosed that the relationship between product adaptation and export performance is a key issue within the international marketing strategy which is still rather unclear. The Study findings of (Lee & Griffith, 2004; Ali EkberAkgun et al., 2014; Joao, 2015; Leonidou et al., 2015;Erdil&Ozdemir, 2016; Calantone et al., 2016; Worku,2016; Kasiso, 2017, Valeria, 2017) concur that there existed a positive and strong evidence of the relationship between export product adaptation strategy and market performance of firms. A study made by Karaca (2017) disclosed that there is negative

relationship between export product adaptation strategy and export performance. Consequently, the following hypotheses is posited:

Ho1: Export product adaptation marketing strategy has no a positive and significant effect on export performance of Medium and Large scale Textile and Garment Enterprises in Ethiopia.

2.2. Export Price Adaptation Strategy

Parallel study with pricing export adaptation strategy and satisfaction with export performance, though research lacks about price adaptation in the literature (Lages& Montgomery, 2014), the results obtained in relationship with export performance are mixed. There are numerous studies that recognize a positive and significant relationship between price export adaptation strategy and export performance (Shoham and Albaum, 1994; Lee & Griffith, 2004; Hoang, 2015; Leonidou et al., 2015; Marianne et al, 2016;Kasiso, 2017). Alternatively, there are other studies that indicated negative relationship between export price adaptation marketing strategy and export performance (Koh and Robicheaux, 1988; Shoham, 1996; Sousa, &Lengler, 2009; Lages& Montgomery, 2014; Zeriti et al, 2014; Karaca, 2017).Therefore, the following hypotheses is posited:

Ho2: Export price adaptation marketing strategy has no a positive and significant effect on export performance of Medium and Large scale Textile and Garment Enterprises in Ethiopia.

2.3. Export Promotion Adaptation Strategy

With promotion export strategy and satisfaction with export performance, when we talk about export promotion adaptation strategy we can find many studies reporting that firms that adapt their export promotional strategies faces improvements in export performance (Shoham, 1996; Poulis&Poulis, 2011; Antonio et al, 2016; Karaca, 2017;Kim-Soon et al, 2018). And in the same way, in Leonidou et al., (2015) findings showed positive association between export promotion strategy and export performance, but on the other hand, a study made by (Cavusgil&Zou, 1994; O'Cass& Julian, 2003)stated that a negative association exists between export promotion adaptation strategy and export performance. Therefore, the following hypotheses is posited:

Ho3: Export promotion adaptation marketing strategy has no a positive and significant effect on export performance of Medium and Large scale Textile and Garment Enterprises in Ethiopia.

2.4. Export Distribution Adaptation Strategy

With regard to export distributionadaptation marketing strategy, it is the export marketing mix element least investigated which is receiving particularly little attention in the context of standardization versus adaptation contention (Leonidou et al., 2015).

From the perspective of the export place strategy adaptation with other marketing mix elements, we can say that this marketing mix element received particularly little attention in the context of standardization versus adaptation contention (Shoham et al., 2008). In their comprehensive review, Li (2018) found a strong positive correlation performance of export distribution strategy and export performance of firms. In another interrelated studies (Zaiem&Zghidi, 2011; Karaca,

2017; Kasiso, 2017; Njuguna, 2018)found a strong positive correlation between distribution adaptation strategies and export performance.Therefore, the following hypotheses is posited:

Ho4: Export distribution adaptation marketing strategy has no a positive and significant effect on export performance of Medium and Large scale Textile and Garment Enterprises in Ethiopia.

3. Research Methodology

3.1. Population and sampling of respondents

This study uses a quantitative methodology to analyze data collected from a questionnaire. Close-ended questions format with five-points Likert Scale were used (i.e. 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5), which indicated 'strongly disagree', 'disagree', 'neutral, 'agree' and 'strongly agree' were used for helping the respondents to make quick decisions to prioritize the explanatory factors. All medium and all large-scale Textile and Garment enterprises which are engaged in export were selected. Out of 315 questionnaires distributed, 252 were returned yielding a response rate of 80%.

4. Result and Discussions

4.1. Measurement Model on Export Marketing Strategy

As presented in Table 4.1, and according to Wong (2013), the factor loadings for the extracted factor were all above the critical value of 0.5 for all the items and composite reliability is was tested to confirm the construct reliability as well, and the result indicated that all the values were greater than 0.7 (Kline, 2010, Kock, 2016). In addition, as can be seen from Table 4.1 that the result of coefficients output – Collinearity statistics disclosed that VIF value ranging from 1.309 to 4.500 meaning that the VIF value obtained is between 1 to 10, therefore, it can be concluded that there is no multicollinearity issue.

As can be seen from Table 4.2 that, Fornell and Larcker's (1981) guideline disclosed also that the AVE values for each construct exceeded 0.50, which demonstrates the statistical significance of all items of the measurement model and is consistent (Barclay *et al*. 1995, Juniati, et al, 2019). In addition, the range of AVE lies between 0.569 - 0.864 to all study variables. Therefore, Figure 4.2 displays that all the four constructs of product export marketing adaptation strategy, price export marketing strategy, place export marketing adaptation strategy and promotion export marketing adaptation strategy, and export performance were statistically significant with a value < 0.05 to all constructs.

Based on the result of coefficients output – Collinearity statistics, the result disclosed that VIF value ranging from 1.205 to 5.603 as it is displayed from Table 4.1, meaning that the VIF value obtained is between 1 to 10, hence, there is no multicollinearity concern (Hair et al, 2019).

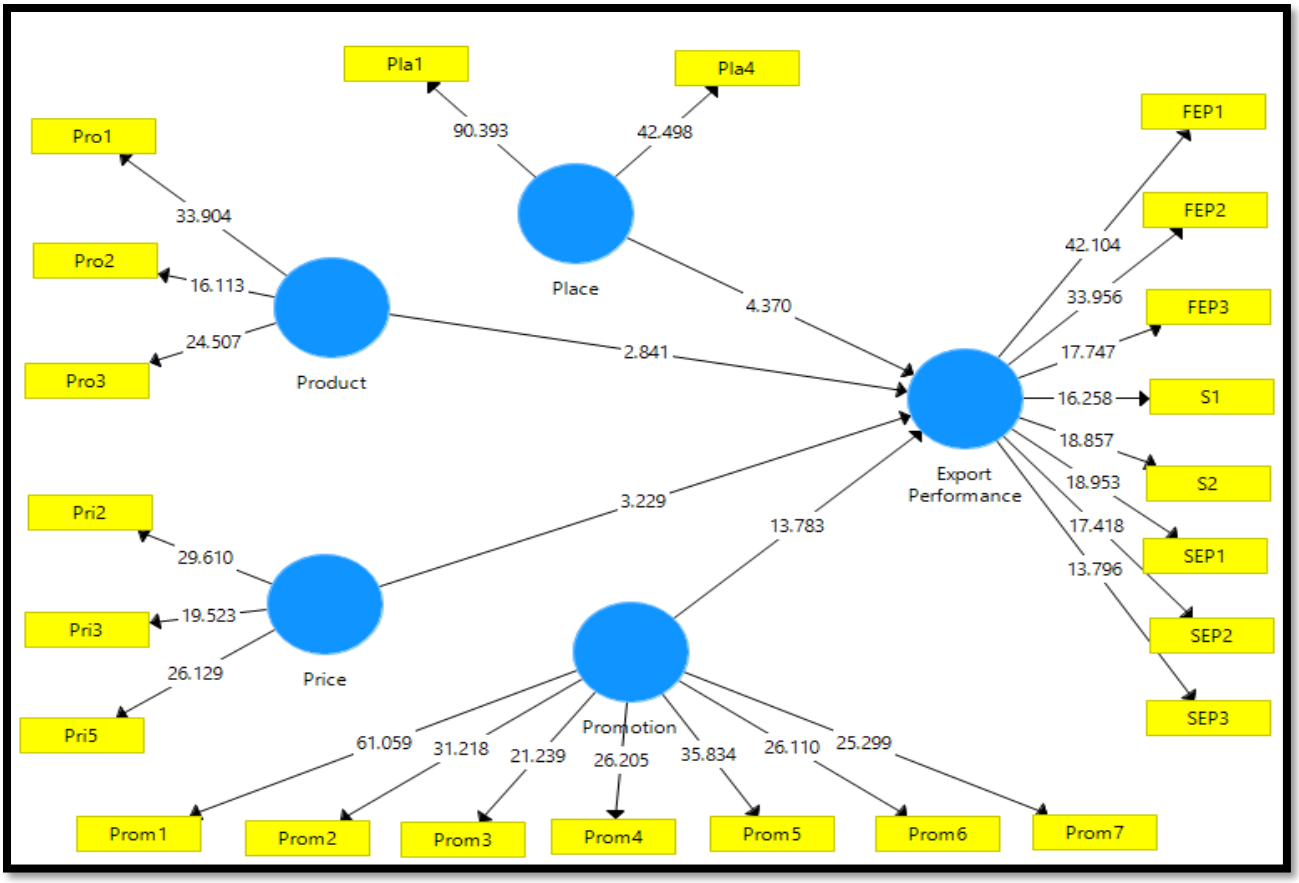

Figure 4.1. Structural model assessment (n = 252 bootstrapped samples)

Table 4.1: Summary results for Measurement model assessment

Variables	Indicators	Loadings	Cronbach's Alpha	VIF	CR[a]	AVE[b]
Product Adaptation Marketing Strategy	**Pro1**	0.834	0.726	1.553	0.846	0.647
	Pro2	0.755		1.309		
	Pro3	0.822		1.523		
Price Adaptation Marketing Strategy	**Pri2**	0.818	0.706	1.359	0.835	0.629
	Pri3	0.763		1.374		
	Pri5	0.797		1.404		
Place Adaptation Marketing Strategy	**Pla1**	0.776	0.843	2.134	0.927	0.864
	Pla4	0.755		2.134		
Promotion Adaptation Marketing Strategy	**Prom1**	0.831	0.896	4.100	0.917	0.614
	Prom2	0.798		4.300		
	Prom3	0.749		2.445		
	Prom4	0.759		2.398		
	Prom5	0.812		4.500		
	Prom6	0.753		2.045		
	Prom7	0.777		4.100		
Export Performance	**FEP1**	0.848	0.891	2.763	0.913	0.569
	FEP2	0.814		2.901		
	FEP3	0.706		1.658		
	S1	0.744		2.374		
	S2	0.765		2.003		
	SEP1	0.749		2.377		
	SEP2	0.710		2.174		
	SEP3	0.684		1.920		

[a]Composite reliability (CR) = (square of the summation of the factor loadings)/{(square of the summation of the factor loadings) + (square of the summation of the error variances)}.
[b]Average variance extracted (AVE) = (summation of the square of the factor loadings)/ {(summation of the square of factor loadings) + (summation of the error variances)

Table 4.2: Fornell-Larcker criteria for Discriminant Validity of Export Marketing Strategy

	1	2	3	4	5
1. Export Performance	**0.754**				
2. Export place adaptation marketing strategy	0.713	**0.929**			
3. Export price adaptation marketing strategy	0.617	0.493	**0.793**		
4. Export product adaptation marketing strategy	0.622	0.497	0.507	**0.804**	
5. Export promotion adaptation marketing strategy	0.853	0.719	0.588	0.619	**0.783**

Source: SMART PLS 3 Algorithm 2021 result

Table 4.3. Results of Hypothesis Testing of Export Marketing Strategy

Hypothesis	OS	SD	T	P	Supported
Product -> Export Performance	0.108	0.038	2.841	0.005*	Yes
Price -> Export Performance	0.134	0.042	3.229	0.001*	Yes
Place -> Export Performance	0.176	0.040	4.370	0.000*	Yes
Promotion -> Export Performance	0.580	0.042	13.783	0.000*	Yes

Source: SMART PLS 3 Bootstrap 2021 result
Notes: * significant at 0.05

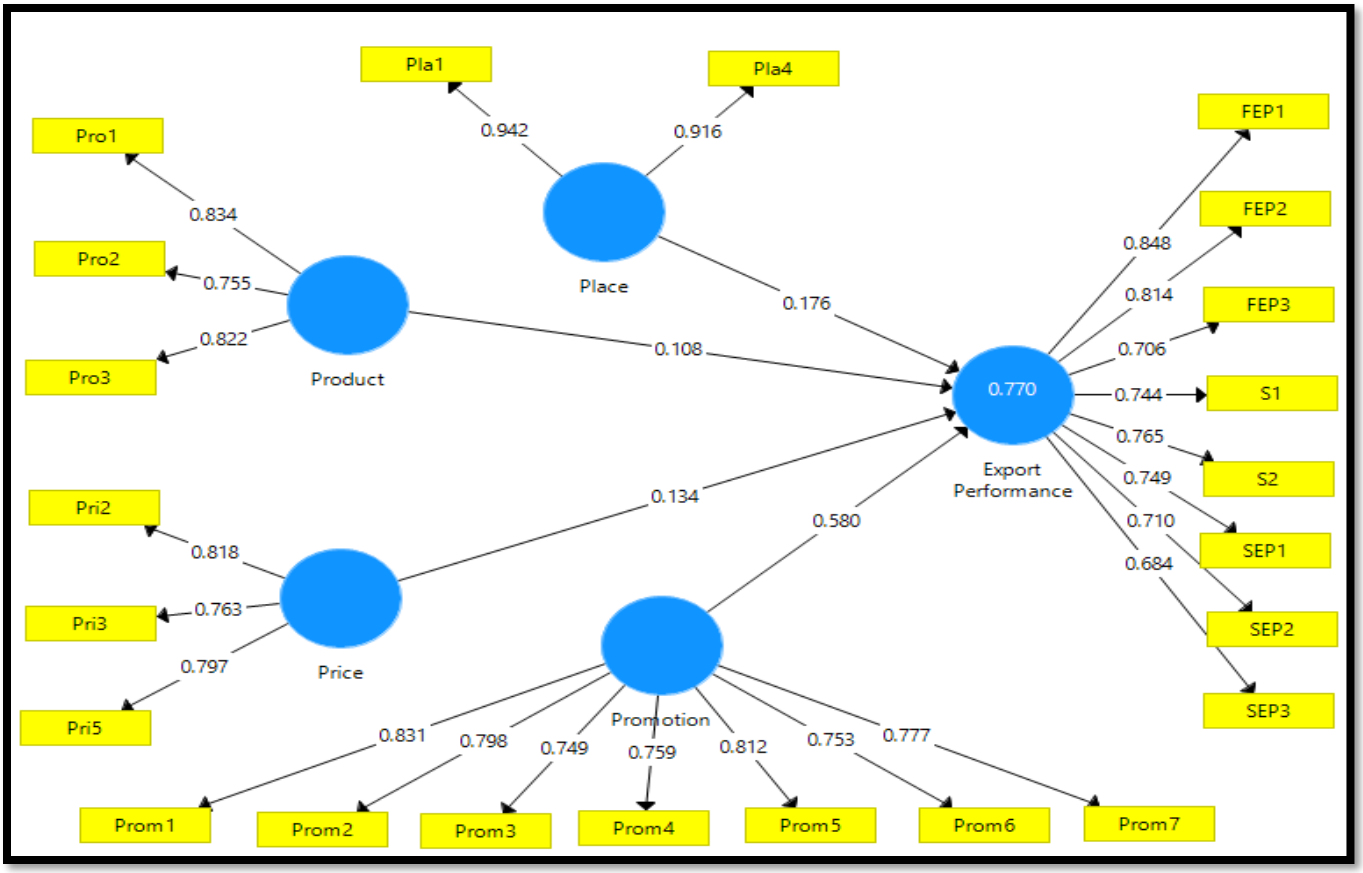

Figure 4.2. The Measurement Model

The PLS-SEM was used to test hypotheses H_1, H_2, H_3, and H_4concerning the relationship of export marketing adaptation strategies and export performance as shown in Table 4.3 and based on the beta coefficient with 95% confidence level and p-value to test whether the hypothesis is supported or not.

As can be seen from Table 4.3 presents the path coefficients (β), standard deviation, T-statistics, and P values. All the relationships (path coefficients) of product, price, place and promotion were found to be significant. Figure 4.2 shows the graphical representation of the inner model and the significant paths suggested that all hypotheses were supported.

Hypothesis 1 states that export product adaptation marketing strategy significantly affecting export performance.The PLS-SEM model as shown in Table 4.3, Figure 4.1, and Figure 4.2 confirms that the beta coefficient, p-values t-values are significant (β1 = 0.018, p=0.005, T = 2.841), showing export product marketing strategy significantlyaffecting export performance of enterprises. Hence, H1 was supported.The finding of most studies made by (Moghaddam*et al*., 2011; Rao-Nicholson & Khan, 2017; Njuguna, 2018; Kashefi, *et al*, 2019; Karim *et al*, 2020) have been largely consistent with this study result that export product marketing strategy significantly affecting export performance. In another interrelated study made by Stoian et al., (2012) also confirmed similar result. But, a few studies have found mixed results which negates the study result. Others works concludes also export product marketing strategy significantly affecting export performance (Addis, 2010; Zeriti et al., 2014;Chen, 2016; Karim et al; 2020; Muis, 2020). In similar vein, Amine and Cavusgil, (1986) inferred that product adaptation strategies negatively affected export performance of firms. Such inconsistencies in the results of these studies could arise from the specific nature of the industry or firm circumstances that may have needed to be investigated using the contingency theory of internationalization.

Hypothesis 2 states that export price adaptation marketing strategy significantly affecting export performance. The PLS-SEM model as shown in Table 4.3, Figure 4.1, and Figure 4.2 confirm that the beta coefficient, p-values and t-values are significant(β2 = 0.134, p=0.001, T = 3.229), showing export price adaptation marketing strategy significantly affecting export performance of enterprises. Hence, H2 was supported. Studies made by (Lee & Griffith, 2004; Leonidou et al., 2015; Njuguna, 2018) and supports to the finding of this study and the most researched aspects of pricing as a strategy are pricing techniques, terms of sales, credit strategy, currency strategy, and price adaptation determined that the ability of exporters to modify prices in foreign market situations significantly affecting export performance. Moreover, they also found that adaption of a suitable pricing mechanism would improve their ability to generate more revenue from exporting of products. But, a few studies however contradicts the result which is affirmed by a study made by Adis (2010) reports that price competitiveness as an export marketing strategy did not affect the export performance because it might have led to less damaging price wars among exporters.

Hypothesis 3 states that export place adaptation marketing strategy significantly affecting export performance. The PLS-SEM model as shown in Table 4.3, Figure 4.1, and Figure 4.2 confirms that the beta coefficient, p-values and t-values are significant(β2 = 0.176, p=0.000, T= 4.370) showing export place adaptation marketing strategy significantly affecting export performance of enterprises. Hence, H3 was supported. The result is consistent with the study result of Leonidou

et al., (2015) concluded that the use of a foreign sales representative office, direct sourcing, dealer support and after sale service contributed to positive export performance. Similarly, the finding of (Karanja et al., 2014; Njuguna, 2018; Chitauro&Khumalo, 2020) are also consistent with the finding that export distribution adaptation marketing strategy significantly affecting export performance of enterprises. In contrast, there were a few studies that found that export performance was not affected by export place strategy, such as (Adis, 2010) and the reason for such inconsistencies was due to the failure of such ventures to have any strategic marketing effort to improve the export performance of firms.

Hypothesis 4 states that export place adaptation marketing strategy significantly affecting export performance.The PLS-SEM model as shown in Table 4.3, Figure 4.1, and Figure 4.2confirms that the beta coefficient, p-values and and t-values are significant($\beta 2 = 0.580$, $p=0.000$, $T = 13.783$) showing export promotion adaptation significantlyaffecting export performance of enterprises. Hence, H4 was supported.Consistent with this study finding, a study made by (Blesa&Ripolle, 2008; Njuguna, 2018; Kebede, 2019) have been largely consistent to this study result that export promotion adaptation strategy affecting export performance and a study made by Eusebio et.al (2007) argue that promotion strategy enables the exporting firm to acclimatize internationalizationand pursue an accurate customers with an integrated messaging and that it has a positive effect to export performance. In another interrelated study made by Al-Aali et al., 2013) concluded that increased investment in promotional drives did not translate to superior export results but Sraha (2016) concluded that advertising spending had an adverse influence on export performance of enterprises.

5. Concluding remarks

The four variables which are export product adaptation, export price adaptation, export place distribution and export promotion adaptation strategy have a significant influence on export performance of textile and garment enterprises.

With regard to export marketing strategy concerned, the structural equation model result shows that export marketing strategy dimensions (i.e. export place adaptation, export price adaptation, export product and export promotion adaptation marketing strategy) have a strongly affecting export performance of enterprises. Therefore, it was concluded that as all of the four export marketing strategy dimensions are increased with certain fraction export performance will also increase by some unit.

The finding of Fornell-Larcker criteria for discriminant validity result indicated that export distribution or place adaptation marketing strategy was the most influential factors affecting export performance of Textile and Garment enterprises in Ethiopia followed by export product, export price and export promotion adaptation strategy. Finally, the four export marketing strategy dimensions significantly explained the variations of export performance in the textile and Garment enterprises export performance by 77.0 percent but the rest 23.0 percent variation explained by the other export adaptation marketing strategy which were not included in this study.

6. Limitations of the study

There are a number of limitations associated with this research finding. First, all primary data was obtained from respondents through questionnaire so response were based on the respondents perception, thus research findings might have been biased that limit the generalizability of results. However these limitations in the study leave future ground for explorations and research on the subject. Second, the area coverage of this study was delimited to only 252 textile and garment enterprises in Ethiopia. The targeted population numbers for this study is large but the researcher tried to estimate a representative sample size for the purpose of maximizing the credibility of the study. On top of this, the conclusions and recommendations drawn by this study will be applicable only for textile and garment enterprises incorporated in the study.

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