

## **Export Performance Determinants Modeling Trial : Theoretical Framework**

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**Summary:** Export performance determinants modeling is a vast and complex field of research that attracts the attention of researchers and practitioners in international trade. Understanding the key factors that influence business success in foreign markets is crucial to developing effective export strategies and increasing international competitiveness.

In this regard, the literature review focused on determinants of export performance, thus contributing to theoretical and practical advances in this area.

Our contribution aims to make a synthesis of the various studies and empirical research, to result in the different determinants of the company's export performance, in relation to the environment (internal and external), marketing strategy and its competences.

**Keywords:** export performance, modeling, determinants, enterprise environment, skills, strategy

### **INTRODUCTION**

The export performance of companies is a crucial subject of analysis to understand their competitiveness in international markets. Many factors influence this performance, and understanding them enables companies to develop more effective export strategies.

Export performance determinants modeling is a vast and complex field of research that attracts the attention of researchers and practitioners in international trade. Understanding the key factors that influence business success in foreign markets is crucial to developing effective export strategies and increasing international competitiveness.

This research paper aims to present a modeling contribution of the determinants of export performance, by presenting the different theoretical, empirical and conceptual contributions to determine the key factors of enterprise success in the international market.

#### **1. Export determinants: input and modelling**

The review of literature in this sense of modeling of the determinants of performance at export, we will present a list of attempts to model performance determinants at export. Our

selection of the authors' works is not exhaustive. For example, we will cite in a chronological manner the research work on determinants of export performance developed by some authors.

### **1.1. SME behavior and export processes : Miesenbock (1988)**

Many studies, since Tookey in 1964, have attempted to characterize certain factors affecting companies' export capacity. The main research is at two levels : empirical research on the explanatory factors of SME/SME exports and an attempt to define export process patterns. The study carried out by Miesenbock (1987), is very interesting, the fact that it focused on small and their behaviour in the international market. Our author came to an important conclusion that the important factor in the export activity is the decision maker or the leader. For this author, the manager plays a very important role in the process of growth of small especially at the level of external growth (export behaviour). The profile of the leader is the most important determinant in the internationalization of small. In addition, the literature review by Miesenbock (1987) shows that export is a sequential process in which the company gradually increases its commitment to export (the theory of the stages of internationalization by Johnson and Vahlne 1977).

### **1.2. Determinants of export performance : Madsen (1987)**

Madsen (1987) synthesizes 17 studies on the company's export performance, published between 1964 and 1985. He was one of the first authors to propose a literature review or establish a classification of the variables operationalized in the studies considered as indicators of 20 concepts that relate to three major categories.

Based on the SCP (Structure – Behavior – Performance) paradigm, Madsen (1987) advances the idea that an organization's performance (O-performance) is the result of continuous pursuit and interaction with other groups of variables, namely its own organizational structure, the structure of its environment (E-Structure), and its own strategies.

The table shows the correlations between export performance and the respective variables in this review. This is how Madsen (1987) classified determinants according to the strategy-structure-performance logic.

**Table 1 : Determinants of export performance according to Madsen (1987)**

The structure of the environment (E-structure)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The attractiveness of the export market.</li> <li>• Barriers to trade.</li> <li>• Physical distance to the market.</li> <li>• Psychological and cultural distance.</li> <li>• The appeal of the domestic market.</li> <li>• Market type.</li> </ul>
The structure of the organization (O-structure)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General resources of the company</li> <li>• Export marketing knowledge</li> <li>• Leadership support</li> <li>• Export status in the organization</li> <li>• Technological intensity..</li> </ul>
The Organization Strategy (O-Strategy)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intensity of market research</li> <li>• Price competitiveness.</li> <li>• Product quality.</li> <li>• Channel support</li> <li>• The intensity of communication.</li> <li>• Intensity of planning and control.</li> <li>• Adaptation of the marketing strategy.</li> <li>• Marketing concentration.</li> <li>• International Marketing</li> <li>• Concentration Marketing Strategy</li> </ul>

**Source :** Allouani, S.A. (2013). “Les déterminants relationnels de la performance export contribution à travers le concept de capacités relationnelles : Cas des PME au Maroc” thèse de doctorat en sciences de gestion à l’université Hassan II Settat. P.9

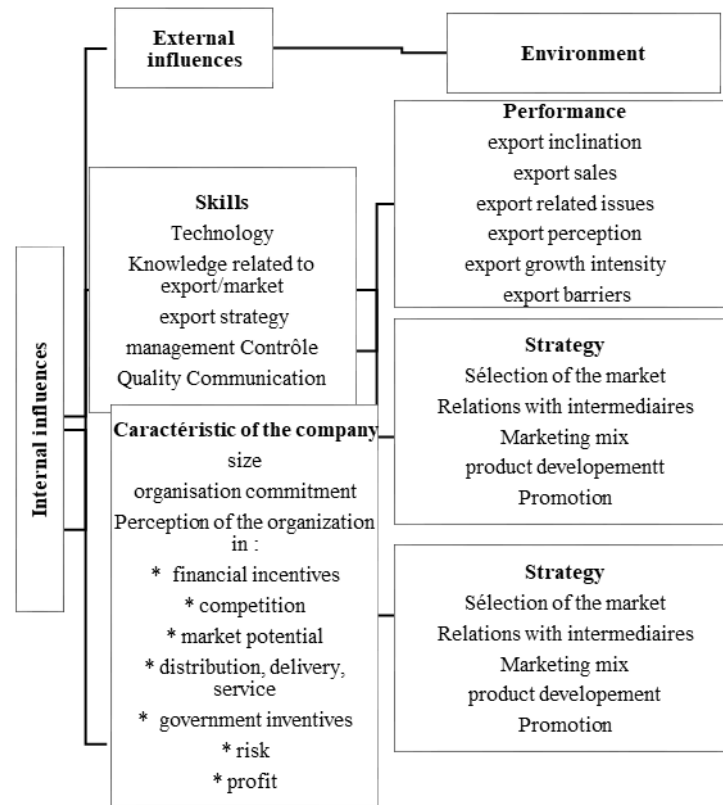
The Madsen analysis (1987), states that the confirmation of a significant relationship with export performance was only possible for a few determinants, for the author this may be explained in part by the fact that in the studies examined, the operationalization of variables was done in different ways, besides Madsen (1987) adds that the studies did not take into account the different variables independent of the organization.

### **1.3. The general model for assessing export performance variables : Aaby and Slater (1989)**

In 1989, Aaby and Slater published their famous article on “The Influence of Management Practices on Export Performance” They review fifty-five empirical studies on export marketing published between 1978 and 1988.

These authors note that the research done during this period is diverse and numerous, while the findings are fragmented, so they describe an integrative model of export performance (see figure).

**Figure 1 : Aaby and Slater’s Overall Model for Evaluation of Export Performance Variables**



**Source:** Aaby, N. and Slater, S.F. (1989), “Management Influences on Export Performance: A Review of the Empirical Literature 1979 – 88”, *International Marketing Review*, 6(4) 726. P. 9

On the basis of their studies, the authors identified four categories of independent variables, namely, environment, skills, company characteristics and strategy adopted, as opposed to a dependent variable that is export performance.

- External elements related to the business environment that impact export performance ; -
- Internal variables under the company's control, which are divided into two categories :
- The company's competencies include information systems, planning, communication, and technologies.
- The business's attributes, such as its scale, export-focused mindset, and assessment of its market potential.

- Marketing strategy : the development of new products, the marketing mix, and the selection of overseas markets all influence the choice of export marketing strategy.

The findings of Aaby and Slater (1989) highlight the importance of skills over company characteristics and the notion that success hinges on managers having a clear export goal, a pro-export attitude and perception, and a willingness to conduct business internationally. However, this attempt to compile prior research has drawn criticism for focusing only on the effects of management practices and ignoring the effects of the enterprise's external environment.

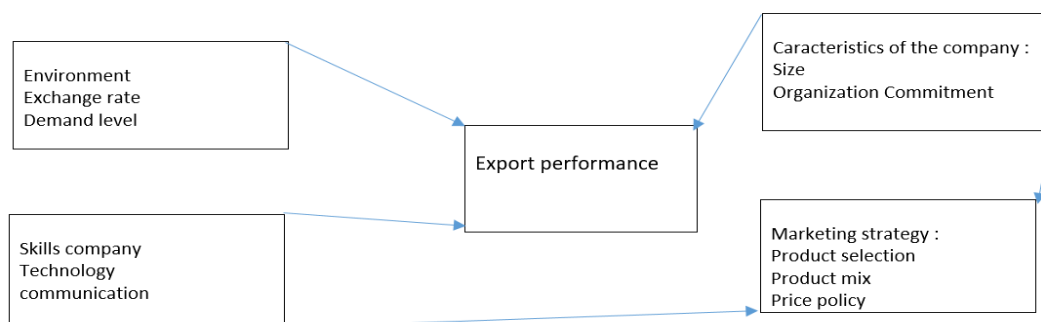
#### 1.4. Company characteristics and skills and export performance : Chetty and Hamilton (1993)

These authors took on the model synthesized by Aaby and Slater (1989) to provide a meta-analysis of the overall export performance model proposed by the authors Aaby, and Slader. (1989). By bringing together 111 studies to test the proposed framework in their analysis, they provide considerable support to the concept model of export performance.

The authors trace the direct relationships between the internal characteristics of the company and that of the environment with export performance with a four-variable model (environment, company characteristics, skills and marketing strategy.) that affect export performance.

Chetty and Hamilton (1993), unlike Aaby and Slater (1989) directly link company skills to export performance. In addition, they claim that the marketing strategy is influenced by both the skills and characteristics of the company.

**Figure 2 : Structure of the Chetty and Hamilton Export Performance Model**



**Source:** Chetty, S. K. and Hamilton, R. T. (1993) "Firm-level Determinants of Export: A Meta-analysis", *International Marketing Review*, Vol. 10, No. 3 pp 26-34, P. 27

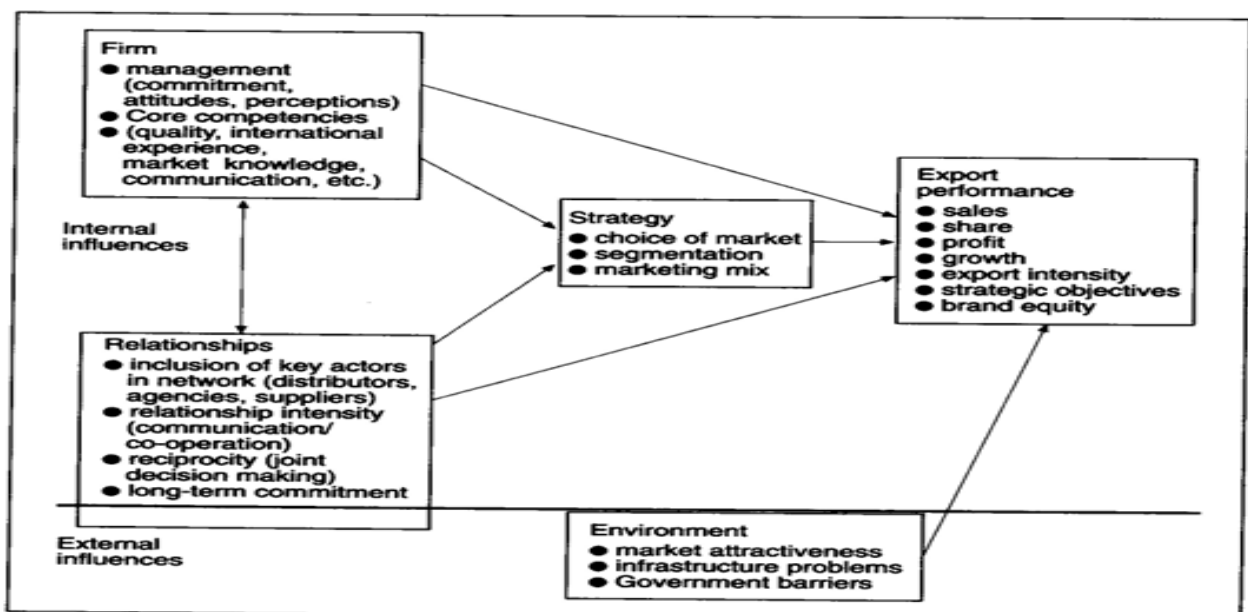
### 1.5. The Hybrid Model of Export Performance Determinants : Styles and Ambler (1994)

In their contribution, Styles and Ambler (1994) looked at models developed within the relationship paradigm and models of customer-supplier relationships and their dynamics, without considering their implications for performance.

Styles and Ambler (1994) conducted a study or proposed a revised model of that of Aaby and Slater (1989) and that is as follows :

- The key factors for the success of the company are the managerial characteristics, the basic skills, such as the company's ability to obtain and analyze the information and resources from the environment. - The strategic relationship variable, as well as the relationship network of the enterprise allow the company a good accumulation of information and help in making the right decisions. (See figure).

**Figure 3 : The hybrid model proposed by Styles and Ambler (1994)**



**Source :** Rahariniaina, C. G. (2012). "Export barriers perceived by SMEs in developing countries : case of Madagascar" (Doctoral dissertation, University of Quebec at Trois-Rivières). October 2012, P. 54

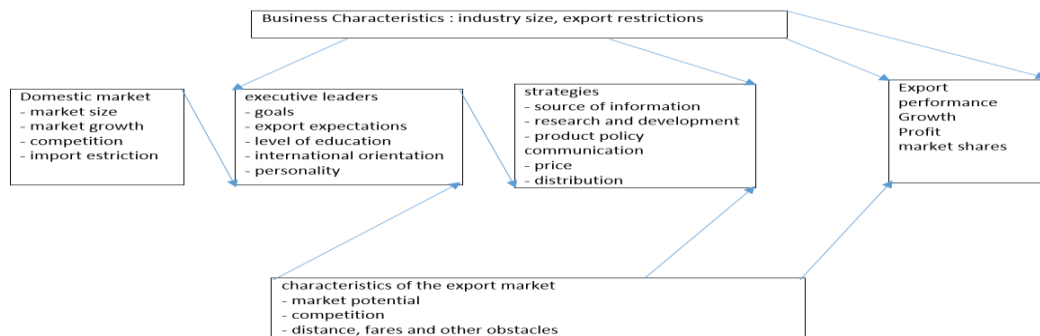
### 1.6. Export Marketing Success Factors : Gemunden (1991)

Based on the work of Madsen (1987), Gemunden (1991) carried out a quantitative meta-analysis of these studies to identify the key factors of export marketing success and to assess their influence through objective statistical procedures.

With a sample of fifty studies, published between 1964 and 1987, the author used more than

700 indicators allegedly influencing the performance of more than 9,000 exporters in 18 different countries. (See figure).

**Figure 4 : Gemunden theoretical framework**



**Source:** Gemunden.H. G, (1991). « Success factors of export marketing: A meta-analytic critique of the empirical studies » *New perspectives on international marketing* 33-62, P. 4

Gemunden (1991) also develops a conceptual framework synthesizing all variables classified as : the characteristics of the export market, local market, managers (managers), company characteristics, company strategies and export success (export performance).

At the level of export performance measurement and evaluation Gemunden (1991) distinguishes three indicators, namely export market shares, export growth and export profits. Gemunden (1991) concludes that there is no positive relationship between intensity and growth, nor between strength and profit. Indeed, the review by the author revealed four important determinants of export performance which are as follows : the size of the company, the sources of information, the intensity of research and development and the adaptation of export-oriented products and services.

### **1.7. Export performance determinants : Zou and Stan (1998)**

Zou and Stan (1998) again tried to provide an updated overview of the studies carried out between 1987 and 1997 ; they took up the work done by Aaby and Slater (1989) by adding the external environment and updating their literature review, which includes 50 studies. By analyzing and updating previous studies, Zou and Stan (1998) concluded that the determinants of export performance were classified according to two criteria : the localization criterion (External – Internal) and that of controllability (controlable – non-controlable). The table below shows the classification proposed by Zou and Stan (1998).

**Table 2 : Determinants of Export Performance by Zou and Stan**

	<b>Internal determinants</b>	<b>external determinants</b>
<b>Controllable</b>	<p><b><u>General export strategy</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Use of market studies</li> <li>▪ Product quality</li> <li>▪ Price competitiveness</li> <li>▪ Intensity of promotion</li> <li>▪ Adaptation to the distribution network</li> <li>▪ Attitudes and perception of management</li> <li>▪ Commitment to export</li> <li>▪ International orientation</li> <li>▪ Perceived export advantages</li> <li>▪ Perceived barriers to export</li> </ul>	
<b>Uncontrollable</b>	<p><b><u>Characteristics of management</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ International management experience</li> <li>▪ The level of education and experience of the leader</li> </ul> <p>▪ <b><u>Business Skills and Traits</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Company size</li> <li>▪ International competence</li> <li>▪ Corporate age</li> <li>▪ The company's capabilities and skills</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Industry Characteristics</u></b></p> <p>The technological intensity of the industry</p> <p>The level of stability of the industry</p> <p><b><u>Characteristics of the foreign market</u></b></p> <p>The attractiveness of the market</p> <p>Competitiveness of the market</p> <p>Export barriers</p>

**Source :** Zou, S., et Stan, S. (1998). The determinants of export performance: à review of the empirical literature between 1987 and 1997. International marketing review. P. 11

In their analysis, the authors report that, for many variables, the alleged links to export performance have not been confirmed, especially those related to industry characteristics, but emphasize the absence of a negative link between the identified variables and export performance. Furthermore, studies have little interest in negative relationships, thus promoting the highlighting of positive or non-significant relationships.

According to the Zou and Stan table (1998), internal factors are based on the resource theory, while external factors are founded on the theory of industrial organization.

Controllable factors are defined as the determinants of performance that managers can support to affect their export performance. In contrast, uncontrollable factors are the determinants that managers cannot change in the short term ; add that Zou and Stan (1998) noted that the internal resources of the organization and strategy are the key determinants of export performance.



### 1.8. Export management and performance factors : Leonidou, Katsikeas and Piercy (1998)

Leonidou, Katsikeas and Piercy (1998) compiled 46 empirical studies published between 1960 and 1995, focusing on management factors that facilitate or hinder the dimensions of the company's performance.

These management characteristics are classified according to two dimensions : objective vs subjective and general vs specific.

The analysis of empirical studies shows positive results for “the level of education of the manager and the mastery of languages by the manager” However, for the other determinants, the authors state that the limited number of studies has limited conclusions in this regard. (See table).

**Figure 5 : Export management and performance factors : Leonidou, Katsikeas and Piercy (1998)**

<u>Objective-General</u>	<u>Objective-Specific</u>
- Age group	- Ethnic origin
- Educational attainment	- Language proficiency
- Professional experience	- Time spent abroad
	- Foreign travel
<u>Subjective-General</u>	<u>Subjective-Specific</u>
- Risk tolerance	- Risk perception
- Innovativeness	- Cost perception
- Flexibility	- Profit perception
- Commitment	- Growth perception
- Quality and dynamism	- Complexity perception

**Source** Leonidou, L. C., Katsikeas, C. S., & Piercy, N. F. (1998). Identifying managerial influences on exporting: past research and future directions. *Journal of international marketing*, 6(2), 74-102. P. 6

### 1.9. Marketing strategy and determinants of export performance : Leonidou, Katsikeas and Samiee (2002)

Based on the previous basis, Leonidou, Katsikeas and Samiee (2002) address 36 studies on marketing strategy determinants influencing export performance.

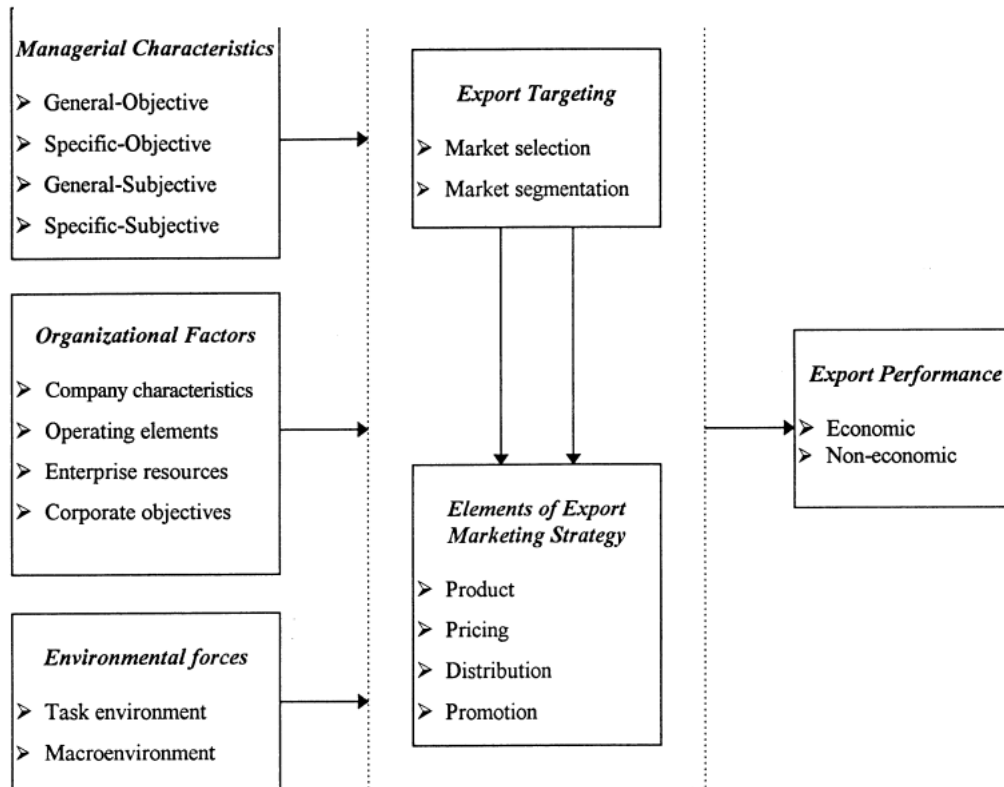
The model identifies five groups of variables, the relationships of these groups with export performance have been highlighted in various research (Cavusgil et Zou, 1994).

The authors distinguish six criteria for measuring export performance : export sales share (export intensity) ; export sales growth ; export profit level ; export sales volume ; export market share ; export contribution to corporate profits.

The authors showed a unidirectional causal relationship. For this, managerial, organizational and environmental factors have a significant impact on the company's export targeting strategy as well as its marketing mix, which in turn influences export performance.

The model below summarizes the process. (See figure)

**Figure 6 : Synthetic export performance model : (Leonidou, Katsikeas et samiee.)**



**Source:** Leonidou, L. C., Katsikeas, C. S., and Samiee, S. (2002). Marketing strategy determinants of export performance: a meta-analysis. *Journal of Business research*, 55(1), 51-67, P. 2

#### **1.10. Conceptual framework on determinants of export performance : Sousa, C.M.P., Martinez-Lopez, F.J. and Coelho, F (2008)**

Sousa, C.M.P., Martinez-Lopez, F.J. and Coelho, F (2008) expressed their appreciation for the efforts made by the studies by Zou and Stan (1998), and Aaby, and Slater (1989), to produce an integrating model of previous studies, but they criticised these authors for not taking into account control variables and moderating variables.

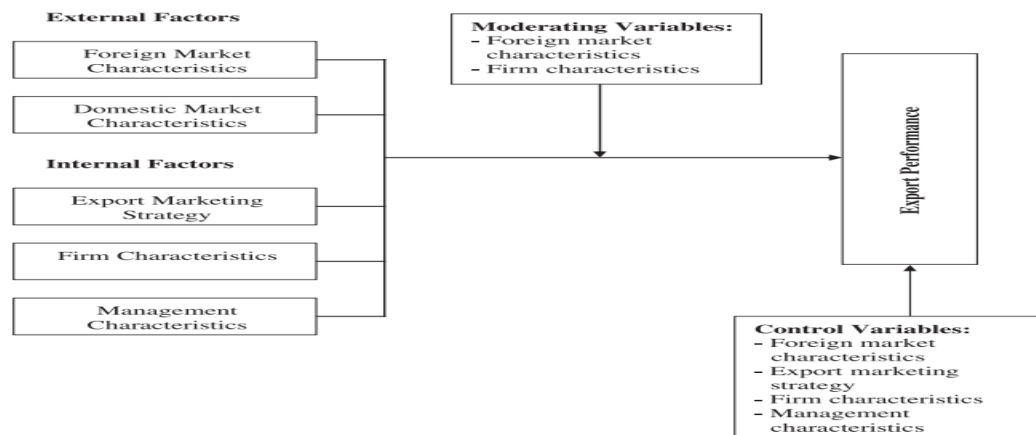
Moderating variables are variables that systematically change the shape and/or strength of the relationship between a preacher and a dependent variable. (Sharma 1981) While a control variable can be defined as a variable that can directly influence the dependent variable, these variables are recognized as playing an important role and impacting export performance.

(Katsikeas et al 2000).

The moderating variables used by Sousa et al (2008) are the characteristics of the export market and the company's characteristics, while the control variables are the foreign market features, marketing strategy, company characteristics and manager characteristics.

Sousa et al (2008) propose an updated review and analysis of empirical studies carried out between 1998 and 2005 on determinants of export performance, or they identify 40 determinants (31 internal grouped in marketing strategy, company characteristics and management characteristics) and others (9 external in the form of characteristics of the export market and domestic market characteristics.) (See pattern below illustrated by figure).

**Figure 7 : Conceptual framework on determinants of export performance : Sousa, C. M., Martínez-L, F. J., & Coelho, F... (2008)**



**Source :** Sousa, C. M., Martínez-López, F. J., & Coelho, F. (2008). The determinants of export performance: A review of the research in the literature between 1998 and 2005. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 10(4), 343-374, P. 10

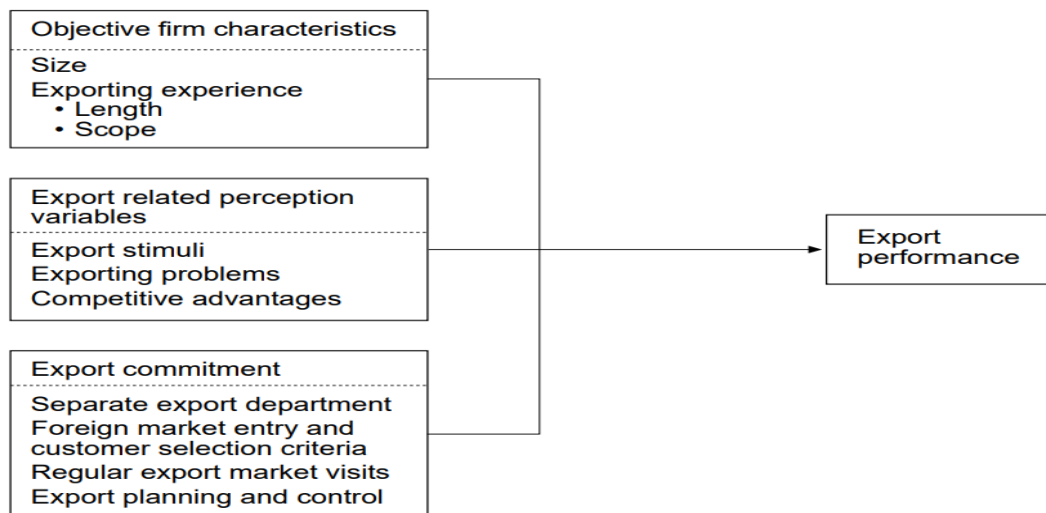
### **1.11. Determinants of export performance in the European context : Katsikeas, Piercy and Ioannidis (1996)**

These authors, drawing attention to some significant gaps in the export literature, developed and evaluated an export performance model using a sample of regular exporters from a small European Union country in their trade activities with foreign distributors. They integrate and consider company specific characteristics, export commitment and export-related perception variables as potentially important factors in explaining the company's performance in the context of the export market. They test the model in a three-step procedure using multiple regression analysis and identify several elements that are directly related to export performance.

The structure of their model tells us that the authors have identified three variables that have an impact on export performance that we distinguish :

1. Characteristics related to the structure of the company, such as the age and experience of the firm.
2. Perceptual variables in relation to exports and the company's competitive advantage.
3. Export commitment measured by the company's marketing activities such as the way it penetrates foreign markets, market selection criteria, control of export activities...

**Figure 8 : Katsikeas, Piercy and Ioannidis (1996)**



**Source:** Katsikeas, C. S., Piercy, N. F., and Ioannidis, C. (1996) "Determinants of export performance in a European context" in *European journal of Marketing* 30 (6): 6-35. P.8

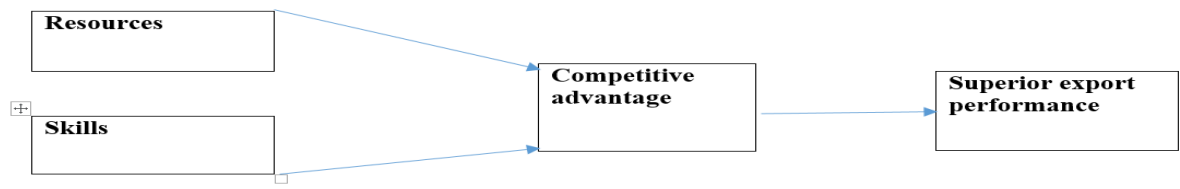
### **1.12. Competitive advantage and export performance : Piercy, Kaleka and Katsikeas (1998)**

Piercy, Kaleka and Katsikeas (1998), believe that export performance is only a result of the company's competitive advantage. For this, they resort to the resource-based approach and the competitive advantage of Mr. PORTER, since the company's competitive edge is determined by the resources to export (experience, financial and physical resources) and the competences of the company (information skills, relationships, product development).

The authors stipulate that the challenge for the company is the appropriate way for the combination and for the mobilization of these resources, allowing to unleash a competitive advantage, this idea is found in the UPPSALA model (according to which the company will initially try to use resource-saving input modes, before choosing entry modes requiring more resources and skills).

The model developed by Piercy, Kaleka and Katsikeas (1998), does not take into account the aspects relating to the process of exploitation, does not include the feedback effects due to learning, for these reasons this model can be characterized as static. (Figure).

**Figure 9 : Competitive advantage and export performance (Piercy, Kaleka et Katsikeas)**



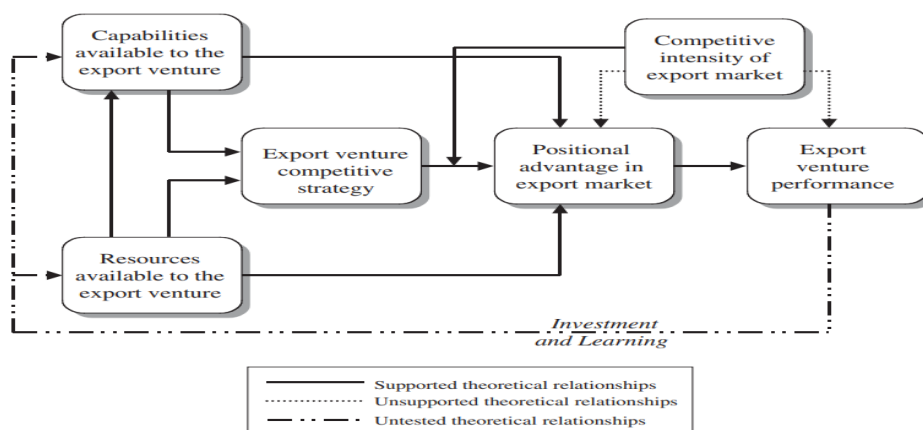
**Source:** Piercy, N. F., Kaleka, A., &Katsikeas, C. S. (1998). Sources of competitive advantage in high performing exporting companies. *Journal of World Business*, 33(4), 378-393, P. 4

**1.13. Export Resource, Capacity and Performance Interactions Model : Morgan, Kaleka and Katsikeas (2004)**

Morgan, Kaleka and Katsikeas (2004) attempted to take as a reference the model of Piercy, Kaleka and Katsikeas (1998), of which they tried to exceed the limit (static) to develop their model with aspect (dynamique).

The authors developed a model that highlights the interactions between resources and capabilities, strategic decisions and the intensity of competition that determine the entry marketing strategy and export performance. (Figure).

**Figure 10 : model interactions resources and capabilities (Morgan, Kaleka et Katsikeas)**



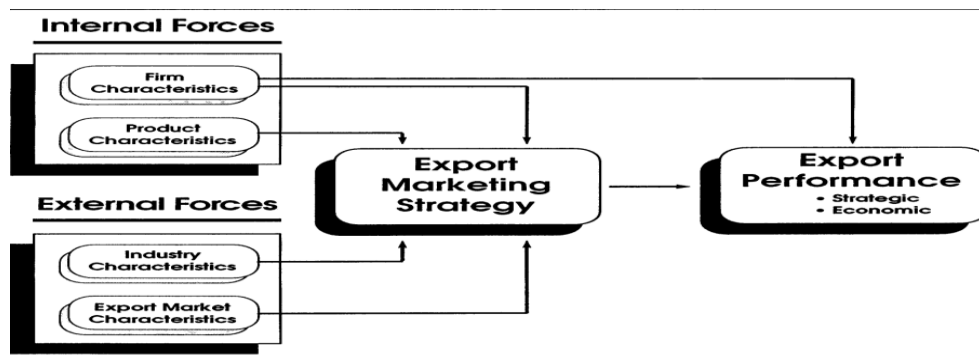
**Source:** Morgan, N. A., Kaleka, A., & Katsikeas, C. S. (2004). Antecedents of export venture performance: A theoretical model and empirical assessment. *Journal of marketing*, 68(1), 90-108, P. 3

The authors integrate the resource paradigm as well as the performance structure, taking into account previous performance, as also interactions between different variables.

#### 1.14. Export Environment, Strategy and Performance : Cavusgil and Zou (1994)

Cavusgil and Zou (1994), in their research try to have a harmonization between the environment and the strategy of the company. For them, the adjustment between the internal or external environment and the strategy has a positive influence on the performance of the company. (Figure).

**Figure 11 : Harmonization between environment and strategy and export performance**



**Source:** Cavusgil, S. T., and Zou, S. (1994). Marketing strategy-performance relationship: an investigation of the empirical link in export market ventures. *Journal of marketing*, 58(1), 1-21, P. 3

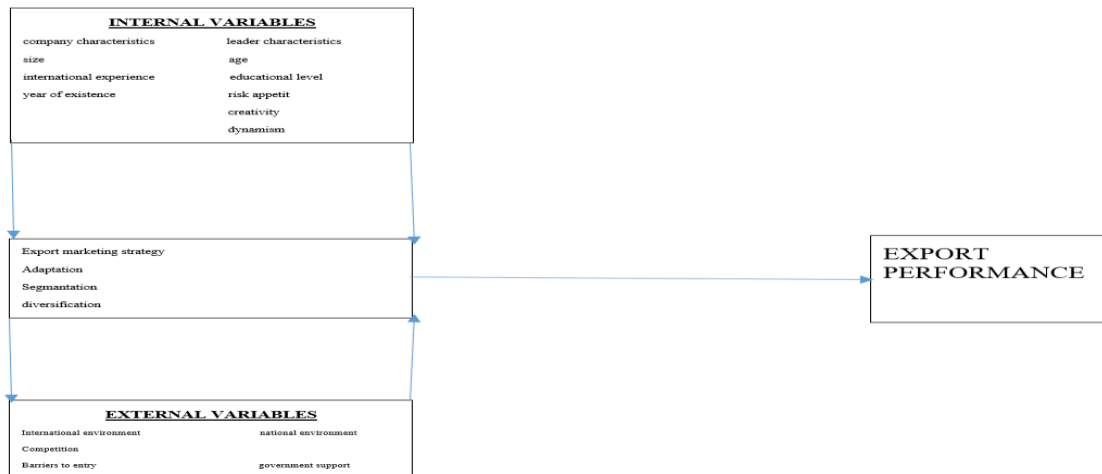
#### 1.15. The business environment model, marketing strategy and export performance : Valence, Astous and Kassous (1993)

Valence, Astous and Kassous (1993), identified three groups of variables (internal variables, external variables and the marketing strategy adopted by the company) that affect export performance.

The Valence, Astous and Kassous model (1993) was tested with Tunisian SMEs in the textile sector.

The authors concluded that there was a relationship between the internal and external variables of the company, but the relative importance of these factors was not specified due to the limitations inherent in the conduct of the study. (Figure).

Figure 12: modèle de Valence, Astous et Kassous (1993)



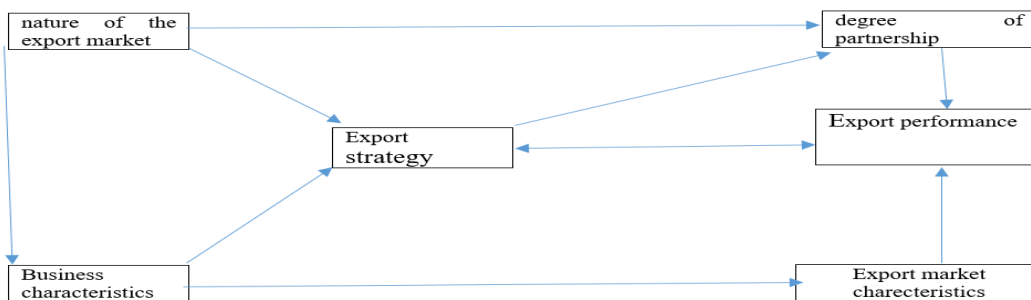
Source : Ben Brahim, S. (2009), “The business and export : Models for evaluating export performance”, Doctoral thesis in management sciences, Faculty of Economics and Management of Tunis, Tunis El Manar University, P. 170

**1.16. Corporate Environment, Export Strategy and Export Performance : N. Bouslama (1991)**

The model proposed by N. Bouslama (1991), contains five sets of explanatory variables (the characteristics of the export market, the company's characteristics, the export strategy, the degree of partnership and the nature of export market).

The author also took two criteria for assessing export performance, which is the variable to be explained. (The mass of export turnover and the rate of development of exports.)

Figure 13: The model proposed by N. Bouslama (1991)



Source : Ben Brahim, S. (2009), “The business and export : Models for evaluating export performance”, Doctoral thesis in management sciences, Faculty of Economics and Management of Tunis, Tunis El Manar University, P. 174

### 1.17. Contingency approach and export performance : Lakes and Jap (2003)

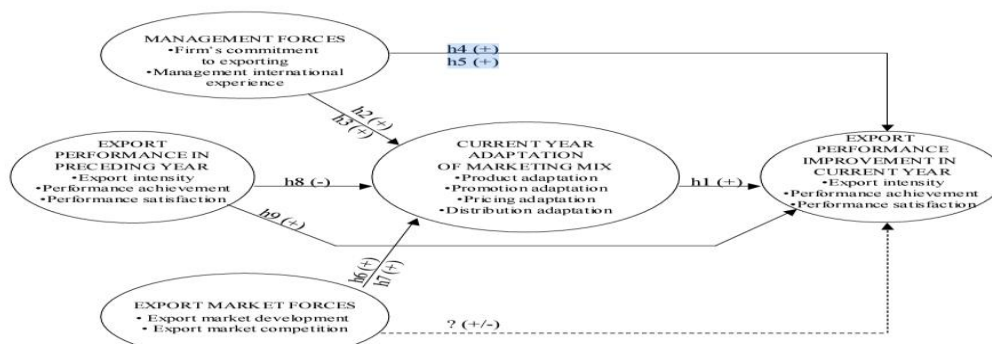
Lages and Jap (2003) based their model on the contingency approach that shows that the adequacy between the external and internal environment and the company's strategy promotes an impact on performance.

By principle of adaptation, the company can adapt its marketing-mix strategy to the context of the foreign market and its internal context, to unlock and improve its export performance.

Taking export performance into account in their model is a considerable contribution as it is decisive in the company's current choices and decisions to adapt its strategy to the context.

(Figure).

**Figure14 : Lages and Jap contingency approach model (2003)**



**Source :** Lages, L. F., & Jap, S. D. (2003). The Relationship among Past Export Performance, Marketing Mix Adaptation, and Current Export Performance Improvement in Global Marketing Relationships. In Marketing: "Research Competition on Global Marketing", Noordwijk, the Netherland, 9-10. P. 4

## 2. Determinants of export performance : state of synthesis

Studies on determinants of export performance have shown that the authors have treated this issue differently. Indeed, several observations have been made by the studies and models and research established by these authors.

The study carried out by Miesenbock (1988) focused on small and their behaviour in the international market, trying to clarify that the leader plays a very important role in the process of small business growth and that his profile is the important determinant in the internationalization of small.

For his part, Madsen (1987) takes as its basis the SCP paradigm (Structure –comportement – performance). He concluded that the idea of an organization's performance is the result of a



continuous pursuit in interaction with other groups of variables, namely its own organizational structure, the structure of its environment. Among the determinants argued by the author is the leader's support for internationalization and export performance, which is only a determinant of the manager's profile.

Aaby and Slater (1988) were able to highlight four categories of independent variables, environment, skills, company characteristics and strategy adopted as opposed to a dependent variable that is export performance. According to the authors, leadership skills play an important role in determining export performance. This variable is one of the characteristics of the leader's profile.

The authors Chetty and Hamilton (1993) trace the direct relationship between the internal characteristics of the company and that of the environment with export performance, with a four-variable model (environment, company characteristics, skills and marketing strategy.) that affect export performance. Skills are among the determinants of export performance, which is only a characteristic of the manager's profile.

In their contribution, Styles and Ambler (1994) looked at models developed within the relationship paradigm and models of customer-supplier relationships and their dynamics, without considering their implications for performance. The authors identified several factors affecting export performance : the strategic relationship variable, which is among the characteristics of the relationship capital linked to the manager's profile, and the company and manager-related variables.

Gemunden (1991) also develops a conceptual framework synthesizing all variables classified as: the characteristics of the export market, local market, managers (managers), company characteristics, company strategies and export success (export performance). The study highlights the characteristics of the executive profile as crucial in determining export performance (profil du dirigeant).

By analyzing and updating studies conducted between 1987 and 1997, Zou and Stan (1998) concluded that the determinants of export performance were classified according to two criteria : the localization criterion (External – Internal) and that of controllability (controllable – non-controlable). Zou and Stan (1998), based on the resource theory, concluded that leadership education and experience are linked to the leadership profile as determinants of export performance.

Leonidou, Katsikeas and Piercy (1998) compiled 46 empirical studies published between

1960 and 1995, focusing on management factors that facilitate or hinder the dimensions of the company's performance. The analysis of the studies shows that "the level of education of the manager", "the mastery of languages by the manager" (manager's human capital) have a good impact on export performance.

Starting from previous base Leonidou, Katsikeas and Samiee (2002), address 36 studies on marketing strategy determinants influencing export performance. The model identifies five groups of variables. Relationships between these groups and export performance have been highlighted in various researches (Cavusgil et Zou, 1994). Among the characteristics identified by the authors as determining export performance are the subjective and objective characteristics of the manager (manager profile), important factors in determining international performance.

Sousa et al (2008) took on the studies conducted by Zou and Stan (1998), and Aaby, and Slater (1989), but they criticised these authors for not taking into account control variables and moderators, Sousa et al (2008) showed that the characteristics of the executive profile are among the internal determinants of the company influencing export performance.

The structure of the model of Katsikeas, Piercy and Ioannidis (1995), informs us that the authors have uncovered three variables that have an impact on export performance, of which we find the characteristics related to the company structure, such as the age and experience of the manager. These authors argue from their study that the profile of the manager has a good impact on export performance.

Piercy, Kaleka and Katsikeas (1998), believe that export performance is only a result of the company's competitive advantage. For this, they use the resource-based approach and the competitive advantage of Mr. PORTER, since the company's competitive edge is determined by the resources at export (experience, financial and physical resources) and the competences of the company (information skills, relationship skills, product development). In this case, it is the relationship and social capital of the leader that the study revealed.

Morgan, Kaleka and Katsikeas (2004) attempted to take as a reference the model of Piercy, Kaleka and Katsikeas (1998) of which they tried to exceed the limit (static) to develop their model with aspect (dynamique). The authors advanced the organization's internal resources as well as competencies as determinants of export performance.

Cavusgil and Zou (1994), in their research try to have a harmonization between the environment and the strategy of the company. For them, the adequacy between the

environment, whether internal or external, and the strategy has a positive influence on the performance of the company. Here you will find the characteristics of the company/manager (manager profile) that are determining export performance.

Valence, Astous and Kassous (1993), identified three groups of variables (internal variables, external variables and the marketing strategy adopted by the company) that affect export performance. The authors have demonstrated that among the internal determinants of export performance are the characteristics of the leader.

The model proposed by Bouslama (1991), contains five sets of explanatory variables (the characteristics of the export market, the company's characteristics, the export strategy, the degree of partnership and the nature of export market). The author indicates the degree of partnership (manager's share capital) and manager characteristics as determinants of export performance.

Lages and Jap (2003) founded their model on the contingency approach that states that the adequacy between the external and internal environment and the company's strategy promotes an impact on performance. Among the determinants developed by the authors are internal characteristics related to the international engagement and experience of the leader.

The export performance of a company reflects a specific behaviour of the company by exploiting its resources and capabilities in an international context at a given time. Business export performance is regarded as one of the key indicators of the success of a company's export operations as such. Numerous studies have been conducted to better understand the factors (company or environmental) and behaviors (e.g. export strategy) that make export a successful project.

In summary, studies have shown that leadership characteristics remain the intersection of most of these researches. In addition, the leadership profile under various components is recognized by most of these studies as determining export performance, the table below visualizes the conclusions of these authors. (See table)

Autor(s)	Export Determinants
Miesenbock (1987)	Leader profile
Madsen (1987)	Corporate Resources Knowledge and experience in exporting Leadership Support Technological intensity Communication and corporate networks Competitiveness
Aaby, N. and Slater, S.F. (1989)	Business Characteristics Business strategy Skills
Chetty et Hamilton (1993)	Business Characteristics Business strategy Skills Environment
Styles et Ambler (1994)	Business Characteristics Business strategy Relational factors Environment
Gemunden (1991), Valence, Astous et Kassous (1993)	Business Characteristics Business strategy Leader profile Characteristics of the export market Characteristics of the internal market
Zou et Stan (1998)	Export marketing strategy Leader characteristics Business Characteristics Business Skills Industry characteristics Characteristics of the foreign market
Leonidou, Katsikeas et Piercy (1998)	Age Level of education Professional experience Risk tolerance Innovation and flexibility Language Aptitude Length of time spent abroad
Sousa, C. M., Martínez-López, F. J., & Coelho, F. (2008), Cavusgil, S. T., & Zou, S. (1994)	Export marketing strategy Characteristics of the leader Business Features Characteristics of the internal market Characteristics of the foreign market

Katsikeas, C. S., Piercy, N. F., and Ioannidis, C. (1996)	Business Features Export experience Competitive advantage Commitment to export Company strategy
Katsikeas, C. S., Piercy, N. F., and Ioannidis, C. (1996)	Business Features Export experience Competitive advantage Commitment to export Company strategy
Morgan, N. A., Kaleka, A., &Katsikeas, C. S. (2004)	Export capabilities Means of export Export strategy and competition Past performance
Lages, L. F., & Jap, S. D. (2003)	Business Features Characteristics of the leader Past performance Marketing mix
Leonidou, L. C., Katsikeas, C. S., &Samiee, S. (2002)	Characteristics of the leader Organizational factors Environmental factors
N. Bouslama - 1991	Business Features Degree of partnership Characteristics of the foreign market Export strategy
Piercy, N. F., Kaleka, A., &Katsikeas, C. S. (1998)	Competitive advantage Company Resources Company skills

**Source** : made by ourselves

### 3. Discussion

Morgan et al. (2004) confirm that export performance is strongly correlated with the company's competitive advantage in the international market and that this is directly linked to the availability of resources and capabilities for external markets. Similarly, Dhanaraj and Beamish (2003) concluded that resources are good predictors of the export strategy

(operationalized in terms of the degree of involvement in foreign markets).

Many internal (business-specific) and external (environment-special) factors have been studied in the export documentation as potential determinants of export performance with inconsistent and sometimes contradictory conclusions on their positive, negative or neutral relationship to international success.

The internal/external division corresponds to the two theoretical approaches that underpin most of the empirical research on export performance (Resource-based Enterprise Vision (RBV) and Contingency Theory). Internal factor studies are based on the RBV approach and assume that the company's export performance is under the control of the company and its management. Resource-based vision (RBV) advocates suggest that the exploitation of strategic resources owned or controlled by a company is a source of superior performance (Penrose, 1959 ; Wernerfelt, 1984).

Empirical research carried out over the past 40 years has identified and tested a number of internal influences, often described as management-controllable factors. They can be grouped into four large groups : company characteristics, management characteristics ; management attitudes and perceptions ; and export strategy. The most frequently cited as company-specific determinants in the export performance literature are marketing composition variables, management characteristics, company specific variables and export strategy factors.

The importance of external determinants is confirmed by the contingency theory, rooted in the framework of the relationship : structure-conduct-performance of the industrial organization (Cavusgil and Zou, 1994), which suggests that any company must adapt to the pressures of the external environment in order to survive and thrive and to be export-performing, it is the result of a company's successful strategic response to external factors. (Robertson and Chetty, 2000).

External influences are defined as environmentally specific and therefore uncontrollable from the management point of view. External determinants are generally classified as industry- and market-specific ; these specific factors refer to the technology intensity of the sector and its level of instability. Factors affecting domestic export performance differ from those affecting foreign markets.

### **Conclusion :**

With the steadily increasing trade and international competition, an understanding of the determinants of export performance has contributed to the development of several studies in this field. (Sousa et al. 2008). However, the lack of a comprehensive theoretical basis for explaining export performance makes it difficult to integrate the results of different studies into a coherent body of knowledge (Morgan et al 2004 ; Sousa et al. 2008). In this regard, the authors reviewed the literature between 1998 and 2005 and concluded that great attention had been paid to determinants of export performance, thus contributing to theoretical and practical advances in this area. However, these authors concluded that :

1. The literature on export performance is fragmented (including many studies characterizing the adoption of different analytical and methodological approaches);
2. The export performance literature is different (examines many determinants of export performance);
3. The export performances literacy is inconsistent (provides different reports);
4. The export Performance literature often contradicts conclusions on the influence of various export performance determinants, resulting in confusion and misunderstanding of factors that significantly affect performance.

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