

Applying the 5W-1H and 4M method to evaluate the content of analyzing the export business organization process: QSA approach

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ABSTRACT

The application and evaluation of the process of the implementing export business activities are mandatory requirements for students studying international business. Lecturers (instructors) can evaluate this requirement by evaluating the content of analysing the export business organization process of enterprises by students.

The objective of these is to help students apply theory and practice to explain how to set up, organize, implement, and monitor and control operations; strategies, export business plans of enterprises. In addition, it also prepares the groundwork for the opportunity to find suitable jobs for students after graduation.

On the other hand, how to evaluate the organization's export activities for students and lecturers is a big question that needs a clear method. So far, there has not been much literature regarding the method of evaluating the content of analyzing the export business organization process. In fact, there are many points of view to evaluate the above content.

The article offers a new method that combines the 5W-1H (What, Who, When, Where, Why and How) and 4M (Men - people, Method - method, Machines - equipment, Materials - raw materials) to evaluate the analysis of export business organization processes as presented in practical reports written by students studying international business. The article utilizes the QSA (The qualitative secondary data analysis) approach, as well as the content analysis method and single case study. The implications of the article are twofold: firstly, it provides general guidelines to students on how to better analyze the content of export business organization processes, and secondly, it offers guidance to instructors on how to evaluate students' analyses of the same.

Therefore, the use of the 5W1H and 4M methods creates consistency in analyzing the export business activities for both students, mentors, and reviewers for the graduation thesis of students.

Key words: 5W-1H, 4M, export business organization process, export business practice

INTRODUCTION TO THE RESEARCH ISSUE

A graduation thesis for students in the economics field (popular) is an applied research topic conducted by a student. It is the result of applying knowledge and skills acquired in the university to research and solve a specific problem arising from the practical business activities of businesses or industries in the field of training that students are most interested in. For students majoring in International Business, one of the applied research directions to complete the graduation thesis is to research/analyze/evaluate the process of organizing the export business activity of a company. However, there is still no consensus on the criteria and methods for evaluating the organization process of export business activities for students and instructors. This creates difficulties or subjective evaluations for students and instructors in the intern-

ship program. Based on this, the author of article aims to introduce the mixed method of 5W-1H and 4M in evaluating the content of analyzing the export business organization process of companies from the perspective of instructors guiding the internship program.

THE RESEARCH METHOD

So far, there has not been much literature regarding the method of evaluating the content of analyzing the export business organization process. Although everyone understands that to evaluate the analysis of a practical process, the writer needs to observe the practicality (or participate in practical activities), consult documents about the process, or listen to narrations from those who are involved in the practical activities. However, the writer of the analysis content may not know which method to use for observation or, in

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other words, where to start? This leads to the evaluator of the process analysis content not having enough information to evaluate. The result will be the failure of both the evaluator and the evaluated person.

Therefore, the article's author chose the qualitative research methodology to conduct the research, in which the qualitative secondary data analysis method (QSA) and single case study method were used. According to Silverman¹, the qualitative secondary data analysis method (QSA) as a method that has grown rapidly to become widely practised and accepted. This growth is explained by more general trends promoting openness and sharing such as the open data movement, research funder and journal policies promoting research transparency, and researchers seeing benefits of sharing all manner of resources through social networks.

THE CONTENT OF THE EXPORT BUSINESS ORGANIZATION PROCESS OF A COMPANY

Export activities are a basic form of international trade, which have been formed for a long time and are increasingly developing strongly. Exporting means selling products made from one country to another or for consumption by that country itself (in the case where goods/services are exported from export processing zones into the country). Export activities are usually divided into two groups. The first group is trade in tangible products such as clothing, computers, and raw materials. The second group is trade in services - also known as trade in intangible products, such as banking, tourism, accounting, international insurance².

Business is simply understood as all activities aimed at bringing profit to an organization. To carry out export business activities, individuals or organizations (enterprises) will perform many steps. Accordingly, the export business organization process of a company can be divided into several stages (steps)³⁻⁶. In summary, the export business organization process of a company typically includes the following steps:

Market research and selecting partners, export forms.

For exporting businesses, researching and choosing international markets is very important and determines the success or failure of the business. When researching foreign markets, businesses often focus on the following issues: what product to export, to which market, who are the trading partners, how do they

usually conduct transactions, business strategies, payments, and delivery for each stage to achieve the set goals³.

According to Pham Duy Lien⁴, when researching foreign markets, businesses need to focus on the following issues:

- The relationship between supply and demand and the scale of the market to determine the market's consumption capacity;
- The economic, political, and trade characteristics of that market;
- The legal systems that the market follows and applies;
- Natural conditions such as climate, resources...;
- Consumption characteristics from the perspective of traders or consumers or both;
- Other issues such as payment methods, contract signing...

When researching and selecting partners, businesses should pay attention to the following issues:

- The organizational form of the partner (trading association, limited liability company, joint company);
- The organizational form of the company will determine who is responsible for the sales contracts;
- The responsibilities of participating members will be specified in the laws of relevant countries;
- Financial capacity (loss, profit, etc.);
- Partner's reputation. To avoid importing low-quality goods;
- The partner's supply capacity is suitable for the import needs of the business or not;
- Geographical location of the partner to actively calculate reasonable time when urgent orders are needed;
- The business sector of the partner;
- Goodwill of the partner.

To obtain information on these issues, businesses can use one or more of the following research methods: through the media, various publications, on-site surveys, credit investigation services, or trial orders.

Depending on the characteristics of the market that the business has researched, the business will determine which export form is suitable: direct export, indirect export, or on-site export. However, the choice of export form also depends on production capacity, scientific and technological level, business scale, capital structure, export experience...

Developing an Export Business Plan

The business plan is a set of action plans for the business to achieve its objectives.

The basis for developing a business plan is to rely on the following main factors:

- The information obtained during the market research process.
- The business's marketing strategy.

The process of creating a business plan includes the following:

- Evaluating the data about the market and traders.
- Setting objectives, including short-term, long-term, and priority objectives.
- Evaluating the economic efficiency: exchange rate, break-even point, payback period, profit margin.
- Developing implementation plans for the business plan.

When evaluating the effectiveness of a business plan, businesses usually use several indicators such as:

- Cost and revenue indicators.
- Export foreign exchange rate indicators.
- Payback period indicators.
- Profit margin indicators.
- Break-even point indicators.

Negotiation and Contract Signing

Negotiation is a process in which two or more parties discuss and agree with each other in order to reach a common goal. According to Doan Thi Hong Van and Kim Ngoc Dat⁶ in import-export activities, negotiation is a cyclical process that never stops, with the end of one negotiation round leading to the beginning of the next, and sometimes multiple negotiations must be conducted simultaneously. The export contract negotiation process can be divided into five stages: preparation stage, contact stage, negotiation stage, end stage - contract signing, and experience withdrawal stage. In addition, during the negotiation stages, exporters must determine methods and forms, and tasks to negotiate and sign contracts.

Implementing the Commercial contract

After signing an export contract, the most important task is to organize the execution of the contract between the buyer and seller. To execute the export contract, the following tasks will be performed depending on the commitment between the seller and the buyer:

- Complete export procedures as required by the state.
- Carry out work at the initial stage of the payment process.
- Prepare goods for export.
- Inspect the exported goods.
- Complete customs procedures.
- Rent transportation vehicles.
- Purchase insurance for exported goods.
- Prepare payment documents.
- Complaint resolution (if any).
- Termination of the contract.

THE 5W-1H METHOD IN EVALUATING PROCESSES AND BUSINESS

All successful work must have a plan in advance. The principle of management control and planning is "first plan what you want to do, then do it based on that"⁷. In other words, a plan is compass that guides action. Additionally, planning helps us visualize what results will occur and what will not. Therefore, planning also has meaning in adjusting actions to help individuals and organizations achieve their goals. According to Deming⁸ (1950, Swamidass, 2000), there is a relationship between planning and action, which can help businesses evaluate and improve quality. Deming also introduced a method called the Deming Cycle or PDCA Cycle (Plan - Do - Check - Act)⁸. This is a continuous improvement cycle. The content of each stage in this cycle can be summarized as follows: *Plan* - Determine the goals and implementation plan to achieve the set objectives; *Do* - Implement the established plan; *Check* - Check and evaluate the results of implementing the plan; *Act* - Based on the check and evaluation results, make necessary adjustments to achieve the desired results or start a cycle with new input information.

In which, the plan is developed based on the following questions: What, Who, When, Where, and How and Why, which is also known as The Kipling method⁹. The Kipling method involves choosing a question, either randomly or with specific intent, and applying it to a given scenario. For instance, if you were

planning an office party, you could ask questions like 'What's the purpose of this party? How much enjoyment are we aiming for? What kind of music do attendees prefer? Who is likely to attend?' and so forth. This straightforward approach allows for thorough analysis and planning. Furthermore, according to Nguyen Kim Dinh¹⁰, to solve the problems in comprehensive management, people also find answers to the questions: What, Who, When, Where, and How. Based on that, managers will check and evaluate the results of implementation.

THE 4M METHOD IN EVALUATING THE CAUSES THAT AFFECT BUSINESS PROCESSES.

As mentioned above, the 5W+1H method can assist managers and employees during the planning and direction of actions. However, evaluating the completion level of the process and business tasks is not solely based on the 5W+1H method, as it only stops at the descriptive level. Therefore, in reality, it is extremely important to explain the causes affecting the completion level or affecting the implementation process. To evaluate the factors affecting the implementation process, Ishikawa¹¹ proposed the 4M method in evaluating the factors that impact the quality of the production process in general, including: M1 (Men) - people, M2 (Method) - method, M3 (Machines) - equipment, M4 (Materials) - raw materials. The 4M method is specified as follows:

M1 (Men)

People include all parties involved in the job implementation process such as managers, employees, partners, and consumers.

M2 (Method)

The method includes ways to manage, produce, and administer technology, as well as strategies and tactics of the organization, the ability to cope with emerging issues to maintain the effectiveness of the implementation process.

M3 (Machines)

Equipment and technology decide the technical capabilities of the product and the production process. In export business, this could be the warehouse system, goods handling equipment, and business data processing system.

M4 (Materials)

Raw materials are important "inputs" that determine the quality of the production process and the output of the business. There cannot be a good result if the "input" raw materials are of poor quality. In export business, the M4 factor could be the of capital, costs for export business operations such as market research costs, customer acquisition, procurement, and customs clearance.

APPLYING THE 5W-1H AND 4M METHODS TO EVALUATE THE PROCESS OF ORGANIZING EXPORT BUSINESS OF A COMPANY

Situation for evaluation: Evaluate the level of analysis of the process of organizing the export of textile products of Viet Tien Garment Corporation (VTEC) to the US. Applying 5W-1H and 4M method to evaluate the level of analysis which presented in the Table 1.

Table 1: Illustration of application of 5W-1H and 4M methods in evaluating export business process analysis content

Steps in the process of organizing export business	5W - 1H method	Application of 5W - 1H method	Using the 4M Method for causal analysis
(1) Market research and selecting partners, export forms.	WHAT	Characteristics of the US market regarding the textile and garment products that the company aims to target: consumer behavior, distribution channels (partners), import regulations for textile products, payment methods, level and nature of competition.	What are the results after each time conducting market research activities? What are the reasons for achieving those results: personnel issues (M1) or methods/techniques used (M2), or financial support for market research activities and partner selection (M4).
	WHO	Which department and who is responsible for the professional and management of market research activities at VTEC?	
	WHEN	When are these research activities conducted?	
	WHERE	Where are the market research and partner selection tasks performed by VTEC managers and specialists? Is it in the company, in the US market or in foreign countries?	
	HOW	What approaches and techniques are used in market research and partner selection, and how are the resources spent for these tasks? What are the results of each market research operation, and how were they achieved in terms of research methods and partner selection?	
(2) Developing an Export Business Plan	WHY	Why is the market research operation conducted at this time and not at another time? Why use this approach and technique instead of other methods?	
	WHAT	The data and information evaluation for the textile and garment market and traders in the US. The VTEC objectives in exporting to the US market. The expected economic benefits from VTEC's export activities to the US. The measures to implement the export business plan to the US market.	”Does creating a business method effectively support or guide the implementation process to achieve the stated goals? If the goals were achieved or not, what are the reasons behind it? Is it due to personnel issues (M1) such as insufficient staff or poor staff quality, or due to the method/technique used (M2)?
	WHO	Which department is responsible for creating the export plan to the US?	
WHEN	When was the export plan to the US created?		

Continued on next page

Table 1 continued

(3) Negotiation and Contract Signing	WHERE	This content is not important so no review	
	HOW	What methods were used to set the objectives and export business strategy to the US market?	
	WHY	Why are the methods and measures in the business plan chosen for export to the US?	
	WHAT	Activities of negotiating and signing export contracts	Were the negotiation results able to achieve the set goals? What is the reason behind it? Is it due to personnel issues (M1), method/technique of approach to clients (M2), financial resources to support the negotiation process (M4), or information infrastructure systems (M3) for e-commerce and email negotiation?
	WHO	Which department and who is responsible for the professional and management of negotiating activities at VTEC?	
	WHEN	When do negotiations and contract signing activities take place?	
	WHERE	Where are negotiations conducted? In Vietnam or in the US or at other exhibitions, trade fairs ...	
(4) Implementing the Commercial contract	HOW	In what form are negotiations conducted? How to negotiate and sign contracts in the form of choice?	
	WHY	Why hold negotiations, sign at the venue, in the form of choice?	
	WHAT	Activities to deliver goods to customers in accordance with the conditions agreed upon in the contract for sale and purchase of foreign trade.	Were the steps in the contract implementation process effective in achieving the desired results? What is the reason behind it? Is it due to personnel issues (M1), method/technique used to implement the process (M2), financial resources to support the implementation process (M4), or the company's equipment, warehouse and workshop systems (M3)?
	WHO	Foreign trade contract implementation activities are assigned to the department, who is in charge?	
	WHEN	When do the steps of the contract performance process take place?	
	WHERE	Where do the steps of the contract performance process take place?	

Continued on next page

Table 1 continued

HOW	How are the steps of the contract implementation process conducted? (related to resources, time, costs)
WHY	Why were these steps in the process chosen to be carried out in this way, and not in another way?

Source: Author's proposed idea.

In addition, combining with the objective evidence of the analytical content through scientific research methods (usually qualitative methods), we can evaluate the level of clarity and specificity of the export business organization process analysis content.

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

In applied-oriented training, the main objective of business international students' internship is to grasp the practical work that is closely related to their major. This helps students to integrate into practical work at companies after graduation. During the internship, students will observe and learn from the real tasks, and find answers through mixed thinking 5W-1H and 4M method. Along with process analysis and description using the 5W-1H method, to clarify the issue, student (writer) needs to combine it with the analysis of the causes and impacts of the process implementation through the 4M method. From this, to evaluate the analysis content of the export business organization process from students' articles, the instructors can assess the level of analysis through process presentation using the 5W-1H method and explaining the cause through the 4M method.

ABBREVIATIONS

4M: Men - people, Method - method, Machines - equipment, Materials - raw materials
 5W: What, Who, When, Where, Why and How
 PDCA: Plan - Do - Check - Act
 QSA: The qualitative secondary data analysis

US: The United States of America

VTEC: Viet Tien Garment Corporation

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest.

AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

Author Le Quang Huy is responsible for the entire article.

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Vận dụng phương pháp 5W-1H và 4M trong đánh giá nội dung phân tích quá trình tổ chức kinh doanh xuất khẩu của doanh nghiệp: Phương pháp tiếp cận QSA

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TÓM TẮT

Việc áp dụng và đánh giá quy trình thực hiện hoạt động kinh doanh xuất khẩu là yêu cầu bắt buộc đối với sinh viên học ngành kinh doanh quốc tế. Giảng viên (Người hướng dẫn) có thể đánh giá yêu cầu này thông qua đánh giá nội dung phân tích quy trình tổ chức kinh doanh xuất khẩu của doanh nghiệp của sinh viên.

Mục tiêu của các nội dung này là giúp sinh viên vận dụng lý thuyết và thực hành để giải thích cách thiết lập, tổ chức, thực hiện và giám sát, kiểm soát các hoạt động; chiến lược, kế hoạch kinh doanh xuất khẩu của doanh nghiệp. Ngoài ra, còn chuẩn bị nền tảng về cơ hội tìm được việc làm phù hợp cho sinh viên sau khi tốt nghiệp.

Mặt khác, làm thế nào để đánh giá được hoạt động xuất khẩu của tổ chức đối với sinh viên, giảng viên là một câu hỏi lớn cần có phương pháp rõ ràng. Cho đến nay, chưa có nhiều tài liệu nghiên cứu về phương pháp đánh giá nội dung phân tích quy trình tổ chức doanh nghiệp xuất khẩu. Trên thực tế, có rất nhiều quan điểm đánh giá nội dung trên.

Bài viết đưa ra phương pháp mới kết hợp 5W-1H (Cái gì, Ai, Khi nào, Ở đâu, Tại sao và Như thế nào) và 4M (Men - con người, Phương pháp – cách thức, Máy móc - thiết bị, Vật liệu - nguyên liệu) để đánh giá việc phân tích quy trình tổ chức kinh doanh xuất khẩu được trình bày trong các báo cáo thực tế do sinh viên học kinh doanh quốc tế viết. Bài viết sử dụng phương pháp tiếp cận QSA (Phân tích dữ liệu thứ cấp định tính), cũng như phương pháp phân tích nội dung và nghiên cứu đơn tình huống. Ý nghĩa của bài viết gồm hai phần: thứ nhất, nó cung cấp những hướng dẫn chung cho sinh viên về cách phân tích tốt hơn nội dung phân tích quá trình tổ chức kinh doanh xuất khẩu của doanh nghiệp và thứ hai, nó cung cấp hướng dẫn cho người hướng dẫn về cách đánh giá nội dung phân tích của sinh viên.

Vì vậy, việc sử dụng phương pháp 5W1H và 4M tạo sự thống nhất trong phân tích hoạt động kinh doanh xuất khẩu cho cả sinh viên, người hướng dẫn và người phản biện luận văn tốt nghiệp của sinh viên.

Từ khóa: 5W-1H, 4M, quá trình tổ chức kinh doanh xuất khẩu, thực hành kinh doanh xuất khẩu

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