ABSTRACT

International marketing has intensified and is evident in nearly all aspects of daily life. Today, the East African Common Market has extended its boundaries by integrating other new countries like Rwanda, Burundi, even the recent new country South Sudan, has started to seek how to be integrated on the National boundaries no longer restrict competitive forces. To be successful in the international’s economy, companies must be simultaneously responsive to local and global market conditions. Hence, international marketing skills are an important ingredient for every company, whether or not it is currently involved in exporting activities. The purpose of this study was to (1) analyze the skills needed to be effective in international marketing; (2) explore the level of importance of each of these skills; (3) investigate the degree to which these skills are acquired by employees of exporting companies; and (4) examine the gap between the skills these employees have and the skills they need. Data was collected, regarding skill importance, through a Delphi participant sample of exporting and distributions practitioners of international marketing experts. Inyange Industries Ltd, one of Rwandan Company of exporting and distributions, were surveyed regarding the degree their employees possessed the identified skills. Possession ratings were compared across importance ratings, in away that allowed skill-based areas for training programs to be prioritized. A sample of twenty five (25) senior employees, categorized into five departments were selected through a purposive method technique. Among sixty skills identified, twenty-four of the skills were rated as being highly importance, thirty-six were rated as being of medium importance and none were rated as being of low importance. Possession ratings were compared across importance ratings, which identified twenty-four international marketing skills as training priorities. This study has produced a new assessment tool which would go a long way to assist small and big firms in identifying international marketing training needs, where effectively the East African Common Market is expanding their activities. Rwandan companies will benefit from the new assessment tool and set effective engagement in order to be responsive in the East African Common Market conditions, which are basically competitive. Rwanda
Private Sector Federation will need to provide significant trainings for the exporting and distributions companies.