

Sub-Saharan Africa: Emerging Market Firms' Strategies for a Region of Great Potential

Special Issue submission deadline: September 1, 2018

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Notes for Prospective Authors:

1. Submitted papers should not have been previously published or be under review at other publications. Conference papers must be fully re-written, and papers should receive written permissions from copyright holders of the original paper.
2. Manuscript submission opens on **May 1, 2018**. Please do not submit papers before this date.
3. All papers must be submitted online, at: <http://ees.elsevier.com/jbr/default.asp>. To ensure that all manuscripts are correctly identified for inclusion in the special issue, it is important that authors select the “**SI: Emerging Mkt Firms Africa**” option from the “Article Type” step in the submission process.

We invite open submissions for a Special Issue of *Journal of Business Research* on strategies of firms that have recently entered the emerging markets in the Sub-Saharan African region. Alongside the open submissions, selected papers from the Academy for Global Business Advancement's 14th Annual World Congress, held at Moi University, Eldoret, Kenya (November 23-25, 2017), will be considered for this Special Issue.

The Special Issue will entertain papers focusing on marketing strategies of African companies within the emerging markets of Sub-Saharan Africa, as well as papers focusing on marketing strategies of foreign companies investing in Sub-Saharan Africa. Emerging markets are low- and middle-income countries growing rapidly and experiencing broad, government-supported economic liberalization and institutional reform; they comprise 51 developing countries in Asia, Latin America, Africa, and the Middle East, and 13 transition economies (Hoskisson, Eden, Lau, & Wright, 2000). Emerging markets are engines of economic growth with a prominent standing in the global economy, and account for more than half of the world's GDP. Recent studies (Bahadir et al. 2015; Wessel 2011) show that emerging markets also account for disproportionately larger firm sales and income growth. The evidence suggests that this trend will more than likely continue into the foreseeable future as global firms from such countries as China, Korea, India, Brazil, Russia, Mexico, and Indonesia are increasingly competing abroad (Casanova and Miroux, 2016).

Sub-Saharan Africa is an economic powerhouse, with a total GDP of \$1.5 trillion (World Bank 2016). The region comprises 48 countries which include Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Republic of Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia,

Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe (World Bank 2016). Sub-Saharan African countries share some of the same problematic institutional environments as other emerging markets with an uneven development (Ahlstrom & Bruton, 2010; Peng, Sun, Pinkham, & Chen, 2009). Even though much of Africa is experiencing substantial pro-market reforms, as do other emerging markets, the reforms differ greatly with regard to scope and speed (Sun, Peng, Lee, & Tan, 2015), which may, ultimately, create institutional fragility (Shi, Sun, Yan, & Zhu, 2017). Because of this, many European and North American firms view Sub-Saharan Africa as a “troubling source of instability” (Pilling, 2017). Nevertheless, emerging market firms and their home-country governments are fully invested in creating a strong and profitable relationship with countries in this region. They see the region as an attractive market that has a great potential, with a population of 1.03 billion and a GNI per capita at \$1,505.39, which is steadily rising (World Bank 2016). Sub-Saharan Africa also benefits from an improved macroeconomic management and a growing middle class, signaling the rise of the African consumer (Devlin 2014).

The Special Issue will attempt to fill a research gap that currently exists between facts on the ground in Sub-Saharan Africa, as perceived by business practitioners, and the limited published academic research on these markets. While practitioners are enthusiastically touting Sub-Saharan Africa as a land of opportunity for international firms, very little research has focused on this market, particularly on the strategies used by firms that have entered the market.

The Special Issue will welcome papers on topics such as:

- Sub-Saharan African consumer analysis and cross-cultural marketing;
- Competitive Analysis in the sub-Saharan Africa region;
- Entry strategies for emerging-market firms in Sub-Saharan Africa;
- Segmentation, Targeting and Positioning strategies for emerging markets in sub-Saharan Africa;
- Innovation management and new product development decisions for Sub-Saharan Africa;
- Pricing strategies, channel management, supply chain strategies for emerging market firms operating in/targeting Sub-Saharan Africa;
- Emerging-market firm retail operations in Sub-Saharan Africa;
- Branding strategies and marketing communications of emerging market firms in Sub-Saharan Africa.

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