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Technological Article

I want to export but where to? A proposed method for selecting international markets

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Abstract

Objective: to develop a suitable method for selecting international markets, in order to meet the company's needs. **Methodology/approach:** this is a technological article, which has established a target market in Africa, with greater potential for attractiveness and accessibility. Therefore, the ranking method, preceded by a cut-offline (clustering) of countries without the minimum requirements, was applied through the decision matrix tool. **Main results:** the market selection started with the definition of the African continent and the 49 clustered countries, and then the unattractive ones were excluded, resulting in South Africa, Angola, Algeria, Egypt and Morocco. After applying the ranking, Angola was the target market chosen for export. **Theoretical/methodological contributions**: the contribution is made through the use of a blend of methods – clustering and ranking – to select the target market, according to objective criteria. **Relevance/originality:** in view of the existing international market selection models, the proposed method stands as an improvement, as it brings two differentials – clustering, as a cut-offline, and the decision matrix, as a tool for ranking countries. **General contributions:** the indication of a simple and accessible method, capable of contemplating the specificity of attractiveness and accessibility of a given product, with the selection of international markets being based on objective and not merely intuitive criteria, in order to increase, with this, your assertiveness.

Keywords: Selection of international markets. Segmentation of international markets. Internationalization of companies. Clustering method. Ranking method.

Resumo

Objetivo: desenvolver um método adequado à seleção de mercados internacionais, de modo a atender às necessidades da empresa. **Metodologia/abordagem**: trata-se de um artigo tecnológico, que estabeleceu um mercado-alvo na África, com maior potencial de atratividade e de acessibilidade. Para tanto, o método de ranking, precedido por uma linha de corte (*clusterização*) de países sem os requisitos mínimos, foi aplicado por intermédio da ferramenta matriz de decisão. **Principais resultados**: a seleção de mercado teve início a partir da definição do continente africano e dos 49 países *clusterizados*, sendo, a seguir, excluídos os sem atratividade, resultando em África do Sul, Angola, Argélia, Egito e Marrocos. Depois de aplicado o ranqueamento, Angola foi o mercado-alvo escolhido para exportação. **Contribuições teóricas/metodológicas**: a contribuição se dá pelo uso de um *blend* de métodos – a *clusterização* e o ranqueamento – para selecionar o mercado-alvo, segundo critérios objetivos. **Relevância/originalidade**: diante dos modelos de seleção de mercados internacionais existentes, o método proposto se posiciona como uma melhoria, por trazer dois diferenciais – a *clusterização*, como linha de corte, e a matriz de decisão, como ferramenta para o ranqueamento de países. **Contribuições gerenciais**: a indicação de um método simples e acessível, capaz de contemplar a especificidade de atratividade e de acessibilidade de determinado produto, sendo a seleção de mercados internacionais pautada em critérios objetivos e não meramente intuitivos, a fim de aumentar, com isso, a sua assertividade.

Palavras-chave: Seleção de mercados internacionais. Segmentação de mercados internacionais. Internacionalização de empresas. Método de *clusterização*. Método de ranqueamento.

INTRODUCTION

The study of international markets segmentation permeates two areas of knowledge: international marketing and international businesses; both, however, converge in the comprehension that selecting markets is a strategic decision that firms which operate or intend to operate in international scale must take (Carneiro & Dib, 2007; Cavusgil et al. 2014; Koch, 2001). This happens because market choice generates a substantial impact on organization's performance (Al Qur'an, 2020; Ramadani et al., 2018) and competitiveness (Jardon, 2018).

Which target market to enter, at first sight, seems to be a simple decision; nevertheless, wrong or intuitive choices for unattractive or inaccessible markets may cost unnecessary investments of time and resources. For mitigating risks arising from those choices, the use of method is fundamental (Ozturk et al., 2015).

There are cases in which internationalization accrues from opportunities (Oviatt & McDougall, 2005) arising from the market, whether through the participation in international fairs or a spontaneously received order, among other forms of opportunity (Koch, 2001; Rocha et al., 2012). In those cases, market is nor selected, but surges as a business opportunity.

On the other hand, some firms do not get real opportunities for international businesses, which demands choosing a target-market or a strategy for the segmentation of international markets. This technical paper addresses this issue by indicating procedural alternatives capable of selecting an international market as potentially attractive or accessible to firms that wish to start or expand internationalization.

For selecting an international market this paper proposes using a business management tool based in multiple criteria – the decision matrix. Hence, in face of existing models for international market selection (Apex-Brasil, 2018; Cavusgil et al. 2014, Ozturk et al., 2015; Papadopoulos et al., 2002), the suggested method presents an improvement that brings two differentials: clustering as cut-off line; and decision matrix as a tool for ranking countries according to attractiveness and accessibility.

Regarding the pre-entry internationalization process, firms must define target-market, study it and follow through with market prospection (Papadopoulos & Martín, 2011). In order to minimize time and costs, broaden assertiveness in the choice, and facilitate going through this path, there are mechanisms and established methods for selecting international markets (present in the "Market Selection" topic of this paper). Such methods, nonetheless, are still inaccessible to small firms or based on country/industry and attractiveness criteria, neglecting peculiar aspects of each firm/business and accessibility criteria.

This technical paper also describes the application of the method for market selection used by a deli meats exporting firm located in the State of Santa Catarina, which decided to expand its international presence through the African continent without knowing to which countries or where to begin.

METHODS FOR THE SEGMENTATION AND SELECTION OF INTERNATIONAL MARKETS

Foreign market selection, that is, the choice of which country/ies to enter, is a strategic decision that needs to be carefully and deliberately made, founded on objective criteria and previous evaluation (Schu & Morhchett, 2017), to lead to a country that will benefit international operations (Al Qur'an, 2020). This avoids, for instance, that poor institutional quality jeopardizes the entrance of newcomers (Tran, 2019) into international markets.

Henceforth, companies that wish to operate or expand in international markets face the following question - **How to select the most adequate foreign market for firms needs?** - which answer includes a difficult decision process due to the multiplicity of attractive markets. This is the reason many firms end up choosing markets taken to be similar to their own (Cavusgil et al., 2014; Rocha et al., 2012).

The selection of a target market permeates the way a company identifies opportunities in international scope, which can be: (a) **opportunist** – the firm responds to opportunities that arise from (1) importers spontaneous orders; (2) casual discovery of a potential market; (3) third part information; (4) participation in international fairs; or (b) **systematic** – opportunity identification results from established processes for the systematic collection and monitoring of information (Rocha et al., 2012; Sousa, & Bradley, 2005).

Initially, firms tend to choose their international markets in an opportunistic manner and, as they broaden foreign relations, they tend to adopt the systematic manner (Sousa, & Bradley, 2005).

According to the results of the study by Al Qu'ran (2020), there are four critical factors that contribute in the selection of international markets: (1) team's experience in international businesses; (2) knowledge about potential international markets; (3) access to experts in international businesses; and (4) the identification of a trustworthy manager with international experience for the operation.

Notwithstanding, beginner firms not always have those in order to define their international target markets. According to Ramadani et al. (2018), most of the times organizations make intuitive choices, not taking many elements into consideration during the process.

One of the alternatives of method for the segmentation of international markets is **clusters analysis** (grouping criteria), which goal is, in this context, composing groups of countries with similarities in macroenvironmental variables; variables related to country's infrastructure and economic aspects; and standards of living, size, and market dynamism – from the point of view of the potential market.

It is important to point out that the criteria used for joining countries together may vary according to product, market, and firm's goals (Ozturk et al., 2015; Papadopoulos & Martín, 2011; Rocha et al., 2012).

Another possibility is **ranking method**, which consists in using market potential indicators for classifying countries in order of attractiveness. For that, variables such as market size and growth, balance of trade, inflation, political stability, among others, are used. The method suggests weighting each variable to

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better estimate the most important ones (Cavusgil et al., 2014; Rocha et al., 2012).

According to the ranking method, the steps for the selecting of international markets are: (1) defining criteria (variables); (2) listing the variables to which may be secondary data; (3) determining the relative importance (assigning weight to) each variable; (4) classifying countries; and (5) actually choosing target market.

Nunes e Lequain (2017 suggest four methods for market selection (Table 1): two of academic nature (Cavusgil et al., 2014; Papadopoulos et al., 2002); and two of executive character (Apex-Brasil, 2018; Centro Internacional de Negócios do Rio Grande do Sul – CIN/RS, 2021).

It is observed that the process of international markets selection is established by models that contemplate the steps/phases for choosing a target market (Koch, 2001), such as: (1) narrowing down of options (initial cut); (2) creation of indicators that allow the comparison between previously selected countries (ranking); and (3) qualitative analysis (except for the method of Papadopoulos et al., 2002), in order to understand the particularities and restrictions that cannot be captured in the quantitative and final selection phases.

Even though there are differences in the number of phases, listed models present similarities, such as the use of economic indicators that demonstrate the financial and trade scenery of potentially attractive countries. As a common fragility we can find the lack of indicators that enable better comprehension of countries' political dimension.

There is a profusion of studies focused on identifying the dimensions, factors, and variables that should be be taken into consideration in the grouping and selection of target countries; others, discuss the need to customize the selection of markets in specific contexts (such as industry or firm) or by market entry strategy. The ranking method presented herein, preceded by a cut-off line of countries without minimum requirements of attractiveness, is and additional option for the existing market selection methods capable of reducing costs and time spent with decision making in an objective and customizable manner.

PROPOSAL OF METHOD FOR INTERNATIONAL TARGET-MARKET SELECTION

Clustering method

In this section we present the clustering method used for establishing a cut-off line of markets without minimum attractiveness required (which must not be included in the analysis) and, afterwards, proceed to the selection of an international market by ranking method through the decision matrix managerial tool. After that, we explain how the method was applied by the analyzed firm in the case of exportation of sausages for the African continent.

It is understood that in a process of international market prospection the first step must be the selection of target market (African market), considering the most attractive in matter of product (sausage) or sector.

For the selection of the target market, we have surveyed macroeconomic data from the countries in continental Africa (no islands or other territories), that is: economic, sociodemographic, and political indicators; information regarding market access; main international information regarding the product; and other sectorial criteria referring to domestic market consumer capacity.

The next step was delimitating the most relevant information for the choice of target market, such as: population, GDP, per capita income, human development index, and international trade volume, from all 49 countries in continental Africa.

In order to enrich the research data regarding international trade volume of each country was collected and examined. Right after that, the clustering method was applied, following the recommendation of Rocha et al. (2012) for the process of market selection. For that, countries were grouped into clusters according to indicators that showed similar figures in indexes such as population, GDP, per capita income, HDI, and international trade volume. The source was The World FactBook (2014), from the year 2014 (Table 2).

Table 1

Comparison of the main methods for market selection

Method	Papadopoulos et al., 2002	Cavusgil et al., 2004	Apex-Brasil	CIN/RS
Phases	**1**. Selection of 17 possible markets among the 34 countries of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). **1.1** Ranking, based on consumer market size, percentage of imports related to consumer marker size; country of origin participation in target market imports; and market similarity. (life expectancy, GDP/per capita, energy production, and imports size in relation to GDP). **2**. Definition of trade barriers: tariff and non-tariff; physical distance between countries; and annual variation of exchange rate.	**1**. *Clustering* – selection of variables according to type of exporting good (from the themes: infrastructure, economic well-being, standard of living, market size and dynamism); and grouping – according to countries' similarities. **2**. Classification for ranking countries according to potential (indicator based on GlobalEdge, annually calculated and published by Michigan State University, from the following market dimensions: size, intensity, growth rate, costumer capacity, trade infrastructure, receptivity, economic freedom, and risk).	**1**. Selection of the 60 top importers by type of good and calculation of annual average growth of good imports during the last five years. **2**. Data survey related to five big themes: (1) trade (Brazil trade relations with selected countries and imports capacity); (2) competition (in the target market: local production and third parties); **3**. macroeconomic scenery (selected countries' economic power and dynamism); (4) market access (logistics and tariff matters); (5) sector (data regarding product sector). **3**. Calculation of each country's average score and verification of the most attractive.	**1**. Diagnosis of firm's internal matters in order to verify needs. **1.1** Definition of an initial group of countries, through sector analysis regarding the product to be exported, with active participation of managers. **2**. Data survey referent to selected countries (macroeconomic, demographic, and trade aspects, among others). **3**. The options for potential markets are reduced to three countries. Carrying of qualitative evaluation – microeconomic characteristics (main importing firms, origin of imports, Brazilian participation in firms' imports, amongst others). **3.1** Choice of target market and analysis of internal opportunities for the product.

Note: Adaptaed from Nunes e Lequain (2017).

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Moreover, we have observed and analyzed the countries with the highest indexes located in the best clusters (with high figures), coming to five chosen countries for the application of the market selection matrix: South Africa, Angola, Algeria, Egypt, and Morocco.

Table 2

Criteria for African markets clustering and its result

Criteria
Population over 20 million.
GDP over 100 billion.
Per capita income over 7,000.
HDI over 0.500.
International trade volume over 59 billion.
Cluster
South Africa; Angola; Algeria; Egypt; Marocco.

Note: Elaborated by authors.

From the final cluster we were able to build the market selection matrix that uses the ranking technique. Therefore, the most relevant criteria were listed and weighted according the degree of importance, taking the product to be exported into consideration as well.

For data survey and ulterior sector and competition analysis we have come to the HS 16.01.11 – Cold cuts and luncheon meats, made from meat, offal or blood; food products based on such produce. Then we used the main sources of information related to the criteria selected for the analysis, namely: Foreign Trade Information Analysis System (Alice – Web), Trade Statistics for International Business Development (Trade Map), World Bank Group (Doing Business), Central Intelligence Agency (CIA – The World FactBook), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), Brazilian Central Bank, among others.

Ranking method

In this section we discuss the method for selection of international target market for the exporting of selected products through the decision matrix tool. As previously mentioned, the decision to enter an international market must be preceded by a study to select the most attractive and accessible one.

The decision matrix is a simple tool that contemplates a set of external variables for evaluating, in a judiciously and objective manner, the most attractive marketing for initiating market prospection. It lists and weights economic and market criteria from a set of pre-selected countries. It is important to point out that before using the tool it is highly recommended to establish a geographic frame such as Latin America, Africa, Western Europe, etc.

In order to use the matrix, the firm must list market attractiveness variables, weight them and give them greats. Its operation consists in six phases, as follows.

During **Phase 1**, we select the variables related to the following criteria: (a) economic – GDP, inflation, exchange rate, per capita income, among others; (b) market and attractiveness – market access, international trade, product consumption, market data, etc.; and (c) cultural and political – corruption levels, institutional distance, and cultural distance.

In **Phase 2**, we establish the **weight** of each variable, varying between one (less important) and five (extremely important), based on the relevance of the variable for the decision process of target market analysis. Attributing weights is justified for all variables present in the decision matrix are important, in greater or lesser degree; therefore, we use a scale to differentiate them.

In **Phase 3**, we survey **information from secondary sources** (international organizations) to establish the scores of each country for the variables (from 1 to 4).

In **Phase 4**, we grade each variable based on the scores, varying from (1) to (4), where (1) unfavorable condition; (2) reasonable condition; (3) favorable condition); (4) (very good condition). For example, if GDP is from zero to 100 billions, the condition is unfavorable; from 100 to 200, it's reasonable; and so forth.

In **Phase 5**, we determine the **total score** of each variable from the multiplication between weight and grades.

In **Phase 6**, from the total score and countries grades arises the chosen market (target market), representing the most attractive to the business in question.

METHOD APPLICATION AND DECISION MATRIX

The reported case – in which the ranking method was combined with the use of the decision matrix to choose an international market – refers to a deli meats company which goal was entering an African country, at first, and later expand its exports operation throughout the continent. For this case, before de decision matrix, the cluster technique was applied, selecting a set of the most attractive African countries and, after, ranking them according to the decision matrix.

For that purpose, we have listed and pondered the most relevant criteria according to its degree of importance, including regards product. Data survey for sectorial and competition analysis was based on the definition of HS 16.01.11 – Cold cuts and luncheon meats, made from meat, offal or blood; food products based on such produce.

During Phase 1 the decision matrix (Table 3) was constituted from economic and market variables. In the first part, general information from each country were related representing main data and characteristics regarding economics and sociodemographic environment, such as GDP and growth rate of the last year, inflation and unemployment rates, population, GDP per capita, exchange rate, country risk, and competitiveness.

In the second part, we have examined information regarding market access, that is, how accessible a market is to the entrance of newcomers and foreign products, which entices: corruption, cultural distance to Brazil, general imports tariffs, regulations and administrative complexities, logistics challenges, and the distance between the country and Brazil in nautical miles – most common mode of transport in international commerce. Analyzed data included import costs per container in USD; total time in days; costumes and other fees; country's official language; the existence of accessible assistance in the country (Trade Promotion Sector – Ministry of Foreign Affairs, SECOM/MRE); and

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trade exchange between country and the State of Santa Catarina, where the firm is located, and between country and Brazil.

In the third part, the analysis included international information regarding the country, such as world imports volume and how much (in percentage) Brazil is a part of it; level of domestic competition, related to the local competition, and level of international competition, related to foreign competitors in the country.

In the forth part, it was time to analyze the information regarding the product to be exported in relation to the domestic market, such as volume, total values and evolution of product's imports in the world in the last five years.

In the fifth and last part of the matrix are the criteria and specific sectorial data related to foreign country's market. The highlights were referred market's potentials regarding domestic consumption of meats in general, pork, and beef. There you can find total per capital animal products consumption in daily calories (Kcal) and daily per capita protein consumption in grams. Regarding meats, total consumption data and production and imports figures were analyzed. At the end, the decision matrix was constituted, complete with its variables, according to economic and market (attractiveness and access) criteria.

In **Phase 2**, weights were attributed accordingly, varying between 1 (less important) and 5 (most important) – based in its relevance to the target market analysis decision process.

In **Phases 3 and 4**, data was extracted from the most important sources of information related to the criteria selected for the analysis; such as: Foreign Trade Information Analysis System (Alice – Web), Trade Statistics for International Business Development (Trade Map), World Bank Group (Doing Business), Central Intelligence Agency (CIA – The World FactBook), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), Brazilian Central Bank, among others. After that, we've attributed the variables with grades which varied from 1 to 4, with 1 representing an unfavorable condition; 2, a reasonable condition; 3, a favorable condition; and 4, a very good condition.

In **Phase 5**, combining grades and weights attributed to variables according to its attractiveness, the spreadsheet calculates each variable's total score by automatically multiplying grade by weight.

In **Phase 6**, by adding all scores we have come to a final country rank. Based on the analysis of all criteria and statistical data surveyed and used in the market selection process decision matrix, the country with the most fit indexes and characteristics in relation to the domestic market is Angola.

Therefore, among five countries analyzed by the decision matrix, from the analysis of all criteria and statistical data for market selection (South Africa, Angola, Algeria, Egypt, and Morocco), Angola was the one that presented the highest final score, the best indexes and characteristics in relation to domestic market, being selected to follow through with market prospection, as a potential target market for the exportation of Brazilian sausage. It is important pointing out here that Algeria, Egypt, and Morocco are of Islamic orientation, which does not allow pork; however, many of these lunch meats (sausages) are made from distinct meats such as chicken or beef; for that reason, they were kept in the decision matrix.

CONCLUSIONS

The definition of target markets is an essential part of international planning for a company wishing to start or even geographically expand its international operations. The strategic decision regarding where to internationalize (Carneiro & Dib, 2007) is a challenge, particularly for start-ups without knowhow or easy access to opportunities in foreign markets.

This study had the purpose of defining a target-market based on a combination of the clustering method (to delineate the cut-off line between all African countries) and the ranking method, with the help of the decision matrix tool (which enables decision making among multiple variables), using variables for indicating the potential of attractiveness and accessibility of foreign markets for the exportation of sausages manufactured by a firm located in Santa Catarina.

We understand that a technological paper regarding the application of the ranking method for the definition of a target market could be enriched by technical statistics of grouping or principal component analysis, which would allow more accurate results.

Another limitation is linked to manager's judgment of established parameters for each criterion, where a mistake can happen. Moreover, as suggested by the literature in selection and segmentation of international markets, the clustering method focuses merely on national level criteria, that is, it selects target countries, but disregards particularities of consumer's market.

In this context of the need to analyze quite specific aspects of foreign market attractiveness for the specificities determined by the firm we present this proposal for international market selection.

Noticing many firms make the decision of which international market to enter based on intuitive criteria, opportunistic approach or in a reactive manner – all prone to error, we bring this as a practical contribution by adding methods for the selection and segmentation of markets, comprehended in the field of International Market Selection (IMS) as a systematic process, sustained by objective criteria in terms of market attractiveness; hence, this paper reviews the theoretical approach to the theme, develops a method and applies it to a concrete case.

It is important to point that this technical proposal can be applied to firms in process of internationalization that intend to start or expand international operations and, therefore, face the demand of the definition of a target market to follow through with market prospection.

Given the existing models for international markets selection, academic or business, this method proposal stands as an improvement by bringing two differentials: clustering as cut-offline; and the decision matrix as an entrepreneurial tool for ranking the countries according to attractiveness and accessibility regarding a determined business.

The contribution of this study for business is in delivering a simple and easy method capable of contemplating the specificities of attractiveness and accessibility to a determined good, with the selection of international markets based on objective – as opposed to merely intuitive – criteria, which increases the chances of assertiveness in target market choice.

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Table 3
Decision matrix *continue*

Sector: Cold cuts and luncheon meats, made from meat, offal or blood (food products based on such produce). Exported good; sausage. NCM: 16010000

Criteria		Weight	Morocco			Egypt			Algeria			Angola			South Africa		
			Value	Grade	*Score*	Value	Grade	*Score*	Value	Grade	*Score*	Value	Grade	*Score*	Value	Grade	*Score*
Exchange Rate		2	0,3990	3	6	0,4657	3	6	0.0345	1	2	0,0308	1	2	0.2753	2	4
GDP	(bi)	2	109,2	1	2	286,4	2	4	214,1	2	4	128.6	1	2	350,1	3	6
GDP growth 2014	(%)	3	2.9	2	6	2.2	2	6	4,10	3	9	4.2	3	9	1,50	2	6
Inflation	(%)	2	0.4	4	8	10,10	1	2	2,90	3	6	7.3	2	4	6,10	2	4
Unemployment	(%)	2	9,10	2	4	13	2	4	10,60	2	4	---	0	0	25,10	1	2
Population	(mil)	3	33,323	2	6	88,487	3	9	30,542	2	6	19,625	2	6	53,676	3	9
GDP per capita	(mil)	3	7,6	2	6	10,9	2	6	14,3	3	9	7,2	2	6	13	3	9
Country risk		3	BBB	3	9	B	2	6	BBB	3	9	B	2	6	BBB	3	9
Country competitiveness		2	4.8	3	6	4.0	3	6	3.5	2	4	3.2	2	4	4.9	3	6
ACESSIBILIDADE AO MERCADO																	
Corruption		1	3.8	1	1	3.1	1	1	2.8	2	2	2.0	2	2	3.3	1	1
Cultural distance		2	14,16	2	4	19	2	4	SEM INFO	2	4	22	2	4	17	2	4
Importing tariffs	(%)	3	40	1	3	30	2	6	30	2	6	30	2	6	40	1	3
Regulations and adm. complexities		3	6	2	6	10	1	3	9	1	3	9	1	3	6	2	6
Logistics challenges		3	26	2	6	67	1	3	38	2	6	7	3	9	3	4	12
Distance	(nm)	3	4555	3	9	6580	2	6	5166	2	6	3834	3	9	4068	3	9
Costume taxes etc.	(%)	3	49,30	1	3	23	2	6	34.9	1	3	52	1	3	25.5	2	6
Import costs	(US$/container)	2	970	3	6	790	3	6	1.330	2	4	2.725	1	2	2.080	1	2
Import time	(days)	2	14	3	6	15	3	6	26	2	4	43	1	2	21	2	4
Language		1	Árabe Francês	1	1	Árabe Inglês Francês	2	2	Árabe Francês	1	1	Portu-guês	4	4	IsiZulu Inglês	3	3
Country assistance accessibility	(Secom)	1	sim	3	3	sim	3	3	sim	3	3	sim	3	3	sim	3	3
Country trade exchange w/ SC	(milhão)	3	25,4	1	3	110,3	2	6	4,6	1	3	102,4	2	6	206,1	3	9
Country trade exchange w/ Brazil	(bi)	3	1,818	2	6	2,461	3	9	4.070	4	12	2.372	3	9	1.958	2	6
INFORMAÇÕES INTERNACIONAIS																	
Country world imports volume	(mil)	3	45.879	2	6	71.338	3	9	58.330	2	6	25.962	1	3	58.330	4	6
% Brazil imports. (to world)	(%)	3	1,20	1	3	5.2	4	12	3,60	3	9	4,90	3	9	3,60	1	9
Local Competitors domestic competition		4	4.8	1	4	4.2	1	4	3.6	2	8	3.2	2	8	3.6	1	8
Foreign competitors internation. competition		4	4.7	1	4	3.3	2	8	3.2	2	8	3.1	2	8	3.2	1	8

Note: Elaborated by authors.

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Tabela 3
Decision matrix *conclusion*

Sector: Cold cuts and luncheon meats, made from meat, offal or blood (food products based on such produce). Exported good; sausage. NCM: 16010000

Criteria		Weight	Morocco			Egypt			Algeria			Angola			South Africa		
			Value	Grade	*Score*	Value	Grade	*Score*	Value	Grade	*Score*	Value	Grade	*Score*	Value	Grade	*Score*
PRODUTO/MERCADO																	
World product imports volume 2014	(ton)	4	54	2	8	9	1	4	16	1	4	80.231	4	16	379	2	8
Brazil product imports volume 2014	(ton)	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	26,9	1	4	156,0	4	16
World product imports value 2014	(mil USD)	4	235	4	16	27	2	8	75	3	12	156,646	4	16	2.291	1	4
Brazil product imports value 2014	(mil USD)	4	0	0	0	0	1	4	0	1	4	39.242	2	8	283	2	8
World prod. imports evolution (volume) 2010-2014	(%)	4	-1	1	4	-36	1	4	-29	1	4	18	3	12	1	2	8
World prod. imports evolution (value) 2010-2014	(%)	4	-5	1	4	0	0	0	1	2	8	16	3	12	-8	1	4
Brazil prod. imports evolution (volume) 2010-2014	(%)	4	---	0	0	---	0	0	---	0	0	---	0	0	---	0	0
Brazil prod. imports evolution (value) 2010-2014	(%)	4	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	27	3	12	-12	1	4
OUTROS CRITÉRIOS SETORIAIS/MERCADO DOMÉSTICO																	
Per capita animal products consumption	(total Kcal/day)	4	307	3	12	336	3	12	378	3	12	243	2	8	462	3	12
Per capita animal products consumption	(proteins gr/day)	4	24.28	2	8	24.46	2	8	25.03	2	8	17.32	2	8	34.29	2	8
Total beef		4	210	1	4	1045	4	16	186	1	4	143	1	4	831	1	4
Beef Production		4	199	1	4	850	1	4	125	1	4	100	1	4	829	1	4
Beef imports		4	12	1	4	196	2	8	61	1	4	43	2	8	13	1	4
Beef general parameter	(ratio:prod./import.)	4		1	4		2	8		1	4		2	8		1	4
Total meats (general)		4	1.080	2	8	2.223	3	12	749	2	8	643	2	8	749	2	8
Meats (general) production		4	1.078	1	4	1.993	1	4	686	1	4	230	2	8	686	1	4
Meats (general) import.		4	15	1	4	233	2	8	63	1	4	413	3	12	63	1	4
Meats (general) general parameter	(ratio:prod./import.)	4		1	4		1	4		1	4		3	12		1	4
Total pork		4	1	1	4	1	1	4	0	1	4	160	1	4	0	1	4
Pork prod.		4	1	1	4	0	1	4	0	1	4	77	1	4	0	1	4
Pork import.		4	0	1	4	0	1	4	0	1	4	83	2	8	0	1	4
Pork general parameter	(ratio:prod./import.)	4		1	4		1	4		1	4		2	8		1	4
Total score			**232**			**263**			**245**			**310**			**302**		
			Morocco			**Egypt**			**Algeria**			**Angola**			**South Africa**		

Note: Elaborated by authors.

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Still, as a suggestion for applicability, the method herein proposed can be conducted by a team designated for the definition of criteria and ponderations in order to reduce subjectivity bias. Firms may even set a data base and structure a model to be replicated in the case of expansion to new international markets. It is worth mentioning, however, that initiatives of prospection of new businesses, such as participation in international fairs, are still valid and should happen concomitantly with the market selection method.

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Conflict of interest statemen

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

Authors' statement of individual contributions

Roles	Contributions		
	Mayer BMZF	Martini P	Roecker R
Conceptualization	■		■
Methodology	■		
Software	N.A.		
Validation	■	■	■
Formal analysis	■	■	
Investigation	■	■	
Resources	N.A.		
Data Curation	N.A.		
Writing - Original Draf	■	■	■
Writing - Review & Editing	■	■	■
Visualization	N.A.		
Supervision	N.A.		
Project administration	■		
Funding acquisition	■		

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