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METHODOLOGICAL APPROACHES TO ANALYZING ENTERPRISES' FOREIGN ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

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Foreign economic activity is the process of organizing and developing economic relations between residents of different countries. It is carried out through commercial operations and constitutes an essential component of the mechanism for managing enterprises' foreign economic ties. Such relations are manifested in the exchange of material goods, services, and intellectual products, as well as in the results of production and technical cooperation between countries. In the context of increasing economic openness and the integration of enterprises into the global market, the justification and application of methodological approaches to analyzing foreign economic activity become particularly relevant, as they enhance the efficiency and competitiveness of economic entities.

The research objective is to systematize methodological approaches to analyzing enterprises' foreign economic activity, enhancing management efficiency and competitiveness in international markets.

The study systematizes methodological approaches into three groups: data collection methods for international research, analytical tools for FEA assessment, and indicator systems for performance evaluation. Contemporary methodological approaches to FEA analysis include both primary data collection techniques and specialized analytical tools. Primary data collection encompasses the following methods [1, pp. 601–606].

The first data collection method is surveying, which can be conducted through questionnaires, personnel, or telephone interviews. This method enables the gathering

of information from many respondents, but may have limitations due to vague questions or low response rates. The most effective approach is to combine multiple methods to ensure more reliable and comparable results.

The second method is defining sample sources, which involves selecting the research environment and subjects to be studied. It is essential to consider the geographical scope and whether it encompasses a global scale or is limited to a specific region. Culture serves as a broader context, significantly influencing the behavior and characteristics of respondents.

The third method is the use of sampling techniques, which determine who or what to include in the study. Two main approaches are applied: probability and non-probability sampling. Random samples generally provide a better approximation of the population and reduce bias, although researchers often rely on convenience sampling due to financial constraints.

The fourth method is determining sample size, which affects the accuracy of estimates and the generalizability of findings. A larger sample helps reduce sampling errors and increases statistical reliability. It is essential to find an optimal balance between cost and adequacy of the sample size.

The fifth method involves analyzing response rates, as low response rates can distort the collected information and reduce the study's reliability. In international business research, particular attention should be paid to question relevance, language ambiguity, and cultural distances. These factors can significantly affect non-response errors and data quality.

Beyond primary data collection, enterprises apply specialized analytical methods to evaluate the efficiency of FEA. These include both traditional statistical approaches and modern strategic analysis tools.

Enterprises engaged in foreign economic activity must ensure their efficiency through systematic and objective analysis. Currently, there is no universally accepted methodology for evaluating FEA. The most applied approaches include traditional methods (factor analysis, statistical techniques – indices, dynamic series, and grouping), mathematical approaches (modeling, probability theory, and economic cybernetics), and strategic tools such as SWOT, PEST, portfolio analysis, and the DuPont model.

To assess the development of export-import activities, it is advisable to define a system of indicators that ensures reliability, comprehensiveness, comparability, timeliness, and analytical accuracy. Indicators are divided into two categories: quantitative, which reflect the volumes and dynamics of foreign economic operations, and qualitative, which assess the efficiency of resource use. Additionally, structural indicators are distinguished, which characterize the commodity, geographical, and institutional components of foreign economic relations.

In the framework of qualitative analysis, companies apply STEP, SWOT, and SPACE analyses, as well as the GE/McKinsey model. A comprehensive approach to assessing the effectiveness of foreign economic activity involves studying both the external environment and the results of the company's operations. Data interpretation and the conduct of audits depend on the type and size of the foreign market, as well as

the volume of trading operations. Audit and analysis are impossible without an adequate information base within the company's accounting subsystem, which provides informational support for foreign economic activity.

The enterprise operates as an open system exposed to numerous influencing factors. Some of these factors create opportunities and contribute to enhanced management efficiency, while others may pose threats, and management's task is to minimize their negative impact. Internal environmental factors that determine the effectiveness of operations include the enterprise's strategic goals, employee qualifications, the level of technological and software support, innovation implementation, product quality, compliance with international standards, and the ability to adapt production to different countries.

For a comprehensive assessment of foreign economic activity, it is essential to establish an optimal system of indicators that reflects the current state, development trends, challenges, and overall efficiency. Recommended indicators are grouped into four categories: export growth and growth rate indicators, relative export indicators, export performance indicators, and structural indicators [2, p. 55].

Thus, practical FEA analysis requires an integrated approach combining quantitative and qualitative methods. The selection of specific methodological tools depends on enterprise size, market scope, and strategic objectives. A comprehensive indicator system, encompassing export dynamics, efficiency metrics, and structural parameters, ensures a reliable assessment of international business performance.

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БЕНЧМАРКІНГ ЯК ФУНКЦІЯ МАРКЕТИНГОВОГО ДОСЛІДЖЕННЯ

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Бенчмаркінг є одним із найдавніших інструментів самовдосконалення, оскільки інновації часто поширюються шляхом тиражування успішних випадків та внесення відповідних модифікацій для полегшення їх комерціалізації.

Бенчмаркінг дозволяє вчитися на найкращих практиках та методах інших, незалежно від їх розміру, галузі, географічного розташування чи часових рамок.