

A Study on the Impact of Trade Shows on International Market Expansion

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Abstract:

In a competitive, globalized market, businesses seek methods to expand globally and engage with stakeholders worldwide. This study examines how trade shows can assist Indian companies in entering foreign markets, generating international leads, and raising their brand awareness. Data from 177 respondents were collected using structured questionnaires as part of a descriptive study design. Because of the non-normal distribution of the data, non-parametric methods like correlation tests, Mann-Whitney U, Kruskal-Wallis H, Chi-square, and percentage analysis were used. According to the results, networking and post-event support significantly impact on lead generation and brand recognition. Despite the benefits, high costs and the difficulty in determining return on investment still exist. The report provides practical recommendations for enhancing trade shows as tools for long-term, sustainable global expansion.

INTRODUCTION

Trade shows are crucial platforms for businesses looking to expand internationally in the current global economy. By enabling face-to-face interactions, product demos, and useful market data, these events assist companies in generating leads, building brand awareness, and forming global partnerships. Trade show organizers are essential in India because they connect Indian businesses with international stakeholders, especially in the industrial sectors. Even though trade shows are becoming more and more important, there is a lack of empirical research on their actual impact. The purpose of this study is to evaluate trade shows and analyze how well they boost exports, convert leads, and establish brand recognition in order to assist businesses in making the most of their international market expansion efforts.

OBJECTIVES

- To analyze how participation in Smart Expos & Fairs helps companies generate international business leads.
- To assess the role of trade shows in enhancing brand visibility and recognition in global markets.
- To identify the challenges faced by businesses in leveraging trade shows for international market entry.
- To examine the extent to which trade shows contribute to business networking and global partnerships.

SCOPE

This study investigates how trade exhibitions can improve international business lead generation, brand visibility, and global networking. It focuses on the experiences of businesses that operate in the manufacturing, consumer goods, technology, and healthcare sectors in North America, Europe, Asia, and the Middle East. Lead quality and quantity, brand impact, logistical, cultural, and financial challenges, and

the role trade shows play in establishing international alliances are important evaluation criteria. Surveys, interviews, and secondary sources like industry reports and recent case studies will all be used to collect data. Although the study offers a thorough analysis, it leaves out specialized industries and recognizes outside influences that could affect results and interpretations, such as geopolitical or economic circumstances.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Asrizam Esam and Yushaida Yusof (2025) examine the post-pandemic effects of virtual trade shows in Malaysia's MICE sector, they point out that low adoption is a result of the platform's limited features. Using IGEM as a case study, the study examines user engagement and expectations through the analysis of ten events from 2020–2021. It suggests a model of user expectations to improve the efficacy of virtual tradeshow in Malaysia.

Manoj Pant and Shubhangini Kapoor (2024) examined the effects of pre-, during-, and post-show marketing initiatives on B2B exhibitor engagement. They discovered that follow-ups, interactive sessions, and targeted promotions greatly increase satisfaction and engagement. More participation and sustained dedication are encouraged when marketing tactics are in line with exhibitor expectations.

Ningkang Chen et al. (2024) investigated the relationship between international trade and sustainable development using the Meta coupling framework. They discovered that regional trade interactions have an impact on social equity, the environment, and resources. In order to balance economic, social, and environmental objectives, the study recommends integrated policies.

Emily Johnson and Michael Lee (2023) focused on digital tools like augmented reality, live streaming, and virtual platforms in their investigation of recent advancements in trade show marketing. According to their research, hybrid events boost global reach and participation. By implementing these innovations, trade shows become more effective.

Roberto Mora Cortez et al. (2022) investigated the elements that affect B2B trade show investment from the perspective of the organizer. According to their research, exhibitors are driven by both short-term (sales) and long-term (brand building) objectives. Decisions about trade show investments are influenced by these expectations.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employs a descriptive research design with a non-probability sampling method, using convenience sampling. The sample size is 177. Primary data was collected via a questionnaire circulated through email and WhatsApp, while secondary data was sourced from articles, journals, and other literature. Various non-parametric tests, including Mann-Whitney U-test, Kruskal-Wallis H-test, and Chi-square test, and Correlation, were used to analyze the data.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

6.1 PERCENTAGE ANALYSIS

Table 1: Demographic profile of respondents

Categories	Sub categories	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
Age	18-25 years	8	5
	25-34 years	43	24
	35-44 years	75	42

	Above 45	51	29
Gender	Male	131	74
	Female	46	26
Qualification	Diploma	47	26
	UG	86	49
	PG	44	25
Total	All categories	169	100.00

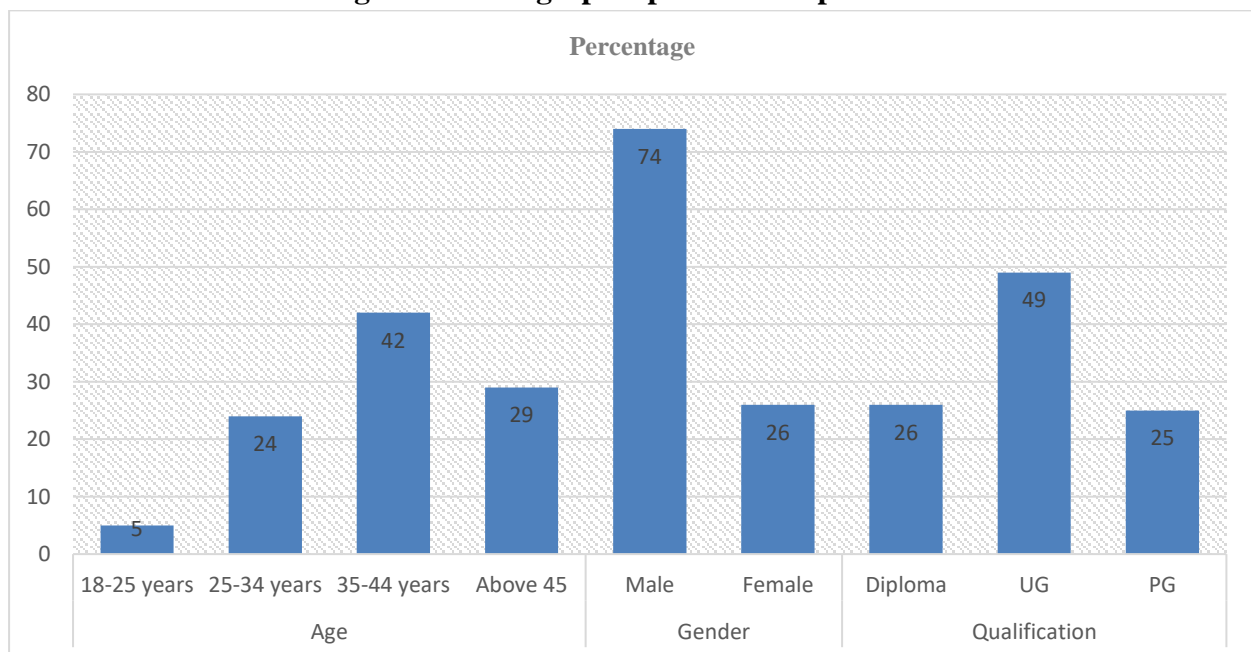
6.1.1 FINDINGS

According to the respondents, 5% are between the ages of 18 and 25, 24% are between the ages of 25 and 34, 42% are between the ages of 35 and 44, and 29% are over 45. Male respondents make up 74% of the sample, while female respondents make up 26%. In terms of qualifications, 26% of respondents have earned a diploma, 49% have earned an undergraduate degree, and 25% have earned a postgraduate degree.

6.1.2 INFERENCE

- The majority of responders (42%) are between the ages of 35 and 44.
- Male respondents make up the majority (74%).
- The majority of responders (49%) have an Undergraduate.

Figure 1: Demographic profile of respondents



SPEARMAN CORRELATION ANALYSIS

Null Hypothesis (H₀): There is no significant correlation between Lead Generation, Brand Visibility, Entry Challenges, and Networking & Partnership.

Alternate Hypothesis (H₁): There is a significant correlation between Lead Generation, Brand Visibility, Entry Challenges, and Networking & Partnership.

Table 2: Showing Spearman correlation.

Correlations

		Lead generation	Brand visibility	Entry challenges	Networking and partnership
Lead generation	Pearson Correlation	1	.587**	.565**	.431**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000
	N	177	177	177	177
Brand visibility	Pearson Correlation	.587**	1	.721**	.613**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000
	N	177	177	177	177
Entry challenges	Pearson Correlation	.565**	.721**	1	.639**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000
	N	177	177	177	177
Networking and partnership	Pearson Correlation	.431**	.613**	.639**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	
	N	177	177	177	177

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

6.2.1 INTERPRETATION

The null hypothesis is rejected because the p-values <0.05 are less than 0.01 for every pair. Lead generation, brand visibility, entry barriers, and networking and partnerships are all significantly positively correlated.

KRUSKAL-WALLIS H TEST-AGE

Null Hypothesis H₀: There is no significant difference between mean ranks of categories of age with respect to Lead Generation, Brand Visibility, Entry Challenges, Networking & Partnerships. Alternate Hypothesis H₁: There is a significant difference between mean ranks of categories of age concerning Lead Generation, Brand Visibility, Entry Challenges, Networking & Partnerships.			
Ranks			
	age	N	Mean Rank
Lead generation	1	8	41.88
	2	43	80.74
	3	75	88.49
	4	51	104.11
	Total	177	

Brand visibility	1	8	54.88
	2	43	86.14
	3	75	92.04
	4	51	92.29
	Total	177	
Entry challenges	1	8	48.50
	2	43	85.21
	3	75	93.79
	4	51	91.50
	Total	177	
Networking and partnership	1	8	68.50
	2	43	82.58
	3	75	92.91
	4	51	91.88
	Total	177	

Test Statistics				
	Lead generation	Brand visibility	Entry challenges	Networking and partnership
Chi-Square	12.346	4.164	6.018	2.557
df	3	3	3	3
Asymp. Sig.	.006	.244	.111	.465
a. Kruskal-Wallis Test				
b. Grouping Variable: age				

6.3.1 INTERPRETATION:

The null hypothesis is accepted because the p-value is greater than 0.05. The mean rankings of age groups in terms of Lead Generation, Brand Visibility, Entry Challenges, and Networking & Partnerships do not differ significantly. Thus, the alternative theory is disproved.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- The majority of responders (42%) are between the ages of 35 and 44.
- Male respondents make up the majority (74%).
- The majority of responders (49%) have an Undergraduate.
- There is a significant correlation between Lead Generation, Brand Visibility, Entry Challenges, and Networking & Partnership.
- There is no significant difference between mean ranks of categories of age with respect to Lead Generation, Brand Visibility, Entry Challenges, Networking & Partnerships.

SUGGESTIONS

- Improvements in one area, like lead generation, may improve other areas, like networking and brand

visibility, according to the strong positive correlation. All of these elements should be strengthened at the same time by integrating trade show strategies. The effectiveness of trade shows can be further increased by concentrated efforts to overcome entry barriers.

- Since there were no discernible age-based differences, trade show tactics can be uniformly applied to all age groups. It is possible to prioritize universal value propositions over customization tailored to a person's age. This makes it possible to plan more efficiently and engage a larger audience.

CONCLUSION

The results of the study show that trade shows significantly influence the expansion of international markets. Significant networking opportunities, enhanced global brand visibility, and valuable international leads were the primary benefits mentioned by the respondents. Exhibitors gained greater visibility, industry insights, and strategic partnerships. However, there were problems like excessive participation costs and little post-event follow-up. Frequent participants had better results for international growth. Non-parametric analysis confirmed significant associations between growing internationally and attending trade shows. When combined with targeted marketing and follow-up campaigns, trade shows had greater success. The study concludes that trade shows are an excellent long-term investment and a vital tool for Indian companies looking to compete globally.

WEBSITES REFERRED

1. www.smartexpos.in
2. www.ibef.org
3. www.tradefairdates.com
4. www.statista.com