GLOBALIZATION AND ACCOUNTING:
AN EMPIRICAL STUDY OF ACCOUNTING EXECUTIVES IN THAI LISTED-FIRMS
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ABSTRACT
This study aims at investigating the effects of globalization on accounting professionalism and best accounting practices through individual learning and continuous self improvement as moderating variables. Globalization includes three dimensions, namely, barrier reduction, quick response to changes, and multilateral trade liberalization. Also, accounting professionalism consists of individual professional judgment and professional self-regulation. Accounting executives of Thai listed-firms are samples of the study. The results indicate that barrier reduction, quick response to changes, and multilateral trade liberalization have significant positive influences on individual professional judgment and professional self-regulation. Only barrier reduction and multilateral trade liberalization are positively related to best accounting practices. Likewise, individual professional judgment has a potential positive association with best accounting practices. For the influences of moderating variables on the aforementioned relationships, both individual learning and continuous self improvement do not moderate the relationships. Giving potential discussion is effectively implemented in the study. Theoretical and professional contributions are explicitly provided. Conclusion and suggestions and directions of the future research are described.

Keywords: Globalization; Barrier Reduction; Quick Response to Changes; Multilateral Trade Liberalization; Accounting Professionalism; Individual Professional Judgment; Professional Self-Regulation; Best Accounting Practices; Individual Learning; Continuous Self Improvement

1. INTRODUCTION
Recently, globalization has become a significant issue which practitioners and researchers play much attention in itself and its antecedents and consequences. It has an important influence of how firms have been doing businesses in a competitive market. For the national perspective, globalization seems to affect how national governments add values of skill premium, solve unemployment obstacles, conduct independent social policies, and utilize exogenous technical change (Ethier, 2005). It outstandingly connects with the opening nature of the world economy via the rapid diffusion of information and communication technology (Levy, 2007). To clearly address the global concerns, globalization potentially involves economic and financial integration through the abolition of capital controls and the dismantling of barriers (Oxelheim, 2009). Thus, the impacts, influences, effects, and roles of globalization have been intensively debated, discussed, and criticized in the diversified fields of businesses, economics, sociology, political sciences, information technology, communication, and others, in both micro and macro levels, and in the national and international views.

In the light of the globalization aspect, globalization is related to the growing mobility of goods, services, commodities, information, people, and communication across frontiers (Arnold and Sikka, 2001). It refers to a process through events and decisions in one part of the world can have significant consequences for individuals and societies in distant parts of the world. Increasingly, globalization definitely focuses on a political, economic, technological, and cultural process that is especially characterized by the growth and spread of suprastatism, supranationalism, and supraterritoriality (Gallhofer and Haslam, 2006). Under the globalization conditions, firms have easily moved and transferred all business activities to other parties in national, international, and globalize societies, and smoothly accepted and received them from others. To outstandingly understand a view of the globalization, globalization herein, consists of three dimensions, namely, barrier reduction, quick response to changes, and multilateral trade liberalization (Ethier, 2005). Accordingly, it has played important roles in explaining economic, technology, culture circumstances, and others. However, it tends to have a significant effect on business activities, especially accounting practices and functions.
Interestingly, accounting has been forced and affected by the possibilities and processes of globalization. They potentially impact the harmonization of accounting and audit standards, financial reporting, and financial services, and the financial coordination and control of dispersed subsidiaries of multinational firms (Cooper et al., 1998). For example, accounting practices of transnational corporations, transfer pricing, and international taxation are evidences to the debate on globalization (Arnold and Sikka, 2001). To indicate accounting in relation to globalization, firms have gained the globalization pressures in order to report their environmental activities and responsibilities. They are willing to voluntarily disclose accounting transactions through foreign capital, product, and labor markets, and environments and social responsibilities even though a country has a weak legal environment (Webb et al., 2008).

Also, the globalization of the world’s economies has forced to establish a single set of financial reporting standards (Chand and White, 2007). The formulation and promulgation of International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRSs) are outcomes of regulation, public, and private interests that represent the international accounting debate by concerning with the globalization issues. Likewise, the design of governance mechanisms (board size, board composition, executive compensation, market discipline, interlocking directorate, ownership concentration, duality, and inbreeding) and the design of accountability systems (accounting information, auditing standards, and financial and non-financial disclosures) are results of the globalization forces (Luo, 2005). While globalization has potentially affected the accounting activities, functions, responsibilities, and practices, it is likely to influence behaviors and job responsibilities of the accountants and other accounting professions, such as accounting professionalism and best accounting practices. Accounting professionalism refers to a preference by accountants to exercise individual professional judgment in undertaking accounting tasks and entail the maintenance of professional self-regulation (Askary, 2006), and best accounting practices are defined as ways, methods, procedures, and guidelines which firms have implemented them in order to operate their accounting activities concerning with governance, accountability, social responsibility, and business ethics. Then, the effects of globalization on accounting professionalism and best accounting practices are explicitly investigated in this study. Moderating effects of the aforementioned relationships are also examined.

With the interest of the relationships among globalization, accounting professionalism, and best accounting practices, the objective of this study is to examine the effects of globalization on accounting professionalism and best accounting practices through individual learning and continuous self improvement of accounting executives of Thai listed-firms. Globalization includes barrier reduction, quick response to changes, and multilateral trade liberalization, and accounting professionalism consists of individual professional judgment and professional self-regulation. Within the current study, the key research questions are: (1) how globalization has a positive relationship with accounting professionalism and best accounting practices, (2) how accounting professionalism has a positive influence on best accounting practices, (3) are barrier reduction, quick response to changes, and multilateral trade liberalization as the dimensions of globalization, (4) are individual professional judgment and professional self-regulation as the dimensions of accounting professionalism, (5) do individual learning positively moderate the globalization-accounting professionalism relationships, and (6) do continuous self improvement positively moderate the accounting professionalism-best accounting practices relationships.

The remainder of this study is organized as follows. First, literature reviews of globalization, accounting professionalism, best accounting practices, individual learning, and continuous self improvement are addressed, and research hypotheses developments are also presented. Second, the research methods used to test the hypotheses are discussed. Third, the results derived from 112 accounting executives of Thai listed-firms are indicated and their reasonable discussions with existing literature supports are showed. Finally, the study concludes by discussing implications for theory and practice, identifying limitations of the study, and providing suggestions and directions for future research.

2. LITERATURE REVIEWS AND RESEARCH HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENTS

This study aims at examining the effects of globalization on accounting professionalism and best accounting practices. Barrier reduction, quick response to changes, and multilateral trade liberalization are independent variables; and best accounting practices are a dependent variable. Also, individual
professional judgment and professional self-regulation are mediators; and individual learning and continuous self improvement are moderators. In this study, the positive relationships of the aforementioned variables are hypothesized definitely. Thus, the conceptual, linkage, and research model presents the relationships among barrier reduction, quick response to changes, multilateral trade liberalization, best accounting practices, individual professional judgment, professional self-regulation, individual learning, and continuous self improvement, as shown in Figure 1.

FIGURE 1
MODEL OF THE RELATIONSHIPS AMONG GLOBALIZATION, ACCOUNTING PROFESSIONALISM, AND BEST ACCOUNTING PRACTICES

2.1 Globalization

In the past two decades, globalization has been important for firms in doing business activities and for countries in opening nature of the world economy via the rapid diffusion of information and communication technology (Levy, 2007) and in involving economic and financial integration through the abolition of capital controls and the dismantling of barriers (Oxelheim, 2009). It affects skill premium, unemployment, independent social policies, and exogenous technical change. To potentially utilize the benefits of globalization, firms with doing businesses under the globalization aspect tend to easily move and transfer all business activities to other parties in national, international, and globalize societies, and smoothly accept and receive them from others. Likewise, globalization definitely plan a significant role in determining the changes and conditions of economic, political science, information technology, culture, and sociology as well as businesses. Here, globalization is an important factor that influences accounting professionals, namely, accounting professionalism and best accounting practices. According to the examination of the relationships among globalization, accounting professionalism, and best accounting practices, globalization is defined as a process through events and decisions in one part of the world can have significant consequences for individuals and societies in distant parts of the world (Arnold and Sikka, 2001). It consists of three components, including barrier reduction, quick response to changes, and multilateral trade liberalization. In the next section, the literature reviews of prior research of barrier reduction, quick response to changes, and multilateral trade liberalization are discussed in details and their hypothesized relationships are explained and provides.

Barrier reduction. Barrier reduction is a key determinant of globalization. It refers to the easy mobility of goods, services, commodities, information, people, and communication across frontiers and among countries by being without limitations of laws, rules, regulations, and other obstacles (Arnold and Sikka, 2001). Under the barrier reduction of globalization, a process through events and decisions in one part of the world can have significant consequences for individuals and societies in distant parts of the world. Also, barrier reduction explicitly promotes technological, legislative, and economic exchanges between nations (Ethier, 2005). Firms operating in high barrier reduction of globalization tend to process the increasingly widespread practices of international outsourcing through slicing up the value-added chain, fragmentation, and production sharing.

Globalization absolutely affects the diversified fields of businesses, economics, sociology, political sciences, information technology, communication, and others. With respect to the challenge of
globalization, accounting activities and practices are also influenced from the importance, role, and change of globalization. Then, the barrier reduction of globalization has enhanced a harmonization of accounting and audit standards. For example, the International Accounting Standards Committee (IASC) has established the harmonization of accounting standards in order to provide the accounting practices of transnational corporations, financial reporting, financial coordination of dispersed subsidiaries of multinational enterprises, transfer pricing, and international taxation, and others (Arnold and Sikka, 2001). International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRSs) also concern with the diversified themes of regulation, public, and private interests by issuing a single set of financial reporting standards (Chand and White, 2007). Accordingly, firms tend to extensively have best accounting practices by implementing harmonized accounting standards. For the individual level, accountants who are committed with the harmonization of accounting and financial reporting standards are likely to perform better accounting professionalism, namely, individual professional judgment and professional self-regulation, and practice greater accounting functions and activities. Thus, the relationships between barrier reduction and accounting professionalism are hypothesized as shown below.

**Hypothesis 1a:** The higher the barrier reduction, the more likely that accountants will perform greater individual professional judgment.

**Hypothesis 1b:** The higher the barrier reduction, the more likely that accountants will perform greater professional self-regulation.

**Quick response to changes.** Similar to the barrier reduction of globalization, quick response to changes is also a main component of globalization. It is defined as the ability of corporations and nations that adjust and improve operation methods globally in order to reply the economic environment changes (Ethier, 2005). In light of the quick response to changes of globalization, firms that continuously develop their business operations very fast and outstandingly innovate business activities very quick seem to survive in the competitive markets. Then, the quick response to changes can become a reasonable strategy for firms in enhancing competitive advantage, achieving superior performance, and sustaining in a future operation. Firms with quickly moving and transferring all business activities to other parties in national, international, and globalize societies are likely to exist in doing businesses under the environmental changes and uncertainties.

According to the globalization components, quick response to changes plays a significant role in explaining how firms and organizations fast adjust themselves to survive in the environmental changes. For the accounting aspect, firms need to explicitly implement international accounting standards in order to improve the quality of information available for risk management and for pricing of risk (Oxelheim, 2009). Also, they are likely to adopt the principles and concepts of corporate governance mechanisms, namely, board size, board composition, executive compensation, market discipline, interlocking directorate, ownership concentration, duality, and inbreeding, and accountability systems, namely, accounting information, auditing standards, and financial and non-financial disclosures (Luo, 2005). Because of concerning with the quick response to changes of globalization, firms are necessary to report both voluntary and non-voluntary disclosures of business activities. Similarly, globalization has impacted accountants’ behaviors and duties. Accountants need to clearly understand and extensively learn the antecedents and consequences of globalization. To act the quick response to changes in the global markets, they must outstandingly perform greater accounting professionalism in their responsibilities. Thus, the relationships between quick response to changes and accounting professionalism are hypothesized as shown below.

**Hypothesis 2a:** The higher the quick response to changes, the more likely that accountants will perform greater individual professional judgment.

**Hypothesis 2b:** The higher the quick response to changes, the more likely that accountants will perform greater professional self-regulation.
Multilateral trade liberalization. Lastly, multilateral trade liberalization is a significant dimension of globalization. Here, it focuses mainly on the exchange of industrial goods and others between different nations (Ethier, 2005). Under the economic reform, multilateral trade liberalization has been established in the economic system through a reallocation of global production from one part to other parts. It definitely enhances to move relatively effortlessly around the world, seek out profitable investment opportunities, and leave nations and communities to celebrate and despair as a result (Cooper et al., 1998). Furthermore, the multilateral trade liberalization is a result of the opening of the world economy. It encompasses economic and financial integration via the abolition of capital controls and the dismantling of barriers (Oxelheim, 2009). Thus, firms necessitate to benefit the multilateral trade liberalization by introducing high quality of products and services, developing product and operation innovations, and searching new strategies to compete the global markets.

To survive in the multilateral trade liberalization of globalization, firms have done accounting activities, functions, responsibilities, and practices by increasingly adopting international accounting standards and financial reporting standards. They must have much knowledge of its factors and outcomes in order to gain competitiveness and achieve great performance. While the multilateral trade liberalization of globalization occurs, accountants need to learn its antecedents and effects, and utilize it in order to continuously develop their knowledge and competency. Then, they are likely to potentially perform greater accounting professionalism, namely, individual professional judgment and professional self-regulation in their behaviors, duties, practices, and responsibilities. The effects of multilateral trade liberalization on accounting professionalism are, herein, interestingly investigated. Thus, the relationships between multilateral trade liberalization and accounting professionalism are hypothesized as shown below.

Hypothesis 3a: The higher the multilateral trade liberalization, the more likely that accountants will perform greater individual professional judgment.

Hypothesis 3b: The higher the multilateral trade liberalization, the more likely that accountants will perform greater professional self-regulation.

2.2 Accounting Professionalism

With respect to the aforementioned globalization discussion, accounting professionalism is a consequence of globalization. Accounting professionalism is defined as a preference by accountants to exercise individual professional judgment in undertaking accounting tasks and entail the maintenance of professional self-regulation (Askary, 2006). It presents the imposition of force on accountant to comply with prescriptive legal requirements with the backing of legal sanctions for non-compliance. Thus, accountants with great professionalism are likely to (1) dedicate to their works, (2) commit their services to the welfare of society, (3) constrain their discretions and supervene their judgment pertaining to their works, (4) involve support for self-regulation, and (5) develop primary contact and involvement with other professionals (Fogarty and Kalbers, 2000). Thus, they potentially attempt to continuously develop their behaviors, duties, practices, and responsibilities through learning and understanding the stakeholders' requirements, needs, and expectations in order to provide accounting professionalism and survive in accounting professions.

Here, accounting professionalism consists of two dimensions, namely, individual professional judgment and professional self-regulation. Individual professional judgment refers to a preference for accountants' independence as a belief in individual decisions and respect for individual endeavor (Askary, 2006). Also, professional self-regulation is a preference for accountants' willingness to do their works concerned with the stakeholders' requirements, needs, and expectations without legal environments and other regulations. Hence, both individual professional judgment and professional self-regulation likely have a positive relationship with best accounting practices. In this study, the relationships between individual professional judgment and best accounting practices and the relationships between professional self-regulation and best accounting practices are hypothesized as shown below.
Hypothesis 4: The higher the individual professional judgment, the more likely that accountants will perform greater best accounting practices.

Hypothesis 5: The higher the professional self-regulation, the more likely that accountants will perform greater best accounting practices.

2.3 Individual Learning and Continuous Self Improvement as Moderating Effects

To expand the understanding of the relationships among globalization, accounting professionalism, and best accounting practices, this study identifies two constructs as moderating influences of the aforementioned relationships, including individual learning and continuous self improvement. Thus, the relationships of the moderators are hypothesized as follow.

**Individual learning.** Individual learning refers to any modification in human behavior related to the experiences of the individual (Novarese, 2007). When individuals have developed successful duties and responsibilities in a given environment, they tend to efficiently apply these successes in different contexts. In contrast, they can also adapt their experiences with failures in order to improve the competencies and achieve more success in the future. Also, individual learning focused on knowledge structures and personal conceptions, and beliefs on knowledge and learning (Bakx et al., 2002). It consists of six components, namely, (1) self-perceived competencies, (2) individual goal orientations, (3) beliefs about the subjects that are dealt within a certain domain, (4) general and domain-related learning conceptions, (5) preferred learning situations, and (6) preferred learning activities. Likewise, individual learning includes lower-level learning as occurring within a given organizational structure and a given set of rules, and higher-level learning as focusing on adjusting rules and norms rather than specific activities and behaviors (Chonko et al., 2003). Accordingly, accountants with high individual learning tend to acquire useful knowledge in the past and implement it to gain job success and survive in accounting professions. Hence, individual learning is likely to positively moderate the globalization-accounting professionalism relationships. Therefore,

Hypothesis 6a: Individual learning will positively moderate the barrier reduction-individual professional judgment relationships.

Hypothesis 6b: Individual learning will positively moderate the quick response to changes-individual professional judgment relationships.

Hypothesis 6c: Individual learning will positively moderate the multilateral trade liberalization-individual professional judgment relationships.

Hypothesis 6d: Individual learning will positively moderate the barrier reduction-professional self-regulation relationships.

Hypothesis 6e: Individual learning will positively moderate the quick response to changes-professional self-regulation relationships.

Hypothesis 6f: Individual learning will positively moderate the multilateral trade liberalization-individual professional judgment relationships.

**Continuous self improvement.** Another moderator of the relationships is continuous self improvement. Continuous self improvement is defined as a behavioral learning process which takes place over time (Bessant et al., 2001). It includes improving and reinforcing behaviors within a particular routine cluster and adding new routines to the repertoire. Individuals with high continuous self improvement are likely to establish the same patterns of behavior in a widespread context variation. For the organization perspective, continuous improvement consists of three dimensions, namely, (1) a company-wide focus to improve process performance, (2) a gradual improvement through step by step innovation, and (3) organizational activities with the involvement of all people in the company form top managers to workers (Wu and Chen, 2006). Thus, firms with great continuous improvement tend to acquire problem-solving
skills that are linked to strategic goals and mechanisms for transforming learning across the entire organization (Bessant et al., 2001). In the context of the individual, accountants with more focusing on continuous self improvement seem to implement behavioral learning processes, and practice and master the behaviors in making up that particular ability in order to achieve a professional success in the accounting career. Hence, continuous self improvement is likely to positively moderate the accounting professionalism-best accounting practices relationships. Therefore,

Hypothesis 7a: Continuous self improvement will positively moderate the individual professional judgment-best accounting practices relationships.

Hypothesis 7b: Continuous self improvement will positively moderate the professional self-regulation-best accounting practices relationships.

3. RESEARCH METHODS

3.1 Sample Selection and Data Collection Procedure
In this study, 536 accounting executives of Thai listed-firms were selected as the sample. A mail survey procedure via the questionnaire was used for data collection. The key participants in this study were accounting executives of Thai listed-firms. With regards to the questionnaire mailing, 3 surveys were undeliverable because some firms were no longer in business or had moved to unknown locations. Deducting the undeliverables from the original 536 mailed, the valid mailing was 533 surveys, from which 112 responses were received. Of the surveys completed and returned, all 112 were usable. The effective response rate was approximately 21.01%. According to Aaker, Kumar and Day (2001), the response rate for a mail survey, without an appropriate follow-up procedure, is less than 20%. Thus, the response rate of this study is considered acceptable.

To test potential and non-response bias and to detect and consider possible problems with non-response errors, the assessment and investigation of non-response-bias was centered on two different procedures: (1) a comparison of sample statistics and known values of the population, such as number of employees, number of years in doing business, and amount of capital funding, and (2) a comparison of first wave and second wave data recommended by Armstrong and Overton (1977). Neither procedure showed significant differences.

3.2 Variables
Here, measurements of dependent variable, independent variables, moderating variable, and control variables are described as follows. Best accounting practices is a dependent variable and they refer to ways, methods, procedures, and guidelines which firms have implemented them in order to operate their accounting activities concerning with governance, accountability, social responsibility, and business ethics. Five scale items were developed to evaluate the degree to how accountants definitely implement accounting methods, procedures, and guidelines for business transactions.

For the independent variables of the study, globalization is a key determinant of the relationships, and includes barrier reduction, quick response to changes, and multilateral trade liberalization. First, barrier reduction is defined as the easy mobility of goods, services, commodities, information, people, and communication across frontiers and among countries by being without limitations of laws, rules, regulations, and other obstacles (Arnold and Sikka, 2001). Four scale items were developed to assess the degree to which accountants effectively deal with the easy mobility of things among countries. Second, quick response to changes refers to the ability of corporations and nations that adjust and improve operation methods globally in order to reply the economic environment changes (Ethier, 2005). Four scale items were utilized to measure the degree to which accountants are concerned with the adjustment and improvement of operation methods globally in order to reply the economic environment changes. Third, multilateral trade liberalization focuses mainly on the exchange of industrial goods and others between different nations (Ethier, 2005). Four scale items were adapted to gauge which accountants understand and benefit on the exchange of industrial goods and others between different nations.
Next, accounting professionalism is a mediator of the relationships and consists of individual professional judgment and professional self-regulation. First, **individual professional judgment** refers to a preference for accountants’ independence as a belief in individual decisions and respect for individual endeavor (Askary, 2006). Five scale items are developed to measure how accountants explicitly behave job independence through a belief in individual decisions and respect for individual endeavor. Second, **professional self-regulation** is defined as a preference for accountants’ willingness to do their works concerned with the stakeholders’ requirements, needs, and expectations without legal environments and other regulations. Five scale items are developed to evaluate how accountants have a willingness to do their works without legal environments and other regulations.

Here, both individual learning and continuous self improvement are moderators of the relationships. First, **individual learning** to any modification in human behavior related to the experiences of the individual (Novarese, 2007). Five scale items are implemented to assess how accountants have a modification in behaviors related to their experiences for accounting duties and responsibilities. Second, **continuous self improvement** is defined as a behavioral learning process which takes place over time (Bessant et al., 2001). Five scale items are developed to gauge how accountants improve their knowledge over time in gaining job success in their professions.

Also, the control variables were likely to affect the relationships, including firm experience, firm size, and firm capital. **Firm experience** may influence a firm’s technological learning capacity, international business activities, and the profitability of foreign operations (Zahra, Ireland, and Hitt, 2000). It was measured by the number of years a firm has been in existence. **Firm size** may affect the ability to learn and diversify operations, and to survive in the markets (Arora and Fosfuri, 2000). It was measured by the number of employees in a firm. Finally, **firm capital** may impact the capacity of a firm to implement business strategies in order to achieve superior performance (Ussahawanitchakit, 2007). It was measured by the amount of money a firm has invested in doing business.

3.3 Methods
Factor analysis was implemented to assess the underlying relationships of a large number of items and to determine whether they can be reduced to a smaller set of factors. The factor analysis conducted was done separately on each set of the items representing a particular scale due to limited observations. This analysis has a high potential to inflate the component loadings. Thus, a higher rule-of-thumb, a cut-off value of 0.40, was adopted (Nunnally and Bernstein, 1994). All factor loadings are greater than the 0.40 cut-off and are statistically significant. Also, the reliability of the measurements was evaluated by Cronbach alpha coefficients. In the scale reliability, Cronbach alpha coefficients are greater than 0.70 (Nunnally and Bernstein, 1994). The scales of all measures appear to produce internally consistent results; thus, these measures are deemed appropriate for further analysis because they express an accepted validity and reliability in this study. Table 1 presents the results for both factor loadings and Cronbach alpha for multiple-item scales used in this study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Factor Loadings</th>
<th>Cronbach Alpha</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Best Accounting Practices (BP)</td>
<td>0.81-0.93</td>
<td>0.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barrier Reduction (BR)</td>
<td>0.67-0.84</td>
<td>0.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quick Response to Changes (QR)</td>
<td>0.79-0.90</td>
<td>0.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multilateral Trade Liberalization (MT)</td>
<td>0.81-0.89</td>
<td>0.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Professional Judgment (IP)</td>
<td>0.70-0.90</td>
<td>0.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Self-Regulation (PS)</td>
<td>0.57-0.84</td>
<td>0.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Learning (IL)</td>
<td>0.67-0.84</td>
<td>0.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuous Self Improvement (SI)</td>
<td>0.80-0.89</td>
<td>0.90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The ordinary least squares (OLS) regression analysis is used to test and examine the hypothesized relationships and estimate factors influencing best accounting practices of accounting executives of Thai-
listed firms. Here, barrier reduction, quick response to changes, multilateral trade liberalization, individual professional judgment, professional self-regulation, individual learning, and continuous self improvement play significant roles in explaining the research relationships. Because all dependent variable, independent variables, moderating variables, and control variables in this study were neither nominal data nor categorical data, OLS is an appropriate method for examining the hypothesized relationships (Aulakh, Kotabe and Teegen, 2000). With the need to understand the relationships in this study, the research model of the aforementioned relationships is as follows.

Equation 1: \[ IP = \beta_{01} + \beta_{1}BR + \beta_{2}QR + \beta_{3}MT + \beta_{4}IL + \beta_{5}BR*IL + \beta_{6}QR*IL + \beta_{7}MT*IL + \beta_{8}FE + \beta_{9}FS + \beta_{10}FC + \varepsilon \]

Equation 2: \[ PS = \beta_{02} + \beta_{11}BR + \beta_{12}QR + \beta_{13}MT + \beta_{14}IL + \beta_{15}QR*IL + \beta_{16}QR*IL + \beta_{17}MT*IL + \beta_{18}FE + \beta_{19}FS + \beta_{20}FC + \varepsilon \]

Equation 3: \[ BP = \beta_{03} + \beta_{21}IP + \beta_{22}PS + \beta_{23}SI + \beta_{24}IP*SI + \beta_{25}PS*SI + \beta_{26}FE + \beta_{27}FS + \beta_{28}FC + \varepsilon \]

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 2 shows the descriptive statistics and correlation matrix for all variables. With respect to potential problems relating to multicollinearity, variance inflation factors (VIF) were used to provide information on the extent to which non-orthogonality among independent variables inflates standard errors. The VIFs range from 1.10 to 2.98, well below the cut-off value of 10 recommended by Neter, Wasserman and Kutner (1985), meaning that the independent variables are not correlated with each other. Therefore, there are no substantial multicollinearity problems encountered in this study.

Table 3 presents the results of OLS regression analysis of the relationships among globalization, individual professional judgment, and individual learning. First, barrier reduction has a significant positive relationship with individual professional judgment (\( b_{1a} = 0.24, p < 0.01; b_{1b} = 0.13, p < 0.10 \)). The barrier reduction of globalization has enhanced a harmonization of accounting and audit standards. Then, the barrier reduction is a significant factor of motivating accountants to perform a great individual professional judgment. Accordingly, accountants tend to have an individual professional judgment of the accounting professionalism under the barrier reduction of globalization. Thus, Hypothesis 1a is supported.

Second, quick response to changes is shown to have a significant positive influence on individual professional judgment (\( b_{2a} = 0.29, p < 0.01; b_{2b} = 0.21, p < 0.02 \)). It is a key determinant of the individual judgment of accounting professionalism. For the accounting activities, accountants are likely to adopt the principles and concepts of corporate governance mechanisms, namely, board size, board composition, executive compensation, market discipline, interlocking directorate, ownership concentration, duality, and inbreeding, and accountability systems, namely, accounting information, auditing standards, and financial and non-financial disclosures (Luo, 2005). Then, they definitely show an individual professional judgment.
of the accounting professionalism in the quick response to changes of globalization. Thus, Hypothesis 2a is supported.

Third, multilateral trade liberalization has an important association with individual professional judgment ($b_{3a} = 0.31, p < 0.01; b_{3b} = 0.17, p < 0.05$). In the multilateral trade liberalization of globalization, firms have done accounting activities, functions, responsibilities, and practices by increasingly adopting international accounting standards and financial reporting standards. For the accountant aspect, accountants need to practice accounting duties, functions, and responsibilities with professionalism through individual professional judgment. Then, the multilateral trade liberalization of globalization forces them to have accounting professionalism via individual professional judgment. Thus, Hypothesis 3a is supported.

Surprisingly, while the existing literature identifies a role of individual learning as a moderator, the result indicates that individual learning does not moderate the globalization (barrier reduction, quick response to changes, and multilateral trade liberalization)-individual professional judgment relationships ($b_5 = 0.05, p < 0.56; b_6 = -0.12, p < 0.28; b_7 = 0.14, p < 0.14$). Thus, Hypotheses 6a-6c are not supported.

### TABLE 3
RESULTS OF REGRESSION ANALYSIS\(^a\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent Variables</th>
<th>Dependent Variables</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IP</td>
<td>IP</td>
<td>IP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BR</td>
<td>0.24***</td>
<td>0.13*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.09)</td>
<td>(0.08)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QR</td>
<td>0.29***</td>
<td>0.21**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.09)</td>
<td>(0.09)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MT</td>
<td>0.31***</td>
<td>0.17**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.09)</td>
<td>(0.08)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IL</td>
<td>0.44***</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.08)</td>
<td>(0.09)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BR*IL</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>-0.12</td>
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* $p<.10$, ** $p<.05$, *** $p<.01$, \(^a\)Beta coefficients with standard errors in parenthesis.
Table 4 presents the results of OLS regression analysis of the relationships among globalization, professional self-regulation, and individual learning. First, barrier reduction has a positive influence on professional self-regulation ($b_{11b} = 0.23, p < 0.03$). For example, under the barrier reduction of globalization, International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRSs) concern with the diversified themes of regulation, public, and private interests by issuing a single set of financial reporting standards (Chand and White, 2007). Then, firms tend to extensively have best accounting practices by implementing harmonized accounting standards. In the individual level, accountants who are committed with the harmonization of accounting and financial reporting standards are likely to perform better professional self-regulation, and practice greater accounting functions and activities. Thus, Hypothesis 1b is supported.

Second, quick response to changes has a significant positive impact on professional self-regulation ($b_{12b} = 0.18, p < 0.10$). Because of concerning with the quick response to changes of globalization, firms are necessary to report both voluntary and non-voluntary disclosures of business activities. Similarly, globalization has impacted accountants’ behaviors and duties. Accountants need to clearly understand and extensively learn the antecedents and consequences of globalization. Then, they have a willingness to perform a professional self-regulation of the accounting professionalism in the quick response to changes of globalization. Thus, Hypothesis 2b is supported.

Third, multilateral trade liberalization has an important effect on professional self-regulation ($b_{13a} = 0.41, p < 0.01; b_{13b} = 0.26, p < 0.02$). While the multilateral trade liberalization of globalization occurs, accountants need to learn its antecedents and effects, and utilize it in order to continuously develop their knowledge and competency. Then, they are likely to potentially perform a great professional self-regulation in their behaviors, duties, practices, and responsibilities. Thus, Hypothesis 3a is supported.

Surprisingly, while previous research finds that individual learning is a moderator of the relationships, the result indicates that individual learning does not moderate the globalization (barrier reduction and quick response to changes)- professional self-regulation relationships ($b_{15} = -0.02, p < 0.85; b_{16} = -0.09, p <
Thus, Hypotheses 6d-6e are not supported. In contrast, individual learning positively moderates the multilateral trade liberalization-professional self-regulation relationships. Hence, Hypothesis 6f is supported.

Table 5 presents the results of OLS regression analysis of the relationships among accounting professionalism, best accounting practices, and individual learning. First, individual professional judgment has a positive influence on best accounting practices ($b_{21a} = 0.45, p < 0.01; b_{21b} = 0.25, p < 0.08$). With the accounting professionalism, accountants potentially attempt to continuously develop their behaviors, duties, practices, and responsibilities through learning and understanding the stakeholders' requirements, needs, and expectations in order to provide individual professional judgment and survive in accounting professions. Thus, Hypothesis 4 is supported. Second, professional self-regulation has no relationship with best accounting practices ($b_{22a} = 0.09, p < 0.39; b_{22b} = 0.06, p < 0.57$). Hence, Hypothesis 5 is not supported. Similarly, continuous self improvement does not moderate the accounting professionalism (individual professional judgment and professional self-regulation)-best accounting practices relationships ($b_{24} = 0.14, p < 0.18; b_{25} = -0.17, p < 0.12$). Then, Hypotheses 7a-7b are supported.

| TABLE 5 |
| RESULTS OF REGRESSION ANALYSIS$^a$ |

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<th>Independent Variables</th>
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<tr>
<td>Adjusted R$^2$</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

* $p<.10$, ** $p<.05$, *** $p<.01$, $^a$Beta coefficients with standard errors in parenthesis.

5. CONTRIBUTIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS FOR RESEARCH

5.1 Theoretical Contributions and Future Directions for Research
This study is intended to provide a clearer understanding of the relationships between globalization, accounting professionalism, best accounting practices, individual learning, and continuous self improvement. The study provides unique theoretical contributions expanding on previous knowledge and literature of globalization, accounting professionalism, best accounting practices, individual learning, and continuous self improvement. For advancing the field theoretically, this study is one of the first known studies to directly link globalization to accounting professionalism and accounting professionalism to best accounting practices of accountants of Thai listed-firms. This study attempts to comprehend globalization, accounting professionalism, best accounting practices, individual learning, and continuous self improvement in the same model. In addition, this study assesses the importance of globalization and accounting professionalism relative to best accounting practices of accountants of Thai listed-firms. According to the results of this study, the need for further research is apparent. Because this study finds that both individual learning and continuous self improvement do not moderate the aforementioned relationships.
relationships, future research is needed to conceptualize the measurement of globalization, accounting professionalism, best accounting practices and find some explanations about why individual learning and continuous self improvement do not play moderating roles in the research model while the existing literatures find the different results. Likewise, while the importance of accounting professionalism and best accounting practices still exist, this study finds that professional self-regulation has no impact on best accounting practices. Future research is needed to conceptualize the measurement of professional self-regulation and collect data from a larger population and/or a comparative population in order to increase the level of reliable results.

5.2 Professional Contributions
Another implication now exists for accounting professionals. This study helps accountants identify and justify key components that may be more critical in a rigorously accounting profession. Accountants should effectively understand, manage, and utilize globalization to improve accounting professionalism and best accounting practices, sustain, and succeed in the present and future accounting professions. These accountants may put more emphasis on globalization, accounting professionalism, and best accounting practices than on other variations. In the challenge of globalization, accountants can understand and exploit it, but they should also plan to expand their other strategies to include or graduate to an advanced accounting activity in order to continuously maintain and increase the levels of accounting professionalism and best accounting practices. To maximize the benefits of globalization, accountants should provide other resources to support their effectiveness and create new opportunities in the accounting professions and environments.

6. CONCLUSION
With respect to the antecedents and consequences of globalization, this study needs to clearly understand its effects on accounting professions. Thus, the objective of this study is to examine the relationships among globalization, accounting professionalism, and best accounting practices. It tests the impacts of individual learning and continuous self improvement on the aforementioned relationships. Here, this study collects data from accounting executives of Thai listed-firms. Barrier reduction, quick response to changes, and multilateral trade liberalization are hypothesized to have an influence on individual professional judgment, professional self-regulation, and best accounting practices. Individual learning is proposed to moderate those relationships. Also, both individual professional judgment and professional self-regulation are hypothesized to have an effect on best accounting practices. Continuous self improvement is proposed to moderate those relationships. As the results of the study, barrier reduction, quick response to changes, and multilateral trade liberalization are positively related to individual professional judgment and professional self-regulation, and only barrier reduction and multilateral trade liberalization have significant positive influences on best accounting practices. Likewise, individual learning and continuous self improvement does not moderate the research relationships. Accordingly, accountants and other relative professions need to learn the antecedents and consequences of globalization and utilize these understandings in order to prepare their knowledge and competency for benefitting its situation, succeeding their professions, and sustaining in the future. For the theoretical implications, future research should investigate the roles of globalization in explaining accountants’ behaviors, activities, practices, and performances. Other professions who adopt accounting knowledge in their workings and occupations need to be proved in their reactions to and utilization of the globalization.

REFERENCES:


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