

THE IMPACT OF SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT PRACTICES ON COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGES: MODERATION ROLE OF TOTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT

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Abstract: The present study focused the phenomenon of competitiveness in rapidly challenging environment. The pharmaceutical industry of Thailand considered as most progressive in Southeast Asian region and needs to achieve competitive advantage. The present study intends to determine the influence of supply chain management practices including logistics integration and organizational learning in SCM perspective to achieve competitive advantages. The study was conducted on pharmaceutical industry of Thailand as data was collected from firm through questionnaires later it was examined by utilizing PLS. The results of study depicted positive significant results between organizational learning and competitive advantage, logistics integration and competitive advantages. The study intends to determine the moderation role of total quality management (TQM) between exogenous and endogenous constructs of study. The study reported significant relationship of TQM by strengthening the relationship between logistics integration and competitive advantage but no moderation effect was observed between organizational learning and competitive advantage.

Key words: total quality management, logistics integration, organizational learning and competitive advantages.

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Introduction

The financial strength of any developed or developing nations largely based on small and medium enterprises (SEMs) industry. The SME industry contributes in economic situation, competitive advantage and for employment generation. The SME sector considered among research scholars and practitioners as an engine to accelerate economic activities, that also contribute in reducing unemployment, poverty reduction and economic stability based on increased exports power and considered as crucial factor that provides job to 88.8 million jobs and produces 3,666 trillion €s and presents

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28% of GDP in EU member nations (Chienwattanasook & Jermstittiparsert, 2019). It has been occurred in literature that various countries such as Australia, Austria, Canada and Germany gained lot GDP contribution by SME sector of different categories and estimated that 55 to 65 % GDP was contributed by SME sector. United Kingdom (UK) gained 60% contribution from SME sector while 47% employment based on SME sector. The research studies have depicted that developing and developed nations focus on SME sector due to its growth rate and economic contribution (Pail, 2015). The SME sector is an integral part of Southeast Asian region due its importance and crucial role in economic development of countries as 80% employment provided by with 50% contribution of GDP and majority business units consists of SMEs in region (Rosli, Lokman, Aziz, & Hamidi, 2015). The present study conducted on Thailand's pharmaceutical while considering the purchasing power parity that has increased to 1.1 trillion US \$ in recent years. The statistics show that Thailand is one of the countries that possess highest GDP of US \$ 03 trillion in Southeast Asian according to IMF (International Monetary Fund). The gross domestic product (GDP) of Thailand observed to be increased at the rate of 3.2% as compare to 1.6% in European Union. The Asian Development Bank reported that Thailand has great potential of GDP growth up to 3.6% in year 2017 and onwards (Chienwattanasook & Jermstittiparsert, 2019).

The present study intends to conduct research to determine the competitive advantages based on supply chain management practices in pharmaceutical industry of Thailand. It has been reported that pharmaceutical industry possess the worth of US \$ 4.4 billion since year 2012 that considered as highest worth in Southeast Asia (Urias, 2017). The natural disasters hit the market in last decade but it grown back rapidly at 9% annually. The reports and financial experts believed and projected that Thai pharmaceutical industry expected to attain US \$ 09 billion in year 2020 (Chienwattanasook & Jermstittiparsert, 2019).

The economy of Thailand considered as stronger in the region among Southeast Asian region. The literature has depicted and reported that there are various evidences of challenges and hurdles for SMEs related to pharmaceutical industry. The research scholars have highlighted the influence of entrepreneurship, market orientation, lack of management, intense competition, lower demand, lack of financial support, lack of training and non-friendly environment, further it has been also reported in literature that lack of innovativeness is a challenge and hurdle in better and effective supply chain management implementation (Shehu & Mahmood, 2014). The pharmaceutical firms are category of SME sector with the worth of US \$ 15.8 billion which is equal to the Taiwan's economic worth. The pharmaceutical industry of Thailand considered as one of major category of SMEs which reported as per-capita spending about US \$ 240

in recent years. The healthcare facilities has to cop-up with increased population of Thailand, so therefore concern towards health industry increased in order to fulfill the demand according to the increased population (Urias, 2017).

It has been reported that pharmaceutical industry of Thailand has worth of US \$ 4.5 billion since year 2013 that shows huge contribution in economic circle and shows strength of Thai drug market. It has been expected that potential growth of Thai pharmaceutical industry will grow even faster and rapidly in year 2020. The pharmaceutical industry of Thailand has increased rapidly in recent years such as last decade observed rapid growth as SME sector according to (Rao, 2008). It has been reported that total worth of exports of drugs are reported as US \$ 300 million that are exported to other neighboring nations in same region including Vietnam, Cambodia and Myanmar. The government supports biotechnology based firms including pharmaceutical sector by providing research and innovation support and tax incentives. There are various factors that affect the performance of SMEs related to pharmaceutical categories including entrepreneurial activities and supply chain management practices that contributes in growth of pharmaceutical industry (Alarape, 2013). The research scholars have highlighted that entrepreneurship related activities that influence the SMEs performance and innovation in pharmaceutical industry. The previous research scholars have depicted that entrepreneurial orientation and product innovation are critical towards SME performance (Boso, Story, Cadogan, & Ashie, 2015). Further, it has been also empirically examined that entrepreneurial and innovation considered as strong factors that influence the SMEs productivity and growth (Mantok, Sekhon, Sahi, & Jones, 2019).

The term supply chain management was coined in early 80s that addresses the concept of internal business operations including manufacturing, sales, purchases and distribution of finished goods. The logistics management considers as an important and crucial part of supply chain management as it is key processes and function of whole supply chain. The integrated system that explains supply chain activities that are series of inter-related businesses processes including following:

- The raw material acquisition and business parts
- Transformation of raw material into finished commodities
- Value addition in existing products
- Distribution and promotion of products for retailer and customers
- The exchange of valuable information among participants of supply chain including suppliers, distributors, manufacturing and retailers

As research scholar Min and Zhou (2002) depicted above stated important points of supply chain management practices.

The present study intends to determine the competitive advantage of supply chain management practices of pharmaceutical industry of Thailand. The researcher intends to empirically examine the relationship between organizational learning and logistics integration with moderating role of total quality management.

Literature review

The long term partnership for common objectives such as to support different business units from raw material procurement to delivery of finished goods depends upon supply chain strategies that influence the success of firms in highly competitive environment. The buyers of raw material and manufacturers that further leads to delivery of finished goods that flow between suppliers and distributors under long term relationship shows supply chain management. The agreement between participants of supply chain such as supplier, buyers and distributors depends upon central contract among them in order to execute effective supply chain management practices. In current highly competitive business environment the supply chain management has become focus point of research scholars and practitioners in order to gain competitive advantages (Liu, Kasturiratne, & Moizer, 2012). The firms must develop strategic approach for effective SCM practices between various participants. It has been well established in literature specifically by Micheal Porter in his classical model that buyers and suppliers prefer to gain competitive advantage through their effective strategies and development of their relationship. It has been stated in literature that purchased products to transform in finished goods to gain profit margin, reduce cost and appropriate quality while responding towards supply chain risks. Customer services have been taken as an important node in supply chain in any industry as it demands from firms to fulfill their demands (Christopher, 2016).

Organizations learn from experience that can be defined as type of firm that considered as ideal for learning to take place that influence the behavior. The change in behavior can be initiated by adopting learning facilities (Yeo, 2008). The studies have been conducted on organizational learning that considered as an important factor that enable firm to gain competitive advantage based on innovativeness and effectiveness (Goh, Elliott, & Quon, 2012). The research scholars have described organizational learning as uni-dimensional construct and examined to define competitive advantage. The studies have examined the multidimensional construct of organizational learning (Chakrabarty & Rogé, 2002). The study previously conducted to determine organizational learning as uni-dimension construct on public and private sector in Canada (Goh et al., 2012). The study also conducted to determine the role of organizational learning based on information access, delivery and dissemination of information and organizational retention (Wang & Ellinger, 2011). The research

studies have explained organizational learning is conceptualization under six orientation including knowledge source, documentation, strong commitment, development of skills, focus on value chain and skill development, the study was conducted on relationship between organizational learning and performance of small and medium enterprises of Poland (Michna, 2009). The study focused to determine the organizational performance among Thai SME sector influenced by entrepreneurship and total quality management and found positive significant relationship (Chienwattanasook & Jermstittiparsert, 2019). The study also examined the moderation role of organizational learning and found insignificant relationship between entrepreneurial orientation and organizational performance but reported significant relationship between total quality management and organizational performance among Thai SME sector.

The studies have reported that organizational learning found to be contributive in reduction of cost, increase effectiveness and performance of firms (Robins, Hendin, & Trzesniewski, 2001). The studies have been conducted previously to determine the relationship of organizational learning with number of variables that influence organizational success due to entrepreneurial activities.

The prime objective of SCM includes enhancing operational efficiency that further increase profit margin by successful integration of supply chain partnership. The whole supply chain among all participants must be capable of create value addition to gain competitive advantages and firms must realize the fact in improving efficiency (Min & Zhou, 2002). The management of supply chain management considered as an essential prerequisite for effectiveness, competitive initiatives in global environment and to gain profitability. The successful firms focus on their competencies to gain competitive advantage by ensuring effective execution of information sharing through integrated mechanism among participants of supply chain that further assist in profit growth. The effectiveness of supply chain of all participants contributes for overall performance and effectiveness of supply chain to gain competitive advantages and to enhance performance. The appropriate balance is required between external opportunities and internal competencies through effective supply chain effectiveness through information integration to gain competitive advantages (Somjai & Jermstittiparsert, 2019). The integrated internal functions are required for successful implementation of SCM by establishing link between internal and external participants between SCM participants (Holmberg, 2000).

The literature has depicted that TQM is considered as set of practices to improve continuous improvements, performance related outcomes, customer satisfaction, problem solving, delivery time improvement, long term strategic planning and effective fruitful relationship between various participants of supply chain (Soares,

Soltani, & Liao, 2017). The term TQM consists of three words which express total as each individual employee responsible for quality initiatives including customers and suppliers. The word quality expresses the satisfaction of customers with quality of goods and services. The term management expresses the planning, organizing and controlling organizational operations by top management to implement managerial practices (Haseeb, Hussain, Ślusarczyk, & Jermisittiparsert, 2019). The studies have empirically examined the relationship between TQM practices and supply chain on logistics firms in Malaysia. The study found and reported positive relationship between total quality management and SCM practices significantly. It has been recommended that firms must focus on TQM practices to gain competitive supply chain and long term benefits. The studies have been conducted to determine the relationship between total quality management and supply chain management relationship as TQM practices improves SCM practices (Zimon, 2017). The research studies have reported positive significant relationship between practices of TQM including flexibility, cost reduction, relationship among stakeholders and responsiveness. The scholars have depicted that TQM practices contribute in value addition of supply chain management practices (Valmohammadi, Sofiyabadi, & Kolahi, 2019). The studies have been conducted on Saudi hotel industry to determine the relationship between TQM and SCM; the study reported that TQM improves the quality at supply chain management.

The present study intends to determine the competitive advantages of supply chain influenced by organizational learning and logistics integration. The study also empirically examined the TQM practices as moderator between exogenous and endogenous constructs of proposed framework. The above stated literature derives towards following direct and moderating hypotheses.

H1: Organizational Learning influence the Competitive Advantages among Pharmaceutical Industry of Thailand

H2: Logistics Integration influence the Competitive Advantages among Pharmaceutical Industry of Thailand

H3: Total Quality Management moderates the relationship between Organizational Learning and Competitive Advantages among Pharmaceutical Industry of Thailand

H4: Total Quality Management moderates the relationship between Logistics Integration and Competitive Advantages among Pharmaceutical Industry of Thailand

Research Framework

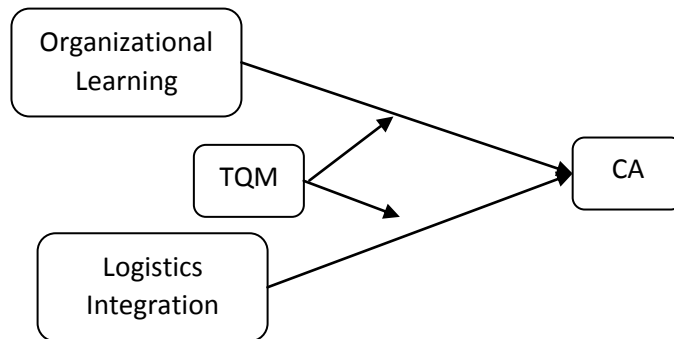


Figure 1: Proposed framework

Research methodology

The current study is correlational and cross-sectional in nature as data was collected from supply chain units of Pharmaceutical firms of Thailand. The current study empirically examined the relationship between organizational learning and logistics integration influential towards competitive advantage with moderating role of total quality management. The data was collected to empirically examine the relationship between constructs of study to generalize the findings to established appropriate supply chain management practices to gain competitive advantages. The study was conducted on pharmaceutical industry of Thailand and sample was identified through Judgmental sampling technique due to specific information based on supply chain management practices among pharmaceutical industry. The data was collected through questionnaire as 158 completed responses were received for analysis. The data was collected through measurement scales for each variable adopted from previous studies. The 04 items measurement scale to determine the organizational learning was taken from the study of (Chienwattanasook & Jermisittiparsert, 2019); the measurement scale of logistics integration was adopted from previous research study of (Somjai & Jermisittiparsert, 2019) with 04 items; the 04 items measurement scale to determine the competitive advantage adopted from the study of (Jermisittiparsert, Joemsittiprasert, & Phonwattana, 2019) and the moderating effect of TQM was examined and 10 items scale was adopted from the study of (Jermisittiparsert, Namdej, & Sriyakul, 2019).

Results

The current study examined the collected responses on PLS, through PLS-algorithm for assessment of measurement model to check the reliability and validity of constructs, whereas bootstrapping method was utilized for executing structural equation model to investigate the relationship between constructs of study. The study examined the relationship between exogenous constructs organizational learning and logistics integration under umbrella of supply chain management practices to determine the competitive advantages of Pharmaceutical industry of Thailand. The moderating role of TQM was also examined in present study that quality management systems strengthen the relationship between exogenous and endogenous constructs.

This section of study examined the reliability and validity of constructs through PLS-algorithm method and reported acceptable results. The measurement model entails the assessment of reliability of constructs based on Cronbach alpha α , composite reliability and average variance extracted (AVE). The statistical acceptable values of Cronbach alpha is considered as 0.70, the acceptable composite reliability is considered as 0.70 and AVE must remain higher than 0.50 to be acceptable (Hair Jr, Sarstedt, Hopkins, & Kuppelwieser, 2014). The table 1 below demonstrates the Cronbach alpha, composite reliability and average variance extracted (AVE).

Table 1: Convergent validity

Constructs	Alpha	CR	AVE
OL	0.711	0.701	0.511
LI	0.781	0.723	0.501
TQM	0.801	0.791	0.532
CA	0.799	0.777	0.520

The above table demonstrated measurement model and statistical values of Cronbach alpha found to be 0.711, 0.781, 0.801 and 0.799 for constructs organizational learning (OL), logistics Integration (LI), total quality management (TQM) and competitive advantage (CA) respectively. The value for CR observed to be acceptable as shown in table that CR for OL found to be 0.701, LI found to be 0.723, TQM found to be 0.791 and CA found to be 0.777 as acceptable. The AVE found to be acceptable based on values for each construct OL, LI, TQM and CA 0.511, 0.501, 0.532 and 0.520 respectively.

The discriminant validity presents correlation between constructs, for satisfactory discriminant validity the correlation between other constructs and itself and it must remain higher than correlation with other variables (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

Table 2: Discriminant validity

Constructs	OL	LI	TQM	CA
OL	0.813			
LI	0.621	0.881		
TQM	0.542	0.501	0.741	
CA	0.433	0.499	0.377	0.820

The above table shows diagonal values that shows the discriminant validity and acceptable on the base of given criteria of higher correlation value within variable as compare to other constructs.

This section of study examined the relationship between constructs of proposed framework. This section intends to investigate the statistical relationship between constructs have been examined based on bootstrapping method and based on β value, t-value and p-value. The β value presents direction of relationship and t-value must remain higher than 1.96 in orders to be significant relationship with 95% confidence interval. The p-value must remain lower than 0.05 for acceptable significance. The table 3 demonstrates direct relationship between constructs.

Table 3: Path analysis

Relationships	Beta	t-values	p-values
OL \rightarrow CA	0.210	1.980	0.004
LI \rightarrow CA	0.320	0.289	0.003
OL*TQM \rightarrow CA	0.430	1.310	0.430
LI*TQM \rightarrow CA	0.340	3.890	0.000

Discussions

The first hypothesis H1 investigates the relationship between organizational learning and competitive advantages among Thai pharmaceutical industry. The hypothesized relationship was examined through bootstrapping method based on structural equation modeling. The acceptance of hypothesis base on β value with t-value and p value, whereas β shows direction of relationship and t-value shows significance of relationship along with p-value must remain lower than 0.05, with 05% error margin. The result of SEM shows that β value observed to be 0.21 that shows positive relationship and t-value 1.98 fulfills significance level with 95% confidence interval. So therefore, H1 was accepted on statistical grounds. The hypothesis H2 investigates the relationship between logistics integration and competitive environment among pharmaceutical industry of Thailand. The pharmaceutical industry has to focus on logistics management in order to maintain their supplies so therefore logistics

management gains much more importance in supply chain management. The present study intends to determine the relationship between logistics integration and competitive advantage. As it is believed that cost effective and quick delivery mechanism enable firms to gain competitive advantages in highly competitive business environment. The results of the study demonstrated that β value for hypothesis H2 was observed as 0.32 which shows positive direction and t-value found to be 2.89 that shows statistically acceptable relationship between constructs with 05% error margin. So therefore, H2 is accepted statistically. The third hypothesis H3 investigates the moderation effect of TQM between organizational learning and competitive advantage. The pharmaceutical industry of Thailand must consider total quality management practices and organizational learning to gain competitive advantages. The result of study observed that TQM has no moderation effect between exogenous and endogenous constructs of study. The t-value observed as 1.31 which is lower than cut off point 1.96 with p value or sig value as 0.43 that shows higher p value than 0.05 so therefore, H3 is rejected on statistical grounds.

The fourth hypothesis H4 investigates the moderation effect of TQM between logistics integration and competitive advantages. The logistics mechanism play important role in supply chain management of pharmaceutical industry to distribute drugs on time at point of sales for patients. The effective logistics management assists in reducing cost, reduce delivery time and contribute for effectiveness to gain competitive advantages. The present study examined the TQM as moderator between logistics integration and competitive advantage.

Conclusion

The prime focus of present study was to determine the influence of organizational learning and logistics integration as supply chain management practices towards achievement of competitive advantages in pharmaceutical industry of Thailand. The study examined the moderating effect of TQM as quality management practices considered as important and crucial factors in achievement of competitive advantage. The study was conducted on Thai pharmaceutical industry to determine the supply chain management practices and effectiveness that contribute to gain competitiveness in highly competitive environment. The data was collected through questionnaires and was analyzed on PLS by utilizing measurement model and structural equation modeling. The results of study indicated that organizational learning significantly influence competitive advantage, similarly logistics integration also contributes in achievement of competitive advantage and significantly positive relationship is depicted based on statistical figures. The moderation role of TQM was also investigated as moderating effect was observed between exogenous and endogenous

constructs. The results of study reported no moderation effect between organizational learning and competitive advantage. The study reported moderation effect of TQM between logistics integration and competitive advantage among pharmaceutical firms of Thailand. In nutshell, the direct hypothesis H1 and H2 reported as statistically significant, however no moderation effect was observed in hypothesis H3 but significant moderation effect of TQM was examined between logistics integration and competitive advantages. The study suggested pharmaceutical industry to adopt effective supply chain practices to gain competitive advantages. This study has some future directions that are also the limitations of the study. This study takes only two predictors and suggested that future studies should add more predictors in their studies. In addition, this study ignore the moderation role on the model and suggested that future study should also incorporate this aspect in their investigation.

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WPLYW PRAKTYK ZARZĄDZANIA ŁAŃCUCHEM DOSTAW NA KONKURENCYJNOŚĆ: MODERACJA ROLA TOTALNEGO ZARZĄDZANIA JAKOŚCIĄ

Streszczenie: W niniejszym badaniu skupiono się na zjawisku konkurencyjności w szybko wymagającym środowisku. Przemysł farmaceutyczny Tajlandii jest uważany za najbardziej rozwijający się w regionie Azji Południowo-Wschodniej i musi osiągnąć przewagę konkurencyjną. Niniejsze badanie ma na celu określenie wpływu praktyk zarządzania łańcuchem dostaw, w tym integracji logistyki i uczenia się organizacji w perspektywie SCM w celu osiągnięcia przewagi konkurencyjnej. Badanie zostało przeprowadzone na tajlandzkim przemyśle farmaceutycznym, ponieważ dane zebrano od firmy za pomocą kwestionariuszy, a następnie zbadano je przy użyciu PLS. Wyniki badania przedstawiają pozytywne znaczące wyniki między nauką organizacji a przewagą konkurencyjną, integracją logistyczną i przewagą konkurencyjną. Badanie ma na celu określenie roli moderatora w całkowitym zarządzaniu jakością (TQM) między egzogennymi i endogennymi konstruktami badania. Badanie wykazało istotny związek TQM poprzez wzmocnienie związku między integracją logistyki a przewagą konkurencyjną, ale nie zaobserwowano żadnego efektu moderacji między nauką organizacji a przewagą konkurencyjną.

Słowa kluczowe: kompleksowe zarządzanie jakością, integracja logistyki, nauka organizacji i przewagi konkurencyjne.

供应链管理实践对竞争优势的影响:全面质量管理的调节作用

摘要:本研究集中在快速挑战性环境中的竞争现象。泰国的制药业被认为是东南亚地区最先进的产业,需要获得竞争优势。本研究旨在确定供应链管理实践(包括物流整合和组织学习)在供应链管理方面的影响,以实现竞争优势。这项研究是针对泰国制药业进行的,数据是通过问卷调查从公司收集的,后来通过PLS进行了检查。研究结果显示了组织学习与竞争优势,物流整合与竞争优势之间的积极显著成果。该研究旨在确定外源和内源研究结构之间的全面质量管理(TQM)的调节作用。该研究通过加强物流整合与竞争优势之间的关系报告了全面质量管理的显著关系,但在组织学习与竞争优势之间未观察到调节作用。

关键词:全面质量管理,物流整合,组织学习和竞争优势