

Effect of Information Technology Application and Strategic Partnership on Firm Performance for Logistics Service Providers

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Abstract

Effective and collaborative supply chain management has been recognized as an advantage for firms involving in global business. Therefore, how to sustain collaborations among firms and their strategic partners, and maintain competitive advantage is quite essential. We gained a picture from the literature that an efficient partnership among firms and their strategic partners through information technology (IT) application could make a win-win situation. Nonetheless, some historical researches revealed negative or no influence of IT application on firm performance, and showed non-significant effect of information sharing between business partners on firm performance. Owing to the contradictory results shown in the literature we focus on investigating the associated relationships among IT application, strategic partnership and firm performance of the logistic service provider (LSP). A conceptual framework, developed based on the results in the literature and the special characteristics of the LSP, are proposed to explore the aforementioned relationships. Moreover, we investigate whether there is a reciprocal causal effect between strategic partnership and firm performance. The research model is validated using the structural equation modeling method. The data for model validation are collected by questionnaire surveys through the stratified samples of LSPs operating from Taiwan. Empirical analysis results show that IT application has a positive influence on both strategic partnership and firm performance. The mediating effect of strategic partnership on the relationship between IT

application and firm performance is positive and partially supported. The reciprocal causal hypothesis is partially supported where only strategic partnership exerts a positive influence on firm performance. Finally, theoretical and practical implications are discussed.

Keyword : Information technology application, Strategic partnership, Firm performance