



A STUDY ON OPERATIONAL CHALLENGES AND SERVICE EFFICIENCY IN FREIGHT FORWARDING: A CASE OF TRANSSAFE GLOBAL FORWARDING PVT. LTD., CHENNAI

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ABSTRACT :

This study investigates the operational inefficiencies affecting freight forwarding services at Transsafe Global Forwarding Pvt. Ltd., Chennai. In particular, the research focuses on carrier delays, port congestion, and documentation errors, all of which contribute to shipment delays and reduced customer satisfaction. Using a mixed-methods approach involving surveys and observational research, the study incorporates both Chi-Square and Pearson correlation analyses to test hypotheses related to operational challenges and service efficiency. The findings confirm that operational problems significantly affect freight forwarding performance, with a near-perfect correlation between port congestion and shipment delays. The research concludes with recommendations aimed at optimizing operations, improving workforce training, and enhancing documentation accuracy through technological upgrades.

2. Keywords : Freight forwarding, operational efficiency, shipment delay, port congestion, customs clearance, logistics, Chi-square analysis, correlation, Transsafe Global.

3. Introduction

Freight forwarding is a critical function within the international logistics chain, facilitating the seamless movement of goods across global borders. Freight forwarders serve as intermediaries between shippers and carriers and are responsible for managing the documentation, customs compliance, and multimodal transportation of cargo. As global trade becomes increasingly complex, companies like Transsafe Global Forwarding Pvt. Ltd. play a vital role in ensuring timely and cost-effective deliveries. Despite technological progress, these companies continue to face operational bottlenecks that hinder their performance. This research investigates such challenges, focusing on Transsafe's Chennai operations.

4. Problem Statement

Transsafe Global Forwarding Pvt. Ltd., despite its technological infrastructure and experienced team, faces recurring operational issues. Carrier delays, insufficient vehicle availability, port congestion, and customs documentation errors have led to inefficiencies and shipment delays. These issues impact customer satisfaction and hinder business growth. Identifying and resolving these inefficiencies is vital to enhancing Transsafe's service delivery and competitiveness.

5. Aim of the Paper

The primary aim of this paper is to evaluate the operational challenges faced by Transsafe Global Forwarding Pvt. Ltd., Chennai, and to propose practical strategies for improving the efficiency of freight forwarding services. The study also seeks to establish the statistical significance of the relationship between operational problems and shipment delays, and between port congestion and the frequency of delays.

6. Literature Review

Davis (2012) emphasized the need for proactive logistics strategies to foster customer loyalty. Dhanabakyam and Parimala (2015) discussed the evolving role of freight forwarders in a globalized economy, highlighting their importance in ensuring compliance and accuracy. Sebastian (2016) outlined infrastructural inadequacies as a primary bottleneck in Indian logistics. Matiya (2017) and Shanmugam (2019) noted that manual processes and delayed documentation were among the critical issues hampering freight services. Recent insights by Rajasekaran (2024) underscore the urgent need for Indian logistics providers to align with global technology standards. These studies collectively highlight the gap between infrastructural growth and operational efficiency, particularly in developing countries.

7. Methodology

This study uses a descriptive research design under a mixed-methods framework, combining both qualitative observations and quantitative surveys. A structured questionnaire was administered to 60 employees across operations, documentation, and logistics departments at Transsafe Global Forwarding Pvt. Ltd., Chennai.

Primary Data: Collected through questionnaires focusing on employee experiences related to documentation, shipment delays, and operational coordination.

Secondary Data: Gathered from journals, government portals, and company reports to contextualize the findings.

Statistical Tools Used:

Chi-Square Test: To determine the relationship between operational problems and shipment delays.

Pearson's Correlation Coefficient: To analyse the relationship between port congestion frequency and shipment delays.

8. Findings

Workforce Composition:

62% of the workforce has 1–3 years of experience, with only 6% having over 5 years. The young workforce, while adaptable, lacks senior expertise in managing operational complexity.

Key Operational Challenges:

Vehicle Unavailability (45%) and Driver Shortage (24%) are the primary reasons for shipment delays.

Technical/Tracking Issues (14%) reveal gaps in digital infrastructure.

Documentation Errors (34%) and Long Customs Processing Times (50%) were frequently cited.

Port Congestion and Carrier Delays were reported as recurrent and directly linked to shipment inefficiency.

Statistical Insights:

Chi-Square Analysis yielded a value of 21.59 (greater than the critical value of 3.841), confirming a significant relationship between operational problems and shipment delays.

Pearson's Correlation Coefficient between port congestion frequency and delay duration was 0.99, indicating an almost perfect positive correlation.

Technology Adoption:

80% of respondents reported full automation and integrated ERP systems. However, system underutilization and inconsistent training were cited as barriers to effective implementation.

Customs Clearance:

83% of respondents use an in-house customs team. Despite this, documentation inconsistencies remain a critical issue affecting shipment timelines.

Communication Gaps:

While email and phone usage is universal, 70% still rely on courier services, indicating an incomplete digital shift. A hybrid approach, combining email, software platforms, and physical documents, adds complexity.

9. Conclusion

The study conclusively demonstrates that operational inefficiencies—such as inadequate vehicle availability, poor coordination, and documentation errors—significantly impact the freight forwarding performance at Transsafe Global Forwarding Pvt. Ltd., Chennai. The Chi-Square analysis confirmed that these inefficiencies correlate strongly with shipment delays, while the correlation between port congestion and delay frequency was nearly perfect ($r = 0.99$).

Despite technological advancements and internal customs handling, challenges persist due to human error, limited training, and external disruptions like port congestion. While the company has made significant progress in automation, greater focus is needed on standardizing procedures, upgrading employee skills, and minimizing dependency on physical documentation.

Strategic improvements, including the adoption of logistics optimization tools, stronger partnerships with third-party providers, and enhanced employee training, are critical. These measures will not only improve shipment reliability and operational efficiency but also elevate customer satisfaction—ensuring sustainable growth in an increasingly competitive logistics landscape.

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