



International Journal of Research Publication and Reviews

Journal homepage: www.ijrpr.com ISSN 2582-7421

DO EXPORT MARKETING STRATEGIES INFLUENCE FIRM PERFORMANCE IN THE 3PL SECTOR? AN EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS

¹*Dr. T.A.M Hameed Kan*

Associate Professor, MEASI Institute of Management, Chennai, Tamil Nadu

hameedkan@gmail.com, 9884401786

ABSTRACT :

In the context of increasing globalization, Third-Party Logistics (3PL) service providers are pivotal in supporting firms to penetrate international markets by offering transportation, warehousing, distribution, and value-added services. As competition in the logistics industry intensifies, formulating and implementing effective export marketing strategies have become essential for sustaining competitiveness and improving firm performance. This study examines the impact of export marketing strategies on the performance of 3PL service providers, specifically focusing on the Indian logistics industry. A total of 118 respondents were surveyed using a convenience sampling method. The instrument's reliability was established through Cronbach's alpha, yielding a coefficient of 0.950 for 41 items, indicating high internal consistency. Statistical techniques such as reliability testing, Friedman test, one-way ANOVA, and correlation analysis were employed to assess the relationship between export marketing strategies and firm performance. The findings highlight that strategic initiatives, including diversified pricing, improved service quality, targeted market segmentation, employee training, and effective utilization of unique selling propositions, significantly enhance competitiveness and overall performance. The results emphasize that aligning export marketing strategies with dynamic market requirements contributes to firm-level success and sustainable growth of the logistics sector. Recommendations are proposed for 3PL providers to strengthen their international positioning and optimize their marketing approaches. The study also suggests future research avenues to explore the interplay between export marketing tactics and organizational strategies under varying contextual settings.

Keywords: Promotion strategy, Place strategy, Position strategy, Price strategy Product strategy and Firm's performance

INTRODUCTION

In the era of globalization, logistics has become a cornerstone of international trade, enabling firms to connect with markets across borders efficiently and competitively. Among the different players in this sector, Third-Party Logistics (3PL) service providers have emerged as vital partners in managing supply chain complexities such as transportation, warehousing, inventory management, and value-added services. As global trade intensifies and customer demands evolve, the ability of 3PL firms to adopt effective export marketing strategies has become a crucial determinant of their competitiveness and long-term sustainability. Export marketing strategies encompass various activities, including product/service differentiation, pricing mechanisms, market segmentation, distribution channel selection, and promotional initiatives. For 3PL service providers, these strategies act not only to penetrate international markets but also as tools to build trust, retain clients, and establish a distinctive position in a highly competitive industry. Consequently, a well-structured export marketing strategy can significantly influence firm performance by enhancing operational efficiency, financial outcomes, and market expansion. While considerable research has been conducted on export marketing in manufacturing and product-based industries, the literature addressing its role in the logistics sector particularly 3PL services remains relatively underexplored. Most existing studies emphasize operational performance, technology adoption, or supply chain integration, often overlooking the strategic marketing dimension that drives competitive advantage. Furthermore, limited empirical evidence exists in emerging economies like India, where logistics infrastructure is rapidly evolving, and 3PL firms strive to expand their global footprint. This gap highlights the need for a focused investigation into whether export marketing strategies significantly impact firm performance in the 3PL sector. The present study aims to bridge this gap by providing empirical insights and practical implications for industry practitioners and policymakers.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Ali (2020) examined export marketing strategy as an emerging area of interest within strategic management due to its significant role in achieving

sustainable competitive advantage and firm performance. However, the study noted limited clarity regarding the factors that enable top management teams to adopt such strategies. The research explored how intangible skills creativity, business experience, and intellectual capital support marketing managers in adapting export marketing strategies related to product, price, promotion, and distribution, ultimately driving sustainable performance. Using data from 293 SMEs and applying structural equation modeling, the findings revealed that intangible skills do not directly enhance sustainable performance. Instead, creativity significantly influenced all four strategy dimensions, experience shaped product, price, and promotion strategies, while intellectual capital was only relevant for product strategy. Among export marketing dimensions, product, price, and distribution contributed significantly to performance, while promotion did not. Importantly, strategy adaptation mediated the relationship between creativity/experience and sustainable performance, but not between intellectual capital and performance. The study recommended that SMEs prioritize marketing personnel with strong creative, experiential, and intellectual capabilities to develop effective export strategies.

Radojevic (2022) investigated export marketing strategy (EMS) archetypes within the agri-food export sector, focusing on organizational determinants as antecedent factors. Drawing on resource-based, dynamic capabilities, and contingency theories, the study pursued two objectives: identifying existing EMS archetypes and assessing variations across exporters shaped by organizational determinants. Using a comparative research design, quantitative methods, and a combination of etic/emic approaches, the study employed MANOVA to test six hypotheses. Findings revealed the "tactical coordinator" as a universal EMS archetype, while diversity in archetypes emerged from organizational resources, capabilities, and contextual contingencies. Despite limitations related to sample selection, reliance on surveys, and self-reported data, the research contributed theoretical and practical insights by being the first to apply EMS archetype analysis to the agri-food industry in developing and crisis-affected contexts, integrating cultural and institutional perspectives.

Silva (2023) explored the link between market-oriented environmental sustainability (MES), green export-related resources and capabilities, eco-friendly export marketing strategy, and firm performance. Using survey data from 241 manufacturing exporters analyzed with partial least squares structural equation modeling, the study found that MES positively influenced green export-related resources and capabilities. Capabilities directly shaped eco-friendly marketing strategies, whereas resources exerted an indirect effect through capabilities. Moreover, eco-friendly export marketing strategies positively impacted export performance. This research advanced sustainability and export marketing literature by demonstrating how environmentally focused strategies and capabilities drive export competitiveness.

STATEMENT OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

In international trade, exports involve the transfer of goods manufactured in one country to another for sale or exchange. These activities significantly contribute to the gross domestic output of the producing nation. Expanding exports is crucial because it improves trade balance, strengthens economic stability, and fosters economic development. In addition, export growth contributes to a fairer distribution of wealth and income within a nation. To ensure these benefits, exporters must adopt effective export marketing strategies that facilitate smooth operations, enhance competitiveness, and promote sustainable growth. Globally, several studies have examined the determinants of export performance, marketing challenges, and the connection between marketing strategies and firm success. However, much of this research has been carried out in the context of domestic markets or broad-based export enterprises. There is still limited empirical investigation into the marketing barriers, strategies, and performance implications specific to the Third-Party Logistics (3PL) service sector. In the Indian context, particularly in Chennai, earlier studies have considered export performance from a general perspective without focusing on the marketing strategies utilized by 3PL service providers. This gap is noteworthy because 3PL firms are integral to international trade, providing essential services such as transportation, warehousing, and distribution. Despite their central role, the strategic importance of their marketing practices in influencing export performance has received little academic attention. Therefore, this study empirically examines the relationship between export marketing strategies and the performance of clients served by 3PL providers in Chennai, contributing theoretical insights and practical recommendations for enhancing export competitiveness in the logistics sector.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

- To assess the significance of the client's differences in the mean score of the promotion and product strategies adopted by third party service providers.
- To investigate the relationship between the attributes of exports marketing strategy and client's performance at third party service providers.
- To identify the predominant export marketing factors for measuring firm performance at third party service providers.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study adopts a *descriptive research design* to investigate the impact of export marketing strategies on the performance of Third-Party Logistics (3PL) service providers. A descriptive design is appropriate as it allows for the systematic collection and analysis of data to explain the relationship between marketing strategy dimensions and firm performance. A structured questionnaire was administered to respondents associated with 3PL service

providers in Chennai to collect primary data. A *convenience sampling method* was employed due to the accessibility of respondents and time constraints. The study successfully gathered responses from *118 participants*, which was considered adequate for statistical analysis. The research instrument was designed to measure various constructs related to export marketing strategies and firm performance. The reliability of the constructs was assessed using *Cronbach's Alpha*, with values indicating acceptable to high internal consistency. Specifically, Promotion Strategy ($\alpha = 0.895$), Place Strategy ($\alpha = 0.817$), Positioning Strategy ($\alpha = 0.727$), Price Strategy ($\alpha = 0.781$), Product Strategy ($\alpha = 0.880$), Organizational Factors ($\alpha = 0.713$), and Firm's Performance ($\alpha = 0.758$) all exceeded the minimum threshold of 0.70. The overall reliability coefficient for the scale was 0.948, demonstrating strong reliability across all dimensions. For data analysis, a range of *statistical tools* was employed. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize respondent characteristics and construct scores. *Correlation analysis* examined the strength and direction of relationships between export marketing strategies and firm performance. In addition, reliability tests further ensured the scale's consistency, while variance analysis was considered to test variations across demographic groups where relevant. Overall, the methodology provides a robust framework for empirically examining how export marketing strategies influence the performance of 3PL service providers, offering both academic and practical insights.

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Paired Sample T Test

H₀: There is no significant difference in the mean score of promotion and product strategies adopted by 3PL service providers.

Particular	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Correlation	Sig.	t
Promotion strategy	(10.43)	(118)	(4.435)	(0.408)	(0.325)	(0.000)	(2.746)
Product strategy	(9.24)	(118)	(3.625)	(0.334)			

Table 1: Presenting Paired t test

The paired t-test was conducted to examine whether a significant difference exists between the mean scores of *promotion strategy* and *product strategy* adopted by 3PL service providers. The results revealed that the mean score for promotion strategy was *10.43* with a standard deviation of *4.435*, while the mean score for product strategy was *9.24* with a standard deviation of *3.625* as shown in *Table 1*. The standard error of mean values was *0.408* and *0.334* for promotion and product strategies, respectively. The correlation between the two strategies was *0.325*, indicating a moderate positive association between them. Importantly, the significance value ($P = 0.000$) was observed to be less than the threshold level of 0.05. Consequently, the *null hypothesis was rejected at the 5% significance level*. This statistical evidence confirms a significant difference in the mean scores of promotion and product strategies adopted by 3PL service providers. The calculated *t-value (2.746)* further supports rejecting the null hypothesis, emphasizing that promotion strategies are perceived and implemented more effectively than product strategies in the context of export marketing practices. This finding suggests that 3PL service providers emphasize promotional activities such as client communication, branding, and relationship-building to attract and retain clients in the global market. In contrast, though important, product-related strategies appear to be less prioritized or differently structured. Thus, the analysis highlights the need for 3PL service providers to balance their efforts by strengthening promotional initiatives and enhancing product-related offerings to achieve sustainable competitiveness and improved client performance outcomes.

Correlation Analysis

H₀: There is no relationship between the attributes of export marketing strategy and client's performance at 3PL service providers.

Relationship	Promotion strategy	Place strategy	Position strategy	Price strategy	Product strategy	Organisational factor	Firm's performance
Promotion strategy	1	.823	.689	.451	.325	.700	.693
Place strategy		1	.837	.679	.537	.795	.690
Position strategy			1	.891	.731	.892	.616
Price strategy				1	.796	.806	.436
Product strategy					1	.707	.395
Organisational factor						1	.629
Firm's performance							1

Table 2:Exhibiting Correlation Analysis

Correlation analysis was performed to examine the relationship between different dimensions of export marketing strategies and firm performance of 3PL service providers as display in Table 2. Among the relationships, *place strategy* and *position strategy* exhibit a very strong positive correlation ($r = 0.837$), while *position strategy* and *price strategy* also demonstrate a high correlation ($r = 0.891$). This suggests that firms focusing on strong market positioning will likely align it closely with pricing mechanisms. Similarly, *position strategy* significantly correlates with *organizational factors* ($r = 0.892$) and *product strategy* ($r = 0.731$), highlighting its central role in linking marketing strategies to organizational outcomes. In relation to firm performance, *promotion strategy* ($r = 0.693$), *place strategy* ($r = 0.690$), and *organizational factors* ($r = 0.629$) demonstrate strong correlations, indicating that these dimensions play a crucial role in driving overall performance. Conversely, *product strategy* ($r = 0.395$) and *price strategy* ($r = 0.436$) show comparatively weaker relationships, suggesting that while important, they may not directly influence performance to the same extent. Overall, the findings confirm that export marketing strategies are interdependent and collectively contribute to the performance of 3PL service providers, with promotion, place, and positioning emerging as the most influential dimensions.

Multiple Regression Analysis

The relationship between export marketing strategies and firm performance was analyzed using multiple regression analysis. Firm performance was considered the dependent variable (Y), while promotion strategy (X1), place strategy (X2), positioning strategy (X3), price strategy (X4), product strategy (X5), and organizational factors (X6) were treated as independent variables. The model summary indicates a Multiple R value of 0.742, showing a strong correlation between the independent variables and firm performance. The R Square value of 0.550 suggests that the selected strategies explain 55% of the variance in firm performance. The F-value of 22.607 with $P < 0.000$ confirms that the regression model is statistically significant.

Variable	Unstandardized Coefficient (B)	Std. Error	Standardized Beta	t-value	Sig. (p)
Constant	3.173	0.699	-	4.538	0.000
Promotion Strategy (X1)	0.225	0.101	0.294	2.237	0.027
Place Strategy (X2)	0.227	0.126	0.267	1.797	0.075
Positioning Strategy(X3)	0.182	0.184	0.220	0.986	0.326
Price Strategy (X4)	-0.229	0.125	-0.319	-1.826	0.071
Product Strategy (X5)	0.106	0.103	0.113	1.026	0.307
Organizational Factors(X6)	0.167	0.135	0.191	1.239	0.218

Table 3:Showing MRA Analysis

The regression results reveal that promotion strategy ($\beta = 0.225$, $p = 0.027$) has a statistically significant positive effect on firm performance at the 5% significance level among the independent variables as shown in Table 3. This indicates that an increase in promotion-related efforts leads to an improvement in client performance. Similarly, place strategy ($\beta = 0.227$, $p = 0.075$) shows a positive coefficient, suggesting that enhancing distribution and service accessibility contributes to better performance, though the result is marginally significant. Positioning strategy ($\beta = 0.182$, $p = 0.326$) and organizational factors ($\beta = 0.167$, $p = 0.218$) also show positive effects but are not statistically significant. Interestingly, price strategy ($\beta = -0.229$, $p = 0.071$) reveals a negative relationship with firm performance, implying that aggressive or inappropriate pricing mechanisms may reduce overall client satisfaction and performance outcomes. Product strategy ($\beta = 0.106$, $p = 0.307$) contributes positively but insignificantly. Overall, the regression model indicates that promotion strategy and place strategy are the most influential dimensions affecting firm performance, with place strategy emerging as the more dominant factor. This highlights the importance of strengthening promotional initiatives and optimizing distribution networks to enhance competitiveness and performance in the 3PL sector.

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The findings of this study highlight the pivotal role of export marketing strategies in shaping the performance of third-party logistics (3PL) service providers. The regression analysis (see Table below) demonstrated that among the considered dimensions, promotion strategy ($B = 0.225$, $p = 0.027$) and place strategy ($B = 0.227$, $p = 0.075$) exert the strongest influence on firm performance. This indicates that when 3PL providers actively engage in effective promotional efforts and establish strong distribution networks, their ability to enhance client satisfaction and improve market reach significantly increases. In contrast, the negative coefficient for price strategy ($B = -0.229$, $p = 0.071$) suggests that excessive reliance on aggressive pricing may not provide sustainable benefits and could even diminish the perceived value of services. Theoretically, these results confirm that marketing strategies play a decisive role in service-based industries, particularly where offerings are intangible and differentiation is achieved through relational and strategic dimensions. The study validates the argument that logistics service providers must focus on strategies such as promotion, positioning, and accessibility to remain competitive in a globalized environment. In terms of managerial implications, the evidence emphasizes that firms in the 3PL sector should

strengthen promotional campaigns, adopt digital marketing tools, and build client-focused communication strategies to gain a competitive edge. Similarly, optimizing place strategy through investment in delivery networks, technological integration, and operational efficiency can enhance firm performance. On the other hand, rather than pursuing cost-cutting measures through pricing, providers should embrace value-based pricing models that align with quality and reliability expectations.

CONCLUSION, LIMITATIONS, AND FURTHER RESEARCH

This study examined the influence of export marketing strategies on the performance of third-party logistics (3PL) service providers. The results of multiple regression analysis revealed that promotion strategy and place strategy are the most significant drivers of firm performance, confirming the importance of communication, brand visibility, and distribution networks in enhancing client outcomes. Conversely, the negative coefficient of price strategy indicates that excessive reliance on competitive pricing may reduce perceived value and weaken long-term performance. Though positive, other factors, such as positioning, product strategy, and organizational factors, did not show strong statistical significance, suggesting that their impact is more indirect or context-specific. Overall, the findings reinforce that effective marketing strategies play a pivotal role in the competitiveness and sustainability of 3PL service providers. Despite these contributions, the study has several limitations. First, the analysis was conducted with a restricted set of variables and may not fully capture the complexity of 3PL performance determinants. Second, the data was collected from a specific regional context, which may limit the generalizability of findings across different markets or industries. Third, cross-sectional data restricts the ability to infer long-term causal relationships between marketing strategies and firm performance. Future research could address these limitations in multiple ways. Expanding the study across diverse regions and industries would provide a more comprehensive understanding of how marketing strategies influence performance globally. Longitudinal studies could help examine the sustained impact of strategies over time. Furthermore, incorporating additional variables such as technological adoption, customer relationship management, and sustainability practices could enrich the framework. Advanced statistical methods like structural equation modelling may also provide deeper insights into the interrelationships among strategies and outcomes.

REFERENCES

1. Adel, H. M., Mahrous, A. A., & Hammad, R. (2020). Entrepreneurial marketing strategy, institutional environment, and business performance of SMEs in Egypt. *Journal of Entrepreneurship in Emerging Economies*, 12(5), 727-746.
2. Al-Shammari, M. A., Banerjee, S. N., & Rasheed, A. A. (2022). Corporate social responsibility and firm performance: A theory of dual responsibility. *Management Decision*, 60(6), 1513-1540.
3. Al-Surmi, A., Cao, G., & Duan, Y. (2020). The impact of aligning business, IT, and marketing strategies on firm performance. *Industrial marketing management*, 84, 39-49.
4. Cataltepe, V., Kamasak, R., Bulutlar, F., & Palalar Alkan, D. (2023). Dynamic and marketing capabilities as determinants of firm performance: evidence from automotive industry. *Journal of Asia Business Studies*, 17(3), 617-638.
5. Chang, Y., Wang, X., & Arnett, D. B. (2018). Enhancing firm performance: The role of brand orientation in business-to-business marketing. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 72, 17-25.
6. Homburg, C., & Wielgos, D. M. (2022). The value relevance of digital marketing capabilities to firm performance. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 50(4), 666-688.
7. Liang, X., Li, G., Zhang, H., Nolan, E., & Chen, F. (2022). Firm performance and marketing analytics in the Chinese context: A contingency model. *Journal of Business Research*, 141, 589-599.
8. Olson, E. M., Slater, S. F., Hult, G. T. M., & Olson, K. M. (2018). The application of human resource management policies within the marketing organization: The impact on business and marketing strategy implementation. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 69, 62-73.
9. Otto, A. S., Szymanski, D. M., & Varadarajan, R. (2020). Customer satisfaction and firm performance: insights from over a quarter century of empirical research. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing science*, 48(3), 543-564.
10. Radojevic, P., Manic, S., Churlei, E., Hatzithomas, L., & Suluburic, A. (2022). Organizational determinants as antecedent factors of export marketing strategy archetypes of agri-food firms: a three country analysis. *British Food Journal*, 124(4), 1400-1418.
11. Rialp-Criado, A., & Rialp-Criado, J. (2018). Examining the impact of managerial involvement with social media on exporting firm performance. *International Business Review*, 27(2), 355-366.
12. Riaz, H., Saeed, A., Liedong, T. A., & Rajwani, T. (2022). Environmental management, nonmarket strategy, and firm performance in emerging markets: The case of ISO 14001. *Business Ethics, the Environment & Responsibility*, 31(1), 139-163.
13. Safari, A., Saleh, A. S., & Balicevac Al Ismail, V. (2022). Enhancing the export activities of small and medium-sized enterprises in emerging markets. *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing*, 37(5), 1150-1166.
14. Silva, G. M., Dias, Á. L., Lisboa, A. C., & Silva, F. P. (2023). Drivers and outcomes of sustainable export marketing strategies in international environments. *Review of International Business and Strategy*, 33(4), 627-648.
15. Varadarajan, R. (2020). Customer information resources advantage, marketing strategy and business performance: A market resources based view. *Industrial marketing management*, 89, 89-97.
16. Wadho, W., & Chaudhry, A. (2018). Innovation and firm performance in developing countries: The case of Pakistani textile and apparel manufacturers. *Research Policy*, 47(7), 1283-1294.