

EXPORT MARKET ORIENTATION, ORGANIZATIONAL KNOWLEDGE AND
EXPORT MARKET PERFORMANCE: THE MEDIATING EFFECT OF
ORGANIZATIONAL INNOVATION

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For my beloved mother and father



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"When it comes to this part, the words become scarce because as much as we try to thank everyone involved, some will be unintentionally left out, or the words are simply not enough to convey what is in our minds"

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ABSTRACT

Arab markets present significant opportunity for Malaysian exporters to grow their sales and profits. Innovation is crucial in creating values and sustainable competitive advantage. However, there are still much to explore on the role of organizational innovation. There is lacking of literature that has incorporated organizational innovation as a mediating variable between export market orientation and organizational knowledge with export market performance. The issue between market orientation and organizational performance has been focused of study over the past three decades. Literature reviews that numerous research works on organizational innovation affecting export performance, have been inconclusive, inconsistent, and characterized by low levels of explanation. Hence, it is crucial to exporters to identify factors influencing performance. This is a quantitative study. The population was selected from the 2011 Federation of Malaysian Manufacturers (FMM) directory. A total of 107 respondents responded to the survey questionnaire distributed to manufacturers that have been exporting for 5 years and above were used in testing the hypotheses formulated. This study found that there is a significant direct relationship between export market orientation and export market performance at $p < 0.05$. Similarly, organizational knowledge was found to be significantly related to export market performance at $p < 0.05$. Organizational innovation was found to have direct influence on export market performance at $p < 0.001$. Finding showed that organizational innovation mediates the relationship between export market orientation and organizational knowledge with export market performance at $p < 0.05$. This implies that in order to

enhance performance, exporters should also emphasize on organizational innovation, besides organizational knowledge and export market orientation.



ABSTRAK

Tujuan utama kajian ini adalah untuk menyiasat kesan pengantara inovasi organisasi antara orientasi pasaran eksport, pengetahuan organisasi dan prestasi pasaran eksport. Inovasi adalah penting dalam mencipta nilai dan kesinambungan daya saing. Walau bagaimanapun, masih terdapat banyak untuk diterokai tentang peranan inovasi organisasi. Masih didapati kekurangan literatur yang menggabungkan inovasi organisasi sebagai pembolehubah pengantara antara orientasi pasaran eksport dan pengetahuan organisasi dengan prestasi pasaran eksport. Isu antara orientasi pasaran dan prestasi organisasi telah diberi tumpuan sejak tiga dekad yang lalu. Terdapat banyak penyelidik empirikal memeriksa penyatuan orientasi pasaran dan prestasi organisasi. Walau bagaimanapun, ulasan literatur telah mendedahkan bahawa kajian ini tidak memberikan kesimpulan penyatuan yang ketara diantaranya. Di samping itu, banyak kerja-kerja penyelidikan mengenai inovasi organisasi didapati tidak konklusif, tidak konsisten, dan dicirikan dengan tahap penjelasan yang rendah. Kebanyakan kajian pada masa lepas telah memberi tumpuan kepada inovasi teknikal dan didapati kerja tentang inovasi organisasi adalah terhad. Sebanyak 506 soal selidik kajian yang diurus secara layan sendiri telah diedarkan kepada pengeluar yang mengeksport ke pasaran Arab. Populasi penyelidikan ini telah dipilih dari Direktori Persekutuan Pengilang-Pengilang Malaysia (FMM). Seramai 223 responden yang telah menjawab soal selidik kajian telah digunakan dalam penganalisaan. Pakej SPSS dan SPSS IBM AMOS telah digunakan untuk menguji hipotesis-hipotesis yang telah ditentukan untuk kerja-kerja penyelidikan ini. Kajian ini telah membuktikan secara empirikal hubungan antara orientasi pasaran eksport dan pengetahuan organisasi dengan inovasi organisasi.

Inovasi organisasi didapati bertindak sebagai pengantara antara kesanterhadap kedua-dua orientasi pasaran dan pengetahuan organisasi dengan prestasi pasaran eksport. Implikasi kajian ini untuk kerja-kerja dan pengamal masa depan turut dilaporkan



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PERPUSTAKAAN TUNKU TUN AMINAH

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ASEAN	– Association of South East Asian Countries
FMM	– Federal of Malaysian Manufacturers
EU	– European Union
FTA	– Free Trade Agreement
GCI	– Global Competitive Index
GDP	– Gross Domestic Product
METS	– Malaysian External Trade Statistics
MEI	– Middle East Institute
SEM	– Structural Equation Modeling



PT TANA UTAMA
PERPUSTAKAAN TUNKU TUN AMINAH

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Innovation is a crucial strategy that provides a better mechanism when it is aligned with market conditions (Vincent, 2005). It is a central mechanism for strategic changes and growth by changing external and internal conditions of the organization. A manager needs to develop a clear innovation strategy that effects not only innovations in products, but also its processes, strategies and markets. An appropriate innovation strategy could improve internal performance indicators (e.g. employee quality and training), external performance indicators (e.g. customer loyalty and satisfaction) and the business result (e.g. sales and profit). That is why managers should include innovation in their strategic plans through establishment of clear objectives to achieve success (Küster and Vila, 2011).

Market information collection and treatment are major functions of an innovative organization. They are challenges faced by manufacturing organizations to build sustainable competitive advantage. Competitive advantage is realized with continuous innovation, new business opportunities and new ideas about performance. It has been commonly accepted that innovation can be brought forward by the process of knowledge creation and application. The entire business, science and management sectors are the sector that are very highly influenced by the concept of innovative systems and its links (Powell and Grodal

2005; Tödting *et al.*, 2009). According to Lado and Olivares (2001), product innovation, service quality, organizational innovation and knowledge generation are crucial for an effective market orientation in the manufacturing organization.

The relationship between exports market orientation and organizational innovation has been tested by many researchers. Successful innovation is a combination of market innovation culture and enterprise value (Slater, 1997). The difference between innovation enterprises and companies with little achievement is on degree of emphasis of market orientation (Lukas and Ferrell 2000). There has been an increased focus on the relationship between market orientation and market performance. Studies of this issue generally demonstrated that market orientation has a positive impact on new product performance (Baker and Sinkula, 2002; Kirca, 2005). However, research work on how market orientation contributes to superior export market performance is still lacking. Empirical evidence shows that there is much emphasis on the importance of market orientation for better economic and commercial results (Mahmoud, 2010).

There are still much to explore on the role of organizational innovation in export marketing. There is lacking literature that has incorporated organizational innovation as a mediating variable between export market orientation and organizational knowledge with export market performance. Numerous research works on organizational innovation have been inconclusive, inconsistent, and characterized by low levels of explanation. Most studies in the past were focused on technical innovation and there is limited work on organization innovation. Hence, in this study, the export market orientation and organizational knowledge variables are conceptualized as exogenous constructs and the organizational innovation and export market performance as endogenous constructs. It follows that this chapter is intended to give an overview of the background, the problem statement, the research questions and objectives, significance, scope, definition and explanation of key terms used in this study, and organization of the thesis.

1.2 Background of the Study

This study focuses on the export market performance of Malaysian manufacturing organization through the critical investigation of organizational innovation, export market orientation, and organizational knowledge. Before the discussion of the factors affecting the export market performance it is crucial to understand the economy and international trade of Malaysia with Arab countries. The pace of economic relation between Malaysia and Arab countries has been growing at rapid rate in recent years. The Arab countries have provided new trades and investments opportunities to many Malaysian firms. This has led to transformation of international trade strategies from dependency on traditional export markets like US, Japan to the newly Arab markets orientated as well (Hussin *et al.*, 2011).

Malaysia is respected as among of the strongest economies in Southeast Asia with an average of 6 percent for its Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Historically, Malaysian Economic was contributed by natural rubber and tin resources as a primary sector for GDP, public sector as well export revenues. In the early 1957, when it became independent and known as The Federation of Malaya, the industrial sectors were very marginal and primarily depended on – unprocessed rubber and tin exports. Malaysian economy that was highly dependent on the primary sector for its GDP, employment and export revenues, nevertheless, has changed to that of a diversified economy with the industrial sector as the engine of growth, along with more commercialized agriculture and modern services sector. This was the result of a series of well-planned development strategies since the independence in 1957.

Malaysia's trade in March 2013 has increased by 1.6% as compared to March 2012. This increased of higher export trade are contributed from countries like France with RM1.52 billion, China with RM1.04 billion, India with RM693.5 million, United States of America with RM580.4 million and Republic of Korea with RM482.2 million (METS, 2013). Table 1.1 tabulated Malaysia's top ten export destination for the year of March 2012 – February 2013. It shows that

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