



An Analysis of Key Strategic Success Factors for Chinese Logistics Enterprises in Thailand

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Abstract. The rapid internationalization of China's logistics industry, driven by the Belt and Road Initiative, has led to significant investment in Thailand's logistics market. However, limited research examines how strategic leadership and operational capabilities jointly determine the success of these enterprises in a complex cross-border environment. This study systematically investigates the key strategic success factors for Chinese logistics enterprises in Thailand, examining the impact of Strategic Leadership and Business Strategic Factors on organizational performance. A quantitative research design was employed using a structured questionnaire administered to 400 professionals within Chinese logistics enterprises operating in Thailand. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, and multiple linear regression. The findings robustly support the proposed conceptual model. Strategic Leadership demonstrated a significant positive effect on Key Strategic Success Factors ($\beta = 0.433$, $p < 0.001$), and Business Strategic Factors exhibited a similarly significant influence ($\beta = 0.422$, $p < 0.001$). The integrated model explained 48.0% of the total variance in Key Strategic Success Factors. This study concludes that strategic success emerges from the synergistic interaction between visionary, cross-cultural leadership and integrated business strategies, including supply chain integration, digital transformation, and human capital development.

Keywords: Chinese Logistics Enterprises; Thailand; Strategic Success Factors; Strategic Leadership; Cross-Border Management.

1 Introduction

The logistics industry has evolved from a simple transportation function into a vital mechanism driving the global economy (Ivanov & Dolgui, 2022). In Asia, the sector has undergone significant transformation, shifting from a manufacturing-support function to a global logistics and technology hub. China, as the world's largest logistics market, has seen its leading companies aggressively expand internationally. Thailand, with its strategic location and status as a regional hub, has become a primary destination for this expansion, particularly in the express delivery and cross-border e-commerce logistics segments (Kumar, 2022).

Despite significant investment from major players like BEST Express, JD Logistics, and SF Holding, the Thai logistics market remains intensely competitive, often described as a "red ocean." Success is no longer based solely on price but increasingly on service quality, operational expertise, and strategic adaptability.

2 Literature Review and Hypotheses

2.1 Strategic Leadership and Key Success Factors

Strategic leadership, defined as a manager's ability to express a strategic vision and motivate others to acquire it, is paramount in navigating international market complexities (Elrehail et al., 2021). Grounded in the Upper Echelons Theory (Hambrick & Mason, 1984), this study considers strategic leadership through three critical dimensions: Visionary Direction (setting a long-term, achievable goal for the Thai market), Communication and Motivation (bridging cross-cultural gaps to align both Chinese expatriate and Thai local staff), and Strategic Decision-Making (making agile, informed decisions under uncertainty). For Chinese logistics firms in Thailand, effective leadership is hypothesized to directly enhance market share, competitive advantage, and long-term sustainability. Thus, we propose:

Hypothesis 1 (H1): Strategic Leadership has a significant positive effect on the Key Strategic Success Factors of Chinese logistics enterprises operating in Thailand.

2.2 Business Strategic Factors and Competitive Advantage

While leadership sets the direction, success is operationalized through Business Strategic Factors. Drawing on the Resource-Based View (RBV) and Dynamic Capabilities Theory (Teece et al., 1997), this study identifies seven critical dimensions: Supply Chain Integration (SCI), Digital Transformation (DT), Human Capital (HC), Cost and Efficiency Management (CEM), Customer Service and CRM (CS), Innovation and Sustainability (IS), and Adaptability and Resilience (AR). Therefore, we propose:

Hypothesis 2 (H2): Business Strategic Factors have a significant positive effect on the Key Strategic Success Factors of Chinese logistics enterprises operating in Thailand.

2.3 Conceptual Framework

The proposed framework (Figure 1) posits that both Strategic Leadership (X1) and Business Strategic Factors (X2) are independent variables that jointly and directly influence the dependent variable, Key Strategic Success Factors (Y). Success is measured by market share growth, competitive advantage, customer satisfaction, and long-term sustainability.

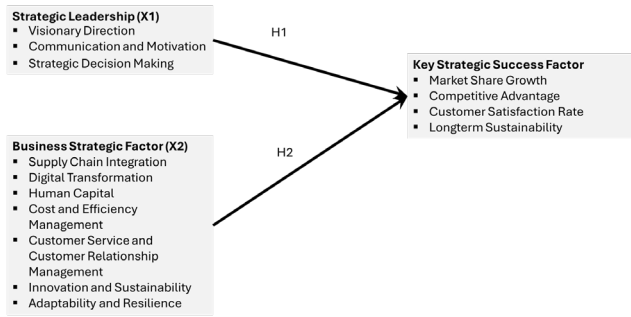


Fig. 1. Conceptual Framework

3 Research Methodology

3.1 Sample and Data Collection

This study employed a quantitative, cross-sectional survey design. The target population comprised employees and managers working in Chinese logistics enterprises operating in Thailand. Using Cochran's formula at a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error, a target sample size of 385 was calculated. To improve reliability, 400 valid responses were collected. An online questionnaire was disseminated via professional networks and platforms like WeChat. The sample consisted of 65.8% male and 34.3% female respondents. In terms of organizational demographics, the majority of respondents were employed by parcel delivery and express (CEP) service providers (48.5%), followed by third-party logistics (3PL) firms (32.0%), and freight forwarding or supply chain management companies (19.5%). Regarding the length of their firm's operation in Thailand, 41.5% of respondents worked for companies that have been established in the Thai market for 4-6 years, 30.8% for 7-10 years, and 17.5% for more than 10 years. A majority (69.3%) of individual respondents were at the team leader or supervisor level, providing a strong operational perspective.

3.2 Instrumentation and Measures

A structured questionnaire was developed based on an extensive literature review. Part 1 collected demographic information. Part 2 measured Strategic Leadership (15 items) across three dimensions from Chen L (2020). Part 3 measured Business Strategic Factors (35 items) across seven dimensions from Tien et al. (2019). Part 4 measured Key Strategic Success Factors (11 items) from Paranko (2024). All items were rated on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree).

3.3 Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using SPSS. The analysis proceeded in three stages: (1) descriptive statistics to summarize respondent profiles and variable means, (2) Pearson correlation

analysis to examine bivariate relationships, and (3) multiple linear regression analysis to test the hypotheses (H1 and H2). The significance level was set at $p < 0.05$.

4 Results

4.1 Descriptive Statistics

The overall mean for Strategic Leadership (X1) was 2.92 (SD = 0.53), for Business Strategic Factors (X2) was 3.01 (SD = 0.50), and for Key Strategic Success Factors (Y) was 2.97 (SD = 0.59) (Table 1). All constructs were perceived by respondents to have a "moderate agreement" level of influence or presence within their organizations.

The Business Strategic Factors (X2) construct was operationalized across seven distinct dimensions. As shown in Table 1, Supply Chain Integration (SCI) received the highest mean score ($\bar{x} = 3.19$, SD = 0.78), indicating it is perceived as the most prominently implemented strategic factor. In contrast, Innovation and Sustainability (IS) received the lowest mean score ($\bar{x} = 2.77$, SD = 0.79), suggesting this is a less developed area for many firms.

Table 1. Pearson correlation analysis and descriptive statistics

Sub-dimension	Mean ($\bar{x}$)	SD	Correlation with Strategic Success (Y)
Supply Chain Integration (SCI)	3.19	0.78	0.45**
Digital Transformation (DT)	2.97	0.72	0.52**
Human Capital (HC)	3.07	0.79	0.49**
Cost and Efficiency Management (CEM)	3.03	0.88	0.41**
Customer Service & CRM (CS)	3.02	0.73	0.38**
Innovation and Sustainability (IS)	2.77	0.79	0.33**
Adaptability and Resilience (AR)	2.92	0.72	0.44**

Note: ** $p < 0.01$.

4.2 Correlation Analysis

Pearson correlation analysis (Table 1) revealed statistically significant positive relationships between all three main constructs at the $p < 0.01$ level. Strategic Leadership showed a strong positive association with Strategic Success Factors ($r = 0.566$). Business Strategic Factors also showed a strong positive correlation with Strategic Success Factors ($r = 0.558$). The correlation between the two independent variables was moderate ($r = 0.314$), confirming they are related but distinct constructs, with no multicollinearity issues.

4.3 Hypothesis Testing

Both independent variables have a significant positive effect on the dependent variable. The standardized coefficients (Beta) for Strategic Leadership ($\beta = 0.433$, $p < 0.001$) and Business Strategic Factors ($\beta = 0.422$, $p < 0.001$) are very similar and highly significant (Table 2). This provides strong support for both H1 and H2. The combined model explains 48.0% of the variance in Key Strategic Success Factors (Adjusted $R^2 = 0.478$), which represents a large effect size.

Table 2. Hypothesis Testing result

Predictor	Unstand- ardized Co- efficients (B)	Stand- ard Er- ror (SE)	Standard- ized Co- efficients (Beta)	t- valu e	p- value (Sig.)	95% CI for B	VIF
(Constant)	0.072	0.145		0.5	0.618	[-0.213, 0.357]	
Strategic Leadership (X1)	0.481	0.047	0.433	10.2 2	< 0.001	[0.388, 0.574]	1.11
Business Strategic Fac- tors (X2)	0.495	0.049	0.422	10.1 7	< 0.001	[0.399, 0.591]	1.11
Model Summary:	R2= 0.480	Ad- justed R2 = 0.478	F(2, 397) = 182.76, p < 0.001				
Dependent Variable:	Key Strate- gic Success Factors (Y)						

5 Discussion

The findings offer robust empirical support for the proposed integrated model, confirming that both strategic leadership and business strategic factors are critical, co-equal drivers of success for Chinese logistics enterprises in Thailand.

The significant effect of Strategic Leadership (H1) aligns with Upper Echelons Theory. In the complex Thai market, a leader's ability to articulate a clear vision, motivate a culturally diverse workforce, and make agile strategic decisions is paramount. This extends the literature by demonstrating that leadership competencies may be even more critical for service-sector multinationals from emerging markets (like China) than for their manufacturing counterparts, as success hinges more on managing intangible assets like relationships and cultural alignment.

The strong effect of Business Strategic Factors (H2) validates the RBV and Dynamic Capabilities perspective. The specific factors identified—particularly digital transformation, supply chain integration, and human capital—are not merely operational tools but are strategic resources that create a sustainable competitive advantage. The high

intercorrelations among these factors suggest that successful firms do not excel in one area but rather develop a synergistic bundle of capabilities. For example, digital transformation enables superior supply chain integration, which in turn relies on skilled human capital to manage.

6 Conclusion

This study concludes that strategic success for Chinese logistics enterprises in Thailand emerges from the synergistic interaction between strategic leadership and business strategic factors. It provides empirical evidence that both constructs function as complementary and co-equal drivers of market share growth, competitive advantage, customer satisfaction, and long-term sustainability.

For practitioners, this means organizations should not simply invest in technology or hire strong leaders in isolation. They must simultaneously build cross-cultural leadership pipelines and systematically develop integrated operational capabilities. For policymakers, the findings underscore the importance of creating an enabling environment that facilitates the positive factors identified, such as investing in digital infrastructure and streamlining regulations for cross-border data flows.

Future research should expand this model to other ASEAN countries for comparative analysis. Longitudinal studies are needed to establish causality. Finally, qualitative case studies could provide deeper insights into the processes and challenges behind these statistical relationships, particularly exploring how specific leadership behaviors shape the development of dynamic capabilities in the unique cross-cultural context of Southeast Asia.

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