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Letter from the Editor-in-Chief

Myanmar and Korea have many similarities and are complementary relationship. Therefore, we believe that research exchange will expand mutual understanding between Myanmar and Korea, and will be the cornerstone for mutual development.

KOMYRA and YUE have co-published The Myanmar Journal since August 2014. So far, many scholars have published numerous papers through the journal, and We are sure that this journal has helped many people understand Myanmar and Korea more clearly and closely.

The Myanmar Journal covers various issues in Myanmar and Korea. It covers various topics that can promote bilateral development and mutual understanding, not limited to specific topics such as economy, industry, society, education, welfare, culture, energy, engineering, healthcare, and agriculture.

We hope that this journal will continue to promote understanding of the current status and potential capabilities of Myanmar and South Korea and promote in-depth international exchange and cooperation.

We would like to express our deepest gratitude to the editorial board and YUE and KOMYRA for their valuable support in The Myanmar Journal publication.

February 28, 2022

Youngjun Choi *yj choi*

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The Myanmar Journal (ISSN 2383-6563) is the official international journal co-published by Yangon University of Economics (YUE) and Korea Myanmar Research Institute (KOMYRA).

This journal aims to promote the mutual cooperation and development of Myanmar and Korea through intensive researches in the entire field of society, economy, culture, and industry.

It will cover all general academic and industrial issues, and share ideas, problems and solution for development of Myanmar.

Articles for publication will be on-line released twice a year at the end of February and August every year on the Myanmar Journal webpage (http://www.komyra.com/bbs/board.php?bo_table=articles).

Factors Influencing Export Performance of Fishery Industry in Myanmar

Aye Thu Htun

Yangon University of Economics

ABSTRACT : The aim of this research is to investigate the factors influencing export performance of fishery industry in Myanmar. To achieve this aim, quantitative research is utilized. The target population is 42 processing companies located in Yangon that export fishery products to the international markets. The sample size is 50% of population that are selected by using simple random sampling method. Managing Director or General Manager, Export manager, and Production manager from each selected company are interviewed with structure questionnaire. Multiple regression is also applied to achieve this aim. In this research, product quality, capital, export knowledge, technological capability, support for export promotion and global competition are dependent variables and export performance is independent variable. The research found that product quality, capital, export knowledge and support for export promotion have a significant influence on export performance of fishery industry. The research also observed that technological capability and global competition do not influence significantly on export performance of fishery industry.

Key words : *export performance, product quality, capital, export knowledge, support for export promotion*

I. Introduction

Today's business organizations including exporting companies are facing rapid and turbulent environment with high competition and technology advancement. These situations can create the challenges for the exporting companies to manage their

export activities and performance.

According to Shoham (1998), export performance is an extent of economic achievements in export markets. Moreover, Koksai and Kettaneh (2011) stated that export performance of a firm can contribute to economic prosperity of a country. Export performance is also an indicator of the firm export operations' success. Business managers and public policy makers realized the importance of export performance because export can generate foreign exchange, increase employment opportunities, increase productivity, and enhance social prosperity (Czinkota, 1994). Export performance has also had positive effects on improving labor skills, limiting the gap between rich and poor rural and urban areas, promoting economic transition towards industrialization and modernization.

At present, many developing countries including Myanmar are facing with trade deficit in its balance of payment. Therefore, Myanmar encourages to increase export performance that can reduce the trade deficit, improve national income, generate employment opportunities, and create foreign exchange extremely needed in investment and economic development. Therefore, Myanmar aggressively attempt to increase export performance through the export promotion strategy.

Fishery industry plays a fundamental role in Myanmar because fishery products are the fourth main export item and this fishery industry can generate the foreign exchange earnings. In Myanmar economy, livestock and fishery products can contribute 10.2% in Gross Domestic Products (GDP) in 2018, and the fishery industry can create job opportunity for over fifty-nine thousand permanent workers in fiscal year 2018-19 (Fishery Statistics, 2019). It also provides a source of a food for Myanmar citizens. Therefore, the performance of fishery industry is needed to improve for export earning, employment opportunity, GDP and sufficient source of food. To improve its performance, it should firstly understand the influences of export performance. Therefore, the research attempts to analyse the factors influencing export performance of fishery industry in Myanmar.

1. Research Aim

The research aim is to investigate the factors influencing export performance of fishery industry in Myanmar.

2. Research Method

This research focuses on local fishery processing companies that engaged in export. Quantitative research method is used in this research. Target population for

this research involves only processing companies that engage in fishery product export and locate in Yangon area. According to Fishery Statistics (2019), there are 42 fishery product processing companies in Yangon region which engage in exporting. Therefore, the target population is 42 processing companies in this research. The sample constitutes 50% of them are selected by simple random sampling method. Export manager, Managing Director or General Manager and Production manager from each selected company are interviewed with structure questionnaire to get enough data and for truth worthiness, creditability, and generality. Therefore, primary data is collected from (63) respondents from selected processing companies by using a data collection instrument, structure questionnaire. International Business text book, theses, research papers, and journals from internet websites are used as secondary data.

II. Theoretical Background

1. Export Performance

Toften (2005) stated that export performance is the outcomes of firms' activities in export markets. Navaro et al., (2010) stated export performance as the success of a business. Cavusgil and Zou (1993) mentioned that export performance is an achievement of the business's goal when services and products are exported to international markets.

2. Factors influencing Export Performance

Gebreyohannes (2016) stated that product quality, supports for export promotion, and capital are influencing factors of export performance. Cavusgil and Zou (1993) mentioned that technology capability, export knowledge and global competition are also the influencing factors of export performance. Antigegegn Kebede (2019) proved that product quality, export knowledge, capital, technological capability, support for export promotion and global competition are the influencing factors of export performance.

(a) Product Quality: Hollensen (2007) mentioned product quality that is an excellence or perceived superiority of a product matching with competing alternatives in the marketplace. Garvin (1984) asserted that five dimensions such as performance, aesthetics, durability, perceived quality and workmanship would be suitable in developing a product quality definition for both durable and nondurable products.

According to Keng and Juan (1989), quality, product design, style, product modification or adaptation or labeling and packaging requirements affect the export markets.

(b) Capital: Capital is very important for every country especially in developing countries and if a firm has a strong capital the firm can get advantage. Al-Hyari et al., (2011) stated that many enterprises such as SMEs can face financial burden when they involve in export activities because they have to make research on foreign markets, visit foreign customers, and adapt the export strategy. Therefore, Lee and Pennings (2001) pointed out that enough capital can facilitate the necessary response to export markets by permitting the enterprise resources to change and innovate in accordance with changes in environmental conditions.

(c) Export knowledge: Toften (2005) mentioned that export knowledge can provide competitiveness is the firm's specific resources to create value. Therefore, lack of appropriate export knowledge and export activities can weaken the competitiveness of firms in international markets. Gencturk and Kotabe (2001) stated that export managers should enhance the export knowledge to develop the export markets. Export knowledge is considered to be an outcome of the use of export market information. With respect to the knowledge assets concept, export knowledge could be defined as the firm-specific resources that are indispensable for creating value for the export firm (Toften, 2005).

(d) Technological Capability: Guifu and Hongfu (2009) classified technological capability into three levels. They are technological acquiring capability, upgrading capability and operating capability. Almost every country considers technological capability as a source of wealth and growth. According to Monopoloulos et al., (2009), technology is essential for development of exporting firms. According to Tsai (2004), exporting firms which have excellent technological capability can make substantial differentiation by responding changes in environment and can realize high efficiency by process innovations.

(e) Global competition: Cavusgil et al.,(1993) asserted that global market competition is the competition intensity and the extent to which businesses strive to outdo others to gain economic rents. Cavusgil and Zou (1993) stated the level of competition that impacts the promotion adaptation and levels of product. O'Cass and Julian (2003) mentioned that degree of customer familiarity regarding products and competition level in international market influence the firm's export performance. According to Katsikeas et al., (2000), competitive pressures can force the businesses to adapt products to fulfil the specific needs of an export market and reduce their prices.

(f) Support for Export Promotion: Export promotion means total activities of the government and state institutions, which have a positive impact on the export

performance of the economy. According to S. Hossein Jalali (2012), export promotion support refers to a public measure designed to support firms' exporting activity such as counseling, seminars for potential exporters, handbooks for export, export financing, and market information and development programs including distribution of sales leads to domestic firms, preparation for market analysis, involvement in foreign trade exhibitions, and export newsletters. Based on the above concepts and theory, this research developed the conceptual framework that is shown in Fig (1).

Figure 1. Conceptual framework of the research



Source: Adopted from Antigejn Kebede (2019)

III. Data Analysis

Table (1) shows the company profile and demographic profile of respondents. Company profile includes age and size of the company, source of raw materials, exporting methods and export destination and demographic characteristics includes gender, age, marital status, education and years of service with their frequencies and percentages in the sample.

Table 1. Profile of Companies and Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Particular	Characteristics	Description	Frequency	%
Profile of Companies	Company age	£10 years	6	29
		11-20 years	10	48
		>20 years	5	23

	Total		21	100
	Company size (No. of employees)	£100	6	29
		101-200	11	52
		>200	4	19
	Total		21	100
	Raw material source	Culture	4	19
		No culture	17	81
	Total		21	100
	Exporting method	Direct export	18	86
		Both indirect and direct export	3	14
Total		21	100	
Export destination	Neighbouring countries	13	62	
	Others	8	38	
Total		21	100	
Demographic profile of Respondents	Gender	Female	39	38
		Male	24	62
	Total		63	100
	Age	£30 years	9	14
		31-40 years	14	22
		41-50 years	25	40
		>50 years	15	24
	Total		63	100
	Marital status	Married	52	83
		Single	11	17
	Total		63	100
	Education background	Graduate	59	94
		Master	4	6
Total		63	100	
Years of service	£5 years	11	17	
	6- 10 years	23	37	
	>10 years	29	46	
Total		63	100	

Source: Survey Data (2020)

Regarding the company profile, most surveyed companies (48%) has been operating from 11 to 20 years, Regarding the company size, most surveyed companies (52%) is operating with 101 to 200 employees. Concerning the source of raw material, majority of the surveyed companies (81%), are not engaged in culture and they buy raw material for their export. The majority of the surveyed companies use direct export method and their export destination is mainly neighboring countries.

Concerning the respondent profile, the gender of the respondents consists of 62% male and 38% female. Regarding the respondent age in the survey, majority of the respondents are at the age of between 41-50 years. The majority (81%) of the

respondents are married. Since 94% of the respondents are bachelor degree holders and the rest percentage are master degree holders, all respondents are educated and they can easily understand the questionnaire. Regarding the working experience, majority of the respondents have over 10 years working experience.

1. Reliability Test

Table (2) exhibits the number of items of each variable and their Cronbach's alpha values.

Table 2. Reliability Test

Sr. No.	Variable name	No. of items	Cronbach's Alpha
1	Product quality	4	0.723
2	Technology capability	4	0.715
3	Capital	4	0.814
4	Export knowledge	4	0.786
5	Support for export promotion	4	0.765
6	Global competition	4	0.812
7	Export Performance	4	0.769

Source: Survey Data (2020)

As it is indicated in the Table (2), the values of reliability test are between 0.715 and 0.814. Therefore, the scale reliability for this research is acceptable and reliable.

2. Multiple Regression Analysis

To analyze the influencing factors of export performance, a statistics technique, Multiple regression is applied. Table (3) illustrates the results of multiple regression.

Table 3. Influencing Factors of Export Performance in Fishery Industry

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
Constant	.191	.103		1.859	.005
Product quality	.167***	.025	.266	6.585	.000
Technological capability	.095	.020	.154	4.654	.012
Capital	.142***	.023	.205	6.269	.001
Export knowledge	.127***	.023	.200	5.490	.000

Support for export promotion	.107 ***	.025	.157	.351	.006
Global competition	-.158	.033	-.180	-4.770	.201
R = 0.866					
Adjusted R2=0.735					
F = 50.597***					

Dependent variable: Export performance

*** represents the 1% significant level

Source: Survey Data (2020)

In Table (3), the value of Adjusted R2 (74 %) represents the overall association between product quality, technological capability, initial investment, export knowledge, promotional support for export, and international competition (independent variables) and export performance (dependent variable) of fishery industry in Myanmar. This research revealed that six independent variables can explain the 74% of the variation in export performance. The rest percentage (26%) is represented by other variables that are not considered in the model. In this research, the table illustrates that the independent variables predict the dependent variable significantly, $F = 50.597$ at $p < 0.05$, therefore the regression model is appropriate for the data of this research.

From the multiple regression results, product quality, capital, support for export promotion and export knowledge significantly influence and predict for export performance, since their p-value is 0.000, 0.001, 0.006, and 0.001 respectively which is less than 0.01 significant level. However, the rest variable such as the competition in global market and technological capability do not significantly influence the export performance of fishery industry in Myanmar since the p-value(0.601) is greater than 0.05 significant level. According to Table (3), product quality is the most influencing factor on export performance followed by capital, export knowledge and support for export promotion.

IV. Conclusion

1. Findings and Discussion

According to the company profile, in this research, most processing companies depend on the neighbouring countries such as Thailand and China. This research proved that product quality, capital, export knowledge, and support for export promotion have significant influences on export performance while competition in

global market and technological capability have no influence on export performance significantly. This research found that product quality is the most influential factor on export performance of fishery industry in Myanmar. In fishery industry, freshness and stability of cold storage temperature are important factors for quality of frozen fishery products.

The statistical result proved that capital is the second largest contributor for improving export performance of fishery industry. To start the fishery exporting business, exporting firms need to invest in processing plant in industrial zone, cold storage, utility facilities including ice breaking machines, generators, freezing trays, and containers. The research found that minority of the fishery exporting firms engage in culture and then do processing and export themselves. This research confirmed that fishery processing companies having access to capital can increase their export performance in foreign markets. At present, although Myanmar Livestock and Fishery Development (MLFDB) provides loans fishery exporting companies financing by MLFDB is still limited.

The result from statistical analysis proved that export knowledge has a significant positive effect on export performance of fishery industry. According to this result, if the processing companies have more export experience and knowledge about the foreign markets, the better the export performance will become. Moreover, the research highlights that support for export promotion has an influence on export performance of fishery industry. Particularly, if the companies can provide more assistance for promoting export, they will be able to strengthen their export performance in fishery industry. Particularly, support for export promotion can be a substantial help to the fishery exporting companies when they are finding markets for their products. Moreover, it can also provide them with a better understanding of their products demanded in the foreign markets.

2. Recommendations

Since the product quality has a significant and positive influence on export performance, fishery processing companies need to assure the quality product by adopting quality management systems such as HACCP which is one of the requirements to penetrate global fishery market and GMP (Good Manufacturing Practice) which is the most important agenda for food manufacturing business. Therefore, fishery processing companies should attain the certification of HACCP and GMP to enter the premium price market. To improve the product quality, effective legislation is also required for use of prohibited drugs in farming. Processing companies engaging in exporting should follow the rules and regulations regarding

the food safety and quality specifications of the government and produce quality products to penetrate the international market.

Regulations regarding the processing and packing of fishery products should be issued to safeguard consumers and to prevent health hazards. On the other side, company management should emphasize more on the development of value-added products, market expansion and the regulation of food safety to improve performance.

Moreover, the research proved that export knowledge also impacts export performance of fishery industry. Therefore, exporting companies need to hire managers who have experience and knowledge about international markets to know turbulent global market situation. Moreover, the non-government and government organizations including Ministry of Commerce, Myanmar Fishery Federations, and UMFCCI should support local manufacturing firms by providing and sharing market information and knowledge for a better understanding of products demanded in different export markets and for findings the potential markets for their fishery products. In additions, since support for export promotion has an important influence on export performance of fishery industry of Myanmar, the government should introduce and provide special incentives to promote the export manufacturing industry in terms of finance accessibility and promotional support.

Although the processing companies can get loans from banks with collateral the research found that capital is one of the influences to improve export performance in fishery industry. Therefore, fishery processing companies and the government should attract foreign investment in this sector. Government should provide an access of financial loans for fishery companies to enter the international markets.

3. Implication of the Research

This research contributes the improvement of exporting that is one of the modes of international businesses. This research also provides valuable information for fishery processing and exporting companies about the factors that determine, influence and enhance the export performance in the international markets. Moreover, the finding of this research gives significant information for policy makers to analyse the current regulations and policies relating the fishery industry. Moreover, this research could help students, researchers and academicians or those who would like to do further research studies on related matters in the future.

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