ABSTRACT

Gandhi, Archana. Merchandisers’ Performance in Improving Supply Chain Competitiveness of Apparel Export Units. (Under the Supervision of Prof. Sunil Sharma)

The purpose of this research is to explore the various factors of merchandisers’ performance at organisation level and supply chain competitiveness factors that affect the apparel industry. It further aims to establish the relationship between the merchandiser performance parameters which are likely to impact supply chain competitiveness of apparel export units.

The study analyses current supply chain dynamics of Indian apparel industry and the existent parameters on which the merchandisers’ performance is measured in various apparel export units. It also identifies the most instrumental factors, for assessing merchandisers’ performance.

The study has focussed on apparel export companies located in NCR of Delhi. A random sample was initially taken for the study followed by final selection of 92 companies on executive/judgment and convenience basis. 80 companies responded. The study takes into consideration apparel export manufacturing units, apparel buying agencies/liaison offices and apparel buyers, with a annual turnover of Rs. 20 crore and more and staffed with minimum 5 merchandisers.

The primary data has been collected through questionnaire, which was administered through-individual in-depth personal interviews, structured telephonic interviews as well as e-mail. The final questionnaire consisted of 45 questions. The areas covered in questionnaire encompassed virtually all aspects of merchandiser job responsibilities and apparel supply chain competitiveness factors as relevant to apparel industry.

Results discussed the capabilities that merchandisers’ must possess to improve competitiveness of apparel export organisations. Through correlation analysis, strength of association between variables of merchandiser performance and supply chain competitiveness was discussed. Factors analysis helped to reduce 22 merchandiser performance variables to 7 factors and 11 supply chain competitiveness
variables to 3 factors. Regression analysis indicated relationship between merchandiser performance factors which affect supply chain competitiveness. The recommendations have been made at three levels viz-

A) Recommendations for apparel export companies

B) Initiatives that individual merchandisers can take to improve their performance

C) Recommendations for international apparel buyers

The recommendations primarily include education and training of merchandisers, standardising documentation requirements in the company and having a Standard Operation Procedure (SOP), strengthening of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and apparel manufacturing systems, performance appraisal with respect to Key Result Areas (KRAs) and training by buyers.