Logistics Journal Article Critique

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Miao, Z., Cai, S., & Xu, D. (2012). Exploring the antecedents of logistics social responsibility: A focus on Chinese firms. International Journal of Production Economics, 140(1), 18–27.

Studies on the external matters that affect logistics and supply chain management in an organization, e.g., the situation, philanthropy, diversity, and human rights has evolved, up to now, of the individual test of these aspects. These issues have been explored by many studies, however, if this investigation from the national corporate social responsibility profession, too as information from comprehensive talks with logistics executives are analyzed, one is able to see that these apparently isolated issues have similar features that supply chain managers and logisticians are able to achieve by applying a much wider, organization-wide approach to CSR (Carter & Jennings, 2002). A number of studies and literature on the topic of logistics social responsibility (LSR) is presented with the ultimate aim to guide higher management solve social responsibility matters and offering the direction for upcoming research campaigns. This paper seeks to summarize and critique an article covering the similar concept with respect to Chinese firms. it unearths the antecedents of LSR among Chinese corporations.

The article titled, “Exploring the antecedents of logistics social responsibility: A focus on Chinese firms”, by Miao, Cai, & Xu, discusses the system underlying logistics social responsibility (LSR) in China. This study is grounded on the five-dimensional framework of LSR: supplier, customer, environment, employee and philanthropy aspects that were developed by some Chinese researchers. Based on this framework the study proposes that these dimensions of LSR in Chinese firms are based on business ethics, suppliers, clan culture, competitors, pressures from customers and the policies and regulations (Miao, Cai, & Xu, 2012). For the sake of this study, a survey was conducted in the Chinese firms and 162 of firms participated in the study. The hypothesis was supported by the results and in the end, the article discussed the implications of its results and findings.

In order to test the hypothesis of the article, the researchers begin by providing an extensive literature review on the topic. With the increase in emphasis on CSR, the concept of LSR has also got significance in the emerging literature. The article supports the idea that supply managers must also be mindful of this idea of cultural obligation, as mentioned. Remarkably, while CSR has long been explored in the bigger field of management, the area of supply chain management has still to find the progress of the broad model. Alternatively, these topics have been analyzed individually and include investigation on reverse logistics and situation supply chain management; variety within the business's supply force and the wider supply chain. Hence this article makes an addition to the literature by highlighting some facts and aspects concerning LSR (Miao et al., 2012).

Coming towards the evaluation of the article, the title clearly demonstrates the purpose and key objective the study aims to achieve. Furthermore, it acquaints the audience about what to expect from the article. The abstract of the article shares the key details about it, including the background, the aim of the study, hypothesis, and methods employed for the research and the final outcomes as well. It also follows the precise format of an article abstract. The introduction also ends with highlighting the purpose of purpose (Miao et al., 2012). Since China differs from the Western world, this article explored the precursors of LSR in specifically Chinese firms. The study is grounded on another study that is credit with the development of a five-dimensional framework of LSR and this study is one of few of those studies based on some empirical framework. The work of other authors is confirmed by the study and then adopted as a ground for this research. One of the worth mentioning factors about the article is that the authors of the study give full credit to the researchers of the framework and elaborates that the framework it has used has been empirically verified through a large-scale survey. In addition, all the discussion in the article is relevant to the topic and the domain of the research.

Concerning the research method used by the study, it is also relevant to the topic. The survey was used to collect data from the participants of the study. Firm-level data was obtained since the CSR of 162 firms had to be studied. For the purpose of eliminating response bias in the data, t-tests were conducted so that the bias may not influence the research findings. The authors of this study have also credited other researchers and authors for their efforts and suggestions if any they have employed in this study (Miao et al., 2012). After the data collection, the data analysis was made employing a valid methodology. First of all, the convergent and discriminant validity was established of the multiple-item scale. Different research models were tested using Principal Components Analysis (PCA) using LISREL. Along with that, Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was utilized to examine the structural models. In this way, the reliability and validity of the study were enhanced.

In addition to that, the authors have cited the most pertinent literature and studies. No websites and non-credible sources were used as part of this study as reveled from the analysis and close reading of the article. The study arrived at a conclusion that business ethics, suppliers, clan culture, competitors, pressures from customers and the policies and regulations are the key factors that significantly impact the LSR of Chinese companies (Miao et al., 2012). In one way or another, all the factors that authors hypothesized to have an impact on the Chinese firms, proved to have some impact. The article, however, emphasizes its findings that the six factors and mainly business ethics and clan culture highly influences the LSR practices in an organization. But these antecedents have also been covered in some earlier studies. Consequently, this article only sheds light on the differentiated effect of these, alongside assessing the influence on each dimension of LSR from the five-dimensional framework.

The findings of the study are also testified in a consistent and clear format. It seems like the article has covered all the aspects of data and has not omitted anything that could have influenced the research findings. The article has also acknowledged the limitations of its study such as it claimed it failed to discover the inner and external drivers of LSR. Secondly, the study has ignored the cost side of implementing the LSR, the sample was limited and small. All these limitations have been accredited and authors have given viable reasons for that.

Overall, the authors have attained their objective by developing the hypothesis and analyzing it after a thorough process of data collection and assessment. Throughout the paper, they have remained objective and backed their statements by some valid references and work of scholars. This study has also created room for cross-cultural comparisons of the literature in the subject area of LSR (Miao et al., 2012). With the emerging interest in social responsibility in logistics, this research also holds some managerial implications such as good business ethics and clan culture are pivotal for the firms to do well in LSR. Furthermore, it guides the role of regulations for a firm to be socially responsible in its supply chain practices.

# References

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