

Purchasing Models and National Culture

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Abstract

This study proposes treating culture as an explanatory variable to test the assumption that existing theories are universally applicable. The primary research question was: Do purchasing theories built on samples from mainly North American companies with Anglo Saxon cultures apply in other cultural contexts? We used data collected from the 4th Round of the Global Manufacturers Research Group (GMRG) survey effort to test a model where top management view of the purchasing function (structure and evaluation) affects the purchasing practices (supplier selection, evaluation, and collaboration) and manufacturing performance. The statistical results provide evidence that the engagement and efficacy of purchasing practices is highly dependent on culture. This finding has significant implications from the perspective of decision making in international supply chain. Specifically, top managers across multiple cultures could decide on the structure and evaluation of purchasing function similarly, but these decisions could lead to different practices and different outcomes depending on the culture. The paper concludes by reviewing the research limitations and suggesting the examination of universal supply chain management theories.

Keyword :