AN EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION OF SELECTED GOVERNMENT EXPORT ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS: A STUDY OF SMEs IN MALAYSIA

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ABSTRACT

The primary objective of this study is to examine the effects of government export assistance programmes on the performance of the SMEs in Malaysia. From the literature, it was found that several factors could contribute on the performance of the organizations in terms of the export assistance programmes. Specifically, the current study focused on the awareness of export assistance programmes among SMEs in Malaysia, satisfaction among SMEs with the programmes provided and benefit of export assistance programmes and whether these construct would have a relationship with the organizations’ performance.

Using the mail questionnaire technique, a survey was conducted in Klang Valley where this place is the centre of commercial and business activities in Malaysia and many small and big organizations located in this area. In total, 500 questionnaires were distributed, 58 were received back within the period of three weeks after a necessary follow-up call and reminder. However, only 54 of the respondents completed all the questions. The demographic profile of the respondents were discussed and presented. Next, the relationship between awareness, satisfaction and benefit of the export assistance programmes on the organizations’ performance, the multiple regression technique was employed. In terms of the relationship between awareness and performance, satisfactions and performance as well as between benefit and performance, the results indicated that all of them are significantly related to performance where satisfaction makes the strongest unique contribution to explain the organizations’ performance, followed by awareness and perceived benefit of the export assistance programmes.

This study makes several implications, especially on the effects of awareness, satisfaction and benefit of export assistance programmes on the SMEs overall performance. Generally, the results suggested that awareness and satisfactions of the export assistance programmes is the important contributor for the SMEs in improving their performance. This knowledge will assist the government agencies to improve their services as well as to attract more SMEs to use their export assistance programmes. This is very important because the participations from the SMEs in these international expansion programmes will helps the government to improve the economic condition as well as to helps the SMEs to strongly compete in the international marketplace.
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