

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

**ANTECEDENTS OF EXPORT PERFORMANCE:
EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE FROM MALAYSIAN
CONSTRUCTION PROFESSIONAL
CONSULTANTS**

ABDUL LATIF BIN MOHD SOM, DATUK IR

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of the requirement for the degree of
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AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

I declare that the work in this thesis was carried out in accordance with the regulations of Universiti Teknologi MARA. It is original and is the result of my own work, unless otherwise indicated or acknowledged as referenced work. This thesis has not been submitted to any other academic institution or non-academic institution for any other degree or qualification.

I, hereby, acknowledge that I have been supplied with the Academic Rules and Regulations for Post Graduate, Universiti Teknologi MARA, regulating the conduct of my study and research.

Name of Student : Abdul Latif Bin Mohd Som, Datuk Ir

Student ID No : 2008302779

Programme : AP990

Faculty : Faculty of Architecture, Planning and Surveying

Thesis Title : Antecedents of Export Performance: Empirical Evidence from Malaysian Construction Professional Consultants.

Signature of Student : 

Date : August 2014

ABSTRACT

The effects of globalization have resulted in many firms exploring beyond their national boundaries in search of a better business performance. Resulting therefrom, increasing efforts have been made by researchers in the recent past in order to determine the antecedents of export venture performance of firms in addition to defining the appropriate dimensions of export performance. The objectives of this study are: (i) to explore the possible dimensions of export performance including its relationship between one dimension and another, (ii) to identify the main antecedent variable to export performance, (iii) to analyze the relationships between one antecedent variable and another, and (iv) to analyze the moderating effects of the 4 moderators on five critical links. Data were collected from 55 participating firms which were drawn from the Malaysian Construction Professional Consultants specifically those which are construction. total of 205 usable questionnaires were returned. Data analyses were conducted by a process of multivariate analysis using structural equation modelling (SEM) via AMOS (Analysis of Moment Structures) software package Version 21.0. Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) were performed to validate the scales. The results of the structural modelling revealed that for the direct relationships, 13 out of 20 hypotheses tested were supported whereas the remaining 7 were rejected. Only one hypothesis on the mediating variable was supported whereas out of 20 sub-hypotheses on the 4 moderators tested, all were supported except for 2 which were rejected. The results provide evidence that management factors are important antecedent towards shaping up the necessary resources, products/services characteristics of the firm and the export market strategy of the firm. On the most crucial outcome of export financial performance, the study revealed that it is dependent upon the degree of internationalisation of the firm and the export market strategy that the firm is pursuing. Additionally, capabilities were found to have a mediating effect on the relationship between management characteristics and the degree of internationalisation. The four moderators were found to have significant effects on several relationship links. Hence, it is proven by this study that the traditional model of export performance applied to manufactured goods comprising the same variables can be applied to describe the antecedents of export performance of service firms as validated. On the relationship between the two main dimensions of export performance and export non-financial performance, it was established in this study, for the first time to the best of the researcher's knowledge, that strategic export performance is positively linked to economic export performance. This study also contributes towards empirical research in export performance in a full-service firm setting from an emerging economy and in particular within the context of Malaysia.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
AUTHOR'S DECLARATION	ii
ABSTRACT	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS	v
LIST OF TABLES	xii
LIST OF FIGURES	xiv
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	xv
DEFINITION OF TERMS	xvi
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	
1.1 Overview	1
1.2 Background and Scope of Research	1
1.3 Problem Statement	7
1.3.1 Empirical Shortcomings on Export Performance of Service Firms	7
1.3.2 Establishing Relationship between the Two Main Dimensions of Export Performance	9
1.3.3 Testing the Effect of Moderating Variables	10
1.4 Research Questions	11
1.5 Research Objectives	12
1.6 Significance of the Study	12
1.6.1 Theoretical Development	12
1.6.2 Practical Contribution	13
1.7 Scope and Limitations	14
1.8 Construction Professional Consultancy Malaysia	17
1.9 Structure of Thesis	20
1.10 Summary	21
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW	23
PART ONE: EXPORT PERFORMANCE AND ITS DIMENSIONS	23
2.1 Introduction	24
2.2 Export Performance	25
2.2.1 Background of Export Performance	25
2.2.2 Operationalization of Export Performance	29
2.2.3 Economic Measure of Export Performance	30
2.2.4 Strategic Measure of Export Performance	31
2.2.5 Summary	32
PART TWO: ANTECEDENTS TO EXPORT PERFORMANCE	34
2.3 Export Performance	34