Abstract

Prof. Islam El-Nakib

Skills Requirements for Entry-level Logisticians: An Empirical Study of Academics and Practitioners Perception in Egypt

Abstract Purpose: As logistics and supply chain management has been recognized for being a powerful tool to achieve competitiveness, an increasing need has been witnessed for highly skilled employees who can manage the challenging processes of getting products to the targeted markets. Nevertheless, a remarkable shortage of supply chain talent has been witnessed in numerous sectors, and further increased the search for highly competent calibers. Therefore, the purpose of this research is to examine the skills needed for entry level logisticians in Egypt by comparing between the academics' and practitioners' perceptions for the required skills. This in return can assist in the provision of recommendations to develop the undergraduate logistics programs and supply the market with logistics and supply chain graduates who can be competent logisticians. Research Approach: This research follows a quantitative approach whereas Murphy and Poist's Business Logistics Management (BLM) framework will be used as the basis upon which an online survey is designed to collect the perceptions of academics and practitioners on the required skills for entry level logisticians. The online survey targets 1,500 manufacturers listed in the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Industries (MOFTI) directory in Egypt as well as 200 academics from different Egyptian universities. Findings and Originality: The majority of research addressing the needed skills for competent logisticians focused on the European, American and Asian markets and nearly none addressed the topic in Africa the Middle East despite the challenging logistics environment in these regions. Thus this research would be an attempt to close the gap in literature and to provide useful insights for the academics to tailor their logistics programs to better suit the logistics market needs in Egypt. Research Impact: It is hoped that this study will draw the attention of the research community towards initiating more research projects that would study the skills required for logisticians in Egypt and the MENA region. It is worth noting that the majority of studies conducted in the supply chain discipline mainly focuses on the developed countries whose infrastructure and logistics' systems are significantly different from those in emerging developing nations. This in many cases renders the implementation of these studies focusing on supply chain practices and strategies rather challenging and in some cases unrealistic in emerging/developing countries. Practical impact: It is hoped that this research would assist the Egyptian universities in developing effective logistics educational programs that would provide competent logistics workforce for the market. Keywords: BLM framework, Egypt, Logistics professionals, Skill requirements