



Examining Container Port Resources and Environments to Enhance Competitiveness: A Cross-Country Study from Resource-Based and Institutional Perspectives*

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the competitiveness of container ports using a cross-country analysis with theoretical foundations. Tangible and intangible resources are discussed as determinants of container port competitiveness using the resource-based view and the institutional theory. This study analyzes the relationships among six variables: container port competitiveness, traffic volume, quality of infrastructure, linear shipping connectivity, operating efficiency, and institutional influence. This study retrieved country-level data on different indicators and countries from several trade and maritime databases. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) is used to test various hypotheses and to evaluate the casual relationships among six variables. Additionally, Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression is used to test the moderating effects of institutional influence.

Key Words : Container Port, Competitiveness, Institutional Theory, RBV

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I. Introduction

We have experienced that globalization affects various areas around the world. Globalization has brought considerable benefits to individual countries. In the maritime industry, tremendously positive effects could be possible by globalization. The vast arrays of routes that connect container seaports are responsible for transporting containers around the globe (Fleming, 2005). Thus, the container port industry has been a key contributor to and beneficiary of globalization.

Historically, container was introduced in the United States. Also, container shipping was first adopted in the U.S. in the 1960s. Container shipping is specialized cranes, storage areas, and railheads. Containerization was adopted on the most heavily traded routes in developed countries (Hummels, 2007). The container port industry may be representative of a country's trade development. Further, container traffic volume has become a key element in determining a country's seaport performance. Containerization has increased competition among seaports (Cullinane and Song, 2007; Luo and Grigalunas, 2003). Many studies have investigated the factors affecting container traffic volumes and seaport competitiveness.

Since the 1980s, dependence of shipping companies on particular seaports has declined (Liu et al., 2013). This has led to fiercer competition among seaports around the world (Yuen et al., 2012). It is not easy for seaports to obtain sufficient container cargo volume to justify massive investments. Also, aggressive competition has created overcapacity in the container port sector.

II. Overview of the Container Port Industry

Many major container ports are located in Asia and Europe. According to Table 1 collected from World Development Indicators (WDI), seven Asian, two European, and one North American countries are included in the top 10 regarding container traffic volume. Korea, Malaysia, and UAE have experienced increased volume. However, the traffic volumes of Japan and Germany have decreased. In the past, Singapore, Hong Kong, Busan, and Kaohsiung were dominant players in Asia (Liu et al., 2013). However,

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