

## **Managing supply chains: lessons learned and future challenges**

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### **Abstract:**

**Purpose -** The purpose of this paper is to gain better understandings on the interrelationships among manufacturers, customers and suppliers within the supply chains of electrical and electronics firms in Thailand. This industry is important to the national economy.

**Design/methodology/approach -** The methodology includes the survey development and distributions, and the hypotheses on the interrelationships among manufacturers, suppliers and customers. The findings are compared with the practices in Hong Kong and with available supply-chain management models. The applications of the correlation analysis are prominent for statistical interpretations. The discussions with participating Thai executives are conducted.

**Findings -** From the manufacturers' viewpoint of Thai executives, managing supply chains requires strong partnerships with customers and suppliers as they are perceived to impact internal operations and subsequently the performance levels. Their viewpoints are generally supported by Hong Kong counterparts and current supply-chain management models.

**Practical implications -** The follow-up discussion with participating executives from Thailand reveals the importance of information and communication technology, and the roles of languages for communication for successful supply-chain management. These implications are critical for department of industrial work as it needs to prepare policy initiatives to support key industrial clusters, especially the electrical and electronics industry.

**Originality/value -** The paper confirms key factors impacting supply-chain managements and underlines the success factors for effectively managing supply chains.

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