王　岚◎著

供应链网络关系、企业国际化与绩效

Supply Chain Network Relationship，Enterprise Internationalization and Performance

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王 岚 著

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1 Relational Characteristics and Financial Performance

1.1 Market orientation and joint actions

Firms respond the external environment in different way, as some may imitate others to react and some may employ relatively independent strategy according to their resources and capabilities which shows the difference of their strategic orientation. Strategic orientation is defined as what kind of the strategy the firms prefer for adapting and change the environment to achieve optimal configuration of resources . Market orientation is one dimension of strategic orientation, namely, that is to create and diffuse the market information for satisfy the future and current demand of customers. Many firms are engaged in outsourcing activities and are increasingly aware of the need to manage inter-organizational relationship from raw material provider to consumer. Market orientation has become a fundamental research question practically and theoretically as the market environment and customer needs change rapidly in a global economy. Drawing upon the resource-based perspectives, this study aims to examine how market orientation of the firm's strategy orientation can be beneficial to performance. Using survey data from a sample of SMEs (Small and Medium Enterprises) from mainland China in Yangtze triangle area, we demonstrate that Market orientation plays a very important role on joint actions. Market orientation facilitates joint actions. In other words, the higher the level of market orientation is, the higher the level of both joint planning and joint problem solving is. Future studies can take joint action as mediator to find their impact on performance. Theoretical and managerial implications are discussed.

1.1.1 Literature review and theoretical hypothesis

Managers are confronting with complicated opportunities and challenges, especially the information technology change the business model a lot. Under this circumstance, enterprises not only need to evaluate the strategic behavior but also have to clarify the potential base of strategy implementation to guarantee maintaining the competitive advantage. Market information is the critical factor to influence the performance. Market orientation study begins in the 1950s, Drucker and Keith argues that market is an viewpoint embedded in the organization and future become the marketing concept which represent as focusing on costumer in the marketing textbook in the 1970s. In the 1990s, market orientation is an important factor to enhance the responsiveness, profit and market share, which has been supported empirically. Although that is not consistent in the definition and measure, the common thing is information collection and diffusion. The present study makes several important contributions to the literature. Although studies have documented the benefits of market orientation on performance, few studies have specifically focused on joint actions. Given these, the first contribution of this study to the inter-firm relationship literature is an examination of the effect of partner search strategy on joint actions. Another contribution of this research is to reveal the heterogeneous influence of different features of joint actions on the acquisition of performance.

(1) Market orientation and joint planning

It is worth noting that joint actions should include joint problem solving and joint planning—A firm may obtain the advantages of linking with upstream and down stream suppliers. Market orientation facilitate the buyer and seller to identify the market information dynamically. To satisfy customer needs and respond the heterogeneous demand systematically, firms need to collect information from multiple channels and integrate them in a short time. Therefore, firms tend to make production schedule and marketing plans with suppliers and customers to improve and enhance complementary resources. In this way, firms can expand the exiting customer base and increase scale of economics. Therefore, market orientation promotes the operational and production planning information sharing among firms to satisfy customer needs. We propose the following hypothesis:

H1: The higher the market orientation of the firm, the higher level of joint planning the firm with the supplier.

(2) Market orientation and joint problem solving

Supplier relationship is always exists between the transaction partners and this construct is defined as the degree and extent of strength of the relationship among organizations. The strength varies as the level of inter-firm trust and commitment changes and inter-organizational trust is a key component of relational closeness which also promotes high level of commitments. Compared with joint planning, since joint problem solving reflects supply chain management with high level of adaptability and agility for the changing market needs, more specific skill and tacit knowledge should be shared in the process of negotiating and communicating with suppliers on the improvement and adaption of the incoming materials. From the view of supply chain management, the agility supply chain employ an integrative strategy to establish a new and sustainable collaborative relationship with all stake holders in the chain, however, the basis of the integrative strategy is relational closeness. Market orientation promotes the partners with high level of closeness to transfer key and private knowledge. This guarantees that the firm can adapt the changes in the environment and satisfy the customer needs. Therefore, we propose the following hypothesis:

H2: The higher the market orientation of the firm, the higher level of joint problem solving the firm with the supplier.

1.1.2 Data and methodology

The data was collected in Yangtze triangle area from the early May of 2007 to the late November of 2007. 280 responses were collected; the response rate is 46.7%. There were 86 pieces of returned questionnaires incompletely filled or with self-evident mistakes, so the effective response rate is 32.3%. Table 1 shows the relative distribution of respondents in terms of the following three relevant variables: industry, sales revenues and business characteristics. For sales revenue, 26.8% of the firms are more than RMB 100 million Yuan, 10.8% of the firms are below RMB 10 million Yuan. For business types, 50% of the firms are engaged in manufacturing, 3.6% of the firms are engaged in retailing.

Measurement: industry, business type, firm size, sale revenues and total asset were controlled. We also conduct harman's one-factor test to examine the presence of common method variance. All the key measures were subjected to a factor analysis and then determined the number of factors accounting for the variance in the measures. The first factor demonstrates only 19% of the variance. Table. 1–1 is means, standard deviations, correlations of variables examined in this study.

Table 1–1 Descriptive Statitics and Correlation Matrix ($N = 194$)

Variables	1	2	3
1. MO	1		
2. Joint Plan	0.379**	1	
3. Joint Pro. sol	0.214**	0.197**	1
Mean	3.10	3.29	3.90
S. DS.	0.83	0.88	0.65

1.1.3 Analyses and result

According to data in questionnaire survey, we tested our hypotheses based on 2 regression models (Table 1 – 2). Hypothesis 1 proposing that the higher the market orientation of the firm is, the higher level of joint planning the firm with the supplier. was supported (β = 0.188; $p < 0.05$). Hypothesis 2 proposing that The higher the market orientation of the firm, the higher level of joint problem solving the firm with the supplier was also supported ($\beta = 0.358$; $p < 0.001$).

Table 1 – 2 Results of Regression Analyses

Variables	Model 1 Buyer Innovation Performance		Model 2 Seller Innovation Performance	
	Step1 controls	Step2 IV (main effect)	Step1 controls	Step2 IV (main effect)
Industry	−0.026	−0.021	−0.018	−0.010
Business Type	0.013	0.009	0.106	0.098
Ffirm Size	−0.017	−0.022	−0.025	−0.033
Sale Revenues	0.058	0.018	0.216	0.137
Total Asset	0.014	0.036	−0.141	−0.098
District	0.189*	0.198**	−0.032	−0.014
MO		0.188*		0.358***
R2	0.045	0.079	0.033	0.157
Increase in R2	—	0.034*	—	0.124
F – Value	1.388	2.166*	1.000	4.662***

1.1.4 Theoretical and practical implications

Market Orientation plays a very important role on joint actions. Joint planning and joint problem solving can be engendered by high level of market orientation. We found that the higher the level of Market orientation is, the higher the level of both joint actions is. The joint planning is likely to involve predominantly basis operational information based on communication, while joint problem solving relate primarily to technical skills and know-how. This also, to some extent, explains why pull model focused on customer real needs can lead to better supply flexibility. Product characteristics may influence the supply flexibility which buyers are desired and this in turn influences supplier selection leading to different level of relational capability.

Several limitations should be addressed for future research. First, the post hoc examination and validation analysis indicated no serious common method problems, but dyadic data is more reliable to explore the relationship from multiple viewpoints. Since the supplier also plays a critical role in affecting the quality of the dyad, and it could be the customer in different industry, there is a need to examine the exchange relationship both from the supplier's and buyer's perspective.

1.2 The internal and external resource integration

Modern enterprise management emphasizes the realization of enterprises' overall performance. It refers to not only breaking the barriers between internal departments, but also eradicating the barriers between relative stakeholders such as companies, industries, and the government, leading to the comprehensive integration of the merchandise flow, the logistics flow, the information flow and the capital flow. Because of this, current competitions among companies are not competitions between single companies, but are competitions between networks. Hence, it is very important for companies to know how to establish an effective external resource management and coordination mechanism. For example, company A, as a national company, has achieved the integration of resource in different industries and departments, integrating the resource of various levels to a large scale. Vertically, it integrated the regional and industry resource; horizontally, it integrated the resource from internal departments and related cooperative companies.

Under the incomplete information conditions, finding a business partner largely depends on the initial relationship between the company and other related companies. By settling at a local place and establishing the network of regional branches, a company can build a system of communication and cooperation, improving its technology innovation and competence. Company network is a value-added network of production. Products, from the raw material to the final stage, add their market value by transferring in the company networks.

Currently, competitions among companies are not competitions between single companies, but are competitions between networks. Hence, it is very important for companies to know how to establish an effective external resource management and coordination mechanism. This thesis analyzes different integration models in terms of resource integration provider, network services provider, innovation network, and we take Company A as an example to reveal how to integrate internal and external recourses to achieve integration advantage.

1.2.1 Different integration models

(1) Resource integration provider

The change of competition concepts leads to the change of companies' resource constitution. Traditional resource division view claims that a company's resource is mainly a company's interior resource, which is divided into three categories: primary resource, which refers to the products and services of a company; supportive resource, which refers to the supportive items and tools during the production of primary resource, including raw materials, equipment, capital and technology etc.; invisible resource, which refers to strategic plans and management controls. However, under the concept of competition, external resource such as the market and customers become important parts of companies' resource and the main area in competitions. Meanwhile, resource providers are transferring from internal to external, which means that a company's resource might come from related members of related groups or companies, including internal organizations such as corporate shareholders, management crew, employees and stake holders, as well as external members such as the government, cooperators, competitors and the society etc.

Therefore, company resource indicates all the items that can potentially or practically influence a company's value, including both the resource that a company can control and the resource that a company cannot control (e. g. external company resource). Clearly recognizing a company's core resource is the foundation of the effective utilization of resource to promote the company's innovation ability. Resource integration is to merge, classify and rearrange independent resource by need and come out with a more functional and effective resource system. The result of resource integration is to form a larger scale collection of items. The total effect and efficiency of the whole company is more remarkable than those of any single part in the company, and even more significant than the simple addition of each part. In conclusion, integration leads to overall efficiency and benefits.

(2) Network services provider

By the measurement of capital stock and the complexity of problem decision, the business expansion ability is one of the most important strategies of a company. The decision of business ability requires that a company to distribute resources according to the future prediction. The strategic problem of business ability expansion is how to improve business ability, approach the company's goal to aincrease its market share, as well as avoiding excess of business ability. Company A forms a multi-business mode of coal, electricity, road, harbor and chemistry, building its core competence and promoting its capital stock. In this case, company A has a production services network based on coal, Which is assisted and extended by other business parts.

The industry chain uses prospective, technologic and well-related companies and products as the core of the chain. These cores can connect the chain by technology and capital in all aspects. The industry chain is a new space organization that is based on the theories of the value chain, collecting related companies. The precondition of the emergence of the industry chain is the existence of a leading company with its core competence. By setting industry standards, sharing technology and resource, controlling core procedures, the leading company can organize and coordinate various relations, as well as establishing an industry chain. The leading company deals with businesses that it is good at, and cooperates with other companies on businesses that it is not good at or that is not its core business, sharing the profits with each other.

The goal of the integration of the industry chain is to produce cooperative effect of companies in the chain. The constitution and collaborationof the industry value chain was based on the profits trading of products and services. On the contrary, in current days, the number of companies in the industry chain has increased and the companies are more professional. The coordination between companies gradually turns into deep collaboration such as strategic alliance, advantage compensation, resource sharing, process integration, and culture fusion.

(3) Innovation network

In the competition occupied by innovation, the flexibility requirements of an organization make its production more scattered. This organization type asks companies to have a friendly cooperation relationship with each other. There are some institutional methods that can avoid opportunism behaviors that might devastate collaboration and minimize market risks.

According to the principle of resource integration to self-innovation, companies should exert the promoting function of resource integration on their innovation increase from all aspects.

1.2.2 The realization of integrated advantages

The business department of multi-business companies generates values by way of direct contacts with customers. Those companies compete for sales and profits in respective markets by meeting customers' needs. The business departments report to their parent companies and the headquarters, as well as the management group of the branches. Compare to the business department, the parent company has no customers or profits, but it has costs. The role of the parent company is an agency, connecting the business department and the capital providers and affecting the decision and strategies of the business department. Therefore, the business department generates value, and it must realize the value created by the parent company. In conclusion, the challenge of the parent company is whether or not it can generate value to the business department.

The concept of competitive advantage offers goals, evaluating standards and testifying evidence for the business strategies. The concept of integrated company advantage plays the same role on the company's strategies: it provides a goal for the parent company. Even if the goal is not yet achieved, the parent company should work for it. The integrated company advantages also provide a measurement that can measure the specific behaviors for the parent company, pointing out the advantages and disadvantages. Meanwhile, the integrated company advantages provide a standard for the parent company that can testify the effectiveness of its strategies. According to the standard, the parent company can ensure the current policies, directions, and actions increase the company's future integrated advantage.

The concept of the integrated advantages can and should be the core of decision making in all big companies. These decisions include