

A Study on the Core Competencies of Freight Forwarders in Handling Cargoes at Swasthikka Warehousing & Logistics Services

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ABSTRACT: In today's globalized economy, international trade plays a vital role in economic growth and business expansion. The smooth movement of goods across borders is made possible by logistics and supply chain management systems. Among the key players in this system are freight forwarders, who act as intermediaries between shippers and transportation services. This project titled "A Study on the Core Competencies of Freight Forwarders in Handling Cargoes" focuses on understanding the essential skills, knowledge, and capabilities required by freight forwarding companies to efficiently manage cargo operations in a competitive and dynamic global market. The objective of the study is to analyse a study on the core competencies of freight forwarders in handling cargoes at Swasthikka warehousing & logistics services. This research follows a descriptive research design. Convenience sampling is adopted in this study. The sample size of the study is 120. Simple percentage analysis, chi square analysis and correlation has been used in this study. It is found that the majority of employees, 40 (33.3%) strongly agree and 50 (41.7%) agree, that they possess adequate knowledge of cargo handling procedures, while 15 (12.5%) are neutral, 10 (8.3%) disagree, and 5 (4.2%) strongly disagree. Overall, most employees report confidence in their knowledge, training, and problem-solving abilities, though a notable portion remains neutral or disagrees in each area. The study establishes that well-implemented technology, infrastructure, and coordination practices directly influence employees' motivation, engagement, and overall job satisfaction.

KEYWORDS: Freight Forwarding , Core Competencies, Cargo Handling, Warehousing, Logistics Services, Supply Chain Management

I. INTRODUCTION

In today's globalized economy, international trade plays a vital role in economic growth and business expansion. The smooth movement of goods across borders is made possible by logistics and supply chain management systems. Among the key players in this system are freight forwarders, who act as intermediaries between shippers and transportation services. This project titled "A Study on the Core Competencies of Freight Forwarders in Handling Cargoes" focuses on understanding the essential skills, knowledge, and capabilities required by freight forwarding companies to efficiently manage cargo operations in a competitive and dynamic global market. Freight forwarding is a specialized service that involves organizing shipments for individuals or corporations to move goods from the manufacturer or producer to the final destination. Freight forwarders do not usually transport goods themselves; instead, they coordinate with multiple carriers such as shipping lines, airlines, trucking companies, and rail operators.

The freight forwarding industry has grown significantly due to increasing globalization, e-commerce expansion, and international trade agreements. According to global trade patterns influenced by institutions like the World Trade Organization, countries are increasingly dependent on imports and exports. This has increased the demand for efficient cargo handling, customs clearance, documentation, risk management, and timely delivery. As a result, freight forwarders must possess strong core competencies to ensure smooth operations and customer satisfaction.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To identify the key skills and capabilities required in cargo handling operations.
- To examine the role of documentation and customs procedures in freight forwarding.
- To evaluate the importance of coordination and communication in logistics management.
- To assess the impact of technology and infrastructure on cargo handling efficiency.
- To study the challenges faced by freight forwarders in managing cargo operations.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Aravind Krishnan.et.al.,(2026) analyzed the operational effectiveness of freight forwarding activities in a logistics firm with emphasis on cargo handling efficiency and technological integration. Using a descriptive research design and structured questionnaires among logistics professionals, the study evaluated key operational competencies required for freight forwarding performance. The results indicated that documentation accuracy, regulatory compliance, cargo tracking visibility, and rapid customer response were critical competencies influencing operational success. The research also revealed that companies using digital freight management systems such as E-Freight software achieved higher efficiency in cargo tracking and shipment coordination. Moreover, effective communication with port authorities and shipping lines significantly reduced cargo delays and operational errors. The study recommended that freight forwarding organizations adopt integrated digital logistics platforms and provide continuous training to employees in customs procedures and cargo documentation. These initiatives would strengthen the core competencies required for efficient cargo handling in international logistics operations.

Koushik.et.al.,(2026) investigated operational practices and technological adoption within freight forwarding firms operating in the Indian logistics sector. The research objective was to evaluate the effectiveness of operational processes used in cargo handling and transportation management. Using a quantitative research design, data were collected from logistics managers and sales executives working in freight forwarding companies through structured questionnaires. Statistical analysis using ANOVA and Chi-square techniques revealed that operational transparency, documentation accuracy, and customer communication significantly influence freight forwarding efficiency. Furthermore, the study found that companies implementing digital tracking systems and automated documentation processes experienced improved cargo visibility and reduced operational errors. The authors suggested that freight forwarding organizations strengthen their technological infrastructure and invest in employee skill development to enhance service quality and operational performance. These competencies are essential for managing complex logistics operations and ensuring efficient cargo handling in global trade.

Skiba and Karas (2022) examined the evolving role of freight forwarders within modern global supply chains. The research objective was to analyze how freight forwarders adapt their competencies in response to globalization, digitalization, and increasing complexity in international trade. Using qualitative analysis and industry observations, the study explored the integration of freight forwarding services with supply chain management practices. The findings revealed that forwarders are increasingly transitioning from traditional intermediaries to strategic logistics coordinators responsible for cargo consolidation, multimodal transport planning, customs compliance, and risk management. The study further found that digital competencies, network partnerships, and regulatory expertise are essential capabilities that enable freight forwarders to manage complex cargo operations efficiently. The research suggested that freight forwarding companies must invest in digital logistics platforms, develop global partnerships, and enhance operational flexibility to remain competitive. These competencies enable forwarders to provide value-added services and ensure efficient cargo movement in global logistics networks.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research follows a descriptive research design. Descriptive research helps in describing and analyzing the characteristics of a particular group or phenomenon. Convenience sampling is adopted in this study. The convenience sampling method, which is a type of non-probability sampling technique. Primary data refers to the data collected directly from the respondents for the specific purpose of the study. The sample size of the study is 120. Simple percentage analysis, chi square analysis and correlation has been used in this study.

Data analysis and interpretation

Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Employees possess adequate knowledge of cargo handling procedures	40 (33.3%)	50 (41.7%)	15 (12.5%)	10 (8.3%)	5 (4.2%)	120 (100%)
Staff are well-trained in documentation and customs regulations	35 (29.2%)	48 (40.0%)	20 (16.7%)	10 (8.3%)	7 (5.8%)	120 (100%)
Employees have strong problem-solving skills during cargo issues	38 (31.7%)	45 (37.5%)	20 (16.7%)	10 (8.3%)	7 (5.8%)	120 (100%)

INTERPRETATION

The majority of employees, 40 (33.3%) strongly agree and 50 (41.7%) agree, that they possess adequate knowledge of cargo handling procedures, while 15 (12.5%) are neutral, 10 (8.3%) disagree, and 5 (4.2%) strongly disagree. Regarding training in documentation and customs regulations, 35 (29.2%) strongly agree and 48 (40.0%) agree, with 20 (16.7%) neutral, 10 (8.3%) disagree, and 7 (5.8%) strongly disagree. For problem-solving skills during cargo issues, 38 (31.7%) strongly agree and 45 (37.5%) agree, 20 (16.7%) are neutral, 10 (8.3%) disagree, and 7 (5.8%) strongly disagree. Overall, most employees report confidence in their knowledge, training, and problem-solving abilities, though a notable portion remains neutral or disagrees in each area.

Table No. 2 TECHNOLOGY AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
The company uses updated logistics software systems	36 (30.0%)	50 (41.7%)	20 (16.7%)	10 (8.3%)	4 (3.3%)	120 (100%)
Technology improves tracking and monitoring of cargo	40 (33.3%)	45 (37.5%)	18 (15.0%)	12 (10.0%)	5 (4.2%)	120 (100%)
Warehousing infrastructure supports smooth operations	38 (31.7%)	47 (39.2%)	20 (16.7%)	10 (8.3%)	5 (4.2%)	120 (100%)

INTERPRETATION

Most employees feel positively about technology and infrastructure, with 36 (30.0%) strongly agreeing and 50 (41.7%) agreeing that the company uses updated logistics software systems, 40 (33.3%) strongly agreeing and 45 (37.5%) agreeing that technology improves tracking and monitoring of cargo, and 38 (31.7%) strongly agreeing and 47 (39.2%) agreeing that warehousing infrastructure supports smooth operations. In each case, a smaller portion of employees remain neutral or disagree, with figures ranging from 10 to 20 neutral, 10 to 12 disagreeing, and 4 to 5 strongly

disagreeing. Overall, employees indicate that the organization’s technology and infrastructure largely support effective logistics operations.

Table No. 3 COORDINATION AND COMMUNICATION

Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
There is effective coordination between departments	35 (29.2%)	48 (40.0%)	20 (16.7%)	12 (10.0%)	5 (4.2%)	120 (100%)
Communication with clients is clear and timely	38 (31.7%)	45 (37.5%)	18 (15.0%)	12 (10.0%)	7 (5.8%)	120 (100%)
Teamwork improves cargo handling efficiency	40 (33.3%)	46 (38.3%)	18 (15.0%)	10 (8.3%)	6 (5.0%)	120 (100%)

INTERPRETATION

Most employees perceive strong coordination and communication within the organization, with 35 (29.2%) strongly agreeing and 48 (40.0%) agreeing that there is effective coordination between departments, 38 (31.7%) strongly agreeing and 45 (37.5%) agreeing that communication with clients is clear and timely, and 40 (33.3%) strongly agreeing and 46 (38.3%) agreeing that teamwork improves cargo handling efficiency. A smaller number of employees remain neutral or disagree, with figures ranging from 18 to 20 neutral, 10 to 12 disagreeing, and 5 to 7 strongly disagreeing. Overall, employees indicate that departmental coordination, client communication, and teamwork contribute positively to operational efficiency.

IV. CHI-SQUARE ANALYSIS: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EMPLOYEE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS AND TECHNOLOGY AND INFRASTRUCTURE

HYPOTHESIS TESTING

Null hypothesis (Ho): There is no significant relationship between employee knowledge and skills and technology and infrastructure.

Alternative hypothesis (H1): There is some significant relationship between employee knowledge and skills and technology and infrastructure.

Chi-Square Tests

Test	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	408.381a	288	0.000
Likelihood Ratio	274.67	288	0.704

Linear-by-Linear Association	50.884	1	0
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INTERPRETATION

As per the above table, the Pearson Chi-Square P value is 0.000, which is significant at 5% (0.05) significance level. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected, indicating that there is a significant association between employee knowledge and skills and technology and infrastructure. This shows that employees’ knowledge and skills are positively related to the effectiveness of technology and infrastructure in supporting logistics operations.

V. MCORRELATION ANALYSIS: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TECHNOLOGY AND INFRASTRUCTURE AND COORDINATION AND COMMUNICATION

	TECHNOLOGY AND INFRASTRUCTURE	COORDINATION AND COMMUNICATION
TECHNOLOGY AND INFRASTRUCTURE	Pearson Correlation	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	—
	N	120
COORDINATION AND COMMUNICATION	Pearson Correlation	0.712**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0
	N	120

INTERPRETATION

The above table indicates that out of 120 respondents, the coefficient of correlation between Technology and Infrastructure and Coordination and Communication is 0.712. Since the value is below 1, it shows a positive relationship between Technology and Infrastructure and Coordination and Communication. This means that as the organization’s technology and infrastructure improve, the effectiveness of coordination and communication among employees also increases. The relationship is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed), indicating a statistically strong association.

VI. SUGGESTIONS

- Conduct refresher training on cargo handling procedures for employees who are neutral or disagree about their knowledge.
- Provide advanced training in documentation and customs regulations to ensure compliance and efficiency.
- Organize problem-solving workshops to improve employees’ ability to handle cargo issues effectively.
- Regularly update logistics software systems to enhance operational efficiency and reduce errors.
- Assess and upgrade warehousing infrastructure to ensure smooth cargo handling and storage.
- Offer technology training sessions so employees can fully utilize tracking and monitoring systems.
- Promote inter-departmental meetings and team-building exercises to strengthen coordination.
- Standardize client communication protocols to ensure clarity, timeliness, and consistency.
- Recognize and reward employees’ achievements in teamwork, problem-solving, and operational efficiency.
- Implement regular feedback mechanisms and surveys to monitor gaps and design targeted improvements.

VII. CONCLUSION

It is concluded that employee knowledge, skills, and the organization’s technology and infrastructure have a significant and positive impact on operational efficiency at Swasthikka Warehousing & Logistics Services. The findings indicate that when employees possess adequate knowledge of cargo handling procedures, receive proper training in

documentation and customs regulations, and demonstrate strong problem-solving abilities, they are better equipped to manage cargo operations effectively. Advanced logistics software, robust tracking systems, and well-maintained warehousing infrastructure further support employees in performing their tasks efficiently, enhancing confidence and performance.

It is also concluded that effective coordination between departments, clear and timely communication with clients, and a collaborative team environment contribute significantly to employees' positive perception of the organization. The study establishes that well-implemented technology, infrastructure, and coordination practices directly influence employees' motivation, engagement, and overall job satisfaction. Therefore, focusing on continuous improvement of training programs, technological upgrades, and communication strategies is essential for sustaining high levels of operational efficiency and promoting organizational effectiveness.

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