

Factors Influencing Strategic Transformational Management Capability of Electronic and Electrical Appliance Businesses in Thailand

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Abstract

The objective of this research was to investigate the impacts of antecedents on strategic transformational management capability. A questionnaire was the tool used to collect the data from 167 managing directors or managing partners of electronic and electrical appliance businesses in Thailand. The statistical technique used to analyze is the ordinary least square regression. The findings suggest that internal factors including continuous adaptation leadership, dynamic knowledge management, best business experience and external factors, competitive pressure intensity, had positive impacts on strategic transformational management capability. Therefore, the managing directors or managing partners should place an emphasis upon the importance to promote and support the four factors.

Keywords: Transformational Management, Strategic Transformational, Electronic and Electrical Appliance Businesses

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Introduction

During the last two decades, organization sustainability has become more global and fundamental to the success of most companies, evolving from expressing good intentions to addressing critical business issues linked to economic, social and ecological performance (Kiron, Kruschwitz, Haanaes, Reeves, Sonja-Katrin Fuisz-Kehrbach, & Kell, 2015). Businesses today, therefore, continue to revolutionize for survival in a rapidly changing business environment (Kim & Kim, 2014). Currently, business environment characterized by increased market competition, globalization, a change in governmental regulations, rapid growth, an increased demand for certification, and advances in technology and information systems, acquiring and managing organizational strategic assets are considered to be critical to achieve competitive advantages (N'Cho, 2017).

Strategy making has been considered as an organization-wide phenomenon (Hart, 1992). Nonetheless, mainstream strategy research has concentrated on top managers (Nag, Hambrick & Chen, 2007), as agents of strategy making although strategy-as-practice research has extended the focus to include various kinds of strategy specialists and interests in the role of middle managers in strategy making (Nketia, 2016). To be consistent with firm's strategies, firm have to transform to cope with challenges by seeking transformational leadership. A large number of researchers suggest that transformational leadership is of great importance in organizational change and effectiveness (Bass and Avolio, 1994). Previous researches have highlighted the leadership theories useful for shaping and directing the success of the organizations (Roncesvalles & Sevilla, 2015). Therefore, growth and survival of future organizations depends on their ability in implementing successful changes which itself is a kind of ultimate goal in improving and transformation of the organization (Lewis, 2000).

Therefore, the electronic and electrical appliance business in Thailand was chosen to study because is one of the fast growing businesses facing the challenges pertaining to become innovation industry and its products need to be improved and designed to serve customer requirement, and the current environment has changed over the years to change their business strategies for firm sustainability. Nevertheless, there are few studies conducted on the factors that contribute to the potential for strategic transformational

management. As a consequence of filling this research gap, the research question seeks to investigate “How antecedent factors affect strategic transformational management capability”.

Research Objective

The purpose of the research was to investigate the relationships among the antecedent factors of strategic transformational management capability, continuous adaptation leadership, dynamic knowledge management, organizational resource readiness, best business experiences, competitive pressure intensity, and strategic transformational management capability.

Literature Reviews

This research investigates the relationships between five factors of strategic transformational management capability and strategic transformational management capability. This research employed contingency theory which examines the relationships among various endogenous and exogenous contextual factors (Wallace & Kreutzfeldt, 1991). Contingency theory state that the appropriateness of different strategies depends on the competitive settings of businesses (Hambrick & Lei, 1985). Therefore, the contingency theory is used to describe the phenomena of the firm’s flexibility to the environmental context factors. These external factors are environmental or industrial factors such as industry competition, government regulations, business environmental uncertainty (Govindarajan, 1984), stakeholder involvements and expectations, technological change, society, and economic conditions (Sauser, Reilly & Shenhar, 2009). Endogenous factors are the organizational factors or internal factors such as corporate vision, organizational climate, firm resources, experience, leadership and firm policy (Lawrence & Lorsch, 1967). The five factors include continuous adaptation leadership, dynamic knowledge management, organizational resource readiness, best business experiences, and competitive pressure intensity. The conceptual model of strategic transformational management capability and its antecedent is presented in Figure 1.

Five factors of strategic transformational management capability

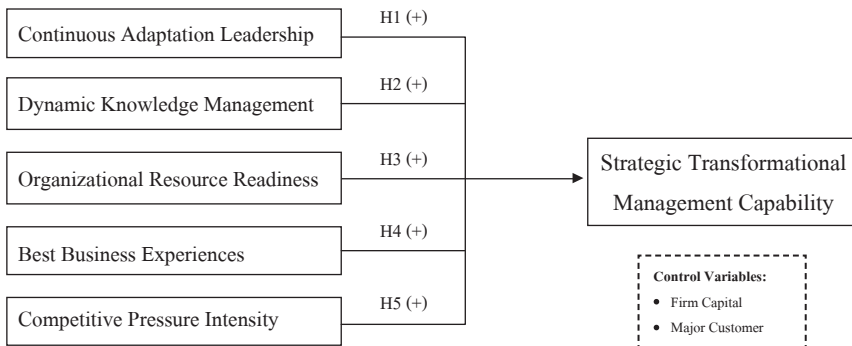


Figure 1 Conceptual Model

Antecedent factors of strategic organizational innovation capability

1. Continuous Adaptation Leadership refers to the ability of being the head who can administrates to consist in situations and continually follow changing situations at present and in the future (Termeer, Teisman, Nooteboom & Deelstra, 2013). Characteristics of adaptation leadership include giving freedom in working to employees, creativity, being the role model for employees and always motivating the employees. In addition, the leadership characteristics have an effect on transformational management, and the leaders also support strategic policy to make the organization better. In the field of leadership, researchers suggest that transformational leadership is especially effective during times of organizational change, because transformational leaders are able to reframe employees' perceptions of change to view it as an opportunity rather than threat (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Wang, Demerouti & Blanc, 2017). Accordingly, adaptation leadership must have a leader vision in changing. The most essential use of vision in organizations is that it leads to methods for attaining goals and objectives (Ozmen & Sumer, 2011). Therefore, it comes to the hypothesis as follows:

Hypothesis 1: The higher the continuous adaptation leadership is, the more likely that the firm will gain greater strategic transformational management capability.

2. Dynamic Knowledge Management refers to the ability to integrate learning obviously by sharing information between employees in order to have the effective performance (Piorkowski, Evans, Martin & Gao, 2013). Knowledge, as the basis of competition, is the most important factor, and the knowledge, innovations and technology and knowledge based companies, are known as the most important factor for survival (Meihami & Meihami, 2014). Knowledge management constitutes the basis of companies' capabilities construction, underlying the performance of organizational and management processes (Dow & Pallaschke, 2010). Consequently, knowledge management is the process which organizational performance is improved through better management of corporate knowledge. Its goal is to improve the management of internal knowledge processes so that all information required for corporate decisions can be made available and efficient in use (Meihami & Meihami, 2014). Thus, the hypothesis is proposed as follows:

Hypothesis 2: The higher the dynamic knowledge management is, the more likely that the firm will gain greater strategic transformational management capability.

3. Organizational Resource Readiness refers to the ability of budget allocation and technology investment, and it emphasizes the systematic improvement in employee knowledge which leads to better operational change (Sengupta, Yavas & Babakus, 2015). Resource readiness is one of the key factors for an organization to drive itself in transforming, including human resources, technologies, budgets and machines. These resources are tools for strategic management to improve the organization. Resources include all firm assets, capabilities, organizational processes, attributes, information, experiences, knowledge, and technology. Organizational resource readiness has been shared over the firm where capability to create new products, new services, and new processes will increase (Kratzer, Gemunden & Lettl, 2008). Hence, the hypothesis is proposed as follows:

Hypothesis 3: The higher the organizational resource readiness is, the more likely that the firm will gain greater strategic transformational management capability.

4. Best Business Experiences refers to gaining knowledge of individual performance which shows knowledge and competence in running businesses, and the good business

practices, brings about learning experiences and sets the direction of operation at present and in the future (Re & Rule, 2016; Tanriverdi & Veakatraman, 2005). Business experiences can have an impact on business development and operations (Tanriverdi & Venkatraman, 2005) and improve an owner's understanding of the role of strategy in business success. Therefore, greater experiences can enhance both strategic decision making and improve internal organization and procedures (Harris, Gibson & McDowell, 2014). Thus, the hypothesis is proposed as follows:

Hypothesis 4: The higher the best business experience is, the more likely that the firm will gain greater strategic transformational management capability.

5. Competitive Pressure Intensity refers to the higher level of contention pressure, and it affects a focus on an individual's ability, skills and consistency in the operational improvement of firm management (Mahapatra, Das & Narasimhan, 2012). For the intensive competition nowadays, all sizes of businesses have planned the strategy of working operation including solving problems in similar or different contexts (Panuwatpaisarn, 2016). Competitive intensity is regarded as a situation where a firm operates in markets that are characterized by a high number of manifestly competing organizations and limiting potential growth opportunities (Auh & Menguc, 2005). Due to today's competitive pressures, organizations must engage in activities that will generate high performance and a competitive advantage. Therefore, competitive pressure will push an organization to be adaptable with fast and uncertain change in business environment. The higher competitive pressure requires organizations to continually adapt to business environment change (Meutia & Ismail, 2015). Accordingly, the hypothesis is constructed as follows:

Hypothesis 5: The higher the competitive pressure intensity is, the more likely that the firm will gain greater strategic transformational management capability.

Strategic Transformational Management Capability

Strategic transformational management capability refers to the ability to think systematically in changing working methods to achieve a goal by creating skills, concepts and new working behaviors, and this ability applies technologies which have modern

innovations of management in the concept of flexible firms to make it apparel to change the environment (Garcés-Galdeano, García-Olaverri & Huerta, 2016; Stockport, 2000). Transformation management is one of those rare management approaches that construct the culture of particular worlds, enabling politicians, businessmen and civic activists to build integral institutions upon our own local soils, while taking an account of the wisdom of others (Bhengru, 2009). Transformation management can help make changes in organizations in such a way that 1) change processes are accelerated, which distinguishes it from classic approaches of organizational development, 2) the solutions identified are highly accepted within the social system of the organization concerned, which is different from the classic change management approach of consulting companies, and 3) at the same time, the “option for a change of pattern” such as fundamental changes becomes a real possibility (Prammer, 2009). Therefore, more importantly, the overall goal of transformation is not just to execute a defined change but to reinvent the organization and discover a new or revised business model based on a vision for the future (Ashkenas, 2015).

Control Variables. There were two control variables as follows:

Firm capital is measured as the money or assets on investment operation in a firm. According to Leiblein, Reuer & Dalsace (2002), large firms may also have greater market power or positional advantages comparing with their smaller rivals, and larger firms often have superior financial statuses.

Major customers are measured as firms that have increasingly embraced internationalization of their businesses, a process through which a firm moves from operating solely in its domestic marketplace to international markets (Andersen, 1993; Buckley & Casson, 1998; O' Farrell, Wood & Zheng, 1998).

Research Methods

The electronic and electrical appliance business in Thailand were selected as the sample in this study. The list of samples was obtained from the online database of the website (<http://www.dbd.go.th>) lists of the electronic and electrical appliances at business data warehouse, the Department of Business Development, Thailand, 2017. The data was

generated employing a key-informant survey design. A mailing questionnaire was used to collect data and 656 copies of questionnaire were sent to managing directors or managing partners who are key informants. The mail survey resulted in 175 returned mailing with 167 usable, 25.46% response rate. The testing of non-response bias is to investigate the responding results after the questionnaire was returned. The important reason for this procedure is to avoid a bias problem occurring between respondents and non-respondents. The results derived from the test revealed that there was no significant difference between early and late respondents as recommended by Armstrong & Overton (1977). The instrument was developed from strategic management literature review, and its validity and reliability was tested using a pre-test. Multiple regression analysis was used to improve all hypotheses testing. The dependent variables, independent variables and control variables were measured by using a five-point Likert scale as explained below.

Strategic transformational management capability is measured by operational planning, flexible organization, management innovation, business strategy, and managerial technology. This construct was developed by a new scale which includes a four-item scale.

Continuous adaptation leadership is measured by perceptions about the behaviors of leadership in the firm by supporting learning, changes, encouraging employee development and being the leaders who are adaptable to situations. The assessment of this construct was developed, based on its definition and literature review, including a four-item scale.

Dynamic knowledge management is measured by the firm's ability in good knowledge management, knowledge sharing between employees and supporting knowledge creation that associates with business success and with the capacity of adaptation of the company to the changing and challenging environments, where the threats can be turned into opportunities. This construct was developed by a new scale which includes four items.

Organizational resource readiness is measured by the degree of the completeness of the assets, technologies, knowledge or skills and modern systems that are necessary for the business processes. The assessment of this construct was developed, based on its definition and literature review, including a four-item scale.

Business experiences were measured by the degree of the outcomes of the process, reality of knowledge or wisdom of business that were observed, discovered, understood, and remembered as the knowledge gained of a person. This scale measurement was adapted from Dawes & Lee (1996), including a four-item scale.

Competitive pressure is measured by a four-item scale, and it is defined as that environmental diversity which consists of market diversity, amount of distinct products offered, client, competitor, and supplier diversification measured by the number of competitors that firms in diversity markets are potential to make good decisions and perceive market risks. This construct is adapted from Wang & Ahmed (2007).

The researcher used Cronbach's alpha to test the reliability of the measurement. Coefficient alpha indicates the degree of internal consistency among items in the questionnaires that should be greater than 0.70 (Nunnally & Berstein, 1994). In this research, convergent validity was tested by the factor loading, each construct should be greater than the 0.40 cut-off and all factors are statistically significant (Nunnally and Berstein, 1994). The results of testing reliability and validity are presented in Table 1.

This research employed the ordinary least squares (OLS) regression analysis to examine the hypothesized relationship provided in prior sessions. In order to understand the relationship, the equation was provided as follows.

$$\text{Equation STMC} = \alpha_1 + \beta_1 \text{CAL} + \beta_2 \text{DKM} + \beta_3 \text{ORR} + \beta_4 \text{BBE} + \beta_5 \text{CPI} + \epsilon_1$$

Table 1 Results of Validity and Reliability Testing

Variables	Factor Loading	Cronbach's Alpha
Continuous Adaptation Leadership (CAL)	0.745-0.938	0.827
Dynamic Knowledge Management (DKM)	0.741-0.919	0.750
Organizational Resource Readiness (ORR)	0.742-0.909	0.783
Best Business Experience (BBE)	0.798-0.919	0.774
Competitive Pressure Intensity (CPI)	0.854-0.919	0.790
Strategic Transformational Management Capability (STMC)	0.655-0.882	0.836

Results and Discussion

According to Table 2 all correlations are less than 0.80 and between 0.447 - 0.690, $p < 0.01$. In addition, the correlations suggest that the maximum value of VIF is 2.536, which is lower than the cut-off score of 10 (Hair, Black, Babin & Anderson, 2010). Thus, the results indicate no significant multicollinearity problem in this research.

Table 2 Descriptive Statistics and Correlation Matrix

	CAL	DKM	ORR	BBE	CPI	STMC
Mean	3.9820	3.9985	3.9910	4.0434	4.1482	4.1090
S.D.	0.52467	0.55935	0.59737	0.59300	0.57636	0.42221
CAL	1					
DKM	0.690***	1				
ORR	0.680***	0.675***	1			
BBE	0.660***	0.651***	0.632***	1		
CPI	0.525***	0.447***	0.542***	0.598***	1	
STMC	0.625***	0.670***	0.615***	0.640***	0.520***	1

** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

The results in Table 3 show that hypothesis 1 to 5 testing which presented the causal factors have affected strategic transformational management capability.

The results, firstly, indicate that the continuous adaptation leadership is positively significant in relation to strategic transformational management capability ($\beta_1 = 0.134$, $p < 0.10$). The management and organizational literatures have demonstrated time and time again that effective change management and leadership significantly influence the success implementation rates of organizational (Gilley, Dixon & Gilley, 2008; Jones, Jimmieson, & Griffiths, 2005; Standish Group, 2013). This is consistent with Kim & Kim (2014) who stated that organizational members have to have confidence in the leader. Transformational leadership reveals the value of the assigned tasks and imperatives. Transformational leaders assign tasks to members as well as expectations for success.

Thus, Hypothesis 1 is accepted.

Second, the finding from this research describes that dynamic knowledge management has a positive effect on strategic transformational management capability ($\beta_2 = 0.316$, $p < 0.01$). This is consistent with Senior (2002) who found that the importance of organizational change and its management is becoming a highly required managerial skill. Furthermore, knowledge management is a crucial activity for organizations. It enables them to identify, promote and spread best practices while improving productivity and other key performance measures (Martinsons, Davison & Huang, 2017). **Hypothesis 2 is accepted.**

Table 3 Results of Regression Analysis

Independent Variables	Dependent Variables
	Equation
Continuous Adaptation Leadership (CAL) H1	0.134* (0.083)
Dynamic Knowledge Management (DKM) H2	0.316*** (0.082)
Organizational Resource Readiness (ORR) H3	0.110 (0.081)
Best Business Experience (BBE) H4	0.195** (0.081)
Competitive Pressure Intensity (CPI) H5	0.127* (0.068)
Firm Capital (FC)	-0.088 (0.190)
Major Customer (MC)	0.065 (0.054)
Adjusted R2	0.546
Maximum VIF	2.536

Beta coefficients with standard in parenthesis. ***p<0.01, **p<0.05, * p<0.1

Another finding from this research indicates that organizational resource readiness has no effect on strategic transformational management capability ($\beta_3 = 0.110$, $p > 0.10$). Managing organizational resources are the ability to creatively think about allocation

of organizational resources (such as people, materials, assets and funding) to support the self-determination of Aboriginal people. It may involve in taking strategic risks with organizational resources, and incorporating ingenuity to maximize results. It includes the ability to look for improvements that do not require significant resourcing while committing to fully resourcing when indicated (Rail, 2017). **Thus, Hypothesis 3 is not accepted.**

Fourth, the finding from this research indicates that best business experiences have a positive influence upon strategic transformational management capability ($\beta_4 = 0.195, p < 0.05$). Therefore, working experience and knowledge implementation can be used to plan, set operation direction and improve organization policy which can be helpful for strategic management of the organization. This is also consistent with Roberts & McEvily (2005) who pointed out that the experience will supplement the capacity and the quality of a firm's impalpable resource, and also encourages more capable use of tangible resources such as when a firm has developed a routine to do the same, and heuristics for problem solving. **Therefore, Hypothesis 4 is accepted.**

Lastly, the finding asserts that competitive pressure intensity has a significant, positive effect on strategic transformational management capability ($\beta_5 = 0.127, p < 0.10$). Jones & Linderman (2014) indicated that the level of competitive intensity of an organization's external environment may play a pivotal role in the effectiveness of that organization's process management efforts. When competitive environment is very intensive, organizations have to transform operational strategy to be successful. **Hypothesis 5 is accepted.**

Conclusion and Contributions

This research investigated the relationships between the factors of strategic transformational management capability consist of continuous adaptation leadership, dynamic knowledge management, organizational resource readiness, best business experiences, and competitive pressure intensity and strategic transformational management capability. This research used the contingency theory to examine the relationships between various endogenous and exogenous contextual factors (Wallace & Kreutzfeldt, 1991).

It also extended the existing knowledge and literature of the key causal factors leading to strategic transformational management capability, and to provide empirical investigation. The antecedent variables of strategic transformational management capability are dynamic knowledge management and best business experiences which seem to be the most influential determinants of strategic transformational management capability. The creativity of a strategic transformational management capability upon on key organization factors include dynamic knowledge management and best business experiences. Furthermore, managing directors or managing partners should focus on good knowledge management that supports knowledge integration by emphasizing knowledge exchanging and sharing between the leaders and employees which will lead the firm to operate successfully. In addition, greater experiences can enhance both strategic decision making and improve internal organization and procedures (Harris, et al., 2014). If the organization places importance on competitive pressure such as customers, competitors and other factors which affect strategic transformational management capability, the organization will enhance organization's operation. Managing director or managing partner should analyze environment and event which will support strategy to be consistent with situation, and these will enhance the more effective operation of the firm. Moreover, the managing directors or managing partners should consider and adopt the business experience in order to plan and develop firm's strategies. However, there may be other external factors that have an influence on strategic transformational management capability beyond this research.

Suggestions

1. The future research should also consider other moderator variables that might have a greater influence on the relationship between strategic transformational management capability and organization such as organizational cultures and organizational innovations.
2. Future research should consider external factors that may affect strategic transformational management capability such as politics, economics, and technologies which may be important antecedents in the research.

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