THE UNIVERSITY OF NEWCASTLE

DOCTOR OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

Investigating the Recognition and Adoption of the Qualifications Framework in the Hong Kong Logistics Industry

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ABSTRACT

The logistics sector of Hong Kong is one of the four strong pillars upon which the Region’s income depends. These four economic pillars being of course the logistics industry, the financial services sector, the real estate industry and travel and tourism. The administration of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region introduced a Training Qualifications Framework to the sector in 2008 to initiate skill building tasks so as to enhance the sector’s level of international competitiveness. The framework comprises seven levels, with each one enriching the candidate with a new skill. However, there seems little empirical research examining stakeholder perceptions of how far the programme has benefited the logistics workers in Hong Kong and the sector itself.

The purpose of this study is to identify methods to facilitate the adoption of the Qualifications Framework in Hong Kong’s logistics industry by examining the perceptions of the Qualifications Framework of the industry’s primary stakeholders which are its employees and firms. The logistics industry is made up of a variety of different modalities: sea freight, airfreight, land transportation, international courier, IT, and the value-added services of third / fourth party logistics. Surveys comprising 27 Likert scale items and associated free-response questions were distributed to 212 logistics workers and managers, randomly chosen from 35 logistics sector companies which responded from the 200 chosen as a representative sample of the 2000 companies comprising the sector. ANOVA techniques were used to compare measures of central tendency in distributions of participant response. Levene’s test of homogeneity was used to test for the population significance of the sample output estimate.
The results of the investigation indicate that both employees and employers recognised the importance and advantages of the Qualifications Framework in the local logistics sector within the Hong Kong market. While employees identified the exact aspects through which they might build up their competency levels and help them to improve their employment positions over time, employers identified desirable professional features in new recruits and recognised the usefulness of the Qualifications Framework in identifying them. Ultimately, this could enhance the competitiveness of the Hong Kong logistics industry within the Pearl River Delta Region.