

APIRADEE METHAROM : CAPABILITIES AND NEW PRODUCT
PROACTIVE AND REACTIVE STRATEGIES OF THAI EXPORTERS. THESIS
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New product development has received much attention in academic and managerial literature over the last ten years because it was seen as an important source of competitive advantage. This study applied resource-based theory to the relationship between firms' capabilities and new product strategy. This study attempted to understand the role of capabilities towards new product proactive and reactive strategies of Thai exporters.

Four industries were chosen for study, which were canned food, garments, furniture, and gems/jewelry. Ministry of Commerce identified these industries as high potentiality of export. This study included three steps in data collection : preliminary interview, pilot study, and mail survey. Response rate was 15%. There were 243 usable questionnaires. Data analysis included factor analysis, analysis of variance and multiple regression analysis to test the hypotheses.

The results of this study partially supported the hypothesis that firms' capabilities were related to new product proactive and reactive strategies. Technical capability helped new products serve new customers' needs better. International marketing capability leaded to greater product newness to firm, such as new technology and design, and increased number of new product lines introduced.

Personnel capability leaded to more frequency of new product introduction with new design and better new product characteristics. Top management capability leaded to more frequency of new product introduction with new design, greater use of firm's own research and design, and lower use of imitation. The result of this research will help develop a better understanding of the relationship between firms' capabilities and new product strategies, and will be useful for export companies and public policy decisions in improving the new product strategies of Thai manufacturing exporters.

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