

FACTORS AFFECTING THE EXPORT PERFORMANCE OF SRI LANKAN RUBBER PRODUCTS

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Sri Lanka is a well-known, high quality natural rubber provider to the world market. There was an increase in rubber products exports, except in the year 2012 due to the economic crisis arose in the Europe. Again in the year 2013, an increase of the Sri Lankan rubber product export was recorded, but the growth didn't reach to the level of performance recorded in the past. On the other hand, growth of the export value was lower than its trade competitors. This low growth rate revealed that the Sri Lankan exporters need to focus on the export industry's behaviour to perform well in the export market. Thus, this paper is aimed to figure out the factors affecting the export performance of Sri Lankan rubber products and their implications. The research study was carried out by performing a comprehensive survey by focusing exclusively on Sri Lankan rubber product exporters and a questionnaire was used to get the feedback from randomly selected sample which comprises more than 50% of Sri Lankan rubber products exporters. Firm characteristics, marketing strategies, market characteristics, technical capabilities and investment portfolio were identified as the main factors affecting the export performance of Sri Lankan rubber products. Throughout the research, for the purpose of analysis, descriptive statistics were comprehensively used and a linear function for rubber products export performance was developed. Firm characteristic and technical capability were identified as significant factors which affect the overall export performance positively. Therefore, by enhancing firm's technological capabilities and gaining experience in the rubber product industry, Sri Lankan rubber product export performance can be improved to play a major role in the world rubber products industry.

Keywords: Export Market, Export Performance, Rubber Industry, Rubber Products, Sri Lanka