

SMART CONTAINERIZATION AS A DETERMINANT OF SUPPLY CHAIN VISIBILITY IN SEA FREIGHT CARGO: A CASE STUDY OF APPAREL INDUSTRY IN SRI LANKA

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The apparel sector draws considerable attention in the Sri Lankan economy as the main export market and it requires exclusive service towards buyers as fast delivery, secure and quality products with optimal planning and execution. As the majority of the apparel supply chain occurs through sea freight, hence, there is a significant demand for more visibility for the end-to-end movements. The concept of smart containerization has become popular with the prevailing problems and enhancing visibility, reliability and efficiency demands as a result of technological innovations. The study was conducted based on the apparel industry in Sri Lanka for understanding the concept and the related influencing factors in enhancing the performance of the supply chain process. The study followed the qualitative approach and case study strategy in methodology. In-depth interviews were conducted selecting six experienced professionals from the logistics and supply chain sector in the leading apparel export organizations in Sri Lanka. NVivo assisted in the transcript coding process while deriving the influencing factors. The study explored technological, financial and social avenues and influences as a contribution to the inbound and outbound logistics process of the apparel industry.

Keywords: Apparel industry, sea freight, smart containerization, supply chain management, supply chain visibility