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**THE ROLE OF KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER AND  
CULTURAL DISTANCE ON INTERNATIONAL JOINT  
VENTURE PERFORMANCE IN THAILAND**



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ON INTERNATIONAL JOINT VENTURE PERFORMANCE IN THAILAND**

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**UUM**  
**Universiti Utara Malaysia**

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## ABSTRACT

This study examines the relationship between antecedent variables (local partner's intent to learn, local partner's capacity to learn, local partner's experience, foreign partner's capacity to transfer, foreign partner's willingness to transfer, and knowledge transfer mechanism) and knowledge transfer on international joint venture (IJV) firms' performance in Thailand. It also aims to investigate how cultural distance moderates the impact of the relationship between knowledge transfer and IJV firms' performance. The investigation is based on resource-based view of firm theory, knowledge based view theory and organizational learning theory. The research framework was developed and eight hypotheses were posited and tested. This research employs quantitative method by using questionnaire survey. Survey questionnaires were mailed and hand-delivered to the respondents. Questionnaires were distributed to 476 IJV firms. 160 of the IJV firms responded to the survey, which gave a 33.61 percent response rate. The data were analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Science. The results revealed that each of the antecedent variables and knowledge transfer have relationship with IJV firms' performance. However, the moderating effect of cultural distance has no significant relationship between knowledge transfer and IJV firms' performance. The implications of the study offer into two main benefits: firstly, the contribution to the body of knowledge in the research context which encompass the key factors in knowledge transfer that should be considered and generalized; and secondly, the inputs to the practical level particularly in the IJV firms which indicate that top managers should understand knowledge transfer to achieve better performance in IJV firms. The present study also highlights the recommendation for future research as well as the limitations of the study.

**Keywords:** knowledge transfer, cultural distance, international joint venture firms' performance, Thailand

## ABSTRAK

Kajian ini mengkaji hubungan antara pemboleh ubah penentu (hasrat belajar rakan tempatan, keupayaan belajar rakan tempatan, pengalaman rakan tempatan, keupayaan memindahkan rakan asing, kemahuan memindahkan rakan asing, dan mekanisma pindahan pengetahuan) dan pindahan pengetahuan terhadap prestasi syarikat usaha sama antarabangsa. Kajian ini juga mengkaji bagaimana jarak budaya memberi kesan terhadap hubungan diantara pindahan pengetahuan dengan prestasi syarikat usaha sama antarabangsa. Kajian ini dilakukan berdasarkan teori firma berasaskan sumber, teori berasaskan pengetahuan dan teori pembelajaran organisasi. Kerangka kajian dibangunkan dan lapan hipotesis telah diuji. Kajian secara kuantitatif ini menggunakan kaedah borang soal selidik bagi mendapatkan data. Borang soal selidik dipos dan dihantar secara peribadi kepada responden yang melibatkan 476 buah syarikat usaha sama antarabangsa. Sebanyak 160 telah diterima kembali dan menjadikan peratusan maklum balas sebanyak 33.61 peratus. Data dianalisa dengan menggunakan *Statistical Package for Social Science*. Dapatan kajian menunjukkan bahawa setiap pemboleh ubah penentu dan pindahan pengetahuan mempunyai hubungan dengan prestasi syarikat usaha sama antarabangsa. Walau bagaimanapun, jarak budaya tidak mempunyai hubung kait yang signifikan dalam hubungan antara pindahan pengetahuan dan prestasi syarikat usaha sama antarabangsa. Kerangka kajian juga boleh digunakan dalam industri pembuatan lain dan industri perkhidmatan. Kajian ini memberikan dua faedah utama. Pertamanya ialah sumbangan kepada ilmu pengetahuan iaitu faktor-faktor penting dalam pindahan pengetahuan yang perlu diberi pertimbangan. Faedah yang kedua ialah dari segi praktikal di mana bagi pencapaian yang lebih baik, pihak pengurusan tertinggi perlu mempunyai pengetahuan tentang syarikat usaha sama antarabangsa dan pindahan pengetahuan. Kajian ini juga memberikan cadangan-cadangan untuk kajian pada masa hadapan dan juga kekangan kajian.

**Kata kunci:** pindahan pengetahuan, jarak budaya, prestasi syarikat usahasama antarabangsa, Thailand

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>TITLE</b>	
<b>PAGE.....</b>	<b>i</b>
<b>CERTIFICATION OF THESIS WORK.....</b>	<b>ii</b>
<b>PERMISSION TO USE.....</b>	<b>iv</b>
<b>ABSTRACT .....</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>ABSTRAK .....</b>	<b>vi</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....</b>	<b>vii</b>
<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS.....</b>	<b>viii</b>
<b>LIST OF TABLES .....</b>	<b>xvi</b>
<b>LIST OF FIGURES .....</b>	<b>xix</b>
<b>LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS .....</b>	<b>xx</b>
<b>CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Background of the Study.....	1
1.2 Problem Statement .....	7
1.3 Research Questions .....	12
1.4 Research Objectives .....	12
1.5 Significance of the Study .....	13
1.5.1 Practical Significance .....	13
1.5.2 Theoretical Significance .....	15
1.6 Definition of Key Terms .....	16
1.7 Scope of the Study.....	18
1.8 Organization of Remaining Chapters .....	18
1.9 Conclusion.....	19



<b>CHAPTER TWO LITERATURE REVIEW .....</b>	<b>20</b>
2.1 Introduction .....	20
2.2 International Joint Venture (IJV) .....	20
2.2.1 International Joint Venture in Thailand .....	24
2.2.2 Motivation of International Joint Ventures (IJVs).....	27
2.2.3 The Advantages of IJVs as a Foreign Market Entry.....	30
2.2.4 Factors Affecting the Success of the International Joint Ventures (IJVs). 32	
2.3 International Joint Venture (IJV) Firms' Performance .....	36
2.3.1 Performance Measurement .....	42
2.4 Knowledge transfer .....	45
2.4.1 Knowledge Transfer and IJV firms' Performance.....	51
2.5 Antecedent Variables and Knowledge transfer .....	55
2.5.1 Local Partner's Characteristics .....	58
2.5.1.1 Capacity to Learn and Knowledge Transfer .....	59
2.5.1.1.1 Definition of Capacity to Learn .....	59
2.5.1.1.2 Intent to Learn and Knowledge Transfer .....	62
2.5.1.1.3 Experience and Knowledge Transfer .....	65
2.5.2 Foreign Partner's Characteristics.....	69
2.5.2.1 Capacity to Transfer and Knowledge Transfer .....	70
2.5.2.2 Willingness to Transfer and Knowledge Transfer .....	71
2.5.3 Knowledge Transfer Mechanism and Knowledge Transfer .....	73
2.6 Cultural Distance, Knowledge Transfer and IJV Firms' Performance .....	77
2.6.1 Cultural Distance .....	78
2.6.2 Cultural Distance and Knowledge Transfer.....	80
2.6.3 Cultural Distance and IJV Firms' Performance.....	82

2.6.4 Cultural Distance, Knowledge Transfer and IJV Firms' performance .....	85
2.6.5 Cultural Distance as a Moderator .....	89
2.7 Underpinning Theories to explain the Antecedent Variables of International Joint Venture Firms' Performance .....	91
2.7.1 Resource-Based View Theory (RBV) .....	92
2.7.2 Knowledge-Based View Theory (KBV).....	98
2.7.3 Organizational Learning Theory.....	102
2.8 Gaps of study.....	105
2.9 Conclusion.....	115
<b>CHAPTER THREE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY .....</b>	<b>116</b>
3.1 Introduction .....	116
3.2 Research Framework and Hypotheses .....	116
3.2.1 Research Framework .....	116
3.2.2 Research Hypotheses .....	118
3.2.2.1 The Relationship between Knowledge Transfer and IJV Firms' Performance.....	119
3.2.2.2 The relationship between Local partner's capacity to learn and knowledge transfer .....	120
3.2.2.3 The relationship between Intent to learn and Knowledge transfer ...	120
3.2.2.4 The relationship between Experience and Knowledge transfer .....	121
3.2.2.5 The relationship between Capacity to transfer and Knowledge transfer .....	122
3.2.2.6 The relationship between Willingness to transfer and Knowledge transfer .....	123

3.2.2.7 The relationship between Knowledge transfer mechanism and Knowledge transfer .....	123
3.2.2.8 Cultural distance moderates on the relationship between Knowledge transfer and IJV firms' performance .....	124
3.3 Research Design .....	125
3.4 Population and Sampling.....	127
3.4.1 Population .....	127
3.4.2 Sampling Procedure .....	128
3.4.2.1 Sampling size .....	128
3.5 Questionnaire Design .....	129
3.6 Variables and Measures.....	132
3.6.1 Measures of Antecedent Variables .....	132
3.6.1.1 Local Partner's Capacity to Learn.....	133
3.6.1.2 Local partner's intent to learn .....	134
3.6.1.3 Local partner's experience .....	134
3.6.1.4 Foreign partner's capacity to transfer .....	135
3.6.1.5 Foreign partner's willingness to transfer .....	135
3.6.1.6 Knowledge transfer mechanism.....	136
3.6.2 Measures of Knowledge Transfer.....	137
3.6.3 Measures of Moderator Variable (Cultural Distance) .....	137
3.6.4 Measure of Dependent Variable (IJV Firms' Performance).....	138
3.7 Control variables .....	140
3.7.1 Age of firm.....	140
3.7.2 Size of firm (Number of employees) .....	141
3.7.3 Nationality .....	142

3.8 Data Collection.....	143
3.9 Preliminary test.....	145
3.9.1 Pre-Test Study.....	145
3.9.2 Validity and Reliability of Measurement.....	145
3.9.2.1 Validity.....	145
3.9.2.2 Reliability.....	146
3.10 Data Analysis Technique.....	148
3.11 Data Analysis Procedure .....	149
3.11.1 Descriptive Statistics.....	149
3.11.2 Test of Difference .....	150
3.11.3 Factor Analysis .....	150
3.11.4 Reliability Analysis .....	152
3.11.5 Correlation Analysis .....	153
3.11.6 Preparing Data for Multivariate Analysis.....	154
3.11.7 Multiple Regression Analysis.....	154
3.11.8 Linear Regression .....	155
3.11.9 Hierarchical Regression analysis.....	156
3.12 Summary .....	157
<b>CHAPTER FOUR RESEARCH FINDINGS .....</b>	<b>158</b>
4.1 Introduction .....	158
4.2 Response Rate .....	158
4.3 Profile of the Respondents .....	160
4.4 Missing Data.....	170
4.5 Non-Response Bias Test .....	171
4.6 Detecting Outliers.....	172

4.7 Checking for Multicollinearity .....	174
4.8 Normality Test.....	175
4.9 Goodness of Measures.....	178
4.9.1 Validity Test .....	178
4.9.1.1 Factor Analysis of Local Partner’s Characteristics.....	180
4.9.1.2 Factor Analysis for Foreign Partner’s Characteristics .....	181
4.9.1.3 Factor Analysis of Knowledge Transfer Mechanism .....	183
4.9.1.4 Factor Analysis for Knowledge Transfer.....	185
4.9.1.5 Factor Analysis for Cultural Distance.....	186
4.9.1.6 Factor Analysis for International Joint Venture Firms’ Performance.....	187
4.9.2 Reliability Analysis.....	187
4.10 Descriptive Statistics .....	188
4.11 Correlation and Hypothesis Testing.....	190
4.12 Independent Samples t -test.....	195
4.13 Multiple Regression Analysis .....	196
4.13.1 The Relationship between Knowledge Transfer and IJV firms’ Performance .....	197
4.13.2 The Relationship between Antecedent Variables and Knowledge Transfer .....	199
4.14 The Moderating Effects of Cultural Distance on the Relationship between Knowledge Transfer and IJV Firms’ Performance .....	200
4.15 Summary of Hypotheses Testing .....	204
4.16 Summary .....	205
4.17 Conclusion.....	206

<b>CHAPTER FIVE DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSION .....</b>	<b>207</b>
5.1 Introduction .....	207
5.2 Overview of the Study .....	207
5.3 Discussion .....	208
5.3.1 Knowledge Transfer and IJV Firms' Performance .....	209
5.3.2 Local Partner's Characteristics (Capacity to Learn, Intent to Learn and Experience) and Impact on Knowledge Transfer.....	214
5.3.3 Foreign Partner's Characteristics (Capacity to Transfer and Willingness to Transfer) regarding the Knowledge Transfer .....	221
5.3.4 Knowledge Transfer Mechanism regarding to Knowledge Transfer. ....	226
5.3.5 Cultural Distance Moderates the Impact on the relationship between Knowledge Transfer and IJV Firms' Performance in Thailand .....	229
5.4 Implications .....	233
5.4.1 Theoretical Implications .....	233
5.4.2 Practical Implications .....	236
5.4.3 Policy Implications .....	237
5.5 Limitations of this Study .....	239
5.6 Recommendation for Future Research .....	240
5.7 Conclusion .....	240
<b>REFERENCE.....</b>	<b>243</b>
<b>APPENDIX A .....</b>	<b>296</b>
<b>APPENDIX B .....</b>	<b>308</b>
<b>APPENDIX C .....</b>	<b>309</b>
<b>APPENDIX D .....</b>	<b>311</b>
<b>APPENDIX E .....</b>	<b>320</b>

<b>APPENDIX F</b> .....	<b>323</b>
<b>APPENDIX G</b> .....	<b>324</b>
<b>APPENDIX H</b> .....	<b>346</b>
<b>APPENDIX I</b> .....	<b>349</b>
<b>APPENDIX J</b> .....	<b>351</b>
<b>APPENDIX K</b> .....	<b>358</b>
<b>APPENDIX L</b> .....	<b>359</b>
<b>APPENDIX M</b> .....	<b>361</b>
<b>APPENDIX N</b> .....	<b>364</b>
<b>APPENDIX O</b> .....	<b>371</b>
<b>APPENDIX P</b> .....	<b>374</b>



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## LIST OF TABLES

<b>Table</b>	<b>Page</b>
Table 1.1 Foreign Investment Projects Approved by BOI .....	4
Table 2.1 Contributions of Foreign and Local partners to a international joint ventures .....	25
Table 2.2 Contributions of Foreign and Local partners to a international joint ventures .....	29
Table 2.3 Employment from foreign investment in Thailand by the Board of Investment (BOI) .....	31
Table 2.4 Summary of prior finding studies on IJV performance .....	34
Table 2.5 Summary on the factors affecting on IJV firms' performance .....	40
Table 2.6 Summary finding of factors that affect knowledge transfer .....	50
Table 3.1 Hypotheses .....	118
Table 3.2 The layout of the questionnaire.....	132
Table 3.3 Capacity to learn .....	133
Table 3.4 Intent to learn .....	134
Table 3.5 Experience.....	134
Table 3.6 Capacity to transfer .....	135
Table 3.7 Willingness to transfer .....	136
Table 3.8 Knowledge transfer mechanism items .....	136
Table 3.9 Knowledge transfer items .....	137
Table 3.10 Cultural distance items.....	138
Table 3.11 IJV Firms' performance .....	139
Table 3.12 Operationalization of Variables .....	139
Table 3.13 Reliability Analysis of the Pre-test study variables .....	148



Table 4.1 Summary of Response Rates .....	159
Table 4.2 A brief summary of demographics .....	160
Table 4.3 T-test results for non-response bias .....	172
Table 4.4 Outlier Detection and Treatment (Mahalanobis Distance) (N=160) .....	174
Table 4.5 Multicollinearity Test.....	175
Table 4.6 Normality test that provides information about the value of skewness and kurtosis for each variable .....	177
Table 4.7 Summary of factor analysis of local partner's characteristics items.....	181
Table 4.8 Summary of factor analysis for foreign partner's characteristics items.....	181
Table 4.9 Summary of factor analysis for foreign partner's characteristics items.....	182
Table 4.10 Summary of factor analysis for knowledge transfer mechanism items ...	183
Table 4.11 Summary of factor analysis for knowledge transfer mechanism items ....	184
Table 4.12 Summary of factor analysis for knowledge transfer items .....	185
Table 4.13 Summary of factor analysis for cultural distance items.....	186
Table 4.14 Summary of factor analysis for international joint venture firms' performance items .....	187
Table 4.15 Reliability Analysis of the study variable .....	188
Table 4.16 Descriptive statistics of all variables.....	189
Table 4.17 Correlation results for study variables .....	192
Table 4.18 The Differences in the nationality of the respondents between the Thai and Foreign manager.....	196
Table 4.19 Evaluating the relationship between knowledge transfer (KTU) and IJV firms' performance.....	198
Table 4.20 Evaluating the relation between antecedent variables and knowledge transfer .....	199

Table 4.21 Evaluating the relationship between knowledge transfer and six dimensions of antecedent variables.....	200
Table 4.22 The moderating effect of cultural distance on knowledge transfer to IJV firms' performance.....	203
Table 4.23 Summary of hypotheses testing .....	204



## LIST OF FIGURES

<b>Figure</b>	<b>Page</b>
Figure 2.1 Resourced-Based Theory Model .....	98
Figure 3.1 Conceptual Framework.....	116
Figure 4.1 Description of respondents based on position .....	163
Figure 4.2 Description of respondents based on year of firm's establishment.....	164
Figure 4.3 Description of firm size .....	165
Figure 4.4 Distribution of respondents based on the type of industry .....	166
Figure 4.5 Distribution of respondents based on motive .....	166
Figure 4.6 Distribution of respondents based on number of expatriates .....	167
Figure 4.7 Distribution of respondents based on gender .....	167
Figure 4.8 Distribution of respondents based on age.....	168
Figure 4.9 Distribution of respondents based on years of work .....	168
Figure 4.10 Distribution of respondents based on nationality of respondents.....	169
Figure 4.11 Distribution of respondents based on country of origin .....	169
Figure 4.12 Distribution of respondents based on ownership.....	170
Figure 4.13 The result of moderating effect.....	204

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
IJV	International Joint Venture
CL	Capacity to Learn
IL	Intent to Learn
EX	Experience
WT	Willingness to Transfer
CT	Capacity to Transfer
KT	Knowledge Transfer
KTU	Overall Knowledge Transfer
CD	Cultural Distance
ASEAN	Association of South East Asian Nations
BOI	Board of Investment of Thailand
NICs	Newly Industrialized Countries
RBV	Resource Based View Theory

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background of the Study

Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) is a major source of capital inflow into developing countries. Due to its relative immobility and concentration on high stake long-term profit, FDI has long been considered to be conducive to the economic growth of developing countries (Lee & Tan, 2006). FDI is becoming increasingly significant in economic and long-term growth; Southeast Asian countries benefit from foreign investments by gaining a competitive advantage in the global market. Foreign investment fosters new skills and technologies, creates new networking opportunities and increases management and marketing skills (Yue, Freeman, Bijit & Urata, 1999; Wisarn & Bunluasak, 1994; Amerasinghe & Modesto, 2010). Investments from foreign sources provide capital for growth and promote greater economic stability for Southeast Asian nations (Fan & Dickie, 2000). Moreover, Li and Liu, (2005); and Alfaro, Chanda, Ozan and Sayek (2004), posits that FDI affects economic growth and FDI has made possible not only accesses to large volumes of capital resources and foreign exchange, but also access to technology, managerial expertise, marketing skills and marketing networks.

According to Borensztein, De Gregorio and Lee (1998), FDI results in technology diffusion necessary for economic growth through a process of 'capital deepening'. FDI provides capital for continuing and creating new commercial or industrial activity, when there is a reduction in capital from other sources (Noorbakhsh, Paloni &

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