RESEARCH ON THE DEVELOPMENT STATUS AND COMPETITIVENESS OF THE LOGISTICS INDUSTRY — A CASE STUDY OF SHANDONG PROVINCE

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ABSTRACT

With the continuous development of transportation, the logistics industry is gaining momentum and receiving extremely high attention. Many companies have been involved in the logistics business, increasing competition between logistics enterprises. How to ensure the competitiveness of logistics enterprises and how to further develop them better is the main problem now. Using a qualitative research method, this paper aimed at the current competitive situation of logistics enterprises in Shandong, and finding ways to improve the competitiveness. This paper systematically reviewed relevant literature in recent years, and summarized the environmental factors for the development of logistics enterprises in China and the factors that affect the competitiveness of the logistics industry in Shandong Province. By applying Porter's five forces model, from the five competitive forces of bargaining power of logistics industry and suppliers, bargaining power of logistics purchasers, between peer competition, the threat of new entrants and the threat of substitutes as the entry point, the competitive structure of the logistics industry market was analyzed, proved that the logistics industry does need to ensure its own competitiveness among itself and make suggestions to enhance the competitiveness of logistics enterprises. The research of this paper provided a reference for logistics enterprises to recognize their own strengths and weaknesses, clarify the direction of enterprise development, and consolidate their competitive advantages.

Keywords: logistics industry, competitiveness, Porter's five forces model

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DECLARATION

I, Xu xiaoyu, hereby certify that the work embodied in this independent study entitled "RESEARCH ON THE DEVELOPMENT STATUS AND COMPETITIVENESS OF THE LOGISTICS INDUSTRY A CASE STUDY OF SHANDONG PROVINCF" is result of original research and has not been submitted for a higher degree to any other university or institution.

许晓宇

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1. Introduction

1.1 Research Background

Logistics activities have existed in ancient China, but the concept of logistics did not exist at that time. Xunzi's "things go smoothly", the construction of the Grand Canal in ancient China, the "dart board" and the "horse gang", all illustrate the existence of logistics activities in Chinese history (Liu, 2022).The term logistics began to be widely used until the 1980s with the continued interest of academia and business. the 1990s was a period of growth for the logistics industry in China. During this period, some multinational companies expanded their operations in China and spread advanced logistics concepts to Chinese companies. Tri-capital logistics companies emerged in China and started to develop towards large integrated logistics companies (Dai, & Yang, 2019).

Entering the 21st century, as road logistics compared with other logistics, door-to-door direct transportation, fast delivery, less intermediate links, less inventory, loading and unloading packaging, and high loss of goods, so countries around the world are actively expanding road networks, improving the quality of roads, building roads, and improving the level of road management (Men, 2022). With the continuous construction of road traffic, China's logistics industry has ushered in a new period of comprehensive and rapid development. In this process, people's cognition and research on logistics are also being comprehensively deepened, and logistics models are being innovated (Wang, 2022).

In recent years, although the total amount of China's logistics industry is developing at a fast pace, but the level of development of enterprises in the industry varies, most of the local logistics service providers can only provide simple logistics services, to provide large-scale, intensive, integrated logistics services of modern logistics enterprises less (Guo, 2020).

At present, the competition in China's logistics industry presents a "three-legged" pattern: First, the logistics enterprises transformed by traditional state-owned enterprises, such as China Post Logistics, China Storage and Transportation, etc., most of which dominate the market through heavy asset investment; Second, the emerging private logistics enterprises, such as Xinning Logistics, market share is rising fast; Third, foreign logistics enterprises The third is the foreign-owned logistics enterprises, such as Dansha Zhongfu, Sink, etc., which have larger international networks and operation scale and occupy a higher market share (Chen, 2018).

1.2 Research Problems

With the continuous development of China's transportation industry and the further opening of the market, the logistics market threshold is low and other reasons, the number of logistics enterprises has increased unprecedentedly (Wang, 2022). Intensified competition among logistics enterprises is not only caused by the international logistics companies using their international popularity and strong corporate strength to enter the logistics market in China, another major cause is the competition generated by Chinese logistics companies to compete for the compressed market share and other related industries are also eyeing the logistics industry and intend to enter the logistics market (Wei, 2015). In the face of such fierce competition, resulting in the transition of the logistics industry from the era of profiteering to the era of marginal profits, the development of the logistics industry has also entered a bottleneck stage.

Therefore, in such a competitive environment, China’s logistics enterprises how to ensure their competitiveness and how to better promote the further development of logistics enterprises?

1.3 Objective of the study

(1) Through the analysis of the competitive structure of logistics enterprises, it provides a basis for industry organizations and the government to formulate appropriate policies for logistics enterprises.

(2) It is hoped that the results of the analysis will enable logistics enterprises to recognize their strengths and weaknesses, clarify the direction of their development, and consolidate their competitive advantages.

(3) Suggestions for improving the competitiveness of the logistics industry are proposed to help logistics enterprises gain an advantageous position in the market in the long run.

1.4 Scope of the study

This paper first describes the background of Shandong logistics industry, based on a simple analysis of the current development of China's logistics industry, the paper applies Porter's five forces model to analyze the competitive structure of Shandong logistics market from the five competitive forces of bargaining power of express enterprises and suppliers and demand side, competition among peers, new entrants and threat of substitutes as the entry point. Finally, the ways and strategies for the logistics industry to improve its competitiveness are proposed.

1.5 Research Significance

By reviewing and studying the literature related to the competitiveness of logistics enterprises and the application of Porter's five forces model, we find that most of the scholars' research on Porter's five forces model still remains to the extent of using the model to analyze the competitiveness of industries, and only a few scholars have explored the real value of the five competitive forces in the five forces model through the interpretation of the five forces model, and few scholars have applied Porter's five forces model to analyze the logistics industry. Therefore, this paper through the Porter five-force model, in-depth analysis of the competitiveness of China's logistics enterprises, to find ways to improve the competitiveness of Chinese logistics enterprises on this basis. so this paper has important theoretical research significance.

2. Literature Reviews

2.1 China's corporate logistics environment

(1) Political environment.

Recently, the international political situation is confusing, and the whole international situation is complicated after "9/11", with a series of retaliation and anti-retaliation actions, and local conflicts intensified in the Middle East, South America and Southeast Asia. Compared with the 1997 financial crisis in Southeast Asia, the impact of 9/11 is global and medium to long-term. Although the pace of world economic integration has slowed down, it is also moving in a positive direction （He）. In contrast to the international environment, the current political situation in China is stable, the theory of "Three Represents" represented by Comrade Jiang Zemin is widely supported by the Party Central Committee, and China's hindrance and strength in the international arena are increasing. These factors have laid a good foundation for the macroeconomic background of the Chinese economy and the micro-progress environment for enterprises. The hosting of the Olympic Games, the World Expo and China's accession to the WTO are all events that are driving China's progress from a political and economic perspective.

(2) Economic environment. First, the impact of WTO accession on China's logistics industry. In the face of the threat of China's accession to the WTO to liberalize the logistics market, Chinese enterprises have accelerated the steps to seize the market. In particular, listed companies have entered the logistics industry, and Chinese enterprises have made a certain breakthrough in terms of enterprise scale and technology level (Wang, Lu, & Liu, 2022). But at the same time, it should also be seen that most of China's logistics enterprises for the original warehouse, transport enterprises transformed into, business is mostly limited to the traditional scope, low mechanization, single mode of transport (almost no multimodal business), measurement equipment and computer network and management software lack, small scale, less market share, less high-quality talent, weak financing capacity, single structure, unstable sources of goods, less service functions, weak competitiveness. Weak competitiveness. And in the handling of goods, allocation, the development of transport plans and the actual operation of asset management, but also the lack of effective and efficient operation guarantee. Secondly, the foreign enterprise posture. Due to policy restrictions, foreign investment is still mainly limited to logistics infrastructure, through sole proprietorship, joint ventures, cooperation, involved in barges, inland trucks, warehouse yards, terminal companies, freight forwarders and even air cargo (Liu, 2022). In addition, the main reason for foreign investors to enter China's logistics industry is not solely because of the business opportunities that exist in the transportation market, its main purpose is to provide distribution and transportation services for foreign goods entering the Chinese market, in order to ensure the efficiency of foreign circulation in the Chinese market, thus ensuring and improving its competitiveness in the world market.

2.2 The competitiveness of Shandong enterprise logistics

The implementation plan of promoting the deep integration and innovative development of the logistics industry manufacturing industry clearly proposes that by 2025, exploring the establishment of a model of integration and development of manufacturing and logistics industry in line with China's national conditions. Today, the head social logistics enterprises and manufacturing enterprises have joined hands to enter the development stage of deep integration, around the needs of manufacturing enterprises, from the perspective of the whole supply chain to explore the upgrade path. Shandong is a large manufacturing province, especially the intelligent manufacturing logistics demand for the supply chain Lu enterprises provide important support, for logistics enterprises, to create an integrated supply chain integrated service platform, become the best choice for manufacturing enterprise strategy, is a feasible path to improve their competitiveness (Wang, & Zhou, 2022).

From the macroscopic perspective of the province's logistics industry, the task of reducing costs, increasing efficiency and improving quality is still daunting. Among them, the integration of logistics to promote industrial development is still weak. Ge Jintian said, "logistics and regional economic development is not high enough match and synergy, industry intensification, scale level to be improved." "Fourteenth Five-Year" period, Shandong aimed at "logistics +" industry, logistics and petrochemical, metal metallurgy, trade circulation, agricultural products and other advantageous industries to accelerate the integration, to promote advanced manufacturing, modern services, modern efficient agricultural development of new advantages Gradually appear (Wang, Lu, & Liu, 2022).

2.3 Introduction to Porter's Five Forces Model

Miehael Porter's Five Forces Mode, also known as Porter's Competition Model, was proposed by Michael Porter, a professor at Harvard Business School, and is used to analyze the competitive characteristics of a company's industry. He believes that competition in an industry is more than just competing with existing competitors, but there are five basic competitive forces, Bargaining power of suppliers , bargaining power of purchasers, peer competition, threat of new entry, and threat of substitution (Xie, & Ge, 2015). The competitive situation of an industry depends on a combination of these five basic competitive forces, which determine the profitability of the firms in the industry and the ultimate flow of capital, ultimately determining the profitability and even the viability of each firm. According to Michael Porter, these five forces can explain the laws of competition in any industry, whether China or international, and regardless of the product or service offered. Porter's Five Forces model brings together most of the factors that affect a firm's competitiveness in a simple model that can be applied to analyze the competitive situation in an industry. The Porter's Five Forces model makes it possible to identify the sources of competitive influences in an industry. By clarifying the five main sources of the key influencing factors of business competitiveness, this paper can evaluate these five forces based on the identification of the key factors and finally propose a feasible development strategy. Since different industries and enterprises face different competitive environments, the selection of influencing factors and their importance will change with different enterprises.

1. Bargaining power of suppliers.

Suppliers mainly affect the profitability and product competitiveness of existing enterprises in the industry through their ability to increase the price of input factors and reduce the quality of unit value (Huang,2020). The strength of the supplier power mainly depends on what input elements they provide to the buyer, when the value of the input elements provided by the supplier constitutes a larger proportion of the total cost of the buyer's product. When it is very important to the production process of the buyer's product or seriously affects the quality of the buyer's product, the potential bargaining power of the supplier to the buyer is greatly enhanced.

2. Bargaining power of purchasers.

The purchasers influences the profitability of existing firms in the industry mainly through their ability to lower prices and demand higher quality of products or service (Han, 2014).

3. Threat of new entrants.

New entrants, while bringing new production capacity and new resources to the industry, will want to win a place in a market that has been carved up by existing players (Wu, & Wang,2022). This may lead to competition for raw materials and market share with existing enterprises, which will eventually lead to lower profitability of existing enterprises in the industry, and in serious cases may endanger the survival of these enterprises. In short, the probability of a new enterprise entering an industry depends on the relative size of the entrant's subjective estimation of the potential benefits, the costs and the risks.

4. The threat of substitutes.

Two enterprises in the same industry or different industries may compete with each other because the products they produce are substitutes for each other, and this competition from substitutes will affect the competitive strategy of existing enterprises in the industry in various forms (Zhuang, 2012).

5. Competition from existing competitors in the industry.

Companies in most industries, the interests of each other are closely linked, As a part of the enterprise's overall strategy, the goal of each enterprise's competitive strategy is to make its own enterprise obtain the advantage relative to the competitors, so, in the implementation will inevitably produce conflict and confrontation phenomenon, these conflict and confrontation constitute the competition between existing enterprises (Huo, 2017).

3. Research Methodology

This paper adopts qualitative research methods, literature research and Porter's five Forces to conduct case analysis.

This study uses Chinese databases such as China Knowledge Network, Wanfang Microblog, Google Academic Foreign Language Database, and Baidu Academic to collect the theoretical basis and literature used in this study. Through Porter's five forces model, this paper deeply analyzes the competitiveness situation of China's logistics enterprises, and on this basis, looks for ways to improve the competitiveness of Chinese logistics enterprises and proposes ways and strategies for the logistics industry to improve its own competitiveness.

4. Result of the Study

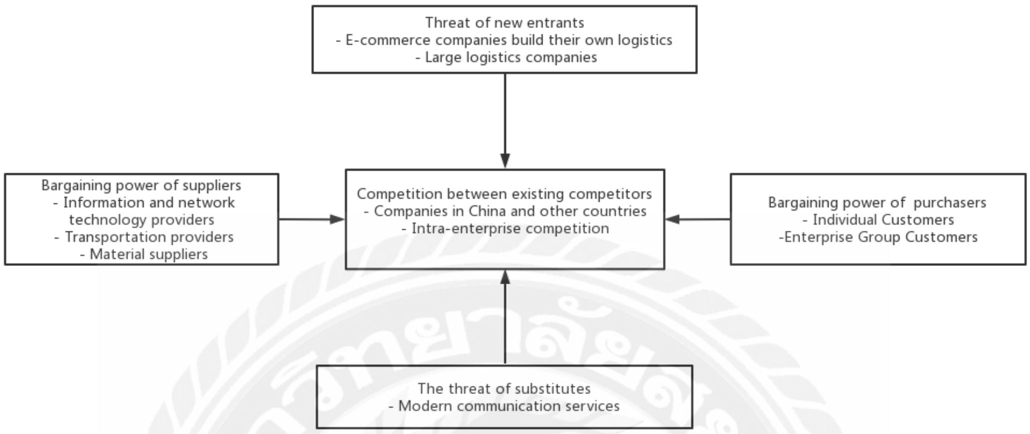

Figure 4.1 Model used as a guideline for this research

1. Bargaining power of logistics industry and suppliers.

(1) Information, network technology provider.

As customers demand more and more safety, timeliness and personalization of logistics services, the development of the logistics industry can no longer rely on expanding the dispatch team to meet demand, but must rely on information technology such as the Internet to improve business efficiency (Zhao,2022).The logistics industry is changing from labor-intensive to capital, technology and management-intensive, so the logistics industry is in urgent need of information and network technology providers to provide network technology upgrade solutions, and the network and other information technology market is currently in an oversupply stage, with the logistics industry at a disadvantage.

(2) Transport providers.

In the process of operation of logistics enterprises, they must rely on means of transportation in the transportation process. Aircraft suppliers required for transportation, which have a certain monopoly nature and have a strong voice (Huang,2020). The bargaining power of logistics enterprises and suppliers is related to the number of enterprise purchases, enterprises partially use leased vehicles for transportation, or common distribution methods between enterprises, and the use of trucks with a long service life, so logistics enterprises purchase cars with low frequency and low volume, there is currently no special market to meet the type of car needed in the transport process of logistics enterprises, which need car suppliers to design special transport vehicles for them The right to speak is relatively weak. If the company buys its own aircraft and other equipment, the cost is quite high, which is unrealistic for small enterprises.

(3) Material providers.

The materials of logistics enterprises are mainly packaging materials. Although the unit price of packaging materials is low, the demand for packaging materials of logistics enterprises is great, and the proportion of operating costs is large. The bargaining power of logistics enterprises and material providers is mainly related to the amount of purchased materials, the larger the purchase volume, the stronger the bargaining power with material suppliers.

2. Bargaining power of logistics purchasers.

For customers, price and service quality are their main concerns. The price of private logistics is adjusted quickly in the case of fierce market competition. For retail customers, the number of single demand is small, the frequency is low, is the recipient of express prices, and its bargaining power is not high. With the development of the economy, the demand for logistics business in some industries is growing, using its proportion is increasing, such as e-commerce, pharmaceutical, automotive parts and other industries, due to the increase in the number of logistics service providers, these business customers can be more selective, and bargaining power is increasing. Currently, the logistics industry's largest customers are e-commerce enterprises, most orders from e-commerce sites, especially Taobao, Jingdong and other e-commerce enterprises. Due to the huge scale of their orders, the price is often very low, only 40% to 50% of the profit of ordinary logistics, and e-commerce is in the upstream of the industry chain, has a strong control over the logistics industry, so that the company's profit margin is reduced (Han,2014).

3. The threat of new entrants.

At the early stage of the development of the logistics industry, due to the high profits and low entry threshold of the logistics industry, making many enterprises can enter the logistics market without reaching the registered capital as well as the business license (Wu, & Wang,2022). The threat of new entrants is that they enter the market will seize the limited market resources, either supplier resources or demand-side resources, which will eventually lead to a decline in the profit level of the existing companies in the market. In general, the key factor influencing the size of the threat of new entrants is the industry entry barriers, high barriers to entry, the threat of new entrants to the express industry is small. Industry entry barriers are additional costs that existing companies do not need to bear and new entrants must bear to enter an industry, such as economies of scale, capital requirements, and relevant government laws and regulations (Yi, & Bing, 2003). Since the country introduced the new "Postal Law" and "Express Business License Management Measures" in 2009, the barriers to entry in the logistics industry have increased to some extent (Dai, & Chen, 2022). Some large e-commerce companies entered the logistics market. At present, Jingdong, Suning, No.1 store, Amazon, etc. have started to build their own logistics system. So far more than 70% of Jingdong Mall's business is self-delivery, in the holiday peak, Jingdong can also be the first time to send goods to customers, belong to the case of doing a good job, received a lot of attention.

4. The threat of substitutes.

A substitute is a product for which the demand for another product increases due to an increase in the price of one product. For logistics business customers, it is difficult to create substitution as they need companies to provide them with services to move goods from one place to another and require information or physical goods to be delivered to the destination as fast as possible (Zhuang, 2012). At present, with the development of modern information technology, some services in communication services have a certain substitution effect on the logistics industry, and information products such as telephone and e-mail have a certain influence on the letter type business of logistics enterprises.

5. between peer competition.

At present, there are three major market players in China's logistics industry, which are divided into foreign-owned logistics, state-owned logistics and private logistics according to the composition of the enterprises. Foreign enterprises are mainly the four foreign giant enterprises represented by UPS, DHL, FedEx and TNT; state-owned enterprises mainly include EMS, China Railway, Civil Aviation, etc.; the main representatives of private enterprises are SF Express, Shentong and Yuantong, etc. State-owned enterprises have a complete network of logistics in China, which can reach most of the regions in the country, which cannot be reached by private logistics companies in China. Capital logistics companies are strong, have sufficient capital and advanced technology, and are strong competitors of Chinese strong competitors of private logistics companies (Zhuang, 2012). Although their network in China is not perfect, but it is gradually improving. Competition between peers in the logistics industry is becoming increasingly fierce, in order to seize market share, the price war has been the main theme of competition between peers, the current logistics industry has shown a micro-profit situation.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

This paper analyzes the competitive structure of the logistics market by applying Porter's five forces competition model. From the above analysis, we can see that the logistics industry is currently in a relatively competitive environment. 1）Shandong logistics industry has weak bargaining power with its suppliers and buyers; 2) With the introduction of the corresponding national policies, as well as the existence of economies of scale barriers and financial barriers in the logistics industry market, making the threat of new entrants to the logistics industry is reduced; 3) Competition between the same industry has been a problem for a long time, in order to compete for market share, the mode of reducing profits is not a long-term solution after all; 4) For the threat of substitutes, the current threat of substitutes to the logistics industry is small, so the development prospect is still very good.

5.1 Improve the competitive advantage of logistics enterprises

1. Provide "high quality service" to enhance the competitiveness of enterprises.

Logistics industry belongs to the service industry, but nowadays the service level of logistics enterprises has become a problem for enterprise development, and the service complaint rate remains high. Logistics enterprises must do a good job in the basic business services in order to provide more value-added services to customers, such as improving logistics speed, expanding network coverage, upgrading infrastructure, training logistics personnel to reduce the problem of complaints such as delay, loss and damage of express delivery (Dong,2015). The final link of logistics enterprises is that they can directly contact the market customers and should have an agile response to the customers' needs. Only by clearly understanding the customers' needs can they better provide more personalized services to the customers.

2. To "market segmentation, professional operation" to enhance the competitiveness of enterprises.

Logistics enterprises continue to price war is mainly due to the homogeneous competition formed by the single logistics products. Therefore, without the formation of differentiation and specialization of logistics market competition pattern, price war is inevitable. In the market segmentation, professional operation, SF Express has a certain role as an example, its entry into the express logistics since the positioning of the high-end market, in the "online shopping" market also occupies the high-end market (Huo, 2017). Therefore, China's logistics enterprises should, according to their own strength, target the logistics market, segment the target market, find their own positioning, and take different marketing tools for the characteristics of different customers. Market segmentation can be divided into high-end customers, terminal customers and low-end customers according to the customers' price sensitivity; it can also be divided into large customers, ordinary customers and general customers according to the size of business volume, etc.

3. "Merger and reorganization" to enhance the competitiveness of enterprises.

In 2011, the State Post Bureau issued the document "Opinions on Promoting the Merger and Reorganization of Logistics Enterprises" to promote the mergers and reorganization of the logistics industry (Chen, 2018). Mergers and acquisitions (M&A) refers to the act of an enterprise acquiring the operational control and ownership of all or part of the assets of another independent enterprise or enterprises at a certain consideration and cost. Through mergers and acquisitions, on the one hand, the number of express enterprises is reduced, the market concentration is increased and potential competitors are effectively fended off, on the other hand, for logistics enterprises, Chinese logistics enterprises are facing a more severe test as the market competition among logistics enterprises becomes more and more intense (Dong, 2015). For Shunfeng and other large logistics enterprises, they can increase their network coverage by merging and acquiring small logistics enterprises; for small logistics enterprises, in such a competitive environment, it is difficult to survive by fighting alone. The M&A alliance is different from its own gradual development mode after a long period of time, it will bring a leap forward to the enterprise, which is a shortcut to the rapid expansion of the enterprise, and is also the performance and result of the integration of resources in the logistics market.

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