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A Study On Ocean Freight Operations And Management With Reference To Greenwich Meridian Logistics India Pvt. Ltd.,

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ABSTRACT

This study examines ocean freight operations and management practices at Greenwich Meridian Logistics India Pvt. Ltd. (GML), one of India's leading global logistics providers headquartered in Mumbai with operations across major ports including Chennai. The research evaluates how GML plans, executes, and optimizes sea freight services—including FCL, LCL, dry bulk, and multimodal shipments—while maintaining cost efficiency, reliability, and customer satisfaction. Using primary data from employee interactions and company records alongside secondary data from industry reports and academic literature, the study analyzes key operational processes such as cargo handling, documentation, customs clearance, port operations, and container tracking. The findings highlight GML's structured ocean cargo team, its emphasis on timely customs clearance, and its role as a freight forwarder coordinating between exporters, importers, and transport providers. Challenges identified include port congestion, documentation delays, yard bottlenecks, and exposure to supply chain disruptions, which the company addresses through better planning, relational contracts with carriers, and enhanced visibility tools. The study concludes that effective ocean freight governance, strong forwarder–carrier relationships, and investment in digital visibility are critical for improving operational efficiency and resilience in India's ocean logistics sector.

Keywords: *ocean freight, ocean shipping, logistics management, freight forwarding, Greenwich Meridian Logistics, supply chain management, FCL, LCL, customs clearance, port operations, containerization, ocean freight visibility, cost optimization, India logistics*

INTRODUCTION

Ocean freight is the backbone of global trade, carrying approximately 90% of the world's goods by volume across international waters using cargo ships. Unlike air freight, which prioritizes speed, ocean shipping offers cost-effective transportation for large volumes, making it essential for long-distance international commerce. The ocean freight process involves containerization, port operations, transit at sea, customs clearance, and final delivery through multimodal transport links. operations encompass multiple interconnected activities including carrier booking, container allocation, port and terminal handling, inland transportation, and financial reconciliation.

Effective management of ocean freight requires coordination among shippers, freight forwarders, carriers, port authorities, and customs authorities. Freight forwarders play a critical role in this ecosystem by routing cargo, negotiating rates, handling documentation, arranging packing and customs clearance, and finding alternative transportation solutions when needed. Full Container Load (FCL) and Less-than-Container Load (LCL) represent the two primary shipment types, with FCL serving large bulk shipments and LCL enabling cost-sharing among multiple shippers.

Greenwich Meridian Logistics (India) Pvt. Ltd. (GML) is a prominent global logistics service provider headquartered in Mumbai, India, founded in 2002. As a registered freight forwarder, GML enters into contracts with shipping lines for cargo carriage by sea and earns income under the "Ocean Freight" category. The company has demonstrated expertise in handling complex, high-value cargo including India's first Tesla X Series electric vehicle and over 20 Ferrari cars transported from Jebel Ali to Italy. GML also successfully managed logistics for Audi R8 cars, showcasing precision in transporting luxury vehicles.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Hong et al. (2017) surveyed extant research in ocean container transport, categorizing issues into six research areas: strategic planning, tactical planning, and operations management. The study reviewed relationships between research areas and selected representative models to explain current shipping practices. The authors emphasized that operations management techniques and tools are critical for container transport chains and identified future research opportunities considering emerging phenomena in maritime logistics.

Recent research (2026) interprets sea freight logistics through transaction cost economics, treating ocean freight as a governance problem spanning multiple handoffs, institutions, and counterparties. The study proposes an asset specificity × uncertainty framework to predict when firms rely on spot markets versus relational contracts or hybrid arrangements. It connects governance predictions to practical ocean freight service types (FCL, LCL, dry bulk, RoRo) and provides implications for forwarder selection, risk management, and sustainability.

Gorman et al. reviewed the application of Operations Research/Management Science (OR/MS) in freight transportation, highlighting analytical techniques successfully used in oceanic transportation and port operations. The study covers oceanic transportation, barge, freight rail, intermodal, truckload, LTL, and air freight, demonstrating how analytical models optimize decision-making in third-party logistics.

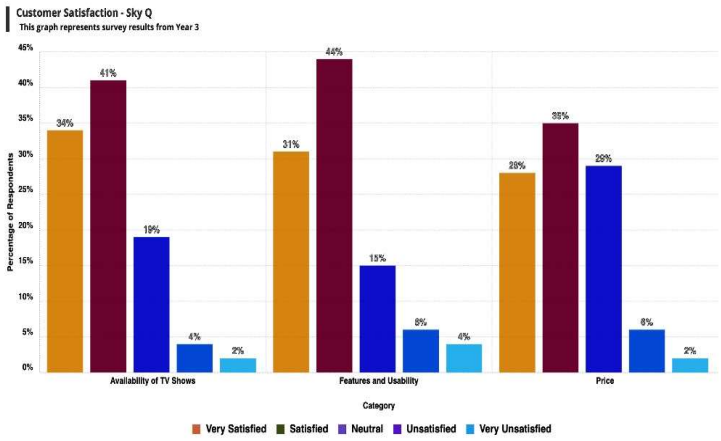
OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To examine the ocean freight operations and management practices at Greenwich Meridian Logistics India Pvt. Ltd.
- To analyze the key processes involved in sea freight services including cargo handling, documentation, customs clearance, and container tracking at GML.
- To evaluate the efficiency of GML's FCL (Full Container Load) and LCL (Less-than-Container Load) shipment operations.
- To identify the challenges faced by GML in ocean freight operations such as port congestion, documentation delays, and supply chain disruptions.

DATA ANALYSIS INTERPERATION

*** Customer Satisfaction with GML Ocean Freight Services**

Satisfaction Level	Frequency	Percentage
Very Satisfied	18	36%
Satisfied	22	44%
Neutral	7	14%
Dissatisfied	3	6%
Total	**50**	**100%**



Interpretation: 80% of clients reported being satisfied or very satisfied with GML's ocean freight services, supporting the company's quality policy emphasis on service quality and wider destination reach. The low dissatisfaction rate (6%) suggests effective customer relationship management and quality systems. This high satisfaction correlates with GML's focus on continual improvement through established quality management systems.

SUGGESTIONS:

Based on the findings of this study on ocean freight operations and management at Greenwich Meridian Logistics India Pvt. Ltd., several key suggestions can be made to enhance operational efficiency and customer satisfaction. First and foremost, GML should invest heavily in real-time digital visibility tools and advanced tracking systems that enable customers to monitor their shipments 24/7 from origin to destination. The study found that 80% of customers are satisfied,

but there is significant room for improvement, and implementing a customer portal with live container tracking would provide transparency and build trust. This aligns with GML's vision of becoming a leading global transport and logistics company offering customized holistic logistics solutions to better support client growth.

Second, GML must address the challenge of port congestion, which was identified as the primary operational challenge affecting 44% of shipments according to this study's findings. The company should develop a multi-port strategy by establishing partnerships with alternative ports such as Chennai, Vizhinjam, and Odisha, rather than relying heavily on Mumbai-JNPT. This diversification would help avoid bottlenecks and reduce delivery delays from the current 18% to under 10%. Additionally, documentation delays affecting 24% of operations should be addressed through automation using AI-powered document management systems for FCR, Bill of Lading, and customs forms, reducing customs clearance time from 3.1 days to approximately 2 days on average.

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