

**THE IMPACT OF PERCEIVED VALUE AND TRUST ON THE INTENTION TO  
USE OUTSOURCED LOGISTICS SERVICES IN VIETNAM****Tran Duc Thanh**

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**ABSTRACT**

In an era of increasing operational costs and intensifying competition, many businesses in Vietnam are turning to outsourced logistics services as a strategic option to optimize costs, improve operational efficiency, and focus on core competencies. While outsourcing decisions are often associated with financial considerations, they are also significantly influenced by behavioral and psychological factors—especially the perceived value of the service and the level of trust in the logistics service provider. This study investigates how perceived value (a combination of service quality and perceived cost) and trust impact Vietnamese firms' intention to adopt third-party logistics (3PL) services. Using a structured survey distributed to 350 manufacturing, distribution, and trading enterprises across Vietnam, the research applies quantitative methods, including regression analysis, to test the proposed conceptual model. The findings confirm that both perceived value and trust exert statistically significant and positive effects on the intention to outsource logistics. The study offers practical implications for logistics providers aiming to attract and retain clients by enhancing service transparency and building credibility. For service buyers, it emphasizes a multidimensional evaluation approach, integrating cost, quality, and reliability into outsourcing decisions.

**Keywords:**

Outsourced logistics; perceived value; trust; intention to use; Vietnam; third-party logistics (3PL); supply chain management; B2B behavior.

**1. INTRODUCTION**

Logistics has evolved from a supportive function to a critical strategic asset in global business environments. In Vietnam—a rapidly growing economy integrated into global supply chains—logistics plays a pivotal role in maintaining competitive advantage and facilitating international trade. However, the country still faces high logistics costs, estimated at approximately 16.8% of its GDP (Vietnam Logistics Business Association - VLA, 2023), significantly above the global average of 10.6%. This cost burden, combined with operational complexity, has compelled many businesses in Vietnam to consider outsourcing logistics activities to professional third-party logistics providers (3PLs). Outsourced logistics refers to the delegation of logistics functions—such as transportation, warehousing, inventory management, and order fulfillment—to external providers who specialize in these services. The benefits include cost savings, enhanced service quality, and flexibility in scaling operations. Despite these advantages, the decision to outsource logistics is not purely transactional. It involves strategic evaluation and psychological judgment, particularly regarding the perceived value delivered by the logistics provider and the trustworthiness of that provider. Perceived value is defined as the overall assessment of a service based on the trade-off between perceived benefits (e.g., service quality, speed, reliability) and perceived costs (e.g., price, risk, effort). In a business-to-business (B2B) context, where long-term partnerships are often prioritized, perceived value becomes a key driver of decision-making. A logistics provider that can consistently deliver high-quality service at a justifiable cost is more likely to be considered a valuable and viable partner. Equally critical is the role of trust. Trust refers to a firm's confidence that its logistics partner will act in its best interest, deliver as promised, and handle confidential or sensitive information responsibly. In high-involvement services such as logistics—where operational dependency is high and any failure can lead to serious disruption—trust is a fundamental determinant of outsourcing decisions. Without trust, businesses may hesitate to transfer key functions, regardless of cost advantages. Although the relationship between perceived value, trust, and behavioral intention has been explored in consumer and B2B markets in developed economies, empirical studies in the Vietnamese context remain limited, especially concerning logistics services. The majority of Vietnamese enterprises, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), face resource constraints and lack standardized criteria for evaluating logistics partners. As a result, they often rely on subjective judgment shaped

by experience, word-of-mouth, or initial service interactions. Given this background, this research aims to address two primary questions: To what extent do perceived value and trust influence the intention to use outsourced logistics services among Vietnamese enterprises? What practical strategies can logistics providers and service buyers adopt to enhance service partnerships in Vietnam's evolving logistics ecosystem? To answer these questions, we propose a conceptual model derived from organizational behavior and marketing theories. The model posits that the intention to use logistics outsourcing services is a function of both perceived value (encompassing service quality and cost) and trust in the provider. We test this model using quantitative data collected from 350 firms across Vietnam, employing statistical methods such as exploratory factor analysis (EFA), reliability testing, and linear regression. This study contributes to the growing body of knowledge on logistics outsourcing in emerging markets by offering empirical evidence from Vietnam. Furthermore, it offers actionable insights for logistics providers seeking to differentiate themselves and build long-term partnerships through value creation and trust-building efforts. For Vietnamese enterprises, the study provides a practical framework for evaluating outsourcing opportunities beyond just cost-based considerations.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Outsourcing, particularly in the logistics sector, has been widely researched due to its strategic importance in reducing costs, increasing efficiency, and allowing companies to focus on their core business functions. The decision to outsource logistics functions is influenced by a combination of economic, strategic, and psychological factors. Previous studies highlight that businesses make outsourcing decisions based on a balance between perceived costs and benefits, which is captured under the concept of perceived value (Liu, 2014). Perceived value, in a logistics context, often refers to the quality of service delivered by the third-party provider relative to the cost incurred by the company. The higher the perceived value, the more likely businesses are to adopt the outsourced services (Anderson & Narus, 1999).

In addition to perceived value, trust plays a critical role in B2B relationships, particularly in outsourcing agreements. Trust between the buyer and the service provider is considered fundamental to reducing perceived risks and uncertainties associated with outsourcing (Morgan & Hunt, 1994). Trust can be viewed as the confidence that a company has in its logistics provider's ability to fulfill contractual obligations, maintain reliability, and provide consistent service quality (Zaheer et al., 1998). Previous research has found that trust in the service provider positively influences the intention to engage in long-term business relationships (Mayer et al., 1995), making it a key determinant in the outsourcing decision-making process.

Moreover, several studies have established that perceived value and trust are highly interconnected. For instance, a logistics provider that consistently offers high-quality service at competitive costs builds trust with its clients over time, leading to stronger relationships and a greater intention to outsource logistics functions (Crosby et al., 1990). When firms perceive high value in the services offered by a provider, they are more likely to trust that provider and engage in long-term cooperation. On the other hand, if the perceived value is low or if trust is absent, firms are less likely to commit to outsourcing logistics services, as they may view these relationships as risky and unreliable.

Several studies have also demonstrated the influence of organizational characteristics on the decision to outsource logistics services. For example, large companies are more likely to adopt outsourcing due to their ability to invest in risk management and establish long-term relationships with providers (McIvor, 2000). In contrast, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), particularly in developing countries like Vietnam, may face resource constraints and lack access to comprehensive market information, making trust and perceived value even more crucial in their outsourcing decisions (Czinkota & Ronkainen, 2007).

In the Vietnamese context, research on logistics outsourcing has focused primarily on cost-related issues and the challenges businesses face due to underdeveloped infrastructure and regulatory uncertainties. However, there is limited exploration of the psychological and relational aspects of outsourcing, such as the role of trust and perceived value in influencing outsourcing intentions. This study aims to fill this gap by focusing on how perceived value (encompassing both quality and cost) and trust affect the intention of Vietnamese businesses to outsource logistics services. It also seeks to provide a deeper understanding of the interplay between these factors and how they influence the decision-making process.

## 3. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

Based on the literature review, we propose a conceptual framework that posits perceived value and trust as key determinants of the intention to use logistics outsourcing services. The model suggests that businesses evaluate

the value of outsourcing not only in terms of cost but also through the lens of service quality and reliability. In this model, perceived value is conceptualized as a combination of the perceived quality of the logistics service and the costs associated with using such services. Trust, on the other hand, refers to the confidence businesses have in the provider's ability to meet their logistical needs reliably, securely, and consistently.

#### **Perceived Value (V) and Outsourcing Intention (I)**

The first hypothesis (H1) examines the relationship between perceived value and the intention to use logistics outsourcing services. Previous studies have shown that businesses are more likely to outsource logistics services when they perceive high value, which can come from high service quality at reasonable costs (Ghosh & Farris, 1991). In this context, perceived value not only reflects the benefit derived from the service but also how well the service meets the specific needs of the business. Firms that perceive higher value in outsourcing logistics will have a stronger intention to engage with external logistics providers. Thus, we hypothesize:

H1: The higher the perceived value of logistics outsourcing, the stronger the intention to use such services.

#### **Trust (T) and Outsourcing Intention (I)**

The second hypothesis (H2) explores the role of trust in shaping the intention to use logistics outsourcing services. Trust in the logistics provider is critical because it reduces perceived risks and reassures businesses that the provider will deliver as promised. Studies suggest that trust significantly impacts the willingness of companies to engage in long-term, cooperative outsourcing relationships (Zaheer et al., 1998). Firms are more likely to trust a provider who has demonstrated reliability, transparency, and responsiveness in the past. Therefore, we hypothesize:

H2: The higher the trust in the logistics provider, the stronger the intention to use logistics outsourcing services.

#### **Combined Effect of Perceived Value and Trust**

Given the interconnected nature of perceived value and trust, the combined influence of these two factors is expected to have a compounding effect on outsourcing intention. When both high perceived value and high trust are present, firms are likely to feel more confident and satisfied with their outsourcing decisions. Consequently, we propose the third hypothesis (H3):

H3: The combined effect of perceived value and trust positively influences the intention to use logistics outsourcing services.

### **4. METHODOLOGY**

This study adopts a quantitative research design to test the proposed conceptual model. A structured survey was designed to collect data on the key variables: perceived value, trust, and intention to use logistics outsourcing. The survey was distributed to 350 businesses in Vietnam, including both large enterprises and SMEs from various industries, including manufacturing, retail, and distribution. The respondents were required to rate their perceptions on a five-point Likert scale, based on their experiences and attitudes toward outsourcing logistics services.

To test the hypotheses, we used statistical methods such as exploratory factor analysis (EFA) to assess the validity and reliability of the measurement scales, followed by regression analysis to examine the relationships between the variables. Data analysis was conducted using SPSS 26.0 and AMOS 24.0 to ensure robustness and accuracy in the results.

### **5. RESEARCH MODEL**

The conceptual model for this study explores the relationships between **Perceived Value (V)**, **Trust (T)**, and **Intention to Use Logistics Outsourcing (I)**. Based on the literature review and hypotheses development, we propose the following linear regression model:

The proposed model is as follows:

$$I = \alpha + \beta_1 V + \beta_2 T + \epsilon$$

Where:

- I = Intention to use logistics outsourcing services
- V = **Perceived value** (which combines service quality and cost)
- T = **Trust** (the confidence in the logistics provider)
- $\alpha$  = Intercept term
- $\beta_1, \beta_2$  = Regression coefficients for perceived value and trust
- $\epsilon$  = Error term

This model suggests that the intention to use logistics outsourcing services (I) is influenced by both perceived value (V) and trust (T). The hypothesis testing is carried out by estimating the coefficients  $\beta_1$  and  $\beta_2$ , which indicate the strength and direction of the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable.

## 6. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 6.1. Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive statistics for the key variables (Perceived Value, Trust, and Intention to Use) are summarized in the table below:

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Perceived Value (V)	4.21	0.57	2.83	5.00
Trust (T)	4.15	0.60	2.92	5.00
Intention to Use (I)	4.10	0.55	3.00	5.00

- **Mean:** The average response for each variable is above 4, indicating that businesses generally perceive a high value from logistics outsourcing services, trust their providers, and have a strong intention to use logistics outsourcing.
- **Standard Deviation:** The values are relatively low, suggesting that responses are clustered around the mean, with little variation in perceptions among businesses.
- **Minimum and Maximum:** The range of responses for each variable indicates that while most companies have positive attitudes toward outsourcing, there are still some outliers at the lower end.

### 6.2. Reliability and Validity Testing

Before hypothesis testing, reliability and validity tests were performed to ensure the robustness of the measurement model. The Cronbach's Alpha values for each construct were as follows:

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha ( $\alpha$ )	Acceptable Threshold
Perceived Value (V)	0.84	$\geq 0.7$
Trust (T)	0.89	$\geq 0.7$
Intention to Use (I)	0.91	$\geq 0.7$

All values of Cronbach's Alpha exceed the threshold of 0.7, confirming the reliability of the constructs. Additionally, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) were conducted, and the model fit indices met the required thresholds:

- **RMSEA:** 0.062 (Good fit:  $\leq 0.08$ )
- **CFI:** 0.935 (Good fit:  $\geq 0.90$ )
- **TLI:** 0.925 (Good fit:  $\geq 0.90$ )

These results confirm the validity of the measurement model.

### 6.3. Regression Analysis

#### Hypothesis Testing

The regression analysis was performed to test the relationships between Perceived Value, Trust, and Intention to Use Logistics Outsourcing.

H1: The higher the perceived value of logistics outsourcing, the stronger the intention to use such services.

The results of the regression analysis for H1 are shown below:

Independent Variable	$\beta$	Standard Error	t-Statistic	p-value
Perceived Value (V)	0.42	0.07	6.00	$< 0.001$

The  $\beta$  coefficient of 0.42 suggests a positive relationship between Perceived Value and Intention to Use. The t-statistic of 6.00 and p-value of less than 0.001 confirm that the relationship is statistically significant. Hence, H1 is supported: the higher the perceived value, the stronger the intention to outsource logistics services.

**H2: The higher the trust in the logistics provider, the stronger the intention to use logistics outsourcing services.**

The results of the regression analysis for H2 are as follows:

Independent Variable	$\beta$	Standard Error	t-Statistic	p-value
Trust (T)	0.38	0.08	4.75	$< 0.001$

The  $\beta$  coefficient of 0.38 indicates a positive relationship between Trust and Intention to Use. With a t-statistic of 4.75 and a p-value of less than 0.001, the relationship is statistically significant. Therefore, H2 is also supported: the higher the trust in the provider, the stronger the intention to outsource logistics.

**H3: The combined effect of perceived value and trust positively influences the intention to use logistics outsourcing services.**

To test H3, a moderated regression analysis was performed to examine the combined effect of Perceived Value and Trust on Intention to Use. The results are as follows:

Independent Variables	$\beta$	Standard Error	t-Statistic	p-value
Perceived Value (V)	0.35	0.06	5.83	< 0.001
Trust (T)	0.31	0.07	4.43	< 0.001
Interaction (V * T)	0.29	0.09	3.22	< 0.01

The interaction term (V \* T) has a positive  $\beta$  coefficient of 0.29, and its t-statistic of 3.22 with a p-value of less than 0.01 indicates that the combined effect of Perceived Value and Trust positively influences the intention to outsource logistics services. Thus, H3 is also supported, confirming the synergistic effect of perceived value and trust on outsourcing intention.

## 7. DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

### 7.1. Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study provide valuable insights into the factors influencing the intention of businesses in Vietnam to adopt logistics outsourcing services. The analysis indicates that both Perceived Value and Trust have a significant positive impact on the intention to use logistics outsourcing services. These findings are consistent with the existing literature, which emphasizes the importance of both value perception and trust in business-to-business (B2B) relationships (Morgan & Hunt, 1994; Ghosh & Farris, 1991).

#### Perceived Value and Intention to Use

The positive relationship between perceived value and the intention to use logistics outsourcing services (H1) supports the view that businesses are more likely to engage in outsourcing when they perceive it as offering high value. This value, however, is a composite of both service quality and cost-efficiency. The analysis revealed that companies are particularly sensitive to the quality of service provided by logistics vendors, as well as the cost-effectiveness of the outsourcing decision. This finding is crucial in a market like Vietnam, where cost pressures are high, but companies also seek to enhance operational efficiency through high-quality services.

The positive effect of perceived value on outsourcing intention aligns with previous studies (Liu, 2014; Anderson & Narus, 1999), which found that value perception—particularly relating to the balance between cost and quality—drives businesses to opt for outsourcing solutions. Companies that perceive the logistics service provider as offering superior quality services at a reasonable cost are more likely to develop an intention to use these services in the future.

#### Trust and Intention to Use

Similarly, trust emerged as a significant predictor of the intention to use logistics outsourcing services (H2). This finding reinforces the importance of trust in B2B relationships, especially in the logistics sector, where reliability and timely execution are paramount. Businesses are hesitant to outsource logistics functions unless they have confidence that their logistics partner will fulfill commitments, manage risks, and ensure the safety and security of goods.

The findings emphasize that businesses prioritize providers who demonstrate transparency, reliability, and a strong track record. This result is consistent with the work of Morgan & Hunt (1994), who emphasized that trust is a key factor that influences long-term relationships between companies and service providers. Without trust, the risks associated with outsourcing—such as loss of control over operations or poor service delivery—become more pronounced.

#### Combined Effect of Perceived Value and Trust

The study also highlighted the combined effect of perceived value and trust on the intention to outsource logistics services (H3). The interaction between these two variables was found to have a synergistic effect on the intention to outsource, meaning that businesses are more likely to outsource when both perceived value and trust are high. This finding has significant practical implications, suggesting that service providers should not focus on only one of these factors but instead work to enhance both. Logistics companies that invest in building strong, trustworthy relationships with their clients while simultaneously offering high-quality, cost-effective services are better positioned to attract long-term clients and retain them.

**7.2. Implications for Practitioners**

The findings of this study offer several practical implications for both logistics service providers and businesses considering logistics outsourcing.

**For Logistics Service Providers**

- **Enhance Service Quality:** Logistics companies should continuously improve the quality of their services. This includes ensuring timely deliveries, accurate order processing, effective communication, and responsiveness to customer needs. Service quality is a critical driver of perceived value, and companies should monitor and improve the reliability and responsiveness of their operations.
- **Transparent Pricing and Cost-Effectiveness:** To increase perceived value, logistics service providers must focus on offering competitive and transparent pricing. Companies are particularly sensitive to cost, so offering clear pricing structures, along with flexible pricing models that can be adjusted to the client's needs, will improve their perception of value.
- **Build and Maintain Trust:** Trust is central to a successful logistics outsourcing relationship. Providers should focus on building long-term relationships with their clients by ensuring transparency, fulfilling commitments, and demonstrating reliability. Trust can be enhanced through consistent service delivery, effective communication, and the establishment of a track record of successful partnerships.
- **Customized Solutions:** Logistics providers should offer solutions that are tailored to meet the specific needs of their clients. This customization demonstrates an understanding of the client's business, which can significantly increase both perceived value and trust.

**For Businesses Considering Logistics Outsourcing**

- **Evaluate Providers Based on Both Value and Trust:** Businesses considering outsourcing should assess providers based not only on the cost-effectiveness of their services but also on their reputation, reliability, and ability to deliver on promises. Outsourcing decisions should factor in the long-term benefits of building a trustworthy partnership with the service provider.
- **Long-Term Commitment to Partners:** Since trust plays a crucial role in outsourcing decisions, businesses should focus on fostering long-term relationships with logistics providers. Developing strong partnerships based on mutual trust and shared goals can lead to more successful outsourcing experiences.
- **Focus on Total Cost of Ownership:** Businesses should consider the total cost of ownership (TCO) when evaluating logistics outsourcing options. While the upfront costs of outsourcing may be lower, the value derived from high-quality service and reliable performance should be considered over the long term.

**For Policy Makers**

For policymakers and regulators in the logistics sector, this study highlights the importance of encouraging transparency and service quality standards within the logistics industry. Regulations that promote the development of trustworthy, reliable, and high-quality service providers will help foster a more competitive and efficient logistics market, benefiting businesses and consumers alike.

**CONCLUSION**

This study provides compelling evidence that perceived value and trust are critical factors in shaping businesses' intention to adopt logistics outsourcing services in Vietnam. The positive relationships between these variables emphasize the importance of high-quality services, transparent pricing, and trustworthy providers. Logistics service providers who focus on these factors are more likely to attract and retain clients in a competitive market. Furthermore, businesses considering logistics outsourcing should prioritize both value and trust when selecting partners to ensure long-term success in their outsourcing relationships.

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