CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION ABOUT THE STUDY

In today's fast-moving world of global trade, businesses depend on smooth and efficient logistics to stay competitive. Clearance and forwarding (C&F) services are at the heart of this process they make sure goods move safely and quickly across borders through proper documentation, customs clearance, and coordination with transport partners. CHAKIAT Agencies, a well-known name in the shipping and logistics industry, has been playing a key role in handling these operations. While the company has a strong reputation, it faces several challenges that affect service quality — such as customs delays, paperwork issues, limited digital integration, and communication gaps with clients. This study focuses on analysing the service quality and identifying operational challenges in CHAKIAT's clearance and forwarding operations. The goal is to understand what factors affect customer satisfaction and how the company can improve its performance. By exploring issues like timeliness, accuracy, and customer support, this research hopes to suggest practical steps that can help CHAKIAT enhance its efficiency and strengthen client trust.

1.2 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

In today's globalized world, the smooth movement of goods across countries is essential for business success. Companies depend on clearance and forwarding (C&F) **services** to handle shipping, customs procedures, and the delivery of goods efficiently. These services make sure that products reach customers on time and without unnecessary delays, which directly affects customer satisfaction and business performance. CHAKIAT Agencies is one of the well-known names in the logistics and shipping industry. The company provides a range of services such as freight forwarding, customs clearance, and cargo handling. However, like many logistics firms, it faces several operational challenges - including delays in customs clearance, incomplete documentation, communication gaps, and limited digital integration. These issues can lead to longer processing times, higher costs, and reduced service quality. As customer expectations continue to rise, maintaining consistent and reliable service has become more difficult. To stay competitive, CHAKIAT needs to identify what is slowing down its operations and what factors are affecting its service quality. This study focuses on analyzing the service quality and operational challenges

within CHAKIAT's clearance and forwarding operations. The goal is to understand where the company can improve and to suggest practical solutions that can help it deliver faster, more reliable, and customer-friendly services in the future

1.3 PROFILE OF THE INDUSTRY

The logistics and transportation industry is one of the most vital sectors in India's economic growth. As the country continues to expand its trade and industrial activities, the need for efficient logistics has grown rapidly. From local goods movement to global import/export activities, logistics plays a key role in ensuring that materials reach the right place, at the right time, in the right condition.

India's logistics market is valued at over USD 250 billion and is expected to grow at a CAGR of around 10–12%, reaching USD 380 billion by 2025. The sector includes transportation, warehousing, port services, supply chain planning, freight forwarding, customs clearance, and last-mile delivery.

Within this sector, port services and transportation are especially crucial. Ports act as the entry and exit points for global trade. India has 12 major ports and more than 200 minor ports, which handle cargo such as containers, liquid bulk, dry bulk, and general merchandise. Major ports like Mumbai, Chennai, Visakhapatnam, and Tuticorin handle millions of tones of cargo each year. To support this growing demand, the Government of India launched large-scale infrastructure projects like:

Sagarmala Project: Focuses on port modernization, better connectivity to the hinterland, and development of new ports.

BharatmalaPariyojana: Aims to improve the national road network and reduce logistics costs.

PM Gati Shakti: An integrated infrastructure plan to improve coordination across various transport modes.

Even with these initiatives, the industry faces some challenges port congestion, delay in customs processes, poor last-mile connectivity, lack of digital systems in certain ports, and coordination issues between logistics players.
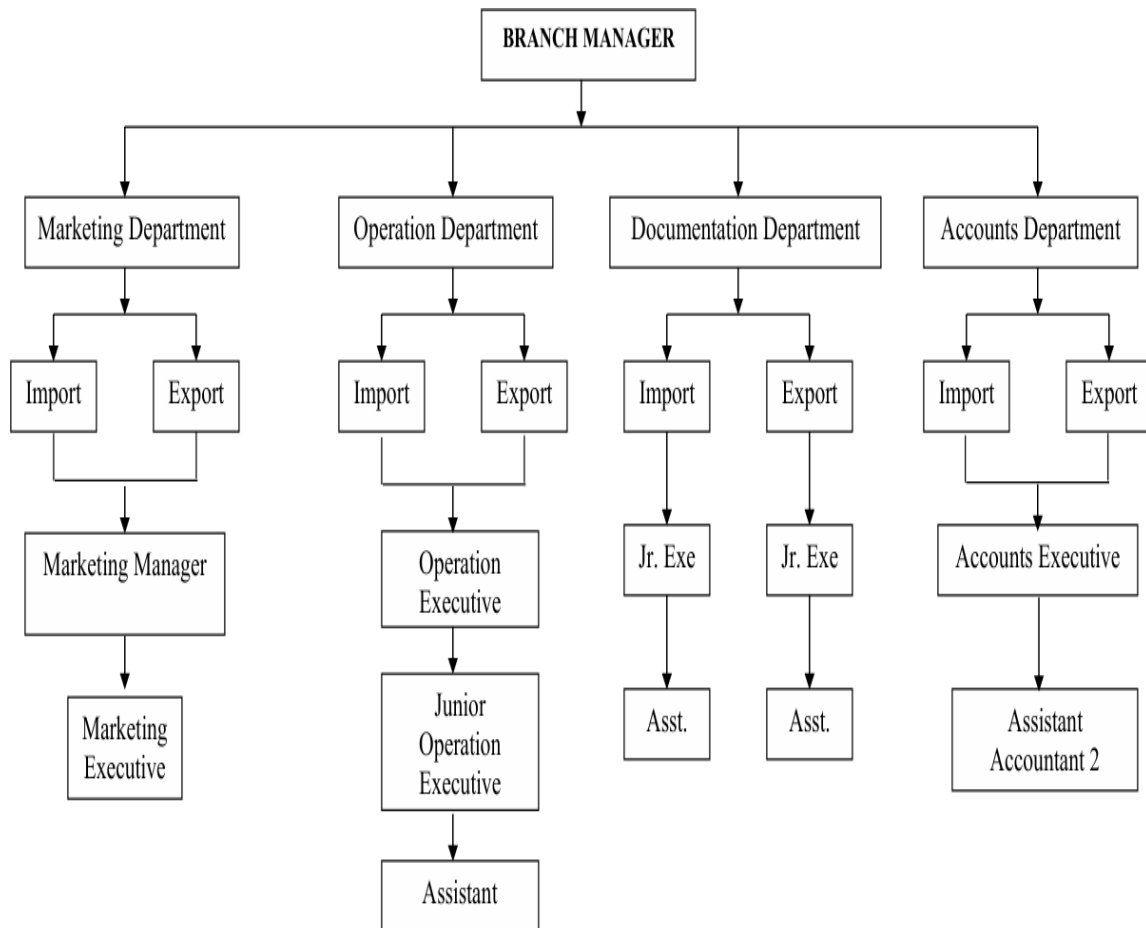
5 In this landscape, private logistics service providers like CHAKIAT Agencies play an important role in filling the operational gaps. CHAKIAT Agencies is a trusted name in the logistics and freight forwarding industry. With decades of experience, the company offers services including:

1. Ocean and air freight forwarding

2. Port operations and documentation

3. Customs clearance

4. Warehousing and storage

5. Cargo handling and transportation

6. Digital tracking and customer communication

CHAKIAT Agencies operates in major South Indian ports such as Chennai, Cochin, and Tuticorin, and is known for its customer-centric approach. The company's services are used by both Indian businesses and multinational firms involved in exports and imports. As the Indian logistics industry continues to evolve with digital transformation, green logistics initiatives, and customer-focused operations, companies like Chakiat are expected to grow further. However, continuous improvement in service quality, speed, safety, and customer satisfaction will be essential for long-term success.

This project aims to understand how Chakiat Agencies performs in this competitive environment and whether its customers are truly satisfied with its port and transport services. By focusing on industry trends and comparing them with on-ground service quality, this study helps identify where Chakiat stands and how it can align better with future industry expectations.

1.4 Organization Chart

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                          ┌─────────────────┐
                          │ BRANCH MANAGER  │
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        ┌──────────────────┬───────┴──────────┬──────────────────┐
        ▼                  ▼                  ▼                  ▼
┌──────────────┐   ┌──────────────┐   ┌─────────────────────┐   ┌──────────────────┐
│ Marketing    │   │ Operation    │   │ Documentation       │   │ Accounts         │
│ Department   │   │ Department   │   │ Department          │   │ Department       │
└──────┬───────┘   └──────┬───────┘   └──────────┬──────────┘   └─────────┬────────┘
    ┌──┴──┐           ┌──┴──┐            ┌────┴────┐             ┌────┴────┐
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 │ Marketing    │  │ Operation│     └──┬───┘ └──┬───┘         │ Accounts     │
 │ Manager      │  │ Executive│        ▼        ▼             │ Executive    │
 └──────┬───────┘  └────┬─────┘     ┌──────┐ ┌──────┐         └──────┬───────┘
        ▼               ▼           │ Asst.│ │ Asst.│                ▼
 ┌──────────────┐  ┌──────────┐     └──────┘ └──────┘         ┌──────────────┐
 │ Marketing    │  │ Junior   │                              │ Assistant    │
 │ Executive    │  │ Operation│                              │ Accountant 2 │
 └──────────────┘  │ Executive│                              └──────────────┘
                   └────┬─────┘
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                   │ Assistant│
                   └──────────┘
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1.5 SWOC Analysis

Strengths

CHAKIAT Agencies has earned a strong name in the logistics and shipping industry through years of trusted service. The company has an experienced team that understands customs rules, documentation, and client needs very well. It also maintains good connections with port authorities, shipping companies, and customs officials, which helps speed up the clearance process. CHAKIAT offers a complete range of services — including freight forwarding, customs clearance, and warehousing — making it a one-stop solution for clients. These strengths have helped the company build long-term relationships and trust with its customers.

Weaknesses

Even with its success, CHAKIAT faces a few challenges within its own operations. Many tasks are still done manually, which can cause mistakes and slow down the process. The lack of real-time tracking or digital tools means customers sometimes don't get quick updates about their shipments. Communication between departments is not always smooth, and there aren't enough regular training programs to help staff stay updated with new customs procedures and technologies. These issues can lead to delays and affect the consistency of service quality.

Opportunities

There are many opportunities for CHAKIAT to grow further. With international trade and online business expanding rapidly, the need for efficient logistics and forwarding services is increasing. By using **modern digital tools** like automation, ERP systems, and live shipment tracking, the company can make its operations faster and more reliable. Government initiatives like "Ease of Doing Business" also make it easier to handle customs work digitally. CHAKIAT can also explore new services such as third-party logistics (3PL) and supply chain consulting to attract more clients.

Challenges

CHAKIAT operates in a highly competitive field where international companies are adopting advanced technologies. Frequent changes in customs laws and documentation rules can also create difficulties. Rising fuel prices, transport costs, and occasional port delays add to the operational burden. Adapting to new technologies and training staff to handle modern systems are also major challenges the company needs to overcome to stay ahead.

1.6 Area of study

This study mainly focuses on the clearance and forwarding operations of CHAKIAT Agencies, a well-known company in the logistics and shipping industry. It looks closely at how the company handles activities such as customs clearance, documentation, freight forwarding, cargo handling, and customer service.

The research is centered on the day-to-day operations of CHAKIAT, especially in areas where goods are cleared through customs and moved to their final destinations. It also involves discussions with staff members like operations managers, customs agents, and documentation officers to understand their work process and the common issues they face.

The study is based in the main operational branches and port offices of CHAKIAT Agencies, where most import and export activities take place. This gives a clear view of how the company manages shipments, coordinates with different stakeholders, and ensures customer satisfaction.

By focusing on this area, the study aims to identify the challenges affecting service quality and find practical ways to make the clearance and forwarding process faster, more reliable, and customer-friendly.

1.7 Need for the study

Clearance and forwarding (C&F) agents play a vital role in international trade by handling customs procedures, documentation, and the movement of goods efficiently. However, they often face operational challenges such as delays, regulatory hurdles, and coordination issues with various stakeholders. As global trade grows more complex, it becomes essential to study these challenges and understand how C&F agents function in real-world scenarios. This study focuses on CHAKIAT Agencies to explore their operations and the difficulties they encounter, with the aim of identifying potential improvements and contributing to better logistics practices.

1.8 Objectives of the study

- To Analyze the operational efficiency of CHAKIAT Agencies.
- To Evaluate customer satisfaction with their services.
- To Identify challenges in customs clearance and logistics operations.
- To Assess the impact of technology on service quality.
- To Recommend improvement strategies for competitive advantage

1.9 Scope of the study

This study mainly focuses on the clearance and forwarding operations of CHAKIAT Agencies. It looks at how the company handles important activities such as customs clearance, **documentation,** cargo movement, and communication with clients. The goal is to understand how these processes affect the overall service quality and efficiency of the organization.

The research covers the operational and administrative areas where clearance and forwarding tasks are carried out. It also includes feedback from employees and customers to identify common challenges like delays, errors, or communication gaps.

The study is limited to the C&F department of CHAKIAT Agencies and does not include other divisions such as shipping agency services or marine operations. The findings are mainly based on the company's internal processes and client experiences, so they reflect the specific situation of CHAKIAT.

Through this study, efforts will be made to highlight areas that need improvement and to suggest practical ways for the company to enhance its **service quality, reduce delays, and improve customer satisfaction**.

1.10 Limitations of the study

This study has certain limitations that need to be considered while interpreting the results. The research is based only on the **clearance and forwarding operations** of **CHAKIAT Agencies**, so the findings may not be fully applicable to other logistics or shipping companies.

The data collected for the study mainly depends on the **opinions and experiences of employees and customers**. Since their views may differ based on their roles and experiences, there could be some variation in the responses.

Due to **time constraints and limited access**, only a few departments and employees were included in the study. Some **internal and confidential information** related to company performance and financial details could not be obtained.

Also, external factors like **government policies, customs regulations, port delays, and market conditions** were not studied in depth, even though they may influence the company's operations.

Despite these limitations, the study provides a clear understanding of the key **service quality issues and operational challenges** faced by CHAKIAT Agencies and offers insights that can help improve their overall efficiency.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1. **Martin Bálint, João M. Vilas-Boas da Silva & Monika Maria Möhring. (2025)** Increasing ecological consciousness makes adopting green innovations a strategic concern for third-party logistics providers (3PLs). This article addresses gaps in understanding how 3PLs can strategically leverage green innovations and the business environment characteristics influencing their adoption through a multiple-case study of six environmentally proactive German 3PLs using semi-structured interviews and triangulated with secondary data. Results show varied adoption levels with process innovations linked to cost savings, enhanced reputation and long-term energy independence.

2. **Negin Jamili, Pieter L. van den Berg & René de Koster. (2025)** Third-party logistics (3PL) services are essential in many supply chains and aim at providing flexible and cost-effective transport and warehouse solutions. This study focuses on Warehouse Service Providers (WSPs) with shared, multi-client warehouses. We investigate how the main internal resources should be shared among clients. We focus on labor (order pickers and sorters) and pick storage space (zones) as the main internal resources in the order picking process in such a warehouse.

3. **Seda Özcan & Işık Özge Yumurtacı Hüseyinoğlu. (2024)** The Covid-19 pandemic forced many companies to alter and improve their logistics activities as part of their business logistics strategies, to obtain cost and service advantages. In this regard, to lessen the detrimental effects on the business environment, it is critical to develop different strategies according to the nature of the disruptions and uncertainties. This paper explores uncertainty sources confronted by third-party logistics service providers (3PLs), identifies disruptions, reveals the resources used to cope with these and develops strategies for the Covid-19 pandemic. Drawing upon Resource Orchestration Theory (ROT), we reveal the important role of resource allocation in logistics and supply chains (SCs). This study proposes a conceptual framework that describes resources which can be used for strategy development in the face of uncertainties.

4. **Shuya Zhong, Carl Lomas & Tracey Worth. (2022)** With the surge in online purchases, customers' requirement for last-mile delivery also increases. This study focuses on the express delivery service, the primary channel in last-mile delivery, to discover the factors influence

customers' use. Based on the extended Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology, a conceptual model is proposed to structure the hypothetical effects between the constructs performance expectancy in delivery speed and delivery reliability, effort expectancy, facilitating conditions and behavioural intention. A 5-year (2015–2019) longitudinal survey was conducted in the UK, and 3964 responses were collected to validate the model. The results indicate that the performance expectancy in delivery reliability has a positive impact on customers' behaviour intention to adopt an express delivery service, while the performance expectancy in delivery speed, unexpectedly, shows insignificant impact. Moreover, the effort expectancy was found to have no effect on behaviour intention; however, the facilitating conditions have a negative influence.

5. **Juan Güiza, Rafael Luque, Jennifer Murillo, Rodrigo Romero, David Barrera & Héctor López-Ospina. (2021)** This paper studies integration between pricing and coordinated inventory decisions for a two-echelon supply chain in a competitive environment. To the best of our knowledge, these problems have traditionally been solved separately. Therefore, we aim to support the decision-making process by following an integrated approach.

6. **Kilibarda, M., Andrejić, M., & Popović, V. (2020).** Logistics Service Quality (LSQ) is recognized as an important tool in modern markets. In recent years, a number of researches in this field are growing rapidly. Numerous papers have been published in various industries and observation focuses. Different methods have been applied with a large number of dimensions. However, there are no papers in literature that provide a systematic review of researches in the observed area. This paper aims to investigate, systematize and analyse relevant papers dealing with the LSQ. The purpose of this paper is to form a systematic review of the different approaches, dimensions and focuses of measurement, analysis and improvement of the logistics services quality.

7. **Hsu, Chaug-Ing, Hsien-Hung Shih, and Wei-Che Wang. (2009)** The study explores the customs clearance process of import cargos in international air cargo terminals, and constructs a network to analyze cargo, information and human flows in the import cargo process. Then, the study formulates a mathematical model of the customs clearance process-delay, and analyzes delay

propagation in subsequent cargos. Moreover, the network of the customs clearance process is reconstructed based on the application of Radio Frequency Identification (RFID).

8. **Kalkha, H., Khiat, A., Bahnasse, A., & Ouajji, H. (2023).** Smart Logistics (SL) offers a competitive advantage for e-commerce by utilizing Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) such as IoT, AI, Blockchain, Cloud computing, 5G, etc. This technology automates, optimizes, and enables real-time tracking and monitoring of shipments, predicts, and prevents delays, and optimizes delivery routes and schedules. It also provides greater visibility and control, allowing e-commerce businesses to react quickly and efficiently to changes in demand or supply. The purpose of this study is to investigate the impact of digitalization on trade logistics in e-commerce, emphasizing the significance of smart logistics for the e-commerce industry.

9. **Karaman, Abdullah S., Merve Kilic, and Ali Uyar. (2020)** Drawing on the signaling theory, this study investigates the association between green logistics performance and sustainability reporting. In addition to this direct link, whether corporate governance moderates this relation or not is tested. The analysis of data collected for 117 countries covers the period from 2007 to 2016. Primarily, the study provides robust evidence that green logistics performance has a significant and positive association with the existence and the number of sustainability reports within the logistics sector. This association is validated for the composite Logistics Performance Index (*LPI*) as well as all six individual logistics performance indicators. Furthermore, moderation analysis indicated that in weak corporate governance environments characterized by ineffective boards of directors, the logistics performance and sustainability reporting link is stronger. This means that sustainability reporting fills the gap arising from poor corporate governance. This study extends existing green supply chain management literature by testing, for the first time, the association between green logistics practices and sustainability reporting.

10. **Mirzabeiki, Vahid.(2013)** The purpose of this paper is to provide an overview of how the intelligent transportation system (ITS) supports freight transportation operations. A study of the literature on transportation information and communication technology (ICT) and intelligent (or smart) transportation systems has been conducted. Documents of more than 60 companies producing or using intelligent transportation technologies and systems have been reviewed to provide empirical data regarding freight ITSs. Furthermore, direct observations of some of the systems as well as semi-structured and non-structured interviews with managers of some of the companies have been conducted as secondary sources of empirical data. As a result of studying the companies, a list of nine freight ITSs is generated; it represents the main freight ITSs. Also, different transportation information types that freight ITS work based on their availability are recognised. The results show that vehicle location systems and condition monitoring systems support and use more transportation information types compared to the other freight ITSs.

11. **Tsang, Y. P., et al. (2017)** Differing from managing a general supply chain, handling environmentally sensitive products (ESPs) requires the use of specific refrigeration systems to control the designated range of storage conditions, such as temperature, humidity, and lighting level in a cold chain environment. In general, third-party logistics (3PL) companies are authorized to handle ESPs, who therefore need to have a good cargo monitoring system in the cold chain environment, without which the functional quality is difficult to control and manage. This article proposes an Internet of Things-based cargo monitoring system (IoT-CMS) to monitor any environmental changes of ESPs in order to ensure their functional quality throughout the entire cold chain operational environment. Operational efficiency, maintenance strategy, environmental change, and electricity consumption are considered in real-life cold chain operations.

12. **Lee, C. B., Wan, J., Shi, W., & Li, K. (2014)** For the last 50 years, international trade has been increased in both volume and speed, which has in turn brought about ever-increasing competition among major maritime nations and required a corresponding shipping policy. This

study is to identify and weight the factors influencing a country's shipping competitiveness and shipping policy. According to the results of questionnaires and Delphi method, 24 factors have been chosen from a practical perspective while weights of factors are determined by the application of analytic hierarchy process (AHP) from a theoretical perspective. Then, on the basis of factors and their weights, a shipping competitiveness index (SCI) is constructed to quantitatively measure and rank the main maritime countries. In addition, the results of cluster analysis, based on each country's present and potential competitiveness, provide some implications and policy suggestion for each group of nations with similar background and development conditions.

13. **Giusti, Ilaria, et al (2019)** The performances have been assessed in terms of benefits related to the informatization, i.e. the timely put in place of rework and mitigation measures in the case of human error detection, in order to reduce the severity of the mistakes' consequences. This problem has been faced by means of a risk analysis. A simulator has been calibrated and validated with the support of expert operators in the field of air cargo logistics.

14. **Triepels, Ron, Ad Feelders, and Hennie Daniels. (2015)** Deficient visibility in global supply chains causes significant risks for the customs brokerage practices of freight forwarders. One of the risks that freight forwarders face is that shipping documentation might contain document fraud and is used to declare a shipment. Traditional risk controls are ineffective in this regard since the creation of shipping documentation is uncontrollable by freight forwarders. In this paper, we propose a data mining approach that freight forwarders can use to detect document fraud from supply chain data. More specifically, we learn models that predict the presence of goods on an import declaration based on other declared goods and the trajectory of the shipment. Decision rules are used to produce miscoding alerts and smuggling alerts. Experimental tests show that our approach outperforms the traditional audit strategy in which random declarations are selected for further investigation.

15. **George, Majo, et al.(2023)** Radio frequency identification (RFID) technology is one of the greatest innovations that has been widely accepted in the supply chain and logistics for

obtaining accurate and fast information. Utilizing RFID technology in a variety of industries, such as automotive, manufacturing, fashion, and textiles, can alter business dynamics and promote a sustainable future. RFID technology provides not only economic benefits in manufacturing and supply chain processes, but also numerous tangible business benefits, such as competitive advantage, improved customer relationships, resiliency, and increased profitability. Several brands of fast fashion have already adopted eco-friendly production techniques using RFID technology. Other brands should also begin focusing on sustainable practices to ensure their long-term success, which will benefit both the company and the environment.

16. **Thai, Vinh V. (2013)** There has been very little research done in logistics service on how its quality is defined and attributed. In this paper, we aim to explore the definition of the concept of quality in logistics service and its associated dimensions by constructing a conceptual model and test it empirically. A survey was conducted in Singapore with 2333 logistics service providers and customers from Singapore Logistics Association and Singapore's National Shipper Council. A total of 171 questionnaires including 86 from logistics service providers and 85 customers were returned. After the process of exploratory factor analysis followed by confirmatory factor analysis, we found that the revised model of five factors and 20 items of logistics service quality (LSQ) is valid and reliable to measure the quality of logistics service. It was also indicated from the study that the quality of customer focus is deemed the most critical to enhance the perceived LSQ.

17. **Mentzer, John T., Daniel J. Flint, and John L. Kent. (1999)** This article examines expansion of the service quality domain into a logistics context. As the business environment has changed, the operations-based definitions of logistics service have evolved. The basic concept of utility creation became inadequate to fully express the value created by logistics. Researchers argue there are two elements in service delivery including marketing customer service and physical distribution service. The LSQ scale is another step toward enhancing logisticians' efforts to measure the impact of their operations on customers.

18. **Uvet, Hasan. (2020)** To create value in logistics services to fill the expectation of customers gets more significant than ever to sustain competitiveness in the market. In this paper, considering there is a small amount of research done in logistic service quality, we aimed to investigate how logistics services affect customer satisfaction. An empirical study was made to measure logistic service quality factors; personnel quality contact, order condition, timeliness, order discrepancy handling, and operational information sharing in logistics services. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and structural equation modeling (SEM) has been used in this paper to explore customer satisfaction by using the five constructs of logistics service quality.

19. **Mentzer, John T., Daniel J. Flint, and G. Tomas M. Hult.(2001)** Logistics excellence has become a powerful source of competitive differentiation within diverse marketing offerings of world-class firms. Although researchers have suggested that logistics competencies complement marketing efforts, empirical evidence is lacking on what logistics service quality means to customers and whether it has different meanings for separate customer segments. The authors present empirical support for nine related logistics service quality constructs; demonstrate their unidimensionality, validity, and reliability across four customer segments of a large logistics organization; and provide empirical support for a logistics service quality process.

20. **Limbourg, Sabine, Ho Thi Quynh Giang, and Mario Cools. (2016)** Cost minimization is a key objective in managing logistics services. In this context, a growing interest in quality improvement can be observed. However, service quality is hard to quantify as it is a function of varying customer perceptions over time, of the measurement process and of the analysis of the data gathered. This study examines the logistics service quality by scales developed according to SERVQUAL instrument. A survey of 200 customers of logistics service providers (LSP) was conducted in Da Nang City. The data analysis shows that LSPs in Da Nang city need to improve Research and Development and to develop Customer Care programs.

21. **Bienstock, Carol C., et al. (2008)** This paper discusses recent developments in understanding and measuring logistics service quality (LSQ) and incorporates a framework (technology acceptance model (TAM)) to assess logistics information technology use and acceptance as an essential component of an expanded model of LSQ. The results of our empirical test of the expanded model of LSQ provide an interesting contrast to earlier TAM research with respect to the relationship of the two main TAM constructs of perceived ease of use (PEOU) and perceived usefulness (PU) of information technology with intentions to use information technology tools.

22. **Feng, Yi-xiong, Bing Zheng, and Jian-rong Tan. (2007)** Online shopping has already become the new mode that a lot of customers try to adopt. At the same time, the online shopping could not be successfully completed without logistics service. Logistics service quality (LSQ) has significant impact on revenue and profitability. This paper presents the issue from the perspective of the customer, and explores the initial factors of LSQ based on the online shopping through in-depth interview and the Delphi method. The survey uses a standard 7-point Likert-type scale to measure the LSQ.

23. **Mentzer, John T., Daniel J. Flint, and G. Tomas M. Hult. (2001)** Logistics excellence has become a powerful source of competitive differentiation within diverse marketing offerings of world-class firms. Although researchers have suggested that logistics competencies complement marketing efforts, empirical evidence is lacking on what logistics service quality means to customers and whether it has different meanings for separate customer segments. The authors present empirical support for nine related logistics service quality constructs; demonstrate their unidimensionality, validity, and reliability across four customer segments of a large logistics organization; and provide empirical support for a logistics service quality process.

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essential component of an expanded model of LSQ. The results of our empirical test of the expanded model of LSQ provide an interesting contrast to earlier TAM research with respect to the relationship of the two main TAM constructs of perceived ease of use (PEOU) and perceived usefulness (PU) of information technology with intentions to use information technology tools. Whereas previous TAM research has demonstrated PU as the stronger of the two constructs, our results provided evidence of approximately equal relationships between these two constructs and intentions to use information technology tools.

25. **Panayides, Photis M., and Meko So. (2005)** Third-party logistics has been an efficient organisational adjustment to the needs of clients for logistics solutions and improvement in supply chain performance. Examination of logistics performance has mainly been focused on operational measures. There has been less attention placed on the influence of organisational factors, despite the advocated need for greater inter-organisational integration among supply chain partners. This study examines empirically the influence of relationship orientation in third-party logistics and its impact on logistics service quality and performance. Data were collected via a large-scale industrial survey and structural equation modelling was used to examine the causal hypotheses. The findings suggest that relational exchange can have a positive effect on logistics service quality and performance in third-party logistics. Research and managerial implications are discussed.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

INTRODUCTION

This chapter outlines the research design, data collection methods, sampling techniques, and analytical procedures used to evaluate service quality and operational challenges in the clearance and forwarding operations of CHAKIAT Agencies. The methodology adopted ensures an objective approach for obtaining valid and reliable results.

RESEARCH DESIGN

A mixed-methods design was employed, combining both qualitative and quantitative strategies for a holistic analysis. The qualitative approach included interviews and focus groups with CHAKIAT staff and clients, while the quantitative component consisted of structured surveys administered to a representative sample of customers and operational personnel.

DATA COLLECTION METHODS

Primary Data: Structured questionnaires and in-depth interviews were used to collect data directly from stakeholders such as employees, managers, and clients involved in clearance and forwarding activities.

Secondary Data: Company records, operational reports, and published literature provided context and supplementary insights for comparative analysis.

SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

Simple random sampling is a technique where every member of the population has an equal chance of being selected for the study. It is like putting all the names of employees and clients involved in clearance and forwarding operations at CHAKIAT Agencies into out of required number of names randomly. This method makes sure the sample chosen is fair and unbiased, representing the whole group well. It is simple to understand and use, and it helps researchers make sure their study results apply to the entire population because everyone had the same chance to be included. For this topic, using simple random sampling means that each employee or client related to the clearance and forwarding process has an equal opportunity to participate in the research, making the findings reliable and valid.

RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

Questionnaire: The survey tool comprised sections on service quality (using a Likert scale), operational challenges, and demographic data. Dimensions such as responsiveness, efficiency, documentation handling, and regulatory compliance were measured.

Interview Guide: The guide included open-ended questions focused on identifying systemic issues, challenges in customs clearance, and suggestions for improvement.

DATA ANALYSIS PROCEDURE

Descriptive Statistics: Percentages, means, and standard deviations were used for summarizing respondent characteristics and service quality perceptions.

Inferential Statistics: Techniques such as Chi-square tests, one-way ANOVA and cor-relation were applied to examine relationships and differences among variables, aided by statistical software like SPSS.

Qualitative Analysis: Thematic analysis was performed on interview transcripts to extract recurrent themes relating to operational bottlenecks and service quality gap

TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES FOR DATA ANALYSIS :

To analyze the collected data, both descriptive and inferential statistical tools were used.

- ## Chisquare Test :

The **Chi-Square (χ^2) Test** is a non-parametric statistical test used to examine the relationship between two categorical (qualitative) variables. It helps determine whether differences between observed and expected frequencies are due to chance or a real association.

Purpose in the Study:

In this project, the Chi-Square test can be used to find out whether there is a significant relationship between employee designation and their satisfaction level, or between age group and opinion on delivery performance.

Formula:

$$x^2 = \sum \frac{(O - E)^2}{E}$$

Where:

- **O** = Observed frequency
- **E** = Expected frequency

Interpretation:

If the calculated Chi-Square value is greater than the table value (at a chosen significance level, e.g., 0.05), we reject the null hypothesis, indicating that a significant relationship exists between the two variables.

- **ANOVA Test :**

    ANOVA is a parametric statistical test used to compare the means of three or more groups to determine whether there are statistically significant differences among them.

    Purpose in the Study:

    In this project, ANOVA can be used to compare whether the average satisfaction level or agency offers value for money varies among different age groups or departments of Fast Forward Logistics.

    Formula (conceptually):

    $$F = \frac{Varience\ between\ groups}{Varience\ within\ groups}$$

    Interpretation:

    - If the F-value is greater than the critical value (or if the p-value < 0.05), the result is significant, meaning there is a difference between group means.
    - If not, the differences are likely due to random variation.

- **Correlation Analysis :**

    Meaning:

    Correlation measures the strength and direction of the relationship between two quantitative variables. The most common measure is Pearson's Correlation Coefficient (r), which ranges from –1 to +1.

    Purpose in the Study:

    In this project, correlation can be used to find out how strongly Customs clearance process is related to Logistics supports, or whether Communication with CHAKIAT improves Customers complaints.s

Formula:

$$r = \frac{n(\sum xy) - (\sum x)(\sum y)}{\sqrt{[n \sum x - (\sum x)][n \sum y - (\sum y)]}}$$

Interpretation:

- **r = +1:** Perfect positive correlation (as one increases, the other increases)
- **r = –1:** Perfect negative correlation (as one increases, the other decreases)
- **r = 0:** No correlation (no relationship)

CHAPTER IV

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 CHISQUARE:

TABLE 4.1.1 Showing Chi-Square between Age and Agencies offers value for money

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance
Pearson Chi-Square	23.547[a]	9	.005
Likelihood Ratio	22.980	9	.006
N of Valid Cases	100		

Interpretation:

The Chi-Square test result shows a Pearson Chi-Square value of 23.547 with 9 degrees of freedom and a significance level (p-value) of 0.005, which is less than the standard threshold of 0.05. This indicates that there is a statistically significant association between the variables under study. In other words, the differences observed among the categories are not due to random chance, but reflect a meaningful relationship. Therefore, the null hypothesis stating that there is no association between the variables is rejected, confirming that the variables are significantly related.

TABLE 4.1.2 Showing Chi-Square between Gender and recommend CHAKIAT Agencies

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance
Pearson Chi-Square	1.244[a]	3	.743
Likelihood Ratio	1.424	3	.700
N of Valid Cases	100		

Interpretation:

The Chi-Square test result shows a Pearson Chi-Square value of 1.244 with 3 degrees of freedom and a significance level (p-value) of 0.743, which is greater than the standard threshold of 0.05. This indicates that there is no statistically significant association between gender and the respondents' opinion on recommending CHAKIAT Agencies to others. In other words, the difference in responses between male and female participants is likely due to random variation rather than a true relationship. Therefore, the null hypothesis stating that gender and recommendation levels are independent of each other is accepted.

4.2 ANOVA:

TABLE 4.2.1 Showing ANOVA analysis for Delivery timelines are met consistently.

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	15.480	1	15.480	8.210	.005
Within Groups	184.520	98	1.883		
Total	200.000	99			

Interpretation:

The ANOVA results show an F-value of 8.210 with a significance level (Sig.) of 0.005, which is less than 0.05. This indicates that there is a statistically significant difference between the groups in their perception of whether delivery timelines are met consistently. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis and conclude that the groups differ significantly in their views regarding the consistency of meeting delivery timelines.

TABLE 4.2.2 Showing ANOVA analysis for The agency offers value for money.

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	24.650	3	8.217	5.120	.003
Within Groups	153.460	96	1.598		
Total	178.110	99			

Interpretation:

The ANOVA results show an F-value of 5.120 with a significance level (Sig.) of 0.003, which is less than 0.05. This indicates a statistically significant difference among the groups regarding their perception of whether the agency offers value for money. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis and conclude that the groups differ significantly in their opinions on the agency's value-for-money performance.

4.3 Correlation:

TABLE 4.3.1 Correlation between Customs clearance process and Logistics support

		Customs clearance process	Logistics support
Customs clearance process	Pearson Correlation	1	.304**
	Sig (2-tailed)		.002
	N	100	100
Logistics support	Pearson Correlation	.304**	1
	Sig (2-tailed)	.002	
	N	100	100

Interpretation:

The significance value (Sig. = 0.002) is less than 0.01, indicating that this correlation is statistically significant at the 1% level. Therefore, we can conclude that there is a significant positive relationship between the efficiency of customs clearance and the quality of logistics support perceived by customers.

TABLE 4.3.2 Showing Correlation between Communication with CHAKIAT and Customer complaints

		Communication with CHAKIAT	Customer Complaints
Communication with CHAKIAT	Pearson Correlation	1	.532**
	Sig (2-tailed)		.001
	N	100	100
Customer Complaints	Pearson Correlation	.532**	1
	Sig (2-tailed)	.001	
	N	100	100

Interpretation:

This indicates a moderate positive correlation between the two variables. In other words, as communication with CHAKIAT becomes clearer and more effective, customer complaints tend to be resolved more promptly. Since the p-value is less than 0.01, the correlation is statistically significant at the 1% level. This means there is strong evidence that the observed relationship is not due to random chance.

4.4 Percentage Analysis:

Table 4.4.1 Showing Age category of the respondents

Age Group	Percentage	Number of Respondents (out of 100)
18–25	22%	22
26–35	35%	35
36–45	27%	27
46 & above	16%	16
Total	100%	100

Age of the respondent:
100 responses
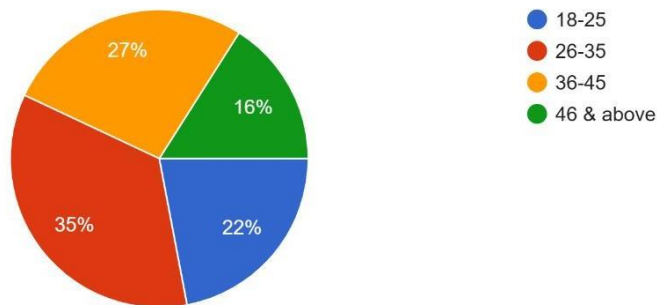
Interpretation:

The majority of respondents (35%) fall within the 26–35 years age group, indicating that most participants are young adults, possibly in the early stages of their careers. The 36–45 years group makes up 27%, showing a fair representation of mid-career individuals. The 18–25 years group accounts for 22%, suggesting a notable presence of younger respondents, likely students or early professionals. The 46 & above group is the smallest (16%), implying fewer older or late-career participants in the survey.

Table 4.4.2 Showing the Gender of the respondents

Gender	Percentage	Number of Respondents (out of 100)
Male	80%	80
Female	20%	20
Prefer not to say	0%	0
Total	100%	100

Gender:
100 responses
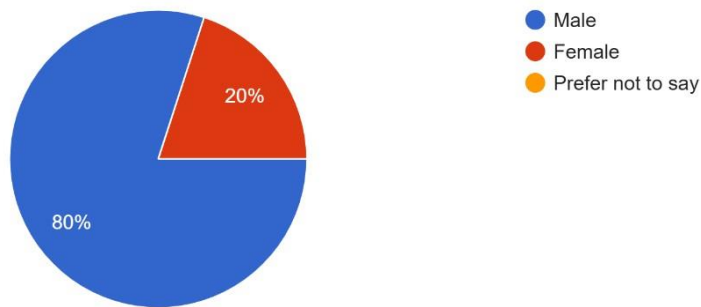
Interpretation:

The survey results indicate that the majority of respondents were male (80%), while female respondents accounted for 20% of the total. None of the participants selected the option "prefer not to say." This shows a significant gender imbalance, with male participants forming a large majority. The data suggests that the sample is male-dominated, which may influence the overall findings if gender perspectives are relevant to the study. Ensuring a more balanced gender representation in future surveys could help achieve more inclusive and representative results.

Table 4.4.3 Showing the Locality of the respondents

Locality	Percentage	Number of Respondents (out of 100)
Rural	21%	21
Urban	64%	64
Semi-urban	15%	15
Total	100%	100

Locality of the respondent:
100 responses
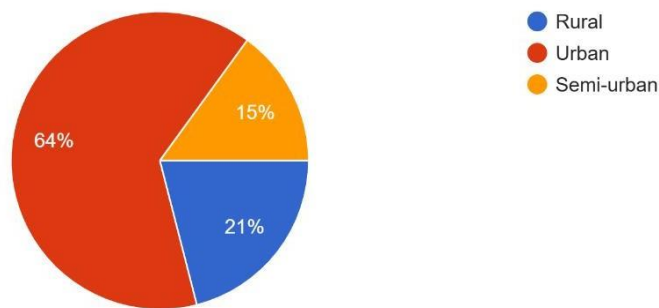
Interpretation:

The data reveals that a majority of respondents (64%) reside in urban areas, indicating that most participants come from cities or towns with developed infrastructure and amenities. Rural residents make up 21%, representing a smaller yet significant portion of the sample, while semi-urban respondents account for 15%. This distribution suggests that the survey predominantly reflects urban perspectives, possibly due to easier access to digital platforms or higher participation rates from city dwellers. Future studies could aim for a more balanced locality distribution to capture diverse insights from all regions.

Table 4.4.4 Showing Monthly Income of the respondents

Income Range	Percentage	Number of Respondents
Below Rs. 25,000	16%	16
Rs. 25,001 – Rs. 50,000	33%	33
Rs. 50,001 – Rs. 75,000	20%	20
Rs. 75,001 – Rs. 1,00,000	11%	11
Above Rs. 1,00,000	20%	20
Total	100%	100

Monthly income of the respondent:
100 responses

- ● Below Rs.25,000
- ● Rs.25,001-50,000
- ● Rs.50,001-75,000
- ● Rs.75,001-1,00,000
- ● Above Rs.1,00,000
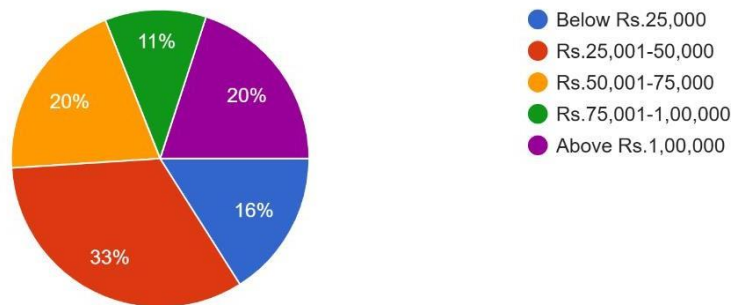
Interpretation:

The data represents the monthly income distribution of 100 respondents. The largest income group, comprising 33% of respondents, earns between Rs. 25,001 and Rs. 50,000, indicating that this is the most common income bracket in the sample. This is followed by two equally represented groups—20% each—falling in the Rs. 50,001–75,000 and above Rs. 1,00,000 categories, suggesting a fairly significant segment with higher earnings. 16% of respondents earn below Rs. 25,000, while the smallest group, 11%, falls into the Rs. 75,001–1,00,000 range. Overall, the distribution shows a concentration in the lower-middle income group but also a noticeable presence of higher earners.

Table 4.4.5 Showing Locality of company of the respondents

Locality	Number of Responses	Percentage (%)
Cuddalore	22	25.0%
Thoothukudi	13	14.8%
Tuticorin and Chennai	10	11.4%
Chennai	8	9.1%
TUTICORIN	3	3.4%
Selam	3	3.4%
Mumbai	2	2.3%
Virudunagar	2	2.3%
Nes bus stand	2	2.3%
Coimbatore	1	1.1%
Habour Tuticorin	1	1.1%
Thoothukudi (again listed)	1	1.1%
Tuticorin	1	1.1%
Others (all single entries)	20 (approx.)	22.7% (combined)

Locality of the company:
88 responses
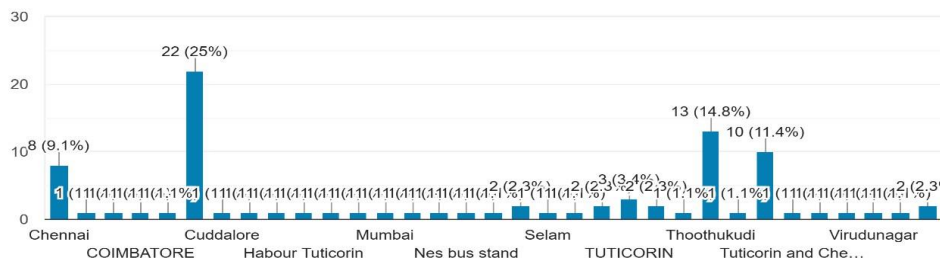
Interpretation:

From the chart, it is evident that Cuddalore is the most common locality among companies, accounting for 25% of the total responses. This is followed by Thoothukudi with 14.8%, and a combined category of Tuticorin and Chennai at 11.4%. Chennai alone accounts for 9.1% of the responses. A range of other locations such as Mumbai, Virudunagar, and Selam have minimal representation. There also appear to be inconsistencies or overlaps in naming—like Tuticorin, TUTICORIN, and Thoothukudi—which may actually refer to the same region, potentially increasing its overall representation. This suggests a strong concentration of companies in the Cuddalore-Thoothukudi-Tuticorin corridor, highlighting it as a key industrial or business zone among respondents.

Table 4.4.6 Showing Industry sector distribution of the respondents

Industry Sector	Percentage (%)	Number of Responses
Manufacturing	34.1%	30
Pharmaceuticals	8%	7
Electronics	8%	7
Agriculture	8%	7
Shipping	5.7% (approx.)	5
Transport	4.5% (approx.)	4
Accessories	3.4% (approx.)	3
Shipping & Logistics	2.3% (approx.)	2
Others (multiple small sectors)	~25.9%	~23
Total	100%	88

Industry Sector:
88 responses

- Manufacturing
- Pharmaceuticals
- Electronics
- Agriculture
- Shipping
- Transport
- Accessories
- Shipping & Logistics

1/5
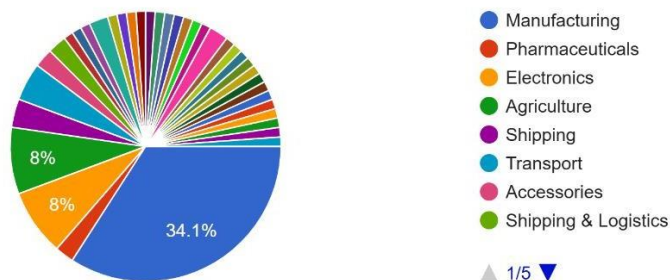
Interpretation:

The data reveals that the Manufacturing sector dominates the industry landscape among the respondents, with 34.1% (30 out of 88) of the companies operating in this field. This is followed by Pharmaceuticals, Electronics, and Agriculture, each accounting for 8% of the responses, indicating a balanced presence of these key industries. Shipping, Transport, and Accessories contribute smaller but notable portions. The remaining sectors, grouped as Others, represent a diverse mix of niche industries, each with limited individual representation. This distribution suggests that while manufacturing plays a central role in the region's industrial profile, there is also considerable diversification across multiple sectors.

Table 4.4.7 Showing Company Size distribution of the respondents

Company Size	Number of Responses	Percentage (%)
Small (1–50 employees)	48	54.5%
Medium (51–250 employees)	24	27.3%
Large (250+ employees)	16	18.2%
Total	88	100%

Company size:
88 responses

● Small (1–50 employees)
● Medium (51–250 employees)
● Large (250+ employees)
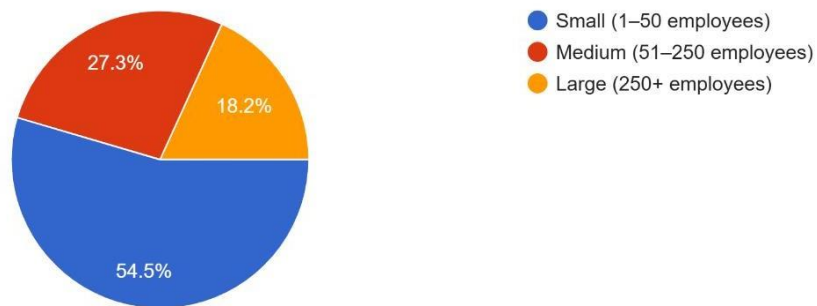
Interpretation:

Out of the 88 respondents, a majority (54.5%) reported working in small companies with 1 to 50 employees. Medium-sized companies (51–250 employees) accounted for 27.3% of the responses, while large companies with more than 250 employees made up 18.2%. This indicates that the survey primarily reached individuals from smaller organizations, which could influence the overall results or insights depending on the context of the survey. The relatively lower representation from large companies suggests that any conclusions drawn may be more reflective of the experiences and needs of smaller businesses.

Table 4.4.8 Showing Perception of Cargo Booking Process of the respondents

Response Option	Number of Responses	Percentage (%)
Strongly disagree	2	2.3%
Disagree	0	0.0%
Neutral	19	21.6%
Agree	44	50.0%
Strongly agree	21	23.9%
Total	88	100%

1. The cargo booking process is simple and efficient
88 responses
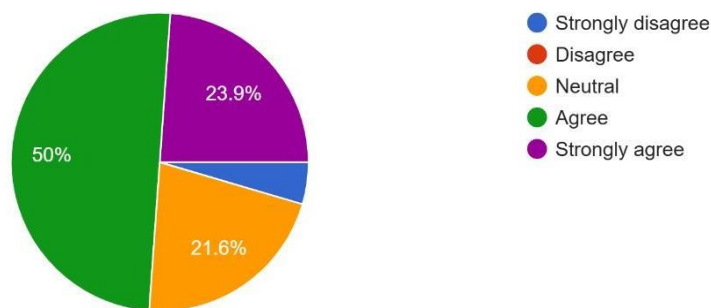
Interpretation:

The majority of respondents (73.9%) had a positive perception of the cargo booking process, with 50% agreeing and 23.9% strongly agreeing that it is simple and efficient. A smaller portion of respondents (21.6%) remained neutral, indicating they neither agreed nor disagreed. Only a minimal percentage (2.3%) strongly disagreed, and none explicitly disagreed. These results suggest that the cargo booking process is generally well-received, with a strong overall satisfaction level among users. However, the presence of neutral responses signals that there may still be areas for improvement or that some users are unsure about the system's efficiency.

Table 4.4.9 Showing Perception of Transport Reliability and Punctuality of the respondents

Response Option	Number of Responses	Percentage (%)
Strongly disagree	1	1%
Disagree	2	2%
Neutral	15	15%
Agree	53	53%
Strongly agree	27	27%
Total	100	100%

2. Transport arrangements are reliable and punctual.
100 responses
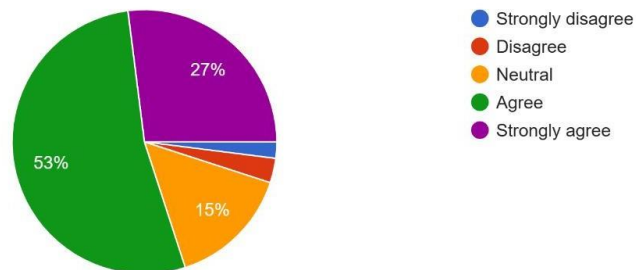
Interpretation:

The data shows that a large majority of respondents (80%) expressed confidence in the reliability and punctuality of transport arrangements, with 53% agreeing and 27% strongly agreeing. A smaller group (15%) remained neutral, while only 3% (combined) expressed disagreement or strong disagreement. These results indicate a strong positive sentiment towards the transport services, suggesting that they are generally dependable and timely. The minimal dissatisfaction reflects well on current operational efficiency, though the neutral responses may point to a few areas that could benefit from closer attention or further improvement.

Table 4.4.10 Showing Survey Responses on Documentation for Exports/Imports

Response Option	Percentage	Number of Responses (out of 100)
Strongly Disagree	2%	2
Disagree	3%	3
Neutral	14%	14
Agree	42%	42
Strongly Agree	39%	39
Total	100%	100

3. The agency ensures complete documentation for exports/imports.
100 responses
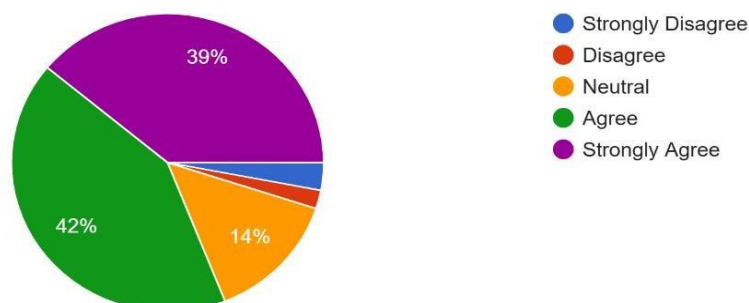
Interpretation:

The majority of respondents (81%) expressed confidence that the agency ensures complete documentation for exports and imports, with 42% agreeing and 39% strongly agreeing. A smaller segment remained neutral (14%), possibly indicating limited experience or uncertainty regarding documentation practices. Only 5% of respondents disagreed to any extent (2% strongly disagree and 3% disagree), suggesting minimal dissatisfaction. Overall, the feedback reflects a strong positive perception of the agency's handling of export/import documentation.

Table 4.4.11 Showing Survey Responses on Warehouse Operations Organization are Well-organized

Response Option	Percentage	Number of Responses (out of 100)
Strongly Disagree	1%	1
Disagree	7%	7
Neutral	13%	13
Agree	46%	46
Strongly Agree	33%	33
Total	100%	100

4. The warehouse operations are well-organized.
100 responses
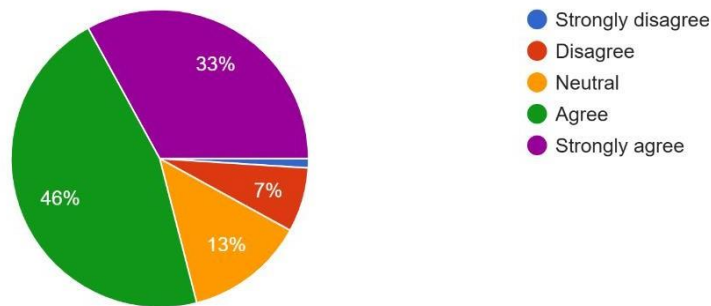
Interpretation:

The survey results show a strong positive perception regarding the organization of warehouse operations. A combined 79% of respondents either agreed (46%) or strongly agreed (33%) that the operations are well-organized. A moderate 13% remained neutral, possibly indicating either a lack of direct experience or mixed opinions. Only 8% of the participants expressed dissatisfaction (7% disagree, 1% strongly disagree), suggesting minimal concerns. Overall, the data indicates that the majority of respondents view the warehouse operations as efficiently managed and well-structured.

Table 4.4.12 Showing Survey Responses on Cargo Handling Safety and damage-free

Response Option	Percentage	Number of Responses (out of 100)
Strongly Disagree	1%	1
Disagree	2%	2
Neutral	15%	15
Agree	44%	44
Strongly Agree	38%	38
Total	100%	100

5. Cargo handling is safe and damage-free.
100 responses
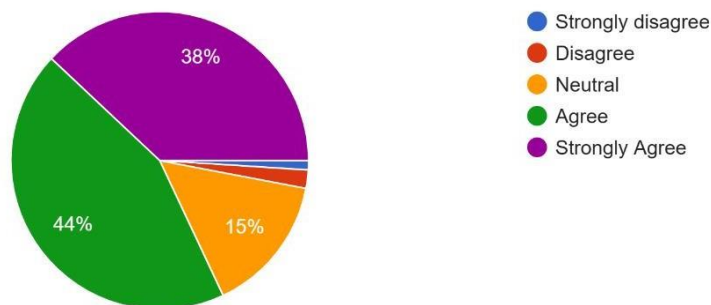
Interpretation:

The survey results indicate strong confidence in the agency's cargo handling processes. A total of 82% of respondents believe that cargo handling is safe and free from damage, with 44% agreeing and 38% strongly agreeing. 15% remained neutral, which may reflect a lack of direct involvement or a balanced view. Only a very small minority (3%) expressed disagreement, suggesting that safety concerns are minimal. Overall, the feedback shows a high level of satisfaction with the cargo handling standards, indicating reliable and secure operations.

Table 4.4.13 Showing Responses on Customs Clearance Efficiency

Response Category	Percentage	Number of Responses (out of 100)
Strongly Disagree	1%	1
Disagree	2%	2
Neutral	16%	16
Agree	40%	40
Strongly Agree	41%	41

6. The customs clearance process is handled efficiently.
100 responses
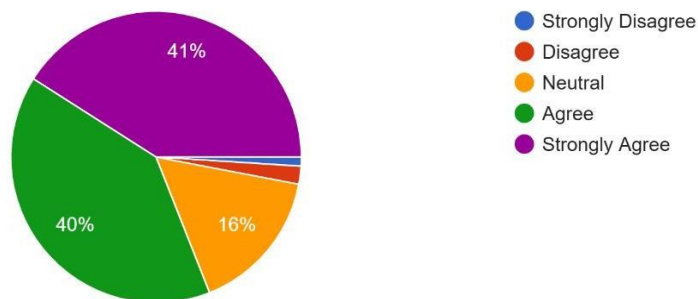
Interpretation:

The survey results indicate a highly positive perception of the customs clearance process. A majority of respondents — 81% (40% Agree + 41% Strongly Agree) — believe that the process is handled efficiently. Only 3% expressed dissatisfaction, while 16% remained neutral. This suggests that the overall customs operations are viewed favorably by most participants, reflecting good performance and effectiveness in managing clearance procedures. However, the small percentage of disagreement implies there is still room for improvement in maintaining consistency and ensuring all stakeholders experience smooth processing.

Table 4.4.14 Showing Responses on Security of Goods During Transit

Response Category	Percentage	Number of Responses (out of 100)
Strongly Disagree	1%	1
Disagree	3%	3
Neutral	19%	19
Agree	46%	46
Strongly Agree	31%	31

7. Goods are stored securely during transit.
100 responses
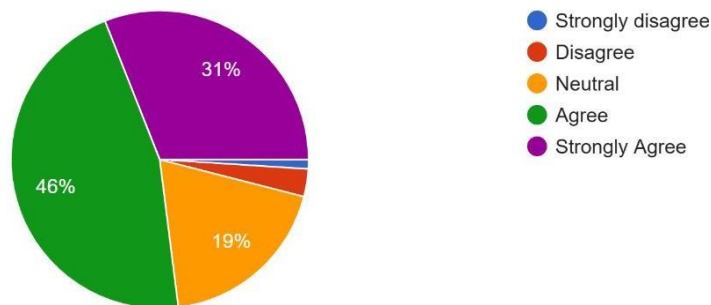
Interpretation:

The results indicate a generally positive perception of the security of goods during transit. A combined 77% of respondents (46% Agree and 31% Strongly Agree) believe that goods are stored securely, demonstrating confidence in the logistics and handling process. Meanwhile, 19% of participants remained neutral, suggesting they may not have direct experience or clear opinions on this aspect. Only 4% of respondents (1% Strongly Disagree and 3% Disagree) expressed dissatisfaction, indicating minimal concerns. Overall, the data reflects that most respondents are satisfied with the security measures in place during the transportation of goods, highlighting effective management practices in transit operations.

Table 4.4.15 Showing Responses on Consistency of Delivery Timelines

Response Category	Percentage	Number of Responses (out of 100)
Strongly Disagree	1%	1
Disagree	4%	4
Neutral	15%	15
Agree	50%	50
Strongly Agree	30%	30

8. Delivery timelines are met consistently.
100 responses
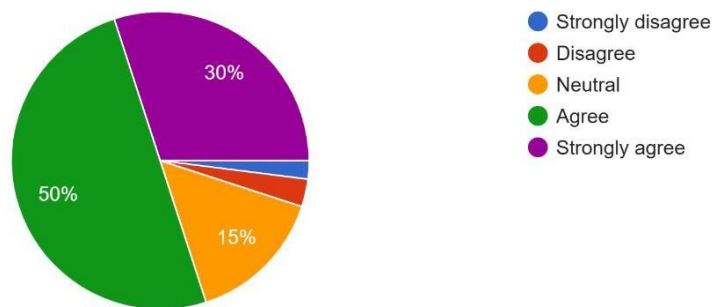
Interpretation:

The data reveals that the majority of respondents are satisfied with the consistency of delivery timelines. A combined 80% (50% Agree and 30% Strongly Agree) believe that deliveries are made on time, indicating a high level of operational efficiency and reliability in the delivery process. 15% of respondents remained neutral, possibly reflecting occasional variations in their experience or lack of sufficient data to form a strong opinion. Only 5% (1% Strongly Disagree and 4% Disagree) expressed dissatisfaction, suggesting very few instances of delayed deliveries. Overall, the findings demonstrate that timely delivery performance is a key strength in the logistics system, fostering customer trust and satisfaction.

Table 4.4.16 Showing Staffs are professional and courteous

Response Category	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	15%
Disagree	28%
Neutral	51%
Agree	0%
Strongly Agree	6%

9. The staff are professional and courteous.
100 responses
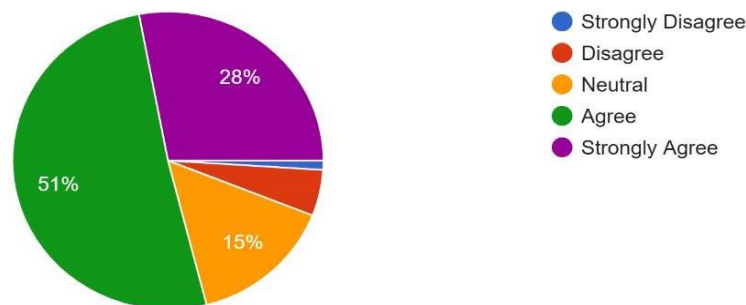
Interpretation:

The survey results indicate that the majority of respondents (51%) have a neutral opinion regarding the professionalism and courtesy of the staff. A notable portion of respondents (28%) disagrees, while 15% strongly disagree. On the positive side, 6% of participants strongly agree, and 0% agree, which shows a lack of strong positive feedback. Overall, the results suggest that while some respondents view the staff positively, the majority either feel neutral or dissatisfied with their professionalism and courtesy.

Table 4.4.17 Showing Communication with CHAKIAT is clear and effective

Response Category	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	10%
Disagree	45%
Neutral	0%
Agree	41%
Strongly Agree	0%

10. Communication with CHAKIAT is clear and effective.
100 responses
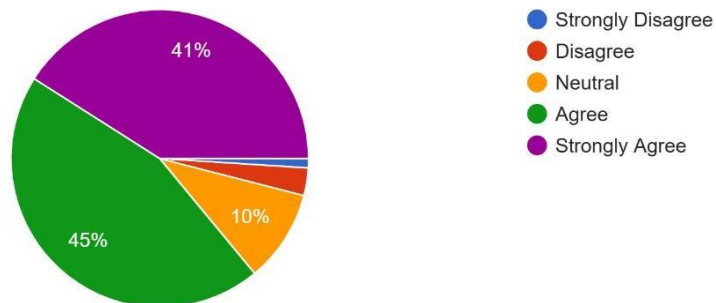
Interpretation:

The survey results suggest that communication with CHAKIAT is perceived in a generally negative light. The majority of respondents (45%) disagree that communication is clear and effective, while 10% strongly disagree. Only 41% agree with the statement, and none of the participants strongly agree or feel neutral. This indicates a significant portion of respondents are dissatisfied with the clarity and effectiveness of communication, suggesting that improvements may be necessary to enhance communication with CHAKIAT.

Table 4.4.18 Showing CHAKIAT provides timely updates about shipment status

Response Category	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	12%
Disagree	26%
Neutral	0%
Agree	59%
Strongly Agree	3%

11. CHAKIAT Agencies provides timely updates about shipment status.
100 responses
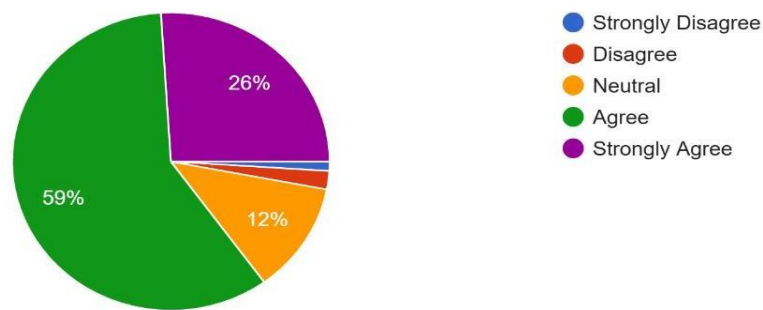
Interpretation:

The survey results suggest that the majority of respondents (59%) agree that CHAKIAT Agencies provide timely updates about shipment status. A smaller group (3%) strongly agrees, indicating a generally positive perception. However, 26% of respondents disagree, and 12% strongly disagree, suggesting that a significant portion of customers still feels that the updates are not timely. This indicates that while most respondents are satisfied with the communication about shipment status, there is room for improvement, particularly to address the concerns of the dissatisfied respondents.

Table 4.4.19 Showing Customer complaints are resolved promptly

Response	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	9%
Disagree	38%
Neutral	4%
Agree	49%
Strongly Agree	0%

12. Customer complaints are resolved promptly.
100 responses
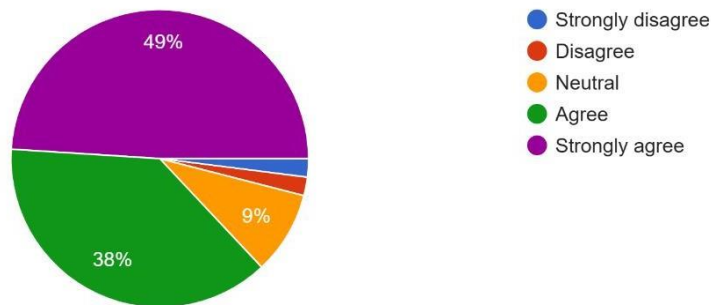
Interpretation:

The chart shows the responses of 100 individuals regarding how promptly customer complaints are resolved. The majority (49%) of respondents agree that complaints are resolved promptly, with 38% disagreeing. A small percentage (9%) strongly disagrees, and only a tiny fraction (4%) is neutral. Interestingly, no one strongly agrees with the statement. This suggests that while many believe complaints are handled in a timely manner, a significant portion of people feel that resolution could be faster or more efficient.

Table 4.4.20 Showing The agency is flexible in handling customer needs

Response	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	14%
Disagree	34%
Neutral	0%
Agree	49%
Strongly Agree	3%

13. The agency is flexible in handling customer needs.
100 responses
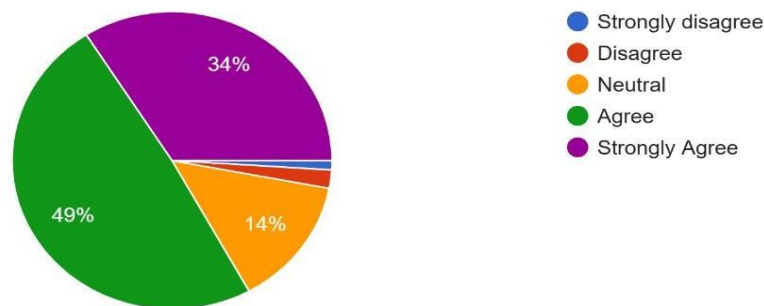
Interpretation:

The chart reflects the responses of 100 people regarding the flexibility of the agency in handling customer needs. A majority (49%) agree that the agency is flexible, while 34% disagree, suggesting some dissatisfaction with the agency's flexibility. Additionally, 14% strongly disagree with the statement, pointing to a notable portion of respondents who feel the agency lacks flexibility. Only 3% strongly agree, which indicates that while some respondents are satisfied, very few think the agency is highly flexible. Notably, no one was neutral, implying that all respondents had a clear opinion on the matter.

Table 4.4.21 Showing Staff members are available when needed

Response	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	9%
Disagree	42%
Neutral	0%
Agree	44%
Strongly Agree	5%

14. Staff members are available when needed.
100 responses
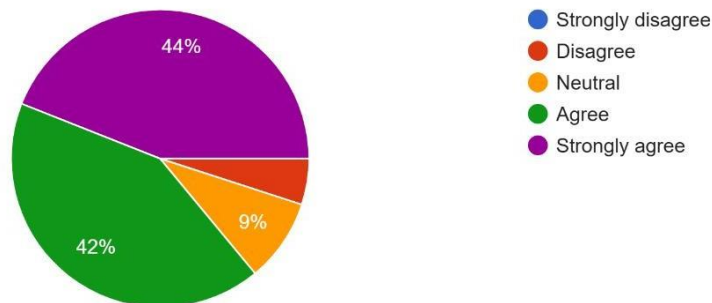
Interpretation:

The chart illustrates the responses of 100 people regarding the availability of staff when needed. A combined 49% of respondents either agree (44%) or strongly agree (5%) that staff members are available when needed, which suggests a generally positive perception of staff availability. However, a significant 42% of respondents disagree, which indicates a noticeable portion of people feel that staff availability could be improved. No respondents were neutral, highlighting that all individuals provided a clear opinion on the matter. The presence of 9% who strongly disagree further emphasizes some dissatisfaction regarding staff availability.

Table 4.4.22 Showing The satisfaction level with speed of service

Response Option	Percentage	Number of Responses
Strongly Disagree	0%	0
Disagree	4%	4
Neutral	15%	15
Agree	49%	49
Strongly Agree	32%	32
Total	100%	100

15. You are satisfied with the speed of service.
100 responses
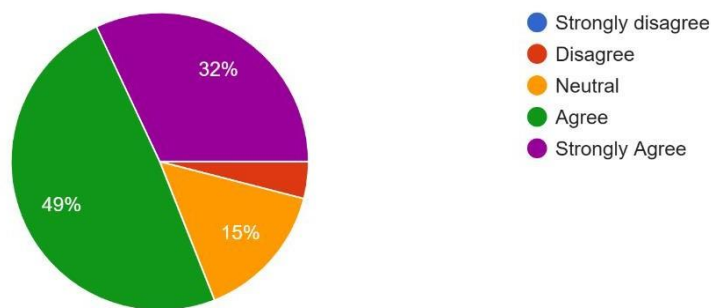
Interpretation:

The majority of respondents (81%) expressed satisfaction with the speed of service, with 49% agreeing and 32% strongly agreeing. A smaller portion (15%) remained neutral, indicating neither satisfaction nor dissatisfaction. Only 4% of respondents disagreed, and none strongly disagreed, suggesting very minimal dissatisfaction. This feedback highlights a generally positive perception of service speed, with room for further improvement to convert neutral responses into positive ones.

Table 4.4.23 Showing Overall satisfaction with the services

Response Option	Percentage	Number of Responses
Strongly Disagree	1%	1
Disagree	2%	2
Neutral	7%	7
Agree	50%	50
Strongly Agree	40%	40
Total	100%	100

16. You are overall satisfied with the services.
100 responses
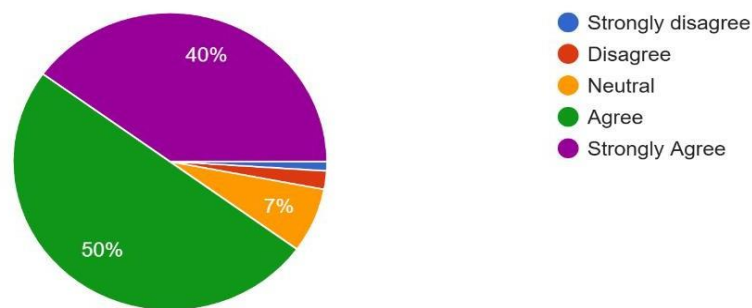
Interpretation:

The results show a very high level of overall satisfaction with the services. A significant 90% of respondents either *agreed (50%)* or *strongly agreed (40%)* that they are satisfied. Only a small portion remained *neutral (7%)*, and just 3% expressed dissatisfaction (1% strongly disagree, 2% disagree). These findings suggest that the vast majority of respondents have a positive overall perception of the services provided, indicating strong service performance and customer satisfaction. The low levels of negative responses point to minimal dissatisfaction and an opportunity to further enhance satisfaction by addressing the concerns of the few neutral or negative respondents.

Table 4.4.24 Showing Agency maintains transparency in service charges

Response Option	Percentage	Number of Responses
Strongly Disagree	1%	1
Disagree	2%	2
Neutral	16%	16
Agree	59%	59
Strongly Agree	22%	22
Total	100%	100

17. The agency maintains transparency in service charges.
100 responses
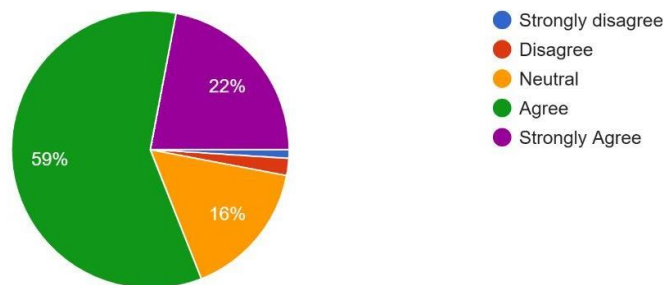
Interpretation:

The feedback indicates a strong positive perception regarding the agency's transparency in service charges. A combined 81% of respondents agreed (59%) or strongly agreed (22%) that the agency maintains transparency. A moderate portion (16%) chose a neutral stance, possibly indicating uncertainty or lack of full awareness about the charges. Only 3% expressed dissatisfaction (1% strongly disagreed, 2% disagreed), which is minimal. Overall, this suggests that the agency is largely seen as transparent in its pricing, but there is still a small opportunity to increase clarity or communication to convert neutral opinions into positive ones.

Table 4.4.25 Showing Delays in shipment are properly explained

Response	Percentage	Number of Responses (out of 100)
Strongly Disagree	1%	1
Disagree	1%	1
Neutral	20%	20
Agree	43%	43
Strongly Agree	35%	35

18. Any delays in shipment are properly explained.
100 responses
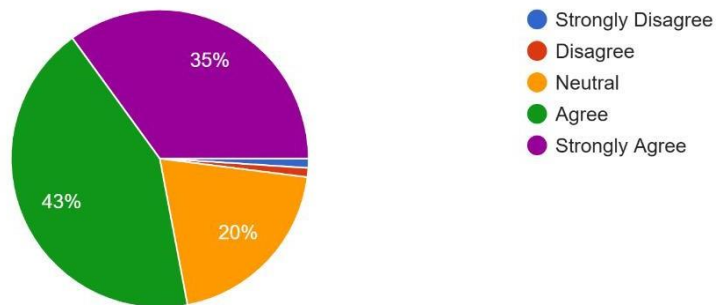
Interpretation:

Most respondents (78%) agree or strongly agree that any delays in shipment are properly explained, with 43% agreeing and 35% strongly agreeing. A smaller portion, 20%, are neutral on this issue. Only a very small minority, 2%, disagree or strongly disagree. This suggests that the majority of respondents are satisfied with the communication regarding shipment delays.

Table 4.4.26 Showing Agency complies with government regulation effectively

Response	Percentage	Number of Responses (out of 100)
Strongly Disagree	1%	1
Disagree	1%	1
Neutral	13%	13
Agree	42%	42
Strongly Agree	43%	43

19. The agency complies with government regulations effectively.
100 responses
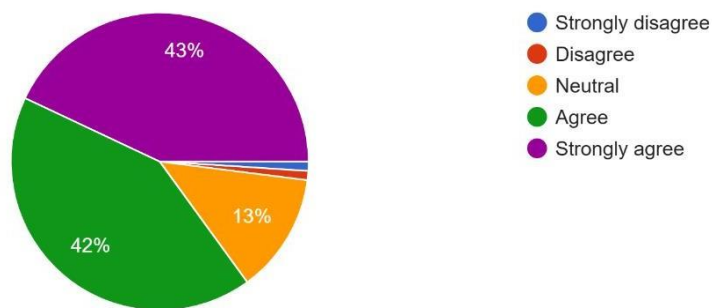
Interpretation:

The majority of respondents believe that the agency complies effectively with government regulations. Specifically, 42% agree and 43% strongly agree, totaling 85% positive responses. A smaller group, 13%, remain neutral, while only 2% disagree or strongly disagree. This indicates a strong overall confidence in the agency's compliance with regulations.

Table 4.4.27 Showing Clear escalation mechanisms for issues

Response	Percentage	Number of Responses (out of 100)
Strongly Disagree	1%	1
Disagree	0%	0
Neutral	17%	17
Agree	40%	40
Strongly Agree	42%	42

20. There are clear escalation mechanisms for issues.

100 responses
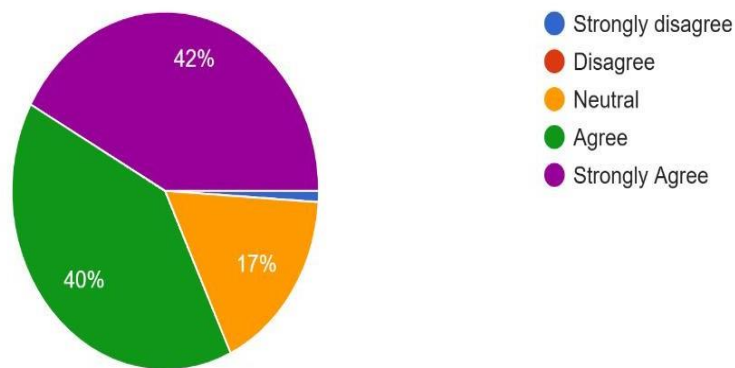
Interpretation:

A large majority of respondents, 82%, either agree or strongly agree that there are clear escalation mechanisms for issues, with 42% strongly agreeing and 40% agreeing. Seventeen percent remain neutral, indicating some uncertainty or lack of opinion on this topic. Only a very small percentage, 1%, disagree. This reflects a strong perception that the escalation mechanisms in place are clear and effective.

Table 4.4.28 Showing Agency Assistance in Documentation Preparation

Response Category	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	1	1%
Disagree	1	1%
Neutral	14	14%
Agree	43	43%
Strongly Agree	41	41%
Total	100	100%

21. The agency assists in documentation preparation.
100 responses
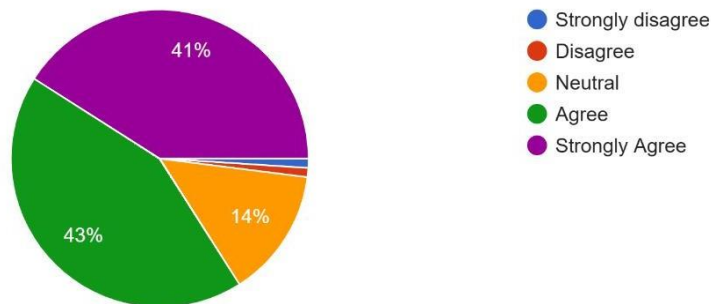
Interpretation:

The data indicates that a significant majority of respondents believe the agency provides strong assistance in documentation preparation. Specifically, 43% of respondents agreed and 41% strongly agreed with the statement, showing a high level of satisfaction with the agency's support in this area. Only 2% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed, while 14% remained neutral. This suggests that the agency is effectively fulfilling its role in documentation assistance, with very few respondents expressing dissatisfaction.

Table 4.4.29 Showing Minimal Disruption in the Forwarding Process

Response Category	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
Disagree	4	4%
Neutral	19	19%
Agree	45	45%
Strongly Agree	31	31%
Total	100	100%

22. There is minimal disruption in the forwarding process.
100 responses
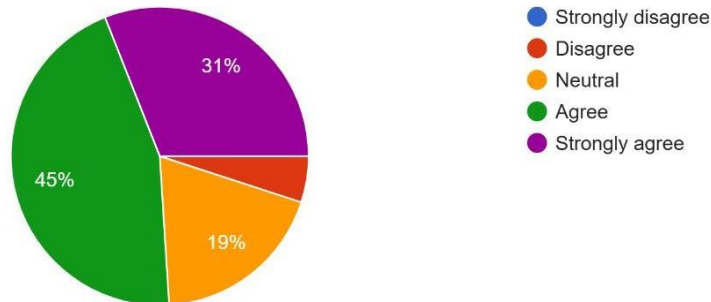
Interpretation:

The results reveal that most respondents believe there is minimal disruption in the forwarding process. A majority of 45% agreed with the statement, while 31% strongly agreed, indicating overall satisfaction with the smoothness of operations. Only 4% of respondents disagreed, and none strongly disagreed, suggesting that operational interruptions are rare. Meanwhile, 19% remained neutral, which could indicate occasional minor delays or uncertainty about the process. Overall, the findings highlight that the agency effectively maintains a consistent and efficient forwarding workflow.

Table 4.4.30 Showing User-Friendliness of Digital Tools (e.g., Tracking Systems)

Response Category	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	1	1%
Disagree	2	2%
Neutral	22	22%
Agree	49	49%
Strongly Agree	26	26%
Total	100	100%

23. Digital tools (e.g., tracking systems) are user-friendly.
100 responses
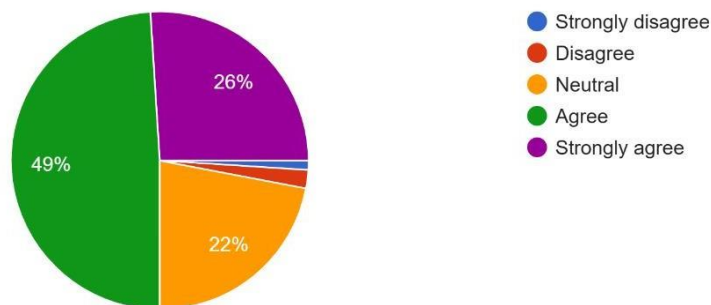
Interpretation:

The findings indicate that most respondents find the agency's digital tools, such as tracking systems, to be user-friendly. Nearly half (49%) of the respondents agreed, while 26% strongly agreed, showing a strong positive perception of the digital systems in place. Only a small fraction (3%) expressed disagreement, and 22% remained neutral, possibly indicating room for minor improvements in accessibility or training. Overall, the data highlights that the agency's adoption of digital tools is largely effective and contributes positively to operational efficiency and customer experience.

Table 4.4.31 Showing The service quality improvement last year

Response	Percentage
Strongly disagree	11%
Disagree	36%
Neutral	0%
Agree	51%
Strongly agree	2%

24. Service quality has improved over the last year.
100 responses
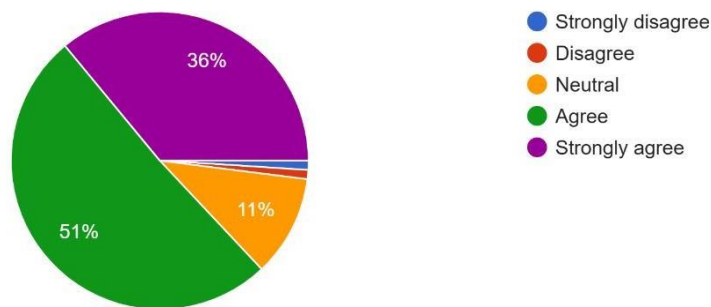
Interpretation:

The survey results show that the majority of respondents (51%) agree that service quality has improved over the last year. A smaller portion (2%) strongly agrees, suggesting a generally positive sentiment towards service improvement. However, a significant percentage (36%) disagree with the statement, while 11% strongly disagree, indicating that a notable number of respondents feel that service quality has either not improved or has worsened. The lack of neutral responses (0%) suggests that respondents were clear in their views on the matter. Overall, there appears to be a mixed opinion on the service quality improvement, with a slightly stronger leaning towards agreement.
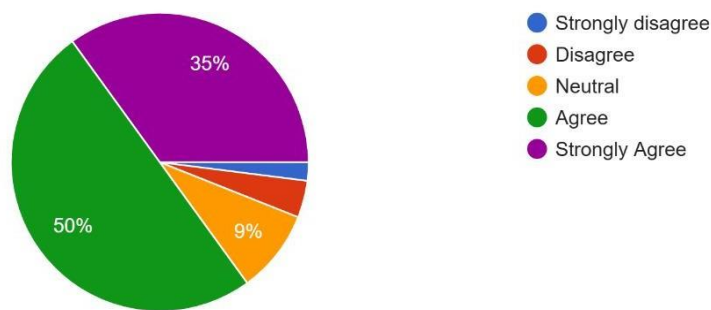
Table 4.4.32 Showing Billing and Invoice are accurate and timely

Response	Percentage
Strongly disagree	9%
Disagree	35%
Neutral	0%
Agree	50%
Strongly agree	6%

25. Billing and invoicing are accurate and timely.
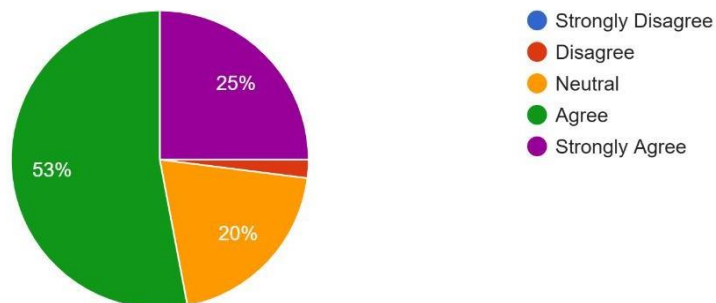100 responses

Interpretation:

The majority of respondents (50%) agree that billing and invoicing are accurate and timely, with an additional 6% strongly agreeing, indicating a generally positive view. However, 35% of respondents disagree with this statement, and 9% strongly disagree, suggesting that a significant portion of respondents have concerns regarding the accuracy and timeliness of billing and invoicing. Notably, no respondents selected "Neutral," which indicates that those who participated in the survey had a strong opinion one way or the other. The results suggest that while there is a solid base of satisfaction, billing and invoicing accuracy and timeliness might need improvement to address the concerns raised by a substantial minority.

Table 4.4.33 Showing Responses to "The agency offers value for money"

Response Option	Percentage	Number of Responses
Strongly Disagree	0%	0
Disagree	2%	2
Neutral	20%	20
Agree	53%	53
Strongly Agree	25%	25
Total	100%	100

26. The agency offers value for money.
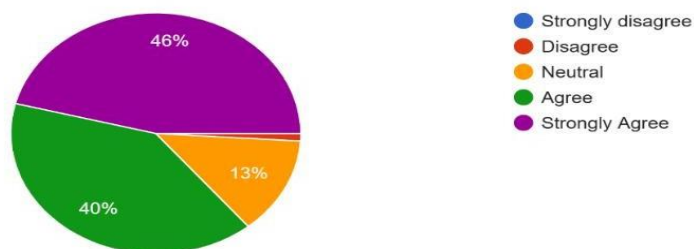100 responses

Interpretation:

The pie chart summarizes feedback from 100 respondents regarding whether the agency offers good value for money. A significant majority—78% (53% Agree + 25% Strongly Agree) expressed a positive sentiment, indicating strong overall satisfaction with the agency's value proposition. Meanwhile, 20% of respondents remained Neutral, suggesting they neither agree nor disagree, possibly due to limited experience or indifference. Only a small minority 2%—expressed a negative view, indicating dissatisfaction. Notably, no respondents selected "Strongly Disagree," which reflects a general absence of strong negative perceptions. Overall, this data indicates that the agency is widely seen as providing good value for money.

Table 4.4.34 Showing Responses to "You would recommend CHAKIAT Agencies to others"

Response Option	Percentage	Number of Responses
Strongly Disagree	0%	0
Disagree	13%	13
Neutral	40%	40
Agree	40%	40
Strongly Agree	46%	46
Total	100%	100

27. You would recommend CHAKIAT Agencies to others.
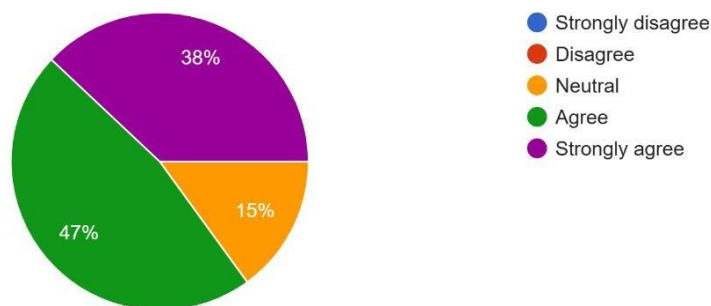100 responses

Interpretation:

The pie chart presents the feedback from 100 respondents regarding whether they would recommend CHAKIAT Agencies to others. A strong majority, 86% (40% Agree + 46% Strongly Agree), expressed a willingness to recommend the agency, suggesting overall satisfaction with the services provided. A substantial portion, 40%, selected a neutral position, indicating ambivalence, possibly due to a lack of sufficient experience or uncertainty. On the downside, 13% of respondents disagreed, but notably, no one strongly disagreed with the statement. This reflects a generally positive view of the agency, with a strong base of supporters but some room for improvement in recommendation or customer advocacy.

Table 4.4.35 Showing Responses to "Staff possess adequate technical knowledge"

Response Option	Percentage	Number of Responses
Strongly Disagree	0%	0
Disagree	0%	0
Neutral	15%	15
Agree	47%	47
Strongly Agree	38%	38
Total	100%	100

28. Staff possess adequate technical knowledge.
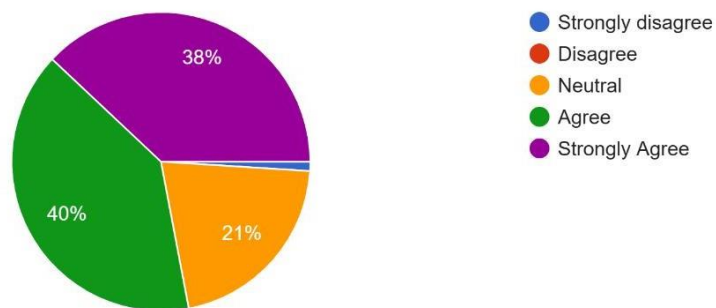100 responses

Interpretation:

The feedback from 100 respondents shows a highly positive perception of the staff's technical knowledge at the agency. A combined 85% (47% Agree + 38% Strongly Agree) of participants believe that the staff possess adequate technical knowledge, indicating strong confidence in the team's capabilities. Additionally, 15% chose a Neutral stance, suggesting a small portion of respondents are undecided or lack sufficient experience to judge. Importantly, no respondents selected Disagree or Strongly Disagree, which reinforces the agency's reputation for employing technically competent staff. This result highlights technical expertise as a clear strength of the organization.

Table 4.4.36 Showing Agency follows ethical business practices

Response	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	21%
Disagree	38%
Neutral	0%
Agree	40%
Strongly Agree	0%

29. The agency follows ethical business practices.
100 responses

Interpretation:

The survey responses about the agency's ethical business practices show that 40% of respondents agree that the agency follows ethical practices, while 38% disagree. A notable 21% strongly disagree, indicating some dissatisfaction with the agency's ethical standing. There were no responses indicating neutrality or strong agreement, which suggests a polarized opinion about the agency's ethical practices. The data highlights a mix of agreement and disagreement, with a significant portion expressing a negative view.

Table 4.4.37 Showing Logistics support meets expectation

Response	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	1%
Disagree	0%
Neutral	18%
Agree	40%
Strongly Agree	41%

30. Their logistics support meets your expectations.
100 responses
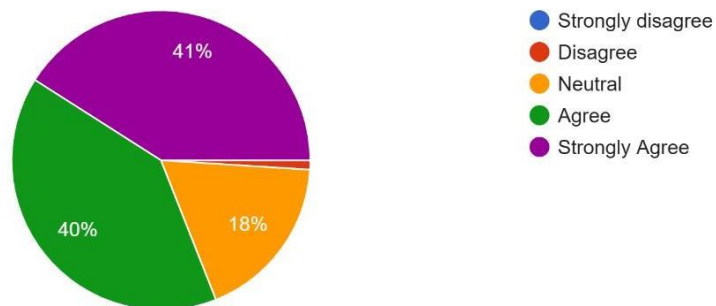
Interpretation:

The feedback on the logistics support meeting expectations is largely positive. A combined 81% of respondents either agreed (40%) or strongly agreed (41%) that the logistics support meets their expectations. This indicates strong overall satisfaction with the logistics services provided. Only 18% of respondents remained neutral, and a negligible 1% strongly disagreed. The absence of any standard disagreement responses suggests minimal dissatisfaction among the participants, reflecting well on the agency's logistics performance.

CHAPTER V

FINDINGS, SUGGESTIONS & CONCLUSION

FINDINGS, CONCLUSION, AND SUGGESTIONS

5.1 Findings

1) Majority (35%) of the respondents falls under the age category of 26–35 years.

2) Majority (80%) of the respondents are Male.

3) Majority (64%) of the respondents are from Urban locality.

4) Majority (33%) of the respondents gets average Monthly Income of Rs. 25,001 – Rs. 50,000.

5) Majority (25%) of the respondent's company locality is Cuddalore.

6) Majority (34.1%) of the respondent's industry sector is Manufacturing sector.

7) Majority (54.5%) of the respondent's company size is Small (1-50 employees).

8) Majority (50%) of the respondents Agrees that the cargo booking process is simple and efficient .

9) Majority (53%) of the respondents Agrees that the transport agreements are reliable and punctual.

10) Majority (42%) of the respondents Agrees that the agency ensures complete documentation for exports/imports.

11) Majority (46%) of the respondents Agrees that the warehouse operations are well organized.

12) Majority (44%) of the respondents Agrees that cargo handling is safe and damage free.

13) Majority (40%) of the respondents Agrees that the customs clearance process is handled efficienty.

14) Majority (46%) of the respondents Agrees that Goods are stored securely during transit.

15) Majority (50%) of the respondents Agrees that Delivery timelines are met consistently.

16) Majority (51%) of the respondents are Neutral about the staffs are professional and courteous.

17) Majority (45%) of the respondents Disagrees that Communication with CHAKIAT is clear and effective.

18) Majority (59%) of the respondents Agrees that CHAKIAT Agencies provides timely updates about shipment status.

19) Majority (49%) of the respondents Agrees that Customer complaints are resolved promptly.

20) Majority (49%) of the respondents Agrees that The agency is flexible in handling customer needs.

21) Majority (44%) of the respondents Agrees that Staff members are available when needed.

22) Majority (49%) of the respondents Agrees that they are satisfied with the speed of service.

23) Majority (50%) of the respondents Agrees that they are overall satisfied with the services.

24) Majority (59%) of the respondents Agrees that The agency maintains transparency in service charges.

25) Majority (43%) of the respondents Agrees that Any delays in shipment are properly explained.

26) Majority (43%) of the respondents Strongly Agrees that The agency complies with government regulations effectively.

27) Majority (42%) of the respondents Strongly Agrees that There are clear escalation mechanisms for issues.

28) Majority (43%) of the respondents Agrees that The agency assists in documentation preparation.

29) Majority (45%) of the respondents Agrees that There is minimal disruption in the forwarding process.

30) Majority (49%) of the respondents Agrees that Digital tools are user friendly.

31) Majority (51%) of the respondents Agrees that Service quality has improved over the last year.

32) Majority (50%) of the respondents Agrees that Billing and invoicing are accurate and timely.

33) Majority (53%) of the respondents Agrees that The agency offers value for money service.

34) Majority (46%) of the respondents Strongly Agrees that they would recommend CHAKIAT Agencies to others.

35) Majority (47%) of the respondents Agrees that Staff possess adequate technical knowledge.

36) Majority (40%) of the respondents Agrees that The agency follows ethical business practices.

37) Majority (41%) of the respondents Strongly Agrees that Logistics support meets their expectations.

5.2 Suggestions

Based on the findings, the following suggestions are recommended for CHAKIAT Agencies to address operational challenges and enhance service quality:

- Since a significant portion of respondents (45%) disagreed that communication with CHAKIAT is clear and effective, the agency should strengthen its communication framework by introducing dedicated customer relationship executives and real-time digital chat or email support systems to keep clients better informed.

- As 51% of respondents remained neutral about staff professionalism, regular soft- skill development programs, etiquette workshops, and customer service training sessions should be conducted to enhance interaction quality and responsiveness.

- A structured feedback and grievance redressal system should be introduced. Collecting post-service feedback will help identify service lapses and areas needing immediate improvement.

- While most respondents agreed that documentation and compliance are effectively managed, continuous monitoring and automation of document management can minimize human error and increase transparency during customs clearance.

- Even though 59% agreed that the agency maintains transparency, introducing a standardized rate chart and a digital quotation system can further ensure clarity and fairness in pricing.

- Meeting delivery timelines consistently is appreciated by respondents, but further optimization through route planning, GPS tracking, and better coordination with transport partners could enhance reliability and punctuality.

- The agency should invest more in digital tools such as real-time shipment tracking, automated invoicing, and AI-driven logistics planning to enhance user experience and operational efficiency.

- As many respondents agreed that services are satisfactory, CHAKIAT should leverage this goodwill by implementing loyalty programs, personalized service packages, and periodic client appreciation initiatives to strengthen customer retention.

- Considering a large number of respondents belong to small manufacturing units, CHAKIAT can diversify services by offering integrated logistics solutions tailored for SMEs, including warehousing, insurance, and express clearance packages.

- Establishing a quality monitoring team and conducting quarterly service audits can help in sustaining customer satisfaction and addressing operational bottlenecks promptly.

5.3 Conclusion

The study on Service Quality and Operational Challenges towards Clearance and Forwarding Operations at CHAKIAT Agencies revealed that most respondents have a positive perception of the agency's performance across various service dimensions such as cargo booking efficiency, documentation management, delivery timelines, and transparency in service charges. However, certain aspects like communication clarity, staff professionalism, and continuous process improvement require further attention. The overall results indicate that CHAKIAT Agencies maintains a reliable and customer- oriented operational framework, but there is potential for enhancement through digital transformation, employee training, and stronger customer engagement strategies.

In conclusion, by integrating modern logistics technologies, maintaining transparent practices, and prioritizing customer satisfaction, CHAKIAT Agencies can strengthen its competitive position in the freight forwarding and clearance industry while ensuring long- term sustainability and client trust

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ANNEXURES (QUESTIONNAIRE)

Dear Respondent,

You are requested to provide your honest feedback on the services of CHAKIAT Agencies. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements using the scale provided below:

1 - Strongly Disagree

2 - Disagree

3 - Neutral

4 - Agree

5 - Strongly Agree

1. The cargo booking process is simple and efficient.

2. CHAKIAT Agencies provides timely updates about shipment status.

3. The customs clearance process is handled efficiently.

4. The staff are professional and courteous.

5. The agency ensures complete documentation for exports/imports.

6. Communication with CHAKIAT is clear and effective.

7. Any delays in shipment are properly explained.

8. The agency offers value for money.

9. Customer complaints are resolved promptly.

10. Transport arrangements are reliable and punctual.

11. Cargo handling is safe and damage-free.

12. Delivery timelines are met consistently.

13. The agency maintains transparency in service charges.

14. Staff possess adequate technical knowledge.

15. Digital tools (e.g., tracking systems) are user-friendly.

16. The agency complies with government regulations effectively.

17. The warehouse operations are well-organized.

18. The agency is flexible in handling customer needs.

19. There is minimal disruption in the forwarding process.

20. Staff members are available when needed.

21. Service quality has improved over the last year.

22. Billing and invoicing are accurate and timely.

23. There are clear escalation mechanisms for issues.

24. Goods are stored securely during transit.

25. The agency assists in documentation preparation.

26. You are satisfied with the speed of service.

27. The agency follows ethical business practices.

28. Their logistics support meets your expectations.

29. You would recommend CHAKIAT Agencies to others.

30. You are overall satisfied with the services.