

## **Policies and Distribution Channels: The Retailer-Wholesaler Channel in the United Arab Emirates**

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**Abstract.** Almost all recent literature on marketing channels has focused on studying this subject in the USA and the West. Specifically, previous research has failed to study conflict in marketing channels in developing countries (e.g., United Arab Emirates). As a consequence, the knowledge of marketing, in general, in these countries remains incomplete. Using a quantitative approach, the author examined the effect of conflict on channel members in the United Arab Emirates. Many issues like manufacturers' management of the rebate systems; manufacturers' management of credit terms; manufacturers' support services; manufacturers' methods of pricing and discounts; manufacturers' allowance of free return of goods; manufacturers' honor of contracts; importance of name and family to manufacturers; and manufacturers' desire to participate in social activities, were investigated. Based on convenience sampling procedure, 240 wholesalers were selected as a sample for this study. The results of this study indicated a strong sense of dissatisfaction amongst UAE wholesalers with respect to manufacturers' management of their distribution systems, which could develop into conflict between members of the marketing channels.

### **Introduction**

Care should be taken with any channel member as the ongoing management of any marketing channel requires a careful overall plan. The administration of a distribution system is an enormous task, because of the amount of transactions going through the system and the huge number of customers that the system deals with everyday [1, 2, 3, 4]. The fact that the marketing channel consists of independent members, who although may have common interests in the distribution of a business product, still have many conflicting interests [5, 6, 7].

Many other issues, e.g., credibility and privileged use of information between channel members, discrepancies in product flow between the manufacturer and channel

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members and differences in role identities, ...etc, can also be seen as a source of conflict [8, 9, 10].

Whatever the cause of the conflict may be, one should not underestimate the disruptions that conflict has on channel performance and, therefore, many steps need to be taken to minimize potential problems during the planning stage of the marketing channel. This will help in reducing channel members dissatisfaction and, hence, minimizing the problems of managing the channel [11, 12, 13].

### **Policy ambiguity and channel conflict**

It is very common to see conflict between channel members in several ways. Some conflict may be related to natural competitive factors, and some may be related to policy ambiguity of the marketing channel and differential treatment of the manufacturer [1, 14, 15, 16]. Although conflict is always seen as destructive to the marketing channel, it also can be constructive in some cases as when each member serves as a watchdog on the other and, hence, providing a set of checks and balances within the channel [4, 9, 16]. However, since the purpose of this study is to examine the role of policy ambiguity in creating channel conflict, the following discusses economic practices and activities related to channel policy, at the corporate level, that could create conflict.

### **Rebate system**

This factor is considered by researchers and writers as one of the most sensitive business practices in distribution systems. As an incentive to other channel members, manufacturers must understand the importance of this factor as a portion of business profit given to wholesalers to motivate their purchase [5, 17]. Types, purposes and methods of payment for rebate should be clearly emphasized in the corporate policy of the distribution system [12, 18]. For example, there are straight rebates on the amount of goods sold. A manufacturer may give the wholesaler 2 to 3 percent commission on sales after the sales have been completed. For a new product, the manufacturer may increase the percent of rebate for the first year to about 5 to 6 percent. Some producers in addition rely on progressive rebates to motivate wholesalers [12, 19]. To preserve harmony and avoid conflict, the purpose of the rebate system and its provisions must be clearly understood by channel members, otherwise it will become mysterious and complex [4, 9, 20]. Fair and clear rebate system helps wholesalers cover their selling expenses. When things reach this stage, no trace remains of the control of distribution by wholesalers, and the subordination of wholesalers to manufacturers is achieved [6, 12, 13].

### **Credit terms**

The use of credit terms is, usually, dependent upon trust and harmonious business relationships between the manufacturer and channel members [4, 12, 21]. Its uses can be seen at every stage of any distribution system. Wholesalers need to accept some form of

credit terms from retailers and, in turn, manufacturers need to give wholesalers acceptable form of business financing. It has been suggested that this archaic structure persists because of the financial reliance; the more middlemen, the more spreading of the credit. The chain reaction of deferred payment thus has been institutionalized easily as a trade custom and industry sales promotion tool [1, 2, 13].

The credit payment system is very important in daily businesses of any distribution system, however, its validity depends largely on the trustworthiness and honesty of the payee (e.g., wholesalers and retailers). As is the case in the rebate system, manufacturers should have credit terms unequivocally clear at their corporate policy of their distribution system [21, 22].

Unclear and deliberate differential credit treatment will lead to dissatisfaction amongst channel members. A manufacturer may have different credit policies, for example, depending upon channel members' strength of loyalty, financial position and human contact, but these policies ought to be clear and simple to understand. Sooner or later, back-door credit favors will uncover and, hence, conflict is expected amongst channel members which could lead to the destruction of the marketing channel.

### **Return of goods:**

The type and portion of goods that is allowed to be returned after delivery should be clearly stated at the corporate policy of the distribution system. These returns are not necessarily attributable deficient or damaged goods. For example, if goods would not sell, the privilege of returning goods to manufacturers may help in strengthening relationships amongst channel members [18, 21].

Limited capital income and financial weaknesses, make it difficult for channel members to keep unsold goods in stock in their limited store space at their own financial risk. This reason, however, is not the only cause for the return of goods, other factors like acquiring economic power by the manufacturer and manufacturers' competition are also important [1, 5, 21]. For instance, to attract stable, large-volume outlets which often enjoy strong customer loyalty, wholesalers permit supermarkets and department stores liberal returns without much question. The burden of returned goods is, usually, transferred by wholesalers to manufacturers to minimize their losses. Of course, relying on past associations and the forces of competition, wholesalers request return privileges from the manufacturers [12, 18, 19].

In the industrialized countries, judgmental bases are usually used by most manufacturers in shipping their products to wholesalers. With no specific orders from wholesalers, manufacturers use their own estimates in sending their shipments, because those manufacturers must dispose of a certain volume in order to maintain economies of scale in production [12, 16].

The acceptance of these shipments by wholesalers, who in turn try to sell the excess further down the channel, is based on the fact that unsold products will enjoy liberal return privileges to manufacturers. Furthermore, many manufacturers accept the free return of goods to maintain their list price, to establish a brand image and to avoid damaging this image by price-cut competition at the distribution level. This policy is true, particularly, when it comes to cosmetics, toiletries and pharmaceutical products [12].

Following a clear policy on the type and portion of goods that are allowed to be returned will reduce the chances of conflict between channel members and, hence, a more healthy marketing channel can be maintained.

### **Services**

The level and type of services (e.g., technical, promotional and flow of information) provided by manufacturers to channel members should also be noted at the corporate policy level of the distribution system [9, 14].

Discrepancies in services provided to channel members are also a major source of dissatisfaction and conflict. These services are important for channel members, especially, for those who do not have the capability to independently develop such needs [10, 20]. For example, lack of flow of information can quickly turn a cooperative relationship into a conflicting one. Manufacturers often make changes in product designs, prices and promotional strategies. Channel members generally feel that they are entitled to ample advance notice of such changes so that they can make appropriate strategic adjustment if necessary. Positive interaction between manufacturers and channel members is becoming increasingly important, and many firms are taking action to achieve this. In addition to getting manufacturers support, channel members are interested in their own financial gain [15, 18]. Many studies have shown that manufacturers' activities, to ensure continued profitability as part of selling their products, play a major role in motivating channel members. The assurance of continued profitability for channel members will help in creating a strong, stable and lasting manufacturer-intermediary relationship.

### **Prices and discounts**

Price is an important element in the marketing mix strategy. It links directly with the generation of total revenue. Actually, prices and organization's profits are interrelated and that profits are the lifeblood for long-term survival.

The notion of marginal pricing and the importance of selling at prices that contribute to costs is well understood both by businesses and by academics. Prices may be cut at any level in the marketing channel by firms that must have sufficient immediate income to meet their unfavorable costs, but the move ultimately will affect the retailer's

cost of goods [2, 5, 20, 22].

Members of the marketing channel are in competition with large number of other members of other marketing channels and, therefore, they face great price pressures. To face competition and increase sales volume, members (e.g., wholesalers and retailers) use price as the main weapon and the most immediate tool at their disposal [12, 16].

Hence, manufacturers should take every care to maintain clear and fair pricing at the corporate policy of the distribution system. Differential pricing may be used by manufacturers but, it should be made clear, consistent and simple to be understood by every member, otherwise conflict is expected.

### **Contracts**

Manufacturers may use contracts in an attempt to minimize the risk of conflict in the marketing channel and, also, to be used for motivating channel members [10, 11, 16]. Contracts can cover a wide range of areas, including channel leadership, financial and inventory management, advertising and promotion, training and other aspects of operating the business. If these issues are properly and clearly verified in the contract, then one can assume that the risk of conflict is minimal [16, 21].

### **Social relations**

The importance of social participation is widely emphasized by businessmen not only with members of the same organization but also with other trade partners. This activity helps in establishing personal relationships between the manufacturer, the wholesaler and the retailer [10, 12, 13, 22]. The social interaction of the three main bodies of the channel distribution allows for the exchange of their frank opinions concerning the business prospects and the marketing channel. These personal relationships can be very meaningful if the three bodies of the marketing channel are keen on maintaining a healthy channel of distribution. This, in return, helps in achieving each member's goal(s) and the overall goal(s) of the marketing channel [11, 18, 21].

Adopting some social activities (e.g., labor day or new business events) at the corporate policy level of the distribution system, may help in reducing the risk of conflict in the marketing channel.

### **Scope and significance of the Study**

This study focuses on a channel context that has been neglected by researchers, namely corporate policy ambiguity of the marketing channel, involving the exchange of consumer products in developing countries with reference to United Arab Emirates.

Corporate policy is defined as "The policy that determines the means for utilizing

resources in the areas of production, finance, research and development, personnel, and marketing to reach the organization's goals [23]. More precisely, the aim is to examine, from the wholesaler's point-of-view, whether or not the corporate policy of the marketing channel of UAE manufacturers is clear and fair or ambiguous and discriminate.

Despite economic prosperity during the last 20 years, the UAE distribution system has maintained the old characteristics of the eighties. It is made of a wide range of wholesalers, brokers, and retailers, however, it remains traditional, scattered and fragmented. It places a lot of emphasis on personal relationships with users. The marketing channels appear to be ineffective and cumbersome. Most UAE customers seem to shop several times a week and prefer convenient and personal neighborhood shops. Thus, designing efficient and effective distribution systems in the UAE poses a difficult challenge. This challenge is all about channel decisions, which deals with channel design, implementation and management. The management of any channel is related to finding and motivating individual channel members and evaluating their performance on regular bases. The characteristics of the distribution system in the UAE points out the importance of having good channel management, and this should give the reader an idea about the significance of this study.

### **Study hypothesis**

As mentioned earlier, manufacturers should be interested in creating positive interaction with channel members and, thus, many firms are taking action to achieve this. Positive interaction with channel members can be achieved through manufacturer's support of their activities. This support can cover wide range of areas, including advertising and promotion, financial and inventory management, training and other aspects of operating the business. Based on this, it can be assumed that manufacturer's support of channel members is expressed at the corporate policy of the marketing channel. Therefore, the researcher developed the following hypothesis.

*The corporate policy of the marketing channel of UAE manufacturers is clear and fair.*

### **Methodology: Sampling and Survey Procedures**

Data were collected through the use of self-administered questionnaire involving wholesalers of consumer products in Abu Dhabi and Dubai. Because of the lack of complete and accurate information on wholesalers in the two Emirates, convenience sampling procedure was adopted and, therefore, 240 wholesalers were selected as a sample for this study. Eight of them refused to participate. A total of 232 questionnaires were hand-delivered to the participants. Of the returned questionnaires, 216 were usable for analysis.

All construct measures had 5-point likert-type anchors ranging from “strongly agree 5” to “strongly disagree 1”. Construct reliability and content validity were achieved through the use of constructs used in previous studies and by operationalizing concepts being guided by their definition or explanation in the literature. Further, reliability analyses was also conducted. The results were acceptable, Alpha values  $\geq 0.66$ . Wholesalers were selected for this study as most of them deal with the ultimate consumer, which means that they perform some retailers’ activities. This, also, means that the stage of retailer-ultimate consumer is relatively and indirectly addressed.

### Data analysis

Two types of statistical procedures were used. Frequencies were used for their usual use and for simple comparisons. A Mann-Whitney test was used to analyze if significant differences exist between the means of two different groups. For example, this test was used to find out if significant differences exist between the means of wholesalers who said that manufacturers gave them fair business treatment and those who did not. In addition, this test was also used in testing the study hypothesis.

### Findings and discussion

Question No.1 intended to ask wholesalers about their general opinion regarding manufacturers’ business fairness. The results shown in table (1) indicate that the majority (i.e., 78%) of wholesalers stated that UAE manufacturers did not give them fair business treatment.

**Table 1. Wholesalers’ opinion regarding UAE manufacturers’ business fairness**

Response	n	%
Yes	48	22
No	168	78

216 Cases

0 Missing Value

This should be of concern to UAE manufacturers as this indication may develop into dissatisfaction amongst wholesalers. Most researchers have related channel conflict to dissatisfaction. The greater the incompatibility and tension between a manufacturer and channel members, the lower would be channel members overall approval of the channel management. A manufacturer who performs his prescribed role excellently would be viewed by wholesalers as being concerned about their welfare. Therefore, wholesalers overall approval of channel relationship would be enhanced. Wholesalers in the United Arab Emirates deal with variety of products including competing ones. If dissatisfaction is there, wholesalers’ interest and loyalty may be switched to other products/manufacturers.

To examine wholesalers' issues of concern and, thus, their dissatisfaction, respondents were asked the questions 2-9. Table 2 reveals the results.

**Table 2. Wholesalers' opinion regarding certain issues of concern**

Level of agreement Issues of concern	Statement agree		Agree		Uncertain		Quite disagree		Statement disagree		Mean value
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	
- Manufacturers' management of the rebate systems	20	9.3	24	11.1	48	22.2	46	21.3	78	36.1	2.36
- Manufacturers' management of credit terms	16	7.4	20	9.3	30	13.9	50	23.1	100	46.3	2.08
- Manufacturers' support services (e.g., technical, promotional, and flow of information)	14	6.5	16	7.4	32	14.8	74	34.3	80	37.0	2.12
- Manufacturers' methods of pricing and discounts	20	9.3	24	11.1	42	19.4	58	26.9	72	33.3	2.36
- Manufacturer's allowance of free return of goods	20	9.3	10	4.6	40	18.5	98	45.4	48	22.2	2.33
- Manufacturers' honor of contracts	14	6.5	12	5.5	12	5.5	62	28.7	116	53.7	1.82
- Importance of name and family to manufacturers	66	30.6	80	37.0	44	20.4	16	7.4	10	4.6	3.82
- Manufacturers' desire to participate in social activities	22	10.2	32	14.8	48	22.2	42	19.4	72	33.3	2.49

216 Cases

0 Missing Value

As shown in Table 2, the majority of respondents have disagreed with the statements regarding manufacturers' management of the rebate systems, management of credit terms, manufacturers' support services, methods of pricing and discounts, allowance of free return of goods, honor of contracts and manufacturers' social participation, with mean values of 2.36, 2.08, 2.12, 2.36, 2.33, 1.82 and 2.49 consecutively. Respondents agreed with the statement concerning manufacturers' interest in wholesaler's name and family, with a mean value of 3.82. However, the overall mean score for all of the questions is 2.42. If we assume that the base accept ance decision is 3 points out of 5, then an overall mean score of 2.42 should tell us a lot about the level of concern and dissatisfaction regarding the management of the marketing channel in the UAE.

If one is to draw a conclusion from the results of Table 2 and the overall mean score for all of the questions, it can be safely said that UAE manufacturers have an ambiguous and discriminatory policy at the corporate level of their distribution system.



To further investigate this matter, a Mann-Whitney test was used to examine if significant differences exist between those who indicated that they received fair business treatment and those who did not. The results are shown in Table 3.

**Table 3. Manufacturers' business treatment by wholesalers' opinion regarding certain issues of concern**

Issue of concern	Level of concern	n	N	P Value	Level of significance
- Manufacturers' management of the rebate systems	H	168	216	0.0024	**
- Manufacturers' management of credit terms.	H	168	216	0.0018	**
- Manufacturers' support services (e.g., technical, promotional, and flow of information)	H	168	216	0.0008	**
- Manufacturers' methods of pricing and discounts	H	168	216	0.0022	**
- Manufacturer's allowance of free return of goods.	H	168	216	0.0013	**
- Manufacturers' honor of contracts.	H	168	216	0.0001	**
- Importance of name and family to manufacturers	H	168	216	0.0011	**
- Manufacturers' desire to participate in social activities	L	168	216	0.3251	--

N= Number of cases included in the sample

n= number of valid observations

H= High

\*\* Significant difference at the 0.01 level

-- No significant difference

Table 3 shows that, wholesalers who stated that they did not receive fair business treatment have had a significantly higher level of concern than those who did, regarding the issues that constitute the corporate policy of manufacturers' distribution system in the UAE. Therefore, the study hypothesis which stated that "*The corporate policy of the marketing channel of UAE manufacturers is clear and fair*" was rejected at the 0.01 level. No significant difference was found regarding manufacturers' participation in wholesalers' social activities.

Table 4 shows that the majority of wholesalers have a high level of concern with respect to the overall improvement of the structure and efficiency of the marketing channel, with mean value of 2.10.

**Table 4. Wholesalers' opinion regarding the overall improvement of the marketing channel**

Issues of Concern	To a very large extent				Not at all				Mean value		
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%			
The overall improvement of the structure and efficiency of the marketing channel.	14	6.5	26	12.0	22	10.2	60	27.8	94	43.5	2.10

216 Cases

0 Missing value

Table 5 shows the results of a Mann-Whitney test which shows a significant difference exists between those who said that they received fair business treatment from UAE manufacturers and those who did not, regarding the overall improvement of the marketing channel.

**Table 5. Manufacturers' business treatment by wholesalers' opinion regarding the overall improvement of the marketing channel**

Issue of improvement	Level of concern	n	N	P value	Level of significance
Marketing channel	H	168	216	0.0006	**

N= Number of cases included in the sample

N= number of valid observations

H= High

\*\* Significant difference at the 0.01 level

The long-run effects of manufacturers' frequent use of an ambiguous corporate policy and preferential treatment in their distribution systems would prove negative for themselves. The market environment drastically changes and other more positive alternatives (manufacturers) appear. If and when such changes do occur, manufacturers may find that the channel support they need to succeed simply is not present because of the manner in which they have managed channel relationships in the past. Attempts to improve channel members relations can have both short and long-run implications for the whole distribution system.

### Conclusions and Recommendations

Marketing channels analysts have postulated a number of relationships on the effects of ambiguous corporate policy of any distribution system. Policy ambiguity of manufacturers is generally seen as a destructive tool to the overall mission of the channel. Almost every researcher who studied this subject has referred conflict within the marketing channel to policy ambiguity. Although some researchers have suggested that conflict may create possible positive effects like when members of the channel serve as a watchdog on each other, the majority of them documented the negative effects and, hence, the destruction of the marketing channel.

Satisfaction refers to a channel member's overall approval of manufacturers' policy of the distribution system. The results of this study indicated that wholesalers have a high level of concern regarding certain issues of the corporate policy of manufacturers' distribution systems in the United Arab Emirates. Wholesalers have a high level of concern regarding credit terms, rebate systems, free return of goods, use of contracts, services provided by manufacturers, pricing and discounts, and the interest of manufacturers in the name and family of wholesalers. No concern was detected regarding manufacturers' social participation with wholesalers. Privileged use of information between channel members was also seen as a source of concern. Whatever channel members' concern may be, it can rise from manufacturers' failure to adopt a

policy or clear procedural issues that affect operations of the marketing channel.

The results of this study indicated a strong sense of dissatisfaction amongst wholesalers with respect to manufacturers' management of their distribution systems. This, therefore, could contribute to the creation of a possible conflict between members of the marketing channel. Overcoming dissatisfaction of channel members is not impossible but hard to achieve as most channel members are independent and the structure of the channel is, usually, complicated. Based on this, especial effort is needed to maintain satisfaction amongst channel members. To reach this, manufacturers need to do five things: (1) determine the needs and problems of members of the channel, (2) provide channel members with the required support to solve their problems and needs, (3) maintain the necessary leadership to inspire understanding and cooperation amongst channel members, (4) establish a clear and unambiguous corporate policy that, unequivocally, addresses the issues of concern of channel members, (5) a periodic and regular evaluation of key areas of channel members' performance and relationships with other members.

### **Implications of the Study Findings**

The results of this study should be useful to all manufacturers who are engaged in the UAE market. Those manufacturers have to view the overall management of marketing channels as a key factor in developing an effective distribution system that can be subsequently contribute to the achievement of an overall marketing mix strategy. For those who underestimate the importance of having good channel management should get a first hand experience by visiting their marketing intermediaries. The overall concern of UAE wholesalers regarding the degree of ambiguity of their marketing channels at the corporate level is immense. The direct contact and involvement between manufacturers and wholesalers should help in reducing the level of ambiguity and hence the level of concern and dissatisfaction with the distribution system.

All business organizations engaged in the UAE market, especially local ones, have different lessons to learn from the findings of this study. The UAE market attracts powerful international competitors and most of them come from the industrialized world. Those competitors have good marketing skills which, in turn, emphasizes the need for all business organizations, working in the UAE market, to have good management of their distribution systems. Concern and dissatisfaction at any level of the marketing channel will hinder the flow of goods to the intended market(s) and, therefore, this will also affect the competitiveness of the business organization.

In addition, this study is highly relevant for managers. It demonstrates, indirectly, a link between the management of any distribution system and the level of sales. It points toward a set of wholesalers' concerns that managers should consider when operating their distribution systems. Good management of any distribution system will help in increasing the level of sales volume.

### Limitations of the study and future research

All studies have limitations and this study is no exception. The first limitation of this study is related to the sampling procedure. This study has used convenience sampling procedure and, therefore, the sample may not be representative to all wholesalers in Abu Dhabi and Dubai. This means that the findings of this study should be taken on tentative bases until further research is carried out, using different sampling procedure.

A second limitation which could provide an opportunity for additional research is related to the sampling unit. This study has covered wholesalers in general and, therefore, no relationship comparisons between manufacturers and wholesalers of different product categories were made. Further research may apply the conceptual framework of this study to manufacturers and wholesalers of different product categories for comparisons. This is important for examining if the findings of this study can be generalized to marketing channels of different product categories.

A third limitation pertains to the demographics of wholesalers. This study did not address this issue, which is left for future research.

A fourth limitation is related to the generalizability of the findings on other Gulf states. No generalizations should be made until further research is carried out on other countries (e.g., Saudi Arabia, Oman, Qatar, etc.).

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**Questionnaire:**

Q1- In your opinion, do you think that UAE manufacturers give wholesalers equal/fair business treatment?  
 Yes..... No.....

To what extent would you agree or disagree with the following:

Q2- Discretionary management action is usually used in the rebate system.

Strongly agree					Strongly disagree
5	4	3	2		1

Q3- Credit terms, from manufacturers, are usually dependent upon the favorableness to the wholesaler rather than a predetermined fixed policy.

Strongly agree					Strongly disagree
5	4	3	2		1

Q4- Manufacturers give wholesalers equal support services (e.g., technical, promotional, and flow of information).

Strongly agree					Strongly disagree
5	4	3	2		1

Q5- Manufacturers use fair methods of pricing and discounts.

Strongly agree					Strongly disagree
5	4	3	2		1

Q6- Wholesalers are allowed free return of goods, to manufacturers, at no special charge.

Strongly agree					Strongly disagree
5	4	3	2		1

Q7- Manufacturer-Wholesaler business is not rigidly controlled by the contract.

Strongly agree					Strongly disagree
5	4	3	2		1

Q8- A wholesaler's name and family are important to manufacturers in giving preferential treatment.

Strongly agree					Strongly disagree
5	4	3	2		1

Q9- Manufacturers usually engage in numerous social activities with wholesalers.

Strongly agree					Strongly disagree
5	4	3	2		1

Q10- Others, please specify.....  
 .....

Strongly agree					Strongly disagree
5	4	3	2	1	

Q11- In your opinion, to what extent would you say that the current manufacturer-wholesaler relationship would help in improving the overall structure and efficiency of the marketing channel.

To a very large extent					Not at all
5	4	3	2	1	

## السياسات المتبعة في القنوات التوزيعية: حلقة المصنع – تاجر الجملة في دولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة"

حسين بن عبد الله العُمري

كلية الاقتصاد والأعمال، جامعة الإمارات العربية المتحدة، العين

(قدم للنشر في ١٤٢٣/٨/٣ هـ ؛ قبل للنشر في ١٤٢٤/٤/٢ هـ)

ملخص البحث. إن معظم الأدب الحديث في مجال القنوات التوزيعية ركز على دراسة هذا الموضوع في الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية و الغرب. لقد أهملت الدراسات السابقة موضوع النزاعات التي تحدث في القنوات التوزيعية في البلدان النامية، ولذلك فإن المعرفة المتوفرة عن التسويق في البلدان النامية تبقى غير مكتملة. ولقد تناولت هذه الدراسة باستخدام الأسلوب الكمي عدة أمور لها علاقة بالنزاعات التي تحدث في القنوات التوزيعية المستخدمة من قبل المصنعين في دولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة. تم اخذ عينة مكونة من ٢٤٠ تاجر جملةً من إمارتي أبوظبي ودبي. بينت نتائج هذه الدراسة نوعاً من عدم الرضا بين تجار الجملة فيما يتعلق بإدارة المصنعين للأنظمة التوزيعية التي يستخدمونها، وهذا الشيء قد يتطور إلى نزاع بين كافة أعضاء القناة التوزيعية.