Adoption of Green Supply Chain Management Practices for Sustainable Performance: A Study of Systematic Literature Review.

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ABSTRACT

In recent years, environmental regulatory bodies, organizations, and researchers have raised their concerns about the uses of Green Supply Chain Management (GSCM) practices and their impact on sustainable performance in many regions. Integrating GSCM practices empowers organizations to achieve a harmonious balance between economic success, environmental stewardship, and social responsibility, thereby securing a more resilient and prosperous future. Hence, this article delves into adopting Green Supply Chain Management (GSCM) practices to enhance sustainable performance. Through a systematic literature review, this study examines the interplay between the adoption of environmentally conscious practices within supply chains and their subsequent impact on overall long-term performance. This review article involves research articles published from 2006 to 2023. Initially, 63 research articles were included using the search engine optimization (SEO) and keyword typing process. However, after a careful assessment of each record based on the objectivity and scope of the study, 52 articles were selected for this review by following the (PRISMA 2020) statement. Results, from the findings of empirical research conducted by enormous authors, show that adopting GSCM practices in organizations leads to sustainable performance (Economic, Social, and Environmental) despite having some difficulties and challenges in implementation. This research aspires to provide researchers, practitioners, and policymakers with valuable insights that can inform their decisions and actions in fostering sustainability within supply chain operations.

Keywords: GSCM Practices; Sustainability; Sustainable Performance.

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

In recent years, the integration of sustainable practices into supply chain management has surged, driven by heightened awareness of business operations' environmental and social impacts. As industries confront challenges like climate change, resource scarcity, and increasing regulatory pressures, organizations are compelled to embrace Green Supply Chain Management (GSCM) practices to bolster their sustainable performance across economic, social, and environmental dimensions. Originally rooted in environmental concerns, GSCM has evolved from traditional supply chain management by infusing environmental considerations into every facet of the supply chain, spanning product design, procurement, production, distribution, and end-of-life disposal. Its significance lies in its ability to mitigate environmental risks, enhance operational efficiency, and deliver value for organizations. GSCM is no longer just a corporate choice; it's a necessity driven by environmental imperatives, regulatory demands, and the pursuit of sustainable competitive advantages. This article begins by elucidating the foundational concepts of GSCM and its pivotal role in addressing sustainability challenges in contemporary supply chains. Subsequently, a comprehensive literature review is conducted, delving into key themes, methodologies, and findings from numerous studies. The examination encompasses various drivers, barriers, and outcomes related to GSCM practices, shedding light on the diverse perspectives and contextual factors influencing the adoption of sustainable supply chain strategies.

1.1 Research Objectives

This systematic literature review seeks to provide a comprehensive analysis of how organizations across diverse sectors are embracing GSCM practices to ensure sustainable performance aligns with environmental, social, and economic sustainability goals.

2. Literature Review

2.1 GSCM Practices and Sustainable Performance

The world's population is growing rapidly, accompanied by improved living standards and a rising demand for various goods and services. However, this growth has brought pollution and the unsustainable depletion of Earth's resources, exceeding the planet's capacity to support such activities. Therefore, there's a consensus that future development must meet current needs without harming future generations (Muduli & Barve, 2013).

Green Supply Chain Management (GSCM) involves integrating eco-friendly practices into a firm's supply chain processes (Rasit et al., 2019). These practices include Green purchasing, Eco-design, Environmental cooperation, and reverse logistics, as per (L.-H. Lin & Lan, 2013). GSCM is closely tied to sustainability, extending beyond environmental concerns to encompass ecological, social, and economic dimensions. This holistic sustainability approach, often referred to as the "triple bottom line," balances environmental protection, social equity, and economic prosperity (Elkington, 1997). Sustainability entails responsible resource management, reduced environmental impact, and social inclusivity. GSCM practices ensure sustainability across organizations, applying throughout the supply chain of industries or organizations. Parties in the supply process, whether upstream or downstream, influence the adoption of GSCM practices. Suppliers and customers, as upstream and downstream networks, play crucial roles in ensuring sustainable

performance through GSCM practices (Pagell & Wu, n.d., Gimenez et al., 2012). Research by (Yu et al., 2014) reveals a positive relationship between GSCM practices and operational performance, impacting aspects like flexibility, delivery, quality, and cost, benefiting both suppliers and customers. However, a study by (Foo et al., 2018) on ISO14001-certified Malaysian manufacturers found no significant link between supplier selection, evaluation, and customer cooperation with sustainable performance. Conversely, (Rusmawati & Soewarno, 2021, Kalpande & Toke, 2021) demonstrated that sustainable supplier and customer collaboration positively influence economic performance, fostering trust and reducing risks within supply chains. Nonetheless, (Choi et al., 2018) showed no significant impact on cooperation with customers for sustainable performance. Furthermore, the impact of ISO 14001 certification, a GSCM practice, on sustainable performance was found insignificant in a case study of the Portuguese automotive supply chain by (Govindan et al., 2014). This suggests that having ISO 14001 certificates doesn't guarantee sustainable performance through GSCM practices, with effectiveness varying by location and industry.
Based on many articles (Durgaprasad & Prasad, 2022; Kuwornu et al., 2023; Luthra et al., 2014; Petljak et al., 2018; Qorri et al., 2018; Rusmawati & Soewarno, 2021) the conceptual model can be developed as seen on figure 1.

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

2.1.1 Environmental Sustainability
Companies are increasingly prioritizing strategies to address environmental concerns within their supply chains. Environmental sustainability revolves around protecting natural resources and ecosystems by reducing carbon emissions, conserving biodiversity, and minimizing pollution. The Paris Agreement marked a significant commitment by nations to limit global warming to well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels. Additionally, the concept of a circular economy, emphasizing waste reduction through recycling and reuse, has gained momentum. Research conducted by (Siregar & Pinagara, 2022) found a substantial connection between Green Supply Chain Management (GSCM) practices and environmental performance and operational costs in the food and beverage industry in Indonesia. It highlights that supply chain ecocentricity, where companies engage external stakeholders to achieve sustainability goals, moderates the relationship between GSCM practices, environmental performance, and operating costs. Without supply chain ecocentricity, the integration of GSCM practices, environmental performance, and firm operating costs becomes challenging. Another study by (Aslam et al., 2018) revealed that customer pressure and internal motivations drive organizations to adopt GSCM practices, resulting

in economic and environmental sustainability. Meanwhile, research on Malaysian SMEs conducted by (Rasit et al., 2019) identified a significant positive link between GSCM practices and sustainability performance. Specifically, eco-design and environmental cooperation was found to contribute to sustainability performance, while the relationship between green purchasing and reverse logistics with sustainability performance was deemed insignificant. These results suggest that Malaysian SMEs prioritize GSCM practices by emphasizing eco-design and fostering effective cooperation among their departments to address environmental concerns. In contrast, the adoption of green practices and reverse logistics practices is relatively nascent within SMEs and has a limited impact on performance. Furthermore, a meta-analysis by (Qorri et al., 2018) provided robust evidence of a positive and significant correlation between the implementation of GSCM practices and firm performance. This empirical support strengthens the connection between GSCM practices and performance, encompassing environmental, social, operational, and economic dimensions. However, the strength of this relationship varies based on factors such as geographical region, industry type, and company size, underscoring the contextual influence on GSCM's impact.

2.1.2 Social Sustainability

Social Sustainability entails ensuring equitable incomes, human rights, accessible goods and services, and employment opportunities (Vallance et al., 2011). It aligns with the peaceful progress of civil society, fostering harmony among culturally and socially diverse communities while promoting social integration and enhancing the overall quality of life for all (Polese and Stren (2000: 15¬16) as cited by Bramley et al., n.d.). Research in Indonesia's petrochemical industry by (YUARY FARRADIA, 2020) demonstrates that GSCM practices significantly enhance firms' social performance, contributing greatly to social sustainability. Both internal and external GSCM practices are pivotal in advancing social sustainability. Findings from a survey conducted by (Kuwornu et al., 2023) among Bangkok and Thailand’s food companies indicate that internal and external GSCM practices influence social sustainable performance by approximately 81% and 85%, respectively. These practices encompass ensuring food safety management, social service, and philanthropy, safeguarding employee rights, and monitoring and assessing supply chain members. Additionally, the adoption of reverse logistics as a GSCM practice positively impacts a firm's social sustainability performance. Research by (Younis et al., 2016) highlights that reverse logistics activities, including remanufacturing, recovering end-of-life products, and managing packaging returns, contribute positively to a company's social sustainability efforts.

2.1.3 Economic Sustainability

Economic sustainability recognizes the interconnectedness of economic systems with the environment and society, advocating for responsible consumption, production, and the integration of sustainability into business strategies (MR Kramer, M Porter - 2011). Sustainable business practices not only reduce environmental impacts but also bolster long-term profitability and resilience (Eccles & Serafeim, 2013). However, a study by (Choudhary & Sangwan, 2018) on Indian ceramic enterprises revealed a contrary finding: GSCM practices improved environmental and operational performance but adversely affected economic performance, particularly in small and medium enterprises (SMEs) due to their limited resources and cost constraints. Conversely, (Sahoo & Vijayvargy, 2020) in an investigation of Indian manufacturers found an indirect relationship between GSCM practices and economic development. GSCM practices did not directly impact economic performance but improved it indirectly, as economic performance was influenced by operational and environmental performance driven by GSCM practices. Similarly,

(Zhu et al., 2007) in their study of the Chinese automobile industry reported an insignificant relationship between these variables, with GSCM practices slightly improving environmental and operational performance but having minimal impact on economic performance, aligning with the findings of (Sahoo & Vijayvargy, 2020).

3. Research Methodology

In the pursuit of a comprehensive understanding of the adoption of green supply chain management practices and their impact on sustainable performance, this study utilized a systematic literature review methodology. A systematic literature review is defined as "identifying, evaluating and interpreting all the available research relevant to a particular research question, topic area, or phenomenon of interest" (Grant & Booth, 2009). This approach facilitates a transparent and repeatable method for the selection, analysis, and presentation of prior research pertaining to a specific subject (Denyer and Tranfield 2009). A Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) approach has been used in this study to help the authors to improve their systematic review reporting. PRISMA 2020 Statement is a well-known set of guidelines for reporting systematic reviews and meta-analyses in scientific research. The guidelines were first published in 2009 and have been updated since then, with the most recent version being PRISMA 2020 (Page et al., 2021). PRISMA follows a structured sequence of four consecutive phases: first, it involves the identification of relevant studies; then, it proceeds with screening, determining eligibility, and finally, study inclusion. This systematic approach ensures clarity and openness in the selection and examination of included research, enabling other researchers to reproduce this methodology (Booth et al. 2020 as cited by Santos et al., 2023).

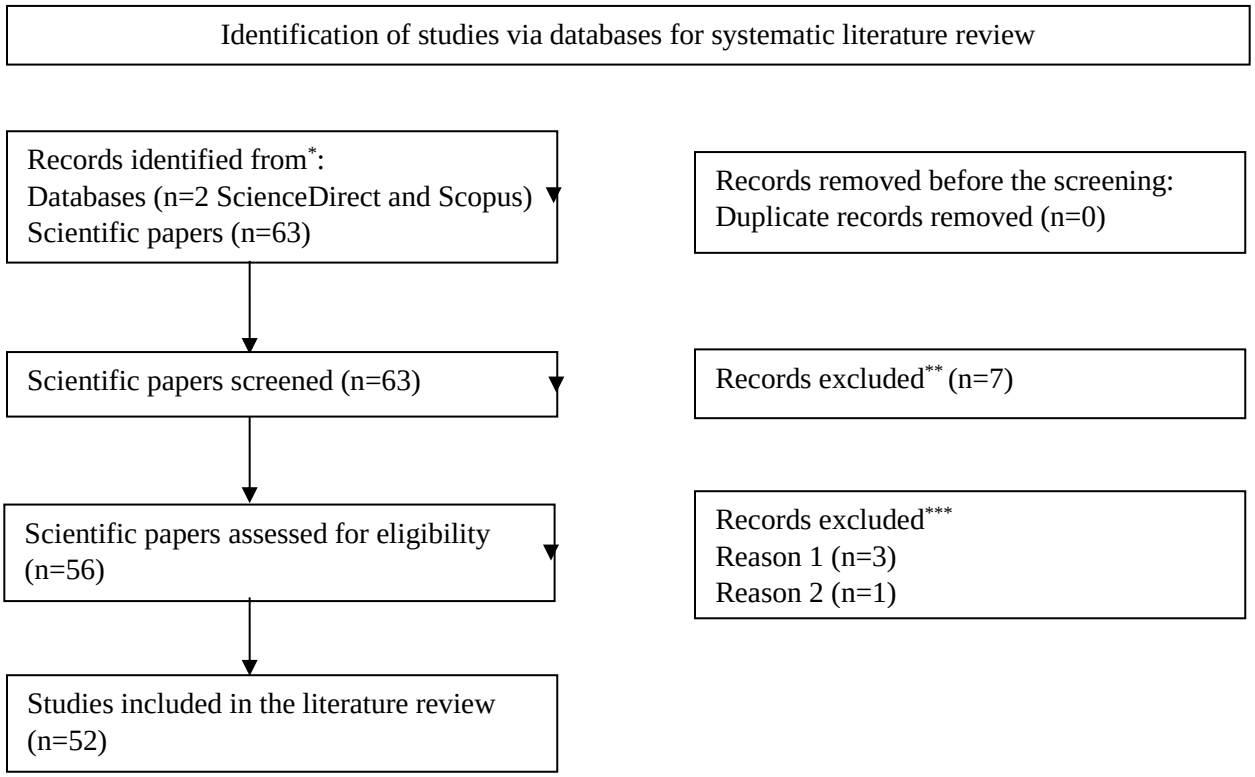

Figure 2. PRISMA 2020 flow diagram for a systematic review on the adoption of GSCM practices for sustainable performance.

Among the various databases available for research, (ScienceDirect and Scopus) were selected due to their reputation as the most dependable, robust, and globally accepted databases*. To explore the full scope of literature related to the concept of GSCM practices and Sustainability, a Topic search employing the keywords "GSCM Practices; Sustainability; Sustainable Performance," was conducted which yielded a total of 63 articles. To refine the research focus and align with the objectives, we subsequently imposed limitations on the number of documents. This entailed selecting document types, date ranges, and languages. The PRISMA 2020 flow diagram, depicted in Figure 2, outlines the exclusion criteria and the steps we took in the selection process. In total, 7 documents were eliminated during the screening phase**, leaving us with 56 articles for our analysis in academic literature. In this case, documents other than those written in English and published by popular publishers such as ELSEVIER and EMERALD Insight were rejected within the time frame between 2006 to 2023. We exclusively examined articles that included the combination of "GSCM and Sustainability". As a result, we disregarded 3 documents during this procedure*** (Reason 1). Finally, 1 document was excluded after the analysis of the entire content due to its irrelevance to our subject of investigation***(Reason 2) leading us to 52 articles that fully met the review protocol and were used in the literature review. However, in relation to the discussion of the topic, some other articles were cited as references to justify the statements declared by different authors.

4. Results

The systematic literature review provides robust evidence that adopting GSCM practices empowers organizations to achieve sustainable performance across economic, social, and environmental dimensions. Despite the complexities and variations observed, GSCM practices emerge as imperative strategies in the pursuit of a harmonious balance between economic success, environmental stewardship, and social responsibility. These findings offer valuable insights for researchers, practitioners, and policymakers seeking to foster sustainability within supply chain operations.

5. Discussion

GSCM practices have expanded to encompass environmental, social, and economic dimensions, playing a crucial role for organizations dealing with challenges and barriers. The relationship between GSCM practices and sustainable performance is multifaceted and context-dependent, influenced by factors like external pressure, resource depletion, suppliers' GSCM knowledge, firm size, top management support, and reputation (Darnall et al., 2008; Laosirihongthong et al., 2013; Mathiyazhagan et al., 2013; Moshood et al., 2021).

An experiment on Malaysian SMEs conducted by (Tseng et al., 2019) identified scientifically significant components influencing GSCM adoption, including perceived relative advantage, cost, top management support, complexity, compatibility, firm size, customer pressure, regulatory pressure, and human resource quality. (Mathiyazhagan et al., 2013) highlighted suppliers as the most prominent barrier to GSCM due to their reluctance to share the necessary information for GSCM establishment. Research by (Kalyar et al., 2020) revealed that GSCM practices,

encompassing green manufacturing, eco-friendly procurement, eco-design, customer collaboration, and green information systems, exert both direct and indirect influences on a company's financial performance. Institutional pressures play a substantial role in moderating the relationship between GSCM practices and environmental performance, as well as between environmental performance and financial outcomes. However, studies by (Longoni & Cagliano, 2018; Petljak et al., 2018; Sahoo & Vijayvargy, 2020; Zhu et al., 2013) found an indirect relationship between GSCM practices and firms' economic performance through environmental performance.

The adoption of GSCM practices in organizations is significantly shaped by external pressures, including institutional pressure, customer pressure, market pressure, and regulatory agency pressure, ultimately leading to the development of sustainable performance (Dzikriansyah et al., 2023; Gonzalez et al., 2022; R. Lin & Sheu, 2012; Saeed et al., 2018; Siah Jaharuddin et al., n.d.; Susanty et al., 2019; Zhu et al., 2013; Zhu & Sarkis, 2007). However, (Choudhary & Sangwan, 2018) argue that this scenario primarily applies to medium and large enterprises, as small enterprises often struggle to implement GSCM practices due to limited resources, such as human capital and technology, despite external pressures. Despite various barriers and challenges, there is a growing trend in the evaluation of GSCM practices and their impact on sustainable performance (Tseng et al., 2019). Furthermore, the adoption of GSCM practices offers organizations the promise of sustaining competitive advantages and improved performance. Enterprises with GSCM practices tend to exhibit enhanced supply chain flexibility and increased profitability (Durgaprasad & Prasad, 2022; Green et al., 2012; Lee et al., 2013; Luthra et al., 2014).

6. Conclusion

The implementation of Green Supply Chain Management (GSCM) practices and their impact on sustainable performance is a growing concern for environmental regulatory bodies, organizations, and researchers worldwide. GSCM practices enable organizations to achieve a balanced approach to economic success, environmental responsibility, and social accountability, ensuring a resilient and prosperous future. This article conducts a systematic literature review spanning 2006 to 2023, selecting 52 out of 63 identified research articles following PRISMA 2020 guidelines. The findings emphasize that GSCM practice adoption enhances sustainable performance, encompassing economic, social, and environmental dimensions. Despite implementation challenges, GSCM practices are pivotal for promoting sustainability in supply chain operations. However, the impact of GSCM practices on economic sustainability varies contextually, with some studies suggesting a direct positive relationship and others proposing an indirect link through environmental performance. Small enterprises may encounter difficulties implementing GSCM practices due to resource limitations. To achieve sustainable performance across economic, social, and environmental dimensions, organizations must embrace GSCM practices. The relationship between these practices and sustainable performance is influenced by various factors, emphasizing the importance of a context-specific approach. This review provides valuable insights for researchers, practitioners, and policymakers striving to advance sustainability within supply chain operations.

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