

The Effect of Sustainable Supply Chain Management On Firm Innovative Performance: A Study of Manufacturing Firms in Nigeria

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ABSTRACTS: *The study sought to establish the effect of sustainable supply chain management practices on innovative performance of manufacturing firms in Nigeria. The precise goals were to evaluate how Nigerian manufacturing companies performed in terms of innovation in relation to economic, environmental, and social dimension of sustainability. The Transaction Cost Economics (TCE) Theory and the Stakeholder Theory were both used in the study. The study employed a descriptive survey approach, with three Nigerian manufacturing companies as the target population. The study used a purposeful sampling strategy, and the researcher decided that a sample size of 120 was manageable. A pilot study was conducted to evaluate the validity and reliability of the research instrument prior to the collection of data. A 91% response rate was obtained, and the results were displayed in tables using percentages. The analysis showed that sustainable supply chain management practices had a positive and significant impact on the innovative performance of manufacturing companies in Nigeria, demonstrating that economic, environmental, and social dimension of sustainability all had a significant positive impact on this performance. The research consequently advises manufacturing companies to engage in more sustainable operations so as boost their competitive edge.*

KEYWORDS: economic dimension, social dimension, environmental dimension, sustainability, supply chain, innovative performance

INTRODUCTION

The contemporary business environment is rife with rivalry, which has been particularly fierce among manufacturing companies because they must work to bring their product to the correct place, time, and price. Supply chain management (SCM), has been shown to be essential in addressing these issues, helps businesses manage their supply chains successfully and maintain long-term partnerships with their stakeholders. In order to withstand the severe competition in the business climate, businesses now realized how crucial it is to increase the efficiency of their everyday activities and operations. Nguyen and Luong (2019) claims that supply chain

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management gives a business an advantage over rivals by ensuring a steady flow of information and resources throughout the whole supply chain process.

Manufacturing companies can enhance their environmental and social performance and gain a competitive edge over rivals by integrating sustainability into their supply chain management. Organizations must then successfully rethink their current supply chain activities in order to achieve this sustainability, as well as integrate a sustainability aim into their daily company operations (Akintokunbo & Obom, 2021). According to Abba, Norhayati and Salisu, (2019), SSCM refers to the process by which organizations offers the greatest value to its stakeholders and satisfies all needs in order to achieve a sustainable flow of information, goods, and services among all of its supply chain partners. The triple bottom line (TBL), which takes into account the economy, environment, and society around a business, was also used to further describe SSCM.

Supply chain management strategies that are sustainable include an organization's social, environmental, and economic aspects. The economic dimension explains the promotion of the socio-economic resources to their best advantage, the environmental dimension explains the reduction of environmental impact from the facility or business operations of the organization, and the social dimension explains the applicability of laws into organization activities. The goal of sustainability is to ensure that resources are used responsibly and effectively in order to achieve high profitability (Kadio, 2023). In a nutshell, SSCM concentrates on protecting an organization's environment while simultaneously enhancing the social and economic facets in order to achieve a long-term sustainable development (Charles, Daniel & Dorcas, 2014).

According to Sunday, Michael, Enitan and Kate (2017), the absence of sustainability goals in the corporate vision is a major contributing factor in the failure of many businesses. Because it is a strategic business initiative, sustainability is important for any size of organization. This is due to the advantages associated with these practices, some of which include raising employee and customer satisfaction levels, improving organizational performance, and acting as a bridge to gaining a long-term competitive edge. According to Kadio (2023), creating sustainable practices in the upstream and downstream of an organizational supply chain lowers the cost of production operations over time, meaning an organization that adopts such a practice will be able to generate more profit.

Previous studies, such as Nathaniel (2020), Nguyen and Luong (2019) and many others explained the benefits of SSCM as allowing organizations to minimize and avoid risks, design their business processes efficiently, improve their level of transparency and innovation, and also in creating value in the business environment in which they operate. However, the manufacturing sector in developing countries, with particular emphasis on Africa and Nigeria as a country, has been faced with a high level of risk (Ireoegbu, Ann & Kifordu, 2018). In light of this, the study will examine the impact that sustainable supply chain practices will have on Nigerian manufacturing companies' ability to innovate and how well these companies can embrace this strategy to their greatest benefit.

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the study would revert to specific research questions, which are as follows:

- i. What is the effect of economic sustainability on firm innovative performance?
- ii. To what extent does environmental sustainability affect firm innovative performance?
- iii. How does social sustainability influence firm innovative performance?

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Concept of Sustainable Supply Chain Management (SSCM)

In order to provide the stakeholders with value-added products and services through a sustainable operation, sustainable supply chain management can be defined as the integration of all business operations or supply chain flow within an organization from its suppliers to its customers (Ola, Khaled & Bassam, 2018). This procedure is used in an organization to provide value to company operations and promote collaboration among its stakeholders. According to Arampantzi and Ioannis (2017), SSCM is the management of people, materials, and resources throughout a company's supply chain. By doing this, the company can preserve its social, economic, and environmental stability. In order to increase an organization's long-term performance and survival. Nathaniel (2020) defined SSCM as the strategic activity of integrating an organization's environmental, social, and economic goals into its business operations.

According to Min, Zacharia and Smith, (2019), SSCM is the all-encompassing strategy used by firms to integrate all three TBL dimensions—economic, environmental, and social—in order to promote the sustainable growth of their supply chain operations. According to Assefa (2020), SSCM refers to the actions that enable an organization to integrate both its social and natural dimensions into its business process in order to succeed in its core objective of making a profit. According to Giannakis and Papadopoulos, (2016) sustainable supply chain management is the movement of products and services from suppliers to consumers through a process of sustainable development that aims to ensure the long-term functioning of the supply chain. It is also a coordinated effort of the entire supply chain process to achieve objectives from the three dimensions of sustainable development—economic, environmental, and social.

Bright and Stephen, (2021) described SSCM from the perspective of integrating an organization's environmentally and financially sound practices, such as recycling and the entire waste management process, in order to ensure a full supply chain lifecycle that begins with the product design state and ends with manufacturing, packaging, warehousing, distribution, consumption, and disposal. They went on to say that it was an optimum technique to guarantee that supply chain management would continue to be practiced. This sustainability in the supply chain process is the result of a number of priorities, including social responsibility, effective and efficient resource use, and environmental responsibility. According to Dina, Djoko and Agustina (2021), it is the application of environmentally, socially, and economically responsible manufacturing processes over the whole product life cycle.

The Concept of Innovative Performance

Manufacturing companies must operate very innovatively if they want to compete in this cutthroat business environment. Innovative performance can be viewed as a catalyst that boosts an organization's financial stability and enables them to endure the fierce competition in the business environment (Zizlavsky 2016). Innovative actions include a number of stages, ranging from research and development to product release and patenting. However, the technical side of innovation and the launch of new products can be used to analyze inventive performance. According to Sunday, Michael, Enitan and Kate (2017)), an organization's efficacy and efficiency can be used to gauge an innovative performance. They went on to say that efficiency can be measured in terms of a company's returns on investment (ROI) and level of profitability, whereas effectiveness can be measured in terms of sales value, market value, and customer value.

In their study, Akintokunbo and Obom, (2021) defined creative performance as the degree to which a firm introduces inventions into a new or existing market. They also noted that creative performance can help an organization's processes and overall performance work together. Every organization needs innovative performance, it helps the business maintain its competitiveness, achieve sustainability, and obtain an advantage over rivals. The ability of a firm to effectively and efficiently transform its inputs into outputs as well as the ability to transform its innovation capability into market implementation can be understood as a key factor in the success of businesses in the manufacturing sector. Charles, Daniel and Dorcas (2014) also made the point that an organization's ability to innovate is measured by the caliber of the services and goods it provides, the degree of customer pleasure it achieves, its performance in the market, and the development of new services.

Triple Bottom Line (TBL or 3 BL) of Sustainability

The three components of sustainability—Economic, Environmental, and Social (Equity)—combine to form the triple bottom line, which is often referred to as the 3Es of sustainability.

Economic Dimension of Sustainability

With this sustainability, economic progress is guaranteed while the environment is preserved. Erakpotobo, (2018) defined this as the efficient use of resources so as to have a long-term beneficial benefit while minimizing the negative impact on resource utilization. This involves more than just increasing the firm's return on investment; it also entails preventing any economic, environmental, or social harm from being caused by organizational activities or business processes. According to the study by Ola, Khaled and Bassam, (2018), economic sustainability refers to making sure that economic welfare is provided with the future in mind. It also refers to making sure that as a business operates, it is not endangering society while still performing better. By doing this, they are able to advocate for the most effective and efficient approach to exploit and deploy the resources in that environment in order to achieve long-term profitability (Dina, Djoko & Agustina, 2021). Aliu, Ogundode and Gbadamosi (2018) claim that economic

Publication of the European Centre for Research Training and Development-UK sustainability describes the benefit that an organization's stakeholders would experience as its profits rise.

Environmental Dimension of Sustainability

This type of sustainability involves safeguarding natural resources in order to meet human needs. It is believed that humans won't produce more garbage than the environment can handle, and that their consumption would recognize and prioritize sustainability. Dina, Djoko and Agustina (2021) assert that environmental sustainability encompasses four main activities, including the organization's utilization of both renewable and non-renewable resources as well as the control of their pollution and waste assimilation. According to Phan and Phan (2018) environmental sustainability entails safeguarding the environment's natural resources to ensure that people will continue to exist. Organizations should consider their long-term effects on the environment in addition to their short-term gains. They must therefore take into account a few elements and behaviors that, over time, will improve the environmental quality. Effective waste management, optimum use of natural resources, reduced usage of hazardous materials or land, and reduced air or noise pollution are all potential strategies to improve the quality of the environment (Das, 2018).

Social (Equity) Dimension of Sustainability

Social sustainability is the process of fostering an environment that is conducive and cohabitates the culture and diversity of different groups in society while still encouraging a uniformed societal value and enhancing the quality of life of residents in that particular environs (Dina, Djoko & Agustina, 2021). This deals with the relationship between human rights and human development. When an organization's operations or business practices are designed to uphold the normative chain of casual justice and elevate humanity through time, this is referred to as being socially responsible. According to Erik and Stefan (2021), who stressed this idea, social sustainability involves promoting an organization's operations and activities to advance and strengthen social and ethical principles. They must provide equitable chances for everyone, encourage social contact among society's participants, and aid the neighborhood. According to Renato, Patricia, Otavio and Silvia, (2019), in order to increase an organization's social dimension sustainability, the company must establish and uphold sound business practices that are fair and beneficial to everyone involved, including not only its own employees but also the community in which it operates and its entire supply chain.

Sustainable Supply Chain Management and Firm Innovative Performance: The Nexus

Research on the impact of sustainable supply chain management (SSCM) practices on organizational performance has become increasingly essential (Bright & Stephen, 2021; Nguyen & Luong, 2019). SSCM practices are now a need for businesses that wish to flourish in the business sector. In order to improve organizational operations, boost the organization's profitability index, increase customer satisfaction, and contend with the pressure of competition present in the business environment, sustainable supply chain management is required (Abba, Norhayati & Salisu, 2019; Renato, Patricia, Otavio and Silvia, 2019). SSCM is a fundamental component in

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improving an organization's effectiveness and innovativeness since it has a favorable effect on the performance of the organization. Several studies on sustainable supply chain management have been conducted as a result (Michael & Helen, 2014; Dina, Djoko & Agustina, 2021; Erik & Stefan, 2021).

According to Giannakis and Papadopoulos, (2016), SSCM techniques have a considerable and advantageous impact on organizational performance. Renato, Patricia, Otavio and Silvia, (2019) discovered in their research that SSCM activities like the environmental, social, and economic dimensions have a substantial impact on an organization's performance. According to Abba, Norhayati and Salisu (2019), an organization's market performance, financial performance, and innovative performance all increase when SSCM is used effectively. Similar to this, the empirical study by Bright and Stephen, (2021) showed that increasing the use of SSCM inside a company will boost its competitive advantage and improve organizational performance. Aliu, Ogunode and Gbadamosi (2018) also demonstrated in their study how adopting sustainable practices can lower an organization's financial risk, which in turn improves its performance in terms of innovation.

All of the aforementioned examples provide empirical support for the claim that implementing SSCM techniques will give a business a financial advantage. Increased sales, lower overhead costs, reduced financial risk, and an overall increase in profit are the advantages listed in the literature. Therefore, it can be said that an organization's ability to effectively manage its supply chain activities and to improve its innovative performance depends on the degree to which the organization is able to integrate its environmental, economic, and social aspects into its supply chain practice (Erik & Stefan, 2021).

Theoretical Review

Transaction Cost Economics (TCE) Theory

Ronald Coase first put forth this thesis in 1937 in his essay "The Nature of the Firm," for which he was awarded the 1991 Noble Prize. The idea explains how a firm functions and is organized in respect to its supply chain. According to Bygballe, Hakansson, and Jahre (2013), this theory is one of the most advanced theoretical frameworks for elucidating a firm's obligation to the environment. It considers how to streamline transaction costs and the logic behind them as they relate to an organization's economic activities. The theory clarifies that an organization must deal with transaction costs as well as production costs, which have a big impact on how well they perform.

The interactions that take place between a firm's stakeholders and its business operations are related to these transactional costs. The efficient administration of this transactional cost will improve how firms handle their issues with supply chain management as well as their overall functions. The transactional cost in connection to sustainable supply chain management is the expense incurred by the firms in order to fulfill their economic, environmental, and social obligations, and this cost significantly influences how well they operate. Aliu A, Ogunode P, &

Gbadamosi O., (2018) noted in their study that an organization's performance and competitive advantage will suffer in the long run if it fails to consider costs in these three areas.

Stakeholder Theory

According to the stakeholder theory, an organization's numerous stakeholders must be taken into account during the production process. When commercial organizations confronted difficulties with value creation and ethical duty in the 1980s, Edward Freeman, a pioneer of the theory, recommended this application (Parmar, 2010; Tullberg, 2013). This theory concentrated on the idea of how effectively leaders within a business adopt specific techniques to improve their relationship with stakeholders (Freeman, 2014). Freeman said that managers within an organization can foster relationships with their stakeholders during business operations by employing this framework and the concepts of fairness and honesty. The link between a business and the individuals who are impacted by its operations and the development of ethical principles, according to Parmar (2010), is at the heart of the stakeholder theory. The generation of value benefits for all stakeholders of a company is a core tenet of the stakeholder theory, and it is made feasible by the managerial relationships that exist between these stakeholders and their involvement throughout the supply chain activities. The linkages between the actors in an organization's supply chain can also be explained using this idea. According to the stakeholder theory, sustainability in the supply chain ensures the integration of all stakeholders in a company.

Conceptual Framework

the conceptual framework for this study is illustrated in figure 2. As it explains the relationship between the study phenomenon.

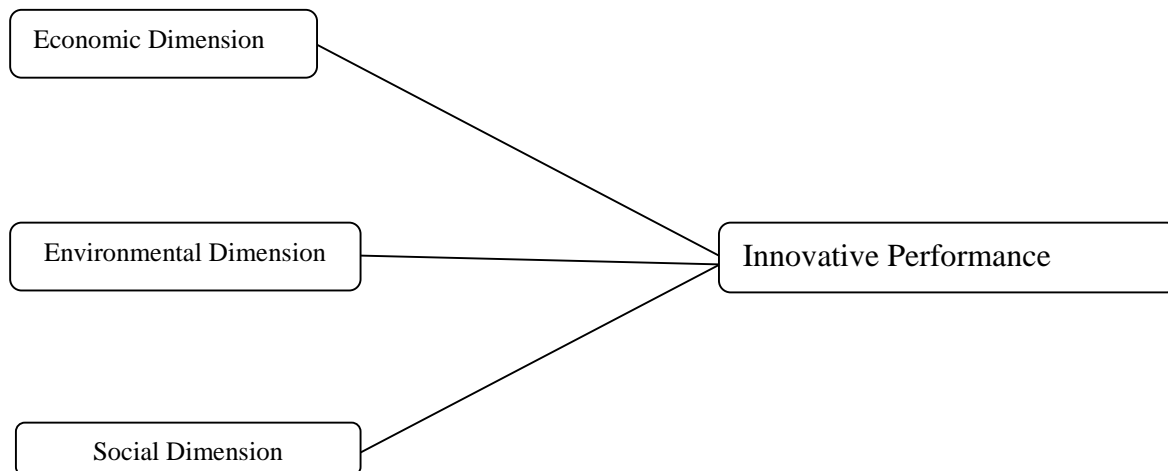


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study used a descriptive survey design, which the researcher believed to be the most appropriate for the topic because it would enable easy data collection and analysis at a later time to determine the relationship between the variables (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2013).

Population of the Study

Cooper and Schindler (2009) claim that the population consists of all the factors that the researcher should consider while looking at the phenomenon under study. The target demographic for this study consists of the employees of Lafarge Africa Plc, Flour Mills of Nigeria, and PZ Cussons Nigeria, three specifically chosen manufacturing companies in Nigeria. Due to the dynamic character of their commercial activities, the researcher carefully selected these firms.

Sampling Technique and Sample Size

When choosing participants for the study, the researcher employed a purposeful sampling technique. Due to the nature of the study, the researcher purposefully chose the procurement staff as the study's respondents because they are known to have the necessary knowledge about the phenomenon under study, and a sample size of 120 was deemed to be a manageable size by the researcher, implying that forty respondents would come from each of the study's participating firms.

Method of Data Collection

The researcher adopted a questionnaire as a tool to gathering data for the study. The questionnaire was divided up into two sections: the first section had demographic data about the respondents, and the second section had close-ended questions regarding the phenomenon under research. The respondents had the option of selecting a scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree on a five point Likert scale.

The researcher conducted a pilot study on a group of 30 employees at the three organizations that were chosen to assess the validity and reliability of the research instrument, and the results of the test showed that each of the study's variables had a Cronbach alpha value over 0.70. This demonstrated the instrument's dependability because, in accordance with Sekaran and Bougie (2010), a research tool is regarded to be dependable if it receives a score of 0.70 or higher.

Method of data Analysis

Percentages, mean, standard deviation, and multiple regression were employed in the analysis of the study. The researcher was able to assess the impact of sustainable supply chain management practices on the innovative performance of organizations by using descriptive statistics, such as frequencies and percentages, on the demographic information of the respondents and multiple regression analysis on the inferential statistics.

Model Specification

The model below was adopted for this study;

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1ECS + \beta_2ENS + \beta_3SS + e$$

Whereby Y = Firm Innovative Performance

ECS= Economic Sustainability

ENS= Environmental Sustainability

SS= Social Sustainability

β_0 = Constant Variable

ε = Error Term

DATA ANALYSIS PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

A total of 120 questionnaire were distributed to the respondents while 109 was returned which gave a response rate of 91%.

Descriptive Analysis**Table 1: Demographics Characteristics**

Characteristics	Classification	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	66	60.6
	Female	43	39.4
	Total	109	100.0
Age	21- 30years	24	22.0
	31-40years	47	43.1
	41-50years	29	26.6
	Above 50years	9	8.3
	Total	109	100
Educational Qualification	OND/HND/B.Sc.	52	47.7
	M.Sc./MBA.	47	43.1
	PhD	8	7.3
	Others	2	1.9
	Total	109	100
Working Experience	1-5years	27	24.8
	6- 10years	51	46.8
	Above 10 years	31	28.4
	Total	109	100.0

Source: *Field Survey, 2023*

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According to Table 1 above, the majority of respondents (60.6%) were men, while 39.4% were women. Regarding the distribution of ages, 43.1% of the respondents are between the ages of 31 and 40, 22.0% are between the ages of 21 and 30, 26.6% are between the ages of 41 and 50, and 8.3% are older than 50. According to the respondent's educational background, 7.3% had a PhD, 47.7% had an OND, HND, or B.Sc. as their highest degree, 43.1% had an M.Sc. or MBA, and 1.9% had a degree beyond a PhD. The working experience revealed that 46.8% of respondents had a working experience between 1 and 5 years, 24.8% had a working experience between 1 and 5, and 28.4% had a working experience beyond 10 years.

Table 2: Inferential Analysis

Table 2: Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.713 ^a	.508	.501	.23915
a. Predictors: (Constant), Economic Sustainability, Environmental Sustainability, Social Sustainability				

According to the table above, the selected model for the study had an R² value of .508 and an adjusted R² value of .501. This explains why the predictor variables considered in this study (economic, environmental, and social sustainability) account for about 50.8% of the variation in the innovative performance of manufacturing firms in Nigeria, while other variables not taken into account in this study are found to account for about 49.2% of the variation in firm innovative performance.

Table 3: Analysis of Variance

Table 3: ANOVA^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	3.057	3	1.019	12.423	.000
	Residual	157.185	105	1.497		
	Total	160.242	108			
a. Dependent Variable: Innovative Performance						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Economic Sustainability, Environmental Sustainability, Social Sustainability						

The table above revealed the ANOVA result and it indicated that the model has a significant value of 0.000 which is less than 0.05. thus indicating the model was good for estimation.

Table 4: Regression Analysis

Coefficients^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	10.310	2.773		3.717	.000
	Economic Sustainability	.196	.057	.223	2.516	.015
	Environmental Sustainability	.278	.094	.303	2.944	.005
	Social Sustainability	.292	.085	.273	3.454	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Innovative Performance

All predictor variables of sustainable supply chain management had a positive and substantial impact on the dependent variable (innovative performance), according to the regression study shown in the above table. This suggests that as each predictor variable (economic sustainability, environmental sustainability, and social sustainability) increases, the dependent variable will also increase.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The primary goal was to investigate how Nigerian manufacturing companies' innovative performance is impacted by sustainable supply chain management. The analysis's findings showed that incorporating sustainability initiatives into an organization not only enhances its performance in terms of the economy, society, and environment, but also increases its capacity for innovation and helps it gain a competitive edge over rivals. A p-value of less than 0.05 and a coefficient of determination of 0.508 further supported the conclusions that SSCM significantly improves the innovative performance of manufacturing enterprises in Nigeria. These findings corroborate prior studies by Abba Norhayati and Salisu (2019), Nathaniel (2020), all of which contend that sustainable supply chain management is a crucial component of an organization's performance, as well as the empirical submissions of Aliu, Ogunode and Gbadamosi (2018), who discovered a positive relationship between sustainable supply chain management and supply chain performance.

CONCLUSION

This study has shown that there is a significant and favorable association between company innovation performance and the three pillars of sustainable supply chain management practices (economic sustainability, environmental sustainability, and social sustainability). This therefore

Publication of the European Centre for Research Training and Development-UK clarifies why businesses using these strategies will not only have higher performance but also be able to maintain a high level of innovation and performance over time. The study comes to the conclusion that a business can continue to be competitive, inventive, and lucrative by properly combining all of these sustainable approaches. All of the strategies in the study have been shown to be effective in assisting an organization in achieving its main objective. The study also showed that putting this plan into practice will improve stakeholder proficiency and cooperation, which will allow the organization to run its operations more smoothly.

Recommendations

It is therefore advised that manufacturing firms should increase their participation in sustainable activities as it will strengthen their competitive advantage based on the findings and the conclusion. Additionally, they should encourage relationships with their stakeholders by promoting their activities in the community. By doing this, they may build a great reputation in the eyes of their clients, which will increase client loyalty and spending. Additionally, manufacturing companies should effectively implement the triple bottom line (TBL) into their operations. This can be done by rethinking their products and services, sponsoring civic activities, and reducing waste in their local area

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