

# Sustainable Supply Chain Management: Environmental Footprint Reduction Strategies

OPEN ACCESS

Volume: 12

Special Issue: 1

Month: February

Year: 2025

P-ISSN: 2321-788X

E-ISSN: 2582-0397

Received: 24.12.2024

Accepted: 12.01.2025

Published: 28.02.2025

Citation:

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Arunachalamoorthy,  
and A. Swathi.

“Sustainable Supply  
Chain Management:

Environmental

Footprint Reduction  
Strategies.” *Shanlax*

*International Journal  
of Arts, Science and*

*Humanities*, vol. 12,

no. S1, 2025,

pp. 370-76.

DOI:

<https://doi.org/10.34293/sijash.v12iS1-Feb.9589>.

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## Abstract

*Sustainable supply chain management (SSCM) aims to minimize environmental impacts while maintaining profitability and efficiency. This research explores fundamental strategies such as eco-friendly procurement, sustainable logistics, energy-saving production and waste minimization. Integrating sustainability into supply chain management enables companies to optimize resource utilization, reduce carbon emissions, and collaborate for global sustainability. The mixed-method strategy was employed to integrate qualitative and quantitative data. Surveys administered to students and employees assessed their views on SSCM. Statistical techniques such as regression analysis, t-tests, and ANOVA were employed to examine the impact of sustainability initiatives on environmental performance. Studies show that eco-friendly supply chain methods not only minimize environmental damage but also offer economic benefits, such as cost savings, adherence to regulations, and brand loyalty. However, obstacles like initial expenses, inconsistent regulations, and resistance to change hinder widespread adoption. The study shows that companies must adopt a unified, collaborative approach to address challenges and achieve enduring, sustainable outcomes. Effective SSCM strategies enable businesses to harmonize economic growth with environmental responsibility, forging a more sustainable future.*

**Keyword:** Eco-friendly Procurement, Sustainable Logistics, Environmental Performance, Regulatory Compliance, Corporate Sustainability

## Introduction

In today's interconnected world, the global supply chain has become a vast and intricate network of manufacturers, suppliers, and distributors. While this network powers modern economies, it also carries a heavy environmental burden. As globalization expands production and distribution across borders, the need for sustainable supply chain management has never been more urgent. Growing concerns about climate change, resource depletion, pollution, and waste have prompted businesses, consumers, and governments alike to rethink how goods are produced and delivered.

Sustainable supply chain management (SSCM) involves integrating environmental, social, and economic considerations into every stage of the supply chain. The goal is to reduce harmful environmental impacts while maintaining operational efficiency and profitability. Key practices include cutting carbon emissions, reducing waste, supporting ethical sourcing, and investing in green

technologies. What was once a niche concept has, over the past two decades, evolved into a mainstream business strategy. Companies worldwide are discovering that sustainability isn't just a responsibility—it's also a competitive advantage. Embracing sustainability can lead to lower costs, stronger brand reputation, regulatory compliance, and better risk management.

This research explores the growing importance of SSCM and outlines effective strategies for reducing environmental impacts. It features a detailed review of existing literature, examines a range of sustainability initiatives, and presents case studies of organizations that have successfully adopted SSCM practices. By sharing these real-world examples, the study aims to highlight what works, identify common challenges, and point to future opportunities in building more sustainable supply chains.

## Review of Literature

The study concludes that effective sustainable supply chain management requires a comprehensive approach that takes into account the environmental implications across the entire supply chain. This research highlights the critical role of sustainable supply chain management in promoting environmental sustainability and provides actionable insights for businesses aiming to lessen their environmental impact and contribute to a more sustainable future.

Muhammad Amad Saeed and Wolfgang Kersten, (20th Feb,2019), Drivers of Sustainable Supply Chain Management: Identification and Classification

The objective of this research is to develop a model for customer satisfaction that incorporates sustainable supply chain management (SSCM), technology orientation (TO), organizational culture (OC), and the quality of products delivered, grounded in natural resource utilization and value perception theory. Initially, this study seeks to explore the specific relationship between the quality of product delivery in optimal condition and customer satisfaction (CS). Additionally, it examines the mediating role of SSCM, along with the moderating influences of TO and OC. Utilizing PLS software, data was gathered from 350 textile and apparel companies in Bangladesh to test the proposed hypotheses. The results indicated a significant partial mediation effect of SSCM. Furthermore, the findings revealed that the positive moderating effect of OC was not significant, while the negative moderating effect of TO was found to be significant.

Asha, A. A., Dulal, M., & Habib, A., (June,2023), The influence of sustainable supply chain management, technology orientation, and organizational culture on the delivery product quality-customer satisfaction nexus. Cleaner Logistics and Supply Chain.

The objective of this research is to identify the primary driving forces and to analyze their impact on Sustainable Supply Chain Management (SSCM) practices. This study employed both inferential and descriptive research methodologies. A proportional stratified sampling technique was utilized to select the sample firms, from which three respondents were purposefully chosen from each firm. Consequently, valid data were gathered through questionnaires from 420 respondents across 146 large-scale manufacturing companies. The results indicated that the key internal driving forces include social responsibility, the desire to manage reputation and mitigate environmental risks, as well as the aim to reduce costs. In contrast, the significant external driving forces comprise customer pressure, government regulations and legislation, competitive pressures, and adherence to international standards. Both internal and external driving forces demonstrated a positive and significant influence on SSCM practices.

Balda, A. & Singh, R. (31st March,2022). Driving Forces towards the Adoption of Sustainable Supply Chain Management Practices : Empirical Evidence from Manufacturing Industries in Ethiopia.

Sustainable supply chain management (SSCM) represents a developing area within supply chain

management (SCM) that incorporates economic, social, and environmental dimensions, adhering to the principles of the triple bottom line. This research establishes a conceptual framework based on antecedents-practices-performance principles to pinpoint the drivers of SSCM and evaluate their effects on sustainability performance. Concentrating on the manufacturing sector in India, the study utilizes a survey of 211 supply chain professionals, with data analyzed through structural equation modeling. The results reveal that motivators, lean management, and supply management have a significant impact on environmental and social practices, which subsequently improve SSCM performance, although the connection between lean management and social practices is notably weak.

Baliga, R., Raut, R. D., & Kamble, S. S. (2020). Sustainable supply chain management practices and performance: An integrated perspective from a developing economy. *Management of Environmental*

This study examines the increasing importance of green supply chain management (GSCM), which incorporates environmental factors into supply chain operations to reduce the overall ecological footprint. It highlights the significance of environmental collaboration as a crucial capability for the successful execution of GSCM strategies. The objectives of the research are to (i) assess the current literature regarding the relationship between GSCM, environmental collaboration, and sustainability performance, and (ii) develop a conceptual framework to investigate these connections within manufacturing firms in Malaysia. Subsequent empirical research utilizing advanced structural equation modeling is anticipated to assist companies in strengthening their collaboration with suppliers to enhance sustainability performance.

Chin, T. A., Tat, H. H., & Sulaiman, Z. (December, 2015). Green supply chain management, environmental collaboration and sustainability performance.

This research examines the mediating roles of environmental and operational performance in the connection between green supply chain management (GSCM) and financial performance. The relationships under consideration are evaluated through survey data collected from a sample of 126 automobile manufacturers in China. Findings indicate that GSCM, as a crucial supply chain strategy, has a significant and positive correlation with both environmental and operational performance, which subsequently contributes to enhanced financial performance. The results also highlight potential complementary effects among different internal and external GSCM practices.

Feng, M., Yu, W., Wang, X., Wong, C. Y., Xu, M., & Xiao, Z. (06th February, 2018). Green supply chain management and financial performance: The mediating roles of operational and environmental performance.

Anthropogenic emissions represent a considerable risk to environmental stability, thereby requiring immediate alterations in resource utilization. Sustainable supply chain management (SSCM) is essential in reducing environmental impacts through sustainable practices in design, sourcing, production, and distribution. This paper examines scholarly research on SSCM, organizing it into four primary categories: strategic considerations, functional decision-making, regulatory frameworks, and decision support mechanisms. It offers valuable insights for managers regarding sustainability trade-offs and explores environmental initiatives in India, underscoring the significance of sustainability within the Indian economy.

Gupta, S., & Palsule-Desai, O. D. (December, 2011). Sustainable supply chain management: Review and research opportunities.

The supply chain encompasses all activities related to the production process, starting from the acquisition of raw materials to the delivery of the final product. Recent changes in environmental regulations have significantly impacted manufacturing operations and transportation systems, leading to an increased focus on developing environmental management strategies within supply

chains. A green supply chain seeks to minimize waste within the industrial framework, thereby conserving energy and preventing the release of harmful substances into the environment. This paper provides a comparative analysis of traditional and green supply chains. Additionally, it explores various critical opportunities in green supply chain management, particularly in the areas of manufacturing, bio-waste, construction, and packaging.

Ho, J. C., Shalishali, M. K., Tseng, T. L. B., & Ang, D. S. (January,2009). Opportunities in green supply chain management.

The specific interpretation of alignment concerning the perceived obstacles and facilitators for the implementation of sustainable supply chain management (SSCM) policies has been explored in numerous research studies. However, there has been relatively little focus on the textile sector. It has been observed that this sector significantly influences the strategies adopted by companies regarding sustainable supply chain management. This article outlines the findings from a comprehensive comparative case study, which involved 23 interviews with managers from 10 textile companies. The analysis reveals that particular forms of collaboration can enhance the effectiveness of SSCM while simultaneously reducing barriers to policy implementation. The extent and nature of collaboration differ between an internal management approach for effective SSCM and collaborative efforts within the industry, as well as between buyers and suppliers to tackle external challenges and facilitators.

Oelze, N. (August,2017). Sustainable Supply Chain Management Implementation – Enablers and Barriers in the Textile Industry.

As awareness of environmental and social challenges continues to rise, stakeholders, especially consumers, are becoming more focused on sustainability. To address these changing trends, organizations are required to implement innovative and sustainable practices throughout their supply chains. This study conducts a systematic review of 217 journal articles to identify the primary drivers of sustainable supply chain management (SSCM), categorizing 40 distinct drivers into internal and external factors. The results indicate that regulatory and market pressures are the most significant influences on sustainability practices. By classifying these drivers into primary and secondary categories, businesses can better prioritize their sustainability initiatives within their supply chains.

Saeed, M.A. & Kersten, W. (February,2019). Drivers of Sustainable Supply Chain Management : Identification and Classification.

## Research Methodology

This study adopts an empirical research design, utilizing primary data collected through structured surveys distributed among SCM professionals in the various industries . The study employs quantitative analysis, applying statistical tests to examine the relationship between AI adoption and HR success.

## Research Objectives

The primary objective of this study is to analyze the key strategies used in sustainable supply chain management (SSCM) to minimize environmental impact. It also aims to identify the main drivers and barriers influencing the adoption of sustainable practices within supply chains. In addition, the research will evaluate how SSCM efforts affect environmental performance indicators such as waste reduction, lower emissions, and improved resource efficiency.

A key focus will be on the role of technology and innovation in advancing sustainability across various supply chain functions, including production, logistics, and distribution. The study will also examine how regulatory frameworks and corporate sustainability initiatives influence the shift

toward environmentally responsible supply chain practices.

Ultimately, this research seeks to offer practical, actionable recommendations for businesses looking to integrate sustainability into their supply chain operations—while still maintaining operational efficiency and profitability.

## Data Analysis and Interpretation

### Demographic Analysis

Role Distribution	Executives/Managers (28%), Supply Chain Specialists(18%), Environmental/ Sustainability Experts (24%), and Others (30%)
Familiarity with SSCM:	Very familiar (40%),Somewhat familiar (33%) Not familiar at all (27%):

### Familiarity with SSCM

**Very familiar (40%),Somewhat familiar (33%) Not familiar at all (27%):**

### ANOVA Analysis: Do Perceptions of Effectiveness Differ by Job Role?

It is essential for organizations seeking to adopt Sustainable Supply Chain Management (SSCM) to comprehend how professionals perceive the effectiveness of sustainability strategies. This research investigates the impact of job functions on perceptions of SSCM effectiveness through ANOVA analysis. The hypothesis evaluated whether distinct roles—Executives, Supply Chain Specialists, and Environmental/Sustainability Experts—exhibit varying opinions regarding sustainability effectiveness. The analysis produced an F-value of 1.67 and a p-value of 0.181, suggesting no statistically significant differences in perceptions among these categories. Given that the p-value surpasses the 0.05 threshold, the null hypothesis remains unchallenged, indicating that all job functions generally possess similar views on SSCM effectiveness. This finding implies that sustainability strategies are regarded with a comparable degree of significance across various roles, emphasizing that sustainability is a shared organizational priority rather than a concern limited to specific functions. These results underscore the importance of a cohesive strategy in the development and execution of sustainability initiatives throughout the entire supply chain.

### T-Test Results

The analysis yielded a t-value of -1.74 and a p-value of 0.090. Given that the p-value exceeds the conventional significance level of 0.05, the null hypothesis remains unchallenged. This suggests that there is no statistically significant difference in the perceptions of sustainability between Executives and Sustainability Experts.

### Interpretation & Implications

While the findings imply that both groups maintain a comparable perspective on sustainability, there is a subtle indication that Sustainability Experts may place a higher value on it than Executives. This observation underscores the potential impact of professional expertise on sustainability priorities. Organizations seeking to strengthen their commitment to sustainability may find it advantageous to promote enhanced collaboration between Executives and Sustainability Experts, thereby aligning strategic decision-making with sustainability objectives.

### Regression Analysis: Determinants of Commitment to SSCM

It is crucial to comprehend the elements that foster an organization’s dedication to Sustainable Supply Chain Management (SSCM) in order to formulate effective sustainability strategies. This

research investigates whether two primary factors—the perceived effectiveness of sustainability strategies and the significance of sustainability in decision-making—serve as predictors of an organization’s commitment to SSCM. A regression analysis was performed to evaluate the relevance of these predictors.

The findings reveal that neither the perceived effectiveness ( $p = 0.481$ ) nor the significance of sustainability ( $p = 0.477$ ) has a substantial impact on commitment to SSCM. The  $R^2$  value of the regression model, which stands at 0.015, indicates that these factors account for merely 1.5% of the variance in commitment, underscoring the influence of other factors. This suggests that organizations may be more influenced by external drivers such as regulatory mandates, financial incentives, and leadership priorities, rather than by internal assessments of strategy effectiveness. Consequently, for organizations to strengthen their commitment to SSCM, it is essential to consider broader systemic changes and external motivators in conjunction with internal sustainability efforts.

### **Limitations of the Study**

#### **1. Self-Reported Data Bias**

- The findings are derived from survey responses, which may not accurately represent the actual practices of companies.
- Certain respondents might exaggerate their organization’s dedication to sustainability.

#### **2. Small and Generalized Sample**

- The dataset encompasses a limited number of professionals and lacks specificity regarding industries or geographical regions.
- Sustainability challenges differ across various sectors, thus the results may not be universally applicable to all enterprises.

#### **3. Absence of Financial or Regulatory Data**

- The research does not take into account financial limitations, regulatory frameworks, or competitive dynamics that affect sustainability choices.
- These elements often have a more significant impact than the perceived effectiveness or significance of sustainability initiatives.

### **Conclusion**

This research examined the perceptions regarding the effectiveness of Sustainable Supply Chain Management (SSCM) and its influence on organizational commitment. The main findings are as follows: 1. SSCM strategies are generally viewed as moderately effective, although there is considerable variation in opinions. 2. Individuals in various job roles exhibit comparable perspectives on the effectiveness of SSCM, indicating a common understanding across different professions. 3. Both executives and sustainability experts assign similar levels of importance to sustainability, with only minor differences. 4. The level of commitment to SSCM is not significantly influenced by perceived effectiveness or importance; rather, external factors are likely to have a more substantial impact.

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