

Behavioral Supply Chain Management and Firm Performance: Systematic Literature Review and Conceptual Framework

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To cite this paper

Dubey, A., & Dasgupta, D. (2022). Behavioral Supply Chain Management and Firm Performance: Systematic Literature Review and Conceptual Framework. *Orissa Journal of Commerce*. 43(4), 89-105.

Keywords

Supply chain management, Behavioral SCM, SCM strategy, SCM integration, Firm performance

JEL Classification

D21, D22, D23, E71

Abstract: Supply Chain Management (SCM) has a significant contribution to the performance of the firm. The adoption of the behavioral approach is still relatively novel in the domain of the supply chain. Failure to account for behavioral components such as interaction, commitment, and like may lead to biased models. The current literature review's objectives are to (a) recognize and revisit the guiding theories underpinning behavioral SCM (BSCM); (b) identifying behavioral dimensions of SCM; (c) create a comprehensive conceptual framework based on aspects with empirical support and their relationships (d) presenting propositions justifying the relationship between the factors and the firm performance. The findings of the integrative literature review of 73 empirical and conceptual studies on the behavioral aspect of SCM suggest that the proposed model is unique since it inter-relates three constructs simultaneously, showing the effect on firm performance. This paradigm establishes a new basis in BSCM by identifying potential research directions and enabling practitioners and academics to conduct more research.

1. Introduction

In the present competitive global business scenario, the effective supply chain is the core of any business and is one of the most critical thrust areas to attain competitive advantage. The factors can be measured both in qualitative and quantitative terms. Studies on quantitative aspects have been studied extensively to comprehend supply chain management (SCM) dynamics and their effects on firm performance. But there is a dearth of literature for qualitative parameters of SCM related to behavioral aspects. There is a disconnect between theory and practice in SCM because “human and behavioral components (the soft-wiring)” are at least as significant as its “hard facts,” such as processes, technology, and measurement

tools. Comparatively speaking, Behavioral Supply Chain Management (BSCM) is “still in its infancy” (Donohue and Siemsen, 2010) and only partial research has been conducted in this field.

Hence, this study aims to explore and review qualitative internal and external factors of behavioral dimensions of SCM. The elements were identified by a review of various theoretical and empirical studies in the field of the supply chain. In this respect, a total of 70 articles were reviewed to comprehend the BSCM concept and its underlying dimensions through various theories and models to generate a conceptual framework. The primary qualitative internal and external factors identified three constructs of BSCM, namely SCM Strategy, Commitment, Integration. The optimum selection of dimensions improves the supply chain performance overall affecting firm performance. Hence, the overarching goal of this study is to strengthen the role of BSCM within the broader discipline of SCM studies.

2. Purpose Statement

The new institutional economic theory, transaction cost economics, and neoclassical economic theory have all been tested in the SCM sector (McNally and Griffin, 2004; Halldórsson and Skjøtt-Larsen, 2007). The grounded and a theoretical framework developed in this area have been significantly improved by the incorporation of these concepts. However, these theories and the current SCM research have mainly concentrated on the effective configuration of processes or the allocation of resources, relying on the Simons’ “Concept of Rationality,” which holds that people can make rational decisions and are motivated by self-interest to achieve the best results of predetermined goals (Simon, 1955; Simon, 1957; Barros, 2010). However, a wealth of data demonstrates that people regularly deviate from the rationality. These rationality assumption failures can be systematic, especially in uncertain situations (Julmi, 2019). However, this topic emerged as a field of study in the 1960s, research on behavioral and non-rational components of SCM has been virtually nonexistent (Gao *et al.*, 2005).

There is an attempt to fill the above information void by reviewing existing research on BSCM while offering a conceptual framework and generating relationships between the underlying dimensions of BSCM with firm performance. Hence, Systematic Literature Review in Stead (SLR) is conducted to assess the studies conducted previously in the parallel field (Gaba and Kumar, 2021). The primary research question guiding this article is how behavioral aspects of SCM add value to attain competitive advantage? The hunt for literature and the resulting philosophical structure to answer the research question was motivated by two sub-questions:

- (a) What are the underlying dimensions of BSCM?
- (b) How are behavioral dimensions of SCM related to firm performance?

To address these questions, this study looks at analytical and philosophical research that identifies the dimensions of BSCM from various behavioral theories of SCM and studies its relationship with firm performance.

3. Methodology

The SLR approach, which has been recommended for completely summarizing the status of research around SCM, was utilized to accomplish the study’s objectives (Durach *et al.*, 2017) and to find out the gap in existing literature (Singh and Gour, 2022). Searching, assessing, and synthesizing submissions

were done according to a specific process (Pilbeam *et al.*, 2012). This approach ensures a transparent and unbiased analysis process everywhere.

Torraco's (2005) structure served as a guidance as we initially chose pertinent literature. The literature discovery method considers several variables, including (a) the location of the articles' discovery, (b) the timing of the search, (c) the searcher, (d) the method used to find the articles, (e) the number of articles that initially appeared and the number of articles that were ultimately chosen, (f) and the reasons for the selection of the articles.

To extract the most pertinent papers, this study searched numerous databases, including Scopus, JSTOR, Ebsco Host, and Google Scholar. Using the databases, the initial search was done first by the author in April 2021. The connection between BSCM and firm performance is the main topic of this study as it relates to keyword combinations. As a result, the terms (a) Behavioral Supply Chain Management and (b) Firm Performance were chosen as the search keywords. This study concentrated on peer-reviewed English-language articles where any of the exact keywords occurred in the abstract, title, or full text to define the scope of review. Between January 2000 and December 2020, documents published for this study were considered. When the titles of each article were individually examined for the keywords, the initial search utilizing the keyword combinations produced 1310 articles from the databases. After reviewing the abstract and the complete papers as being relevant to the topic, it was further limited to 302 articles, and then to 119 articles. The overall number of articles to be considered for this study came to 73, as shown in Table 1. Duplicate articles that were available in various sources were also decreased by a direct search, and 14 additional articles were added through forward and backward search.

Table 1: Number of Articles Search

	<i>Keyword Search</i>	<i>Title Search</i>	<i>Abstract Search</i>	<i>Full Paper Search</i>	<i>Final Papers Selected</i>
Scopus	515	253	112	43	29
JSTOR	649	124	84	21	18
EBSCOhost	29	14	9	9	2
Scholar	117	45	28	22	15
INFORMS	1558	251	69	24	9
PubsOnLine					
Total	1310	687	302	119	73

Source: Authors' Own Compilation

The 687 articles that were found through the search were then examined using the systematic review method, a method for studying the literature that involves first conducting an initial evaluation of abstracts and then finishing an in-depth analysis of articles (Torraco, 2005). The main consideration during the tiered evaluation was whether a publication explored and addressed the BSCM and company performance conceptually or experimentally. The articles were removed if an abstract just briefly or

imprecisely defined the relationship without providing any context or pertinent commentary. Additionally, duplicate articles were eliminated. The use of backward and forward searches also assisted in the discovery of 14 additional pertinent articles. 73 publications were ultimately chosen for this study because of this method, as indicated in figure 1.

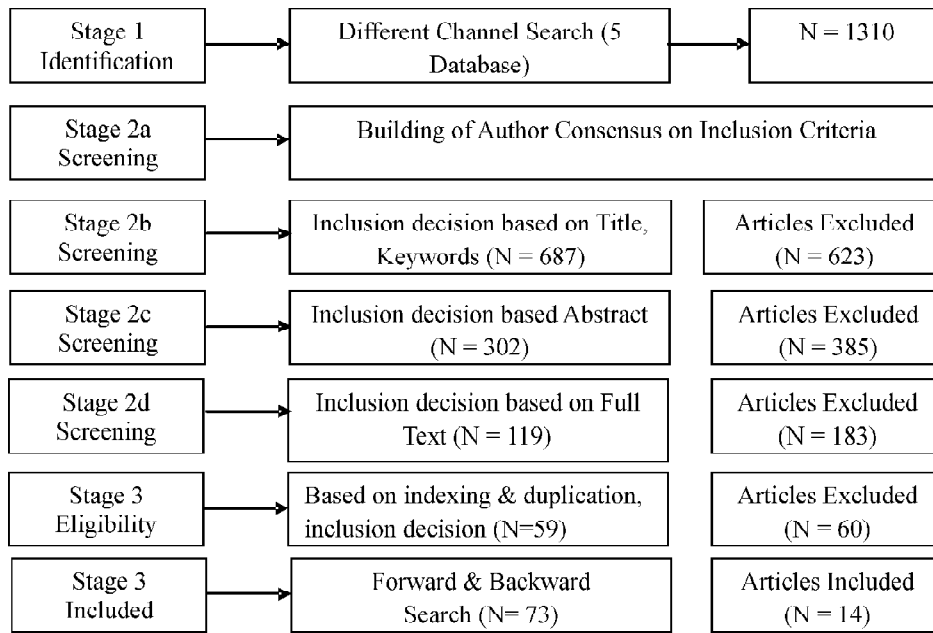


Figure 1: The outcomes of the systematic literature search are shown in a PRISMA flow diagram (Liberati et al., 2009), along with the reasons why records were omitted at each stage of the procedure

Source: Authors' Own Compilation

The frequency of publications demonstrates that in 2005–2006, BSCM research started to pick up steam. The symposium on behavioral operations, which began in 2006, and subsequent review articles by Carter *et al.* (2007), Tsanos and Zografos (2016), Perera *et al.* (2018), and Fahimnia *et al.* (2019) have all made significant contributions to understand the concept of BSCM and its underlying dimensions that have assisted in identifying some of the crucial research opportunities. Figure 2 shows the frequency of publications since 2006, highlighting that the subject took prominence between years 2017 to 2019 which more studies compared to another time- period, which declined in 2020. Overall, not many studies have been conducted so far in BSCM in general and identifying its underlying dimensions specifically.

4. Analysis and Synthesis of Literature

This section articulates the literature from the identified articles to understand the underlying concepts and extract the theories and models to identify the dimensions of BSCM and generate the relationship with firm performance to propose a conceptual framework and present the propositions.

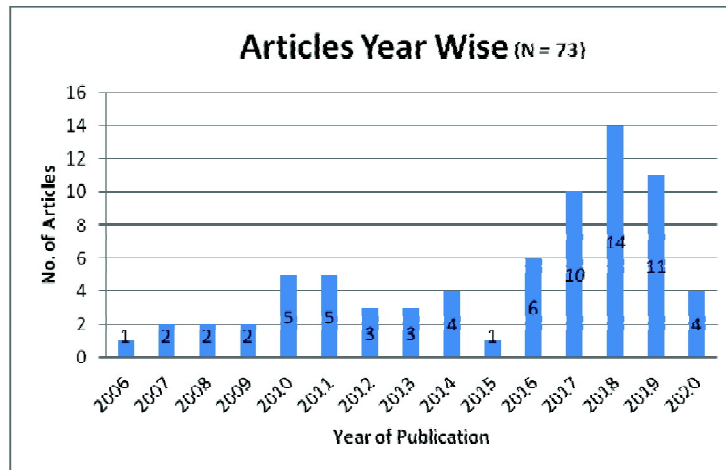


Figure 2: Frequency of BSCM Articles Year wise

Source: Authors’ Own Compilation

BSCM must be properly defined in terms of both the behavioral component and SCM as a starting point. According to the definition of BSCM by Croson *et al.* (2013), behavioral research can be viewed by people in at least one of three ways: (1) people have motivations other than financial gain; (2) people’s behavior is influenced by unconscious or unintentional mechanisms; and (3) people’s behavior does not always lead to the best course of action (i.e., the rational equilibrium in the given context). In addition, the analysis needs to be based on SCM meaning. The literature is dominated by SCM models that address the behavioral complexities of inter-organizational relationships (Danese and Romano, 2011; Emberson and Storey, 2006; Fawcett, Magnan and McCarter, 2008). In supply chain relationships, opportunistic and competitive attitudes are often portrayed as opposing ends of a continuum (Das and Teng, 1998; Hoyt and Huq, 2000; Wilson, 2006). Various behavioral models for controlling and managing procedures, systems, and operations around the supply chain have been formulated in this respect. Lambert, *et al.* (1996), for example, created one of the first SCM relationship models. The model clarifies the logic behind collaboration formation and can be used as a driving method to establish and sustain mutual partnerships.

5. Theories and Models of BSCM

The behavioral model was made possible by Herbert A. The behavioral model of rational choice proposed by Simon in 1955. The presumption of neoclassical economists was that businesses had perfect information. Herbert Simon created the idea of “bounded rationality,” which is where this idea originated. Bounded rationality refers to making wise decisions in a particular set of conditions.

Hence, theories for BSCM developed under the premises of ‘Bounded Rationality’ have a broader application on explaining, describing, and predicting complex behavioral aspects in the explanation of supply chain as evident from the studies of various researchers (Halldórsson *et al.*, 2007; Shook *et al.*,

2009). Few behavioral theories recommend managing and controlling the supply chain's practices, processes, and activities as a result.

5.1. Partnership Model (PM) of SCM

Lambert *et al.* (1996) suggested a simple view of the reasoning underpinning collaboration growth, which can be seen as a driving mechanism to establish and sustain mutual partnerships, as shown in figure 3.

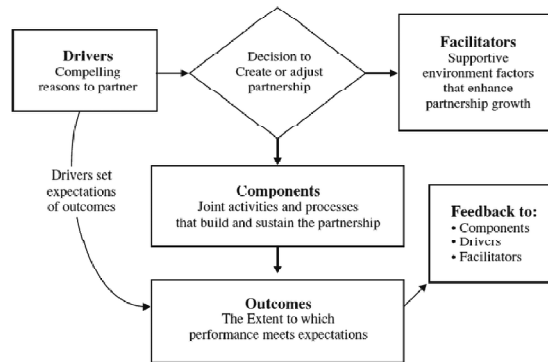


Figure 3: The Partnership Model

Source: Lambert *et al.* (1996)

5.2. Collaborative Model (CM) of SCM

Barratt (2004) proposes that ideology and policy play significant roles in handling supply chain cooperation. The cultivation of a collaborative culture among supply chain participants is attributed as the basis for collaboration, which may include factors such as trust, mutuality, knowledge sharing, and communication, as seen in figure 4.

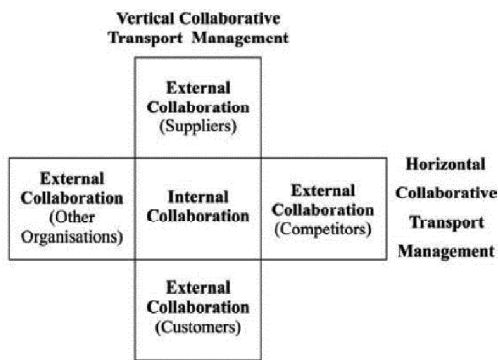


Figure 4: Collaborative Model

Source: Barratt (2004)

5.3. Relationship Maturity Model (RMM)

The Relationship Maturity Model (RMM) of SCM, as proposed by Spekman *et al.* (1998), suggested a classification of behavioral elements across member's relationships in the supply chain. This model emphasizes the participants' self-maximization behavior during transactions. As shown in Figure 5, teamwork pervades partnerships, resource sharing and shared coordination are the key priorities for supply chain stakeholders.

The behavioral aspect of SCM can be addressed using other theories regarding BSCM, such as Relational Exchange Theory (Ring and van de Ven, 1992) and Social Exchange Theory (Emerson, 1976).

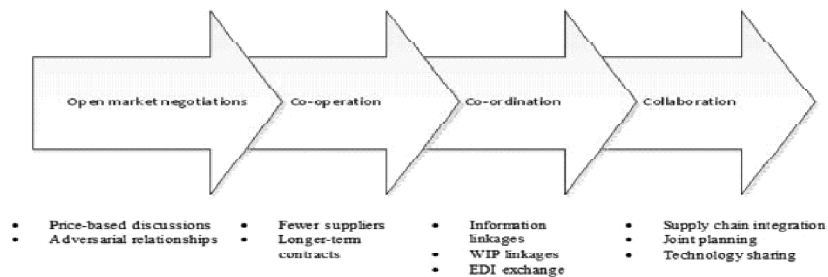


Figure 5: Supply Chain Relationships Maturity Model

Source: Spekman *et al.* (1998)

5.4. Relational Exchange Theory (RET)

It is predicated on the notion that the trade's outcomes are better than those that could be obtained either through more exchanges or the trade with a different partner, which is mutually acknowledged by the parties to the exchange. This encourages the trade parties to value the connection and invest resources in its growth and maintenance (Goles and Chin 2002).

According to RET, which serves as the primary theoretical framework for this study, relational norms including cooperation, adaptability, and information sharing are components of a replacement for the current governing framework of formal agreements as the sole approach of an exchange (Vijayasathy, 2010). Through internalization and moral strength, these rules present an internal means of controlling the behavior of trading partners (Joshi and Stump, 1999).

5.5. Social Exchange Theory (SET)

The significance of agreements that are “two-sided, mutually contingent, and mutually rewarding” (Emerson, 1976), where internal control systems ensure the reinforcement of positive behavior. Behavioral characteristics including trust, commitment, mutuality, and reciprocity are seen in figure 7 as being significant antecedents of collaborative supply chain partnerships because they can increase internal control and reinforce partners' positive behavior.

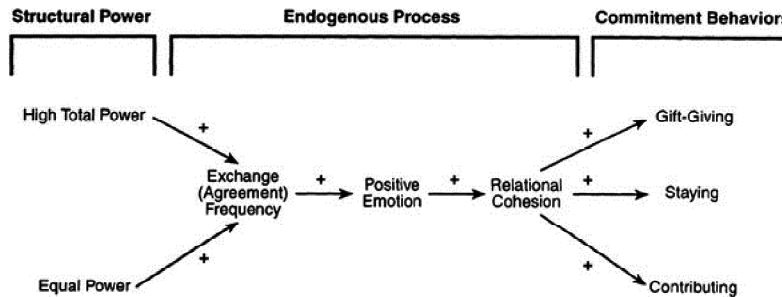


Figure 6: Theory of Relational Cohesion

Source: Adapted from Lawler and Yoon (1996)

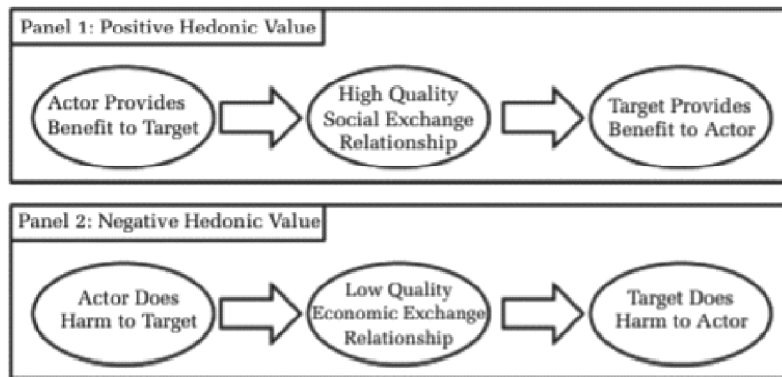


Figure 7: Generic Model of Social Exchange

Source: Cropanzano et al. (2017)

6. Discussion

A review of SCM extant literature and behavioral theories helps identify various behavioral dimensions, as mentioned in table 2. It further helps generate a theoretical framework for this study to fulfill the purpose of this article, i.e., to conceptualize and hypothesize the behavioral dimensions and the relationships with firm performance.

Hence, after critically reviewing all the theories and models discussed above, we have identified three factors for BSCM related to the focus on the theories, i.e., strategy, relationship, and commitment that encompasses the behavioral aspect essential to have a practical intangible resource for successful SCM. It can be understood that an effective strategy will lead to a harmonious relationship that will further lead to commitment among members

Therefore, this study is based on various behavioral theories of SCM to identify the underlying dimensions of BSCM to generate relationships between the dimensions and firm performance. The

Table 2: Behavioural Theories & Models of SCM

<i>Theory/Model</i>	<i>Authors</i>	<i>Representative Research</i>	<i>Focus Area</i>	<i>Factors of BSCM</i>	<i>Dimension of BSCM</i>
PM	Lambert <i>et al.</i> (1996)	Emberson and Storey (2006)	collaborative relationships	commitment	trust, mutuality, information exchange, and communication.
CM	Barratt (2004)	Kimmich and Fischbacher (2016); Fahimnia <i>et al.</i> (2019)	collaborative culture	strategy	management methods, power, and leadership structure
RMM	Spekman <i>et al.</i> (1998)	Durach and Machuca (2018)	self-maximization behavior	integration	collaboration, resource sharing, and mutual planning
RET	Ring and van de Ven (1992)	Vijayasathy (2010); Yang (2016)	governance mechanism	relational norms	cooperation, flexibility, and information sharing
SET	Homans (1958); Thibault and Kelly (1959); Emerson (1976)	Griffith <i>et al.</i> (2006); Dania <i>et al.</i> (2018)	internal forms of control	collaborative relationships	trust, mutuality, and reciprocity
RBV	Barney (1991)	Hafeez <i>et al.</i> (2010); Davis-Sramek <i>et al.</i> (2018)	strategy	relational exchanges	information integration and coordination, risk and reward

Source: Authors' Own Compilation

underlying dimensions of BSCM recognized, i.e., SCM Strategy, Integration, and Commitment, are discussed below.

Strategy: Specifically defined strategic behavior entails anticipatory behavior. Strategic customer, effects the strategic behaviour (Liang *et al.*, 2018, Zhang, Mantin and Wu, 2019). Green Jr., McGaughey, and Casey (2006) discovered that The SCM strategy is inextricably linked to firm results. According to Zelbst *et al.* (2010), firm success is dependent on the ability of the supply chain to satisfy the needs of the ultimate customers. To improve efficiency, a company should devise and execute an effective SCM strategy in terms of the behavioral aspect of SCM.

Integration/Relationships: Supply chain integration refers to how closely a company works with its suppliers and customers. (Frohlich and Westbrook, 2001). Issues of bullwhip impact and disputes among supplier chain members occur if integration is not appropriately achieved (Shah, 2009). This emphasizes the importance of integration in supply chain management. Strategic alliances with suppliers and interactions with customers are crucial elements of supply chain management activities. (Li *et al.*, 2005), and they lead to knowledge exchange, one of the five pillars of building a strong supply chain relationship (Lalonde, 1998). The similar research approach was used by Fynes, Voss *et al.* (2005) as they examined the relationship between suppliers' four dimensions (communication, commitment, cooperation, and adaptation) and the effects they had on operational performance in traditional competitive priorities (quality, costs, delivery, and flexibility).

Relationships with Suppliers: Companies have a disposition to partner with various vendors in a variety of ways. The arrangement with manufacturers must meet the needs of the business. Hines (2004) stated that it is typical to see an adversarial partnership between buyer and seller in commodity goods that is primarily focused on price. This form of supplier arrangement would not allow for cost savings in the supply chain. It could be advantageous to network with the provider to form relationships and collaborations that support both parties. This may be focused on manufacturing, personal, or symbolic networking and would turn on strategic partnerships (Hines, 2004), allowing for knowledge exchange, risk sharing, shared gains, and organizing strategies, allowing for supply chain development.

Relationships with Customers: The variety of products available in the international marketplaces range in price and quality. The result is companies are continually in trouble and trying to raise prices while increasing productivity. More options, greater service, better quality, and quicker delivery are what customers apparently want (Burgess, 1998). Relationships with customers have changed over time to become a competitive issue for organizations today. Strong connections between internal and external parts of the supply chain, from vendors to consumers, should be built on mutual trust and knowledge sharing (Sheridan, 1998).

Commitment: A commitment in supply chain partnerships is a pledge or duty to do something in the future. It is described as each party's ability to maintain and strengthen a business relationship (Morgan and Hunt, 1994). It refers to relationship-driven behavioral issues (Gligor and Holcomb, 2012), competitive behavior (Nagurney *et al.*, 2015), and the bullwhip effect (Narayanan and Moritz, 2015).

Firm Performance: All SCM practices can eventually result in firm performance. In the current analysis, one of the constructs considered as an outcome of BSCM is firm efficiency. According to Altekar (2005), a value chain is mapped out to evaluate all steps from beginning to end and redesign them to ensure that they contribute value to the result. BSCM considers firm success to be an outcome.

7. Conceptual Framework and Propositions

Based on the identified dimension of BSCM, a conceptual framework has been created by generating the relationships between the dimensions with the firm performance, and propositions is presented.

7.1. Integration and Firm Performance

Supply chain integration improves the efficiency of the company (Leuschner *et al.*, 2013). Collaboration is a vital opportunity for businesses looking to save prices, maximize agility, and satisfy customers

(Spekman *et al.*, 1994). Strategic relationships have a significant positive impact on company growth in small and medium-sized companies, (Eyaa and Ntayi, 2010). Moreover, Gimenez and Ventura (2005) also noted that external integration has a significant positive impact on organizational outcomes.

P1: SCM Integration positively affects firm performance.

7.2. Integration and Commitment

Understanding the significance of dedication to a strategic partnership's long-term sustainability is key to understanding organizational performance. (Andaleeb, 1996). According to Chen *et al.* (2012), there is a good connection between SCM Commitment and Integration. Salam (2011) demonstrated that supply chain commitment is directly linked to supply chain integration. These two studies explicitly show a favorable association between SCM dedication and SCM integration.

P2: SCM Integration positively affects SCM Commitment

7.3. Strategy and Firm Performance

Green *et al.* (2006) discovered that the SCM approach is closely related to firm success. According to Zelbst *et al.* (2010), firm success depends on the supply chain's willingness to meet the demands of the supply chain's ultimate consumers. To improve efficiency, a company should devise and execute an effective supply chain management plan. However, no research till date has tested the interrelationships between SCM strategy and organizational success, according to (Green *et al.* 2006).

P3: SCM strategy positively affects firm performance

7.4. Strategy and Integration

The problem is figuring out how to do this integration effectively (Lambert and Cooper, 2000). Via the partnership, integration aims to achieve organizational efficiencies and competitive efficacy in the supply chain. Organizations with a comprehensive internal integration plan obtain the highest levels of external integration, while companies with a bad internal integration strategy only achieve modest levels of external integration (Gimenez and Ventura, 2005). There is proof of this that the correct integration approach would have "complete integration" (Kannan and Tan, 2010).

P4: SCM strategy positively affects SCM Integration

7.5. Strategy and Commitment

Strategic agility results in operational and economic performance (Fartash and Davoudi, 2012). Strategic agility has a great impact on overall performance of small and medium companies (Kiprotich (2017).

P5: SCM Strategy positively affects SCM Commitment

7.6. Commitment and Firm Performance

A common metric for assessing dyadic supply chain connections is relationship commitment. Many times, buying companies can only achieve the performance improvements they need if they commit to a long-term partnership with their major suppliers (Krause, 2007). The level of operations, the process

of planning and controlling them, and the operational performance are all determined by behavioral antecedents like commitment (Tsanos and Zografos, 2016).

P6: SCM Commitment positively affects firm performance

Based on the above discussion, a conceptual model is proposed, as shown in figure 8, based on the thorough literature review based on behavioral theories of the firm.

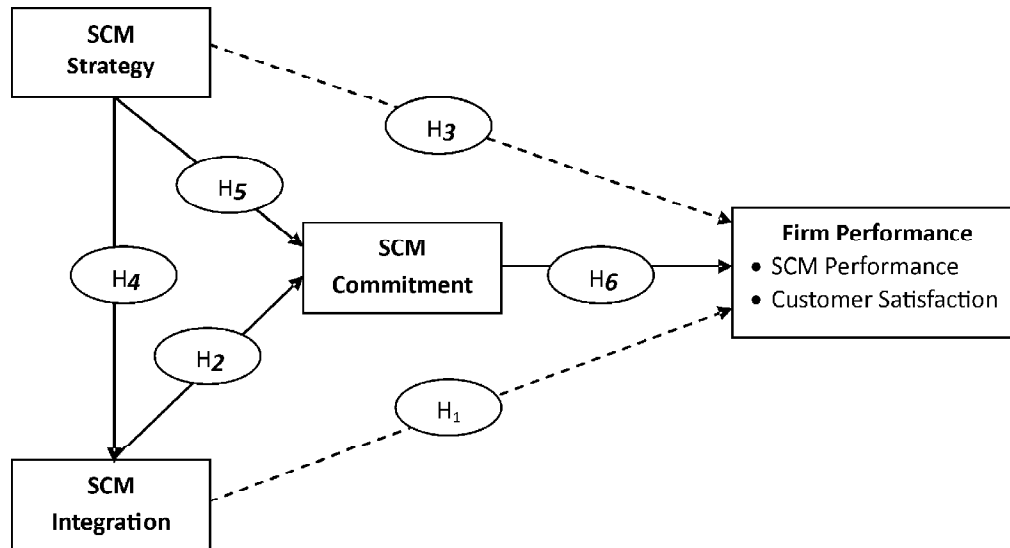


Figure 8: Conceptual Framework for BSCM

Source: Authors' Own Compilation

The behavioral dimensions of SCM are identified through Lambert and Cooper (2000). The SCM architecture has several behavioral elements that can influence how operations are handled, and thus networks are organized within supply chains. The behavioral management elements are intangible, soft instruments that allow the organization's physical resources to be used efficiently and effectively.

8. Findings

These findings show that while academicians and practitioners understand the impact of SCM's behavioral dimensions generating relationships between integration, commitment, and strategy, existing research on business performance is hampered by a lack of comprehensible conceptualizations and a limited exploration of behavioral variables. The BSCM association with performance results from the development of collaborative partnerships cannot be determined because of these gaps. These findings led us to create a conceptual framework and put forth hypotheses for it to be empirically tested using supply chain managers' perspectives to respond to the following research question, i.e., how significant is the relationship between BSCM and firm performance?

9. Practical Implications

The discussion presented throughout the paper, especially in the previous part, has several significant implications for specialists working in various supply chain functions. The course first enhances professionals' understanding of the behavioral elements that comprise the SCM. This is significant because the silo mindset often prevents functional managers from understanding how their actions can affect the preceding or succeeding role, mechanism, operation, or mission.

Second, professionals may better understand how management theories justify, forecast, or any of their supplier chain choices in contradiction. This allows these professionals to focus on their actions, whether they were based on predisposition or evidence. Finally, the concept discussed here helps professionals better understand the relationships between their supply chain techniques (e.g., performance, risk-hedging, resilience, agility) and internal and external activities, processes, and networks. This is a two-way relationship that explains how strategies affect attitudes, operations, and networks and how behaviors, procedures, and networks can be designed to facilitate strategy execution.

10. Future Research Agenda

Numerous research gaps were identified in the based-on intuition, the state of BSCM research at this time. Some of these differences were more apparent and have already been mentioned. However, to offer an even more significant catalyst for growth, the following potential research prospects are highlighted in this article as the most relevant and groundbreaking.

- To empirically test the conceptual foundation of the research and test the hypotheses.
- How should a business start fostering behavioral traits to forge closer working connections with its suppliers and clients?
- Is a better perceived level of supply chain performance, as supported by cooperative partnerships, positively connected with a higher perceived level of supply chain integration?
- Which BSCM dimension affect the most on supply chain performance, and why?

11. Conclusion

It is undeniable that BSCM has achieved traction. Nonetheless, relative to the broader SCM discipline's vast theoretical and analytical breadth, BSCM recently with fewer publications each year represents a narrow niche. Traditional SCM study clearly does not state behavioral assumptions and claims directly. Therefore, more work is needed to assist BSCM in being more relevant. This research provides a detailed analysis of previous BSCM studies and provides mechanisms that promote this desired growth. The descriptive overview of the study area, comparisons of behavioral hypotheses, and the established research opportunities aid in defining research holes and presenting answers to open questions in this important field. Furthermore, It is intended that the innovative strategy utilized in writing this essay would assist the BSCM sector in opening new insights by participating in unique and essential dialogues to expand and flourish.

This study examines whether enhanced integration and efficiency are a result of the reciprocal activity of partners in the supply chain who interact on a personal level. The partners' belief that

cooperation can lead to greater supply chain output benefits is what motivates them to form these partnerships, according to the behavioral patterns examined. Because of this, a theoretical strategy that examines the connection between relational structures and integration is adequate.

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