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Supply Chain Management Practices and Performance of Retail Outlets in Nigeria

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Abstract

Retailers have changed dramatically over the last few years, courtesy of emerging technologies, customer preferences, and rivalry. Retailers use digital resources for enhancing stock management, optimizing supply channel partnerships, and enhancing customer engagement. The study investigated the effect of supply chain management practices on retail outlet performance in Nigeria. Adopting a cross-sectional survey design, data were collected from 108 supermarket owners and managers, representing both large outlets, selected through Krejcie and Morgan's sampling determination method. Structured questionnaires served as the primary instrument, and the data were analyzed using multiple regression analysis. The results revealed a strong positive relationship ($r = .659$) between supply chain management practices strategic supplier relationship and information sharing and business effectiveness. The model explained 43.4% of the variance in performance, with ANOVA results confirming the model's overall significance ($f = 18.425$, $p < 0.05$). Coefficient analysis indicated that both strategic supplier relationship ($\beta = 0.191$, $p = 0.043$) and information sharing ($\beta = 0.247$, $p = 0.019$) significantly enhance business effectiveness, with information sharing exerting a stronger influence. These findings align with prior research emphasizing the critical role of supplier integration and transparent information flow in sustaining competitiveness. The study concludes that while supplier relationships provide stability in supply chains, effective information sharing delivers greater performance gains through improved coordination and responsiveness. The study recommends that retail firms invest in long-term supplier partnerships and adopt digital tools to strengthen communication and forecasting accuracy.

Keywords: Supply chain management, Strategic supplier relationship, Information sharing, Business effectiveness.

Introduction

Supply Chain Management (SCM) has become a central driver of competitiveness and business success. In today’s fast-changing marketplace, businesses are under pressure to deliver high-quality products, respond quickly to customer needs, and remain agile in the face of uncertainty. Effective SCM practices are no longer just operational necessities—they are strategic imperatives. By integrating supply chain processes, firms can not only optimize efficiency but also build resilience against market disruptions, shifting consumer demands, and global uncertainties. This makes SCM a cornerstone of long-term sustainability and profitability.

Over the past decade, SCM has attracted growing attention from both practitioners and scholars. Wisner, Tan, and Leong (2021) define SCM as the coordination of material flows and information across the value chain to achieve maximum customer satisfaction at minimal cost. Globalization has amplified the importance of SCM, reshaping manufacturing and retail operations worldwide. As competition intensifies, firms are compelled to improve service quality, increase flexibility, and reduce costs (Sudirjo, 2023). To meet these challenges, many companies have invested in resilient logistics systems, digital tracking technologies, and strategic sourcing models that provide end-to-end visibility and operational agility. The rise of e-commerce has further accelerated the need for flexible supply chain strategies capable of meeting customer demands in real time.

Businesses today understand that cost optimization, quality enhancement, and rapid problem-solving are critical to survival. One of the most effective ways to achieve these goals is by adopting robust supply chain practices (Saragih et al., 2020). Recent evidence shows that 51% of managers have increased investments in SCM in the past three years (Cahyono et al., 2023), underscoring its growing importance. Advanced technologies such as artificial intelligence, machine learning, and blockchain are transforming supply chains by enabling real-time data access, streamlining logistics, and improving decision-making. The way firms harness these technologies will determine their ability to compete both locally and globally.

The retail sector, in particular, has undergone a dramatic shift due to technology, evolving customer preferences, and competition. Retailers now rely on digital tools to improve inventory management, strengthen supplier partnerships, and engage customers more effectively. Real-time data analysis, automated restocking, and multi-channel communication have made supply chains more efficient and responsive. In markets such as Nigeria, where retail is expanding rapidly, businesses that fail to embrace modern SCM risk losing ground to better-equipped competitors. Accurate demand forecasting, efficient inventory management, and reliable supplier relationships have become vital for retail success.

One critical element of SCM is Strategic Supplier Partnerships (SSPs), which create collaborative synergies and long-term competitive advantages (Islami, 2021). However, SSPs are not without challenges. Aligning the objectives of retailers, suppliers, distributors, and service providers is often difficult, particularly as businesses grow and priorities shift (Dibsi & Cho, 2023). Building and sustaining trust within these partnerships is also complex, as conflicting interests and miscommunication can undermine collaboration (Zeng, Tse, & Mason, 2023). Moreover, the ever-changing business environment demands continuous adaptation and innovation, making it hard for partners to balance immediate challenges with long-term goals. Such tensions can weaken supplier relationships and ultimately reduce profitability, especially in dynamic markets like West Africa.

Addressing these challenges requires deeper research into which SCM practices most effectively enhance business performance. This study seeks to contribute to that understanding by examining how strategic SCM components can be leveraged to improve retail performance in West Africa's competitive and evolving business landscape.

Literature review

Supply chain management (SCM) is broadly understood as the planning and coordination of sourcing, procurement, conversion, and logistics activities (Mukhamedjanova, 2022). It encompasses a wide range of functions, including raw material purchasing, demand and supply management, production, inventory control, order processing, and the final delivery of goods to customers (Altekar, 2023). In this sense, SCM represents an end-to-end system that integrates activities from the supplier through to the end consumer.

Beyond operational functions, SCM is also defined as the coordination mechanism that enhances performance not only within a single firm but also across networks of trade partners (Abdallah et al., 2021; Salau, 2025). This perspective highlights the importance of collaboration and integration in achieving efficiency and effectiveness throughout the supply chain. Similarly, Bimha et al. (2020) argue that SCM should not be seen as a collection of separate business functions but as part of a holistic organizational strategy that connects goods, information, and financial flows from suppliers to manufacturers, wholesalers, retailers, and ultimately consumers.

In expanding traditional business operations, SCM emphasizes inter-enterprise cooperation, seeking to unify trade partners under a shared goal of optimization and long-term effectiveness (Olapoju, 2019). Thus, SCM goes beyond transactional exchanges to foster strategic collaboration, making it a critical enabler of competitiveness in today's interconnected business environment.

Components of supply chain management

Strategic supplier relationships

Strategic supplier partnerships (SSPs) refer to the long-term relationships established between an organization and its suppliers, built on cooperation, trust, and mutual benefit. Utami et al. (2019) describe SSPs as ongoing relationships where organizations and their suppliers collaborate closely on planning and problem-solving initiatives. The aim is to strengthen both operational and strategic capabilities to help firms achieve their goals (Melander, 2018). Nyamasege and Biraori (2015) further emphasize that these partnerships are not limited to transactional exchanges but instead foster enduring ties that encourage cooperative planning and joint problem-solving.

Strategic supplier relationships are particularly important in areas such as technology, markets, and product development, where they provide mutual advantages and promote long-term collaboration. Govindaraju et al. (2017) highlight that SSPs can create significant competitive advantages by leveraging the combined operational and strategic competencies of participating firms. In addition, deliberate cooperation strengthens joint planning activities and enhances the ability to resolve shared challenges (Kosgei & Gitau, 2016). In this sense, SSPs are a cornerstone of modern SCM, supporting not only efficiency but also long-term competitiveness.

Information sharing

Information sharing is another critical component of effective supply chain management. Ambreen and Siddiqui (2018) define it as the transfer of product knowledge and relevant data to partners across different stages of the supply chain. By providing a complete and timely flow of information, firms can enhance coordination and improve overall supply chain performance (Rached et al., 2015). According to Berut et al. (2018), sharing information also allows supply chain partners to monitor the status of orders and products as they progress through different processes, creating greater transparency and trust.

Govindaraju et al. (2017) identify information sharing as one of the five fundamental building blocks of strong supply chain relationships. Through regular communication, supply chain partners can function almost as a single entity, collectively responding to market changes and gaining deeper insights into customer needs. Utami et al. (2019) stress that timely exchange of information enables firms to respond more quickly to consumer demands, making information sharing not just a support activity but a strategic necessity in competitive markets.

Business effectiveness

Business effectiveness refers to the ability of an organization to operate efficiently and effectively in pursuit of its goals and objectives (Čabinová et al., 2020). It encompasses the strategies, processes, and practices that enable organizations to optimize resources, enhance performance, and ensure long-term sustainability. Business effectiveness is not solely about short-term profitability; rather, it involves delivering value to customers, maintaining competitiveness, and fostering continuous improvement.

To achieve business effectiveness, firms must align their mission, vision, and objectives with day-to-day operations, activities, and resource allocation (Ghonim et al., 2021). This alignment requires setting measurable targets, monitoring performance, and making evidence-based decisions. Furthermore, effectiveness in business is reflected in how organizations adapt to environmental fluctuations, technological advancements, and evolving customer needs to remain relevant and competitive. Thus, business effectiveness is a dynamic and adaptive process that integrates strategy, resource optimization, and responsiveness to external changes.

Theoretical review: Resource-based view (RBV)

The Resource-Based View (RBV) is a strategic management theory that highlights the role of organizational resources and capabilities in achieving and sustaining competitive advantage (Lubis, 2022). Originating from the work of Jay Barney in 1991, RBV asserts that firms outperform competitors when they possess resources that are valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable (VRIN). These resources may include physical assets, proprietary technologies, skilled human capital, and strong inter-organizational relationships.

Applied to supply chain management, RBV emphasizes the importance of leveraging both internal capabilities and external partnerships to generate value. For instance, cultivating distinctive supplier relationships, adopting advanced technologies, and investing in skilled personnel can reduce costs, streamline operations, and enhance adaptability. The RBV perspective underscores that sustained business effectiveness depends less on external market conditions and more on how firms strategically manage and deploy their unique resources and competencies. By focusing on the development and protection of such strategic assets, organizations can strengthen their supply chains, enhance efficiency, and secure a sustainable competitive advantage.

Empirical review

ROK Lee (2021) investigated the connection between supply chain management strategy and both financial and operational performance in order to ascertain the effect of supply chain management on the operational performance of SMEs in Korea. Empirical research of 300 Korean manufacturing SMEs that have used SCM techniques was carried out in order to achieve this. Equation modelling was used to examine variables. Furthermore, it was shown that SCM strategies have a major influence on SMEs' organisational competence and that both organisational skills and SCM strategies have a considerable impact on firm performance. Furthermore, an analysis of the meditative influence of organisational competencies on the impact of supply chain management strategy on company performance revealed that these competencies mediated the impact of SCM on operational performance but not on financial performance. The research concludes that by combining supply chain management techniques with organisational capabilities, SMEs may attain sustained overall company performance.

Amedofu et al. (2019) looked at how supply chain management strategies affected customer growth and startup performance in Ghana. The purpose of this article is to examine how supply chain management strategies may increase the success of startups in developing countries. Using the partial list square structural equation model as the research model, a survey of 300 Ghanaian entrepreneurs was conducted, yielding 72 insightful responses. The study confirmed that customer development and startup success are positively impacted by SCM techniques. Startup performance is also impacted by customer development.

Utami et al. (2019) investigate how supply chain management practices (SCMP) affect the financial and economic viability of Indonesian SMEs. The researcher used a quantitative research approach to do this, and the questionnaire technique was utilised to collect data. The information was supplied by planning managers, supply chain managers, procurement managers, and managing directors. The hypotheses were analysed using the PLS-SEM approach. The study's findings demonstrated that the degree of information sharing, strategic supplier integration, and customer connections all affect SMEs' capacity to remain financially and economically viable. The study's conclusions indicate that SCM techniques have a major and positive influence on the long-term financial and economic performance of Indonesian SMEs. Additionally, the study's findings demonstrated that effective SCMP implementation may enhance the financial and economic performance of SMEs in developing countries. Memia (2018) sought to ascertain how the performance of significant industrial enterprises in Kenya was impacted by contemporary supply chain practices. Lean supply chain, outsourcing, supplier relationship management, and customer relationship management are all components of the multifarious architecture that is supply chain management (SCM) techniques, according to the research. This research also included five theories: the theory of transaction costs, the theory of resource-based perspectives, the theory of value chains, the theory of supply chain limitations, and the theory of lean six sigma. In order to acquire information from 312 respondents, who represented 563 major manufacturing enterprises listed by KAM, the study employed a descriptive research approach. The study also included regression analysis and correlation to ascertain the relationships between the predictor and criteria variables. The results shown that any contemporary SC procedure significantly affects performance.

A study by Khaddam, Irtaimeh, and Bader (2020) examined the mediating effect of information technology and the relationship between supply chain management and competitive advantage. The main objective of this research is to investigate the indirect impacts of supply chain management (SCM) in its five dimensions—costs, quality, delivery time, flexibility, and creative commitment—as well as its three dimensions—relationships with suppliers, intermediates, and distributors. using information technology (IT) as a mediator. In this study, 250 structured questionnaires served as the research instrument. The statistical program for social sciences (SPSS) was used to extract and analyse 266 in order to evaluate the hypothesis. The study showed that connections with suppliers and customers both had an influence on information technology (IT), enabling SCM to directly affect competitive advantage, even while interactions with distributors and intermediaries did not increase the effect.

Methodology

The study adopted a cross-sectional research design, utilizing a descriptive survey approach to examine the relationships between supply chain management practices and retail outlet performance. The population of the study will consist of all supermarkets within Nigeria, providing a broad view of the retail landscape. According to ECOWAS Trade Information System (ECOTIS) there are 146 organised supermarket outlets aggregated data across the states in Nigeria states. The business owners or managers of these supermarkets comprise the participants, as they are best positioned to provide the data necessary for the research. To determine the sample size, the study adopted the Krejcie and Morgan sampling determination method, which provided a scientific approach for ensuring representativeness of the sample. Based on their table, for a population of 146 supermarkets, the appropriate sample size was approximately 108. This ensured that the findings achieved a 95% confidence level with a 5% margin of error, making the results statistically significant and generalizable to the entire supermarket population within Nigeria. Consequently, 108 supermarkets were selected, and their business owners or managers served as respondents, given their direct knowledge and involvement in supply chain management practices. A convenience sampling technique was employed to select participants due to the practical challenges of accessing supermarkets across Nigeria. The researcher adopted a door-to-door approach in various shopping centers to distribute and retrieve questionnaires, thereby maximizing response rates. Structured questionnaires were used as the main research instrument to ensure consistency and reliability in the data collection process. For data analysis, the study employed inferential statistical techniques. Inferential statistics were conducted using multiple regression analysis to examine the extent to which supply chain management practices influenced business effectiveness. Multiple regression was particularly appropriate because it enabled the study to assess the combined and individual contributions of independent variables (supply chain practices) to the dependent variable (retail performance).

Analysis and findings

Statement of Hypotheses:

H01: Strategic supplier relationship has no significant effect on business effectiveness.
H02: Information sharing has no significant effect on business effectiveness.

Table 1 Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of Estimate
1	.659	.434	.411	1.84544

a. Dependent Variable: Business Effectiveness
b. Predictors: Strategic Supplier relationship and Information sharing

The model summary shows that there is a strong positive relationship (R = .659) between the predictors (strategic supplier relationship and information sharing) and the dependent variable (business effectiveness). The R Square value of .434 indicates that about 43.4% of the variation in business effectiveness is explained by the combined effect of the predictors, while the Adjusted R Square (.411) confirms that after accounting for the number of predictors and sample size, approximately 41.1% of the variance in business effectiveness is still explained by the model. Overall, this result demonstrates that strategic supplier relationships and information sharing play a substantial role in enhancing business effectiveness.

Table 2 Anova

Source	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	251.000	2	62.750	18.425	.000b
Residual	326.941	106	3.406		
Total	577.941	108			

a. Dependent Variable: Business Effectiveness
b. Predictors: Strategic Supplier relationship and Information sharing

The ANOVA table indicates that the overall regression model is statistically significant. The F-value of 18.425 with a significance level of p = .000 (p < 0.05) demonstrates that strategic supplier relationship and information sharing, taken together, have a significant effect on business effectiveness. The regression sum of squares (251.000) compared with the residual sum of squares (326.941) shows that a substantial proportion of the variation in business effectiveness is explained by the predictors. This finding confirms that the predictors jointly contribute meaningfully to explaining variations in business effectiveness, thereby validating the fitness of the model.

Table 3 Coefficients

Predictor	Unstandardized B	Std. Error	Standardized Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	7.515	1.721		4.368	.000
Strategic Supplier Relationship	0.097	0.047	0.191	2.054	.043
Information Sharing	0.158	0.066	0.247	2.396	.019

a. Dependent Variable: Business Effectiveness
b. Predictors: Strategic Supplier relationship and Information sharing

The coefficients table shows the individual contributions of the predictors to business effectiveness. The constant ($B = 7.515$, $p < 0.001$) indicates the baseline level of business effectiveness when both predictors are held constant. Strategic supplier relationship has a positive and statistically significant effect on business effectiveness ($B = 0.097$, $\beta = 0.191$, $t = 2.054$, $p = 0.043$), meaning that improvements in supplier relationships lead to higher business effectiveness. Similarly, information sharing also has a positive and significant effect ($B = 0.158$, $\beta = 0.247$, $t = 2.396$, $p = 0.019$), showing that effective exchange of information contributes more strongly to business performance than supplier relationship in this model. Overall, both predictors significantly enhance business effectiveness, with information sharing having the stronger impact.

Discussion of findings

The findings from the coefficients table indicate that both strategic supplier relationship and information sharing play significant roles in enhancing business effectiveness, with information sharing exerting a stronger influence. This result resonates with Lee (2021), who found that supply chain management (SCM) strategies, when aligned with organizational competencies, significantly improve firm performance, highlighting the importance of integrating relational and informational practices. Similarly, Utami et al. (2019) established that information sharing, supplier integration, and customer relationship management significantly contribute to SMEs' financial and economic viability in Indonesia, supporting the stronger effect of information sharing observed in this study. Amedofu et al. (2019) also confirmed that SCM strategies enhance customer growth and startup performance in Ghana, reinforcing the idea that supplier relationships are foundational to business success in emerging markets. Moreover, Memia (2018) demonstrated that supplier relationship management, alongside other SCM practices, significantly impacts the performance of manufacturing enterprises in Kenya, consistent with the positive effect of strategic supplier relationships in this study. Additionally, Khaddam, Irtaimeh, and Bader (2020) emphasized that effective relationships with suppliers, when coupled with information technology, boost competitive advantage, aligning with the current findings that information sharing enhances business effectiveness. Collectively, these results highlight that while strong supplier relationships provide a foundation for effective supply chain collaboration, information sharing creates a more direct and powerful mechanism for improving business outcomes. The findings reinforce prior research (Lee, 2021; Utami et al., 2019; Memia, 2018) that emphasized the value of integrating supplier management with knowledge-sharing mechanisms to achieve sustainable competitiveness. Therefore, for businesses seeking to optimize performance, supplier relationship management and transparent information flow are indispensable drivers.

Conclusion

This study concludes that both strategic supplier relationships and information sharing significantly contribute to business effectiveness. The regression results revealed that while supplier relationships enhance collaboration and stability in supply chains, information sharing exerts a stronger influence by improving coordination, decision-making, and responsiveness. This indicates that organizations that effectively exchange accurate and timely information with supply chain partners are more likely to achieve higher performance outcomes.

Recommendations

1. Organizations should invest in long-term partnerships with suppliers through trust-building, joint planning, and contractual collaboration. This will enhance supply reliability and reduce operational risks.

2. Firms should adopt digital tools, supply chain management software, and real-time communication platforms to facilitate seamless exchange of information with partners. This can reduce delays, increase transparency, and support better forecasting.

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