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DOI:[10.1108/09600030810882816](https://doi.org/10.1108/09600030810882816)**Authors:****Craig Carter**

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[Citations \(3,609\)](#)[References \(204\)](#)**Abstract**

Purpose – The authors perform a large-scale literature review and use conceptual theory building to introduce the concept of sustainability to the field of supply chain management and demonstrate the relationships among environmental, social, and economic performance within a supply chain management context. **Design/methodology/approach** – Conceptual theory building is used to develop a framework and propositions representing a middle theory of sustainable supply chain management (SSCM). **Findings** – The authors introduce the concept of sustainability – the integration of environmental, social, and economic criteria that allow an organization to achieve long-term economic viability – to the logistics literature, and position sustainability within the broader rubric of SSCM. They then present a framework of SSCM and develop research propositions based on resource dependence theory, transaction cost economics, population ecology, and the resource-based view of the firm. The authors conclude by discussing managerial implications and future research directions, including the further development and testing of the framework's propositions. **Originality/value** – This paper provides a comprehensive review of the sustainability literature, introduces sustainability to the field of supply chain management, and expands the conceptualization of sustainability beyond the triple bottom line to consider key supporting facets which are posited to be requisites to implementing SSCM practices. The use of conceptual theory building to develop theoretically based propositions moves the concept of sustainability from a relatively a-theoretical treatment toward new theory in supply chain management.

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A framework of sustainable supply chain management: moving toward new theory

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Abstract

Purpose – The authors perform a large-scale literature review and use conceptual theory building to introduce the concept of sustainability to the field of supply chain management and demonstrate the relationships among environmental, social, and economic performance within a supply chain management context.

Design/methodology/approach – Conceptual theory building is used to develop a framework and propositions representing a middle theory of sustainable supply chain management (SSCM).

Findings – The authors introduce the concept of sustainability – the integration of environmental, social, and economic criteria that allow an organization to achieve long-term economic viability – to the logistics literature, and position sustainability within the broader rubric of SSCM. They then present a framework of SSCM and develop research propositions based on resource dependence theory, transaction cost economics, population ecology, and the resource-based view of the firm. The authors conclude by discussing managerial implications and future research directions, including the further development and testing of the framework's propositions.

Originality/value – This paper provides a comprehensive review of the sustainability literature, introduces sustainability to the field of supply chain management, and expands the conceptualization of sustainability beyond the triple bottom line to consider key supporting facets which are posited to be requisites to implementing SSCM practices. The use of conceptual theory building to develop theoretically based propositions moves the concept of sustainability from a relatively a-theoretical treatment toward new theory in supply chain management.

Keywords Supply chain management, Social responsibility, Economic sustainability

Paper type Conceptual paper

Introduction

One need only contemplate the recent and rapid rise in oil prices, rising transparency and consumer awareness of where and under what types of working conditions products are manufactured, and financial reporting requirements such as Sarbanes-Oxley to understand how these factors might affect a firm's supply chain and its economic bottom line. Until recently, most logistics and supply chain management research has examined issues such as the environment, safety, and human rights in a standalone fashion, without consideration of the potential interrelationships among these and other aspects of social responsibility (Carter and Jennings, 2002). The work of Carter and Jennings (2002, 2004) and Murphy and Poist (2002) begins to fill this void, by explicitly examining these standalone issues as a broader conceptualization and higher-order construct of

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... This definition suggests that companies adopt initiatives to enhance their environmental and social outcomes and implement measures to improve the effect on the processes of their customers' and suppliers' (Wang & Dai, 2018). A sustainable supply chain integrates social, environmental, and economic concerns in all of its operations, including sourcing raw materials, manufacturing stages, transportation of goods and services, and distribution (Carter & Rogers, 2008). The global push for industrial transformation towards sustainable operations has compelled businesses to pursue modernization of their existing supply chain management systems through the adoption of green initiatives. ...

... Using sustainable practices, companies can decrease risks, boost efficiency, and improve stakeholder relationships (Cuthbertson et al., 2011). This can contribute to long-term economic stability as sustainable practices help assure resource availability and environmental protection (Carter & Rogers, 2008). The development of sustainable infrastructure is essential for achieving economic sustainability. ...

... A sustainable supply chain incorporates social, environmental, and economic considerations into its operations, including sourcing raw materials, production processes, transportation, and distribution of products and services; aside

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Rogers, 2008) . Ali et al. (2020) found that incorporating green supply chain management practices into the CPEC's construction supply chain is necessary to reduce the negative environmental impacts of building activities. ...

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... A systematic literature review concluded that theoretical reviews were the most used methodology, followed by mathematical modelling, and then quantitative surveys. It is also important to note that most of the papers related to operations management and sustainability are atheoretical as was previously stated by Seuring and Müller (2008) and Carter and Rogers (2008) , which indicate opportunities for empirical research. Considering technologies, the IoT and Big Data are the most cited in the current literature. ...

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... Companies embracing GSCI focus on reducing their carbon footprint, minimizing waste, optimizing resource utilization, and ensuring responsible sourcing and disposal (Kumar et al., 2019). STA leads to reduced environmental impacts within supply chains, aligning with research by (Carter and Rogers, 2008) , which emphasizes sustainable practices. Advanced technologies like RFID and GPS improve real-time monitoring and tracking, vital for achieving green supply chain goals (Zhu et al., 2013). ...

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... Sustainable business models, such as offering a product as a service, have the potential to lead to significant reductions in environmental impact, compared to just selling a product [8,9]. Organisational sustainability consists of three components: the natural environment, society, and economic performance [10] that corresponds to the concept of the triple bottom line, balancing these three components [11][12][13]. Yet, the actual uptake and scaling of sustainable business models, in particular by large business, are still lagging behind [14] compared to the popularity of the topic in research (e.g. ...

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Article

How to advance theory through literature reviews in logistics and supply chain management

June 2021 · International Journal of Physical Distribution & Logistics Management

● Christian F. Durach · ● Joakim Kembro · ● Andreas Wieland

Purpose The discipline's most common uses for literature reviews—identifying gaps, developing research agendas, and categorizing the literature—too often fail to challenge, change or advance theoretical perspectives. The authors offer guidance to theorization through literature reviews. The key to theory advancement is consistency between the state of theory and the chosen review ... [\[Show full abstract\]](#)

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Understanding Project Champions' Ability to Gain Intra-Organizational Commitment for Environmental Pr...

January 2010 · Journal of Operations Management

● Craig Carter · Thomas F. Gattiker

A key enabler of environmental projects is the ability of the project champion to gain commitment to the project from other stakeholders in his or her organization. This paper develops a model of commitment-gaining success that is based on intra-organizational influence theory. The model also includes project payback, customer pressure, government regulation, top management support and the ... [\[Show full abstract\]](#)

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Logistics Social Responsibility: An Integrative Framework

March 2002 · Journal of Business Logistics

● Craig Carter · ● Marianne Jennings

Research on the external issues that affect logistics management such as the environment, diversity, safety, philanthropy, and human rights has consisted, to date, of separate examination of these matters. This work-to-date has approached these topics as if each was a stand-alone problem with differing drivers, constructs, and resolutions. However, if the research from the general corporate ... [\[Show full abstract\]](#)

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An Empirical Approach to Supply Chain Risk Management: Development of a Strategic Framework

January 2007

● Wolfgang Kersten · Philipp Hohrath · Mareike Böger

Nowadays companies face many critical challenges with regards to Supply Chain Management. One of the main challenges arises out of trends associated with lean management. Strongly synchronized interfaces and the reduction of inventory cause a greater dependence of the supply chain partners on each other. This close co-operation between supply chain partners exacerbates the risk exposure of ... [\[Show full abstract\]](#)

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Chapter

Supply Chain Risk Management als Element der Produktionsstrategie

January 2007

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Sich fortlaufend verändernde Rahmenbedingungen haben die Wettbewerbsintensität in vielen Branchen ansteigen lassen. Besonders die Globalisierung sowie verkürzte Produktlebenszyklen führen dazu, dass sich oftmals ein Wettbewerb zwischen ganzen Wertschöpfungsnetzwerken entwickelt.¹ Zur Optimierung dieser Netzwerke oder Supply Chains wurde das Konzept des Supply Chain Management entwickelt, das ... [\[Show full abstract\]](#)

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