

THE INFLUENCE OF SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES ON OPTIMISING ORGANISATIONAL POTENTIAL IN CHINESE ENTERPRISES: THE MEDIATING EFFECTS OF CUSTOMER SATISFACTION AND EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT.

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ABSTRACT

To gain a competitive advantage and realise their full potential, Chinese companies are using Supply Chain Management strategies. The intricate connection between SCM methods and organisational performance is explored in this study, with a focus on the moderating roles of customer satisfaction and employee engagement. Using a mixed-methods technique, data was collected from a diverse group of medium- to large-sized firms across several industries in China. Both quantitative analyses using structural equation modelling (SEM) and qualitative interviews with supply chain managers concluded that strong SCM strategies—including demand forecasting, supplier relationship management, logistics optimisation, and technology integration—have a positive impact on organisational effectiveness. Customer satisfaction significantly mediates the link between SCM efficiency and organisational performance, according to the study. This is because simpler supply chains improve service quality, delivery speed, and responsiveness. When workers are invested in the process, they learn their jobs better, collaborate more efficiently, and experience greater intrinsic motivation, all of which contribute to a more efficient supply chain. SCM two-pronged impact goes far beyond its ability to revolutionise operational efficiency; it also has far-reaching effects on business culture and customer relationships. Based on the findings, Chinese businesses aiming for global competitiveness would do well to adopt integrated supply chain management techniques and foster a work environment that places equal importance on people and consumers. As China's business climate changes, researchers build on previous knowledge by creating a comprehensive model that links SCM practices to internal and external performance determinants. This provides practitioners and policymakers with useful information.

Keywords: Management, China, enterprises, strategies, workforce engagement.

INTRODUCTION

The integration and management of supply chains have emerged as some of the most important tasks in the business sector in the modern era. These tasks have a direct

impact on the amount of potential an organisation has, as well as its competitive advantage, productivity, and total potential. When it comes to SCM, which is an approach that aims to deliver value for stakeholders and customers, the design, planning, execution, control, and monitoring of activities throughout the supply chain are all components that are included in such management. The fact that firms are able to properly manage their resources, meet the needs of the market, and adapt to an environment that is always changing is primarily down to the fact that this strategy is used. China provides a particularly fascinating background for the study of supply chain management strategies by virtue of the fact that it is the biggest industrial centre in the world and the second-largest economy in the world. As a consequence of the nation's rapid industrialisation, economic expansion, and admission into the global market, businesses have been presented with a significant amount of opportunity as well as significant problems. To achieve their organisational potential as they go through the process of developing, gaining market influence, and becoming more complicated, it is vital for Chinese enterprises to be able to streamline and simplify their supply chains. This is because it is essential for them to be able to maximise their organisational potential. A growing number of Chinese companies are beginning to acknowledge the significance of supply chain management to the achievement of their business goals. Traditional supply chain strategies, such as cost reduction and just-in-time inventory management, have been supplemented by the implementation of more cultured strategies, such as digitalisation, automation, and the use of artificial intelligence and big data, with the goal of improving forecasting, decision-making, and overall supply chain efficiency. These strategies have been implemented in order to improve supply chain efficiency. By using these techniques, businesses are able to better meet the expectations of their consumers, reduce their expenses, increase their operational efficiency, and improve the quality of their products. Although these advancements have been made, the full extent of the impact that supply chain management strategies have on the enhancement of organisational potential in the context of Chinese businesses is still not fully understood. This research endeavour is designed to explore the ways in which supply chain management methods have an impact on major outcomes such as the level of engagement of employees, the level of satisfaction experienced by customers, and the expansion of a business (Gupta et al., 2020).

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Companies in today's fast-paced, globally-connected market, especially those in developing and dynamic economies like China's, are realising the increasing importance of SCM. Chinese corporations' approaches to supply chain management have changed drastically over the past few decades for a variety of reasons, such as technology development, changing consumer preferences, the rise of e-commerce, and China's status as a worldwide manufacturing and trade superpower. If they want to keep or grow their market share, Chinese companies are under unprecedented

pressure to boost efficiency, production, and customer delight. The effects of SCM strategies on business outcomes, including employee involvement and customer satisfaction, are the focus of this research. Chinese businesses' potential is the main emphasis. It is widely believed that SCM may significantly impact a company's potential. Research in this area will seek to fill in the gaps in the knowledge by examining the connections between strategic supply chain strategies and the overall performance of Chinese organisations. These days, people put a premium on doing what's right for the planet and their fellow humans. Management methods are being pursued by companies in an effort to minimise or eliminate any negative impact on the economy. The majority of individuals believe that the most critical problems that mankind is now facing—climate change and global warming—are mostly caused by commercial activities such as extracting resources, burning fossil fuels, disposing of garbage improperly, and using too much electricity (Abed, 2021). Biogas, solar electricity, and hybrid autos are just a few of the eco-friendly alternatives proposed in light of the pressing need for sustainable practices. Efficient and environmentally conscious business practices form the basis of SCM strategy. As a sign of solidarity in the fight against contemporary environmental crises, this approach seeks to incorporate eco-friendliness into business processes. The need to track and eliminate pollution from factories has increased in significance ever since the industrial revolution. Every link in the supply chain—from producers to manufacturers to retailers to distributors to consumers—is essential to its smooth operation. Using the system's monetary transactions, information interchange, and physical storage, goods and services may be moved upstream and downstream. A new approach to SCM that takes environmental and ethical factors into account has arisen as a result of the fast development of supply chains. An increasing number of companies are using SCM because of the incentives and potential benefits it offers to managers who are interested in green practices. Improving strategic positioning and implementing cost-effective environmentally friendly policies requires manufacturers to collaborate with suppliers, consumers, and other stakeholders. By using SCM, a firm may improve its long-term sustainability and competitiveness in the supply chain ecosystem while also contributing to ethical and environmental objectives. Companies nowadays are confronted with the urgent issue of environmental management, the main goal of which is to make production more sustainable. The primary objective is to provide standards for assessing various methodologies and measurements used in supply chain management. By working together for the environment, sustainable practices may be more readily incorporated into supplier partnerships. But there are still a lot of questions that need answering, such how providers might make renewable commodities and effectively integrate environmental concepts into systems. Studies have shown that in order for supply chain management to progress, partnerships between buyers and sellers are essential (Ali et al., 2022).

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this research is to examine the mediating roles of customer happiness and employee engagement in the relationship between SCM practices and the process of organisational potential maximisation in Chinese enterprises. Businesses in China need to implement effective and flexible supply chain management strategies if they want to survive and thrive in today's very competitive and ever-changing market. The researchers want to learn more about how supplier cooperation, logistics optimisation, and technology integration are all part of supply chain management and how they affect an organization's bottom line by doing this research. More than that, it delves into how internal and external stakeholders are interdependent on one another to achieve strategic objectives, and how worker engagement and customer happiness mediate this relationship. In order to help Chinese business leaders and policymakers enhance consumer experiences, boost employee engagement and productivity, and better connect supply chain practices with overall organisational objectives, this study aims to provide them with practical insights. The examination of the aforementioned criteria will achieve this goal.

LITERATURE REVIEW

For rapidly developing nations like China, SCM has become a crucial strategic function in enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of businesses. Over time, businesses have begun to see SCM as more than just an operational task; it is now seen as a key to sustained growth, efficiency, and competitive advantage. Everyone knows that better customer service, faster deliveries, lower prices, and stronger supplier relationships are the results of good supply chain management practices including optimising logistics, integrating technology, and improving demand forecasts. In addition to streamlining operations, these techniques seek to align business procedures with market demands. The impact of supply chain management on a company's performance is indirect, but no less significant (Alenazi & Alanazi, 2023). It is becoming more apparent that factors like customer happiness and staff engagement greatly influence how these two metrics interact with each other. Because it enhances the whole customer experience, boosts product availability, and minimises delivery delays, a well-structured supply chain leads to more customer loyalty and repeat business. All of these things are essential for increasing consumer loyalty. Conversely, employees are more likely to be motivated, collaborative, and in sync with the organization's goals when they are actively involved in their job and know how they contribute to the seamless operation of the supply chain. Few studies have examined these traits in Chinese businesses, which face cultural, economic, and regulatory differences in their operating environments. Despite the fact that these features have been extensively studied in global or Western settings, this remains the case. This study aims to address that knowledge gap by exploring how SCM approaches help Chinese organisations reach their full potential. This is achieved by examining the synergistic effects of happy customers and enthusiastic employees (Al-Madi et al., 2021).

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

What is the effect of Supply Chain Management Strategies on Optimising Organisational Potential in Chinese Firms through customer satisfaction?

What is the impact of Employee Engagement on Optimising Organisational Potential in Chinese Firms?

METHODOLOGY

RESEARCH DESIGN

The quantitative data analysis used SPSS version 25. The odds ratio and 95% confidence interval were used to evaluate the strength and direction of the statistical association. The researchers established a statistically significant threshold of $p < 0.05$. A descriptive analysis was conducted to ascertain the principal features of the data. Quantitative approaches are often used to evaluate data collected by surveys, polls, and questionnaires, as well as data analysed using statistical computational techniques.

SAMPLING

A straightforward sampling method was utilised for the investigation. The study utilised questionnaires to collect data. The Rao-soft program calculated a sample size of 320. A total of 560 questionnaires were distributed; 486 were returned, and 77 were rejected due to incompleteness. A total of 409 questionnaires were utilised in the investigation.

DATA AND MEASUREMENT

The main tool for data collection in this study was a questionnaire. Part A of the survey requested essential demographic information, while Part B used a 5-point Likert scale to collect responses about characteristics related to online and offline channels. A plethora of sources, especially online databases, provided the secondary data.

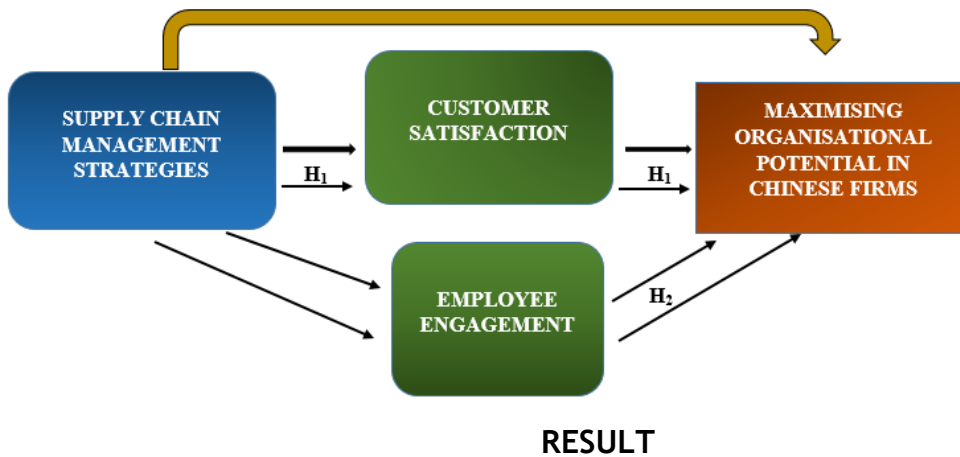
STATISTICAL SOFTWARE

The statistical analysis was conducted using SPSS 25 and MS-Excel.

STATISTICAL TOOLS

Descriptive analysis was employed to comprehend the essential nature of the data. The researcher must analyse the data with ANOVA.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK



Factor Analysis: A prevalent use of Factor Analysis (FA) is to reveal hidden variables within visible data. In the absence of definite visual or diagnostic signs, it is standard practice to use regression coefficients for evaluations. In FA, models are essential for success. The aims of modelling are to detect faults, intrusions, and identifiable connections. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Test is a technique for assessing datasets produced by multiple regression studies. The model and sample variables have been validated as representative. The data demonstrates redundancy, as shown by the statistics. Decreasing the proportions improves the data's clarity. The KMO output varies from zero to one. A KMO value between 0.8 and 1 indicates an adequate sample size. These specify the permissible boundaries, according to Kaiser: The additional admittance criteria set out by Kaiser are as follows:

A pitiful 0.050 to 0.059, below average 0.60 to 0.69

Middle grades often fall within the range of 0.70-0.79.

With a quality point score ranging from 0.80 to 0.89.

They marvel at the range of 0.90 to 1.00.

Testing for KMO and Bartlett's Sampling Adequacy Measured by Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin .894

The results of Bartlett's test of sphericity are as follows: approx. chi-square

df=190

sig.=.000

This confirms the validity of claims made just for sampling reasons. Researchers used Bartlett's Test of Sphericity to assess the significance of the correlation matrices. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure indicates that a score of 0.894 reflects sample adequacy. The p-value from Bartlett's sphericity test is 0.00. A positive outcome

from Bartlett's sphericity test indicates that the correlation matrix is not an identity matrix.

Table 1: KMO and Bartlett's Test.

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.894
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	3252.968
	df	190
	Sig.	.000

The Bartlett Test of Sphericity confirmed the general significance of the correlation matrices. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin metric of sampling adequacy is 0.894. Researchers calculated a p-value of 0.00 using Bartlett's sphericity test. The researcher recognises the correlation matrix's invalidity, since Bartlett's sphericity test yielded a significant result.

INDEPENDENT VARIABLE

Supply chain management strategies: The objective of supply chain management, often known as SCM, is to maximise total value. Value is determined by the supply chain's profitability. When entire supply chain expenditures are less than total customer income, the researchers say that the business is profitable. Supply chain management entails coordinating the flow of products and services from producers to consumers. Logistics and SCM include the transfer of products and information between different points in the supply chain in order to achieve profit maximisation. Supply chain management primarily include acquiring raw materials, creating products, advertising those products, running the business, distributing those goods, handling finances, and assisting customers. Consumption is the lifeblood of every supply chain. The objective of supply chain management, often known as SCM, is to maximise total value. Value is determined by the supply chain's profitability. Divide the total revenue from customers by the total expenditures incurred in the supply chain to get the return on investment (ROI). Making a decision on the structure of the supply chain and the roles that each component plays Choosing a location and assessing the building's needs Choosing the products to be produced and the space needed to store them Logistics preparation, which includes determining the best locations and methods for data collection. In today's complex global business climate, effective supply chain management is crucial for staying ahead of the competition. A solid supply chain strategy was necessary since many companies had disruptions because to shifts in customer demand and raw material shortages during and after the outbreak. There are still issues; a survey taken in 2023 found that 44%

of companies had to make changes the year before due to worries about their supply chain footprint, and 49% reported that disruptions in the chain had made planning difficult. If the researchers are well-prepared and prioritise the researcher's tasks, however, everything should go well. Companies are achieving their goals via the usage of various supply chain management methodologies (Ameen et al., 2021).

MEDIATING VARIABLE

Customer Satisfaction: One typical metric for success in marketing is the level of satisfaction felt by the target audience. As such, it provides insight into whether or not a business's offerings meet or exceed client expectations. One definition of customer happiness is "the number of customers, or percentage of total customers, whose reported experience with a firm, its products, or its services (ratings) exceeds specified satisfaction goals." In order to strike a better balance between pre- and post-consumption attitudes, businesses should focus on making customers happier and more loyal. To this day, expectation disconfirmation theory remains the go-to framework for analysing customer satisfaction. Various theories are used to illuminate consumer satisfaction, such as equity theory, attribution theory, comparison theory, assimilation theory, and many more. Various variables, such as respondents' emotional states, availability heuristics, memory restrictions, and the dynamic nature of the customer experience, might bias traditional ways of measuring customer satisfaction via surveys. The Marketing Accountability Standards Board has approved the definitions, objectives, and metrics contained in Marketing Metrics as part of its ongoing Common Language in Marketing Project. The majority of senior marketing managers (71 out of 200) believe that a customer satisfaction indicator is an excellent instrument for monitoring and management. A balanced scorecard often includes customer satisfaction as one of its key performance indicators. In a cutthroat business environment, where firms battle for customers, customer satisfaction is seen as a critical differentiator and an integral part of corporate strategy (Anning-Dorson, 2021).

Employee engagement: Employees who care about the company's success and its goal show it in their work and attitude every day. This is called an engaged workforce. Employee engagement is a crucial concept when attempting to measure and qualitatively describe the nature of the connection between a company and its personnel. An "engaged employee" is one that cares deeply about the success of their employer and is willing to put in extra effort to achieve its objectives. An employee's demeanour reveals how passionate they are about their job and the values it represents. A disengaged employee, on the other hand, may be doing absolutely nothing (a phenomenon known as "coasting") or may be actively working to damage the company's reputation and output. Employees are more likely to be productive for companies with "high" engagement levels compared to those with "low" engagement levels. Although employee engagement has been around since the 1990s, both as a management theory and a management practice, it is still a

hotly contested topic. Despite criticism from academics, employee engagement tactics have long been utilised in human resource and internal communications management. Even though pleasure is a separate concept, terms like “employee experience” and “employee satisfaction” have become to seem interchangeable. In contrast to “engagement,” which refers to an individual’s level of intrinsic motivation to work, “satisfaction” refers to their overall attitude towards their employment (Anning-Dorson & Nyamekye, 2020).

DEPENDENT VARIABLE

Maximising Organisational Potential in Chinese Firms: Using internal resources and external techniques, Chinese enterprises may maximise their organisational potential, which includes development, innovation, and competitiveness. In today’s globally interconnected and technologically advanced Chinese economy, traditional metrics of operational efficiency are insufficient for companies to achieve their full potential. This includes putting money into digital transformation, having a growth mind-set, and using state-of-the-art supply chain management strategies. Bringing business processes in line with customer expectations and market trends improves responsiveness and service quality. Involvement of employees is also critical since, when motivated, empowered, and invested in the company’s purpose, employees’ creativity and output soar. Chinese businesses are placing a premium on the capacity to respond quickly to changing regulations, market fluctuations, and global competition. On a global and regional level, businesses are forming strategic partnerships to tap into untapped markets, resources, and technologies. Companies are also investing more in leadership development and organisational learning as a means to attract and retain creative and talented employees. But bureaucratic procedures, difficulties in retaining talent, and unequal policy settings could be barriers. In order to overcome challenges, one must use resources such as people, technology, and dependable supply chain networks in a well-organised and coordinated manner. Companies in China have a great opportunity to become global leaders in the modern economy if they focus on both internal processes and the demands of the market (Aslam et al., 2021).

Relationship between Supply Chain Management Strategies and Optimising Organisational Potential in Chinese Firms through customer satisfaction: SCM techniques, particularly when they are in line with customer satisfaction objectives, play a crucial role in Chinese enterprises’ efforts to maximise organisational potential. Streamlining processes, reducing costs, and improving service delivery are all outcomes of efficient SCM, which in turn affects the customer experience. Timely delivery, consistent product quality, and responsiveness to changing consumer demands may be achieved by Chinese enterprises via the use of methods including digital integration, agile logistics, lean manufacturing, and strong supplier alliances. Customer happiness, which is a key indicator of customer loyalty and profitability in the long run, is greatly impacted by these characteristics. Speed, transparency, and

personalisation are three things that Chinese customers demand more from brands in today's cutthroat market. To better satisfy these needs, businesses should integrate data and technology into their supply chains. In addition to being more likely to repurchase and even promote the brand to others, happy consumers also help build a favourable reputation for it. This allows the company to fortify its position in the industry, boost its ability to innovate, and weather storms better. Strategic SCM plans that work boost operational performance and provide the groundwork for long-term expansion. To sum up, in the Chinese business environment, customer satisfaction is the link that allows an organisation to fully realise its potential via efficient supply chain management (Barbosa et al., 2021).

Following the aforementioned argument, the researcher posited the further hypothesis to examine the relationship between supply chain management strategies and optimising organisational potential in Chinese firms through customer satisfaction.

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between supply chain management strategies and maximising organisational potential in Chinese firms through customer satisfaction.

H₁: There is a significant relationship between supply chain management strategies and maximising organisational potential in Chinese firms through customer satisfaction.

Table 2: H1 ANOVA Test.

ANOVA					
Sum					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	39588.620	147	5468.517	966.852	.000
Within Groups	492.770	261	5.656		
Total	40081.390	408			

This investigation will provide substantial outcomes. The F value is 966.852, indicating statistical significance with a p-value of .000, which is below the .05 alpha threshold. The hypothesis posits: "**H₁: There is a significant relationship between supply chain management strategies and maximising organisational potential in Chinese firms through customer satisfaction.**" The alternative hypothesis is accepted, whereas the null hypothesis is rejected.

Relationship between Employee Engagement and Optimising Organisational Potential in Chinese Firms: To maximise organisational potential, employee engagement is crucial for Chinese enterprises. Employee engagement is a key factor in increased productivity, enhanced creativity, and superior overall performance because it increases commitment, motivation, and alignment with the company's

objectives. Workers are more inclined to go above and beyond the call of duty and make innovative contributions to the success of their organisation when they are respected, heard, and emotionally invested in what they do. Stronger employee loyalty and lower turnover rates are common outcomes for Chinese organisations that put resources into employee development, communicate clearly, recognise employees, and provide a happy work environment. Organisational agility and talent retention are of utmost importance in China's fast-paced and fiercely competitive economic climate. The ability to swiftly react to market demands is facilitated by engaged personnel who are more adaptive to change and who take ownership of their activities. Teamwork, client service, and internal efficiency are all boosted by their proactive approach, which in turn helps the organisation flourish. Because it creates a driven workforce that backs long-term strategic objectives, employee engagement is crucial to a company's ability to reach its maximum potential. To sum up, in today's fast-paced global economy, Chinese companies who put an emphasis on employee engagement have a higher chance of long-term success (Cagliano & Mangano, 2021).

Following the aforementioned argument, the researcher posited the further hypothesis to examine the relationship between Employee Engagement and Optimising Organisational Potential in Chinese Firms.

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between Employee Engagement and Optimising Organisational Potential in Chinese Firms.

H₂: There is a significant relationship between Employee Engagement and Optimising Organisational Potential in Chinese Firms.

Table 3: H1 ANOVA Test.

ANOVA					
Sum					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	39588.620	172	5655.517	1055.921	.000
Within Groups	492.770	236	5.356		
Total	40081.390	408			

This investigation will provide substantial outcomes. The F value is 1055.921, indicating statistical significance with a p-value of .000, which is below the .05 alpha threshold. The hypothesis posits: "**H₂: There is a significant relationship between Employee Engagement and Optimising Organisational Potential in Chinese Firms.**" The alternative hypothesis is accepted, whereas the null hypothesis is rejected.

DISCUSSION

This research found that in Chinese firms, SCM approaches are strongly and intricately linked to maximising organisational potential. With the shift in China's economy away from manufacturing and towards innovation, quality, and speed, supply chain management has become an integral part of the country's economic strategy. Businesses must use efficient supply chain management techniques if they want to improve their performance and remain competitive. By using these tactics, they are able to make their systems more responsive, cheaper, and of higher quality. The fact that SCM is not self-sufficient is an important understanding. Its impact on a company's potential becomes apparent when paired with other elements like satisfied customers and invested employees. For example, companies may streamline their logistics and supplier connections to improve delivery times and decrease errors. This, in turn, promotes customer trust and loyalty. An increase in morale and production may be achieved via the implementation of supply chain processes that are clear and efficient. Put together, these elements strengthen the company's reputation and internal processes, laying the groundwork for long-term success. In addition, the discussion suggests that Chinese businesses which invest in digital transformation, such as cloud-based supply systems or AI-driven inventory management, are better equipped to handle uncertainty and adopt new strategies quickly. Trade regulations, inconsistent supply chain standards, and a stubborn workforce are still external factors that might cause disruptions. To surpass them, companies need a flexible and comprehensive approach to supply chain management that integrates technology, staff, and customer experience. Organisations can't reach their full potential without an interconnected ecosystem that prioritises supply chain efficiency, customer value, and worker engagement in innovation and ongoing growth above resource optimisation alone.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study's results provide strong evidence that effective supply chain management strategies are critical for organisations to reach their full potential. By boosting employee engagement and consumer pleasure, supply chain management methods help organisations improve their performance, become more competitive, and ensure their sustainability in the long run. To thrive in today's volatile market, companies need to implement customer-centric supply chain management strategies that also prioritise employee happiness and financial security. Nevertheless, further research is needed to fully understand the impact of emerging technologies, to compare and contrast various cultures, and to identify industry-specific differences. The study's implications go well beyond the purview of particular organisations; they touch scholars, legislators, and society at large. It offers actionable suggestions for promoting sustainable business practices and enhancing the efficacy of supply chain management approaches.

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