

THE IMPACT OF SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES ON MAXIMISING ORGANISATIONAL POTENTIAL IN CHINESE FIRMS: THE MEDIATING ROLE OF CUSTOMER SATISFACTION AND EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT.

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ABSTRACT

Supply Chain Management methods are being used more and more by Chinese enterprises to get competitive advantages and maximise organisational potential in the ever-changing world of global commerce. Using customer happiness and staff engagement as mediators, this research delves into the complex ways in which SCM methods affect organisational success. A mixed-methods approach was used to gather data from a cross-section of Chinese businesses ranging in size from medium to big and operating in a wide variety of sectors. The results of quantitative analysis using structural equation modelling (SEM) and qualitative interviews with supply chain managers show that effective supply chain management strategies have a positive impact on organisational effectiveness. These strategies include demand forecasting, supplier relationship management, logistics optimisation, and technology integration. As a result of improved service quality, delivery speed, and responsiveness brought about by simplified supply chains, the research concludes that customer satisfaction plays a mediating role in the link between SCM effectiveness and organisational success. At the same time, employee involvement is a key internal mediator in an effective supply chain, which in turn leads to better job descriptions, more teamwork, and higher morale. By illuminating its wider influence on corporate culture and customer connections, the two mediating effects demonstrate that SCM's strategic worth extends beyond operational efficiency. The results indicate that if Chinese companies want to be more competitive on a global scale. As a result, practitioners and policymakers in China's dynamic business landscape may benefit from the actionable insights provided by this model.

Keywords: Supply chain, management strategies, Chinese firms, customer satisfaction, employee engagement.

INTRODUCTION

Some of the most important things that companies do now include managing and integrating their supply networks. These duties impact an organization's competitiveness, production, and potential in general. The goal of supply chain management (SCM) is to provide value to stakeholders and consumers via the design, planning, execution, control, and monitoring of supply chain activities. Businesses

are able to effectively manage their resources, meet market needs, and adapt to an ever-changing environment because of this strategy. As the world's second-largest economy and biggest industrial centre, China provides an interesting setting for research on supply chain management strategies. The rapid industrialisation, economic expansion, and global market entrance of the country has presented both huge opportunities and severe problems to businesses (Giannakis et al., 2020). As they expand, get a stronger foothold in the market, and become more intricate, Chinese companies must optimise and streamline their supply chains to reach their full organisational potential. The importance of supply chain management to the success of certain Chinese enterprises is becoming more apparent. The integration of more cultural approaches to supply chain management, such as digitisation and automation, with more traditional ones, such as cost reduction and just-in-time inventory management, has led to better forecasting, decision-making, and overall supply chain efficiency. Better customer satisfaction, cost savings, operational efficiency, and product quality are all possible outcomes when businesses use these tactics. These developments have not yet led to a general consensus on the extent to which supply chain management strategies may boost organisational potential for Chinese businesses. The primary purpose of the research is to understand the relationship between supply chain management tactics and critical success factors including customer happiness, employee engagement, and company revenue (Fernando & Wulansari, 2021).

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Especially in dynamic and expanding countries like China's, SCM is gaining prominence in today's fast-paced, globally-connected business landscape. 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. There is unprecedented demand on Chinese businesses to increase efficiency, expand output, and enhance consumer happiness if they want to maintain or increase their market share. This study looks at the ways in which SCM techniques impact organisational performance, specifically looking at the ways in which they influence employee engagement and customer happiness. It focusses on the potential of Chinese enterprises. An increasing number of people believe that SCM may greatly affect a company's potential (Ding & Fan, 2022). To better understand how strategic supply chain strategies contribute to the overall performance of Chinese organisations, this research will investigate these links. In today's society, protecting the environment and ensuring human welfare are of the utmost importance. Companies are actively pursuing management strategies that include actions with little to no negative effect on the economy. Most people think that business activities like resource exploitation, burning fossil fuels, improper waste disposal, and excessive power consumption are the main causes of

global warming and climate change, the two most pressing issues that humanity is now confronting. A number of environmentally friendly options, including biogas, solar power, and hybrid cars, have been suggested in response to the urgent need for sustainable practices. Sustainable and ecologically friendly company practices are the cornerstone of SCM strategy. This strategy aims to integrate environmental protection into company operations as a way to show a shared dedication to solving the ecological problems of the modern world. Since the Industrial Revolution, the importance of monitoring and remediating industrial pollution has grown in society. The supply chain is an intricate web that includes everyone from producers to manufacturers to retailers to wholesalers to customers and everyone in between. The system allows for the upstream and downstream movement of commodities and services by means of monetary transactions, the exchange of information, and physical storage. Due to the rapid evolution of supply chains, a fresh strategy for SCM has emerged, one that incorporates environmental and ethical considerations (Chygryn et al., 2020). The possible advantages and incentives of SCM are enticing managers to embrace environmentally friendly practices, and as a result, many businesses are adopting it. Manufacturers need to work with suppliers, customers, and other stakeholders to improve their strategic positioning and implement environmentally friendly policies that won't break the bank. A company's long-term viability and competitiveness in the supply chain ecosystem are enhanced by the integration of SCM, which also helps with ethical and environmental goals. Modern companies face the pressing problem of environmental management, the primary objective of which is to improve the sustainability of manufacturing. The important goal, is to create criteria for evaluating supply chain management methods using different measures and approaches. Sustainable practices may be more easily integrated into supplier relationships through environmental collaboration. However, several concerns remain unresolved, such as how suppliers may efficiently incorporate environmental principles into systems and manufacture renewable commodities. Alliances between suppliers and buyers are crucial to the development of supply chain management, according to studies (Chen et al., 2020).

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This study seeks to evaluate the effect of supply chain management strategies on the optimisation of organisational potential in Chinese firms, with an emphasis on the mediating roles of customer happiness and worker engagement. In today's cutthroat and ever-evolving business environment, Chinese enterprises need to embrace supply chain management strategies that are both efficient and adaptable in order to improve their performance and maintain long-term growth. With the help of this study, we intend to investigate the ways in which various supply chain management methods, such as supplier collaboration, logistics optimisation, and technology integration, directly contribute to the success of an organisation. In addition to this, it investigates the ways in which customer satisfaction and staff

engagement serve as mediators in this connection, highlighting the significance of both external and internal stakeholders in the process of accomplishing strategic goals. The purpose of this research is to give managers and policymakers in Chinese companies with practical insights they can use to better align their supply chain practices with overall organisational goals, improve customer experiences, and create a workforce that is more engaged and productive. This will be accomplished via the analysis of the characteristics listed above.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Supply chain management, often known as SCM, has emerged as an essential strategic role for improving the performance of organisations, especially in countries that are rising at a fast pace, such as China. Companies have, over the course of time, switched their attention from perceiving SCM as a simply operational activity to recognising it as a significant driver of competitiveness, efficiency, and long-term development. It is general knowledge that effective supply chain management tactics, such as enhanced demand forecasting, robust supplier relationships, technology integration, and logistics optimisation, are associated with decreased costs, accelerated delivery times, and improved customer service. Not only do these strategies aim to simplify operations, but they also aim to connect company processes with the needs of the market. It is important to note that the influence of SCM on the success of an organisation is not entirely direct (Borazon et al., 2022). It is becoming more apparent that factors like customer happiness and staff engagement greatly influence how these two metrics interact with each other. A supply chain that is well-structured leads to greater customer loyalty and repeat business because it improves overall customer experience, increases product availability, and decreases delivery delays. These are all critical components that contribute to higher customer loyalty. On the other hand, when workers are engaged in their work and have a clear understanding of their part in ensuring that the supply chain runs smoothly, they have a tendency to be more motivated, collaborative, and aligned with the objectives of the organisation. There is a small amount of study that focusses on how these characteristics play out in Chinese companies, which operate in surroundings that are distinct in terms of culture, economics, and regulations. This is despite the fact that a significant portion of the current literature has investigated these aspects in global or Western contexts. This research attempts to fill that void by investigating the ways in which supply chain management (SCM) methods contribute to the maximisation of organisational potential in China. This is accomplished by analysing the combined impact of customer satisfaction and staff engagement (Birkel & Müller, 2021).

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

What is the impact of supply chain management strategies on the Maximising organisational potential of Chinese firms?

What is the influence of supply chain management strategies on Employee Engagement?

METHODOLOGY

RESEARCH DESIGN

The quantitative data analysis used SPSS version 25. The odds ratio and 95% confidence interval were used to assess the extent and pattern of the statistical correlation. 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 via surveys, polls, and questionnaires, in addition to 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 disseminated; 486 were sent back, and 77 were discarded owing to incompleteness. A total of 409 questionnaires were used in the study.

DATA AND MEASUREMENT

The primary instrument for data collection in this research was a questionnaire. Part A of the survey solicited fundamental demographic information, while Part B used a 5-point Likert scale to gather answers about attributes associated with online and offline channels. A multitude of sources, particularly internet databases, supplied the secondary data.

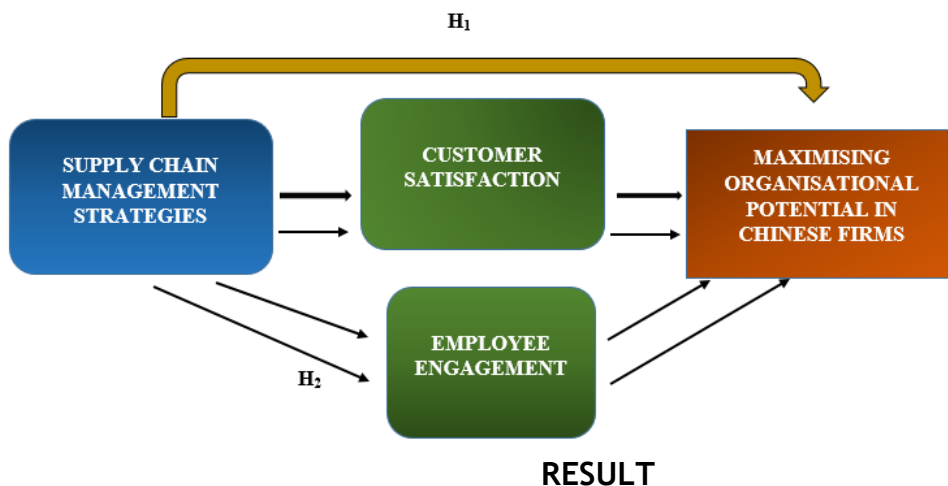
STATISTICAL SOFTWARE

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

STATISTICAL TOOLS

Descriptive evaluation was employed to comprehend the fundamental essence of the data. The researcher must analyse the data with ANOVA.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK



Factor Analysis: A common use of Factor Analysis (FA) is to uncover latent variables within observable data. In the lack of definitive visual or diagnostic indicators, it is customary to use regression coefficients for assessments. In FA, models are crucial for success. The objectives of modelling are to identify defects, intrusions, and discernible linkages. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Test is a method for evaluating datasets generated by multiple regression analyses. The model and sample variables have been confirmed as representative. The data exhibits redundancy, as seen by the statistics. Reducing the proportions enhances the clarity of the data. The KMO output ranges from zero to one. A KMO value ranging from 0.8 to 1 indicates a sufficient sample size. These delineate the acceptable limits, as per Kaiser: The supplementary admission standards established by Kaiser are as follows:

A pitiful 0.050 to 0.059, below average 0.60 to 0.69

Middle grades often reside within the range of 0.70 to 0.79.

The quality point score ranges from 0.80 to 0.89.

They are astonished by the range of 0.90 to 1.00.

Assessment of KMO and Bartlett's Sampling Adequacy Evaluated by Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin .894

The outcomes of Bartlett's test of sphericity are as follows: Approximately chi-square degrees of freedom = 190

significance = 0.000

This validates the assertions stated just for sampling purposes. Researchers used Bartlett's Test of Sphericity to evaluate the relevance of the correlation matrices. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin metric implies that a score of 0.894 confirms sample

adequacy. The p-value obtained from Bartlett's sphericity test is 0.00. A favourable result from Bartlett's sphericity test indicates that the correlated matrix is not a distinct 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

INDEPENDENT VARIABLE

Supply chain management strategies: SCM functions with the overarching goal of increasing total value. The profitability of the supply chain is the determinant of value. A company is considered profitable when its total revenue is less than its total expenditures across the supply chain. Coordination of the production, distribution, and consumption of goods and services is the essence of supply chain management. The goal of supply chain management and logistics is to maximise profits by transferring items and information across various stages of the supply chain. The primary functions of supply chain management include the following: sourcing of raw materials, product development, marketing, sales, operations management, inventory control, accounting, and customer service. Every supply chain revolves on consumption. SCM functions with the overarching goal of increasing 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 corporate climate, effective SCM is essential 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 you are well-prepared and prioritise your tasks, however, everything should go well. Companies are achieving their goals via the usage of various supply chain management methodologies (Bai et al., 2023).

MEDIATING VARIABLE

Customer Satisfaction: Customer happiness is a common indicator of a successful marketing campaign. Therefore, it shows how well a company's products or services meet or surpass customer expectations. A customer's happiness is defined as "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." Businesses should prioritise customer happiness and loyalty to achieve a better balance between pre- and post-consumption attitudes. When it comes to assessing consumer happiness, expectation disconfirmation theory is still the gold standard. We employ a wide range of theories—including equity, attribution, comparison, assimilation, and many more—to shed light on customer happiness. Conventional methods of gauging consumer happiness via surveys may be skewed due to a number of factors, including respondents' emotional states, memory limitations, availability heuristics, and the ever-changing character of the whole customer experience. As a component of its continuing Common Language in Marketing Project, the Marketing Accountability Standards Board has authorised the goals, measurements, and definitions included in marketing measurements. A customer satisfaction indicator is a great tool for monitoring and managing, according to the majority of senior marketing managers (71 out of 200). One of the KPIs of a balanced scorecard is the level of customer happiness. Companies in today's fiercely competitive market place see happy customers as a key differentiator and an essential component of their overall strategy (Ali et al., 2019).

Employee engagement: An engaged workforce is one whose members are personally invested in the success of their company and its mission via the enthusiasm and dedication with which they carry out their work. When trying to quantify and qualitatively explain the nature of the interaction between an organisation and its workers, employee engagement is a vital notion. An "engaged employee" is someone who is so engrossed in their job that they go above and above to help the company's standing and goals. When workers are enthusiastic about their work and the principles it stands for, it shows in their attitude. On the other hand, a disengaged worker might be doing nothing at all (also known as "coasting") or could be deliberately hurting the company's productivity and image. Companies that have "high" levels of employee engagement are likely to have more productive workers than those that have "low" levels of engagement. The idea of employee engagement emerged in the 1990s as a theory of management; it gained traction in the 2000s as a management practice; nonetheless, the notion is still debated. Human resource and internal communications management have long used employee engagement strategies, despite criticism from academics. Nowadays, phrases like "employee satisfaction" and "employee experience" sound same, even if satisfaction is a distinct idea. What we mean by "satisfaction" here is how a person feels about their

job, as opposed to “engagement,” which is how motivated they are to work (Ali et al., 2022).

DEPENDENT VARIABLE

Maximising Organisational Potential in Chinese Firms: In order for Chinese businesses to reach their full organisational potential, which includes maximising development, innovation, and competitiveness, it is necessary to use both internal resources and external tactics. To reach their maximum potential in today’s increasingly technology-driven and internationally linked Chinese economy, businesses can no longer rely on conventional measures of operational efficiency. Investing in digital transformation, cultivating a growth mind-set, and implementing cutting-edge supply chain management practices are all part of this. Improved responsiveness and service quality are outcomes of this process’s primary component: bringing company operations in line with consumer expectations and market developments. Employee involvement is also crucial, as creativity and productivity skyrocket when workers are inspired, given responsibility, and believe in the company’s mission. The ability to swiftly adjust to shifting rules, market upheavals, and global competition is becoming an increasingly important priority for Chinese enterprises. To access new markets, resources, and technology, strategic alliances are being formed on a global and local scale. Also, in an effort to build a strong and innovative staff, companies are putting greater emphasis on leadership training and organisational learning. However, obstacles might arise in the form of bureaucratic systems, problems with retaining talent, and uneven policy settings. To get beyond obstacles, you need a well-planned, coordinated effort that makes use of resources like people, technology, and reliable supply chain networks. Chinese companies may reach their full organisational potential and establish themselves as world leaders in the contemporary economy by attending to both internal procedures and external market needs (Asamoah et al., 2021).

Relationship between supply chain management strategies and maximizing organisational potential in Chinese firms: SCM techniques have a direct and revolutionary impact on Chinese companies’ ability to reach their full potential. Recognising the importance of efficient and well-integrated supply chains in accomplishing long-term strategic objectives, Chinese enterprises are adapting to a more competitive and globalised business climate. SCM tactics help businesses save money, provide better service, and simplify operations via methods including demand forecasting, supplier cooperation, inventory optimisation, and digital technology adoption. The two most important aspects of an organization’s potential—its efficiency and agility—are both improved by these upgrades. In addition, with good SCM, businesses can adapt faster to changes in the market, handle risks better, and forge deeper bonds with their partners and consumers. This has a multiplicative effect on consumer happiness, brand loyalty, and word-of-mouth advertising. Better decision-making and resource allocation are additional

benefits that accrue to businesses when they use cutting-edge SCM processes and have an operational structure that is both transparent and well-organised. By making procedures more transparent and reducing operational stress, these tactics help create a more engaged and aligned staff on the inside. To develop and preserve organisational potential, the capacity to strategically manage the supply chain is crucial for Chinese enterprises in the setting of fast changing market circumstances and severe competition. Strategically enabling growth, innovation, and long-term success, SCM is now seen as more than just a support role (Ali et al., 2022).

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

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between supply chain management strategies and maximizing organisational potential in Chinese firms.

H₁: There is a significant relationship between supply chain management strategies and maximizing organisational potential in Chinese firms.

Table 2: H1 ANOVA Test.

ANOVA					
Sum					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	39588.620	126	5735.517	1091.232	.000
Within Groups	492.770	282	5.256		
Total	40081.390	408			

This investigation will provide substantial outcomes. The F value is 1091.232, 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 maximizing organisational potential in Chinese firms.**” The alternative hypothesis is accepted, whereas the null hypothesis is rejected.

Relationship between supply chain management strategies and Employee Engagement: It is becoming more and more apparent that a critical component in organisational success is the connection between SCM policies and employee engagement. The operational clarity, standardised procedures, and improved communication across departments that result from effective supply chain management strategies have a beneficial impact on employee experience. Employees are relieved of last-minute stress, uncertainty, and resource shortages when supply chains are organised via effective logistics, precise demand planning, and strong supplier collaboration. Employees report less stress and more happiness in their work lives as a result. In addition, SCM techniques that include contemporary data systems and technology allow workers access to up-to-the-minute data and

resources that improve the quality and quantity of their work. Workers experience an increase in agency, engagement, and intrinsic motivation to achieve organisational objectives. A transparent and responsive SCM system enables workers to cooperate more effectively and react swiftly to change, which is especially important for Chinese enterprises with complicated and fast-moving supply chains. A feeling of belonging and purpose is also increased when personnel are involved in inclusive SCM initiatives that include cross-functional teams in decision-making. Both individual performance and the company culture as a whole are bolstered by this kind of participation. To build a dedicated and productive team, SCM strategies must be in sync with employee wants and input (Alam et al., 2021).

Following the aforementioned argument, the researcher posited the further hypothesis to examine the relationship between supply chain management strategies and Employee Engagement.

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between supply chain management strategies and Employee Engagement.

H₂: There is a significant relationship between supply chain management strategies and Employee Engagement.

Table 3: H1 ANOVA Test.

ANOVA					
Sum					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	39588.620	152	5645.517	1052.090	.000
Within Groups	492.770	256	5.366		
Total	40081.390	408			

This investigation will provide substantial outcomes. The F value is 1052.090, 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 supply chain management strategies and Employee Engagement.**” The alternative hypothesis is accepted, whereas the null hypothesis is rejected.

DISCUSSION

SCM techniques have a substantial and complex association with organisational potential maximisation in Chinese enterprises, according to this study’s results. Supply chain management has become an essential component of China’s economic strategy as the country moves away from an economy dependent on manufacturing and towards one that is focused on innovation, quality, and speed. To achieve better levels of organisational performance and competitiveness, it is vital for enterprises to apply effective supply chain management strategies. These strategies allow them

to increase responsiveness, cut costs, boost product quality, and construct more flexible systems. That SCM does not function autonomously is a crucial realisation. When combined with other factors, such as happy customers and invested workers, its effect on an organization's potential becomes clear. By enhancing delivery times and decreasing mistakes, for instance, businesses may optimise their logistics and supplier relationships, which in turn increases consumer trust and loyalty. Supply chain procedures that are both efficient and well-defined help keep everyone on the same page and boost morale and output. Together, these factors fortify the company's external image and internal operations, establishing a solid foundation for sustained success. Furthermore, the conversation implies that Chinese companies that put money into digital transformation—like AI-driven inventory management or supply systems hosted on the cloud—are better able to deal with unpredictability and change tactics swiftly. Disruptions from outside sources, such as trade rules, variable standards in the supply chain, and a resistant workforce are still obstacles. To go beyond them, businesses need a more adaptable and all-encompassing supply chain management strategy that links technology, personnel, and customer experience. Overall, the findings highlight the need of a well-connected ecosystem where supply chain efficiency, customer value, and staff participation all contribute to continuous development and innovation, rather than just optimising resources, for organisations to maximise their potential.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the findings of this research give persuasive evidence that efficient techniques for supply chain management are essential for maximising the potential of an organisation. When it comes to improving organisational performance, increasing competitiveness, and ensuring long-term sustainability, supply chain management strategies contribute to these outcomes by increasing employee engagement and customer happiness. It is more probable that businesses will be successful in today's changing market climate if they use supply chain management methods that are centred on the customer, encourage the well-being of their employees, and nurture financial stability. However, the study also underscores the need for more research, especially in the area of investigating the effect of developing technology, drawing parallels across different cultures, and examining variances that are unique to certain industries. The consequences of the study extend beyond the scope of individual organisations to include policymakers, researchers, and society as a whole. It provides ideas that may be put into practice with the goals of promoting environmentally responsible company practices and making supply chain management methods more efficient.

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