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Sustainable Supply Chain Practices (SSCPs) and Organizational Performance: A Mediating Role of Functional Constructs

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ABSTRACT

The research aims to develop a mid-way approach for the adoption of Sustainable Supply Chain Practices (SSCPs) by an organization while managing its functional constructs and organizational performance both. The study undertook the analysis of 100 plus research papers published between 2000 and 2019 to unravel some functional constructs and the relationship between the application of sustainable supply chain practices and overall organization performance. The research highlighted the positive linkage between the application of sustainable supply chain practices and the organization's performance in the long run. Moreover, the functional constructs were reckoned as key to mediate the relationship between the sustainable supply chain practices and the long run organization performance.

Keywords: *sustainable supply chain; sustainability; social performance; economic performance; environmental performance and green supply chain.*

1. INTRODUCTION

The environmental concerns have become so profound in the globalized scenario witnessing the dialectical associations between environmental and human practices. The alarming environmental scenario has persuaded all the corporate entities to extend their commitment towards the adoption and execution of sustainable and responsible business initiatives. The step ahead towards the adoption of sustainability criteria enables the firms to demonstrate their concerns about multiple concerned stakeholders and the environment (Das, 2020; Marshall and Brown, 2003; Schalteggger and Peterson, 2000). The manufacturing companies are adopting more environmentally amicable and greener practices by encapsulating the best possible ways from procurement of raw materials to the supply of finished goods to the end-users by evaluating and selecting the suppliers on sustainability criteria to attain global diversification and better organizational performance to survive in the highly competitive business environment (Anderson and Larsen, 2009; Mitra, 2016). They make major sustainable decisions by filtering through the supply chain of their entire operations (Kenton, 2019; Horisch *et al.*, 2014; Navrocka and Parker, 2009).

The Industrial units are exposed to multifariously distinctive (MacCarthy *et al.*, 2013) and contradicting goals in carrying out their operations (Benner and Tushman, 2003), which results in various paradoxes in designing and executing the organizational systems (Andriopoulos and Lewis, 2009). There is a gulf in terms of the conflicting situation for the managers, where they have to make firm decisions for their long-term survival, either by adopting sustainable supply chain practices or enhancing the organizational performance by compromising the environmentally amicable yards The growing paradoxical tussle in the economic and social domains of production (Ng *et al.*, 2015) and logistics has gained the attention of industrial practitioners and organizational behavior researchers to go beyond the innovations in product development and procedural management (Pagell and Shevchenko, 2014; Linton *et al.*, 2007).

Hence, the phenomenon of adopting and implementing sustainable supply chain practices has gradually evolved having its roots in the developed nations. It has its impressions and exposure to the emerging economies, which aim at maximum environmental protection at minimal resource consumption and cost of operations. The evolution and expansion in the sustainable supply chain practices have been represented in an integrated and holistic approach below:

- 1990-2000: Introduction of sustainable awareness as a strategic weapon to get a competitive edge, extension of green design, green purchase, green policies and standards to the whole supply chain (Walton *et al.*, 1998; Beamon, 1999; Bansal and Roth, 2000; Carter *et al.*, 2000).
- 2001-2010: The emergence of the sustainable supply chain as a corporate strategy with the adoption of sustainable development goals, clean production; introduction of 3rs namely reduce, recycle and reuse (Hervani *et al.*, 2005; Rao and Holt, 2005; Shang *et al.*, 2010).

- 2011 Onwards: An expansive concept imbibing green procurement, green packaging, green logistics, reverse logistics, the flow of information among stakeholders (Sarkis *et al.*, 2010; Zhu *et al.*, 2011; Shi *et al.*, 2012; Ying and Li-Jun, 2012; Hajikhani *et al.*, 2012; Khaskar *et al.*, 2013).

This is how the sustainable supply chain has evolved over the years. As mentioned above, the period after 2000 marked the introduction of new dimensions to the concept of sustainable supply chain practices. It is widely reckoned with many other different names that have more significant and meaningful dimensions to represent it on a global scale. The sustainable supply chain is possibly reckoned as a sustainable supply chain that includes all those initiatives having their minimum impact on the environment and people as well as the maximum impact on the profitability of the organization in the long run.

The term Sustainable supply chain encompasses all the techniques, tactics, and strategies that benefit the planet, people, and organization in terms of profitability. The trade-off among the environment, economy, and society; improved customer satisfaction, scheduling activities among supply chain stakeholders are components or the dimensions of SSPs (Hahn *et al.*, 2000). While green supply chain includes all those practices that aim at reducing the environmental effects of a brand product throughout its entire cycle. Parameters of green supply chain are mainly; Green design, resource-saving, harmful material reduction, product recycle, and reuse (Qorri *et al.*, 2018; Aslam *et al.*, 2018; Abuko, 2011; Hajikhani *et al.*, 2012; Masudin *et al.*, 2018).

The impressions of acknowledgment regarding the importance of sustainability practices have already been found among the developed nations in terms of adopting sustainable supply chain operating system, reinvesting the surplus generated through sponsorships and donations, deploying the long-term vision to generate surplus as well as working on sustainability reporting practices (Sarkis, 2017). Many developing economies in Asia like Singapore, Malaysia, Hong Kong, and India still lag behind their western counterparts in terms of weak institutional strategies (Mitra, 2016), appeal systems, measuring standards that pose various impediments on the organizations towards the achievements of corporate social responsibility practices by adopting green initiatives and adequate organizational performance. India agreed to adopt green business practices to benefit its business entities, concerned stakeholders, and the environment (Thong and Wong, 2018). India began with the initiative to adopt climate-sustainable technologies with the global coalition of nations named International Solar Alliance in 2015, ratified the second commitment period of Kyoto Protocol on climate change (2013-2020), and aimed at harnessing the power of solar energy as well as green practices (UN Environment Programme, 2019). In addition to it, the India has recently joined the Climate and Clean Air Coalition (CCAC) as the 65th nation partner on the foundation of a solutions-oriented approach for combating pollution (UN Environment Programme, 2019). Some multinational companies in India have registered themselves under ISO 14001 to comply with the guidelines for ensuring eco-friendly practices in their operational systems (Hansen *et al.*, 2009; Horisch *et al.*, 2014). Moreover, many studies have illuminated that the achievement of functional and economic efficacy of the organizational system is always in line with the environment as well as social concerns, but this proposition does not exist in a realistic manner (Markman and Krause, 2016; Matos and Hall, 2007). Despite perplexing interests among the practitioners and researchers as well as ratification of some UN Conventions, there are little possibilities explored to provide a mitigating solution to bring organizational ambidexterity i.e., adopting sustainability practices as well as gaining a Triple bottom line approach (Patel *et al.*, 2012; Matthews *et al.*, 2016).

Hence, every manufacturing unit is expected to attain its economic objectives in line with the fulfillment of some social and environmental parameters. The present study endeavors to explore the existence of conflicts in the operations and supply chain management in terms of duality dilemma and perpetuating trade-off in actual and perceived performance across the brown investments. The purpose of this paper is to explore the shift in organizational practices keeping in view the need for sustainability as the core aspect. It also seeks to revert by eschewing the gap-spotting ideology that involves answering the dominant assumptions by acknowledging the problematization approach based on the construct's extant knowledge. In light of the above discussion, the study would revert to specific research questions, which are as follows:

RQ1: What are the impacts of Sustainable Supply Chain Practices (SSCPs) over the performance indices of an organization such as; environmental, social, economic, operational, marketing, and logistics performance?

RQ2: What is the relationship between Sustainable Supply Chain Practices (SSCPs) and long-run organizational performance?

RQ3: Which functional constructs have a significant impact on the Sustainable Supply Chain Practices (SSCPs) and its relationship with organizational performance in the long run?

To fulfill the research objectives, the study examined the empirical literature on sustainable supply chain practices; barriers, and prospects to the adoption of these practices; their impact on firm performance. The research initiative is substantial to bridge the gaps in the literature over the shift in the approach from conventional supply chain practices to sustainable supply chain practices, which have been initiated in this research work. The research will provide the best possible measures to mitigate the barriers, which can hinder the smooth application of Sustainable Supply Chain Practices to gain a competitive advantage and enhance organizational performance in the long run. Thus, the study contributes to theory and practice by generalizing the impact of sustainable supply chain management practices as a construct on a firm's overall performance, which embodies the major elements i.e. environment, product, and management. The supply chain managers could use this study to identify sustainable supply chain practices, which lead to desirable firm performance. The scholars can also find this study useful as it provides new insights into the link between sustainable supply chain management practices, firm performance and recommends the best possible research directions for the future.

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study is based on the Triple Bottom Line Theory. The approach reveals that the firms support the sustainable supply chain practices in their production and operations. They focusing on the Economic, Social, and Environmental concerns equally to yield profitability, improve their overall performance, and attain long term business goals (Zhang *et al.*, 2019). Although the papers related to sustainable supply chain practices have a long history of research in their respective domains, the crossover analysis began at the beginning of the 21st century. Based on our literature review, most of the studies related to sustainable supply chain practices were initiated in the last 21 years. The study was conducted by analyzing the secondary data analyzed through almost 101 research papers between 1995 and 2020. The year 2000 marked the beginning of the adoption of green practices to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) around the world. The majority of the secondary data was collected after the year 2000, which acted as the hallmark in the research of sustainable supply chain practices. The review related papers were included the multidisciplinary, peer-reviewed, authentic academic literature. These databases include the mainstream research journals in the domain of sustainable supply chains, in particular, indexed on Web of Science, Emerald, ScienceDirect, JSTOR, Elsevier, and SCOPUS.

Table 1 Year-wise literature included in the study

Period covered	Number of papers
1995 to 2000	05
2000 to 2005	12
2005 to 2010	14
2010 to 2015	35
2015 to 2019	32
2019 Onwards	03
Total	101

Table 2 Constructs or areas covered in the literature

Areas Covered in literature	Number of papers
Performance Metrics in Supply chain	13
Challenges in SSPs	13
Functional Constraints as a mediating variable	29
Green supply chain	17
Total	72

3. TRIPLE BOTTOM LINE MODEL: A LAYOUT OF PERFORMANCE INDICES

Morali and Searcy (2013) contended that the past two decades have witnessed an increase in pressures from shareholders, customers, employees, and governments on the corporations to address the social, environmental, and economical implications of their activities. As a result of this, the concept of sustainability and its applications into business practices have gained prominence. The concept of sustainability is all about widening the financial/profitability bottom line to the Triple Bottom Line performance (TBL) perspective acts as the foundation to incorporate the sustainability vision in the operation and supply chain in terms of ensuring a framework by focusing more on environmental and social aspects and looking away from the profit-making i.e., Profit, Planet and People (Kenton, 2019; Zhang *et al.*, 2019). The entire concept of sustainable supply chain practices is based on the Triple Bottom Line approach leading to long term economic organizational performance is depicted in **Figure 1** (Liu *et al.*, 2017).

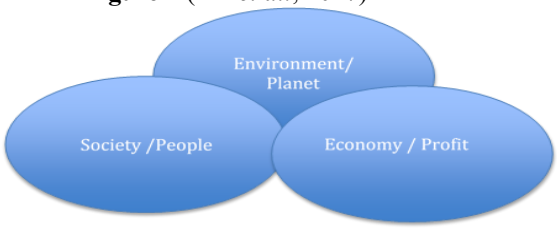

Figure 1: Triple bottom line concept

This could be represented as an approach towards yielding profits/depicting economic/organizational aspect (attaining short term; long term progress, prosperity, and organizational performance) and protecting the planet/depicting the environmental aspect (paying heed to the environmental concerns) with the participation of people/ depicting the social aspect (active involvement of community/ adequate utilization of human resources, business enterprises, government authorities, and non-government organizations to combat the various social and environmental concerns). Apart from it, the dimensions of marketing performance, operational performance, and logistics performance have expanded the concept of sustainable supply chain practices; it is now almost incomplete to think about the concept without considering these indices (Shang *et al.*, 2010; Sarkis *et al.*, 2010; Shi *et al.*, 2012, Anderson *et al.*, 2020).

All these core concepts are interlinked and many eminent scholars have contended that sustainable supply chain practices have a direct impact on the economic, environmental, social, operational, marketing and logistics performance (Gotschol *et al.*, 2014; Reuter *et al.*, 2004). The entire process is cyclical and hence goes on and on. The concept of long-run organizational performance is the combination of organizational social performance, environmental performance, and economic performance. Many studies have contended the relationship between sustainable supply chain practices on different indices of organizational performance and it has been depicted below.

Environmental Performance (Sakris *et al.*, 2010; Yu and Ramanathan, 2015): Reduction in the use of a non-renewable source of energy and toxic materials, the introduction of various innovative systems like ISO 14001 and Six Sigma, etc.; reduction in pollution level, proper effluent treatment mechanism, and the adoption of efficiently processing initiatives in the organizations. It helps in promotion of a healthy outer environment.

Social Performance (Qu *et al.*, 2015): Attainment of social compliance, use of certification, proper care to the health mechanisms, improvements in the working conditions, freedom to the workers, right of collective bargaining, proper working hours, work participation, employee involvement in decision making, and assurance of

fair wage system. It mainly includes the provision of basic facilities and comforts to the employees.

Economic Performance (Yu and Ramanathan, 2015): Enhancing the market value of the share, rise in sales volume, increasing the profitability, decrease in the cost of production, the attraction of new customers, new market places at geographical places. Increase in the goodwill of the organization, which will result in long term capital gains.

Marketing Performance (Hervani, *et al.*, 2005; Geng *et al.*, 2017): Satisfying the customers and improving the cooperation with the customers by focusing on the entire planning process, performance standards, and framing predictive analytics. Demonstration of an organization's capability to attain the predefined standards of performance.

Operational Performance (Zhu *et al.*, 2008; Liu *et al.*, 2017; Green *et al.*, 2012): The ability of the organizations to satisfy their customers by producing and delivering environment-friendly as well as quality goods and services. Enhances the interaction between the suppliers and customers.

Logistics Performance (Chand *et al.*, 2018; Wu *et al.*, 2015; Geng *et al.*, 2017): Transportation of the goods in an environmentally friendly and efficient mode to render multiple services such as green procurement, green production, green marketing, green distribution, and reverse logistics. Long-term customer retention with a particular brand product and service.

Several studies have identified the association between these aspects, each of which specifies different domains leading towards long-term sustainability, competitiveness, stability, and overall organizational performance. Hence, sustainable supply chain practices are associated with different performance indices, which are directly linked with the overall performance of the firm in the long run (Green *et al.*, 2012). In furtherance, the study would reflect the model depicting the relationship between the functional constructs and various segments of organizational performance. Moreover, the mediating role of functional constructs between the application of sustainable supply chain practices and organizational performance has been discussed. The functional constructs have been categorized under four segments conceptualizing the IEOS approach i.e., Internal organizational forces (I); External organizational forces (E); Organizational dynamism and commitment (O) as well as Sustainable management strategy (S). All these constructs are directly and indirectly associated with the various aspects of the overall performance of the organization, in the long run, i.e., environmental, social, and economic performance. Following Metrices have been derived from review of literature, which reflects a positive relation between SSCPs and Organizational Performance.

1. Management operations philosophies (Zhu & Sakris, 2004): The management operation philosophy implies the quality in the scale of operations that are performed and finished over the predefined period. It is justified with the principle of time management and quality management. It has a direct positive relationship between SSCPs and economic, environmental, and overall performance.
2. External Green Supply Chain Practices (Firouzabadi *et al.*, 2010; Umar *et al.*, 2016; Toke *et al.*, 2013): This practice includes Green Environmental Monitoring of Supplier, Collaboration with customers, Green Purchasing, Green Policy, and Shipping Practices), Investment Recovery and Eco-design of the product. It has a positive association with the Environmental, Economic and Operational Performance.
3. Investment Recovery (Zhu *et al.*, 2008): It is the third phase of the supply chain and the process of enhancing the value of unused assets with the help of effective reuse or divestment. It has a direct Relationship between Sustainable Supply Chain Practices and Organizational Performance.
4. Re-active Practices / The Threat of Legislation and Regulation (Laosirihongthong *et al.*, 2013): It implies that the organizations are required to work keeping in view the standards of performance and sanctions while working. It has enhanced Impact of Sustainable Supply Chain Management Practices on Intangible, Economic and Environmental Performance.
5. Inter-Supply Chain (Ganeshkumar and Mohan, 2015): For better integration, supply inter-organizational systems facilitate the technological infrastructure to enable the flow of information along the chain to ensure the smooth flow of goods. Positive Relationship Between the Green Supply Chain Practices and Improved Overall Organizational performance in the Long run.
6. Cooperation between the vendor and customers (Kumar *et al.*, 2012): The suppliers and the customers are required to work in close consortium with each other, only then it becomes possible for the organizations to perform their best in the adoption of green practices in their production and operations. Positive Relationship of Sustainable Supply Chain Practices with the Environment and Economic Performance.
7. Selection of Eco Supplier (Njoroge *et al.*, 2018): This includes the consideration of Eco Label, ISO Certification, and Past Performance) and Implementation of Green Procurement in Manufacturing (Cost Reduction, Quality Enhancement, and Waste Management. Positive Association between the Sustainable Supply Chain Practices and various Performance Indices.
8. Collaboration in Research and Development with the stakeholders on green grounds (Aslam *et al.*, 2018): Constant research initiatives are required on the part of the organizations to ascertain the innovative ways to adopt more sustainable practices and satisfy the stakeholders. The direct impact of Sustainable supply chain practices on the organizational performance.
9. Upstream Supplier Facing and Downstream Consumer-Facing strategy (Qorri *et al.*, 2018): Channelizing the procurement of the material to be used in the production and distribution of the final product to the customers based on green practices is the responsibility of operation managers. Positive Relationship between SSCPs and Company Performance.
10. Internal Environmental Management (Toke *et al.*, 2012): It encapsulates the Commitment on the part of top Management towards the Societal Concern for the Protection of the Natural Environment, Reverse Logistics Practices, Competitiveness, Lean

Manufacturing Practices, Employee Involvement, 3R-Reduce/ Remanufacture/ Recycle and Eco Labeling of Products. It has a positive Impact on Overall Performance.

Apart from this, there are certain barriers that refrain the organization to introduce sustainable supply chain practices in their operational strategies.

1. Government Legislations (Abuko 2011; Aslam *et al.*, 2018): It negatively impacts the adaptation of sustainable supply chain practices and organizational performance. The government must be flexible in terms of its norms and regulations towards the firms that adopt green practices.
2. Employee Job Satisfaction (Lee *et al.*, 2012): It has an insignificant direct association between the Sustainable Supply Chain Practices and organization performance. The employees must be made aware of the clear-cut impact of adopting the sustainable supply chain practices by the organization which may bring fewer profits in the short-run but attains stability and profitability in the long run.
3. Customer Satisfaction (Azevedo *et al.*, 2011): It has a negative impact on sustainable supply chain practices on chain performance. Customers should be made aware of the long-run positive impact of the adoption of sustainable supply chain practices and their impact on their health.
4. Managerial Intention organization (Masudin *et al.*, 2018): The managerial intention has been found as a low significant variable that hinders the adoption of SSCPs in the organization. Managers must be imparted with sensitivity training so that they work with empathy, integrity, and put strenuous efforts to coordinate the activities of the departments in the organization. They have to maintain peace and prosperity in the.
5. Lack of effectively integrated activities across organizations (Hahn *et al.*, 2000): It has a negative impact on the organizational performance. All the departments and levels must act in the same direction and steer their activities at the same pace to attain the predefined organizational objectives.
6. Unethical Corporate Behavior (Smith *et al.*, 2010): Brings defamation to the organizational image and hinder the adoption of SSCPs. The firms must keep all the stakeholders in the consortium and treat them at par while making any strategy and decision in the organization.
7. Lack of adherence to the Social and Environmental Standards (Neumayer (2003): It creates challenge before the firms to step ahead towards the adoption of Sustainable Supply Chain Practices. The organizations are required to follow the ethical standards of behavior while performing their activities.
8. The inadequate and unstructured approach towards objectives (Marcus and Fremeth, 2009): It has a negative impact on the achievement of organizational performance in short as well as in the long run. The proponents stress a well-defined plan that provides a clear-cut vision of the approach to meet the organizational objectives.
9. Reverse channel structure of product collection for remanufacturing (Savaskan *et al.*, 2004): The complexity of the accurate path to collect the used product from the customers becomes a major challenge for the producer. A simple coordination mechanism must be designed in such a manner that the collection from the users and the supply chain profits are achieved simultaneously.
10. Inability to understand the intricate interplay between the pillars of sustainability and their impact on the economic bottom line (Morali & Searcy, 2013): The profit, planet, and people conceptualize sustainability. The understanding of their interplay and the effect on the economic bottom line act as a conundrum for the managers. It becomes necessary that all the concepts should be made crystal clear for the understanding of managers and other stakeholders. Companies must rely on the ecological footprint to have better reporting practices and communication with stakeholders keeping in mind the environmental and economic practices.

4. IEOS MODEL FOR SUSTAINABLE SUPPLY CHAIN AND OVERALL ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE

The economic systems and institutions are required to work within the carrying capacity of the natural system adopting the long-term vision (Usama and Ramish, 2020). The firms are now focusing on sustainability gain, apart from gaining profits in the business market. The directions of work have been changed, and the vision is more inclusive now for the benefit of the entire system. In the words of Thong and Wong (2018), the economic gains earned through the adoption of social and environmental practices are salvaged by its performance results. In the words of Golicic and Smith (2013), the environmental actions are not to be profound as an end in itself rather they act as significant means to enhance the operational and financial performance of the organization and lead to the continuation of the business as well.

Moreover, many other researchers have propounded that environmental sustainability in terms of adequate performance paves the way for economic and social sustainability (Czech, 2013). Gladwin *et al.*, (1995) contended that little steps of fruitful progress could be made about the application of sustainable practices in business operations and supply chain on the unquestioned grounds. There is a series of constructive but gradual approaches essential to be adopted to unravel all the mysteries, which are nodal to the development of new knowledge (Alvesson and Karreman, 2007). Burke and Logsdon (1996) have depicted that the organizations, which are actively engrossed in the adoption of sustainable supply chain practices attain superior long term competitive and economic performance. Many eminent scholars have corroborated that the inclusive environment practices make the organization more innovative, competitive, socially responsible, proactive, which works on the path of generating optimistic opportunities for its stakeholders and society leading to better performance outcomes (Reuter *et al.*, 2004; Ketchen and Hult, 2007). Hence, the study is the demonstration of the significance of applying sustainable supply chain practices

to achieve the Triple Bottom Line performance, which is the outcome of some functional constructs to the environment and stakeholders as well as the implementation of sustainable initiatives (Thong and Wong, 2018). The research work has recalled the functional adoption constructs, which are precisely dealt with by the organizations to line the adoption of sustainable supply chain practices (in the short run) and yield organizational performance (in the long term) has been expressed in the form of the following **Figure 2**.

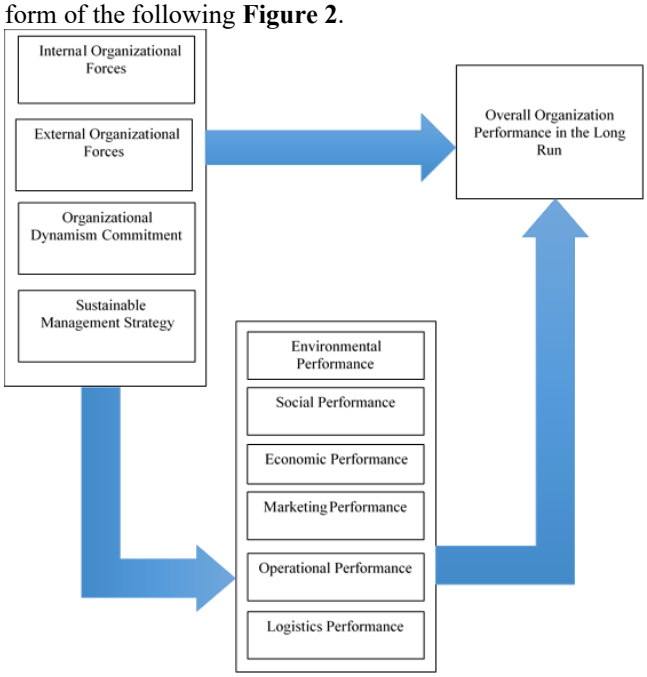

Figure 2: Depiction of IEOS Approach linked with the overall organizational performance

The research work has recalled the adoption of some functional constructs, which are considered adequate to maintain the level of profitability (Bansal 2005) and survival as the long-term vision (Horisch *et al.*, 2014). The constructs are segregated under four major dimensions i.e., Internal organizational forces (I); External organizational forces (E); Organizational dynamism and commitment (O), and Sustainable Management Strategy (S) defining major variables come under their purview.

Internal organizational forces (I): The first construct is Internal organizational forces (I), which define the factors within the organizational framework including the working employees, the approach of the management (Gladwin 2012; Son *et al.*, 2018), normative aspects encompassing the Eco-centric managerialism (Ryu, 2016; Rauter, 2017) business competitiveness (Eisenhardt and Martin, 2000) and ethical environment (Brockhaus *et al.*, 2017). The prominent companies rely on incorporating the Low Hanging Fruits by proactively collaborating with environmental and social orders (Thong and Wong, 2018; Jayaraman, 2002).

External organizational forces (E): The second category is the External organizational forces (E), which include the pressures from traders, suppliers, governance, regulatory bodies (Rauter, 2017), market competitors significant enough to influence the organizations' decisions to indulge in the sustainable supply chain practices to survive in the dynamic environment (Wijethilake 2017). Ekins (2000) and Neumayer (2003) contended the sustainability is attained through the Strong Sustainability practices (SSPs) i.e., with the adoption of problematization approach with mindful of the political aspects and reforming the entire political-economic system to operate at the sustainable echelon (Alvesson and Sandberg, 2011). Moreover, social awareness stems from the advocacy from media platforms, and interest groups are quintessential to be in consortium with the development of organizational identity to have leverage impact on their resource capabilities (Thong and Wong, 2018). As per the stakeholder theory, the filtration of suppliers is another practice as the preference for only sustainable supply chain thespians would enable the organizations to be superordinate the objectives of associating innovativeness and enhancing the economic performance in the long run (Ketchen and Hult, 2007).

Organizational dynamism and commitment (O): The third category imbibes the Organizational dynamism and commitment (O) including technological innovation and the adaptability of the organization to accept and implement the changes in the outer environment (Walker *et al.*, 2015) the commitment of the organization towards the various human, financial and physical resources (Hervas-Oliver *et al.*, 2018), which are significant in the production process and the ability on the part of the organization to sense the transformations in the market as well as to adapt itself to engross them to enhance their entire functional prospects (Nemlioglu and Mallick, 2017; Grewatsch and Kleindienst, 2017; Yalchin *et al.*, 2020).

Sustainable management system (S): The fourth category defines the Sustainable management system (S), which highlight the training needs of employees and assurance of reward system, total quality management system and policy formulation to serve the exigencies of different stakeholders (Zhu and Sarkis, 2007; Mustapha *et al.*, 2017). The managers are required to supervise and monitor the behavior of suppliers and their policies to ensure environmental compatibility (Reuter *et al.*, 2004). The suppliers with certification and involvement in the execution of total quality environmental management systems must be considered for future associations and operations (Zhu and Sakris; 2007; Sarkis *et al.*, 2010). The organizations are necessarily required to have a well-established auditing system to check to regulate the initiatives of suppliers (Sarkis *et al.*, 2010). Zhu *et al.*, (2010) have supported the effective associations and interactions among the supply chain thespians, in-partnership agreements as well as joint industrial practitioners, which could yield improved environmental performance and economic output in the long run (Thong and Wong, 2018; Freeman, 2016). It was corroborated by the researchers that all these functional constructs are significantly associated with social, economic, and environmental performance. Moreover, these constructs perform the mediating role between the Sustainable Supply Chain Practices (SSCPs) and the ESE (Economic, Social and Environmental) aspects of organizational performance (Jansson *et al.*, 2017; Domingues *et al.*, 2017).

The notion regarding the direct association of implementing the Sustainable Supply Chain Practices (SSCPs) with social, environmental, and economic performance has been acknowledged by many researchers (Qu *et al.*, 2015). Gostchol *et al.*, (2014) and Wijethilake (2017) have stated that organizations must consider environmental performance and social performance as their short-term target, which further equates or lead to long-term

economic gains and performance. Moreover, Zhang *et al.* (2019), and Grewatsch and Kleindienst (2017) have also corroborated the major aim of indulging sustainable practices by the organization steers their environmental and economic performance and leading to superior profitability. Some sustainable strategic practices adopted and followed by the organizations in terms of adaptability to change, commitment and orientation lead to a firm's better performance. Many other eminent scholars have supported that adoption of sustainable practices in the organization improve their overall performance in the fierce competition (Jansson *et al.*, 2017; Hojnik and Ruzzer, 2012).

5. CONCLUSION

The introduction of sustainable supply chain practices and their impact on the overall organization performance, in the long run, has gained attention during the last few years. The organizations have to survive in the highly challenging environment by encountering several constraints such as lack of support from the government, lack of initiatives on the part of managers to introduce productive measures, customers' dissatisfaction, and lack of integrated operations in the organization. These challenges hinder the functional capability of the organization despite its focus on environmental, economic, operational, and logistics performance. All these core indices collaborate to conjoin the overall organizational performance. These constraints impact the overall performance of the organization in the short run. With the introduction of some sustainable supply chain practices, the organization can attain its aim of overall long-term performance to gain a competitive edge in the market for its long-term survival. Hence, the present study has given knowledge of practical aspects to lay an idea of various functional constructs that act as mid-way to reconcile the adoption of sustainable supply chain practices and attainment of overall organizational performance in the long run. The adoption of a sustainable approach also enhances the firm's productivity in a resource-constrained environment.

The organizations, which make a proper combination of overall strategic visions for the natural environment to stay competitive, innovative, and profitable. The introduction of valuable functional constructs such as; organizational dynamism and commitment, sustainable management system, internal environmental management, external sustainable supply chain practices could prove to be productive to reach the ultimate goal of the organization. Therefore, the theoretical framework of the study stimulates the reformation of business strategies with the integration of sustainable and environmentally sustainable practices. It is recommended that the top managers and Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) must incorporate adequate strategies to enhance their survival. This approach would be beneficial for the managers, business analysts, and academicians in assessing the suppliers on a precise scale. In furtherance, it will also suggest some best practices, which managers could incorporate in the sustainable supply chain operations to attain effective levels of business performance in synchronization with each other.

6. THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

The implementation of Sustainable supply Chain Practices would assertively contribute towards the precise utilization of resources to enhance the corporate image by improving the overall operational performance without compromising the synchronization among the multiple stakeholders, society, and environment. Hence, the proposed framework provides a systematized mechanism to reach the end goals of the economy, which acts as a foundation to support sustainability at the macro level.

The research work has identified the need for a paradigm shift and introduced a series of innovative ideas to trigger future research, which would enhance the ability of researchers and industrial practitioners to explore alternative assumptions (Matthews *et al.*, 2016). The outcomes of the present research would provide new baseline opportunities and render information regarding the impact of sustainable practices to enable the ecological economists and policymakers and revive and restructure the strategies, ecological metrics and rejuvenate the political-economic systems and discourses that limit the impact of such initiatives (Wickert and Schaefer, 2015; Matthews *et al.*, 2016). Moreover, the study would usher the corporate practitioners with a comprehensive exploration of institutional and context constructs that enable them to reshape the entrepreneurial agenda for the application of sustainability practices and provide the information of their outcome in the Financial Reporting System in consortium with the Social and Environmental concerns (Alvesson and Sandberg, 2011). The policymakers across the governmental and non-governmental organizations would get a base to prepare for the regulatory enforcement framework for the companies to get environmental accreditation and certification. In furtherance, this would help in creating a clean industrial environment to increase the possibility of adequate resource mobilization; collaboration and decrease in the mismanagement of resources; pollution as well as the wastage of resources. The adoption of a healthy sustainability perspective would also enable the researchers to explore the ways and means to move from scare and annihilation reduction mechanisms to have a long term positive environmental and social effects. In furtherance, the workstream could also investigate how the aspect of nature is represented and neglected in the strategic planning and management praxis in the contemporary scenario. The study has provided the operations and supply chain managers from developing nations with deep insights into dealing with functional ambidexterity on the grounds of adopting green practices and meeting the economic and environmental objectives (Patel *et al.*, 2012). The proposed holistic approach would bridge a gap in an integrated manner by depicting linkages between different functional constructs and the numerous aspects of the overall performance of the organization in the long period. Therefore, the study would provide a space for the interesting theoretical perspective to stimulate the course of futuristic research with the application of a problematization perspective (Alvesson and Sandberg, 2011; Matthews *et al.*, 2016; Alvesson and Karreman, 2007). Moreover, the managers would have a

clear-cut idea of the significance to be environmentally aware to draft the green activities and green packaging. It would provide a road map in terms of economic, social, environmental, logistics, marketing, and operational practices, which result in long-run organizational performance. The main theoretical implication of the study is the assessment of the different functional criteria in context to a developing nation like India. Hence, this integrated approach imbibed all the significant aspects related to sustainable supply chain management practices.

Table 3 Functional constructs

Name of the construct	Measurement	Citation
Internal Organizational Forces	Eco-centric Approach of Managers	Gladwin (2012); Burke and Logsdon (1996)
	Management Innovation	Jansson *et al.* (2017); Domingues *et al.*, (2017)
	Low Hanging Fruits (Use of sound green initiatives at all the organizational levels	Thong and Wong (2018) Jayaraman (2002)
	Business Competitiveness and Ethical Commitment	Rauter (2017), Brockhaus *et al.*, (2017)
External Organizational Forces	Governance, Regulatory Bodies, and Political Influence	Alvesson and Sandberg (2011); Singh *et al.* (2015)
	The ideology of Suppliers and Traders (Filtration of Suppliers)	Ketchen and Hult (2008)
	Influence of Media and Advocacy groups	Thong & Wong (2018); Wijethilake (2017)
	Market Competitors	Rauter (2017)
Organizational Dynamism and Commitment	Technological Innovation	Walker *et al.* (2015); Hervas-Oliver *et al.* (2018); Jackson *et al.* (2016);
	Commitment towards Human, Physical and Financial Resources	Walker *et al.* (2015); Hervas-Oliver *et al.* (2018)
	Market Adaptability and Sensing Ability	Teece (2007); Truffer (2014)
Strategic Management Strategy	Total Quality Environment System and Policy Making	Baden *et al.* (2013)
	Regular Monitoring, Reporting, and Auditing	Mustapha *et al.* (2017); Pojasek (2012)
	Training needs of Employees and Assurance of Reward system	Pojasek (2012); Mustapha *et al.* (2017); Vanteddu and Nicholls (2020)

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