
Systematic Literature Review: Corporate Image, Buyer-Supplier Relationship Marketing Communication, and Supplier Performance

Hasrul & Hari Muharam

Universitas Pakuan

Email: hasrul@unpak.ac.id

Abstract

This systematic literature review investigates the intricate relationships between corporate image, buyer-supplier relationship marketing communication, and supplier performance, particularly through Structural Equation Modelling (SEM). Utilizing a comprehensive synthesis of existing empirical and theoretical literature, this review elucidates how corporate image mediates between various operational variables and how effective communication strategies can shape buyer-supplier dynamics, thereby influencing supplier performance. Insights drawn from the literature reveal these constructs' complexities and relevance in optimizing supply chain effectiveness. The review concludes by identifying critical gaps in existing research and proposing future research directions that warrant exploration to deepen our understanding of these phenomena.

Keywords: Systematic Literature Review, SEM, Supplier Performance

1. Introduction

Maintaining a favorable corporate image in the global marketplace is paramount for organizations. Corporate image encompasses the perceptions stakeholders form regarding a company, influenced profoundly by its actions, communications, and the quality of its products or services (Xu et al., 2020; Chien & Chi, 2019). As organizations engage more deeply with their supply chains, the dynamics of buyer-supplier relationships have become increasingly critical to overall business performance. The interplay between marketing communications and the perceptions resulting from the corporate image is essential for creating sustainable relationships that enhance supplier performance (Slabbert, 2016).

Effective communication not only aids in managing perceptions but also plays a substantial and pivotal role in nurturing trust and commitment between buyers and suppliers (Tang & Rai, 2011; Previous studies have demonstrated that high-quality communication practices positively affect supplier performance metrics, including reliability, flexibility, and quality (Sillanpää et al., 2015; (Zeng et al., 2024; This literature review aims to explore the relationships among corporate image,

buyer-supplier relationship marketing communication, and supplier performance while employing Structural Equation Modeling to provide a quantitative analysis of these relationships.

The objectives of this review are threefold: to define and conceptualize key variables, to synthesize existing literature related to the interrelations between these variables, and to identify research gaps that warrant further exploration, particularly in utilizing SEM as a methodological framework. These objectives guide the reader's understanding and expectations of the review's content.

2. Literature Review

Corporate Image: Definition and Influence. Corporate image refers to the collective perceptions and associations stakeholders attribute to an organization, shaped by various factors, including product quality, service delivery, ethical behavior, and marketing efforts (Fan et al., 2021; Bravo et al., 2012).

The Role of Corporate Image in Marketing. Corporate image significantly influences marketing outcomes, including consumer trust, satisfaction, and loyalty (Diebel et al., 2024; A) positive corporate image can lead to enhanced customer satisfaction and higher repurchase intentions, underscoring the importance of image management in corporate strategy (Manzanares, 2019).

Table 1. Factors Influencing Corporate Image

Factors	Description
Service Quality	Directly correlates with customer perceptions
Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)	Shapes stakeholder trust
Brand Communication	It affects how corporate attributes are perceived

The Link Between Corporate Image and Buyer-Supplier Relationships. A robust corporate image can significantly enhance relationships with suppliers. When suppliers perceive a buyer as having a strong corporate image, they are more likely to respond positively to requests and maintain a higher level of commitment. This underscores the pivotal role of corporate image in shaping buyer-supplier dynamics and ultimately influencing supplier performance.

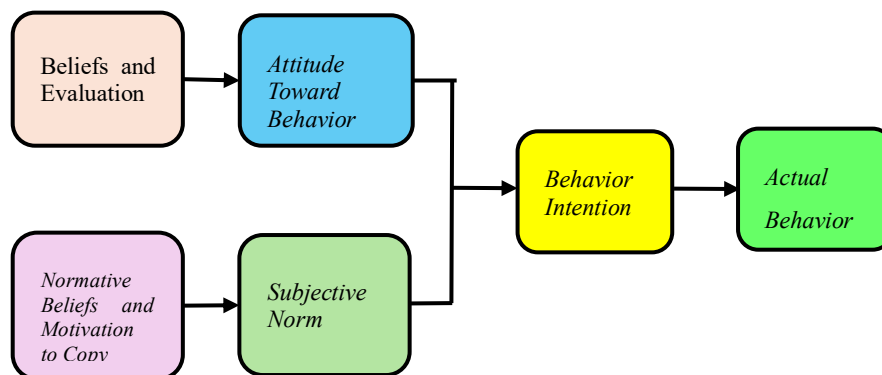
Buyer-Supplier Relationship Marketing Communication. Buyer-supplier relationship marketing communication is characterized by the strategic exchange of information that fosters relationship dynamics between buyers and suppliers (Tang & Rai, 2011; Alam & Noor, 2020).

Grand theory underlying this research is the behavioral theory by John A. Howard and Jagdish N. Seth (1969) to explain the consumer decision-making process. This model aims to understand how consumers process information and make purchasing decisions, particularly in purchasing situations that involve high levels of engagement and complexity. Model is based on three main elements: (1) Inputs (Stimulus): External stimuli that affect consumers. (2) Process (Psychological Process): The internal mechanism of consumers to process information. (3) Output (Response): The final decision or purchase behavior of the consumer.

According to Mahyarni (2019) Behavioral Theory derived from action theory. Theory of Reasoned Action proposed by Ajzen and Fishbein (1980), and updated with the theory of planned behavior by Vallerand et al. (1992), has been used for the past two decades to examine shared desires and behaviors. The reasoned action theory of Ajzen and Fishbein (1980), assumes behavior is determined by the individual's desire to do or not to perform a certain behavior or vice versa. Desire is determined by two independent variables including attitudes and subjective norms. This theory of planned behavior is developed from the theory of reasoned action by including the addition, namely building control behaviors that.

Felt. Ajzen's theory of attitudes towards behavior refers to the degree to which a person has a favorable or unfavorable evaluation assessment of the behavior in a question. The rationality of decision-making assumes that the decision is made under uncertainty, (Basu 1996; Eppen et al. 1998). Rational decision-making implies that there is an expectation of optimal outcomes or that the decision-making unit is aware of all the impacts and consequences, (Basu 1996; Bazerman 2002; Eppen et al. 1998) in Mahyarni (2019).

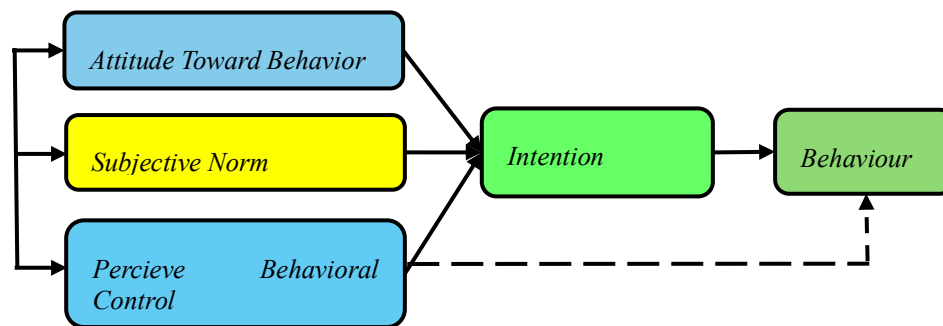
Figure 1. Theory of Reasoned Action



In essence, the theory of reasoned action presents a theory of control behaviour based on Ajzen in Mahyarni (2019). Perceived control behaviour can indirectly affect behaviour. These things according to what was said by Ajzen can be seen in the picture below.

Critical dimensions of buyer-supplier marketing communication include: (1) Transparency: Builds trust and mitigates uncertainty. (2) Frequency: Regular interactions promote better understanding and alignment. (3) Quality of Interaction: The ability to communicate effectively affects relational outcomes. The effectiveness of these communication dimensions can significantly influence supplier performance, impacting metrics related to quality and efficiency (Brinkhoff et al., 2015); (Li et al., 2022; Figure 2 The Theory of Plan Behaviour.

Figure 2. The Theory of Plan Behaviour



The second Grand Theory used in this study is Agency Theory (Jensen & Meckling, 1976), which states that design describes the contextual relationship between principal and agent, i.e. between two or more people, a group or organization. The principal party is the party who has the right to make a decision for the future of the company and give responsibility to other parties (agents) (Junianto & Harsono, 2021). Agency Theory (Jensen & Meckling, 1976) also states that. The behavior displayed by each individual is very diverse and unique. This diversity and uniqueness attracts the attention of experts to research human behavior. There are many theories that explain the determinants of human behavior. In these theories, experts explain their opinions on how a behavior is formed and what factors influence it.

These two grand theories have relevance related to the achievement of customer trust as an outcome of a series of activities and processes that are art and science to achieve the company's goals, namely consumer trust. Based on these two grand theories, a framework of thought was developed that directed the theoretical solution of problems by paying attention to the relationship between middle range theory and applied theory.

The middle range theory used is supplier performance (Mahmoudi & Javed, 2022). Supplier performance has an important influence through supplier evaluation, supplier development and negotiation.

Furthermore, applied theory is developed in the framework of thought by considering the relationship between the underlying theories and the context or phenomenon in this study, the applied theory used operationally in this study is consumer trust Morgan & Hunt, 1994 which states that trust is the belief that the other party has integrity and is reliable in fulfilling its commitments. Trust Dimensions. This dimension describes the aspects that shape consumer trust: (1) Integrity: The belief that the company or seller has strong and honest moral principles. (2) Competence: The perception that a company or seller has the ability to meet consumer needs. (3) Benevolence: The belief that the company has good intentions and cares about the interests of consumers. (4) Reliability: The belief that the company can be relied upon to fulfill their promises and commitments. (5) Transparency: The disclosure of information provided by the company to consumers.

Effective communication enhances supplier performance by fostering a collaborative environment that fosters innovation and responsiveness. Research indicates that firms actively engaging with suppliers exhibit improvements in key performance indicators, including delivery precision and product quality. This highlights the significant impact of communication on supplier performance and its importance in effective supply chain management.

Supplier Performance: Definitions and Metrics. Supplier performance can be defined through various operational metrics, including quality, delivery reliability, responsiveness, and flexibility (Wilhelm, 2011).

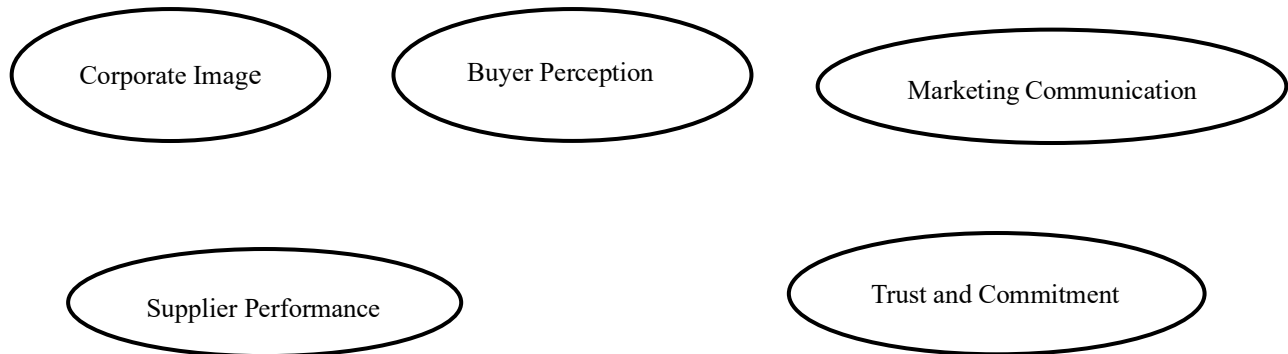
Performance Metrics. Quantitative measures of supplier performance often include: (1) Quality Assessments: Evaluating products against predefined specifications. (2) Delivery Performance: Measuring adherence to delivery schedules. (3) Responsiveness and Flexibility: Assessing the ability to adapt to changing demands.

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) in Context.

Structural Equation Modeling is a powerful statistical technique used to validate complex relationships between observed and latent variables. SEM allows for the analysis of multiple relationships simultaneously, making it particularly suited for examining the interconnected effects of corporate image, marketing communication, and supplier performance (Slabbert, 2016; "undefined," 2018).

Application of SEM. In the context of this literature review, SEM can be employed to test the hypothesis that corporate image influences buyer-supplier communication practices, which subsequently affect supplier performance. Several studies have validated their constructs using SEM, thereby providing a robust framework for analysis (Awaysheh & Klassen, 2010; Pulles et al., 2014)

Figure 3 Proposed Structural Equation Modelling



The Interconnections among Corporate Image, Marketing Communication, and Supplier Performance. The relationships between corporate image, marketing communication, and supplier performance can be conceptualized through a multi-dimensional framework.

Empirical research suggests the following relationships: (1) Corporate Image as a Mediator: A favorable corporate image can enhance buyer perceptions, which facilitates effective communication and increases supplier performance (Foroudi et al., 2021). (2) Communication Enhancing Relationships: Effective marketing communication can strengthen buyer-supplier dynamics, improving trust and commitment, ultimately leading to enhanced supplier performance (Bayın, 2015; Hariyanto & Anandya, 2021).

The Mediating Role of Commitment and Trust. The effects of corporate image and marketing communication on supplier performance are often mediated by trust and commitment. Studies demonstrate that buyers with a strong corporate image build trust, which leads to commitment from suppliers (Jackline & Nyambane, 2023) (Darmawan, 2019). This commitment improves the effectiveness of communication strategies, leading to better overall cooperation.

3. Research Method

Systematic Review Approach. This literature review adheres to systematic review methodologies to synthesize data from peer-reviewed journals and empirical studies regarding corporate image, marketing communication, and supplier performance.

Search Strategy. The search included literature published in relevant academic databases within the last decade using keywords such as "corporate image," "buyer-supplier relationship," "marketing communication," "supplier performance," and "Structural Equation Modeling."

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria. (1) Inclusion: Empirical studies, theoretical frameworks, and literature reviews exploring these variables. (2) Exclusion: Non-peer-reviewed articles that are not directly related to business contexts or purely consumer behavior studies.

Data Extraction. Key insights and findings from selected articles were categorized based on their contributions to conceptualizing the relationships among corporate image, marketing communication, and supplier performance.

4. Finding and Discussion

Key Findings from Literature. The literature synthesis reveals several important findings regarding the relationships among the three variables:

Corporate Image Impacting Buyer Trust and Communication. A strong corporate image significantly impacts buyer trust, which subsequently facilitates effective communication practices with suppliers. Positive corporate images lead to enhanced perceptions of value, fostering better communication and collaboration, which increases supplier performance (Slabbert, 2016; Chien & Chi, 2019; Jackline & Nyambane, 2023).

Marketing Communication Enhancing Supplier Performance. The alignment of marketing communication strategies with corporate image initiatives helps improve supplier performance outcomes. Studies demonstrate that effective communication builds mutual understanding and promotes operational efficiency (Zeng et al., 2024; Terawatanavong et al., 2011).

Supplier Performance as a Direct Output of Corporate Image and Communication. Quantitative analyses demonstrate a direct correlation between a positive corporate image, effective marketing communication, and improved supplier performance metrics. Data reveal that firms that engage in open communication and manage their corporate image effectively gain substantial benefits (Bidin et al., 2014; Foroudi et al., 2021).

Gaps in Literature. Despite the substantial body of research, notable gaps persist: (1) Few studies have quantitatively addressed the mediation effects of trust and commitment. (2) Limitations in cross-industry empirical analyses constrain the generalizability of findings. (3) The application of SEM in evaluating these relationships is underutilized, emphasizing the need for a quantitative approach in future research.

Future Research Directions. Expanding empirical research across various industries to assess the robustness of established relationships. Conducting longitudinal studies utilizing SEM to track changes in supplier performance as a function of shifts in corporate image and communication practices. Investigating external factors, such as cultural variations and market dynamics, that affect these interrelationships.

5. Conclusion

This systematic literature review offers a comprehensive exploration of the relationships among corporate image, buyer-supplier relationship marketing communication, and supplier performance. Utilizing Structural Equation Modeling, this review underscores the significance of corporate image in shaping key performance outcomes and the role of effective communication strategies in fostering strong buyer-supplier relationships. The findings highlight the necessity for organizations to prioritize corporate image management and invest in strategic communication practices that enhance supplier relationships. Continued exploration of these constructs, particularly through robust methodologies such as SEM, will facilitate a deeper understanding of how organizations can optimize their supply chain effectiveness in today's dynamic business context.

References

- Noor (2018). Untitled. *International Review of Management and Marketing*, 8(5). <https://doi.org/10.32479/irmm.6808>
- Alam, M. and Noor, N. (2020). The relationship between service quality, corporate image, and customer loyalty of generation y: an application of s-o-r paradigm in the context of superstores in Bangladesh. *Sage Open*, 10(2). <https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244020924405>
- Awaysheh, A. and Klassen, R. (2010). The impact of supply chain structure on the use of supplier socially responsible practices. *International Journal of Operations & Production Management*, 30(12), 1246-1268. <https://doi.org/10.1108/01443571011094253>
- Bayın, G. (2015). Determination of the effect of corporate image of health institutions on patient loyalty. *Ege Akademik Bakis (Ege Academic Review)*, 15(4), 577-577. <https://doi.org/10.21121/eab.2015416659>

International Conference of Organizational Innovation 2025

Proceedings

ICOI

2025

e-ISSN: 3064-6030
FMI, Vol 2
15-17 July 2025

- Bidin, R., Muhaimi, A., & Bolong, J. (2014). Strategizing corporate identity for the perception of corporate image in the selected government-linked companies (GLC) in Malaysia. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 155, 326-330. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.10.300>
- Bravo, R., Gutiérrez, T., & Pérez, J. (2012). Corporate brand image of financial institutions: a consumer approach. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 21(4), 232-245. <https://doi.org/10.1108/10610421211246649>
- Brinkhoff, A., Özer, Ö., & Sargut, G. (2015). All you need is trust? an examination of inter-organizational supply chain projects. *Production and Operations Management*, 24(2), 181-200. <https://doi.org/10.1111/poms.12234>
- Cao, Z., Kim, D., Mu, Y., & Singhal, V. (2023). Toward suppliers' corporate social responsibility performance: the role of relationship dependence. *International Journal of Operations & Production Management*, 44(2), 538–561. <https://doi.org/10.1108/ijopm-08-2022-0540>
- Chien, L. and Chi, S. (2019). Corporate image as a mediator between service quality and customer satisfaction: difference across categorized exhibitors. *Heliyon*, 5(3), e01307. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2019.e01307>
- Darmawan, D. (2019). The effect of corporate image on brand awareness and brand attitude. *Translitera Jurnal Kajian Komunikasi Dan Studi Media*, 8(01), 13-26. <https://doi.org/10.35457/translitera.v8i01.595>
- Diebel, W., Gualandris, J., & Klassen, R. (2024). How do suppliers respond to institutional complexity? Examining voluntary public environmental disclosure in a global manufacturing supply network. *Journal of Operations Management*, 70(2), 285-315. <https://doi.org/10.1002/joom.1293>
- Fan, D., Xiao, C., Xiao, Z., & Guo, Y. (2021). Gaining customer satisfaction through sustainable supplier development: the role of firm reputation and marketing communication. *Transportation Research Part E Logistics and Transportation Review*, 154, 102453. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tre.2021.102453>
- Foroudi, P., Foroudi, M., Palazzo, M., & Nguyen, B. (2021). Fly me to the moon: from corporate branding orientation to retailer preference and business performance. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 34(1), 78–112. <https://doi.org/10.1108/ijchm-12-2020-1424>

International Conference of Organizational Innovation 2025

Proceedings

ICOI

2025

e-ISSN: 3064-6030
FMI, Vol 2
15-17 July 2025

- Gorton, M., Angell, R., Dries, L., Urutyan, V., Jackson, E., & White, J. (2015). Power, buyer trustworthiness and supplier performance: evidence from the Armenian dairy sector. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 50, 69–77. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.indmarman.2015.05.024>
- Hariyanto, M. and Anandya, D. (2021). The significance of service quality on customer loyalty with corporate image and customer satisfaction as mediators. *Manajemen Dan Bisnis*, 20(2). <https://doi.org/10.24123/jmb.v20i2.541>
- Jackline, M. and Nyambane, D. (2023). Strategic development and brand establishment in the insurance sector of Rwanda: a case study of the Soras insurance company. *NIJCRHSS*, 3(3), 7-26. <https://doi.org/10.59298/nijcrhss/2023/10.2.1000>
- Li, X., Wu, Q., Goldsby, T., & Holsapple, C. (2022). Enduring buyer-supplier relationship and buyer performance: the mediating role of buyer-supplier dyadic embeddedness and supplier external embeddedness. *European Journal of Management Studies*, 27(3), 291-316. <https://doi.org/10.1108/ejms-03-2022-0020>
- Manzanares, F. (2019). Export performance of SMEs: an empirical analysis of the mediating role of corporate image. *Journal of Small Business Management*, 57(2), 386-399. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jsbm.12337>
- Pulles, N., Veldman, J., Schiele, H., & Sierksma, H. (2014). Pressure or pamper? The effects of power and trust dimensions on supplier resource allocation. *Journal of Supply Chain Management*, 50(3), 16-36. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jscm.12049>
- Sillanpää, I., Shahzad, K., & Sillanpää, E. (2015). Supplier development and buyer-supplier relationship strategies - a literature review. *International Journal of Procurement Management*, 8(1/2), 227. <https://doi.org/10.1504/ijpm.2015.066283>
- Slabbert, Y. (2016). A new conceptual framework to strengthen internal corporate image: a stakeholder-inclusive perspective. *Communicatio*, 42(2), 253-275. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02500167.2016.1167752>
- Tang, X. & Rai, A. (2011). The moderating effects of supplier portfolio characteristics on the competitive performance impacts of supplier-facing process capabilities. *Journal of Operations Management*, 30(1-2), 85-98. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jom.2011.07.001>
- Terawatanavong, C., Whitwell, G., Widing, R., & O'Cass, A. (2011). Technological turbulence, supplier market orientation, and buyer satisfaction. *Journal of Business Research*, 64(8), 911-918. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2010.09.003>

International Conference of Organizational Innovation 2025

Proceedings

ICOI

2025

e-ISSN: 3064-6030
FMI, Vol 2
15-17 July 2025

- Terpend, R. and Krause, D. (2015). Competition or cooperation? promoting supplier performance with incentives under varying conditions of dependence. *Journal of Supply Chain Management*, 51(4), 29-53. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jscm.12080>
- Wagner, S., Coley, L., & Lindemann, E. (2011). Effects of suppliers' reputation on the future of buyer-supplier relationships: the mediating roles of outcome fairness and trust. *Journal of Supply Chain Management*, 47(2), 29-48. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1745-493x.2011.03225.x>
- Wilhelm, M. (2011). Managing coopetition through horizontal supply chain relations: linking dyadic and network levels of analysis. *Journal of Operations Management*, 29(7-8), 663-676. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jom.2011.03.003>
- Xu, M., Lai, I., & Tang, H. (2020). From corporate environmental responsibility to purchase intention of chinese buyers: the mediation role of relationship quality. *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, 20(2), 309-323. <https://doi.org/10.1002/cb.1857>
- Zeng, Y., Katsumata, S., Li, X., & Zhang, Q. (2024). Supplier-buyer (in)congruence in environmental management accounting for sustainable development in the context of japan. *Sustainable Development*, 33(1), 84-99. <https://doi.org/10.1002/sd.3085>
- Slabbert, Y. (2016). A new conceptual framework to strengthen internal corporate image: a stakeholder-inclusive perspective. *Communicatio*, 42(2), 253-275. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02500167.2016.1167752>
- Tang, X. and Rai, A. (2011). The moderating effects of supplier portfolio characteristics on the competitive performance impacts of supplier-facing process capabilities. *Journal of Operations Management*, 30(1-2), 85-98. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jom.2011.07.001>
- Terawatanavong, C., Whitwell, G., Widing, R., & O'Cass, A. (2011). Technological turbulence, supplier market orientation, and buyer satisfaction. *Journal of Business Research*, 64(8), 911-918. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2010.09.003>
- Terpend, R. and Krause, D. (2015). Competition or cooperation? promoting supplier performance with incentives under varying conditions of dependence. *Journal of Supply Chain Management*, 51(4), 29-53. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jscm.12080>
- Wagner, S., Coley, L., & Lindemann, E. (2011). Effects of suppliers' reputation on the future of buyer-supplier relationships: the mediating roles of outcome fairness and trust. *Journal of Supply Chain Management*, 47(2), 29-48. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1745-493x.2011.03225.x>

International Conference of Organizational Innovation 2025

Proceedings

ICOI

2025

e-ISSN: 3064-6030
FMI, Vol 2
15-17 July 2025

Wilhelm, M. (2011). Managing coopetition through horizontal supply chain relations: linking dyadic and network levels of analysis. *Journal of Operations Management*, 29(7-8), 663–676. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jom.2011.03.003>

Xu, M., Lai, I., & Tang, H. (2020). From corporate environmental responsibility to purchase intention of chinese buyers: the mediation role of relationship quality. *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, 20(2), 309-323. <https://doi.org/10.1002/cb.1857>

Zeng, Y., Katsumata, S., Li, X., & Zhang, Q. (2024). Supplier–buyer (in)congruence in environmental management accounting for sustainable development in the context of Japan. *Sustainable Development*, 33(1), 84-99. <https://doi.org/10.1002/sd.3085>

Copyrights

Copyright for this article is retained by the author(s), with first publication rights granted to the journal.

This is an open-access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>)