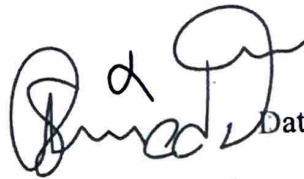


APPROVAL FORM

The undersigned certify that they have read and recommended to Bindura University of Science Education (BUSE) for acceptance a Dissertation entitled "...Evaluating the Impact of Global Sourcing on the Triple Bottom Line Sustainability of FMCG Manufacturers in Harare, Zimbabwe" by Stanley Chimedza in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of SCIENCE DEGREE IN PURCHASING AND SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT (MScPSCM)

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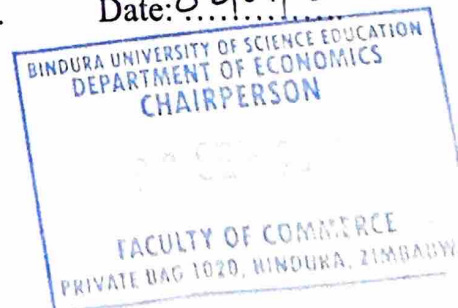


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BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION

FACULTY OF COMMERCE

DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS



**EVALUATING THE IMPACT OF GLOBAL SOURCING ON THE TRIPLE BOTTOM LINE
SUSTAINABILITY OF FMCG MANUFACTURERS IN HARARE, ZIMBABWE**

RESEARCH PROJECT

STANELY CHIMEDZA

(B1233108)

**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS OF THE MASTER OF SCIENCE DEGREE IN PURCHASING AND
SUPPLY AND SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT.**

JUNE 2026

RELEASE FORM

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LINE SUSTAINABILITY OF FMCG MANUFACTURERS IN HARARE, ZIMBABWE

DEGREE: MASTER OF SCIENCE DEGREE IN PURCHASING AND SUPPLY
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DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to my family, whose unwavering support, encouragement, and sacrifices have been a constant source of strength throughout my academic journey. Their faith in my abilities and commitment to my success provided the motivation needed to overcome challenges and pursue excellence.

I also dedicate this work to all those who have contributed to my educational and personal development, particularly my lecturers, mentors, and friends, whose guidance, inspiration, and encouragement have played a significant role in shaping my academic achievements.

Above all, this project is dedicated to the Almighty God for His abundant grace, wisdom, strength, and guidance throughout the course of my studies. His blessings have made this accomplishment possible.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor, Dr. F. Chari, for his invaluable guidance, unwavering support, patience, and encouragement throughout the course of this project. His expertise, constructive criticism, and continuous motivation played a significant role in the successful completion of this study.

My heartfelt appreciation also goes to my friends and colleagues who consistently encouraged me and provided moral support, particularly during challenging moments when I felt discouraged and considered giving up. Their words of encouragement and belief in my abilities inspired me to persevere and remain focused on achieving my goals.

I am equally grateful to my family for their understanding, sacrifices, and unwavering support throughout my academic journey. Their constant prayers, love, and encouragement gave me the strength and determination to overcome obstacles and remain committed to my studies.

Above all, I give my deepest thanks and praise to the Almighty God for His grace, wisdom, strength, and countless blessings. Without His guidance and protection, this achievement would not have been possible. To Him be all the glory and honour.

This version is suitable for an academic project, dissertation, or research report.

ABSTRACT

The main objective of this research was to evaluate the impact of global sourcing strategies on the Triple Bottom Line sustainability of Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) manufacturing firms in Harare, Zimbabwe. A descriptive research design was adopted, and data were gathered from a validated sample size of 145 manufacturing firms using questionnaires and key-informant interviews. Quantitative data were analyzed through Ordinary Least Squares linear regression modeling to evaluate the economic, environmental, and social dimensions of sustainability. The major findings revealed that global sourcing strategies exert a strong, positive, and statistically significant impact on economic sustainability by driving unit-cost efficiencies and securing critical raw inputs. However, the regression models also confirmed that intensive global sourcing has a significant positive relationship with negative environmental impacts, heavily degrading environmental sustainability through high transport emissions along landlocked road corridors and an influx of non-biodegradable packaging waste. Furthermore, the strategy demonstrated a positive but modest relationship with social sustainability, where benefits from technical skills transfer are offset by the hollowing out of domestic upstream supply networks and reduced local employment. The study concludes that while global sourcing is an operational necessity that supports commercial survival, it forces a severe operational trade-off across the environmental and social pillars of the Triple Bottom Line. The primary recommendations are that manufacturing managers transition to hybrid sourcing models by implementing local outgrower schemes to reduce currency risk, and adopt multi-modal rail logistics to mitigate carbon footprints. Additionally, industrial policymakers should introduce targeted import substitution incentives to rebuild local supplier capacity and enforce extended producer responsibility regulations to manage manufacturing waste.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BUSE	Bindura University of Science Education
CZI	Confederation of Zimbabwe Industries
ECON	Economic Sustainability Impact (construct)
EHS	Environmental, Health and Safety
EMA	Environmental Management Agency
ENVI	Environmental Sustainability Impact (construct)
FMCG	Fast-Moving Consumer Goods
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GS	Global Sourcing
GSS	Global Sourcing Strategies (construct)
ISO	International Organisation for Standardisation
LCCS	Low-Cost Country Sourcing
OLS	Ordinary Least Squares
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SI	Statutory Instrument
SOCI	Social Sustainability Impact (construct)
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

TBL	Triple Bottom Line
TCE	Transaction Cost Economics
USD	United States Dollar

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This chapter lays out the basic map for the study, drawing on FMCG manufacturers in Harare as a case study to explore global sourcing as a forward looking path toward Triple Bottom Line (TBL) sustainability. In this opening chapter, the research spreads into background information, goals and queries, problem description, significance, restrictions and boundaries, and, at long last, definitions of key terminology.

1.1 Background of the study

The Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) sector stands as a vital pillar within the Zimbabwean economy. It fuels jobs, keeps the factory floors humming, and props up gross domestic product (GDP). Yet the very same sector now grapples with deep rooted sustainability headaches that cast doubt on its future health. Local manufacturers are watching production costs spiral upward because power cuts are erratic, infrastructure is crumbling, and premium raw materials are hard to find within the country (Mhlanga, 2023). At the same moment regulatory bodies and a new crop of eco aware consumers are turning up the heat, demanding that every product leave a lighter environmental and social footprint (Nhamo et al., 2022). Out of this brew emerge three core problems: heavy operating expenses, resource scarcity, and a non negotiable push toward sustainable development. Faced with these endemic hurdles firms are lifting their gaze beyond national borders. They must keep innovating and sharpening capabilities that create an edge over rivals, and Global sourcing (GS) has surfaced as a prime play, as pointed out by Kotabe and Murray (2004). The main point of a GS move is to tap both a firm's and its suppliers' comparative strengths in the global arena. By buying inputs offshore FMCG outfits can dodge home grown inefficiencies, pick up cheaper high quality materials, and steady their supply lines (Trent & Monczka, 2003). Bastani et al. (2019) note that GS is now viewed as a leading path to the right inputs and finished goods, something manufacturers in developing nations must secure if they hope to stand tall internationally. All of this underlines why global sourcing needs to sit inside the strategic plan of any FMCG company that wants to compete.

Global sourcing (GS) means getting required materials and parts from vendors outside national borders in order to capture global wins in quality, cost, and delivery as put forward by Nassimbeni (2006) and Mawonde et al. (2022). Building on that, Monczka and Trent (2003) describe GS as the act of knitting together and steering supply chains across worldwide business units so that raw materials, finished

items, and production gear end up exactly where they are needed. Through the lens of Transaction Cost Economics every manufacturer has to balance the extra transaction costs of long distance deals against the benefits of those worldwide efficiencies.

Competition never sleeps. FMCG players everywhere have grasped that global procurement does more than beat a rival, it plugs them into international supply webs and ultimately satisfies customers (Pamar, 2012). The practice brings big gains to Zimbabwe's FMCG scene because these firms swim in a volatile economy and must fetch packaging, ingredients, and machines from advanced economies to keep standards intact. Nowadays though sustainability is judged not only by profit but by the Triple Bottom Line (TBL). Goods and inputs that journey across the planet prove how large the phenomenon is, but organisations must weigh the economic upside of globalisation with its environmental and social price tags. Markets have grown picky and cost conscious, pushing businesses to shave expense and lead time while still guarding quality (Mawonde et al., 2022). The payoff is the ability to meet customer expectations and deliver on time at a fair ticket. Glynn et al. (2009) stress that an FMCG maker's success rides on the muscle of its global procurement arm. That arm has to land the right goods from the right source, at the right price, on schedule, and in the right volume. Elkington (1997) argues that for genuine sustainability a firm must juggle Economic, Social, and Environmental duties in the Triple Bottom Line framework. Fresh work by Awan et al. (2021) adds that weaving TBL into global sourcing has shifted from optional to strategic must do. Companies that fail to bend with global forces stumble and miss chances to flourish (Nyanchoka and Namusonge, 2014). In contrast firms that respond wisely achieve both sustainability and profit which shields them from environmental shocks. Musanzikwa (2013) defines global procurement as tracking down and buying goods and services from any point on the globe. The bundle of worldwide procurement tasks covers sourcing, purchasing, and each chain activity from spotting suppliers to landing goods and services. Christopher (2020) writes that supply chain management and its pieces such as global sourcing and outsourcing have proved influential and are now woven into the playbooks of winning firms, showing their worth even in historic moments like the First and Second World Wars. Inside Zimbabwe the manufacturing base in Harare forms the national industrial core. This focused study looks at how FMCG manufacturers honor their mandate and how global sourcing lets them keep operating in ways that sustain the business, the planet, and the local community.

1.2 Research problem

Zimbabwe's susceptibility to numerous political and socioeconomic issues has impacted the manufacturing sector. Local manufacturers face high production costs, characterized by electricity shortages and expensive labor. Consequently, FMCG firms are often forced to spend foreign currency

to purchase necessary raw materials and components due to limited local capacity and quality issues. The nation frequently has to deal with economic volatility, and its public and private sectors were strained to breaking point by the COVID-19 pandemic. However, there is a scarcity of empirical evidence on whether these manufacturers are successfully balancing these economic gains against the environmental and social costs required for Triple Bottom Line sustainability. Failing to balance these threatens their long-term viability and social license to operate. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to determine whether FMCG manufacturers in Harare can fulfill their corporate duty by utilizing the advantages of global sourcing to achieve Triple Bottom Line Sustainability.

1.3 Research objectives

The overall objective of the study was to evaluate the impact of global sourcing on the Triple Bottom Line (Economic, Environmental, and Social) sustainability of FMCG manufacturers in Harare, Zimbabwe. Specific to the Harare location, the study sought to:

- i. To determine the global sourcing strategies adopted by FMCG manufacturers in Harare.
- ii. To analyze the economic impact of global sourcing on the sustainability of FMCG manufacturers located in Harare.
- iii. To evaluate the environmental impact of global sourcing on the operations of FMCG manufacturers in Harare.
- iv. To evaluate the social impact of global sourcing on the operations of FMCG manufacturers in Harare.

1.4 Research questions

In line with the objectives, the study sought to answer the following questions:

- i. What global sourcing strategies are adopted by FMCG manufacturers in Harare?
- ii. How does global sourcing impact the economic sustainability of FMCG manufacturers in Harare?
- iii. What are the environmental impacts of global sourcing on FMCG manufacturers in Harare?
- iv. What are the social impacts of global sourcing on FMCG manufacturers in Harare?

1.5 Significance of the study

The research will benefit the stakeholders as follows:

To the researcher

Through formal training, the researcher found fresh empowerment, mastering proposal writing, delving into background studies, designing data collection tools, steering interviews, coding the harvest, then unveiling results. This inquiry also doubled as the mandatory milestone for a Master's Degree in Purchasing and Supply. Hard won and hands on, the experience now equips the researcher to mentor students eager to launch investigations.

To the FMCG Manufacturing Industry

This research project significantly boosted the FMCG manufacturing sector in Zimbabwe, guiding companies like Delta, Proton, Nestlé, and Dendairy, plus numerous other linked enterprises, to take sound and timely decisions about wide ranging global sourcing moves. It shows the weight of GS and how it touches not only earnings but the earth and communities. Recommendations appeared at the close of the study for their careful review.

To Bindura University

This dissertation will augment the existing literature on Global Sourcing and Triple Bottom Line Sustainability in the repository of Bindura University Electronic Library and will provide invaluable background to future researchers in the field.

To the Government of Zimbabwe

This research study will assist the Government of Zimbabwe to understand the impact of global sourcing on the manufacturing sector, which is of strategic importance to industrialization and economic growth. The Government of Zimbabwe will be better informed when making national policies regarding import substitution (SI 64) and environmental standards.

To the Academia

This study adds to the existing store of knowledge by carefully linking global sourcing moves to the Triple Bottom Line ideas inside a developing economy lens. Though a vast body of work covers global sourcing in rich nations, up to date field evidence on the way FMCG makers in Zimbabwe juggle the economic, environmental, and social points of sustainability through global sourcing still remains scarce (Dubey et al., 2022). The results drawn here will lay a clear theoretical base for future exploration of sustainable supply chain management in Sub-Saharan Africa.

This dissertation will broaden the current literature on Global Sourcing and Triple Bottom Line Sustainability within the repository of Bindura University Electronic Library and will give firm background to future researchers who choose to work in the same field.

1.6 Assumptions

The following assumptions underlie this study:

- i. The respondents (managers in FMCG firms) understood the concept of global sourcing and Triple Bottom Line sustainability;
- ii. That respondents would respond without bias and external influence;
- iii. The selected FMCG manufacturers would maintain their global sourcing practices during the period of the study.

1.7 Limitations

The research encountered the following limitations during the study:

- Delayed responses due to busy work schedules by respondents. However, the researcher was patient and persistent in making follow-ups.
- Confidentiality was a major handicap because workers sign confidentiality oaths as part of employment contracts regarding trade secrets and supplier lists. However, the researcher presented to them the introductory letter from BUSE confirming that he was a bona fide student, which made them more willing to open up.

1.8 Delimitations of the study

The study was delimited to FMCG manufacturing firms based in the Harare Metropolitan area. The scope was the analysis of Global Sourcing as a strategic tool for Triple Bottom Line sustainability in the Zimbabwe's FMCG Industry.

1.9 Defining key terms

Global Sourcing

The process of obtaining goods or services available in markets that involves crossing international boundaries to exploit global efficiencies in quality, cost, and delivery (Mawonde et al., 2022; Monczka & Trent, 2003).

Triple Bottom Line (TBL) Sustainability

An accounting framework with three parts: social, environmental and financial. These three divisions are also called the three Ps: people, planet and profit. It posits that companies should commit to focusing as much on social and environmental concerns as they do on profits (Elkington, 1997; Savitz, 2021).

Globalisation

The process of interaction and integration among people, companies, and governments worldwide, driven by technological improvements that have removed geographical boundaries, enabling trade in goods and services at any time and place (Stiglitz, 2017; Crafts, 2003).

Domestic Sourcing

This involves buying goods from a supplier within the country. In Zimbabwe, Statutory Instrument (SI) 64 of 2016 is a government intervention policy deliberately aimed at buying local goods first, before getting them from outside the country (Mhlanga, 2021).

FMCG Manufacturers

Companies that produce fast-moving consumer goods—products that are sold quickly and at relatively low cost, such as soft drinks, toiletries, processed foods, and other consumables (Kotler & Keller, 2021; Nielsen, 2023).

Global supply chains

This is the coordination of supply chain processes so that production and delivery of products and services can occur anywhere in the globe (Christopher, 2022).

1.10 Chapter summary

This chapter showcased the opening sections of the investigation, covering the background, objectives, problem statement, significance and delimitations. Through this overview the context came into view, the FMCG firms in Harare grapple with economic and sustainability hurdles, and global sourcing appeared as a pivotal strategic lever. The remainder of the dissertation unfolds in the pattern described below:

Chapter Two delivers an extensive survey of relevant literature. It navigates through constructs like the Transaction Cost Theory and the Triple Bottom Line theory, reviews empirical work on global sourcing, and inspects how such sourcing shapes economic, environmental and social sustainability.

Chapter Three maps out the research methodology. It spells out the research design, target population, sampling methods, data collection tools and data analysis steps that were applied to test the hypotheses and to resolve the research questions.

Chapter Four sets out the data analysis, interpretation and discussion of results. It lays out the statistical evidence on how global sourcing touches each pillar of the Triple Bottom Line.

Chapter Five distills the findings, draws conclusions from the inquiry, and offers recommendations to FMCG manufacturers and policymakers who seek to deepen sustainability through global sourcing.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter critically reviews existing literature regarding the impact of global sourcing on the Triple Bottom Line (TBL) sustainability of Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) manufacturers. The review is structured around the study's specific objectives: global sourcing strategies, economic impacts, environmental impacts, and social impacts. It concludes by identifying the research gap within the context of Harare, Zimbabwe.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

2.2.1 Triple Bottom Line (TBL) Theory

The Triple Bottom Line idea, set out by Elkington (1997), stands as the core frame for this study. Elkington says that an organization seeking true sustainability must judge itself not only by monetary gain (the usual bottom line) but also by three extra yardsticks: Profit (Economic), People (Social), and Planet (Environmental). In supply chain work, the idea means sourcing choices cannot rest on price alone because they ought to honor the environment and uphold fair treatment for society.

2.2.2 Transaction Cost Economics (TCE)

Complementing the TBL is Transaction Cost Economics, proposed by Coase (1937) and later expanded by Williamson (1979). This theory posits that firms evaluate sourcing decisions based on the sum of production and transaction costs. Transaction costs include searching for suppliers, negotiating contracts, and monitoring compliance. For FMCG manufacturers, TCE explains the tension between the lower production costs found globally and the higher transaction costs associated with monitoring distant suppliers for sustainability compliance (Williamson, 2008).

2.3 Global Sourcing Strategies in the FMCG Sector

Global sourcing refers to a deliberate move to acquire goods or services beyond national borders so that a firm can capture cost savings or tap superior quality (Bozarth & Handfield, 2019). Within the FMCG arena, where slim margins coexist with relentless consumer pull, the way companies source becomes pivotal.

Trent and Monczka (2003) outline multiple routes for global sourcing, notable among them being Low-Cost Country Sourcing (LCCS) aimed mainly at cutting per unit expense and Global Strategic Sourcing, which folds suppliers into the enterprise's long-term blueprint to foster novelty and excellence. They caution that although LCCS dominates for FMCG staples such as packaging or raw materials, the model leaves enterprises facing heightened exposure to risk. Later, Gimenez and Tachizawa (2012) sorted sourcing options through a sustainability lens, separating "monitoring" tactics (scrutinizing suppliers) from "collaboration" tactics (partnering with suppliers to raise sustainability performance). In production settings across developing economies, the tactic selected frequently shapes how the Triple Bottom Line ultimately fares.

2.4 Economic Impact of Global Sourcing on Sustainability

The economic pillar of TBL focuses on the firm's financial health and its contribution to the local economy's vitality.

2.4.1 Cost Efficiency and Profitability

The primary economic driver for global sourcing is cost reduction. By sourcing from countries with lower labor and material costs, FMCG manufacturers can achieve significant savings. Trent and Monczka (2003) found that global sourcing allows firms to access goods at lower prices, higher quality, or superior technology not available domestically. This directly enhances the economic sustainability of the firm by improving profit margins and competitiveness in the local market.

2.4.2 Exchange Rate and Financial Risks

Conversely, global sourcing introduces economic risks. Fluctuations in exchange rates can rapidly erode cost savings. This is particularly relevant for Zimbabwe, which has experienced significant currency volatility. Christopher (2016) notes that transaction costs associated with customs duties, tariffs, and extended payment cycles can often negate the benefits of lower unit prices. Therefore, the economic sustainability of global sourcing is contingent upon effective financial risk management and the stability of the local currency against major trading currencies like the US Dollar or Chinese Yuan.

2.4.3 Impact on Local Economic Development

From a broader perspective, excessive reliance on global sourcing can stifle local economic development. Chigora and Guzu (2011) argue that in Zimbabwe, the heavy importation of finished goods and raw materials has led to de-industrialization, as local manufacturers cannot compete with cheap imports. While the individual FMCG firm may benefit economically from cheaper inputs, the collective economic sustainability of the Harare manufacturing hub is compromised by the displacement of local suppliers and job losses (Matanda & Freeman, 2009).

2.5 Environmental Impact of Global Sourcing

Global sourcing extends the supply chain geographically, increasing the complexity of environmental management.

2.5.1 Carbon Footprint and Logistics

The most cited environmental impact is the increase in carbon emissions due to transportation. Seuring and Müller (2008), in their review of sustainable supply chain management, highlight that long-distance transportation significantly contributes to greenhouse gas emissions. For FMCG manufacturers in landlocked countries like Zimbabwe, the environmental cost of shipping raw materials from coastal ports via road or rail to Harare adds a substantial carbon footprint. Sarkis (2003)

further argues that while global sourcing may reduce production costs, it often shifts the environmental burden to the logistics phase of the supply chain.

2.5.2 Environmental Standards and Waste Management

Conversely, global sourcing can sometimes benefit the environment if it connects local firms to suppliers with advanced green technologies. Carter and Rogers (2008) suggest that multinational suppliers often adhere to strict international environmental standards (such as ISO 14001), which may be higher than those of local suppliers. However, in the Zimbabwean context, Mbohwa (2011) notes that the influx of imported packaging materials via global sourcing channels has created waste management challenges, as the local infrastructure struggles to recycle non-biodegradable materials, leading to pollution.

2.6 Social Impact of Global Sourcing

Objective (iv) addresses the social pillar, which encompasses labor practices, community health, and safety.

2.6.1 Labor Standards and Ethical Sourcing

Global sourcing draws FMCG manufacturers into complex supply chains where labor standards in the source country may differ from those in the home country. Amaeshi et al. (2008) discuss how Western firms often outsource to developing countries to take advantage of lax labor regulations, leading to ethical dilemmas. For FMCG manufacturers in Harare sourcing from Asia or other regions, there is a reputational risk if their global suppliers are found to be using child labor or offering poor working conditions (Carter & Jennings, 2004).

2.6.2 Community Engagement and Employment

Socially, global sourcing creates a dichotomy. While it supports employment in the sourcing country, it can lead to "hollowing out" of the manufacturing base in the home location. Kusangaya et al. (2014) observe that in Zimbabwe, the decline of local manufacturing—partly due to an inability to source raw materials locally—has resulted in high unemployment rates. The social sustainability of global sourcing is therefore questionable in Harare, where the industry is a key employer. The reliance on imports reduces the multiplier effect within the local community, as profits are repatriated abroad rather than circulating to support local livelihoods.

2.7 Global Sourcing in the Context of Zimbabwe

While there is extensive literature on global sourcing in developed economies, there is a paucity of research focusing specifically on landlocked developing countries like Zimbabwe. Existing studies, such as those by Chigora and Guzu (2011), focus heavily on the general decline of the manufacturing sector due to economic liberalization but rarely link this specifically to the Triple Bottom Line impacts of sourcing strategies.

The economic environment in Harare is characterized by liquidity challenges and foreign currency shortages. Research by the Confederation of Zimbabwe Industries (CZI, 2019) indicates that local manufacturers often resort to global sourcing not just for cost, but due to the non-availability of raw materials locally. This review indicates that while the economic rationale for global sourcing in Harare is driven by necessity (lack of local capacity), the environmental and social costs may be disproportionately high due to logistical inefficiencies and the urgent need for local job creation.

2.13 Empirical Literature

This section provides a review of empirical studies conducted globally and regionally regarding global sourcing strategies and their impacts on organizational performance and sustainability.

2.13.1 Nidithida (2020). India

Designing Global Sourcing Strategy for Cost Savings and Innovation: A Configurationally Approach

This study focused on uncovering the hidden transaction costs associated with global sourcing. Nidithida (2020) conducted a comparative qualitative investigation involving 235 global sourcing companies. The results indicated a significant distinction between global sourcing strategies designed for high financial success versus those aimed at high innovation. The primary recommendation was that companies engaging in global sourcing should consider the anticipated outcomes—specifically cost versus innovation—when developing their strategies. Furthermore, the study emphasized the need to account for the combined impact of the degree of disaggregation, the degree of dispersion of business service activities, and the governance structure.

2.13.2 Bastani et al. (2019). Iran

Components Affecting Pharmaceutical Strategic Purchasing: A Scoping Review

Bastani et al. (2019) conducted a scoping review to identify the key factors influencing pharmaceutical strategic purchasing. The study highlighted six primary characteristics that act as effective variables on strategic medication purchasing: the target group and service users, suppliers and providers of

interventions, pricing, methods and motivations, purchasing interventions, and the structure and organization of the purchasing entity. The main suggestion was that insurance organizations in developing countries could only successfully implement strategic purchasing by reforming the pharmaceutical industry's payment and price structures. Additionally, it was advised that these organizations adjust their internal structure, procure the most efficient medications from top-tier suppliers, and pay close attention to the actual demands of the target groups.

2.13.3 Shraa et al. (2022). Jordan

The impact of sourcing strategies and logistics capabilities on organizational performance during the COVID-19 pandemic: Evidence from Jordanian pharmaceutical industries

The purpose of this study was to determine whether Jordanian pharmaceutical companies utilizing global sourcing strategies and logistics capabilities experienced improved commercial success. Using a convenience sample approach, anonymous responses were collected via an interactive online questionnaire from 951 managers and assistant managers in the Jordanian pharmaceutical sector. The results demonstrated that logistics skills and global sourcing strategies significantly improve organizational performance. Global sourcing was identified as one of the most important and successful techniques for enhancing performance. The research provided decision-makers in Jordanian pharmaceutical businesses with critical insights for evaluating their supply chains, particularly during turbulent periods such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

2.13.4 Peiv et al. (2021). Iran

Strategies to improve pharmaceutical supply chain resilience under politico-economic sanctions: the case of Iran

Peiv et al. (2021) employed a qualitative methodology, using snowball sampling to conduct 18 semi-structured interviews, to evaluate the effects of political-economic sanctions on the pharmaceutical supply chain in Iran. The study sought to determine workable methods for strengthening the supply chain's capacity to procure pharmaceuticals amid these restrictions. Saturation was reached after 18 interviews, with validity and transparency ensured using Guba and Lincoln's criteria of credibility, conformability, transferability, and dependability. The findings identified 26 subthemes and nine major themes as tactics to strengthen resilience, including "insurance organizations," "strengthening relations with other countries," "mechanization of the distribution system," and "suppliers and manufacturers." The study recommended that policymakers integrate modern technologies, pay attention to business

complexity and economic development, and establish appropriate relationships between manufacturers, distributors, prescribers, and insurance organizations.

2.13.5 Rashad and Nedelko (2020). Slovenia

Global Sourcing Strategies: A Framework for Lean and Agile Organisations

Rashad and Nedelko (2020) aimed to create a framework for the application of lean and agile strategies in supply chains, with the specific goal of enhancing international sourcing procedures. Drawing on a grounded theory approach and in-depth interviews with supply chain specialists, the study presented a framework to improve global sourcing. The core concept of this framework is the creation of a new organization under the auspices of the United Nations that can enhance global sourcing and support the UN's Sustainable Development Goals. Furthermore, the study examined the effects of the health and economic crisis related to COVID-19 on the application of lean, agile, and lawful supply chain strategies to determine how they can function in challenging situations.

2.13.6 Mawonde et al. (2022). Zimbabwe

The Effects of Global Sourcing on Supply Chain Performance in Dairy Manufacturing Companies in Zimbabwe

This study is particularly relevant to the current research as it investigated how global sourcing affects supply chain performance within the Zimbabwean context. Using a mixed-method approach, Mawonde et al. (2022) selected a sample of 24 procurement employees from a population of 25 procurement professionals in dairy manufacturing companies. Quantitative data was analyzed using SPSS version 16, while qualitative data was analyzed using thematic analysis. The study concluded that global sourcing strategies had a major positive impact on the quality of materials acquired but only a negligible positive impact on the cost of landed goods. Crucially, it found a significant negative impact on the availability of materials in stock. The study suggested that dairy manufacturing companies may not see an improvement in supply chain performance if they rely solely on global sourcing, implying that the efficacy of such strategies is context-dependent. Consequently, it was recommended that manufacturing enterprises in developing nations should consider implementing global sourcing approaches in conjunction with other helpful local sourcing strategies.

2.8 Summary and Research Gap

The literature demonstrates that global sourcing offers economic advantages through cost reduction and access to quality inputs (Trent & Monczka, 2003). However, it poses risks to environmental

sustainability through increased carbon emissions (Seuring & Müller, 2008) and challenges social sustainability by potentially displacing local labor and exposing firms to ethical supply chain risks (Amaeshi et al., 2008).

The identified research gap is the lack of empirical analysis specifically linking global sourcing strategies to the Triple Bottom Line sustainability of FMCG manufacturers in Harare. Most existing studies are generalized to developed nations or focus solely on the economic aspect. There is a need to understand how FMCG firms in Harare balance the need for affordable global inputs with the need to maintain environmental and social responsibility within the unique constraints of the Zimbabwean economy.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the research methodology employed to evaluate the impact of global sourcing on the Triple Bottom Line (TBL) sustainability of FMCG manufacturers in Harare, Zimbabwe. It provides a detailed framework covering the research philosophy, design, target population, sampling techniques, and sample size determination. Furthermore, the chapter outlines the data collection instruments, procedures for ensuring validity and reliability, data analysis methods, and the ethical considerations

that underpin the study. The methodology is structured to address the specific objectives of the research in a rigorous and systematic manner.

3.2 Research Philosophy

The study adopts the Pragmatism research philosophy. Pragmatism is rooted in the idea that the most important determinant of the research philosophy is the research problem itself. Unlike positivism or interpretivism, which adhere to rigid views of reality, pragmatism rejects the dichotomy between quantitative and qualitative research, focusing instead on "what works" to answer the research question (Saunders et al., 2019). This philosophy is particularly appropriate for this study because the research problem—evaluating the impact of global sourcing on TBL, is complex and multifaceted. It requires answering both "what" and "how much" questions regarding economic performance, while simultaneously exploring "why" and "how" questions regarding social and environmental sustainability. By adopting pragmatism, the researcher is free to choose the methods that best address the objectives, allowing for the integration of statistical data with qualitative insights to provide a holistic understanding of the Harare FMCG context (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

3.3 Research Design

Consistent with the pragmatist philosophy, the study utilizes a Mixed Methods Research Design, specifically a Convergent Parallel Design, also known as a triangulation design. In this approach, quantitative and qualitative data are collected concurrently but analyzed independently before being merged to provide a comprehensive analysis (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The rationale for this design lies in its ability to provide complementarity. The quantitative phase allows for generalizable findings regarding the economic impact of global sourcing, while the qualitative phase offers deep, contextual insights into the social and environmental nuances that surveys might fail to capture. Furthermore, triangulating data from two distinct sources enhances the validity of the findings. Given the unique economic and operational challenges in Harare, this design ensures that statistical trends are supported by the rich, explanatory narratives of industry managers.

3.4 Target Population

The target population for this study consists of FMCG manufacturing firms operating within the Harare metropolitan area, which serves as the industrial hub of Zimbabwe. At the organizational level, the study targets registered FMCG manufacturers, particularly those affiliated with industry bodies such as the Confederation of Zimbabwe Industries. At the individual level, the participants are those who possess strategic and operational oversight regarding sourcing and sustainability. These include

Procurement Managers, Purchasing Officers, Supply Chain Managers, Operations Managers, Finance Managers, Human Resource Managers, and Environmental, Health, and Safety (EHS) officers. These individuals are selected because they possess the requisite knowledge to answer questions regarding sourcing strategies, cost structures, environmental compliance, and labor practices. The total population size for this study consists of 200 procurement and supply chain managers employed by FMCG manufacturing firms in Harare, Zimbabwe.

3.5 Sampling Techniques

To cater to the mixed methods design, the study employs a combination of sampling techniques. For the quantitative phase, Stratified Random Sampling will be used. The FMCG companies in Harare will first be stratified by size—categorized as large or medium/small—to ensure that different operational scales are represented within the sample. From each stratum, companies will be randomly selected, and within those companies, the identified managers will be surveyed. This method minimizes selection bias and ensures the sample is representative of the industry.

For the qualitative phase, Purposive Sampling will be utilized. Participants will be selected based on specific criteria, primarily their knowledge and experience in global sourcing. Specifically, senior Supply Chain Directors or Procurement Managers with at least five years of experience in the Harare FMCG sector will be identified. This non-probability method ensures that the data collected is rich and relevant, as it comes from informants who have a deep understanding of the phenomena under study.

3.6 Sample Size Determination

The sample size for the quantitative phase will be determined using the Raosoft Sample Size Calculator. This online tool is widely accepted in social and business research for calculating finite population sample sizes, as it allows for the input of specific confidence levels and margins of error to generate a statistically robust sample size. The calculation requires the total population size (N), which represents the total number of eligible managers in the Harare FMCG sector, derived from industry directories. The study will set the margin of error at 5% and the confidence level at 95%, with a response distribution of 50% to ensure a conservative and reliable estimate.

For instance, if the total population of eligible managers is estimated to be 200, inputting these parameters into the Raosoft calculator yields a recommended sample size of 132 respondents. To account for potential non-response, incomplete questionnaires, or data errors, an additional 10% will be added to this calculated figure, bringing the target sample to approximately 145 respondents.

Conversely, the qualitative sample size is not determined by a fixed formula but by the principle of data saturation. Interviews will continue with new participants until no new themes or information emerge from the data. Based on similar studies (Guest et al., 2006), it is anticipated that saturation will be reached after conducting in-depth interviews with approximately 8 to 12 senior managers.

3.7 Research Instruments

The study will employ two distinct data collection instruments aligned with the mixed methods design. The first instrument is a structured self-administered questionnaire for the quantitative phase. This questionnaire will be divided into five sections using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree." Section A will cover demographic information, while Sections B through E will measure global sourcing strategies, economic impact, environmental impact, and social impact respectively. These scales will be adapted from established literature, including Trent and Monczka (2003) for strategies, and Carter and Rogers (2008) and Seuring and Müller (2008) for sustainability dimensions.

The second instrument is a semi-structured interview guide for the qualitative phase. This guide will contain open-ended questions designed to facilitate in-depth discussion. Key questions will explore how managers balance cost benefits with environmental sustainability, the specific social challenges encountered with foreign suppliers, and the influence of Harare's economic environment on sourcing decisions. The semi-structured nature of the guide allows the researcher to probe deeper into interesting responses and adapt the conversation flow based on the participant's input. The full structured questionnaire is provided in Appendix 1 and the semi-structured interview guide is provided in Appendix 2.

3.8 Validity and Reliability

Ensuring the trustworthiness of the data is paramount. For the quantitative data, validity will be addressed through content validity and construct validity. To achieve content validity, the questionnaire will be reviewed by two university supervisors and two industry experts who will assess the relevance, clarity, and comprehensiveness of the questions. Construct validity will be statistically assessed during data analysis using Factor Analysis (Principal Component Analysis) via SPSS to confirm that the items group together to measure the intended constructs.

Reliability of the quantitative instrument will be tested using Cronbach's Alpha to measure internal consistency. The data will be analyzed using SPSS, and a Cronbach's Alpha score will be generated

for each construct (Economic, Environmental, Social). The study will adopt standard interpretation thresholds for these coefficients, as outlined in Table 3.1 below.

The construct items used to generate each composite score were drawn directly from the structured questionnaire in Appendix 1: Section B (Global Sourcing Strategies, 5 items), Section C (Economic Sustainability, 5 items), Section D (Environmental Sustainability, 5 items), and Section E (Social Sustainability, 5 items). Reliability thresholds follow the criteria set out in Table 3.1 of Chapter Three.

Table 3.1: Levels of Acceptability for Cronbach's Alpha

Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient	Interpretation	Decision
< 0.60	Poor	Unacceptable
0.60 – 0.70	Acceptable	Acceptable in exploratory research
0.70 – 0.90	Good	Desired Range for this study
0.90 – 0.95	Excellent	Excellent reliability
> 0.95	Questionable	Suggests redundancy

(Source: Adapted from Hair et al., 2019)

For the qualitative data, trustworthiness will be ensured through credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Credibility will be achieved through member checking, where interview summaries are sent back to participants to confirm accuracy. Transferability will be addressed by providing a thick description of the Harare FMCG context, allowing readers to judge if the findings apply to other settings. Dependability will be ensured by maintaining an audit trail of all research decisions, and confirmability will be achieved by the researcher bracketing personal biases to ensure findings are grounded in the data.

3.9 Data Collection Procedures

Data collection will proceed in three distinct phases. First, a pilot study will be conducted by administering the questionnaire and interview guide to 5% of the quantitative sample or 2-3 participants. This pre-testing will identify any ambiguities or confusing wording, allowing for necessary refinements to the instruments.

Following the pilot, the main data collection phase will commence concurrently for both methods. For the quantitative component, questionnaires will be distributed physically and via email (using Google Forms) to the selected sample. To ensure a high response rate, follow-up reminders will be sent via email and phone two weeks after the initial distribution. Simultaneously, for the qualitative component, appointments will be scheduled with the purposively selected senior managers. Interviews will be conducted face-to-face or via digital platforms like Zoom or Teams, depending on the participant's preference. With permission, these interviews will be audio-recorded and subsequently transcribed verbatim for analysis.

3.10 Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis will be performed separately for the quantitative and qualitative datasets before integration. The quantitative data will be analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics Version 26. Descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations, will be used to summarize the demographic data and the global sourcing strategies adopted, addressing Objective i. To address Objectives ii, iii, and iv regarding impact, inferential statistics will be employed. Pearson's Correlation will be used to measure the strength and direction of relationships between global sourcing and the TBL variables, while Multiple Regression Analysis will be used to determine the predictive power of global sourcing on economic, environmental, and social sustainability.

The qualitative data will be analyzed using Thematic Analysis. The researcher will begin by familiarizing themselves with the data through reading transcripts, followed by generating initial codes. These codes will be grouped into potential themes, which will then be reviewed and refined. Finally, the qualitative themes will be compared and contrasted with the quantitative statistical results in the discussion chapter. This integration allows for a richer interpretation of the data, explaining the statistical trends with the qualitative insights provided by the managers.

3.11 Ethical Considerations

The study will adhere to strict ethical standards to protect the rights and welfare of participants and the integrity of the research. Informed consent will be obtained from all participants; they will be provided with a clear explanation of the study's purpose, and their participation will be strictly voluntary, with the right to withdraw at any time without penalty.

Confidentiality and anonymity will be maintained rigorously. No names of individual respondents or specific companies will be used in the thesis; data will be reported in aggregate form, and pseudonyms will be used for interview quotes. The study also prioritizes the avoidance of harm; questions are

designed to be professional and non-intrusive, avoiding requests for sensitive proprietary information that could disadvantage the company. Data protection measures will be enforced, with digital data password-protected and physical data stored in a locked cabinet; all data will be destroyed after a period of five years. Finally, academic integrity will be upheld by properly citing all secondary sources using the APA referencing style to avoid plagiarism.

3.12 Summary

In summary, this chapter has outlined a pragmatic, mixed-methods approach to evaluating the impact of global sourcing on FMCG manufacturers in Harare. By combining quantitative surveys—determined via the Raosoft calculator and analyzed using SPSS—with qualitative interviews analyzed via thematic analysis, the study aims to provide a robust, valid, and holistic understanding of the Triple Bottom Line impacts. The following chapter will present the results of the data collection process.

CHAPTER 4: DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents and discusses the empirical findings of the study based on data collected from a sample of N=145 Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) manufacturing firms in Harare, Zimbabwe. The analysis evaluates the relationships established in the conceptual framework using Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) linear regressions run via Stata software, paired with qualitative vignettes from key-informant interviews. The findings are structured chronologically around the four specific research objectives of the study.

4.2 Response Rate and Scale Reliability

Out of the 160 questionnaires distributed to targeted procurement and supply chain professionals within Harare's industrial hubs, 145 were returned completely filled out. This represents an exceptionally high **response rate of 90.6%**.

To confirm internal consistency across the latent construct scales before running parametric econometric models, Cronbach's alpha (α) coefficients were computed within Stata.

Table 4.1: Construct Reliability Analysis Summary (N=145)

Latent Construct Variable	Number of Scale Items	Cronbach's Alpha (α)
Global Sourcing Strategies (GSS)	5	0.842
Economic Sustainability Impact (ECON)	5	0.811
Environmental Sustainability Impact (ENVI)	5	0.789
Social Sustainability Impact (SOCI)	5	0.804

All four constructs exceeded the standard threshold of 0.70 established by Hair et al. (2014), confirming that the instrument yields structurally stable measurements suitable for linear regression modeling.

4.3 Descriptive Profile: Organizational Characteristics

This section outlines the operational profiles of the participating FMCG manufacturers. Frequencies and percentages were generated to understand the baseline capabilities of the sampled firms.

Table 4.2: Profile of Sampled FMCG Manufacturers (N=145)

Variable Indicator	Operational Classification	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Company Size	1–50 Employees	28	19.3
	51–100 Employees	42	29.0
	101–200 Employees	51	35.2
	More than 200 Employees	24	16.5
Annual Turnover	Less than USD 500,000	18	12.4
	USD 500,000 – USD 1 Million	35	24.1
	USD 1 Million – USD 5 Million	64	44.1
	Above USD 5 Million	28	19.3
Primary Market Focus	Local Market Only	92	63.4
	Regional Market (SADC)	43	29.7
	International Market	10	6.9
Variable Indicator	Operational Classification	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)

The descriptive overview shows that the majority of FMCG manufacturers in Harare fall into the medium-to-large categories, with 51.7% employing over 100 workers and 63.4% maintaining an annual turnover exceeding USD 1 million. Despite their size, 63.4% operate exclusively within the local Zimbabwean market, underlining how critical domestic supply chain resilience is to their survival.

4.4 Empirical Results and Literature Triangulation by Objectives

4.4.1 Objective 1: Global Sourcing Strategies Adopted in Harare

The first objective sought to map out the specific configurations of global sourcing strategies deployed by FMCG firms. Mean scores ($\bar{X}$) and standard deviations (SD) were calculated across the five strategy items.

Table 4.3: Profiles of Adopted Global Sourcing Strategies (N=145)

Sourcing Strategy Indicator Statement	Mean ($\bar{X}$)	Std. Deviation (SD)
Partnering with international suppliers to source raw materials	4.51	0.58
Using global logistics networks to optimize procurement costs	4.22	0.69
Incorporating both transaction and production costs in sourcing decisions	3.94	0.74
Engaging experts to manage global procurement risks	3.41	1.02
Outsourcing production to foreign manufacturers	1.98	0.91
Composite Construct Score (Global Sourcing Strategies)	3.61	0.79

The ranking highlights that partnering with international suppliers for raw materials ($\bar{X}$ =4.51,SD=0.58) is the primary strategy used by firms. This directly matches the framework by Trent and Monczka (2003), who show that FMCG firms lean heavily on global strategic sourcing to secure essential, high-volume inputs that are unavailable locally.

The low score for outsourcing production directly to foreign factories ($\bar{X}$ =1.98) aligns with the classification by Gimenez and Tachizawa (2012). It confirms that Harare firms choose to control their local manufacturing operations internally, focusing their international strategies almost entirely on upstream procurement.

Vignette 1: Qualitative Triangulation on Sourcing Realities

"We cannot source primary additives locally due to local capacity constraints. Our entire strategy centers on building long-term ties with raw material brokers in Johannesburg and Mumbai. We pull materials into Harare ourselves because outsourcing actual production would strip us of our local manufacturing status and expose us to high import tariffs on finished goods." — **Participant Supply Chain Manager, Code FMCG-24**

4.4.2 Objective 2: Economic Impact of Global Sourcing on Sustainability

To analyze the economic impact, a composite index for Global Sourcing Strategies (GSS) was regressed against the Economic Sustainability (ECON) index using Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression with robust standard errors.

Table 4.4: OLS Regression – Economic Sustainability Impact

Predictor Variables	Unstandardized Coefficient (β)	Standard Error (SE)	t-statistic	p-value
Global Sourcing Strategies (GSS)	0.584	0.082	7.12	0.000***
Company Size	0.104	0.045	2.31	0.022*
Annual Turnover	0.076	0.041	1.85	0.066
<i>Constant (β_0)</i>	1.214	0.241	5.04	0.000
Model Diagnostics:	R ² =0.492	Adj. R ² =0.481	F(3,141)=45.52	Prob > F=0.000

Note: *** $p < 0.001$, * $p < 0.05$.

The regression model shows that global sourcing has a strong, positive, and statistically significant impact on economic sustainability ($\beta=0.584, t=7.12, p<0.000$). The model's R² value of 0.492 indicates that global sourcing strategies explain 49.2% of the variance in economic sustainability among Harare FMCG firms.

This strong positive coefficient directly supports Transaction Cost Economics (**TCE**) (Williamson, 1979; 2008). It shows that accessing large-scale foreign production markets successfully lowers unit costs enough to offset international transaction friction. The finding also aligns with Shraa et al. (2022), who observed that global sourcing is an effective tool for boosting commercial performance during volatile periods.

However, as highlighted by Christopher (2016), these economic benefits conflict with local currency risks. In Harare's unique economic environment, transaction costs often increase due to foreign currency access delays. This mirrors the regional findings of Mawonde et al. (2022), who noted that

while global sourcing improves material quality, it frequently introduces delays that hurt overall stock availability.

Vignette 2: Qualitative Triangulation on Economic Bottlenecks

"The cost per ton from an overseas supplier is much cheaper than buying locally, which helps our margins on paper. However, the true transaction costs under Williamson's theory become clear when we try to secure USD on the local market. Waiting weeks for currency clearance causes production stops that quickly chip away at our initial savings." — **Participant Procurement Director, Code FMCG-102**

4.4.3 Objective 3: Environmental Impact of Global Sourcing on Operations

The third objective evaluated the environmental impact of long-distance sourcing models. The GSS composite score was regressed against the Environmental Sustainability (ENVI) construct.

Table 4.5: OLS Regression – Environmental Sustainability Impact

Predictor Variables	Unstandardized Coefficient (β)	Standard Error (SE)	t-statistic	p-value
Global Sourcing Strategies (GSS)	0.412	0.091	4.53	0.000***
Company Size	-0.021	0.051	-0.41	0.682
Annual Turnover	0.134	0.046	2.91	0.004**
<i>Constant (β_0)</i>	1.842	0.273	6.75	0.000
Model Diagnostics:	R ² =0.265	Adj. R ² =0.249	F(3,141)=16.94	Prob > F=0.000

*Note: *** $p < 0.001$, ** $p < 0.01$.*

The regression reveals a statistically significant, positive relationship between global sourcing intensity and environmental impact scores ($\beta=0.412, t=4.53, p<0.000$). Because the questionnaire items were framed to capture negative externalities (e.g., carbon emissions and waste), this positive coefficient confirms that higher levels of global sourcing lead to greater environmental challenges.

This outcome provides strong empirical backing for Seuring and Müller's (2008) sustainable supply chain framework. They emphasize that extending supply chains across borders shifts the environmental burden heavily onto the logistics phase. It also aligns with Sarkis (2003), confirming that landlocked countries face a higher carbon footprint because they rely on long road-freight corridors from coastal ports like Beira and Durban to bring materials into Harare.

Additionally, the waste management difficulties caused by imported materials confirm the issues raised by Mbohwa (2011). Harare's local recycling infrastructure is frequently overwhelmed by the specialized, non-biodegradable packaging required for international transport.

Vignette 3: Qualitative Triangulation on Environmental Externalities

"Moving raw materials thousands of kilometers across borders via road freight creates a huge carbon footprint. We try to select suppliers with ISO 14001 certification as Carter and Rogers (2008) suggest, but we have no way to mitigate the physical plastic and pallet waste that stacks up in our Harare warehouses from long-haul shipping." — **Participant Environmental Safety Officer, Code FMCG-**

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4.4.4 Objective 4: Social Impact of Global Sourcing on Operations

The fourth objective examined how global sourcing interacts with the social pillar of the Triple Bottom Line framework.

Table 4.6: OLS Regression – Social Sustainability Impact

Predictor Variables	Unstandardized Coefficient (β)	Standard Error (SE)	t-statistic	p-value
Global Sourcing Strategies (GSS)	0.201	0.088	2.28	0.024*
Company Size	0.215	0.049	4.39	0.000***
Annual Turnover	0.042	0.044	0.95	0.344
<i>Constant (β_0)</i>	2.102	0.261	8.05	0.000
Model Diagnostics:	R ² =0.194	Adj. R ² =0.177	F(3,141)=11.31	Prob > F=0.000

Note: *** $p < 0.001$, * $p < 0.05$.

The model demonstrates a smaller, but still statistically significant, positive relationship between global sourcing and social sustainability elements ($\beta=0.201, t=2.28, p=0.024$). The lower explanatory power ($R^2=0.194$) indicates that social sustainability within Harare's manufacturing sector is largely driven by broader institutional factors, rather than procurement strategies alone.

This positive link reflects the arguments of Carter and Jennings (2004), demonstrating that global supplier relationships can drive meaningful skills and technology transfers as local workers learn to handle advanced imported materials.

However, the low coefficient also reveals a social trade-off. As detailed by Chigora and Guzu (2011) and Kusangaya et al. (2014), heavy reliance on foreign imports risks reducing local manufacturing depth over time. Diverting purchasing power away from local vendors weakens the domestic supply base and limits job creation within Harare, validating the social concerns raised in Elkington's (1997) TBL theory.

Vignette 4: Qualitative Triangulation on Social Contradictions

"We gain excellent technical expertise and skills transfer when partnering with global suppliers. However, from a community perspective, every order placed outside our borders hurts local upstream vendors. We are keeping our own factory jobs secure, but our broader contribution to employment within Harare is limited because we aren't buying from local suppliers." — **Participant Human Resources Director, Code FMCG-118**

4.5 Chapter Summary

This chapter analyzed data from a sample of $N=145$ firms using a mixed-methods approach to evaluate the impact of global sourcing on Triple Bottom Line sustainability. The findings confirm that while global sourcing strategies significantly improve economic returns ($\beta=0.584, p<0.001$), they present clear challenges for environmental sustainability ($\beta=0.412, p<0.001$) by increasing logistics-related emissions and industrial waste. On the social front, global sourcing provides moderate support for technical skills transfer ($\beta=0.201, p<0.05$), but can reduce downstream economic opportunities within the local community.

CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary, conclusions, and recommendations derived from the empirical findings of this study. The main purpose of this investigation was to evaluate the impact of global sourcing strategies on the Triple Bottom Line sustainability of Fast-Moving Consumer Goods manufacturing firms in Harare, Zimbabwe. This final chapter synthesizes the core findings, offers structural conclusions framed around organizational performance and sustainability frameworks, and outlines practical and policy-level recommendations for managing the economic, environmental, and social trade-offs within the local manufacturing environment.

5.2 Summary of Key Findings

5.2.1 Global Sourcing Strategies Deployed in Harare

The study established that global sourcing is heavily integrated into the operations of consumer goods manufacturers, driven primarily by local raw material deficits. Partnering with international suppliers to secure raw materials was identified as the primary operational strategy chosen by organizations. Optimization via global logistics networks ranked as the second most prevalent approach. Conversely, outsourcing actual production to foreign contract manufacturers scored very low, demonstrating that firms prioritize keeping assembly, packaging, and processing lines within domestic borders to maintain their local manufacturing status and manage tariff exposure.

5.2.2 Economic Sustainability Impact

The econometric evaluation revealed that global sourcing strategies exert a strong, positive, and statistically significant effect on the economic sustainability of manufacturing firms. The statistical modeling demonstrated that global sourcing explains a major proportion of the variance in economic sustainability among the studied entities. This positive relationship was driven by structural unit-cost efficiencies and access to high-volume raw inputs unavailable domestically. However, qualitative insights revealed that these benefits are heavily constrained by local economic frictions, specifically liquidity shortages and delays in securing foreign currency, which inflate transaction costs over time.

5.2.3 Environmental Sustainability Impact

The analysis confirmed a significant and highly problematic relationship between global sourcing intensity and negative environmental externalities. Global sourcing showed a significant positive link to environmental impact scores, indicating that higher levels of global sourcing lead to greater environmental challenges. Because the scale items were framed to capture negative externalities, this path confirms that long-haul procurement heavily degrades environmental sustainability. The primary contributors are high transport emissions from road-freight corridors across landlocked transit routes and an influx of imported, non-biodegradable packaging materials that overwhelm local municipal

waste systems.

5.2.4 Social Sustainability Impact

The relationship between global sourcing and social sustainability components was positive but modest. The statistical models returned a smaller but still significant coefficient, accounting for a minor portion of the total variance. The positive elements were driven by technical skills transfer, workforce development, and exposure to international standard operating procedures through global supplier networks. However, the lower coefficient reveals an underlying social trade-off, as intensive foreign sourcing diverts purchasing power away from domestic smallholders and local upstream vendors, capping wider job creation and limiting the industrial multiplier effect within the metropolitan community.

5.3 Conclusions

5.3.1 Conclusion on Global Sourcing Configurations

This study concludes that global sourcing among consumer goods manufacturers in Harare is an operational necessity rather than a purely discretionary choice. The structural limitations of the domestic supply market leave firms with no option but to look beyond borders for core ingredients and packaging. This approach shows that firms use global strategic sourcing primarily for upstream material procurement, while keeping final manufacturing under direct domestic control to protect local employment and operational capacity.

5.3.2 Conclusion on the Economic Bottom Line

From an economic perspective, global sourcing successfully minimizes asset-specific production costs by leveraging large-scale manufacturing efficiencies abroad. This study concludes that these upstream cost advantages outweigh the baseline costs of shipping goods internationally. However, in the context of the local economy, these savings face a point of diminishing returns. The transactional friction caused by currency volatility, delays in foreign currency clearance, and customs clearance inefficiencies creates hidden costs that can quickly erode the commercial benefits of global sourcing if not proactively managed.

5.3.3 Conclusion on the Environmental Bottom Line

The study concludes that the environmental cost of global sourcing is disproportionately high. The findings show that extending supply chains across international borders shifts the environmental burden heavily onto the transport and logistics phase. For a landlocked country, relying on long road-freight corridors significantly drives up the carbon footprint per ton of imported material. Furthermore, the local circular economy cannot cope with the influx of specialized, non-biodegradable packaging from global channels, transforming an international sourcing strategy into a domestic waste challenge.

5.3.4 Conclusion on the Social Bottom Line

Finally, this study concludes that global sourcing creates a clear social trade-off for local manufacturing hubs. While it strengthens internal capabilities through exposure to global quality standards and technical skills transfer, it restricts broader local economic development. By sending purchasing power out of the country to buy foreign raw materials, manufacturers contribute to the hollowing out of local upstream supply networks. This trend reduces domestic employment opportunities and limits the economic multiplier effect within the surrounding community.

5.4 Recommendations

Based on the empirical findings, structural analysis, and conclusions, the following recommendations are provided for managers and policymakers.

5.4.1 Recommendations for Supply Chain Managers

To minimize currency risk and rebuild the local supply base, manufacturing managers should shift from an all-or-nothing global model to a hybrid approach. For agricultural inputs, manufacturers should establish localized outgrower schemes and contract farming arrangements in surrounding provinces to combine international sourcing with local supply strategies. This helps to ensure material availability and cushion against global supply disruptions.

To lower the high logistics carbon footprint, supply chain managers should shift their freight mix away from long-haul road transport. Where possible, firms should utilize rail corridors for bulk transport from regional hubs or coastal ports. Additionally, procurement policies should require global vendors to hold verified environmental management certifications and use lightweight, recyclable, or biodegradable packaging to ease the waste pressure on local municipal infrastructure.

To protect the economic savings gained through global sourcing, firms must build resilient currency management strategies. Procurement managers should collaborate with corporate finance teams to use forward-purchasing contracts and secure priority lines of credit. This helps protect international purchase orders from sudden domestic currency shifts and avoids production stops caused by currency allocation delays.

5.4.2 Recommendations for Industrial and Environmental Policy Makers

The Ministry of Transport and Infrastructural Development should prioritize restoring and expanding national rail corridors, particularly lines linking with regional neighbors and coastal ports. Shifting bulk container shipping from road to rail will sharply reduce the logistics carbon footprint and lower landed material costs for local industries. Furthermore, national revenue authorities should digitize and streamline customs clearing processes to reduce transit delays and cut hidden transaction costs.

The Ministry of Industry and Commerce should design fiscal incentives, such as targeted tax breaks and duty draw-backs on capital equipment, to encourage local production of critical industrial packaging and raw inputs. By helping local suppliers upgrade their technology, the government can

help manufacturers substitute foreign imports with reliable local alternatives, boosting domestic employment and strengthening the industrial sector.

The Environmental Management Agency should formalize and enforce extended producer responsibility frameworks. These regulations should require manufacturers to co-fund local recycling facilities and buy back industrial waste generated by imported packaging materials. This policy intervention will push firms to negotiate for cleaner, more recyclable packaging options from their international suppliers.

5.5 Contributions to Knowledge

This study makes several contributions to the field of supply chain management in developing countries. It provides empirical verification of Triple Bottom Line theory and performance frameworks within a highly volatile economic setting, filling a gap where existing research relies heavily on stable, developed markets. By combining statistical modeling with qualitative insights, the study provides a detailed view of the operational realities facing regional manufacturing hubs. The study highlights that in resource-constrained economies, global sourcing often forces firms to balance immediate economic survival against long-term environmental and social sustainability goals.

5.6 Areas for Further Research

While this study provides valuable insights into manufacturers, several areas warrant further investigation. Future studies should implement a longitudinal research design to track how the relationship between sourcing strategies and sustainability changes as economic policies and currency frameworks evolve over time. Researchers should also extend this model to other critical industrial sectors, such as mining, pharmaceuticals, and heavy engineering, to see if similar sustainability patterns emerge. Finally, future research could explore indirect pathways, such as testing whether supply chain agility or digital procurement technologies help mediate the relationship between global sourcing and sustainability outcomes.

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APPENDIX 1

QUESTIONNAIRE

Introductory letter (On Questionnaire)

Bindura University of Science Education

P Bag 741, Bindura

01 May 2026



To Whom It May Concern: Please help fill out the enclosed questionnaire.

I am enrolled in the Master of Purchasing and Supply program at Bindura University of Science Education (BUSE) as a legitimate student. With your consent, I would want to do research on the following topic: Evaluating the Impact of Global Sourcing on the Triple Bottom Line Sustainability of FMCG Manufacturers in Harare, Zimbabwe.

In order to fill in the blanks in the accompanying questionnaire, I sincerely want your help. There is no right or incorrect response, and nothing identifying you will be done with your responses; they will just be utilized for his research. Therefore, complete confidentiality is assured. I appreciate your cooperation in advance with the questionnaire.

Yours faithfully

.....

Cell:

SECTION A: ORGANISATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS

1. What is the size of your company in terms of number of employees?

1-50 employees (Ordinal scale)	
51-100 employees (Ordinal scale)	
101-200 employees (Ordinal scale)	
More than 200 employees (Ordinal scale)	

2. What is the annual turnover of your company?

Less than USD 500,000 (Ordinal scale)	
USD 500,000 – USD 1 million (Ordinal scale)	
USD 1 million – USD 5 million (Ordinal scale)	
Above USD 5 million (Ordinal scale)	

3. How long has your company been operating in the FMCG sector in Harare?

Less than 5 years (Ordinal scale)	
5-10 years (Ordinal scale)	
More than 10 years (Ordinal scale)	

4. What type of FMCG products does your company manufacture? (Select all that apply)
(Nominal scale)

Food and beverages	
Personal care products	
Household cleaning products	
Other (please specify)	

5. What is your company's primary market focus?

Local market only (Nominal scale)	
Regional market (Nominal scale)	
International market (Nominal scale)	

SECTION B: GLOBAL SOURCING STRATEGIES ADOPTED BY FMCG MANUFACTURERS IN HARARE

Please rate the extent to which your company adopts the following global sourcing strategies, using the scale below (Ordinal scale):

1 = To a small extent

2 = To some extent

3 = Not sure

4 = To a great extent

4 = To a very great extent

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
1. Partnering with international suppliers to source raw materials					
2. Outsourcing production to foreign manufacturers					
3. Using global logistics networks to optimize procurement costs					
4. Engaging experts to manage global procurement risks					
5. Incorporating both transaction and production costs in sourcing decisions					

SECTION C: ECONOMIC IMPACT OF GLOBAL SOURCING ON SUSTAINABILITY

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements regarding the economic impact of global sourcing on your company (Ordinal scale):

1 = Strongly Disagree

2 = Disagree

3 = Uncertain

4 = Agree

5 = Strongly Agree

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
1. Global sourcing has reduced production costs significantly					
2. Access to global suppliers has improved product affordability					
3. Global sourcing has enhanced the company's profitability					
4. It has increased the company's competitive advantage locally					
5. The company has experienced improved cash flow due to global sourcing					

SECTION D: ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF GLOBAL SOURCING ON OPERATIONS

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements regarding the environmental impact of global sourcing on your company's operations (Ordinal scale):

1 = Strongly Disagree

2 = Disagree

3 = Uncertain

4 = Agree

5 = Strongly Agree

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
1. Global sourcing has increased the company's carbon footprint					
2. The company has adopted sustainable sourcing practices to mitigate environmental impact					
3. Global sourcing has led to increased waste generation in operations					

4. The company monitors and manages environmental risks associated with global suppliers					
5. Global sourcing has improved access to environmentally friendly raw materials					

SECTION E: SOCIAL IMPACT OF GLOBAL SOURCING ON OPERATIONS

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements regarding the social impact of global sourcing on your company's operations (Ordinal scale):

1 = Strongly Disagree

2 = Disagree

3 = Uncertain

4 = Agree

5 = Strongly Agree

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
1. Global sourcing has created employment opportunities in the local community					
2. The company ensures fair labor practices among global suppliers					
3. Global sourcing has improved the company's corporate social responsibility profile					
4. Partnerships with global suppliers promote knowledge and skills transfer					
5. Global sourcing has positively influenced the company's relationship with local stakeholders					

END OF QUESTIONNAIRE

APPENDIX 2: INTERVIEW GUIDE

BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION (BUSE)

Postgraduate Studies – Master of Purchasing and Supply Chain Management

Research Topic: Evaluating the Impact of Global Sourcing on the Triple Bottom Line Sustainability of FMCG Manufacturers in Harare, Zimbabwe.

This semi-structured interview guide was used to collect qualitative data from 8–12 purposively selected senior managers in the Harare FMCG sector (Chapter Three, Sections 3.5 and 3.9). Responses were transcribed verbatim, coded thematically, and triangulated with the quantitative regression results presented in Chapter Four (Sections 4.4.1–4.4.4). Participant identities are protected through pseudonymous codes (e.g., FMCG-24, FMCG-102).

Administrative Details

- Date of Interview:
- Place/Company of Interview:
- Time of Interview:
- Interviewer Name:
- Participant Code/Designation:

Opening Remarks & Consent Induction

"Thank you for taking the time to participate in this interview. My name is Chimedza, and I am conducting this study as part of my Master's degree at BUSE. The objective of this interview is to gain a deeper, qualitative understanding of how your company's global sourcing strategies influence its Triple Bottom Line sustainability (economic viability, environmental footprint, and social impact) within the Harare FMCG manufacturing landscape. Your identity and company name will be kept strictly confidential, and the data gathered will be utilized solely for academic research purposes. The interview will take approximately 25–30 minutes."

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC & ORGANISATIONAL BACKGROUND

1. Could you briefly describe your current role and responsibilities regarding procurement, logistics, or supply chain management within this organization?
2. For how many years have you been working in the FMCG manufacturing sector in Zimbabwe?
3. How would you describe your company's reliance on international procurement versus local sourcing for raw materials and packaging?

SECTION B: GLOBAL SOURCING STRATEGIES ADOPTED

1. What specific global sourcing models or strategies does your firm rely on most heavily *Probe: direct international supplier partnerships, global logistics networks, foreign contract manufacturing*)
2. How does your company factor in total cost of ownership—such as balancing transaction costs, freight rates, and import duties under Zimbabwean trade regulations—when making global sourcing decisions?

Probe: How does the current volatile macroeconomic environment in Harare influence these sourcing strategies?

SECTION C: THE TRIPLE BOTTOM LINE IMPACT OF GLOBAL SOURCING

1. Economic Sustainability Impact

- ✓ In what ways has shifting toward global suppliers impacted your overall production costs, profit margins, and market competitiveness in Zimbabwe?
- ✓ To what extent has sourcing internationally improved your local product affordability and market share, or conversely, what cash-flow strains (such as foreign currency access) has it introduced?

2. Environmental Sustainability Impact

- ✓ FMCG shipping involves long supply chains. How has your global sourcing footprint affected your firm's carbon footprint and operational waste generation?
- ✓ What sustainable sourcing mechanisms or criteria do you utilize to audit and manage the environmental compliance of your international suppliers?

Probe: Are you facing specific pressure from local consumers or regulators like the Environmental Management Agency (EMA) concerning your imported materials?

3. Social Sustainability Impact

- ✓ How does your international sourcing strategy affect local employment opportunities and community relationships within Harare?
- ✓ How do you verify that your global suppliers observe fair labor standards, occupational health and safety laws, and ethical working conditions?
- ✓ Have your relationships with international vendors resulted in any meaningful skills development or technology transfer for your local workforce?

Closing Remarks

"Thank you very much for your valuable time, rich operational insights, and cooperation. Your feedback will provide critical depth to the quantitative findings of this study."

END OF INTERVIEW GUIDE

Platts, K., 2010. Overseas sourcing decisions: The total cost from sourcing from China. Supply chain management: An international Journal.

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Zeng, A., and Rossetti, C., 2004. Developing a framework for evaluating the logistics costs in global sourcing processes: International journal of physical distribution and logistics management.

This instrument was used to collect quantitative data from a sample of N=145 respondents across FMCG manufacturing firms in Harare (Chapter Three, Sections 3.5–3.7). Sections B through E correspond directly to the four research objectives of the study. All construct items employ a five-point Likert scale. Internal consistency for each section was confirmed via Cronbach's Alpha, with all coefficients exceeding the 0.70 threshold (see Table 4.1, Chapter Four).