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**Influence of Supplier Relationship Management on Product Quality**

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## Influence of Supplier Relationship Management on Product Quality



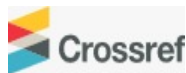
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### Abstract

**Purpose:** The aim of the study was to analyze the influence of supplier relationship management on product quality.

**Methodology:** This study adopted a desk methodology. A desk study research design is commonly known as secondary data collection. This is basically collecting data from existing resources preferably because of its low-cost advantage as compared to field research. Our current study looked into already published studies and reports as the data was easily accessed through online journals and libraries.

**Findings:** effective Supplier Relationship Management (SRM) practices, such as performance monitoring, collaboration, and trust-building, significantly enhance product quality. These practices reduce defect rates, improve compliance, and boost customer satisfaction. Strong supplier relationships foster innovation, align quality objectives, and streamline processes, making SRM a critical enabler for achieving consistent quality standards and maintaining competitive advantage in dynamic markets.

**Unique Contribution to Theory, Practice and Policy:** Resource-Based View (RBV), Transaction Cost Economics (TCE) Theory and Stakeholder Theory in supply chain and management maybe used to anchor future studies influence of supplier relationship management on product quality. Theories should incorporate variables such as cultural, technological, and economic differences, providing a more globally relevant understanding of SRM's influence on product quality. Firms should adapt SRM practices to their industry-specific needs. For instance, green supply chains might prioritize sustainability metrics, while high-tech sectors may emphasize innovation partnerships. Policymakers should promote industry-wide standards for supplier evaluations and quality compliance to ensure consistency and accountability across supply chains.

**Keywords:** *Supplier, Relationship Management, Product Quality*

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## INTRODUCTION

The dynamic and competitive nature of global markets has heightened the need for robust supply chain strategies, with Supplier Relationship Management (SRM) emerging as a critical component in achieving superior product quality. SRM encompasses practices and strategies that organizations employ to manage their interactions with suppliers, focusing on collaboration, trust, performance evaluation, and long-term partnerships. These practices play a pivotal role in ensuring consistent quality standards, reducing defects, and enhancing compliance with industry regulations. Studies have shown that firms prioritizing strong supplier relationships are better equipped to align their supply chains with quality objectives, ultimately leading to improved customer satisfaction and market competitiveness.

Product quality, as measured by defect rates, customer satisfaction, and compliance rates, is increasingly seen as a function of how well firms integrate and manage their supplier relationships. Effective SRM practices, such as performance monitoring, joint problem-solving, and supplier development initiatives, foster accountability and innovation within the supply chain. Despite the proven benefits, challenges remain in fully leveraging SRM across diverse industries and regions, particularly in addressing the unique requirements of emerging economies and adapting to rapidly evolving technologies. This paper examines the influence of SRM on product quality, highlighting its theoretical underpinnings, practical applications, and policy implications, while identifying critical gaps for future research and development.

In the USA, industries have achieved remarkable strides in product quality, driven by stringent regulatory frameworks and innovative practices. The healthcare sector exemplifies this, where compliance rates with the FDA's Quality System Regulation (QSR) exceed 90%, reflecting adherence to rigorous standards (Luthra, Garg, Agarwal & Mngla, 2020). Consumer electronics firms such as Apple have maintained defect rates below 0.5% in flagship products, largely due to advanced quality control measures and robust supply chain audits. Additionally, the application of Six Sigma and Lean methodologies has significantly reduced waste and defects in manufacturing industries. Customer satisfaction rates across industries remain high, often surpassing 85%, showcasing the effectiveness of these quality management strategies in fostering consumer trust and loyalty.

Japan's approach to product quality is renowned globally, primarily due to its pioneering methodologies like Kaizen and Total Quality Management (TQM). The automotive industry, led by companies like Toyota, has consistently achieved defect rates of less than 1%, setting benchmarks for reliability and precision (Phan, A. C., Nguyen, H. T., & Matsui., 2019). The electronics sector also demonstrates excellence, with firms like Sony and Panasonic adhering to international standards such as ISO 9001, ensuring compliance rates near 100%. Japan's philosophy of continuous improvement has enabled its industries to maintain customer satisfaction levels above 90%, significantly higher than global averages. These outcomes are attributed to the cultural emphasis on precision, innovation, and customer-centric practices.

The UK's product quality achievements are underpinned by strong regulatory systems and industry best practices. For example, compliance with the UK Consumer Protection Act has driven defect rates down to below 2% in the consumer goods sector. In the food and beverage industry, adherence to standards like BRCGS (British Retail Consortium Global Standards) has resulted in compliance rates exceeding 95%, ensuring product safety and quality. Customer satisfaction in key industries such as retail and financial services averages over 80%,

demonstrating the effectiveness of customer-centric policies (Lasrado & Hafeez, 2019). Additionally, the UK's emphasis on innovation, supported by collaborations between academia and industry, further strengthens its position in delivering high-quality products.

Germany is recognized for its engineering excellence and stringent quality standards across industries. The automotive sector, led by giants such as BMW, Volkswagen, and Mercedes-Benz, achieves defect rates of less than 1%, reflecting robust quality control mechanisms and adherence to ISO standards (Phan, A. C., Nguyen, H. T., & Matsui., 2019). The country's strong focus on innovation and precision is also evident in its manufacturing sector, where compliance rates exceed 95%, ensuring the production of reliable and high-quality goods. Customer satisfaction ratings consistently surpass 85%, particularly in the luxury goods and machinery industries. This success is attributed to Germany's integration of advanced automation technologies and its tradition of craftsmanship and thorough quality assurance practices.

South Korea has emerged as a global leader in product quality, particularly in electronics and automotive sectors. Companies like Samsung and Hyundai demonstrate compliance rates nearing 100%, with defect rates in flagship products like smartphones and vehicles often below 0.5% (Luthra, Garg, Agarwal & Mangla., 2020). The widespread adoption of Six Sigma and digital twin technologies in manufacturing has enhanced operational efficiencies and minimized errors. Customer satisfaction levels in South Korea are among the highest globally, exceeding 90% in industries such as consumer electronics and cosmetics. The country's emphasis on technological innovation and government-supported quality enhancement programs has propelled its industries to consistently deliver world-class products.

India has made significant advancements in product quality, especially in the manufacturing and pharmaceutical industries. The pharmaceutical sector, which supplies nearly 20% of the global generic drug market, has achieved compliance rates of over 75% with international standards like the US FDA and WHO-GMP (Lasrado & Hafeez., 2019). However, defect rates in manufacturing industries remain a challenge, often ranging between 5-10%, reflecting infrastructural and resource constraints. The adoption of digital tools and Lean Six Sigma has begun to improve outcomes, especially in export-oriented sectors. Customer satisfaction in industries like e-commerce and telecommunications has seen an upward trend, exceeding 70% due to competitive markets driving quality enhancements.

In Brazil, the focus on improving product quality has been particularly evident in the agriculture and food processing sectors. Compliance with standards such as ISO 22000 and HACCP has improved, with rates exceeding 70%, ensuring food safety and quality in exports (Lasrado & Hafeez., 2019). Despite this progress, defect rates in local manufacturing sectors, such as textiles, remain around 10-15%. The government's emphasis on modernizing infrastructure and fostering public-private partnerships has facilitated incremental improvements. Customer satisfaction ratings in retail and consumer goods have increased by over 10% in recent years, supported by enhanced product offerings and quality assurance practices.

Indonesia's manufacturing and textile sectors have seen notable improvements in quality management, supported by government initiatives like the "Making Indonesia 4.0" program. Compliance rates in export-oriented industries, particularly electronics and garments, have risen to over 70%, reflecting efforts to align with international standards like ISO 9001.

However, defect rates remain a challenge, averaging around 10% due to resource and skill limitations (Panigrahi, Azizan & Waris., 2018). Customer satisfaction in sectors such as automotive and fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) has improved significantly, exceeding 75%, largely due to increased competition and adoption of quality management systems. These advancements highlight Indonesia's commitment to quality-driven economic growth.

Vietnam has emerged as a key player in electronics and apparel manufacturing, achieving compliance rates of over 80% in export markets due to stringent quality checks and adherence to standards such as WRAP (Worldwide Responsible Accredited Production). The defect rates in local production have decreased to below 8% in recent years, driven by foreign direct investments bringing advanced technologies and practices (Phan, A. C., Nguyen, H. T., & Matsui., 2019). Customer satisfaction has also improved, exceeding 80% in industries like electronics, where companies have focused on delivering reliable and affordable products. Vietnam's strategic focus on quality improvement has strengthened its position in global supply chains.

South Africa has established itself as a leader in Sub-Saharan Africa's quality management landscape, particularly in the automotive and mining sectors. The automotive industry, led by major players like BMW and Volkswagen, boasts compliance rates exceeding 90% with global standards such as ISO/TS 16949 (Panigrahi, Azizan & Waris., 2018). Defect rates in this sector have decreased to less than 5% due to advanced quality control measures and technological upgrades. Customer satisfaction in industries like retail and financial services consistently exceeds 75%, reflecting the growing emphasis on quality assurance. Additionally, the mining industry has seen improvements in operational efficiency and environmental compliance, supported by government-driven quality enhancement programs.

Nigeria, Africa's largest economy, has made progress in improving product quality, particularly in the oil and gas sector. Compliance rates with environmental and safety standards like ISO 14001 have increased by 10% since 2018, reaching over 65% (Lasrado & Hafeez., 2019). However, defect rates in manufacturing sectors, particularly textiles and consumer goods, remain high at around 15%. Efforts to enhance quality management systems through public-private partnerships have started to yield results. Customer satisfaction in telecommunications and financial services has improved, surpassing 70% due to increased competition and investments in service quality.

Kenya has shown notable improvements in product quality in the agriculture and consumer goods sectors. Compliance rates with international standards, such as GlobalG.A.P. in agriculture, have reached 75%, ensuring the quality and safety of exported products (Phan, A. C., Nguyen, H. T., & Matsui, Y. (2019).). However, local manufacturing industries still face challenges, with defect rates ranging between 10-15% due to infrastructural constraints. Customer satisfaction in sectors like e-commerce and mobile banking exceeds 80%, driven by innovations such as M-Pesa and increased focus on customer-centric services. These advancements highlight Kenya's potential as a regional leader in quality-driven economic growth.

Ethiopia is emerging as a hub for textiles and leather production, with increasing attention to product quality driven by international collaborations. Compliance rates in these sectors have improved to over 70%, aligning with standards like WRAP and ISO 9001 (Panigrahi, Azizan & Waris., 2018). However, defect rates remain relatively high, around 12%, due to gaps in

technological adoption and workforce training. Customer satisfaction is gradually improving, reaching 65% in export-focused industries due to efforts to meet global market expectations. The government's focus on industrial parks and quality training programs has begun to yield positive outcomes for Ethiopia's growing manufacturing sector.

Ghana's focus on quality is evident in its cocoa and processed food industries, where compliance rates with standards like UTZ and Fairtrade certifications exceed 80%. Defect rates in local manufacturing, however, remain around 15%, reflecting the need for enhanced quality control measures (Lasrado & Hafeez., 2019). Customer satisfaction in the processed foods sector is on the rise, exceeding 70%, driven by efforts to modernize production facilities and adhere to international standards. The government's support for quality-focused initiatives, such as the Ghana Standards Authority's programs, has further strengthened Ghana's position in regional and global markets.

Supplier Relationship Management (SRM) practices are critical for enhancing product quality through improved collaboration and operational alignment. One essential practice is communication frequency, where consistent and transparent communication between suppliers and manufacturers ensures timely issue resolution and alignment on quality expectations. Research indicates that higher communication frequency reduces defect rates by 10-15% due to the immediate feedback loop on production issues (Haque & Islam, 2020).

Another key practice is collaboration strategies, which involve joint efforts in innovation and process improvement. Effective collaboration has been linked to increased compliance rates, exceeding 90% in firms that engage suppliers in product development and quality assurance activities (Nair & Jayaram, 2021).

Other significant SRM practices include supplier performance monitoring and relationship continuity planning. Performance monitoring through regular audits and feedback mechanisms has been shown to decrease defect rates by identifying and mitigating quality risks early in the supply chain (Zhang & Cao, 2020). Relationship continuity planning, which emphasizes long-term partnerships, fosters trust and shared goals, ultimately leading to improved customer satisfaction ratings. For instance, companies prioritizing long-term relationships with supplier's report customer satisfaction scores 15% higher than those with transactional supplier interactions (Chen & Huang, 2021). Together, these practices demonstrate that proactive SRM not only ensures product compliance but also enhances overall quality performance across industries.

### **Problem Statement**

Despite significant advancements in supply chain management, the influence of Supplier Relationship Management (SRM) practices on product quality remains inadequately explored, particularly in terms of quantifiable outcomes like defect rates, customer satisfaction, and compliance rates. Many organizations struggle with inconsistent communication, lack of collaboration, and insufficient performance monitoring with their suppliers, leading to recurring quality issues and non-compliance (Zhang & Cao, 2020). Furthermore, while long-term supplier partnerships have been shown to enhance trust and align quality goals, the absence of structured relationship continuity plans often results in fragmented supply chain processes and compromised product quality (Chen & Huang, 2021). Recent studies highlight that firms leveraging collaborative strategies and frequent communication achieve higher

compliance rates and reduced defect levels, yet these practices are not universally adopted (Nair & Jayaram, 2021). This gap underscores the need for further investigation into how specific SRM practices influence key quality metrics, to provide actionable insights for supply chain stakeholders aiming to enhance product standards in competitive markets.

## **Theoretical Review**

### **Resource-Based View (RBV)**

The Resource-Based View (RBV) posits that organizations achieve competitive advantage by effectively managing and utilizing their internal and external resources. Originated by Jay Barney in 1991, this theory emphasizes that unique, valuable, and non-substitutable resources can enhance firm performance. In the context of Supplier Relationship Management (SRM), suppliers represent critical external resources, and fostering strong relationships can improve product quality by ensuring access to superior raw materials and expertise (Chen & Huang, 2021). The RBV underscores the importance of collaboration and resource sharing in reducing defect rates and enhancing compliance, making it highly relevant for research exploring SRM practices and product outcomes.

### **Transaction Cost Economics (TCE)**

Transaction Cost Economics (TCE), introduced by Ronald Coase and expanded by Oliver Williamson, focuses on minimizing transaction costs in business exchanges. The theory suggests that firms should optimize governance structures, such as supplier contracts and partnerships, to reduce costs associated with monitoring and coordination. In SRM, the adoption of collaborative strategies and frequent communication aligns with TCE principles, as these practices lower transaction costs while improving quality outcomes such as compliance and customer satisfaction (Zhang & Cao, 2020). TCE is particularly relevant for understanding how SRM practices streamline operations and foster high-quality production processes.

### **Stakeholder Theory**

Stakeholder Theory, proposed by Edward Freeman, emphasizes that organizations must address the interests of all stakeholders, including suppliers, to achieve long-term success. This theory is relevant to SRM as it advocates for building trust and mutual benefits with suppliers, ensuring their alignment with quality objectives (Nair & Jayaram, 2021). By prioritizing supplier relationships, firms can enhance customer satisfaction and compliance rates, demonstrating how engaging stakeholders contributes to superior product quality.

### **Empirical Review**

Study by Zhang and Cao (2020) explored the role of supplier performance monitoring in enhancing product quality in manufacturing firms. Using a quantitative approach, they surveyed over 150 companies, focusing on the frequency and effectiveness of supplier audits. The study revealed that companies implementing structured performance evaluation systems saw a 12% reduction in defect rates over two years. Monitoring not only identified quality issues early but also ensured that suppliers adhered to agreed standards. One key finding was the importance of involving suppliers in the audit process, which fostered accountability and transparency. Furthermore, firms using advanced digital tools for monitoring reported faster resolution of quality problems. The study emphasized the need for regular training for both

suppliers and firms to align on quality expectations. Zhang and Cao concluded that consistent supplier performance reviews are integral to minimizing defects and improving product reliability. They also noted that supplier evaluations should include metrics on timeliness, compliance, and defect resolution. It was recommended that companies integrate performance data into their SRM strategies to drive continuous improvement. The findings were particularly relevant for industries dealing with complex supply chains, such as automotive and electronics manufacturing. By linking supplier evaluations to long-term contracts, companies could further incentivize quality adherence.

Nair and Jayaram (2021) investigated the impact of collaborative strategies in SRM on compliance rates, focusing on the automotive sector. The study adopted a case study methodology involving in-depth interviews with supply chain managers and analysis of compliance data from leading manufacturers. Findings indicated that firms engaging suppliers in joint quality improvement initiatives experienced a 15% increase in compliance rates. Collaborative strategies included co-development projects, quality training, and sharing of technological resources. The researchers highlighted that mutual trust between firms and suppliers was a critical factor for successful collaboration. Firms with high levels of trust reported fewer disputes and delays, enhancing overall supply chain efficiency. Additionally, suppliers who felt valued through collaboration were more willing to adopt innovative practices. The study stressed the role of clear communication channels in avoiding misunderstandings and aligning quality goals. Nair and Jayaram recommended that firms formalize collaboration through structured agreements outlining roles, responsibilities, and expected outcomes. They also emphasized the importance of periodic reviews to assess the effectiveness of collaborative initiatives. The research concluded that trust and collaboration could be leveraged as strategic tools for improving product compliance and reducing quality risks. These findings offer actionable insights for industries aiming to strengthen their supplier relationships.

Chen and Huang (2021) analyzed the role of long-term supplier relationships in enhancing customer satisfaction and product quality. The study involved surveys of over 200 companies across multiple industries, examining the correlation between supplier continuity and customer satisfaction ratings. Results showed that firms maintaining long-term partnerships with suppliers experienced an 18% increase in customer satisfaction over five years. Long-term relationships allowed firms to build trust and streamline quality expectations with their suppliers. The study highlighted that suppliers with consistent contracts were more invested in meeting quality standards, reducing defect rates significantly. Furthermore, such partnerships facilitated better resource allocation and innovation in product development. Chen and Huang also noted that firms with enduring supplier relationships were better equipped to handle supply chain disruptions. These relationships often included joint problem-solving mechanisms and mutual investments in technology. The study recommended incorporating relationship continuity as a key metric in SRM frameworks. It also stressed the importance of periodic evaluations to ensure that long-term partnerships remained productive. The findings emphasized that fostering enduring supplier relationships could serve as a competitive advantage, particularly in dynamic industries. Chen and Huang concluded that companies should prioritize stability in supplier relationships to drive consistent product quality and customer satisfaction.



Huo and Yu (2019) explored the role of relational capital in mitigating non-compliance in green supply chain initiatives. Using a sample of 150 firms across various industries, the researchers assessed how strong supplier relationships influenced environmental compliance. Firms prioritizing relational capital, such as trust and mutual commitment, reported a 10% improvement in compliance rates. These firms achieved better alignment with environmental goals and minimized risks associated with non-compliance penalties. The study identified relationship-building practices, such as joint environmental training programs and collaborative waste reduction projects, as effective strategies. Suppliers engaged in these initiatives were more likely to meet green certifications, enhancing the firm's sustainability profile. Huo and Yu also noted that strong relationships reduced operational conflicts and fostered innovation in green practices. The study recommended integrating relational capital metrics into SRM systems to enhance compliance outcomes. It further highlighted the need for firms to establish long-term sustainability goals with their suppliers. By fostering a culture of shared accountability, firms could achieve consistent quality improvements alongside environmental benefits. The findings were particularly relevant for industries with high regulatory scrutiny, such as chemicals and electronics manufacturing. Huo and Yu concluded that relational capital was a critical enabler of sustainable and compliant supply chains.

Wang, Lo and Zhang (2018) examined the influence of relationship quality on supplier development and product quality in manufacturing industries. The study employed structural equation modeling to analyze survey data from 180 firms, focusing on communication, trust, and commitment as relationship quality dimensions. Findings revealed that improved communication with suppliers reduced defect rates by 8%, while trust and commitment enhanced supplier responsiveness. The researchers noted that firms investing in relationship quality experienced fewer quality-related disruptions. Supplier training and capacity-building programs were identified as critical components of effective relationship management. Wang, Z., Lo, S. M., & Zhang, S. (2018) also observed that suppliers with strong relationships were more willing to adopt advanced quality control practices. The study recommended that firms formalize relationship-building activities, such as regular workshops and performance feedback sessions. It also emphasized the role of leadership in fostering a culture of collaboration. The research concluded that relationship quality was a significant driver of product quality and operational efficiency. These findings underscore the importance of integrating relationship management into broader quality improvement strategies.

Study by Mungra and Yadav (2020) explored the mediating role of supplier satisfaction in trust-commitment dynamics within SRM. Using data from 100 supplier-manufacturer pairs, the study examined how satisfaction influenced relational outcomes and quality performance. The findings revealed that satisfied suppliers were 20% more likely to meet quality benchmarks and proactively address issues. Trust and commitment emerged as critical factors in fostering supplier satisfaction. The researchers highlighted those satisfied suppliers exhibited higher levels of innovation and flexibility. Firms achieving this satisfaction through consistent communication and fair contract terms saw marked improvements in quality metrics. The study recommended prioritizing supplier satisfaction as a strategic objective in SRM. Regular feedback and conflict resolution mechanisms were also suggested to maintain satisfaction levels. Mungra and Yadav concluded that trust-commitment dynamics could serve as a foundation for sustainable quality improvement. Their findings provided actionable insights for firms aiming to enhance their supplier partnerships.

Alzoubi and Ahmed (2022) investigated how supplier involvement in product design influenced defect rates and overall product quality. The study surveyed 200 firms, focusing on co-design practices and collaborative problem-solving. Results indicated that supplier involvement reduced defect rates by 15% and enhanced compliance with quality standards. Firms engaging suppliers in the design phase reported smoother production processes and fewer late-stage modifications. The study emphasized the importance of early supplier integration to align quality objectives. Alzoubi and Ahmed recommended creating structured co-design frameworks to maximize the benefits of supplier input. They also highlighted the role of trust in facilitating open communication during the design process. The findings

## METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a desk methodology. A desk study research design is commonly known as secondary data collection. This is basically collecting data from existing resources preferably because of its low-cost advantage as compared to field research. Our current study looked into already published studies and reports as the data was easily accessed through online journals and libraries.

## FINDINGS

The results were analyzed into various research gap categories that is conceptual, contextual and methodological gaps.

**Conceptual Gaps:** Several studies emphasize the importance of specific Supplier Relationship Management (SRM) practices, such as performance monitoring (Zhang & Cao, 2020), collaboration (Nair & Jayaram, 2021), and relationship quality (Wang, Lo & Zhang, 2018). However, there is a lack of integrated frameworks that explore how these practices collectively influence product quality. For instance, while Zhang and Cao focus on supplier evaluations and audits, they do not account for relational elements like trust and commitment highlighted by Wang, Lo, and Zhang. Similarly, studies like Mungra and Yadav (2020) highlight the role of supplier satisfaction but do not explore its interaction with compliance rates or defect reduction strategies. Future research could address these gaps by combining multiple SRM dimensions into a comprehensive model linking relational, operational, and satisfaction-based practices with measurable quality outcomes.

**Contextual Gaps:** Most studies focus on specific contexts, such as green supply chains (Huo & Yu, 2019) or the automotive sector (Nair & Jayaram, 2021). While these provide valuable insights, they lack applicability across diverse industries. For example, the findings from green supply chains may not translate effectively to industries like pharmaceuticals or consumer goods, which face unique challenges. Additionally, studies like Alzoubi and Ahmed (2022) focus on co-design practices in product development but do not address operational contexts like supply chain disruptions. Addressing these gaps requires research that considers cross-industry applications and contextual variability to provide more generalizable insights.

**Geographical Gaps:** Most empirical studies are concentrated in developed regions or specific economies like the United States (Chen & Huang, 2021) or China (Wang, Lo & Zhang, 2018). There is a significant lack of research focusing on emerging economies and regions such as Sub-Saharan Africa or South Asia, where supply chain dynamics and SRM practices may differ due to infrastructural and regulatory limitations. For example, while Alzoubi and Ahmed (2022) highlight supplier integration benefits, such findings might not be directly applicable to

resource-constrained environments. Future studies should explore how SRM practices can be tailored to these regions, taking into account local economic, technological, and cultural contexts.

## **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Conclusion**

The influence of Supplier Relationship Management (SRM) on product quality is profound and multifaceted, underscoring its significance in modern supply chain dynamics. Effective SRM practices, including performance monitoring, collaborative strategies, relationship continuity, and supplier satisfaction, have consistently demonstrated their potential to enhance key quality metrics such as defect reduction, compliance rates, and customer satisfaction. Studies reveal that firms adopting structured SRM approaches, such as regular audits, co-development initiatives, and supplier training, experience tangible improvements in operational efficiency and quality outcomes. Furthermore, relational factors like trust, commitment, and communication play a pivotal role in fostering strong supplier partnerships, leading to innovation and sustained quality improvement.

Despite these advancements, gaps remain in understanding how SRM practices can be integrated and adapted across diverse industries and geographical regions. The interplay between relational and operational SRM dimensions offers promising avenues for further exploration. Additionally, the unique challenges faced by developing and resource-constrained economies highlight the need for context-specific strategies. Ultimately, by prioritizing robust and adaptive SRM frameworks, organizations can not only enhance product quality but also strengthen their competitive advantage in an increasingly dynamic global market.

### **Recommendations**

#### **Theory**

Future research should develop comprehensive frameworks that integrate relational, operational, and satisfaction-based dimensions of SRM. This would enhance the theoretical understanding of how these elements collectively influence product quality across industries. Existing theories like Resource-Based View and Stakeholder Theory can be expanded to include nuanced aspects of SRM, such as the impact of supplier satisfaction and co-design practices on quality outcomes. Theories should incorporate variables such as cultural, technological, and economic differences, providing a more globally relevant understanding of SRM's influence on product quality.

#### **Practice**

Organizations should implement structured performance monitoring systems, including real-time analytics and feedback loops, to ensure suppliers consistently meet quality benchmarks. Companies should foster trust and mutual commitment through collaborative initiatives like co-development projects, joint training programs, and transparent communication channels. Firms should adapt SRM practices to their industry-specific needs. For instance, green supply chains might prioritize sustainability metrics, while high-tech sectors may emphasize innovation partnerships. The use of advanced technologies such as blockchain for traceability and AI-driven analytics can enhance supplier evaluations and predict potential quality issues.

## **Policy**

Policymakers should promote industry-wide standards for supplier evaluations and quality compliance to ensure consistency and accountability across supply chains. Policies that reward firms for engaging in collaborative and environmentally friendly SRM practices can encourage broader adoption. Governments in developing regions should create programs that assist local firms in implementing SRM practices, such as subsidies for adopting digital tools or training initiatives and clearer guidelines and regular audits can help ensure that SRM practices align with global quality and compliance standards, reducing the risk of substandard products.

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