

Trust as a Catalyst for Environment, Social and Governance (ESG) Integration in Sustainable Supply Chain Management Operations: Evidence from Ghana Frozen Fisheries

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ABSTRACT

This study takes a deeper dive into trust as a catalyst for ESG by discussing relevant topics, concepts, and theories on how trust acts as a catalyst to the adoption of social, environmental and governance in supply chain operations of frozen fisheries firms in Ghana. The conclusions in the study are based on primary research which employed a quantitative research method. Data were gathered from 328 operators and staff of fifteen frozen fisheries businesses who were randomly selected in Tema in the Greater Accra region through a five-point Likert scale questionnaire. Environmentally sustainable practices implemented at the firms included responsible waste management practices, water and energy efficiency. Social aspects of supply chain practices included the donation of frozen foods to orphanages and small-scale CSR projects. Despite moderate integration of these supply chain practices, trust significantly influences the integration of social, environmental, and responsible governance in the supply chain practices of frozen fisheries firms.

INTRODUCTION

The integration of environmental values and social responsibilities in the management framework of organizations is increasingly becoming successful across the globe since many organizations have seen the need to ensure that their business operations create little or no negative implications on the socio-economic and physical environment. The increasing pressure from government, non-governmental organisations, and pressure groups for transparency and accountability has compelled firms across various industries to implement responsible business operations in various business management functions such as supply chain management. Adoption and implementation of socially and environmentally oriented sustainable business practices do not

only improve business performance but also resonate the level of commitment that firms show in creating sustainable benefits to stakeholders. The integration of sustainability into business practices helps the organization to gain a competitive advantage since consumers and pressure groups tend to favour firms that adhere to the concept of sustainability and social responsibility. The consuming public is increasingly becoming aware of the negative ramifications of carbon emission, which result in climate change and global warming, waste and pollution across industries, environmental degradation as a result of business operations, etc. Awareness of these contemporary social and environmental issues has triggered the need for firms to adopt sustainable supply chain operations that address these global concerns. Despite these narratives, literature in Ghana has not captured how trust facilitates the integration of ESG practices into the supply chain management framework of firms within the fisheries industry. This study, therefore, delves into how trust accelerates environmental, social, and governance integration of supply chain management operations by relying on primary research from the frozen fisheries sector in Ghana. The study addresses three objectives, which include;

1. Assessing Environmentally Sustainable Supply Chain Operations of Frozen Fisheries Firms
2. Investigating Socially-Oriented Sustainable Supply Chain Operations of Frozen Fisheries Firms
3. Examine Trust as a Catalyst to Social and Environmental Governance in SCM

The study which is based on primary research is structured into seven sections which include, introduction which highlights the background information and research gap, literature review which underscore discussions on current literatures on the thematic focus of the study, methodology which underpins appropriate methods and data applied in the study, results, discussions, conclusions and limitations as well as directions for future studies.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This section of the study reviews relevant concepts and topics based on the recent literature.

2.1 Sustainability

The term sustainability, which is considered one of the core concepts of sustainable development, emerged in the 1970s as a responsive measure to address the overutilization of resources. Imperatively, the human population has increased by 20% over the last three decades, yet resources to sustain the human race keep declining (Thiele, 2024). This explains why the concept of sustainability has become one of the key issues that have gained global attention in the last three decades. The concept of sustainability is concerned with development that ensures that the current generation satisfies their socio-economic needs with available resources without jeopardizing the future generation's ability to satisfy their own socio-economic needs with the same available resources. Authors, students, researchers, and industry players have over, the past decades, given considerable attention to the impact of business operations on the socio-economic and physical environment. The concept of sustainability has been put into the context of business discussion in several academic works. While businesses focus on wealth and profit maximization, attention has shifted over the past two decades to the subject of sustainable development. The concept of sustainable development tries to explain the strategic efforts made by firms and organizations to create value for its current and future shareholders and stakeholders through responsible business operations and responsible resource exploitation. The key element with the concept of sustainability is the synergy between the organization and its stakeholders, which include, employees, suppliers, customers, the public, government, among others. Pascual et al. (2023) suggest that the facets of sustainability that are often applied in the context of the industrial world are of four major dimensions. Their study outlines them to be responsible for business development, corporate social responsibility, sustainable procurement, corporate governance and transparency. From the shareholders' point of view, while the managers of the firm are mandated to maximize profit and wealth, they are also tasked by the shareholders to create a friendly relationship between the business and its stakeholders by embarking on corporate social responsibility projects (Hristov & Searcy, 2025).

2.3 Corporate Social Responsibility

The concept of corporate social responsibility has, over the decades, been categorized and defined from different perspectives. These variations often emanate from the academia, industry, business analysts among others. In the views Ashurov et al. (2024), the distinction that arrive in the definition of corporate social responsibility lie

in how it is applied by industry players and how it is applied in various academic fields. For example, Ashurov et al. (2024) suggests that, some academic fields and industry refer to the concept of corporate social responsibility as corporate duty, corporate citizenship, triple-primary concern, social undertaking, corporate morals among others. Pouresmaeli et al., (2024) contends that CSR may bring about companies getting an all the more remarkable situation inside society. She proposes that it is unconventional to anticipate that enterprises should acknowledge more noteworthy social obligations without requiring something consequently in return. In tolerating obligations, enterprises would bring about expenses and consequently they would guarantee rights. Others contend that CSR is just a window-dressing, or an endeavor to acquire the job of government as a guard dog over incredible worldwide enterprise. Garcia-Rivas et al. (2023) regard corporate social responsibility one of the key components of business strategy in contemporary times that explains the organization's commitment to adherence to rules and regulation as well as ethical standards or business operations. The inspiration of the organization to undertake corporate social responsibility initiatives is often determined by whether the organization is bent on making philanthropic impact on customers and the general public or by the mere fact of adhering to ethical standards of business operations.

2.4 Supply Chain Management Operations

Hugos (2024) suggest that, every firm produces goods and services or consumes goods and services hence the subject of supply chain management cannot be downplayed in the firm's set-up. Esan et al. (2024) described supply chain management the organization's business function that create a viable and efficient channel for obtaining or acquiring logistics, information, products and services through an end-to-end system. Supply chain management focuses on feeding the firms productive departments with information and logistics as well as getting the finished goods and services delivered to customers. Figure 1 has been used to describe the primary function of supply chain management.

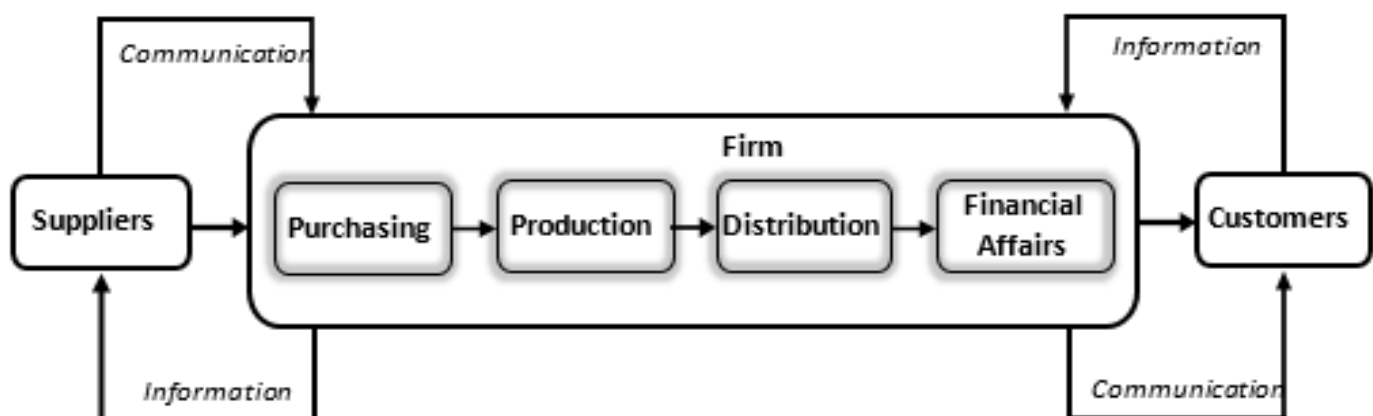


Figure 1: Primary Activities of Supply Chain Management Operations: Source: (Bratic, 2011).

Purchasing activities include acquiring information, goods, services, and logistics to begin or enhance production within the organization. In the view of Kumar et al. (2023), the entire function of supply chain management becomes nullified if the task of purchasing fails. Lofti et al. (2023) therefore describe the task of purchasing as the most important facet of supply chain management. Storey et al., (2006) also add that purchasing triggers the entire supply chain systems, hence they also regard purchasing as an important element in supply chain management. According to Bratic (2011), logistics and supply chain departments interrelate with the production unit to ensure that quality products and services are supplied to the consumer through an efficient distribution channel. Distribution, as a primary function of supply chain management, as illustrated in Figure 1, explains the process of delivering the finished goods and services to the consumer either through a direct delivery mechanism or through third party agents (Esan et al., 2024). The task of distribution is made up of transportation, stores and warehousing of finished goods. According to Esan et al. (2024), the task of distribution can also assist the organization to minimize cost if effective and timely mechanisms are deployed to enhance the delivery of services to the end-users. The financial affairs facet of supply chain management has, over the years, gained

attention since it allows the organization to assess its true profitability and viability. Bratic (2011) describes this function as the assessment of the input cost against the output cost in the supply chain system. The focus of this function is to ensure that all supply chain activities of the organization are converted to create sustainable monetary value for the organization.

2.5 Dimensions of Sustainable Supply Chain Practices

Sustainable supply chain management fuses the concept of environmental management and corporate social responsibility into conventional supply chain management in order to minimize the negative impacts of their activities on the social and physical environment. Esan et al. (2024) defined sustainable supply chain management as the strategic incorporation and achievement of a firm's social, environmental and economic goals in the systematic coordination of key inter-organizational business process that seeks to improve the long-term performance implications of the traditional supply chain scheme of the firm.

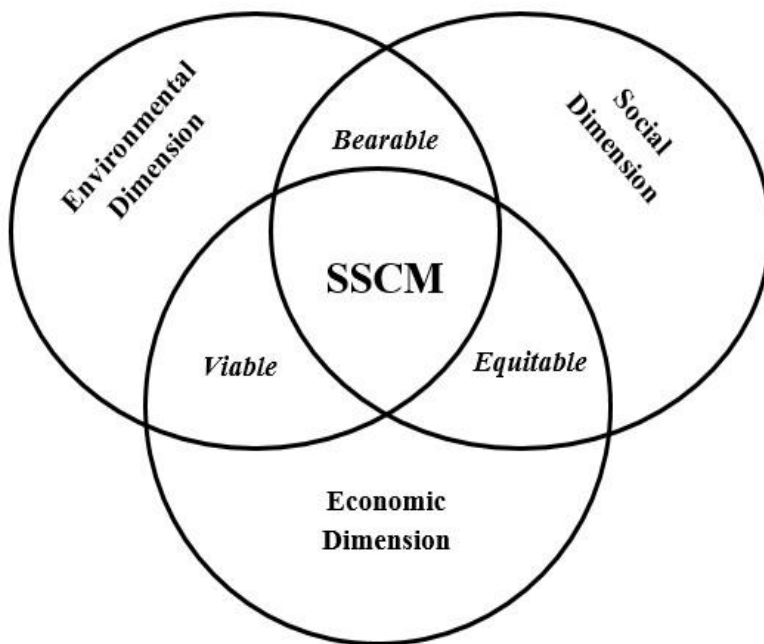


Figure 2: Conceptualization of SSCM

Source: Carter and Rogers (2008)

The interrelation of the environmental, social and environmental components of this conceptualization depicts the entirety of the meaning of sustainable supply chain management. According to Carter and Rogers (2008), sustainable supply chain management seeks to pursue environmental and social related activities with supply chain giving consideration to the overall strategic objectives of the firm (Eggert & Hartmann, 2023). From figure 3, it can be seen that the intersection of social and environmental dimensions of the concept is depicted as bearable which lays no emphasis on the economic component. Esan et al. (2024) opine that, it is very easy for manufacturing organizations to save energy if they embark on the procurement of energy saving electronic installations. The economic dimension comes into play when the organization intend to create economic values for shareholders and stakeholders by minimizing environmental cost of production.

2.7 Environmental and Social Governance

Environmental and social governance in contemporary business operations has become very paramount, considering the increasing rate of negative impacts of businesses on the environment and socio-cultural values of communities (Yan et al., 2024). The concept resonates the framework for highlighting the non-profit performance of firms in terms of social and environmental value creation for stakeholders (Truant et al., 2024). It thus focuses on environmental impacts and corporate social responsibility initiatives which inherently showcase firms' commitment to the UN- Sustainable Development Goals. The environmental facet of the concepts addresses sustainability issues such as waste and pollution reduction, energy and resource efficiency,

climate change, resource management and others (Igwe et al., 2024). The social facet of the concept also addresses issues on labour practices, corporate social responsibility, community relations, employee diversity, fairness and inclusion (Li & Liu, 2023). Ultimately, governance addresses on disclosures, transparency and accountability. This section primarily discusses relevant topics such as trust in environmental and social governance, and sustainability reporting and disclosures

2.8 Trust for Environmental and Social Governance

Trust is one of the morally driven principles that influences environmental and social governance in developing countries, where CSR and environmental sustainability practices lack strong legal frameworks (Bodin et al., 2020). Trust is a social responsibility that highlights the moral and ethical commitment that firms across the frozen fisheries sector in Ghana demonstrate towards creating socially oriented values for employees, people, and the larger community. Authors such as Saeed and Riaz (2021) have stressed that, firms may have CSR policies; nonetheless, financial commitment towards actualizing the policies is driven by the moral and ethical principles that underline the policies. In general, firms can demonstrate higher level of trust, commitment, moral and ethical standards towards implementation of CSR initiatives when code of ethics are strongly imbibed in the strategic direction of the firm. Promoting ethical behaviour based on principles and standards are therefore eminent trust elements that drive social and environmental governance in the frozen fisheries sector in Ghana. Shahab et al. (2023) stressed that, good ethical standing and dealing facilitate moral business operations which in turn create sustainable values for stakeholders. Creation of ethical principles based on trust and commitment also serve as guiding principles which inform firms about unethical dealings in their supply chain systems. Firms can institutionalize the framework of ethical business operations and decision making which consciously translate into creating the basis for social and environmental governance across supply chain operations. Stupak et al. (2021) stressed that, creation of corporate social responsibility and environmental values go beyond operating within legal frameworks and obligations, underscoring the need to embrace ethically guided business principles based on trust and commitment for societal welfare.

2.9 Theoretical Framework

2.9.1 Stakeholder's Theory

Stakeholders' theory which was originally developed by Freeman Edward in 1984 has been used in several socially-oriented studies across the globe. According to Freeman (1984), stakeholders who share much interest in the operations of corporate entities are regarded as key pressure groups that compel firms to align their business functions such as supply chain management to the facets of sustainability through to investment in CSR initiatives and generation of environmental values. According to Mahajan et al. (2023) stakeholders such as customers develop some level of brand attachment when company invest in CSR project as part of giving back to society. Moreover, communities within which companies operate expect the later to invest in projects that provide benefits to their livelihoods and living conditions. In essence, the stakeholder theory highlights the significance of conducting business operations that provide broad spectrum benefits to communities. The scope of environmentally friendly operations and CSR implementation has evolved over the years. Companies have become more conscious of implementing social and environmentally driven business practices from a more inclusion point of view (Fontaine et al., 2025). Thus, companies are increasingly becoming customer-centric in the implementation of their CSR and environmental value creation projects. This because customers have become generally aware of the need for companies to implement their business operating models within responsible frameworks (Mahajan et al., 2023). The general assumption here is that, consumers and other stakeholders show higher level of trust in firms that align their supply chain operations to the social and environmental pillars of sustainability.

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Philosophy

Positivism was used as the philosophical foundation of the study. This paradigm was used because it offered an objective and scientific foundation to examining the role of trust as a catalyst for environmental, social and

governance integration in sustainable supply chain management practices. Thus, the ontology of this paradigm enabled the study to arrive at findings that were based on truth devoid of subjective views and opinions. This helped the study to generate findings that were conclusive and empirically verifiable (Risjord, 2022).

3.2 Research Design

The study was based on quantitative research design. This design was selected to anchor the chosen research paradigm. Thus, quantitative research design enabled the study to gather and analyses numeric data through survey questionnaire which helped in testing the association between trust and social, environmental and governance integration in sustainable supply chain management practices through linear regression analysis.

3.3 Population

The population of this study included operators/owners, managers and staff of frozen fisheries firms in the Tema Fishing Harbour in the Greater Accra region of Ghana. These respondents were chosen because they could offer relevant insight on sustainable supply chain management practices across the three-dimensional constructs (environmental, social and government) of sustainable business practices.

3.4 Sample and Sampling Technique

The sample size for this study was scientifically determined through the Cochran's formular which is mostly used when the size of the target population is unknown. The formular is expressed as:

$$n_0 = \frac{Z^2 pq}{e^2}$$

Description of variables

n_0 is considered as the actual size of the population which is appropriate for the study. This must be representative to help the study reach a conclusion.

z is also considered as the confidence level for estimation of the sample size which is set at 95% with a margin of error is 5%.

p is considered as the portion of the population present at the time of the data collection.

q is considered as the margin of error at which the sample size is determine. In this case, the margin of error is 5% since the confidence level is 95%.

The sample size is therefore determined as follows:

$$n_0 = \frac{(1.96)^2 (0.5 \times 0.5)}{(0.05)^2} = 384.16 \approx 384$$

$$\therefore n_0 = 384$$

Three hundred and eight four (384) respondents were expected to participate in the data collection. However, 328 questionnaires retrieved from the field met the validity and reliability test for analysis.

The study was based on the positivist and quantitative paradigms; hence it was appropriate and justifiable to adopt a scientific/probability sampling technique. In this case, the simple random technique was used to select the 384 respondents. This technique was used because it aided the study to avoid selection basis by way of giving each of the participants an equal chance of selection or being part of the study as recommended by Chaokromthong and Sinto (2021).

3.5 Data collection and Instrumentation

The study intended to examine the statistical effect of trust on environmental, social and governance sustainable supply chain practices. Hence it became plausible to utilise an instrument allowed to gathering of numeric data that would fit the adopted statistical models (descriptive statistics and linear regression). The survey tool was structure in four parts. The first part had questions on demographic features of respondents. The second section had questions on environmental sustainability supply chain practices. The questions on environmental sustainability supply chain practices were adapted from the 7-validated measurement scale of Saeed and Riaz (2021). Section three contained questions and responses on social sustainability supply chain practices adapted from the 6-validated measurement scale of Hristov and Searcy (2025). Section four contained questions and responses on the influence of trust which were adapted from the 7-item validated measurement scale of Bodin et al. (2020). Section two to four were developed in a Likert scale format where; 1= strongly agree and 5= strongly disagree.

3.6 Validity and Reliability

Two techniques were applied to test the internal consistency of the data collection instrument. Firstly, the instrument was piloted among 10% of the population. This was done to ascertain errors and ambiguities in the data collection instrument which had potentials to cause inconsistent reporting and missing values in the returned questionnaires. A Cronbach Alpha analysis was done in through SPSS to check the internal validity and reliability for each of the items used to measure the three research objectives. Indeed, the observation in Table 1 suggested that, all the questions on the questionnaire on each of the objectives had adequate consistency based on the direction of responses. Thus, none of the responses had less than 0.7 CA.

3.7 Data Analysis

The Statistical Package for Social Sciences was used as the analytical software for the study. The data entry and cleaning were done in this software as the initial step of the data analysis. The cleaning in particular was done to remove questionnaires that were not properly administered since they could affect the statistical models (linear regression and descriptive statistics) used for the study. For the statistical reliability test, the study adopted the Cronbach Alpha analysis which helped in removing responses that were not loading prospering. Thus, responses that had less than 0.5 loading factor been ignored since they could reduce the internal consistency of the data for the regression. Mean and standard deviation were also used to determine the central tendencies of the responses across the Likert scale. The linear regression was performed at 95% confidence interval to determine the statistical effect of trust on governance, environmental and social sustainable supply chain management practices.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

Issues bordering academic research ethics were taken seriously in this study. It is worth noting that, was not based on any experiment or clinical trials hence, ethical clearance and approval were not needed. Again, the issues under investigation were not strictly confidential since they did not boarder on health, hence an informed consent was not issued. Regardless of these exemptions, the study maintained high level of confidentiality, privacy and academic trust. For instance, names of the respondents were not included in the data analysis as part of the study's quest to maintain high confidential of respondents' identities. In terms of trust and academic integrity, the study's findings are the actual representations of the efforts of the researchers. Thus, no artificial intelligence-assisted writings were used in the study. Lastly, all materials that were borrowed for literature review have been cited both in-text and bibliography list.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Reliability and Validity

Cronbach Alpha analysis was used to test the internal reliability and validity of the items which were used to measure the constructs of the study. The results in Table 1 shows that, all the items which were used to measure

the constructs passed the reliability and valid test since their corresponding Cronbach Alpha values are greater than the required 0.7 (Saunders et al., 2009). For example, the observed CA. value of 0.889 indicate that all the items which were used to measure environmental sustainability supply chain management practices were valid and reliable. Again, the observed CA values of 0.837 and 0.831 suggest that all the items which were used to measure social sustainability supply chain management practices and the influence of trust on implementation of both environmental and social sustainability practices had adequate validity and reliability scores for analysis.

Table 1: Cronbach Alpha Test

Construct	No. of items	Cronbach Alpha	Interpretation
Environmental sustainability SCMO	7	0.809	Good
Social sustainability SCMO	6	0.837	Good
Influence of trust	7	0.831	Good

Source (Field Survey, 2025)

4.2 Descriptive Statistics

The preliminary analyses examined sustainable supply chain management practices which are implemented across selected frozen fisheries firms in Tema. In this section, operators/firm owners and staff were asked on the questionnaire to rank their level of agreement to on whether various environmentally and social sustainable practices are implemented in the supply chain management practices of their firms. The ranking of the statements was done on a Five-Point Likert Scale (1=Strongly disagree 2=Disagree 3=Neutral 4= Agree 5= Strongly agree). Table 2 presents the descriptive statistics based on the highest to the lowest variables in terms of mean and standard deviation.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics

Statements	Mean	SD
Environmental SSCMO		
Eco-friendly solid waste disposal (e.g.; debris of fish cartons)	4.2043	.42590
Collaboration with waste management companies (e.g.; Zoom Lion Ghana)	4.3262	.70406
Water efficiency	4.5762	.51904
Waste segregation	4.5396	.56796
Reuse of supposedly waste materials.	1.4207	.49443
Utilization of low carbon emission transport system	1.4665	.49964
Recycling of waste	1.5671	.49624
Social SSCMO		
Compliance to human right	4.4970	.54743
Compliance to child labour laws	4.1951	.46764

Gender fairness in sourcing	4.4909	.55293
Ethical sourcing and distribution	4.4756	.55246
Donation of fishery products to orphanages	3.1037	.49609
Corporate social responsibility projects	3.1128	.49098
Trust		
The firm has higher commitment towards sustainable supply chain management	4.4817	.54714
The firm has strong concerns to generate benefits for stakeholders	4.4756	.55797
The firm is ethically aware of its sustainable supply chain operations	4.4695	.57388
There is a conscious sustainability policy that captures sustainable supply chain operations	4.2927	.48179
Directors ensure that staff align to the sustainable supply chain goals of the firm	3.9116	.55970
The firm ensures credibility in disclosing sustainability practices and outcomes	4.4817	.55820
The firm is very open to criticism on its sustainable supply chain operations.	4.4909	.55293

The mean score of 4.20 (SD = 0.42) gives the indication that, majority of the respondent agreed that their respective firms consider responsible and eco-friendly waste disposal as part of their environmentally sustainable SCM practices. It is important to note that, waste (water, cartons, etc.) are very common within the supply chain system of fisheries firms. Neglect of waste cause environmental pollution that disrupt the ecology and also present health dangers and risks to people and animals (Nurmi, 2017). This explains why frozen fisheries that were engaged in the study integrated measures to ensure that wastes are cleared through responsible means. This translates into why majority of the respondents (mean 4.32: SD = 0.70) agreed that, their respective firms have strategic partnership with waste management companies such as Zoom Lion Ghana to execute their waste disposal in a more environmentally friendly manner. It is imperative to note that, the inclusion of waste management companies in the supply and value chain of construction ultimately lead to responsible waste disposal since these companies have integrated approaches the align with the 3Rs (Recycle, Reduce and Reuse) of the UN-Environmental Sustainability Framework (Kumar et al., 2023). For example, Zoom Lion has strategic partnership with various recycling firms in Ghana that ensure that waste from the frozen fisheries sector as well as other sectors of the economy are recycled into useful end-products such as compost, plastic among others.

Water is increasingly becoming one of the scares and pressure resources on the earth. Demand for fresh water keeps increasing because population of countries also keeps increasingly. The unfortunate development is that, there is a mismatch between fresh water supply and demand. Several irresponsible business practices such as illegal mining, over exploitation of water resources among others have reduced the supply of fresh water (Lofti et al., 2023). This explains why majority (mean = 4.57: SD = 0.51) of the respondents strongly agreed that, their respective firms integrate water efficiency as part of their environmentally sustainable supply chain practices to reduce their reliance on fresh water. Strategies which are used to achieve this objective per the findings of the study include ratio and proportion which is used to match water demands of the fisheries sector.

The mean scores of 1.42 (SD =0.49), 1.46 (SD =0.49) and 1.56 (SD = 0.49) imply that majority of the respondents strongly disagreed that their respective firms consider reuse of supposedly waste materials, utilization of low carbon emission transport system and recycling of waste products as part of their environmentally sustainable project management practices. The narrative above gives a clear indication that, the carbon emission performance of frozen fisheries firms in Ghana is relatively low. Apart from construction

companies creating forward linkage with waste management companies to accelerate recycling, the study can suggest per the findings that, performance of construction in issues such as recycling and re-use of first line waste is very low.

The results of the study as depicted in Table 2 indicate that, compliance to human right ($M=4.49$) was the most socially-oriented sustainability SCM practice which was implemented across the selected firms for the primary research. Compliance to child labour laws ($M=4.19$), gender fairness in sourcing ($M=4.49$) and ethical sourcing and distribution ($M=4.27$) were the 2nd, 3rd and 4th ranked socially oriented sustainability SCM practices which were implemented across the firms. Donation to orphanages and corporate social responsibility projects were moderately implemented across the firms based on the observed means of 3.10 and 3.11 respectively.

Trust is highlighted in the stakeholder's theory as one of the key elements that drive the implementation of social and environmental governance in countries that have weak legal frameworks toward the implementation of sustainability practices in the business facet of supply chain operations. The results demonstrated in Table 2 the sampled firms have higher commitment towards sustainable supply chain operations from the social and environmental governance perspectives. The results further show that the firms have concerns to generate environmentally and socially-oriented benefits for all stakeholders including communities. Moreover, the results demonstrate that the firms have ethical awareness and policies towards environmental and social sustainable operations which ultimately show their level of trust towards the global sustainability calls on environment and corporate social responsibility. In exhibiting higher trust, the respondents affirmed that, the directors (primarily) owners of their firms ensure that, staff at all levels align to the social and environmental sustainability goals of their firms. Moreover, the findings showed that firms show higher level of credibility to sustainability disclosures while maintaining openness to criticism on sustainable supply chain operations.

4.3 Regression Analysis 1: Trust as a Catalyst for Environmental Sustainability SCMO

The study performed a linear regression analysis at 95% confidence interval to determine the statistical effect of trust on the implementation of environmental sustainability supply chain management operations across the selected firms. The ordinal data were for environmental sustainability supply chain practices and trust were transformed where the means for each of the items for the two variables were determined to facilitate the regression model. Table 3, 4 and 5 show the model summary, ANOVA and regression coefficient respectively.

Table 3: Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.618 ^a	.381	.380	.18540
a. Predictors: (Constant) Trust				

Per the observed correlation coefficient (R) value of 0.618. it can be said that, the independent variable (trust) had moderate positive association with the dependent variable. The observed R-Square value of .381 suggests that, the independent variable (trust) could predict at least 38.1% change implementation of environmental sustainability supply chain management practices.

Table 4: ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	6.911	1	6.911	201.054	.000 ^b
	Residual	11.205	326	.034		
	Total	18.116	327			

a. Dependent Variable: Environmental sustainability supply chain management practices

b. Predictors: (Constant), Trust

The output in Table 4 shows that, the overall regression model had a good fit for the data. It therefore implies that trust had a statistically significant predictive power on implementation of environmental sustainability supply chain management practices with $p < .000$.

Table 5: Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.512	.116		12.988	.000
	Trust	.376	.027	.618	14.179	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Environmental sustainability supply chain management practices

The results in Table 5 shows that trust had a statistically significant positive influence on implementation of environmental sustainability supply chain management practices with ($\beta = 0.376$; $p < .000$). The observed β value of 0.376 shows that a unit increase in trust caused at least 0.375 increase in implementation of environmental sustainability supply chain management practices across the selected firms.

4.4 Regression Analysis 2: Trust as a Catalyst for Social Sustainability SCMO

The study further performed another linear regression analysis at 95% confidence interval to determine the statistical effect of trust on the implementation of social sustainability supply chain management operations across the selected firms. Again, the ordinal data were for social sustainability supply chain practices and trust were transformed where the means for each of the items for the two variables were determined to facilitate the regression model. Table 6, 7 and 8 show the model summary, ANOVA and regression coefficient respectively.

Table 6: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.817 ^a	.668	.667	.18168

a. Predictors: (Constant), Trust

The correlation coefficient (R) value of 0.817 shows a strong positive association between trust and implementation of social sustainability supply chain management practices across the selected firms it can the R-Square value of .667 suggests that, the independent variable (trust) predicted at least 66.7% change in the implementation of social sustainability supply chain management practices.

Table 7: ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	21.625	1	21.625	655.156	.000 ^b
	Residual	10.760	326	.033		

	Total	32.385	327			
a. Dependent Variable: Social sustainability supply chain management practices						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Trust						

Results in Table 7 shows that, the overall regression model had a good fit for the data. It therefore implies that trust had a statistically significant predictive effect on implementation of social sustainability supply chain management practices at $p < .000$.

Table 8: Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.070	.114		9.373	.000
	Trust	.666	.026	.817	25.596	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Social sustainability supply chain management practices						

Observations in Table 8 shows that trust had a statistically significant positive effect on implementation of social sustainable supply chain management practices with ($\beta = 0.376$; $p < .000$). The β value of 0.666 shows that a unit increase in trust caused at least 0.666 increase in implementation of social sustainability supply chain management practices across the selected firms.

From the finding of the regression analyses, it can be concluded that, trust has key influence on how firms align their supply chain operations to social and environmental governance. Shahab et al. (2023) explained that, in as much legal framework compels firms in the frozen fisheries sector to implement some sustainability inclined measures in their supply chain operations, concepts such as CSR is driven by higher moral and ethical standards of firms. From the theoretical assumptions of the stakeholder's theory, it can be argued that, both internal and external CSR investments are triggered level of trust which translate into commitment, loyalty and sacrifice for such investment. According to Saeed and Riaz (2021), it takes highly committed firms to align their values and interest to environmentally and socially-oriented supply chain practices that support the global goals on sustainable development. The argument of Saeed and Riaz (2021) is that, corporate social responsibility is expensive hence firms with lower trust in the pillars of the concepts tend to demonstrate lower commitment in creating environmental and social values for stakeholders.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This study has thoroughly discussed several topics, themes and sub themes that center on trust as a catalyst for social and environmental governance in supply chain operations in the frozen fisheries sector in Ghana. The study has also presented the findings on primary research which was conducted to buttress existing literatures on the major topic in this study. The study has demonstrated that, the global call for social and environmental governance in the frozen fisheries sector is gaining momentum. Thus, firms in sub-Sahara Africa are making conscious efforts to align their supply chain operations to social and environmental facets of sustainable development which highlights the need to create socially and environmentally oriented values for people and communities. The primary research has demonstrated that, frozen fisheries firms in Ghana are implementing environmentally friendly practices such as responsible waste management, collaboration with waste management firms, waste segregation, etc. as part of efforts to align their supply chain operations to the environmental facets of sustainable development. The primary research also demonstrated that, firms within the frozen fisheries sector in Ghana are committed to creating socially oriented supply chain values such as CSR,

donation of fisheries products to orphanages, fair and gender inclusive sourcing and distribution, ethical sourcing, compliance to human rights and child labour laws. Regardless of these narratives, the primary research demonstrated that, trust is very essential in the adoption of environmental and social governance in the supply chain operations of frozen fisheries sector in Ghana.

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