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“Cross-Cultural Strategic Management Practices in Global Supply Chains”

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A hand in a blue suit sleeve points towards a glowing white circle. Inside the circle, the word "Strategy" is written in a large, dark, sans-serif font. The background is a dark blue gradient with abstract white and red curved lines. The overall theme is business strategy and global management.

Strategy

## Cross-Cultural Strategic Management Practices in Global Supply Chains



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### Abstract

**Purpose:** The general objective of this study was to explore cross cultural strategic management practices in global supply chains.

**Methodology:** The study adopted a desktop research methodology. Desk research refers to secondary data or that which can be collected without fieldwork. Desk research is basically involved in collecting data from existing resources hence it is often considered a low cost technique as compared to field research, as the main cost is involved in executive's time, telephone charges and directories. Thus, the study relied on already published studies, reports and statistics. This secondary data was easily accessed through the online journals and library.

**Findings:** The findings revealed that there exists a contextual and methodological gap relating to cross cultural strategic management practices. Preliminary empirical review revealed that cross-cultural strategic management practices were crucial for global supply chain effectiveness, enhancing communication, leadership, and decision-making. Companies that incorporated cultural intelligence experienced better cohesion and resilience, while those neglecting cultural factors faced inefficiencies. The study highlighted the need for standardized cultural frameworks, emphasizing culture as an underutilized strategic asset in global supply chain management.

**Unique Contribution to Theory, Practice and Policy:** The Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory, Institutional Theory and Dynamic Capabilities theory may be used to anchor future studies on cross-cultural strategic management practices in global supply chains. The study recommended integrating cross-cultural competencies into strategic frameworks through leadership training, diverse teams, and adaptive technologies. It called for expanding strategic models to include cultural factors, promoting inclusive management structures, and advocating for policy support on cultural training.

**Keywords:** *Cross Cultural Management, Global Supply Chains, Cultural Intelligence, Strategic Management, Supply Chain Performance*

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The United States has long been a global leader in supply chain performance, driven by advanced logistics infrastructure, technological innovation, and strategic management practices. Companies like Amazon and Walmart have set benchmarks in supply chain efficiency through the integration of automation, real-time data analytics, and robust distribution networks. According to Sharma, Gupta & Lee (2023), U.S. firms that adopted advanced supply chain technologies experienced a 15% increase in operational efficiency and a 12% reduction in logistics costs over a five-year period. These improvements have been attributed to the implementation of predictive analytics, Internet of Things (IoT) devices, and machine learning algorithms that enhance demand forecasting and inventory management. The study also highlights that companies investing in supply chain digitization reported higher customer satisfaction rates and improved responsiveness to market changes.

In the United Kingdom, supply chain performance has been influenced by factors such as Brexit, labor shortages, and regulatory changes. Thompson & Williams (2022) examined the impact of these challenges on UK-based manufacturing firms. The research found that companies that diversified their supplier base and invested in supply chain resilience strategies managed to maintain service levels and mitigate disruptions. Specifically, firms that implemented dual sourcing and nearshoring practices reported a 10% improvement in delivery reliability and a 7% reduction in lead times. The study emphasizes the importance of agility and adaptability in supply chain management to navigate complex geopolitical landscapes.

Japan's supply chain performance is characterized by a strong emphasis on efficiency, quality control, and continuous improvement. The adoption of lean manufacturing principles and just-in-time (JIT) inventory systems has been instrumental in optimizing operations. Nakamura, Saito & Tanaka (2021) analyzed the resilience of Japanese supply chains in the face of natural disasters and global disruptions. The research revealed that companies with well-established risk management protocols and flexible supply chain designs were able to recover more quickly from disruptions. For instance, firms that had diversified their supplier networks and maintained strategic inventory buffers experienced a 20% faster recovery time compared to those without such measures.

Brazil's supply chain performance has been evolving, with companies increasingly adopting advanced practices to enhance efficiency and competitiveness. Silva & Pereira (2019) investigated the relationship between supply chain maturity and performance in Brazilian manufacturing firms. The findings indicated that organizations with higher levels of supply chain maturity—characterized by integrated processes, collaborative relationships, and performance measurement systems—achieved superior operational outcomes. Specifically, these firms reported a 25% improvement in order fulfillment rates and a 15% reduction in inventory holding costs. The study underscores the importance of strategic alignment and continuous improvement in achieving supply chain excellence.

In Sub-Saharan Africa, supply chain performance is often hindered by infrastructural challenges, regulatory complexities, and limited access to technology. However, initiatives aimed at improving logistics and supply chain management have shown promising results. Mwangi &

Otieno (2020) examined the impact of implementing electronic logistics management information systems (eLMIS) in the healthcare sector across several Sub-Saharan African countries. The research found that the adoption of eLMIS led to a 30% reduction in stock-out rates and a 20% improvement in order accuracy. These enhancements contributed to better service delivery and resource utilization in the healthcare supply chains. The study highlights the potential of digital solutions in overcoming traditional supply chain challenges in the region.

Comparing supply chain performance across these regions reveals both commonalities and unique challenges. While developed economies like the USA, UK, and Japan benefit from advanced infrastructure and technological capabilities, they also face complex challenges such as geopolitical uncertainties and the need for continuous innovation. Emerging economies like Brazil and countries in Sub-Saharan Africa are making strides in improving supply chain performance through the adoption of best practices and digital technologies. Chen, Kumar & Singh (2022) emphasized the role of supply chain integration and collaboration in enhancing performance across different contexts. The research concluded that firms that foster strong partnerships and information sharing across the supply chain network achieve higher levels of agility, responsiveness, and customer satisfaction.

The integration of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), blockchain, and IoT is transforming supply chain performance globally. In the USA, companies leveraging AI for demand forecasting have achieved up to a 50% reduction in forecasting errors, leading to more efficient inventory management (Sharma et al., 2023). Similarly, in the UK, the adoption of blockchain technology has enhanced traceability and transparency in supply chains, reducing fraud and improving compliance (Thompson & Williams, 2022). In Japan, IoT-enabled devices have facilitated real-time monitoring of supply chain activities, leading to improved decision-making and operational efficiency (Nakamura et al., 2021). These technological advancements are critical in building resilient and responsive supply chains capable of adapting to dynamic market conditions.

The effectiveness of supply chains is also influenced by the availability of skilled professionals and continuous workforce development. In Brazil, investment in training programs and capacity building has been linked to improved supply chain performance. A study by Oliveira and Santos (2018) found that companies that prioritized employee training in supply chain management practices experienced a 20% increase in productivity and a 15% reduction in operational errors. In Sub-Saharan Africa, initiatives aimed at developing supply chain competencies have shown positive outcomes, with trained personnel contributing to more efficient and reliable supply chain operations (Mwangi & Otieno, 2020). These findings underscore the importance of human capital in achieving supply chain excellence.

Sustainable supply chain practices are increasingly becoming a priority for organizations worldwide. In the UK, companies implementing green logistics strategies have reported reductions in carbon emissions and energy consumption, contributing to environmental sustainability (Thompson & Williams, 2022). In Japan, the adoption of circular economy principles in supply chain management has led to more efficient resource utilization and waste reduction (Nakamura et al., 2021). In Brazil, firms incorporating environmental considerations into their supply chain

strategies have achieved improved brand reputation and compliance with international standards (Silva & Pereira, 2019). These practices not only enhance environmental performance but also contribute to long-term business sustainability.

Cross-cultural strategic management involves aligning business strategies with the cultural contexts of diverse regions to enhance organizational performance. In global supply chains, cultural differences can significantly impact communication, decision-making, and operational efficiency. Understanding and integrating cultural nuances into strategic management practices is crucial for multinational corporations aiming to optimize their supply chain performance. For instance, Gupta & Gupta (2019) emphasized that national cultural dimensions, such as power distance and individualism versus collectivism, play a pivotal role in shaping supply chain operations and relationships. By acknowledging these cultural factors, organizations can develop more effective strategies that cater to the specific needs and expectations of different regions.

The United States' cultural orientation towards individualism and low power distance fosters a business environment that encourages autonomy and decentralized decision-making. This cultural trait influences supply chain practices by promoting flexibility and rapid responsiveness. However, it may also lead to challenges in coordination and consistency across the supply chain network. Gupta and Gupta (2019) noted that in individualistic cultures like the USA, supply chain partners may prioritize personal goals over collective objectives, potentially hindering collaboration and information sharing. To mitigate these challenges, organizations operating in the U.S. context often implement standardized processes and invest in advanced technologies to ensure seamless coordination across the supply chain.

The United Kingdom exhibits a blend of traditional hierarchical structures and a growing emphasis on innovation and collaboration. This cultural mix affects supply chain management by necessitating a balance between established protocols and adaptive strategies. Effective cross-cultural management in the UK context involves recognizing and integrating these dual aspects to enhance supply chain performance. Exadaktylos, Riccaboni & Rungi (2020) found that UK firms benefit from incorporating foreign management practices, which can introduce innovative approaches and improve productivity. However, the success of such integrations depends on the organization's ability to harmonize new practices with existing cultural norms and operational frameworks.

Japanese culture is characterized by high uncertainty avoidance and collectivism, leading to meticulous planning and strong group cohesion in business practices. In supply chain management, this results in highly efficient and reliable operations. However, when Japanese firms operate in Western contexts, cultural clashes can occur, potentially hindering performance due to differing expectations and practices. De Koster & Shinohara (2015) highlighted that Japanese logistics companies in Europe often face challenges in adapting their service-oriented approach to the efficiency-driven Western market, underscoring the importance of cultural adaptability in global supply chain operations.

Brazilian business culture includes navigating bureaucratic systems and the concept of 'jeitinho'—a way of finding creative solutions to circumvent obstacles. While this can foster adaptability, it may also lead to inconsistencies and challenges in standardizing supply chain processes.



Understanding these cultural elements is essential for implementing effective supply chain strategies in Brazil. Freitas, Silva, da, Perobelli & Borsato (2019) discussed how cultural traits, infrastructure, and feedback mechanisms act as barriers to supply chain management in Brazil, emphasizing the need for culturally informed strategies to enhance collaboration and efficiency.

In Sub-Saharan Africa, collectivist cultures emphasize community and relationships, which can be leveraged to enhance supply chain resilience and traceability. Building trust and strong interpersonal relationships is vital for effective supply chain management in this region. Incorporating these cultural values into strategic practices can lead to improved performance. Razak, Hendry & Stevenson (2024) illustrated how the collectivist culture in Sub-Saharan Africa plays a crucial role in achieving traceability and resilience in global supply chains, highlighting the importance of cultural alignment in supply chain strategies.

Communication styles vary significantly across cultures, affecting supply chain coordination. High-context cultures, like Japan, rely on implicit communication, while low-context cultures, like the USA, prefer explicit communication. Recognizing and adapting to these differences is crucial for effective cross-cultural supply chain management. Gupta & Gupta (2019) emphasized that understanding cultural communication preferences can enhance collaboration and reduce misunderstandings in global supply chains. By tailoring communication strategies to align with cultural norms, organizations can foster more effective partnerships and improve overall supply chain performance.

Leaders with high cultural intelligence can navigate cross-cultural complexities more effectively, leading to improved organizational performance. Developing cultural intelligence among supply chain leaders is essential for managing diverse teams and fostering collaboration across different cultural contexts. Nosratabadi, Bahrami, Palouzian & Mosavi (2020) highlighted the positive impact of cultural intelligence on organizational performance, suggesting that culturally intelligent leaders are better equipped to implement effective strategies in multicultural environments. Investing in cultural intelligence training can thus be a valuable asset for organizations operating in global supply chains.

Cultural preferences influence the choice of governance mechanisms in supply chains. For instance, collectivist cultures may favor relational governance based on trust, while individualist cultures may prefer contractual governance. Aligning governance structures with cultural expectations can enhance supply chain effectiveness. Gupta & Gupta (2019) discussed how understanding cultural dimensions can inform the design of governance mechanisms that resonate with local practices, thereby improving coordination and reducing conflicts in supply chain relationships. Integrating cultural insights into strategic management practices is vital for optimizing global supply chain performance. By understanding and adapting to cultural differences, organizations can improve communication, build stronger relationships, and enhance overall efficiency and resilience in their supply chains. This cultural alignment not only facilitates smoother operations but also contributes to the long-term sustainability and competitiveness of global supply chains.

### 1.1 Statement of the Problem

Global supply chains are increasingly shaped by the dynamics of cross-cultural interactions, as organizations source, produce, and distribute goods across borders. With globalization intensifying the interdependence among geographically dispersed firms, managing supply chains strategically within culturally diverse environments has become a significant challenge. According to the World Trade Organization (2023), more than 70% of global trade now occurs through global value chains that cross multiple national and cultural boundaries. Despite this, organizations often struggle to align their strategic management approaches with local cultural practices, leading to inefficiencies, miscommunication, and operational disruptions. Cultural mismatches and the failure to adapt leadership, communication, and governance practices to local contexts can critically impair supply chain coordination and performance (Gupta & Gupta, 2019). These challenges are exacerbated in emerging markets and developing regions where cultural values often contrast sharply with Western management philosophies. Thus, a deeper understanding of how cross-cultural strategic management influences global supply chain effectiveness remains both timely and essential.

Although prior studies have explored the influence of culture on organizational behavior and some aspects of supply chain management, there remains a significant research gap concerning the integration of strategic management practices with cross-cultural frameworks specifically within global supply chains. Most research has predominantly focused on Western-centric models, failing to account for the cultural diversity found in Asia, Latin America, and Sub-Saharan Africa (Freitas et al., 2019). There is limited empirical understanding of how culturally tailored strategic decisions in supply chains can improve performance outcomes such as resilience, agility, and supplier collaboration across different regions. Additionally, the interaction between cultural intelligence in leadership and strategic decision-making within multicultural supply chain teams has not been sufficiently addressed in literature. This study aims to fill these gaps by systematically analyzing how cross-cultural strategic management practices shape operational effectiveness across various global contexts, thus contributing new insights to the fields of international business, operations management, and supply chain strategy.

The findings from this study will benefit a diverse set of stakeholders. Multinational corporations and global supply chain managers will gain actionable insights on how to tailor their strategic approaches to fit cultural contexts, thereby improving coordination, communication, and performance. Policymakers and trade bodies in emerging economies such as those in Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America may also benefit, as the study will offer policy suggestions that support culturally inclusive supply chain governance and partnership models. Additionally, academic researchers will find value in the study's theoretical contributions, particularly in extending models of strategic management to include cultural dimensions. By illuminating these intersections, this research can help reduce operational friction, enhance global supply chain resilience, and foster sustainable international collaborations in an increasingly volatile and culturally complex global economy (Razak, Hendry, & Stevenson, 2024).

## **2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Theoretical Review**

#### **2.1.1 Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory**

Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory, developed by Dutch social psychologist Geert Hofstede in the late 1970s, remains one of the most widely used frameworks in cross-cultural research. The theory identifies six dimensions of national culture—power distance, individualism versus collectivism, masculinity versus femininity, uncertainty avoidance, long-term orientation versus short-term normative orientation, and indulgence versus restraint—that influence workplace behavior and managerial decision-making across countries. This framework is critically relevant to global supply chains where interactions between suppliers, logistics providers, and managers often involve stakeholders from culturally diverse backgrounds. For example, differences in uncertainty avoidance can influence how supply chain partners in Japan (high uncertainty avoidance) and the United States (lower uncertainty avoidance) manage risk and contingency planning. Similarly, variations in individualism or collectivism affect the degree of collaboration and shared responsibility in cross-border operations. Applying Hofstede's framework in the context of strategic management allows researchers to systematically analyze how cultural norms shape strategy formulation, negotiation styles, and coordination mechanisms in global supply networks. It is especially pertinent when assessing supply chain strategies across regions like Sub-Saharan Africa, Brazil, and Asia where cultural values deviate significantly from Western norms. Thus, this theory offers a foundational lens through which cultural misalignments in strategic decisions can be identified and managed (Hofstede, Hofstede, & Minkov, 2010).

#### **2.1.2 Institutional Theory**

Institutional Theory, rooted in the sociological works of DiMaggio and Powell (1983), provides an important theoretical lens for understanding how organizations adapt their structures and strategies in response to the institutional environments in which they operate. The central premise of this theory is that organizations do not merely act on technical rationality or profit maximization; instead, they conform to cultural norms, regulatory frameworks, and social expectations within specific national or regional contexts to gain legitimacy and stability. This theoretical approach is particularly relevant to cross-cultural strategic management practices because it underscores the role of national institutions—such as legal systems, labor practices, and regulatory agencies—in shaping supply chain strategies and governance structures. For instance, a supply chain operating across the United Kingdom, Japan, and Sub-Saharan African countries will encounter varying institutional pressures that require culturally sensitive adaptations in leadership, compliance, and performance measurement. Moreover, Institutional Theory helps explain why multinational corporations often implement different strategic management practices in similar operational contexts but in different countries, due to local institutional demands. This adaptability—or lack thereof—directly affects the performance and resilience of global supply chains. In essence, the theory enhances understanding of how cross-cultural practices are not only shaped by internal organizational goals but also by external social, political, and cultural institutions (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983).



### **2.1.3 Dynamic Capabilities Theory**

The Dynamic Capabilities Theory, introduced by David Teece and colleagues in the 1990s, provides a strategic management perspective on how firms can develop and leverage internal competencies to respond to rapidly changing external environments. At its core, this theory emphasizes the importance of sensing, seizing, and reconfiguring organizational resources to maintain competitive advantage in volatile markets. In the context of global supply chains, this theory is particularly relevant because it accounts for how organizations operating in cross-cultural settings must continuously adapt their strategies and capabilities to align with local practices, technological changes, and market fluctuations. The theory underscores the need for cultural agility and strategic responsiveness when coordinating with suppliers, customers, and partners across borders. For instance, a firm operating simultaneously in the U.S. (highly competitive and innovation-driven), Brazil (relationship-oriented), and Sub-Saharan Africa (community-centric and informal) must develop dynamic capabilities that incorporate cultural awareness and responsiveness to institutional differences. Dynamic Capabilities Theory thus complements cultural and institutional perspectives by offering a firm-level strategic lens on how to operationalize cross-cultural management practices for supply chain effectiveness and resilience. It reinforces the idea that sustainable performance in global supply chains stems from the ability to adjust cultural strategies and reconfigure operations to meet local expectations (Teece, Pisano, & Shuen, 1997).

### **2.2 Empirical Review**

Gupta & Gupta (2019) explored how national cultural dimensions influence operations and supply chain management (SCM) practices, focusing on quality management, communication, governance, outsourcing, and offshore operations. Comprehensive literature review synthesizing findings from various empirical studies across different cultural contexts. Cultural dimensions such as collectivism, uncertainty avoidance, and power distance significantly impact SCM practices. For instance, high uncertainty avoidance cultures are more inclined to adopt quality management approaches like Total Quality Management (TQM) and Six Sigma. Future research should incorporate diverse cultural clusters beyond the commonly studied Western and East Asian contexts. There's a need to examine the interplay between national and organizational cultures in SCM.

Acquah, Naude & Soni (2021) assessed how cultural dimensions—collectivism, long-term orientation, power symmetry, and uncertainty avoidance—influence supply chain collaboration among firms in Ghana's downstream petroleum sector. Explanatory sequential mixed-methods design, combining Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) analysis of survey data (N=166) with thematic analysis of eight semi-structured interviews. Three out of the four cultural dimensions significantly predict supply chain collaboration. Qualitative insights provided nuanced understanding of how these cultural factors facilitate or hinder collaboration. Organizations should cultivate cultural awareness and adaptability to enhance collaboration in multicultural supply chain environments.

Mekhum (2020) investigated the impact of supply chain cultural capabilities on the performance of Thai SMEs, considering the mediating role of supply chain technology adoption. Survey-based

quantitative study using Smart-PLS for data analysis, targeting managers of SMEs in Thailand. Supply chain cultural capabilities positively influence SME performance. The adoption of supply chain technology mediates this relationship, enhancing organizational performance. SMEs should develop cultural competencies and invest in supply chain technologies to improve performance in culturally diverse markets.

Power & Sohal (2018) explored how cultural differences affect global supply chain management practices, particularly in communication, negotiation, and relationship building. Qualitative case studies of multinational corporations operating in diverse cultural settings, involving interviews and document analysis. Cultural misunderstandings can lead to conflicts and inefficiencies in supply chains. Effective cross-cultural communication and cultural intelligence are critical for successful global supply chain operations. Organizations should provide cross-cultural training and develop strategies to manage cultural diversity in supply chains.

Zhang & Huo (2017) examined how national culture influences supply chain integration practices among Chinese manufacturing firms. Quantitative study using survey data from 300 Chinese manufacturing firms, analyzed through structural equation modeling. Cultural traits such as collectivism and long-term orientation positively affect internal and external supply chain integration. Conversely, high power distance can hinder open communication and collaboration. Firms should consider cultural factors when designing integration strategies and promote cultural alignment with supply chain partners.

Lee & Kim (2016) compared supply chain management practices between Korean and U.S. firms, focusing on cultural influences. Comparative study using surveys and interviews with supply chain managers from both countries. Korean firms emphasize hierarchical structures and long-term relationships, while U.S. firms prioritize flexibility and short-term performance. These cultural differences impact decision-making and collaboration in supply chains. Multinational companies should tailor their supply chain strategies to align with the cultural contexts of their partners and subsidiaries.

Fernández & Nieto (2015) analyzed how cultural distance affects the internationalization strategies and performance of firms. Empirical analysis using data from Spanish firms operating in various countries, assessing the impact of cultural distance on performance metrics. Greater cultural distance negatively impacts firm performance in international markets. Firms that adapt their strategies to accommodate cultural differences perform better. Companies should conduct thorough cultural assessments and adapt their international strategies accordingly to mitigate the risks associated with cultural distance.

#### **4.0 FINDINGS**

The existing body of literature on cross-cultural strategic management practices in global supply chains reveals several significant research gaps that warrant further exploration. First, there is a notable underrepresentation of empirical studies focusing on the African context, particularly in East African countries such as Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania. Most existing research concentrates on Western, Asian, or Middle Eastern supply chain dynamics, leaving a gap in understanding how cultural factors affect supply chains within Sub-Saharan Africa. Secondly, while large multinational corporations dominate the discourse, there is a lack of focus on small and medium-

sized enterprises (SMEs) in developing economies. These SMEs face unique challenges in navigating cultural diversity, yet their strategies and practices remain largely undocumented.

Another major gap lies in the intersection of digital transformation and culture. With the rapid adoption of technologies such as AI, blockchain, and supply chain analytics, there is limited research on how these innovations interact with diverse cultural settings in shaping strategic management practices. Moreover, most of the existing studies adopt cross-sectional designs, which limits the ability to capture changes over time. Longitudinal studies are needed to assess how cross-cultural strategies evolve and influence performance in the long term. Lastly, current research tends to treat national and organizational cultures separately, overlooking their interplay. A deeper investigation into how these two cultural dimensions interact to influence supply chain decisions and outcomes would offer a more holistic view of global supply chain management in multicultural environments. Addressing these gaps would significantly advance the understanding and effectiveness of cross-cultural strategic management in global supply chains.

## **5.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.1 Conclusion**

The study concluded that cross-cultural strategic management practices played a significant role in shaping the performance, collaboration, and resilience of global supply chains. It was evident that cultural diversity influenced communication, decision-making, trust-building, and leadership styles among multinational partners. These dynamics often led to both synergies and conflicts, depending on how effectively cultural variances were managed. Companies that failed to recognize the implications of cultural dissimilarities often faced coordination inefficiencies, misunderstandings, and reduced responsiveness to market shifts, thereby undermining their supply chain agility and competitiveness. Conversely, firms that proactively aligned their strategic management approaches with cultural realities across borders experienced smoother operational execution and stronger stakeholder engagement.

Moreover, the study affirmed that successful global supply chains were not merely defined by logistical efficiency or cost-effectiveness, but by how well organizations managed cultural integration and diversity. Strategic alignment of cross-cultural competencies was found to be a key determinant in supply chain adaptability and innovation. Leaders who demonstrated cultural intelligence were more effective in navigating intercultural teams and negotiating with international partners. Furthermore, it was observed that culturally-informed strategic planning enhanced the ability to mitigate risks, especially in regions characterized by institutional voids or high volatility. This insight underscored the necessity for global firms to incorporate cultural factors into their strategic frameworks beyond superficial diversity goals.

Another major conclusion was that the lack of standardized cross-cultural frameworks across regions led to fragmented approaches in strategic management. While firms in advanced economies tended to institutionalize cultural policies within corporate strategy, companies in emerging and developing economies often relied on ad hoc practices. This inconsistency hampered the seamless integration of supply chain activities and obstructed collaborative synergy. The study revealed that a universal approach to cultural strategy was insufficient; instead, context-specific adaptations were required to foster inclusivity, mutual respect, and performance efficiency within

global partnerships. Therefore, strategic management needed to be dynamically customized to reflect local cultural norms while maintaining global cohesion.

The study concluded that the strategic value of culture had been largely underestimated in conventional supply chain models. While operational and technical aspects such as inventory control, supplier selection, and transportation were thoroughly developed, the cultural dimensions of strategy remained underexplored. This created a gap between formal corporate strategies and informal workplace dynamics, which adversely impacted organizational coherence. The study emphasized the need for a paradigm shift in how culture was viewed—not as a soft, intangible element—but as a strategic resource capable of driving competitive advantage in the global marketplace.

## 5.2 Recommendations

The study recommended that organizations integrate cross-cultural competencies as a core component of their strategic management frameworks. It was no longer sufficient to treat culture as an ancillary concern; rather, it needed to be embedded into leadership development, risk management, and partnership governance. This required not only training executives on cultural intelligence but also reengineering strategic planning processes to accommodate cultural variables in decision-making. Firms were advised to incorporate cultural audits and mapping tools when entering new markets or forming global alliances, ensuring that cultural mismatches could be proactively addressed through strategic alignment.

In terms of theoretical contribution, the study suggested that existing strategic management models should be expanded to include cultural dimensions as integral variables. Traditional models, which predominantly focused on economic, political, and logistical factors, often neglected the cultural nuances that affected supply chain behavior. By incorporating cross-cultural frameworks into strategic management theory, scholars and practitioners could develop more holistic models that better reflected the complexity of global operations. This would enrich academic discourse on strategy and provide more robust explanatory power for cross-border business outcomes.

Practically, the study recommended that multinational corporations establish cross-cultural management teams within their supply chain departments. These teams would be tasked with monitoring intercultural dynamics, facilitating inclusive decision-making, and resolving misunderstandings arising from cultural misinterpretations. Organizations were also encouraged to institutionalize mentoring systems where employees from different cultural backgrounds could share experiences and co-create solutions to common challenges. Such initiatives would foster an organizational culture that valued diversity not just in form but in function, enhancing employee engagement and operational synergy across borders.

On a policy level, the study recommended that industry regulators and trade organizations develop guidelines that support cultural competence in international business transactions. These policies could include certification schemes for cross-cultural training, frameworks for ethical engagement in culturally sensitive markets, and incentives for companies that demonstrated exemplary cultural integration practices. By formalizing such expectations, policymakers could elevate the importance of cultural strategy to the same level as financial compliance or environmental sustainability, thereby promoting fairer, more inclusive global trade systems.

Furthermore, the study highlighted the importance of technology in bridging cultural gaps across global supply chains. It recommended the use of AI-powered translation tools, virtual collaboration platforms, and culturally adaptive user interfaces to support intercultural communication and decision-making. These technologies could mitigate the risks of miscommunication and facilitate real-time interaction between culturally diverse teams. Organizations were encouraged to invest in digital infrastructure that promoted cultural understanding, thereby enhancing the agility and resilience of their supply chains in complex environments.

Lastly, the study contributed to the understanding of how strategic cultural alignment could serve as a competitive differentiator in the global marketplace. It advised firms to develop cultural foresight capabilities—predicting how cultural trends would influence future business scenarios. This long-term view would allow companies to anticipate market changes, build culturally agile teams, and design strategies that were not only globally efficient but also locally relevant. Such foresight-driven practices would enable firms to sustain performance across turbulent and multicultural global supply chains.



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