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CUSTOMER INTEGRATION IN THE SUPPLY CHAIN: THE ROLE OF MARKET ORIENTATION AND SUPPLY CHAIN STRATEGY IN THE AGE OF DIGITAL REVOLUTION

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the role of market orientation and supply chain strategy in enhancing customer integration within Pakistan's manufacturing industries, particularly in the context of the digital revolution. The research aims to identify how market orientation capabilities and supply chain strategies influence customer integration and improve supply chain performance. Using the Dynamic Capabilities View (DCV) theory, the study develops a conceptual model to examine the relationships between market orientation, supply chain strategy, marketing-supply chain alignment, and customer integration. Data was collected from 38 managers in the manufacturing sector using a structured questionnaire. The findings reveal that market orientation and supply chain strategy significantly impact customer integration, highlighting the importance of aligning marketing and supply chain functions to achieve competitive advantage. The study contributes to the literature by emphasizing the role of dynamic capabilities in supply chain management and provides practical insights for firms aiming to enhance customer integration in a rapidly evolving digital landscape. Future research recommendations include exploring the impact of emerging technologies and external factors on supply chain performance.

Keywords: *Customer Integration, Supply Chain, Market Orientation, Supply Chain Strategy, Digital Revolution, Dynamic Capabilities View*

INTRODUCTION

Global competitiveness, the desire for more product diversity with shorter product life cycles (Nawaz et al., 2022), technical progress, and expanding digitalization are all projected to accelerate (Gligor et al., 2019) especially in the face of disruptions like as Suez Canal blockage andCovid-19 pandemic (Ambrogio et al., 2022; Aslam et al., 2022). In the modern word there is a firm they are able to adapt effectively to market changes, predict shifting and enjoy greater profitability and competitive advantage. (Ali et al., 2020; Teece 2007). Market-orientated firms aim to satisfy their customers by gathering and

coordinating market information throughout the organization (Kohli & Jaworski, 1990).

Researchshows that market-orientation provides the basis for business transformation (Wang etal., 2020; Yang et al., 2020) leading to improved performance in testing times (Buratti etal., 2021; D'Souza et al., 2022; Taghvaee & Talebi, 2022; Tinoco et al., 2020; Wilson &Liguori, 2022).

The success of supply chain strategies heavily relies on market orientation capability (Iqbal & Omercic, 2024). The recent period of high market uncertainty has made firms realize the importance of understanding markets and responding with appropriate supply chain strategies (Fisher, 1997; Handfeld, 2010; Pettit et al, 2019; Iqbal et al., 2025). As more firms strive to develop supply chain strategies for greater efficiency, they are discovering significant gaps in their fundamental understanding of these strategies' effectiveness (Handfeld, 2010).

This research seeks to develop a model identifying the interaction of supply chain strategy with market orientation competence as a determinant for better inter-firm success at supply-chain level. It consists the decision-making processes related to various aspects of supply chain operations which includes: Business unit, SBU or Group and Functional level as well Supplier Chain i.e. administration & strategy together form up for Supply Policy specific to each other in many cases too (Cigolini et al., 2004; Perez-Franco & Phadnis, 2018;; Rizvi et al., 2022, 2025; Stevens, 1989). Our study adds to a variety of fields of knowledge. Firstly, the capacity to focus on the market is a dynamic skill (Foerstl et al., 2020), we add to the body of research evaluating the effectiveness and significance of dynamic capabilities in the supply chain (Aslam etal., 2020; Defee & Fugate, 2010). Additionally, we methodologically add to the literature on supply chain integration by include the time data dimension in our study, which was identified as a significant limitation in earlier research (Qi et al., 2017; Fareed & Iqbal, 2024)).

Problem Statement

In the Pakistan's manufacturing industries involve technologies, which effects of supply chain strategy and market orientation on customer integration and to improve supply chain performance and we look into supply chain strategy and market orientation in developed market economies. (Bhattarai et al., 2019; Guptaet al., 2020; Zhou et al., 2021). The role of sustainable technologies in supply chain and market orientation to make their businesses operations easy and more suitable in market and gives the competitive edge to firm therefore, the organization can easily improve their performances and grow by utilizing (DCV) theory which is used in this research for adapting capabilities and opportunities.

Significance

This study tells us the way through which we can improve customers integration and the impact of supply chain performances. In our model which shows that how market orientation, supply chain strategies impact on the level of customer integration. We also look into how supply chain integration and marketing play a contingent role in these partnerships. The finding of the research associate between supply strategy customer integration is not moderated by marketing-supply chain alignment, our findings corroborate the study hypotheses (Aslam., et al 2023; Fatima, Iqbal & Ahmed, 2023)).

Research Question

The central research question guiding the study is:

1. What are mechanisms through which market orientation capability influence the Customer integration?
2. How can we adopt digital mechanisms to modernize the organization overall functions and performance?

LITERATURE REVIEW

The conduction of this survey to find the solution for the customer integration through marketing supply chain alignment, market orientation and supply chain strategies, and to solve these problems the theory or method was used is this study which DCV Dynamic capabilities view. The dynamic capabilities view

(DCV) is the most important factor in modern research areas and will help to find the new modern techniques to overcome challenges and grap new opportunities. Furthermore, on behalf of the finding and the results we make the structure model which shows the impact of three IVs and One DVs (Di Stefano et al., 2014; Schilke, 2014b). moreover, this capabilities creates competitive advantage for firm in future endeavors (Iqbal, Omercic & Bukhari, 2024). However, it suggests three different levels through which we can get the competitive advantage firstly, to evaluate the basic functions of organizations. Secondly, to improve the dynamic capabilities of firms with respect of time. Lastly, allow the firm to find the new solutions and improve the firm overall performances.

EMPIRICAL STUDIES

In this section we present the empirical studies conducted market orientation from a capability's perspective (Barrales Molina et al., 2014; Foerstl et al., 2020; Foley & Fahy, 2009). The application of marketing concepts through actions that lead to the creation, dissemination, and responsiveness to market intelligence is known as market orientation (Kohli & Jaworski, 1990; Hassan et al., 2021). The importance of market orientation has been well recognized in marketing literature as a capability with the potential to generate competitive advantage (Bodlaj & Čater, 2022; Kumar et al., 2011; Schulze etal., 2022; Shin & Aiken 2012; Tinoco et al., 2020; Fahim et al., 2020).

Previous research has claimed considerable data collection problems in developing countries (Aslam et al., 2020; Hoskisson et al., 2000; Malik & Kotabe, 2009; Russell, 2015). Pakistan is no different in this domain. Among other factors, this is primarily because of the nonexistence of a frame from which to draw samples/ materials. The country's stock exchange shows. Less than 0.1% of total organizations. Furthermore, the contact information of organizations on the websites of various chambers of commerce and industry associations is either missing or incomplete (Kanwal et al., 2023). To make a good sample, we first had to identify organizations willingness to participate in two-month long data collection effort (Iqbal, Farhan, & Atif, 2025). We considered the managers from marketing, supply chain, finance, admin, human Resources and related areas as suitable respondents for this study. Managers from consenting organizations were sent requests to fill the questionnaire along withan available cover letter, briefly explain the significance of this research (Zaheer, Iqbal & Chishti, 2024). We resent a questionnaire to meet his target containing our dependent variable 20 days later. In all, 55 participants responded to both of our requests, whereas the description of respondents is provided in Table. Our sample represents a cross-section of Pakistani firms and corporate sector, SME's and major industries were well represented (Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, 2005-06).

The supply chain management strategy evaluated firm's ability to organize and improve business processes throughout the supply chain to satisfy customer requirements. The scale is relies on measurement such as: reducing responded times through the supply chain, searching for new techniques to integrate supply chain management activities, and create a higher level of trust across the supply chain (Green et al., 2019; Wisner, 2003).

HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

- There is a significant relationship b/w Market Orientation (MO) and Customer Integration.
- There is a significant relationship b/w Supply chain strategy and Customer Integration.
- There is a significant relationship b/w Marketing Supply chain Alignment and Customer Integration.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

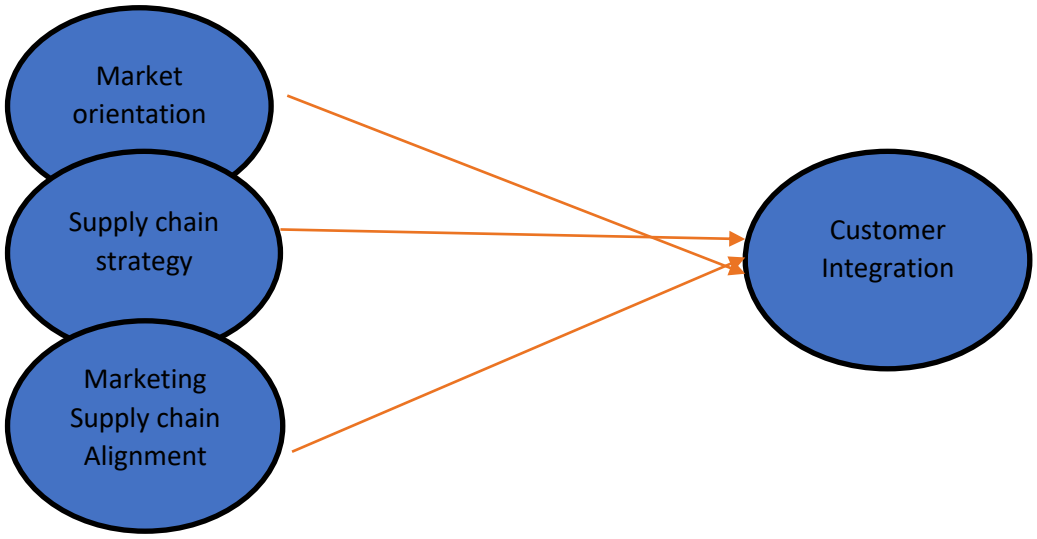


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

METHODOLOGY

Research Purpose

The primary objectives of this research is to provide a details description and understanding of the scale is based on marketing orientation practices such as business objectives driven by customer satisfaction, constant monitoring of commitment level to serve customers, dissemination of information about successful and unsuccessful customer experiences, on our daily routine measurement of customer service, etc. All items are measured on a 7-point scale ranging between 1 (strongly disagree)to 7 (strongly agree).

Research Approach

This research is to overcome issues associated with survey research and cross-sectional research design into our study. Yet, without acknowledging the limitations, it will be difficult to put the results into perspective. So first, we perform our research in a single developing country (i.e., Pakistan), and that results are not directly generalize to other developing countries. However, given that many relationships in this research are new, more research is needed in different settings to confirm the findings. Second, our research is quantitative and based on perceptual data. While perceptual measures are well recognized in the management, future research could consider objective variables or mixed methods to overcome the shortcomings of perceptual measures.

Research Design

The research design employs a cross sectional approach (Iqbal, 2025), collecting data a multiple points in a time from manufacturing industries stakeholders from Pakistan. This design allows for cross sectional tracking of relationship b/w variables, providing insights into the dynamics and evolving nature of supply chain strategy and market orientation in manufacturing industries in Pakistan.

Sampling Technique

A purposive sampling technique is applied to target to participants from the manufacturing industries from the Pakistan.We deliberated the managers from marketing, supply chain, and related areas as suitable respondents for this study and they have a good understanding of marketing supply chain and supply chain strategy and also customer integration concept within the context of the manufacturing industries.

Target Audience

The target audience includes stakeholders, managers, and other employees from various

segments from the manufacturing industries in Pakistan such as textiles, automobiles etc.

Sample Size

A total of 45 surveys form were circulated, and 38 respondents were received, resulting in response rate of 84.44%. For further analysis, the respondents are well acquainted with supply chain strategy and customer integration in concept of market orientation and supply chain strategy in the age of digital evaluation.

Statistical Techniques

Finally, to test the DV hypothesized in this research, we used a bootstrapping technique (Hayes, 2009, 2013) with 5,000 bootstrap samples and 95% bootstrap confidence intervals. Study suggests that the relationship between market orientation and customer integration. Results showed this relationship to be significant(β =0.086, lower confidence limit=0.013, upper confidence limit= 0.248, p<0.029).

Questionnaire And Measurement Instruments

The questionnaire utilized in this study was adapted from the base paper, incorporating insights from previous studies, focus group discussions, and consultations with experts and academicians. The structured questionnaire is divided into four parts: three parts related to independent variables, with one part focusing on the dependent variable. To gauge responses, a five-point Likert scale was employed as the measurement instrument.

Ethical Consideration

This research keeps to ethical guidelines by ensuring participant confidentiality, voluntary participation, and informed consent. Respondents were made aware of the research purpose, and their data is handled with utmost confidentiality and only used for research purposes.

Data Analysis

To construct the measurement model, we first import file in CSV format and then start creating model which includes individual item reliability, construct reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity while the structural model has been evaluated by the hypothesis measurement through the signs and significant of the coefficient between dependent and independent variables.

Measurement Model

The measurement model evaluates the dependency of the independent variable on dependent variables which consists of four different angles of measurement like Cronbach Alpha which is > than 0.7 and composite reliability as well with average variance extracted which must be > than 0.5. the quantity of measuring items are included (MO1, MO2, MO3, MO4, MSA1, MSA2, SCS1, SCS2, SCS3, CI1, CI2, CI3).

RESULTS

CONSTRUCT RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY OVERVIEW

	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability (rho_c)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
CI	0.679	0.685	0.824	0.611
MO	0.774	0.804	0.855	0.598
MSA	0.801	0.812	0.909	0.833
SCS	0.75	0.755	0.859	0.671

This table shows the construct and reliability measures for our four constructs including, (MO) market orientation, (MSA) perceived performance expectancy, (PEE) perceived effort expectancy and (SI) social influence

DISCRIMINANT VALIDITY
FORNELL-LARCKER CRITERION

	CI	MO	MSA	SCS
CI				
MO	0.973			
MSA	0.856	0.729		
SCS	1.13	0.906	1.054	

The Fornell-Larcker validity table measures the discriminant validity of each construct by comparing the square root of each construct through the correlation of each construct. The diagonal values show in the above table are 0.973, 0.729 and 1.054 respectively. This value indicates the higher variance with the correlation between another construct in each variable the diagonal one is higher. It shows the measurement model's capability to get more variance associated with each construct.

R SQUARED VALUES

	R-square	R-square adjusted
CI	0.702	0.674

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CROSS LOADING

	CI	MO	MSA	SCS
CI1	0.82	0.552	0.589	0.707
CI2	0.713	0.433	0.495	0.643
CI3	0.808	0.699	0.4	0.537
MO1	0.451	0.652	0.417	0.55
MO2	0.695	0.844	0.569	0.673
MO3	0.565	0.811	0.319	0.409
MO4	0.467	0.773	0.48	0.498
MSA1	0.538	0.468	0.9	0.747
MSA2	0.619	0.586	0.925	0.738
SCS1	0.621	0.543	0.68	0.724
SCS2	0.677	0.664	0.79	0.893
SCS3	0.681	0.496	0.527	0.831

STRUCTURAL MODEL

The structural model investigates the signs, size and meaning of the coefficient between every independent variable including (MO), (MSA), (SCS) .And dependent variable is (CI) customer integrations. The higher the value of coefficient the more impactful the construct between the independent on dependent variable.

PATH COFFICIENTS- MEANS, STDEV. T VALUES & P VALUES

	CI	MO	MSA	SCS
SCS	0.651			
MSA	-0.073			
MO	0.311			
CI				

FORNELL LARCKNER TABLE

	CI	MO	MSA	SCS
CI	0.782			
MO	0.72	0.773		
MSA	0.636	0.581	0.913	
SCS	0.807	0.694	0.812	0.819

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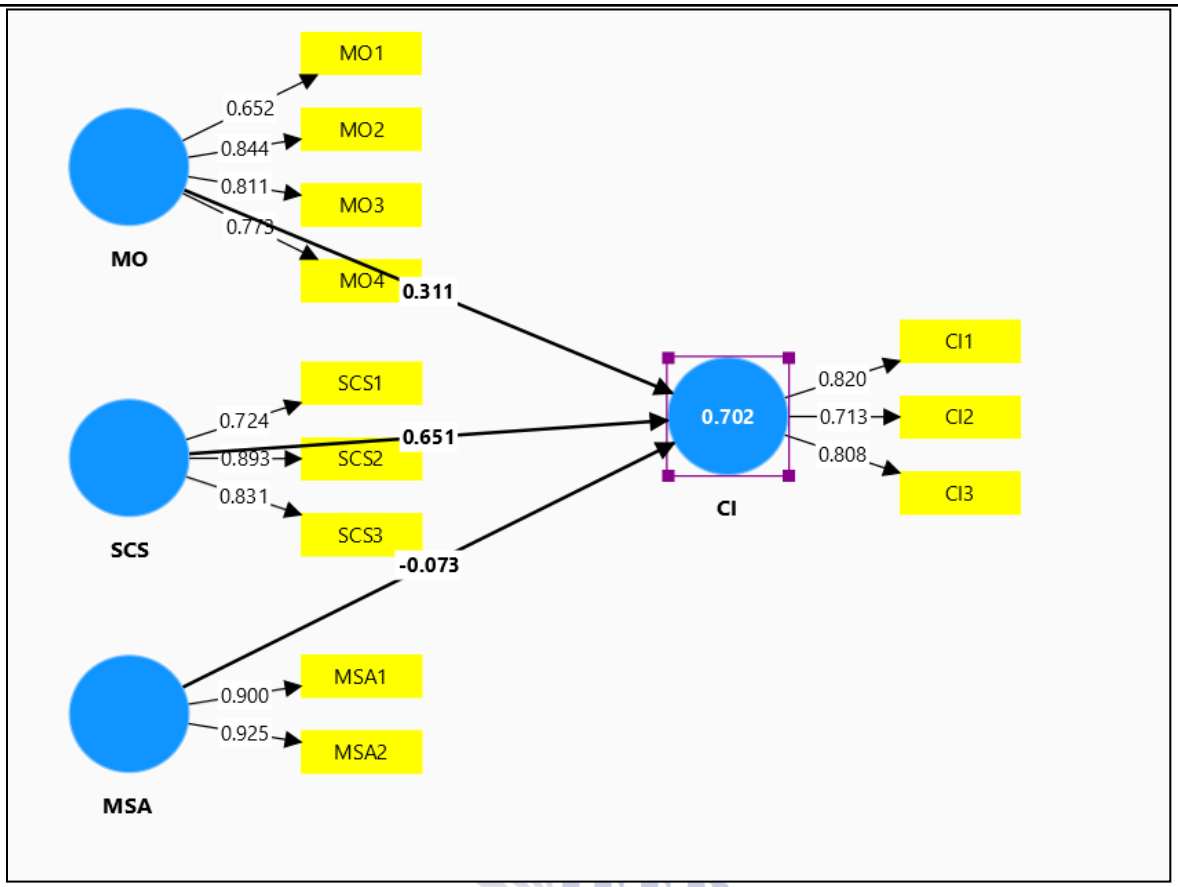


Figure 2: Smart PLS Model of Concept

DISCUSSION

This research provides valuable insights into the relationship between market orientation, supply chain strategy, and customer integration in the manufacturing sector of Pakistan. The findings confirm that companies with a strong market orientation are more capable of adapting to changes, predicting shifts in customer preferences, and implementing supply chain strategies that enhance efficiency and responsiveness. By aligning supply chain processes with market needs, organizations can optimize their operations and maintain a competitive edge in an increasingly digital and globalized business environment (Zaheer, Iqbal & Yousuf, 2023).

The study also highlights the significant role of supply chain strategy in customer integration. Firms that adopt dynamic and flexible supply chain strategies can improve coordination among suppliers, manufacturers, and distributors, ensuring seamless production and delivery processes. The research further emphasizes that the alignment between marketing and supply chain functions is a key factor in enhancing overall organizational performance. When marketing strategies are closely linked with supply chain operations, companies can respond more effectively to customer demands, reduce lead times, and enhance service quality.

Moreover, the study findings suggest that firms in developing economies, such as Pakistan, need to focus on building digital capabilities to support their supply chain operations. The adoption of modern technologies like ERP systems, data analytics, and automation can significantly improve supply chain visibility, decision-making, and integration. However, the study also recognizes certain limitations, including a relatively small sample size and the exclusion of external factors such as government policies and economic conditions. Future research should

explore these aspects to provide a more comprehensive understanding of customer integration strategies

CONCLUSION

In the age of globalizations, firms are basically facing different types of challenges including how to sustain their supply chain cycle particularly in the current phase of Covid-19. Our study concluding that firms can sustain their manufacturing operations and capture competitive edge by proper utilization of their dynamic capabilities. In the study with resulting from market orientation, supply chain strategy, and alignment between marketing and supply chain functions is crucial in obtaining Customer integration especially in the era of crisis. Firms integrated with customers are better able to deal with market changes leading to customer satisfaction and sustain from competitive advantage.

Policy Implications

For further advanced the understanding of Supply Chain In Customer integration in the Pakistani Manufacturing industries context, future research could explore the role of specific alignment, the impact of firms on customer integration, and the integration of emerging technologies ERP Software. Additionally, examining the influence of external factors, such as regulatory changes and geopolitical shifts, could provide a more comprehensive understanding of the challenges and opportunities in the age Globalization. Continuous research and adaptation are essential in a rapidly evolving the age of Globalization.

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