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Exploring sustainable purchasing and supply chain management through an institutional change lens: A systematic literature review

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ABSTRACT

The integration of sustainability into purchasing and supply chain management (PSCM) increasingly demands a shift in the norms and assumptions governing these domains (i.e. institutions). Despite the growing application of institutional theory in sustainable PSCM, the literature remains fragmented. Specifically, there remains a lack of systematic theoretical articulation regarding *how* different elements of institutional change contribute to the development of sustainable PSCM. Adopting an institutional change perspective, this review systematically analyses 93 peer-reviewed articles to advance understanding of sustainable PSCM. The literature reveals four key areas through which institutional change unfolds: triggers that initiate change; mechanisms and processes through which change is enacted; the outcomes that emerge; and enablers that support or shape these developments. The findings indicate a predominance of exogenous pressures, while also highlighting a growing focus on endogenous drivers. Change mechanisms are synthesised using a means-based institutional work lens, identifying relational, symbolic and material forms of work. The review further reveals varied outcomes and identifies key moderating factors at both firm and supply chain levels. These insights are consolidated into an integrative framework of the institutional change that highlights key gaps and outlines future research directions, offering theoretical and practical insights to support transformative change in PSCM.

1. Introduction

Within the field of purchasing and supply chain management (PSCM), the notion of sustainability has evolved over the past few decades (Hoejmose and Adrien-Kirby, 2012; Johnsen et al., 2017; Miemczyk et al., 2012). Early discussions in PSCM primarily focused on environmental concerns, such as reducing carbon emissions, minimising waste, and improving energy efficiency within supply chains (Carter and Easton, 2011; Seuring and Müller, 2008). Over time, the scope of sustainability expanded to include social and ethical dimensions, such as ensuring fair labour practices, promoting diversity and inclusion, and supporting local communities through procurement decisions (Yawar and Seuring, 2017; Zorzini et al., 2015). In parallel, the conceptual framing of sustainability within PSCM has also matured. Initial efforts were often driven by regulatory compliance and risk mitigation, with firms seeking to adhere to environmental laws and avoid reputational damage (Pagell and Shevchenko, 2014; Pagell and Wu, 2009; Shevchenko et al., 2016). More recent approaches, however, emphasise strategic value creation, in which sustainability is integrated as a core component of organisational strategy (Pagell and Shevchenko, 2014; Ponte et al., 2023; Villena, 2019). This shift reflects a growing recognition of the pivotal role of firms' operations and supply chains in driving systemic change and addressing broader societal challenges (Knight et al., 2022; Luzzini et al., 2024b).

The notion of sustainable purchasing and supply chain management (SPSCM) introduces a profound imperative for change, as traditional supply chain practices often fall short of sustainable standards (Miemczyk et al., 2012). The PSCM field is deeply embedded within broader normative and organisational environments that shape expectations of what constitutes legitimate behaviour. Sustainability disrupts these expectations by challenging long-standing assumptions (i.e. norms and values) about cost and efficiency, proposing a re-evaluation of what is considered as legitimate (Pagell and Shevchenko, 2014; Shevchenko et al., 2016). As such, it generates tensions within established

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operational routines and exposes the multiple, layered assumptions that operate across industries and supply chain tiers. These layered assumptions are closely linked to how institutions are conceptualised in institutional theory. Institutions are defined as 'relatively enduring systems of social beliefs and socially organised practices associated with varying functional arenas within societal systems' (Scott, 1987, p. 499). Institutional change, in turn, explains how these institutions change over time (Greenwood et al., 2002). Given the complexity of sustainability, recent scholarship argues that embedding sustainability within PSCM requires institutional change (Luzzini et al., 2024b; Pagell and Shevchenko, 2014).

Existing studies have increasingly drawn on institutional theory to explain how traditional PSCM practices evolve in response to the overarching goal of sustainability (Touboulic and Walker, 2015). For instance, the institutional pressures (e.g. coercive, normative, and mimetic) exerted by stakeholders and regulatory bodies can drive firms to adopt sustainable procurement practices or to alter existing unsustainable supply chain operations (Giunipero et al., 2012; Sancha et al., 2015; Walker et al., 2008). This can lead to processes of deinstitutionalisation as unsustainable purchasing and supply chain operations lose legitimacy over time. As legitimacy erodes, new practices and processes may emerge, often driven by actors operating across different levels of PSCM who act as change agents in advocating for the implementation of sustainability initiatives (Villena, 2019; Wu and Pagell, 2011). These change agents can take various forms, such as individuals involved in day-to-day supply decisions (e.g. category managers), organisational actors operating at the firm level (e.g. buying firms and tier-one or tier-two suppliers) and actors situated at a broader macro level who shape industry standards and regulatory frameworks (Mena et al., 2013). This perspective is particularly valuable in the PSCM context since its multi-layered and multi-actor nature characterises it as a boundary-spanning domain, making it a key site in which conflicting institutional expectations are encountered, interpreted and potentially reconciled (Sauer and Seuring, 2018).

Despite the growing application of institutional theory in SPSCM, the literature remains fragmented. In particular, scholars draw on different aspects of institutional theory such as institutional pressures, institutionalisation and institutional logics, each of which highlights certain dimensions of change while overlooking others (Alvesson and Spicer, 2019; Kauppi, 2022). As a result, the use of varied terminologies and conceptual framings has hindered the development of a cohesive understanding of how change unfolds in SPSCM. Specifically, there remains a lack of systematic theoretical articulation regarding *how* these different elements of institutional change contribute to the development of SPSCM, along with a clear identification of gaps and areas requiring further exploration to advance the debate.

Thus, the present paper aims to critically and systematically review and assess the existing body of research that adopts the institutional theory lens in SPSCM and to develop an organising framework grounded in institutional change. Specifically, we address the following question: '*How has the notion of SPSCM been explored from an institutional change perspective?*' We review 93 articles in the PSCM literature that examine different aspects of institutional theory in the context of sustainability. Through this review, the study contributes to the literature on understanding how PSCM becomes sustainable by adopting an institutional change lens to explain the change process. Existing reviews of SPSCM have primarily focused on defining the concept (e.g. Miemczyk et al., 2012), examining the theories applied (e.g. Touboulic and Walker, 2015), exploring specific dimensions of sustainability (e.g. Zorzini et al., 2015), analysing particular geographical contexts (e.g. Jia et al., 2018) and making interdisciplinary connections (e.g. Johnsen et al., 2017; Quarshie et al., 2016). Our review contributes to the literature by employing an institutional change theory perspective to provide a deeper understanding of the mechanisms and contexts through which sustainable practices are created and embedded as institutions. In doing so, we demonstrate how sustainability within PSCM represents a process of institutional change. The review further reveals emerging patterns that suggest interconnections across different elements of change, highlighting the value of examining these dimensions in a dynamic and interrelated manner. Finally, by identifying potential avenues for future research, we illustrate how the institutional change perspective offer valuable insights into the systemic changes required in the field (Knight et al., 2022; Luzzini et al., 2024b).

2. Theoretical background

Institutional theory has long served as a foundational lens for understanding how organisational society is shaped, structured and maintained within institutional fields (Scott, 2014). An 'institutional field' refers to the broader environment in which organisations operate and comprises of government regulations, industry associations and cultural norms (Barley and Tolbert, 1997). Early institutional theorists conceptualised institutions as social structures that constrain and shape organisational behaviour through taken-for-granted norms, rules and routines (Dimaggio and Powell, 1983; Meyer and Rowan, 1977). Within this framing, stability was initially viewed as the natural state of institutions, reinforced by isomorphic pressures (i.e. coercive, mimetic and normative) that drive convergence around accepted norms and enable organisations to gain legitimacy (Scott, 1987, 2014).

Subsequent developments in institutional theory, however, problematised this emphasis on stability and introduced the notion of deinstitutionalisation (Oliver, 1992; Scott, 2014). This perspective acknowledges the fluidity of institutions by recognising that they can erode, evolve or be deliberately transformed, even within highly institutionalised systems (Alvesson and Spicer, 2019). These developments prompted new discussions that account for change through dynamic and process-oriented models of institutional change, which emphasise the interplay between structure and agency. One of the most influential contributions in this regard is the framework proposed by Greenwood et al. (2002), which conceptualises institutional change as unfolding through a series of stages, ranging from field-level disruptions and value misalignments to the theorisation and diffusion of new practices. Central to their model is the recognition that institutions do not uniformly constrain actors. Rather, change can be purposely initiated by certain actors or organisations, known as institutional entrepreneurs (Battilana et al., 2009), who identify tensions within the institutional environment (i.e. institutional conflict; Seo and Creed, 2002) and strategically work to frame alternatives as legitimate responses (i.e. through institutional work; Lawrence and Suddaby, 2006).

Extending this model, Micelotta et al. (2017) highlighted the recursive and non-linear (i.e. developmental) nature of institutional change and drew attention to the ongoing contestation that arises when multiple institutional logics co-exist (i.e. institutional complexity; Greenwood et al., 2011). Institutional logics can be understood as the organising principles and belief systems that guide behaviour and shape what actors perceive as legitimate, appropriate and desirable within a given field (Thornton et al., 2012). Taken together, these contributions demonstrate that institutional change is a complex, multi-level phenomenon shaped by both structure and agency. It involves intentional efforts to disrupt existing arrangements (as conceptualised by Greenwood et al., 2002) and more gradual, unintended shifts that emerge from ongoing negotiation within complex institutional fields (Micelotta et al., 2017).

Despite the growing body of research on institutional change, its application to PSCM remains underdeveloped. PSCM has traditionally been treated as a highly institutionalised domain governed by logics of efficiency, cost minimisation and procedural standardisation (Kauppi, 2022). These logics are embedded through formal procurement rules, professional standards and established supplier evaluation frameworks, making the field relatively resistant to change (Wu and Jia, 2018). Simultaneously, scholars increasingly recognise that supply chains operate as institutional fields composed of diverse actors embedded

across tiers, jurisdictions and sectors, each influenced by different, often conflicting, normative systems (Mena et al., 2013; Sauer and Seuring, 2018). As a result, PSCM is characterised by structural complexity and institutional fragmentation. This multiplicity generates institutional complexity, which becomes particularly salient when new demands such as sustainability, are introduced. Consequently, PSCM exhibits a dual character of institutional life: anchored in stability yet animated by the potential for change (Kauppi, 2022; Scott, 2014).

Sustainability introduces new demands that often conflict with established procurement norms, creating tensions that must be negotiated by actors within and across organisational boundaries. Although prior research has examined how organisations respond to such pressures, this work has adopted an isomorphism perspective, focusing on reactive adjustments to external demands (Kauppi and Luzzini, 2022; Montabon et al., 2016). This perspective tends to explain surface-level shifts such as symbolic adoption or decoupling rather than the deeper, more fundamental transformations that sustainability arguably requires (Knight et al., 2022; Luzzini et al., 2024b). Moreover, this framing positions PSCM as a passive recipient of institutional pressure. Yet, the embeddedness of diverse actors across fragmented supply networks suggests that these actors are not merely responding to change; rather, they are often actively involved in constructing, or constraining, it (Tchokogué et al., 2018).

This observation calls for a shift in focus from institutional response to institutional change, alongside closer examination of how change is conceptualised and enacted within SPSCM. While recent literature has increasingly drawn on different strands of institutional theory to acknowledge the evolving nature of institutions, this uptake has also contributed to conceptual fragmentation. The SPSCM field is characterised by the application of divergent institutional perspectives across disciplinary silos (e.g. purchasing, supply chain and operations management), limited theoretical engagement with the concept of institutional change, and inconsistent use of terminology. Moreover, many studies examine phenomena that instil elements of institutional change (e.g. the adoption of sustainable practices or abandonment of long-standing routines) without explicitly framing their work as contributing to an understanding of institutional change. This has limited the field's ability to explain how sustainability becomes embedded in purchasing and supply practices over time and has constrained the development of theories capable of capturing both the depth and complexity of change within SPSCM. Adopting institutional change as a central lens offers a way to harmonise these perspectives, enhance conceptual clarity and identify gaps that can guide future research towards a more integrated and cumulative theorisation of change in the field.

3. Methodology

The systematic review approach proposed by Tranfield et al. (2003) was employed to rigorously analyse the literature on institutional change in SPSCM. This approach enhances rigour through its emphasis on replicability, reliability and transparency (Denyer and Tranfield, 2009; Tranfield et al., 2003). This review primarily followed the structured approach outlined by Tranfield et al. (2003), while also drawing on guidance from recent PSCM reviews (e.g. Sauer and Seuring, 2023) to inform and clarify the methodological decisions. The review process was organised into three main stages: (1) identification of relevant research; (2) screening and study selection; and (3) data extraction and analysis. Fig. 1 illustrates the systematic literature review process adopted in this study.

3.1. Identification of relevant research

The review question served as the foundation for the review design, thereby enabling a focused, coherent and theoretically grounded study (Sauer and Seuring, 2023). The first step involved conceptually narrowing and defining the core domains relevant to the review. Three domains were selected: 'Procurement and Supply Chain', 'Sustainability' and 'Institutional Theory'. These domains were chosen because they provided a scope broad enough to capture relevant articles across disciplinary boundaries, while remaining sufficiently focused to support a contextualised analysis aligned with the research aim. Keywords for each domain were identified based on prior reviews in related fields (e.g. Johnsen et al., 2017; Miemczyk et al., 2012; Zorzini et al., 2015) and are presented in Table 1.

These keywords were searched within the title, abstract and keyword fields of the Scopus database. Scopus was selected as the primary source for identifying relevant literature due to its broad coverage and established reliability in systematic reviews (Zhu and Liu, 2020). Several prior reviews in the business and management field have similarly adopted a single-database approach, citing Scopus's superior coverage, content breadth and bibliometric accuracy compared with alternative databases (Bhandal et al., 2022; Tipu and Ryan, 2022). This review focused exclusively on peer-reviewed journal articles; books, book chapters, conference papers, dissertations and grey literature were excluded to ensure that all sources met established academic standards and reflected validated contributions to scholarly discourse (Zhu and Liu, 2020).

Several criteria were applied to guide the search. First, the search was restricted to English-language publications to ensure consistency in coding, analysis and interpretation. No date restrictions were applied, allowing the review to capture both foundational and recent contributions to the field; accordingly, the search included all articles meeting the criteria published up to August 30, 2024. Finally, the search was limited to the subject area of 'Business, Management and Accounting' to maintain a focus on the organisational and management context of PSCM and sustainability.

The initial search yielded 5215 results. To refine the scope and ensure the relevance and quality of the studies, an approach similar to that adopted by Quarshie et al. (2016), Johnsen et al. (2017) and Carter and Easton (2011) was applied, involving the restriction of the search to a selected set of journals. This method ensured that the articles included were both relevant to the review topic and of high quality (Sauer and Seuring, 2023). Accordingly, the search was limited to 18 leading journals in the field of purchasing and supply management. These journals were selected based on prior literature reviews (e.g. Miemczyk et al., 2012; Seuring and Müller, 2008; Zorzini et al., 2015) and their Chartered Association of Business Schools (CABS) ranking[1] of 3, 4 or 4*, to ensure both relevance and quality (Johnsen et al., 2017; Miandar et al., 2024). Following the application of these criteria, the number of articles was reduced to 449. The full list of journals included in the search, along with their CABS rankings, is provided in Appendix A.

3.2. Screening and study selection

Titles and abstracts were screened to assess topical relevance and alignment with the research focus. This initial review removed studies that were clearly outside the scope of institutional theory and sustainable purchasing or supply chain management. For example, papers focusing on adjacent topics that often intersect with supply chain management (e.g. healthcare, digitalisation, technology or finance) were excluded where they did not explicitly address SPSCM. In addition, articles that did not reference any institutional theory concepts in the title, abstract or keywords were excluded. This stage resulted in 240 articles being retained for full-text screening. These articles were subsequently assessed using clearly defined inclusion and exclusion criteria.

First, studies were excluded if they did not engage meaningfully with institutional theory within the SPSCM context. For instance, articles

[1] Notably, we also included the International Journal of Physical Distribution and Logistics Management, which has a CABS ranking of 2, due to its strong field relevance and alignment with the purpose of the review.

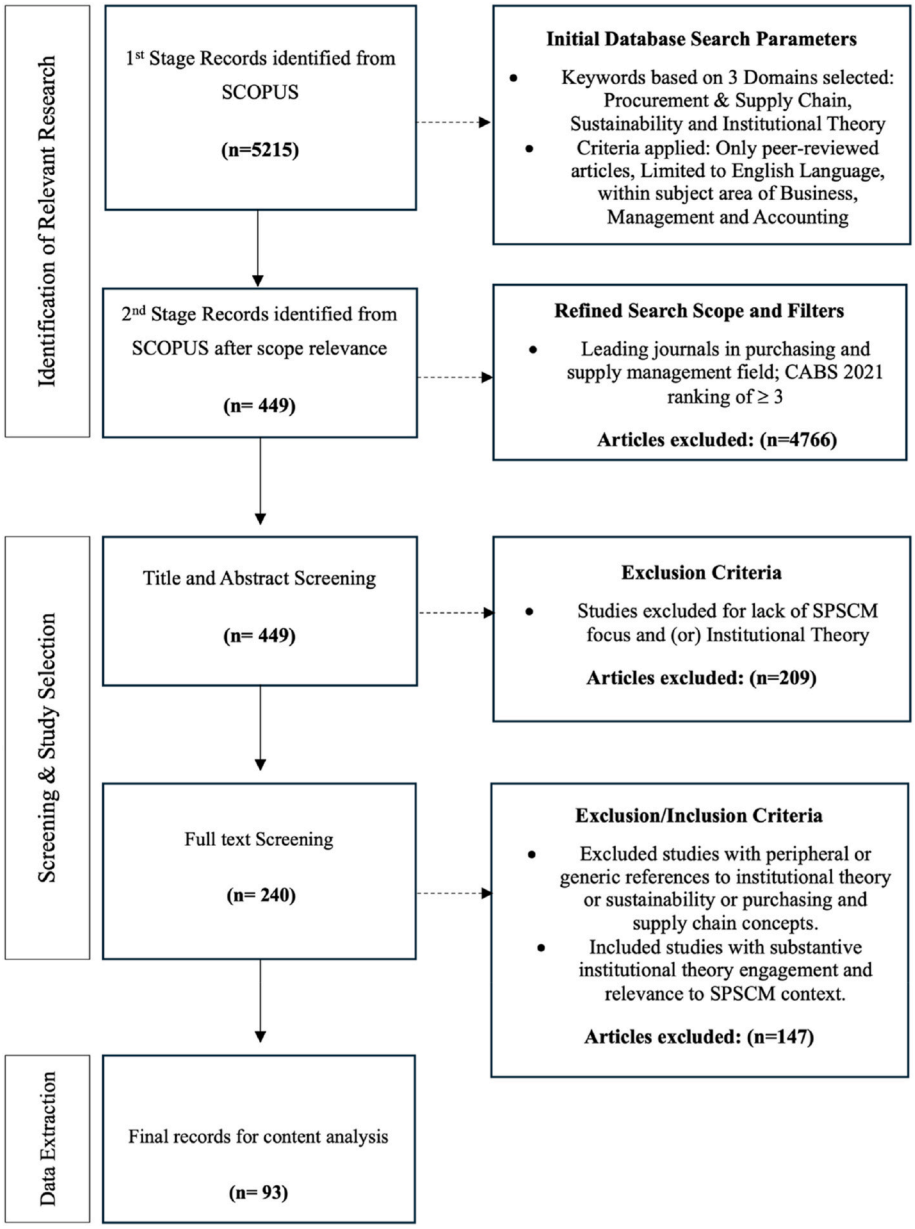

Fig. 1. Systematic literature review process.

Table 1
Keywords used for literature search.

Theme	Keywords
Procurement and Supply Chain	'suppl*', 'buy*', 'procure*', 'sourc*', 'purchase*' and 'seller*'
Sustainability	'green', 'environment*', 'sustain*', 'social*', 'responsible*', 'CSR', 'ethic*' and 'TBL'
Institutional Theory	'institution*'

were excluded if institutional theory concepts were mentioned briefly in the introduction or conclusion, or treated merely as recommendations rather than as central theoretical lens. We also excluded articles that used the term 'institutional' in a general or unrelated sense, such as 'institutional settings' or 'institutional purchasing managers'. Second, studies applying institutional theory in combination with other frameworks were included only where they provided substantive insights grounded in institutional theory (e.g. Adams et al., 2022; Liao et al., 2024; Xu et al., 2023). Third, studies were excluded if references to sustainability or supply chain concepts were superficial or used in unrelated contexts. This criterion was particularly important given that the keyword search strategy incorporated a range of sustainability-related terms, such as 'social', 'environmental', 'green' and 'ethical'. However, not all uses of these terms were aligned with the intended focus of the review. For example, some studies referred to 'social networks' or 'country environment', which are conceptually unrelated to sustainability, while others employed terms such as 'sustainable performance' merely as generic descriptors without engaging with sustainability as a substantive concept. Finally, both empirical and theoretical papers were included, provided that they offered relevant insights into institutional theory in the context of SPSCM. This final stage of screening resulted in the exclusion of 147 articles, yielding a final sample of 93 articles from 14 journals included in the review.

3.3. Data extraction and analysis

We began this step by conducting a structured data extraction using predefined descriptive categories, as recommended by Denyer and

Tranfield (2009). These categories were designed to capture the general characteristics of each study and to ensure consistency across the review. The first author developed the data extraction form, which was subsequently reviewed by the co-authors to approve the final set of categories. For each study, the following information was extracted: author(s), publication year, journal, research method (e.g. empirical, theoretical or review), sustainability dimensions addressed (social, ethical, environmental) and main findings.

For the classification and coding framework, we applied a structured deductive approach to categorise each paper and its main findings according to established concepts of institutional change processes (see Appendix B for article categorisation). Given that institutional change has not been systematically conceptualised within PSCM, we adopted a theory-driven coding approach, consistent with what Seuring et al. (2020) describe as theory extension through deductive-external analysis. Specifically, we drew on the six-stage model of institutional change proposed by Greenwood et al. (2002), which has been widely applied to examine how institutions evolve over time. However, rather than applying all six stages separately, we followed the adapted and streamlined framework developed by Micelotta et al. (2017), which consolidates the stages into three overarching categories: triggers, mechanisms and outcomes. This broader framework was particularly useful to facilitating a theory-informed synthesis (Snyder, 2019) since it enabled a nuanced interpretation of heterogeneous findings by recognising the multiple, and sometimes overlapping, components shaping institutional change. Each article was reviewed and coded into one or more of the three stages of institutional change. Within the triggers category, institutional pressures were initially coded using the high-level constructs of coercive, mimetic and normative pressures (Dimaggio and Powell, 1983; Scott, 2014). This decision was informed by the observation that most reviewed studies either explicitly employed these terms or implicitly referred to pressures that conceptually aligned with these well-established categories. However, a number of studies also referred to internally driven factors, such as management commitment or internal impetus, as triggers of change. As these influences could not be meaningfully classified within the established pressure categories, they were coded separately under a distinct theme labelled endogenous triggers, capturing drivers of change originating within the focal firm or supply chain.

For the processes and mechanisms category, we initially adopted an inductive approach to identify and label the specific activities or strategies discussed in each article as contributing to institutional change. However, since many of the studies did not explicitly set out to define or analyse these processes, descriptions of change mechanisms were often embedded within broader empirical narratives. In several cases, only brief references were made to how change occurred, necessitating close and interpretive reading to extract relevant practices. During this stage, it became apparent that many articles emphasised specific tools or means through which change was enacted, such as certifications (Grimm et al., 2023), supplier management practices (León-Bravo et al., 2022) or the use of technology (Li et al., 2020), rather than delineating procedural or sequential processes of change. As such, we drew on Hampel et al.'s (2017) means-based categorisation of institutional work, which provided a more structured and analytically meaningful lens to synthesise these dispersed references.

For the outcomes category, we employed a conceptually guided approach, drawing on established constructs from institutional change theory to structure the coding. Although outcomes were not always explicitly labelled as such in the reviewed studies, recurring themes emerged that aligned with recognised theoretical categories. For instance, the exclusion of non-compliant suppliers (Abbate et al., 2023) was coded as 'supplier removal' and subsequently interpreted as a case of 'deinstitutionalisation', as it reflected the disruption of previously accepted supplier relationships and norms. In addition, the analysis revealed frequent references to factors that enabled or shaped institutional change processes. Consequently, a fourth classification, *enablers*, was introduced to capture internal and external factors that influenced or facilitated change processes. Patterns of similarity and difference across the data were then examined to identify sub-themes within each classification. All coding and categorisation decisions were discussed collaboratively and cross-validated among the author team.

To ensure validity and reliability, we followed established methodological guidance for systematic reviews in purchasing and supply chain management (Sauer and Seuring, 2023). Potential sources of bias and corresponding mitigation strategies are summarised in Table 2.

4. Descriptive analysis

4.1. Journal sources and year distribution of articles

The analysis of journal contributions indicates a concentration of research within a relatively small number of key sources (see Table 3). This concentration is largely shaped by recent publication activity, with 56 articles (60.2%) published between January 2020 and August 2024, and a further 23 articles (25%) appearing between 2015 and 2019. Overall, 85% of the reviewed articles were published within the last decade, highlighting a growing scholarly emphasis on institutional change in purchasing and supply chain management. This trend is particularly evident following the foundational contribution of Kauppi (2013), who introduced the economic and social dimensions of institutional change and isomorphism into operations and supply management research. The increasing volume of studies in recent years may be attributed to the heightened regulatory pressures and rising societal expectations for firms to demonstrate credible and substantive sustainability practices. As a result, there is growing evidence of firms undertaking transformational efforts to embed sustainability, especially within PSCM, thereby creating rich empirical contexts for academic inquiry. The past decade has also been characterised by increasing calls for impactful research with strong relevance to practice (Ferraro and Gehman, 2015; George et al., 2016). Although research on SPSCM has a long-standing history, its intersection with institutional theory is comparatively more recent and continues to expand due its potential to

Table 2
Potential biases and mitigation strategies in the systematic literature review.

Potential Bias	Affected SLR Stage	Mitigation Strategy Applied in This Review
Retrieval bias	Literature Search	Theory-informed search across PSCM, sustainability and institutional theory; search strings refined in consultation with an academic librarian; Scopus selected for coverage and bibliometric reliability.
Publication bias	Journal Selection	Journal selection informed by established PSCM reviews and CABS rankings; inclusion of both empirical and conceptual studies with no date restriction.
Inclusion criteria bias	Screening and Selection	Consistent application of explicit inclusion and exclusion criteria during title, abstract and full-text screening; inclusion required substantive engagement with institutional theory and sustainability in PSCM.
Selector bias	Study Selection	Screening decisions, particularly in borderline cases, were discussed collaboratively among the author team to reach consensus and reduce individual bias.
Within-study coding bias	Data Extraction and Coding	Coding guided by established institutional change process models and institutional work typologies; iterative discussions among authors to ensure consistency.
Expectancy bias	Data Synthesis	Reflexive, theory-driven synthesis; preliminary interpretations presented at two academic conferences; detailed article-level classifications documented in Appendix B.

Adapted from Durach et al. (2017)

Table 3
Distribution of articles across the journals and year.

Source Title; (CABS Ranking)	Number of Articles	2005 – 2009	2010 – 2014	2015 – 2019	2020 – Aug 2024
Business Strategy and the Environment; (3)	17			1	16
International Journal of Production Economics; (3)	13		4	7	3
International Journal of Physical Distribution and Logistics Management; (2)	10			4	5
Supply Chain Management: An International Journal; (3)	10		4	3	4
International Journal of Operations and Production Management; (4)	9				9
Journal of Purchasing and Supply Management; (3)	8		2	2	4
Journal of Business Ethics; (3)	5	1		1	3
Journal of Operations Management; (4*)	4			2	2
International Journal of Production Research; (3)	4	1	1		2
Journal of Supply Chain Management; (4)	3			2	1
Journal of Business Logistics; (3)	3		1	1	1
IEEE Transactions on Engineering Management; (3)	2				2
Production Planning and Control; (3)	2				2
Annals of Operations Research; (3)	2				2
Total	**93**	**2**	**12**	**23**	**56**

advance theoretical development within the field. Earlier reviews (e.g. Miemczyk et al., 2012; Seuring and Müller, 2008; Walker et al., 2012) highlighted the lack of theoretical depth in SPSCM. In response, scholars have increasingly turned to institutional theory to examine sustainability-related phenomena in PSCM, contributing to the growing body of literature at this intersection.

4.2. Research methodologies applied

The sample predominantly consisted of empirical studies, with 83 articles (89% of the total) employing empirical research designs. This distribution reflects a clear emphasis on investigating SPSCM through data-driven and real-world contexts. Among the empirical studies, quantitative research methods were most commonly adopted, with 41 studies utilising survey data and secondary sources. A wide range of analytical techniques was applied, with regression analysis and structural equation modelling each accounting for 35% of the methods employed. In addition, 10% of the studies used multivariate techniques, while the remaining 20% applied a variety of other approaches, including hierarchical linear modelling, path analysis, factor analysis (both confirmatory and exploratory) and conditional process modelling. Qualitative research was also well-represented with 39 studies employing methods such as case studies, interviews, field observations and archival document analysis. The majority of these qualitative studies (84%) adopted inductive, abductive or grounded theory approaches, typically involving thematic analysis and the identification of

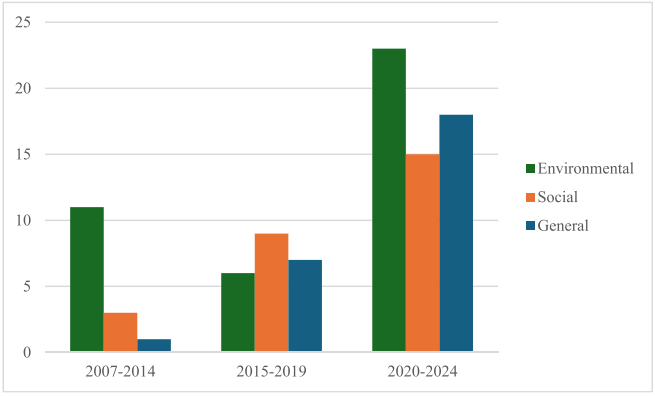

Fig. 2. Trends in sustainability dimensions over time.

first-order codes and second-order themes. The remaining qualitative articles (16%) employed alternative data analysis methods, including content analysis, narrative analysis and template analysis. The distribution of qualitative and quantitative approaches suggests a concerted effort within the field to both explore and empirically test sustainable practices and their impacts. However, mixed-methods designs were rarely used. Only three studies (e.g. Laosirihongthong et al., 2020; Osei et al., 2023; Rentizelas et al., 2020) combined qualitative and quantitative data, indicating considerable scope for future research to integrate these approaches in order to better capture the multifaceted nature of sustainability-related phenomena. In contrast, theoretical or conceptual studies accounted for a relatively small proportion of the sample, with only 10 articles (10%). This imbalance underscores the continued need for further theoretical development to complement and guide empirical research in this domain.

4.3. Sustainability dimensions

We examined the sustainability dimensions and related issues discussed in the reviewed literature, as illustrated in Fig. 2. Overall, the distribution reveals a persistent imbalance across sustainability dimensions, with environmental sustainability receiving the greatest attention (42.5%), followed by social sustainability (29.8%) and broader sustainability perspectives (28.7%). In the early period (2007–2014), research focused predominantly on environmental sustainability, with limited engagement with social sustainability and relatively few studies adopting a broader sustainability perspective. Although environmental sustainability remains prominent across all periods, its dominance becomes less pronounced over time. From 2015 onwards, there is a noticeable increase in studies addressing social sustainability issues, alongside a growing number of contributions adopting more integrated

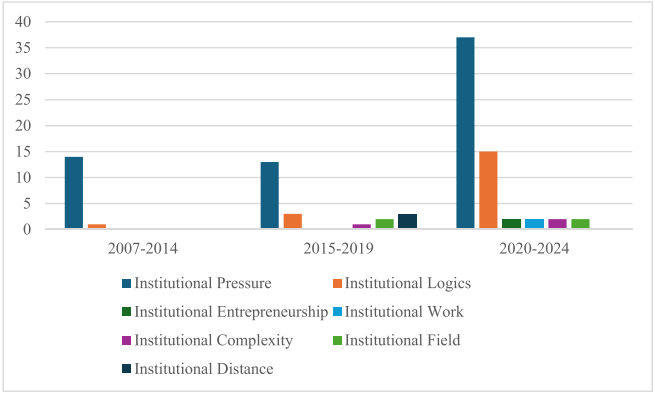

Fig. 3. Distribution of institutional theory perspectives over time.

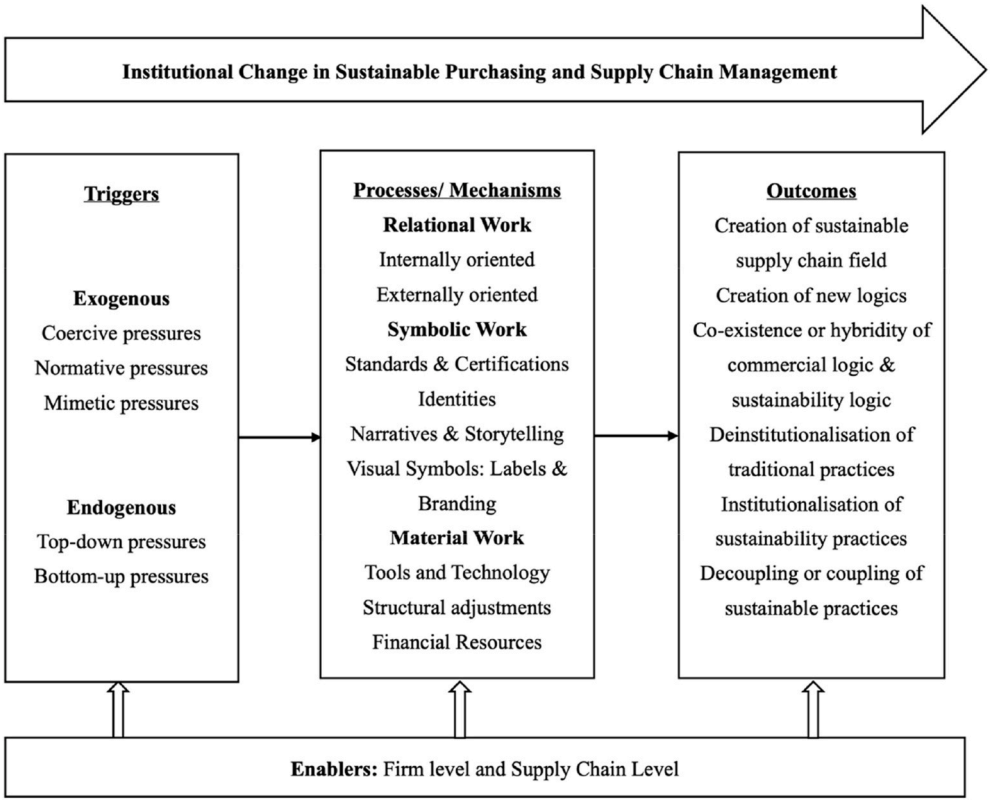

Fig. 4. Institutional change in sustainable purchasing and supply chain management framework.[2]

sustainability perspectives. In the most recent period (2020–2024), while environmental sustainability continues to account for the largest proportion of studies, research examining social sustainability and broader sustainability concerns expands substantially. This includes work aligned with wider societal challenges, such as the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (e.g. Carmagnac et al., 2024). Collectively, this temporal pattern indicates a gradual broadening of the sustainability agenda within institutional change research in PSCM, while also suggesting that social sustainability remains comparatively underexplored. This pattern is consistent with broader observations in the supply chain literature, which highlight the challenges associated with addressing socially embedded sustainability concerns, particularly when sustainability is framed through performance-oriented and firm-centric perspectives (Luzzini et al., 2024a; Pagell and Wilhelm, 2025).

4.4. Institutional change theoretical perspectives

An examination of the institutional change theoretical lenses applied in the reviewed studies reveals that the majority (58 articles, 62%) adopted an institutional pressure perspective. These studies primarily examined how external pressures, such as regulatory mandates, market competition and stakeholder expectations drive organisations to adopt sustainable practices. Many of these studies also considered institutional pressures in conjunction with related concepts, including institutional fields and contexts (e.g. Chen et al., 2024; Ferri et al., 2016; Ye et al., 2023), thereby highlighting how broader industry norms shape organisational behaviour. In addition, several studies examined institutional distance, reflecting differences in regulatory and cultural environments across regions (e.g. Busse et al., 2016; Sauer and Seuring, 2018), as well as institutional uncertainty and institutional voids, where the absence of clear rules or standards influences organisational responses to sustainability-related challenges. When analysed across publication periods (see Fig. 3), the institutional pressure perspective consistently dominated over time, with the largest share of such studies published in the most recent period (2020–2024). This pattern reflects the overall growth of institutional change research in PSCM.

The second most prevalent perspective was institutional logics, accounting for 18% of the studies (17 articles). These studies focused on the underlying assumptions, values and belief systems that shape how organisational actors interpret and respond to sustainability issues within PSCM (e.g. Carmagnac et al., 2024; Glover et al., 2014; McLoughlin and Meehan, 2021). Research adopting an institutional logics perspective was largely concentrated in the post-2015 period, indicating a more recent scholarly interest in value- and meaning-oriented explanations of sustainability-related change.

The remaining 20% of studies drew on a diverse set of institutional perspectives. These included institutional conflict and complexity, which examines tensions arising from competing institutional demands (e.g. León-Bravo et al., 2022; Pullman et al., 2018; Schumm and Niehm, 2023), as well as studies on institutional entrepreneurship (e.g. Grimm et al., 2023; Vo et al., 2023), which emphasise the role of individual actors in shaping or creating new norms within PSCM. Finally, only a small number of studies (two articles) employed an institutional work perspective, focusing on the deliberate actions undertaken by individuals or groups to create, maintain or disrupt PSCM practices to embed sustainability (e.g. Razmdoost and Alinaghian, 2024; Tsvetkova, 2021).

5. Findings

This section presents the findings of the study, examining how institutional change unfolds within SPSCM. Fig. 4 presents an organising

[2] The framework synthesises the key triggers, processes and mechanisms, outcomes and enablers identified across the reviewed literature. Detailed article-level categorisation underpinning the framework is provided in Appendix B.

framework used to structure these findings. The framework is adapted from institutional change process models that conceptualise change as unfolding from triggers to mechanisms and outcomes (Greenwood et al., 2002), following the consolidated three-stage structure proposed by Micelotta et al. (2017). In addition to these elements, the framework also incorporates *enablers* that influence the change process. Although these categories are presented separately for analytical clarity, they should not be interpreted as representing a linear sequence. Institutional change is frequently non-linear and shaped by iterative interactions. Our findings highlight the emerging interdependencies identified in the literature, which we examine in detail in Section 5.5.

5.1. Triggers of change

The literature shows that institutional change towards SPSCM is initiated by a range of triggers that can be broadly categorised as exogenous and endogenous in origin. Our analysis identified multiple exogenous pressures that influence the adoption of sustainable practices in PSCM. These pressures originate outside the focal firm and compel purchasing and supply chain functions to respond to evolving environmental, social and regulatory demands. Consistent with institutional theory, such exogenous pressures can be classified into three primary forms: coercive, normative and mimetic pressures.

Coercive pressures arise from mandates, regulations and directives imposed by powerful exogenous actors, such as governments, regulatory agencies or influential firms within the supply chain (Tate et al., 2011; Zhu and Sarkis, 2007). Focal firms often adopt sustainable practices in response to these pressures to ensure compliance and avoid sanctions (Laosirihongthong et al., 2020; Silva and Nunes, 2022). For instance, customers in the apparel industry exert coercive pressures by requiring suppliers to adopt sustainable practices in line with societal and regulatory expectations (Abbate et al., 2023). Although government-led green procurement policies encourage firms to pursue environmental innovation, such policies do not necessarily address all dimensions of sustainability (Liao et al., 2024; Sharma et al., 2024). In some cases, a 'ceiling effect' constrains firms to meeting minimum compliance requirements, potentially limiting continuous improvement and reducing incentives to pursue more ambitious or transformative change (Rentizelas et al., 2020; Yang et al., 2020).

Normative pressures stem from industry standards, certification schemes and shared values, encouraging firms to adopt practices that reflect collectively accepted sustainability expectations (Calzolari et al., 2025). For instance, biodiversity-related certifications function as normative pressures by motivating focal firms to integrate biodiversity considerations into their purchasing and supply management activities (Atupola and Gunarathne, 2023). Third-party organisations, such as purchasing consortia, further facilitate the diffusion of best practices, promoting normative alignment (Sancha et al., 2015). These pressures are particularly pronounced in the manufacturing sector, where customer demands strongly influence the adoption of green supply chain practices (Abbate et al., 2023; Seles et al., 2016). Moreover, stakeholder expectations operating at different levels of institutional fields reinforce normative pressures and shape focal firms' sustainability strategies (Agyabeng-Mensah et al., 2024; Grekova et al., 2014).

Lastly, mimetic pressures arise when focal firms emulate the sustainability practices of successful competitors, particularly in uncertain regulatory environments or industries characterised by limited sustainability guidance (Sayed et al., 2017). Firms operating in developing economies may adopt practices associated with market leaders to enhance their legitimacy and efficiency (Yawar and Kauppi, 2018). Mimetic pressures can also facilitate cross-functional sustainability innovations within firms, as they seek to align with recognised frontrunners (Sharma et al., 2024; Xu et al., 2023). However, mimetic responses may vary in depth, resulting in either symbolic or substantive adoption of standards such as SA8000 (a social accountability standard focused on labour rights and working conditions), depending on whether customer demands are perceived as reputational or operational in nature (Koster et al., 2019). Collectively, these exogenous pressures interact across different levels of the supply chain. First- and second-tier suppliers tend to experience stronger coercive and normative pressures, whereas third-tier suppliers are more likely to encounter such pressures only when they are directly connected to focal firms (Mena and Schoenherr, 2023; Nath et al., 2021).

We also identified a set of endogenous (internally driven) pressures that trigger purchasing functions and supply chains to embed sustainability; however, these pressures have been explored less extensively in the literature. We grouped these endogenous pressures into two broad categories: *top-down* and *bottom-up* pressures. The review suggests that organisations are increasingly becoming environmentally aware (Sayed et al., 2017; Yawar and Kauppi, 2018) and, as a result, may assume a dual agency role within their supply chains by proactively embedding sustainability within their own operations (Rentizelas et al., 2020) and diffusing sustainability practices across their supply chains (Wilhelm et al., 2016). Owners and senior management play a central role in generating internal pressures by setting sustainability-related targets and goals (Khor et al., 2016), which prompt different organisational functions to engage with sustainability. In this regard, the purchasing function has emerged as a key locus for advancing sustainability initiatives (Blome et al., 2014; Varsei et al., 2014). Owners and senior leadership thus act as powerful actors capable of enacting top-down institutional change (Agarwal et al., 2018; Vo et al., 2023). In addition, the review identified employee-driven initiatives as an important form of endogenous pressure, whereby low-status actors assume the role of institutional entrepreneurs and advocate for bottom-up change (Silva and Nunes, 2022). For example, employees involved in day-to-day negotiations, interactions and meetings with suppliers can leverage their positions as boundary spanners to facilitate the adoption of sustainability practices across the supply chain (Geng et al., 2020). Such incremental actions by lower-status actors may generate tensions with established routines and practices that do not prioritise sustainability, thereby creating pressure for institutional change to address and reconcile these misalignments (Tsvetkova, 2021).

5.2. Processes and mechanisms of change

In classifying the processes and mechanisms of institutional change, we drew on the institutional work perspective, which focuses on the purposeful actions through which institutions are changed (Lawrence and Suddaby, 2006). Building on the work of Hampel et al. (2017), we applied a means-based approach to identify three primary strategies through which institutional change occurs: symbolic, relational and material work. This categorisation is particularly valuable as it links the everyday practices of PSCM, such as operational tasks and stakeholder interactions, to broader institutional change processes.

5.2.1. Relational work

The literature consistently emphasises that the implementation of sustainable practices within purchasing and supply management is not an isolated endeavour but instead requires collaboration with a diverse range of stakeholders (McLoughlin and Meehan, 2021; Tsvetkova, 2021). Across the reviewed studies, two broad forms of relational work were identified: internally oriented and externally oriented.

Internally oriented relational work refers to actions aimed at influencing institutions through collaboration and coordination within the focal firm (Li et al., 2020; Osei et al., 2023). These practices seek to build internal alignment around sustainability objectives by fostering cross-functional collaboration, knowledge sharing and the development of sustainability-related competencies. The literature highlights practices such as interdepartmental dialogue, cross-functional coopetition and internal knowledge exchange as mechanisms through which sustainability considerations are embedded across procurement, operations and sustainability functions (Do et al., 2024; Grimm et al., 2023; Xu

et al., 2023). A recurring theme in this stream is the role of sustainability champions, who mobilise support internally, advocate for sustainability initiatives and facilitate the embedding of sustainability as a shared organisational concern (Carmagnac et al., 2024; Razmdoost and Alinaghian, 2024).

Externally oriented relational work encompasses actions aimed at influencing institutions through collaboration with external stakeholders such as suppliers, customers, professional bodies and non-governmental organisations (Grimm et al., 2023; Li et al., 2020). Several studies highlight the role of institutional entrepreneurs within supply chains who leverage relational ties to drive changes in sustainability practices across upstream and downstream relationships (Grimm et al., 2023; Mena and Schoenherr, 2023). Through inter-firm dialogue and repeated interaction, these actors facilitate knowledge exchange and contribute to the diffusion of sustainability practices beyond organisational boundaries (Kelling et al., 2021).

Supplier development programmes emerge as one of the most prominent externally oriented relational practices (Blome et al., 2014). These programmes involve structured engagement through which focal firms support suppliers in developing sustainability-related capabilities and aligning with sustainability standards (Shibin et al., 2020; Xu et al., 2023). Prior studies indicate that supplier development enables mutual learning and co-creation, as suppliers not only implement sustainability requirements but also contribute insights that shape sustainability practices at the focal firm level (Ahmadi-Gh and Bello-Pintado, 2024; Yawar and Kauppi, 2018). Through such collaborative arrangements, firms may contribute to the gradual transformation of buyer–supplier institutions towards more sustainability-oriented norms (León-Bravo et al., 2022; Razmdoost and Alinaghian, 2024).

However, the literature also highlights considerable variation in supplier responses to relational sustainability initiatives. Suppliers adopt a range of strategies, including accommodation, compromise, concealment and selective compliance, depending on their resources, institutional context and power position within the supply chain (Nath et al., 2020; Nath and Eweje, 2021; Diebel et al., 2024). These responses underscore the role of power asymmetries in shaping the effectiveness of relational work, as focal firms with greater resources are often better positioned to influence sustainability adoption, whereas less powerful suppliers may engage in symbolic or decoupled practices (Fayezi et al., 2018; McLoughlin and Meehan, 2021; Vanpoucke and Klassen, 2023).

Several studies further suggest that when sustainability is weakly embedded within organisational cultures, relational work may result in superficial adoption rather than substantive change. This can manifest in decoupling, corruption or compliance-driven behaviours that undermine strategic sustainability transformations (Rentizelas et al., 2020; Silvestre et al., 2020; Kelling et al., 2021). In response, scholars emphasise the importance of moving beyond compliance-oriented approaches rooted in narrow commercial logics towards hybrid logics that integrate social and environmental welfare considerations (Longoni et al., 2019; Pullman et al., 2018; Schumm and Niehm, 2023).

Where multiple logics co-exist across buyer–supplier relationships, relational work becomes central to managing tensions and sustaining collaboration over time (Pullman et al., 2018; Razmdoost and Alinaghian, 2024). Firms adopt relational strategies such as accommodation, acceptance and complementarity to navigate competing demands and align sustainability objectives with local contexts and stakeholder expectations (Longoni et al., 2019; Fontana et al., 2023). These practices illustrate how relational work functions not only as a coordination mechanism but also as a means through which institutional tensions are negotiated and sustainability practices stabilised over time.

5.2.2. Symbolic work

Symbolic work refers to the use of symbols to enable, demonstrate and sustain institutional change (Hampel et al., 2017). Across the reviewed studies, symbolic objects in PSCM, such as certifications, standards, communication tools and eco-labels, function as boundary-spanning mechanisms that help bridge traditional procurement practices with sustainability-oriented approaches (Do et al., 2024; Nicholls and Huybrechts, 2016; Razmdoost and Alinaghian, 2024). By providing shared reference points, these symbols facilitate coordination across organisations and stakeholder groups and support the diffusion of sustainability-related norms.

Certifications and standards represent the most frequently discussed form of symbolic work in the literature. Prior research highlight that sustainability certifications play a central role in legitimising sustainable practices and supporting their institutionalisation within supply chains and broader institutional fields (Abbate et al., 2023; Ahmadi-Gh and Bello-Pintado, 2024; Atupola and Gunarathne, 2023; Kauppi and Hannibal, 2017). As such certifications become widely adopted, firms often engage in mimetic adaptation, pursuing certification in order to maintain legitimacy and align with emerging field-level expectations (Atupola and Gunarathne, 2023). The presence of third-party standard-setting and assessment organisations, such as EcoVadis, the Carbon Disclosure Project and the Global Reporting Initiative, further contributes to the consolidation of shared sustainability benchmarks across supply chains (Kauppi and Hannibal, 2017; Pereira et al., 2023). Evidence also suggests that certifications can serve as vehicles for cascading sustainability practices across supply chain tiers, as downstream actors use assessment requirements to influence upstream suppliers (Kauppi and Hannibal, 2017).

Symbolic work through identity construction is discussed less frequently in the literature but nonetheless provides important insights into how institutional change is enacted and sustained. A small number of studies illustrate how individuals and organisations mobilise identities to challenge established norms and introduce alternative ways of working. For example, Vo et al. (2023) demonstrate how female managers in the maritime sector leveraged new professional identities to navigate male-dominated environments and act as institutional entrepreneurs, thereby enabling the introduction of alternative logics associated with social sustainability.

Visual symbols, such as labels and logos, constitute another form of symbolic work, particularly in manufacturing and consumer-facing industries (Abbate et al., 2023). These symbols provide visible signals of sustainability commitment and contribute to shaping stakeholder perceptions and normative expectations within industries (Fontana et al., 2023). However, several studies caution that visual symbols may also be adopted superficially, serving reputational purposes without being accompanied by substantive operational change (Agarwal et al., 2018; Koster et al., 2019). In contexts where firms operate under both commercial and sustainability logics, the depth of integration of visual symbols often varies, resulting in uneven or predominantly symbolic adoption of sustainability practices (Carmagnac et al., 2024; León-Bravo et al., 2022; Nath and Eweje, 2021).

Beyond tangible symbols, the literature also highlights the role of narratives and storytelling as symbolic mechanisms through which firms frame and communicate sustainability efforts. As firms develop sustainability-related competencies through internal improvement activities, such as training, operational adjustments and leadership engagement, they simultaneously construct narratives that signal commitment and shape organisational identity (Li et al., 2020; Pereira et al., 2023). These narratives form part of broader storytelling processes through which firms and PSCM actors articulate sustainability journeys, values and aspirations. In doing so, they reinforce symbolic legitimacy and support the ongoing institutionalisation of sustainability practices (Abbate et al., 2023; Atupola and Gunarathne, 2023; Do et al., 2024; Razmdoost and Alinaghian, 2024).

5.2.3. Material work

Material work, as defined by Hampel et al. (2017), involves the use of tangible resources, structures and tools that directly shape or influences institutions. Our review indicate that material work is a vital approach for embedding sustainability within supply chains, with firms

increasingly leveraging technologies, structures and financial resources to advance sustainable practices. However, compared with symbolic and relational work, material work has received relatively limited attention in the literature, despite its critical role in operationalising sustainability across purchasing functions and supply chains.

Studies addressing material work highlight several ways in which firms deploy tangible resources to support sustainability across supply chain networks. A prominent theme concerns the use of digital and production technologies, such as Industry 4.0, which enhance transparency, traceability and real-time monitoring of sustainability practices across supply chains (Sharma et al., 2024). In parallel, firms invest in sustainable product design through approaches such as eco-design, recycling and waste reduction, enabling them to respond more effectively to environmental requirements and consumer expectations (Khor et al., 2016; Li et al., 2020; Wu et al., 2012; Zhu and Sarkis, 2007).

Material work is also evident in organisational restructuring aimed at supporting sustainability objectives. Several studies report the establishment of dedicated sustainability or sustainable procurement units, as well as the appointment of specialised roles responsible for coordinating sustainability-related activities (Atupola and Gunarathne, 2023; Silva and Nunes, 2022). These structural arrangements provide formal mechanisms through which sustainability practices are embedded into procurement and supply chain operations and facilitate coordination across internal functions and external partners (Li et al., 2020).

Financial investments represent another important form of material work. Firms allocate financial resources to sustainability initiatives, innovation activities and product development efforts that enable the trial and implementation of new sustainable practices (Dubey et al., 2015; Huang et al., 2017; Ye et al., 2023). Through pilot projects and iterative experimentation, firms can operationalise sustainability commitments and demonstrate the feasibility of alternative practices within their supply chains (Fung et al., 2020; Laosirihongthong et al., 2020; Singh and Joshi, 2024; Do et al., 2024; Razmdoost and Alinaghian, 2024).

Finally, the literature highlights the role of formal contracts and agreements as material mechanisms that stabilise sustainability practices within buyer–supplier relationships. Such contractual arrangements establish enforceable guidelines that support the continuity of sustainability practices, particularly in contexts characterised by power asymmetries (Egels-Zandén and Wahlqvist, 2007; Nicholls and Huybrechts, 2016). By codifying expectations and responsibilities, such agreements create durable structures that help sustain social and environmental objectives within supply chain partnerships (Fontana et al., 2023).

5.3. Enablers of change

Across the reviewed studies, we identified several factors that influence how institutional change towards sustainability unfolds within PSCM. These factors were primarily discussed in studies adopting an institutional change lens to explain variation in change processes and outcomes (e.g. Geng et al., 2020; Sawang et al., 2024; Yang et al., 2020; Zhang et al., 2024). We grouped these enablers into two broad categories: firm-level and supply-chain-level enablers.

Firm-level enablers refer to factors that largely lie within the focal firm's control. A recurring theme in the literature is the role of leadership and internal capabilities in shaping the embedding of sustainability within PSCM. Several studies highlight that leadership commitment, particularly at senior management level, supports the creation and diffusion of sustainability-oriented institutions by providing strategic direction, allocating resources and generating consistent internal pressure (Ahmadi-Gh and Bello-Pintado, 2024; Dubey et al., 2015; Fung et al., 2020). Some firms further reinforce leadership engagement through incentive mechanisms, such as linking executive remuneration to sustainability performance (Liao et al., 2024). Complementing leadership, a supportive organisational culture characterised by learning, collaboration and innovation has been shown to facilitate the diffusion of sustainability practices across procurement and supply chain functions (Jajja et al., 2019; Osei et al., 2023).

Other firm-level structural attributes, including firm size, resource availability and technological capacity, also influence the institutional change process (Grekova et al., 2014; Li et al., 2020). Larger firms with greater resources are often better positioned to invest in sustainability-related technologies, training and specialised roles, thereby supporting the institutionalisation of sustainability practices across PSCM (Wilhelm et al., 2016). In contrast, resource-constrained firms may encounter greater challenges in scaling and sustaining such practices, illustrating how firm characteristics condition the pace and depth of institutional change (Shi et al., 2012).

Supply-chain-level enablers encompass factors that extend beyond the focal firm and relate to the broader institutional environment in which supply chains operate. The literature frequently conceptualises supply chains as institutional fields, within which shared norms, expectations and power relations shape sustainability adoption across interconnected actors (Sauer and Seuring, 2018). Within these fields, institutional context, such as regulation, national culture and customer pressure, plays a central role. Studies indicate that suppliers operating in environments characterised by strong regulation and active civil society institutions are generally better equipped to meet sustainability requirements, whereas weak regulatory regimes and structural barriers can hinder sustainability performance and monitoring (Castaldi et al., 2023; Silvestre et al., 2020). Institutional distance between buyers and suppliers, reflected in regulatory and cultural differences, further complicates the alignment and institutionalisation of sustainability practices (Omar et al., 2022; Ye et al., 2023). For example, Geng et al. (2020) demonstrate how relational norms such as *guanxi* shape the adoption of green practices in China by mediating the effects of formal regulatory pressures.

Finally, several studies highlight how a firm's position and visibility within the supply chain influence engagement with institutional change. Firms located closer to end markets and consumers tend to face stronger sustainability pressures and are therefore more proactive in adopting and promoting sustainable practices, whereas actors positioned further upstream may experience weaker incentives to engage in institutional change (Mena and Schoenherr, 2023; Nath et al., 2021; Seles et al., 2016).

5.4. Outcomes

The analysis of the reviewed studies also revealed several outcomes that can be examined from an institutional change perspective. One of the most frequently observed outcomes is the decoupling or coupling of sustainability practices within procurement and supply chain operations. Some firms engage in symbolic adoption, formally committing to sustainability initiatives while failing to substantively embed them in decision-making and supplier relationships (Huq and Stevenson, 2020; Kelling et al., 2021). Such decoupling often arises in response to external pressures, enabling firms to maintain legitimacy without fundamentally disrupting established institutions (Silvestre et al., 2020; Kelling et al., 2021; Koster et al., 2019). By contrast, where regulatory oversight and consumer-driven accountability mechanisms are robust, firms are more likely to couple sustainability with procurement processes by integrating sustainability principles into sourcing decisions, supplier engagement and contract enforcement (Nath and Eweje, 2021).

Where coupling is more extensive, institutional change may extend beyond minor or incremental adjustments, leading to the disruptions of traditional procurement and supply chain practices. Established PSCM approaches lose legitimacy as sustainability-oriented norms and practices gain traction (Tsvetkova, 2021; Rentizelas et al., 2020). As these established approaches diminish, new practices emerge that reshape how supply chain actors engage with sustainability. For instance, several studies show that suppliers develop new competencies and capabilities

that enable to participate more actively in environmental innovation within the supply chain (Liao et al., 2024; Xu et al., 2023). These capabilities may include improved resource efficiency, eco-design expertise and the ability to meet more stringent sustainability criteria set by buyers (Ahmadi-Gh and Bello-Pintado, 2024; Abbate et al., 2023; Pereira et al., 2023). In turn, this shift fosters deeper collaboration between buyers and suppliers (Silvestre, 2015), facilitating the co-creation of sustainable solutions and reinforcing the institutionalisation of new sustainable practices (Abbate et al., 2023; Vo et al., 2023).

As sustainability-driven practices become increasingly embedded, they contribute to the emergence of new institutional logics that reframe how procurement and supply chain management are understood and enacted. Rather than merely modifying existing practices and frameworks, firms begin to internalise sustainability as a guiding principle, influencing how value is defined, how success is measured and how supplier relationships are structured (Carmagnac et al., 2024). The review indicates that, as most firms continue to operate under dominant commercial logics, this shift does not entail the replacement of commercial logics but instead their interaction with sustainability-oriented logics (Razmdoost and Alinaghian, 2024). This interaction may result in the hybridisation of logics, whereby cost-efficiency and financial performance are balanced alongside sustainability commitments (Geng et al., 2020; León-Bravo et al., 2020). Through this hybridisation, firms sustain legitimacy across commercial, regulatory and societal domains by integrating sustainability alongside traditional procurement priorities (Carmagnac et al., 2024; León-Bravo et al., 2020; Pullman et al., 2018). Over time, as sustainability gains legitimacy among purchasing and supply chain actors, it contributes to the emergence of new institutional fields in which these actors collectively shape and maintain norms, standards and governance structures that formalise sustainability within PSCM (Wu and Jia, 2018).

5.5. *Emerging interdependencies across the institutional change process*

While this review adopts a high-level organising framework comprising triggers, processes, enablers and outcomes, patterns across the literature reveal early indications of how these components may interact in context-specific ways. For example, Abbate et al. (2023) demonstrate how coercive pressures, particularly from customers and regulatory bodies demanding traceability and transparency in the Italian apparel sector, promoted material forms of institutional work, including changes to tools, technologies and product tracking systems. In contrast, normative pressures from non-governmental organisations in the same context were addressed primarily through symbolic work, such as the adoption of third-party certifications signalling conformity to circular and ethical standards. These responses ultimately contributed to the introduction and institutionalisation of new circular practices. Together, these findings suggest a potential relationship between the type of institutional pressure and the form of institutional work it elicits. In a related vein, Agarwal et al. (2018) examining the adoption of green supply chain management practices in US manufacturing firms, show that internal management support mediated the relationship between external pressures and green supply chain adoption. This finding highlights the joint influence of pressures and enablers in shaping change processes, indicating that enablers can alter both the strength and direction of institutional change outcomes.

We further observed that similar types of institutional pressures can lead to divergent forms of institutional work, depending on contextual enablers. In the Sri Lankan plantation sector, Atupola and Gunarathne (2023) found that coercive pressures from international non-governmental organisations and normative pressures from certification bodies (e.g. Rainforest Alliance) interacted to produce differentiated sustainability responses. While some firms relied on symbolic practices to secure certification, others engaged in material work to implement biodiversity-friendly land management. These divergent responses illustrate how identical institutional pressures can generate varied forms of institutional work, contingent on the enabling conditions present in each context. Such variation also leads to differences in the institutionalisation process, for example between symbolic and substantial coupling.

Collectively, these examples point to emerging theoretical patterns regarding how different types of institutional pressures relate to forms of institutional work and subsequent outcomes. Symbolic work, for instance, frequently emerges in response to normative pressures, allowing firms to demonstrate conformity and legitimacy through certifications, voluntary reporting schemes and public sustainability pledges (e.g. Atupola and Gunarathne, 2023; Calzolari et al., 2025). Coercive pressures, by contrast, tend to prompt material work involving tangible changes in tools, technologies and supply chain routines (e.g. Abbate et al., 2023; Ahmadi-Gh and Bello-Pintado, 2024; Li et al., 2020). Mimetic pressure encourages firms to adopt sustainability practices perceived as industry norms or competitive benchmarks, often resulting in a combination of symbolic and relational work aimed at demonstrating conformity and maintain legitimacy, which may ultimately contribute to the deinstitutionalisation of traditional practices (e.g. Fontana et al., 2023; Jajja et al., 2019). Relational work emerges more broadly in contexts where institutional demands necessitate coordinated responses across organisational boundaries (Castaldi et al., 2023).

Although these interdependencies remain under-theorised and inconsistently articulated in the existing literature, their occurrence across diverse sectors and contexts underscores the need for future research to move beyond linear models of institutional change and to more explicitly theorise the dynamic interactions among triggers, processes, enablers and outcomes.

6. Agenda for future research and conclusion

This review identifies several avenues for future research, which are organised around the key themes emerging from the findings and synthesised in Table 4. To enhance clarity and usability, each institutional change component was assigned a code (e.g. TR – Triggers, PR – Processes). In addition, theoretical perspectives (e.g. TP1 – Agency Perspective, TP2 – Field Perspective) and methodological approaches (e.g. MD1 – Qualitative and Interpretive Approaches, MD2 – Analytical and Computational Techniques, MD3 –Comparative and Configurational Methods) were categorised to guide future research directions.

6.1. *Triggers*

The review highlights that research on institutional triggers for sustainability in SPSCM has predominantly focused on exogenous pressures. This emphasis largely reflects the widespread application of institutional pressure perspectives centred on isomorphism, which conceptualise firms as responding to external demands to maintain legitimacy, often through compliance with prevailing norms and expectations. While this perspective has generated valuable insights into evolutionary processes of institutional change, it also risks overemphasising incremental adaptation and overlooking the potential for superficial adoption or decoupling, whereby sustainability is symbolically embraced without substantive integration.

A notable gap therefore exists in research examining more revolutionary triggers that challenge established norms and provoke substantive shifts in sustainability practices within PSCM. Unlike evolutionary triggers, which involve gradual alignment with external pressures, revolutionary triggers disrupt existing arrangements and necessitate more systemic forms of change. Such triggers may stem from shifting competitive dynamics, strategic reorientations or disruptive interventions by external actors that redefine sustainability priorities. However, these forms of change remain underexplored in the extant literature.

Although many studies acknowledge pressure from supply chain stakeholders, there is limited understanding of how such pressures are

Table 4
Future research questions and theoretical or methodological approaches.

Institutional Change Component	Potential Future Research Questions (TR-Triggers, PR-Processes, OC-Outcomes, EB-Enablers)	Future Theoretical or Methodological Approaches	Implications
Triggers	**(TR1)** How do different types of institutional pressures (coercive, normative, and mimetic) vary in their influence on sustainable purchasing and supply chain management behaviours **(TR2)** What external disruptions trigger a redefinition of sustainability priorities within supply chains? **(TR3)** How do relational and structural factors in complex supply chain networks drive institutional change toward sustainability? **(TR4)** What role do grassroots movements and social activism play in exerting institutional pressure on firms to adopt sustainable practices? **(TR5)** How do micro-level actions by procurement professionals, such as informal sustainability practices, accumulate to drive broader institutional change? **(TR6)** What role do the personal sustainability values and professional identities of individuals within organisations play in driving the adoption of sustainable procurement practices?	• **(TP1)** Identity work • **(TP1)** Institutional entrepreneurship • **(MD1)** Longitudinal case studies • **(MD1)** Ethnographic approaches • **(MD2)** Simulation modelling • **(MD2)** Social network analysis • **(MD2)** Meta analysis	To identify and leverage triggers that drive transformative change beyond isomorphism in embedding sustainability within PSCM
Processes	**(PR1)** How do relational, material, and symbolic forms of institutional work interact and reinforce one another during the institutionalisation of sustainability practices in PSCM? **(PR2)** How do the processes of embedding sustainability in PSCM evolve over time, and what adaptive strategies do firms use to sustain momentum? **(PR3)** What temporal patterns (e.g. progression, regression, or stalling) emerge during the institutionalisation of sustainability in PSCM? **(PR4)** How do interdependencies among supply chain actors influence the success or failure of institutional work aimed at embedding sustainability? **(PR5)** How do institutional work efforts at different levels of the supply chain (e.g. buying firms, Tier 1 suppliers, upstream actors) align or clash in shaping sustainability outcomes?	• **(TP1)** Institutional work • **(TP1)** Social-symbolic work • **(TP2)** Institutional logics and complexity • **(TP2)** Institutional field • **(MD1)** Qualitative methods (interviews, case studies, focus groups) • **(MD1)** Participatory action research • **(MD1)** Ethnographic approaches • **(MD1)** Longitudinal case studies	To advance understanding of the complex and interconnected mechanisms that enable firms to embed sustainability within PSCM
Outcomes	**(OC1)** How do firms create, maintain or disrupt institutions to embed sustainability within PSCM? **(OC2)** What are the impacts of firm-level sustainability practices across micro, meso, and macro levels within PSCM? **(OC3)** What are the unintended outcomes of institutional work aimed at sustainability within PSCM, and how can these be managed? **(OC4)** To what extent does the integration of social-welfare logic and commercial logic drive systemic changes in norms and practices within supply chains? **(OC5)** What distinct configurations of triggers, processes, and enablers lead to different institutional change outcomes in PSCM?	• **(TP1)** Institutional work • **(TP1)** Institutional entrepreneurship • **(TP2)** Institutional logics and complexity • **(TP2)** Hybridity • **(MD1)** Narrative analysis • **(MD1)** Multiple Case studies • **(MD3)** Qualitative comparative analysis	To capture the deeper transformations of institutional change in PSCM beyond performance outcomes, focusing on the evolution of norms, values, and institutionalisation processes.
Enablers	**(EB1)** What synergies or tensions arise when multiple enablers operate simultaneously within organisations or networks? **(EB2)** How do combinations of enablers collectively influence the adoption of sustainability practices within PSCM? **(EB3)** How do existing institutions (i.e. norms, values practices) both facilitate and hinder efforts to embed sustainability within PSCM? **(EB4)** What role do intermediaries play in shaping the direction and pace of institutional change in PSCM, and how do their actions balance to enable progress in introducing potential barriers such as conflicting priorities or misaligned objectives?	• **(TP2)** Boundary work • **(TP2)** Institutional logics and complexity • **(MD3)** Fuzzy-set qualitative comparative analysis (FsQCA)	To uncover the complex interactions and roles that enablers play in shaping the institutional change process within PSCM

enacted and translated into change, particularly in multi-tier supply chains. Existing research tends to focus on direct relationships, offering limited insight into how indirect actors, such as second- or third-tier suppliers, influence sustainability outcomes. Future research could therefore examine how direct and indirect interactions within complex supply chain networks shape the embedding of sustainability and the diffusion of institutional change across tiers.

The review also reveals a paucity of research on bottom-up external pressures, such as those arising from social movements and alternative governance arrangements. With few exceptions (e.g. Liu, 2023), existing studies rarely examine how grassroots activism and collective action exert institutional pressure on firms. Expanding attention to these dynamics would enhance understanding of how societal actors contribute to shaping sustainability agendas beyond formal regulatory or

market-based mechanisms.

From a methodological perspective, research on exogenous triggers has been dominated by quantitative, survey-based approaches that test the influence of institutional pressures on SPSCM outcomes. While this work has been valuable in establishing broad patterns and associations, there remains considerable scope for greater use of qualitative and mixed-method designs (MD1 in Table 4) to explore how external pressures are interpreted, enacted and negotiated within organisations. Furthermore, the growing volume of quantitative research creates opportunities for advanced analytical approaches (MD3 in Table 4), such as meta-analyses, to assess the relative strength and consistency of different institutional pressures across contexts.

In contrast, endogenous sources of institutional change remain comparatively underexplored. Existing studies provide limited insight into how sustainability in PSCM emerges from internal drivers and micro-level actions. Endogenous change often unfolds through the incremental practices of individuals who may lack formal authority but nevertheless influence routines and norms over time. Future research could therefore investigate how such micro-level actions accumulate to challenge established practices and enable broader institutional change. Specifically, drawing on agency-oriented perspectives (TP1 in Table 4), such as institutional work and institutional entrepreneurship, scholars could further examine how procurement professionals mobilise values, identities and informal practices to embed sustainability within purchasing decisions and organisational cultures.

6.2. Processes

Through a means-based institutional work approach, our analysis uncovered mechanisms and practices that are often overlooked yet central to institutional change in SPSCM. By aligning institutional work concepts with established purchasing and supply management practices, such as supplier relationship management with relational work, certifications and standards with symbolic work and technological or manufacturing innovations with material work, we provide a framework that provides a relatable and actionable way of understanding how institutional change unfolds in supply chains. Despite these insights, several dimensions of these processes remain underexplored, opening avenues for future research.

Our review indicates that the explicit application of institutional work to explain how sustainability is embedded in PSCM remains relatively rare, with only a small number of studies directly adopting this perspective. For example, Razmdoost and Alinaghian (2024) show how buying firms purposefully procure from social enterprises to challenge traditional procurement practices, while Tsvetkova (2021) highlights the role of informal, day-to-day actions and relational arrangements in transforming supply chain practices. These studies illustrate the potential of the institutional work lens to illuminate the purposeful and often subtle actions through which sustainability becomes embedded in PSCM. Future research could examine why and how specific forms of institutional work, relational, symbolic and material, are prioritised, coordinated and combined to embed sustainability within PSCM. In particular, closer attention to the interaction and reinforcement between different forms of work could shed light on how firms balance legitimacy-seeking activities with substantive sustainability integration, as well as how they avoid superficial compliance or decoupling (Kelling et al., 2021; Rentizelas et al., 2020; Silvestre et al., 2020). A promising direction for such research lies in agency-oriented perspectives (TP1 in Table 4), including social-symbolic work, which examines how actors engage with and construct social-symbolic objects such as sustainability initiatives, certifications or collaborative supply chain arrangements. From this perspective, the supply chain itself may be conceptualised as a social-symbolic object that is continuously shaped through relational, material and symbolic work (Sauer and Seuring, 2018). This lens enables analysis of how shared meanings are negotiated, contested and stabilised over time in support of sustainable PSCM practices.

Further opportunities arise from examining institutional work across multiple actors and levels of the supply chain. Given the interdependent nature of supply chains, future research could explore how institutional work undertaken by buying firms aligns with, complements or conflicts with the efforts of suppliers and other stakeholders. Combining agency-based perspectives with field-level perspectives (TP2 in Table 4), such as institutional logics and hybridity, would allow scholars to capture how broader institutional contexts shape these inter-organisational dynamics. Finally, greater attention to the temporal dynamics of institutional change could illuminate how sustainability embedding evolves over time, including how firms respond to setbacks, disruptions or shifting priorities (Hampel et al., 2017).

6.3. Outcomes

We observed that much of the existing research on institutional change outcomes in SPSCM focuses on performance-based metrics, such as operational, economic and environmental outcomes. While these studies provide valuable insights, they offer a relatively narrow view of institutional change outcomes. Emerging work has begun to examine variation in how sustainability practices are adopted, such as coupling versus decoupling or substantive versus symbolic adoption, and the consequences associated with these differences (Nath et al., 2020; Nath and Eweje, 2021; Pullman et al., 2018). Future research could further explore how these variations shape performance outcomes in different ways, thereby revealing potential trade-offs and synergies that remain underexamined.

We also observed that outcomes are rarely examined across multiple analytical levels. Although some studies show that sustainability practices adopted at the firm level can influence buyer–supplier relationships and, in turn, shape broader supply chain fields (Wu and Jia, 2018; Yawar and Kauppi, 2018), the institutional change outcomes of these cross-level dynamics remain insufficiently understood. Micro-level actions, such as purchasing professionals championing sustainability initiatives, may generate meso-level relational shifts that eventually contribute to macro-level changes in norms and practices. Future research could draw on field-oriented perspectives (TP2 in Table 4) to examine how institutional change outcomes unfold across micro, meso and macro levels within PSCM.

In addition, while this review proposes an organising framework comprising triggers, processes, enablers and outcomes, existing studies rarely examine how these elements interact under varying conditions. Future research could therefore move beyond linear representations of change by exploring multiple, context-specific pathways through which sustainability becomes institutionalised. Configurational approaches that examine how different combinations of triggers, forms of institutional work and enabling conditions produce varied outcomes would enrich understanding of institutional complexity and equifinality (Ocasio, 2023). Methods such as qualitative comparative analysis (QCA) (MD3 in Table 4) may be particularly valuable in this regard.

Finally, we observed that outcomes are shaped not only by institutional pressures or organisational resources, but also by how actors are positioned within broader institutional and structural contexts. These positional dynamics influence how sustainability pressures are interpreted, which responses are considered legitimate and which institutional outcomes ultimately emerge (Cardinale, 2018). Building on this insight, future research could integrate outcome-oriented perspectives on institutional change (Lawrence and Suddaby, 2006) with attention to unintended outcomes (Micelotta et al., 2017) and hybridisation processes (TP2 in Table 4). Such work would advance understanding of how commercial and social-welfare logics are blended as sustainability becomes institutionalised in SPSCM (Nicholls and Huybrechts, 2016; Vanpoucke and Klassen, 2023).

6.4. Enablers

Our review indicates that institutional change aimed at embedding sustainability in PSCM is shaped by multiple enablers operating at both firm and supply chain levels. This is important because institutional change is rarely an isolated process; rather, it typically involves a constellation of interconnected elements, including the actors driving the change, the tools and mechanisms they employ and the institutional contexts in which they operate. Understanding these enablers therefore provides a more nuanced account of how firms navigate the complexities of institutional change. However, while the review highlights their importance, it also underscores the need for deeper investigation into how these enablers interact, evolve and shape the trajectory of institutional change. Future research could examine the interdependencies and synergies among enablers to investigate, for example by exploring whether specific combinations of enablers are more effective in driving institutional change than others. Analytical approaches such as social network analysis or case-based configurational methods (i.e. fuzzy-set qualitative comparative analysis, FsQCA) could provide valuable insights into these complex relationships, thereby enabling a more comprehensive understanding of the systemic interactions that support or constrain sustainability integration.

There is also a need to better understand how existing institutions influence the change process. While long-standing institutions can stabilise and legitimise sustainability initiatives, they may simultaneously resist change, generating inertia that slows progress (Hampel et al., 2017; Lawrence and Suddaby, 2006). Future studies could therefore explore this dual role of institutions to identify strategies for overcoming resistance while leveraging their stabilising influence. For instance, establishing frameworks such as corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives or environmental management systems may serve as foundational structures upon which sustainability can be further integrated into procurement practices. In addition, intermediaries, such as consultants, professional bodies and industry alliances play a critical role in facilitating or constraining sustainability-related change. These actors often shape the adoption and diffusion of sustainable practices by providing expertise, fostering collaboration and setting industry standards. However, their involvement may also introduce challenges, including conflicting priorities or misaligned objectives. Future research could therefore explore how intermediaries influence the direction and pace of institutional change in PSCM, shedding light on their potential roles as both enablers and barriers.

CRediT authorship contribution statement

Josephine Chikwana: Writing – review & editing, Writing – original draft, Methodology, Formal analysis, Data curation, Conceptualization. **Leila Alinaghian:** Writing – review & editing, Supervision, Conceptualization. **Kamran Razmdoost:** Writing – review & editing, Supervision, Conceptualization.

Declaration of generative AI and AI-assisted technologies in the writing process

During the preparation of this work, the author(s) used PAPERPAL to enhance the clarity and improve the coherence of the manuscript. Following the use of this tool/service, the author(s) reviewed and edited the content as necessary and take(s) full responsibility for the content of the published work.

Declaration of competing interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest related to this study.

APPENDICES.

Appendix A. Full Source Titles and Number of Articles Returned in Scopus Search

Source Title; (CABS Ranking)	Number of Articles
Journal of Business Ethics; (3)	70
Business Strategy and the Environment; (3)	57
Supply Chain Management: An International Journal; (3)	54
International Journal of Production Economics; (3)	51
Journal Of Operations Management; (4*)	30
IEEE Transactions on Engineering Management; (3)	29
International Journal of Operations and Production Management; (4)	26
International Journal of Production Research; (3)	25
International Journal of Physical Distribution and Logistics Management (2)	20
Production Planning and Control; (3)	18
Journal of Purchasing and Supply Management; (3)	16
Annals of Operations Research; (3)	10
Production and Operations Management (4)	8
Management Science; (4*)	8
Journal of Supply Chain Management; (4)	8
Journal of Business Logistics; (3)	8
European Journal of Operational Research; (4)	8
Manufacturing And Service Operations Management; (3)	3
Total	**449**

Appendix B. Article Categorisation

Authors	Triggers	Processes	Outcomes	Enablers
Ahmadi-Gh and Bello-Pintado (2024)		X	X	X
Castaldi et al. (2023)		X	X	X
Fontana et al. (2023)		X		X
Osei et al. (2023)		X		X
Adams et al. (2022)	X	X		
Calzolari et al. (2025)	X		X	
Razmdoost and Alinaghian (2024)		X	X	
Andoh-Baidoo et al. (2024)	X	X		X
Farooque et al. (2024)	X	X		
Vanpoucke and Klassen (2023)		X		X
Zhang et al. (2024)	X			X
Diebel et al. (2024)	X	X		X
Abbate et al. (2023)	X	X	X	
Sharma et al. (2024)	X	X		
Chen et al. (2024)		X		X
Xu et al. (2023)	X	X	X	X
Liao et al. (2024)	X		X	X
Baral et al. (2023)	X	X	X	
Atupola and Gunarathne (2023)	X	X		
Liu (2023)		X		X
Singh and Joshi (2024)		X		X
Vo et al. (2023)		X	X	
Do et al. (2024)		X		
Pereira et al. (2023)	X	X	X	
Wiredu et al. (2024)	X	X		
Carmagnac et al. (2024)		X	X	
Flynn and Li (2023)	X		X	
Sawang et al. (2024)	X			
León Bravo et al. (2022)		X	X	
Huq and Stevenson (2020)	X	X		X
Fung et al. (2020)	X			
Hasle and Vang (2021)		X		X
Shibin et al. (2020)	X	X		
Laosirihongthong et al. (2020)	X	X		
Tsvetkova (2021)	X	X		
Nath and Eweje (2021)	X	X	X	X
Flynn (2020)				X
McLoughlin and Meehan (2021)		X	X	
Silva and Nunes (2022)	X	X		
Nath et al. (2021)	X	X		
Mena and Schoenherr (2023)		X		
Li et al. (2020)	X	X		
Omar et al. (2022)				X
Schumm and Niehm (2023)		X		X
Silvestre et al. (2020)		X	X	
Ye et al. (2023)		X		X
Rentizelas et al. (2020)	X			X
Hofman et al. (2020)	X	X		X
Longoni et al. (2019)		X		
Joardar and Sarkis (2021)				X
Nath et al. (2020)		X	X	
Geng et al. (2020)	X	X		X
Yang et al. (2020)				X
Grimm et al. (2023)		X		
Kelling et al. (2021)		X	X	X
Pullman et al. (2018)			X	
Mani and Gunasekaran (2018)	X			
Busse et al. (2016)		X	X	X
Huang et al. (2017)	X	X		
Silvestre (2015)		X	X	
Kauppi and Hannibal (2017)	X	X		X
Sayed et al. (2017)	X		X	
Sauer and Seuring (2018)	X			X
Dubey et al. (2015)	X	X		X
Sancha et al. (2015)	X	X		X
Ferri et al. (2016)				X
Yawar and Kauppi (2018)	X	X		
Koster et al. (2019)	X		X	
Agarwal et al. (2018)	X			
Hoejmose et al. (2014)	X	X		X
Nicholls and Huybrechts (2016)		X		
Seles et al. (2016)	X			X
Khor et al. (2016)		X		X
Fayezi et al. (2018)		X		X

(*continued on next page*)

(*continued*)

Authors	Triggers	Processes	Outcomes	Enablers
Jajja et al. (2019)	X			X
Wilhelm et al. (2016)	X	X		
Wu and Jia (2018)		X		X
Wu et al. (2012)	X	X		X
Varsei et al. (2014)	X			
Glover et al. (2014)				
Moxham and Kauppi (2014)	X		X	
Zhu and Sarkis (2007)	X			X
Shi et al. (2012)	X	X		
Blome et al. (2014)	X	X		X
Simpson (2012)	X		X	X
Zhu et al. (2013)	X	X	X	
Tate et al. (2011)	X			
Egels-Zandén and Wahlqvist (2007)	X	X		
Adebanjo et al. (2013)	X			X
Do et al. (2022)	X			
Tate et al. (2014)				X
Agyabeng-Mensah et al. (2024)	X	X		X

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