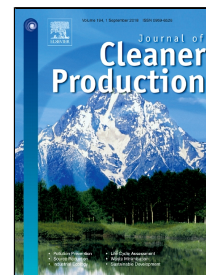


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Advancing Social Sustainability in Supply Chain Management: Lessons from Multiple Case Studies in an Emerging Economy

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Abstract

In the sustainable supply chain management literature, the social dimension has been insufficiently investigated. The aim of this research is to analyse why and how focal companies implement and manage social sustainability in their supply chains. To do this, we adopted a multiple case study research strategy in six focal companies which had implemented 34 supply chain social initiatives. We draw from the constructs of motivation and supply chain engagement to develop a typology that improves our understanding of the complex interactions between the management of supply chains and their social sustainability performance. This research also explored a third concept, social relationship level, which helps us to understand which relationship levels focal companies often use to operationalize such initiatives. Results suggest that intrinsically motivated social sustainability initiatives in supply chains led focal companies to adopt supply chain structural collaborations, while extrinsically motivated social initiatives were more strongly connected with information exchange only. The involvement of primary stakeholder groups (e.g., consumers and suppliers) occurs usually in extrinsically motivated social initiatives, while the involvement of secondary stakeholders (e.g., NGOs and community) seems to be the norm for intrinsically motivated social initiatives.

Keywords: Sustainable Supply Chain Management; Social Sustainability; Motivation; Typology; Supply Chain Engagement; Emerging Economies

1. Introduction

An increasing number of companies are considering sustainability as a key strategic issue (Burritt and Schaltegger, 2014; Gold et al., 2010; Hassini et al., 2012); as a consequence, the literature on the subject has been growing significantly (Bansal and DesJardine, 2014). The sustainable supply chain management (SSCM) perspective suggests that the focus on individual organizations tells us little about sustainability since sustainability issues can only be evident if the entire supply chain is analysed (Silvestre, 2016). This is because sometimes focal companies hide unsustainable operations in distant parts of the supply chain in order to avoid public backlash and loss of reputation (Chan and Pun, 2010). As supply chains (SC) become increasingly complex and difficult to manage, researchers have been searching for useful approaches to deal with this complexity.

Sustainability and SSCM perspectives are primarily centred on the notion of the Triple Bottom Line (TBL), which indicates that all three dimensions of performance—economic, social, and environmental—are interconnected and are equally important (Elkington, 2002). The social dimension, however, has often been neglected in SSCM studies (Abbasi, 2017; Ashby et al., 2012; Wu and Pagell, 2011), and it is therefore under-valued, under-explored, and under-theorized (Pullman et al., 2009; Silvestre, 2015a). Perhaps this neglect can be justified because companies find the social issues more challenging to address than the environmental ones (Ashby et al., 2012), or because sustainability in the broad TBL definition represents a theoretical construct with limited practical relevance (Brandenburg et al., 2014).

The research presented here addresses the following question: *Why and how do focal companies implement and manage social sustainability in their supply chains?* A focal company is the member of the supply chain that provides leadership and exercises the greatest control over supply chain decisions and activities (Cooper and Ellram, 1993). This study makes a contribution to the field of SSCM by responding to the numerous calls to address social sustainability in supply chains (e.g., Ashby et al., 2012; Touboulic and Walker, 2015; Mani et al., 2018), and by providing empirical evidence on why and how focal companies actually implement and manage the social dimension in practice. The research explores these initiatives in the context of emerging economies, where

empirical studies investigating drivers and outcomes of social sustainability adoption are still rare (Mani and Gunasekaran, 2018). In this context, pressing social problems exist (Yawar and Seuring, 2015) amplified by a higher level of complexity and environmental turbulence (Silvestre, 2015a). This setting is particularly important for studies on supply chain management since in the current globalized economy supply chains often operate in countries where governments and suppliers may have lower social standards than the ones operating in developed countries (Busse, 2016; McCarthy et al., 2013).

We investigated six focal companies operating in Brazil through a multi-case study research approach and identified 34 social initiatives that have recently been implemented in their supply chains. Each social initiative was the unit of analysis, assessed in terms of the primary motivation behind it (i.e., extrinsic or intrinsic), the way the focal company engages other supply chain stakeholders (i.e., via structural collaboration or simple information exchange), and which relationship levels are often engaged (i.e., suppliers, consumers and/or society). Results indicate that intrinsically motivated social initiatives tend to have a greater impact than extrinsically motivated ones, especially when engaging the supply chain via structural collaboration. Extrinsically motivated social initiatives tend to connect primary stakeholders only (i.e., suppliers and consumers) while intrinsically motivated initiatives are more likely to be innovative and connect with secondary stakeholders as well (e.g., NGOs, community).

The paper is organized as follows: We first review the SSCM and associated literatures. We then describe our methodology and present the results of our empirical work. A discussion section follows, where we compare and contrast our findings with the existing literature. In the concluding section, we discuss the implications of this research for practice and theory, note the contributions (and limitations) of this research, and make suggestions for future research on this important, yet neglected field within SSCM.

2. Theoretical Background

2.1. Sustainable supply chain management and the social sustainability

A holistic view of sustainability and its integration with the supply chain management discourse has emerged in the last few decades generating a new perspective called Sustainable Supply Chain Management (SSCM). Ahi and Searcy (2013) analyzed the key features of 12 different definitions and as a result proposed a definition for SSCM:

“The creation of coordinated supply chains through the voluntary integration of economic, environmental, and social considerations with key inter-organizational business systems designed to efficiently and effectively manage the material, information, and capital flows associated with the procurement, production, and distribution of products or services in order to meet stakeholder requirements and improve the profitability, competitiveness, and resilience of the organization over the short- and long-term.” (Ahi and Searcy, 2013, p.339)

Research on SSCM has grown exponentially, and has experienced a ten-fold increase from 2005 to 2014, a rate five times greater than that indicated in bibliometric studies to characterize the scientific relevance of a field (Beske et al., 2015). One of the first papers that linked social sustainability with the supply chain area was Carter and Jennings (2004). The authors identify the dimensions of sustainability in purchasing management such as diversity, natural environment, safety, human rights, and philanthropy. Since then, other studies have advanced our understanding regarding the interplay between social issues and SCM. For example, Awaysheh and Klassen (2010) examine the influence of supply chain distance on the adoption of socially responsible practices. The authors found that as a firm is positioned farther downstream in the supply chain (i.e., closer to the most basic sources of raw materials), it becomes more difficult to identify specific suppliers and consequently realistically track working conditions. Ehr Gott et al. (2011) point out that in order to effectively spread high social standards across entire supply chains, firms should make sure that their middle-level supply management positions are taken by managers who show an intrinsic motivation

to advance the social causes. Stiller and Gold (2014) suggest that the SSCM practices of the focal company may not always be linked to improved economic performance in the short and mid-term.

The literature also suggests that the content of social sustainability has changed significantly in the last few years. While most of the approaches still subordinate the social dimension to the economic dimension (Hart, 1995) or to the ecological dimension (Foladori, 2005), critics of these unbalanced approaches have emerged, arguing for the need to consider a more interdisciplinary and philosophical approach to social issues (Nussbaum and Sen, 1993; Dyck and Silvestre, 2018a). Conceptually, SC social sustainability is understood as the consideration and resolution of the emerging social issues and concerns along the entire supply chain, both upstream and downstream from the focal company, and beyond internal operations, including even the most distant supplier and other stakeholders (Mani et al., 2015). In addition, it also involves how communities, societies, and individuals live with regard to equity and basic needs, working conditions, human rights, fair wages, and cultural diversity (Rajak and Vinodh, 2015).

North American and European perspectives are dominant (Taticchi et al., 2013), and few studies have taken a broad sustainability perspective (i.e., TBL) on supply chains operating in emerging economies. Research on social sustainability also suggests a predominantly Western perspective; three-quarters of the 142 publications on the topic between 2000 and 2013 were conducted by European and Northern American scholars (Yawar and Seuring, 2015). Even recent studies note that research on supply chain social sustainability in developing countries and emerging economies is still scarce (Mani et al., 2016; Abbasi, 2017) and that further attention is required (Silvestre, 2015a; Huq et al., 2016).

Matos and Silvestre (2013) argue that understanding social issues in supply chains is a complex challenge since these issues are often ambiguous, multifaceted, and impacted by different variables such as stakeholders' conflicting interests. Both primary stakeholders (i.e., companies that are directly involved in the supply chain operations such as manufacturers, suppliers, distributors, and consumers) and secondary stakeholders (i.e., organizations indirectly involved in the supply chain such as governments, agencies, NGOs, and media) are fundamental for our understanding of supply chain sustainability. For example, shareholders' interests in traditional wealth maximization may conflict with the interests of other supply chain stakeholder groups, who may want an increased emphasis on social responsibility (Mackey et al., 2007). Implementing social sustainability in supply chains also requires a significant dose of innovation (Hansen et al., 2009) because social sustainability requires changes that affect the basic structures and mindset of both primary and secondary stakeholders (Smith et al., 2010). Neutzling et al., (2018) analyze how sustainability-oriented innovations can influence relationships, collaboration, and learning in supply chains.

Based on this complexity and growing interest in the subject, a variety of definitions of social sustainability have emerged. For example, Jorgensen (2008) and Simões et al. (2014) guide their definition of social issues in supply chains by linking them to Life Cycle Assessment perspectives, where they are divided into four possible categories of impact: human rights, work practices and decent work conditions, society, and product-related responsibility. Yawar and Seuring (2015)'s definition identifies seven main social issues: labor conditions, child labor, human rights, health and safety, minority development, disabled/marginalized people inclusion and gender. Mani et al. (2016) developed and validated five key categories of social issues in supply chains in India. They are: philanthropy, health, safety and well-being, equity, ethics and human rights. Klassen and Vereecke (2012) propose three levels of practices to address social issues within supply chains: internal social practices (e.g. ensuring gender/ethnic equality among employees); supply chain social practices (e.g. selecting suppliers and collaborating companies that adhere to certain standards); society and external social practices (e.g. carrying out charitable initiatives). Mani et al. (2015) move this discussion forward and classify social practices in Indian supply chains into four different relationship levels: internal operations; supplier relationship; consumer relationship and society relationship, which is adopted in this research.

Numerous challenges for increased supply chain sustainability performance have been identified in the literature. These challenges include dealing with decision makers from different

departments and organizations, recognizing industry specificities (Hassini et al., 2012), preventing opportunistic behavior such as corruption (Silvestre, 2015a), enhancing capability building for socio-environmental performance (Ahy and Searcy, 2015), and ensuring socio-environmental standards and measures for the entire supply chain (Tajbakhsh and Hassini, 2015).

2.2. *Understanding social supply chain sustainability in emerging economies*

In response to globalization, supply chain systems have extended their reach and have made developing and emerging economies integral parts of the total system. As noted earlier, research on social supply chain sustainability in these settings has been growing, but is still in its early stages (Wu and Pagell, 2011; Ashby et al., 2012; Touboulic and Walker, 2015). Ehr Gott et al., (2011) analyze how stakeholder pressures determine the extent to which companies consider social aspects when selecting emerging economy suppliers, and how such selection approaches relate to the suppliers' capabilities, market reputation, and supply management learning. Huq et al. (2016) suggest that in the absence of intense stakeholder pressure, buyers from the Bangladesh clothing supply chain lay the foundation for improved social performance by using their own auditors and collaborating with suppliers rather than using third-party auditors. On the other hand, when facing great pressure, consultative buyer-consortium audits emerge. In exploring supply chains in China, Zeng et al (2017) report that institutional pressures have a significant positive impact on the way and extent organizations and supply chains engage in sustainability initiatives. Mani and Gunasekaran (2018) highlight the key role of regulatory pressures in emerging economies and suggest that, in this context, practitioners need to be aware of the importance of institutional pressures that can positively impact the emergence of sustainable supply chains.

Hall and Matos (2010) explore the opportunity to incorporate marginalized populations into biodiesel and ethanol supply chains to achieve poverty alleviation in the less developed regions in Brazil. Hall et al. (2012a) suggest that this could be achieved by creating a mechanism to educate small, impoverished farmers about available economic opportunities and engaging with them. In the same vein, Silvestre and Silva Neto (2014a) observe that learning and innovation are crucial for improving sustainability within impoverished communities and bottom of the pyramid (BoP) settings. Considering the role of NGOs in poverty alleviation, Rodríguez et al. (2016) investigate how NGOs undertake socially sustainable supply chain practices, and argue that NGOs in Ecuador rely mainly on their own knowledge to develop local suppliers and bridge capability gaps. Dyck and Silvestre (2018b) go beyond the TBL approach and argue that in less-developed settings, NGOs should adopt what they call Sustainable Innovation 2.0, where socio-ecological well-being is the focus.

The literature suggests that there are two factors that influence focal companies as they develop and implement social initiatives in their supply chains: (1) the motivation for SC social sustainability (Gimenez and Tachiawa, 2012), and (2) SC engagement (Vereecke and Muylle, 2006). With respect to (1), the primary motivation is either intrinsic or extrinsic (Ryan and Deci, 2000). Social initiatives that are launched based primarily on extrinsic motivations are focused on gaining direct or indirect financial rewards (e.g., increased profit margins, increased competitive advantage, larger market share), while approaches that are based primarily on intrinsic motivations are focused on ethical considerations and values of the decision maker (i.e., is it the right thing to do?) (Muller and Kolk, 2010). Approaches based on extrinsic motivations are related to the idea that "it pays to be ethical" (Burke and Logsdon, 1996), are associated with risk-avoidance and/or opportunity-seeking behaviors (Silvestre, 2016), and can be linked to a multiplicity of drivers (see Table 1). By contrast, social initiatives that are launched based on intrinsic motivation are related to the mindset of decision-makers and organizational culture (instead of temporary opportunities and risks). Although expected to be less common, we reason that supply chain social initiatives based on intrinsic motivations may be more likely to "stick" for a longer period of time and achieve more permanent results.

With regard to (2), a focal company engages with other supply chain actors to address social issues or launch social initiatives. At one extreme, the simple exchange of information defines the extent of engagement. At the other extreme—structural collaboration—there is a much higher degree of commitment to resolve social issues, and interaction becomes embedded in business practices and

oriented toward integration (Vereecke and Muylle, 2006). Collaborative initiatives (e.g., offering training on social performance or resolving social issues on the suppliers' side) can provide focal companies with the knowledge and skills to improve their own social performance in the future (Sancha et al., 2016). Besides, as suggested in Mani et al. (2018), focal firm's collaborative efforts towards social sustainability adoption can diminish supply risk and enhance reputation and performance in the context of emerging economies. In this sense, we reason that higher supply chain engagement in social initiatives (i.e., structural collaboration) is more conducive to learning. Since the commitment is higher, the accumulated knowledge is more likely to become embedded in the business practices of the entire supply chain (Matos and Silvestre, 2013).

Table 1 – Drivers for Extrinsic and Intrinsic Motivated Social Initiatives within Supply Chains

Drivers	Description	Studies
Extrinsically Motivated Initiatives (i.e., driven by financial rewards of social sustainability)		
Competition	Focal company launches social initiative in the supply chain because competitors are undertaking social/sustainable initiatives	Sarkis et al., (2010); Grosvold et al. (2014); Dubey et al. (2017)
Market	Focal company launches social initiative in the supply chain because of pressure from customers willing to buy socially responsible/sustainable goods and services.	Lee and Kim (2009); Awaysheh and Klassen (2010); Hassini et al. (2012); Klassen and Vereecke (2012); Varsei et al. (2014); Marshall et al. (2015); Meixell and Luoma (2015); Dubey et al. (2017); Sancha et al. (2016)
Regulations	Focal company launches social initiative in the supply chain because of changing laws and regulations	Linton et al. (2007); Lee and Kim (2009); Hassini et al. (2012); Marshall et al. (2015); Dubey et al. (2017); Sancha et al. (2016)
Reputation and competitive advantage	Focal company launches social initiative in the supply chain to achieve enhanced reputation through marketing campaigns and the search for competitive advantage	Awaysheh and Klassen (2010); Linton et al. (2007); Gold et al. (2010); Klassen and Vereecke (2012); Grosvold et al. (2014); Luzzini et al. (2015); Silvestre (2015b);
Secondary Stakeholders	Focal company launches social initiative in the supply chain because of pressure from secondary stakeholders (e.g., media, NGOs, financial institutions)	Awaysheh and Klassen (2010); Hall and Matos (2010); Klassen and Vereecke (2012); Matos and Silvestre (2013); Meixell and Luoma (2015); Yawar and Seuring (2015); Sancha et al. (2016)
Intrinsically Motivated Initiatives (i.e., driven by ethical considerations and values)		
Ethics and Values	Focal company launches social initiative in the supply chain because of decision-makers' ethical standards and/or organizational values	Hall et al. (2012a); Beske and Seuring (2014); Varsei et al. (2014); Meixell and Luoma (2015); Silvestre (2015a); Dubey et al. (2017)

Source: Prepared by the Authors

A third construct is then added to the analysis, which is the concept of social relationship levels as proposed by Mani et al. (2015). It represents the relationship levels (i.e., suppliers, consumers and/or society) that are often engaged by focal companies when operationalizing social initiatives in their supply chains. In the quest to understand why and how focal companies implement and manage social sustainability in their supply chains, we argue that articulating these three dimensions—motivation, SC engagement, and relationship level—is central in describing and analyzing the reasons behind the implementation of social initiatives, the means by which such initiatives are managed at various stages in the supply chain, the relationship levels focal firms engage when operationalizing such initiatives and the possible interconnections between these three dimensions.

3. Methodology

This research aims to analyse why and how focus companies implement and manage social sustainability in their supply chains. We investigated why and how six focal companies (see Appendix 1) recently launched social initiatives in their supply chains in Brazil. We were able to identify and

explore 34 social initiatives launched in their supply chains, which is the unit of analysis of this research (Appendix 2). These initiatives do not represent an exhaustive list of social initiatives run by these focal companies at the time, but rather correspond to SC social initiatives that the researchers were able to identify during the interviews and that are representative for this study. Social initiatives that were not connected in some way to the supply chain were discarded.

The use of case studies is highly recommended to develop conceptual models for social sustainability in SC (Brandenburg et al., 2014; Seuring, 2008b) due to its complexity and multifaceted perspective. Compared to companies operating in developed countries, companies in emerging economies tend to have lower social/labor standards and consequently are likely to face higher pressure from secondary stakeholders such as NGOs and communities (Busse, 2016; McCarthy et al., 2013). Focal companies' initiatives are emphasized in this research because these companies have a leadership role relative to the other actors in the supply chain as they specify supply chain policies for other members and exercise control over various decisions and activities (Cooper and Ellram, 1993, Seuring and Müller, 2008; Silvestre, 2015a). In addition, focal companies establish direct contact with consumers and receive the most pressure to adopt sustainable practices and to increase sustainability performance (Seuring and Müller, 2008). It is usually the focal companies that are held accountable by consumers, NGOs, and the media for disruptions, accidents, or poor sustainability performance (Beske et al., 2015). Although we examine initiatives launched by focal companies, we acknowledge that such initiatives can also be initiated by other companies in a supply chain.

The data collection strategy was twofold. We first collected primary data through company visits and interviews with professionals linked to the areas of sustainability and/or supply chain management. We then collected and analyzed secondary data through document search and sustainability reports. The selection of the cases followed Pagell and Wu (2009)'s suggestion on exemplary cases. According to the authors, SSCM studies should focus on exemplary cases of focal companies that seek to be more sustainable than its competitors and that, possibly, can be seen as examples of best sustainability practices. Thus, the focal companies were initially selected through their participation in an important Brazilian research center on sustainability. These focal companies voluntarily engaged in sustainability projects conducted by the research center, which has more than a decade of operation and is nationally recognized as an important think tank on sustainability issues.

Focal companies were then contacted to arrange an interview with the person in charge of the sustainability area. During interviews, the interviewees recommended other sustainability professionals within and outside the focal company as potential interviewees. These leads were pursued, following a snowball technique, which involves first identifying cases with characteristics relevant to the study and then requesting indications of other cases that have similar attributes (Berg, 2004). The snowball technique is an efficient way to locate subjects with certain attributes or characteristics that are necessary for the study, and it is popular among researchers interested in sensitive issues or difficult-to-access populations (Lee, 1993). In this study, the interviewees were sustainability leaders (either purchasers or suppliers) in large focal companies in their industry that led sustainable practices in their supply chain. The focal companies and the professionals who were interviewed are detailed in the Appendix 1.

Data collection on issues such as ethics and social responsibility is often subject to social desirability bias, which is the tendency to deny socially undesirable behaviors and to admit socially desirable ones (Zerbe and Paulhus, 1987; Chung and Monroe, 2003). We worked to avoid this bias in data collection, data analysis, and data interpretation by using three strategies. First, we used an indirect questioning strategy, which reduces the social desirability bias (Fisher, 1993). Second, we made sure that we understood the focal companies' contexts and the background of our interviewees (e.g., education, position within the company, roles, and mandates), since this helped us to assess their answers and interpret the data. Third, we adopted a data triangulation strategy (Myers, 2013), which helped to reduce potential social desirability bias during data analysis and interpretation. We used different data sources to triangulate and assist with data interpretation and to double or triple-check key findings and trends with different sources when additional clarity was needed. These

triangulation strategies increase the legitimacy of the findings and our contribution to academic research (Cox and Hassard, 2005).

Six key informants were formally interviewed, one from each of the focal companies. Informal interviews and additional conversations were also carried out with other employees of the focal companies and suppliers. The data collection phase was executed between July and September 2017, followed by in-depth analysis of the focal companies' sustainability reports. Each interview was transcribed and coded using the software Atlas T.I, based on thirteen predetermined codes: intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, information exchange, structural collaboration, internal operations, supplier relationship, consumer relationship, society relationship, philanthropy, equity, ethics, human rights, health, safety and well-being (see Appendix 3). This coding strategy was useful because it allowed the researchers to organize and group similarly coded data (Saldaña, 2015). The main purpose of such coding is to facilitate the retrieval of data segments categorized under the same codes (Coffey and Atkinson, 1997). Based on the coding of sustainability reports and the interviews of each case, it was possible to: (a) identify relevant phenomena, (b) collect interesting/extreme examples of the phenomena, and (c) analyze the phenomena to find commonalities, differences, patterns, and structures (Seidel and Kelle, 1995).

Each social initiative that was identified during data collection in these 6 focal companies was classified with respect to its associated motivation (i.e. intrinsic or extrinsic), the SC engagement approach (i.e. information exchange or structural collaboration), and the associated social relationship levels, according to Mani et al. (2015). One level of Mani et al.'s classification was not used due to its lack of applicability (i.e., internal operations). The other three levels (i.e., supplier relationship, consumer relationship, and society relationship) were used to classify the social initiatives identified during the empirical work.

4. Results

This paper investigates why and how focal companies implement and manage social sustainability in their supply chains. We now explore the 34 social initiatives launched by six focal companies in Brazil. The initiatives are listed in Table 3, where they are classified as to their primary motivation (i.e. intrinsic or extrinsic), their SC engagement approach (i.e. information exchange or structural collaboration) and their social relationship levels (i.e. supplier relationship, consumer relationship and society relationship).

Among the 34 social initiatives, 53% (i.e., 18 of the 34) are intrinsically motivated, that is, they emerged mostly for reasons which seem to go beyond risk avoidance or monetary opportunities, and appear to be linked with organizational values and/or ethical principles. These initiatives comprise a wide range of practices such as donations of the profits from specific products for educational programs for communities, and funding social businesses that address social problems such as malnutrition and access to drinking water. Extrinsically motivated social initiatives were evident in 47% of the cases (i.e., 16 of the 34), and related to issues such as training suppliers on the companies' Code of Ethics and promoting initiatives that reinforce women entrepreneurship and empowerment through sales force expansion. All six focal companies in this study introduced at least one social initiative associated with each type of motivation (i.e., intrinsic and extrinsic).

Table 3 – Initiatives Motivation, SC Engagement and Social Relationship Levels

#	Case	Motivation		SC Engagement		Social Relationship Levels*		
		Intrinsic	Extrinsic	Information Exchange	Structural Collaboration	Suppliers Relationship	Consumer Relationship	Society Relationship
01	A	X			X			X
02		X			X			X
03			X	X		X		
04		X	X		X	X		
05		X			X		X	
06	B		X	X		X		
07			X		X	X		
08		X		X			X	
09			X	X				X

10	C		X		X	X	
11			X		X		X
12		X			X		X
13		X		X			X
14	X			X		X	
15	D		X	X		X	
16		X		X			X
17			X	X			X
18		X			X	X	X
19		X			X	X	X
20		X			X	X	X
21			X		X		
22	E		X	X		X	
23		X			X		X
24		X		X			X
25		X			X	X	
26			X	X		X	
27			X		X	X	
28			X		X	X	
29	X			X	X		
30	F		X	X			X
31		X		X			X
32			X	X			X
33			X		X	X	
34		X			X	X	

Source: Empirical Data

*Mani et al. (2015)'s social relationship levels

Regarding the nature of the SC engagement, 59% (20 of the 34 social initiatives) are managed based on structural collaboration within the supply chain (Table 3). They comprise a wide range of practices such as the creation of a platform to foster volunteering; training suppliers; redirecting purchases focused on suppliers aligned with social standards; and developing mentoring programs for supplier diversity and gender equity. By contrast, 41% of the initiatives (14 of 34) occur through information exchange, and are related to issues such as dissemination of sustainability policies, codes of conduct, or ethics; commitment to social standards through contractual information; dissemination of information from sectoral, regional, or global pacts; and the creation of online content for awareness and teaching of social issues. All six focal companies in this study conduct at least one social initiative that is associated with each type of engagement (i.e., structural collaboration or information exchange).

Seventy-two percent of the intrinsically motivated initiatives (13 of 18) had SC engagement based on structural collaboration, while 56% of the extrinsically motivated initiatives had SC engagement based on the exchange of information. Thus, motivation appears to have some influence on the type of SC engagement that is used to introduce social initiatives (the two most populated quadrants on Figure 1 – upper right and lower left quadrants). Although this is an interesting insight from the data, it is important to note that the focal companies' motivations do not seem to prevent them from engaging with their supply chain in any form.

By taking into account the relationship levels of social initiatives (Mani et al., 2015), it is possible to observe that 14 initiatives are related to supplier relationship only, 6 initiatives are related to consumer relationship only, and 11 initiatives are related to society relationship only. Although we could not identify any social initiative that engages simultaneously with supplier and consumers or consumers and society, 3 initiatives from the same focal company (Food B) are related to both supplier and society relationships. All the other initiatives identified engage with one single relationship level: supplier or consumer or society. The data suggest that social initiatives along the supply chain tend to involve primarily one single stakeholder group (i.e., focused relationship level), no matter the social initiative's motivation (i.e., intrinsic or extrinsic) or the type of SC engagement (i.e., information exchange or structural collaboration).

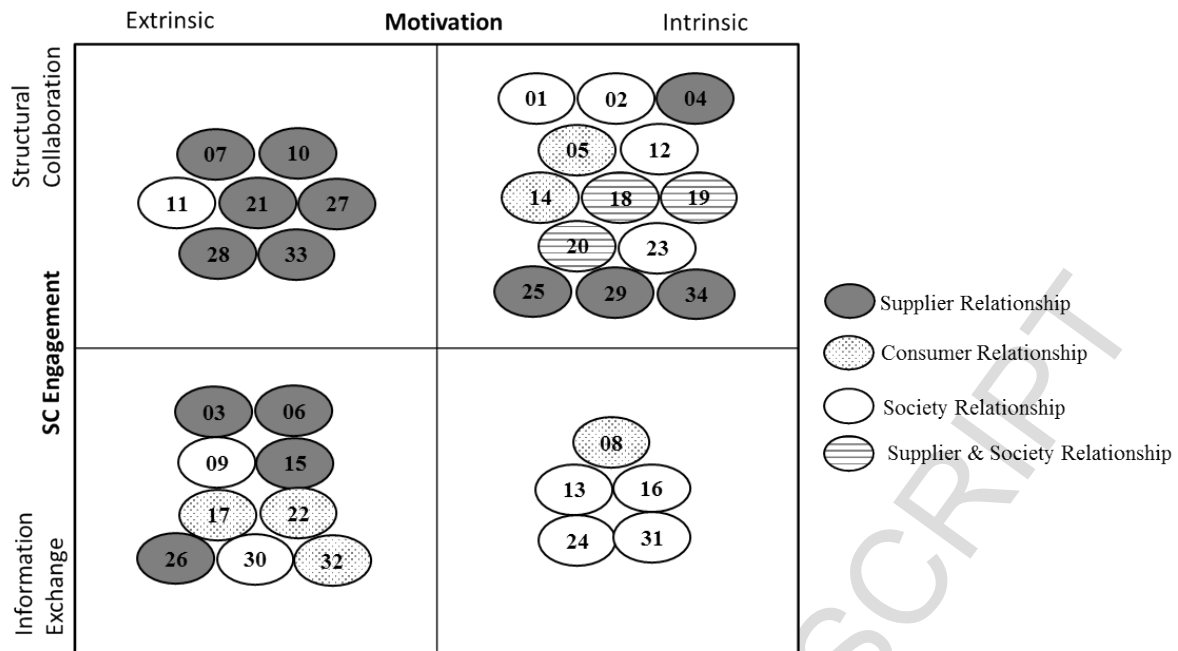


Figure 1 – Supply Chain social initiatives

Another interesting observation is that 83% of the initiatives (5 out of 6) in the quadrant “extrinsic motivation/structural collaboration” involve supplier relationships. This may suggest that, when not intrinsically motivated, the focal company has its suppliers as the primary focus of collaborative engagement (i.e., beyond the simple exchange of information). Although the quadrant “extrinsic motivation/information exchange” appears to show a more mixed result, 78% (7 out of 9 initiatives) are related to either supplier relationship only or consumer relationship only.

When the focal company is intrinsically motivated and adopts structural collaboration (Figure 1’s most populated quadrant), social initiatives involve a variety of single relationship levels (i.e., supplier relationship only, or consumer relationship only, or society relationship only) and a single combination of multiple relationship levels (i.e., both supplier and society relationships). More specifically, intrinsically motivated initiatives that are developed through information exchange show that focal companies may tend to develop a direct relationship with society in general (Figure 1’s least populated quadrant; 4 out of 5, or 80%), at the expense of relationships with direct players in the supply chain such as consumers and suppliers. In fact, no initiative with a focus on supplier relationship was found when intrinsically motivated and adopting the exchange of information. This may suggest that focal companies mainly exchange information with suppliers when extrinsically motivated. Results also indicated that for the quadrant “intrinsic motivation/structural collaboration” the social initiatives’ characteristics are more diverse, and include all four levels of relationships identified in the fieldwork (i.e., no dominating pattern).

There is an even stronger indication that when social initiatives are extrinsically motivated (independently of their SC engagement), then a focused relationship with either suppliers or consumers is the route focal companies pursue (13 out of 16, or 81%). There is also a strong indication that when social initiatives are intrinsically motivated (independently of their SC engagement), then it appears that a relationship at the society level becomes dominant (11 out of 18, or 61%). Also, when adopting structural collaboration (independent of motivation), relationships at the level of suppliers seem to be dominant (i.e., 10-suppliers; 5-society; 2-consumers; and 3-suppliers/society). When adopting information exchange (independent of motivation), relationships at the level of society seem to be dominant (i.e., 6-society; 4-suppliers; and 4-consumers).

It is also interesting to note (Figure 1) that out of 14 social initiatives that included a relationship with society (i.e., secondary stakeholders outside the supply chain itself), 11 initiatives (or 79%) are associated with intrinsic motivations. Out of the 20 social initiatives associated with relationships with suppliers or consumers only (i.e., primary stakeholders within the supply chain),

13 (or 65%) are associated with extrinsically related motivations. These results suggest that when social initiatives involve some sort of relationships with society (i.e., secondary stakeholders not directly operating inside the supply chain), then these initiatives might be strongly connected to intrinsic motivations (i.e., ethical considerations and values of the organization and/or the decision makers). Also, when social initiatives involve relationships with suppliers or consumers only (i.e., primary stakeholders directly operating inside the supply chain), then these initiatives are more strongly connected to extrinsic motivations (i.e., financial reward). Table 4 presents an exemplar quote from interviewees of social initiative classified in each of the four quadrant of Figure 1.

Table 4 – Quotes from each type of SC social initiatives

Initiative Type	Quotes from Interviews
Extrinsically motivated SC structural collaboration	“[direct sales] was a channel that we did not use before, I'm talking about a door-to-door sales channel [...] we started in one city and today it is already responsible for 15% of sales in that city. This is super relevant for us, 15% of our sales come from that program and, also, we take our products to an audience that would not necessarily be our buyers... and [...] the people who support the cause carry this message for us” (Interviewee, Food A)
Intrinsically motivated SC structural collaboration	“Diversity is a very strong value for us as a company, for everything we do [...]. It is an extremely important initiative where we mentor suppliers from minority groups, and we try to ensure their success. [...] We even mentor small companies that are not our suppliers yet, so, I think this has to do with our social role” (Interviewee, Agriculture)
Intrinsically motivated SC information exchange	“[...] we promote simple daily activities that help prevent the spread of zica, yellow fever, and dengue. [...] our direct sales people distribute informational leaflets, when visiting our residential and commercial customers.” (Interviewee, Natural Gas)
Extrinsically motivated SC information exchange	“we have clauses that inform that the suppliers have to work in accordance to our Sustainability Policy. So, they receive our policy and sign the contract” (Interviewee, Natural Gas)

Source: Empirical Data

5. Discussion

Supply chain initiatives are important because “firms are not islands of isolation” (Hall, 2000: p.456) and there is a growing need to identify and understand both direct and indirect impacts of companies’ social initiatives within supply chains (Lee, 2011). In order to understand why and how focal companies implement and manage social sustainability in their supply chains, we argue that social initiatives can be analyzed based on the motivation for the initiative and the type of supply chain engagement that is established. Based on these two dimensions, we developed a typology of social sustainability initiatives in the supply chain to understand this phenomenon (Figure 2). Based on extensive fieldwork carried out in Brazil, the 34 social initiatives from the 6 focal companies were classified into one of four types: i) extrinsically motivated/SC structural collaboration; ii) intrinsically motivated/SC structural collaboration; iii) intrinsically motivated/SC information exchange only; and iv) extrinsically motivated/SC information exchange only.

This research suggests that each social initiative has some peculiarities, such as variations associated with its original motivation and the way focal companies engage with other stakeholders (i.e., SC engagement). A third dimension, the relationship levels used to implement these social initiatives, is also added to the analysis so that we can identify and understand not only why (i.e., motivation) and how (i.e., SC engagement) focal companies integrate social initiatives into their supply chains, but also at which relationship levels focal companies operationalize these social initiatives. These variation in approaches taken by focal companies is aligned with the literature, which suggests that corporate social responsibility can take different perspectives. For example, in an early study Carrol (1991) introduced the pyramid of corporate social responsibility and its different levels of operations. More recently, Du et al. (2010) argue that there are three categories of social orientation: prosocial, individualistic, and competitive. Organizations adopting prosocial orientations seek to equally maximize outcomes for both themselves and other stakeholders. Individualists seek to maximize only their own outcomes, while competitors seek to maximize their own outcomes

relative to other stakeholders' outcomes. Converging with this literature, the typology presented here (Figures 1 and 2) is promising in regard to providing new insights and perspectives on this issue. Below, we discuss each one of the quadrants in light of the existing literature.

		Motivation	
		Extrinsic	Intrinsic
SC Engagement	Structural Collaboration	Social initiative that is initiated by an SC focal company based on extrinsic motivations (e.g., gain competitive advantage, increase market share, improve reputation, etc). Focal company's engagement with the rest of its SC is based on structural collaboration to achieve the desirable goal (i.e., internal resources to the organization are not enough).	Social initiative that is initiated by an SC focal company primarily based on intrinsic motivations (e.g., ethical considerations, satisfaction because this was the right thing to do, etc). Focal company's engagement with the rest of its SC is based on structural collaboration to achieve the desirable goal (i.e., internal resources to the organization are not enough).
	Information Exchange	Social initiative that is initiated by an SC focal company based on extrinsic motivations (e.g., gain competitive advantage, increase market share, improve reputation, etc). Focal company's engagement with the rest of its SC is based on information exchange only, because the organization can achieve the desirable goal with existing internal resources.	Social initiative that is initiated by an SC focal company primarily based on intrinsic motivations (e.g., ethical considerations, satisfaction because this was the right thing to do, etc). Focal company's engagement with the rest of its SC is based on information exchange only, because the organization can achieve the desirable goal with existing internal resources.

Figure 2 – Model for implementing social sustainability into supply chains

Extrinsically motivated focal company/SC structural collaboration: From our empirical work, seven initiatives were classified in this category (i.e., upper left quadrant of Figures 1 and 2). A good example is Initiative #10, which was launched by Food A (see Table 3 and Appendix 1), and involved the development of a fund to provide training for small-scale farmers and micro-distributors operating in Food A's supply chain. This initiative focuses on improving productivity and quality and increasing the volume of milk supply (i.e., extrinsically motivated). It employs SC structural collaboration at the relationship level of suppliers and provides training to family-based farmers and organizes them to jointly acquire milk parlors and other machinery.

In the same way, initiative #11 (Food A) aims to promote a new direct sales model that enforces the social aspect of traditional direct sales. In this initiative, Food A, in partnership with an NGO, gives opportunities to impoverished vulnerable women and aims to promote women entrepreneurship and empowerment. This initiative focuses on increasing market share and sales (extrinsic motivations) and employs SC structural collaboration at the relationship level of society (i.e., women entrepreneurs) by offering training and support in entrepreneurship, financial management, cooperation, teamwork, and sales. This social initiative allowed Food A to increase sales and provided opportunities for marketing campaigns.

The nature of these initiatives requires a higher level of engagement with stakeholders in the supply chain, which is seen as a positive factor in the literature (Schliephake et al., 2009; Cantor et al., 2012). This is consistent with Dyck and Silvestre (2018a), who argue that sustainability in emerging countries must necessarily involve NGOs and other groups from society. In addition to this, collaborations between corporations and NGOs tend to increase social acceptance (Gold, 2011) and provide synergies towards social improvements on issues such as poverty alleviation (Hall and Matos, 2010). This leads to Propositions 1a and 1b:

Proposition 1a: Extrinsically motivated social initiatives that are implemented through SC structural collaborations are more likely to connect primary stakeholders only (i.e., suppliers and consumers).

Proposition 1b: Extrinsically motivated social initiatives that are implemented through SC structural collaborations can sometimes involve secondary stakeholders (e.g., NGOs) to provide higher levels of legitimacy and social acceptance.

Intrinsically motivated focal company/SC structural collaboration: Based on our fieldwork, 13 social initiatives were identified in this category (i.e., upper right quadrant of Figures 1 and 2). For example, Food A launched initiative #12, which consists of a community fund for local social entrepreneurs aiming to address issues such as malnutrition and drinking water access through incubation services (i.e., to provide training for these entrepreneurs in areas such as management, fund raising, marketing, governance). The initiative shows an intrinsic motivation to help solve social issues through direct structural collaboration at the relationship level of society (i.e., local social entrepreneurs).

Similarly, initiative #29 launched by Agriculture (Table 3 and Appendix 1) led to the development of a program to support suppliers whose businesses were owned by minority groups (e.g., women, people with disabilities, afro-descendants, and indigenous people). This initiative focuses on ethical considerations and organizational values, since the focal company was not aiming for direct or indirect financial rewards. Agriculture engaged in an SC structural collaboration at the relationship level of suppliers to provide direct supplier support to marginalized and impoverished farmers.

Both of these initiatives clearly place diversity, equality, and social inclusion at the forefront of the discussion. They show a high level of innovation in design, and are aligned with the perspective of Sustainable Innovations 2.0 (Dyck and Silvestre, 2018b), where the economic/financial dimension is subservient. In line with the existing literature, results show that innovation is a central element for businesses that are attempting to truly address social issues (Neutzling et al., 2018; Silvestre and Silva Neto, 2014b), especially complex social issues within their supply chains (Hall et al., 2012a; 2012b). This leads to the Proposition 2.

Proposition 2: Intrinsically motivated social initiatives that are implemented through SC structural collaborations are more likely to be innovative, and they connect a larger number and more diverse set of stakeholders in order to achieve the desired social performance.

Intrinsically motivated focal company/SC information exchange: Based on our fieldwork, five initiatives were classified in this category (i.e., lower right quadrant of Figures 1 and 2). None of the initiatives involves suppliers, but mainly secondary stakeholders from society (i.e., social relationship level of society). For example, initiative #8 (see Table 3 and Appendix 1), which was launched by Natural Gas, used company sales representatives to conduct an education program which was designed to increase the awareness in local communities of ways to prevent the spread of diseases such as yellow fever and zika.

Initiative #16, which was launched by Food B, aims to organize local events to disseminate the importance of healthy and balanced nutrition. For instance, in partnership with NGOs (e.g., the Center for Nutritional Recovery and Education, and the Support Group for Adolescent and Child with Cancer), Food B disseminates information to youth in local communities to improve diagnoses and care for children with nutritional disorders or unhealthy eating habits, and to develop healthy menus for children during and after cancer treatment.

Although intrinsically motivated, the nature of these initiatives require simple exchange of information, rather than structural collaborations (Lee and Whang, 2000). This is because the main goal is to disseminate information to the public by using traditional methods and social media. In addition to this, collaborations between companies and other secondary stakeholders (e.g., NGOs, community) can provide important synergies to build value (Perez-Aleman and Sandilands, 2008)

and to help get the message across to the target audiences (Brockhaus et al., 2013). Various studies show that political institutions and the strategies of stakeholder groups are key to explaining the significant impact of NGOs on corporate decision-making (Doh and Guay, 2006). This leads to Proposition 3:

Proposition 3: Intrinsically motivated social initiatives that are implemented through information exchange are more likely to involve secondary stakeholder groups such as NGOs and the community.

Extrinsically motivated focal company/SC information exchange: From our empirical work, nine social initiatives were classified in this category (i.e., lower left quadrant of Figures 1 and 2). The main formal mechanism to facilitate information exchange in the supply chain to address social issues is to sign contracts that establish social standards that are supposed to be guaranteed by direct suppliers. For example, initiative #6, launched by Natural Gas, shows that suppliers have formally committed to the focal company's Sustainability Policy that establishes minimum social and environmental standards, labor practices, and anti-corruption measures.

Initiative #25, launched by Agriculture involved the creation of online material on how to manage farms and feed cities by relying on sustainable agricultural practices. The initiative is called the Sustainable Farm Challenge, and has currently more than 1.5 million views/downloads. The initiative aims to increase market share, reputation, and competitive advantage (i.e., extrinsically motivated) and works by disseminating information to its consumers.

The descriptions of both initiatives show that these types of social initiatives have the tendency to adopt a formalization mechanism such as contracts that can be easily enforced, or online content that can be easily shared and promoted. Such formalizations tend to be standard as a means of attenuating the pressures from various stakeholder groups on the focal company to improve its social performance (Huq et al., 2016; Zeng et al., 2017). These formalizations targeting suppliers and buyers through contracts can also work as a risk-mitigation mechanism for the focal companies (Klassen and Vereecke, 2012). This is, through formalization, the focal company often aims to avoid being held accountable for low SC social performance. However, Pedersen and Andersen (2006) argue that these mechanisms are often not effective because active commitment from all the actors in the supply chain is required, but the incentives to comply are not the same for everyone. This leads to Proposition 4:

Proposition 4a: Extrinsically motivated social initiatives that are implemented through information exchange only tend to engage one single primary stakeholder group (e.g., suppliers or consumers).

Proposition 4b: Extrinsically motivated social initiatives that are implemented through information exchange only often employ formal mechanisms (e.g., contracts) to potentially transfer responsibility and reduce pressure from secondary stakeholders (e.g., NGOs and the media) on the focal company.

6. Conclusion

In this paper, we explore the question of why and how focal companies implement and manage social sustainability in their supply chains. Drawing from previous literature (Vereecke and Muylle, 2006; Muller and Kolk, 2010; Gimenez and Tachiawa, 2012), we combine two fundamental constructs to build our model: a focal company's motivation to implement the social initiative (i.e. intrinsic or extrinsic) and SC engagement (i.e., information exchange or structural collaboration) to help us to understand the dynamics of social initiatives within supply chains. Through our empirical work, we identified, analyzed, and classified 34 social initiatives according to three key relationship levels in supply chains—supplier, consumer, and society (Mani et al., 2015).

This research makes five contributions to research and practice. First, by analyzing the nature and scope of these social initiatives, this research suggests that integrating intrinsically motivated social sustainability initiatives in supply chains may require focal companies to adopt SC structural collaboration as a strategy, while integrating extrinsically motivated social sustainability initiatives may be achievable with information exchange only. Perhaps focal companies have already realized

that simply exchanging information is not generally sufficient to effectively implement and manage complex social issues in supply chains, and that the more comprehensive approach of SC structural collaboration is necessary. Although we explored exemplary cases of focal companies that seek to be more sustainable than its competitors, slightly more than half of the identified initiatives were classified as intrinsically motivated (i.e., based on ethical considerations and values). We reason that this ratio might be significantly lower for the average focal company, which might confirm that organizations and supply chains are currently investing in social sustainability for the wrong reasons (i.e., to achieve higher financial returns). These findings deserve further investigation and questions like why and how non-exemplar focal firms implement and manage social sustainability in their supply chains represent an interesting and complementary opportunity for future research.

Second, the results of the fieldwork suggest that the involvement of secondary stakeholders such as NGOs might be a fundamental (if not mandatory) element for the successful implementation of intrinsically motivated social initiatives. Similarly, the involvement of a primary stakeholder groups such as consumers or suppliers might be required for the successful implementation of extrinsically motivated social initiatives. It might be the case that when intrinsically motivated, focal companies are inherently more willing to involve a larger number and more diverse set of stakeholders in the social initiative. It might also be the case that focal companies do not see themselves as possessing the capabilities to run intrinsically motivated social initiatives by themselves, and for that reason secondary stakeholders (such as NGOs and community) are often involved. On the other hand, when social initiatives are extrinsically motivated, focal companies might prefer to engage with a more limited set of stakeholder groups (often just one). When a more diverse group of stakeholders is involved in extrinsically motivated social initiatives, the aim seems to be to simply increase legitimacy and social acceptance of the initiatives. Although multi-industry data were collected, the dataset comes entirely from one country (i.e., Brazil), so this is a limitation of this study. Further research in multiple settings and industries is needed to comprehensively test the generalizability of our findings. Thus, future research can contribute to the field by investigating questions like how focal firms from developed economies engage stakeholder groups compared to focal firms from emerging economies.

Third, this research contributes to the SSCM dialogue by reinforcing the importance of the fundamental notion of social sustainability. Social initiatives can be implemented in supply chains through different approaches that might indicate the real purpose of these initiatives and the types of outcomes they can generate in the short-term, medium-term and long-term in regard to supply chain sustainability performance. The literature on SSCM will benefit from analyzing social initiatives in supply chains in terms of their motivations, SC engagement adopted and relationship level used in order to determine which approaches lead to better supply chain sustainability performance in the long run. Also, it is important to acknowledge that the approaches associated with a given social initiative (i.e., its motivation, SC engagement, and relationship level) may have some dynamism and actually change over time. These dynamics might be associated with the characteristics of the top management team at the time, the characteristics of the manager in charge of the initiative, and the specific context the focal company may be facing at the time. Further research is needed to improve our understanding of the dynamics behind the potential changes and dynamics in approaches to social initiatives over time. For example, how changes in senior management influence the implementation of social initiatives in supply chains in terms of their motivations and engagement.

Fourth, although westernized perspectives are dominant in the SSCM discourse, perspectives in emerging economies are relevant and required. Therefore, a more robust understanding of the dynamics of SSCM in emerging countries is needed. This research helps fill this gap by explaining why and how focal companies implement and manage social initiatives in an emerging economy such as Brazil. It is one step in the direction of clarifying the black box called “SSCM in emerging economies,” but much remains to be done. For example, in a recent study, Silvestre et al. (2018) found that close stakeholder engagement in supply chains operating in emerging economies can increase the likelihood of corruption scams to emerge, especially in certain parts of the supply chain.

Therefore, we are just scratching the surface. One limitation of this study is that we have data from just 6 focal companies operating in a single country. Research on this issue is needed from both large emerging economies (e.g., China, India, and Russia) and smaller ones. Considering a more comprehensive perspective, opportunities for future research exist in terms of enhancing our understanding of how institutional pressures influence the implementation and management of social initiatives by focal firms from different emerging economies.

Finally, this study contributes to the practice of managing supply chains by reinforcing the relevance of social sustainability, and by arguing that genuine management actions may lead to more robust and permanent sustainability results. Many managers still view social sustainability simply as “philanthropy” rather than as a key dimension for the sustainability performance of organizations and supply chains. Managers can employ tools such as the typology developed in this paper to understand the reasons behind each social initiative, the key elements that may permit focal companies to manage these initiatives in a more appropriate way, and the outcomes associated with each social initiative type and their impact on primary (i.e., suppliers and consumers) and secondary stakeholders (i.e., communities). Adopting and testing this typology in practice will benefit practitioners and researchers as the proposed model can evolve over time and accommodate the inevitable changes that occur in the business environment and in the mindset of decision makers.

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Appendix 1: Dataset

Cosmetics is a Brazilian multinational company founded in 1969. The company leads the direct sale market in the sector, and has approximately 6,500 employees and 1.8 million direct sellers. The *Cosmetics* interviewee is an agricultural engineer, who has worked as the sustainability manager for more than 10 years. In 2014, *Cosmetics* developed a document called 2050 Sustainability Vision, stating its challenges for generating positive financial, social, cultural, and environmental impact. In the same year, they were the first publically traded company to become a B Corp¹.

Focal companies analyzed and professionals interviewed

#	Company ^a	Industry	Size ^b	Brazilian company	Time in Brazil	Interviewee
A	Cosmetics	Cosmetics	Large	Yes	45y	Sustainability Manager
B	Natural Gas	Liquefied petroleum gas	Large	Yes	80y	Sustainability Manager
C	Food A	Food	Large	No	45y	Sustainability Supervisor
D	Food B	Food	Large	No	50y	Sustainability Manager
E	Agriculture	Food	Large	No	60y	Crop Production Leader for South America
F	Automobile	Automotive	Large	No	90y	Environmental Engineer

^a The names of the Companies have been changed for privacy reasons.

^b Large sized companies are companies with more than 500 employees

Natural Gas is a Brazilian company, founded in 1937, and is the leader in the domestic market for the distribution of Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG). The company has 3,600 employees and provides LPG to 11 million homes and 50,000 businesses. The *Natural Gas* interviewee is the sustainability manager, who has been in the company for fourteen years, and holds a PhD in sustainability management. Among other actions, in 2010 *Natural Gas* adopted a series of measures to minimize its operational impacts, including “sustainable growth of the communities impacted by the company” as one of its organizational principles. In 2013, it also launched a long-term management tool to help the organization reach its main socio-environmental objectives by 2022.

Food A is a multinational company that started its operation in Brazil about 45 years ago; it has more than 5,000 employees in Brazil. The company was initially founded in 1919 as a small factory producing yogurt. *Food A*’s interviewee is the sustainability supervisor, who has been in the company for three years and holds a master in business and sustainability. The company’s mission is “to bring health through food to as many people as possible,” and it developed a fund that provides training for small-scale farmers and micro-distributors. Moreover, it launched a business model that reinforces the social character of the traditional direct sales with a focus on the promotion of women entrepreneurship and empowerment.

Food B is a 150 years old multinational company that started its operations in Brazil in 1965. Today, the company is one of the largest food companies in the country with about 9,800 employees. *Food B* has activities in agriculture, animal nutrition, food, and financial areas, and operates in 176 Brazilian municipalities. The *Food B* interviewee is the sustainability manager, who has worked for the company for six years and has a master’s degree in environmental technologies. The company aims “to be a leader in nurturing the world in a safe, responsible and sustainable way.” Among multiple social initiatives, *Food B* has also developed the Supplier Code of Conduct, which determines ethical standards required throughout its supply chain

Agriculture is a multinational company founded around 1900 that operates globally in areas such as seeds, vegetables, and crop protection. In Brazil, the company started its operations almost 60 years ago and has about 3,900 employees. The interviewee works as the Crop Production Leader

¹ System B (<https://www.bcorporation.net/>) is a movement that aims to disseminate sustainable development by certifying companies that aim to solve socio-environmental problems globally.

in South America, is a mechanical engineer and has been with the company for 6 years. The company indicates six sustainable development objectives relevant to its business due to its positioning at the beginning of the food chain: i) eradication of poverty, ii) zero hunger and sustainable agriculture, iii) clean water and sanitation, iv) decent work and economic growth, v) action against global climate change, and vi) terrestrial life. It undertakes sustainable initiatives to improve eating habits of mothers and children, and periodic meetings with the community to discuss social issues. It constantly conducts supplier sustainability certification and audits.

Automobile is a 105 year old multinational company that initiated its operations in Brazil 90 years ago. It currently has about 20,000 employees in Brazil. The *Automobile* interviewee, who has been with the company for about 3 years, is an environmental engineer who specializes in environmental strategic management, sustainable projects, climate change, and corporate management. The company created a Sustainability Committee in 2011 to disseminate sustainability initiatives adopted by different business areas and to assess sustainability performance. *Automobile* engages with a multi-stakeholder initiative to develop and implement supply chain responsibility training programs.

Appendix 2: Social Initiatives

Focal Company	#	Social Initiative	Types
Cosmetics (A)	01	Created a platform that brings together volunteers for socio-environmental projects, which has already benefited more than 50,000 people in the areas of health, education, culture and sports.	Philanthropy Health, Safety and Well-being
	02	Donated the profit from specific products to education for communities and its sales consultants (8,000 have returned to high school and college). R\$38 million donated in 2016 in Latin America.	Philanthropy Health, Safety and Well-being
	03	All suppliers take training on the company's Code of Ethics. At the time of hiring, they must take a training course through an online platform.	Ethics
	04	The company encourages the ethical trade of raw materials from Amazon communities. Through this program the company encourages supply chains that conserve the forest and generate income for 2,119 families.	Health, Safety and Well-being Ethics
	05	Promotion of responsible consumption with the stimulation of new consumption patterns by means of products with refills and sustainable packaging.	Health, Safety and Well-being
Natural Gas (B)	06	Critical suppliers formally commit to the company's Sustainability Policy and have contracts signed with a clause on social and environmental criteria, labor practices, and anti-corruption.	Ethics Health, Safety and Well-being
	07	Critical suppliers sign a Term of Commitment of Sustainable Performance, with items related to labor rights, human rights, combating child labor and analogous to slavery, freedom of association, diversity. Verifications are made by visiting suppliers and analyzing documents.	Human rights Health, Safety and Well-being
	08	The company collaborated in the fight against local diseases through an educational campaign that mobilized its resellers, bringing information to help prevention at consumer's homes. Estimates suggest 9 million people were impacted.	Health, Safety and Well-being
	09	As a signatory of a Pact Against Children and Adolescents Sexual Exploitation on Brazilian Highways, the company assists programs that combat sexual exploitation and supports campaigns to make society aware of these crimes.	Human rights
Food A (C)	10	Development of an Ecosystem Fund that provides training for small-scale farmers and micro-distributors from its supply base.	Health, Safety and Well-being
	11	Promotes a new direct selling model that enforces the social character of traditional direct selling focusing on women entrepreneurship and women empowerment.	Equity
	12	The company has a Communities Fund, an incubator of its social business that brings finance and skills to local companies aiming to address social problems such as malnutrition and access to clean drinking water.	Human rights Health, Safety and Well-being

	13	Promotes an initiative to support social entrepreneurs by connecting them with its own employees to develop skills, share knowledge, and provide apprenticeship opportunities.	Philanthropy
	14	Created a Product Compliance Board, whose mission is to supervise the company's engagement on health and nutrition.	Health, Safety and Well-being
Food B (D)	15	Developed Codes of Conduct, which determine ethical standards required. Two key documents guide business relationships: Buyer's Code of Ethics, a set of rules for the company's professionals, and Supplier's Code of Conduct, a set of rules for suppliers. All contracts include clauses that address human rights issues.	Ethics Human rights
	16	Through volunteer staff, civil society organizations, institutions and associations, the company works to raise public awareness of the importance of healthy and balanced nutrition/food.	Philanthropy Health, Safety and Well-being
	17	The company has collaborated with food industry associations in the new regulations that determine mandatory information on allergenic ingredients on labels.	Health, Safety and Well-being
	18	The company has a Family Agriculture Program that serves about 1,000 family farmers and 1,200 cooperatives. The program has enabled the biodiesel plant to obtain a Social Fuel Seal to biodiesel producers that promote social inclusion and regional development, by generating employment and income for family farmers.	Health, Safety and Well-being
	19	A program that benefits 75 farmers with training and capacity building. Farmers improve their knowledge of technology and technical support to improve productivity, while the community has benefited from projects that improve their environment, health, and nutrition.	Health, Safety and Well-being
	20	The company has a partnership with a local university, where students are selected for training on quality of life in agriculture, rural health and safety, and labor legislation and, then, present a plan of action to selected farmers.	Health, Safety and Well-being
	21	Brought a new certification to Brazil, regarding the best agricultural practices and compliance with environmental and labor legislation. The company started to buy part of its raw materials directly from the farmers who committed to certify.	Health, Safety and Well-being
Agriculture (E)	22	The company created online material on how to build a farm and feed a city with good agricultural practices, called the Sustainable Farm Challenge, currently with more than 1.5 million views.	Health, Safety and Well-being
	23	Growing Healthy Program leads to training of mothers, teachers, and health workers, contributing to the creation of healthy eating habits, and contributes to the access to quality food, at low cost, with the operation gardens in preschools and stimulating the cultivation of nutrient sources at home. The program works to promote preventive health and basic hygiene.	Health, Safety and Well-being
	24	Voluntary work of 4,000 employees to stimulate the adoption of healthy eating habits and traffic safety campaigns.	Philanthropy Health, Safety and Well-being
	25	The Borderless Program works directly with rural workers in promoting safety at work in an attempt to reduce the high accident rates at work in rural communities.	Health, Safety and Well-being
	26	The company has an Anti-Corruption Policy that guides the conduct of employees and third parties who interact with the government on behalf of the company, where 750 people were trained across the entire supply chain.	Ethics
	27	Protection of human rights clauses are included in all contracts. In 2016, 21,000 suppliers were evaluated, and as a result, 129 contracts were not renewed due to no compliance with human right standards.	Human rights
	28	Conducts the Suppliers Sustainability Qualification Plan, an initiative that includes performance audits and supplier certification to verify sustainability measures and prepare suppliers to provide services.	Health, Safety and Well-being
	29	Developed a Mentoring Program for Diversity Suppliers, a program aimed at suppliers whose businesses operated by persons belonging to minority groups like women, people with disabilities, Afro-descendants, and indigenous people.	Equity

Automobile (F)	30	Developed the Focus Project, promoted in cooperation with the Metalworkers union, focused on preparing youth for their first job and to improve cultural and intellectual background of union members.	Philanthropy
	31	Created the STEM Program (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math), a mentoring program for young students from the communities surrounding the company's facilities, where employees help to develop their skills.	Philanthropy
	32	Created a Teen Driver System, which provides parents with a teaching tool to help encourage safe driving habits focusing on their kids.	Health, Safety and Well-being
	33	Engages with an industry action group to develop and implement supply chain responsibility training programs.	Health, Safety and Well-being
	34	Promotes a Supplier Diversity Program for supplier development, sourcing alignment and enhancing relationships to strengthen suppliers' positions in the marketplace.	Equity

Appendix 3: Coding and Sample Questions

Codes Analyzed	Concepts	Sample Questions
Intrinsic motivation	Motivation for SC social sustainability (Gimenez and Tachiawa, 2012) is either intrinsic or extrinsic (Ryan and Deci, 2000). Social initiatives that are launched based primarily on extrinsic motivations are focused on gaining direct or indirect financial rewards (e.g., increased profit margins, increased competitive advantage, larger market share), while approaches that are based primarily on intrinsic motivations are focused on ethical considerations and values of the decision maker (i.e., is it the right thing to do?) (Muller and Kolk, 2010). Approaches based on extrinsic motivations are related to the idea that "it pays to be ethical" (Burke and Logsdon, 1996), are associated with risk-avoidance and/or opportunity-seeking behaviors (Silvestre, 2016), and can be linked to a multiplicity of drivers. By contrast, social initiatives that are launched based on intrinsic motivation are related to the mindset of decision-makers and organizational culture (instead of temporary opportunities and risks).	Once the social initiative was identified: Why did the focal company launched initiative "X"? Could you comment about what factors led the focal company to adopt initiative "X"? As initiative "X" is potentially a source of costs, how shareholders viewed it? Explain how was the convincing process? Once approved, how was the process of integrating social sustainability initiatives in the supply chain?
Extrinsic motivation		
Information exchange	A focal company engages with other supply chain actors to address social issues or launch social initiatives. At one extreme, the simple exchange of information defines the extent of engagement. At the other extreme—structural collaboration—there is a much higher degree of commitment to resolve social issues, and interaction becomes embedded in business practices and oriented toward integration (Vereecke and Muylle, 2006).	What practices does the focal company use to interact with other players when integrating initiative "X" into the SC? Explain.
Structural collaboration		
Internal operations	Mani et al. (2015) classify social practices in Indian supply chains into four different relationship levels: internal operations; supplier relationship; consumer relationship and society relationship	In terms of initiative "X", which stakeholder groups interact with the focal company? How these interactions take place? How often these interactions occur?
Supplier relationship		
Consumer relationship		
Society relationship		
Philanthropy	Mani et al. (2016) developed and validated five key categories of social issues in supply chains in India. They are: philanthropy, health, safety and well-being, equity, ethics and human rights	How does the focal company classify social sustainability internally? What category has been the target when integrating social initiative "X" in the supply chain? Explain
Equity		
Ethics		
Human rights		
Safety and well-being		