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Industry patterns regarding sustainable supply chain practices

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Context: Sustainable supply chain management (SSC) offer companies great improvements opportunities although the types of implemented practices vary according to the industry (Waddock & Graves 1997).

Objective and Methodology: The aim of this paper is, through a content analysis with reports from 32 multinational companies, identify patterns of five different industries: Basic materials and energy (BM&E), Industrial materials (IM), Automotive and commercial vehicles (A&CV), Consumer goods (CG) and Transportation and Logistics Services (T&LS).

Findings:

1. T&LS have a particular behavior towards sustainability, with lacks in fundamental practices related to governance and production, which also includes resources management. More intentions than actions. Some (few) investments in equipment and vehicles. Low margins and limited resources available to support the SSC initiatives (Piecyk & Björklund 2012)?

2. Lack of supply chain integration among all companies. Since most of the distribution activities are outsourced in manufacturers, initiatives conducted together with partners are not reported. It is unclear if they are not just reported or also not implemented. Few efforts to involve suppliers in the product and packaging development. Opportunities for reducing their impact on the environment and society might arise from collaborations (Anne Touboulic & Walker 2015) - still absent in all industries' realities.

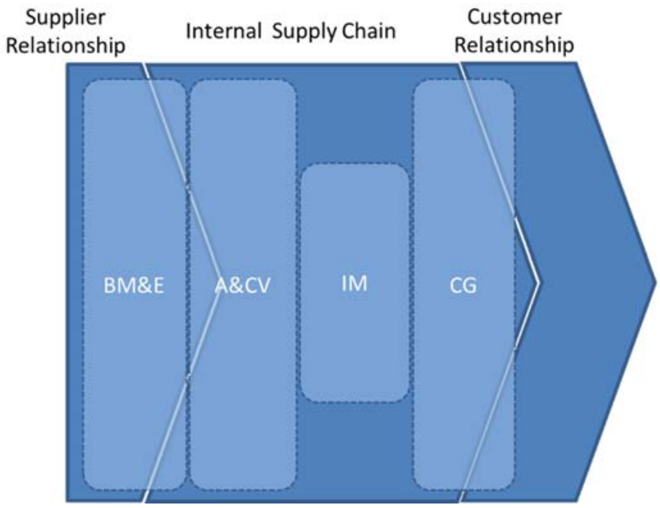
3. Patterns for each industry (figure):

RM&E: Invest considerably more in waste management and supplier relationships, including with logistics service providers, although this does not mean setting collaboration projects.

A&CV: focus on high-regulated issues and in improving transparency with suppliers of goods.

IM: particular challenges in managing waste and collaborating with external stakeholders - governments, suppliers and customers. Due to their position in the SC? Neither directly influenced by final customers' pressures nor by strict regulations?

CG: initiatives for improving procurement, recycling rates and setting collaboration with customers for reducing scope 3 emissions.



Conclusions: Leading manufacturers seem to have overcame the first challenge of organizing their corporate environment, each industry with its particular portfolio of practices. The current step is building long-term relationships with other companies, through industry associations and collaborative platforms. This step is essential for extending sustainability towards supply chain. T&LS firms, in contrast, are still in the preliminary phase, when internal culture and mind-set have to be transformed and value business sustainability appropriately.