

THE NEGATIVE IMPACT OF SOCIAL NETWORKS ON SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT: SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW

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Abstract. This systematic literature review examines the negative impacts of social media (SM) on supply chain management (SCM). Pre-defined selection criteria were used on four research questions to identify a hundred relevant publications from the Scopus database, including publishers such as Emerald, Elsevier, Springer, Inderscience, and Wiley. The review begins with the first research question – the characteristics of the selected publications. Then, the authors delve into the second question – negative impacts, such as reputational damage, profit losses, and unreliable data. The third question highlights supply chain (SC) processes that are particularly vulnerable to the influence of social media. In addressing the fourth question, the authors identified the most common social networks (SN) discussed in related literature. Despite the comprehensive research, no publication thoroughly explored these four research questions, pointing to gaps for future empirical research. The limitation of focusing solely on English-language literature and other disciplines suggests the need for broader studies. This work deepens understanding of this underexplored area and contrasts the documented positive impacts.

Keywords: social network, social media, supply chain management, negative impact, systematic literature review (SLR).

JEL Classification: M10, M14.

1. Introduction

Social media users almost doubled from 2017 to 2023. Currently, more than half Earth's population are using social media, and it is expected to include one more billion users by 2027 (Statista, 2024a). The number of social media users is growing, and the impact on daily lives has also increased. Approximately 10 % of daily activities are dedicated to social media (Statista, 2024b). Thus, it is uncommon to believe that the supply chain is resistant to the impacts of social networks.

Especially in the past several years, global and local supply chains have regularly encountered dynamic changes and disruptions from external and internal sources. On the one hand, Brexit in Europe and the COVID-19 pandemic caused global disruption, vulnerability, and extra strain on supply chains and logistics networks. The digitals are suggested as a means for heightened demands for adaptivity and resilience, especially for small and medium-sized enterprises and their staff (Ferreira et al., 2021).

On the other hand, social media and significantly misleading narratives, such as fake news, that were spread

by using digital networks caused even more disruption for supply chains that were already disrupted during the Ukrainian-Russian war. This resulted in hasty purchases and disposal of various goods, from essential commodities to stocks (Sarraf et al., 2024).

Currently, the Israel-Hamas war is causing new disruptions in the global shipping routes and impacting Red Sea shipping and voyages. In December 2023, four major shipping companies reacted to the tensions in the region. They halted Red Sea operations due to intensified attacks by Iran-supported Houthi rebels, jeopardizing a vital route for global commerce (The Economist, 2023).

There are various studies on the positive impact of social media on supply chain management and processes, related systematic literature review or bibliometric analysis (Mishra et al., 2017; Devi & Ganguly, 2021; Hoang et al., 2023; Luo et al., 2023). Several literature reviews specifically focused on the food supply chain. For example, Luo et al. (2023) conducted a bibliometric analysis and relevance-driven literature review on social media engagement and the food supply chain.

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The researchers discovered concerns about social media usage in the food sector's supply chains, such as false information, trust in digitized platforms for food marketing, breach of expectations, and lack of reliability. In the meantime, Mishra et al. (2017) dived into the beef production supply chain. They conducted a systematic literature review to capture the elements shaping beef consumers' purchasing choices based on "Twitter".

Several researchers concluded their studies by suggesting investigating social media's harmful impacts, related risks, and drawbacks. For example, Devi and Ganguly (2021) recommend further investigations on topics such as confidentiality and employee productivity decline due to distraction caused by "Facebook," "Instagram," or other means of social networks. Hoang et al. (2023) also suggest analyzing how extensive information sharing via social networks can negatively influence a company's competitiveness. Sarraf et al. (2024) advise concentrating on the impacts of misinformation generated via social media by Artificial Intelligence.

Besides concentrating on the consequences, it still needs to be determined which of the common supply chain processes, such as those related to production, logistics, warehousing, inventory, and the management of information (Hugos, 2018), are influenced mainly by social networks. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) categorized social media into six types: collaborative (e.g., Wikipedia), blogs, communities of content (e.g., YouTube), social networking (e.g., Facebook), virtual games, and virtual social platforms (e.g., Second Life). However, it is valuable to understand if the impact on the supply chain correlates with the currently most popular and widely used social media platforms.

Therefore, here are the questions to be answered by this systematic literature review:

RQ1: What are the main characteristics (co-occurrence of keywords, co-authorship by countries, year, source) of the selected publications?

RQ2: What are the negative impacts of different types of social networks on supply chain management?

RQ3: What are the most common supply chain management processes impacted by social media?

RQ4: What are the main social networks discussed in related literature?

This study seeks to broaden the understanding of current literature on the negative consequences of social networks on supply chain management. Also, it provides future directions for the researchers aiming to analyze the topic by suggesting key characteristics of systematically reviewed literature. Then, gives the most common negative impacts, supply chain processes, and social media platforms for further investigation.

The paper has been divided into several main sections. The methodology used is listed in the Section 1. The findings and the discussion part are covered in Section 2. The conclusion is in the last section.

2. Methodology

Systematic literature review (SLR) is a popular method emphasizing transparency and rule definition. It originated in medicine with British epidemiologist Archie Cochrane (Albanese & Norcini, 2002). Cochrane's method is also called Cochrane review or systematic review. The review aims to avoid bias by gathering and assessing all research on specific questions, following strict inclusion and exclusion criteria rules, and describing how the review will be conducted (Cochrane Library, n.d.). This systematic review was later applied to increase the management field's knowledge by mapping and critically assessing the existing publications based on the research question (Tranfield et al., 2003). However, there are also some limitations, as the method of SLR is time-consuming and needs a variety of sources and databases that might be paid for and based on a subscription (Višić, 2022). The SLR methodology that is used for this study is similar to other SLR publications by Višić (2022), Devi and Ganguly (2021), Behera et al. (2019), Arksey and O'Malley (2005), and Tranfield et al. (2003) and covers the following steps.

First, planning the review is mainly based on preparing and developing a research plan to delimit the topic, describe steps to be taken, cover changes made, and provide their rationale. Second, conducting the review – identifying research keywords and search terms, selecting "best fit" publications for the research questions, and assessing their quality through stages by employing inclusion and exclusion criteria. Also, thoroughly reading selected articles to decide whether to include them in the final list. Then, the data will be extracted, progress will be monitored, and findings will be synthesized. Third, synthesizing – providing insights, summaries, and recommendations based on a small percentage of the articles included in the final list.

2.1. Planning the review

The authors created relevant research questions (RQ1–RQ4) based on the main characteristics (co-occurrence of keywords, co-authorship by countries, year, source) of the selected publications (RQ1); the negative impact of social media on supply chain (RQ2); the most common supply chain management processes impacted by social media (RQ3); main social networks discussed (RQ4). They were also identified in the Introduction section.

Inclusion criteria (IC) and exclusion criteria (EC) used for decision-making on literature were conceived and presented in Table 1. Inclusion criteria included such keywords as "supply chain" AND ("social network" OR "social media" OR "digital platform" OR "social platform" OR "social ap") AND ("negative impact" OR "negative influence" OR "disadvantage" OR "risk" OR "threat"). Moreover, the exclusion criteria were also chosen: "business management and accounting" and "social sciences" categories (EC1). The studies were limited to English language publications (EC2). However, this is also the limitation of our

study. Thus, other academic fields and languages may be researched to broaden the topic's knowledge.

Table 1. Inclusion and exclusion criteria for the Scopus database

Inclusion criteria (IC)	Exclusion criteria (EC)
IC1: Search within Article title, Abstract, Keywords: “supply chain” AND (“social network” OR “social media” OR “digital platform” OR “social platform” OR “social ap”) AND (“negative impact” OR “negative influence” OR “disadvantage” OR “risk” OR “threat”).	EC1: Categories – limited to “Business, Management and Accounting” and “Social Sciences”, others excluded from the review.
IC2: Document Types – article, review.	EC2: Literature only written in English is used; other languages are excluded.
	EC3: Literature excluded if it does not comply with the quality requirements (discussed in Table 2).

The quality evaluation (QE3) questions were defined in Table 2. They are based on research questions (RQ2–RQ4). The QE1 question covers the negative impact of social networks on the supply chain (RQ2). While the QE2 question covers supply chain processes (RQ3), and the QE3 question covers social media platforms (RQ4). The possible score ranges from 2 (the highest) to 0 (the lowest). The Scopus digital database was chosen, and “grey literature” was excluded. This is another limitation of our study, so other databases (such as Web of Science) and sources may be researched in the future.

Table 2. Quality evaluation (QE) questions

# of QE	QE criteria	Score range (2 – highest, 0 – lowest)
QE1	Does the publication explicitly mention the negative impact of social networks on the supply chain?	The expected answers: “publication mentions negative impacts (+2)”, “<...> mentions some impact (+1)”, and “<...> does not mention and there is no evidence on impacts in general (+0)”.
QE3	Does the publication explicitly mention and detail supply chain processes?	The expected answers: “publication mentions specific supply chain processes (+2)”, “<...> mentions supply chain in a general, broad sense (+1)”, and “<...> does not mention supply chain at all (+0)”.
QE5	Does the publication explicitly mention and detail social media platforms?	The expected answers: “publication mentions specific social media platform (+2)”, “<...> mentions social media, social networks in a general, broad sense (+1)”, “<...> does not mention social media at all (+0)”.

2.2. Conducting the first phase of the review

The first stage of the review was performed. The Scopus database was browsed using the search function and IC1, IC2, EC1, and EC2 criteria (Table 1). Thus, 100 relevant initial publications were visualized and bibliometric maps graphically represented with VOSviewer computer program (van Eck & Waltman, 2010).

In Figure 1 visualization of the primary results by co-occurrence of all keywords is provided. As van Eck and Waltman (2023) indicate, the label and cycle sizes determine the weight of the topic, and the colour is determined by the cluster it belongs to, while the distance shows how much the topics are related.

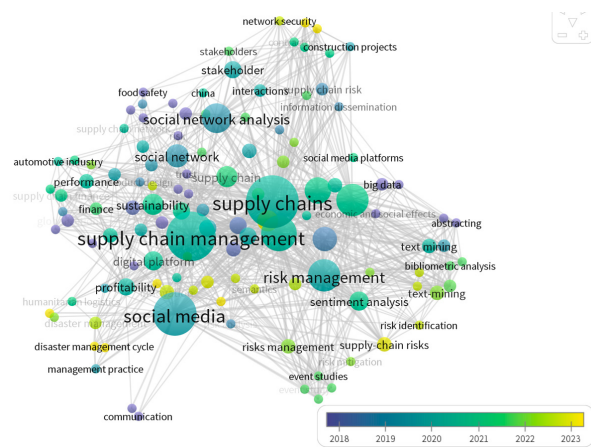


Figure 1. Bibliographic overlay map of 100 related publications' by all keywords co-occurrence

As given in Figure 1, topics such as “supply chains,” “supply chain management,” “social media,” and “risk management” are dominating. Also, there is a great variety (more than 120) of the keywords to be selected, creating 8 clusters. While the colour bar below indicates how dates of the publications are mapped to colorus (van Eck & Waltman, 2023), it shows growing attention to other topics such as “supply chain risks,” “disaster management cycle,” and “social network analysis.”

The density map's visual representation of the title and cycle of the topic is similar to overlay visualization, and the closer the colour is to the yellow, the more the country is represented by the co-authors (van Eck & Waltman, 2023). This suggests that the co-authored publications from countries like the USA, China, the UK, and Germany led this topic (Figure 2).

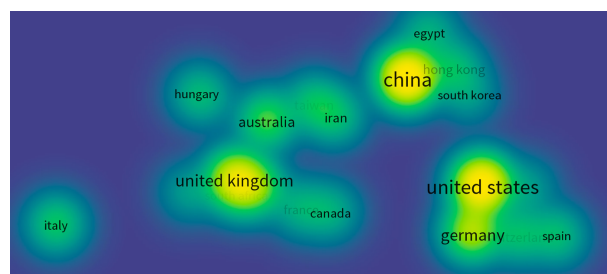


Figure 2. Bibliographic density map of 100 related publications by co-authorship by countries

However, this wide range of comprehensive results (various keywords and leading countries) motivated the authors to conduct further reviews and minimize the number of articles.

2.3. Conducting the second phase of review

The second stage of the review was performed to improve the research. The goal was to evaluate the 100 relevant publications and to remove non-applicable ones based on the EC3 criteria (Table 2). The CSV file was exported from the Scopus database, including complete information on citations, bibliographical information, abstract and keywords, funding details, and other information.

As a result, 81 publications remained for a deeper analysis after the Excel VBA Macro run. Thus, publications not including all QE1-QE3 criteria were excluded (Table 2). It did not cover social media impact or mention supply chain and social media platforms; the total score was less than 3.

The third stage concluded with 18 publications after a second analysis with Excel VBA Macro search. This allowed the exclusion of publications that did not meet all QE1-QE3 criteria (Table 2) and had a total score of less than 4.

The fourth stage was to re-read all 18 articles and manually determine the relevance of the quality evaluation QE1-QE3 criteria (Table 2). Four publications were eliminated because negative impacts were not mentioned, only risk management was emphasized, no specific social media platforms were covered, or the quality of the publication needed to be more acceptable. After this evaluation, there were 14 publications left for further research. The publishers of these final selected articles were Emerald, Elsevier, Springer, Inderscience, and Wiley.

The final data was converted to CSV format to use VOSviewer to analyze the rest of the 14 publications. In the VOSviewer program, the “Creation of a map based on the bibliographic data” was used. The following steps included “Read data from bibliographic database files” and choosing “Scopus”. Then, a couple of map views were chosen and examined: co-occurrence (for all keywords mentioned at least twice) and co-authorship (by countries).

2.4. Insights of review

The final step showed the publication relevance and links by the main keywords listed (van Eck & Waltman, 2010). The overlay visualization by VOSviewer in Figure 3 shows the main topics relevant to the study were “Social networking (online)”, “social media”, “supply chains”, and “supply chain management”. Also, as the emphasis was placed on the negative aspect of social media’s influence on supply chains, the data shows the frequent occurrence of “risk management” and “supply-chain risks”.

It is worth mentioning that the trending research and analytical methods appear through this data visualization, such as “sentiment analysis”, “data analytics”, and

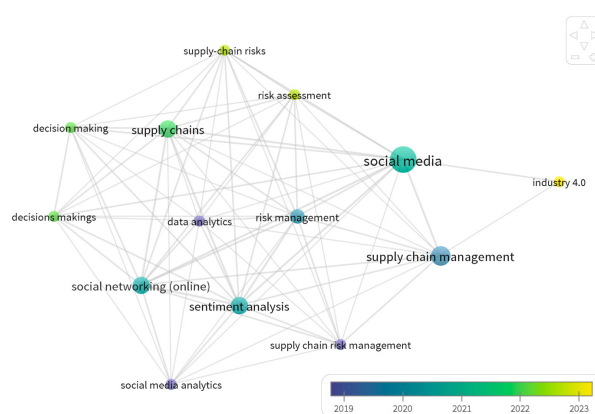


Figure 3. Bibliographic overlay map of 14 related publications by all keywords co-occurrence

“data mining”. Such topics as “supply-chain risks”, “risk assessment”, and “Industry 4.0” are getting more attention as well. The density map’s visual representation (Figure 4) suggests that leading co-authored publications were from the UK, South Africa, Australia, and India.

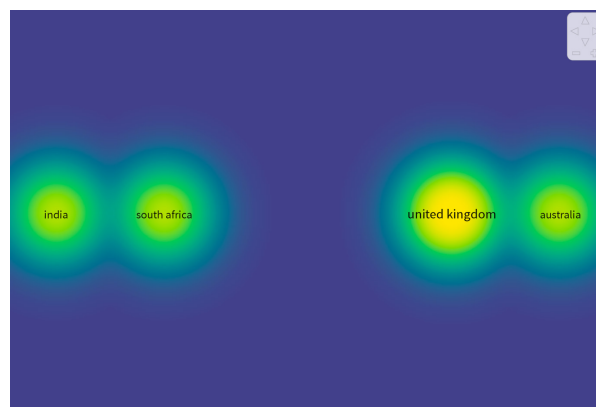


Figure 4. Bibliographic density map of 14 related publications by co-authorship by countries

The next chapter will cover the main findings and recommendations based on the research questions.

3. Findings and discussion

First, the authors discuss the selected publications’ main characteristics (co-occurrence of keywords, co-authorship by countries, year, source) to answer RQ1. Then, the negative impact on supply chain management by social media as RQ2. Followed by the supply chain management processes impacted by social media (RQ3). Finally, the paper covers the leading social networks in the selected literature (RQ4).

3.1. The publications’ characteristics (RQ1)

The topic has been getting more attention and steadily increasing since 2014, while since 2020, more than most of the selected papers have been published. The first selected publication was in 2014 (Fisher et al., 2014), and the number of publications each year remained the same

for 2015 and 2018, suggesting a steady, low output period.

In 2020, there was a significant increase in three publications (Ciulli et al., 2020; Tietze et al., 2020; Tóth et al., 2020), indicating a possible surge in research activity or interest. Or an effect of various external factors affecting the field, such as funding changes, shifts in research priorities, or global events such as the pandemic impacting research productivity.

There is another notable increase in 2023, with four publications (Hoang et al., 2023; Schmidt et al., 2023; Shrivastav & Bag, 2023; Papagiannidis et al., 2023), which is the highest in the given period, suggesting a renewed and growing interest in the field. There were no leading sources of the selected publications. Still, more than one paper was published by the “International Journal of Production Economics” (as given in Table 3), indicating that it may have a particular interest or focus in the field of study relevant to these publications. Interestingly, according to the quality evaluation, these two publications were among the most suitable (Chae, 2015; Schmidt et al., 2023).

Table 3. Publications by source

Publication Source Title	# of Publications
International Journal of Production Economics	2
Benchmarking	1
British Journal of Management	1
Business Horizons	1
Industrial Management and Data Systems	1
International Journal of Integrated Supply Management	1
International Journal of Operations and Production Management	1
International Journal of Physical Distribution and Logistics Management	1
Journal of Advances in Management Research	1
Journal of Business Ethics	1
Journal of Cleaner Production	1
Journal of Enterprising Communities	1
Operations Management Research	1

All other journals listed have one publication each. This diversity of sources suggests that the topic is of broad interest across various academic domains or that the field of study is interdisciplinary. Journals such as “Benchmarking”, “British Journal of Management”, and “Business Horizons” show that the research is relevant to both specific management disciplines and broader business perspectives.

The presence of specialized journals such as “The International Journal of Integrated Supply Management”, “International Journal of Operations and Production Management”, and “Operations Management Research” points to a

focus on supply chain and operations management within the research. The inclusion of “The Journal of Business Ethics”, “Journal of Cleaner Production”, and “Journal of Enterprising Communities” suggests that ethical considerations, sustainability, and interest in the community might be important themes within the research.

The most relevant publications based on quality evaluation criteria were four papers with a maximum score in all three categories of QE4-QE6 (Chae, 2015; Tóth et al., 2020; Hoang et al., 2023; Schmidt et al., 2023), as shown in Table 4. Chae’s (2015) work introduces an analytical framework for analyzing supply chain-related tweets. The publication of Tóth et al. (2020) investigates how supplier attractiveness is based on the intensity of social media activity.

Table 4. Publications rating by Quality Evaluation

Publication	QE4 Impact score	QE5 SC process score	QE6 SM platform score	Total score
Chae (2015)	2	2	2	6
Tóth et al. (2020)	2	2	2	6
Hoang et al. (2023)	2	2	2	6
Schmidt et al. (2023)	2	2	2	6
Fisher et al. (2014)	1	2	2	5
Cao et al. (2018)	1	2	2	5
Tietze et al. (2020)	1	2	2	5
Margherita and Heikkilä (2021)	1	2	2	5
Papagiannidis et al. (2023)	1	2	2	5
Ciulli et al. (2020)	1	2	1	4
Hove-Sibanda et al. (2021)	0	2	2	4
Deiva Ganesh and Kalpana (2022)	0	2	2	4
Shahidzadeh et al. (2022)	0	2	2	4
Shrivastav and Bag (2023)	0	2	2	4

Hoang et al. (2023) acknowledge potential challenges associated with using social media in the supply chain, such as disseminating inaccurate information and requiring intensive resources to manage digital platforms. Schmidt et al. (2023) focus on public reactions to supply chain glitches, particularly on social media platforms like “Twitter” and its influence on a company’s financial performance and reputation.

3.2. SN’s negative impact on SCM (RQ2)

Based on the selected literature review from 2014 to 2023, most publications concentrated on the advantages social media platforms bring to the supply chain. The emphasis on the negative impacts of social media on the

supply chain is still in infant mode, as only several publications specifically covered this topic. However, it was possible to extract several groups of negative aspects.

The main impact was reputational damage (Chae, 2015; Ciulli et al., 2020; Tóth et al., 2020; Margherita and Heikkilä, 2021; Schmidt et al., 2023). Then followed by loss in sales or revenue (Tóth et al., 2020; Schmidt et al., 2023), data discrepancies and lack of reliability (Tietze et al., 2020; Hoang et al., 2023), increase in risk management awareness and resource demand (impact to profitability) (Cao et al., 2018; Hoang et al., 2023), and decreased organizational performance (Fisher et al., 2014). Details on the negative aspects are provided below.

3.3. SCM processes impacted by SM (RQ3)

Several supply chain management processes were covered based on the literature reviewed, especially emphasizing stakeholder relationship building and risk awareness. Most common processes and critical areas include supplier relationship management (Fisher et al., 2014; Chae, 2015; Cao et al., 2018; Tóth et al., 2020; Margherita and Heikkilä, 2021; Shahidzadeh et al., 2022; Hoang et al., 2023), compliance and risk management (Chae, 2015; Ciulli et al., 2020; Tietze et al., 2020; Hove-Sibanda et al., 2021; Deiva Ganesh and Kalpana, 2022; Schmidt et al., 2023) and customer service management (Fisher et al., 2014; Chae, 2015; Cao et al., 2018; Tóth et al., 2020; Hoang et al., 2023; Papagiannidis et al., 2023) with research contributions from scholars between 2014 and 2023.

3.4. SN discussed in related literature (RQ4)

On the one hand, the reviewed articles mainly focus on the “Twitter” (now known as “X”) social media platform. Despite not being among the top 10 most popular platforms, according to Statista (2024c), scholars frequently use “Twitter” in supply chain management research due to its accessible API. This technical feature allows for more in-depth study and application in academic papers (Fisher et al., 2014; Chae, 2015; Cao et al., 2018; Tietze et al., 2020; Hove-Sibanda et al., 2021; Deiva Ganesh and Kalpana, 2022; Shahidzadeh et al., 2022; Hoang et al., 2023; Papagiannidis et al., 2023; Schmidt et al., 2023; Shrivastav and Bag, 2023).

On the other hand, “Facebook”, the leading social media platform globally, is discussed in approximately half of the selected studies (Fisher et al., 2014; Chae, 2015; Cao et al., 2018; Tietze et al., 2020; Hove-Sibanda et al., 2021; Shahidzadeh et al., 2022; Hoang et al., 2023). Additionally, “LinkedIn”, which is not as popular worldwide (Statista, 2024c), has surprisingly received attention from scholars, perhaps due to its professional networking focus (Fisher et al., 2014; Chae, 2015; Cao et al., 2018; Margherita and Heikkilä, 2021; Shrivastav and Bag, 2023).

4. Conclusions

In conclusion, the systematic literature review of social media’s negative impact on supply chain management sought to address research questions about the main characteristics of the final list of publications, the identification of negative impacts, supply chain processes, and the most commonly analyzed social media platforms. After evaluating the initial list of hundred publications and distilling it to the final list of fourteen from the “Scopus” database published by “Emerald”, “Elsevier”, “Springer”, “Inderscience”, and “Wiley”, main research questions were addressed.

The publications predominantly originated from the UK, South Africa, Australia, and India, reflecting the growing global awareness of the topics since 2014. 2020 and 2023 had the highest number of publications, possibly due to increased interest or external factors. No single source dominated; only the “International Journal of Production Economics” published more than one article relevant to our work, suggesting the interdisciplinary nature of this field. Four of the fourteen articles received maximum scores (Chae, 2015; Tóth et al., 2020; Hoang et al., 2023; Schmidt et al., 2023). However, to the authors’ knowledge, none of the articles entirely covered our research questions, indicating potential areas for future empirical research.

The authors grouped the negative impacts of social networks on supply chain management, noting issues such as damage to the organization’s reputation, loss of sales or revenue, unreliable data, increased risk management focus, and reduced organizational performance. Impacts on supply chain management processes were primarily related to stakeholder relationship building and risk awareness, though these were not clearly defined, presenting opportunities for further study.

The most frequently discussed social media platform among scholars was “Twitter” (now known as “X”), attributed to its accessible API. Then followed by “Facebook”, the most popular social media platform globally. While not as globally prominent, “LinkedIn” has garnered scholarly attention. The rationale behind these platforms’ popularity could be the subject of subsequent scholarly investigation.

This study, however, had limitations, mainly due to the systematic literature review methodology, which was constrained by time and data diversity. Exclusion criteria included business management, accounting, and social sciences; other fields were not explored. Furthermore, the analysis was restricted to the “Scopus” database and English-language publications, omitting research in other databases, “grey literature”, and other languages. Future research could expand the databases used (including “Web of Science”) and other languages and consider different methodologies to comprehensively explore social media’s negative impact on supply chain management. Based on this work, the topic is relatively niche compared to the positive effects of social media on supply chain management and should be explored more broadly.

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