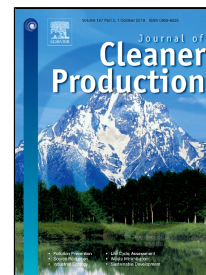


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Interrelationships amongst factors for sub-supplier corporate sustainability standards compliance: An exploratory field study

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## **Interrelationships amongst factors for sub-supplier corporate sustainability standards compliance: An exploratory field study**

*Sub-supplier compliance with a focal firm's corporate sustainability standards (CSS) is increasingly recognized as an important dimension of sustainable supply chain management. This paper draws on recent sub-supplier management studies and their critical success factors (CSFs) to investigate the interrelationships between and strengths of CSFs. While previous research focused on the perspective and practices only of focal firms, this exploratory field study investigated a focal firm, one of its suppliers and one of its sub-suppliers in a multi-tier supply chain setting. Our findings suggest that sub-supplier assessment and collaboration are influenced by (1) the committed long-term relationship between the direct supplier and the sub-supplier, (2) the involvement of the direct supplier, and (3) the focal firm's buyer-power over the direct supplier. In return, sub-supplier assessment and collaboration influence those and further CSFs in a feedback loop, enabling virtuous or vicious cycle effects. The perspective of the sub-supplier revealed substantial differences to the supplier and the focal firm, in particular the lower feedback loop effect of collaboration on CSFs.*

**Key words:** Sustainable supply chain management, sub-supplier management, theory of critical success factors, DEMATEL, field study research.

*Word count: 16,077 (11,779 excl. numerical matrices)*

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