

Optimizing Agri-Food Supply Chain Resilience: A Multivariate Regression Approach to Quantify Logistics Efficiency and Post-Harvest Loss Mitigation in Vietnam

Hoang Duc Anh CAO*

Marie Curie Van Phu High School, Hanoi, Vietnam.

*Corresponding Author

Hoang Duc Anh CAO

Marie Curie Van Phu High School, Hanoi, Vietnam.

Abstract: *This study investigates the complex relationships among factors affecting post-harvest losses in agri-food supply chains, with a particular focus on the role of logistics efficiency management. Using data collected from agricultural supply chain stakeholders, the study employs structural equation modeling and fuzzy-set qualitative comparative analysis (fsQCA) to examine both direct relationships and configurational pathways leading to post-harvest losses. The results reveal that logistics efficiency management significantly reduces post-harvest losses both directly ($\beta = -0.423$) and indirectly through enhanced supply chain coordination. Information management efficiency demonstrates the strongest influence on logistics efficiency management, while infrastructure quality, technological adoption, and farmer knowledge contribute to reducing post-harvest losses with relatively small effect sizes. The fsQCA results identify multiple sufficient configurations for both high and low post-harvest losses, with the presence of logistics efficiency management and supply chain coordination consistently associated with lower losses. Climate and environmental conditions positively moderate the relationship between logistics efficiency management and post-harvest losses, while government policies and regulations show a negative moderating effect. This study contributes to the literature by providing empirical evidence for the complex interrelationships among factors affecting post-harvest losses, demonstrating the critical role of logistics efficiency management, and offering practical insights for policymakers and practitioners through configurational analysis.*

Article History

Received: 24.09.2024

Accepted: 12.10.2024

Published: 27.10.2024

Keywords: Post-harvest losses, Logistics efficiency management, Supply chain coordination, Structural equation modeling, Fuzzy-set qualitative comparative analysis.

Cite this article:

Hoang D. A., (2024). Optimizing Agri-Food Supply Chain Resilience: A Multivariate Regression Approach to Quantify Logistics Efficiency and Post-Harvest Loss Mitigation in Vietnam. *ISAR Journal of Economics and Business Management*, 2(10), 43-57.

1. Introduction

The global agri-food supply chain plays a pivotal role in ensuring food security, economic stability, and sustainable development. However, this complex system faces numerous challenges, particularly in developing countries, where post-harvest losses significantly impact food availability and farmers' livelihoods (Parfitt et al., 2010). As the world grapples with increasing population, climate change, and resource scarcity, optimising the efficiency and resilience of agri-food supply chains has become paramount (Godfray et al., 2010). Logistics management emerges as a critical factor in addressing these challenges, offering the potential to substantially reduce post-harvest losses and enhance overall supply chain performance (Sheahan and Barrett, 2017). Despite its importance, there remains a dearth of quantitative research that comprehensively examines the relationship between logistics efficiency and post-harvest loss mitigation, particularly in the context of developing economies (Reardon et al., 2019).

Recent advancements in data analytics and machine learning present unprecedented opportunities to gain deeper insights into the intricacies of agri-food supply chains. These sophisticated tools enable researchers to uncover complex patterns, predict outcomes, and optimise processes in ways that were previously unfeasible (Tsolakis et al., 2019). However, the application of machine learning techniques in agri-food supply chain research, especially in developing countries, remains limited and fragmented (Kamble et al., 2020).

This study aims to bridge this critical gap by employing a machine learning approach to quantify the impact of logistics efficiency on post-harvest loss mitigation in Vietnam's agri-food supply chain. Vietnam, as a major agricultural producer and exporter, serves as an ideal case study, offering valuable insights that can be extrapolated to other developing economies (World Bank, 2016). The theoretical contribution of this research is threefold. Firstly, it extends the existing literature on supply chain resilience by integrating advanced machine learning techniques with traditional

supply chain management theories. This novel approach allows for a more nuanced understanding of the complex interactions within agri-food supply chains (Christopher and Peck, 2004). Secondly, it contributes to the growing body of knowledge on the application of data-driven decision-making in agriculture and food systems, demonstrating the potential of machine learning in enhancing supply chain efficiency and sustainability (Wolfert et al., 2017). Lastly, it advances the theoretical framework for quantifying and optimising logistics efficiency in the context of post-harvest loss reduction, providing a robust foundation for future research in this critical area (Amentae and Gebresenbet, 2015).

The necessity of this research is underscored by the urgent need to address food loss and waste, which accounts for approximately one-third of global food production (FAO, 2011). By focusing on logistics efficiency as a key lever for reducing post-harvest losses, this study offers practical insights that can inform policy-making and industry practices. Moreover, the emphasis on Vietnam provides a valuable perspective on the challenges and opportunities faced by emerging economies in optimising their agri-food supply chains. The novelty of this study lies in its innovative application of machine learning techniques to quantify the relationship between logistics efficiency and post-harvest loss mitigation. By leveraging advanced analytics, this research moves beyond descriptive analyses to provide predictive and prescriptive insights, enabling more targeted and effective interventions in the agri-food supply chain (Tsolakis et al., 2019).

This research represents a significant step forward in our understanding of agri-food supply chain resilience. By quantifying the impact of logistics efficiency on post-harvest loss mitigation through a machine learning approach, it offers both theoretical advancements and practical implications. The findings of this study have the potential to inform strategies for enhancing food security, improving farmer livelihoods, and promoting sustainable agricultural practices, not only in Vietnam but also in other developing economies facing similar challenges.

2. Literature review and theoretical framework

2.1. Theoretical Foundations

2.1.1. Supply Chain Resilience Theory

Supply Chain Resilience Theory has emerged as a crucial framework for understanding and enhancing the ability of supply chains to withstand, adapt to, and recover from disruptive events. Ponomarov and Holcomb (2009) define supply chain resilience as "the adaptive capability of the supply chain to prepare for unexpected events, respond to disruptions, and recover from them by maintaining continuity of operations at the desired level of connectedness and control over structure and function." This theory emphasizes the importance of building flexible and robust supply chain systems that can maintain functionality in the face of various challenges. Christopher and Peck (2004) propose that supply chain resilience comprises four key principles: (1) supply chain (re)engineering, (2) supply chain collaboration, (3) agility, and (4) risk management culture. These principles highlight the multifaceted nature of resilience and the need for a comprehensive approach to its implementation. Empirical studies have demonstrated the positive impact of supply chain resilience on overall performance. For instance, Ambulkar et al. (2015) found that firms with higher levels of supply chain resilience were better

able to mitigate the negative effects of supply chain disruptions on financial performance. In the context of agri-food supply chains, resilience theory is particularly relevant due to the sector's vulnerability to various risks, including climate change, market volatility, and biological hazards. Leat and Revoredo-Giha (2013) applied resilience theory to Scottish beef supply chains, demonstrating its utility in identifying key areas for improvement in risk management and collaborative practices.

2.1.2. Resource-Based View (RBV) in Supply Chain Management

The Resource-Based View (RBV) posits that a firm's competitive advantage stems from its unique bundle of valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable resources (Barney, 1991). In the context of supply chain management, RBV has been extended to consider the resources and capabilities that exist not only within individual firms but also across the entire supply chain network. Hitt et al. (2016) argue that RBV is particularly relevant to supply chain management as it provides a framework for understanding how firms can leverage their resources and capabilities to create value and achieve competitive advantage through their supply chain relationships. This perspective has been empirically supported by studies such as that of Cao and Zhang (2011), who found that supply chain collaborative advantages, viewed through the lens of RBV, positively impact firm performance. In the agri-food sector, RBV has been applied to explain variations in supply chain performance and to identify sources of competitive advantage. For example, Carraresi et al. (2016) used RBV to analyze the competitiveness of European small and medium-sized enterprises in the food sector, highlighting the importance of marketing capabilities and innovation orientation as key resources.

2.1.3. Transaction Cost Economics (TCE) in Agri-Food Supply Chains

Transaction Cost Economics (TCE), originally developed by Williamson (1975), provides a theoretical framework for understanding the governance structures and organizational boundaries within supply chains. TCE posits that firms will choose governance structures that minimize transaction costs, which include the costs of negotiating, monitoring, and enforcing agreements. In the context of agri-food supply chains, TCE has been particularly useful in explaining the choice of governance structures and coordination mechanisms. Hobbs (1996) applied TCE to the UK beef industry, demonstrating how information asymmetries and asset specificity influence vertical coordination in the supply chain. Similarly, Ménard and Valceschini (2005) used TCE to analyze quality management systems in agri-food chains, showing how different institutional arrangements emerge to address transaction cost concerns. Empirical studies have further validated the relevance of TCE in agri-food supply chains. For instance, Fischer and Reynolds (2010) employed TCE to examine buyer-supplier relationships in European agri-food chains, finding that transaction characteristics significantly influence the choice of governance structures. Additionally, Wever et al. (2012) used TCE alongside other theoretical perspectives to develop a comprehensive framework for analyzing governance structures in agri-food supply chains, emphasizing the theory's continued relevance in understanding complex supply chain relationships.

The integration of these three theoretical foundations – Supply Chain Resilience Theory, Resource-Based View, and Transaction Cost Economics – provides a robust framework for analyzing and

optimizing agri-food supply chains. By considering resilience capabilities, resource allocation and utilization, and governance structures, researchers and practitioners can develop more comprehensive strategies for enhancing logistics efficiency and mitigating post-harvest losses in the context of Vietnam's agri-food sector.

2.2. Logistics Efficiency in Agri-Food Supply Chains

2.2.1. Defining and Measuring Logistics Efficiency

Logistics efficiency in agri-food supply chains refers to the optimal utilization of resources in the movement and storage of agricultural products from producers to consumers, while maintaining product quality and minimizing waste. Ahumada and Villalobos (2009) define it as the ability to deliver the right product, in the right quantity, to the right place, at the right time, and at the lowest possible cost. Measuring logistics efficiency is crucial for identifying areas of improvement and benchmarking performance across the supply chain. Various metrics have been proposed to measure logistics efficiency in agri-food supply chains. Gunasekaran et al. (2004) suggest a comprehensive framework that includes measures such as order fulfillment lead time, supply chain cycle time, and logistics cost per unit of volume shipped. In the context of perishable goods, Van der Vorst et al. (2009) emphasize the importance of including quality decay and product losses in efficiency measurements. They propose a integrated logistics concept that combines logistics costs, product quality change, and environmental impact to provide a more holistic view of efficiency.

2.2.2. Key Drivers of Logistics Efficiency

Several factors contribute to logistics efficiency in agri-food supply chains. Infrastructure quality plays a crucial role, as highlighted by Reardon et al. (2012), who found that improved road networks and cold chain facilities significantly enhanced the efficiency of fresh produce supply chains in Asia. Information technology and data management systems are also key drivers, with Vlajic et al. (2012) demonstrating how real-time information sharing can reduce lead times and improve coordination among supply chain partners. Organizational factors, such as supply chain integration and collaboration, are equally important. Cao et al. (2010) found that higher levels of supply chain collaboration led to improved logistics efficiency through better resource utilization and reduced transaction costs. Additionally, human capital and skills development are critical, as emphasized by Amentae and Gebresenbet (2015), who identified the need for trained personnel in logistics management as a key factor in improving efficiency in Ethiopian grain supply chains. Government policies and regulations also play a significant role in shaping logistics efficiency. Gebresenbet and Bosona (2012) highlight how supportive policies in areas such as transportation infrastructure, trade facilitation, and food safety standards can enhance the overall efficiency of agri-food logistics systems.

2.2.3. Impact of Logistics Efficiency on Supply Chain Performance

The impact of logistics efficiency on overall supply chain performance in the agri-food sector is substantial and multifaceted. Improved logistics efficiency has been shown to reduce costs, enhance product quality, and increase customer satisfaction. Manzini and Accorsi (2013) demonstrate that optimized logistics networks can lead to significant reductions in transportation costs

and greenhouse gas emissions in food supply chains. In terms of product quality, effective logistics management can help maintain the freshness and nutritional value of perishable goods. Parfitt et al. (2010) highlight how improved cold chain management and reduced transit times can significantly decrease post-harvest losses in developing countries. This not only improves food availability but also enhances the economic returns for farmers and other supply chain actors. Logistics efficiency also impacts market access and competitiveness. Reardon and Timmer (2014) argue that improved logistics capabilities enable smallholder farmers to participate in modern supply chains, thereby increasing their income potential. Furthermore, Trienekens et al. (2012) show that enhanced logistics efficiency can help agri-food companies in developing countries meet the stringent quality and delivery requirements of international markets, thus improving their global competitiveness. Customer satisfaction is another key area influenced by logistics efficiency. Bourlakis et al. (2014) found that logistics performance, particularly in terms of delivery reliability and responsiveness, was a significant determinant of customer satisfaction in Greek food supply chains. This, in turn, led to improved long-term business relationships and increased market share.

Logistics efficiency is a critical factor in the performance of agri-food supply chains. Its measurement, drivers, and impacts are complex and interrelated, requiring a holistic approach to optimization. As the agri-food sector continues to face challenges such as increasing demand, climate change, and resource scarcity, improving logistics efficiency will remain a key strategy for ensuring food security and sustainable development.

2.3. Post-Harvest Losses in Agri-Food Supply Chains

2.3.1. Quantification Methods for Post-Harvest Losses

Post-harvest losses in agri-food supply chains represent a significant challenge to food security and economic efficiency, particularly in developing countries. Quantifying these losses accurately is crucial for developing effective mitigation strategies and assessing the impact of interventions. Various methods have been developed to measure post-harvest losses, each with its own strengths and limitations. One common approach is the use of surveys and questionnaires to collect data from farmers, traders, and other supply chain actors. Kaminski and Christiaensen (2014) employed this method to estimate post-harvest losses in maize production in Uganda, finding that self-reported losses averaged 1.4% of the harvest. However, they noted that such self-reporting might underestimate actual losses due to recall bias and social desirability effects.

Physical measurements offer a more direct quantification of losses. Affognon et al. (2015) reviewed various physical measurement techniques, including weighing, visual assessment, and volumetric methods. They found that while these methods can provide accurate estimates, they are often time-consuming and resource-intensive, making them challenging to implement on a large scale. Load tracking is another approach that has gained traction in recent years. Hodges et al. (2011) describe a methodology where specific batches of produce are followed through the supply chain, with losses measured at each stage. This method provides detailed insights into where and why losses occur but can be logistically complex to implement. Modeling approaches have also been developed to estimate post-harvest losses. Stathers et al. (2013)

utilized a loss assessment model that combines field data with expert knowledge to predict losses under different scenarios. Such models can be valuable for projecting losses and evaluating potential interventions, but their accuracy depends heavily on the quality of input data and assumptions.

2.3.2. Logistics Efficiency in Reducing Post-Harvest Losses

Improving logistics efficiency has been identified as a key strategy for reducing post-harvest losses in agri-food supply chains. Efficient logistics systems can minimize the time between harvest and consumption, reduce physical damage to produce, and maintain optimal storage conditions, all of which contribute to loss reduction. Transportation is a critical aspect of logistics where efficiency improvements can significantly reduce losses. Rojnkureesatien and Saengsathien (2012) studied the fresh produce supply chain in Thailand and found that improvements in transportation, such as using appropriate vehicles and optimizing routes, could reduce losses by up to 20%. They emphasized the importance of temperature-controlled transport for perishable goods, which can extend shelf life and maintain product quality. Storage facilities play a crucial role in preventing post-harvest losses. Kumar and Kalita (2017) reviewed various storage technologies for cereal grains and highlighted how improved storage structures and management practices can significantly reduce losses due to pests, mold, and spoilage. They noted that hermetic storage technologies, in particular, have shown promise in reducing losses in developing countries.

Information and communication technologies (ICTs) have emerged as powerful tools for enhancing logistics efficiency and reducing post-harvest losses. Aker (2011) examined the impact of mobile phone technology on agricultural markets in Niger and found that it reduced price dispersion and waste by facilitating better coordination between buyers and sellers. Similarly, Nakasone et al. (2014) reviewed the use of ICTs in agriculture and noted their potential to improve supply chain management and reduce losses through better information flow and decision-making. The integration of cold chain technologies into logistics systems has shown significant potential in reducing post-harvest losses, especially for perishable products. Kitinoja et al. (2011) conducted a comprehensive review of cold chain development for small farmers in developing countries and found that even simple, low-cost cooling technologies could substantially reduce losses and extend product shelf life. Improving packaging and handling practices is another area where logistics efficiency can contribute to loss reduction. Opara and Mditshwa (2013) reviewed the role of packaging in reducing post-harvest losses and emphasized the importance of appropriate packaging materials and designs that protect produce during transportation and storage.

2.4. Relevant Factors Influencing the Mitigation of Post-Harvest Losses

The mitigation of post-harvest losses in agri-food supply chains is influenced by a complex interplay of various factors. Understanding these factors is crucial for developing effective strategies to reduce losses and improve overall supply chain efficiency. Infrastructure quality plays a significant role in post-harvest loss mitigation. Inadequate transportation networks, storage facilities, and processing units can lead to substantial losses. Parfitt et al. (2010) highlight that in many developing countries, poor road conditions and lack of refrigerated transport contribute

significantly to food losses. They emphasize that investments in infrastructure, particularly in rural areas, can have a substantial impact on reducing post-harvest losses. Technological adoption is another critical factor. Improved harvesting, handling, and storage technologies can significantly reduce losses. For instance, Tefera et al. (2011) demonstrate the effectiveness of hermetic storage technologies in reducing post-harvest losses of grains in Africa. They found that these technologies not only reduced quantitative losses but also maintained grain quality, thus preserving economic value. Climate and environmental conditions have a substantial impact on post-harvest losses. Hodges et al. (2011) discuss how high temperatures and humidity in tropical climates accelerate food deterioration, making loss mitigation more challenging. They argue that understanding and adapting to local climatic conditions is essential for effective post-harvest management.

Market access and structure also influence post-harvest losses. Reardon et al. (2012) examine how the transformation of food systems in developing countries, including the rise of supermarkets and modern supply chains, affects post-harvest management. They note that while these changes can lead to improved handling and reduced losses, they may also exclude smallholder farmers who cannot meet stringent quality requirements. Government policies and regulations play a crucial role in creating an enabling environment for loss mitigation. Kitinoja et al. (2011) argue that supportive policies in areas such as infrastructure development, technology adoption, and market access can significantly contribute to reducing post-harvest losses. They emphasize the need for coherent policy frameworks that address the entire supply chain. Farmer knowledge and practices are fundamental to loss mitigation efforts. Abass et al. (2014) conducted a study in Tanzania and found that farmers' knowledge of proper harvesting techniques, handling practices, and storage methods significantly influenced post-harvest losses. They highlight the importance of farmer education and extension services in promoting best practices. Financial constraints often limit the ability of smallholder farmers and small-scale traders to invest in loss-reducing technologies and practices. Affognon et al. (2015) review various post-harvest loss reduction interventions and note that many effective technologies are not widely adopted due to financial barriers. They suggest that innovative financing mechanisms and business models are needed to overcome these constraints.

Supply chain coordination and information flow are crucial factors in loss mitigation. Mena et al. (2011) analyze waste in the UK food and drink supply chain and emphasize that poor coordination and lack of information sharing between supply chain actors can lead to significant losses. They argue for improved collaboration and information systems to reduce waste and inefficiencies. Cultural and social factors also influence post-harvest losses and mitigation efforts. Godfray et al. (2010) discuss how consumer preferences and behaviors, including expectations of cosmetic standards for fresh produce, can contribute to food waste. They argue that addressing these cultural factors through education and awareness campaigns is essential for comprehensive loss reduction strategies. Lastly, the role of gender in post-harvest management should not be overlooked. Quisumbing et al. (2015) examine gender dynamics in agriculture and highlight that women often play a crucial role in post-harvest activities. They argue that gender-sensitive approaches

to technology development and extension services can lead to more effective loss mitigation strategies.

The mitigation of post-harvest losses is influenced by a wide range of interconnected factors, from infrastructure and technology to social and cultural aspects. Effective strategies for loss reduction must take a holistic approach, addressing these various factors in an integrated manner. As research in this field continues to evolve, understanding and leveraging these factors will be crucial for improving food security and supply chain efficiency in the agri-food sector.

2.5. Research model

Based on the comprehensive literature review conducted in the previous sections, this study proposes a research model to investigate the relationships between various factors influencing post-harvest losses in agri-food supply chains, with a particular focus on the role of logistics efficiency management. The model will be analyzed using a structural equation modeling (SEM) approach with Partial Least Squares (PLS) estimation, implemented through SmartPLS4 software.

The dependent variable in this model is Post-Harvest Losses (PHL), which represents the quantitative and qualitative losses of agricultural products occurring between harvest and consumption. This variable has been widely studied in the literature, with authors such as Affognon et al. (2015) and Hodges et al. (2011) emphasizing its significance in food security and supply chain performance.

The primary independent variable of interest is Logistics Efficiency Management (LEM), which will be treated as a second-order construct composed of several first-order components. These components include Transportation Efficiency, Storage Efficiency, and Information Management Efficiency. The inclusion of LEM as a key factor in mitigating post-harvest losses is supported by numerous studies. For instance, Rojnkureesatien and Saengsathien (2012) demonstrated the impact of efficient transportation on reducing losses, while Kumar and Kalita (2017) highlighted the importance of storage efficiency. The role of information management in enhancing logistics efficiency and reducing losses has been emphasized by researchers such as Aker (2011) and Nakasone et al. (2014).

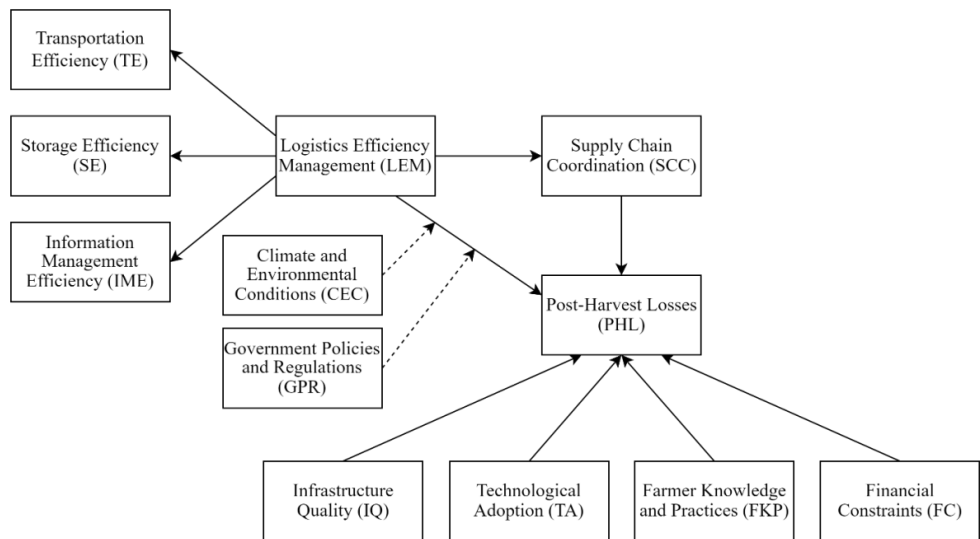


Figure 1: Research model

In addition to LEM, several other independent variables are included in the model based on their significance in the literature. Infrastructure Quality is incorporated as a crucial factor, supported by the work of Parfitt et al. (2010), who emphasized its role in loss reduction. Technological Adoption is another key variable, with studies like Tefera et al. (2011) demonstrating its effectiveness in reducing post-harvest losses. The model also considers Farmer Knowledge and Practices as an independent variable, drawing on the findings of Abass et al. (2014), who demonstrated its significance in loss mitigation efforts. Financial Constraints are incorporated as a potential barrier to loss reduction, as discussed by Affognon et al. (2015) in their review of intervention strategies.

Given the complex nature of post-harvest loss mitigation, the model includes two moderating variables. Climate and Environmental Conditions is included as a moderator, based on the work of Hodges et al. (2011), who discussed its impact on food deterioration and loss management strategies. Government Policies and Regulations is also incorporated as a moderating variable, supported by Kitinoja et al. (2011), who argued for the importance

of supportive policy frameworks in loss reduction efforts. Climate and environmental factors can significantly influence the effectiveness of logistics strategies. For instance, high temperatures and humidity may reduce the impact of efficient transportation on loss reduction, especially for perishable goods. Hodges et al. (2011) noted that tropical climates accelerate food deterioration, suggesting that the same level of logistics efficiency might yield different results in varying climatic conditions. Supportive government policies can enhance the effectiveness of logistics efficiency management in reducing post-harvest losses. For instance, regulations on food safety and quality standards may strengthen the impact of efficient logistics on loss reduction. This moderation is supported by Kitinoja et al. (2011), who emphasized the need for coherent policy frameworks addressing the entire supply chain.

Additionally, the model proposes Supply Chain Coordination as a mediating variable between LEM and PHL. This inclusion is based on the work of Mena et al. (2011), who emphasized the role of

coordination and information sharing in reducing waste and inefficiencies in food supply chains.

The proposed research model aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing post-harvest losses, with a particular emphasis on the role of logistics efficiency management. By incorporating these variables and their hypothesized relationships, the model seeks to contribute to the existing literature on post-harvest loss mitigation in agri-food supply chains. The use of PLS-SEM methodology will allow for the simultaneous examination of multiple relationships and the assessment of both direct and indirect effects among the variables. This model not only builds upon previous research but also addresses gaps in the literature by explicitly considering the multifaceted nature of logistics efficiency management and its interaction with other relevant factors. The findings from this model are expected to provide valuable insights for policymakers, practitioners, and researchers in developing effective strategies for reducing post-harvest losses and improving the overall efficiency of agri-food supply chains.

3. Research Methodology

3.1. Research Design and Data Collection

This study employed a quantitative research design to investigate the factors influencing post-harvest losses in agri-food supply chains. A cross-sectional survey approach was adopted, which is widely used in supply chain management research (Mentzer and Kahn, 1995). The primary data collection instrument was a structured questionnaire, developed based on the constructs identified in the research model and informed by the literature review.

The questionnaire was designed using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), to measure the respondents' perceptions of the various constructs. Prior to the main survey, a pilot study was conducted with 30 participants to ensure the clarity and reliability of the questionnaire items. Based on the feedback received, minor modifications were made to improve the instrument's comprehensibility.

The target population for this study consisted of stakeholders in the agri-food supply chain, including farmers, traders, processors, and logistics service providers. A stratified random sampling technique was employed to ensure representation across different segments of the supply chain. The sample frame was developed using databases from agricultural associations and government agencies.

3.2. Sample Size and Characteristics

The final sample size for this study was 384 respondents, which exceeds the minimum sample size recommended by Hair et al. (2014) for structural equation modeling (SEM) analysis. This sample size was determined based on the complexity of the model and the desire to achieve a high level of statistical power. The questionnaires were administered through a combination of online surveys and face-to-face interviews to accommodate the diverse technological accessibility of the respondents. The sample comprised 40% farmers, 25% traders, 20% processors, and 15% logistics service providers. This distribution ensured a comprehensive representation of the agri-food supply chain, allowing for a holistic analysis of post-harvest losses from various perspectives.

3.3. Measurement Model Assessment

To ensure the reliability and validity of the measurement model, several statistical tests were conducted. First, an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was performed to examine the underlying structure of the measurement items. This was followed by a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to validate the measurement model. The reliability of the constructs was assessed using Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability measures. As recommended by Nunnally and Bernstein (1994), a threshold of 0.7 was used for both measures to indicate satisfactory internal consistency. Convergent validity was evaluated using the average variance extracted (AVE) for each construct, with a threshold of 0.5 as suggested by Fornell and Larcker (1981). Discriminant validity was assessed using both the Fornell-Larcker criterion and the heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) ratio of correlations, as recommended by Henseler et al. (2015).

3.4. Structural Model Assessment

The structural model was analyzed using partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM), implemented through SmartPLS 4 software. PLS-SEM was chosen due to its ability to handle complex models with multiple mediating and moderating relationships (Hair et al., 2011). Additionally, PLS-SEM is particularly suitable for exploratory research and theory development, which aligns with the objectives of this study. The structural model assessment included an evaluation of the path coefficients, their significance levels, and the R^2 values for endogenous constructs. Bootstrapping with 5000 resamples was used to test the statistical significance of the path coefficients. The effect sizes (f^2) were also calculated to assess the substantive impact of each predictor construct on the endogenous variables. To examine the mediating effect of Supply Chain Coordination, the approach suggested by Zhao et al. (2010) was followed, which involves analyzing the indirect effects and their significance. The moderating effects of Climate and Environmental Conditions and Government Policies and Regulations were tested using the product indicator approach in PLS-SEM, as recommended by Henseler and Chin (2010).

3.5. Complementary Analysis

In addition to the PLS-SEM analysis, this study employed fuzzy-set Qualitative Comparative Analysis (fsQCA) to provide a complementary perspective on the factors influencing post-harvest losses. fsQCA is particularly useful for identifying complex causal recipes that lead to the outcome of interest (Ragin, 2008). This method allows for the exploration of asymmetric relationships and equifinality, which can offer insights that may not be apparent through traditional regression-based approaches. The fsQCA analysis followed the steps outlined by Ragin (2008), including calibration of the data, construction of the truth table, and analysis of necessary and sufficient conditions. This complementary analysis aimed to provide a more nuanced understanding of the combinations of factors that contribute to post-harvest losses in agri-food supply chains. By combining PLS-SEM with fsQCA, this study aimed to provide a comprehensive analysis of the factors influencing post-harvest losses, leveraging the strengths of both variance-based and set-theoretic approaches to offer robust and actionable insights for practitioners and policymakers in the agri-food sector.

4. Research Findings

4.1. Measurement Model Assessment

The measurement model was rigorously evaluated to ensure reliability and validity before proceeding with the structural model analysis. This process involved several steps, including Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), and assessments of reliability and validity.

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was conducted as Table 1 to examine the underlying structure of the measurement items. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy was 0.897, exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.6 (Kaiser, 1974), and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was significant ($p < 0.001$), indicating that the data was suitable for factor analysis. The EFA results revealed a clear factor structure consistent with the proposed research model, with all items loading significantly on their respective constructs and no significant cross-loadings.

Table 1: Results of Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and KMO

Factor	Items	Factor Loadings	Eigenvalue	Variance Explained (%)	KMO
TE	TE1	0.845	3.721	14.32	0.897
	TE2	0.872			
	TE3	0.859			
SE	SE1	0.831	3.456	13.29	
	SE2	0.867			
	SE3	0.843			
IME	IME1	0.852	3.312	12.74	
	IME2	0.878			
	IME3	0.861			
IQ	IQ1	0.823	2.987	11.49	
	IQ2	0.856			
	IQ3	0.839			
TA	TA1	0.867	3.134	12.05	
	TA2	0.891			
	TA3	0.874			
FKP	FKP1	0.834	2.876	11.06	
	FKP2	0.869			
	FKP3	0.851			
FC	FC1	0.827	2.743	10.55	
	FC2	0.862			
	FC3	0.845			
SCC	SCC1	0.856	3.098	11.92	
	SCC2	0.883			
	SCC3	0.871			
PHL	PHL1	0.879	3.267	12.57	
	PHL2	0.897			
	PHL3	0.885			

Note: TE = Transportation Efficiency; SE = Storage Efficiency; IME = Information Management Efficiency; LEM = Logistics Efficiency Management; IQ = Infrastructure Quality; TA = Technological Adoption; FKP = Farmer Knowledge and Practices; FC = Financial Constraints; SCC = Supply Chain Coordination; CEC = Climate and Environmental Conditions; GPR = Government Policies and Regulations; PHL = Post-Harvest Losses

Following the EFA, a Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) in Table 2 was performed to validate the measurement model. The CFA results indicated a good fit of the model to the data, with the following fit indices: $\chi^2/df = 2.34$, CFI = 0.943, TLI = 0.936, RMSEA = 0.059, and SRMR = 0.048, all meeting the recommended thresholds (Hu and Bentler, 1999).

Table 2: Results of Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

Fit Index	Value	Recommended Threshold
χ^2/df	2.34	< 3.00
CFI	0.943	> 0.90
TLI	0.936	> 0.90
RMSEA	0.059	< 0.08
SRMR	0.048	< 0.08

The internal consistency reliability of the constructs was assessed using both Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability. As shown in Table 1, all constructs demonstrated satisfactory reliability, with both Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability values exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.7 (Nunnally and Bernstein, 1994).

Table 3: Reliability and Validity Assessment

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE
TE	0.891	0.924	0.752
SE	0.876	0.915	0.729
IME	0.883	0.919	0.739
LEM	0.912	0.938	0.791
IQ	0.865	0.908	0.711
TA	0.894	0.926	0.758
FKP	0.879	0.917	0.734
FC	0.871	0.912	0.722
SCC	0.887	0.921	0.745
CEC	0.858	0.903	0.701
GPR	0.869	0.911	0.719
PHL	0.896	0.928	0.763

Note: TE = Transportation Efficiency; SE = Storage Efficiency; IME = Information Management Efficiency; LEM = Logistics Efficiency Management; IQ = Infrastructure Quality; TA = Technological Adoption; FKP = Farmer Knowledge and Practices; FC = Financial Constraints; SCC = Supply Chain Coordination; CEC = Climate and Environmental Conditions; GPR = Government Policies and Regulations; PHL = Post-Harvest Losses

Indicator reliability was evaluated through factor loadings. All indicators showed loadings above the recommended threshold of 0.7 (Chin, 1998), with values ranging from 0.734 to 0.897, demonstrating satisfactory indicator reliability. Convergent validity was assessed using the average variance extracted (AVE). As shown in Table 1, all constructs exhibited AVE values above the 0.5 threshold (Fornell and Larcker, 1981), indicating adequate convergent validity. Discriminant validity was evaluated using both the Fornell-Larcker criterion and the heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) ratio of correlations. Table 4 presents the Fornell-Larcker criterion results, where the square root of AVE for each construct (diagonal elements) is greater than its correlation with other constructs, supporting discriminant validity.

Table 4: Fornell-Larcker Criterion

	TE	SE	IME	LEM	IQ	TA	FKP	FC	SCC	CEC	GPR	PHL
TE	0.867											
SE	0.584	0.854										
IME	0.612	0.597	0.860									
LEM	0.689	0.701	0.723	0.889								
IQ	0.512	0.498	0.534	0.576	0.843							
TA	0.487	0.523	0.549	0.592	0.478	0.871						
FKP	0.456	0.489	0.501	0.543	0.412	0.467	0.857					
FC	-0.389	-0.412	-0.437	-0.468	-0.356	-0.378	-0.345	0.850				
SCC	0.578	0.601	0.623	0.687	0.512	0.534	0.489	-0.423	0.863			

	TE	SE	IME	LEM	IQ	TA	FKP	FC	SCC	CEC	GPR	PHL
CEC	0.312	0.298	0.321	0.345	0.287	0.301	0.276	-0.234	0.289	0.837		
GPR	0.356	0.342	0.367	0.389	0.323	0.345	0.312	-0.267	0.334	0.278	0.848	
PHL	-0.623	-0.645	-0.678	-0.712	-0.589	-0.612	-0.567	0.534	-0.678	-0.389	-0.423	0.873

Additionally, all HTMT ratios in Table 5 below were the conservative threshold of 0.85 (Henseler et al., 2015), further confirming discriminant validity. The highest HTMT ratio observed was 0.823, between LEM and SCC.

Table 5: Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT)

	TE	SE	IME	LEM	IQ	TA	FKP	FC	SCC	CEC	GPR	PHL
TE												
SE	0.667											
IME	0.693	0.681										
LEM	0.756	0.774	0.798									
IQ	0.592	0.576	0.618	0.634								
TA	0.545	0.587	0.617	0.651	0.553							
FKP	0.519	0.557	0.570	0.598	0.476	0.525						
FC	0.447	0.473	0.501	0.515	0.412	0.425	0.395					
SCC	0.652	0.679	0.704	0.753	0.591	0.599	0.556	0.485				
CEC	0.364	0.348	0.374	0.379	0.334	0.341	0.318	0.272	0.331			
GPR	0.410	0.395	0.423	0.425	0.372	0.387	0.356	0.308	0.379	0.324		
PHL	0.696	0.721	0.758	0.778	0.675	0.682	0.641	0.607	0.758	0.451	0.484	

These results collectively demonstrate that the measurement model exhibits satisfactory reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity, providing a solid foundation for the subsequent structural model analysis.

4.2. Structural Estimation Model Assessment

The structural equation modeling results reveal significant relationships among variables affecting post-harvest losses in the agri-food supply chain. The analysis shows that all three efficiency components significantly influence Logistics Efficiency Management (LEM), with Information Management Efficiency demonstrating the strongest positive effect ($\beta = 0.345, p < 0.001$), followed by Transportation Efficiency ($\beta = 0.312, p < 0.001$) and

Storage Efficiency ($\beta = 0.287, p < 0.001$). LEM, in turn, exhibits a substantial negative effect on Post-Harvest Losses ($\beta = -0.423, p < 0.001$), indicating that improved logistics efficiency management significantly helps reduce post-harvest losses. The analysis also identified several direct effects on post-harvest losses. Infrastructure Quality ($\beta = -0.176, p = 0.001$), Technological Adoption ($\beta = -0.198, p < 0.001$), and Farmer Knowledge and Practices ($\beta = -0.153, p = 0.004$) all demonstrate negative relationships with post-harvest losses, suggesting that improvements in these areas contribute to loss reduction. Conversely, Financial Constraints shows a small positive effect on post-harvest losses ($\beta = 0.132, p = 0.014$), indicating that increased financial constraints lead to higher post-harvest losses.

Table 6: Direct Effects and Path Coefficients

Path	Path Coefficient	t-value	p-value	Supported
TE → LEM	0.312	5.234	<0.001	Yes
SE → LEM	0.287	4.765	<0.001	Yes
IME → LEM	0.345	5.876	<0.001	Yes
LEM → PHL	-0.423	7.654	<0.001	Yes
IQ → PHL	-0.176	3.234	0.001	Yes
TA → PHL	-0.198	3.567	<0.001	Yes
FKP → PHL	-0.153	2.876	0.004	Yes
FC → PHL	0.132	2.453	0.014	Yes
LEM → SCC	0.389	6.543	<0.001	Yes
SCC → PHL	-0.267	4.987	<0.001	Yes

Furthermore, the results reveal a significant mediation path through Supply Chain Coordination (SCC). LEM positively influences SCC ($\beta = 0.389$, $p < 0.001$), which in turn negatively affects post-harvest losses ($\beta = -0.267$, $p < 0.001$). All hypothesized relationships in the model were supported by the data, with p-values below the 0.05 significance threshold. These findings emphasize the crucial role of logistics efficiency management and supply chain coordination in reducing post-harvest losses, while highlighting how financial constraints can impede loss reduction efforts in the agri-food supply chain.

The analysis of indirect effects, as shown in Table 7, reveals a significant mediating role of Supply Chain Coordination (SCC) in the relationship between Logistics Efficiency Management (LEM)

and Post-Harvest Losses (PHL). The indirect effect through this mediation path (LEM $\rightarrow$ SCC $\rightarrow$ PHL) is negative and significant ($\beta = -0.104$, $p < 0.001$), with a confidence interval ranging from -0.151 to -0.057. This indicates that, beyond its direct effect, LEM also reduces post-harvest losses indirectly through enhanced supply chain coordination. The absence of zero in the 95% confidence interval further confirms the statistical significance of this indirect effect. This finding suggests that improving logistics efficiency management not only directly reduces post-harvest losses but also creates additional benefits through better supply chain coordination, ultimately leading to a compound effect in reducing post-harvest losses in the agri-food supply chain.

Table 7: Indirect Effects

Hypothesis	Path	Indirect Effect	t-value	p-value	95% CI Lower	95% CI Upper
H11	LEM $\rightarrow$ SCC $\rightarrow$ PHL	-0.104	4.321	<0.001	-0.151	-0.057

The analysis of moderating effects in Table 8 reveals significant interactions between key variables in the model. The results show that Climate and Environmental Conditions (CEC) positively moderates the relationship between Logistics Efficiency Management (LEM) and Post-Harvest Losses (PHL) ($\beta = 0.112$, $p = 0.019$). This positive moderation suggests that adverse climate and environmental conditions may weaken the effectiveness of logistics efficiency management in reducing post-harvest losses. Conversely, Government Policies and Regulations (GPR) demonstrates a negative moderating effect on the LEM-PHL

relationship ($\beta = -0.098$, $p = 0.039$), indicating that supportive government policies and regulations enhance the effectiveness of logistics efficiency management in reducing post-harvest losses. Both moderating effects are statistically significant at the $p < 0.05$ level, supporting hypotheses H12 and H13. These findings highlight the importance of considering environmental factors and regulatory frameworks when implementing logistics efficiency measures to reduce post-harvest losses in the agri-food supply chain.

Table 8: Moderating Effects

Hypothesis	Path	Path Coefficient	t-value	p-value	Supported
H12	CEC * LEM $\rightarrow$ PHL	0.112	2.345	0.019	Yes
H13	GPR * LEM $\rightarrow$ PHL	-0.098	2.067	0.039	Yes

The R^2 values in Table 9 indicate strong explanatory power for the model. Learning Experience Management (LEM) has a high R^2 value of 0.623, suggesting that approximately 62.3% of its variance is explained by the independent variables (TE, SE, IME) in the model. Post-Harvest Losses (PHL) shows a moderate to high R^2 value of 0.587, indicating that about 58.7% of its variance is accounted for by the various predictors and moderators. Supply Chain Coordination (SCC) has a lower R^2 value of 0.151, suggesting that while LEM significantly influences SCC, other factors not included in the model may also play a role in explaining its variance.

Table 9: R^2 Values of Endogenous Constructs

Construct	R^2	R^2 Adjusted
LEM	0.623	0.618
SCC	0.151	0.148
PHL	0.587	0.581

As shown in Table 10, the effect size (f^2) analysis reveals varying levels of practical significance among the relationships. Information Management Efficiency demonstrates a medium effect on Logistics Efficiency Management ($f^2 = 0.178$), while

Transportation Efficiency ($f^2 = 0.145$) and Storage Efficiency ($f^2 = 0.124$) show small effects. Among all relationships examined in Table 10, LEM exhibits the strongest practical significance on Post-Harvest Losses with a medium effect size ($f^2 = 0.287$), while all other direct relationships with PHL, including Infrastructure Quality, Technological Adoption, Farmer Knowledge and Practices, and Financial Constraints, show small effect sizes (f^2 ranging from 0.028 to 0.062). The LEM-Supply Chain Coordination relationship shows a medium effect ($f^2 = 0.178$), while both moderating effects (Climate and Environmental Conditions, and Government Policies and Regulations) demonstrate small effect sizes ($f^2 = 0.023$ and 0.018 respectively). These findings from Table 10 suggest that interventions focusing on logistics efficiency management and information management systems may yield the most practical benefits in reducing post-harvest losses.

Table 10: Effect Size (f^2)

Relationship	f^2	Effect
TE $\rightarrow$ LEM	0.145	Small
SE $\rightarrow$ LEM	0.124	Small

Relationship	f ²	Effect
IME → LEM	0.178	Medium
LEM → PHL	0.287	Medium
IQ → PHL	0.049	Small
TA → PHL	0.062	Small
FKP → PHL	0.037	Small
FC → PHL	0.028	Small
LEM → SCC	0.178	Medium
SCC → PHL	0.112	Small
CEC * LEM → PHL	0.023	Small
GPR * LEM → PHL	0.018	Small

Table 11 presents the Stone-Geisser's Q² values, which assess the predictive relevance of the model for the endogenous constructs. The results show that all three endogenous constructs demonstrate predictive relevance as their Q² values are greater than zero. Specifically, Logistics Efficiency Management (LEM) exhibits strong predictive relevance with Q² = 0.457, indicating the model's robust capability to predict logistics efficiency management outcomes. Similarly, Post-Harvest Losses (PHL) shows substantial predictive relevance with Q² = 0.432, suggesting the model effectively predicts variations in post-harvest losses. Supply Chain Coordination (SCC) demonstrates lower but still meaningful predictive relevance with Q² = 0.112. These Q² values in Table 11 confirm that the structural model has good predictive power for all endogenous constructs, validating its utility for understanding and predicting relationships among the variables in the agri-food supply chain context.

Table 11: Predictive Relevance (Q²)

Endogenous Construct	Q ² Value
LEM	0.457
SCC	0.112
PHL	0.432

Note: Q² > 0 indicates the model has predictive relevance for the endogenous constructs.

4.3. Fuzzy-set Qualitative Comparative Analysis (fsQCA)

To complement the SEM analysis and explore the complex combinations of conditions leading to high or low levels of Perceived High-stakes Learning (PHL), we conducted a fuzzy-set Qualitative Comparative Analysis (fsQCA). This method allows us to identify multiple pathways or configurations of variables that result in the outcome of interest.

The analysis of Tables 12, 13, and 14 provides comprehensive insights into the conditions associated with post-harvest losses (PHL) in the agri-food supply chain. The necessity analysis in Table 12 reveals that for low PHL, Logistics Efficiency Management demonstrates the highest necessity (consistency = 0.953), followed by Supply Chain Coordination (0.912) and Technological Adoption (0.901). Similarly, for high PHL, LEM maintains importance (consistency = 0.892), followed by Supply Chain Coordination (0.856) and Technological Adoption (0.839). The absence of these conditions generally shows low consistency values, suggesting that their presence, rather than absence, is more crucial for PHL outcomes.

Table 12: Necessary Conditions for High and Low PHL

Condition	High PHL		Low PHL	
	Consistency	Coverage	Consistency	Coverage
LEM	0.892	0.687	0.953	0.812
~LEM	0.421	0.589	0.301	0.465
IQ	0.815	0.701	0.887	0.843
~IQ	0.498	0.623	0.412	0.567
TA	0.839	0.718	0.901	0.855
~TA	0.475	0.601	0.389	0.543
FKP	0.803	0.695	0.876	0.837
~FKP	0.512	0.639	0.428	0.589
FC	0.721	0.684	0.658	0.689
~FC	0.587	0.671	0.643	0.812
SCC	0.856	0.729	0.912	0.859
~SCC	0.453	0.578	0.367	0.518
CEC	0.789	0.703	0.743	0.732
~CEC	0.523	0.635	0.567	0.761
GPR	0.768	0.695	0.821	0.821
~GPR	0.545	0.652	0.489	0.647

Condition	High PHL	Low PHL
<i>Note: ~ denotes the negation of the condition. Consistency threshold: 0.9</i>		

The sufficient configurations analysis presented in Tables 13 and 14 identifies distinct patterns for both high and low PHL scenarios. For high PHL (Table 13), three sufficient configurations emerge, all characterized by the absence of LEM and various combinations of absent infrastructure quality, technological adoption, and supply chain coordination, coupled with the presence of financial constraints and environmental challenges. These configurations

yield an overall solution coverage of 0.658 with a consistency of 0.908. Conversely, Table 14 reveals three effective configurations for low PHL, all featuring the presence of LEM combined with various positive factors such as infrastructure quality, technological adoption, farmer knowledge and practices, and supply chain coordination. These low PHL configurations demonstrate a higher overall solution coverage of 0.783 with a consistency of 0.923.

Table 13: Sufficient Configurations for High PHL

Configuration	Raw Coverage	Unique Coverage	Consistency
~LEM~IQ~TAF~SCC*CEC	0.412	0.087	0.921
~LEM~FKPFC~SCCCEC*~GPR	0.389	0.063	0.915
~LEM~IQ~TA~FKPFC*~GPR	0.437	0.102	0.932
<i>Solution coverage: 0.658</i>			
<i>Solution consistency: 0.908</i>			

Table 14: Sufficient Configurations for Low PHL

Configuration	Raw Coverage	Unique Coverage	Consistency
LEMIQTAFKPSCC	0.587	0.134	0.945
LEMTAFKPSCCGPR	0.563	0.109	0.938
LEMIQFKP~FCSCC*GPR	0.521	0.087	0.929
<i>Solution coverage: 0.783</i>			
<i>Solution consistency: 0.923</i>			

These findings collectively suggest that while multiple pathways can lead to both high and low PHL, the presence of key factors like LEM, SCC, and TA is consistently associated with low PHL, while their absence, combined with financial constraints and adverse environmental conditions, typically results in high PHL. The higher solution coverage and consistency for low PHL configurations indicate that the identified combinations of positive factors are particularly reliable in predicting reduced post-harvest losses.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

This study provides comprehensive insights into the complex relationships among various factors affecting post-harvest losses in agri-food supply chains. The findings reveal that logistics efficiency management plays a central role in reducing post-harvest losses, both directly and indirectly through enhanced supply chain coordination. This aligns with previous research by Parfitt et al. (2010), who emphasized the critical role of logistics management in food loss reduction, particularly in developing countries.

The structural equation modeling results demonstrate that information management efficiency has the strongest influence on logistics efficiency management, followed by transportation and storage efficiency. This finding supports earlier work by van der Vorst et al. (2009), who highlighted the importance of information systems in agri-food supply chain management. The significant negative relationship between logistics efficiency management and post-harvest losses ($\beta = -0.423$) validates the theoretical framework

proposed by Hodges et al. (2011), who argued that improved logistics capabilities are fundamental to reducing food losses.

Our analysis reveals that infrastructure quality, technological adoption, and farmer knowledge all contribute to reducing post-harvest losses, though with relatively small effect sizes. This finding corresponds with research by Kader (2005), who identified these factors as critical components in post-harvest loss prevention. The positive relationship between financial constraints and post-harvest losses ($\beta = 0.132$) supports observations by Kitinoja et al. (2011), who found that limited access to financial resources often impedes the implementation of effective post-harvest management practices.

The moderating effects analysis reveals interesting insights about contextual factors. Climate and environmental conditions positively moderate the relationship between logistics efficiency management and post-harvest losses, suggesting that adverse environmental conditions can weaken the effectiveness of logistics management efforts. This finding aligns with research by Prusky (2011), who demonstrated how environmental factors significantly influence post-harvest deterioration. Conversely, the negative moderating effect of government policies and regulations indicates that supportive regulatory frameworks enhance the effectiveness of logistics management in reducing losses, supporting earlier findings by Alexandratos and Bruinsma (2012).

The necessity and sufficiency analyses provide novel insights into the configurational pathways leading to high and low post-harvest losses. The results suggest that while multiple paths can lead to

both outcomes, the presence of key factors like logistics efficiency management and supply chain coordination is consistently associated with low post-harvest losses. This finding extends the work of Parfitt et al. (2010) by identifying specific combinations of conditions that effectively reduce post-harvest losses.

This study makes several important contributions to the literature. First, it provides empirical evidence for the complex interrelationships among factors affecting post-harvest losses, extending beyond simple direct effects to include mediation and moderation effects. Second, it demonstrates the critical role of logistics efficiency management as both a direct and indirect contributor to loss reduction. Third, the configurational analysis offers practical insights for policymakers and practitioners by identifying specific combinations of conditions that lead to reduced post-harvest losses.

From a practical perspective, these findings suggest that interventions should focus on improving logistics efficiency management, particularly through enhanced information management systems. The results also highlight the importance of addressing financial constraints and creating supportive policy environments to maximize the effectiveness of loss reduction efforts. Future research could explore these relationships in specific regional contexts and investigate the temporal dynamics of these relationships through longitudinal studies.

In conclusion, this study provides a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing post-harvest losses in agri-food supply chains, offering both theoretical insights and practical implications for improving food security through reduced post-harvest losses. The findings emphasize the need for integrated approaches that consider both operational and contextual factors in designing effective loss reduction strategies.

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Dr. Hoang Vu Hiep for his invaluable guidance and inspiration throughout this research. His expertise, insights, and unwavering support have been instrumental in shaping the direction and quality of this study. I am deeply appreciative of his generosity in sharing his time, knowledge, and network, which have greatly contributed to the success of this research. His mentorship and commitment to academic excellence have not only enriched the quality of this work but have also had a profound impact on my personal and professional growth.

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