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Cognitive Bias and Stakeholder Alignment in Cross-Functional Supply Chain Decisions in Industrial Manufacturing

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Abstract

Cross-functional supply-chain decisions in industrial manufacturing combine operational constraints with different stakeholder incentives and judgments. This paper develops the Behavioral Alignment Framework for Supply Chain Decisions (BAF-SCD), a behavioral decision framework for supplier and stakeholder negotiation that links cognitive bias, stakeholder alignment and decision governance. A purposive narrative synthesis of behavioral decision theory, negotiation psychology, stakeholder research and behavioral operations is mapped to six decision points: supplier selection, price and contract negotiation, allocation under shortage, quality disputes, make-or-buy and dual sourcing, and customer commitments. The framework moves a decision through five stages (mapping stakeholder frames, detecting bias risks, debiasing the process, negotiating for alignment, and learning from outcomes) and connects biases such as anchoring, loss aversion, reactive devaluation and escalation of commitment to decision records, independent estimates, structured challenge, pre-set exit criteria and accountable escalation. Practitioner reflection assesses the plausibility of these mechanisms, and three composite scenarios illustrate their use without representing observed cases. Six propositions are offered as candidates for empirical testing, not as evidence that the interventions improve performance. The contribution is a mechanism-based account of how functional reference points and negotiation judgment may shape supply-chain choices. Future evaluation should distinguish psychological effects from incentives, information asymmetry and market power, and should measure decision quality and implementation outcomes rather than speed of agreement.

Keywords: Cognitive Bias, Behavioral Operations, Supply Chain Management, Stakeholder Alignment, Negotiation, Cross-Functional Decision Making, Industrial Manufacturing, Debiasing

1. Introduction

Industrial manufacturers operate supply chains in which a single decision can touch dozens of people across several functions and organizations. When a key supplier announces a price increase, procurement worries about cost targets, operations worries about continuity of supply, quality worries about the risk of switching to an unqualified source, engineering worries about specification changes, finance worries about margin and working capital, and sales worries about what can be promised to the customer. The decision that eventually emerges is the product of a negotiation, partly formal and partly informal, among all of these parties and the supplier itself.

Traditional supply chain models tend to treat these decisions as optimization problems solved by rational agents with stable preferences and full access to relevant data. Decades of research in psychology and behavioral economics suggest that this assumption is often violated. People rely on mental shortcuts, are sensitive to how choices are framed, weigh losses more heavily than equivalent gains and interpret ambiguous information in ways that confirm what they already believe (Tversky &

Kahneman, 1974; Kahneman & Tversky, 1979; Kahneman, 2011). These tendencies do not disappear when people walk into a sourcing review or a supplier negotiation. If anything, the time pressure, uncertainty and political stakes of supply chain work make them more likely to appear. Recent work on supply chain leadership similarly stresses that logistics and sourcing decisions must be deliberately aligned with enterprise strategy rather than left to each function (Akin-Oluyomi & Akhigbe, 2023b), and that procurement negotiation in manufacturing remains a major lever for cost performance (Akinleye & Adeyoyin, 2022a).

A growing body of behavioral operations research has confirmed that managers deviate systematically from normative predictions in inventory, ordering and forecasting tasks (Sterman, 1989; Schweitzer & Cachon, 2000; Bendoly, Donohue & Schultz, 2006). Within purchasing, Carter, Kaufmann and Michel (2007) offered an influential taxonomy of judgment and decision biases in supply management. However, comparatively little work has examined how these biases operate in the social, multi-party setting where most supply chain decisions are actually made: between internal functions that must agree on a position, and between the firm and its suppliers and customers who must agree on terms. Much of the applied procurement literature has instead concentrated on data, analytics and governance tools, such as business intelligence for manufacturing procurement (Akinleye, Okoruwa, Babatope & Akokodaripon, 2023), data visualization for sourcing decisions (Babatope, Akokodaripon, Akinleye & Okoruwa, 2023) and predictive demand forecasting (Aifuwa *et al*., 2020). Related contributions address procurement process automation and transparency (Akinleye & Adeyoyin, 2021), data-driven vendor evaluation and bid selection (Ahiaeke Patrick, Okonkwo, Mayo & Okeke, 2021), end-to-end supply chain visibility (Nnabueze *et al*., 2021; Okonkwo, Mayo & Okeke, 2023), the integration of IT systems with supply chain operations (Okonkwo, Ahiaeke Patrick, Okeke & Mayo, 2023) and analytics for forecasting accuracy and bottleneck reduction (Akin-Oluyomi & Akhigbe, 2023c; Akin-Oluyomi, Atima, Akinleye & Okoruwa, 2023). Further strands cover ERP-based procurement processes (Ahiaeke Patrick *et al*., 2020), regulatory-compliant procurement in high-risk environments (Okonkwo, Ogunwole, Mayo & Okeke, 2021), inventory availability and plant uptime (Okonkwo, Ogunwole & Okeke, 2018b), port logistics efficiency (Okonkwo *et al*., 2020), agile and secure digital supply chains (Mbonu *et al*., 2020; Shittu & Nabil, 2023), smart contracts for supplier payment and benchmarking (Akomolafe *et al*., 2022), digital transformation of operations management (Agboada *et al*., 2018), integrated performance visualization (Ogbole *et al*., 2021; Akin-Oluyomi *et al*., 2020) and the quantitative evaluation of ESG adoption in supply chains (Akinleye, 2023). These tools improve the information available to decision makers, but they do not by themselves correct how that information is interpreted and argued over. This is the gap the present paper addresses. It also responds to calls to treat supply chain management as a fundamentally cross-functional and inter-organizational activity (Mentzer *et al*., 2001) in which human judgment, rather than technology alone, determines whether integration succeeds (Fawcett, Magnan & McCarter, 2008; Schorsch, Wallenburg & Wieland, 2017).

The paper pursues three objectives. First, it brings together behavioral decision theory, negotiation psychology and stakeholder theory into a single lens for understanding cross-functional supply chain decisions. Second, it proposes a behavioral decision framework for supplier and stakeholder negotiation, the Behavioral Alignment Framework for Supply Chain Decisions (BAF-SCD), which helps practitioners anticipate where bias is likely to distort alignment, both among internal functions and between the firm and its suppliers and customers, and what to do about it. Third, it offers six testable propositions and three illustrative applications that can guide future empirical research.

The perspective taken here is that of practitioner-scholars. The framework draws on the first author's undergraduate training in psychology, which supplies the theoretical vocabulary of cognition, social perception and group behavior, and on the first author's professional work negotiating and aligning with internal customers (such as operations, quality and engineering) and with external customers and suppliers in industrial manufacturing. This dual grounding is reflected throughout: concepts are drawn from the research literature, and their practical plausibility is examined against the realities of manufacturing supply chains. The remainder of this introduction reviews the relevant literature in six parts, ending with the supplier selection, coordination and negotiation-mode studies that most directly inform the design of the framework (Section 1.6). Section 2 describes the research method. Section 3 presents and discusses the results: a taxonomy of biases in cross-functional supply chain decisions, the five-stage framework, its propositions, illustrative applications, implications, and limitations. Section 4 concludes.

1.1 Behavioral Decision Theory and Heuristics

Behavioral decision theory describes how people actually make judgments under uncertainty, in contrast to how normative models say they should. Tversky and Kahneman (1974) showed that people rely on a limited set of heuristics, such as representativeness, availability and anchoring with insufficient adjustment, which are often useful but produce predictable errors. Prospect theory (Kahneman & Tversky, 1979) added that outcomes are evaluated as gains or losses relative to a reference point, that losses loom larger than gains, and that people tend to be risk-averse for gains and risk-seeking for losses. Later work distinguished between fast, intuitive processing and slower, deliberate reasoning, and argued that many errors arise when intuitive responses go unchecked (Kahneman, 2011).

Several further findings are especially relevant to organizational decisions. Confirmation bias leads people to seek and favor evidence consistent with their existing views. Overconfidence leads them to set estimates and forecasts with ranges that are too narrow. Escalation of commitment leads decision makers to continue investing in a failing course of action to justify earlier choices (Staw, 1976). Groupthink describes how cohesive groups under pressure suppress dissent and converge prematurely on a single option (Janis, 1972). Each of these has a natural home in supply chain work, as later sections show. Behavioral explanations have also begun to enter adjacent management fields; Lawal and Oduleye (2023b), for example, argue that enterprise performance cannot be fully explained without

modeling the behavioral tendencies of decision makers. Work on data-driven executive decision systems and on aligning financial planning analytics with corporate strategy makes a related point, namely that better data improves decisions only when the decision process itself is designed to use it well (Lawal & Oduleye, 2019, 2021b), and scenario-based modeling has been proposed as one way to widen the range of futures that strategic decision makers consider (Filani, Nnabueze, Sakyi & Okojie, 2023).

The foundations of this work lie in Simon's (1955) argument that decision makers are boundedly rational, and in the behavioral theory of the firm, which treats organizational choices as the outcome of bargaining among coalitions with partly conflicting goals (Cyert & March, 1963). Tversky and Kahneman (1981) showed that logically equivalent options produce different choices when framed as gains rather than losses. Anchoring has proved one of the most robust of these effects (Furnham & Boo, 2011), although it can be reduced when people are prompted to consider reasons why the anchor is inappropriate (Mussweiler, Strack & Pfeiffer, 2000).

Several other findings bear directly on supply chain judgment. Overconfidence takes several distinct forms, including overestimation of one's own performance and excessive precision in estimates (Moore & Healy, 2008). Managers tend to combine timid choices with bold forecasts (Kahneman & Lovallo, 1993), and optimism leads executives to underestimate costs and timelines (Lovallo & Kahneman, 2003). Sunk costs drive continued investment in failing courses of action (Arkes & Blumer, 1985), a pattern confirmed by meta-analysis (Sleesman, Conlon, McNamara & Miles, 2012), and people show a strong preference for existing arrangements (Samuelson & Zeckhauser, 1988). Confirmation bias appears in many guises (Nickerson, 1998), and motivated reasoning allows people to reach conclusions they prefer while believing they are being objective (Kunda, 1990). People also attribute others' behavior to disposition rather than situation (Ross, 1977) and see bias more readily in others than in themselves (Pronin, Lin & Ross, 2002), which matters greatly when functions or firms judge each other's motives.

Dual-process accounts help explain when these errors appear. Individual differences in reflective reasoning predict susceptibility to bias (Frederick, 2005), and intuitive judgment is trustworthy mainly in environments that offer regular feedback (Kahneman & Klein, 2009). Bazerman and Moore (2013) provide an integrated account of these phenomena in managerial settings.

1.2 Behavioral Operations and Supply Management

Behavioral operations management applies these insights to operational settings. Sterman's (1989) beer distribution game demonstrated that participants misperceive feedback and delays, generating the oscillating orders that Lee, Padmanabhan and Whang (1997) would later describe as the bullwhip effect. Schweitzer and Cachon (2000) found that decision makers in newsvendor problems systematically order too close to mean demand, a pattern consistent with anchoring and insufficient adjustment. Bendoly, Donohue and Schultz (2006) reviewed the field and argued that operations models need to account for cognitive limits, social preferences and emotion.

In purchasing and supply, Carter *et al*. (2007) catalogued biases such as the availability cascade, anchoring, the status quo bias and the sunk cost effect, and illustrated how each could affect supplier selection and evaluation. Tokar (2010) reviewed behavioral research across logistics and supply chain management and called for more work on interpersonal and inter-organizational behavior. Croson, Donohue, Katok and Sterman (2014) showed that even when demand is perfectly known and constant, participants hold extra stock because they doubt that their partners will behave rationally, a phenomenon they called coordination risk. This last finding is particularly important for the present paper: it suggests that supply chain inefficiency can arise from beliefs about other stakeholders, not only from individual misjudgment. It is consistent with reviews of post-disruption supply chain resilience, which note that firms facing uncertainty tend to respond with defensive buffering and fragmented decisions rather than coordinated action (Anene, 2021). Frameworks for supply chain risk management and resilience in capital-intensive and regulated sectors (Agbabiaka, Okonkwo, Ogunwole, Mayo & Okeke, 2019; Ogunwole, Okonkwo, Agbabiaka, Mayo & Okeke, 2021; Awulu, Obukadata & Williams, 2022b) and proposals for a post-pandemic resilience index (Efobi, Akinleye & Fasawe, 2023) likewise depend, in practice, on how risk is perceived and argued over by the functions involved.

The behavioral operations field has since matured considerably (Bendoly, Croson, Goncalves & Schultz, 2010; Donohue, Özer & Zheng, 2020). Laboratory studies show that the bullwhip effect persists even when inventory information is shared (Croson & Donohue, 2006), that contract performance depends on how people respond to contract framing (Katok & Wu, 2009), and that cognitive reflection predicts better newsvendor decisions (Moritz, Hill & Donohue, 2013). Trust is central to whether forecast information is shared and believed (Özer, Zheng & Chen, 2011), and fear of others' hoarding produces phantom ordering (Sterman & Dogan, 2015). Schorsch *et al*. (2017) proposed a meta-theory of behavioral supply chain management that places human cognition and social interaction at its center. Within purchasing specifically, Kaufmann, Michel and Carter (2009) and Kaufmann, Carter and Buhrmann (2010, 2012) developed and tested debiasing strategies for supplier selection, Riedl, Kaufmann, Zimmermann and Perols (2013) linked procedural rationality to reduced uncertainty in supplier choice, and Mantel, Tatikonda and Liao (2006) showed that make-or-buy evaluations are shaped by behavioral factors beyond cost.

Applied work on supply chain risk points in the same direction. Classic treatments of supply chain risk and resilience (Chopra & Sodhi, 2004; Tang, 2006) and evidence from the COVID-19 disruption (Ivanov, 2020) show that firms must make consequential choices under deep uncertainty, exactly the conditions in which heuristics dominate. Related studies extend this concern to humanitarian logistics (Anene & Clement, 2022), force majeure and contractual resilience (Uchechi *et al*., 2020), pharmaceutical supply chain governance and inefficiency (Eze, Anene & Akinleye, 2023; Asiedu & Asiedu, 2023), supply chain integration in large asset acquisitions (Nwangwu, Duvbiama-Owasanoye & Akano, 2023), machine-learning risk dashboards (Filani, Nnabueze, Ike &

Wedraogo, 2022) and data-driven procurement risk management in multinational enterprises (Bello, Akomolafe & Agu, 2023).

1.3 Stakeholder Theory and Cross-Functional Alignment

Stakeholder theory holds that organizations must attend to the interests of all groups who can affect or are affected by their objectives (Freeman, 1984). Mitchell, Agle and Wood (1997) proposed that stakeholder salience depends on power, legitimacy and urgency, which helps explain why some voices dominate supply chain decisions while others are overlooked. Inside the firm, functions act as internal stakeholders with their own performance metrics and professional cultures. Procurement is often measured on purchase price variance and savings, operations on output and schedule attainment, quality on defect rates and audit outcomes, and finance on margin and working capital. These metrics create different reference points, and therefore different perceptions of what counts as a gain or a loss. Seyi-Lande, Arowogbadamu and Oziri (2022) show that cross-functional key performance indicator frameworks are a central mechanism for organizational alignment, while Sakyi, Filani, Nnabueze, Okojie and Ogedengbe (2022) link well-designed KPI frameworks to accountability across large commercial organizations. Beyond the firm, multi-stakeholder alignment requires explicit governance structures that coordinate business processes across parties with different mandates (Eyetsemitan, Ambali, Oyeleye & Fadayomi, 2020), and global supply chains increasingly depend on shared responsibility across organizations and jurisdictions (Ominyi, Uchechi, Anichukwueze & Jones, 2021). Comparable arguments appear in work on supply chain governance models for compliance and operational quality (Akin-Oluyomi & Akhigbe, 2022), operational performance metrics in regulated manufacturing (Awulu, Obukadata & Williams, 2022a), stakeholder engagement in complex digital transformation (Sanni & Attah, 2023), capacity planning across multi-stakeholder portfolios (Edivri & Oteri, 2022) and project governance in multinational operations (Amayo, Owulade & Isi, 2023a).

Research on cross-functional teams shows that diversity of functional background can improve the range of information available but can also impair communication and cohesion (Ancona & Caldwell, 1992). Edmondson (1999) found that team psychological safety, the shared belief that it is safe to take interpersonal risks, predicts learning behavior. In supply chain settings, low psychological safety can mean that a quality engineer does not challenge an optimistic supplier qualification timeline, or that a planner does not admit that a forecast is weak. Oguntegbe, Farounbi and Okafor (2023) similarly find that inclusive leadership practices strengthen committee decision making by widening the range of views that are voiced, and Amayo, Owulade and Isi (2023b) link diversity and inclusion to stronger team performance and delivery in multinational environments.

Stakeholder theory has developed descriptive, instrumental and normative strands (Donaldson & Preston, 1995; Freeman, Harrison, Wicks, Parmar & de Colle, 2010). Inside the firm, specialized departments develop distinct goals and time horizons, which creates the need for deliberate integration (Lawrence & Lorsch, 1967). Different functions also interpret the same information through different 'thought worlds' (Dougherty, 1992), and knowledge must be translated and sometimes transformed to cross functional boundaries (Carlile, 2004). Social identity theory adds that people favor their own group and view others through its lens (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), which helps explain why a quality engineer and a buyer may judge the same supplier differently.

Supply chain research confirms that integration across operations, purchasing and logistics is enabled or inhibited by structure, culture and reward systems (Pagell, 2004) and that it calls for collaboration rather than mere interaction. Sales and operations planning is the most studied mechanism for cross-functional alignment (Tuomikangas & Kaipia, 2014); Oliva and Watson (2011) show that well-designed planning processes can achieve alignment even when functional incentives differ. Team research adds that task conflict can be useful while relationship conflict is harmful (Jehn, 1995; De Dreu & Weingart, 2003), that groups tend to discuss information everyone already holds rather than unique information (Stasser & Titus, 1985), that dissent improves group decisions (Schulz-Hardt, Brodbeck, Mojzisch, Kerschreiter & Frey, 2006) and that psychological safety is a key condition for learning (Edmondson & Lei, 2014). Communication across cultures, a daily reality in global supplier networks, adds further room for misinterpretation (Lilian *et al*., 2020), as do joint venture and cross-border partnerships in which finance leaders must reconcile partner priorities (Isiekwu, Oluwo & Dada, 2021).

1.4 The Psychology of Negotiation

Negotiation research provides the most direct bridge between cognitive psychology and supplier and stakeholder alignment. Bazerman and Neale (1992) identified a set of common negotiator errors, including irrational escalation, the mythical fixed pie, anchoring on initial offers, sensitivity to framing and overconfidence. Thompson and Hastie (1990) showed that most negotiators wrongly assume their counterpart's interests are directly opposed to their own, missing opportunities for integrative agreements. Galinsky and Mussweiler (2001) demonstrated that first offers act as powerful anchors, and that focusing on the counterpart's alternatives or one's own target can reduce that effect. Ross and Stillinger (1991) described reactive devaluation, the tendency to value a proposal less simply because it comes from an adversary.

Principled negotiation (Fisher, Ury & Patton, 2011) offers a prescriptive counterpart: separate people from the problem, focus on interests rather than positions, invent options for mutual gain and insist on objective criteria. Read through a psychological lens, many of these prescriptions are debiasing techniques. Focusing on interests counters the fixed-pie assumption; objective criteria counter anchoring; separating people from the problem counters reactive devaluation and attribution errors. This observation is central to the framework developed below. Within the supply literature, it is echoed by frameworks that treat contract negotiation and vendor governance as a structured discipline for cost reduction (Okonkwo, Ogunwole, Okeke & Mayo, 2019), by negotiation optimization models developed specifically for manufacturing procurement (Akinleye & Adeyoyin, 2022a), and by supplier relationship management approaches that emphasize collaboration, innovation and resilience over transactional bargaining (Akinleye & Adeyoyin, 2022b; Ike *et al*., 2021). Strategic procurement optimization frameworks (Okonkwo,

Ogunwole & Okeke, 2018a), comparative analyses of procurement cost optimization across national contexts (Akokodaripon, Akinleye, Okoruwa & Babatope, 2023) and structured supplier risk assessment (Akin-Oluyomi, Atima & Akinleye, 2023b) provide the commercial content that such negotiations operate on.

The broader negotiation literature supplies several further building blocks. Walton and McKersie (1965) distinguished distributive from integrative bargaining, and Raiffa (1982) showed how analysis of interests and alternatives can create value. Meta-analysis shows that prosocial motives, a concern for the other party's outcomes as well as one's own, promote integrative agreements (De Dreu, Weingart & Kwon, 2000). Framing a negotiation in terms of losses makes negotiators less concessionary, and overconfidence reduces settlement (Neale & Bazerman, 1985). Good alternatives strengthen a negotiator's position (Pinkley, Neale & Bennett, 1994), information exchange is the route to integrative outcomes (Thompson, 1991), and perspective taking helps more than empathy alone (Galinsky, Maddux, Gilin & White, 2008). Negotiators also value subjective outcomes such as feelings about the process and the relationship, not only economic results (Curhan, Elfenbein & Xu, 2006). A review of the psychology of negotiation summarizes these findings (Thompson, Wang & Gunia, 2010).

In buyer-supplier settings, research has examined negotiation strategies in supply chain management (Zachariassen, 2008), the state of knowledge on buyer-seller negotiations (Herbst, Voeth & Meister, 2011) and the effect of negotiation strategy on suppliers' willingness to share knowledge (Thomas, Thomas, Manrodt & Rutner, 2013). Contract design and governance also shape negotiation, from liability mitigation and dispute prevention in high-value service contracts (Uchechi & Ominyi, 2019) to standardized contract review workflows (Uchechi *et al*., 2021).

1.5 Buyer-Supplier Relationships, Power and Trust

Negotiations take place inside relationships that carry history, power and expectations. Kraljic (1983) argued that purchasing strategy should reflect the supply risk and profit impact of each category, and Cox (2001) showed how relative buyer and supplier power shapes what can be negotiated. Relationship marketing research identifies commitment and trust as central to cooperative exchange (Morgan & Hunt, 1994), and the relational view locates competitive advantage in relation-specific assets, knowledge sharing and effective governance between firms (Dyer & Singh, 1998). Supplier development builds social capital and performance (Krause, Handfield & Tyler, 2007). Supplier selection has long been treated as a multi-criteria decision (Ho, Xu & Dey, 2010), and total cost of ownership provides an objective frame that counters price anchoring (Ellram, 1995). Each of these perspectives assumes that people perceive power, trust and value accurately; the behavioral lens of this paper asks what happens when they do not.

1.6 Supplier Selection, Coordination and Negotiation Mode

1.6.1 Supplier Selection Under Competing Criteria

Supplier selection is the decision point at which anchoring on price and status quo preference toward incumbents are most consequential for the present framework, and supply management research shows how many criteria compete in it. Badorf *et al*. (2019) examine how supplier economies of scale drive selection decisions, which implies that a buyer's sense of a fair price is partly a judgment about the supplier's cost structure rather than a neutral fact. Choudhary and Shankar (2013) model procurement lot size, supplier choice and carrier choice as a joint decision, showing that a single sourcing award spans functions whose criteria are usually set separately. Nejma *et al*. (2019) propose a hybrid multi-agent negotiation protocol for supplier selection that supports dyadic collaboration, treating selection and negotiation as one process rather than two. Gumus and Love (2012) design a supply chain sourcing game as a negotiation exercise, a reminder that trade-offs between cost, capacity and relationship are learned through practice rather than by rule. For the BAF-SCD these studies justify two design choices. The frame statement in Stage 1 asks each function to state its selection criteria and weights before suppliers are compared, and the total cost reframing in Stage 3 replaces last-price anchors with an explicit estimate of the supplier's cost position, the kind of individual debiasing effort that Kaufmann *et al*. (2012) related to financial decision effectiveness in the supplier selection process.

1.6.2 Perceived Bias and Inter-Organizational Coordination

A second group of studies concerns how bias and coordination operate between decision makers rather than within one of them. Hada *et al*. (2013) study purchasing managers' perceived bias in referrals that suppliers themselves select, a setting in which buyers weigh information partly by its source; this is close to the reactive devaluation that Stage 4 of the BAF-SCD addresses by evaluating proposals against agreed criteria before their origin is discussed. Rezaei *et al*. (2021) show experimentally that the way attribute weights are elicited can bias multiattribute decisions, which supports the requirement in Stages 2 and 3 that each function records its criterion weights independently and before group discussion. Kirchoff *et al*. (2015) develop a behavioral theory of sustainable supply chain decision making in non-exemplar firms, indicating that ordinary manufacturers, not only acknowledged leaders, frame such choices through managerial perception. Wong and Acur (2010) examine how decisions are coordinated across organizational boundaries; for the present framework this motivates a distinction between agreement on a decision procedure and agreement on the preferred outcome, and Stage 4 asks functions to settle the procedure first. Knemeyer and Naylor (2011) argue that behavioral experiments can deepen understanding of logistics and supply chain decision making, which is one of the evaluation routes proposed for the propositions in Section 3.3.

1.6.3 Negotiation Mode, Protocols and Tactics

Negotiation mode and protocol form the third design input. Kaufmann and Carter (2004) examine when buyers should negotiate directly rather than run an electronic auction, and Thomas *et al*. (2021) study the relational impact of violating a counterpart's expectations about negotiation strategy; together they suggest that the choice of format is itself a decision exposed to the fixed-pie assumption. Automated protocols offer a contrasting design. Wang *et al*. (2009) and Kim and Cho (2010) model supply chain formation through agent-based negotiation, and Fiedler (2022) extends agent-based negotiation to supply chain finance. These protocols

make issues, offers and concession rules explicit, which is the property the BAF-SCD seeks to reproduce in human negotiations through multi-issue agendas and documented criteria, without assuming that people behave like rational agents. At the level of tactics, Haselhuhn (2014) applies support theory to examine how unpacking aspirations and alternatives can improve negotiation performance, consistent with the Stage 4 advice to focus on one's own alternatives when facing an extreme first offer, while Jang and Bottom (2021) analyze tactical anger from the expresser's perspective, a reminder that emotional displays in supplier meetings can be strategic rather than spontaneous.

Classroom negotiation exercises built around a coffee supply chain and international Incoterms (Inouye & Kling, 2020; García-Dastugue, 2018) provide low-risk settings in which buyers can rehearse these behaviors, supporting the training implication in Section 3.5. Research on supplier relationship management strategies that foster collaboration, innovation and resilience (Ike *et al*., 2021) and on contract negotiation and vendor governance (Okonkwo *et al*., 2019) connects these tactics to the rules that govern a supplier relationship over time. Supplier-selection debiasing (Kaufmann *et al*., 2012) and the prospective failure review known as the pre-mortem (Klein, 2007) supply the structured challenge mechanisms used in Stage 3. Their value in industrial manufacturing remains a design proposition that must be evaluated against operating outcomes rather than assumed from other settings.

2. Research Method

This paper uses a conceptual, framework-building method rather than a statistical test. Conceptual papers are appropriate when the aim is to integrate theories from different disciplines and to generate propositions that can later be tested (Jaakkola, 2020). The approach followed three steps.

Step 1: Purposive narrative synthesis: The review is a purposive narrative synthesis of behavioral decision theory, negotiation, stakeholder research and behavioral operations. It is not a systematic review with a reproducible search or an exhaustive coverage claim. Studies were selected for their relevance to the decision mechanisms considered here, with priority given to foundational experimental work on heuristics and negotiation and to supply management studies of bias and debiasing (Carter *et al*., 2007; Kaufmann *et al*., 2009). Future replication should document databases, dates, eligibility criteria and evidence quality.

Step 2: Mapping to decision points: Typical cross-functional decision points in industrial manufacturing supply chains were identified: supplier selection and sourcing awards, price and contract negotiation, capacity and allocation decisions under shortage, quality disputes and dispositions, make-or-buy and dual-sourcing decisions, and customer commitment decisions. Each bias was mapped to the decision points where it is most likely to appear and to the stakeholders most likely to display it.

Step 3: Practitioner reflection and composite scenarios: Each mapped mechanism and intervention was examined against the first author's experience of cross-functional and supplier negotiations in industrial manufacturing, to judge whether it was plausible and usable in practice. This reflection examines plausibility and usability; it does not generate empirical observations or test intervention effects. The three scenarios in Section 3.4 are composites of recurring patterns and do not describe identifiable organizations, and the six propositions in Section 3.3 remain open to testing against decision records and operational outcomes.

The disciplinary lens of the paper is primarily psychological, reflecting the first author's training, and this makes certain mechanisms, such as social perception, motivated reasoning and group dynamics, especially salient. That emphasis is useful, because interpersonal and inter-organizational behavior remains underrepresented in supply chain research (Tokar, 2010), but it may also lead the framework to emphasize psychological explanations over structural ones such as incentive design or the relative power of buyer and supplier (Cox, 2001). Section 3.6 returns to this limitation.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Cognitive Biases in Cross-Functional Supply Chain Decisions

Table 1 summarizes the biases judged most consequential for cross-functional and supplier-facing decisions in industrial manufacturing. For each, it identifies the decision points where it typically appears, how it tends to show up in practice and the main risk it creates for alignment.

Table 1: Cognitive biases in cross-functional supply chain decisions

Bias	Typical decision point	How it shows up	Alignment risk
Anchoring	Price negotiation; cost estimates; lead-time quotes	Last year's price or the supplier's first offer becomes the reference for all discussion	Settlements cluster around arbitrary numbers; value-based arguments are ignored
Loss aversion and framing	Price increases; supplier switching; specification changes	A 4% increase is felt more strongly than a 4% saving; switching is framed as risk rather than opportunity	Functions with different reference points talk past each other
Fixed-pie assumption	Supplier and internal negotiations	Every concession is seen as a loss for one side	Integrative options (volume, terms, lead time, payment) are never explored
Confirmation bias	Supplier evaluation; root-cause analysis	Evidence is read to support a preferred supplier or a preferred explanation of a defect	Disputes harden; data stop being shared
Overconfidence	Forecasting; qualification timelines; savings estimates	Narrow ranges on demand forecasts and ramp-up dates	Commitments to customers exceed what operations can deliver
Escalation of commitment	Underperforming suppliers; legacy tooling; failing projects	Continued investment to justify an earlier sourcing decision	Exit is delayed; cross-functional blame grows
Availability heuristic	Risk assessment; supplier scorecards	A recent, vivid failure dominates judgment of an otherwise reliable supplier	Overreaction or underreaction to risk
Reactive devaluation	Supplier proposals; proposals from other functions	A good idea is discounted because of who proposed it	Viable solutions are rejected
Status quo bias	Make-or-buy; dual sourcing; process change	Existing arrangements are preferred by default	Improvement opportunities are missed
Groupthink and authority bias	Sourcing committees; escalation meetings	Junior or less powerful functions defer to the most senior voice	Risks raised by quality or planning go unheard

Sources: Synthesized from Tversky and Kahneman (1974), Kahneman and Tversky (1979), Staw (1976), Janis (1972), Bazerman and Neale (1992), Ross and Stillinger (1991) and Carter *et al*. (2007), mapped to manufacturing decision points by the authors.

Two features of this taxonomy deserve emphasis. First, most of the biases are relational: they distort not only an individual's judgment but how that individual perceives and responds to other stakeholders. Second, different functions are vulnerable to different biases because they hold different reference points, a point developed in Section 3.2.1 and Table 2. Because these biases are relational, the attribution error and the bias blind spot reviewed in Section 1.1 (Ross, 1977; Pronin, Lin & Ross, 2002) help explain why functions that disagree tend to read the disagreement as a matter of each other's motives rather than of their different metrics and reference points.

3.2 A Behavioral Alignment Framework for Supply Chain Decisions

The BAF-SCD is organized around five stages that a cross-functional decision passes through, from first framing to final review: mapping stakeholders and their frames, detecting bias risks, debiasing the decision process, negotiating for alignment, and learning and recalibrating (Sections 3.2.1 to 3.2.5). At each stage it identifies the dominant psychological risk and a set of practical interventions. The sequence follows the behavioral theory of the firm, in which organizational choices emerge from bargaining among coalitions with partly conflicting goals (Cyert & March, 1963), and it builds in the procedural rationality that Riedl *et al*. (2013) associated with reduced uncertainty in supplier selection decisions. The stages are iterative rather than linear: alignment achieved internally often has to be renegotiated once a supplier or customer responds, and an outcome reviewed in Stage 5 changes the reference points mapped in Stage 1 for the next decision. The framework applies to the six decision points identified in Section 2, and Tables 1 to 3 supply its working content.

3.2.1 Stage 1: Map Stakeholders and Their Frames

Alignment begins with understanding not only who the stakeholders are, but how each of them frames the decision. Because people evaluate outcomes relative to a reference point, two functions can look at the same proposal and see a gain and a loss respectively. Mapping frames makes these differences visible before they turn into conflict. Table 2 illustrates the typical frames of the main functions involved in industrial supply chain decisions.

Table 2: Functional frames and characteristic bias exposure

Function	Primary goal and metric	Typical reference point	Characteristic bias exposure	Alignment lever
Procurement	Cost reduction; purchase price variance	Last price paid; budget target	Anchoring; fixed-pie	Total cost of ownership criteria
Operations and planning	Output; schedule attainment	Current supply continuity	Loss aversion; availability	Explicit continuity and risk scenarios
Quality	Defect rates; compliance	Zero escapes; audit findings	Confirmation bias; status quo	Shared data and joint root-cause work
Engineering	Performance; specification integrity	Current design and approved sources	Status quo; overconfidence	Early involvement; staged validation
Finance	Margin; cash and working capital	Plan and forecast	Anchoring on plan; framing	Ranges rather than point estimates
Sales and customer service	Revenue; customer satisfaction	Customer promise	Overconfidence; optimism	Capacity-checked commitments
External supplier	Margin; volume; relationship continuity	Its own cost base and other customers	Fixed-pie; reactive devaluation	Interest-based dialogue; objective indices

Note: frames are typical tendencies, not fixed traits. Individuals vary, and the same person may adopt different frames in different decisions.

Practical tools at this stage include a stakeholder map that records each party's power, legitimacy and urgency (Mitchell *et al*., 1997), and a short frame statement for each function: what it would count as success, what it would count as a loss, and what it is measured on. Writing frames down converts implicit reference points into explicit ones that can be discussed.

Frame mapping is increasingly important as sustainability objectives enter sourcing decisions. Green and ESG-integrated procurement asks functions to balance short-term cost against long-term environmental responsibility (Okojie, Filani, Ihwughwavwe & Sakyi, 2020; Akin-Oluyomi, Atima & Akinleye, 2023a), and supplier sustainability metrics (Akin-Oluyomi, Okoruwa, Babatope & Akokodaripon, 2023) and sustainable procurement practices in local manufacturing (Efobi, Akinleye & Fasawe, 2022a) add a further reference point to the discussion. Finance frames are similarly shaped by predictive budgeting models (Adesuyi, Walawalkar & Kalu, 2022), while operations frames are anchored in materials readiness and plant uptime (Okonkwo, Agbabiaka, Ogunwole, Mayo & Okeke, 2021). Finance perspectives are further shaped by capital allocation and decision analytics models (Lawal & Oduleye, 2021a, 2023a), cost management and cost governance models (Oduleye & Medon, 2021; Adesuyi, Kalu & Walawalkar, 2023) and cash flow and working capital forecasting (Tonoyan, Dada & Ayivi-Donkor, 2021), while operations perspectives draw on lifecycle performance management (Adelanwa, Basnet & Anene, 2023), multi-site performance indicators (Akin-Oluyomi & Akhigbe, 2023a) and workforce optimization and scheduling (Falemi, Akhigbe & Akin-Oluyomi, 2023; Okwesa *et al*., 2023).

3.2.2 Stage 2: Detect Bias Risks

The second stage asks where, given the decision type and the frames identified, bias is most likely to enter. Table 1 functions as a checklist. A sourcing award, for example, is exposed to status quo bias and confirmation bias toward incumbent suppliers, while a price increase negotiation is exposed to anchoring and loss aversion. Detection is most effective when it is routine and impersonal: a standard question in the decision template ('Which biases are most likely here, and for whom?') reduces the risk that naming a bias is heard as an accusation. Standardized decision workflows are known to improve data quality and management visibility (Alieme, Sule & Obukadata, 2022), and embedding bias questions in them extends that benefit to judgment quality. In regulated manufacturing settings, this mirrors the logic of risk-based decision frameworks that require risks to be named and assessed before a disposition is made (Aneke & Adesemoye, 2020).

3.2.3 Stage 3: Debias the Decision Process

Because people are generally poor at correcting their own biases in the moment, effective debiasing usually changes the process or environment rather than relying on willpower (Kahneman, 2011; Thaler & Sunstein, 2008). Table 3 lists interventions suited to supply chain settings.

Table 3: Debiasing interventions for supply chain decisions

Intervention	Targets	Application in supply chain decisions
Independent estimates before discussion	Anchoring; groupthink; authority bias	Each function submits its cost, risk or lead-time estimate before the meeting, so the first voice does not set the anchor
Consider-the-opposite	Confirmation bias; overconfidence	Before finalizing a supplier choice, the team lists the strongest reasons it could be wrong
Pre-mortem (Klein, 2007)	Overconfidence; groupthink	Assume the new supplier launch has failed in a year and ask what caused it
Reframing in total cost terms	Loss aversion; framing; anchoring on price	Compare options on total cost of ownership, including quality, logistics, inventory and risk
Pre-set exit criteria	Escalation of commitment	Agree in advance on the performance thresholds that will trigger a supplier exit or resourcing
Base rates and reference classes	Availability; overconfidence	Use historical qualification durations and defect data instead of the most memorable case
Designated challenger	Groupthink; authority bias	Rotate a role whose job is to raise risks, protecting less powerful functions
Ranges rather than point estimates	Overconfidence; anchoring on plan	Forecasts and savings presented as ranges with stated assumptions

These interventions are drawn from a substantial debiasing literature. Early reviews concluded that warnings alone rarely work and that restructuring the task is more effective (Larrick, 2004). Considering the opposite reliably reduces biased judgment (Lord, Lepper & Preston, 1984), and imagining that an event has already happened improves the generation of explanations, which underpins the pre-mortem (Mitchell, Russo & Pennington, 1989). Devil's advocacy and dialectical inquiry improve group decisions compared with consensus approaches (Schwenk, 1990), and accountability to an audience with unknown views encourages more careful thinking (Lerner & Tetlock, 1999). Decision checklists for senior leaders apply the same logic (Kahneman, Lovallo & Sibony, 2011). Soll, Milkman and Payne (2015) summarize what is known about when debiasing works.

Debiasing interventions are most durable when they are embedded in routine work rather than introduced as one-off exercises. Standard operating procedures can act as infrastructure for sustaining change (Agboada, Ezeako, Okoli & Uzondu, 2019), and structured change management helps new practices take hold (Eyetsemitan, Ambali, Oyeleye & Fadayomi, 2023). Lean Six Sigma routines adapted to resource-constrained settings (Ambali *et al*., 2021) and procedures treated as strategic assets (Eyetsemitan, Oyeleye, Ambali & Fadayomi, 2022) offer

further carriers for these practices. Real-time performance analytics can also reduce the decision delays that encourage reliance on intuition under pressure (Nnaji & Akinlolu, 2022).

3.2.4 Stage 4: Negotiate for Alignment

With frames mapped and the process debiased, the fourth stage addresses the negotiation itself, both the internal negotiation to agree a common position and the external negotiation with suppliers or customers. Four principles connect negotiation psychology to supply chain practice.

- **Interests before positions:** Asking each party why it holds its position reveals interests that are often compatible. A supplier asking for a price increase may care most about cash flow, which can be addressed through payment terms rather than price.
- **Expand the pie:** Supply agreements contain many tradable issues: volume commitments, contract length, lead times, safety stock ownership, payment terms, specification flexibility and technical support. Negotiating several issues at once allows trades on issues valued differently by each side (Thompson & Hastie, 1990).
- **Manage anchors deliberately:** Where a credible basis exists, making the first offer anchored in objective criteria such as published commodity indices or should-cost models can shape the bargaining zone. When receiving an extreme first offer, focusing on one's own alternatives reduces its influence (Galinsky & Mussweiler, 2001).
- **Separate the proposal from the proposer:** To counter reactive devaluation, proposals can be evaluated against agreed criteria before their source is discussed, and joint problem solving can replace sequential demand and response.

Internal alignment should normally precede external negotiation. A supplier who senses disagreement among the buyer's functions will rationally exploit it, and functions that were not consulted are likely to devalue any agreement they did not help shape.

3.2.5 Stage 5: Learn and Recalibrate

The final stage closes the loop. After major decisions, a short structured review compares what was expected with what happened: Were forecasts within their ranges? Did the supplier meet the qualification timeline? Which concerns raised by which function proved correct? Recording these outcomes builds the base rates that improve future estimates, and it provides the regular feedback under which intuitive judgment becomes more trustworthy (Kahneman & Klein, 2009). In a psychologically safe climate (Edmondson, 1999), these reviews also build trust between functions by making it legitimate to have been wrong. Over time, the lessons captured in these reviews can feed lean, data-driven improvement routines already common in manufacturing supply chains (Efobi, Akinleye & Fasawe, 2022b; Ike *et al*., 2022; Ezeugwa, Oluokun & Ogunnowo, 2023), and broader digital transformation of manufacturing operations (Obukadata, Awulu & Williams, 2021).

3.3 Propositions

The framework implies six claims that can be tested empirically. Propositions 1 and 2 concern the framing, detection and debiasing stages; Propositions 3 and 4 concern supplier negotiation and exit decisions; and Propositions 5 and 6 concern the social conditions under which alignment succeeds, building on the psychological safety research of Edmondson (1999) and the coordination risk findings of Croson *et al*. (2014).

Proposition 1: *Cross-functional supply chain decisions in which stakeholders' reference points are made explicit before discussion will show less relationship conflict and fewer later reversals of the agreed decision than decisions in which reference points remain implicit.*

Proposition 2: *Collecting independent estimates from each function before group discussion will reduce the influence of the first-voiced estimate and improve the accuracy of cost, lead-time and risk judgments.*

Proposition 3: *Supplier negotiations that address multiple issues simultaneously will produce agreements with higher joint value and stronger relationship outcomes than single-issue price negotiations.*

Proposition 4: *Pre-agreed exit criteria will shorten the time taken to resource away from underperforming suppliers, reducing escalation of commitment.*

Proposition 5: *The positive effect of debiasing interventions on alignment will be stronger in teams with higher psychological safety.*

Proposition 6: *Perceived coordination risk between internal functions will partially mediate the relationship between functional misalignment and excess buffer inventory, consistent with Croson et al. (2014).*

These propositions require prospective tests rather than confirmation through illustration. Decision quality should be defined in advance through forecast errors, service or cost outcomes and, where feasible, blinded assessments by reviewers who did not take part in the decision. Faster agreement alone is not evidence of better decisions, since quick consensus can also reflect authority bias or suppressed dissent (Janis, 1972). Tests should separate cognitive bias from legitimate competing objectives, supplier bargaining power and incentive design, should use the same measurement instruments across groups, and should report adverse outcomes, dissent and unsuccessful decisions as well as successful alignment.

3.4 Illustrative Applications

The following three scenarios are composites constructed from recurring patterns in industrial manufacturing practice. They are intended to show how the framework operates, not to report empirical findings, and the outcomes they describe are illustrative rather than observed. Each scenario corresponds to a decision point from Section 2 and to a cluster of biases in Table 1: Scenario A to price negotiation under anchoring and loss aversion, Scenario B to allocation under shortage, where overconfidence and authority bias dominate, and Scenario C to a quality dispute shaped by confirmation bias and reactive devaluation. This use of illustration is consistent with the role of examples in conceptual articles (Jaakkola, 2020), and it parallels the way Carter *et al*. (2007) used purchasing examples to make their bias taxonomy concrete.

3.4.1 Scenario A: Responding to a Supplier Price Increase

A supplier of machined castings announces a significant price increase, citing energy and raw material costs. Procurement's initial reaction is anchored on last year's price and frames the request as a pure loss to be minimized. Operations, which has recently experienced a vivid shortage with a different supplier, quietly fears that resisting the increase could jeopardize supply. Quality is concerned that

any discussion of switching suppliers will lead to a lengthy requalification.

Applying the BAF-SCD, the team first maps these frames explicitly (Stage 1) and recognizes that procurement and operations hold opposite reference points. In Stage 2 it identifies anchoring, loss aversion and availability as the main bias risks. In Stage 3 it replaces the last-price anchor with a should-cost model linked to published energy and metal indices, an objective criterion consistent with total cost of ownership reasoning (Ellram, 1995), and asks each function for independent estimates of the cost and risk of switching. In Stage 4 the team enters the supplier conversation with an aligned position and explores interests rather than positions (Fisher, Ury & Patton, 2011): in this illustration, the supplier's main concern turns out to be cash flow during a period of high input costs. A multi-issue agreement then becomes possible in which part of the increase is indexed to commodity prices, payment terms are improved for the supplier, and the buyer secures a longer volume commitment with capacity reservation. Stage 5 records the outcome and the accuracy of the index model for use in later negotiations.

3.4.2 Scenario B: Allocating Scarce Capacity Across Internal Customers

A shortage of an electronic component forces the plant to allocate limited supply across product lines. Each business unit argues that its customers are most critical. Sales, under pressure, has already made optimistic promises. The discussion quickly polarizes, and the most senior voice in the room begins to steer the outcome.

Here the dominant risks are overconfidence in what can be promised (Moore & Healy, 2008), the fixed-pie assumption (Thompson & Hastie, 1990) and authority bias, a form of the deference to dominant voices that Janis (1972) described in cohesive groups under pressure. The framework recommends agreeing allocation criteria (such as contractual penalties, margin, strategic customers and safety-critical applications) before any product line is discussed, so that criteria are not shaped to justify a preferred answer. A designated challenger role allows planning to raise feasibility concerns. Integrative options, such as redesign to use alternate components or partial shipments negotiated with customers, become visible once the group stops treating allocation as a zero-sum division.

3.4.3 Scenario C: A Quality Dispute with a Long-Standing Supplier

A batch of components fails incoming inspection. The supplier attributes the failure to the buyer's handling; the buyer's quality team attributes it to the supplier's process. Each side reads ambiguous evidence as confirming its own view, and each discounts the other's corrective action proposals.

Confirmation bias and reactive devaluation are the main risks. The framework suggests a joint root-cause investigation with shared data access and agreed analytical methods, which separates the proposal from the proposer. A consider-the-opposite exercise on both sides helps each party take the alternative explanation seriously. Because the supplier relationship is long-standing, the team also checks for escalation of commitment: are performance problems being tolerated because of the history of the relationship? Pre-agreed quality thresholds make this judgment less personal. Reviews of corrective and preventive action effectiveness emphasize that root-cause methods are only as good as the openness of the investigation (Aneke, Adesemoye & Sydney, 2022), and work on data integrity in regulated operations shows why shared, trustworthy data is a precondition for resolving such disputes (Aneke, Sydney & Adesemoye, 2023).

3.5 Implications for Research and Practice

This study makes three contributions. First, it extends behavioral supply management beyond individual judgment to the multi-party setting in which supply chain decisions are actually negotiated, linking the bias taxonomy of Carter *et al*. (2007) with the coordination risk findings of Croson *et al*. (2014). Second, it argues that the reference point concept from prospect theory provides a useful bridge between stakeholder theory and decision psychology: functional metrics create reference points, and conflicting reference points help explain why functions perceive the same outcome so differently. Third, it reinterprets established negotiation prescriptions as debiasing tools, offering a psychological account of why interest-based negotiation tends to work in supplier relationships.

For supply chain leaders, several practical implications follow. First, organizations can build bias checks into standard decision templates for sourcing awards, supplier exits and allocation decisions, so that debiasing does not depend on individual vigilance, and can require independent pre-meeting estimates for cost, risk and timing in cross-functional reviews. Second, internal alignment should precede external negotiation, with functional reference points made explicit early. Third, buyers and supplier managers benefit from training in the psychology of negotiation, including anchoring, framing and reactive devaluation, not only in commercial tactics. Evidence that cross-functional education reduces contract errors in engineering teams (Anichukwueze, Ominyi, Uzougbo & Jones, 2022), and that well-designed training can produce measurable behavioral change (Anichukwueze, Osuji & Oguntegbe, 2020), supports this investment, as does research on supply chain talent and capability building (Falemi, Akhigbe & Akin-Oluyomi, 2020) and on behavioral programs that sustain changes in workforce behavior (Obriki, Obogo & Arumosoye, 2023; Akhigbe, Falemi & Akin-Oluyomi, 2023). Lessons from industrial safety are especially transferable: research on human error causation (Obriki & Arumosoye, 2020), the recurrence of unsafe behaviors (Obriki & Arumosoye, 2022), human factors in process safety (Oduro, 2023), leadership-driven culture change (Obogo, Nwafor & Ozobu, 2023), organizational learning maturity (Arumosoye & Obriki, 2021), governance of multi-contractor performance (Arumosoye & Obriki, 2020) and workforce training models (Obriki, Obogo & Arumosoye, 2022) shows how behavioral risks can be made visible and managed systematically. Fourth, exit criteria and performance thresholds are best agreed at the start of supplier relationships, when emotional commitment is lowest. Finally, investment in psychological safety matters, because the value of cross-functional input depends on people feeling able to voice it.

3.6 Limitations and Future Research

The framework has several limitations. It is conceptual, and its propositions have not yet been tested. The illustrative scenarios are composites drawn from practitioner experience and may reflect the particular industries and roles in which

that experience was gained. The emphasis on psychological mechanisms may underweight structural factors such as incentive systems, market power and contractual constraints, which interact with bias in important ways (Cox, 2001; Schorsch *et al*., 2017). Finally, much of the underlying bias research was conducted in laboratory settings, and effect sizes in real organizational decisions may differ (Bendoly *et al*., 2010; Donohue *et al*., 2020).

Future research could test the propositions through several designs: field experiments that introduce independent estimation or pre-mortems into sourcing reviews; behavioral experiments that simulate multi-function negotiations with suppliers; survey studies linking functional metric conflict, psychological safety and decision quality; and longitudinal case studies of supplier relationships that track escalation of commitment over time. Cross-cultural work would also be valuable, since negotiation norms and attitudes toward hierarchy differ across the global supply bases of industrial manufacturers.

4. Conclusion

The Behavioral Alignment Framework for Supply Chain Decisions is a behavioral decision framework for supplier and stakeholder negotiation that links identifiable judgment mechanisms to stakeholder conditions and structured supply-chain decisions. It offers specific interventions and propositions that require testing, rather than demonstrated performance effects. Decision records, independent estimates and accountable challenge are proposed to support better alignment, but their effectiveness depends on incentives, information and authority. Empirical studies should measure both decision quality and implementation outcomes before the framework is generalized across industrial settings.

Practical application requires a decision record describing the problem, competing objectives, available evidence and authority for approval. Independent estimates should precede group discussion where feasible, and participants should explain disagreement before reaching consensus. The aim is to expose assumptions and resolve trade-offs rather than suppress dissent. Legitimate differences in service, cost, quality and contractual responsibility must remain visible. A bias label should never replace an examination of incentives, information access or supplier bargaining power when these factors explain a disputed decision. Two adjacent literatures support this design. Work on operational integrity in high-risk drilling treats productivity and compliance as interdependent outcomes of shared decision governance rather than as competing goals (Nwangwu *et al*., 2018), and work on upstream capital projects attributes budget overruns partly to incoherence between the assumptions made at the decision stage and those that execution teams can deliver (Nwangwu *et al*., 2021); both point to an explicit, shared decision record as the means of keeping functions aligned.

The proposed interventions require assessment against observable decision quality and implementation outcomes. Agreement speed or meeting satisfaction alone does not demonstrate improved judgment. A useful evaluation should compare forecast error, service performance, cost consequences and adherence to the approved decision, using prespecified criteria. Researchers should record unsuccessful negotiations and adverse outcomes alongside accepted recommendations. Measurement instruments need consistent use across teams, and independent review should reduce the influence of participants evaluating their own decisions. The six propositions remain untested.

Future work should examine whether the framework improves decisions under different power structures, levels of uncertainty and degrees of interdependence. Comparative field studies would help separate the effect of structured challenge from changes in leadership or incentives. Longitudinal observation should assess whether teams retain the process after an initial intervention and whether implementation costs outweigh benefits. The contribution is a transparent connection between judgment mechanisms and supply-chain governance. Stronger claims about effectiveness require evidence of improved decisions and operating results across defined industrial settings.

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