


Chapter 6

Human Capital as a Driver of Supply Chain Resilience in Conflict-Affected MENA Regions

Raed Awashreh

 <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-2252-0299>

United Arab Emirates University, UAE

ABSTRACT

This chapter examines the role of human capital, leadership, human resource management (HRM), and capacity-building, in enhancing supply chain resilience in conflict-affected MENA regions, including Yemen, Palestine, Iraq, and Libya. Using a qualitative, multiple case-study approach, triangulated with document analysis and secondary literature, the research identifies how transformational and adaptive leadership, strategic HR practices, and targeted education jointly sustain operational continuity under extreme uncertainty. Findings highlight that human capital investment, rather than technological solutions alone, is critical for rapid crisis response, workforce stability, and long-term adaptability. An integrated human-capital framework is proposed, providing a holistic model for resilient supply chain operations.

INTRODUCTION

Supply chains are widely regarded as the backbone of economic development and humanitarian relief. In the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), however, these critical systems face unprecedented challenges. Prolonged conflicts, political

DOI: 10.4018/979-8-3373-6950-1.ch006

instability, and fragile governance structures have disrupted supply networks, leaving communities vulnerable to shortages of essential goods and delaying post-conflict recovery (Ali, 2025). While advances in logistics technology, infrastructure investment, and digital tracking systems have received considerable attention in both academic and practical spheres, there is growing recognition that technical solutions alone are insufficient. At the core of resilient supply chains lies human capital, defined here as the leadership capabilities, workforce skills, and institutional capacities that shape organizational responses to disruption, the leadership, skills, and capacities of the workforce that drive decision-making, operational continuity, and innovation under conditions of extreme uncertainty. This chapter investigates the often-overlooked intersection of leadership, human resource management (HRM), and education in building supply chain resilience in conflict-affected MENA states, demonstrating how **coordinated and strategic investment in people** can transform fragile operations into adaptive, crisis-ready networks (Awashreh et al., 2024).

The research problem addressed in this study stems from a critical gap in existing supply chain literature. Despite decades of research on technological solutions and logistical efficiency, relatively little attention has been paid to the explicit role of human capital in shaping supply chain resilience, particularly in conflict-prone regions. Organizations operating in war-torn environments frequently struggle to maintain workforce stability, develop local expertise, and retain leadership talent capable of navigating complex and volatile operational contexts. This neglect often results in delayed humanitarian aid, disrupted commercial supply chains, and inefficiencies in reconstruction initiatives, perpetuating cycles of vulnerability (Mazar, Gossett & Shashi, 2024). While technological and infrastructure improvements remain necessary, they are insufficient in isolation and cannot compensate for the absence of capable leaders, skilled human resources, and effective training programs (Awashreh & Hassiba, 2025). This chapter addresses this gap by examining how leadership development, strategic HR practices, and targeted education initiatives interact synergistically to strengthen human capital, enabling supply chains to withstand disruptions and support sustainable recovery.

Empirical evidence from Yemen, Iraq, Palestine, and Libya underscores the consequences of insufficient investment in human capital. In Yemen, for example, logistical delays in humanitarian aid delivery have been linked not only to infrastructural damage but also to the absence of trained managers capable of coordinating complex, high-risk operations (Al-Badani, 2025; Elayah, Gaber & Fenttiman, 2022). Similarly, in Iraq and Palestine, organizations that prioritize workforce training, leadership mentoring, and continuous skill development report higher levels of operational continuity and adaptability, even under persistent instability. These cases highlight the pivotal role of human capital in translating technological and procedural capabilities into actionable resilience, reinforcing the argument that

24 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage: www.igi-global.com/chapter/human-capital-as-a-driver-of-supply-chain-resilience-in-conflict-affected-mena-regions/406867

Related Content

Establishment of Zakat Bank: Do We Need One?

Hakimah Yaacob, Adli Yaacob, Khairul Hidayatullah Basirand Qaisar Ali (2021). *Impact of Zakat on Sustainable Economic Development* (pp. 78-94).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/establishment-of-zakat-bank/259760

Sustainable Consumption and Green Marketing in Developing Countries: Contemporary Perspective Using Nigeria and Kenya as Case Studies

Abiodun Elijah Obayelu (2019). *Green Business: Concepts, Methodologies, Tools, and Applications* (pp. 1523-1544).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/sustainable-consumption-and-green-marketing-in-developing-countries/221117

Can a Gamified Proposal Increase the Motivation, Satisfaction of Basic Psychological Needs, and Enjoyment of Primary Education Students?: Brawl Stars in Physical Education

Rubén Navarro-Patón, Jairo Campo-Vázquezand Marcos Mecías-Calvo (2025). *Promoting Sustainable Development Goals in Physical Education: The Role of Motor Games* (pp. 67-88).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/can-a-gamified-proposal-increase-the-motivation-satisfaction-of-basic-psychological-needs-and-enjoyment-of-primary-education-students/370327

A Bibliometric Analysis of Higher Education and the Sustainable Development Goals

Hacer Yumurtaci Aydogmus, Yusuf Sait Turkanand Ufuk Aydogmus (2023). *Considerations on Education for Economic, Social, and Environmental Sustainability* (pp. 1-25).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/a-bibliometric-analysis-of-higher-education-and-the-sustainable-development-goals/323334

Vendor Managed Inventory and Strategy: Case Study of Global Supply Chains

Alan D. Smith (2020). *International Journal of Sustainable Economies Management* (pp. 1-20).

www.irma-international.org/article/vendor-managed-inventory-and-strategy/269476