OPERATIONS AND SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT

A Study on Logistics and Supply Chain Management Operations

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Abstract

This research paper examines the practical functioning of logistics and supply chain management operations through the learning and observations recorded during a six-week Summer Internship at Inline Shipping Logistics (India) LLP, from 1 July 2026 to 14 August 2026. The study focuses on the relationship between shipment documentation, logistics data entry, database maintenance and warehouse activities. It explores how the accuracy and timely exchange of information support the physical movement of goods through shipping and freight operations.

The research follows a descriptive and qualitative approach. Primary inputs were drawn from workplace observation, practical involvement in routine administrative activities and informal discussions with personnel. Secondary understanding was supported by the academic and industry references listed in the internship report. The practical tasks included preparing Kata Chithi (weighment/tally) reports in paper and spreadsheet formats, entering shipment information into the company system, organizing records and observing warehouse processes and material-handling equipment.

The study finds that logistics performance depends on the close coordination of physical cargo movement and information flow. Inaccurate weights, container references or shipment details can create downstream delays and reconciliation problems. Spreadsheet tools and structured databases support consistency, while paper records remain useful for field verification, signatures and reference. Warehouse layout, equipment selection and safe handling practices also influence the efficiency of cargo movement.

The paper concludes that standardized templates, verification checklists, systematic archiving, clear warehouse procedures and structured intern orientation can support operational consistency. These recommendations are presented as general suggestions based on the internship observations and do not imply that the organization lacks such practices.

Keywords: Logistics management; supply chain management; shipping operations; Kata Chithi; documentation; Excel; database maintenance; warehousing; material handling equipment

1 Introduction

1.1 Background of the study

Supply Chain Management (SCM) is the coordinated management of activities involved in sourcing, moving, storing and delivering goods, together with the information and financial flows that support these activities. It connects suppliers, manufacturers, transport providers, warehouses, service agencies and customers. The purpose is to ensure that the right goods reach the right place, in the required quantity and condition, at the appropriate time and cost.

Logistics is a key operational component of SCM. It deals with planning, executing and controlling the movement and storage of goods and related information between origin and destination. In shipping and freight operations, logistics service providers coordinate documentation, shipment schedules, cargo handling, transport arrangements and communication among stakeholders. The quality of these activities affects delivery reliability, cost, customer confidence and the continuity of trade.

The internship at Inline Shipping Logistics (India) LLP provided practical exposure to selected administrative and operational processes. The work included shipment and logistics data entry, preparation of Kata Chithi reports, database and record maintenance, and observation of warehouse activities. These tasks demonstrated that the movement of cargo depends not only on vehicles, vessels and equipment but also on reliable information.

1.2 Need and significance of the study

Academic study introduces concepts such as transportation, inventory, warehousing and documentation. However, their interaction becomes clearer when observed in an operating organization. A small error in a shipment reference or weight entry may affect later checks, records or operational decisions. Similarly, delayed updates may reduce the usefulness of otherwise accurate information. Studying these processes helps explain why accuracy, timeliness and coordination are central to logistics management.

The study is significant because it connects classroom concepts with practical work. It also highlights the role of routine administrative activities—often less visible than physical transportation—in supporting freight movement and warehouse execution.

2 Objectives, scope and methodology

2.1 Objectives of the study

1. To understand the basic workflow of logistics and supply chain management in a shipping-agency environment.
2. To examine the preparation and verification of Kata Chithi reports using paper records and Microsoft Excel.
3. To understand how shipment details are entered, updated and maintained in an organizational information system.
4. To study the importance of systematic database management, filing and record retrieval.
5. To observe warehouse operations, material movement and the purpose of commonly used material-handling equipment.
6. To identify practical learning outcomes and develop general recommendations for documentation and operational coordination.

2.2 Scope of the study

The study is limited to the activities and observations recorded during the internship period at Inline Shipping Logistics (India) LLP. It concentrates on shipment information processing, Kata Chithi preparation, database maintenance, document organization and warehouse observation. It does not claim to provide a complete audit of the company's operations, financial performance or commercial relationships. Confidential customer details, financial records and proprietary information are excluded.

2.3 Research methodology

The research uses a descriptive design and qualitative analysis. Primary information was obtained through personal observation, practical exposure to documentation and data-entry activities, warehouse observation and informal discussions with staff. Secondary information was drawn from the textbooks, journals, institutional publications and other sources listed in the original internship report.

The collected material was organized thematically around documentation, information systems, warehouse operations and skills developed. Observations were interpreted in relation to supply chain concepts. No fabricated survey sample, numerical performance measure or statistical result is presented.

2.4 Limitations

The internship lasted approximately six weeks, limiting the opportunity to observe long-term performance or seasonal variations. Access to confidential commercial and client information was restricted. The study focuses on selected administrative and warehouse-related processes rather than procurement, strategic sourcing or the full customs-brokerage function. Some interpretations are based on observation and informal discussions and should be read within that scope.

3 Theoretical framework

3.1 Supply chain and logistics management

A supply chain involves three connected flows: material, information and finance. Material moves through suppliers, production and distribution towards customers. Information moves in both directions and includes orders, inventory balances, shipment status and schedules. Financial flows include invoices, payments and settlement of commercial obligations. Effective SCM coordinates these flows so that decisions about physical goods are supported by current and dependable information.

Logistics management concentrates on the operational movement and storage of goods. Its activities include transportation planning, warehousing, inventory handling, order processing and documentation. In a shipping agency, coordination and information control are especially important because cargo may pass through multiple organizations and checkpoints.

3.2 Shipping and freight operations

Shipping operations involve the movement of cargo through maritime and connected land-transport networks. Agencies coordinate with cargo owners, carriers, port authorities, transport providers, warehouses and other parties. Shipment information may include booking references, container identifiers, weights, vessel and voyage details, origin and destination points, seals and handling instructions. Records must be consistent as information moves between stakeholders.

Documents such as Bills of Lading, packing lists, commercial invoices, booking orders, manifests and tally or weighment records provide information and evidence for operational coordination. A mismatch between physical cargo and its documentation may require clarification and can interrupt subsequent processes.

3.3 Documentation and data integrity

Documentation provides a structured record of transactions, cargo details and operational milestones. It supports communication, verification, traceability and retrieval. Digital systems make information easier to search and update, while physical records may remain necessary for field use, signatures, endorsements and reference. A hybrid system is effective only when both versions are kept aligned.

Data integrity requires accurate entry, consistent formats, appropriate access and routine checks. Standard fields, validation rules, cross-checking and clear file naming can reduce avoidable errors. Timely updates are equally important: information that is accurate but outdated may still lead to poor coordination.

4 Warehousing and information systems

4.1 Warehouse management

A warehouse is an active part of the supply chain rather than simply a place to store goods. Typical activities include receiving, inspection, unloading, staging, palletization, storage, picking and dispatch. A clear layout helps employees identify movement paths, storage locations and work zones. Designated aisles and location identifiers can support safer movement and reduce the risk of misplaced cargo.

Material-handling equipment is selected according to cargo weight, dimensions, required lifting height, aisle width and frequency of movement. The internship report refers to equipment categories such as hand pallet trucks, reach trucks, counterbalanced forklifts and dock levelers. Such equipment can reduce manual handling and support the movement and positioning of loads, but safe use depends on training, load limits and established procedures.

4.2 Role of Microsoft Excel

Microsoft Excel is useful for organizing operational information in rows and columns, preparing reports and checking totals. During the internship, spreadsheets were used in connection with Kata Chithi preparation and the organization of shipment information. Formula-based calculations can support the checking of weights and package counts, while consistent templates make records easier to review.

Excel does not remove the need for human verification. Incorrect source information, inconsistent formats or an unsuitable formula can still produce misleading results. A disciplined process should therefore combine spreadsheet functions with comparison against source documents and review by an authorized person.

4.3 Coordination between office and warehouse

Office documentation and warehouse execution are interdependent. Pre-arrival shipment information helps staff prepare for receiving and handling. Physical observations and actual cargo details, in turn, must be reflected accurately in the records. When the two sides are synchronized, teams can plan movement, allocate space and retrieve shipment details more effectively. When they differ, staff may need to investigate missing or inconsistent information.

5 Practical study and internship observations

5.1 Shipment and logistics data entry

One assigned activity was entering shipment and logistics information into the company system. This introduced the importance of structured information capture and continuity of updates. Shipment details recorded in a system can support tracking, internal coordination and later retrieval. The experience emphasized checking information before saving or updating records and completing routine tasks within operational timelines.

5.2 Kata Chithi preparation

A major practical task was preparing Kata Chithi reports, described in the internship report as weighment or tally-related records. The process involved understanding the format, recording relevant cargo and vehicle information, transferring details from paper records into Excel and checking the figures against available source documents such as tally sheets, booking manifests and weighbridge slips.

The work showed why numerical accuracy matters. A weight discrepancy or incorrect container reference can create uncertainty in subsequent documentation. Manual checking and spreadsheet calculations served complementary purposes: the source record provided the initial information, while the spreadsheet helped organize and verify totals. Paper copies were also maintained where required for signatures, stamps or physical reference.

5.3 Database and record maintenance

Database and record maintenance involved updating information, organizing files, cross-checking entries and keeping records retrievable. The learning was not limited to typing data; it included understanding how information should be categorized, how incomplete fields can be identified and why confidentiality must be respected. Organized records can support operational continuity and later verification.

5.4 Warehouse visit

The warehouse visit connected office-based information work with physical cargo handling. Observations covered the general working environment, movement of goods, storage organization and the purpose of different machines and equipment. The report notes receiving, unloading, staging, palletization and rack allocation as activities that form part of the warehouse workflow. It also highlights the importance of clear aisles, location identification and safe material movement.

6 Analysis and key findings

6.1 Accuracy is foundational to logistics

The most important finding is that the quality of logistics execution depends on the accuracy of the information used to plan and record cargo movement. Incorrect weights, container numbers or shipment details can create inconsistencies between records and physical cargo. Early checking is therefore preferable to correcting an error after it has moved through several stages.

6.2 Documentation supports coordination and traceability

Kata Chithi reports and other shipping documents create a common reference for the people involved in handling a shipment. They help teams verify cargo information, review handovers and retrieve details when questions arise. Documentation is therefore both an administrative task and an operational control.

6.3 Digital and paper records have complementary uses

The internship exposed both paper-based and digital record practices. Excel and company systems support structured entry, calculation and retrieval. Physical documents may still be used for field tallies, signatures, stamps and reference. The key requirement is not simply choosing one format; it is maintaining consistency between the formats.

6.4 Warehouse layout and equipment affect handling

Warehouse observation demonstrated that storage arrangement and equipment selection influence how goods are moved and positioned. Equipment must match the nature of the load and the facility. Safe movement also depends on clear routes, awareness of load limits and suitable operating procedures.

6.5 Information and physical movement must remain aligned

A digital record is useful only when it reflects the actual status of the cargo. Similarly, warehouse staff need reliable information to receive, stage, store and dispatch goods. The study therefore identifies synchronization between information flow and physical activity as a central condition for dependable logistics operations.

6.6 Professional skills developed

The activities supported development of spreadsheet use, data entry, documentation, attention to detail, record organization, warehouse awareness, communication, time management and professional discipline. The weekly progress reports also show a gradual learning sequence: initial orientation, report preparation, system entry, warehouse observation, record auditing and consolidation of operational learning.

7 Recommendations

The following suggestions are based on practical observations and are intended as general opportunities for process support. They do not imply that the organization currently lacks these controls.

7.1 Standardize digital documentation

Use consistent templates for recurring reports, define mandatory fields and apply clear file-naming conventions. Where appropriate, spreadsheet validation and formula checks can help flag incomplete or unusual entries before submission.

7.2 Strengthen verification

A short checklist or maker-checker process may be considered for important shipment records. Critical fields such as container references, weights, dates and shipment identifiers should be compared with the relevant source documents. Responsibility for updating records should be clear.

7.3 Improve record organization

Physical and digital files can be indexed using consistent booking references and date ranges. Periodic checks between system records and physical archives can support retrieval and audit readiness. Access to confidential information should remain limited to authorized personnel.

7.4 Support warehouse procedures and safety awareness

Clear labels, location identifiers, visible aisle markings and accessible standard operating procedures can help employees understand warehouse routines. Equipment orientation should explain the purpose of major equipment, safe operating requirements and the need for authorized, supervised use.

7.5 Structure intern induction

A concise induction checklist covering company workflow, document formats, system access, confidentiality, reporting responsibilities and warehouse safety can help interns understand expectations. A designated reporting person and periodic feedback can support learning and reduce avoidable confusion.

8 Conclusion

The internship at Inline Shipping Logistics (India) LLP provided practical exposure to selected logistics and supply chain management activities. Preparing Kata Chithi reports, entering shipment information, maintaining records and observing warehouse operations demonstrated how administrative accuracy supports the physical movement of goods. The study concludes that documentation, data integrity, timely communication, warehouse organization and safe equipment use are interconnected elements of logistics performance.

The experience helped translate academic concepts into workplace understanding and strengthened practical skills in Excel, documentation, data handling, communication and time management. Although the study is limited by its duration and observational scope, it offers a grounded view of the role played by routine information-management activities in shipping and freight operations.

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