

DELIVERING UNDER PRESSURE: HR and SCM Issues in Flipkart's Fast-Growing Operations

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Abstract- Flipkart's rapid expansion in India's competitive e-commerce sector has intensified pressures on both its human resource (HR) and supply chain management (SCM) functions. This paper examines the organizational challenges that arise as the company scales its logistics network, fulfillment centers, and last-mile delivery operations. Key HR issues—including high employee turnover, workload stress, skill gaps, and the need for continuous training—are analyzed alongside SCM pressures such as capacity constraints, demand variability, and the push for faster, more reliable deliveries. Through an integrated perspective, the study highlights how HR and SCM interdependencies shape operational efficiency, workforce stability, and service quality. Findings emphasize the importance of coordinated workforce planning, technology-enabled process optimization, and sustainable employee management practices to support Flipkart's growth trajectory. The paper provides insights relevant to e-commerce firms navigating similar challenges in rapidly evolving markets.

Keywords: Flipkart; e-commerce operations; human resource challenges; supply chain management; workforce management; logistics optimization; last-mile delivery; operational efficiency; employee performance pressure; rapid organizational growth; talent retention; labor productivity; distribution network; fulfillment centers; HR-SCM integration.

I. INTRODUCTION

Flipkart, founded in 2007 in Bengaluru, is one of India's largest e-commerce companies. It delivers millions of orders every month across more than 20,000 PIN codes. Despite being a market leader, Flipkart faces significant challenges in human resources, logistics, and supply chain due to India's large geography, structural gaps, and fluctuating Consumer behavior.

II. HR ISSUES AT FLIPKART

1. High Attrition in Warehouses & Delivery Workforce:

- India's gig economy has high employee turnover.
- Delivery Partners frequently shift to Swiggy, Zomato, and Amazon due to incentives.
- Warehouse workers leave after festive season due to physical workload.

2. Pressure During Big Billion Days:

- Flipkart's annual Big Billion Days sale causes a 5-7x spike in orders.

- HR faces challenges in hiring, onboarding, and training thousands of temporary workers within days.

3. Skill Gap:

- India lacks advanced supply chain talent.
- Flipkart struggles to hire skilled professionals trained in AI, automation, and data analytics.

4. Employee Safety Issues:

- Delivery boys face heatwaves, road accidents, dog bites, and unsafe neighbourhoods.
- Warehouse workers face injuries due to heavy lifting and long shifts.

5. Wage and Incentive Disputes:

- Gig Workers often strike regarding
 - i. Reduced payment per delivery
 - ii. Delayed incentives
 - iii. Unfair penalties
- These disputes create instability in operation

III. LOGISTICS ISSUES

Last-Mile Delivery Challenges in India:

Source: <https://www.downtoearth.org.in/air/how-india-moves-our-analysis-of-40-cities-reveals-a-brutally-simple-answer-it-does-not>

- Congested roads in metros like Delhi, Mumbai

- Narrow lanes unstructured addresses in tier-2/3 towns.
- Rural areas face limited courier connectivity.

2. High Dependence on Cash-on-Delivery (COD):

- India still has a large COD culture.
- Risk
 - i. Fake Orders
 - ii. Refund Delays
 - iii. Increased Delivery attempts

3. Reverse Logistics:

- India has one of the highest return rates (especially fashion).
- Handling returns increases cost and slows down the network.

4. Damage & Pilferage:

- Long-distance transportation on Indian roads leads to product damage.
- Incidents of theft during inter-state transit.

5. High Logistics Cost:

- Rising fuel prices in India directly increase delivery cost.
- Need to maintain dark stores, fulfillment centres, micro-hubs.

IV. SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT ISSUES

1. Inventory Distribution Across India

- Flipkart must stock inventory in multiple fulfillment centres.
- Uneven demand in North, South, and East causes either stockouts or dead stock.

2. Forecasting Challenges:

- India's festivals (Diwali, Navratri, Pongal, and Eid) cause sudden order spikes.
- Consumer behavior varies drastically across regions.

3. Vendor & Seller Issues

- Many Indian sellers:
 - i. Delay dispatch
 - ii. Provide poor packaging
 - iii. Send incorrect products
- b. This affects Flipkart's customer rating.

4. Infrastructure Limitations

- Roads, cold-storage chains, and inter-state transport rules vary by state.
- These Cause delays and high transit time.

5. Technological Integration Challenges

- India has lakhs of small sellers with low digital maturity.
- Syncing inventory and order status becomes difficult.

V. CONCLUSION

Flipkart's HR, logistics, and supply chain issues reflect the broader challenges of the Indian e-commerce industry. While it leads in innovation with Kirana partnerships, advanced warehouses, drones, and automated systems, India's diverse geography, infrastructure gaps, and workforce challenges continue to impact operations

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