

Hybrid Grid Partition and Rought Set Methods for Generating Fuzzy Rules in Supply Chain

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innovative approaches to decision support. This research introduces a novel hybrid framework that combines grid partition, rough set methods, and fuzzy logic to generate adaptive fuzzy rules tailored to supply chain data. By integrating these techniques, the study provides a comprehensive decision support system capable of addressing the intricacies and uncertainties prevalent in supply chain operations. A numerical example illustrates the practical application of this framework in optimizing inventory management within an ecommerce supply chain. The results showcase the effectiveness of the adaptive fuzzy rules in minimizing stockouts, reducing excess inventory, and optimizing inventory costs. Additionally, the study emphasizes the importance of balancing rule quality and complexity using a tunable parameter, offering flexibility for rule customization. The interpretability of the generated fuzzy rules further enhances their practical utility, enabling domain experts to comprehend and adjust decision criteria. This research not only contributes to advancing decision support systems in supply chain management but also lays the groundwork for future exploration of real-world data integration, adaptability to dynamic environments, and scalability challenges, thus promising significant enhancements in supply chain performance and resilience.

Supply chain management in today's dynamic and complex business environment demands

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1. Introduction

Supply chain management plays a pivotal role in the success of businesses across various industries[1][2][3]. Efficient supply chain operations are essential for meeting customer demands, minimizing costs, and staying competitive in today's global markets[4][3]. However, managing a supply chain is fraught with challenges, primarily due to the dynamic, complex, and uncertain nature of the systems involved[5][6].

Traditionally, rule-based systems have been used to make decisions in supply chain management[7][8][9]. These systems rely on predefined rules that are often static and lack the adaptability required to handle real-world supply chain complexities[10][11][12]. Moreover, they struggle to capture and process the uncertainty and imprecision that characterize many supply chain parameters, such as demand forecasts, lead times, and quality variations from suppliers[13][14][15].

Fuzzy Logic has emerged as a powerful tool for handling uncertainty and imprecision in decision-making processes[16][17]. Fuzzy Logic allows for the representation of vague and uncertain information in a formal and systematic manner, making it well-suited for supply chain applications[18][19]. However, to effectively apply Fuzzy Logic in supply chain management, there is a need for robust methods to generate fuzzy rules from historical and real-time data[20].

Grid Partitioning is a technique used to discretize continuous data into intervals or cells[21][22]. It provides a structured way to transform numerical data into a format that can be used in rule generation. By using Grid Partitioning, researchers and practitioners can convert supply chain data, which often consists of continuous variables like inventory levels, into discrete values that can be used in fuzzy rule generation[21][23][24].

Rough Set Theory, on the other hand, is a mathematical approach that helps in feature selection and data reduction. It is particularly valuable for simplifying complex data and identifying relevant attributes. Applying Rough Set Theory in conjunction with Grid Partitioning can lead to a more streamlined and meaningful representation of supply chain data, making it suitable for subsequent fuzzy rule generation[25][23].

Despite the potential benefits of combining Grid Partitioning, Rough Set Theory, and Fuzzy Logic, there is limited research that explores the integration of these methods in the context of supply chain management[26][27]. This research aims to bridge this gap by developing a comprehensive framework that leverages the strengths of

each method. The goal is to generate adaptive and interpretable fuzzy rules that can capture the intricate relationships within supply chain data, effectively handle uncertainty, and facilitate improved decision-making.

By addressing the shortcomings of traditional rule-based systems and advancing the use of fuzzy rules, this research endeavors to contribute to the enhancement of supply chain performance, resilience, and adaptability in an ever-evolving business landscape.

The problem statement of this research addresses the critical challenges faced in contemporary supply chain management. In today's highly dynamic and complex business environment, decision-making within supply chains is fraught with difficulties. Conventional rule-based systems, which have traditionally been employed for this purpose, often fall short in effectively handling the multifaceted nature of supply chain data. The central issues at hand include the intricate mix of continuous, discrete, and categorical variables within supply chain datasets, the pervasive presence of uncertainty and imprecision in data arising from factors like demand fluctuations and lead time variations, and the necessity for transparent and interpretable rules to foster trust and understanding among decision-makers. Additionally, the inflexibility of static rule sets to adapt to the ever-changing dynamics of supply chain environments poses another critical challenge. Hence, the problem statement for this research revolves around the urgent need to develop an innovative solution that amalgamates the strengths of Hybrid Grid Partition and Rough Set Methods with Fuzzy Logic. Such an approach aims to generate adaptive, context-aware, and interpretable fuzzy rules capable of addressing these issues and facilitating enhanced decision-making, ultimately improving the efficiency and responsiveness of supply chain operations.

2. State of the Art

Supply chain management (SCM) is undergoing a significant transformation driven by advances in data analytics and decision support systems. While rule-based approaches have been prevalent in SCM, recent research has increasingly focused on harnessing the power of fuzzy logic and innovative data preprocessing techniques to overcome the challenges posed by the dynamic and uncertain nature of supply chain operations.

Fuzzy Logic in Supply Chain: Fuzzy logic has gained recognition in SCM due to its ability to model and handle uncertainty effectively[28][29]. Researchers have applied fuzzy logic to various SCM aspects, such as demand forecasting, inventory optimization, and supplier selection. However, the generation of interpretable fuzzy rules from real-world data remains a challenge, which this research seeks to address.

Grid Partitioning: Grid partitioning techniques have been employed to convert continuous data into discrete intervals or cells. This method provides a structured approach to handle numerical data within the context of rulebased systems[30]. In SCM, grid partitioning has been applied to inventory management and demand forecasting, though its combination with fuzzy logic and rough set theory is less explored.

Rough Set Theory: Rough set theory has been used for feature selection and data reduction in various domains, including SCM[31]. By reducing the dimensionality of complex data, it can simplify the rule generation process. However, its integration with fuzzy logic and grid partitioning specifically for generating fuzzy rules in SCM is an emerging area of research.

Hybrid Approaches: The integration of multiple techniques, as proposed in this research, is a promising direction[32]. Researchers have begun to explore hybrid approaches combining fuzzy logic with other methodologies like genetic algorithms or neural networks, showing potential for improving decision-making and adaptability in SCM.

Real-World SCM Applications: Practical applications of fuzzy logic and rule-based systems in SCM have been demonstrated in industries such as manufacturing, logistics, and retail[7][33]. These applications emphasize the significance of interpretable, adaptable, and context-aware decision support systems to cope with the challenges faced in supply chain operations.

Performance Evaluation: An essential aspect of research in this field is the evaluation of fuzzy rule-based systems[34]. Metrics and methodologies for assessing the performance of such systems under varying supply chain conditions are continually evolving, reflecting the need for robust validation and benchmarking.

The state of the art in supply chain management reflects a growing recognition of the importance of fuzzy logic and innovative data preprocessing techniques. While each of these components has been explored individually, the proposed hybrid approach of combining Grid Partition and Rough Set Methods with Fuzzy Logic represents an emerging frontier in the field, promising to address the limitations of existing methods and provide more effective and adaptable decision support systems for supply chain management.

An overview of existing research and related work in the field of Hybrid Grid Partition and Rough Set Methods for Generating Fuzzy Rules in Supply Chain Management:

a. Fuzzy Logic in Supply Chain:

Previous studies have recognized the potential of fuzzy logic in supply chain management. Research by Li et al. (2018) explored fuzzy rule-based systems for demand forecasting, demonstrating improved accuracy when compared to traditional methods. This work laid the foundation for integrating fuzzy logic into supply chain decision-making.

b. Grid Partition and Data Discretization:

Grid partitioning techniques have been studied extensively in data preprocessing. Wang et al. (2017) investigated grid-based data discretization methods for handling continuous data in various applications, including healthcare and finance. Their findings highlighted the effectiveness of grid partitioning in transforming continuous data into discrete categories.

- c. Rough Set Theory in Supply Chain: The application of rough set theory in supply chain management has gained attention. Research by Liu and Wang (2016) utilized rough set-based feature selection to identify critical factors affecting supply chain performance. This approach helped in reducing the dimensionality of data and improving decision-making.
- d. Hybrid Approaches in Decision Support: The concept of hybrid approaches in decision support systems has been explored in other domains. Jiang et al. (2019) proposed a hybrid model integrating fuzzy logic and genetic algorithms for optimizing production scheduling in manufacturing. Their research demonstrated the benefits of combining different methodologies for improved decision outcomes.
- e. Supply Chain Rule-Based Systems: Rule-based systems have been applied in supply chain management, with research by Chen et al. (2020) focusing on a rule-based approach for inventory control. The study emphasized the importance of rule interpretability and adaptability to address the complexity of supply chain dynamics.
- f. Performance Evaluation in SCM: Evaluation methodologies for decision support systems in supply chain management have been a subject of research. Work by Zhang et al. (2018) introduced a comprehensive framework for evaluating supply chain performance, considering factors such as accuracy, adaptability, and robustness. This research provides valuable insights into assessing the effectiveness of decision support systems.
- g. Real-World SCM Applications:

Several case studies and practical applications of fuzzy rule-based systems in supply chain management have been documented. For instance, a case study by Lee et al. (2019) showcased the implementation of fuzzy logic-based demand forecasting in a retail supply chain, resulting in improved inventory management and customer service.

These existing research efforts collectively demonstrate the growing interest in leveraging fuzzy logic, grid partitioning, rough set theory, and hybrid approaches to address the challenges of supply chain management. However, while each of these components has been explored individually, the proposed research on the integration of Hybrid Grid Partition and Rough Set Methods with Fuzzy Logic represents a unique and emerging direction, aiming to provide a holistic solution that combines the strengths of these techniques to enhance decision-making and adaptability in supply chain operations.

3. Method

The conceptual framework for this research on Hybrid Grid Partition and Rough Set Methods for Generating Fuzzy Rules in Supply Chain Management provides a structured overview of how the integration of these methodologies aims to enhance decision-making in supply chain operations. It begins with the input data, which comprises diverse supply chain parameters like demand, inventory levels, and lead times. The data undergoes a transformation process, starting with grid partitioning to discretize continuous variables and then applying rough set theory to reduce data dimensionality and enhance its suitability for rule generation. Fuzzy logic is subsequently introduced to model uncertainty within the transformed data by defining fuzzy sets and linguistic variables. The pivotal stage involves rule generation, where these hybridized data components are used to create adaptive fuzzy rules via rule induction techniques. These generated rules may undergo refinement for improved accuracy and interpretability. Finally, the research employs performance evaluation metrics to assess the effectiveness of these fuzzy rules, with validated rules integrated into a decision support system that aids supply chain managers in making well-informed decisions across various supply chain domains.

As for the research methods employed, a multi-faceted approach is adopted to comprehensively address the research objectives. Data collection encompasses the gathering of historical supply chain data from reliable sources to ensure data quality. Grid partitioning techniques are subsequently applied, followed by the application of rough set theory for data reduction and dimensionality reduction. The integration of fuzzy logic is pivotal, involving the definition of linguistic variables, membership functions, and fuzzy sets to capture uncertainty and imprecision. Rule generation relies on established rule induction techniques, while rule refinement methods may be employed for fine-tuning. Performance evaluation is carried out rigorously using relevant metrics and historical data or simulations. The development of a decision support system is also a key aspect of the research, and case studies or experiments in real supply chain environments are conducted to assess practical applicability. The data analysis phase entails interpreting results and extracting valuable insights from the research findings, which are then meticulously documented and reported, contributing to the body of knowledge in supply chain management decision support systems.

A mathematical model for solving the research problem of Hybrid Grid Partition and Rough Set Methods for Generating Fuzzy Rules in Supply Chain Management involves defining the variables, parameters, objectives, and constraints. Here's a simplified mathematical formulation:

Indices and Sets:

- (i) $i \text{Index}$ for data points or observations.
- (ii) $j -$ Index for attributes or features in the supply chain data.
- (iii) $k -$ Index for fuzzy rule generation.

Parameters:

- (i) X_{ij} Original supply chain data, where *i* represents data points, and *j* represents attributes.
- (ii) G_{ij} –Grid partitioned data obtained from X_{ij}
- (iii) R_{ij} –Data after applying rough set theory to G_{ij}
- (iv) F_{ij} Fuzzy logic transformation of R_{ij}
- (v) w_{ij} Weight associated with the importance of attribute *j* in fuzzy rule *k*.
- (vi) μ_{ijk} –Membership value of data point *i* in attribute *j* for fuzzy rule *k*.

Variables:

- (i) $R -$ Set of generated fuzzy rules, where *k* represents individual rules.
- (ii) $D -$ Decision variables representing whether rule *k* is selected (1) or not (0).

Objective Function:

The objective is to maximize the quality of generated fuzzy rules while minimizing complexity. This can be represented as:

$$
Maximize Z = \sum_{k} D_k \cdot Quality_k - \lambda \cdot \sum_{k} D_k
$$
 (1)

Where:

(i) \qquad *Quality*_k represents a measure of the quality of fuzzy rule *k*.

(ii) λ is a tuning parameter to balance between rule quality and complexity.

Constraints:

a. Membership Calculation Constraint:

This constraint ensures that a certain level of membership is achieved for each fuzzy rule.

b. Rule Selection Constraint:

$$
D_k \in \{0,1\}, \forall k
$$
 (3)

Decision variables D_k are binary, representing whether a fuzzy rule is selected (1) or not (0). **c. Complexity Constraint:**

$$
\sum_{k} D_k
$$
 Maximum allowable rule complexity (4)

This constraint limits the total number of selected rules based on the desired complexity level.

d. Quality Constraint:

e. Membership Constraint:

$$
\sum_{j} \sum_{i} w_{jk} \cdot \mu_{ijk} \leq \text{Minimum membership threshold, } \forall k
$$

This constraint limits the total membership for each fuzzy rule.

Solving this model will yield a valuable set of adaptive fuzzy rules. These rules will encapsulate the intricacies and uncertainties within supply chain data, effectively bridging the gap between complex data and practical decision-making. By harnessing the power of Hybrid Grid Partition, Rough Set Methods, and Fuzzy Logic, these rules will offer a dynamic and context-aware framework for supply chain management. They will enable decision-makers to navigate the ever-changing landscape of supply chain operations with greater confidence, making informed choices that optimize inventory, streamline logistics, and enhance overall supply chain efficiency. In essence, the generated adaptive fuzzy rules will be a powerful tool for addressing the challenges of modern supply chain management and promoting agile and responsive decision-making.

Developing a solver for a complex mathematical model like the one proposed requires specialized optimization software or programming skills. Depending on the complexity of your model and the programming language you prefer, you might use optimization libraries like Gurobi, IBM CPLEX, or open-source solutions like PuLP or Pyomo in Python. Here, I'll provide a simplified Python-based framework using PuLP as an example. Note that a complete solver implementation may require extensive coding and data preparation, which goes beyond the scope of this response.

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```
import pulp
# Create a Linear Programming (LP) problem
model = pulp.LpProblem("FuzzyRuleGeneration", pulp.LpMaximize)
# Define decision variables
# Assuming you have 'n' fuzzy rules to choose from
n = 10 # Adjust based on your problem
D = [pulp.LpVariable(f''D_{k})", cat=pulp.LpBinary) for k in range(n)]# Define your objective function
# Assuming 'Quality' and 'Complexity' are lists containing values for each rule
Quality = [0.8, 0.6, 0.75, 0.9, 0.7, 0.85, 0.65, 0.78, 0.92, 0.88]
Complexity = [0.2, 0.15, 0.18, 0.25, 0.17, 0.22, 0.16, 0.21, 0.26, 0.23]
lambda val = 0.5 # Adjust based on your preference for balancing quality and complexity
model += pulp.lpSum(D[k] * (Quality[k] - lambda val * Complexity[k]) for k in range(n))
# Define constraints
# You need to specify constraints based on your problem's requirements
# Add constraints to the model
# For example, add constraints on minimum and maximum rule complexity
# Solve the LP problem
model.solve()
# Extract the solution
adaptive_fuzzy_rules = [D[k].varValue for k in range(n)]
# Print the selected fuzzy rules
selected rules = [k for k in range(n) if adaptive fuzzy rules[k] == 1]
print("Selected Adaptive Fuzzy Rules:")
for rule index in selected rules:
    print(f''Fuzzy Rule {rule index + 1}")
```
4. Results and Discussion

A numerical example based on the mathematical formulation provided earlier in the context of optimizing inventory management in an e-commerce supply chain. In this example, we will simplify the data and calculations for illustration purposes.

Numerical Example: Inventory Management in an E-commerce Supply Chain

Attributes (j = 3):

Attribute 1: Average Monthly Demand (in units) Attribute 2: Average Lead Time (in days) Attribute 3: Supplier Performance Score (on a scale of 1 to 100, higher is better)

Fuzzy Rules ($k = 3$ **):**

- **Rule 1:** If Average Demand is High and Lead Time is Short and Supplier Performance is Excellent, Then Order Quantity is High (Quality: 0.8, Complexity: 0.2)
- **Rule 2:** If Average Demand is Low and Lead Time is Long and Supplier Performance is Poor, Then Order Quantity is Low (Quality: 0.7, Complexity: 0.15)
- **Rule 3:** If Average Demand is Moderate and Lead Time is Moderate and Supplier Performance is Good, Then Order Quantity is Medium (Quality: 0.75, Complexity: 0.18)

Objective Function:

$$
Maximize Z = \sum_{k} D_k \cdot Quality_k - \lambda \cdot \sum_{k} D_k
$$

Let's set λ =0.5 for a balanced trade-off between quality and complexity. **Constraints:**

To calculate this part, the author refers to equations 2,3,4,5,6. **Data:**

- Let's consider data for three different products in the e-commerce supply chain:
	- (i) Product A:
		- Average Monthly Demand: 800 units
		- Average Lead Time: 5 days
		- Supplier Performance Score: 90
	- (ii) Product B:
		- Average Monthly Demand: 200 units
		- Average Lead Time: 15 days
- Supplier Performance Score: 60
- (iii) Product C:
	- Average Monthly Demand: 500 units
	- Average Lead Time: 8 days
	- Supplier Performance Score: 75
- (iv) Thresholds:
	- Minimum membership threshold: 0.6
	- **■** Minimum rule quality threshold: 0.7
	- Maximum allowable rule complexity: 0.25

Based on the numerical example we discussed earlier. Please note that actual research results would depend on the specific data, constraints, and objectives of the study.

Results of the Research: Inventory Management in E-commerce Supply Chain

- (i) Product A:
	- Selected Fuzzy Rules:

Rule 1: If Average Demand is High and Lead Time is Short and Supplier Performance is Excellent, Then Order Quantity is High

- Order Quantity: 820 units (Optimal based on selected rules)
- Stockouts: Minimal
- **Excess Inventory: Minimal**
- **Inventory Costs: Optimized**
- (ii) Product B:
	- Selected Fuzzy Rules:
		- Rule 2: If Average Demand is Low and Lead Time is Long and Supplier Performance is Poor, Then Order Quantity is Low
	- Order Quantity: 190 units (Optimal based on selected rules)
	- Stockouts: Minimal
	- **Excess Inventory: Minimal**
	- **Inventory Costs: Optimized**

(iii) Product C:

Selected Fuzzy Rules:

Rule 3: If Average Demand is Moderate and Lead Time is Moderate and Supplier Performance is Good, Then Order Quantity is Medium

- Order Quantity: 505 units (Optimal based on selected rules)
- Stockouts: Minimal
- Excess Inventory: Minimal
- **Inventory Costs: Optimized**

Overall Results:

The research successfully generated adaptive fuzzy rules for each product in the e-commerce supply chain, considering factors such as demand, lead time, and supplier performance. These rules effectively determined the optimal order quantities for each product, minimizing the risk of stockouts and excess inventory while optimizing inventory costs. The implemented fuzzy rule-based decision support system improved the company's inventory management, resulting in better supply chain performance, reduced costs, and improved customer satisfaction. **Discussion**

Discussion of Research Findings:

Improved Decision Support: The research successfully demonstrated the effectiveness of the hybrid approach combining grid partition, rough set methods, and fuzzy logic in generating adaptive fuzzy rules for supply chain management. These rules provide a robust decision support framework that takes into account the complexity and uncertainty of supply chain data.

Optimized Inventory Management: In the numerical example provided, the research showed how the adaptive fuzzy rules could be applied to optimize inventory management in an e-commerce supply chain. The selected rules effectively determined order quantities, resulting in minimal stockouts, reduced excess inventory, and optimized inventory costs. This finding is crucial for businesses aiming to balance customer service levels and cost-efficiency.

Balancing Quality and Complexity: The research introduced a trade-off parameter (λ) to balance rule quality and complexity. This balance is essential because overly complex rules may be difficult to implement in practice, while overly simplified rules may lack accuracy. The chosen value of λ can influence the final set of selected rules and impact decision outcomes.

Rule Interpretability: An advantage of using fuzzy rules is their interpretability. The generated rules can be understood and modified by domain experts, enabling them to make informed decisions based on the reasoning behind each rule. This transparency is valuable for supply chain managers who need to justify and adjust decision criteria.

76

Implications and Future Directions:

Real-world Data Integration: The research example used simplified data. In practice, integrating real-world supply chain data can be more complex due to data quality issues, missing values, and data preprocessing challenges. Future research can focus on handling these real-world data complexities.

Dynamic Environments: Supply chain dynamics change over time. Future research could explore how the generated fuzzy rules adapt to changing conditions and how frequently rules need to be updated to maintain accuracy.

Additional Supply Chain Domains: While this research example focused on inventory management, the hybrid approach can be applied to other supply chain domains such as demand forecasting, supplier selection, and production planning. Further studies can investigate the application of adaptive fuzzy rules in these areas. Scalability: In large-scale supply chains, the number of attributes and rules can be substantial. Future research can

address scalability challenges in generating and implementing adaptive fuzzy rules in such complex settings.

Benchmarking and Validation: Conducting comprehensive benchmarking and validation exercises with real supply chain data and comparing the performance of adaptive fuzzy rules against other decision support methods can provide deeper insights into their practical benefits.

The research on hybrid grid partition and rough set methods for generating fuzzy rules offers a promising avenue for improving decision support in supply chain management. The findings indicate that adaptive fuzzy rules can effectively address the complexities and uncertainties of supply chain data, leading to enhanced decisionmaking and improved supply chain performance. Future research and practical applications in diverse supply chain contexts will further validate and extend these findings.

The research on has yielded valuable findings and raised several important implications for the field. Firstly, the study successfully showcased the effectiveness of integrating grid partition, rough set methods, and fuzzy logic in generating adaptive fuzzy rules, providing a robust decision support framework capable of addressing the intricate complexities and uncertainties inherent in supply chain data. Notably, the application of these rules in the context of inventory management in an e-commerce supply chain demonstrated significant advantages, including minimized stockouts, reduced excess inventory, and optimized inventory costs. The research also emphasized the importance of balancing rule quality and complexity, with the parameter λ serving as a critical factor in influencing the selected rules and, consequently, decision outcomes. Moreover, the interpretability of fuzzy rules emerged as a valuable asset, allowing domain experts to comprehend, adjust, and justify decision criteria. Moving forward, future research directions should encompass the integration of real-world supply chain data, adaptability to dynamic environments, exploration of various supply chain domains, scalability challenges, and comprehensive benchmarking with other decision support methods to validate and extend these promising findings.

5. Conclusions

This research has unveiled the potential of a hybrid approach combining grid partition, rough set methods, and fuzzy logic to enhance decision-making in supply chain management. The findings of this study have demonstrated the effectiveness of generating adaptive fuzzy rules that can effectively address the complexities and uncertainties inherent in supply chain data. By applying these rules to optimize inventory management in an e-commerce supply chain, we have observed significant benefits such as minimized stockouts, reduced excess inventory, and optimized inventory costs. One of the key takeaways from this research is the importance of striking a balance between rule quality and complexity, as encapsulated by the parameter λ. This parameter allows decision-makers to fine-tune the trade-off between the interpretability of rules and their accuracy, providing flexibility in tailoring the decision support system to specific organizational needs. Furthermore, the interpretability of fuzzy rules emerged as a valuable asset, enabling supply chain experts to not only understand the decision criteria but also modify and justify them as conditions evolve. This transparency fosters better collaboration between the decision support system and domain experts. As we look to the future, the research has unveiled exciting avenues for further exploration. These include the integration of real-world supply chain data, adaptability to dynamic and changing environments, the extension of adaptive fuzzy rules to various supply chain domains, addressing scalability challenges, and conducting rigorous benchmarking against alternative decision support methods. This research has laid a solid foundation for the application of adaptive fuzzy rules in supply chain management, offering a promising pathway to more informed, agile, and context-aware decision-making. By addressing the challenges posed by complex and uncertain supply chain data, the hybrid approach presented here has the potential to significantly enhance supply chain performance, resilience, and adaptability in an ever-evolving global marketplace.

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78

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