



A systematic review of multi-objective optimization applications in reverse logistics

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Abstract – Reverse logistics (RL) have received the attention of the practitioners and researchers of the fields of supply chain and logistics due to, inter alia, the increase in public awareness, boundless waste generation, and environmental issues. To formulate RL issues, multi-objective decision-making (MODM) techniques are of the most practical approaches. MODM methods refer to an optimization problem with multiple objectives that usually conflict with each other and must be satisfied simultaneously. However, no literature review had yet undertaken a comprehensive systematic review of the utilization of MODM methods in RL. Therefore, 205 relevant papers published in scientific journals are considered and investigated from descriptive and technical content dimensions in this paper. The results clearly illustrate the quantitative increase in the number of papers published in this field over the last 20 years. This increase depicts that the researchers' focus on this field has been increasing in the last decade. Content analysis on the main focus areas, case study sector, solution methodology, uncertainty modeling, period(s), product(s), and numerous objectives that these 205 papers considered in their study helped to visualize the current state of this field and reveal research gaps and introduce future directions. Finally, some potential topics are provided based on the results that cover all reverse logistics activities and also content analysis categories.

Keywords: Literature review; Multi-objective decision-making (MODM); Reverse logistics (RL); Optimization

1. Introduction

Based on Chopra et al. (2013), a traditional supply chain (forward flow: from supplier to customer) refers to a set of actors to satisfy a customer request. These actors include suppliers, manufacturers, transporters, warehouses, and retailers. Due to, inter alia, the increase in public awareness, corporate societal responsibility, boundless waste generation, environmental issues, legislative shifts towards the environment, and sustainable competitiveness, reverse logistics (RL) have received the attention of the practitioners and researchers of the supply chain field (Agrawal et al. 2015, Govindan et al. 2015, Prajapati et al. 2019). This form of logistics is the reverse of the traditional form of supply chain movement of goods from suppliers to customers. Thus, instead the goods are moving from the original consumer to the supplier. In a comprehensive and well-known definition, the American Executive Council of Reverse Logistics defines RL as “the process of planning, implementing, and controlling the efficient, cost-effective flow of raw materials, in-process inventory, finished goods, and related information from the point of consumption to the point of origin for the purpose of recapturing value or proper disposal” (Rogers and Tibben-Lembke 2001).

There is a difference between RL, waste management, and green logistics. Waste management aims to collect, and process waste that cannot be utilized; however, when looking at RL we can turn this waste into new products, by utilizing several techniques, and create value in RL. Green logistics is concerned with environmental obstacles in

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logistics, especially in the forward flow of supply chains such as international environmental standards, material, and energy usage (Farahani and Rezapour 2011).

A basic flow diagram of forward and reverse logistics activities is illustrated in Figure 1.

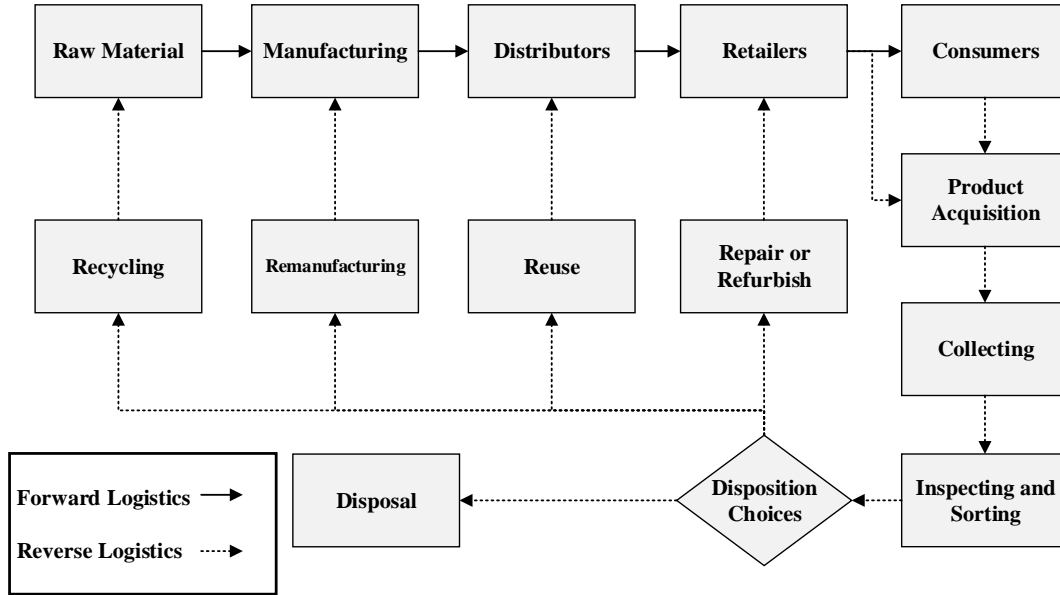


Figure 1. Basic flow diagram of forward and reverse logistics activities.

Figure 1 shows that RL has four main operations ‘product acquisition’, ‘collecting’, ‘inspecting and sorting’, and ‘disposition choices.’ In product acquisition, used products are taken from the consumers to be processed. In collecting, the firm obtains the products’ possession for further processing. In inspecting and sorting, the general state of the collected products is evaluated prior to deciding on what further actions to take (Agrawal et al. 2015). After inspecting and sorting, the firm should make a disposition choice among six alternatives: repair (product recovery and correction of defects) or refurbish (fix any flaws the product has; rehabilitating it), reuse (selling a used product with a sufficient quality level), remanufacturing (disassemble, remanufacture, and reassemble the product to modify its quality or specifications), recycling (transform the product to the basic materials such as paper and metal to use with other processed materials forming the new products), and disposal (concluding none of the other processes would work (sufficiently) and thus deciding to part ways with the product) (Jayaraman 2006).

This supply chain brings about problems for firms, especially in the areas of design, planning, and control (Rachih et al. 2019). These problems have gotten many parties involved, such as suppliers, buyers, customers, and recycling specialists. These also have multiple objectives, decision variables, and constraints. One of the most practical approaches to formulating these complex problems is multi-objective decision-making (MODM). Multi-objective decision-making refers to an optimization problem with multiple objectives that usually conflict with each other and must be satisfied simultaneously. This model includes decision variables, objective functions, and constraints. Decision-makers aim to calculate optimal values of decision variables to maximize or minimize the objective functions (depending on the objectives type) under the constraints condition. Generally, MODM problems can be formulated as standard forms as follows:

$$\text{Max } f_m(x), \quad m = 1, 2, 3, \dots, M,$$

$$\text{Subject to: } x \in X = \{x \in R^n | g(x) \leq b, x^L \leq x \leq x^U\}.$$

where $f_m(x)$ denotes M conflicting objective functions (it can be a maximization or minimization or a combination of them), $g(x) \leq b$ shows k constraints (it can be equality or non-equality constraints or both), and x is the n -vector of decision variables. x^L and x^U are lower and upper bounds of decision variable x and considering the type of mathematical problem, it can be categorized as an integer variable. Unlike single-objective optimization,

this problem might not have a unique global optimal solution (because of the existence of conflicting objectives), and decision-makers must select a solution from the set of efficient solutions called Pareto optimal solutions. Pareto optimal solutions refer to a set of trade-offs between different non-dominated solutions of objectives and means that there is no other solution that would improve an objective without causing a worsening in another one (Deb 2001, Lu and Ruan 2007).

The methods for solving multi objective problems are MODM methods such as goal programming (Charnes and Cooper 1957), weighted sum (Zadeh 1963), ε -constraint (Haimes 1971), and Augmented ε -constraint (Mavrotas 2009). So, if a firm aims to make a decision about a reverse logistics problem characterized by multiple objectives, multiple variables, and multiple constraints, it should evaluate the objectives using a multi-objective decision-making method based on one or more decision-makers (experts) opinions to optimize the objectives of the supply chain.

Some researchers have conducted literature review (LR) in the RL field, such as Govindan et al. (2015), Kazemi et al. (2019), Prajapati et al. (2019), Agrawal et al. (2015), and Pokharel and Mutha (2009).

Besides, a literature review of multi-criteria decision-making (MCDM) applications in reverse logistics is conducted by Rezaei (2015) using multi-attribute decision-making (MADM) methods where a number of alternatives are evaluated with respect to a set of decision attributes to select the best alternative(s). Rachih et al. (2019) conducted a comprehensive literature review on applications of meta-heuristics methods for reverse logistics, and Abid et al. (2019) reviewed the related literature to simulation techniques applied in RL. However, no literature review has yet undertaken a comprehensive systematic review of the use of MODM methods in RL. The current paper aims to fill this critical gap and suggest future research directions for researchers. This contribution is made by addressing these main research questions:

RQ1. What are the main contents and areas of the published research on reverse logistics by using MODM methods, and how does MODM contribute to RL optimization?

RQ2. What are the opportunities for future research in this field?

The remainder of the paper is organized as follows. In section 2, the literature review methodology used in this paper is described, which is followed by a detailed analysis of the literature. Finally, the conclusion and future research suggestions are provided in Section 3.

2. Research methodology

In this study we use a systematic literature review approach based on Mayring (2010) to answer the main research questions and classify the body of the literature and analyze the literature in a structured way. This approach has been used by several literature review studies in the RL field (Kazemi et al. 2019, Rachih et al. 2019) and has four stages: material collection, descriptive analysis, content analysis, and material evaluation.

2.1 Material collection

This stage is about collecting papers related to the application of MODM methods in the RL field. For this procedure we utilize a review protocol to ensure the relevance of the papers discussed. In this protocol, we consider the pair combination of these keywords in the search in the Scopus electronic database. We include papers that contain at least one pair of these keywords in their title AND/OR abstract AND/OR keywords: (redistribute* OR refurbish* OR "end-of-life_product*" OR "product*_recovery" OR "product*_repair" OR "product*_reuse" OR "product*_returns" OR "reverse_logistics" OR "product*_recycling" OR remanufacture*) AND ("MODM" OR "multi*-objective_optimization*" OR "multi*-criteria_optimization*" OR "multi*-objective_decision-making" OR "multi*-objective" OR "bi*-objective").

The searches were conducted on 23 May 2021. Inclusion criteria consist of scientific journal research articles published in the English language between January 2001 and May 2021 that employed MODM in RL. We removed literature reviews and conference papers, thesis/dissertations, books, and book chapters from the list of reviewable articles.

Then the irrelevant papers were excluded by reading the abstract and skimming the paper to ensure the adaptation of an MODM method in the RL field is the situation and then exclude duplicated papers from the study. Finally, we focus on the remaining papers and investigate them to answer the main research questions. All the mentioned stages with the number of the included papers in each of them are illustrated in Figure 2.

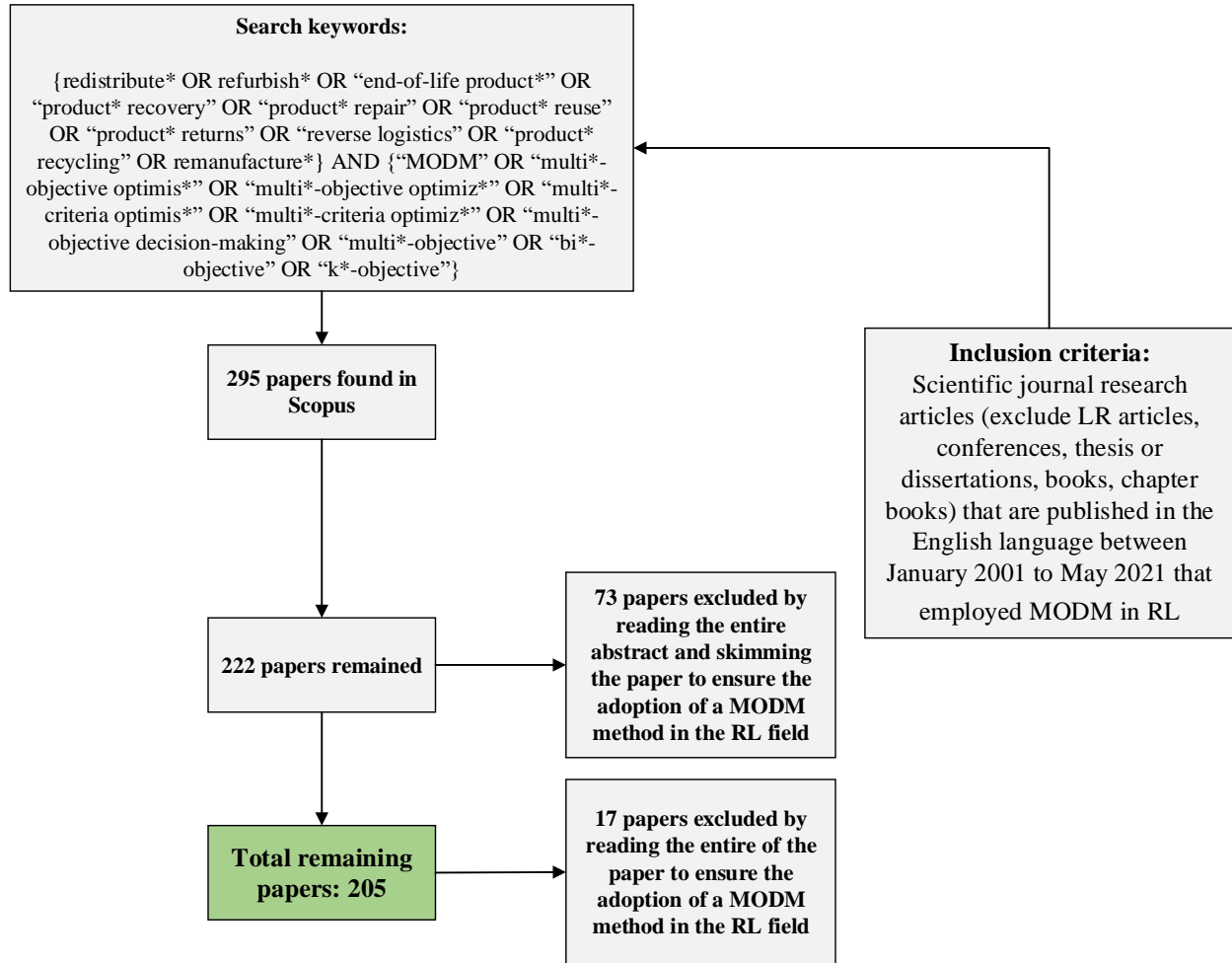


Figure 2. Stages of the material collection.

2.2 Descriptive analysis

In this step, 205 scientific papers were evaluated in detail by dimensions such as the total number of published papers per year and research fields of the journals, Figure 3 shows the distribution trend and increase in the number of papers published in this field over the last 20 years. This growth shows that the researchers' focus on this field has increased over the last few years due to some important issues such as public awareness, waste generation, and environmental issues.

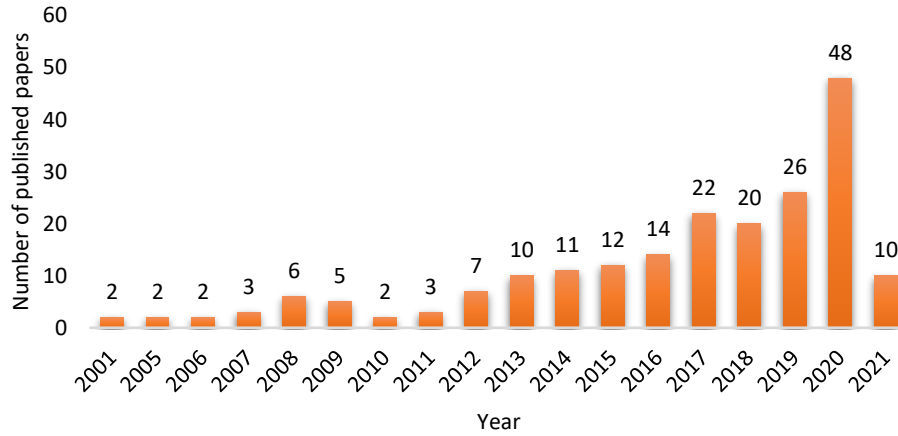


Figure 3. The number of published papers during the last 20 years.

Also, Figure 4 shows the distribution of publications based on different journals. As can be seen, the *Journal of Cleaner Production*, *International Journal of Production Research*, *International Journal of Advanced Manufacturing Technology*, *Annals of Operations Research*, *Applied Soft Computing Journal*, *International Journal of Production Economics*, and *Sustainability* are the top contributors in this field.

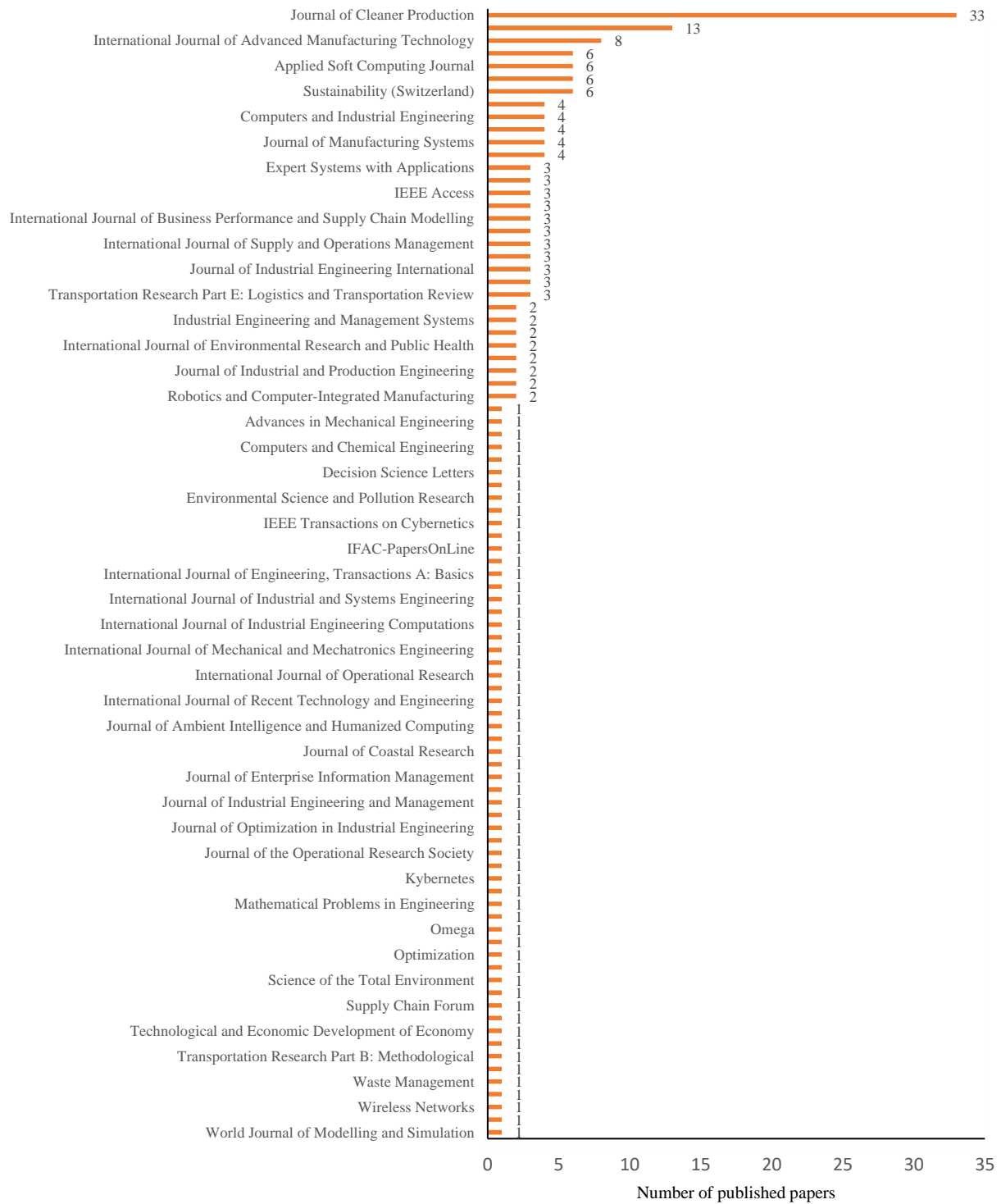


Figure 4. The publications per journal distribution.

Furthermore, in Figure 5, the keywords used in the considered papers and their co-occurrence (the frequency that a keyword appeared with other keywords) is illustrated by using VOSviewer. In this way, keywords cluster by investigating their co-occurrence by the full counting method and with the five minimum number of occurrences of a keyword condition. Consequently, 26 keywords satisfied this condition, a significant reduction from 593. This

figure shows that “reverse logistic,” “multi-objective optimization,” “closed-loop supply chain,” “sustainability,” “remufacturing,” and “product recovery” were the most frequently used keywords by the authors. These keywords are clustered so that different clusters are illustrated with different colors. Multi-objective optimization (in a green color cluster) has been chiefly used with the keywords of genetic algorithm, remanufacturing, supply chain management, sustainable development, sustainable supply chain, NSGAI, and reverse logistics. In contrast, product recovery (in a blue cluster) has been chiefly used with the keywords of disassembly line balancing, disassembly, and metaheuristics.

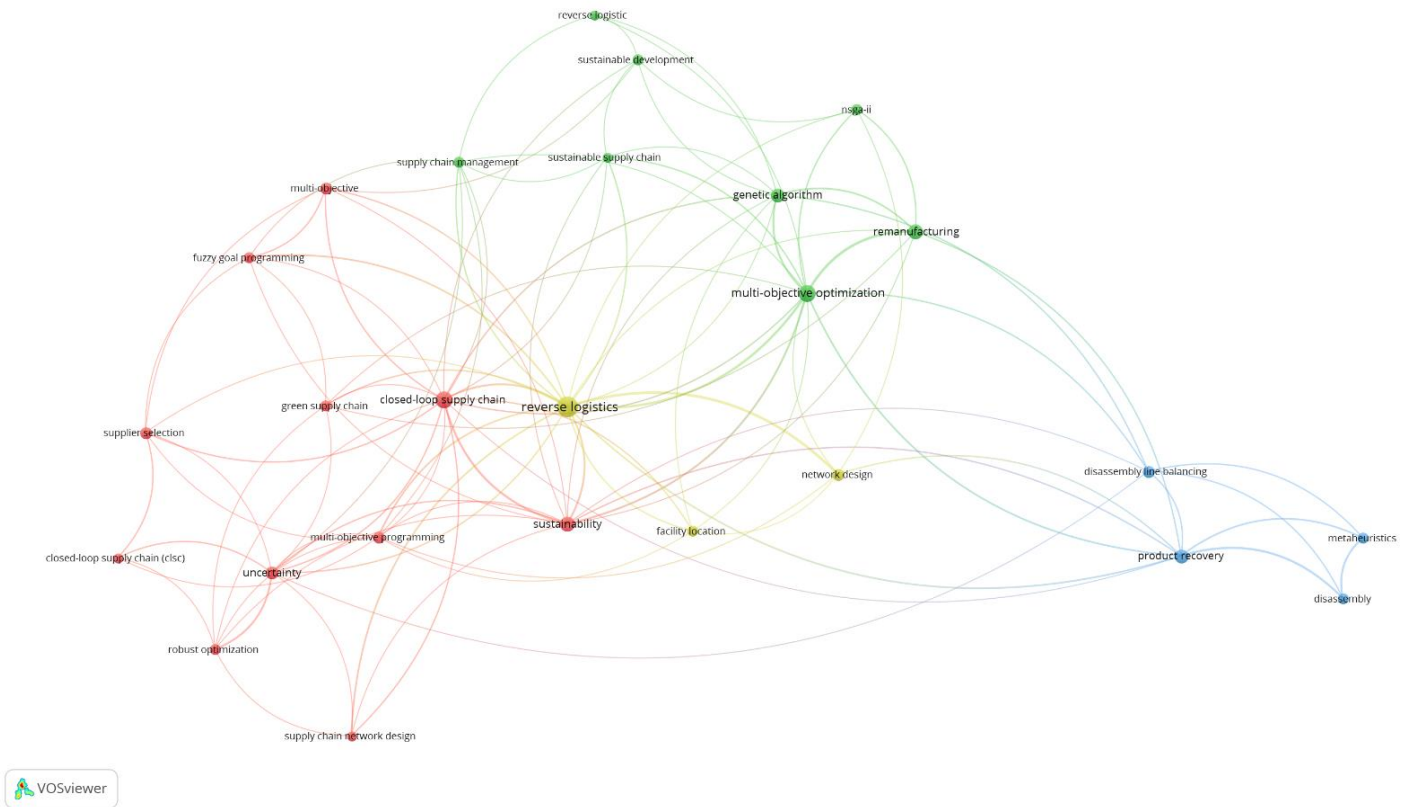


Figure 5. Co-occurrence of author-keywords used in the papers.

2.3 Content analysis

This section provides detailed information about the main focus area, case study sector, solution methodology, and method type, uncertainty modeling, number of the periods, products and objectives, and kind of objectives that these 205 papers have considered in their study to provide a clear current state of this field and introduce research gaps and future direction. Table 1 shows the extended details of these papers in each content analysis category.

Table 1. Reviewed studies.

Row	Author (year)	Coverage
1	X. Liu, Chu, Dolgui, Zheng, and Liu (2021)	(C-D,RG,E,ST,MPE,MPR,2,C&SAL)
2	L. Zhang, Zhao, Ke, Dong, and Zhong (2021)	(DLB,A,M,C,SPE,SPR,2,T&EI)
3	Fasihi, Tavakkoli-Moghaddam, Najafi, and Hajiaghahi-Keshteli (2021)	(ND,FI,E,C,SPE,SPR,2,C&D)
4	Laili, Li, Wang, Ren, and Wang (2021)	(DLB,R,M,C,SPE,MPR,2,T&FR)
5	Dalle Mura, Pistolesi, Dini, and Lazzerini (2021)	(DLB,E,M,C,SPE,SPR,4,P&LB&F&S)
6	Liang et al. (2021)	(DLB,RG,M,C,SPE,SPR,3,T&WS&EC)
7	Pant, Yadav, and Singh (2021)	(ND,P,E,C,MPE,SPR,2,P&UV)
8	Guo, Zhou, Liu, and Qi (2021)	(DLB,E,M,C,SPE,MPR,2,P&EC)
9	Ren et al. (2021)	(DLB,E,M,C,SPE,MPR,2,P&ES)
10	Sazvar, Zokaee, Tavakkoli-Moghaddam, Salari, and Nayeri (2021)	(ND,H,E&H,ST,MPE,MPR,3,P&EI&SI)
11	He, Chu, Zheng, Liu, and Chu (2020)	(DLB,RG,E,ST,SPE,SPR,2,C&T)
12	J.-L. Shi, Ma, Wang, and Qu (2020)	(EOLM,E,M,C,MPE,SPR,2,C&EC)
13	Meng, Cao, Peng, Prybutok, and Gupta (2020)	(PR,A,M,ST,SPE,SPR,3,P&SI&ES)
14	J. Shi, Chen, Zhou, and Zhang (2020)	(L,HO,M,C,MPE,SPR,3,C&W)
15	Beiki, Seyedhosseini, Ghezavati, and Seyedaliakbar (2020)	(VRP,EA,E&M,C,MPE,MPR,2,C&SAL)
16	Meng, Qian, Lou, and Zhang (2020)	(PR,A,M,C,SPE,MPR,2,C&EC&ES)
17	Djatna and Amien (2020)	(VRP,B,M,C,SPE,MPR,2,C&RLN)
18	Guo, Zhou, Liu, and Qi (2020)	(DLB,E,M,C,SPE,MPR,3,T&EC&REV)
19	Dutta, Mishra, Khandelwal, and Katthawala (2020)	(ND,CL,E,C,SPE,SPR,3,C&EI&SI)
20	Fang, Xu, Liu, and Pham (2020)	(DLB,R,M,C,MPE,MPR,2,C&NOR)
21	Tosarkani, Amin, and Zolfagharinia (2020)	(ND,R,E,R&F&SI,MPE,MPR,2,C&EI)
22	Zarbakshnia, Kannan, Kiani Mavi, and Soleimani (2020)	(ND,RG,M,C,MPE,MPR,3,C&T&SI)
23	Sun and Su (2020)	(ND,RG,M,C,SPE,MPR,3,C&EI&REV)
24	Huang, Zhen, and Yin (2020)	(ND,P,E,C,SPE,SPR,3,C&EI&SI)
25	Rabbani, Amirhossein Sadati, and Farrokhi-Asl (2020)	(WM,A,E,C,SPE,MPR,2,C&R)
26	Porkar, Mahdavi, Maleki Vishkaei, and Hematian (2020)	(ND,RG,M,C,MPE,MPR,2,Q&P&EI)
27	Hao Yu and Solvang (2020)	(ND,RG,E,F-S,SPE,MPR,2,C&EI)
28	X. Gao and Cao (2020)	(ND,RG,E,C,SPE,SPR,3,P&EI&SI)
29	Park, Kim, Ko, and Song (2020)	(ND,B,E,C,SPE,SPR,2,C&NR)
30	Jabarzadeh, Reyhani Yamchi, Kumar, and Ghaffarinasab (2020)	(ND,FF,E,C,MPE,SPR,3,C&EI&D)
31	A. Liu, Zhang, Luo, and Miao (2020)	(ND,RG,E,C,MPE,SPR,3,EI&SI&NPV)
32	Moslehi, Sahebi, and Teymouri (2020)	(ND,E,E,ST,SPE,MPR,2,C&EI)
33	Q. Lu et al. (2020)	(DLB,E&BP,M,C,SPE,MPR,2,P&EC)
34	Goodarzian, Hosseini-Nasab, and Fakhrzad (2020)	(ND,RG,M,C,SPE,SPR,3,C&EI&SI)
35	Ghoushchi and Hushyar (2020)	(ND,E,E,C,MPE,MPR,3,Q&P&SW)
36	Ahlaqqach, Benhra, Mouatassim, and Lamrani (2020)	(ND&L,H,E,C,SPE,MPR,3,P&SI&R)
37	Budak (2020)	(ND&DLB,E,E,C,MPE,SPR,3,C&EI&SI)
38	Sajedi, Sarfaraz, Bamdad, and Khalili-Damghani (2020)	(ND,RG,M,F,MPE,MPR,3,C&EI&SI)
39	Fathollahi-Fard, Ahmadi, and Al (2020)	(ND&WM,EN,E,F,SPE,SPR,3,C&EI&SI)

Row	Author (year)	Coverage
40	C. Yang and Chen (2020)	(L,M,E,C,MPE,MPR,3,C&RLN&EI)
41	Ali, Paksoy, Torğul, and Kaur (2020)	(ND&PR,E,E,F,MPE,MPR,7,C&EI&REV)
42	Pourmehdi, Paydar, and Asadi-Gangraj (2020)	(ND,S,E,F-S,SPE,MPR,3,P&EI&SI&EC&MWD)
43	Antucheviciene, Jafarnejad, Amoozad Mahdiraji, Razavi Hajiagha, and Kargar (2020)	(ND,S,M,R,SPE,MPR,3,P&EI&SEL)
44	Kargar, Pourmehdi, and Paydar (2020)	(ND&WM,H,E,C,MPE,SPR,3,C&W&R)
45	Govindan, Mina, Esmaili, and Gholami-Zanjani (2020)	(ND&SS&OA,A,E,F,SPE,MPR,2,C&SH)
46	Trochu, Chaabane, and Ouhimmou (2020)	(ND,WO,E,ST,MPE,MPR,2,P&LF)
47	Shahbazbegian, Hosseini-Motlagh, and Haeri (2020)	(ND,EN,E,FR,MPE,SPR,2,C&E)
48	X. Jiang, Li, Lu, and Tian (2020)	(ND,M,M,G,SPE,SPR,2,C&EI)
49	Zandkarimkhani, Nasiri, and Heydari (2020)	(ND&VRP&L,CH,E,F,MPE,MPR,2,C&VEPS)
50	Khalafi, Hafezalkotob, Mohammaditabar, and Sayadi (2020)	(RSC,F,E,F,MPE,MPR,2,P&SAL)
51	Khan et al. (2020)	(ND,A,E&M,C,SPE,SPR,3,C&T&EI)
52	S. Lu, Zhu, Wang, Xie, and Su (2020)	(ND,E,E,F,MPE,MPR,3,C)
53	Pan, Xie, and Feng (2020)	(ND&WM,C,E,C,MPE,SPR,3,C&P&RCP)
54	Rossit, Toutouh, and Nesmachnow (2020)	(L,C,E&H,C,SPE,SPR,3,C&DI&GF)
55	Kumar, Jain, and Sharma (2020)	(ND,A,E,F,SPE,MPR,4,P&CF&EI&RCP)
56	Mehrbakhsh and Ghezavati (2020)	(IM,RG,E&M,ME,MPE,MPR,2,C&EI)
57	Safdar, Khalid, Ahmed, and Imran (2020)	(ND&WM,E,E,N,SPE,MPR,3,P&EI&SI)
58	H. Yu, Sun, Solvang, and Zhao (2020)	(ND&WM,H,E,C,MPE,SPR,3,C&R)
59	Z. Wang, Huang, and He (2020)	(ND,H,E,G,MPE,MPR,2,C&EI)
60	Z. Jiang, Wang, Zhang, Mendis, and Sutherland (2020)	(PR,L,M,C,SPE,SPR,3,C&E&LSE)
61	Yuchi, Wang, Li, Yang, and Jiang (2019)	(ND,RG,M,G,MPE,SPR,2,C&EI)
62	Tao, Meng, Lou, Peng, and Qian (2019)	(DLB&VRP,E,M,C,SPE,MPR,2,P&ES)
63	S.-H. Tseng, Wee, Song, and Jeng (2019)	(ND,P,E,C,MPE,SPR,2,C&EI)
64	Ahlaqqach, Benhra, Mouatassim, and Lamrani (2019)	(VRP,H,M,C,SPE,SPR,2,C&R)
65	Khorshidian, Akbarpour Shirazi, and Fatemi Ghomi (2019)	(VRP,F,E,C,MPE,MPR,2,C&T)
66	Farrokhi-Asl, Makui, Ghousi, and Rabbani (2019)	(ND,RG,M,C,SPE,SPR,4,C&RLN&EI&SI)
67	Alkahtani and Ziout (2019)	(ND,E,E,C,SPE,SPR,3,C&EI&SI)
68	Roghani and Cheraghalipour (2019)	(ND,AG,E&M,C,MPE,SPR,3,C&EI&D)
69	Yadong Wang and Shi (2019)	(ND,RG,H,C,MPE,SPR,2,T&FR)
70	Jin, Song, Yih, and Sutherland (2019)	(ND,A&E,E,C,MPE,MPR,2,P&EI)
71	Govindan, Agarwal, Darbari, and Jha (2019)	(SS,E,E,C,SPE,MPR,2,P&EI&SI)
72	Farahinejad and Gholamian (2019)	(IM,E,E,C,MPE,MPR,2,C&T)
73	Tseng, Wee, Reong, and Wu (2019)	(IM,M,E,C,MPE,MPR,2,C&EI)
74	Taleizadeh, Pourrezaie Khaligh, and Moon (2019)	(PS,RG,M,ST,SPE,SPR,2,P&SAL)
75	Zarbakshnia, Soleimani, Goh, and Razavi (2019)	(ND,E,E,C,SPE,MPR,3,C&EI&NOR)
76	Avakh Darestani and Pourasadollah (2019)	(ND&P,RG,M,F,MPE,MPR,3,C&Q&LD)

Row	Author (year)	Coverage
77	Papen and Amin (2019)	(ND&SS,B,E,C,SPE,MPR,4,Q&P&EI&LD)
78	Darbari, Kannan, Agarwal, and Jha (2019)	(ND,E,E,F,SPE,MPR,3,P&EI&SI)
79	X. Gao (2019)	(ND,M,E,ST,SPE,SPR,2,P&EI)
80	Jalil, Hashmi, Asim, and Javaid (2019)	(ND,M,E,F,SPE,MPR,3,C&Q)
81	S. Lu, Xie, Zhu, and Su (2019)	(ND,E,E,C,MPE,MPR,2,C&EI)
82	Pouriani, Asadi-Gangraj, and Paydar (2019)	(WM,C&W,E,R,MPE,MPR,2,C)
83	Z. Li, Kucukkoc, and Zhang (2019)	(DLB,B,H,C,SPE,MPR,4,LB&WS&D&R)
84	Ahmadi and Amin (2019)	(ND&SS&OA,E,E,F-S,MPE,MPR,2,P&SW)
85	Cheraghalipour, Paydar, and Hajiaghaei-Keshteli (2018)	(ND,FF,M,C,SPE,SPR,2,C&D)
86	Y. Gao, Feng, Wang, Zheng, and Tan (2018)	(PR,A,M,TUM,SPE,MPR,2,P&F)
87	Ghassemi, Asl-Najafi, and Yaghoubi (2018)	(ND&SS,M,E,C,MPE,MPR,2,P&GW)
88	Bortolini, Galizia, Mora, Botti, and Rosano (2018)	(ND,FF,E,C,MPE,MPR,2,C&EI)
89	Badurdeen, Aydin, and Brown (2018)	(PR,E,M,C,MPE,MPR,3,C&EI&EC)
90	Yong Wang et al. (2018)	(VRP,M,H&M,C,MPE,SPR,2,C&UV)
91	Nobari and Kheirkhah (2018)	(ND&P,R,G,M,C,MPE,MPR,3,P&EI&SI)
92	W. Yang, Xie, and Li (2019)	(IM,E,M,C,MPE,MPR,2,C&SEL)
93	Jiayi Liu et al. (2018)	(DLB,R,M,C,MPE,MPR,3,NW&T&WS)
94	Tosarkani and Amin (2018)	(ND&SS,E,E,C,MPE,MPR,4,Q&P&EI&LD)
95	Rasi (2018)	(ND,CH,M,F,MPE,SPR,2,C&LD)
96	Mohebalizadeh and Hafezalkotob (2018)	(ND,M,E,F,SPE,SPR,4,C&T&SI&EC)
97	Soleimani, Chaharlang, and Ghaderi (2018)	(VRP,RG,E,F,SPE,MPR,2,C&EI)
98	Mota, Gomes, Carvalho, and Barbosa-Povoa (2018)	(ND,E,E,ST,MPE,MPR,3,EI&SI&NPV)
99	Ren et al. (2018)	(DLB,RG,H,F,SPE,SPR,2,LB&WS)
100	Yadollahinia, Teimoury, and Paydar (2018)	(ND&CRM,A,E,R,MPE,MPR,3,C&DI&SAL)
101	Hao Yu and Solvang (2018)	(ND,RG,E,ST,SPE,MPR,2,P&EI)
102	Rabbani, Mokhtarzadeh, and Farrokhi-Asl (2018)	(VRP&WM&L,RG,M,C,SPE,SPR,2,C&EI)
103	Saxena, Jain, and Sharma (2018)	(ND,A,E,F,MPE,MPR,4,P&PV&EI&RCP)
104	Mohsen Rahimi and Ghezavati (2018)	(ND,RG,E,ST,MPE,SPR,3,P)
105	Maleki, Pasandideh, Niaki, and Cárdenas-Barrón (2017)	(P&CM&O,RG,M,C,SPE,MPR,2,P&NW)
106	Farrokhi-Asl, Tavakkoli-Moghaddam, Asgarian, and Sangari (2017)	(WM,RG,M,C,SPE,SPR,2,C&SI)
107	Meng, Lou, Peng, and Prybutok (2017)	(PR,A,M,C,SPE,SPR,3,C&Q&PR)
108	Wu, Kwong, Aydin, and Tang (2017)	(ND&PFD,RG,E,C,SPE,MPR,2,C&P)
109	Jindal and Sangwan (2017)	(ND,M,E,F,SPE,MPR,2,P&EI)
110	Dinler and Güngör (2017)	(WM,M,E,F,MPE,MPR,2,P&R)
111	Soleimani, Govindan, Saghafi, and Jafari (2017)	(ND,RG,M,F,MPE,MPR,3,P&D&MWD)
112	Paydar, Babaveisi, and Safaei (2017)	(ND,EN,E,R&C,MPE,MPR,2,P&R)
113	Keshavarz Ghorabae, Amiri, Olfat, and Khatami Firouzabadi (2017)	(ND,E,E,F,MPE,MPR,2,C&EI)
114	Shakourloo (2017)	(PROCP,E,E,F-S,MPE,MPR,3,C&P&EI&EC)
115	Kadambala, Subramanian, Tiwari, Abdulrahman, and Liu (2017)	(ND,M,M,C,SPE,SPR,2,P&EC)
116	Chen, Wang, Wang, and Chen (2017)	(ND,EN,M,C,SPE,SPR,2,C&EI)
117	Fazli-Khalaf, Mirzazadeh, and Pishvaei (2017)	(ND,CH,E,F-S&R,SPE,SPR,2,C&EI)

Row	Author (year)	Coverage
118	Amir Mohammad, Gholian-Jouybari, Mohammad, and Mostafa (2017)	(ND&RM, RG, M, ST, SPE, SPR, 2, C&R)
119	Amin and Baki (2017)	(L, C, E, F, MPE, MPR, 2, P&LD)
120	Zhao and Ke (2017)	(VRP&RM&WM&L, C, E, C, SPE, SPR, 2, C&R)
121	Ivanov, Pavlov, Pavlov, and Sokolov (2017)	(PR, M, E, C, MPE, MPR, 4, C&TH&I&RP)
122	Govindan, Darbari, Agarwal, and Jha (2017)	(ND, E, E, F, MPE, SPR, 3, C&EI&SW)
123	Shokouhyar and Aalirezai (2017)	(L, E, M, C, SPE, SPR, 3, P&EI&SI)
124	Jahangoshai Rezaee, Yousefi, and Hayati (2017)	(SS&OA, M, E, C, SPE, MPR, 4, Q&P&E&LD)
125	Jia Liu and Wang (2017)	(DLB, E, M, C, SPE, MPR, 4, T&WS&D&R)
126	Feitó-Cespón, Sarache, Piedra-Jimenez, and Cespón-Castro (2017)	(ND, CH, E, ST, SPE, MPR, 3, C&EI&SI)
127	Dai (2016)	(ND, M, E, F, SPE, MPR, 4, C&W&EI&R)
128	Ghezavati and Beigi (2016)	(VRP&L, RG, M, C, SPE, SPR, 2, C&T)
129	Z. Jiang et al. (2016)	(PROCP, L, M, C, SPE, MPR, 2, C&REL)
130	Govindan, Paam, and Abtahi (2016)	(ND, RG, E&M, F, MPE, MPR, 3, C&EI&SI)
131	Afshari, Sharafi, ElMekawy, and Peng (2016)	(L, A, M, ST, MPE, MPR, 2, C&SAL)
132	Wu, Kwong, Lee, and Tang (2016)	(PFD, E, M, C, SPE, MPR, 2, C&MS)
133	Zohal and Soleimani (2016)	(ND, G, M, C, SPE, SPR, 3, C&EI&REV)
134	Mohammad Rahimi, Baboli, and Rekik (2016)	(IM, RG&F, E, F, MPE, MPR, 2, P&SI)
135	Entezaminia, Heydari, and Rahmani (2016)	(PRODP, RG, E, C, MPE, MPR, 2, C&EI)
136	Hao Yu and Solvang (2016)	(ND, M, E, C, SPE, SPR, 2, C&EI)
137	Kalayci, Polat, and Gupta (2016)	(DLB, M, M, C, SPE, SPR, 4, T&WS&D&R)
138	Govindan, Jha, and Garg (2016)	(ND&PR&L, E, E, C, MPE, MPR, 3, P&EI&SI)
139	Shakourloo, Kazemi, and Javad (2016)	(SS&OA, WA, E, C, SPE, MPR, 3, C&P&W)
140	Azadeh, Zarrin, and Salehi (2016)	(SS, M, E, C, MPE, SPR, 2, Q&P)
141	Saffar, Shakouri G, and Razmi (2015)	(ND, RG, E&M, F, MPE, MPR, 2, C&EI)
142	Moghaddam (2015b)	(SS&OA, M, E, F&C, SPE, MPR, 4, P&LD&R)
143	Mehrbod, Xue, Miao, and Lin (2015)	(L, RG, M, C, MPE, MPR, 3, C&T&LD)
144	Moghaddam (2015a)	(SS&OA, M, E, F, SPE, MPR, 4, Q&P&EI&LD)
145	R. Zhang, Ong, and Nee (2015)	(LS&PRODP, RG, M, C, SPE, SPR, 2, PE&M)
146	Ghayebloo, Tarokh, Venkatadri, and Diallo (2015)	(DLB&SS, RG, E, C, SPE, MPR, 2, P&EI)
147	Kwak (2015)	(PFD, A, E, C, SPE, MPR, 2, P&EI)
148	J.-E. Lee, Chung, Lee, and Gen (2015)	(ND, B, M, C, MPE, SPR, 2, C&LD)
149	Xiaoyang Zhou (2015)	(ND, B, M, C, SPE, SPR, 2, C&T)
150	Kwak and Kim (2015)	(PFD, E, E, C, MPE, SPR, 2, P&EI)
151	Subulan, Taşan, and Baykasoğlu (2015)	(ND, CH, E, F, SPE, MPR, 3, C&NR&PV)
152	Sathish and Jayaprakash (2015)	(EOLM, E, M, C, MPE, MPR, 2, C)
153	Eskandarpour, Nikbakhsh, and Zegordi (2014)	(ND, RG, M, C, SPE, MPR, 2, C&TTR)
154	Mirakhorli (2014)	(ND, F, M, F, SPE, SPR, 2, D&RP)
155	Sadjadi, Soltani, and Eskandarpour (2014)	(ND&L, RG, H, F, SPE, MPR, 2, C&D)
156	Amin and Zhang (2014)	(ND, E, E, C, SPE, MPR, 3, C&Q&T)
157	Mehrbod, Tu, and Miao (2014)	(L, RG, E, R&F, MPE, MPR, 2, C&T)
158	Ghorbani, Arabzad, and Tavakkoli-Moghaddam (2014)	(ND, RG, E, F, SPE, MPR, 3, C&T&W)
159	Altmann and Bogaschewsky (2014)	(ND, M, E, R, MPE, SPR, 2, C&EI)
160	Özceylan and Paksoy (2014)	(ND, RG, E, F, MPE, SPR, 4, C)
161	Tari and Alumur (2014)	(L, E, E, C, MPE, MPR, 3, C&EF&SF)
162	Ondemir and Gupta (2014)	(PR, E, E, C, SPE, MPR, 4, C&Q&GW&REV)

Row	Author (year)	Coverage
163	Ramos, Gomes, and Barbosa-Póvoa (2014)	(VRP,C,E,C,MPE,MPR,3,DI&EI&SI)
164	Özkır and Başlıgil (2013)	(ND,RG,E,F,SPE,MPR,3,P&SAL)
165	Aydemir-Karadag and Turkbey (2013)	(DLB,RG,M,ST,SPE,SPR,2,C&LB)
166	H. Lee, Zhang, Boile, Theofanis, and Choo (2013)	(L,M,E,C,MPE,MPR,2,C&T)
167	Amin and Zhang (2013a)	(L,RG,E,ST,MPE,SPR,2,C&EI)
168	Ramezani et al. (2013)	(ND,RG,E,ST,MPE,SPR,3,Q&P&RLN)
169	Vahdani, Tavakkoli-Moghaddam, Jolai, and Baboli (2013)	(ND,S,E,R&F,SPE,MPR,2,C&REL)
170	Hu and Sheu (2013)	(PDM,C,E,C,MPE,SPR,3,C&PS&R)
171	Can B. Kalayci and Surendra M. Gupta (2013a)	(DLB,E,M,C,SPE,MPR,4,T&WS&D&R)
172	Amin and Zhang (2013b)	(ND&SS&OA,E,E,F,SPE,MPR,4,C&Q&LD&SW)
173	Can B Kalayci and Surendra M Gupta (2013)	(DLB,E,M,C,SPE,MPR,3,E&S&REV)
174	Vahdani, Tavakkoli-Moghaddam, Modarres, and Baboli (2012)	(ND,RG,E,R&F,MPE,SPR,2,C)
175	Paksoy, Pehlivan, and Özceylan (2012)	(ND,RG,E,F,SPE,MPR,4,C&EI&ECR)
176	Achillas et al. (2012)	(WM,W,E,C,SPE,SPR,3,C&EI&EC)
177	Xiao, Cai, and Zhang (2012)	(RM,E,M,F,SPE,SPR,3,C&P&R)
178	Amin and Zhang (2012)	(ND&SS,E,E,C,SPE,MPR,3,Q&P&SW)
179	Yacan Wang, Lu, and Zhang (2012)	(L,E,E,C,SPE,MPR,3,C&W&EC)
180	S. Li, Wang, He, Che, and Ma (2012)	(ND,E,M,C,SPE,SPR,3,C&T&SEL)
181	X. Wang, Zhang, and Yang (2011)	(WM&L,C,E,C,SPE,MPR,2,C&DI)
182	Ashayeri and Tuzkaya (2011)	(ND,E,E,F,SPE,SPR,4,C&PV&CU&SEL)
183	Tuzkaya, Gülsün, and Önsel (2011)	(ND,E,M,C,SPE,SPR,2,C&PV)
184	Pishvae et al. (2010)	(ND,RG,M,C,SPE,SPR,2,C&RLN)
185	Fonseca, García-Sánchez, Ortega-Mier, and Saldanha-da-Gama (2010)	(L,W,E,ST,SPE,MPR,3,NPV&D&R)
186	R. D. Kusumastuti, R. Piplani, and G. H. Lim (2009)	(ND&PR,E,M,SI,MPE,MPR,2,EI&EC&REV)
187	Quariguasi Frota Neto, Walther, Bloemhof, van Nunen, and Spengler (2009)	(EE,E,E,C,SPE,MPR,3,W&D&REV)
188	Wongthatsanekorn (2009)	(WM,CH,E,C,MPE,MPR,3,C&I&RCP)
189	Dehghanian and Mansour (2009)	(ND,C,M,C,SPE,SPR,3,P&EI&SI)
190	Xiaoyang Zhou and Xu (2009)	(ND,B,M,F,SPE,SPR,2,C&T)
191	Du and Evans (2008)	(ND,RG,E&M,C,SPE,SPR,2,C&TTC)
192	Sheu (2008)	(ND,EN,E,C,MPE,SPR,2,P&R)
193	Shimizu and Yamada (2008)	(DLB,E,M,C,SPE,MPR,2,C&T)
194	Luminata Duta, Filip, and Popescu (2008)	(DLB,E,M,C,SPE,MPR,2,P&LB)
195	Luminata Duta, Filip, Henrioud, and Popescu (2008)	(DLB,E,M,C,SPE,MPR,2,C&LB)
196	R. Pati, P. Vrat, and P. Kumar (2008)	(ND&WM,P,E,C,SPE,MPR,3,C&Q&EI)
197	Jun, Cusin, Kiritsis, and Xirouchakis (2007)	(PR,RG,M,C,SPE,MPR,2,C&Q)
198	Sheu (2007)	(WM,W,E,C,MPE,MPR,2,C&R)
199	S. M. McGovern and Gupta (2007)	(DLB,RG,H&M,C,SPE,MPR,2,T&WS)
200	Ahluwalia and Nema (2006)	(WM,E,E,C,SPE,MPR,2,C&EI)
201	Seamus M. McGovern and Gupta (2006)	(DLB,E,M,C,SPE,MPR,5,LB&T&WS&DC&D&R)
202	Sheu et al. (2005)	(ND,E,E,C,MPE,SPR,2,P)
203	Gerner, Kobeissi, David, Binder, and Descotes-Genon (2005)	(DLB,S,E,C,SPE,MPR,2,P&EI)
204	S. Lee, Lye, and Khoo (2001)	(EOLM,E,H,C,SPE,MPR,2,C&EI)
205	Luo, Zhou, and Caudill (2001)	(ND,E,E,F,SPE,SPR,4,C&T&EI&EC)

Coverage: (Main focus area, Case study sector, Solution methodology, Uncertainty modeling, Period, Product, Number of objectives, Objectives)

Main focus area= {Network design: ND, Disassembly line balancing/ sequencing: DLB, Location: L, Waste management: WM, Supplier selection: SS, Product recovery: PR, Vehicle routing problem: VRP, Order allocation: OA, Inventory management: IM, Product family design: PFD, Pricing: P, End of life management: EOLM, Risk management: RM, Process planning: PROCP, Production planning: PRODP, Capacity management: CM, Revenue sharing contract: RSC, Outsourcing the products: O, Eco-efficiency: EE, Post-disaster management: PDM, Customer relationship management: CRM, Production system: PS, Collection- disassembly: C-D, Lot scheduling: LS}

Case study sector= {Electronic: E, Random generated: RG, Manufacturing: M, Auto: A, City/ country: C, beverages: B, Chemical: CH, healthcare: H, Energy: EN, steel: S, Robotic: R, Waste treating: W, paper: P, fresh fruits: FF, food: F, lathe: L, Gold: G, Earthquake: EA, ballpoint pen: PP, Household: HO, Wood: WO, Agriculture: AG, Cloth: CL, Fish: FI, Watch: WA}

Solution methodology= {Exact: E, Heuristics: H, Metaheuristics: M}

Uncertainty modeling= {Crisp: C, Fuzzy: F, Stochastic: ST, Robust: R, Fuzzy-Stochastic: F-S, Grey: G, Simulation: SI, Fuzzy-Robust: FR, Neutrosophic: N, Maximum Entropy: ME, Taxonomy of uncertainty metrics: TUM}

Period= {Single: SPE, Multiple: MPE}

Product= {Single: SPR, Multiple: MPR}

Number of objectives= {2, 3, 4, 5, 7}

Objectives= {Cost: C, Environmental impact: EI, Profit: P, Social impact: SI, Time: T, Risk: R, Quality: Q, Energy consumption: EC, Demand: D, late delivery: LD, Work station: WS, Revenue: RE, line balance: LB, Waste: W, Satisfaction level: SAL, Responsiveness of a logistics network: RLN, Suppliers weight: SW, Efficiency: E, Distance: DI, Product volume: PV, Energy saving: ES, Recovered/ recycled product coverage: RPC, service level: SEL, Net present value: NPV, Inventory: I, Feasibility: F, Number of remanufacturing end of-use products: NR, Number of waiting products in remanufacturing workstation queues: NW, Safety: S, Return product: RP, Satisfy the price expectations of customers: SPEC, Global weight: GW, Fill rate: FR, Reliability: RE, Number of occupied robot/ machine: NCR, Missed working days: MWD, Performance: PE, Makespan: M, Landfilling flows: LF, Throughput: TH, Shortage: SH, Value of establishing potential sites: VEPS, Life span equilibrium: LSE, price: PR, equity among different firms: EF, Steady flow of products to each firm: SF, Total tardiness of cycle time: TTC, Capacity flexibility: CF, Capacity utilization: CU, Direction changes: DC, Used vehicles: UV, Total tardiness of returning repaired products: TTR, Encourage customers to use recycle products: EC, psychological: PS, Garbage accumulation points frequency: GF, Market share: MS}

2.3.1 Main focus areas

In this section the classification of papers regarding their main focus is provided. The results show that network design is the most focused area in the literature of this field with 43.8 percent. RL network design is the process of modeling a supply chain to improve the determination of the best location and optimal size of the facilities to be included in the network and aims to find an optimal chain that collects used, refurbished, or defective products from the market and processes their recovery activities efficiently (Rezaei 2015). Disassembly line balancing/ sequencing is in second place with 10.8 percent. This category refers to the process of determining the number of workstations and the sequence of tasks that must be performed in each station to have an efficient line. The next frequent one is the location problem with 8.4 percent. This problem determines which facilities are to be selected and where to locate new facilities to minimize the total distances or costs or to optimize other objectives to satisfy the RL supply chain aims. Waste management is the next one with 6.8 percent. It refers to all the activities including finding the best waste management strategy and the optimal level of tactical activities such as collection, transportation, and waste disposal and treatment. Supplier selection is in the next place with 5.6 percent. A reverse

logistic supplier selection evaluates suppliers according to the defined attributes to select the best ones. The next one is product recovery and also VRP with 4.8 percent. The first one aims to select the best end-of-life options (such as disassembling, remanufacturing, and recycling) of components to maximize the recovery value, reduce costs, and increase sustainability. The last one refers to finding optimal routes for the considered objectives (such as costs, customer demands or satisfaction level, and environmental goals). The next one is order allocation with 2.8 percent. Order allocation aims to find an optimal amount of order of materials/goods to different suppliers for considered objectives such as cost, the environment, social, resiliency, and sustainability. The other categories are inventory management (2 percent), product family design (1.6 percent), pricing (1.2 percent), EOL management (1.2 percent), risk management (1.2 percent), process planning (0.8 percent), production planning (0.8 percent), capacity management (0.4 percent), revenue sharing contract (0.4 percent), outsourcing the products (0.4 percent), eco-efficiency (0.4 percent), post-disaster management (0.4 percent), CRM (0.4 percent), production system (0.4 percent), collection- disassembly (0.4 percent), lot scheduling (0.4 percent), respectively. Figure 6 shows the distribution of the classification of papers regarding their main focus.

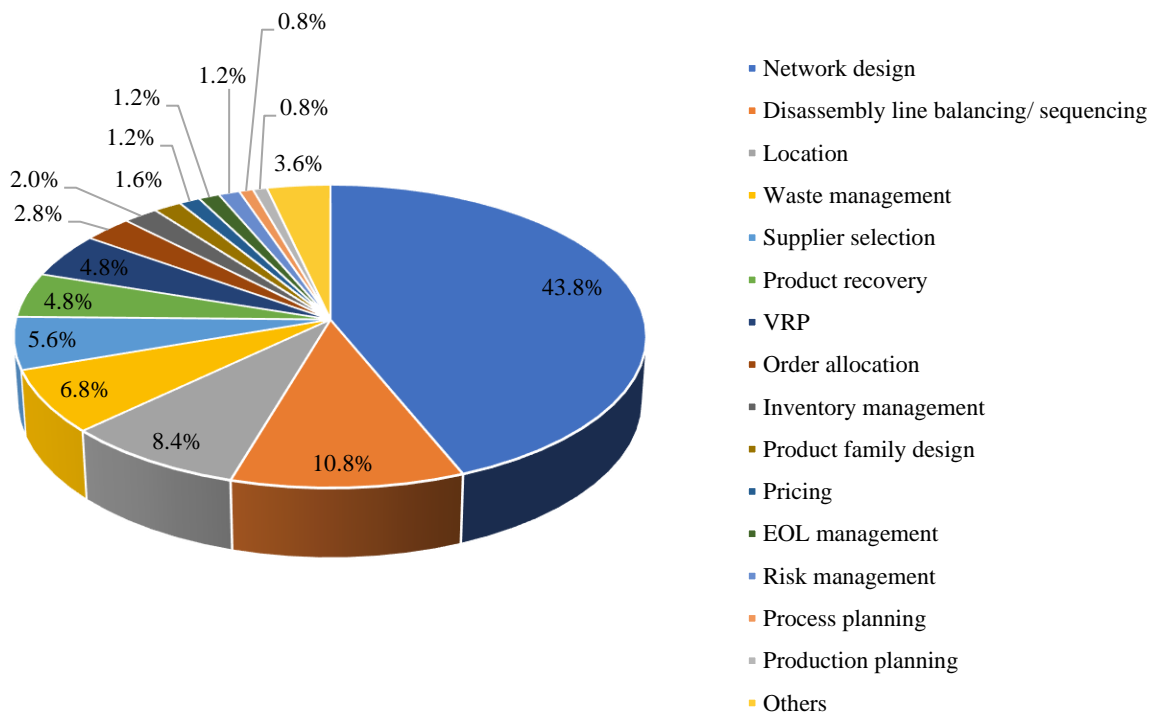


Figure 6. Distribution of the classification of papers regarding their main focus.

2.3.2 Case study sector

In this section we investigated the sectors considered in the papers. Our analysis reveals that out of all 205 papers, 24.4 percent used randomly generated examples to validate their optimization model. However, others used real examples from various sectors. Among them, electronics, with 26.8 percent, is the most considered sector. Because the electronic products have rapid growth and existing models reach their end of life sooner and reverse logistics helps reduce costs and environmental disadvantages, and corporates can then incorporate them into new products’ manufacturing to reduce waste and their effects on society and lower production expenses. After that, manufacturing (generic manufacturing without saying the name of products) with 10 percent, auto with 6.7 percent, city/country with 4.3 percent, beverages, chemical and healthcare with 2.9 percent, energy, steel, robotic, waste treating, paper, and food with about 2 percent, fresh fruits with about 1 percent and other sectors

such as lathe, gold, earthquake, and agriculture with an overall 5.3 percent considered, respectively. Figure 7 shows this distribution in detail.

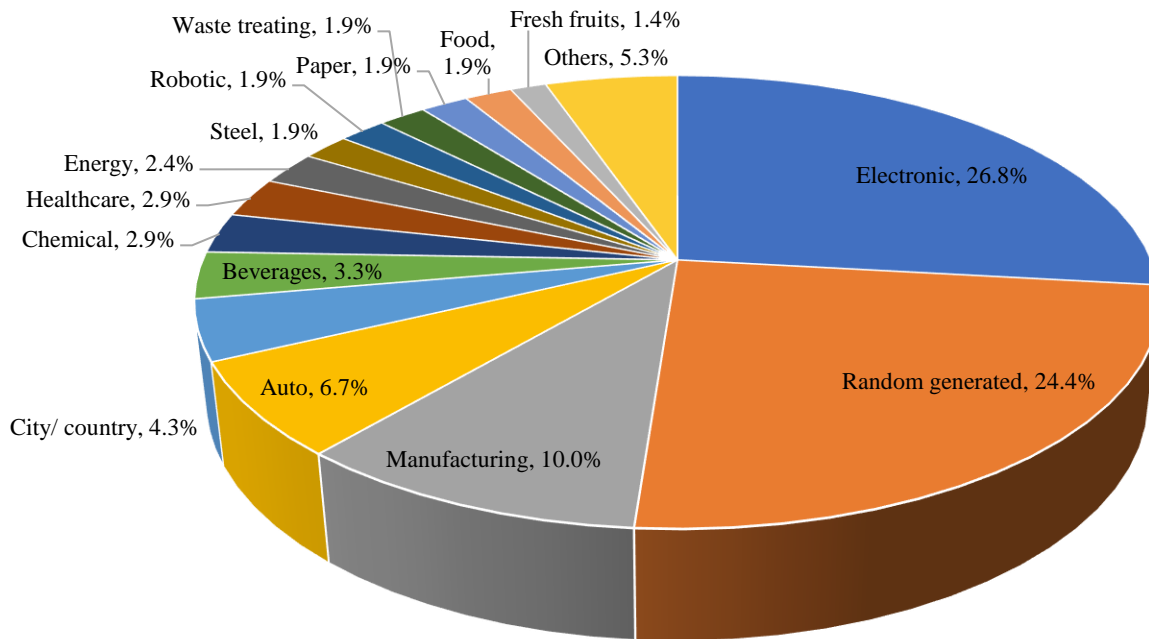


Figure 7. Distribution of case study sectors.

2.3.3 Solution methodology and method type

There are different methodologies in the literature of the MODM application to the RL field to solve the multi-objective optimization model. We investigated the solution methodology and method type of all 205 papers. Our analysis shows that the solution methodologies can be categorized into three categories 'exact', 'heuristics' and 'metaheuristics.' Exact algorithms are appropriate for small and finite-size optimization problems in bounded time. However, for the NP-Hard problems, this category is not suitable for finding an optimal solution. The most common and popular exact methods are branch and bound, linear programming, dynamic programming, mixed integer programming, and decomposition methods. Heuristics appeared to overcome exact algorithms' shortcomings. In this kind of algorithms, we have near-optimal solutions instead of optimal ones leading to computational efficiency. These algorithms are similar to an approximate for a problem to get a good guess of the solution, and these ones are problem dependent. It means that for any special problem, you should design a unique heuristic algorithm. Meta-heuristic algorithms appeared to overcome the heuristics shortcomings about problem dependency and to trap in a local optimum solution and failure in reaching the near-global optimum solution. These kind of algorithms' efficiency and effectiveness is more than heuristics; they can be applied to a broad range of problems (problem-independent), and also their mechanism can help them to escape from trapping in the local optimum solutions. The results show that exact, heuristics, and metaheuristic algorithms were considered in 205 papers with the share of 57.87%, 4.2%, and 37.93%, respectively. It is noted that the most frequently applied exact methods in this field are 'epsilon-constraint', 'weighted sum,' 'LP-metric,' and 'augmented epsilon-constraint,' respectively. Also, methods based on 'augmented epsilon-constraint 2', 'PageRank', '2-Opt exchange', and 'multiple service action' are the most frequent heuristic ones, and 'NSGA II,' 'GA,' 'MOPSO,' 'ABC,' 'VNS,' and 'ant colony' are the most metaheuristics ones, respectively.

2.3.4 Uncertainty modeling

In this section, we investigated the uncertainty modeling of the problem's parameters considered in the papers. The parameters deem to be deterministic or uncertain. Deterministic parameters are the ones whose values are known, and precise, and uncertain parameters are the ones whose values are not known and precise due to some uncertainties in real situations of markets. For more information about uncertainties in supply chain management, one can see Peidro et al. (2009), Simangunsong et al. (2012), and Flynn et al. (2016). Our analysis reveals that 59.6 percent of the papers consider crisp or deterministic parameters in their model, while 40.4 percent consider uncertainty in their modeling. Among the uncertainty approaches that these studies utilized, fuzzy (20.7 percent), stochastic (8.5 percent), robust (4.7 percent), fuzzy-stochastic (2.3 percent), grey (1.4 percent), simulation (0.9 percent), fuzzy-robust (0.5 percent), neutrosophic (0.5 percent), maximum entropy (0.5 percent) and taxonomy of uncertainty metrics (0.5 percent) were the most frequent ones, respectively. Figure 8 shows the distribution of the uncertainty modeling approaches. The most frequent parameters that considered uncertain in the RL optimization field are demands and return amounts, environmental issues, delivery time, lead-time, transportation time, and risk factors.

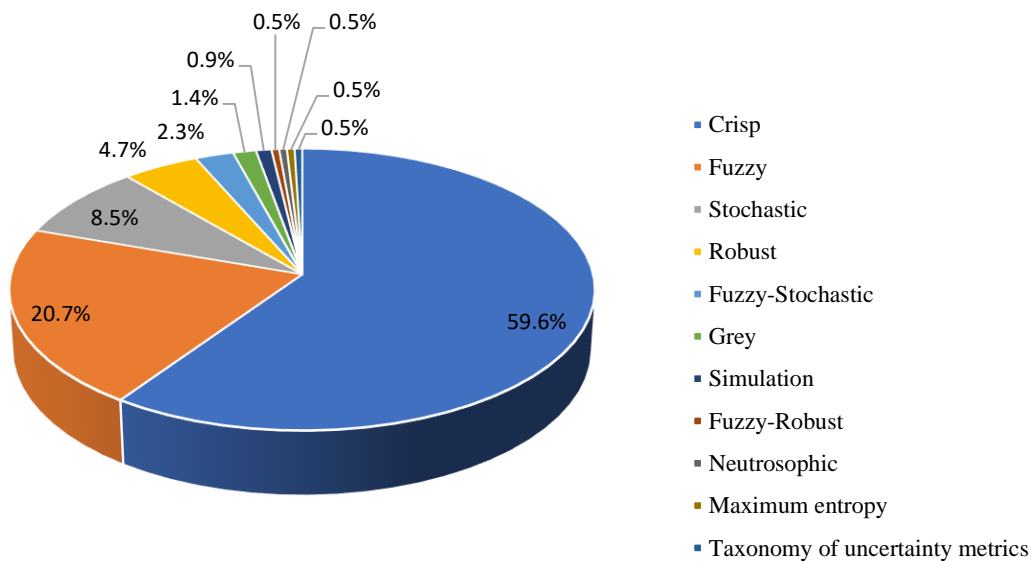


Figure 8. Distribution of the uncertainty modeling approaches.

2.3.5 Number of the period(s), product(s), and objectives

This part considers the number of the period(s), product(s), and objectives in the 205 target papers' multi-objective optimization model. In this field, the models can be single or multiple in terms of the period (multiple period model cover time horizon decision about problem but single period support one static point of time horizon), product (multiple product models cover more than one kind of products but the single product only support one special product in decisions), and also can have two or more than two objective functions. Our analysis shows that out of all 205 papers, about 58 percent considered single-period and 42 percent considered multiple periods. Also, 61 percent have multiple products in their model, while 39 percent considered only one product. Besides, about 54 percent considered only two objective functions, about 35 percent considered three objectives, about 11 percent considered four objectives, and the remaining papers, that are only 1 percent considered more than 4 objectives. Figure shows this distribution in detail.

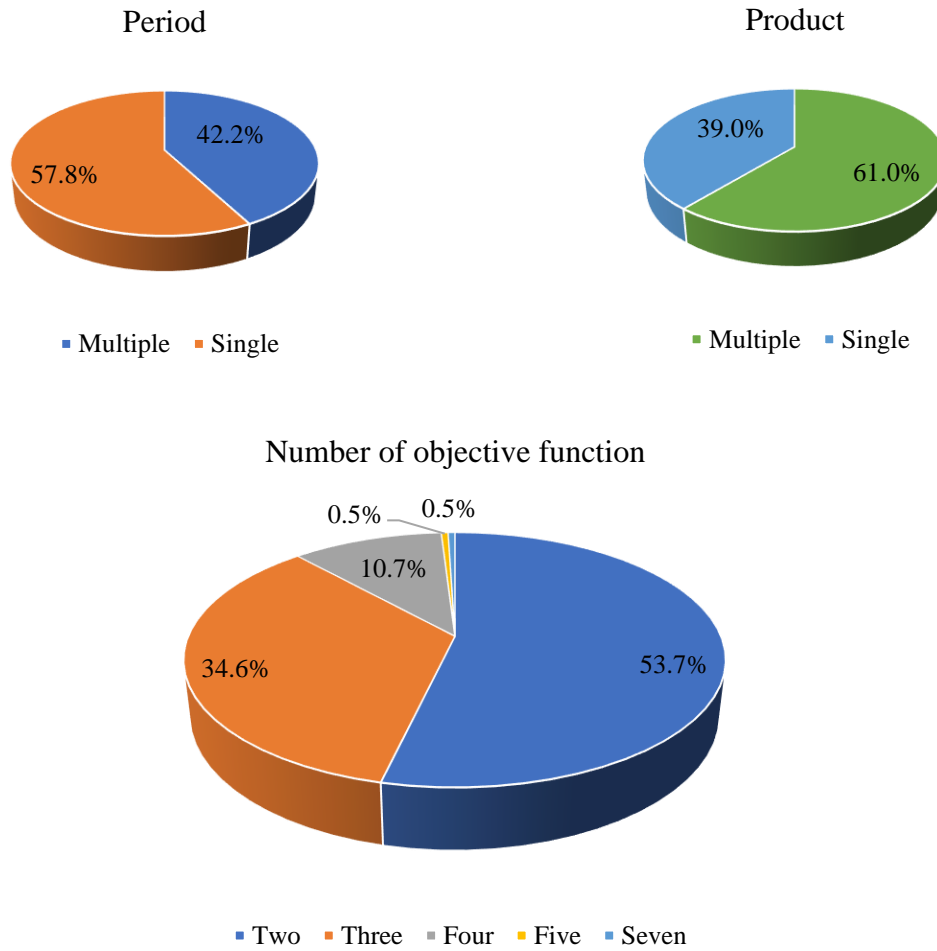


Figure 9. Distribution of the number of the period(s), product(s), and objectives.

2.3.6 Type of objectives

In this section, we investigated the objective functions considered in the papers to be optimized. Our analysis reveals that cost reduction is considered the most frequent objective with 24.2 percent. Total cost consists of RL activities such as opening and design costs, transportation costs, holding costs, production costs, processing and re-processing costs, CO₂ emission costs, and the costs savings associated with combining distribution, collection/inspection, combining recycling, and disposal centers. After that, environmental impact with 15.2 percent includes in their models. This objective highlights the severity of pollution, CO₂ emissions and waste. The next frequent is profit with 11.9 percent. Profit is defined by the total profit obtained by subtracting the total cost from the total revenue. After that social impact was considered with 5.6 percent. Social impact is, in this case, defined by social unsettlement surrounding the construction of disposal facilities, the number of jobs created by supply chains. Time with 5.4 percent is the next frequent objective. Time might refer to total operation time, the cycle time of the assembly and disassembly line, total transportation and delivery time, collection time, and lost production time. Risk is the last to be elaborated on with 4 percent. It refers to all strategic and operational points in the RL network at which unexpected consequences can occur that negatively affect the process. such consequences can for example occur during purchasing, transportation, storage, (re)processing, disposing. These can occur in several scopes such as the environment, society and HSE. Also, quality (3.3 percent), energy consumption (2.9 percent), demand (2.7 percent), late delivery (2.1 percent), work station (1.7 percent), revenue (1.5 percent), line balance (1.3 percent), waste (1.3 percent), satisfaction level (1.3 percent), the responsiveness of a logistics network (1 percent), suppliers

weight (1 percent) and other objectives (13.7 percent) that each (40 objectives) have below 1 percent are the other objectives considered in the papers. Figure 10 shows this distribution in detail.

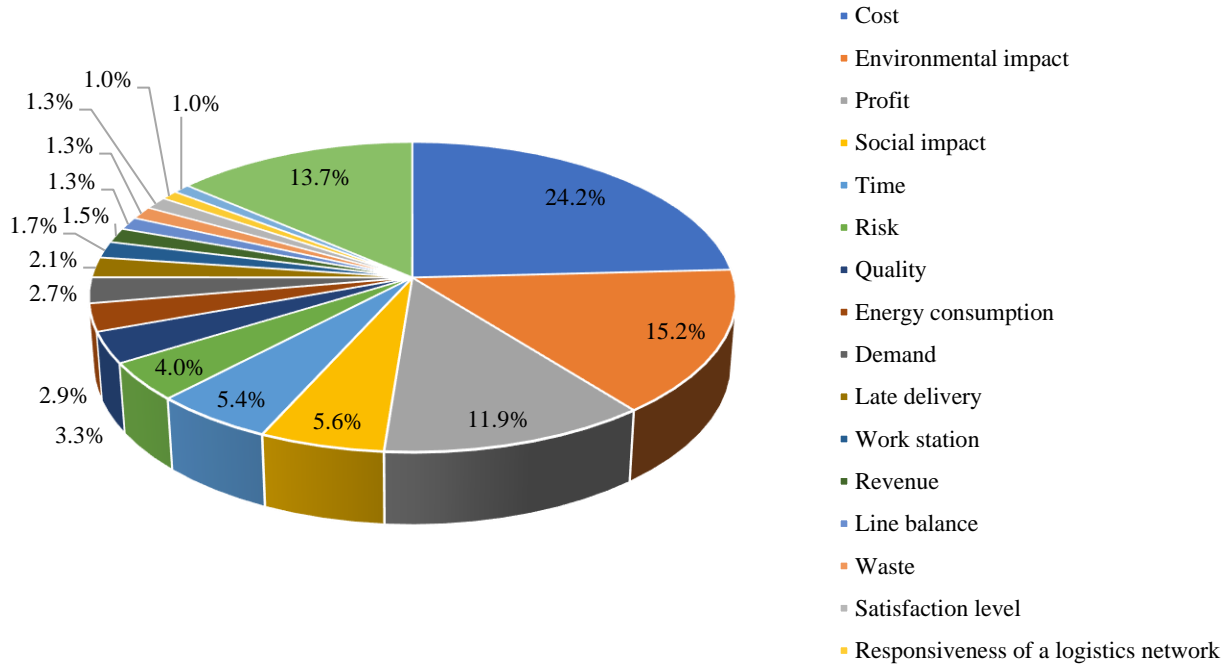


Figure 10. Distribution of kind of objectives.

3. Conclusion and future directions

Nowadays reverse logistics is one of the most exciting and highlighted topics researched in the fields of supply chain management and logistics. This is, inter alia, because of increased public awareness about environmental and societal issues, boundless waste generation, governmental and environmental legislation, and sustainable competitiveness. But firms struggle with this supply chain, which has many parties with different objectives involved, and are faced with significant problems and challenges in the design, planning, and control departments. Multi-objective decision-making (MODM) is one of the most worthwhile approaches to handle these complex problems. Despite the importance and applicability of multi-objective decision-making in reverse logistics (RL), there is not a literature review done on this topic. This paper aims to fill this critical gap and clarify the state of this field, reveal research gaps, and introduce future directions by showing the main contents and areas of the published research on reverse logistics by using multi-objective decision-making methods, and by illustrating how and with what significance multi-objective decision-making contributes to reverse logistics optimization. This allows practitioners to have a comprehensive view on the issue and to take advantage of it accordingly. In addition, it prevents researchers from devoting time to duplicate research.

For that reason, it is that after conducting the literature review stages, 205 relevant papers published in scientific journals were left and investigated. The results clearly illustrate the quantitative increase in the number of papers published in this field over the last 20 years, in which top journals and published papers in the field of reverse logistics were introduced. Besides, content analysis on the main focus area, case study sector, solution methodology, uncertainty modeling, period(s), and product(s) were purported. These results have significant implications for both academics and practitioners that work in this field. We propose some of the most important implications of the literature review results as follows:

- Some areas of research in this field have not received much attention, including the role of the industrial revolution in the form of industry 4.0 and new technologies in the RL activities such as IoT or blockchains. Also, researchers have not paid attention to some other areas such as human factors, ethical complications,

cognitive biases, and other multidisciplinary areas. Whilst these play a significant role in the current business environment. So, future research should cover them.

- The case study sectors' investigation showed that 24.4 percent of the papers were conducted based on randomly generated data. This has some major complications when adapted to the real world. The main problem is the validity of these papers' models, and the lack there of. In fact, since real world problems often consist of complex and unique situations that sometimes behave different from what research expects them to, we cannot expect solutions based on generated data to be plausible and efficient. Therefore, it is recommended to conduct research by utilizing case studies. Besides, some sectors such as the electronics and car manufacturing industries have received significantly more attention than other sectors while paying attention to other fields such as the pharmaceutical, food and agricultural, and steel industries in which reverse logistics are very meaningful potentially can turn out crucial in improving effectiveness and efficiency in these sectors.
- About the uncertainty modeling, the results showed that about 60 percent of studies see the parameters of the problem in a deterministic state. However, we know that in real-world situations, there is a high level of uncertainty. Hence, considering uncertainty can only seem logical. Also, some novel uncertainty modeling approaches such as chaos theory, neutrosophic numbers, rough set theory, and robust optimization have received less attention than other popular and classical methods, while these can be considered as potential topics for future works.
- Another issue is about using solution methodology. Most of the studies have not considered the complexity of the problem and selected the methodology and method based on the name of the algorithm used in recent years while in real-world problems, it depends on the problem's size and complexity.

Similar to all studies, this research has limitations. We investigated scientific journal papers that were published in English between January 2001 and May 2021. Thus, other scientific articles, such as conference papers, theses, dissertations, books, and book chapters were excluded. Besides, the increasing trend of publishing in this field causes many articles that have been published towards the end of the study period to be ignored. In addition, because of limitations due to the length of the paper, we eschew the discussion about each element of content analysis categories and discussed the most important and frequent studies.

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