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## Editorial

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**Biographical notes:** Govindan Kannan, PhD is an Associate Professor in Operations and Supply Chain Management in the Department of Business and Economics at the University of Southern Denmark, Denmark. His research interest includes supply chain management and reverse logistics. He received a gold medal for the best PhD Thesis award. He is an Editor-in-Chief for *International Journal of Advanced Operations Management*, *International Journal of Business Performance and Supply Chain Modelling*, *International Journal of Logistics and Supply Chain Management* and *International Journal of Industrial Engineering Practices*. He has published 30 papers in referred international journal and more than 50 papers in the conferences.

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Logistics has become more widely recognised in the last 20 years. The necessity of outsourcing the logistical operations like transportation, warehousing, packing and other value added operations is becoming inevitable to satisfy customers through the on-time delivery of goods/services at reduced cost. Industrial organisations are constantly in search of new solutions and strategies to develop and increase their competitive advantage. Outsourcing is one of these strategies that can lead to greater competitiveness. Briefly, it can be defined as a managed process of transferring activities to be performed by others. Logistics outsourcing or Third Party Logistics (3PL) involves the use of external companies to perform logistics functions that have traditionally been performed within an organisation. A key rationale for this form of outsourcing is that with intensified global competition, firms are concentrating their energies on core activities that are critical to survival, and leaving the rest to specialised firms. In industry logistics outsourcing has become a rapidly expanding source of competitive advantage and logistics cost savings.

This Special Issue aims to provide academic and practitioners with a collection of innovative research and development in supporting business decision making for the role of third party and fourth party logistics provider in logistics and supply chain management. Totally 13 papers were received and seven were accepted for publication. The papers were fully reviewed by two independent referees and based on the reviews seven papers were finally accepted for the publication in this issue. The cluster of papers included in this issue highlights the following “Role of Third/Fourth Party Logistics Providers in Logistics and Supply Chain Management” issues:

- Conceptual study on 3PL/4PL/ new trends for service industry
- Selection of Third Party Logistics Provider in supply chain

- Selection of 3PL service providers: a combined approach of AHP and Graph theory
- 3PRLP'S selection using an integrated analytic hierarchy process and linear programming
- Influence of 3PL in tolerance synthesis of an assembly: a successive case study
- Aligning 3PL service bundles with relational integration: a conceptual model
- A heuristic based approach to vehicle routing model for Third Party Reverse Logistics provider.

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