
Editorial

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Biographical notes: Hokey Min is James R. Good Chair in Global Supply Chain Strategy in the Department of Management at the Bowling Green State University. He was Distinguished University Scholar and Director of the UPS Center for World-wide Supply Chain Management and the Center for Supply Chain Workforce Development at the University of Louisville. He earned his PhD in Management Sciences and Logistics from the Ohio State University. His research interests include global logistics strategy, healthcare supply chain and supply chain risk modelling. He has published more than 125 articles in various refereed journals including *European Journal of Operational Research*, *Journal of Business Logistics*, *Journal of the Operational Research Society*, *Transportation Journal* and *Transportation Research*.

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The global financial crisis has swept through more than two-thirds of the free economic world ever since we witnessed a colossal collapse of major financial institutions in the USA in 2008. Despite a series of government bailouts and economic stimulus plans, there is still no sign of hope for quick recovery. Indeed, this ongoing financial crisis is believed to be the worst of its kind since Great Depression. In this time of global financial crisis,

single failure in any part of the stretched supply chain can lead to a chain of failures across the entire supply chain as illustrated by the automobile industry. Thus, the viability of the companies may rely on the weakest link of their supply chains. To beef up the weakest link of the supply chain, supply chain partners should find ways to evaluate and share goals, practices, risks and resources through coordination and integration across the entire supply chain.

The theme of the special issue is to seek research works that develop resilient supply chain frameworks and innovative thinking processes to cope with unprecedented global financial crisis. The culmination of these works is exemplified by five papers that were selected by the rigorous double-blind review process. These papers represent important advances in theory and practices in supply chain management in a global context. A brief overview of these papers is provided below.

The first paper by Khan and Rahman proposes the use of Quality Function Deployment (QFD) matrix to evaluate the performances of Executing Agencies in providing foreign-aid funds in Bangladesh. Their proposed matrix can be easily modified to assess the various supply selection criteria in many other developing countries which cope with unique sets of challenging procurement issues such as foreign-aid funds procurement. The matrix is particularly useful for tackling supplier selection problems encountering not-for-profit organisations. In comparison to traditional supplier selection techniques such as Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP), Multi-Attribute Utility Theory (MAUT), and Goal Programming (GP), the QFD matrix is more intuitive, easier to interpret, and more flexible. Thus, its application potential is greater than other existing techniques. Also, its utility has been demonstrated through a real-world application illustrated in this paper.

The second paper by Ahsan and Azeem conducts an in-depth case study of the supply chain practices of apparel manufacturers in Bangladesh. While mapping-out the apparel supply chain in Bangladesh, they discovered that the apparel manufacturers tended to take corporate social responsibility more seriously than they thought. This finding defies the common misconception that low-cost sourcing is often motivated by cost savings only at the expense of corporate social responsibility such as environment-friendly manufacturing, the prevention of child labour, and the assurance of health and safety in the workplace. They also provide a number of useful managerial insights into apparel supply chain practices in Bangladesh. These insights include the needs for (logistics) infrastructure development, government policy changes, backward integration in the supply chain, and customised product developments that will make the apparel supply chain more resilient and subsequently make the Bangladesh apparel industry more competitive in tough economic crisis. The insights provided in this study can also be used for burgeoning labour-intensive manufacturing sectors in other developing countries.

The third paper by Palaniappan and Jawahar proposes a model that integrates procurement and production scheduling with the objective of minimising the Integrated Total Cost (ITC), which includes assembly, switchover, material, inventory, and shortage costs. They seek to solve the model using a novel sequencing algorithm for a flexible flow-line assembly in sequence, which is frequently witnessed in automobile, computer, and home-appliance manufacturing. A performance comparison of their novel algorithm is conducted with that of existing ones.

The fourth paper by Bhatti, Kumar and Kumar analyses the way that 3PLs are chosen by 4PLs, using intangible selection criteria such as trust, flexibility, and innovativeness. In particular, they employ a risk-based index which measure risks associated with the selection of any particular 3PL. The analysis they perform to evaluate a risky choice is based on the Taguchi's loss function, whose utility is validated by a case study.

The fifth and final paper by Wakchaure, Nandurkar and Kallurkar evaluate an integrated manufacturing framework using a combination of many well-know management principles including JIT, ERP, TQM, and TPM. Based on a survey of 92 manufacturing firms, they found that an integrated manufacturing framework is associated with multiple operational benefits such as cost reduction, quality improvement, manufacturing flexibility, and delivery reliability.

In closing, we sincerely hope that the papers selected for a special issue of *International Journal of Integrated Supply Management* can be a valuable guidance and knowledge sources for the readership of *IJISM*. We are delighted to have a privilege to guest-edit this special issue and are very grateful to the authors who made significant contributions to this special issue. Also, we would be remiss if we forgot to acknowledge the hard work put in by anonymous reviewers across the world. Finally, our special thanks go to Prof. Ajay Das, Editor-in-Chief of *International Journal of Integrated Supply Management*, who continued to encourage and support our guest-editorial efforts even when we were bogged down with unexpected process delays.