Editorial

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Biographical notes: Ephrem Eyob is a Professor of Engineering and Technology at Virginia State University. He has published numerous articles and a book on information systems and supply chain management. His current research interest includes supply chain management, enterprise resources planning, business intelligence and business objects, and simulations of business processes.

With increased globalisation, the role of global services in economic growth and job creation calls for researchers and practitioners' attention to come up with innovative solutions to manage the strategic positioning of the supply chain of a firm. Improved global services enhances supply chain performance, reduces the cost of service procurement mainly through outsourced skilled labour, to reduce overall risks and costs while operating in a complex environment by teaming with first-tier suppliers and sub-suppliers to provide excellent products and services to the consumers. The selected papers cover various issues of global service supply chain management that weigh in important factors related to global supply chains when making decisions.

These papers cover cutting edge issues related to global service supply chains that may be of interest to researchers and practitioners to foster discussions on empirical and theoretical work on global service economics and management. Furthermore, these contributed papers have clear implications for practitioners based on one or more of a variety of rigorous research methodologies.

I am pleased to select seven excellent papers for this issue, each written by experts from different parts of the world and very knowledgeable in their fields. The papers used state-of-the-art research methodologies to contribute further the depth of knowledge. A brief overview of each paper is provided below.

The first paper by Nabelsi covered performance measurement in the healthcare supply chain on Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that may help the healthcare professionals to measure progress towards their strategic goals and objectives. According to the author the development and the use of KPIs can improve internal decision-making processes for each and across all levels in the organisation. This research identified and validated a list of KPIs from different professional groups and empirically assessed the relative importance of KPIs.

The second paper by Reis, Peña and Gillis covers the innovations made in supply chain by companies to remain competitive. According to authors, only world-class companies are positioned to survive. Furthermore, in order for companies to remain competitive they must excel in five critical areas: quality, cost, flexibility, innovation and customer service. The paper ponders on how companies can use these factors to excel

and be trailblazers in their respective industries. Innovation in the supply chains can make a firm very competitive by providing quality products and excellent customer service and at the same time improves its bottom line.

The third paper titled 'Multi-model for planning high-complexity spectrum' by Oliveira, Cazarini and de Oliveira covers planning guidelines for supply chain management divided into two phases of the modelling needs of information in the supply chain management. As a result the determination of critical knowledge in the supply chain management becomes paramount. It uses several instruments to reduce subjectivity of the results and for determination of critical knowledge. According to the authors satisfactory results were produced to validate the SCM procedures.

The fourth paper by Pradeepmon and Paul focuses on a hybrid algorithm for uncapacitated facility location problem. NP-hard combinatorial optimisation problems include location problems to provide a hybrid algorithm to solve the Uncapacitated Facility Location (UFL) problems by combining concepts of Genetic Algorithm (GA) and Particle Swarm Optimisation Algorithm (PSO). Their proposed algorithm, according to the authors, gives good solutions for UFL problems and is compared to other algorithms for its performance.

The fifth paper by Aigbokhan et al. examined the reliability of mobile communication software and its impact on quality service to the user. Global System for Mobile (GSM) software is relatively new in the market place and the level of awareness of its quality service is low. The authors made a compelling case by comparing empirically based estimation of failure rate to that of simulation techniques. Both estimations were found to be similar in assessing software reliability with minor variations between the estimates.

The sixth paper, titled 'Socioeconomics in supply chain management: a case study analysis of facility location decisions with GIS', by Davis covers the topic of 'socioeconomics in supply chain management'. It develops a framework for integrating the socioeconomic effects of facility location decisions on minority groups in the USA. Different socioeconomic-related factors are used in a case study using GIS to examine the impact of facility location of a supply chain to these communities.

The seventh paper by Aghazadeh examines the 'risks and benefits associated with global outsourcing'. The advantages of outsourcing are efficiency and low costs to the outsourcer; the disadvantages are the possibilities of losing control on quality of the service or products as recently manifested in the recall of automobiles by the major car manufacturers. Economic theory on outsourcing may suggest guidelines for future trends in outsourcing according to the author.

This special issue is beneficial to anyone who is interested in the subjects of supply chain service, technology, economics and management, such as practitioners, researchers and academics. I hope readers will find these scholarly works very interesting and useful.