
Editorial

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We have selected an interesting array of studies for you in this issue of *IJISM*. In keeping with the thematic focus of our journal, these address various aspects of supply chain integration. Our issue begins with studies that look at the fundamental question of how to extend an enterprise, and the role of resources and working capital management in order to do so. We then transition to matters of management including supplier relationships and commodity bundling. The use of practices and techniques such as AHP and VMI for performance centred assessments round up the issue.

Bhimani, Hausken and Ncube lead an investigation of the determinants of organisational structure. Firms can integrate and grow through acquisition or collaboration. The study uses game theory to examine the precedence relationship between acquisition and collaboration, and the conditions conducive to interchanging acquisition and collaboration incrementally.

Companies need resources to succeed. Lockström and Lei from the China Europe International Business School ask two research questions:

- a What are the implications of resources on global sourcing performance?
- b How can a framework for resource-based global sourcing performance be conceptualised?"

They develop a new conceptual framework that integrates the effects of intra- and inter-firm resources on global sourcing performance, explicating the role of resources for global sourcing in a business.

Viskari and Kärri from the Lappeenranta University of Technology lead an investigation in the challenges of inter-organisational working capital management: in particular, 'how can working capital be observed in an inter-organisational value chain context?' The paper introduces a financial cycle time model (FCTM), based on cycle time and inter-organisational cost management practices. FCTM would allow supply chain members to manage working capital holistically and benchmark their position in the value chain.

Building and improving supplier relationships is a recognised practice of successful supply chains. Giannakis of the Warwick Business School proposes a mediating role for asset specificity and product criticality in the relationship between purchasing manager contributions and supplier relationship management. He finds that both asset specificity and product criticality have significant mediating effects depending on the stage of the supplier relationship management initiative. The study emerges with nuanced conclusions

on the contribution of purchasing managers to supplier relationship management, providing useful guidelines for both theory and practice.

Commodity bundling is a common practice in companies. Ozkul, Yilmaz and Barut use simulation to examine commodity bundling in the supply chain. They introduce supply chain variables such as product type and supply chain type and find that performance depends on a careful consideration of product type, capacity level, and production flexibilities. Their examination emerges with interesting observations on specific supply chain capabilities, operations management policies, and supplier development initiatives that associate with successful bundling efforts.

Firm performance differentials are often attributed to specific operational initiatives. One such initiative is vendor managed inventory (VMI). Mangiaracina, Melacini and Perego of the Politecnico di Milano, Italy, examine the performance implications of VMI in a specific environment – the grocery supply chain. Included in performance are overall supply chain costs together with key cost drivers and an analysis of shared benefits between manufacturers and retailers. The paper presents a simulation model in the context of a two-level supply chain – ‘one manufacturer – many retailers’. The model suggests that cost savings are not achieved in all categories, and that manufacturers may benefit disproportionately relative to retailers. Useful insights are also obtained on the motivations for VMI adoption from the dual perspectives of manufacturer and retailer.

The remaining paper in the issue offers an innovative application of two techniques, AHP and ISM (interpretive structural modelling), to assess supply chain agility. Saleeshya, Thampi and Raghuram develop a multi-level model connecting various potential antecedents to supply chain agility. Customer centred paradigms emerge as the most important antecedent. Effects for other variables are mixed and lead to an interesting discussion that includes antecedent inter-dependency issues and implications for practice.

We hope that this issue will stimulate further research on the multi-dimensional theme of supply chain integration. We continue to invite you to consider *IJISM* as the best vehicle for global dissemination and discussion of your scholarly ideas and research work in the area of supply chain integration.

We would also appreciate your ideas on supply chain issues of contemporary significance to our community. We can create and publish special issues of the *IJISM*, for appropriate topics, with your assistance as a special issue editor.

Thank you for your continued interest in *IJISM*. Your contributions have informed and enriched the body and community of supply chain knowledge and practice.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the *IJISM* editorial board and the many reviewers who have so graciously given of their time and knowledge during the year. My sincere thanks, as always, to our publication editor, Ms. Barbara Curran, and the entire *IJISM* support team, for their hard work and consistent support.

Happy holidays, and best wishes for a healthy and productive new year!