
Editorial

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Launched in 2009, the *International Journal of Shipping and Transport Logistics (IJSTL)* is dedicated to publishing original, high-quality, and methodologically rigorous research articles that address significant management issues pertinent to shipping and transport logistics. The submission rate to *IJSTL* has been increasing continually. We are especially pleased to see that the quality of the submissions has also improved significantly over time. As the number of paper submissions is expected to multiply in the time ahead, the publication of *IJSTL* increased from four issues a year to six issues a year with effect from 2013.

IJSTL has been listed in *ISI Web of Knowledge* since 2010. The latest release of the *ISI Journal Citation Reports (JCR)* by Thomson Reuters reported that *IJSTL* secured an impact factor of 1.319 in 2012, which placed *IJSTL* among the top 50% of the scholarly journals listed under the categories of ‘management’ and ‘transportation’. Since its launching, more than 300 authors from Africa, USA, Asia, Australia, and Europe have their research outputs published in or accepted by *IJSTL*. The editorial board of *IJSTL* would like to thank all the contributors for their support for their submissions, and reviewers for their valuable time and effort in the reviewing process.

IJSTL has published a number of regular issues. To provide a forum for scholars to address specific research topics at greater depth, *IJSTL* from time to time collaborates with the international academic community in shipping and transport logistics to publish special issues. There were past special issues on ‘Comparative benchmarking analysis of seaports at international level’ (Barros et al., 2009), ‘Managing container operations effectively’ (Song and Roe, 2010), ‘Air-cargo logistics and airport economics’ (Leung et al., 2010), ‘Future of Eurasian logistics’ (Hilmola et al., 2011), and ‘Container security and supply chain visibility’ (Arendt and Meyer-Larsen, 2012). There is a forthcoming special issue on ‘The security of transport and intermodal supply chain’ to be edited by Khalid Bichou and Michael Bell.

In addition to special issues organised by guest editors, *IJSTL* also publishes special issues with international conferences. *IJSTL* has devoted special issues to publishing selected papers for the International Association of Maritime Economists (IAME) Annual Conferences, including IAME 2010 (Casaca et al., 2011), IAME 2011 (Nottemboom et al., 2013), and IAME 2012 (Lee et al., 2013). *IJSTL* will publish special issues for IAME 2013 (to be edited by Frabcesco Parloa and Pierre Cariou) and IAME 2014 (to be edited by Mary Brooks, Venus Lun, and Stephen Pettit). Furthermore, *IJSTL* has published a special issue for the 2011 International Conference of Asian Shipping and Logistics (ICASL) edited by Lu and Lin (2012). *IJSTL* will publish selected papers from the following international conferences in forthcoming special issues:

- Asia Logistics Round Table (ALTR 2014) to be edited by Young-Tae Chang, Paul T.W. Lee, and Kamonchanok Suthiwartnarueput
- European Conference on Shipping, Intermodalism and Ports (EUROSHIP 2011) edited by Athanasios Pallis and Ioannis Theotokas
- International Conference on Advanced Logistics and Transport (ICALT 2014) to be edited by Mounir Benaissa and Mourad Abed
- International Conference on Low-carbon Transportation, Logistics, and Green Buildings (LTLGB2012) edited by T. C. E. Cheng, Shouyang Wang, and Feng Chen
- International Forum of Shipping Ports and Airport (IFSPA 2012) edited by Xiaowen Fu and Chung-Lun Li
- World Conference on Transport Research Society (WCTRS 2012) Special Interest Group 2 (Ports and Maritime) edited by Thierry Vanelslander and Trevor Heaver.

IJSTL has published over one hundred papers in the past five volumes. We take this opportunity to introduce the following highly cited *IJSTL* papers according to *JCR* from the *ISI Web of Knowledge*.

Top cited papers published in 2009:

- ‘Fleet mix in container shipping operations’ (Lun and Brown, 2009)
- ‘Complementarities and alignment of information systems management and supply chain management’ (Wong et al., 2009)
- ‘An empirical model of the bulk shipping market’ (Lun and Quaddus, 2009)
- ‘An analytical framework for managing container terminals’ (Lun and Carius, 2009)
- ‘Port logistics platform integration in supply chain management’ (Almotairi and Lumsden, 2009)

Top cited papers published in 2010:

- ‘Organizational growth and firm performance in the international container shipping industry’ (Lun et al., 2010)
- ‘Efficiency considerations for sequencing and scheduling of double-rail-mounted gantry crane at maritime container terminals’ (Stahlbock and Voss, 2010)
- ‘Optimal container dispatching policy and its structure in a shuttle service with finite capacity and random demands’ (Song et al., 2010)
- ‘Transportation strategy in international supply chains – the case of Russia’ (Saranen et al., 2010)
- ‘From multi-porting to hub port configuration: the South African container port system in transition’ (Notteboom, 2010)

Top cited papers published in 2011:

- ‘Research in shipping and transport logistics’ (Lun et al., 2011)
- ‘A two-stage supply chain DEA model for measuring container-terminal efficiency’ (Bichou, 2011)
- ‘Inverse scheduling: application in shipping’ (Zhang et al., 2011)
- ‘An integrated model for ship routing and berth allocation’ (Li and Pang, 2011)
- ‘The impact of capacity on firm performance: a study on the liner shipping industry’ (Lun and Marlow, 2011)

Top cited papers published in 2012:

- ‘A study on the antecedents of supplier commitment in support of logistics operations’ (Wong et al., 2012)
- ‘South-South trade liberalization and shipping geography: a case study on India, Brazil, and South Africa’ (Lee and Lee, 2012)
- ‘The effect of environmental management on environmental performance and firm performance in Taiwanese maritime firms’ (Yang, 2012)
- ‘Maritime piracy: an analysis of attacks and violence’ (Wong and Yip, 2012)
- ‘Factors influencing the use of intention of port logistics information system by ocean carrier’ (Yang and Lu, 2012).

Scholarly journal publications are important to facilitate knowledge sharing among researchers. Ng et al. (2013) collected 25 years of shipping research data from Thomson Reuters' *ISI Web of Knowledge* database to conduct a study to analyse the development, trends, and classifications of shipping studies. The findings reveal a significant growth in volume in shipping research in recent years. Based on the findings, the top ten research topics in shipping studies have been identified. While the papers published in previous volumes have addressed some key issues in shipping and transport logistics, interesting topics worthy of studying in future research are as follows:

- *Port management* relates to port connectivity, port development, port management, and inland waterways. Studies address the issues of terminal management and the problems of port operations with the aim of enhancing operations efficiency are important. Moreover, factors affecting port development and competition among ports are interesting to revisit.
- *Carrier management* involves carrier's operations management, operations strategy, organisational management, and human resources management. Studies in this area should address a range of problems associated with the business operations of the shipping industry. These studies also identify innovative trends and industry practices to enhance the operations efficiency and organisational effectiveness in the shipping industry.
- *Shipping economics* include shipping and transport cost analysis, the demand for and supply of shipping service, the shipping market, and international trade. It is essential to conduct rigorous analyses to examine the economic behaviour of the shipping industry and apply economic rationale to explain different market phenomena.
- *Safety and security* includes studies on maritime accidents, human safety, transport safety, and maritime security. This area deals with issues and problems concerning maritime risks and accidents, and a range of safety issues caused by humans as they relate to maritime transport. Maritime security is also a popular research topic for researchers to investigate.
- *Shipping finance* includes studies on capital market, financial products, and financing of ships. To facilitate effective decision making, it is essential to conduct analyse to examine the capital market, assess the risk and return performance of financial products, and address the issues of ship financing and risk management.
- *Ship management* tackles issues related to ship operations strategy and ship registration. Ship operations strategy concerns the process of managing ships and strategic shipping operations ranging from ship scheduling and routing strategy to fleet mix decisions. Ship registration is also an importance topic covering the issues and policies relevant to the registry of ships.
- *Green shipping* includes environmental issues, environmental policy, and green shipping. Although there are studies identifying various environmental issues caused by maritime transport and evaluating environmental policies that seek to cope with particular environmental issues such as oil spills and global warming, it is essential to conduct more studies to further explore this area. An emerging topic is on how green shipping practices can enhance the energy efficiency of ships and contribute to pollution reduction. Recently, greening shipping operations have captured tremendous attention of researchers.

- *Liner shipping* includes studies on the market structure, network, and operations management of liner shipping. The characteristics of liner shipping and development of the liner shipping market in terms of trade routes and operations strategies need further investigation.
- *Container transport* includes topics on empty container transport, container transport operations, logistics services, and the market structure of the container transport industry. The intermodal transport operations, container transport services in the market, and the operating issues concerning container shipping are also interesting topics to further study.
- *Maritime policy* explores the transport policy of different countries and regions, as well as government regulations in different transport sectors. The current state and future trends of transport policy and their implications for the maritime transport industry are interesting to examine.

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