

International Journal of Physical Distribution & Logistics Management

“Under the Umbrella of Sustainable Supply Chain Management: Emergent Solutions to Real-World Problems”

Special issue Call for Papers from International Journal of Physical Distribution & Logistics Management

Submission Deadline: January 31, 2016

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Call for Papers

Researchers across the spectrum of supply chain-oriented functional disciplines are contributing to the growing dialogue on sustainable supply chain management. Much of that research has been framed from the triple-bottom line perspective, and has addressed broad concepts relating to the development of “overall sustainable” supply chains, thereby leading to valuable insights on the theory and practice of sustainable supply chain management (Carter and Easton, 2011; Winter and Knemeyer, 2013).

Yet, sustainability is a very broad and abstract idea that can be regarded as an “umbrella concept” (Hirsch and Levin, 1999), wrapped around various issues within the environmental, social, and economic dimensions that make up the triple-bottom line. Umbrella concepts are useful in early stages of a topic’s life cycle, because they provide relevance within an ever-changing world. Yet, at some point, researchers need to move beyond the broad perspective in order to delve into narrower and more focused aspects of a concept. In doing so, methodological rigor becomes more integral to the ongoing stream of research on a given topic, and in the process, definitions are more clearly articulated and delineated, operationalizations emerge and are refined by a series of researchers, and knowledge is advanced as relationships between constructs are rigorously explored within the broad topic domain. This special issue seeks to promote such an evolution in sustainable supply chain research, to protect and foster its relevance to both scholars and practitioners.

In order for scholars to advance both the theory and practice of sustainable SCM further, the narrower streams of thought *within* sustainable SCM that provide validity to the broader notion itself should receive more attention. Numerous real-world problems deserve to be studied by the supply-chain related functional disciplines covered by *IJPDLM*. In this spirit, we invite research scholars from around the globe to send their best work on *specific environmental issues* and/or *specific social issues*, to further advance knowledge within the realm of sustainable SCM. Many of these environmental and social issues may also fall within the domain of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).

Narrower streams of thought do not threaten the existence of the broader sustainability construct. Rather, research in these areas can *complement* more holistic triple-bottom line perspectives, as well as augment relevance to practitioners. By focusing on specific issues within sustainable SCM, we hope to provide emergent solutions to real-world problems. Submissions are sought that provide *theoretically-grounded* approaches to directly or indirectly solving real-world sustainability problems within the supply chain arena (Busse, 2014). Submissions are sought across the Purchasing, Logistics, and/or Operations Management domains. Authors are encouraged to submit research that is linked to specific real-world contexts or that entails cross-context comparisons.

While this special issue call for papers is driven first of all by relevance, rigor also plays a major role. Theoretical rigor must be demonstrated in terms of showing that the real-world problems are truly unsolved SCM problems and must be framed appropriately within a theoretical lens (Mollenkopf, 2014). Likewise, methodological rigor must be demonstrated such that the applied methods are appropriate for the problems being solved. The call for papers is methodologically open, including synthesizing and integrative literature reviews, conceptual theory development, large-scale empirical studies, qualitative research such as case study research, or design-oriented methods such as action research and design science, as long as rigor is apparent. This list of suggested methodologies is indicative, without being definitive of the types of papers sought. However, consistent with *IJPDLM* guidelines, quantitatively oriented mathematical modelling and simulation studies are unlikely to meet the requirements of this Special Issue. Regardless of method employed, preference will be given to theoretically grounded research papers that are able to effectively and appropriately address the theme of this special issue.

The following list provides an illustrative set of topics for the special issue, but is not exhaustive of potential topics. Research can focus on a singular company or industry, or address issues across geographies and global supply chains. Any questions about the suitability of a topic may be directed to the special issue guest editors.

- *Social issues might include:*
 - Occupational health and safety policies
 - Food security and food conflicts
 - Non-discrimination policies: coping with different norms across global supply chain
 - Labor issues and human rights in supply chain management
- *Environmental issues might include:*
 - Conflict minerals, provenance and traceability
 - Management of natural resources
 - Energy and carbon measurement and management
 - Packaging solutions
 - Environmental certification and labeling
 - Adapting supply chain strategies in a changing climate
 - The role of supply chain management in the evolving circular economy
- *Phenomenon- and context-related topics might include:*
 - Drivers and management of supply chain sustainability risks
 - Diffusion of sustainability innovations through supply chains
 - Sustainability issues within emerging economies
 - Effectiveness of regulations across the globe

Manuscript Submission:

Prospective authors are encouraged to submit abstracts of their papers to the Guest Editors in advance of actual submission.

In preparing and submitting your articles, please follow the author guidelines that can be found on the *IJPDLM* website: http://www.emeraldgroupublishing.com/products/journals/author_guidelines.htm?id=ijpdlm

All papers should be submitted between January 15 – 31st, 2016. Authors should ensure that the Sustainability Special Issue option is selected. All appropriate papers will go through the normal journal review process.

References

- Busse, C. (2014), "Editorial: striving for appropriate forms of relevance through problem-driven research", *International Journal of Physical Distribution & Logistics Management*, Vol. 44 No. 10, pp. 714-720.
- Carter, C.R. and Easton, P.L. (2011), "Sustainable supply chain management: evolution and future directions", *International Journal of Physical Distribution & Logistics Management*, Vol. 41 No. 1, pp. 46-62.
- Hirsch, P.M., and Levin, D.Z. (1999), "Umbrella advocates versus validity police: a life-cycle model", *Organization Science*, Vol. 10 No. 2, pp. 199-212.
- Mollenkopf, D.A., (2014), "Editorial: what does it take to get published these days?", *International Journal of Physical Distribution & Logistics Management*, Vol. 44 No. 3, pp. 174-178.
- Winter, M. and Knemeyer, A.M. (2013), "Exploring the integration of sustainability and supply chain management: current state and opportunities for future inquiry", *International Journal of Physical Distribution & Logistics Management*, Vol. 43 No. 1, pp. 18-38.