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“Global Supply Chain Management Issues in Bottom-of-the-Pyramid Markets”

*Special issue Call for Papers from
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Description

A remaining conceptual and practical challenge is how to integrate sustainability into global supply chains. For example, the availability of clean water is lacking and negatively impacts approximately 783 million people globally (UN Water, 2013). Technology-based solutions along the supply chain may address the economic and environmental side of clean water conservation and distribution, but these solutions may not be accessible to those most vulnerable. Therefore, a major challenge lies in overcoming such tradeoffs and designing supply chains in ways that deliver on triple bottom line (TBL; Elkington, 1998) objectives, specifically in emerging or developing economies.

This is a fruitful area for research as it is estimated that by 2020 about \$500 billion will be allocated to impact investment initiatives (World Economic Forum, 2013). Coined after a Rockefeller Foundation meeting in 2007, impact investments could present a new asset class in future, requiring new social business models (J.P. Morgan, 2010). Additional insights into how sustainable supply chains can be created in emerging markets is central to maximize the TBL impact of these investments, e.g. there is a need to understand how supply chains can be designed to operate sustainably within the boundaries of this new asset class.

The focus of this special issue is on the emerging market context, i.e. emerging market communities that are facing severe economic, social and environmental constraints. These communities are at the bottom of the pyramid (BOP) (e.g. Karnani, 2007; Hahn, 2009) that exist in levels of extreme poverty with limited access to goods and services. This special issue particularly addresses suppliers in developing countries (i.e. an overall emerging market focus);

balancing trade-offs (i.e. a TBL orientation); multi-tier studies (i.e. supply and/or value chain focus); and the role of individuals (e.g. role of social entrepreneurs), areas which have been identified as particularly interesting for future research (Walker et al., 2014).

Potential Areas of Interest

Noting that the interface of environmental, economic and social aspects in supply chain management is not yet well covered (Seuring and Gold, 2013), this call particularly concerns BOP research that addresses the sustainability needs of the global poor (e.g. Karnani, 2007; Hahn, 2009). This special issue aims to show innovative cases, approaches and concepts in how to successfully implement all three dimensions of TBL sustainability, i.e. economic, environmental and social (e.g. Elkington, 1998; Gimenez et al., 2012; Griggs et al., 2013) into global supply and value chains focused on bottom-of-the-pyramid (BOP) issues.¹ BOP refers to “the world’s four billion consumers who live on \$5 or less per day” (Fawcett and Waller, 2015: 233). While this area of research has largely focused on BOP population as potential consumers, some companies and entrepreneurs are searching for and identifying suppliers, producers, distributors and retailers in the BOP segment, which is posing challenges (Sodhi and Tang, 2016).

Particularly in BOP contexts, companies face many resource constraints (Sodhi and Tang, 2016; Bendul et al., 2016). BOP contexts therefore offer an opportunity to further explore the idea of constraints, how supply chains are designed under such circumstances (e.g. Bals and Tate, forthcoming) and also how to include impoverished communities (Hall and Matos, 2010). Even beyond the BOP context, research can offer insights on the design and performance of sustainable supply chain management in the 21st century in the wake of increasing disruptions, such as political unrest or global climate change, and how particular functions such as purchasing and supply management can help mitigate these issues (e.g. Bals, 2012). Following the logic of a broader societal focus (Autry and Whipple, 2013), deliberate sustainable supply chain design (Bals and Tate, Forthcoming) and also more broadly deliberate shared value chain design (Bals and Tate, 2016) warrant further research.

However, supply chain risks may also bring opportunities including developing new products and services and creating new markets (Nidumolu et al. 2009). Research can explore the types of risks to be exploited and the ways in which companies can capitalise on sustainable supply chain management.

Another area of particular interest, when thinking about BOP contexts concerns impact investing and supply chain management. One area of such investments can be into the establishment of social businesses. For example, additional insights into how (social) businesses can successfully build TBL-effective supply chains for BOP communities will play an increasing role. Therefore, aspects such as what makes social businesses successful and what can be learned from failures holds tremendous potential for advancing this trend and encouraging sustainable BOP practices.

¹ The wording “value chain” is deliberate: While the terms “supply chain” and “value chain” are sometimes used interchangeably, a supply chain concerns transferring products or materials to a definite point (potentially without value added at the various stages in the chain, just as mere transportation), whereas a value chain adds value at various points (Gereffi et al., 2005). Allowing submissions about these differences as well as targeted explicitly at either supply and value chains would enrich and make the scientific discourse more precise.

In this context, the role of individual capabilities can also be studied further, as the role of individual level resources and capabilities for establishment of sustainable supply chains in BOP markets should not be underestimated (Tate and Bals, 2016). Here cross-disciplinary research within business ethics, social entrepreneurship and the creation of sustainable business models is of interest.

From a methodological viewpoint, multiple types of theoretically-grounded research methodologies including synthesizing and integrative literature reviews, conceptual development, empirical studies, qualitative and empirically-grounded quantitative research, and case study research will be considered.

The list below is indicative, and by no means definitive, of the types of papers sought. Topics for this special issue may include:

1. Creating customer value in emerging markets through better management at the bottom of the pyramid (BOP) and helping those with different needs
2. Trade-offs affecting BOP suppliers
3. Trade-offs in supply chain management affecting BOP markets
4. Supply chain design and management in the wake of increased disruption (e.g. political unrest, climate change) particularly at the BOP.
5. Supply chain design (material, information and financial flows) under TBL (economic, social, environmental) objectives at the BOP
6. Emerging business models and supply and value chain design at the BOP
7. Highlighting new practices implementing TBL sustainability (e.g. across multi-tier chains) at the BOP
8. Viewing SSCM from different perspective e.g. NGOs, governments, not-for-profits at the BOP
9. Measurement and reporting TBL sustainability in supply and value chains at the BOP
10. Bringing social entrepreneurship and impact investing into supply chain management
11. Influence of impact investors on sustainable supply and value chains
12. Influence of social entrepreneurs on sustainable supply and value chains

Timing

Due date for submissions in system – December 31st 2017

Approximate publication – End of 2018

Short Biographies of the Guest Editors

Wendy L. Tate, Ph.D. (Arizona State University, 2006) is Associate Professor of Supply Chain Management, Department of Marketing and Supply Chain Management at the University of Tennessee. She teaches undergraduate, MBA and PhD students Strategic Sourcing and Manufacturing and Service Operations and has an interest in the financial impacts of business decisions across the supply chain. Dr. Tate has published in both academic and practitioner top-rated journals in supply chain management. She enjoys research and takes a special interest in

translating academic work into classroom learning activities and disseminating her work globally. Her research can be broadly classified under the umbrella of purchasing but focuses primarily on two different types of business problems. The first is in the area of services purchasing including outsourcing and offshoring. This area of research has recently expanded into “reshoring”, or bringing manufacturing back to the home country. The second area is on environmental business practices and trying to understand how these initiatives can be diffused across a supply chain and a supply network. She presents at many different venues including both academic- and practitioner-oriented conferences. She has published research in many top-tier academic journals including the Journal of Operations Management, Journal of Supply Chain Management, California Management Review and others. She co-authored a book on environmental purchasing and also a learning guide for SC Pro Certification. She was recently appointed co-editor in chief of the Journal of Purchasing and Supply Management, serves on many editorial boards and serves as an ad-hoc reviewer for multiple others.

Dr. Lydia Bals is Professor of Supply Chain & Operations Management at Mainz University of Applied Sciences in Germany and a Visiting Professor at Copenhagen Business School in Denmark. She holds a Doctoral Degree from European Business School in Germany and was a visiting scholar at Wharton and Columbia University in 2008. From 2008-2013 she worked in the industry fulltime in managerial positions, before returning to academia in 2014. Until the end of 2013 she was head of the global department of Procurement Solutions (e.g. Sustainability, Methods, Tools & Systems; Benchmarking and Excellence) at Bayer CropScience AG, also steering the international Procurement Solutions network in Germany, North America, France, India, China and Brazil. Prior to that she worked as a Project Manager at Bayer Business Consulting, managing projects in various functional areas and countries (e.g. Spain, Mexico, Turkey). Her main research areas are Sustainable Supply Chain Management, Offshoring/Reshoring and Purchasing & Supply Organization. She has published in the Journal of Supply Chain Management, International Journal of Physical Distribution & Logistics Management, Journal of Business Ethics, Journal of International Management, Industrial Marketing Management, Journal of Purchasing & Supply Management and other academic outlets.

Donna Marshall has researched and taught in the supply chain management area for over twenty years and has been with University College Dublin for fifteen years. She has a PhD from the University of Bath, UK and has a wide range of interests including supply chain management, responsible purchasing and supply management, sustainability, ethics, relationship management, outsourcing, power, culture, and education. She publishes in the highest-impact journals in the management field including Sloan Management Review, Journal of Business Ethics and Journal of Supply Chain Management and many others. She has won several teaching awards and has taught supply chain management at undergraduate, postgraduate, PhD and executive levels. She has also won multiple research awards and has received many large corporate and research organisation grants. She advises government, industry and NGOs on responsible purchasing and supply management.

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