

## **Research at the Intersection of Supply Chain Management and Public Policy and Government Regulation**

The topic for JSCM's second emerging discourse incubator (EDI) is research that focuses on the intersection of supply chain management (SCM) and public policy and government regulation (PPGR). PPGR encompasses the laws, regulations, and government and regulatory agencies' actions. The aim is to incubate a discourse with major schools of thought in political economy that have been largely unexplored in our discipline.

### **Rationale**

Research on PPGR is well-established in disciplines such as political science, administrative law, public administration, economics, and agriculture. These disciplines have addressed a number of issues through economic and impact analyses, including the role of national and international government and power relationships in economic systems and the political dynamics of rulemaking processes (Kerwin and Furlong, 2011; West, 2005). However, while such research has informed public policy stakeholders about regulatory costs, benefits, and implementation processes, the analyses are often made without understanding of the systemic implications on supply chains and extended networks.

Far too often, the nomological network of our research models excludes variables related to the PPGR-SCM intersection that could improve our understanding of supply chain management, even when data for such variables are readily available. And the studies that do include such variables tend to include them as controls, missing potentially valuable insights. Simply controlling for PPGR related variables is not sufficient. This EDI encourages submissions that move these variables closer to the forefront of research by including them as antecedents, mediators, moderators, or outcomes, and extracting meaningful implications for theory, managers, consumers, and policymakers.

In the SCM discipline, several specialized journals, such as *Transportation Research Part A: Policy and Practice*, *Journal of Public Procurement*, and *Transportation Policy and Economic Regulation*, examine numerous research questions at the intersection of SCM and PPGR. However, apart from the growing body of research focused on environmental sustainability that highlights PPGR implications (e.g., Johnson et al., 2018), theory-based empirical research in our discipline has largely ignored the intended and unintended consequences of PPGRs on supply chains (Spring et al., 2016). As a discipline, SCM scholars are not well-versed in the broader institutional environment and do not link our organizational and supply chain outcomes to societal well-being and problems of choice. Consequently, very little research has addressed the intersection with the government, through policies, regulations, and public agencies, and SCM strategy, structure, and performance. Yet the political economy –

the social and power relations that mutually constitute the production, distribution, and consumption of resources (Cohen, 2008) – and supply chains are clearly interdependent in ways that we, as a discipline, should investigate.

Academic supply chain journals traditionally target implications for scholars and practitioners. Implications for practitioners seen in our research journals most commonly refer to managers in business and, to a lesser degree, managers in government or non-government organizations. Yet, our research has the potential to directly inform policymakers to consider a broader supply chain perspective (e.g., Gray et al., 2013; Wu and Jia, 2018). Moreover, our research can also indirectly affect the policymaking process by educating constituents, including consumers, managers in for-profit and non-profit organizations, and policymakers about the intended and unintended consequences of PPGRs on SCM, and vice versa. As scholars in SCM, we have the unique opportunity, and perhaps responsibility, to educate other decision-makers about the intersection of SCM and PPGRs.

### **Background**

The increase in regulations related to transparency, buyer-supplier anti-trust, food and transportation safety, and international trade demonstrates the extent to which supply chain issues are no longer merely business issues, but progressively involve the complex confluence of business, law, social policy, human rights, politics, and international relations. On one hand, the myriad of national and international PPGRs related to trade and competition, safety and security, labor and human resources, energy and environment, and technology and innovation have significant implications on supply chain strategy, structure, and decision-making.

On the other hand, the rapid advancement in technologies such as blockchain, artificial intelligence, delivery drones, robots, globalization, and other societal shifts have, in many cases, outpaced existing PPGRs. In some cases, supply chain-oriented policies, norms, or codes of conduct are leading the creation of new PPGRs. For example, many of the more than 40 industry blockchain consortia (Gratzke et al., 2017) are collaborating with policymakers to create PPGRs that are appropriately aligned with SCM practices. Another example is the Accord ([bangladeshaccord.org](http://bangladeshaccord.org)), which is an industry, non-government based independent agreement between supply chain participants designed to work towards a safe, healthy Bangladeshi ready-made garment industry.

Extant empirical, theory-based supply chain research, however, has largely ignored these issues at the intersection of SCM and PPGRs. Worthy and desirable objectives are behind most PPGRs, but the way in which they are developed and implemented may or may not be done with a scholarly understanding of supply chain complexities. Therefore, the goal of this EDI is to encourage empirical, theory-based discourse about the intended and unintended consequences of PPGRs on SCM and/or how SCM thinking, principles, and practices inform the creation of new PPGRs or the adaptation, replacement, or removal of existing PPGRs.

### **Research Opportunities**

We believe there are many research opportunities to advance theory and practice on the

intersection of PPGR and SCM. Submissions may address how relevant stakeholders influence the creation of new PPGRs and/or make decisions and adapt practices in response to new or proposed SCM-related PPGRs. For example, submissions could address the direct effects of PPGRs on SCM performance. Miller et al. (2018) provides one such example by using multiyear panel data to test theory about the longitudinal effects of the Compliance, Safety, and Accountability program on motor carrier safety.

Submissions might also examine the *institutional* effects of PPGRs on SCM strategy and decision-making. Supply chains are inherently embedded in a broader institutional context that includes both economic and sociopolitical institutions. These institutions influence SCM because they form the rules of the game and the incentive structure of a society, and, as a consequence, can be argued to be the underlying determinants of decision-making and performance (North, 1990). For instance, Davis-Sramek et al. (2017) investigated the impact of political institutional transitions in emerging markets on outsourcing decision-making.

There are also opportunities to study stakeholders' influence on PPGRs, in situations where supply chain practices inform the creation of PPGRs. Submissions may examine phenomena where societal objectives are enabled by policymakers and regulators collaborating with supply chain managers to better understand how PPGRs should be developed. For example, how do policymakers with public safety, security, and privacy goals work with supply chain-oriented stakeholders to improve these goals and the well-being of the public? Relevant stakeholders may include managers and employees in for-profit and/or nonprofit organizations, policymakers, and even consumers where the research has clear and direct implications for the SCM discipline.

## **Process**

We will consider all research that addresses the intersection of SCM and PPGRs and advances JSCM's mission to be the journal of choice among supply chain scholars across disciplines by attracting high-quality, high-impact behavioral research focusing on theory building and empirical methodologies. All papers published in JSCM are expected to make contributions to theory.

EDI submissions could address areas where national and international PPGRs affect supply chains and/or supply chain practices influence the creation of new PPGRs, such as:

- International trade, tariffs, and competition
- SCM technologies and innovations (e.g., drones, robots, driverless/autonomous cars, and blockchain)
- Data privacy and cyber-security
- SCM integration and collaboration (e.g., anti-trust and competition laws)
- Food safety, transparency, and traceability
- Environmental sustainability
- Healthcare
- Raw materials industries (e.g., conflict minerals and related geopolitical situations)
- Social sustainability and human rights (e.g., human trafficking, child labor, etc.)
- State-owned enterprises (e.g., government chartered/owned corporations that influence supply chains)

## Timeline

- *July 2018*: Initial call for submissions
- *July 2018 - December 2019*: Submissions to EDI, as well as regular submissions, are welcomed and will be processed upon submission.
- *January 2019*: Invited papers are expected to appear online to initiate the discourse.
- *January 2019 - December 2019*: Papers related to the EDI will be published online as they are accepted.

Please direct queries to any of JSCMs co-editors: Mark Pagell (mark.pagell@ucd.ie), Brian Fugate (bfugate@walton.uark.edu), or Barbara Flynn ([bbflynn@iu.edu](mailto:bbflynn@iu.edu)).

## What is an Emerging Discourse Incubator?

### References

- Cohen, B.P., 2008. *International Political Economy: An Intellectual History*, Princeton University Press, 1-210.
- Davis-Sramek, B., Fugate, B.S., Miller, J.W., Germain, R., Izyumov, A., and Krotov, K. 2017. Understanding the present by examining the past: imprinting effects on supply chain outsourcing in a transition economy. *Journal of Supply Chain Management*, 53(1), 65-86.
- Gratzke, P. Schatsky, D., and Piscini, E. 2017. Banding together for blockchain: Does it make sense for your company to join a consortium? *Deloitte Insights* <https://www2.deloitte.com/insights/us/en/focus/signals-for-strategists/emergence-of-blockchain-consortia.html#endnote-sup-2>
- Gray, J.V., Skowronski, K., Esenduran, G., and Rungtusanatham, M.J., 2013. The reshoring phenomenon: what supply chain academics ought to know and should do. *Journal of Supply Chain Management*, 49(2), 27-33.
- Jonathan, J.L., Dooley, K.J., Hyatt, D.G., and Hutson, A. M. 2018. Emerging Discourse Incubator: Cross-sector relations in global supply chains: a social capital perspective. *Journal of Supply Chain Management*, 54(2), 21-33.
- Kerwin, C.M., and Furlong S. 2011. *Rulemaking: How Government Agencies Write Law and Make Policy*, 4th edn. CQ Press: Washington, DC.
- Miller, J.W., Schwieterman, M.A., and Bolumole, Y.A. Effects of Motor Carriers' Growth or Contraction on Safety: A Multiyear Panel Analysis. *Journal of Business Logistics*, <https://doi.org/10.1111/jbl.12178>.
- North, D. 1990. *Institutions, Institutional Change and Economic Performance* (Political Economy of Institutions and Decisions, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Cambridge University Press.
- Spring, M., Hughes, A., Mason, K., and McCaffrey, P. 2017. Creating the competitive edge: A new relationship between operations management and industrial policy. *Journal of Operations Management*, 49(2), 6-19.
- West, W.F. 2005. Administrative rulemaking: an old and emerging literature. *Public Administration Review*, 65(6): 655–668.
- Wu, Z. and Jia, F. 2018. Toward a theory of supply chain fields – understanding the institutional process of supply chain localization. *Journal of Operations Management*, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jom.2018.03.002>.

