

## *IJPDLM Special Issue: CALL FOR PAPERS*

# **“Outsourcing/Offshoring Insights: Going Beyond Reshoring to Rightshoring”**

Submission Deadline: August 31, 2015

### **Guest Editors:**

Wendy L. Tate, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Supply Chain Management, University of Tennessee  
Email: Wendy.Tate@utk.edu

Lydia Bals, Ph.D., Professor of Supply Chain & Operations Management, University of Applied Sciences Mainz - School of Business, Email: lydia.bals@hs-mainz.de; lb.smg@cbs.dk

Over the last few decades there has been an increase in the offshoring of manufacturing and services to low labor cost countries such as China and India. These geographic locational decisions were largely made based on quantitative cost measures and often ignored other important criteria in the decision-making process (Tate, Ellram, Bals and Hartmann, 2009). However, global organizations now face the growing trend of having to re-evaluate their supply chain designs largely because of rapidly rising wages in lower cost countries as well as increasing supply chain risk (Tate, Ellram, Schoenherr and Petersen, 2014) and complexity (Christopher and Holweg, 2011). There has also been a strong push -- particularly in the U.S.-- to reshore products and services, largely driven by a political platform to “bring jobs back home” (Tate, 2014). Decision-makers weighing the relative benefits and the risks of offshoring, nearshoring or reshoring are finding that the most important aspect is to focus on “rightshoring”.

Offshoring involves international relocation of disaggregated firm value chain activities in governance modes that are captive, collaborative or outsourced (Bals, Jensen, Larsen and Pedersen, 2013; Contractor, Kumar, Kundu, and Pedersen 2010; Jahns, Hartmann and Bals, 2006). Nearshoring involves relocating operations close to country borders (e.g., Canada and Mexico for the U.S.). There has been research into the governance side of offshoring, i.e. “buy” as offshore outsourcing, “hybrid” models like alliances as well as “make” setups in establishing captive offshoring organizations. This research attempts to build on this stream of research to guide managers in the decision-making process of where in the world does it make sense to make or buy? However, the geographical dimension of these offshoring, nearshoring and reshoring decisions are largely anecdotal or conceptual. The idea behind this call for papers is to expand existing outsourcing insights by looking at the “shoring” decision through new integrative, theoretical and methodological perspectives. Research that looks at the decision making process across multiple firms, multiple functions, or across networks involving multiple organizations would help to broaden this knowledge base. Of particular interest are multinational organizations. For example, how are firms ultimately making the right decision to make or buy in the locations where they are making or buying? What issues are key in firms’ decisions and how do they ultimately decide on the most important criteria? How often and in which cases does failure play a role in reshoring decisions versus making a deliberate strategic next move into a closer geography? And in case offshoring endeavors fail and companies move back to their home countries, or somewhere else, is the move prompted by internal mistakes or external events and what can be learned from that? How far does the concept of supply chain resilience play a role in these decisions? Is there one right way to make the right decision?

Multiple types of theoretically grounded research/methodologies including synthesizing and integrative literature reviews, conceptual development, empirical studies, qualitative research, and case study research will be considered. The increasing complexity involved in the shoring decision is driving managers to seek ideas and innovations to help them better manage and mitigate risk for organizations. Low price is not necessarily the best price any longer -- there are many other factors to consider.

The list below is indicative only, and by no means is definitive, of the types of papers being sought. Consistent with the topicality section that can be found on the IJPDLM journal web page, preference will be given to theoretically grounded, empirical research studies including case studies and surveys that are able to effectively and appropriately address the theme of this special issue. As such, quantitatively oriented mathematical modelling and simulation studies are unlikely to meet the requirements of this Special Issue. Topics for this special issue may include (but are not limited to):

- Typologies of decision-making and influencing factors
- Synthesis of existing research and a development of future research directions
- Alternative theoretical foundations for the “shoring” decision
- Nearshoring, Offshoring, Reshoring of manufacturing
- Nearshoring, Offshoring, Reshoring of services
- Global sourcing decisions and supply chain complexity
- Research in multinational and multi-location decision making with regard to the shoring decision
- Global supply chain design and influence on supply chain performance
- Insights from the offshoring context for global supply chain design
- Role of political and public policy initiatives to bring jobs home
- Importance of manufacturing for a country’s prosperity
- Role of scarcity of input factors in supply chains on offshoring decisions

#### **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 *International Journal of Physical Distribution & Logistics Management* (IJPDLM) journal website: [http://www.emeraldgrouppublishing.com/products/journals/author\\_guidelines.htm?id=ijpdlm](http://www.emeraldgrouppublishing.com/products/journals/author_guidelines.htm?id=ijpdlm)

All papers should be submitted between August 1 and August 31, 2015. Authors should ensure that the Outsourcing/Offshoring Special Issue option is selected. All appropriate papers will go through the normal journal review process.

#### **REFERENCES**

- Bals, L., Jensen, P. D. Ø., Larsen, M. M., & Pedersen, T. 2013. *Exploring Layers of Complexity in Offshoring Research and Practice*. In T. Pedersen, L. Bals, P. D. Ørberg Jensen, & M. Møller Larsen (Eds.), *The Offshoring Challenge: Strategic Design and Innovation for Tomorrow’s Organization*: 1–18. London: Springer.
- Christopher, Martin, and Matthias Holweg 2011. Supply Chain 2.0”: managing supply chains in the era of turbulence. *International Journal of Physical Distribution & Logistics Management*, Vol. 41, No. 1, pp. 63-82.
- Contractor, F. J., Kumar, V., Kundu, S. K., & Pedersen, T. 2010. Reconceptualizing the firm in a world of outsourcing and offshoring: The organizational and geographical relocation of high-value company functions. *Journal of Management Studies*, Vol. 47, No. 8, pp. 1417-1433.
- Hartmann, E., Trautmann, G., & Jahns, C. 2008. Organizational design implications of global sourcing: A multiple case study analysis on the application of control mechanisms. *Journal of Purchasing and Supply Management*, Vol. 14, No. 1, pp. 28-42.
- Jahns, C., Hartmann, E., & Bals, Lydia 2006. Offshoring: Dimensions and diffusion of a new business concept, *Journal of Purchasing and Supply Management*, Vol. 12, Issue 4, pp. 218-231.
- Tate, W. 2014. Offshoring and reshoring: U.S. insights and research challenges. *Journal of Purchasing and Supply Management*, Vol. 20, No. 1, pp. 66-68.
- Tate, W. L., Ellram, L. M., Schoenherr, T. and Petersen, K. J. 2014. Global competitive conditions driving the manufacturing location decision. *Business Horizons*, Vol. 57, No. 3, pp. 381-390.
- Tate, W., Ellram, L., Bals, L., and Hartmann, E. 2009. Offshore outsourcing of services: An evolutionary perspective. *International Journal of Production Economics*, Vol. 120, No. 2, pp. 512-524.