

Resource efficiency and sustainability in logistics and supply chain management

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EDITORIAL

Resource Efficiency and Sustainability in Logistics and Supply Chain Management

The Centre for Supply Chain Improvement at the University of Derby hosted the 20th Annual Logistics Research Network Conference (LRN 2015). The LRN Conference as part of the Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport is a leading academic event that attracts academics and professionals from many sectors. As well as the depth and breadth of papers that provide the latest research insights in this area, it was a pleasure to introduce high-level speakers who are at the cutting-edge of logistics, transport and supply chain research and practice. The speakers were Simon Hobbs (Vice President – Supply Chain Development, CEVA Logistics), Catherine Weetman (Director, Re-think Solutions), Steve Pryce (Head of Marketing & Wagon Management, DB Schenker Rail UK), and Professor Alan McKinnon (Kühne Logistics University).

The theme was *Resource Efficiency and Sustainability in Logistics and Supply Chain Management*, focussing on the growing scale and complexity of servicing the needs of global consumers driven by the changing demographics, legislation, technology and modern dynamic lifestyle. Ninety-seven full papers were accepted for presentation, and the sessions included green logistics & sustainability, food supply chain, global supply chain & logistics, last-mile logistics, supply network, freight management, and cyber risk. We trust that the event has forged bonds between logisticians and universities and that the research has demonstrated its applicability to the global world of business.

The editorial team of the LRN 2015's Special Issue of International Journal of Logistics Research and Applications had invited the authors from the most insightful papers from the conference which have the most potential of attracting the attention from fellow academics and practitioners, to extend their papers. After undergoing a few rounds of blind reviews, the accepted papers have reached the right scope and context to serve the purpose of this Special Issue. A summary of the four papers are provided below:

"Green Supply Chain Management – Food for Thought?"

This paper investigates the impact of Green Supply Chain (GSCM) practices, and particularly, on the performance of UK food retail SMEs which is currently under-researched.

Deploying resource dependence theory (RDT) and institutional theory (IT), this study developed a conceptual framework to enrich existing theories and to test the relationship between GSCM practices and organisational performance. The empirical findings strongly supported the statement that internal drivers influence GSCM practices, but did not show significant relationship between external pressures and GSCM practices.

"A Comprehensive View of Intelligent Transport System (ITS) for Urban Smart Mobility"

Efficient Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) enable road users to achieve higher efficiency in the use of resources and a better management of physical flows with updated information and forecasts on both traffic and weather conditions. The purpose of this paper is to conduct an in-depth review on the role of ITS supporting urban Smart Mobility. Seventy-one

papers have been thoroughly analysed and it was found that most recent work has mainly focussed on technology, with limited attention to value creation and a general lack of quantitative models emerged. In addition, there was a lack of contributions considering both people and freight transport, even if they are strongly related especially in an urban environment.

“Assessing Efficiency and Innovation in the 3PL Industry: An Empirical Analysis”

In a highly competitive environment, this paper again follows a theme on efficiency. The paper is based on seventy-one Italian 3PL providers using Data Envelopment Analysis. ‘Best in class’ providers had benefited from strategies to improve working practices, e.g. flow management, as well as from innovations with technology providers. A further breakdown of the analysis with empirical evidence by size and industry focus was also provided, which is deemed to be very useful for many practitioners.

“Identifying Root Causes of Inefficiencies in Road Haulage: Case Studies from Sweden, Switzerland and Germany”

The paper was based on the road transport case studies in Sweden, Switzerland and Germany, and found that most efficiency problems appear in the actual transport execution. The paper showed that many of the efficiencies could be resolved by the transport operator’s own organisation, although some needed customer cooperation. The paper found that in some cases, IT solutions could be used.

The editorial team believes that the selected papers above for this Special Issue will be of great interest of the researchers to explore future research agenda in the relevant fields and the practitioners to find the research inspiring for their operations improvement solutions.

Many people have worked hard to bring LRN 2015 to Derby and on this Special Issue. We would like to thank everyone who were involved, including the CILT event team, the LRN Committee, conference management team at Derby, guest speakers, conference delegates and session chairs, journal’s editors, reviewers and, of course, all authors making this conference (and Special Issue) a successful one!

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