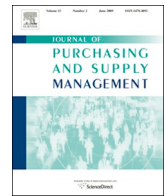




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# Journal of Purchasing and Supply Management

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## Editorial

### Looking back & looking forward



The Journal was launched as the European Journal of Purchasing and Supply Management in 1994. As its Co-Editors-in-Chief and Senior Associate Editors, we are delighted to introduce this special issue (SI) *Looking Back and Looking Forward*, compiled to mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Journal of Purchasing and Supply Management (JPSM25 SI)<sup>1,2</sup>.

In the mid-1990s, when Richard Lamming founded this Journal, working in partnership with suppliers was the exciting new approach being promoted in industry. The European Journal of Purchasing and Supply Management's first issues show partnering with suppliers also captured the interest of several academics working in the field of purchasing and supply management (PSM). Often in collaboration with national professional associations, PSM specialist research groups were formed in the US, Canada and several European countries. Also around this time, PSM researchers formed the International Purchasing and Supply Education and Research Association (IPSERA). These institutions have, together, played a significant part in shaping and developing PSM as an academic field, complementing the rapid rise in the strategic importance of PSM across all sectors.

Looking ahead, the importance of supply-side management is set to grow further. Suppliers increasingly become a critical source of innovation, while supply risk continues to rise. The challenges from outsourcing products, services and innovation and the resulting interdependencies must be strategically managed. In the execution of the purchasing function, processes, technologies and systems are changing, and supply bases and relationships are adapted. Many of the opportunities and challenges for PSM's strategic contribution that we face today were recognised many years ago. Many of these more familiar issues are characterised by rising complexity, urgency and uncertainty; in combination with new developments, they drive rapidly increasing pressures on organizations across the commercial, public and not-for-profit sectors.

The Journal's path through, and contribution to, the field is presented in the first article in this Special Issue. Led by George Zsidisin, the past and current (Co-)Editors-in-Chief of the Journal explain their context and priorities when leading the Journal, and speculate about the future of PSM. Other articles also serve to inform the readers about (J)PSM's past and future, and we do not seek to duplicate their messages in this Editorial. Rather, we will focus first on introducing the articles, highlighting their contributions, especially points of alignment

and dissent, and some of the prospects this opens up for future research. Second, we explain to JPSM readers and authors what we regard as key priorities for PSM and the Journal, some of the tensions these present and our vision and plans for JPSM in the coming years.

#### 1. Introducing the special issue

An important aspect of JPSM's editorial policy is to encourage researchers to adopt novel methodologies, to investigate new topics, and to work across traditional field and functional boundaries. As noted in the editorial for our 2016 special issue on Novel Methods (Knight et al., 2016) rising publishing standards – whilst necessary and of course very welcome – can have the unintended consequence of developing a 'straitjacket', encouraging risk aversion on both topics and methods. Mindful of this, while seeking rigorous reviews, we also wanted to do something different in this issue, and have sought to 'push boundaries'.

Our aim has been to publish a set of thought-provoking articles which will help the PSM academic community recognise, critique and appreciate the foundations of the field, look forward to the future of PSM, and provide a valuable resource for future research. Contributions could build closely on past research, or they could stretch current boundaries of the field. Between them, we believe the eleven articles (see Table 1) will deliver on our thought-provoking intent.

Below, the articles are introduced in the order presented in the article collection, printed in hard copy by Elsevier and available on line (at <https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/journal-of-purchasing-and-supply-management>). The order very approximately reflects the primary perspective of the article – whether it is more about *looking back*, a current view of the field, or *looking forward*. We also highlight the different types of contribution – some articles are reflexive reviews, some highlight particularly important domains for PSM research, others advocate novel research methodologies. These details are captured in Table 1, which includes a number in square brackets which is used to refer to the article in the remainder of this Editorial.

All of the articles were proposed by the authors in response to the Call for Papers; none were solicited or invited. Recognising that many of the prospective contributors are closely involved in editing the Journal, the review process was coordinated by Asta Salmi and organized outside the usual Elsevier system to guarantee reviewer anonymity.<sup>3</sup> In the first round of review (and in subsequent rounds where it

<sup>1</sup> Managing the pipeline of articles, encouraging submissions, balancing quality and acceptance rates are all crucial aspects of a journal editor's work. Richard Lamming decided not to publish any issues in 1995, and Volume 2 was published in 1996.

<sup>2</sup> In line with Elsevier's new production policy, this SI is JPSM's first virtual Special Issue (VSI). This is part of the switch to publishing articles immediately on acceptance. Special Issues will be 'virtual' in that they are collated post-hoc as Article Collections. Article Collections are available on line, and in some cases in print.

<sup>3</sup> Salmi was not involved as author of any of the submissions.

**Table 1**  
Introducing the articles in the JPSM 25th anniversary (virtual) special issue.

Reference within this Editorial	Title	Authors	JPSM Volume (issue)	Article no.	Article description
[1]	Reflecting on the Past 25 Years of the Journal of Purchasing and Supply Management: The Editors' Perspectives	George Zsidisin, Richard Lamming, Christine Harland, Finn Wynstra, Alessandro Ancarani, Wendy L. Tate, Louise Knight	Vol 25(4)	100559	This Notes and Debates article opens the JPSM Anniversary Special Issue with contributions from all seven PSM academics who have led the Journal over the last 25 years. From the Founding Editor to the current co-Editors-in-Chief, they describe the chronology of their involvement with the Journal, the strategy/ies they followed during their tenure and their expectations for the future of the field.
[2]	Purchasing and Supply Management as a Multi-Disciplinary Research Field: E Pluribus Unum?	Finn Wynstra, Fabian Nullmeier, Robert Suurmond	Vol 25(5)	100578	This systematic literature review covers over 2500 articles published in 18 journals between 1995 and 2014. Framed around three 'reference' disciplines (Operations Management, Marketing, and Strategy & Organisation), the authors analyse how PSM research has developed over time in terms of the topics addressed and the theories deployed. They conclude that PSM demonstrates 'unity in diversity' ( <i>E Pluribus Unum</i> ) and provide recommendations on how the multidisciplinary character of the field can be exploited in future research.
[3]	Purchasing and Supply Management's Identity: Crisis? What Crisis?	Lisa Ellram, Christine Harland, Arjan Van Weele, Erik van Raaij, Finn Wynstra, Frank Rozemeijer, Guido Nassimbeni, Mark Pagell, Michael Essig, Thomas Johnsen, Wendy Tate	Vol 26(1)	100583	This Notes and Debates article makes an important contribution to the debate about whether PSM is regarded as a discipline, and indeed whether it should be. The argument is framed in terms of 'identity', offering a fresh perspective on the 'PSM as a discipline' question. The authors take full advantage of recent discussions within the PSM academic community coordinated by the three lead authors, providing many quotes to present a rich account of the diverse views in this ongoing debate.
[4]	Purchasing Process Models: Inspiration for Teaching Purchasing and Supply management	Jenny Bäckstrand, Erik van Raaij, Robert Suurmond, Xin Chen	Vol 25(5)	100577	In this Notes and Debates article, the authors address the interests of PSM researchers as teachers with a review of a diverse set of purchasing process models (PPM) – "visual representations of the sequence of activities that constitute PSM". While the authors acknowledge their study did not yield the "one integrated PPM fit for all educational purposes" they had anticipated, it does provide an inspiring and practical discussion for PSM educators.
[5]	Where we Are Heading and the Research that Can Help us Get There – Executive Perspectives on the Anniversary of JPSM	Remko van Hoek and colleagues	Vol 26		For this Notes and Debates contribution, four senior procurement executives from major companies in diverse sectors debate PSM's direction and what research is needed to support this trajectory. The discussion follows four themes – technology and digitization, talent of the future, sustainability, and supplier-enabled innovation – and then closes with consideration of the 'knowing-doing' gap.
[6]	Engaged Scholar(ship) in Purchasing and Supply Management (PSM): Creative Tension or Squeezed in the Middle?	Jenny Bäckstrand and Árni Halldórsson	Vol 25(4)	100557	In this call for more engaged scholarship in PSM, the authors 'practice what they preach', using a design science approach (specifically, concept mapping) to explore the critical institutional and discipline-based influences on the engaged scholar and the resulting tensions they face. Rather than offering solutions, their analysis provides insights which can inform and encourage those wanting to do, or facilitate, more and better practitioner-oriented research.

(continued on next page)

Table 1 (continued)

Reference within this Editorial	Title	Authors	JPSM Volume (issue) Article no.	Article description
[7]	Exploring the Future of Purchasing and Supply Management: The Purpose and Potential of Developing Scenarios	Louise Knight, Joanne Meehan, Efsthathios Tapinos, Laura Menzies and Alexandra Pfeiffer	Vol 26	This Notes and Debates article on research about the future of purchasing and supply management (FPSM) critically evaluates methods used in past FPSM studies, makes the case for prescience oriented research in PSM, and explores the value of scenario planning. Their analysis shows that scenario-based future studies can deliver research that is original, rigorous and significant.
[8]	Small Talk, Big Impact – The Influence of Casual Collegial Advice on Purchasing Negotiations	Jiachun Lu, Lutz Kaufmann and Craig Carter	Vol 25(5) 100576	Using two scenario-based experimental studies, to examine the impact on behaviour (be honest, bluff or lie) of solicited and unsolicited advice, the authors demonstrate that even casual collegial advice during everyday interactions can have significant impacts on the subsequent behaviour of supply management professionals. Despite their crucial importance to ethics in business relationships, informal communication systems are rarely studied. This manuscript offers both new insight on this topic, and advice to others wishing to follow experimental methods in behavioral supply management research.
[9]	Purchasing and Supply Management (PSM) Competencies: Current and Future Requirements	Lydia Bals, Heike Schulze, Stephen Kelly and Klaas Stek	Vol 25(5) 100572	Through qualitative research, the authors identify the current competencies required by PSM professionals, and whether these have changed over the last ten years. They elaborate several new competences in three categories: technical, interpersonal and strategic business skills. With an exemplary level of transparency on method and evidence, the authors provide a useful resource for other researchers, and for managers wishing to use the findings in a practical context.
[10]	Blockchain and Supply Chain Relations: A Transaction Cost Theory Perspective	Christoph Schmidt and Stephan M. Wagner	Vol 25 (4) 100552	Blockchain technology has attracted a great deal of attention in the mainstream and business media, but little academic research has been published. The authors explain the technology and, framed by transaction cost economic theory, explore its potential impact on transaction costs and governance. They set out a research agenda in the form of research questions across six areas: adoption/participation; information sharing; purchasing; organizational forms; sustainability; business models
[11]	Making Sense of Impact of the Internet of Things on Purchasing and Supply Management: A Tension Perspective	Hervé Legenvre, Michael Henke and Herbert Ruile	Vol 26 (1)	The authors are highly experienced in research, education and consulting with industrialists. For this article, they draw on three studies in which they engaged with managers to explore the implications for PSM of the Internet of Things (IoT). Combining data from distinct studies presents methodological challenges, but also important opportunities in the scale and breadth of the evidence to advance our understanding of this critical, complex and fast changing topic.

was meaningful to do so), the review process was double blind. Ensuring reviewer anonymity has delivered as intended; the articles have been very robustly critiqued and significantly developed during the review process. Since this SI was first suggested, all involved – authors and reviewers – have shown great interest in it and provided considerable support. We are grateful for this, and recognise it is another indicator of the lively community enjoyed by PSM scholars, with its strong, shared interest in developing the field.

## 2. Introducing the articles

George Zsidisin led the first *looking back* contribution [1], coordinating reflections from all seven of JPSM's past and current Editors-in-Chief (EIC). While journal editors often set out their views when starting or ending their tenure, we think this article represents a unique approach (Zsidisin et al., 2019). For those engaged in writing the piece, it was intriguing and very informative. It explains the innovations each new Editor brought but also reveals the constancy of purpose and direction, two characteristics that we believe lie at the heart of the Journal's success. This piece however is not just about looking back. Zsidisin persuaded the EICs to commit to paper their expectations of future developments.

The second *looking back* contribution was led by Finn Wynstra - JPSM's third Editor-in-Chief (EIC). Aided by a sizable team of colleagues a review of the literature was conducted [2] – the largest ever in PSM – to explore the development trajectory of PSM in relation to strategic management, marketing and operations management (Wynstra et al., 2019). They firmly conclude that PSM is indeed a field, not a discipline – a topic also addressed in another paper [3]. Wynstra et al. note the relative increase in more operational level PSM research compared to strategic PSM and suggest this may reflect a view that the argument about the strategic contribution is won, and therefore no longer a research priority. Perhaps it is also a reflection of a growing number of Chief Procurement Officers who are willing to engage with PSM academics to address practical problems, and that they are seeking evidence on how to improve PSM, rather than wanting to take part in a more existential debate about the status of PSM. Where Zsidisin et al. [1] focused on the Journal, Lisa Ellram (past EIC of the Journal of Supply Chain Management, and current JPSM Senior Associate Editor) and Christine Harland (JPSM's second EIC) lead an article [3] which considers the wider PSM academic community (Ellram et al., 2020). They use the notion of identity to explore the past and future of PSM, in particular whether and why it should be seen as a discipline [3]. This is a polyphonic piece, with quotes from many of leading academics in PSM, to reveal a diversity of perspectives. As highlighted by Ellram, Harland et al. there is no consensus among leading PSM scholars yet on whether PSM is a discipline, and indeed whether a consensus is even desirable is also part of the debate.

Complementing the discussion of identity focused around research, we are pleased to include an article related to the other crucial aspect of being an academic – our role as educators. When IPSERA and JPSM were founded, as well as a focus on academic research, the community wanted to emphasise PSM education and practice. Over the years, attention on education and practice waned. More recently this gap has been recognised, and several initiatives launched to rebalance the three aspects. IPSERA, for example, now runs a well-attended Educators Forum each year immediately before the annual conference. In that spirit, we are pleased to include JPSM's first ever article on PSM pedagogy.

Bäckstrand, Suurmond, Van Raaij and Chen review a range of well-known purchasing process models (PPM) and their use in teaching PSM [4]. Their analysis raises intriguing questions about the scope and activities of PSM, and consequently about PSM identity (Bäckstrand et al., 2019). Though starting from a different point, we see interesting connections emerging between this and Ellram, Harland et al.'s contribution [3]. They too started with an assumption of moving to a

(more) unified view but acknowledge diversity (Ellram et al., 2020).

Also in line with IPSERA's renewed focus on practice, and JPSM's long-standing commitment to publishing research with clear managerial relevance, several of the JPSM25 SI contributions demonstrate and/or advocate a strong practice turn, addressing both what should be researched, and how this might be done. Harland, Zsidisin and Knight [1] all express concern about the risk of ever-tightening methodological standards and university performance metrics driving us ever further away from doing research that is interesting and important for business and society. Having already discussed on a number of occasions how we might include the 'voice of the practitioner' in the SI, we were very pleased to receive a proposal from Remko van Hoek to engage four senior executives in a dialogue about how they expect PSM to develop and consequent research priorities [5] (Van Hoek et al., 2020).

From researchers' perspective, two articles [6] [7] provide practical guidance which can help us avoid such "methodologically meticulous research with minimal managerial relevance" (Zsidisin in [1], page 7). Bäckstrand and Halldórsson, (2019) [6] use the same techniques they advocate for engaged scholarship to explore the challenges experienced by engaged scholars. Knight, Meehan, Tapinos, Menzies and Pfeiffer [7] (2020) focus on scenario planning as one methodology for future-focused research. They argue future oriented research is vital, but not readily aligned with established norms for evaluating research. Both explicitly address the tensions experienced by PSM academics aiming to perform original, rigorous and significant research.

The empirical article by Lu, Kauffman and Carter [8] also addresses an emerging research priority: 'behavioural supply management' which concerns how "judgement in supply management decision-making deviates from the assumptions of *homo economicus*" (Carter et al., 2007). Lu et al. (2019) followed an experimental methodology (itself relatively new to our field) to explore the influence of three types of casual advice – to be honest, to bluff or to lie – on buyer behaviour. This paper exemplifies the benefits of interdisciplinary research, in this case drawing on psychology to deepen our understanding of a crucial, but to date rather neglected field. At the editors' request, Lu et al. provide an extended discussion about the behavioural supply management and future research prospects.

Where Lu et al. [8] shed light on buyers' (sometimes) 'bad' behaviour, Bals, Schultze, Kelly and Stek [9] present the findings of their recent EU-funded study of PSM competencies (Bals et al., 2019). They provide a timely update of the widely cited 2008 JPSM article on competencies by Tassebehji and Moorhouse (2008), to which they add several competencies. All the new competencies proposed by Bals et al. [9] align with other contributions in this SI and to JPSM, for example: 'critical thinking' and 'dealing with ambiguity' in Knight et al. [7]; 'innovation sourcing' and the IPSERA 2018 conference special issue (see JPSM, 2019 Issue 4, and Di Mauro and Giannakis' (2019) editorial); interpersonal skills and behavioural supply management (see Lu et al. [8]); automation and big data analytics, see Legenvre et al. [11] and Schmidt & Wagner [10]. One additional competence – 'sustainability' – signals however an important gap in this Special Issue's coverage of the field: to our surprise, we received no submissions on this topic, an issue to which we return below.

As Alessandro Ancarani [1] highlights, the digitalisation of procurement is a vast, complex and rapidly developing field which the community must address through new research, and JPSM must ensure it attracts the resulting papers. With Srari and Lorentz's (2019) JPSM article on design principles for PSM digitalisation, the two technology focused contributions in this SI are a very good start. Schmidt and Wagner's [10] review focuses on one technology, namely blockchain, from one perspective – transaction cost theory – to propose its key implications for supply chain relations and associated research opportunities (Schmidt and Wagner, 2019). Legenvre, Henke and Ruile's article [11] reports a methodologically unconventional study in that they combine three prior studies to make sense of the impact of the Internet of Things (IoT) on PSM (Legenvre et al., 2020).

### 3. How to foster bold, future-guiding PSM research?

This was the question posed by Constantin Blome, Co-Editor in Chief of the *International Journal of Operations & Production Management*, to the Editors' Panel session at the recent POMS International Conference in Brighton (UK). The question neatly captures a key JPSM priority. We borrow it to frame this part of the Editorial in which we review recent progress at JPSM and set out our vision and plans for the future, and associated editorial policies. The 2016–2019 review below shows several ways in which the JPSM editorial team has actively promoted bold, future-guiding research, all of which we intend to continue to pursue. This recent experience has highlighted a number of tensions and themes which need attention, when viewed in the light of rapidly developing perspectives on the relationships between business, society and the environment.

#### 3.1. Looking back ... reviewing JPSM 2016–2019

In preparing this Editorial, we have referred back to four Editorials published since Wendy Tate and Louise Knight began their term of office as EICs of JPSM in January 2016. The 2016 issue 2 Editorial set out their vision and ethos for JPSM, the research topic priorities, and several tactics to deliver their objectives (Knight and Tate, 2016). We are pleased to report good progress on most fronts. The topics listed in that Editorial remain priority themes, and we continue to welcome a highly diverse range of contributions in terms of unit/level of analysis, methodology, topic, sector etc. JPSM benefits from a large group of Associate Editors, so we can assign handling editors with deep expertise in the topic, and they have the capacity to add a great deal of value to the review process.

While we no longer publish book reviews, the Notes and Debates category has grown in significance, providing an important opportunity for shorter, agenda setting articles. The call for Special Topic Forum proposals has proved fruitful. We have changed the approach for the annual IPSEERA conference special issue, to invite authors to nominate their own papers for consideration. For 2018 and 2019, this has meant the Conference Chairs have had a much bigger pool of papers to work with, including working papers which were not sufficiently developed to submit as full papers in the November preceding the April conference. Overall, the number and quality of submissions and papers have risen, both for conference special issues and regular articles.

There are a few areas of concern or lack of sufficient progress. In 2016, we expressed our commitment to increase JPSM's global reach. We have made some progress, but not enough. Despite a major commitment to developmental events, including professional development workshops at conferences and training held in conjunction with the other supply chain journal editors, workshop events have been held North America, Brazil and China. Each major conference including POMS, AOM, IPSEERA, and DSI have sessions on how to publish. However, authors from outside North America and Europe remain under-represented largely due to the difficulty of publishing in the SCM journals. More training is required for those in other regions. We will continue to organise and/or contribute to workshops, and hope that editorials too will provide useful guidance for reviewers and authors (see in particular Tate and Knight, 2017). Recognising that this is not specific to PSM, at these events we enjoy working with our counterparts in other journals, notably the *Journal of Supply Chain Management* (JSCM) and the *International Journal of Operations & Production Management* (IJOPM) and the *Journal of Business Logistics* (JBL) to name a few.

Another area for development is our objective to publish more interdisciplinary research. We continue to solicit submissions about PSM from authors who come from other disciplines/fields, or from PSM authors working on interdisciplinary projects. For these, we need authors to explicitly address what is novel about their work and guide JPSM readers towards a better understanding of its relevance and

potential. This necessarily means elaborating how their paper connects to past research. It may be entirely appropriate that some sections of the paper reference only research from other fields/disciplines; the discussion of the research problem and conclusions must however link to PSM research across the many journals in which it is published.<sup>4</sup> Our goal to encourage interdisciplinary research complements our ongoing commitment to encouraging the use of novel perspectives, methodologies and methods (Knight et al., 2016), and promoting research quality and integrity (Knight and Tate, 2018; Van Raaij, 2018). While we are motivated to publish such papers, at the moment the vast majority of papers we receive are (relatively) conventional. We believe this can and will – and indeed must – change in the short-term (five years, or less).

#### 3.2. PSM research priorities looking forward: adding business-NOT-as-usual

**“Scientists have a moral obligation to clearly warn humanity of any catastrophic threat and to “tell it like it is.” ... we declare ... clearly and unequivocally that planet Earth is facing a climate emergency”**

Ripple, Wolf, Newsome, Barnard, Moomaw and 11000 + signatories, *Bioscience*, 2019

The climate crisis now has much greater attention from mainstream media and the public than it did even 18 months ago. If and how this rise in attention will drive faster, deeper and wider systemic change remains to be seen. Acknowledging that we face the climate emergency, growing inequalities, and rapid technological change (see Fig. 1) means accepting society faces a fundamental transition in the near term. ‘Business-as-usual’ is not an option and we can expect radical, systemic change across all sectors, and at all levels (Wright and Nyberg, 2017: 1657). As some business sectors disappear and others emerge, governance structures change, and value networks are re-shaped (Howard-Grenville et al., 2014), the commercial interface between organizations will change, strategic relationships and resources will be governed differently, procurement decision making criteria will shift and many processes will be automated. Here, we consider how PSM, whether as a function, profession, field or discipline, is positioned to contribute to ‘business-not-as-usual’ (BNAU).<sup>5</sup> We argue these changes represent opportunities for PSM to contribute more widely to ‘grand challenges’ (George et al., 2016), and propose avenues for greater engagement.

JPSM's launch roughly coincided with the advent of ‘sustainable procurement’/‘sustainable supply chain management’ (SSCM), in which organizations reduce their net negative environmental or social impact by influencing change in their supply base and logistics. Tate et al.'s (2012) analysis of research on environmental PSM shows an early set of papers from the 1990s, with significant growth in publications about sustainability and PSM starting in 2007 (Quarshie et al., 2016), and the inclusion of social outcomes.

However, across business and management studies, in the last five years or so, there is an increasingly critical perspective, with many speaking against some of the developments in practice, and educators' part in promoting them. Criticisms include: the huge growth in pro-sustainability rhetoric is not matched by real change; key messages have been distorted and progress has stalled; where change is achieved it is only about becoming less unsustainable (Wright and Nyberg, 2017;

<sup>4</sup> We wish to emphasise that this point is *not* about soliciting references to JPSM articles. It is about making sure readers can appreciate the value of the article, despite their lack of familiarity with some of its key aspects.

<sup>5</sup> We intentionally adopt an optimistic view, and assume society will be mobilised to engender positive, transformative change in the short and medium term. We recognise of course this optimism may be misplaced. In the case of business-as-usual, in the medium and long term, there will also be transformative, systemic change affecting whole sectors, governance, value networks etc. in dramatic ways, perhaps to the advantage of the few, but definitely to the detriment of wider society.

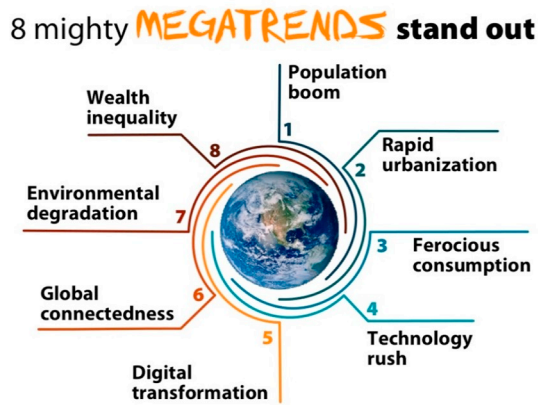


Fig. 1. Key macro-environmental trends (source: Lindgren, 2019).

Ehrenfeld and Hoffman, 2013). These arguments have fed into a critique of SSCM (see for example Montabon et al., 2016; Matthews et al., 2016).

Necessarily, most PSM research has been focused on meeting the near-term needs of organizations. The primacy of shorter-term, private and (mostly) economic benefit breaks down in the face of grand challenges, yet that is where historically – with good reason – PSM academics have focused their attention. Research on, for example, ‘whole’ supply chains and networks, on the concept of value in sourcing decision-making, on facilitating innovation, and on new PSM process technologies take the field in the right direction for engaging with BNAU. And yet this PSM research is important and necessary, but not sufficient.

It could be argued that PSM people should bide their time, waiting for clearer vision and direction from senior executives, business ‘influencers’, policy makers, public servants, etc. to frame PSM’s supporting role in transformative change to address grand challenges. There is however an important and potentially immediate part to play for PSM leaders in all sectors to facilitate systemic BNAU change, for example: through generating demand for novel goods, services or technologies; by serving as commercial experts in interorganizational collaborative planning; facilitating innovation adoption; harnessing positive network effects from new tech; (re)configuring interorganizational networks; cooperating with other buying organizations; promoting social and business development; managing scarce resources; challenging traditional notions of relationship risk and opportunity, and value. All these activities are familiar facets of strategic PSM; what is different is the context.

Wynstra et al. [2] show a reduction in the volume of strategic PSM research, relative to operational PSM. This needs to change, with more strategic PSM research specifically targeting the context of BNAU/grand challenges. The complexity and emergent nature of these settings will mean bridging system-level and disciplinary divides (Molloy et al., 2011), working with economists, innovation policy leads, public agencies, NGOs, activist organizations etc.; adopting future focused, exploratory, participatory methods (Linnenluecke et al., 2017), placing renewed emphasis on engaged scholarship with genuine co-production; more critically and reflexively evaluating and developing our own role as educators and researchers. These priorities resonate with a critical management perspective, but should not be regarded as only relevant to critical, activist (Touboulie and McCarthy, forthcoming) PSM scholars. It will also lead to a renewed emphasis on theorising as scholars assess the relevance of established theories and adapt them, or develop new theories.

JPSM actively encourages submissions from researchers working in one way or another on ‘business-NOT-as-usual’ – a term we use to refer to commercial exchange in general and therefore to include exchange between organizations from any sector. To take this forward, in

addition to topics listed in the 2016 issue 2 editorial,<sup>6</sup> we would welcome papers on, for example, but not limited to:

- Sectors
  - Contracting for infrastructure
  - PSM in emerging sectors
  - PSM in networks with non-traditional actors, contesting the traditional public vs private sector divide
- Management and governance
  - PSM’s role in business system transition
  - PSM and grand challenges, or in the context of mega-trends
  - Governance in commercial relationships and networks in novel settings
  - PSM related regulation (e.g., related to eco-environment or market concentration)
  - Leadership in/of PSM as a function and as a profession
- Digitalisation
  - Data and systems expertise within the PSM domain
  - Risks and opportunities from new technologies in PSM processes (e.g. on the quality and outcomes of decision-making)
  - PSM analytics
  - Implementation of PSM digitalisation projects

### 3.3. Editorial tensions and processes

Bäckstrand and Halldórsson [6] and Legenvre et al. [11] both highlight tensions experienced by researchers and managers. As journal editors interested in advancing the field, the scholarly community and the Journal itself, we too face a set of tensions. For example, how best to promote and publish a body of research which simultaneously:

- is about ‘doing business better’ (facilitating efficiency and effectiveness), and promotes ‘doing business-not-as-usual’ (helping to engender systemic, transformative change)
- addresses research gaps to deepen PSM knowledge, and which problematizes and challenges (Sandberg and Alvesson, 2011)
- helps to define and strengthen the field, while also extending and crossing disciplinary boundaries
- demonstrates creativity, risk taking and diversity, and meets high standards in research quality and integrity
- appreciates depth of knowledge and specialisation, and facilitates learning and innovation through combination

Articulating these tensions is itself formative and has helped us refresh JPSM’s editorial priorities and processes. Priority topics are set out above and in Knight and Tate (2016). Here, we describe key aspects of the editorial and publishing processes.

#### 3.3.1. Established approaches

We will continue with Notes and Debates, Special Topic Forums, and running events on research and publishing skills, often in collaboration with editors of other journals. To promote learning, in the novel methods SI editorial (Knight et al., 2016), we invited authors of papers with novel method(ologie)s to provide an extended discussion of the methods section, to serve as a resource for readers. Similarly, we invite authors of papers with other novel aspects to include extended

<sup>6</sup> These are: Location decision (reshoring, offshoring, nearshoring, outsourcing); Sustainability and development issues, including supply management in emerging economies; Financial implications (supply chain finance, total cost, cost issues, currency and financial flows, resource scarcity); Risk and resilience; Innovation and supply management, especially in emerging commercial sectors and in the context of public procurement; Evolution of supply markets; Services supply chain Purchasing integration with other functions (e.g. Engineering and Logistics); Performance metrics; Network design, measurement and management.

sections (for example, about a new technology or a concept imported from another field).

### 3.3.2. Editorial process

We continue to focus on three criteria for evaluating quality: originality, rigour and significance. We continue with ‘behind-the-scenes’ incremental improvements: to reduce manuscript processing times without compromising on quality; to offer guidance to handling editors to harmonise standards; to recruit committed reviewers and advise these on JPSM norms and expectations. One area receiving attention is coercive citation (Wilhite and Fong, 2012); guidance will soon be provided on how to handle this concern for reviewers and Associate Editors.

### 3.3.3. Changing landscape in journal publishing

The publishing landscape is changing. The advent of open access is a critical change on the horizon. It affects some people in some countries, but not all, and is more important for articles published from projects funded by direct grants. Level of awareness among prospective contributors can be low – some confuse open access in reputable journals with predatory pay-to-publish journals. We will monitor developments and engage with the PSM academic community and fellow editors to consider their implications.

### 3.3.4. Virtual special issues, and article collections

The publisher of JPSM, Elsevier, is changing the article publication process to better fit to the online context. Special Issues and Special Topic Fora will no longer be about publishing all the articles in just one issue. Instead, papers will be published on acceptance, and subsequently collated with the Editorial in a ‘virtual special issue’ (VSI). The VSI will appear as an article collection online and in the relevant databases, and may be published as a collection in hard copy too, as we are doing with this Anniversary Special Issue. One advantage of this change is that it allows us much flexibility in developing article collections. For example, a VSI could be developed that is made up of 3 seminal JPSM articles plus four new articles and an editorial. This allows Guest Editors to both *look back* and *look forward* on their chosen PSM topic. We welcome proposals.

### 3.3.5. Championing change

To give more traction to initiatives set out above and in previous editorials, members of JPSM’s editorial team have agreed to champion a specific theme. We begin with three appointments. Erik van Raaij (Erasmus University, NL) will take the lead for ethics, quality and integrity in PSM research. Joanne Meehan (University of Liverpool, UK) and Anne Touboullic (University of Nottingham, UK) will lead on ‘business-not-as-usual’ research in PSM. They will solicit articles, recruit specialist reviewers, curate article collections, and represent JPSM at relevant events, or help EIC/other AEs do so related to theme they champion.

## 4. In conclusion

Our ‘core business’ remains the publication of empirical PSM research. We want however to offer space also to other forms of high quality, scholarly articles which shape the PSM agenda, promote high quality research, go beyond relevance to practice, to real impact and facilitating transformational change. If that means breaking conventions, with caution and a continuing concern for quality, we are willing to do so. We look forward to continuing to receive interesting, high quality submissions, to supporting authors disseminating their findings, to providing JPSM readers with resources for their research, teaching, and their own interest and development, and to maintaining our close dialogue with the PSM community about opportunities for positive, ambitious developments.

Here’s to the next 25 years of JPSM serving and influencing the PSM community!

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